

APPLICATION FOR HOUSEHOLDER PLANNING PERMISSION DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2025/08331
APPLICATION TYPE:	Householder planning permission
SITE ADDRESS:	2 Springfield Close, Corsham, SN13 0JP
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Removal of existing hedge and replace with 6ft closeboard fencing for privacy and security.
RECOMMENDATION:	That Planning Permission be GRANTED

PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks planning permission for the removal of an existing boundary hedge and replace with a close boarded boundary fence to the boundary of a domestic garden area. The new fence is described as being of some 6ft/1.8m height and constructed of treated timber with concrete posts.

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

Springfield Close is an established residential area in Corsham, with predominantly terraced and semi-detached homes to the south of Springfield Close cul-de-sac and the northern end more detached presentations. Boundary treatments in this area are varied, reflecting the mix of housing types. Properties typically feature a combination of hedging, stone walling, wooden fencing and open frontages.

The application site, No. 2, occupies a prominent corner plot at the entrance to Springfield Close. The proposal seeks the removal of the existing boundary hedging along the north-western and southern boundaries of the dwelling to be replaced with a timber boarded fence. A new access gate is also proposed within the side elevation of the fence, positioned toward the rear of the property.

The site is located within the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation given the known presence of bats and core roosts in the area. These designations impact large parts of Box and its surrounding environs given the known populations of these protected species.

In other respects, there are no relevant planning policy designations that cover the application site.

PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal / Summary

RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Wiltshire Core Strategy:

- Core Policy 57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping
- Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Core Policy 61: Transport and New Development

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The Planning Practice Guidance

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Box Parish Council: No objection.

Wiltshire Council Highways Engineer: No objection.

REPRESENTATIONS

No comments were received.

ASSESSMENT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

In accordance with this statutory requirement, this application has been assessed against the relevant policies of the Development Plan, including the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) and, where applicable, any made Neighbourhood Plans.

Design and Impact upon the character and context of the area

Core Policy 57 - Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that all new development is of high design quality, reflecting local context, character, and distinctiveness.

The proposal seeks the removal of the existing hedge along the site's northeastern and southern boundaries and replace with a high timber-boarded fence which would wrap around the dwelling from the front to the rear.

The existing hedge contributes to the verdant character of the street scene and provides a soft boundary treatment typical of the locality. Its removal would be regrettable, however there are several different boundary treatments in the immediate context of Springfield Close. Within the surrounding street scene, properties typically display a varied approach, which incorporate a mix of established hedging and shrubbery, wooden fencing, stone walling and more open frontage arrangements with minimal enclosure. This results in a generally informal and varied character to plot boundaries throughout Springfield Close. Indeed, in this instance, the new fencing would be located away from the garden boundaries which are most visible closer to the junction area, that area remaining vegetated and well kept garden area.

Timber fencing is present throughout of the wider area. Although the proposed timber fence would be more visually prominent than the existing hedge, its overall scale, height and domestic form would be typical of residential boundary treatments commonly found within the immediate and wider area. When considered within the context of the varied boundary forms present within Springfield Close, the proposed treatment is not considered to appear unduly incongruous or out of keeping with its immediate surroundings.

Overall, while the loss of the hedge is regrettable, the replacement boundary treatment is not considered to result in unacceptable harm to the character or appearance of the site or the surrounding area to justify a refusal in this instance. Having regard to the above, the proposal complies with the design principles set out in Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and Appendix D of the Wiltshire Design Guide.

Amenity

Point vii of Core Policy 57 - Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that developments do not adversely affect neighbouring properties. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly Paragraph 135(f), stresses that planning decisions should ensure developments provide a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. The proposed development has been assessed in terms of its potential impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties, with particular regard to loss of light, overshadowing, loss of privacy, and overbearing effects.

The proposed replacement boundary fencing is not anticipated to result in any unacceptable impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers. The site occupies a corner plot, and the fence would be positioned along the site's existing boundary line, which is orientated away from immediate neighbours. Given its domestic scale and the separation distances between the application site and adjacent dwellings, the development would not give rise to unacceptable overshadowing, loss of light, or an overbearing form of enclosure. Although the fence would be lower in height than the existing hedge, it would not introduce any opportunity for harmful overlooking or loss of privacy to adjacent occupiers, retaining a boundary height of approximately 1.8 metres.

As such, the scheme is considered acceptable with regard to residential amenity. The proposal therefore accords with Core Policy 57 point vii in respect of safeguarding residential amenity and Appendix D of the Wiltshire Design Guide.

Highways Impact

Core Policy 57 (xiv) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that development must meet the requirements of Core Policy 61. This policy requires proposals to be capable of being served by safe access to the highway network. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly Paragraph 115 and 116, requires that development proposals do not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety and that safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users.

The proposed development involves the replacement of existing boundary hedging with timber fencing along the site's northeastern and southern boundaries. The fencing would broadly follow the existing boundary line and would not alter the established access arrangements serving the dwelling. The highways engineer has been consulted on the application and has provided no objection. Therefore, with no objections raised the proposed development would not result in any adverse impact on highway safety, pedestrians or visibility for road users.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Core Policies 57 (xiv), 61 and 64 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the NPPF, and the Wiltshire Local Transport Plan.

Ecology

Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, including through ensuring that development avoids harm to protected species and habitats. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), in Paragraphs 193, requires that development minimises impacts on and provides net gains for biodiversity, including ensuring mitigation is secured where harm cannot be avoided.

The application site is recorded to be in a sensitive location in relation to bats. No preliminary ecological assessments have been submitted with the application. The site is located within the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation given the known presence of bats and core roosts in the area. These designations impact large parts of Box and its surrounding environs given the known populations of these protected species. To support decision making in this area the council has Planning Guidance for Wiltshire on the Bat Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). A summary of the process is provided at Section 7. As the site falls within a 'Core Area' it is necessary to assess whether the proposals could potentially impact upon a 'Sensitive Feature'. References to Sections 3.1 and 4.1 of the guidance is then required.

The proposal includes the removal of approximately 20m of an established boundary hedge which wraps around the dwelling, to be replaced with timber fencing. These works relate only to boundary treatments and do not involve the loss of mature trees, known roost features, or high-value foraging areas. The hedge in question does not form part of a mapped or likely commuting corridor, and the works would not introduce significant new artificial lighting or other sources of disturbance. On balance it is considered that the risk to bat species

associated with the SAC is negligible and other bat species such as Pipistrelles are low. As such, no further ecology survey is required and an informative is adequate in the circumstances.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Householder planning applications are exempt from the requirement to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain under Schedule 7A, Section 4(2)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as inserted by the Environment Act 2021.

CONCLUSION

The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in terms of its design, scale, and relationship with the surrounding area. It would not result in any unacceptable harm to the character of the locality, the amenities of neighbouring occupiers, or the interests of highway safety and ecology.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the relevant policies of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the Wiltshire Local Plan, and the National Planning Policy Framework. As such, the application is recommended for approval, subject to the conditions set out below.

RECOMMENDATION: That Planning Permission be GRANTED subject to conditions.

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

Existing Side Elevation
Proposed Side Elevation

Received: 20.11.2025

Existing Rear Elevation
Existing Front Elevation
Proposed Front Elevation
Proposed Rear Elevation

Received: 18.11.2025

Site Plan
Location Plan

Received: 30.10.2025

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 3 The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match in material, colour and texture those detailed on the application form and approved drawings.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.

INFORMATIVES

The applicant should note that under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and the Habitats Regulations (2010) it is an offence to disturb or harm any protected species, or to damage or disturb their habitat or resting place. Please note that this consent does not override the statutory protection afforded to any such species. In the event that your proposals could potentially affect a protected species you should seek the advice of a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist and consider the need for a licence from Natural England prior to commencing works. Please see Natural England's website for further information on protected species.

If at any time during the works there is any evidence of bats found (the active bat season being from May to September inclusive), the developer should stop work immediately and contact the National Bat Helpline on 0845 1300 228 for further information. Bats are protected species as set out in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 which came into effect on 1st April 2010. It is an offence to kill bats, disturb them or their roosts.