

The Town & Country Planning Act 1990

**A Design & Access Statement to accompany a planning application for the
provision of an extension to provide a staircase
at Harpers Cottage, High Street, Avebury**



February 2026

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Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is to accompany a planning application for the provision of a small first floor extension to provide space for a staircase between the ground and first floor of Harpers Cottage in Avebury. The works for the provision of the staircase are part of a wider re-organisation of the cottage, but is the only element that requires planning approval (the rest being internal works).
- 1.2 This Design and Access Statement describes the site, together with the proposal that is the subject of the planning application it accompanies. Following this description is an explanation of the reasons why the works are proposed in this form and the impact they have on the character and appearance of the house and immediate environment.



Picture 1: Harpers Cottage from the High Street

Contextual Appraisal

Harpers Cottage

- 2.1 Harpers Cottage sits at the western end of the High Street in Avebury. The cottage is orientated at right angles to the road, with its principal façade facing west. The original stone building on site has been extended to provide a first floor and later single and two storey additions have created the cottage currently on site.



Picture 2: Harpers Cottage from the High Street

- 2.2 Harpers Cottage is not listed, but does sit within the Avebury Conservation Area and the wider North Wessex Downs AONB, which sweeps over the village.

Planning History

- 2.3 A number of previous planning applications relating to extensions and tree works are recorded on the Council's website. None of these are directly relevant to the minor works proposed within this submission.



The Proposal

- 3.1 The proposal that is the subject of this application is for a small extension at the side of Harpers Cottage to allow for a staircase to be provided from ground to first floor. The provision of this staircase is part of a wider programme of internal changes to the cottage and is to allow a new access to one of the first floor bedrooms and the removal of the current stairs.
- 3.2 The extension to provide the staircase would have timber clad walls with a tiled roof to match the existing cottage roofing materials.

Planning Policy

Wiltshire Core Strategy

- 4.1 There are three policies relating to this form of development within the Wiltshire Core Strategy. Policy CP57 requires a high quality of design in all new developments, including extensions, alterations and changes of use to existing buildings.
- 4.2 Core Policy CP58 is relevant because of the site's location within the Avebury Conservation Area. The policy requires that development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment.
- 4.3 Policy CP59 relates to development within the Stonehenge, Avebury and associated sites World Heritage Site. This policy requires that development demonstrate that full account has been taken of the Outstanding Universal Value of the WHS. It's submitted that this policy was not written with small scale domestic extensions in mind, however it remains a relevant consideration.

Design and Access Statement

The Use of the Site

- 5.1 The site is in residential use and this would remain the case.

The Amount of Development

- 5.2 The amount of development proposed is the provision of an addition to the house to provide room for a staircase – as shown on the submitted drawings. Although the house has been



extended previously, this amount of new development would have negligible impact on the overall built form of the house.

The Layout of Development

- 5.3 The location of the proposed staircase extension is dictated by the layout of the inside of the cottage and provides a new access to the first floor.

The Scale of Development

- 5.4 The proposed development is small in scale and of a size appropriate to the host cottage. The new addition would assimilate with the existing built form of the house.

The Landscaping of the Development

- 5.5 Harpers Cottage has a mature garden around it and no additional landscaping is considered necessary in relation to this minor change to the house.

The Appearance of the Development

- 5.6 The proposed addition has been designed in a form to fit in with the existing vernacular of the house. The scale and form of the extension are appropriate, meaning that the change to the building would not look out of place. The materials would be a tiled roof to match the existing house with the walls being finished with horizontal timber boarding – thereby creating an interesting visual contrast with other materials within the cottage, but in a material appropriate to Avebury.
- 5.7 Harpers Cottage has a mix of different building forms that creates its character. This small addition would be in a discreet location where it would not be prominent within the streetscape and as such would fit in with what is a wide variety of house types and built forms that makes up the Conservation Area. This being the case, the development as proposed would not adversely affect the WHS and its attributes of outstanding universal value.

Access to the Development

- 6.1 Access to Harpers Cottage would be unchanged as a result of this development.



Conclusion

- 7.1 The conclusion to this Design and Access Statement is that this small scale extension would facilitate the proposed internal changes to Harpers Cottage in a way that would appear visually appropriate from Avebury High Street. Situated in a location set back from the road, the small addition is of a design and scale that would sit comfortably on the east facing wall of the cottage and thus fulfil the requirements of the policies referred to within this statement.