

Design and Access Statement

Proposal: Construction of replacement outbuilding to create additional guest accommodation and restaurant dining area.

Site Address: *Carpenters Arms, Church Street, Lacock, SN15 2LB*

Written by: *LSB*

Checked by: *AW*

Revision: *A*

DATE: 24th February 2026

1.0 Introduction:



Front elevation of The Carpenters Arms

This application seeks the demolition of an existing outbuilding at the rear of the public house 'The Carpenters Arms' and the erection of a replacement building, to provide a restaurant on the ground floor and 2no additional guest bedrooms on the first floor. This will bring the total number of guest bedrooms within the public house to 8 in total.

This is a revised application further to the withdrawal of planning and listed applications that sought the replacement of the outbuilding at the rear of the pub with additional guest accommodation and restaurant dining area in 2025 (Ref 2025/07651/LBC and 2025/07409). These applications were withdrawn by the applicant due to the concerns of the Conservation Officer to the size, scale and design of the proposal.

This Design and Access Statement sets out the various design options that have been considered by the applicant further to the withdrawal of the last scheme and provides justification for the approach taken.

2.0 Site Location:

The Carpenters Arms is a Grade II listed building located within the designated Lacock Conservation Area.

The village of Lacock is a National Trust village which attracts thousands of visitors each year. The National Trust owns the majority of the properties within the village.

The Carpenters Arms occupies the corner plot at the junction of Church Street and East Street. The principal elevation fronts Church Street onto the former Market Square. The rear of the building extends along East Street, where there is a small entrance gate to the courtyard.



Extract of Location Plan highlighting The Carpenters Arms in red

3.0 Relevant Planning History/Pre-Application Advice:

2023/02787 & PL/2023/02322: Refurbishment of Public House and Associated Works.

Whilst the demolition of the outbuilding and the erection of a replacement 2-storey extension was included in the original planning and listed building submissions, this element of the proposal was withdrawn from the applications further to concerns raised by the Conservation Officer. The approval notices therefore did not include the proposed replacement building at the rear of the pub. The outbuilding was excluded under the advice of the Officers dealing with the application.

ENQ/2024/00409: Pre-Application enquiry for the Demolition of the Outbuilding to the rear of building and the erection of an extension to the rear of the public house to create restaurant space and guest accommodation.

The pre-application enquiry proposed a replacement of the existing timber-clad two-storey outbuilding and single-storey store structure with a stone extension. The written response of the Conservation Officer to the pre-application request, dated 12th August 2024, raised no objection in principle to the proposal. The response stating,

*'Given the works are relatively minor in their size/scale and retain the existing public house use class, **the works are deemed acceptable in principle** and would not likely give rise to any detrimental impacts upon the vitality of the village nor result in unacceptable traffic congestions above and beyond the existing situation.*

With regard to the appropriateness of the character of the works, it is not considered that as proposed, the resultant design is so out of keeping with that of the wider village context to warrant an in-principle reason for refusal.'

Pursuant to the Conservation Officer raising no objection in principle to a proposed extension the applicant proceeded to re-submit a revised scheme as outlined below:

2025/07651/LBC: Construction of replacement outbuilding to create additional guest accommodation and restaurant dining area. Withdrawn.

PL/2025/07651: Construction of replacement outbuilding to create additional guest accommodation and restaurant dining area. Withdrawn.

The 2025 applications were withdrawn given concerns that were raised by the Conservation Officer that the scale, massing, design and materials of the proposed extension would create a substantial change in the streetscape, that would have significant harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The Conservation Officer raised concern that no substantive case had been made for the demolition of the outbuilding and that the proposed replacement building would be harmful to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. This was due to the 'raised height and raised eaves in relation to the listed neighbour 'No 15 East Street' and its overall massing, design and materials.

It was acknowledged that the proposal would extend the amount of restaurant accommodation on the ground floor and provide 2no additional bedrooms on the first floor. However, the Conservation Officer considered that there were no public or conservation benefits to the long-term use of the public house that overcame the perceived harm to the listed building from the proposal. The Conservation Officer stating the following,

‘There appears there is no public benefit from demolition and rebuilding this outbuilding. Especially as the existing building is quite capable of being retained and converted into very similar uses. This may require raising of the existing truss roof to create the headroom for the two bedrooms to the first floor but this would be much less harmful than demolition.’

The Conservation Officer suggested exploring options to utilise the existing outbuilding rather than demolishing it and erecting a replacement structure. His comments stating that,

‘Careful design could incorporate a staircase possibly across the middle serving bedrooms either side accessed from the existing courtyard. This would extend across the plan of the restaurant and reduce floorspace slightly but could provide additional options and benefits as front street facing room that could offer alternative commercial opportunities or private dining.’

During the site visit on 4th November 2025, the Planning Officer and Conservation Officer agreed that any forthcoming scheme relating to the outbuilding would be considered as part of a wider restoration and regeneration scheme relating to the entire Carpenters Arms. This is owing to the fact that the building undoubtedly contributes to the whole site and that the removal of this element from the original application had been made in good faith in alignment with Officer recommendations.

Since withdrawing the planning and listed building applications for the rear extension in 2025, we have revisited the options to convert the existing outbuilding rather than proceeding with a scheme to erect a replacement building. This report sets out all the design options that have been considered and explains why these other options are not deemed feasible.

4.0 Background to the Application/Heritage Public Houses and the Economy:

The application seeks planning and listed building consent to replace the existing 2-storey outbuilding at the rear of the public house with a high-quality alternative. The erection of the proposed replacement building will regenerate and reinvigorate the Carpenters Arms to ensure the longevity of the public house and enrich its provision for the local area.

The applicant has taken on the site during a national decline in the sector, which has been recognised industry wide for some time and was unfortunately accelerated by the Covid 19 crisis. The Office for National Statistics data shows the number of pubs declined by around 13,000 between 2019 & 2020. The British Beer and Pub Association shows a steady decline in the number of public houses from around 61,000 in 2000 to 45,000 in 2023. CAMRA suggest figures to be as high as over 20 British pubs a week closing permanently. In Wiltshire specifically, there has been a loss of 135 pubs between 2001 and 2019.

The recognition of the decline of traditional public houses has seen a variety of movements and calls for action on a national scale. Historic England have recognised the increasingly vulnerable position pubs within British culture and have completed research in alignment with this. Historic England continue to commission research and interest projects within this sector. Some of the most recent works included the publication of the “12 pubs of Christmas” Blog in December 2025. This highlighted that 3.2% of the listed buildings in England are pubs and inns, demonstrating the importance of these assets on a national scale.

The Heritage Public Houses Bill was devised to protect heritage pubs (both designated and non-designated) from total loss owing to their importance as community assets. The Bill looks to improve legislation and seeks additional support for owners of local pubs from Local Planning Authorities. This is currently awaiting its Second Reading in the House of Commons, scheduled for 27th February 2026.

The establishment of the likes of “*Pub is the Hub*” demonstrates the importance of rural public houses in supporting the local economy which is largely achieved by business diversification to provide additional services.

The National Innovation Centre Rural Enterprise has released their Annual State of the Art Review: Rural Poverty. The main contributors to rural poverty were highlighted to include “*low pay, precarious work*” and “*unaffordable housing, higher cost of living, declining services, digital exclusion*”. This publication explains how those in rural areas are also facing a cost-of living crisis and that spending habits have been adapted in relation to this. This is seen directly in the rural pub industry with regular drinking habits declining. Unusually there is a good daytime and evening market in Lacock due to tourists, however this is seasonal and having overnight guests would allow the business to be more profitable and thrive.

Public houses are social hubs, particularly for those in rural communities. This is because they enable social engagement which reduces loneliness, stress and anxiety whilst also boosting individuals’ self-esteem by promoting a sense of inclusion in the wider community. Breaking Bread: the Function of Social Eating by The University of Oxford professor Dunbar, revealed how people that eat socially are more likely to feel better about themselves and will likely have a stronger network of those providing social and emotional care.

The Applicant is passionate about the survival of this community hub. They are keen to ensure the listed building remains accessible to the public and are looking for business expansion and diversification to enable this.

The Applicant is working hard to ensure that there is sufficient scope within the site to continue adapting to the ebbs and flows in the rural pub industry whilst balancing this with seasonal tourist demand. This will allow the business model to adapt as required and ultimately survive in the long run. The Applicant is willing and excited to continue to invest in the property to ensure it is in the best position to thrive through expanding sensitively to be able to provide an enhanced restaurant space and public bar supported by additional guest bedrooms.

The proposal has carefully considered the existing condition, materials, scale and form of the buildings within the site and proposes the sensitive replacement of the structure at the rear of the pub to secure the long-term viability of the building.

5.0 Proposal for Outbuilding:

The proposal seeks to replace the existing timber-clad, two-storey outbuilding with a traditional stone extension. This material has been chosen to ensure that the new development complements the existing street scene by continuation of the dominant material.

Photographs of the existing timber structure are shown below. A discussion on the condition of the existing outbuilding is included in the Structural Condition section of this report.



Existing timber structure proposed to be replaced

The applicant has carefully considered the existing condition, materials, scale and form of the complex of buildings within the site and is proposing the sensitive replacement of the existing low quality structures to the rear of the public house.

The redevelopment works present an opportunity to uplift the architectural quality of the rear of the public house, benefitting the Grade II listed building and the wider Conservation Area.

The redevelopment proposal incorporates design features, scale and massing inspired by the local context to create a modest and appropriate replacement building.

Through studying buildings elsewhere in the village, we have gained a comprehensive understanding of the architectural form and fabric which defines the character of Lacock. We feel the scheme takes strong influence from this sense of place.

The proposal will retain the central courtyard in the middle of the site, as this is recognised as an important feature within the densely built-up village and ties with its historical layout. The courtyard will be accessed via an archway, this being a familiar feature within Lacock village as illustrated below.



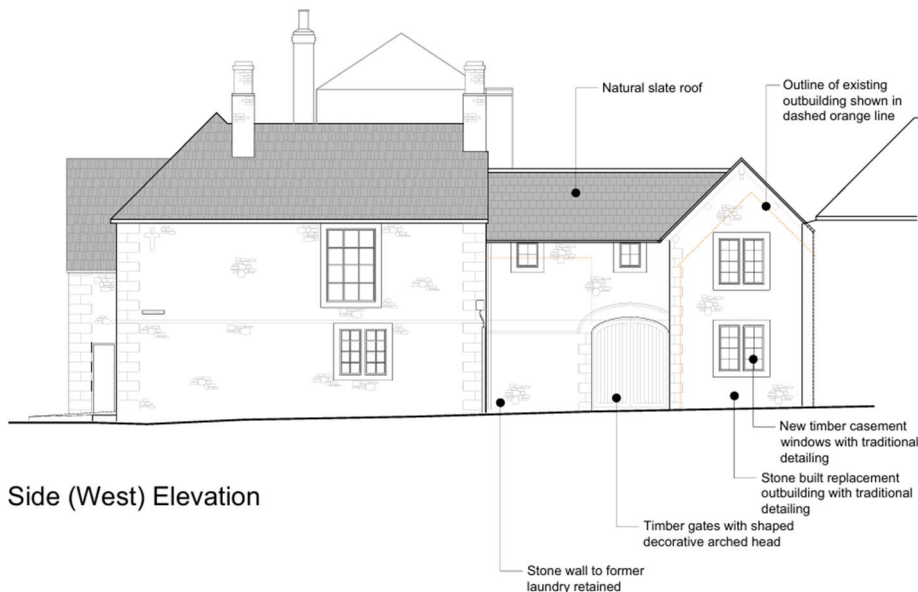
Existing arched entrances elsewhere in Lacock

The proposed replacement building will retain a gable fronting on to East Street, to maintain architectural diversity and differentiation from the surrounding properties and reflect the form of the existing outbuilding. Existing and proposed elevations are shown overleaf.



Side (West) Elevation

As Existing Side (West) Elevation facing East Street



Side (West) Elevation

As Proposed Side (West) Elevation facing East Street

The proposed front gable on to East Street measures 3.8 metres wide, with an overall ridge height of 6.6 metres. An outline of the existing outbuilding is shown on the Proposed Elevations (Drawing Number 2397-052-B) to allow ease of comparison in the scale and massing of the proposal in relation to the existing building. The proposal will only be approximately 0.6m wider than the existing building and approximately 1m taller. It will have a steep roof pitch akin to the existing outbuilding and the local vernacular. This will be finished in natural blue slate laid in diminishing courses to match other subservient buildings within the complex.



Examples stone gable features elsewhere in Lacock

A 2-storey link extension is proposed between the new gable extension and the rear (south) elevation of the public house. This will incorporate an arched gateway on to East Street and, in part, will replace an existing single-storey, storeroom building on the rear elevation. It is felt that the provision of second floor access by this means would be less impactful than erecting a free-standing stair within the courtyard of the building as there is insufficient space and height available within the existing outbuilding without the inclusion of a considerable dormer or raising the roof.

Whereas, the previously withdrawn application showed the extension to be timber framed detailing on the external walling, this application proposes the extension be finished in natural stone walling. This addresses the Conservation Officer concerns raised during the course of the last application that the introduction of a heavy timber frame would be harmful to the character of the listed building. The chosen design put forward in this application is illustrated in context by the photomontages below.



Photomontage views of the proposed design in context by Arc Media

5.1 Proposed Change to Forecourt

The proposal is to replace the existing uneven curved fronted apron in front of the main entrance door with a new flagged stone forecourt. The proposal is for a natural stone to co-ordinate with the existing flagged strip that runs along the front elevation.



Photos of the existing flag stone strip and curved apron to main entrance

The proposal allows the main entrance to gain a level threshold and a gentle ramped approach at 1:20 gradient, both of which will improve accessibility. The replacement of the tarmac will also improve the appearance of the street scene and will bring benefit to the wider conservation area through installation of a more sympathetic material.

The extent of the new stone flags is defined by the existing line of pin kerbs set into the tarmac surface.

6.0 Design Approach/Other Design Options Considered:

The initial design submitted in 2023 (Ref 2023/02787 & PL/2023/02322) was for a replacement structure in stone, with a slate roof, and stone arch giving access to the courtyard (see first proposed elevation below). Due to concerns raised during the course of the planning permission and listed building consent applications, the replacement outbuilding was omitted from the scope of the application.

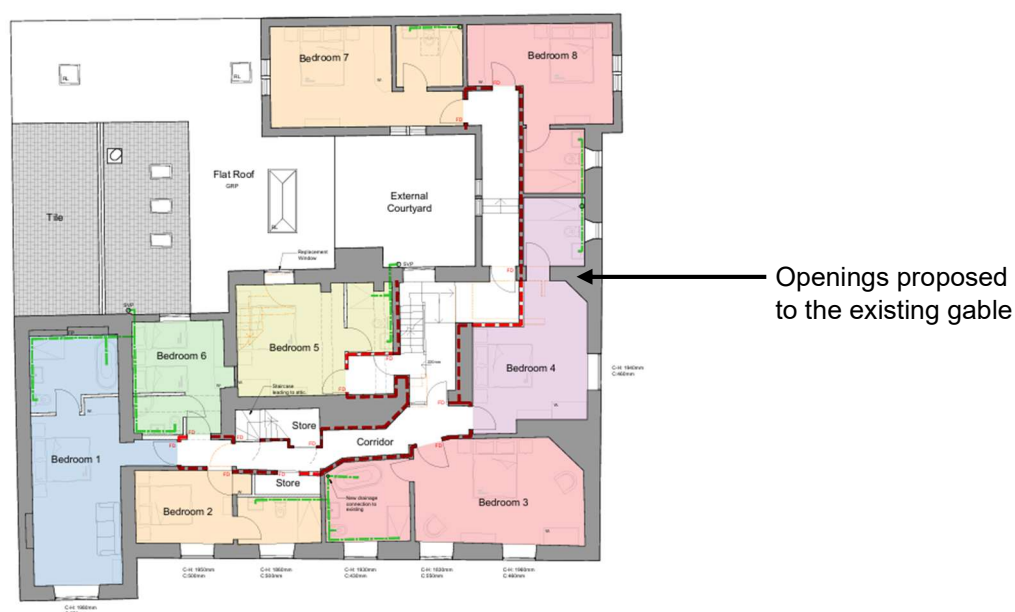


Side (West) Elevation

Proposed side (west) elevation that was withdrawn from applications Ref 2023/02787 & PL/2023/02322)

Comments received during the course of the 2023 application suggested that the replacement structure was too tall relative to the pub building, losing the sense of subservience of the outbuilding to the main building.

Internally, the layout required two openings to be formed in the rear gable wall of the pub at first floor level, to connect the corridor in the new structure to the existing staircase. This is illustrated on the plan below.



First Floor Plan

The feedback from this initial 2023 proposal was that there would be significant disruption to the historic fabric to form the openings.

In considering the feedback above, we then developed a design that was smaller in scale/massing, with lower eaves and ridge heights, and used different materials to differentiate the outbuilding from the main building. The access for the proposal was via an additional staircase to serve the outbuilding only, avoiding the need for the openings in the gable of the host building.

Following the omission of the outbuilding from the 2023 application, we submitted a Pre-Application advice request and gained further feedback on two proposed designs. The options submitted are illustrated below, both using materials taken from the palette of materials found within Lacock Conservation Area.



West Elevation - Option 1 Half Timber

An option for an oak framed half-timbered building (above) and a stone-built structure (see below) were proposed.

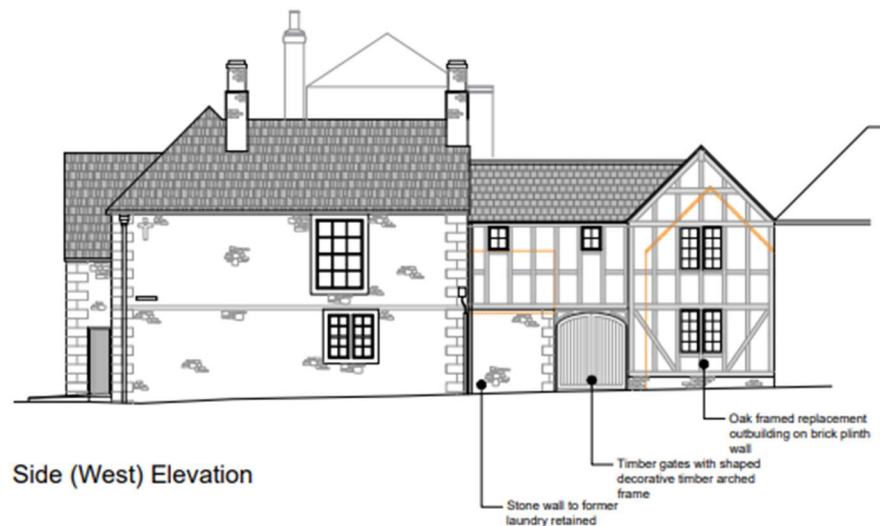


West Elevation - Option 2 Rubble Stone

Feedback from the pre-application process was positive with both design options deemed acceptable in size, scale and massing. The set down eaves and ridge heights were welcomed and were therefore retained in the submission of subsequent applications Ref 2025/07651 and 2025/07409.

The withdrawn applications took in to account the Conservation Officer feedback received in the pre-application advice to differentiate the extension from the main building through contrasting material, lower eaves and ridge heights and smaller windows to maintain subservience to the main part of the building.

The withdrawn planning and listed building applications showed an oak framed extension to replace the existing outbuilding. This incorporated a 2-storey gable facing on to East Street and retained the central courtyard in the middle of the site, as these elements are recognised as an important feature in the historical layout of the village. Below shows the proposed west elevation (Ref 2025/07651 and 2025/07409).



West Elevation Previously Proposed by Withdrawn Applications Ref 2025/07651/LBC and 2025/07409.



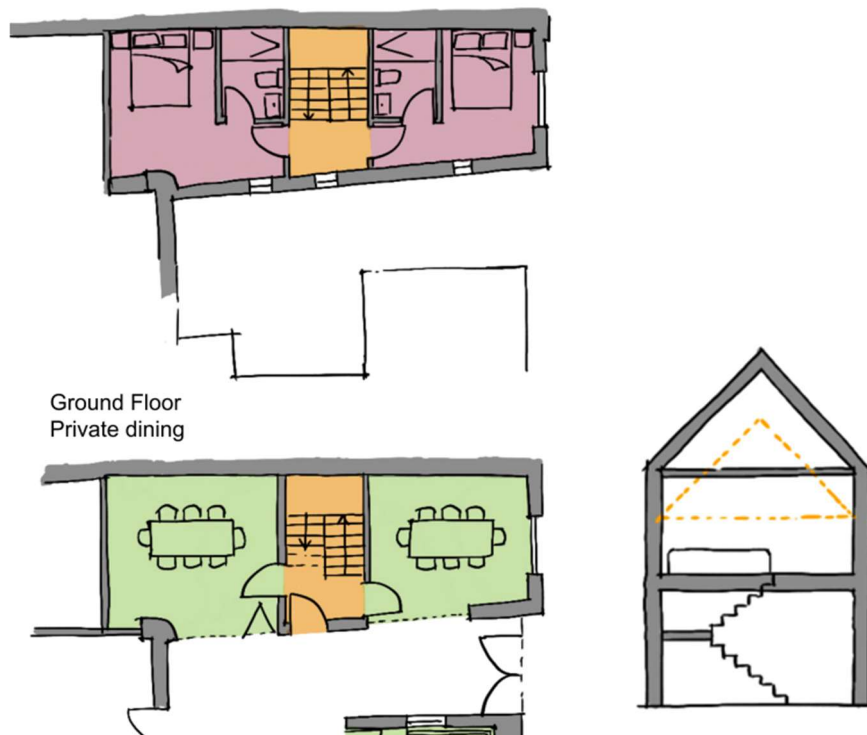
Proposed West Elevation photomontage

Taking into account the comments of the Conservation Officer to the last (2025) application, we have now incorporated the early design studies undertaken at initial concept stages for the

full site. These have been further considered following the Conservation Officer expressing that there would be scope to extend the existing building upwards to accommodate the accommodation.

These schemes are outlined in turn below.

Option 1



Option 1: Shows the provision of an internal staircase within the existing structure, plan and cross section

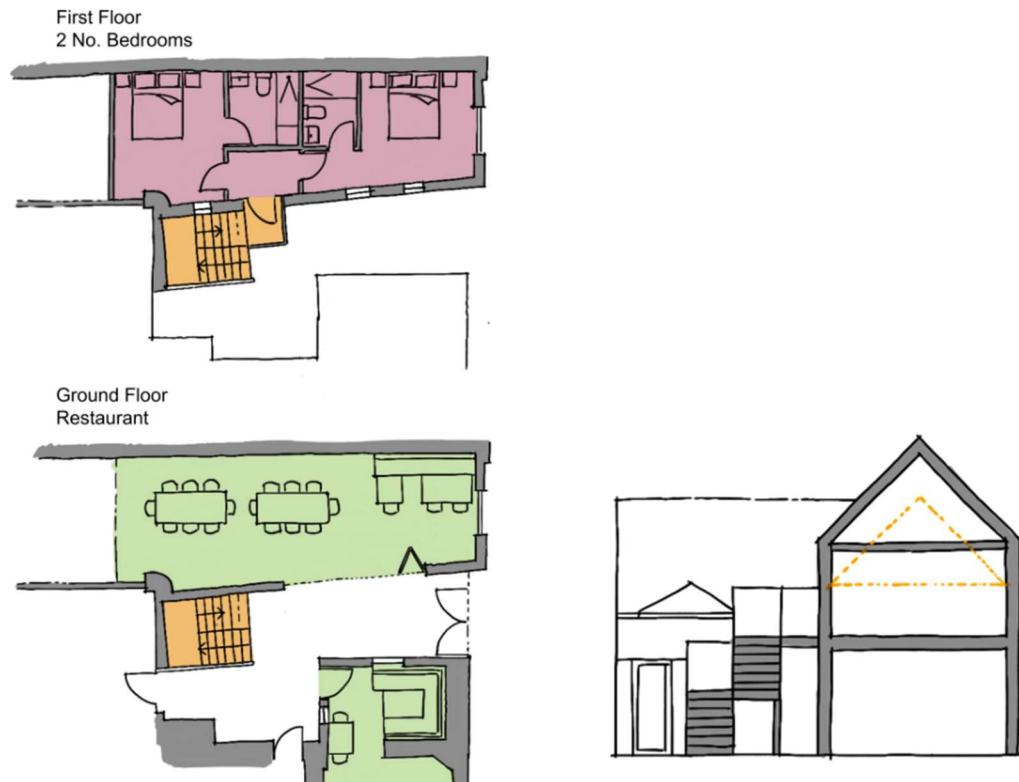
To achieve this layout and the provision of a staircase within the centre of the building plan, it would be necessary to raise the height of the existing roof by 1.3 metres. This would be considerably taller than the ridge height of the currently proposed gable extension, see cross-section above. The existing height is indicated with an orange dashed line.

On balance, it is considered Option 1 does not create a space fully fit for purpose. Installing a central staircase not only creates poor circulation space within the Bedrooms, with limited space to walk around the bed, but it also creates separated dining spaces on the proposed ground floor. The formation of two separate dining rooms, divided by the central stairwell, would mean the dining space would have to be accessed externally from the courtyard, making it difficult to service. The required fire separation between the dining area and the bedrooms would also need to be overcome.

Whilst the retention of the building would see the retention of some historic fabric, the increase in ridge height would see the loss of subservience in scale between this building and the listed building. This had been raised as a concern for a replacement building by the Conservation Officer previously.

Option 2

Progressing from Option 1, we continued to develop the scheme to take into account the Conservation Officer's comments. Sketches of the floor plans for Option 2 are shown below.



Option 2: Showing provision of external staircase, plan and cross section

Option 2 shows a restaurant occupying the whole of the ground floor of the existing building and two bedrooms on the first floor accessed via a new external staircase within the existing courtyard.

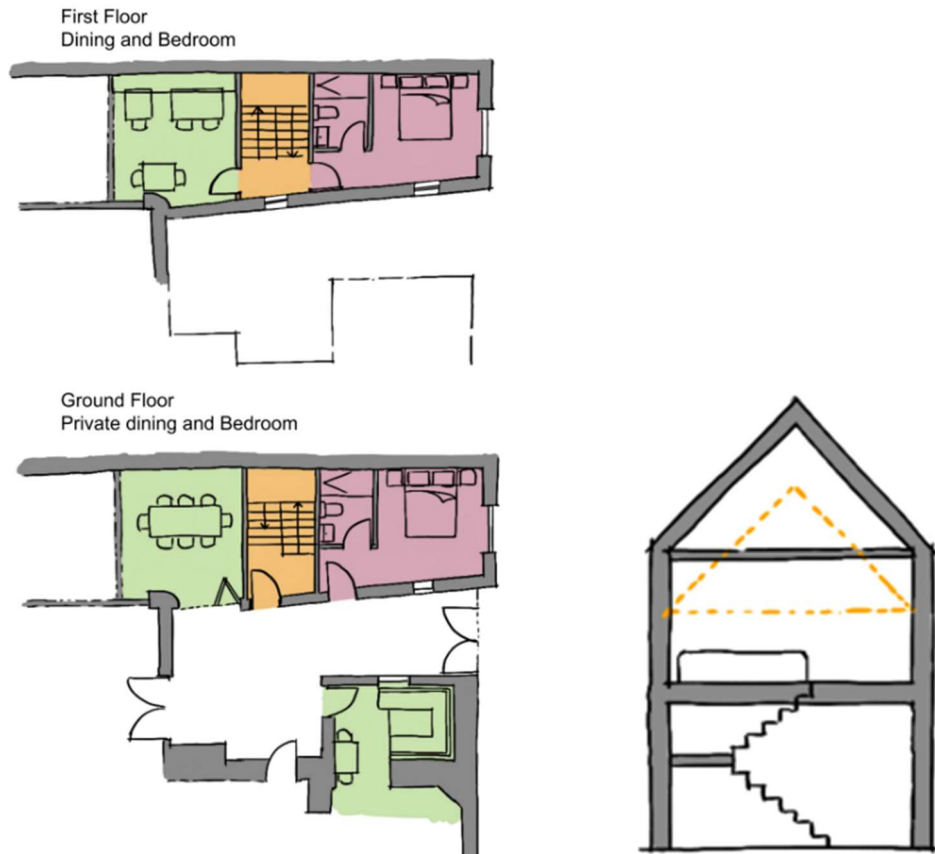
Again, to achieve this it would be necessary to raise the height of the existing truss and roofline by 1.3m, which would be taller than the current proposal (see proposed cross section above). The bedroom sizes are adequate if the truss is raised to provide headroom.

This being said, Option 2 is not deemed a suitable option to pursue further, as it is considered that the installation of an external staircase of the necessary size and scale would compromise the existing courtyard and be harmful to the character of listed building and wider Conservation Area. The staircase would also obstruct light, access and the view out from the internal dining area to the left of the stair on the plan above.

Once again, this option would see the retention of some historic fabric, but the increase in ridge height would see the loss of subservience in scale between this building and the listed building.

Option 3

Option 3 creates space for a dining room and en-suite guest bedroom on both the ground and first floor.



Option 3: Provision of dining space on both ground and first floor, plan and cross section

To achieve this a staircase is shown within the existing structure, dividing the dining and sleeping accommodation.

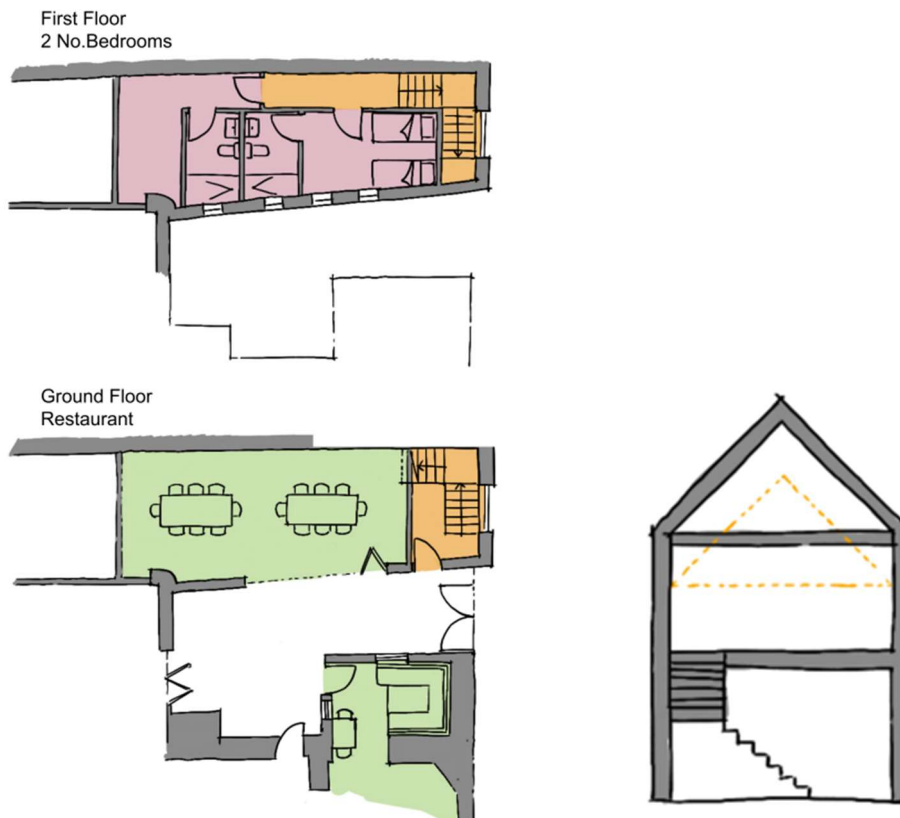
As per Options 1 and 2, it would be necessary to raise the existing roof by 1.3m which would again be taller than the current proposal (see cross section above).

The bedrooms are both adequate size, however the remaining area on the first floor would not be a practical proposition for a dining area, being remote and difficult to access from the kitchen servery. It would also likely create excessive disturbances for occupants of the first floor bedroom which would ultimately render one of these items unusable.

Once again, this option would see the retention of some historic fabric, but the increase in ridge height would see the loss of subservience in scale between this building and the listed building.

Option 4

Option 4 includes a dining space on the ground floor and one guest bedroom on the first floor together with separate w/c.



Option 4: Stairwell at western end of building, plan and cross section

The upstairs accommodation is shown to be accessed via an internal staircase at one end of the existing structure.

Having the staircase in this position is not deemed feasible, as it is too tight and creates a pinch point at ground floor level. It also creates a corridor across the majority of the width of the first floor, which wastes a lot of usable space within the building. The building would need to be wider to comfortably make this option workable, which would compromise the courtyard area.

It also has the consequence that there is only space to provide one upstairs bedroom, reducing the viability of the project. The second bedroom would not be large enough for a double bed.

Similarly, the existing roof would have to be raised by 1.3m which would again be taller than the current proposal. Once again, this option would see the retention of some historic fabric, but the increase in ridge height would see the loss of subservience in scale between this building and the listed building.

7.0 Planning Policy:

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

Section 6: Building a strong, competitive economy

In alignment with this section of the NPPF, the scheme looks to invigorate a demised public house within the village of Lacock to help further improve the tourist and local offer. The delivery of this scheme will help create jobs in a rural area.

Section 12: Achieving well-designed places

The Government sets out that new development must be high quality, beautiful and sustainable. As such, the design has been carefully considered to respect the surrounding built form to ensure that the new site layout blends seamlessly with the surrounding properties and highway. Consideration for the potential to reduce carbon consumption in the proposed works is also considered within the scheme.

Section 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

The section of the NPPF sets out Government expectations for development affecting the historic environment. It explains that development proposals must consider the special character of our built heritage and where possible this should be preserved and enhanced. The scheme has considered the special character of the building and seeks to provide improvements to ensure its longevity.

Paragraph 208 of the Framework states that LPAs should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset and take this into account when considering the impact of the proposal, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset and any aspect of the proposal. Where there is any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset from its alteration, paragraph 213 of the Framework requires this to require clear and convincing justification.

The Framework allows there to be a degree of harm to a heritage asset where this harm is outweighed against the public benefits of the proposal, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use and where there is a convincing justification for the scheme (paragraph 215).

The proposed scheme is considered to reflect the design, scale and materials of existing buildings in the locality and within the wider village. It is considered the proposal will preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area for the reasons set out within this report.

Local Planning Policy

The relevant development plan relating to the application site is the Wiltshire Core Strategy (adopted in 2015).

The Wiltshire Core Strategy replaced the saved policies from the North Wiltshire Local Plan.

A review of the Local Plan is underway and Wiltshire Council submitted the Wiltshire Local Plan for examination in November 2024. The first stage of hearings on the Local Plan Review were held in June 2025 and the second stage hearings commenced in November 2025.

Inspector's Stage 2 post hearing letters have been issued, the latest being dated 31st December 2025 and Wiltshire Council have until 30th January 2026 to respond.

The Local Plan review is therefore at its advanced stages in its examination but is not yet formally adopted.

The policies within the emerging local plan can therefore be given significant weight but the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy still carries full statutory weight.

Within the Core Strategy, Lacock is defined as a small village within the Corsham area. The Corsham area is categorised by its rural setting, high quality landscape and historic built environment.

Adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015)

Strategic objective 1: delivering a thriving economy

This strategic objective highlights the Council's desire to "*deliver resilient rural communities*". As the scheme looks to help regenerate a listed building and its associated business within the small village of Lacock, it is apparent that the works will align with this objective.

This objective explains that "*targeting growth in the tourism sector*" is a priority for achieving this. Lacock is a considerable tourist attraction in the Wiltshire area. The delivery of this scheme will provide additional guest accommodation in the village whilst regenerating the facilities of the pub and restaurant for tourists and locals. This will encourage an increase in local spending and create additional job opportunities for local residents.

Core Policy 39 – Tourist development

This policy seeks to ensure that tourist development in small villages is located within existing buildings. The proposal will see the addition of two new bedrooms within the proposed extension. This will help retain visitors in the village and further boost the local economy.

Core Policy 40: Hotels, bed and breakfasts, guest houses and conference facilities

This policy sets out that development of existing hotels, bed and breakfasts, guest houses and conference facilities must be of an appropriate scale and character to the immediate surroundings and wider settlement. The proposal has carefully considered the existing offers available within the village and has identified the need for a small number of additional guest rooms. It has also identified the need for the regeneration of the listed building within this prestigious location.

Strategic Objective 2: to address climate change

This objective looks to ensure that new buildings minimise their impact on resources and that upgrades to existing buildings look to make carbon savings where possible. During the upgrade works to the property, services and systems will be carefully examined to ensure that these reduce the property's carbon consumption where possible. The design of the replacement extension will also see the use of maximum levels of natural light.

Core Policy 41: Sustainable construction and low-carbon energy

The proposal seeks to maximise natural light levels within the property. The replacement outbuilding will be constructed to achieve a high thermal efficiency.

Where feasible, measures to improve the thermal efficiency of the existing building will be implemented, including the addition of insulation, provided these changes do not impact the listed building's special character.

Strategic objective 5: protecting and enhancing the natural, historic and built environment

This objective looks to protect international, national and local wildlife sites.

Core Policy 5: Ensuring high-quality design and place shaping

This policy sets out the Council's expectation for ensuring that development makes a positive contribution to the local area. The proposal has carefully considered the built form of the existing building and wider village to ensure that its mass, scale, proportion, detailed design, materiality, orientation and layout enhance local distinctiveness. The replacement extension reinforces the sense of place through the inclusion of a gable front, gated passageway and the use of traditional stone materials.

Core Policy 58: Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment

In alignment with the policy, the scheme will see the regeneration of a redundant listed building within the Lacock Conservation Area. The building will be restored, and traditional materials will be reinstated to the interiors and exteriors. This ensures the longevity of the designated heritage asset for future generations.

Strategic objective 6: to ensure that essential infrastructure is in place to support our communities

This objective looks to ensure that development considers and does not put strain on existing transport networks.

Core Policy 62: Development impacts on the transport network

This policy highlights the need to address construction and operational traffic when planning development proposals. It is identified that the road network within Lacock village is somewhat constrained due to the medieval plan form of the streets, which are densely developed. As such, a construction method statement will be provided to detail how demolition and construction works will be managed within the site to ensure that disruption in the local area is minimised.

Emerging Local Plan

As indicated above, some weight can be given to the emerging policies of the Local Plan.

The following policies of the emerging Wiltshire Local Plan are considered relevant to this application.

Draft Policy 69 – Tourism and related development

This supports tourism development where it will result in economic, social and environmental benefits and, where practical, will be located in existing or replacement buildings.

It therefore does not preclude the replacement of existing buildings for tourist accommodation, such as being put forward in this application.

Policy 69 outlines a number of criteria which proposals must comply with, one being that they must not have a detrimental impact on heritage assets.

The proposal is considered to preserve the character of the Conservation Area and heritage significance of the Listed Building for the reasons set out in the submitted Heritage Statement.

Draft Policy 98 – Ensuring high quality design and place shaping

This requires a high standard of design to all development proposals and states that development should enhance local distinctiveness, respecting the pattern of development and appearance of the local area.

The proposal respects the form of the existing outbuilding that it will replace, incorporating a gable of traditional roof pitch on the East Street elevation. Its design takes cues from the local vernacular, with the incorporation of a gated archway on to the road, akin to other historic openings within the village of Lacock.

The materials of the proposed extension have been amended since the previous submission, showing the use of natural stone in lieu of timber framing, addressing the concerns of the Conservation Officer with regards the proposed materiality of the scheme.

8.0 Structural Issues/Condition of Existing Outbuilding

Two structural surveys accompany the application, undertaken by C.J Baumber on 5th August 2025 and by Graham Schofield Associates (GSA), dated February 2024.

The structural surveys found that the existing timber outbuilding is showing considerable rotting to both the cladding and structure. There is currently minimal or no air gap to the adjoining building and the C.J. Baumber survey indicates the outbuilding may be relying on the neighbouring structure for lateral support against collapse.

The C J Baumber report concludes that the methods of construction and possible apparent use of recycled materials in a somewhat 'haphazard' structural way, concur with a building that was created for the storage of an automobile and therefore required little robust construction.

It concludes that 'what is below the footings of some of the walls may identify or refer to a previous structure but this clearly would no longer offer any historic value or significance to justify keeping the current structure.'

The GSA survey concurs with the findings of the C.J Baumber report indicating that the existing outbuilding (referred to as Area 'F' within the report) is of basic agricultural building standard and is therefore structurally inadequate for habitable use. It indicates that its outer skin of weather boarding together with the timber support posts are in particular poor condition. It identifies the plinth is in particularly poor condition and that there is evidence of wet rot. See Photographs F10 and F11 from the submitted GSA report below.



Photograph showing poor condition of masonry plinth to existing outbuilding (taken from GSA report)



Photograph showing poor condition of masonry within existing outbuilding (taken from GSA report)

The GSA report concludes (see page 16 of GSA report) that, in light of its current very poor condition, there is a strong argument for the demolition and replacement of the outbuilding.

It is apparent from the Conservation Officer's comments to the withdrawn applications (Ref 2023/02787 & PL/2023/02322) that their preference is to convert the existing outbuilding rather than to demolish it and erect a replacement building. The Conservation Officer stating that, '*The existing building is quite capable of being retained and converted into very similar uses.*'

However, as evidenced above, two separately commissioned Structural Surveys have both concluded that the existing building is of poor construction and in very poor structural condition. It is therefore not deemed feasible to utilise the fabric of the existing outbuilding to house the proposed accommodation.

9.0 Heritage Matters:

The development relates to a Grade II listed building within the Lacock Conservation Area. Subsequently the application is supported by a Heritage Statement which deals with the Statutory and Policy Requirements set out in legislation and by Government.

Whilst the application site is within a designated Conservation Area, there is currently no Conservation Area Appraisal for the village of Lacock. The Lacock Conservation Management Plan, completed by the National Trust in 2012, which considers both Lacock Abbey and the village.

The content of national planning policy makes it clear that if there is deemed to be a degree of harm to a heritage asset, the harm can be acceptable where it is outweighed against securing its optimum viable use (paragraph 215) and where a convincing justification for the scheme is put forward. In this instance, the increase in 2no bedrooms within the public house will significantly improve the viability of the public house.

It is also seen that the scheme represents part of a wider regeneration project at The Carpenters Arms. This is seeing the restoration of the building through the removal of unsympathetic materials and alterations and the reinstatement of traditional materials throughout. The project is enabling the retention of this heritage pub in a prestigious village which is creating public benefit.

10.0 Sustainability:

The scheme seeks to regenerate the main building and the majority of extensions/additions to retain the maximum amount of embodied carbon. Demolition of the altered low-quality former store and garage to the rear is proposed as this building cannot be suitably upgraded to meet modern building regulation standards.

In order to help reduce the impact of this proposed development, opportunities to improve the energy efficiency and reduce carbon consumption within the replacement building have been considered.

11.0 Ecology and the Environment:

The site is a small village within the rural countryside. As such, the proposal is supported by a Bat Survey to understand the use of the building as a roost.

This survey has confirmed that no bats are present within the building. It should be noted that the building has been part of a construction site since the bat survey was undertaken.

12.0 Accessibility:

The replacement of the outbuilding presents an opportunity to improve the accessibility of the ground floor of the building. At present there is a step up from the central part of the bar/restaurant area to the function room in the current outbuilding. There is also a step up from the courtyard into the outbuilding. By re-building we can construct the ground floor level with the adjacent surfaces to allow step free access across the ground floor and from the courtyard into the restaurant area in the outbuilding. The proposed change to the forecourt surface also creates an opportunity to be able to improve accessibility by creating a level threshold at the main entrance and removing a kerb.



Kerb and uneven paving to main entrance



Stepped threshold to existing outbuilding

13.0 Conclusion:

The proposal will replace an outbuilding of poor structural quality with a permanent building that has been sympathetically designed to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and Listed Building.

Structural evidence accompanies the application to demonstrate that the existing outbuilding is of poor quality and is not capable of re-use.

It is argued that even if the existing outbuilding was deemed capable of reuse it could not accommodate the level of accommodation required to allow a reasonable timeframe of returns without significant changes to the building. A number of options have been explored to convert the outbuilding, as outlined in Section 6 of this report, however all of the options illustrated show that it would be necessary to raise the height of the outbuilding by approximately 1.3m to achieve first floor accommodation. This would result in any conversion being considerably taller than the ridge height of the currently proposed gable extension.

The proposal is a long-term investment for the applicant, and the proposed extension has to be of the size and scale proposed to incorporate the level of accommodation required to allow a reasonable return on investment.

Whilst the Conservation Officer may prefer to see an extension smaller in scale and mass, on planning balance it is considered that any harm that they perceive may arise from the size of the proposal would be outweighed by the public benefit of securing the long-term community use of the building for current future generations to enjoy.

It is important to stress that the Conservation Officer themselves has previously stated in writing that the proposed works are 'relatively minor in their size/scale' and that 'with regard to the appropriateness of the character of the works that it is not considered that as proposed the resultant design is so out of keeping with that of the wider village context to warrant an in-principle reason for refusal.'

The principle of development is therefore not in question and the planning balance in this case is in favour of the proposal, with the benefits of the proposal in terms of securing a long-term, economically viable use of the community building clearly outweighing the loss of an outbuilding which has been proven to be of questionable heritage value and in extremely poor structural condition.

The scheme aligns with both National and Local Planning Policy and it is hoped that the Local Planning Authority are able to support this application.