

Church Corner Design & Access Statement

A sustainable home
in Whaddon, Wiltshire, BA14 6NR

February 2026

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by Richmond Bell Architects on behalf of the applicants: Ms Sally Evans and Ms Debra Alford.
- 1.2. This document should be read in conjunction with Vision Planning Technical Details Consent (TDC) Planning Statement. For a full description and introduction of the project, please refer to their document first.
- 1.3. A Permission in Principle (PIP) for a new dwelling was approved on 21st May 2025. This Technical Details Consent therefore follows this approval.
- 1.4. Technical Details Consent is being sought for the "Erection of a new self build dwelling, associated works and landscaping".
- 1.5. This document will focus on the design and access rationale for the proposed development and therefore references to planning policy will be limited as this will be detailed in the supporting Planning Statement.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1. The site is located on an unclassified road, in the village of Whaddon, accessed from an existing gated entrance to the north. The site is bound by residential and agricultural use.

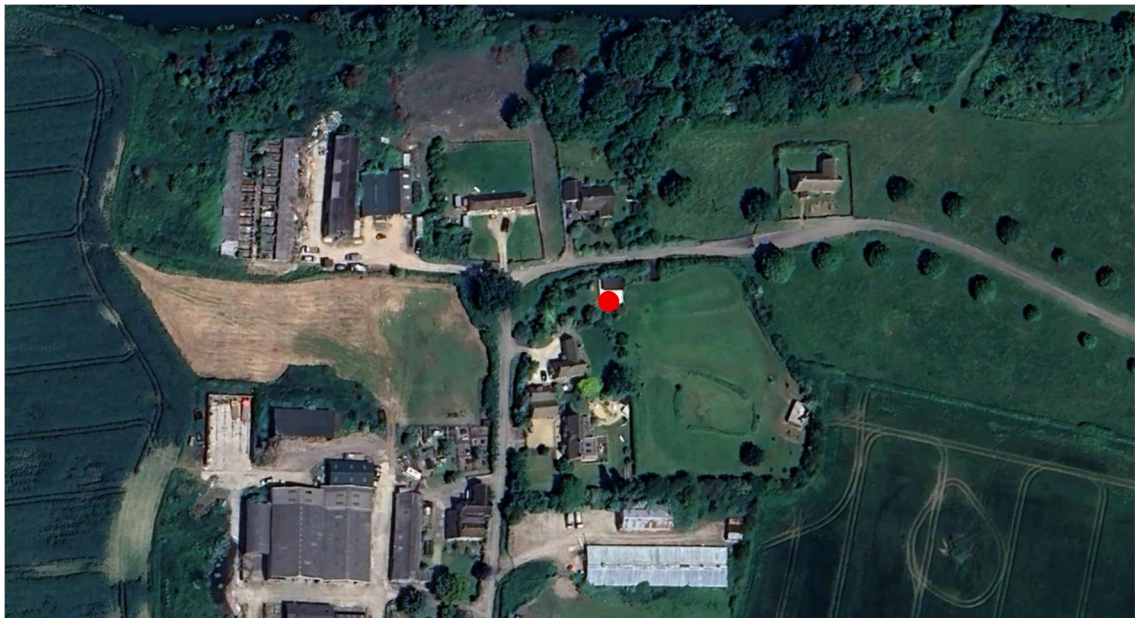


Figure 2.1 – Aerial view of the site taken from Google Maps

- 2.2. The site currently forms part of the garden of the Rectory Barn, to the south.
- 2.3. The design of the proposed development has responded directly to the site's context, local vernacular, climate and very specific needs of the applicant.

- 2.4. The applicant has a health condition, that requires supportive care. The details of this can be found in the Supporting Personal Circumstances Statement, prepared by the applicant.
- 2.5. The design rationale therefore is to provide a new, accessible home that responds sensitively to the applicants and carers needs.
- 2.6. Longer term, this will provide Whaddon and Wiltshire's housing stock with an essential home suitable for future occupants with similar needs.

3. SCHEME OVERVIEW

- 3.1. The proposal is structured around traditional building forms with contemporary detailing and a palette of local materials. The aim is to create a home that has a clear identity and feels rooted in its setting.
- 3.2. The layout and orientation of the dwelling has been carefully considered to maximise daylight, prevent overlooking to improve privacy for both the applicant and neighbour's, optimise passive solar gain and benefit from open views across the countryside to the east.
- 3.3. The development adopts a robust low energy, fabric-first approach, prioritising high levels of natural insulation, airtightness and thermal performance in line with Passivhaus principles. This is supported by national planning objectives to reduce carbon emissions and deliver sustainable homes that are resilient to climate change.
- 3.4. The building's design therefore focuses on reducing energy demand at source before the application of technology, ensuring long-term efficiency and occupant comfort.



Figure 3.4: Proposed East Elevation

- 3.5. Low-carbon and natural materials will be incorporated as standard, with an emphasis on renewable, locally sourced materials where practicable, and the minimisation of concrete and steel to reduce transportation distances and embodied carbon.
- 3.6. Renewable energy technologies, such as integrated photovoltaics, an air source heat pump (ASHP), mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR), and an electric car charging point further support the scheme's intentions as a low-carbon home, consistent with national and local sustainability objectives.
- 3.7. The existing garden, trees and pond to the west, along with the existing hedge that wraps the site to the north and west will be retained. This strengthens the projects biodiversity credentials and encourages daily interaction with nature.
- 3.8. The site will be accessed through an existing entrance to the north.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL & ECOLOGICAL DESIGN

The proposal seeks to act as an exemplar low-carbon rural dwelling incorporating the following principles:

- 4.1.1. Passive Design: The proposed dwelling has been designed from the outset to be environmentally exemplary, using a fabric-first, passive design approach that significantly exceeds current Building Regulation standards. It reflects a detailed engagement with leading practitioners in low-energy and sustainable construction, and adopts a construction methodology tailored to natural materials, thermal performance, and carbon reduction.
- 4.1.2. Fabric-First Approach: 500mm thick external wall construction, designed to accommodate natural insulations such as wood fibre, in preference to oil-based insulants like PIR. This supports a breathable, low-embodied-carbon construction.
- 4.1.3. Airtight construction: Airtightness is integral to the fabric-first approach, reducing air leakage and heat loss. Careful detailing at junctions and penetrations will minimise thermal bridging, improving energy efficiency, internal comfort and the overall performance of the building.
- 4.1.4. Windows: The intention is to use Passivhaus-standard double or triple glazing to achieve excellent thermal performance across the building envelope. Such windows typically feature minimal framing and no glazing bars, which maximise natural daylight, and help reduce air leakage and thermal bridging. They are also recessed within the wall to align with the insulation layer, offering improved solar shading and reducing light spill.
- 4.1.5. Solar Panels: The orientation of the dwelling has been carefully considered to maximise daylight, optimised to enable the incorporation of photovoltaic panels on the south, east and west facing roofs.

- 4.1.6. Embodied Carbon: Low-carbon and natural materials will be incorporated as standard, with an emphasis on renewable, locally sourced materials and the minimisation of high embodied carbon concrete use to reduce embodied carbon.
- 4.1.7. Renewables: Renewable energy technologies, such as an air source heat pump (ASHP) combined with mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR), further support the scheme's intentions as a low-carbon dwelling.
- 4.1.8. EV Charging: An electric vehicle charging points will be installed.
- 4.1.9. Green Roofs: A single storey element, with green roof, links the main house with the Studio. This roof will be planted with wildflowers and sedum to enhance biodiversity, provide additional habitat for pollinators, and soften the appearance of built form within the landscape. Green roofs also assist with sustainable drainage by attenuating surface water runoff, supporting the scheme's ecological and environmental objectives.
- 4.1.10. Rainwater Harvesting: Rainwater will be harvested from the roof and stored for use in watering the garden, supporting efficient water use and reducing demand on mains supply.
- 4.1.11. Landscape and Ecology: Retaining the existing hedgerow alongside new planting will support biodiversity and habitat connectivity.
- 4.1.12. Bird boxes, bee bricks and bat boxes, will be integrated into the designs, to support local wildlife.
- 4.1.13. Pond: The existing pond will be retained. It is sufficient distance from the proposed works that it will not be impacted, however as a matter of good practice the pond will be fenced off during construction in accordance with the supporting Ecological report.



Figure 4.1.13: Image of existing pond

5. DESIGN & ACCESS

5.1. Site Layout and Access

The design incorporates the following principles:

- 5.1.1. Site Entrance: The site will be accessed by vehicles, cycles, and pedestrians from an existing entrance to the north of the site, this provides the site with safe access.
- 5.1.2. Footprint: The footprint of the proposed dwelling is proportionate to the neighbouring dwellings to the north, adopting a stepped form to breakup the overall massing, reflective of the local vernacular.
- 5.1.3. Layout: The main point of access, and front door is to the east. This ensures that the house maintains a private back garden to the west and northwest.
- 5.1.4. Surface materials: Permeable gravel and paving will be used across the site to allow rainwater to filter through the site.
- 5.1.5. Landscape Integration: Existing boundary hedgerows are retained ensuring a natural buffer to the road to the north and west and provide a soft edge to the development.
- 5.1.6. Boundary: A low-level garden wall will be positioned along the southern boundary between the proposed site and Rectory Barn, this creates a clear delineation of ownership.

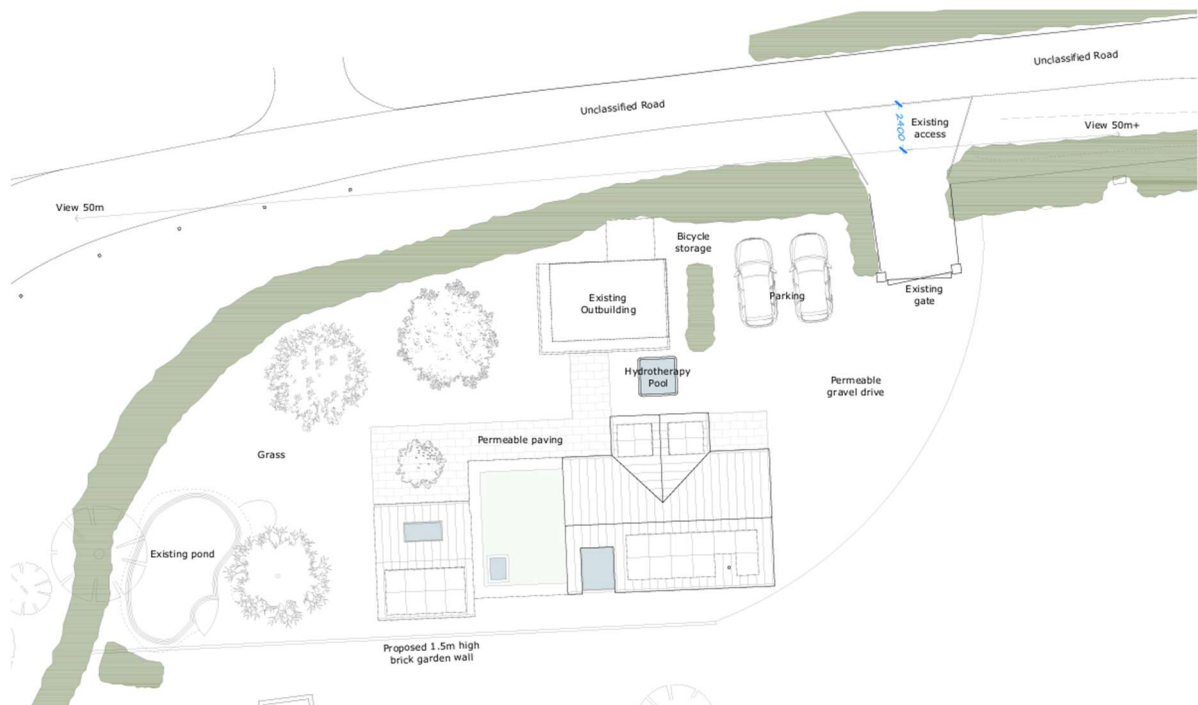


Figure 5.1.6: Proposed Site Plan

5.2. Parking and Traffic

The proposal demonstrates the following:

- 5.2.1. Parking: The site will provide for two off street parking spaces, with driveway for an additional guest parking space.
- 5.2.2. Traffic: The traffic generated from the proposed dwelling will have a negligible impact on the operation of the surrounding road network.
- 5.2.3. Visibility: The existing access provides visibility splays of >50m in both directions onto an unclassified road.
- 5.2.4. Cycle storage: The site will provide storage space for two bicycles in accordance with local policy.

5.3. Design, Appearance and Character

The design, appearance and character of the new dwelling has been informed by the following design intentions:

- 5.3.1. Size: The proposed dwelling is designed as 1.5 storey dwelling with pitched roof forms with varied ridge heights reflect the local vernacular.
- 5.3.2. Plan layout: The ground floor accommodates the accessible bedroom and open plan living arrangement. The 1st floor, in the roof space, accommodates the carers bedroom.

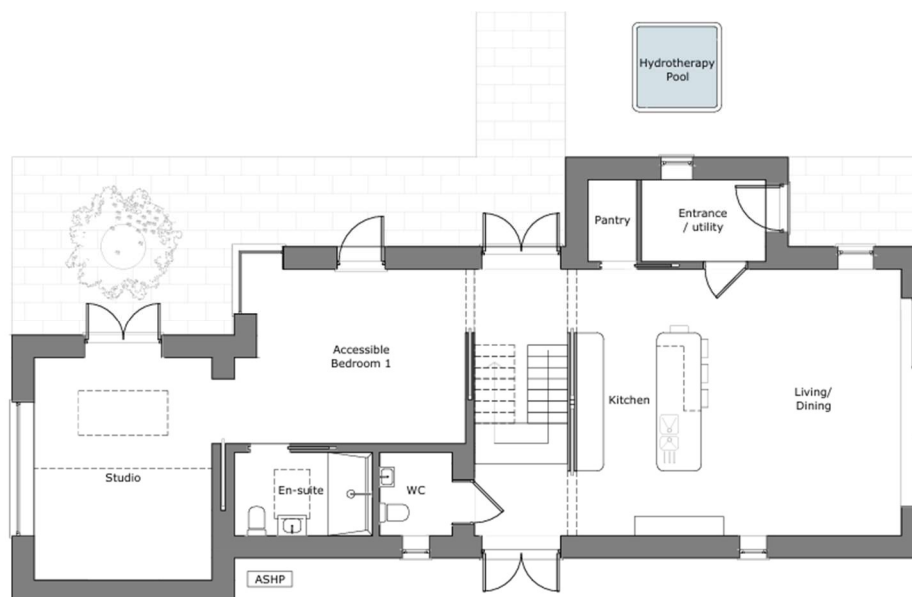


Figure 5.3.2: Proposed Ground Floor Plan

- 5.3.3. Scale: The height of the dwelling is modest and in keeping with the scale and proportions of the neighbouring properties.
- 5.3.4. Form: The proposal has been carefully designed to reflect the scale of a traditional 1.5-storey dwelling, appropriate to the plot size and neighbouring context. The massing of the house is intentionally broken down through a stepped form from the main 1.5 storey element, to a single storey link to a single storey pitched roof. This helps to minimise overall sense of scale and massing, and allows light and views through the site.



Figure 5.3.4: Proposed North Elevation

- 5.3.5. Massing: The resulting massing ensures that the rear of the house remains visually subservient to the front elevation, with all components unified through a restrained and natural material palette.
- 5.3.6. Orientation: The dwelling's footprint and east-west rectilinear orientation aligns with Passivhaus principles to optimise environmental performance.
- 5.3.7. Architectural Detailing: This has been carefully designed to establish a character that remains grounded in its rural context while incorporating subtle contemporary detailing. Details such as integrated solar panels, feature glazing, hidden gutters, variations in material treatment, and well-proportioned windows demonstrate this.
- 5.3.8. Privacy: Minimal glazing has been proposed in habitable rooms on the side elevation facing Rectory Barn, this is to ensure that both dwellings share a mutual level of privacy.
- 5.3.9. No Overlooking: The only windows from habitable rooms at 1st floor level are on the eastern elevation, overlooking the fields. There is therefore no overlooking onto the neighbouring sites. The east facing terrace is enclosed by the roof to ensure there is no overlooking north and south.

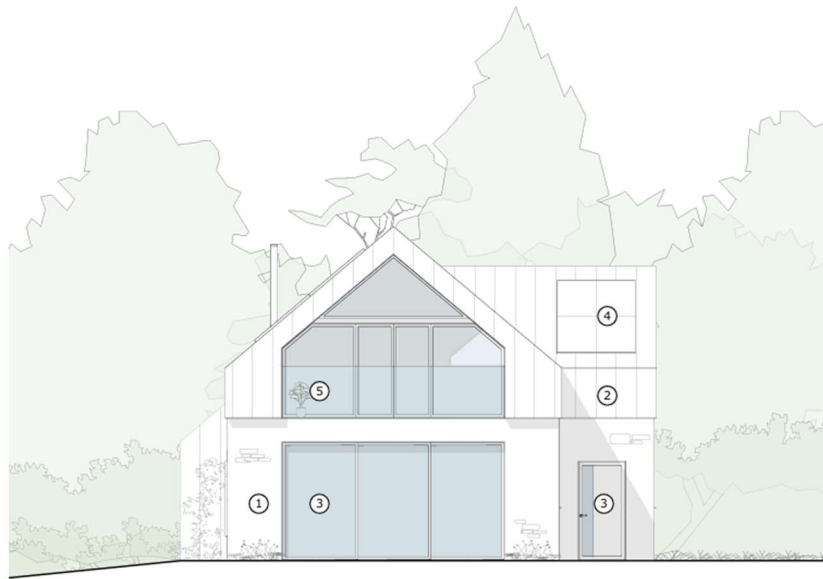


Figure 5.3.9: Proposed East Elevation

5.4. Accessibility Provision and Inclusive Design

The layout prioritises accessible spaces that support the applicant's health, independence and long-term living needs.

- 5.4.1. Creative studio: Provides a dedicated environment suitable for therapeutic and creative tasks central to the applicant's lifestyle and wellbeing.
- 5.4.2. Hydrotherapy: Essential therapeutic facility tailored to address significant mobility and health needs which cannot be sufficiently met off-site.
- 5.4.3. Accessible bedroom with en-suite: Creates an easy to access, safe and comfortable resting space configured for personal care needs.
- 5.4.4. Accessible WC: Provides essential accessible sanitary provision enabling independent use throughout the home.
- 5.4.5. Open plan living: Creates uninterrupted circulation space enabling easy movement for occupants with mobility aids.
- 5.4.6. Wide doors: Facilitates ease of access and manoeuvrability necessary for mobility support devices throughout the home.
- 5.4.7. Stairlift: A wide stair future-proofs the design to allow for the installation of a stairlift should mobility needs change in the future.
- 5.4.8. Carers bedroom: Provides necessary on-site accommodation for the carer required by the occupants' daily care regime.

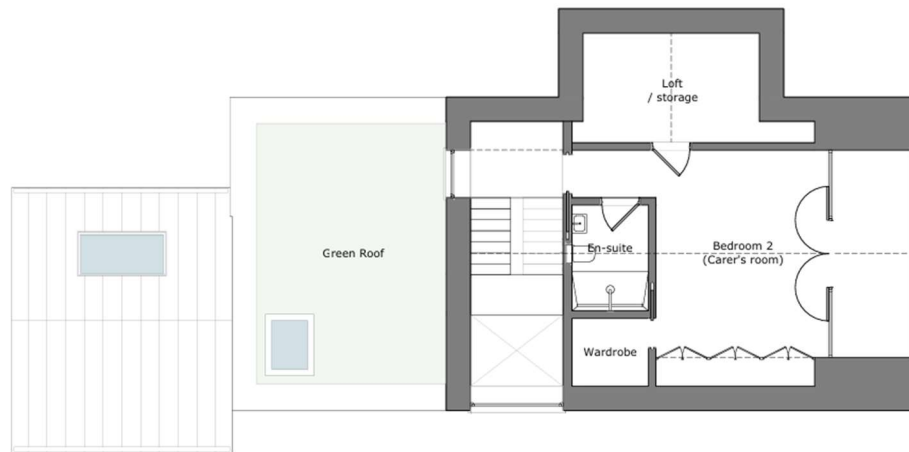


Figure 5.4.8: Proposed 1st Floor Plan

5.5. Materiality

- 5.5.1. The proposed palette of materials is grounded in natural and locally relevant tones and textures, including metal roof cladding and stone walls. These materials are not only visually appropriate to the rural landscape, but also align with the low-carbon ambitions of the Wiltshire Council, the UK and Europe. All materials have been selected for their sustainability, durability, and visual softness.
- 5.5.2. The proposed metal roof is in keeping with the agricultural buildings in the village.
- 5.5.3. The use of stone is a characteristic material within the village and wider landscape, historically used in the agricultural buildings and traditional dwellings. Its inclusion reinforces a sense of permanence. Where possible, stone will be locally sourced, reducing transport distances and embodied carbon while delivering a material that weathers naturally over time.
- 5.5.4. PPC Aluminium Windows & Doors: PPC aluminium, coloured to match the roof, is proposed for its durability, thermal performance and low maintenance. Aluminium is fully recyclable and has a long lifespan, making it an environmentally responsible choice. Thermally broken frames help reduce heat loss and support the overall energy strategy of the house.
- 5.5.5. The use of natural, muted materials and sensitive detailing ensures the elevations remain understated and contextually appropriate.



Figure 5.5.6: Integrated Solar Panels



Figure 5.5.7: Metal cladding



Figure 5.5.8: Stone walls



Figure 5.5.9: Integrated planting

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1. Technical Details Consent is being sought for the "Erection of a new self build dwelling, associated works and landscaping".
- 6.2. The intention is to provide a new, accessible home that meets the needs of the applicant and their carer, while also contributing to Whaddon and Wiltshire's housing stock by offering a dwelling suitable for future occupants with similar requirements.
- 6.3. By combining traditional architectural forms, with contemporary detailing, a fabric-first energy strategy and solar orientation, the proposal delivers an attractive and well-integrated dwelling.
- 6.4. The low carbon local materials reinforce the design's sustainability credentials while responding sensitively to local character, in accordance with national and local planning policy.
- 6.5. The site entrance will remain as per the existing which supports a safe means of access into and out of the site. The new dwelling will have no unacceptable impact on road safety or traffic.
- 6.6. The proposal shows that high-quality, sustainable architecture can sit harmoniously within its setting while addressing both present and future housing needs.
- 6.7. The site is largely comprised of modified garden habitat with low ecological value. The pond and hedgerow will be retained and protected within the layout. Any potential impacts arising from construction and lighting will be managed through appropriate mitigation measures, including sensitive lighting design and licensing where required, such that no significant adverse effects are anticipated, and the proposal remains compliant with planning policy and wildlife legislation.
- 6.8. Taking account of the above, the proposal is found to accord with all relevant local and national policy criteria and other material considerations and should therefore be approved without delay.