

Design Statement

7 Henley Cottages,
Henley Lane,
Corsham,
SN13 8BY



Photograph of rear elevation (Rightmove, 2013)

April 2026

Introduction

7 Henley Cottages is a 19th century dwelling located South-West of Box and East of the Kingsdown hamlet. The site sits within the North Wiltshire Green Belt, Cotswold AONB, Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bat SAC core area and south of the Box Conservation Area.

The original stone dwelling has maintained similar in form, though now sees a clearly delineated side extension. This has converted the one-up one-down arrangement into a two-up two-down arrangement; an alteration required for the continued use of the property.

Previous Planning

1. N/77/00890/F
Side extension to dwelling | Approved with conditions
2. N/09/02305/FUL
Extension and renovation of outbuilding into home office | Approved with conditions
3. ENQ/2025/01682
Pre-Application Enquiry | Acceptable in Principle

Proposed Works

1. Single storey rear extension to formalise entrance & provide extended kitchen/dining area.
2. Removal of existing modern garage building to improve site openness within the Green Belt.
3. Front landscaping to formalise principal entrance and improve parking provision.
4. Block up original front door and alter existing porch to provide ground floor WC.
5. Rear landscaping to provide improved connection to garden and outbuildings.

Design

The scheme is focused on the improvement and rationalisation of internal provisions suitable for contemporary family life, while working to increase the rear private garden connection and enhancing the scenic quality of the site. Impact to the wider context has been at the forefront of the design process, with the proposal particularly responding to Core Policy 51 (Landscape) and Core Policy 57 (Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping).

The proposed single-storey, tapered massing is stepped back and concealed from public view, and as acknowledged in the pre-application response, imposes no reduction of amenity on neighbouring properties. The rear of the site is shrouded in dense vegetation and the neighbouring rear extension, thus obscuring the proposed extension from both neighbouring properties and the public realm.

The removal of the modern single garage building improves the design quality of the scheme by removing inferior quality addition in favour of open green space, directly addressing Core Policy 57.

The front and side landscaping rationalises and softens the view from the public realm, while removing the now vestigial front entrance door. This formalisation of garden space will increase local biodiversity and provide an alternative parking space (in light of garage removal) for the dwelling.

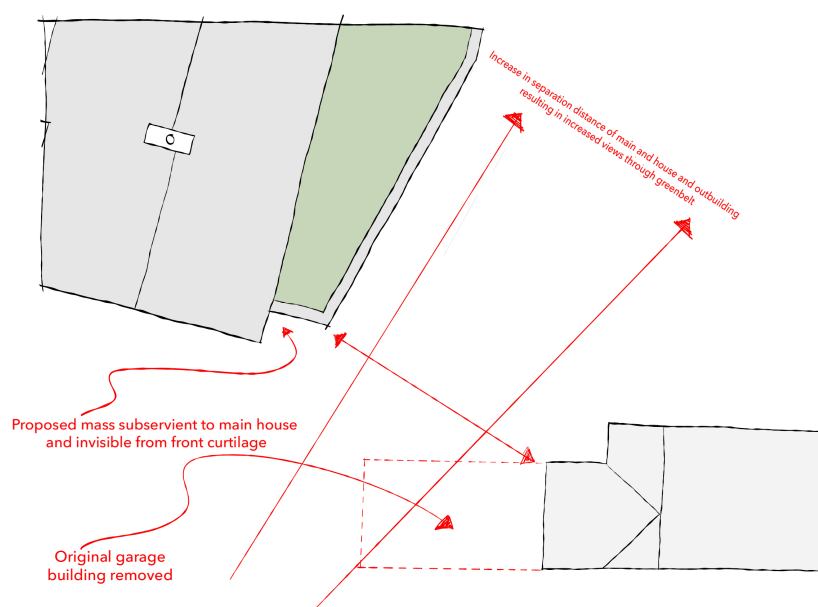
The extension provides a small but formal entrance facing the drive, with an area for coats and utility. The space then widens to accommodate a functional kitchen/dining area with large, glazed openings connecting to the garden.

Massing

The size and scale of the proposed rear extension and wider scheme have been carefully reconsidered to minimise the impact to the host dwelling and nearby context, whilst allowing for the necessary upgrades to enhance the overall provisions of the property.

The mass is a single storey flat roof structure, presenting increased subservience to the original dwelling. The volume of the extension has been reduced as far as is practical whilst still fulfilling the space requirements inside. The tapered form and set-back southern elevation further emphasise its subservience whilst minimising visual impact and built volume to the surrounding context.

The extension is focused on increasing internal provisions to suit contemporary family life, accommodating an entrance hall, utility space, downstairs WC, and an improved connection to the garden. The entrance is subservient to the main house and contemporary in materiality. The green roof reduces visual impact when viewed from the first floor of the host dwelling and neighbouring properties, as well as increasing the opportunity for biodiversity and increasing rainwater attenuation.



openness & massing redistribution

Volume Calculations

As requested in the pre-application response, full volume calculations are provided below, identifying the original building and the cumulative changes to the dwelling over time. The revised scheme brings the proposed total to 193% of the original volume – only marginally above the existing position of 186%. This demonstrates that, notwithstanding the extension to the house, the overall scheme represents the measured and proportionate approach supported at pre-application.

	Volume (m ³)	% of Original
Original Total	324	100
House	275	
Outbuildings	49	
Existing	602	186
House	467	170
Outbuildings	135	276
Proposed	625	193
House	548.5	199
Outbuildings	76.5	156

Access & Parking

The proposal does not increase the number of bedrooms in the dwelling and accordingly no increase in parking provision is required. The driveway has been augmented to provide two designated permanent parking spaces and the ability to accommodate a third visitor space when required.

In response to the highway engineer's comments, the following amendments have been made to the parking layout:

- The two side-by-side spaces nearest the road have been reviewed. The dimension outline has been retained to demonstrate that a third vehicle can technically be accommodated, while the regular layout designates two permanent spaces with adequate clearance. The widest point of the drive has been increased by 500mm through an adjustment to the radius of the adjacent flower bed.
- The revised arrangement provides improved clearance for door opening and pedestrian movement between parked vehicles to the relocated front door.

Ecology and Biodiversity

Policy CP50 seeks to conserve and enhance biodiversity across Wiltshire. The site is located within the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation. The pre-application response confirmed that, from the information submitted, works do not appear to include works to roost

networks, community corridors, trees or any foraging areas, and would not be likely to impact on commuting corridors for bat species.

As a householder application, the scheme is exempt from the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements under Schedule 7A, Section 4(2)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as inserted by the Environment Act 2021.

Notwithstanding this exemption, the proposals deliver positive biodiversity outcomes. The extensive green roof specification increases biodiversity and provides habitat value, while the removal of the garage creates additional space for soft landscaping, increasing opportunities for vegetation cover.

The rationalisation of the front garden introduces additional planting. These measures collectively contribute to biodiversity enhancement in line with the spirit of CP50.

Materiality

The proposed development, whilst not visible from the public realm and highway, is crafted of a palette of complementary materials to the existing house, whilst being clearly contemporary in form. This approach delineates the modern addition from the original house and previous extension, allowing the original fabric to be elevated and the contemporary additions to be understated.



proposed material example

The pre-application response suggested that the blonde masonry brick finish may appear 'visually discordant' against the natural stone and recommended the use of matching stonework. Having carefully considered this opinion, the applicant respectfully maintains that blonde brick is the most appropriate material for the following reasons:

- Honesty of fabric and tectonic delineation: Both the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) and government guidance on works to historic buildings identify the clear and honest delineation between original and later additions as a core principle of good practice. Simulating the existing cottage stonework in a modern extension risks creating a pastiche that blurs the distinction between original and new, which is considered less sympathetic, than a clearly differentiated (but complementary) material.
- Complementary colour palette: The blonde brick is closely aligned in tone and warmth with the existing natural stonework of the original cottage, creating a harmonious relationship without pretending to be something it is not. This approach reflects the character of the delineated modern side extension already present on the dwelling.
- Traditional construction method, contemporary expression: Brick is a traditional and well-understood construction material with deep roots in the regional vernacular. Its use in this context is representative of the time at which the addition is being made, consistent with the principle of 'designing for its own time' supported by both SPAB guidance and the Historic England guidance on extensions to historic buildings.
- Consistency with existing modern extension: The existing side extension, which has been accepted and noted by the officer as 'clearly delineated', similarly uses a material palette of recon Bath stone, that distinguishes it from the original stone. The proposed rear extension maintains this language of differentiation at time of construction.

This application clearly indicates the proposed materials and has considered the sensitivities of the locality and the landscape designations, in line with the officer's advice.

Residential Amenity

Core Policy 57 and Section 12 of the NPPF require that development achieves a high standard of amenity for both existing and future users. As acknowledged in the pre-application response, the new fenestration appears to be at sufficient distance from immediate neighbours to mitigate any direct or unacceptable impact to amenities enjoyed by neighbouring properties.

The single storey nature of the extension ensures there is no overlooking of neighbouring gardens or habitable rooms. The set-back southern elevation and tapered form minimise any potential for overshadowing. The extension is located to the rear (east) of the dwelling and is screened by mature boundary vegetation. These factors together demonstrate that there will be no significant loss of light or privacy and no harm to neighbour amenity.

Conclusion

This design statement reinforces the application for proposed extensions rationalisation and landscaping works at 7 Henley Cottages.

The proposals have been developed in direct response to the pre-application advice issued by Wiltshire Council (ENQ/2025/01682) and seek to address each of the material considerations identified.

The scheme is proportionate in scale and modest in its increase to the overall site volume, particularly when the removal of the garage building is considered. The extension is subservient, single storey, and screened from the public realm and neighbouring properties. The blonde brick materiality is considered appropriate on the grounds of tectonic honesty and complementary colour. The revised parking arrangement addresses the highway engineer's comments whilst maintaining improved practical access to the dwelling.

The proposal will enable the current occupants to maintain the house as a comfortable and well-loved family home, commensurate in scale with the existing dwelling and its context within the Green Belt and Cotswolds National Landscape.