

Planning Briefing Note: Site Access & Parking Constraints

Location: 45 High Street, Pewsey SN95AF — Pewsey Conservation Area

Reference 1: PL/2026/01813 (Retrospective Change of Use)

Reference 2: Highways Department Comment WC-26-04-368530 — Clare Covil, dated 8 Apr 2026

1. Assessment of Residential Density (Bedroom Count)

Under the **Wiltshire Council Parking Strategy**, parking requirements are determined by the number of bedrooms. While the application for the 1953 bungalow does not explicitly state a total, the **Design & Access Statement** and **Plan Layout** in PL/2026/01813 describe a high-occupancy dwelling:

- **Ground Floor:** Two bedrooms (including the room currently utilised as a music room). Planning policy assesses rooms by their *potential* use; therefore, this counts as two sleeping units.
- **Attic Level:** Explicitly described in the plural as "**bedrooms**," indicating at least two further sleeping spaces created via the conversion of the original bungalow roof space.
- **Independent Studio Airbnb Unit:** One bedroom.

Conclusion: The site operates as a **5-bedroom development**. This triggers a mandatory requirement for **5 off-street parking bays** (3 for the main house, 1 for the unit, and 1 for visitors/service deliveries).

2. Procedural Error: The Red Line Boundary

A critical flaw exists in the application's **Location Plan**:

- **Incomplete Boundary:** The Red Line stops at the property gate, excluding the gravel strip and shared driveway.
- **Planning Requirement:** National validation requirements state the Red Line must include all land required for access to the public highway. By excluding the access route, the applicant has failed to demonstrate legal or safe "visibility splays" and "vehicle tracking."
- **Implication:** Because the access is excluded, the applicant cannot formally "mitigate" the overspill parking which occurs on the gravel strip, as that land is technically outside the scope of their application.

3. Access Constraints & Bottleneck

The site is landlocked and relies on a narrow gravel strip across Parish-owned public green space.

- **Single-Track Conflict:** The gravel strip is too narrow to allow two vehicles to pass.

- **The Overspill Issue:** Vehicles park on the gravel strip because the private plot lacks the **5 required bays**. This obstructs the only route for emergency services and deliveries.
- **C5 (Airbnb) Risk:** Commercial guests are unfamiliar with the bottleneck, increasing the likelihood of vehicles reversing 50m back into the shared driveway or onto public green space when meeting oncoming traffic.

4. Emergency Access & Safety (The 45m Rule)

Under **Building Regulations (Approved Document B)** and Wiltshire Fire & Rescue standards:

- **Hose Reach:** The independent unit is ~50m from the shared driveway. Fire appliances require access within 45m of all points of a dwelling.
- **Appliance Access:** The "seven-bar" gate and narrow strip do not meet the **3.7m width** required for a 12.5-tonne fire appliance.
- **Turning:** National policy (**Manual for Streets**) requires vehicles to exit in a forward gear. If the site is full of parked cars, there is no room for a "turning head," creating a permanent safety hazard.

5. Conservation Area & Neighbourhood Plan

The **Pewsey Neighbourhood Development Plan** protects "green wedges."

- The intensification of this site—resulting in unauthorized parking on a visible gravel strip over public green space—is "detrimental to the visual amenity" of the Conservation Area.
- The LPA must consider if an access agreement for a 1953 bungalow is legally or practically sufficient for a **C5 Commercial Business**.

6. Summary for the Planning Authority

The application PL/2026/01813 is fundamentally flawed:

1. **Invalid Red Line:** It excludes the essential access route to the highway.
2. **Parking Deficit:** It fails to provide 5 functional bays within the private boundary.
3. **Safety Breach:** It fails to meet mandatory fire appliance access and "forward-gear" exit requirements.

