

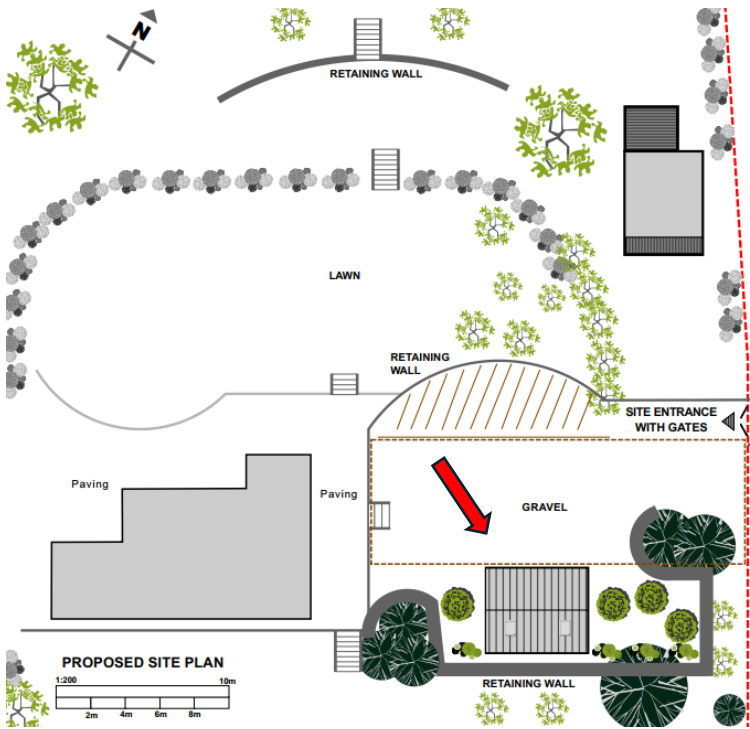
APPLICATION FOR HOUSEHOLDER PLANNING PERMISSION DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2026/01576
APPLICATION TYPE:	Householder planning permission
SITE ADDRESS:	Amberwell House, Beech House, Box Hill, Corsham, SN13 8EU
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Proposed car port
RECOMMENDATION:	That Planning Permission be REFUSED

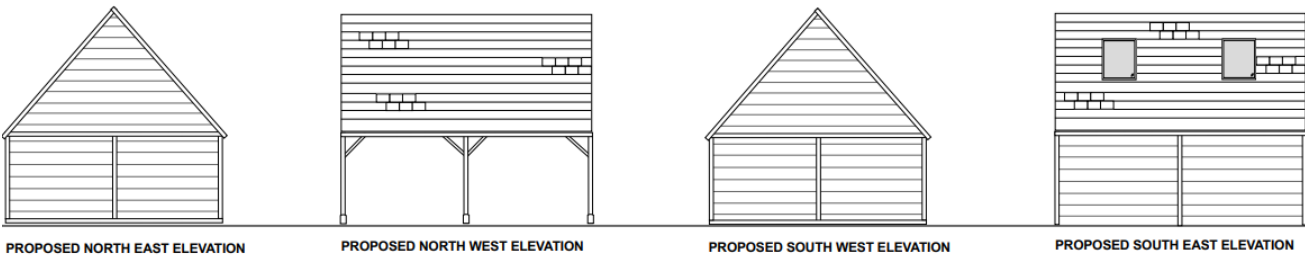
PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks planning permission for the erection of a free standing carport. The application is submitted using Householder application forms.

The extracts below demonstrate the proposed positioning of the car port in relation to the main dwelling, as well as the proposed appearance of the structure.



Proposed site plan (car port denoted by red arrow)



Proposed Elevations

The proposed car port would be positioned in front of an existing retaining wall to the side of the site on a gravelled area, in proximity to the main dwelling and within the residential curtilage. The carport would be an open fronted structure with a pitched roof, enabling parking for 2 vehicles with the remainder of the elevations enclosed. The carport would be a timber frame with waney edge cladding to the external walls and clay double roman tiles to the roof, integrating 2 flat roof lights to the rear roof slope.

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The property known as Amberwell House is a large character detached property of stone construction, situated along a bridlepath that is set back from Beech Road in Box Hill, with the location being situated within the Western Wiltshire Green Belt. The property is to the west of the plot, with an existing outbuilding positioned to the north within close proximity to the front entrance to the grounds which was recently granted planning permission to be converted into an annex. The property is positioned on a generous plot with established planting and landscaping to the garden, as well as a large courtyard to the front. The property enjoys scenic views to the open countryside to the north, whilst the immediate surrounding area is characterised by a number of detached dwellings to the south and north boundaries, with further properties of further distance to the north west of the site.



'Amberwell'



Proposed location for carport

The application site is subject to the following planning policy constraints:

- Cotswolds National Landscape (Formerly AONB)
- Western Wiltshire Green Belt
- Countryside Character Areas - Cotswolds
- Areas Susceptible to Ground Water Flooding -
- NE Priority Habitat Inventory - Deciduous woodland
- Bath BoA Bat SAC GHS 4km Core Roost buffer - Box, The Grille
- LHS 2km Core Roost Buffer - Box, All Areas Except The Grille
- Bath BoA Bat SAC GHS 4km SAC parcel buffer - Bath & Bradford on Avon Bats

PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal / Summary
N/09/02044/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Refused Date: 12/2/2010 – Conservatory – Allowed on appeal
N/02/01057/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 8/7/2002 – TWO STOREY EXTENSION
N/07/02690/S73A - Full planning permission Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 4/12/2007 – Retaining Wall (Retrospective) and New Hardstanding
PL/2025/07089 – Householder planning permission Decision - Approved with Conditions Date: 30/10/2025 - Conversion of outbuilding into an annex

RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Wiltshire Core Strategy:

- Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Core Policy 51: Landscape
- Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping
- Core Policy 58: Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment
- Core Policy 61: Transport and New Development

Box Neighbourhood Plan – Status: Designated

Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2025-2030

- Policy CE1: Landscape
- Policy CE4: Local Distinctiveness
- Policy CE6: Dark Skies
- Policy CE7: Historic Environment and Cultural Heritage

Bat Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) Planning Guidance for Wiltshire (September 2015)

Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026 Car Parking Strategy,

Wiltshire Design Guide: Appendix D – Design Guidance for Householder extensions

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- Section 12 – Achieving well designed places
- Section 13 – Protecting Green Belt Land
- Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

The Planning Practice Guidance

ISSUES

- Principle of development
- Appropriateness of the development in Greenbelt and harm to the openness
- Design and Impact upon the upon the character and context of the area and impact to the National Landscape
- Residential amenity
- Highways Impact and Parking
- Bath and BOA Bat Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Box Parish Council: No objection

Wiltshire Council Highways: No objection

REPRESENTATIONS

The application was publicised by direct neighbour letter. 3 letters of representation have been received supporting the application, with a summary below of the main comments made:

- The site will be barely visible, shrouded as it is by trees and will, I understand, be built sustainably thereby having little impact on the surrounding area or the environment.
- We've just moved into the house next door to this one. The main reason we chose to buy here is because of the natural beauty and so we're keen for developments in the local area not to impinge on this.
- The building is a suitable design for a rural area. While it's close to our property line, the proposed structure will be well concealed by the trees and surrounding foliage.
- Its a sound proposal sensitively designed for its surrounds.
- As the nearest neighbours to the proposed development, we have no issues with the proposal and think the design fits well with its local surroundings.

ASSESSMENT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

In accordance with this statutory requirement, this application has been assessed against the relevant policies of the Development Plan, including the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) and, where applicable, any made Neighbourhood Plans.

Principle of Development

The carport to be erected would serve an existing residential property, the principle of which is established as acceptable. However, since the application site is located within the Western Wiltshire Green Belt, an assessment must also be undertaken as to whether the proposals constitute “inappropriate development” for the purposes of section 13 to the NPPF. For convenience, that assessment is undertaken in the sub-section immediately below. The detail of the proposal must also be assessed against all other relevant policies, with assessment undertaken within this report.

Is the proposal inappropriate development in the Green Belt?

The development plan is silent on the matter of Green Belt and therefore it is necessary to have regard to other material considerations, principally here the National Planning Policy Framework. Great importance is attached to Green Belts and new development within the Green Belt is highly restricted by national planning policy. Paragraph 153 to the NPPF is unequivocal in stating that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness should be given substantial weight.

Paragraph 153 of the NPPF states:

When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. ‘Very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Paragraph 154 then explains that development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of criteria (a) through to (h) apply:

- (a) Buildings for agriculture and forestry
- (b) Provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation
- (c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- (d) Replacement of a building
- (e) Limited infilling in villages
- (f) Limited affordable housing for local community needs
- (g) Limited infilling or partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land (PDL / brownfield)
- (h) Development brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order

This planning application proposes the erection of a free-standing car port within the residential curtilage, however this land is designated within the Western Wiltshire Green Belt. Given the free-standing nature of the carport, whilst positioned in proximity to the main dwelling, it would be a separate structure both physically and visually and would constitute a new building for the purposes of Green Belt policy. On this basis, the proposed car port may not fall within any of the forms of development identified as not inappropriate in paragraph 154 of the NPPF.

The applicant has set out that the proposed car port would be incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling, located wholly within the residential curtilage and is proportionate and clearly subordinate in scale. Considering the applicant's supporting statement additional consideration has been given to exemption (c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. Even if this development were to be treated in Green Belt terms as an extension or alteration the applicant has not provided sufficient justification that the proposed development, taken cumulatively with existing additions and extensions of the dwelling, would not be a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building.

The planning history sets out that the property has been previously extended and altered with 2-storey extensions and also a conservatory to the west side of the property. It may be that further extensions and alterations have occurred over and above the 'original building' beyond what has been recorded in the planning history too. This is quite possible given it is described as a period property and as such the original building is likely to be what existed on 1 July 1948. Additionally, it is noted that there is an outbuilding at the site which has recently been approved for annexe use and assessed as a building that could be considered similarly functionally related to the principle building as the proposed car port. In which case too may be considered an extension or alteration of the original building.

Therefore, based on the information available, even if the proposed development would be an extension or alteration of a building, it would be a disproportionate extension or alteration over and above the size of the original building when taken cumulatively with the existing built form at the site.

No very special circumstances have been demonstrated that would clearly outweigh the identified Green Belt harm. While the provision of covered parking may be desirable for the occupiers of the dwelling, this is a private benefit which does not outweigh the identified harm. The applicant has set out that the proposal will provide provision for electric vehicle charging. This is positive, but has little weight in the planning balance as similar could be achieved without the proposed development. The applicant sets out a proposed landscape enhancement strategy. However, the planting proposed is not considered to have weight such as to merit very special circumstances taken individually or cumulatively. Whilst the applicant refers to a grant of planning permission for a similar development nearby this is not considered to represent a precedent for this specific proposal on a different site. The maxim of each case being assessed on its planning merits applies. Therefore, overall, the proposal is considered to constitute inappropriate development within the Western Wiltshire Green Belt. Since such development is by definition harmful to the Green Belt, and in the absence of any very special

circumstances, that harm must be given substantial weight in the determination of this planning application.

In conclusion on this matter none of the exemptions at paragraph 154 of the NPPF apply and no very special circumstances have been presented to outweigh the harm by reason of inappropriateness. Substantial weight needs to be given to the harm as directed by national policy.

Design and Impact upon the upon the character and context of the area and impact to the National Landscape

WCS Core Policy 57 requires development to respond positively to the existing townscape and landscape features in terms of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, elevational design and materials, with particular regard required for the compatibility of the design with the host dwelling and its surroundings, together with the relationship to adjoining buildings and spaces.

WCS Core Policy 51 seeks to protect, conserve and enhance Wiltshire's distinctive landscape character. It is noted that the scale and extent of development within National Landscapes should be carefully considered so as not to give rise to unacceptable impact or detract from the intrinsic character and beauty of the area.

Policy CE1 of the Cotswold National Landscape Management Plan 2025-2030 states that development should have regard to the scenic quality of the location and its setting and ensure that views - including those into and out of the National Landscape – and visual amenity are conserved and enhanced. Policy CE4 states that proposals that are likely to impact on the local distinctiveness of the Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL) should be delivered in a way that is compatible with and seek to further the conservation and enhancement of this local distinctiveness. Policy CE6 states that proposals that have the potential to impact on the dark skies of the Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL) should be delivered in a way that is compatible with and seek to further the conservation and enhancement of these dark skies, by seeking to avoid and where avoiding is not possible, minimise lighting.

Section 12 of the NPPF expects a good standard of design. Section 15 details conserving and enhancing the natural environment. The Wiltshire Design Guide elaborates on WCS Core Policy 57 and requires consideration that should be given to the external appearance, design and materials used for development

The proposed carport would occupy a location that is set to the side of the main dwelling, against the backdrop of an existing retaining wall to the side of the boundary. However, due to the openness to this part of the site, the carport would be apparent and visible on approach to the main dwelling. The carport would be constructed using timber with a double roman tile roof and would be open fronted to enable vehicles to drive directly into it. The height of the carport would be confined to a single storey structure, with the use of timber as a natural material considered to be of good quality to blend and be sympathetic within this location and against the backdrop of the main dwelling.

Furthermore, the design and form of the car port is both sympathetic and in-keeping, helping preserve the character and appearance of the area and not resulting in an incongruous or dominant addition. It is considered that the proposal would not give rise to unacceptable visual impact to the main dwelling, its setting and the surrounding area whilst conserving the views within the National Landscape. No external lighting is proposed and the design is compatible with the existing dwelling, immediate vicinity and surrounding area and for this reason, the proposal would accord with WCS Core Policies 51 and 57, as well as Policies CE1, CE4 and CE6 of the Cotswolds National Management Plan, the Wiltshire Design Guide and the relevant sections of the NPPF.

Residential Amenity

Point vii of Core Policy 57 - Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that developments do not adversely affect neighbouring properties. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly Paragraph 135(f), stresses that planning decisions should ensure developments provide a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

The neighbouring properties most sensitive to the development are Cherry Tree Cottage to the NE of the site, Fairlight Cottage to the South of the site and The Old Chapel and Hilden positioned to the NW.

Arguably, Fairlight Cottage is in closest proximity to the proposed works. It is set at a higher ground level than Amberwell, positioned immediately above it, therefore will have vantage points looking down onto the site. Whilst the car port would be positioned set back against an existing boundary wall, the openness to this area within the curtilage would make the car port visible, however it is noted that there is a degree of established landscaping and planting along the boundary which may help obscure part of the development. 2 rooflights are proposed to the rear roof slope of the carport, which would face towards the side boundary and in the general direction of Fairlight Cottage. However, given the differing ground levels and the carport being solely used for the parking of vehicles as opposed to habitable rooms, it is considered that the proposal would not result in increased or unacceptable overlooking.

The remaining surrounding properties are located a considerable distance to the proposed location of the car port, although they do share a boundary with the application site. Amberwell itself has an extensive garden/amenity space which benefits from established trees and planting which will help obscure the development from vantage points at these properties and it is considered that the current distance to the neighbouring boundaries is sufficient.

Given the positioning of the proposed car port, together with the scale, design, fenestration and the distances to the neighbouring properties, it is considered that the proposal will not result in unacceptable impact to residential amenity, loss of light or resulting overlooking or overbearing effects. The proposal therefore accords with Core Policy 57 point vii in respect of safeguarding residential amenity and Appendix D of the Wiltshire Design Guide.

Highways Impact and Parking

Core Policy 57 (xiv) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that development must meet the requirements of Core Policy 61. This policy requires proposals to be capable of being served by safe access to the highway network. Core Policy 64 seeks to ensure compliance with parking standards set out in the Local Transport Plan.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly Paragraph 115 and 116, requires that development proposals do not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety and that safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users.

The proposed car port would be situated within the residential curtilage of the dwelling and would provide off-road parking for 2 vehicles, whilst it is not proposed to alter the existing access arrangements. A degree of parking provision is already afforded to the application site, especially on the area of hardstanding and gravel fronting the site (and indeed where the carport is proposed to be erected). The addition of the car port, of a structure of this size and in this location, would not demonstrably reduce the parking provision serving the property, or impact the ability to turn within the site given the available expanse. Wiltshire Council highways officers have raised a no objection response.

Therefore it is considered that the proposed development would not result in any adverse impact on highway safety. Adequate parking and turning provision is provided in accordance with Wiltshire's adopted parking standards, and access arrangements are acceptable. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Core Policies 57 (xiv), 61 and 64 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the NPPF, and the Wiltshire Local Transport Plan.

Bat SAC Zones of Impact

The wider landscape surrounding Box and Corsham is of international importance for bats. Locally, their habitat is protected through a Bat Special Area of Conservation (SAC) which is focused around the Box mine complex, just outside of the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan boundary. It is known that essential foraging and commuting routes supporting this SAC extend for several kilometres outside the SAC boundary, including the entire Corsham Neighbourhood Plan area. This Batscape Strategy sets out to influence and enhance the sustainable development of Box and Corsham through protecting important bat habitats within the designated Neighbourhood Plan area.

Although the application site is located within the Bat SAC Zone of Impact, the nature, scale, and location of the proposed works are not considered to give rise to any adverse effects on bats or their associated ecological networks. The development relates solely to a domestic carport and does not involve the removal of mature vegetation, trees, hedgerows or other landscape features that typically provide key foraging or commuting habitat for SAC bat populations and the wider foraging resource and established commuting corridors within the surrounding landscape will remain unaffected.

Therefore, given the limited and localised nature of the works, the proposal is not considered likely to give rise to any significant effects on bats or the integrity of the SAC individually or cumulatively. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal will meet with the requirements of

policy CP50 to the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the Bat SAC Planning Guidance for Wiltshire (September 2015) and relevant legislative duties.

Other material considerations

In addition to the matters already raised and addressed above it is noted that the application has been supported through the public consultation process. However, these do not raise matters that are sufficient to outweigh the substantial harm identified.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Householder planning applications are exempt from the requirement to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain under Schedule 7A, Section 4(2)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as inserted by the Environment Act 2021.

CONCLUSION

The proposals constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt. By definition, inappropriate development is harmful in the Green Belt, and in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, that harm must be given substantial weight when determining this planning application. There are no very special circumstances or other material considerations which would otherwise justify the harm caused to the Green Belt. Accordingly, the application is recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION: That Planning Permission be REFUSED for the following reason:

1. The proposal by reason of it being inappropriate development within the Green Belt would by definition be harmful and in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework that harm must be given substantial weight. There are no very special circumstances or other material considerations which would clearly outweigh the identified harm. As such, the proposal would be contrary to Section 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework.