

APPLICATION FOR HOUSEHOLDER PLANNING PERMISSION DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2026/01561
APPLICATION TYPE:	Householder planning permission
SITE ADDRESS:	24 Willow Grove, Trowbridge, BA14 0HA
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Retrospective application for the erection of 1.8m close-boarded timber boundary fence
RECOMMENDATION:	That Planning Permission be GRANTED

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

This application relates to a detached bungalow, within an established residential area of Trowbridge, characterised predominately by a mixture of two-storey dwellings, bungalows and chalet style bungalows.



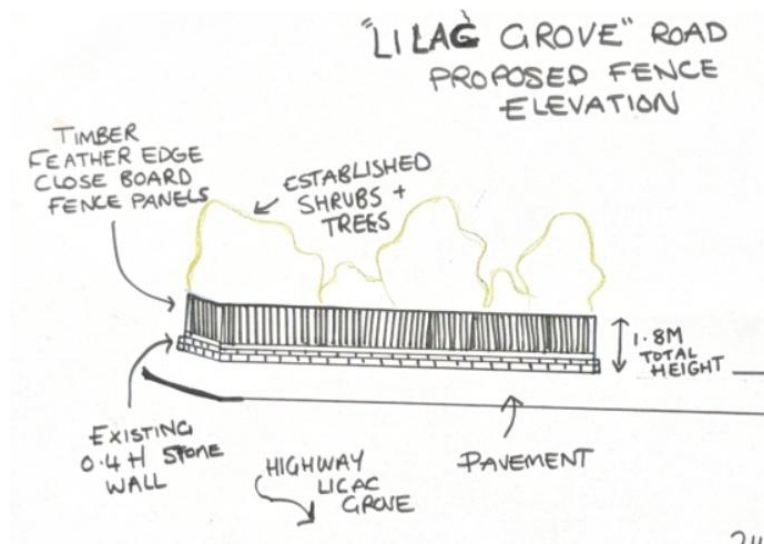
Location Plan and Proposed Block Plan

The subject dwelling is situated on a corner plot between Willow Grove, and the cul-de-sac Lilac Grove shown above. The site benefits from an existing access off Lilac Grove, with an area of off-street parking, with the front entrance of the property facing south-west towards Willow Grove.

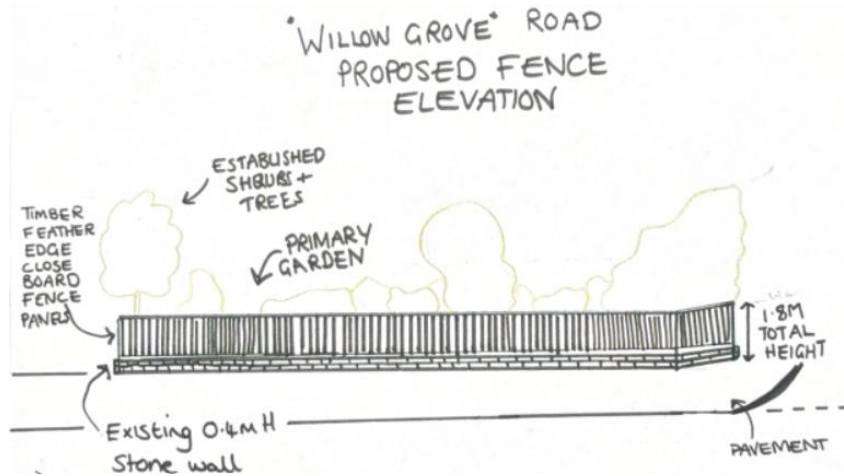
The site is located within the grey hatched zone associated with the adopted Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy.

PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks retrospective planning permission for fencing that has been erected along the existing property boundary set behind an existing stone plinth wall and retaining all existing shrubs. The proposed fencing is close-boarded and 1.8m tall. The height and proximity to the highway deems the development not permissible under PD.



Proposed Lilac Grove Elevation



Proposed Willow Grove Road Elevation



Site Photos – Willow Grove and Lilac Grove

PLANNING HISTORY

PL/2025/01105 - Demolition of single storey front porch area and single storey rear utility area. Proposed single storey front extension. Alterations to roof and conversion of roof space to first floor living accommodation. Internal alterations to ground floor area – Approved with conditions.

RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
National Design Guide
Wiltshire Design Guide: Appendix D – Design Guidance for Householder extensions

Wiltshire Core Strategy:

- Core Policy 57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping
- Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026, Car Parking Strategy

Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy Supplementary Planning Document (adopted February 2020)

Wiltshire Local Plan Examination Submission (WLP, Regulation 24): The examination of the emerging Wiltshire Local Plan remains paused at the time of finalising this committee report and the weight to be afforded to any part of the emerging plan can be no more than very limited. A decision on how to proceed is programmed to be made by the Council in the coming weeks (and after the determination of this application).

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Trowbridge Town Council: objects, stating that the fence is too high and changes the character of the area. There would be no objection to a fence 1m high (officer note – a 1m high fence would be permissible under PD in any case).

Highways: No objection. The site was visited along with viewing historical images on google of the site and it was observed on site that the installed fence does not impede inter-pedestrian visibility from the vehicle access of number 24.

The fence has also been assessed in terms of its impact on the inter-pedestrian visibility from the vehicle access of number 26 and it is considered that the current situation is no worse than the previous situation where although the previous fence was lower, it was higher than the specified 600mm required for inter-pedestrian visibility and therefore the situation has not been made worse.

REPRESENTATIONS

7 comments of support received, noting an improvement, in terms of visual amenity, the owner's privacy, ability for pedestrians to be able to walk on the pavement and highway visibility/safety. The quality of work was also highlighted.

One objection was also received stating that the fence is harmful to the established character and appearance of the street, being visually prominent, disrupting the openness and uniformity of the streetscape.

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.

Design and Impact upon the character and context of the area

Core Policy 57 - Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that all new development is of high design quality, reflecting local context, character, and distinctiveness.

The fence is set back behind an existing low wall, replacing large trees/shrubs which have now been managed away from the pavement behind the fencing.

The wider area has limited examples of close boarded fencing all approx. 1m height, with brick walls and landscaped boundaries dominating the streetscene character.

However, the 1.8m high erected close boarded fence does not appear visually obtrusive given the relatively short sections of fencing along two highways – following the bend in the common boundary. The fence undoubtedly changes the streetscene character in terms of the new boundary treatment, but it not considered harmful to warrant a refusal of planning permission.

Having regard to the above, the proposal complies with the design principles set out in Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and Appendix D of the Wiltshire Design Guide.

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 proposed fence does not cause any concerns with overshadowing, overbearing or negative impact to neighbouring amenity.

The property's garden lies primarily to the front of the property, behind the boundary to Willow Grove, such that the fencing provides privacy of the primary amenity space, providing significant benefits to the host dwelling.

The completed works has been done to a good standard and the development accords with Core Policy 57 point vii in respect of safeguarding residential amenity and Appendix D of the Wiltshire Design Guide.

Highways Impact

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.

As per the Highways officer reported consultation comments following their site visit and inspection, the fence does not impede inter-pedestrian visibility from immediate neighbour no.24, nor from the site's own off-street parking, and nor does it manifest as a highway hazard.

Third party comments note that the fence, by having cut back tall trees and shrubs, has improved pedestrian access and highway visibility.

The proposed development would not result in any adverse impact on highway safety. Adequate parking 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.

Ecology Impact

Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, including through ensuring that development avoids harm to protected species and habitats.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), in Paragraphs 193, requires that development minimises impacts on and provides net gains for biodiversity, including ensuring mitigation is secured where harm cannot be avoided.

Given the scale of development, by rebuilding and extension of an existing, occupied structure, any operational impacts would be de-minims.

As such, the development complies with Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

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 proposed development is acceptable in terms of its design, scale, and relationship with the surrounding area. It would not result in any unacceptable harm to the character of the locality, the amenities of neighbouring occupiers, nor the interests of highway safety, or ecology.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the relevant policies of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the Wiltshire Local Plan, and the National Planning Policy Framework. As such, the application is recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATION: That Planning Permission be GRANTED subject to conditions.