

HOUSEHOLDER PLANNING APPLICATION CASE OFFICER REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2026/02100
APPLICATION TYPE:	Householder
SITE ADDRESS:	The Paddocks, 1 Butts Lane, Steeple Ashton, Trowbridge, BA14 6ET.
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Modernisation of existing bungalow and existing garage including addition of new porch, windows, doors, re-roofing, and cladding plus enlarging patio doors. also filling in some existing windows and creating some new window openings plus removal of some existing internal walls. Addition of solar panels on the roof.
RECOMMENDATION:	Approve with Conditions.

PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks planning permission for the modernisation of an existing bungalow to include a new porch, windows, doors, re-roofing and cladding. The patio doors would be enlarged, and some window openings would be filled in, whilst new window openings would be created elsewhere. The internal living space would be re-arranged, and solar panels would be added to the roof structure.

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The site is a single storey bungalow located along Butts Lane, Steeple Ashton, constructed from red brick with matching red roof tiles. Steeple Ashton is a Large Village located within the Conservation Area and with the site being in an established residential area of development. The site is located within the Bath & Bradford on Avon Bat SAC and also within the grey zone of the adopted Trowbridge Westbury Bat Mitigation Strategy (TWBMS).

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None

RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Wiltshire Core Strategy:

- Core Policy 15 Spatial strategy for Melksham.
- Core Policy 57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping.
- Core Policy 28 Ensuring conservation of the historic environment.
- Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Core Policy 51: Landscape
- Core Policy 58: Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment
- Core Policy 61: Transport and New Development
- Core Policy 64: Demand Management
- Core Policy 67: Flood Risk

Steeple Ashton emerging neighbourhood plan (Status: Designation of Steeple Ashton Neighbourhood Area).

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
National Design Guide

Emerging Wiltshire Local Plan:

At Full Council on 19 May 2026, the elected members of Wiltshire Council agreed to withdraw the emerging Wiltshire Local Plan. It will now be subject to a legal process to finalise its withdrawal -

which is likely to happen in July or August (2026). The said Plan has no material weight for the purposes of this application.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Steeple Ashton Parish Council: No objections.

Highways: No objections.

REPRESENTATIONS

No third-party comments were received.

PRINCIPLE OF THE PROPOSAL.

The principle of the proposed scheme is considered to be acceptable for the reasons as discussed below.

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 the emerging Neighbourhood Plan for Steeple Ashton.

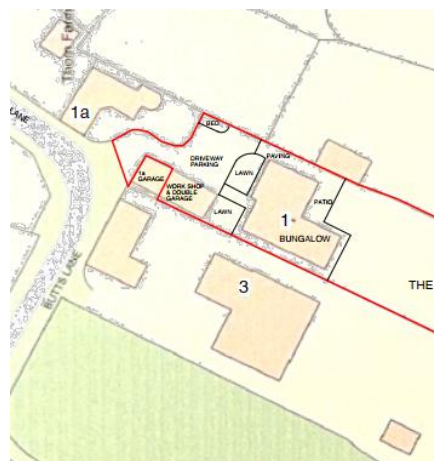
Design and Impact upon the upon the character and context of the area

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.

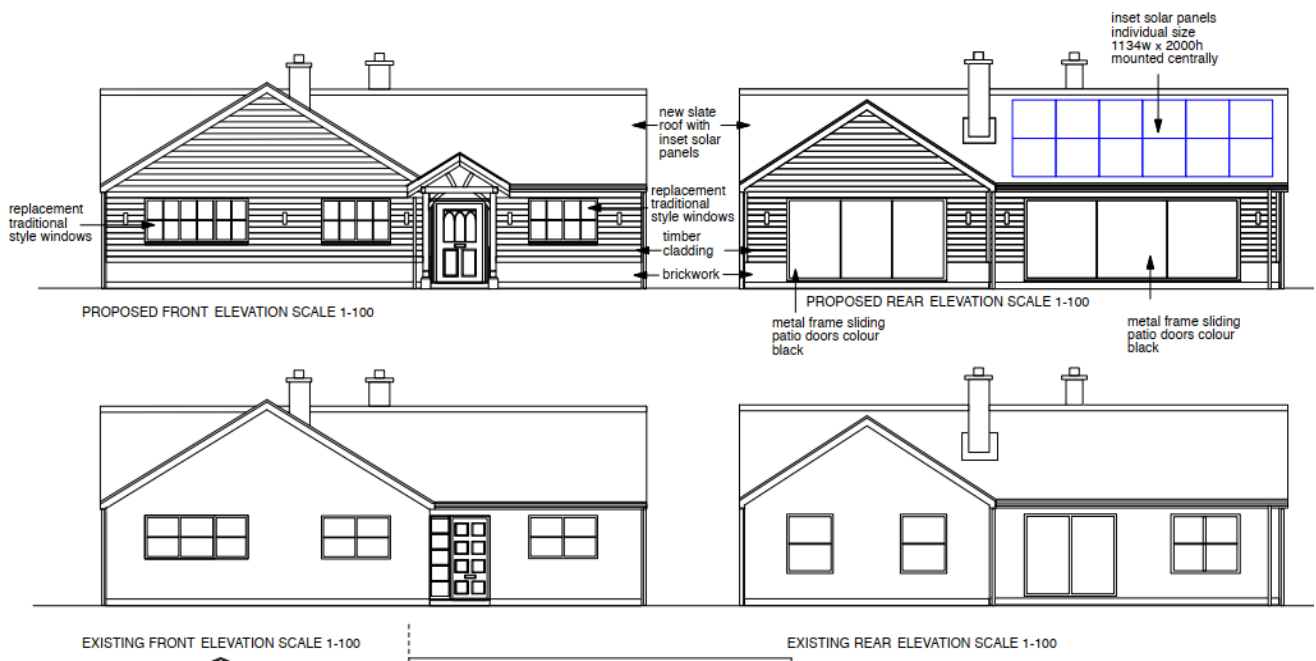
The proposals can be viewed within the plan snippets taken from the submitted plans:



Location Plan



Existing & Proposed Site Plan



Existing & Proposed Front & Rear Elevations.

The plan snippets shown above illustrate the existing and proposed front and rear elevations of the dwelling, with the proposed changes. The building would remain single storey and would have horizontal timber cladding, with changes in the fenestration. The front elevation windows would remain the same size and represent a more traditional style of window, whilst on the rear aspect larger sized contemporary windows are proposed which would open onto the site's rear garden area.

On the front elevation a small sized open porch is proposed as are solar panels. On the two side elevations, similar upgrades are proposed by way of timber cladding and solar panels, and internal reconfiguration works are further proposed which would make the building more useable and manageable. From a design viewpoint, the proposals are wholly acceptable, with the host dwelling being contemporary in appearance whilst still retaining its rural character.

Therefore, in summary, 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 property would have a number of modern features included within it, such as the described solar panels and upgraded fenestration, the internal spaces of the building would be re-configured with two small bedrooms being converted to one large sized bedroom. This would result in the loss of a bedroom, making the total as four in number. The building would remain single storey so there would not be any new levels of overlooking of neighbours being introduced. The site is not readily visible from the public realm and so the surrounding conservation area would not be harmfully impacted upon, as further discussed below. The proposal therefore accords with Core Policy 57 point vii. in respect of safeguarding residential amenity and Appendix D of the Wiltshire Design Guide.

Highway Matters.

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 development would continue to use the established site access which would not be altered and so would not have any adverse impact on highway safety. In accordance with the council's adopted car parking strategy where there are more than three bedrooms there is a requirement to provide three off road car parking spaces. This has been achieved and the proposed plans serve to show that three such spaces are achievable, which have been re-configured accordingly. Adequate parking and turning provision are therefore provided within the site and such access arrangements are acceptable. The council's highways officer has been consulted who has not raised any objections.

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.

Conservation Area. The NPPF, Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990 and Core Policy 58 of the Council's adopted Core Strategy highlights the fact that the Local Planning Authority has a duty to pay special attention to the preservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The site is located within the Steeple Ashton Conservation Area which is predominantly characterised by relatively modest individual dwellings and structures in a loose and low-density pattern along the main highway. There is no overarching style or configuration save for the use of similar local vernacular materials and forms. Whilst the existing building has some merit, it makes a limited contribution to the Conservation Area, and the proposal would not result in harm. Careful consideration has been given to WCS CP58, the NPPF and Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990 and no conflict has been identified.

Ecology Impact CP50 requires no net loss of biodiversity on site. The site is located within the Bath & Bradford on Avon Bat SAC and also within the grey zone of the adopted Trowbridge Westbury Bat Mitigation Strategy (TWBMS). The proposed development because of its very minor nature and established presence in a residential location is considered unlikely to result in harm to bats or their habitat. There is no mechanism for significant effects from recreational pressure since it does not result in the creation of a new dwelling. Accordingly, the proposal is acceptable in this regard. As such, the development complies with Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

Biodiversity Net Gain. This application is 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, because the proposal is a householder extension.

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, or the interests of highway safety, heritage, 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 the conditions set out below.

RECOMMENDATION: Planning Permission be GRANTED subject to conditions.