

APPLICATION FOR HOUSEHOLDER PLANNING PERMISSION DELEGATED REPORT

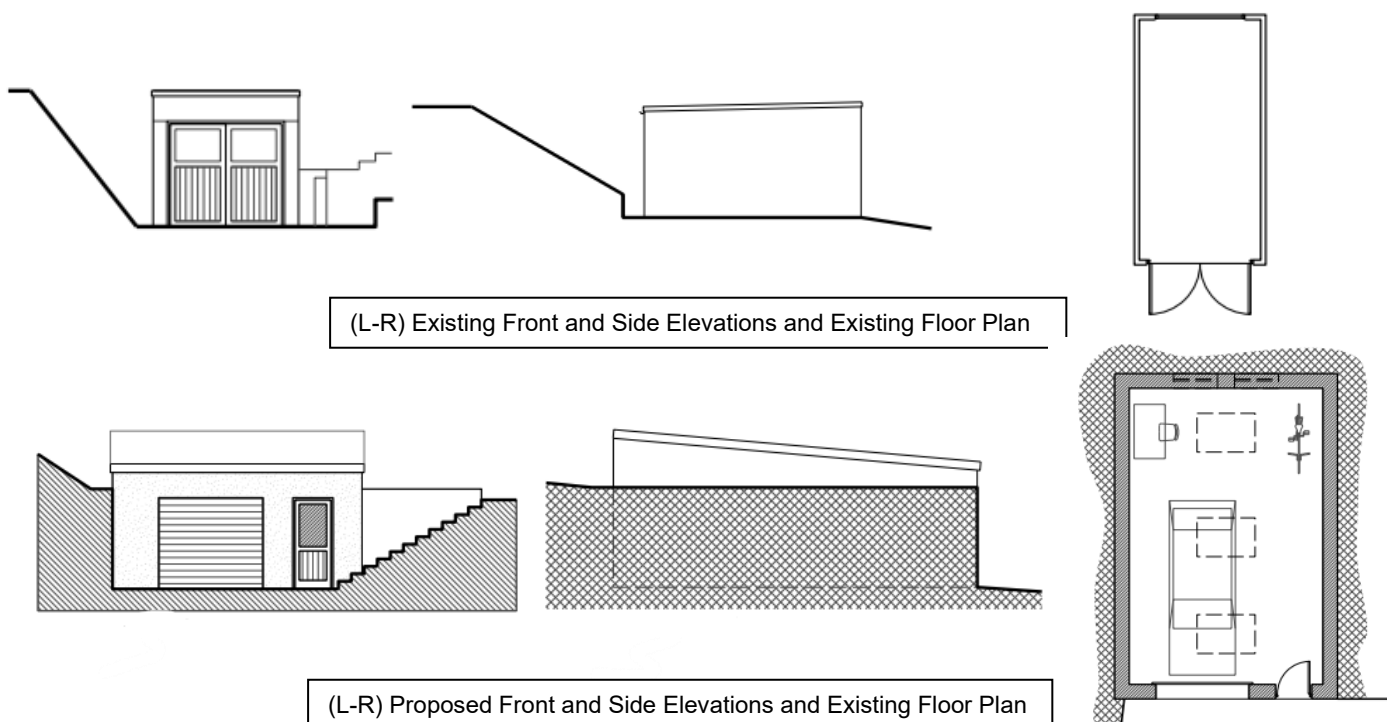
APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2026/01419
APPLICATION TYPE:	Householder planning permission
SITE ADDRESS:	Byefields, Henley Lane, Box, Corsham, SN13 8EL
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Replacement of existing garage with new garage and artist studio, and associated ground remodelling and landscaping to improve access to main house
RECOMMENDATION:	That Planning Permission be GRANTED

PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks planning permission for the replacement of a garage with a domestic outbuilding, along with associated ground remodelling and landscaping. The application is submitted on Householder application forms.

During the course of the application, a small amendment was made to the red line to include all of the residential curtilage, and certificate B was signed on the application form and notice served to the adjoining land owner given that the property has a shared access with the adjacent property. Additionally, it was concluded that the original scheme to place a first floor above the garage to provide the artist studio was deemed inappropriate and a 'disproportionate addition' in green belt terms. As a result, a revised scheme was submitted which removed the upper floor to the garage, enabling the replacement structure to remain single storey and in broadly the same location, incorporating the artist space internally within the proposed structure itself.

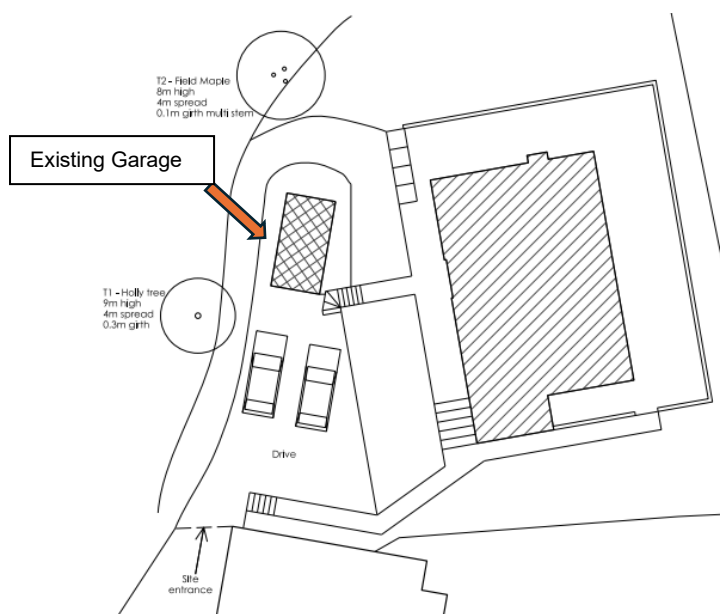
The extracts below demonstrate the existing appearance of the garage, together with the proposed appearance and layout subject to this application:



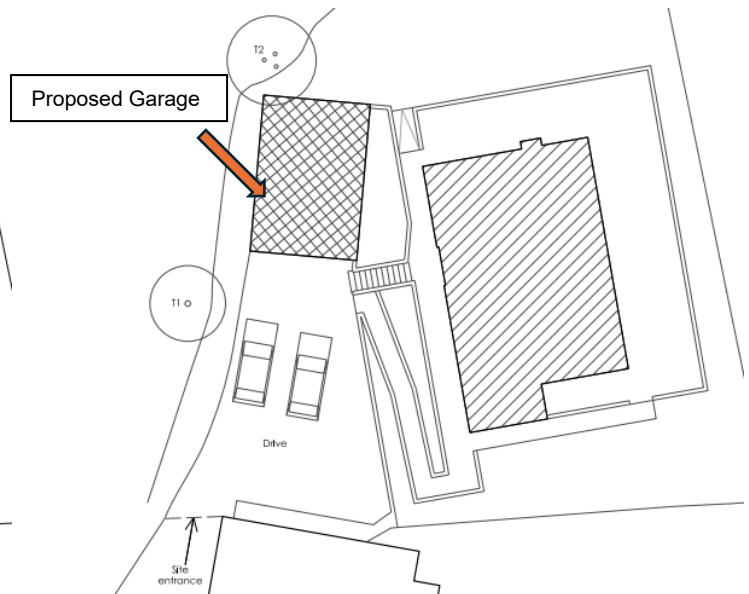
The proposed garage would broadly be positioned on the same footprint as the existing structure, however would be more recessed within its setting than the existing arrangement, as demonstrated by the extracts below, with a degree of land clearance and removal of the embankment to the side and rear of the proposed structure in order to enable the garage to integrate within its setting. Additionally, the garage would be further set in the ground to become partially 'below ground' when compared to the existing structure, with access facilitated to the garage from the creation of additional external steps due to the varied ground levels across the site.

The new building is described as to provide a multi-functional space, enabling car parking as well as space to the rear for a flexible use of an artist studio and gym. The garage structure itself would be a single storey structure with an ultra-low flat roof, and in terms of construction materials, it is proposed to utilise reconstituted stone to the external walls, with UPVC windows and doors. In terms of fenestration, a single entrance door is proposed to the front elevation, with 2 high level horizontal windows to the rear elevation, positioned just above ground level. Additionally, 3 flat rooflights are proposed across the flat roof.

Additional external landscaping and remodelling is also proposed to enable the garage to integrate within its setting and to improve the spatial relationship, appearance and usage of the land between the garage and the main dwelling.



Existing Site Layout



Proposed Site Layout

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The site known as Byefields is a detached single storey dwelling situated on Henley Lane in Box. The dwelling is the last property situated in a small linear arrangement of properties towards the outskirts of the settlement and is located both within the North Wiltshire Green Belt and the Cotswolds National Landscape. The building is situated within a generous plot, with its position recessed from the main road and open views to countryside and agricultural land to the rear. The plot has varying ground levels, with the main dwelling set at a higher level than the detached garage, accessed by external steps leading up to the dwelling. The main building is single storey and has been extended over the duration of time. The front elevation features front forward-projecting gables at opposing ends of the frontage at varying heights, with the building displaying a pitched roof. The property itself is constructed from reconstituted stone, with a tiled roof and UPVC windows and doors. Whilst the location is semi-rural, there are a number of dwellings within the vicinity of both detached and semi-detached arrangements of varying appearances, with reconstituted stone being the overarching construction material in this vicinity.



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

- North Wiltshire Green Belt
- Cotswolds National Landscape
- Negligible Risk of Ground Water Flooding
- Bat SAC Zones of Impact

PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal / Summary

N/94/02361/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Approved Date: 18/1/1995 – PROPOSED STUDIO/SUN ROOM EXTENSION EXTENSION
N/89/02518/SEC - Unknown Decision - Permitted Development Date: 22/9/1989 – SECTION 53 DETERMINATION- ENTRANCE LOBBY AND SHOWER ROOM
N/00/01772/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Approved Date: 6/9/2000 – EXTENSIONS TO DWELLING AND NEW PORCH
N/04/00370/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 16/3/2004 – EXTEND EXISTING FLAT ROOF DORMER AND ERECTION OF CONSERVATORY
N/79/00801/F - Historic apps 1974 to 1983 Decision - Approve Date: 13/8/1979 – Porch

RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Wiltshire Core Strategy

- Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping
- Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Core Policy 51: Landscape
- Core Policy 61: Transport and New Development
- Core Policy 64: Demand Management

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 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

National Design Guide

ISSUES

- Principle of development
- North Wiltshire Green Belt
- Design and Impact upon the upon the character and context of the area and impact to the National Landscape
- Residential Amenity
- Highways Impact
- Bath and BOA Bat Sac

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Box Parish Council: No objection to initial submission. The Parish Council were reconsulted on the revised plans, however no further comment was received.

Wiltshire Council Highways: No objection:

The site is located with existing shared access onto Henley Lane, an unclassified section of public highway subject to a speed limit of 60mph. There are no plans to alter the existing access with the public highway. The access to the site is located within the large private driveway.

The garage would be a direct replacement of the existing garage but slightly larger in dimensions and with an artist studio over. The garage proposed would be considered more functional in terms of dimensions to provide parking and an element of cycle storage. Access to the property would be altered to provide realigned steps and a ramp which would connect to first floor access for the space over the garage and also connect to the garden.

It would not be considered that the proposed garage would alter the way in which the access currently functions nor intensify the use of the access and therefore there would be no highway objection raised.

REPRESENTATIONS

The application was publicised by direct neighbour letter, however no comments have been received.

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 proposed development is for the replacement of a domestic outbuilding within a residential curtilage, the principle of which is established as acceptable. However, since the application site is located within the Bath and 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. That assessment is undertaken in the sub-section immediately below. The detail of the proposals must also be assessed against all other relevant policies, with assessment undertaken in the relevant sub-sections below.

Green Belt

The application site is located within the Bath and Western Wiltshire Green Belt.

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.

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.

Before then going on at paragraph 154 to identify exceptions to that policy, setting out forms of development which may be *not inappropriate* in the Green Belt (known as exceptions (a) though to (h)). Taking the description of development at face value, most relevant is exception is that set out at (d) relating to the replacement of existing buildings:

the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;

With regards to this proposal, the proposed outbuilding would remain in the same use as per the existing structure, enabling ancillary floorspace to serve the main dwelling. Whilst the replacement building and associated ground works is larger in both footprint and overall size

than the existing structure, the increase is not considered to be material when considered in the context of its discreet location immediately adjacent to the main dwelling.

However, caselaw has established that where new development is to take place in close proximity to another existing building and may be regarded as ancillary to that building, it is reasonable to regard that new development as an extension, rather than a new building in its own right. In this case, the existing and new, replacement building occupies an intimate relationship with the main house, with terracing occupying the space between them. For this reason, it is reasonably possible to also regard the proposal an extension to the dwelling and therefore necessary to also consider it against the different tests set out paragraph 154(c). This states:

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.

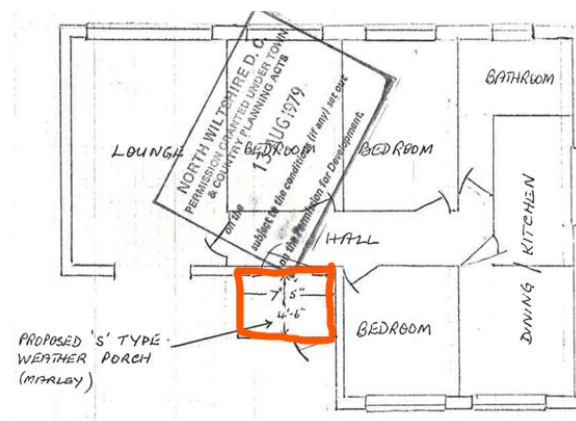
With reference to exception (c), “original building” is defined within the Annex 2: Glossary to the NPPF as a building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was built originally.

Whilst the precise date of construction of the ‘original building’ is unknown, the available planning history on this site illustrate that the main building has been subject to previous extensions and alterations. Whilst the garage is not physically attached to the main dwelling, the garage shares a clear functional and spatial relationship with it and given this close proximity, an extension to the garage can reasonably be considered as an extension to the dwellinghouse itself. In this specific scenario, it is concluded that the garage does form part of the ‘original building’ and consequently, the scale, massing and design of the proposal should be judged in the context of the combined built form, rather than treating the garage as a wholly separate structure.

Post 1978 and using available resources, the identified approved applications to this site (solely to the main building) are as follows:

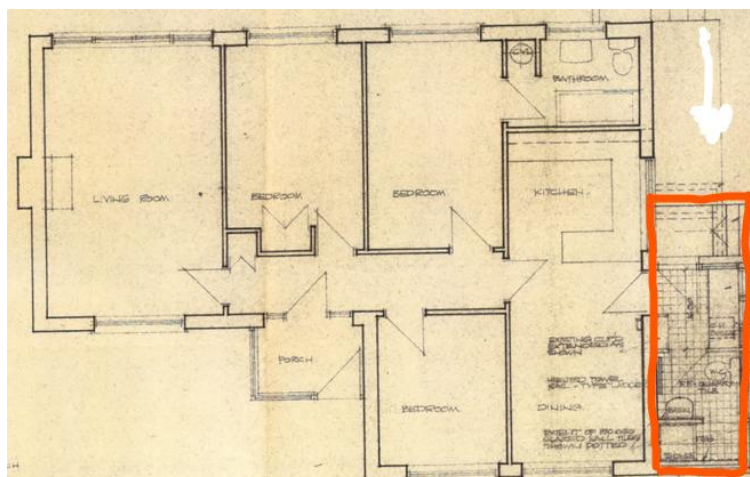
N/79/00801/F – Porch

A single storey porch was approved to the front of the building, recessed from the principal elevation (as marked in orange).



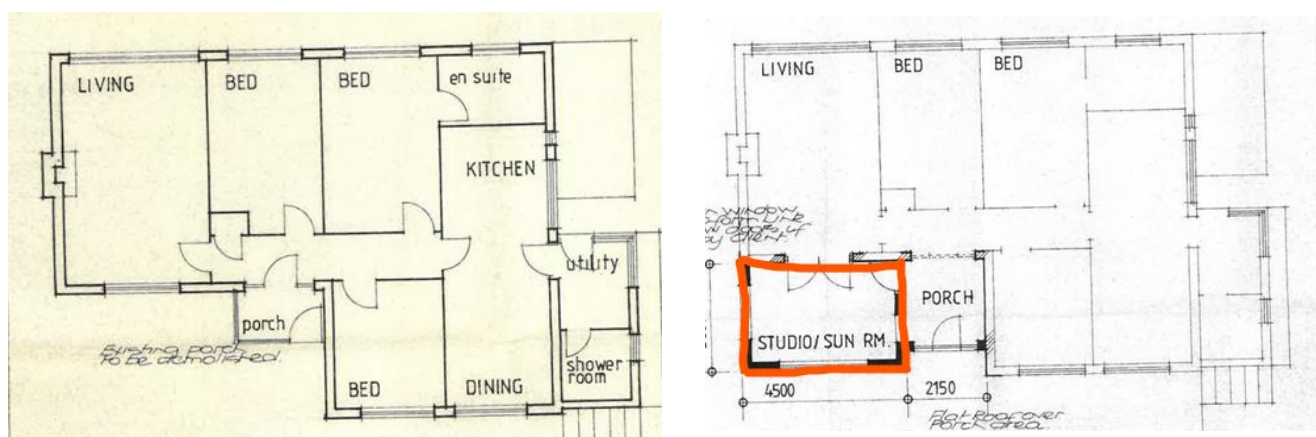
N/89/02518/SEC – Entrance lobby and shower room

This application was approved for a single storey entrance lobby and shower room to the side elevation of the property (as marked in orange), with the supporting documentation confirming this was considered Permitted Development.



N/94/02361/FUL – Proposed studio/sun room extension

This application approved a ground floor studio/sun room (as marked in orange), positioned adjacent to the approved porch on the front elevation:



Taking account of the foregoing, it is clear, therefore, that the 'original building' comprises a relatively modest bungalow, albeit with a reasonably sized garage/outbuilding and intervening terracing which can reasonably be considered to be part of the original building for the purposes of assessment against paragraph 154(c). It is also clear that the original building has been extended and altered multiple times.

The current proposal does not seek to further extend the footprint of the main dwelling, instead focusing on the replacement of the existing detached garage and the remodelling of surrounding areas within the curtilage. While it is acknowledged that the new development would not be inconsequential and that the previous additions and alterations to the dwelling

have changed the size of the original building, even in its cumulative totality, the proposal does not represent a disproportionate addition over and above the original building, thereby meeting the tests set out in exception (c) to paragraph 154.

Regarding the openness of the Green Belt, the development will take place within the existing, developed part of the site, in the same location as the existing garage, and remain closely linked to the main dwelling. The site is already clearly enclosed by strong boundary treatments, enabling the site to remain well defined from the surrounding open countryside. As a result, the development would stay contained within the existing built form and would not encroach into the open landscape, ensuring that the overall sense of openness is preserved, thereby meeting a key aim of the Green Belt designation.

In conclusion, when considered against paragraph 154(d), whilst the proposed replacement building is larger than the structure it replaces, it is not materially so, and will remain in the same use as ancillary floorspace to the existing dwelling. When considered against paragraph 154(c), even when considered in the context of previous extensions, the proposed development would not represent a disproportionate addition to the original building. In other respects, the proposal is contained within the established curtilage of the site and does not adversely affect the openness of the landscape.

Accordingly, the proposal is not considered to constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt and will meet with the requirements of section 13 to the NPPF.

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, whilst Section 13 focuses on protecting green belt land. 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 property occupies a somewhat secluded position, set back from the road and accessed via a steep driveway, resulting in the site being situated in an elevated position in comparison to the main road. The external boundary adjacent to the main road features dense and established landscaping, which helps to partially conceal the site from vantage points to the front and roadside. The elevated position of the main dwelling, coupled with the proposed garage being predominantly positioned below-ground, helps to obscure vantage points of the structure from within the immediate vicinity. Whilst the garage will wholly be visible on approach to the property, it will only be partially visible from the side and rear of the property..

The continued use of a flat roof helps to retain the overarching appearance of the previous structure, which helps to mitigate against a resulting dominant or imposing appearance when viewed in the context of the site. Its close spatial relationship with the main dwelling means that the flat roof and in-ground construction would not obscure vantage points from the frontage of the main dwelling itself.

Whilst the garage would present as a demonstrably larger structure than the existing garage, it is not considered to result in unacceptable visual impact. It is proposed to be located within broadly the same location as the existing garage, thereby the overarching character and appearance of both the main dwelling and the site as a whole is not considered to be negatively impacted. The appearance of the garage 'in ground' is considered to lessen any unacceptable visual impact when viewed from within the surrounding area, as it would not result in an incongruous appearance, or be considered imposing within the site. By incorporating matching materials to the main dwelling, this enables the proposal to align and sympathise with the existing character and appearance of both the main building and the surrounding area, whilst the location of fenestration is not considered to result in an overly glazed appearance.

Whilst rooflights are proposed across the flat roof, this is not considered to result in unacceptable light spill within this sensitive area. The garage is proposed to function flexibly and thereby would not be used in such high demand when compared to other functional rooms within the main dwelling, such as a lounge or bedroom, whilst its insertion within the ground would also help lessen any residual impact from internal lighting.

Furthermore, the proposed alterations and remodelling to the space both between the main dwelling and garage is considered acceptable, and would help the overall functionality of the space and the spatial relationship between the buildings. The altered and resulting appearance from the remodelling is not considered to result in unacceptable visual impact, and would enable an arrangement more befitting of the varying land levels across the site as a whole.

The property occupies a relatively secluded position within this location, with far reaching views within the Cotswold National Landscape to the rear and sides of the plot. Given its semi-isolated position, visibility of the garage is possible from within the surrounding area, however its 'in-ground' setting would help to reduce its overall visibility. The elevated position of the main dwelling would effectively partially conceal vantage points of the garage when viewed from the rear and from further afield given the openness of the site to the rear. Additionally, the existing mature and established landscaping to the boundary with the road also helps to effectively conceal vantage points across to the application site. The proposal as a whole is not considered to demonstrably alter the existing character and appearance of the main building, its plot or the surrounding area.

Conclusion

Overall, it is considered that the proposal would not give rise to unacceptable visual impact to the main building, 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 building, its setting and the 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.

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 in closest proximity to the application site is Meadowside, to the NE of the site. Meadowside is also a detached property which features a large detached garage building adjacent to the access driveway to the application site. Given the variation in ground levels, the application site occupies a higher position in comparison to Meadowside. When assessing the spatial and visual relationship between the properties, the positioning of the garage building serving Meadowside would help to partially conceal views to the replacement garage and remodelling works. Whilst the existing garage structure is wholly above ground, the replacement structure would be partially 'in ground', and thereby less of the structure would be visible to Meadowside. The continued incorporation of a flat roof also helps to less the overall dominance and presence of the garage within the site, whilst it is not considered to result in loss of light or overshadowing to Meadowside given its proposed positioning and built form. The only additional fenestration proposed to the front-facing elevation (visible to Meadowside) is in the form of a partially glazed door, thereby there is no perceived increase in overlooking or resulting loss of privacy. Additionally, the height and position of the existing garage building serving Meadowside will also obscure vantage points to the proposed remodelling and alterations within the plot.

Overall, the proposed development is not considered to result in an unacceptable impact upon the amenity or living conditions of surrounding residential occupiers and will therefore accord with Core Policy 57 point vii in respect of safeguarding residential amenity and Appendix D of the Wiltshire Design Guide.

Highways 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.

Whilst it is proposed to remove the existing garage structure, the replacement garage would be enlarged and would still enable off-road parking for a vehicle. Fronting the garage on the sloping driveway is additional space for off-road parking for at least 2 vehicles, and no alterations are proposed to the existing access arrangements. Wiltshire Council Highways have not objected to the application and consider the replacement garage to be more functional in terms of its dimensions for the provision of parking.

Overall, 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 Zone 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. The Bat Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) Planning Guidance for Wiltshire provides guidance on planning decisions, including householder development.

At section 7 of the guidance is a summary of the process. The site falls within a Core Area of the SAC and the proposal by virtue of being in this location may be considered to potentially impact upon a Sensitive Feature as defined by section 3.1 and 4.1 of the guidance i.e. potential roost in the building.

The development relates to the replacement of an existing garage, with associated increase in footprint. The proposal 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.

There is no evidence of roosting potential within the existing garage, and no structural features suitable for bats will be disturbed, destroyed, or modified as part of the proposal. Therefore, given the limited and localised nature of the works, the absence of direct impacts on potential roost features and the retention of all external habitat features that support bat activity, the proposal is not considered likely to give rise to any significant effects on bats or the integrity of the SAC. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal will meet with the requirements of policy CP50 to the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the Bat Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) Planning Guidance for Wiltshire (September 2015) and relevant legislative duties.

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 proposal is considered to comply with the exceptions set out in paragraphs 154(d) and 154(c) of the NPPF and is not considered to constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

In other respects, the proposed development, by reason of its scale and positioning, is considered to enable a sympathetic addition that preserves the character and appearance of the main building and its setting, remaining subservient and proportionate to the building and its plot. Additionally, given the works are fully contained within the existing built form and would not encroach into the open landscape nor cause unacceptable impacts upon the amenity or living conditions of surrounding residential occupiers.

Furthermore, the proposed works are not considered to impact on the Bat SAC Zone of Impact or interrupt views both into and out of the Cotswolds National Landscape.

Accordingly, the development is considered to comply with Sections 12 and 16 and other relevant provisions within the NPPF, Core Policies 50, 51, 57, 61 and 64 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, policies CE1, CE4, CE6 and CE7 of the Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan, together with the Wiltshire Design Guide.

As such, the application is recommended for approval, subject to the conditions set out below.

RECOMMENDATION: That Planning Permission be GRANTED subject to conditions.

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

Location Plan received 09.04.26

P02 C – Proposed Floor Plan, Roof Plan, Elevations and Site Plan received 19.06.26

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.