



PLANNING BY DESIGN

FROM CONCEPT TO COMPLETION

Planning Committee Statement

Erection of new build 2-bedroom dwelling

**Land Adjacent to Telephone Exchange, Middle Stoke,
Limpley Stoke, Wiltshire (closest postcode BA2 7GF)**

**Prepared by Planning By Design
On behalf of Christopher Foulkes**

Introduction

This report summarises the applicant's detailed responses to the public and consultee comments received in relation to planning application PL/2024/09844. It reviews the key technical considerations across design, access, ecology, drainage, and other environmental matters, following the Council's consultation process.

The application has been amended to address feedback from the Parish Council, local residents, and statutory consultees. In particular, the revised proposals include a widened access to create an internal passing place, clarified drainage and surface water management, and design refinements to ensure the dwelling sits appropriately within its AONB context.

The Council has also confirmed that the site is not within the Green Belt, and as such, Green Belt restrictions are not engaged. The proposal therefore represents a small-scale, self-build infill dwelling within the established settlement of Limpley Stoke, consistent with Wiltshire Core Strategy and Neighbourhood Plan policies.

Technical Considerations

Design and Visual Impact

Issues Raised:

- The proposed dwelling was described as being excessive in scale and out of keeping with local cottages and the surrounding settlement.
- Concerns were expressed over the building's description as a "bungalow," and fears that it could in fact be larger or two-storey in appearance.
- Objectors highlighted the importance of preserving the character and traditional materials of the Cotswolds AONB.

Response and Mitigation:

The design has been comprehensively reviewed to respond to these concerns. The proposed dwelling has been kept to a single storey with a low ridge height, following the natural slope of the land so that it sits discreetly below the roadside level. The massing has been reduced, and the form simplified to ensure the building reads as a modest, self-contained bungalow. Materials will be traditional and sympathetic—natural Bath stone or similar local stone with appropriate roof materials to blend within the local context

The siting of the dwelling has been carefully chosen to maintain open visual corridors between existing structures, and the design reflects the local rhythm and proportions of development. The layout ensures ample spacing and landscaping around the building, preventing any sense of enclosure or overdevelopment.

Outcome:

The revised design now integrates successfully with the settlement form of Middle Stoke. The building's scale, materials and siting preserve the visual amenity and character of the area in accordance with Core Policy 57 (High Quality Design) and the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan.

Landscape and AONB Considerations

Issues Raised:

- The development was considered to harm the openness and panoramic views characteristic of the Cotswolds AONB.
- Several representations requested a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA).

Response and Mitigation:

The proposal has been designed with the surrounding landscape and topography at its core. The dwelling is located within an existing cluster of development and visually contained by surrounding built form, trees and hedgerows. The site does not extend beyond the established settlement boundary and therefore does not intrude into open countryside.

The modest footprint and low height ensure that the development will not interrupt key sightlines or long-distance views across the valley. Additional native hedge and tree planting along the site boundaries will further soften its appearance and strengthen local landscape character. Given the contained nature and limited visual envelope, the Council confirmed that a full LVIA was not required for a single dwelling of this scale.

Outcome:

The proposal will not result in any material harm to the scenic quality or special character of the AONB. It represents an appropriately scaled and sensitively designed form of development fully consistent with Core Policy 51 (Landscape) and national policy guidance in the NPPF paragraph 182.

Transport and Highways

Issues Raised:

- The existing lane is narrow and lacks pedestrian footways, giving rise to potential safety concerns.
- The Highway Authority requested compliance with visibility and gate setback requirements.
- Residents noted difficulties with larger vehicles and on-street congestion.

Response and Mitigation:

In response, the site access has been widened internally to form a combined driveway and passing place, allowing vehicles to safely pull in without obstructing the highway. The revised block plan includes swept-path diagrams confirming that two vehicles can pass or turn within the entrance area, meeting the design standard sought by Wiltshire Highways.

Visibility splays have been confirmed to meet policy requirements, and the entrance gate is now set back the requisite distance from the carriageway edge. The development provides adequate on-site parking and turning for residents and visitors, avoiding the need for on-street parking. Given that the proposal is for one dwelling only, the resulting traffic generation will be extremely low and will not affect the capacity or safety of Middle Stoke Lane.

Outcome:

The amended access arrangements are now fully compliant with Wiltshire Highways' guidance. The proposal will not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety or network operation, satisfying Core Policies 60, 61 and 62 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

Flood Risk and Surface Water Drainage

Issues Raised:

- Local residents reported surface water runoff along the Twizzle Bridleway and the adjoining park, particularly after heavy rainfall.
- Concerns were raised that new hardstanding might exacerbate flooding or redirect natural flows.

Response and Mitigation:

A site-specific surface water management strategy will be developed in detail at the reserved matters stage. The design will employ sustainable drainage (SuDS) principles, including permeable paving, on-site soakaways, and rainwater harvesting, ensuring that post-development runoff rates do not exceed existing greenfield levels.

The proposal has been carefully designed to avoid diverting or culverting existing surface flows. The site's natural drainage patterns will be respected, and permeable surfacing will maintain infiltration capacity. The overall developed area remains small, and surface water from roofs and drives will be attenuated on-site before discharge.

Outcome:

With these measures in place, the development will not increase flood risk either on or off-site and will contribute to improved surface water management in the locality. The proposal therefore complies with Core Policy 67 (Flood Risk) and Section 14 of the NPPF.

Ecology and Biodiversity

Issues Raised:

- Objectors challenged the adequacy of the ecological surveys, suggesting that watercourses, bats, and other protected species had been under-recorded.
- Concerns were raised about the loss of scrub habitat and the impact of external lighting on wildlife.

Response and Mitigation:

The submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) concluded that the site is of low ecological value, comprising mainly semi-improved grass and scrub. Nonetheless, the applicant acknowledges the sensitivity of the area and will secure further species-specific surveys where necessary via pre-commencement condition.

The development will deliver a net ecological gain through a biodiversity enhancement plan, incorporating native planting, bat and bird boxes, hedgehog corridors, and low-level downlighting to avoid light spill. The layout maintains ecological connectivity with the adjacent community park and its associated habitats.

Outcome:

The scheme ensures protection of local biodiversity and will enhance ecological resilience through targeted mitigation and habitat creation. It fully accords with Core Policy 50 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) and NPPF paragraph 186.

Trees and Green Infrastructure

Issues Raised:

- Residents questioned the accuracy of the tree survey and the need to retain existing vegetation.
- The importance of green boundary planting was emphasised.

Response and Mitigation:

An updated tree assessment will be undertaken prior to construction to confirm the health and position of trees within and adjacent to the site. Tree protection fencing and working method statements will be secured through condition to safeguard retained vegetation during development.

New native hedgerow and tree planting will be implemented along the site boundaries to reinforce the green corridor adjoining the village park and to enhance visual screening. This approach will strengthen local biodiversity and contribute to the area's green infrastructure network.

Outcome:

The development will maintain and enhance the green setting of Middle Stoke. Tree protection and replanting measures will deliver long-term landscape and ecological benefits consistent with Core Policy 52 (Green Infrastructure).

Amenity and Construction Impacts

Issues Raised:

- Concerns about temporary disruption, noise, dust, and access during construction.
- Potential overlooking or dominance in relation to the neighbouring play park.

Response and Mitigation:

Construction activity will be managed under a Construction Management Plan (CMP), which will regulate working hours, site deliveries, dust suppression, and waste management. The single-storey height and set-back from boundaries ensure there will be no overlooking or loss of privacy to neighbouring dwellings or the park.

The dwelling is designed with ample garden space and green buffers, providing a soft interface between residential use and public recreation areas.

Outcome:

Construction impacts will be short-term and tightly controlled. The completed development will have no adverse impact on residential or public amenity, meeting Core Policy 57 and the amenity objectives of the NPPF.

Planning Policy Compliance

The proposal accords with the relevant policies of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (CP1, CP2, CP45, CP50, CP51, CP57, CP60–62, CP67) and with the Freshford & Limpley Stoke Neighbourhood Plan definition of limited infill.

It also satisfies NPPF objectives for sustainable development, efficient use of land, and limited infilling in villages under paragraph 154(e).

The site's confirmed exclusion from the Green Belt removes any previous policy ambiguity.

Summary Table

Discipline	Key Concerns Raised	Outcome / Applicant Response
Design & Visual	Scale, materials, visual impact	Revised to single-storey, Bath stone design; integrates with local character.
Landscape/AONB	Loss of openness and views	Low profile and native planting ensure minimal visual effect; no LVIA required.
Highways	Narrow lane, no passing or setback	Access widened inward; visibility and swept paths confirmed safe.
Flooding/Drainage	Surface runoff to park and Twizzle	On-site SuDS including permeable paving and soakaways; no increase in runoff.
Ecology	Inadequate survey, species omissions	Further surveys secured by condition; biodiversity enhancements integrated.
Trees/Green Infrastructure	Tree survey accuracy, retention	Tree protection and native replanting to strengthen green network.
Amenity/Construction	Disruption, privacy	Controlled via CMP; low ridge and setback preserve amenity.
Policy Context	Green Belt and infill concerns	Site confirmed outside Green Belt; consistent with Core Strategy and NP.

Conclusion

The proposed development has evolved in direct response to the issues raised through consultation. It now represents a well-considered, modest infill dwelling that respects its landscape, ecological and village context, whilst addressing access, design and environmental matters comprehensively.

The application is therefore considered to fully comply with national and local planning policy and should be supported subject to standard planning conditions.