

APPLICATION FOR FULL-PLANNING PERMISSION

CASE OFFICER REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2026/03261
APPLICATION TYPE:	Full planning permission
SITE ADDRESS:	Tinkers Lane Surgery, Tinkers Field, Royal Wootton Bassett, Swindon, SN4 7AT
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Replacement of a failing glazed lean-to structure with a solid brick-and-tile extension (in the same footprint and built to the same height) at front of surgery.
RECOMMENDATION:	That Planning Permission is GRANTED subject to conditions.

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The application site relates to Tinkers Lane Surgery, a General Practitioner (GP) Surgery situated within the settlement boundary of Royal Wootton Bassett (RWB).

The site is bounded by residential development to the north-west, north-east and south-east. To the south-west lies the associated car park, beyond which residential development continues. It lies adjacent to the boundary of the RWB Conservation Area to the southwest, and there is a Grade II listed building, 66 High Street, approximately 61.5 metres to the northwest of the site.

The site is served by its own car park directly adjacent to the southwest, and access is served from Mitchell Close to the southwest. There is a Public Rights of Way footpath WBAS23 directly to the southwest providing connection from Mitchell Close to High Street to the northwest. According to the Council's mapping data, there are two individual trees to the southwest of the building, however, these no longer appear to exist.

Based on the latest national flood mapping data updated by the Environmental Agency in 2025, the site lies within Flood Zone 1 from fluvial flooding. On the northwestern area of the site, outside of the existing building, the area is identified to be at risk of surface water flooding at 0.1% AEP extent. According to the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment in 2024, the site is identified to be at risk of groundwater flooding to surface and subsurface assets.

It is outside but adjacent to the designated Town Centre of Policy 2 of RWB Neighbourhood Plan, and the designated Town Centre Secondary Frontage of Policy R2 of the North Wiltshire Local Plan.

PROPOSAL

This is a full planning application seeking for the replacement of the glazed lean-to structure with a solid brick and tile extension of the same footprint and height on the front (southwest) elevation of the building. The proposed materials would be of interlocking tiles and facing brick to match those of the existing building. Furthermore, two windows are to replace the full glazing on each side of the entrance doors. The position and design of the front entrance door, two rooflights, and its side elevations would remain the same as the existing extension.

PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal / Summary
N/92/00085/FUL - Extensions to existing surgery extensions to surgery – Approved 2/3/1992
N/01/01748/FUL - Extension and alterations to health centre, provision of car parking, landscaping and footpaths – Approved 7/11/2001
N/02/00201/FUL - Amendment to 01.01748.ful - extensions to health centre – Approved 28/3/2002

RELEVANT LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

National Planning Policy:

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

Development Plan:

The development plan for Wiltshire comprises the *Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS)* (adopted January 2015) and any made neighbourhood plans, which remains the principal statutory planning document guiding development across the county. In line with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Though the development plan is considered as a whole, those parts deemed to be particularly relevant to this application are listed below:

The adopted *Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS)*, with particular regard to:

- Core Policy 1 Settlement Strategy;
- Core Policy 2 Delivery Strategy;
- Core Policy 19 Spatial Strategy Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Area;
- 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 67 Flood Risk.

‘Saved Policies’ of the North Wiltshire Local Plan

- Policy R2 (Town centre secondary frontage areas)

Draft Wiltshire Local Plan Policies

At Full Council on 19 May, 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 the application.

Neighbourhood Plan:

Royal Wootton Bassett Neighbourhood Development Plan 2017-2026 ('made' April 2018):

- Policy 1: Services and Facilities
- Policy 7: Design

Supplementary Planning Documents and other Guidance:

None relevant.

ISSUES

The main issues that need to be addressed in this case include:

- Whether the development is acceptable in principle (CP 1 and 2)
- Whether the scheme constitutes high quality design (CP 57)
- Whether the scheme would have an acceptable impact upon the reasonable living conditions of the adjoining occupants (CP 57)
- Whether the scheme would preserve or enhance the historic environment (CP 58)
- Whether the site can be adequately drained without increasing flood risk elsewhere (CP 67)
- Whether there would be any harmful impacts upon protected species or priority habitats (CP 50)

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

The views of consultees are material considerations in the determination of the application. However, the decision-maker must exercise their own planning judgement. Where consultees raise concerns or recommend conditions, these have been considered and are addressed within the assessment section of this report.

WC Rights of Way: No comments received.

WC Conservation: No comment.

WC Arboriculture: No objection.

Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council: No objection.

REPRESENTATIONS

In accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), the application was publicised by way of:

- Neighbour notification letters sent to adjoining and nearby properties;
- A site notice displayed near the site;

- An advertisement placed in the local press.

These methods were used to inform interested parties and provide a period of 21 days for comments to be submitted.

No representations were received during the consultation period.

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 Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) and, where applicable, any made Neighbourhood Plans. Consideration has also been given to the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as a material consideration in the assessment.

The assessment below considers each of the main issues identified above. Each topic is assessed in turn with reference to the relevant policy context, the evidence submitted, consultee responses, and all other material considerations, before a conclusion is reached.

Principle of Development

Policy Context

Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy of the WCS establishes a hierarchy of settlements to guide where development should be focused. The policy prioritises growth in:

- Principal Settlements (e.g., Salisbury, Chippenham, Trowbridge) – main focus for strategic growth.
- Market Towns – support local services and employment; suitable for sustainable development.
- Local Service Centres – smaller towns and villages with a range of services; limited development supported.
- Large and Small Villages – development should be limited and respond to local needs.
- Outside the defined settlements – development is strictly controlled and generally not supported unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Core Policy 2: Delivery Strategy of the WCS sets out how development will be distributed and delivered across Wiltshire. The policy emphasises:

- Sustainable patterns of growth, reducing the need to travel and supporting local services.
- Development should be plan-led, aligning with the settlement strategy and supported by infrastructure.
- Windfall development (not allocated in plans) must still comply with the principles of sustainable development.

- Development outside settlement boundaries is generally not permitted, unless it meets specific policy exceptions (as set out in paragraph 4.25 of the WCS).

Together, CP1, CP2 and CP19 ensure that new development is strategically located, sustainable, and supports the character and function of Wiltshire's communities.

Assessment and Conclusion

The principle of alterations within existing buildings is considered acceptable, providing those proposals are compliant with the requirements of relevant policies within the development plan.

Design and Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

Policy Context

Core Policy 57 of the WCS requires high-quality design that:

- Enhances local character.
- Responds to the natural, historic, and built environment.
- Retains important features (e.g., trees, hedges).
- Supports sustainable construction and compatibility with surrounding uses.
- Creates safe, legible, and accessible spaces.

Section 12 of the NPPF emphasises design that is:

- Visually attractive.
- Functionally effective.
- Contributes to the quality of the built environment.

The Wiltshire Design Guide encourages sensitivity to local character, materials, and architectural styles and supports modern living standards while maintaining aesthetic and functional quality.

Building for a Healthy Life Framework promotes healthy, inclusive, and sustainable places. The document encourages:

- Walkability.
- Access to green space.
- Active design principles for well-being.

Policy 7 of the RWBNP requires all development to respect local character.

Assessment

In assessing this aspect of the proposal, regard has been had to the site context, the details of the proposed development, the relevant development plan policies, and all other material considerations. The key considerations are set out below.

The proposal seeks to replace the existing glazed extension on the front (south-west) elevation with a new extension of the same footprint, scale, height and overall massing. The proposed extension would broadly replicate the existing form and appearance, retaining the existing appearance of the side elevations, the existing entrance arrangement, sloped roof form, and the position of the two rooflights. The principal changes relate to the external materials, with

the extensive glazing of the existing structure being replaced by predominantly brickwork and roof tiles to match those of the main building, together with two modest windows positioned either side of the entrance.

Given that the proposed materials would closely match those used on the existing building, the development is not considered to result in any significant harm to the character or appearance of the dwelling or the surrounding area, where similar materials are prevalent. Furthermore, as the replacement extension would maintain the existing footprint, scale, roof form and massing, it would remain a subordinate element of the host building. Consequently, the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area and would not result in any unacceptable visual harm.

Conclusion

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposal would be in accordance with Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, Policy 7 of the RWB Neighbourhood Plan and the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

Impact on Heritage Assets

Policy Context

From the point of view of the historic environment the main statutory tests are set out within the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Section 72(1) of the Act requires the Council to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of designated Conservation Areas. The NPPF outlines government policy for planning.

Chapter 16 of the NPPF 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' sets out the Government's high-level policies concerning heritage and sustainable development. In particular:

Paragraph 208 requires LPAs should “avoid or minimise any conflict” between the heritage asset's conservation (which includes achieving its optimum viable use) and any aspect of a proposal.

Paragraph 210 requires local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable new uses and of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraphs 212 requires “great weight” to be given to an asset's conservation “irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.”

Paragraph 213 advises that harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset should require “clear and convincing justification”.

Paragraphs 213-215(214-216) require a balanced approach with any harm which would be caused being weighed against the potential public benefits which might be achieved.

Paragraph 220 advises that not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm or less than substantial harm as appropriate.

The Planning Practice Guidance provides guidance on interpreting the NPPF.

The Council's Core Strategy Policy CP58: 'Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment' requires that designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner appropriate to their significance and encourages proposals which improve the condition of heritage assets at risk.

The Council's Core Strategy CP 57: 'Ensuring high quality design' requires a high quality of design in all new developments. The policy requires applicants to "demonstrate how the proposal will make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire through (amongst other things) responding to the value of the natural and historic environment and being sympathetic to and conserving historic buildings and landscapes. Development is required to respond positively to the existing in terms of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, building line, plot size, elevational design, materials, streetscape and rooflines to effectively integrate the building into its setting.

Policy 7 of the RWBNP requires all development to conserve or enhance heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.

Assessment

In assessing this aspect of the proposal, regard has been had to the site context, the details of the proposed development, the relevant development plan policies, and all other material considerations. The key considerations are set out below.

The proposal lies outside but adjacent to the RWB Conservation Area, therefore, the application site is considered to sit within the setting of the Conservation Area. Given the nature of the proposal being a replacement, with the materials matching the existing of the host building, it is not considered that the proposal would result in any harm to the setting of the Conservation Area. However, given the above, it is considered reasonable and necessary to impose a compliance condition to ensure that the proposed external materials would match the existing of those on the host dwelling.

Any identified listed buildings are of a sufficient distance with intervening buildings and existing landscape features that the site would not be considered to be within the setting of, nor would the nature of the proposal being a replacement in scale, affect the significance of these heritage assets.

In accordance with the NPPF, any identified harm to the significance of heritage assets must be clearly categorised as either substantial harm or less than substantial harm, and weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

In any event, even if harm were identified, sufficient evidence has been submitted to demonstrate that the existing extension is in a poor state of repair. The replacement extension is therefore necessary to ensure the continued operation and viability of the existing surgery.

The proposal would facilitate the ongoing provision of healthcare services from the site, thereby supporting the health and wellbeing needs of the local community. The retention and continued functioning of a valued community healthcare facility constitutes a clear public benefit, to which significant weight should be afforded in the planning balance. As such, any identified harm would be outweighed by the substantial public benefits arising from the proposal.

Conclusion

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposal would not result in any harm to the significance of the identified heritage assets. Therefore, the proposal is considered in accordance with the Core Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, Policy 7 of the RWB Neighbourhood Plan, Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

Amenity

Policy Context

Core Policy 57 (Point vii) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires development to respect the amenity of existing occupants and ensure appropriate amenity levels for future residents.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly Paragraph 135, reinforces the need for development to provide a high standard of amenity for both existing and future users.

Assessment

Given the proposal includes the replacement of the existing extension with one of the same footprint and scale, and would remain single storey, it is not considered that there would be any harm in terms of overlooking, overbearing, overshadowing impacts upon the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. The proposal would therefore preserve existing levels of residential amenity.

Whilst construction activities associated with the development may result in some temporary noise and disturbance, such impacts would be limited to the construction phase and are not considered to be of a nature, duration or severity that would justify refusal of planning permission.

Conclusion

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposal would be in accordance with Core Policy 57 (point vii) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, and the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

Ecology and Biodiversity

Policy Context

The ecological impact of development is a key planning consideration, especially for larger schemes. Proposals must assess and address potential effects on:

- Protected species
- Priority habitats
- Ecological networks
- Green and blue infrastructure

Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires development to:

- Avoid harm to ecological assets.
- Deliver measurable Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), in line with the Environment Act 2021.
- Support habitat restoration and connectivity.
- Integrate biodiversity into site design.

The Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy (2022–2030) promotes nature recovery, ecosystem services, and habitat connectivity through development.

Unless exempt, National policy requires a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) for major developments, demonstrated via:

- Biodiversity Metric calculations
- Ecological assessments (e.g. PEAs, Phase 1 surveys, protected species surveys)

Assessment

In assessing this aspect of the proposal, regard has been had to the site context, the details of the proposed development, the relevant development plan policies, and all other material considerations. The key considerations are set out below.

The proposal is considered to fall within the *de minimis* exemption from the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements. Nevertheless, as required by the regulations, any approval must include an Informative reminding the applicants of the biodiversity net gain requirements. In addition, the proposal is for the replacement of an existing extension with one of the same footprint, scale and massing, therefore it is not considered that the proposal would result in any unacceptable harm to the biodiversity.

Conclusion

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposal would be exempt from BNG requirements and would not result in any unacceptable ecological harm, in accordance with Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the relevant provisions of the NPPF

Trees and Arboricultural Impact

Policy Context

Core Policy 51 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to protect and enhance landscape character, including important trees and woodland features.

Assessment

The application site contains a mature tree to the west. Furthermore, according to the Council's mapping data, there are two individual trees to the southwest of the building outside the site, situated on the car park serving the surgery, however, these no longer appear to exist.

Given the site lies adjacent to the RWB Conservation Area, where any important landscape features within are required by policy to be protected, the Council's Arboricultural Officer has been consulted. No objection has been raised, noting that the proposal only concerns the replacement of an existing extension, and as such would not result in any harm to these trees.

Conclusion

It is considered that the proposal would not result in harm to trees of amenity value.

Flood Risk and Drainage

Policy Context

Core Policy 67 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and NPPF paragraphs 170–182 require:

- Avoidance of increased flood risk.
- Use of appropriate mitigation measures.
- Application of the sequential and exception tests for developments in Flood Zones 2 or 3.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are required for all major developments and must:

- Manage runoff near its source.
- Improve water quality.
- Support biodiversity and amenity.
- Be integrated into the site layout and green infrastructure.

Assessment

In assessing this aspect of the proposal, regard has been had to the site context, the details of the proposed development, the relevant development plan policies, and all other material considerations. The key considerations are set out below.

Part of the northwest area of the site is occupied by an area identified by the national flood mapping data to be subject to risk of surface water flooding at 0.1% AEP extent. According to the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment in 2024, the site is identified to be at risk of groundwater flooding to surface and subsurface assets.

Given the nature of the proposal being a replacement with the same footprint, it is not considered that the proposal would result in increased flood risk on the site or elsewhere.

Conclusion

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposal would be in accordance with Core Policy 67 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

The principle of development is considered acceptable when assessed against the settlement strategy of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the emerging Local Plan.

The proposal is broadly compliant with relevant local and national planning policies in respect of design, scale, residential amenity, heritage, flood risk and drainage, and ecology impacts, subject to the recommended conditions.

The development would deliver clear benefits, including the retention and continued functioning of a community healthcare facility, which weigh positively in the overall planning balance.

No material considerations have been identified that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh these benefits or indicate that permission should be refused, having regard to the assessment above.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered acceptable in planning terms and in accordance with the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the National Planning Policy Framework, and all other relevant material considerations.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Planning Permission be GRANTED, subject to conditions.

All conditions imposed have been assessed against the six tests set out in paragraph 56 of the National Planning Policy Framework and are considered to be necessary, relevant to planning, relevant to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects.

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:

Application form & Certificate; received 21 May 2026
Location Plan; TQRQM26139121610382; received 21 May 2026
Block Plan; received 21 May 2026
Proposed Elevations and Ground Floor Plan; 26/3423/01; received 21 May 2026

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

3. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match in material, colour and texture those used in the existing building.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.

INFORMATIVES:

Building Regulations

Any alterations to the approved plans, brought about by compliance with Building Regulations or any other reason must first be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority before commencement of work.

Biodiversity Net Gain

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition (biodiversity gain condition) that development may not begin unless:

(a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and

(b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan, if one is required in respect of this permission would be Wiltshire Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. For further information on exempt developments please refer to:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments>

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because one or more of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements is considered to apply.