

Garden structures at
Radnor House
The Headlands
Downton
Wiltshire
SP5 3HJ

Design and Access / Heritage Statement

S J Egford Bsc (Hons) BArch

August 2026

1. Introduction

This Design & Access Statement accompanies a retrospective householder planning application for the installation of a timber garden shed and a timber pergola within the rear garden of Radnor House, Downton, Wiltshire. Both structures were erected to support normal domestic use of the property, providing secure storage and improved outdoor amenity space.

The statement explains the design rationale, materials, siting, and how the development respects the character of the property, neighbouring amenity, and the wider setting within Downton.

2. Site & Context

- Property: Radnor House is a residential dwelling within the settlement of Downton, Wiltshire.
- Setting: The area is characterised by mixed-age residential properties with varied garden structures, boundary treatments, and domestic outbuildings.
- Visibility: The rear garden is not visible from the public realm (at ground level), screened by an existing boundary wall.
- Neighbouring context: Surrounding properties feature sheds, pergolas, greenhouses, and other small domestic structures typical of village gardens.

3. Description of Development

3.1 Garden Shed

- Dimensions: 2.7m × 2.1m × 2.1m high.
- Construction: Timber framed, timber cladding, felt roof.
- Colour/finish: Stained timber.
- Purpose: Secure storage for garden tools, bicycles, and domestic equipment.
- Location: Positioned against the rear boundary adjacent to the existing garage, away from neighbouring windows and not visible from the street.

3.2 Pergola

- Dimensions: 6.5m × 3.5m × 2.4m high.
- Construction: Pressure-treated timber posts and beams.
- Roof: Translucent roof sheets.
- Purpose: Outdoor seating and shade structure for domestic enjoyment.
- Location: Adjacent to existing boundary wall which forms enclosure on 2 sides

4. Design Principles

4.1 Scale & Massing

Both structures are modest in scale, subordinate to the main dwelling, and consistent with typical domestic garden features found throughout Downton.

4.2 Materials

Natural timber was selected to ensure the structures blend into the garden setting and weather sympathetically over time. Materials are durable, sustainable, and visually unobtrusive.

4.3 Appearance

The shed and pergola are simple, functional garden structures. Their appearance is low-key and appropriate for a residential garden environment.

5. Siting & Layout

- The shed is located against the southern boundary between the house and garage minimising visual impact and preserving usable garden space.
- The pergola sits in the north-eastern corner of the garden, again preserving usable garden space.
- Neither structure affects access, parking, or the principal elevation of the dwelling.
- The siting avoids overshadowing or overbearing impact on neighbouring properties.

6. Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

- No loss of light: The structures are low-height and positioned away from neighbouring windows.
- No loss of privacy: They do not introduce elevated platforms or overlooking positions.
- No noise impact: Use is domestic and low-intensity.
- No overbearing effect: Timber structures of modest height and open form (pergola) ensure minimal visual impact.

Given the enclosed nature of the rear garden, the development does not materially affect neighbouring amenity.

7. Access Considerations

The development does not alter access to the dwelling.

- No changes to pedestrian or vehicular access.
- No impact on emergency access.
- The pergola and shed are accessible via the existing garden.

8. Planning Policy Compliance

The proposal aligns with:

- Wiltshire Core Strategy – respecting local character, maintaining amenity, and supporting sustainable domestic improvements.
- NPPF (2023) – small-scale domestic development that is proportionate and enhances the enjoyment of the home.
- Downton Neighbourhood Plan – maintaining the character of residential areas and supporting appropriate home improvements.
- Downton Conservation Area Appraisal – maintaining the domestic garden character and protecting public views

The structures are typical domestic garden features and do not conflict with any local design guidance.

9. Heritage Context

Downton Conservation Area

Downton Conservation Area is designated for its:

- Historic linear village form along The Borough and High Street
- Medieval street pattern and long narrow plots
- Mixture of historic cottages, farmsteads, and later infill
- Strong relationship with the River Avon and water meadows
- Traditional materials including brick, timber, thatch, slate, and clay tiles
- Mature boundary vegetation and enclosed rear gardens that contribute to the village's rural character

Rear gardens in Downton are typically private, enclosed, and not visible from public viewpoints, forming part of the domestic landscape behind the historic street frontage.

Significance of Radnor House and Its Setting

Radnor House contributes positively to the Conservation Area through:

- Its traditional domestic scale
- Its garden setting, consistent with the historic burgage-style plots
- Its boundary treatments and mature planting, which reinforce the enclosed, green character typical of Downton's rear garden environment

The rear garden is not publicly visible, and forms part of the private domestic realm that is characteristic of the Conservation Area's internal structure.

Impact on Conservation Area Character

The shed and pergola:

- Are small-scale, subordinate to the dwelling
- Use traditional materials that sit comfortably within a garden setting
- Are located entirely within the private rear garden, with no visibility from the public realm (except the very top of the pergola)
- Do not alter the historic street frontage or the wider village character
- Reflect the long-established pattern of domestic garden structures behind Downton's historic buildings and reflect typical domestic garden structures found throughout the village
- Preserve the character and appearance of the Downton Conservation Area
- Do not affect public views or historic street patterns
- Do not harm the architectural significance of Radnor House

As such, the development preserves the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Impact on Architectural Significance of Radnor House

The structures:

- Do not attach to or alter the historic fabric of the dwelling
- Do not compete with or dominate the main building
- Are visually recessive and clearly ancillary

There is no harm to the architectural significance of Radnor House.

Impact on Setting & Views

- The rear garden is not visible from public viewpoints, footpaths, or highways
- The structures are well screened
- No important views, vistas, or heritage relationships are affected

The development has no impact on the public appreciation of the Conservation Area.

10. Justification for Retrospective Nature

The works were undertaken in good faith as minor domestic garden structures, commonly considered permitted development. Upon review, the applicant seeks retrospective permission to ensure full compliance with planning requirements and to regularise the development.

11. Conclusion

The shed and pergola at Radnor House represent modest, well-designed domestic additions that:

- Respect the character of the property and surrounding conservation area
- Have no adverse impact on neighbouring amenity
- Use appropriate materials and scale
- Support normal domestic use
- Are consistent with similar garden structures across Downton

The applicant therefore respectfully requests that Wiltshire Council grants retrospective planning permission.