

SHANAWAY, MAPLE DRIVE, FIRSDOWN

Proposed garden alterations including the construction of a retaining wall
(part retrospective).

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

August 2026

Statement checked by Matthew Holmes, BA (Hons), MA MRTPI

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Mr A Howden in support of a part retrospective planning application for garden alterations including the formation of a retaining wall at 'Shanaway', Maple Drive, Firsdown, Wiltshire. The garden alterations were/are to be undertaken in order to create a more useable garden area at the rear of the house.
- 1.2 This Planning Statement explains the design approach to the proposed development and its compliance with national and local planning policy. The Statement demonstrates how the proposals comply with national planning policy and local development plan requirements in that they reflect the local patterns of development and neighbouring buildings in terms of layout and siting, height and scale, bulk and scale, materials and landscaping. The proposed development creates a more useable garden area without impacting upon the character of the area or the amenities of adjacent properties.

2. Site Context

- 2.1 The application site is located on the west side of Maple Drive, a cul-de-sac leading off from Firs Road. Maple Drive is comprised of bungalows on plots of various sizes and the application property is likewise a bungalow.



Aerial view of the site (www.google.co.uk)

- 2.2 The property is a modern bungalow finished in brick and with a tiled roof. To the front of the building is a parking area and driveway alongside the front garden, and to the rear is a garden comprising lawn and shrubs. The site slopes upwards from front to back with an overall levels difference across the site of approximately 2m.



Front elevation of Shanaway (www.google.co.uk)

- 2.3 The existing building is not a designated or non-designated heritage asset and there are no listed buildings within the immediate vicinity of the site. The site shows on the Environment Agency website as being within flood zone 1 and with no risk of flooding from any source. There is no significant landscaping within the application site itself although there are trees in adjacent gardens.

3. Relevant Planning History

- 3.1 Planning permission has previously been refused for the retention of the landscaping as it currently stands under application no.PL/2025/08714. The reason for refusal was...

The submitted structural assessment confirms that the retrospective retaining wall as constructed, is inadequate to provide long-term stability and requires substantial additional works to achieve an acceptable solution. Furthermore, there remains a paucity of information as to how the required strengthening works would be carried out and what form the final, stable solution would take.

In the absence of such information, the Local Planning Authority cannot be satisfied that the development would not give rise to ground instability or adversely affect the stability of neighbouring land, and thereby have a likely unacceptable impact on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, by reason of risk and uncertainty associated with land stability.

Consequently, the development, by reason of the extent of excavation works and the construction of a retaining wall adjacent to the shared boundary with the neighbouring property at No. 1 Maple Drive, fails to demonstrate that the land can be adequately and safely retained. As a result, based on the current information submitted, the Local Planning Authority must conclude that the proposal is likely to have an adverse impact on general amenity, in conflict with aims Core Policy 57 (vii) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and the principles of the Wiltshire Design Guide.

- 3.2 The structural assessment that was submitted in support of the previous application identifies that the retaining wall that has been constructed, whilst not impacting on the structural integrity of adjacent properties, could give rise to localised failure in the future as it has inadequate foundations. The report does identify a proposed solution to strengthen the wall but the Applicant had not committed to its implementation at the time when the previous application was determined.

5. Relevant Planning Policies

National Planning Policy

- 5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), August 2026 confirms that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Sustainable development is defined as encompassing economic, social and environmental factors. The economic involves building a strong, responsive and competitive economy. The social role entails supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations and by creating a high-quality built environment. The environmental role requires protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change.
- 5.2 Policy S3 The NPPF confirms that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Policy S4 goes on to confirm that 'Development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects'.
- 5.3 Policy DP3: Key principles for well-designed places states that development proposals should respond to their context so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings, the use of materials and architectural features and the integration of heritage assets

Local Planning Policy

- 5.4 In this instance, the Local Development Plan comprises the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015), Salisbury Neighbourhood Development Plan (2025) and SPDs; Salisbury Design and Advertising Guide (2025), Wiltshire Design Guidance (2024).
- 5.5 Core Strategy Policy 1: Settlement Strategy – sets out the settlement strategy for new development in the District. It identifies where sustainable development will take place to improve the lives of all those who live and work in Wiltshire. These comprise Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large and Small Villages.
- 5.6 Core Strategy Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design and Place-Shaping – requires a high standard of design for all new developments, including the creation of a strong sense of place

through drawing on the local context, responding positively to existing townscape and landscape features and being complementary to the locality. Proposals are to make efficient use of the land whilst taking account of the characteristics of the site and having regard to the compatibility of adjoining uses and the amenities of existing and future occupants.

6. Planning Considerations

- 6.1 The existing use of the application site is residential and the prevailing land use in the area is also residential. The proposed garden alterations and extensions do not change the use of the property and are in keeping with the existing residential use of the site.
- 6.2 The garden works involved the excavation of land at the immediate rear of the site to provide a level patio area. A retaining wall was built around the edge of the excavated area. The works, in being almost entirely at or below the original ground level, and located at the rear of the house, are not visually prominent viewed from outside of the site or from the adjacent gardens. Nor do the alterations give rise to any loss of privacy or amenity for the adjacent homes. In that sense the works are compliant with the design and amenity requirements of Core Policy 57.
- 6.3 The retaining wall was constructed by a party in the belief that planning permission was not required. Therefore, the previous application was submitted retrospectively. In the course of assessing the application the planning officer requested a structural report which was duly undertaken and identified a need for remedial works to strengthen the wall for the longer term. It should be stressed that the report confirms that the wall is *'inadequate to provide long term stability as a retaining structure'*, ie that it is not at risk of immediate collapse but that remedial strengthening works are required in order to provide for its longer term structural integrity.
- 6.4 In response to the LPA's refusal of the previous refusal this application proposes to undertake the recommended remedial works as shown in the diagram attached at paragraph 4.1. Thus, the wall will be strengthened as recommended by the qualified structural surveyor. In doing, reason for refusal no.1 of application no.PL/2025/08714 will be addressed in that;
- The additional works necessary to achieve an acceptable solution to the wall's longer term stability will be undertaken. The applicant is happy to accept a condition requiring those works to be undertaken within 12 months of planning permission being granted.

- With the strengthening works undertaken as proposed the works will not give rise to ground instability or adversely affect the stability of neighbouring land. The living conditions of neighbouring occupiers will therefore be unaffected.
- With the strengthening works undertaken as proposed the land can be adequately and safely retained, satisfying the requirements of Core Policy 57 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

7. Conclusion

7.1 In accordance with the NPPF consideration needs to be given as to whether the proposals constitute sustainable development. In this case the proposals are sustainable for the following reasons:

- The proposals are of an appropriate design and scale to preserve the character and appearance of the area and amenities of adjacent properties.
- The proposals create an improved amenity space to meet the needs of the Applicant.

7.2 It is therefore considered that the planning justifications and design rationale identified in this Planning Statement demonstrate that the proposed development is acceptable.