

## **APPLICATION FOR HOUSEHOLDER PLANNING PERMISSION OFFICER DELEGATED REPORT**

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| <b>APPLICATION REFERENCE:</b> | PL/2026/03309                                                                        |
| <b>APPLICATION TYPE:</b>      | Householder planning permission                                                      |
| <b>SITE ADDRESS:</b>          | Heath Farm Cottage, Garsdon, Malmesbury,<br>SN16 9NW                                 |
| <b>DESCRIPTION:</b>           | Construction of single storey rear extension and<br>removal of balcony and staircase |
| <b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>        | APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS                                                              |

### **PROPOSAL**

Revised plans were received 26 August 2026 to address concerns raised by the case officer; the changes represent a reduced scheme and minor design changes which did not necessitate re-publicising the application.

The application seeks planning permission for a single-storey rear extension and the removal of an existing balcony and staircase. The proposed extension would have stonework walls and a flat roof, uPVC fenestration, timber profile fascia, and prismoid roof lanterns. Internally, it would provide a large kitchen/living area with a utility and pantry. An existing timber balcony would be removed and a metal Juliet balcony rail installed around existing first-floor doors. No changes to existing access, parking and services are proposed.

### **SITE DESCRIPTION**

The application site is a detached two-storey dwellinghouse known as Heath Farm Cottage. It probably dates to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century; it has walls of limestone rubble, a gabled stone slate roof, uPVC fenestration under timber lintels, and surrounding gardens. It is in the open countryside of Lea, in the Garsdon and Cleverton designated Neighbourhood Plan Area. Its rural setting is characterised by the foliage, open fields and low-density, locally distinctive built form. Relevant designations and constraints include a public footpath (LECL21) running to the northeast of the site, Flood Zone 1 with no future climate impact from surface water identified<sup>1</sup>.

### **PLANNING HISTORY**

N/11/00876/FUL - Two Storey Extension to North West Elevation (APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS 27/4/2011).

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<sup>1</sup> Flood Map for Planning

## **RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE**

Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS):

- Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy (CP1)
- Core Policy 2: Delivery Strategy (CP2)
- Core Policy 13: Spatial Strategy for Malmesbury Community Area (CP13)
- Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping (CP57)
- Core Policy 58: Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment (CP58)

Saved policies of the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 (NWLP)

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

National Design Guide (NDG)

Wiltshire Design Guide SPD (WDG):

- Appendix D – Design Guidance for Householder extensions

## **CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

The following consultees and interested parties were invited to comment on the application:

Lea, Garsdon and Cleverton Parish Council – No objection, commenting that national and local policy would not be contravened, that the development would be virtually invisible from the road, that neighbouring properties are remote and will not suffer impacts, that materials would match those of the existing building, and no requirement for increased parking or for any increase in traffic (16/07/2026).

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

Immediate neighbouring dwellings were notified of the application, and a site notice was displayed on 14 June 2026. No letters of representation were made by members of the public.

## **ASSESSMENT**

Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 require that the determination of planning applications be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

### Preliminary matters

In providing revised plans, the applicant has drawn attention to changes in the NPPF during the course of the application. They have also put forward a 'fallback' position in the event the Local Planning Authority are minded to refuse permission, however the fallback advanced is subject to a prior notification process which has not been completed. In any case, the application falls to be considered on its own merits.

### Principle of development

Core Policy 1, 2 and 13 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) set out the spatial strategy for the area. Having regard to the settlement hierarchy under CP1, the application site outside of defined limits of development and, therefore, in open countryside where development is strictly controlled by CP2.

The development comprises extensions and alterations to a dwellinghouse, which would not meet any of the exception policies contained in paragraph 4.25 of CP2. The development plan for the area otherwise contains a policy gap for considering extension and alterations to existing buildings.

However, the fundamental aim of the spatial strategy is to facilitate sustainable development. Given the established residential use of the site, extensions and alterations incidental to its buildings would not undermine the spatial strategy as a matter of principle, subject to assessment of their impacts, compliance with the development plan as a whole, and other material considerations.

S3 of the NPPF advises that decision should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Outside of settlements, this means development proposals that accord with both an up-to-date development plan and the National Decision-Making Policies (NDMPs) should be approved without delay.

S5 of the NPPF advises that only certain forms of development should be approved outside settlements unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by the adverse effects.

S5(1)(c) supports, as a matter of principle, the extension or alteration of an existing building outside a settlement, provided that the existing building is of permanent and substantial construction, is lawful in planning terms, and any extension or alteration will not result in a disproportionate increase in size compared to the existing building.

There is no doubt the existing building is of permanent and substantial construction, and it is a lawful dwellinghouse in planning terms. Therefore, the development will be acceptable in principle where it does not result in a disproportionate increase in size

compared to the existing building. This matter is addressed as part of the design in the following section of the assessment.

### Design and local character and appearance

Core Policy 57 of the WCS requires all new development, including extensions and alterations to existing buildings, to meet a high standard of design by, among other things, ensuring a positive response to the features of the site itself and its landscape or townscape setting.

Appendix D of the Wiltshire Design Guide (WDG) supports CP57 with design expectations for delivering well-designed householder development. Among other things, it expects extensions to respect the original building and neighbouring properties including by not dominating the existing building and appearing as a subservient, supporting addition, and fitting into the general street scene. It also advises their appearance could replicate the style, form, rhythm, materials and architectural detailing of the original house or by contrast with a modern or traditional aesthetic.

DP3 and 4 of the NPPF sets out principles for achieving well-designed places and advises that substantial weight should be given to compliance with relevant development plan policies and guidance when assessing design quality.

Heath Farm Cottage is probably an early 19<sup>th</sup> century dwellinghouse, possibly at one point two cottages, appearing on the 1840s Tithe Map<sup>2</sup>. It survives well, albeit altered, and its external appearance remains firmly representative of the area's locally distinctive vernacular traditions.

The removal of the existing balcony would be of no consequence to the character or appearance of the dwellinghouse or surrounding area, nor would the alterations to the first-floor doors to install a Juliet balcony.

The proposed extension would almost fill the angle of the existing L-shaped layout of the ranges, incorporating setbacks from extremities to appear deferential to the original building.

Although the position of fenestration does not follow the existing pattern, the rear elevation is less formal, and the style of fenestration is complementary alongside matching stonework walls. Its flat roof is contrasting but not wholly inappropriate for a single-storey addition.

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<sup>2</sup> Available from Know Your Place (<https://maps.bristol.gov.uk/kyp/?edition=wilts>).

Having regard to the likely increase in volume, footprint, massing and bulk, the extension would form a substantial addition. However, its supporting role would be legible, an acceptable degree of subservience expressed through its single-storey scale and matching or complementary materials and details.

The existing building has not borne any extensions or alterations since 17 August 2026 that, in combination with the development proposed, would result in a cumulatively disproportionate increase in size compared to the existing building.

No objection was raised by the Parish Council who were satisfied that the materials would match, which can be secured by condition. They acknowledge that the development would be “virtually invisible from the road”, however public visibility is not a prerequisite for harm to occur.

For the above reasons, the development would not result in a disproportionate increase in size compared to the existing building nor harm the character or appearance of the dwellinghouse or surrounding area. Subject to conditions to control delivery of the design to an acceptable standard, it would satisfy the expectations of adopted design guidance and the requirements of CP57 of the WCS and S5(1)(c) of the NPPF.

The development plan remains broadly aligned with the national guidance at DP3 and 4.9 of the NPPF in so far as they are relevant to achieving well-designed places and assessing design quality. Material considerations would not, therefore, lead to different conclusion.

### Residential amenity

Core Policy 57 (vii) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that the design of new development has regard to the compatibility of adjoining buildings and uses, the impact on the amenities of existing occupants and that appropriate levels of amenity are achievable within the development itself.

Appendix D of the Wiltshire Design Guide expects a well-designed householder development to respect neighbouring properties by advising, amongst other things, that they should not be unduly overbearing or unduly obtrusive, and that windows should not directly overlook neighbouring properties.

DP3 and 4 of the NPPF sets out principles for achieving well-designed places, including liveability by ensuring their function well over the lifetime of the development. P3 advises that developments should be appropriate for their location taking into account likely effects on living conditions from air, noise and light pollution, among other things.

The closest neighbouring dwellings to the application site are Heath Farm (southeast) and the Nursery (west). The application site is bordered by fields to northeast and northwest and a woodland to southwest, all of which are in the applicant's ownership.

The proposed extension adds substantially to the massing and bulk of the dwellinghouse, but it maintains considerable separation from the boundaries of the curtilage. Also, having regard to separation distances and intervening features, it would not appear overbearing, cause a loss of outlook or natural light to neighbours.

A balcony would be removed and a barrier installed to the first-floor doors, ensuring the safety and living conditions of occupants of the dwellinghouse are safeguarded. Neither this alteration nor the proposed extension would cause a material loss of privacy for neighbouring properties within the area due to separation distances and intervening features. The development would be restricted to the ground floor and the rear of the property and would not impact existing access or parking.

For the reasons given, the development would not harm the living conditions enjoyed by occupants of the site itself or neighbouring land now or in the foreseeable future. Furthermore, it would satisfy the expectations of adopted design guidance and the aims of CP57 (vii) of the WCS.

The development plan remains broadly aligned with the national guidance at DP3 and 4 and P3 of the NPPF in so far as it relates to design and living conditions. Material considerations would not, therefore, lead to different conclusion.

#### Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

The development is exempt from the requirement to deliver 10% BNG, introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021), and the decision notice shall include the relevant informative note.

### **PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION**

The development would have acceptable effects in respect of matters of acknowledged importance to the public interest, subject to the recommended conditions. Furthermore, it would not conflict with the development plan, and other material considerations do not indicate that a decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. The statutory requirements have therefore been fulfilled, and the application should be supported.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

**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 25 May 2026.

Proposed Block Plan. WILTS-AP-269.03 Rev D. Received 26 August 2026.

Proposed Plans and Elevations. WILTS-AP-269.05 Rev E. Received 26 August 2026.

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

3. The stonework to be used in the external construction of the extension hereby permitted shall match the stone type, colour, texture, coursing, pointing and mortar bedding of the stonework found in the existing building. All other materials shall be as stated on the approved plans.

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