

PLANNING STATEMENT

Springfield, Preston, near Chippenham, Wiltshire SN15 4DX

Proposal: Retrospective change of use and subdivision of the existing dwelling to form two residential planning units, comprising the existing dwelling and a separate self-contained two-bedroom dwelling, together with associated private amenity space, parking and access arrangements.

Relevant Planning History: 13/03134/FUL

1. Introduction

This Planning Statement accompanies a retrospective full planning application for the subdivision of the existing residential property known as Springfield, Preston, near Chippenham, to create a separate self-contained two-bedroom dwelling.

The accommodation concerned already exists and forms part of the established residential building. It was created as part of the extensions and alterations approved under planning permission 13/03134/FUL.

The application does not therefore involve the construction of a new residential building. It seeks retrospective permission for the subdivision of an existing residential building to form two independent residential planning units.

Independent occupation of the two-bedroom unit commenced on **7 July 2026**. The unit is currently separately assessed for and pays Council Tax as an individual residential unit.

This application is submitted to regularise the planning position and asks the Local Planning Authority to consider the acceptability of the existing use on its planning merits.

2. Site and Planning History

Springfield is an established residential property at Preston, near Chippenham.

The site comprises the principal dwelling, its residential curtilage, existing vehicular access and off-street parking.

The accommodation which is the subject of this application physically forms part of the existing residential building rather than comprising a detached building within its grounds.

Planning permission 13/03134/FUL granted permission for extensions and alterations to Springfield. The approved plans demonstrate the physical relationship between the principal dwelling and the accommodation now occupied as a separate unit.

No condition attached to planning permission 13/03134/FUL restricted the occupation of the accommodation to purposes ancillary to Springfield.

The accommodation therefore formed part of the lawful residential use of Springfield before subsequently becoming occupied as an independent residential unit.

3. Existing Use for which Retrospective Permission is Sought

On 7 July 2026, the accommodation commenced occupation as a separate self-contained residential unit.

The unit comprises approximately 68 m² of internal residential accommodation and provides a two-bedroom dwelling with its own living, sleeping, kitchen and bathroom facilities.

It functions independently from Springfield and has its own external access arrangements.

The dwelling benefits from:

- approximately 68 m² of internal accommodation;
- independent access to its principal entrance;
- separate side access to its rear entrance;
- a gated and walled private courtyard/patio;
- approximately 20 m² of private external amenity space; and
- an allocated off-street parking space.

The unit is separately assessed for Council Tax.

Retrospective planning permission is sought to regularise this existing arrangement.

4. Principle of Development

The proposal should be distinguished from an application for the construction of an additional dwelling within the grounds of Springfield.

No new residential building has been constructed.

Instead, existing residential accommodation within an established residential building has been subdivided to provide an additional home.

The physical presence of the accommodation, including its scale, footprint and relationship with Springfield and the surrounding area, was already established before the independent residential occupation commenced.

The principal planning issue is therefore whether the subdivision and independent occupation of the existing residential accommodation gives rise to unacceptable planning consequences.

The proposal makes efficient use of existing residential floorspace and provides an additional relatively small dwelling without requiring the construction of a new residential building or materially extending built development into the surrounding countryside.

5. National Planning Policy

The application falls to be considered having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework and the adopted development plan.

The National Planning Policy Framework supports the provision of housing appropriate to local circumstances and the effective use of existing land and buildings.

Of particular relevance to this application is national policy concerning homes in the countryside. National policy expressly recognises the subdivision of an existing residential building as a circumstance in which an isolated home in the countryside may be acceptable.

This is directly relevant to the present application.

The proposal does not involve the conversion of an agricultural or other non-residential building, nor the construction of a new dwelling within undeveloped countryside.

It involves an existing lawful residential building and the creation of an additional dwelling through its subdivision.

The proposal therefore represents a form of residential development expressly recognised by national planning policy.

6. Relationship with Local Planning Policy

The objectives of the Wiltshire development plan in directing new housing towards sustainable locations and protecting the character of the countryside are acknowledged.

However, the circumstances of this application are materially different from a proposal to construct an additional dwelling on undeveloped land outside a defined settlement.

The proposal:

- utilises an existing residential building;
- does not materially increase the existing residential footprint;
- does not require development to extend further into the countryside;
- does not require a new vehicular access;
- makes more efficient use of existing residential accommodation; and
- provides one additional small dwelling within the existing developed residential site.

These characteristics substantially limit the environmental and landscape consequences normally associated with the creation of a new countryside dwelling.

The proposal should therefore be assessed as the subdivision of an existing residential building rather than as the construction of a new dwelling on an undeveloped site.

7. Standard of Residential Accommodation

The separate dwelling provides approximately 68 m² of internal residential accommodation.

It is a self-contained two-bedroom dwelling with its own living accommodation, kitchen, bedroom and bathroom facilities.

The accommodation is capable of functioning entirely independently from Springfield and provides a good standard of accommodation for its occupants.

Its existing occupation since 7 July 2026 also demonstrates in practical terms that the accommodation is capable of functioning as an independent residential unit.

8. Independent Access

The separate dwelling has its own external access arrangements.

Its principal entrance is independently accessible from the access and parking area without the need to enter Springfield.

Separate side pedestrian access leads to the private courtyard and rear entrance to the dwelling.

Occupants therefore do not need to pass through Springfield or through the principal dwelling's private garden in order to access their home.

This arrangement provides a clear and practical separation between the two residential units.

9. Private External Amenity Space

The dwelling benefits from its own gated and walled private courtyard/patio.

The courtyard measures approximately 2.4 metres by 8.4 metres, providing approximately 20 m² of private external amenity space.

The courtyard immediately adjoins the dwelling and is independently accessible.

Its gated and enclosed nature provides a clear physical distinction between the private amenity space serving the separate dwelling and the remainder of the residential curtilage serving Springfield.

The substantial majority of the original residential curtilage remains associated with Springfield.

The subdivision therefore does not result in an unduly cramped division of the existing property and both residential units retain appropriate private external space.

10. Access and Parking

Springfield is served by an existing vehicular access. No new access onto the highway has been created or is required as a consequence of the subdivision.

The existing property has sufficient off-street space to accommodate three vehicles.

One parking space, identified as **P** on the submitted plan, is allocated specifically to the separate two-bedroom dwelling.

The remaining parking provision continues to serve Springfield.

The existing vehicular access is shared between the two residential units.

The arrangement therefore provides the separate dwelling with a dedicated off-street parking space without requiring additional hardstanding or the creation of a new highway access.

If the two residential units are subsequently held in separate ownership, the necessary permanent rights of vehicular and pedestrian access, use of the allocated parking space and appropriate maintenance obligations for any shared areas will be established through the respective property titles as part of the conveyancing process.

11. Character and Appearance

The subdivision has very limited consequences for the character and appearance of the site or surrounding area.

The residential accommodation already exists and forms part of the established building.

No additional dwelling has been physically introduced into the grounds and the existing scale, footprint and general appearance of Springfield remain substantially unchanged.

The proposal consequently avoids the landscape and visual effects normally associated with the construction of an additional dwelling within a rural location.

The residential character of the site is retained.

12. Residential Amenity

The physical relationship between the separate dwelling, Springfield and neighbouring properties was established before the independent residential occupation commenced.

The subdivision has not introduced an additional building closer to neighbouring properties and does not create materially different overlooking or overbearing relationships.

The separate dwelling has its own entrances, private external amenity space and allocated parking and is therefore able to function independently without undue interference with the residential amenity of Springfield.

The nature and scale of the two-bedroom residential use are compatible with the established residential use of the site.

13. Sustainability and Efficient Use of Existing Development

The proposal represents an efficient use of existing residential accommodation.

Providing the additional dwelling has not required construction of a new residential building.

The proposal therefore avoids much of the additional land take, construction activity, building materials and associated environmental effects that would arise from constructing an entirely new dwelling.

The existing building, infrastructure, access and parking arrangements are utilised to provide a modest additional home.

This represents an efficient and proportionate use of an existing residential building.

14. Existing Operation of the Dwelling

The independent occupation of the dwelling commenced on 7 July 2026.

Although the relatively short period of occupation is not relied upon to establish any immunity from planning enforcement, the existing arrangement provides practical evidence of how the two residential units function.

The separate dwelling operates using the existing access and parking arrangements and its own independent pedestrian access and private external amenity space.

No additional residential building or new highway access has been required to enable the independent occupation.

The Council is therefore able to assess the planning consequences of an established physical arrangement rather than a speculative future layout.

15. Planning Balance

The application seeks to regularise the subdivision of an existing residential building to provide one additional two-bedroom dwelling.

Material considerations in support of the application include:

- the accommodation already forms part of a lawful residential building;
- the development does not involve construction of a new residential building;
- planning permission 13/03134/FUL did not impose a condition restricting the accommodation to ancillary occupation;
- the dwelling provides approximately 68 m² of internal residential accommodation;
- it is capable of functioning independently from Springfield;
- it has independent pedestrian access;
- it benefits from a gated and walled private courtyard providing approximately 20 m² of private external amenity space;
- an allocated off-street parking space is provided;
- the existing vehicular access continues to be used;
- the majority of the original residential curtilage remains associated with Springfield;
- the subdivision has very limited physical effect upon the character and appearance of the site;
- the proposal makes efficient use of existing residential accommodation; and
- national planning policy expressly recognises the subdivision of an existing residential building in its approach to homes in the countryside.

The proposal is consequently materially different from the construction of an additional dwelling on an undeveloped countryside site.

The limited planning effects of the subdivision should be balanced against the benefit of creating an additional, modest dwelling through the efficient use of existing residential accommodation.

The planning balance is therefore considered to weigh in favour of granting permission.

16. Conclusion

This application seeks retrospective permission for the subdivision of the existing residential building at Springfield to create a separate self-contained two-bedroom dwelling.

Independent occupation commenced on 7 July 2026, and the dwelling is separately assessed for Council Tax.

The application does not involve the construction of a new residential building. The accommodation already existed as part of the lawful residential property before independent occupation commenced.

The dwelling provides approximately 68 m² of internal accommodation together with independent access, approximately 20 m² of gated and walled private external amenity space and a dedicated off-street parking space.

The proposal makes effective use of existing residential accommodation while avoiding the physical and landscape consequences that would ordinarily arise from construction of a new dwelling within a rural location.

National planning policy expressly recognises the subdivision of an existing residential building as a circumstance in which the provision of an additional home in the countryside can be acceptable.

There are no overriding adverse effects upon highway safety, residential amenity or the character and appearance of the area which would justify withholding permission.

It is therefore respectfully requested that retrospective planning permission be granted.