

APPLICATION FOR HOUSEHOLDER PLANNING PERMISSION DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2026/03168
APPLICATION TYPE:	Householder planning permission
SITE ADDRESS:	1 High Street, Box, Corsham, SN13 8NB
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Single storey ground floor rear extension, rooflights to rear roof slope and formation of parking space with garden room below
RECOMMENDATION:	That Planning Permission be GRANTED

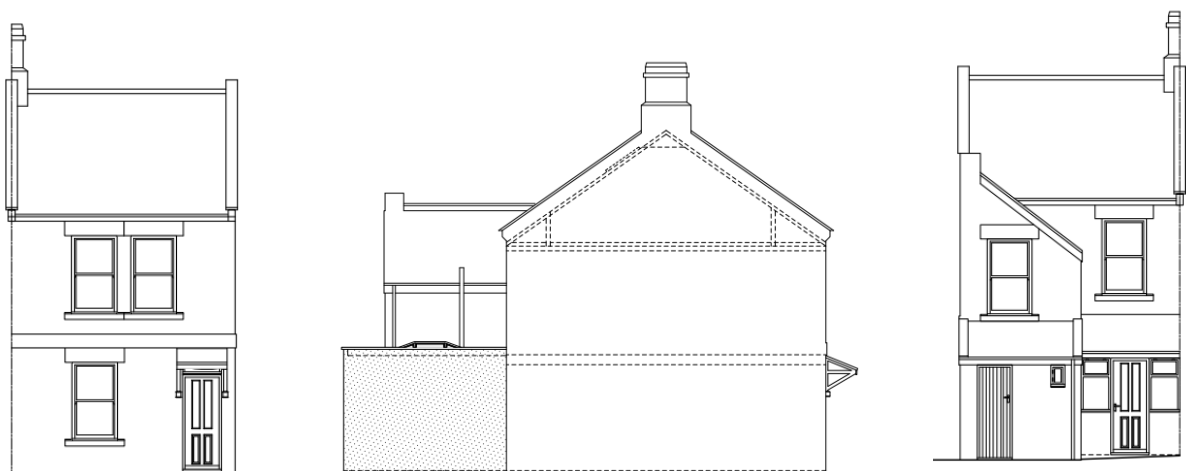
PROPOSAL

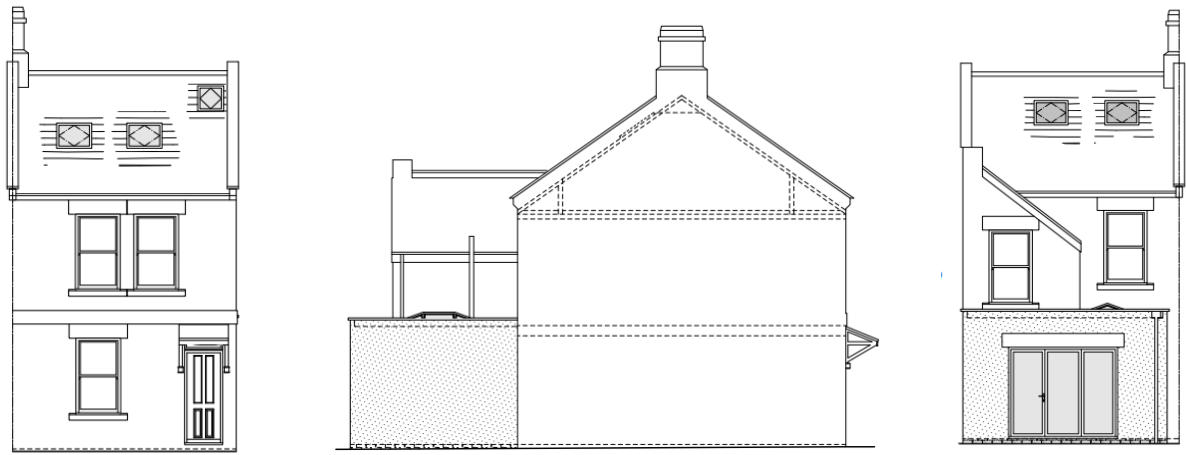
The proposal seeks planning permission for the erection of a single storey ground floor rear extension, proposed rooflights in the rear roof slope and the formation of a parking space with garden room below. Also, whilst not expressly included within the description of works, roof lights are also proposed to the front roof slope. The application is submitted using Householder application forms.

During the course of the application, concerns were raised with the original proposal of a dormer window to the rear elevation. This resulted in revised plans which substituted the dormers for cabrio style velux windows. Concerns remained regarding the impact this style of velux window could have on residential amenity, thereby it was suggested for standard velux windows to be included instead, with their position raised higher on the rear roof slope. A revised description was also agreed to reflect these changes.

Additionally, concerns were raised as to whether notice had been served (via the correct ownership certificate in the application form) on all requisite landowners of the land which is subject to the proposed parking space and garden room, given that this space is utilised by multiple users. As a result, a revised Certificate B on the application form was received after investigations were conducted to ascertain who was required to have notice served upon them.

The extracts below demonstrate the existing appearance of the application site, together with the proposed appearance subject to this application:





Proposed Front, Side and Rear Elevations

The extension to the rear would enable the creation of a kitchen off of the existing dining area. The extension would broadly span across the entirety of the rear façade, only marginally recessed from the side boundary, and would display a flat roof form with parapet and incorporates an integrated rooflight. In terms of construction materials, the extension would be finished with lightly-coloured render to the external walls with fenestration finished in white to match the existing building. The rear façade would include a set of bi-fold doors centrally positioned on the rear wall to enable access to the courtyard garden and pedestrian path beyond.

A proposed loft conversion is proposed to provide an additional bedroom, facilitated by the inclusion of rooflights to both the front and rear roof slopes.

Additionally, it is proposed to create a parking space on land adjacent to the terrace of dwellings and located directly off of the A4. Given the topography of the land, it is proposed to create a garden room directly below the parking space, accessed via a set of steps which also enable access the garden which is at a considerably lower ground level than the parking area above. The garden room would be finished in Cotswold stone and would also feature a set of bi-fold doors to enable access to the garden land below.

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The site known as 1 High Street is an end of terrace two storey dwellinghouse, situated along the A4 in Box. The site also lies within the Box Conservation Area, as well as the Cotswolds National Landscape and the West Wiltshire Green Belt. The terrace forms a linear group of dwellings with courtyard gardens to the rear, with a small pedestrian walkway running along the rear of the gardens to join up with the off-road parking areas located to the SW of the terrace where Public Right of Way BOX16 is located. The garden land associated with the terraces are located to the SW at lower ground levels to the dwellings, with many properties having created garden rooms beneath the car parking above. The main building has been constructed from stone to the external walls with a tiled roof, with the surrounding area displaying a variety of built form including detached, semi-detached and terraced buildings with the overarching construction material within the vernacular being stone.



Google Streetview Images (July 2024)

The application site is subject to the following planning policy constraints:

- Box Conservation Area
- Cotswolds National Landscape
- PRow – Box16
- West Wiltshire Green Belt
- Countryside Character Area – Cotswolds
- Groundwater Emergence - risk of groundwater flooding to both surface and subsurface assets
- Bat SAC zones of impact

PLANNING HISTORY – None relating to this property

RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Wiltshire Core Strategy:

- Core Policy 11: Spatial Strategy for Corsham Community Area
- Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping
- Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Core Policy 51: Landscape
- Core Policy 58: Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment
- Core Policy 61: Transport and New Development
- Core Policy 64: Demand Management
- Core Policy 67: Flood Risk

Box Neighbourhood Plan: Designated

Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan:

- Policy CE1: Landscape
- Policy CE4: Local Distinctiveness
- Policy CE5: Dark Skies

Wiltshire Design Guide (adopted April 2024)

Bat Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) Planning Guidance for Wiltshire

The National Planning Policy Framework:

- Policy DP3: Key Principles for Well-Designed Places
- Policy DP4: The Design Process
- Policy GB2: Assessing Existing Green Belt Land
- Policy GB6: Control of Development in the Green Belt
- Policy GB7: Development which is Not Appropriate in the Green Belt
- Policy P3: Living Conditions and Pollution
- Policy L2(d)(ii): Making Effective use of Land

The Planning Practice Guidance

ISSUES

- Principle of development
- West Wiltshire Green Belt
- Design and Impact upon the character and context of the area and impact on the National Landscape
- Heritage Impact
- Residential Amenity
- Highways Impact and Parking
- Rights of Way
- Drainage
- Bat SAC Zone of Impact

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Box Town Council: No objection –

Box PC has no objection but is concerned about the access over the PROW.

When amended plans were received, Box PC were reconsulted and commented as follows:

Box PC has no objection but recognises the concerns of neighbours with overview from the rear dormer and the protection of the right of way to the rear of the property.

Wiltshire Council Highways: No objection –

The site is located on the A4 High Street for the main dwelling. The parking/garden room is located on a private section of highway, Fairmead View, this is also a PROW footpath BOX16 and accessed from the A4 High Street. There are no proposed alterations to the access with the public highway in either location, and the Countryside Access Team have been consulted in regard to the PROW.

The proposals consist of an extension to the existing dwelling and conversion of the loft space to provide a further bedroom, this would not alter the required parking provision of at least 2 spaces within the curtilage. The proposals would also provide an area of parking on the roof of the proposed garden room at the lower garden level. The parking area proposed is in an area where the only access is off a private road and public right of way BOX16, which accesses directly from the A4 High Street. A number of vehicles appear to access parking over this PROW in a similar manner.

Provided the applicant has access rights over the private road and PROW then I would not consider the proposals of detriment to the surrounding highway network and would therefore not wish to raise an objection to the proposals with regard to highways.

Wiltshire Council Rights of Way Officer: Comment (suggested informatives and their full comments can be viewed on the website) –

The parking space would be accessed by a public footpath (BOX16). This is not recorded as a public vehicular highway. The only recorded public rights along it are on foot. In order to drive a vehicle along here, the applicant would require a demonstrable private right of vehicular access. Without this private right they would be committing an offence under Section 34 of the Road Traffic Act 1988. The granting of planning permission does not give the applicant or householder a vehicular right of access over the footpath. The applicant is advised to take private legal advice to ensure they have a right of access.

Assuming the applicant has a private vehicular right of access I would have no objections subject to informatives.

REPRESENTATIONS

The application was publicised by direct neighbour letter and the erection of a site notice at the application site. Several letters of representation have been received, both upon the original proposed plans and upon the receipt of an amended suite of plans which removed the dormer window and replaced with the cabrio velux windows. The main points with these representations are summarised below:

- Concerns over overlooking and loss of privacy resulting from the proposed windows in the rear roof slope
- The site plan would appear to indicate ownership of the access and footpath

- The property is in the conservation area and the proposed dormer roof extension is out of keeping with conservation area policy
- Scale and height of the rear windows would give an increased ability to over look my garden
- Whilst I welcome the removal of the dormer from the proposal, I object to the inclusion of Velux balcony windows, as depicted on the elevations, as this will result in a loss of privacy for myself and other neighbours
- I would not have an objection to a standard Velux roof light as currently proposed for the front elevation.

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 adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) and, where applicable, any made Neighbourhood Plans.

Principle of Development

The proposed development is for the erection of a rear ground floor extension, parking provision and garden room within a residential curtilage, the principle of which is established as acceptable. However, since the application site is located within the Bath and Western Wiltshire Green Belt, an assessment must also be undertaken as to whether the proposals constitute "inappropriate development" for the purposes of section 13 to the NPPF. That assessment is undertaken in the sub-section immediately below. The detail of the proposals must also be assessed against all other relevant policies, with assessment undertaken in the relevant sub-sections below.

Green Belt

Great importance is attached to Green Belts and new development within the Green Belt is highly restricted by national planning policy. The NPPF is unequivocal in stating that *inappropriate* development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

Policy GB6 (section 2) of the NPPF states that:

Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Such circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm resulting from the proposed development, is clearly outweighed by other

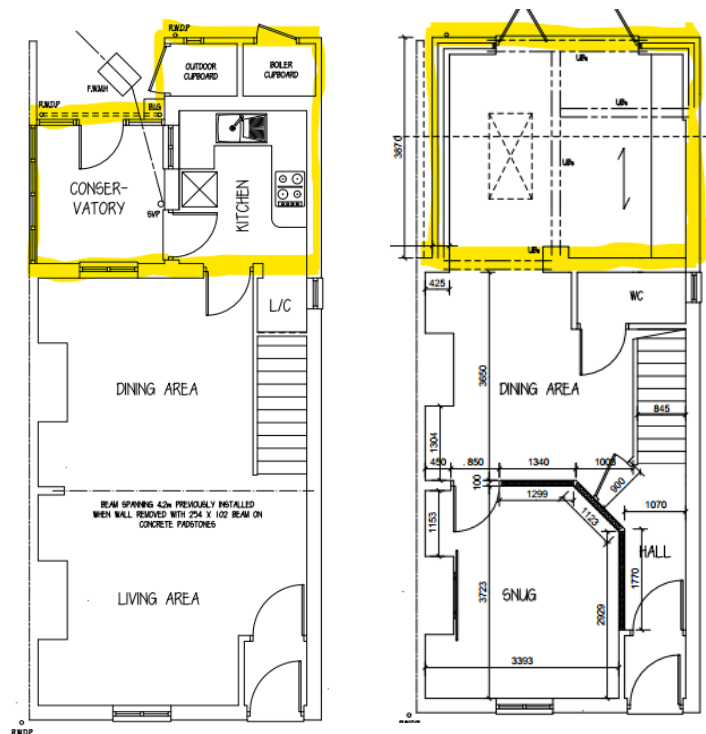
considerations. In making this assessment, substantial weight should be given to the harm to the Green Belt which would be caused, including harm to its openness.

Before then going on within Policy GB7 to identify exceptions to that policy, setting out forms of development which may be not inappropriate in the Green Belt (known as exceptions (a) though to (h). Taking the description of development at face value, with regards solely to the extension to the main dwelling, the most relevant is exception is that set out at (b) relating to the extension of existing buildings:

The reuse, extension, alteration or replacement of an existing building, 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 original building. In the case of proposals for a replacement building, it should be for the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces.

Regarding the rear extension and specifically with reference to exception (b), “original building” is defined as a building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was built originally.

Whilst the precise date of construction of the ‘original building’ is unknown, the available planning history on this site illustrate that the main building has not been subject to extensions. The existing arrangement of the building to the rear features an existing conservatory with adjacent cupboards off of the existing kitchen and to facilitate the rear extension, these would need to be removed. However, cumulatively the increase in footprint would be marginal when comparing the existing and proposed floor plans, as illustrated below:



(L-R) Existing and Proposed Ground Floor Plans

The areas highlighted within the extracts above help to demonstrate the increase in footprint which would be achieved by the ground floor extension. Broadly, the increase would result from extending across the current recessed area directly in front of the conservatory to create a single linear rear wall, with the proposed extension not extending beyond this established rear wall projection. The existing dwelling is a modest two storey end of terrace dwelling with a small courtyard rear garden and it is clear that the property has not previously been subject to extensions. Section 13 to the NPPF does not define what constitutes “disproportionate” and the LPA has not adopted any policy which prescribes a floorspace or % increase of what is not regarded as acceptable in the Green Belt. However given the limited degree of increased floor space overall from the ground floor extension, the proposal does not represent a disproportionate addition over and above the original building, thereby meeting the tests set out in exception (b) to policy GB7.

Garden Room

Turning to the parking area with garden room below. Whilst the building is proposed to serve the host dwelling and would be incidental to its enjoyment, it would nevertheless represent the construction of a new structure within the Green Belt and therefore requires assessment against Section 13 of the NPPF. GB7(1) sets out types of development that are not inappropriate in the Green Belt. (f)(iv) refers to “certain other forms of development, provided the impact on the openness of the Green Belt is minimised, and there would not be a significant conflict with the Green Belt purposes. These are: the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings, for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds or allotments.”. The proposal relates to land within the residential ownership and is understood to be used as a garden. The proposal relates to ancillary residential development to the main house on an unusually detached parcel of land.

The proposed garden room would be situated beneath an area of land forming part of the residential garden associated with the property, located to the SW of the main building. It is acknowledged that the degree of separation is greater than would ordinarily be expected for a domestic outbuilding. However, the separation arises primarily as a consequence of the layout and arrangement of the site, with the garden land extending to the side of the terrace, rather than because the land functions independently from the dwellinghouse. The application site remains within the same residential planning unit and the proposed garden room would not operate as a separate unit of accommodation.

Regard has been had to the existence of similar garden buildings adjacent to the garden area which have already been built out and which serve surrounding properties. Whilst these structures are generally located closer to their respective host dwellings, they demonstrate that ancillary domestic outbuildings/structures are an established feature within this locality. Nevertheless, each proposal must be assessed on its own merits and the existence of such development does not, in itself, determine the acceptability of the current application.

In terms of openness, the proposal would introduce additional built form within an area that is presently free from development, however it is acknowledged that similar built form would surround the proposed works. However, the garden room would remain modest in scale and

would be set within the existing bank, reducing both its visual prominence and wider landscape impact and would be of comparable scale to the existing examples within this locality. The garden room would present differently than a detached outbuilding given that it is to be built into the bank, therefore predominantly only the front façade would be mainly visible. Furthermore, the proposal would remain clearly associated with the residential use of the host dwelling and would not result in the establishment of a separate residential unit or a materially greater encroachment into the countryside than what is currently apparently within this locality and in comparison to the surrounding built form. Whilst being set within the existing bank, the garden room would be afforded a significant degree of natural screening, especially in conjunction with the established landscaping and planting shrouding the site. As a consequence, its visual prominence would be reduced, limiting its presence within the wider landscape and mitigating its effect on the open character of the site.

The proposal would not have a significant conflict with the Green Belt purposes as set out at Policy GB2(1)(a)-(e). It would not represent unrestricted sprawl of a large built-up area; result in towns merging into one another, cause encroachment into the countryside, impact the setting and special character of historic towns or impact recycling of derelict and other urban land.



Google Street View July 2024 – View towards location of existing parking provision and existing garden rooms below

Conclusion

Taking all factors into account, the proposals would not represent inappropriate development and the garden room and parking would not cause impact on the openness of the Green Belt or have significant conflict with the Green Belt purposes.

The property is located within the built-up area of the village of Box and the proposal is located in close proximity to similar development and close to the associated built form of the site in general. The development does not encroach into the countryside or lead to further sprawl of the built-up area. Additionally, the degree of separation of the parking area and garden room from the host dwelling is noted, however, on balance this is considered to reflect the unusual

configuration of the site rather than indicating a lack of functional relationship with the dwelling. The proposal is therefore considered to maintain a sufficient association with the host dwelling and existing land use. The extensions are considered to be proportionate to the host dwelling and the other development is also acceptable for the reasons set out above in accordance with Policy GB7 of the NPPF.

Design and Impact upon the character and context of the area and impact on the National Landscape

WCS Core Policy 57 requires development to respond positively to the existing townscape and landscape features in terms of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, elevational design and materials, with particular regard required for the compatibility of the design with the host dwelling and its surroundings, together with the relationship to adjoining buildings and spaces. Core Policy 51 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires all development to protect, conserve, and where possible enhance the character and quality of Wiltshire's landscapes, giving particular weight to designated areas such as National Landscapes.

Policy CE1 of the Cotswold National Landscape Management Plan 2025-2030 states that development should have regard to the scenic quality of the location and its setting and ensure that views - including those into and out of the National Landscape – and visual amenity are conserved and enhanced. Policy CE4 states that proposals that are likely to impact on the local distinctiveness of the Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL) should be delivered in a way that is compatible with and seek to further the conservation and enhancement of this local distinctiveness. Policy CE6 states that proposals that have the potential to impact on the dark skies of the Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL) should be delivered in a way that is compatible with and seek to further the conservation and enhancement of these dark skies, by seeking to avoid and where avoiding is not possible, minimise lighting. Lastly Policy CE7 states that development should be delivered in a way that is compatible with and seek to further the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their setting

Policies DP3 and DP4 of the National Planning Policy Framework require development to achieve a high standard of design that responds positively to local character and context. In assessing design quality, regard should be had to matters including scale, siting, form, appearance, materials and the relationship of development to its surroundings. Policy N4 of the NPPF affords significant protection to Protected Landscapes, including National Landscapes. Development proposals within or affecting a National Landscape should conserve and enhance natural beauty and the special qualities of the designated area and avoid unacceptable harm to its landscape character and scenic quality.

A site visit was conducted to the application site to observe the existing building, the neighbouring properties, the location for the parking space and garden room as well as the surrounding area.

In order to facilitate the rear extension, it would be necessary to remove the existing conservatory and outdoor cupboards and therefore in comparison, the proposed footprint of the rear extension would only be marginally greater than the footprint that the conservatory and cupboards already accommodated at ground floor level. The overall aesthetic of the

proposed extension is considered to represent a sympathetic and subservient addition to the main dwelling and is broadly considered to respond positively to the character and appearance of the existing building, the street scene and wider area, enabling the property to continue to integrate within the immediate vicinity. The overall bulk and mass arising from the extension would not overwhelm or dominate the rear façade and would respect the height and positioning of the upper floor windows above without obscuring their outlook. Whilst a small degree of rear amenity space will be compromised to facilitate the extension, it is not considered to result in a cramped or overdeveloped appearance when viewed from the rear. Furthermore, whilst introducing alternative finishing materials to the material palette, the incorporation of lightly coloured render is not considered incongruous within this area, especially given that the extension would remain largely concealed from view from within the local vernacular. The incorporation of the roof lights to the front roof slope is not considered incongruous when viewed within the context of the site and from the main road, given that the terrace of buildings already feature rooflights to the front façade that are of comparable size, positioning and appearance. Additionally, the rooflights to the rear are positioned on the rear roof slope, with the size of window considered proportionate to the existing roof slope.

With regards to the garden room, the overall appearance would have similarities to garden rooms which have been constructed within the lower garden sections serving the surrounding dwellings, which also benefit from parking provision directly above the structures. Due to the topography of the site, the application site has a large and sloping garden which is physically separate to the main building. Whilst introducing a degree of built form, the garden room will remain somewhat concealed from view given the extent of established planting and landscaping within the vicinity. The positioning and arrangement of access steps are of a similar style and appearance to those already in situ within the vicinity, and the use of sympathetic and aligning construction materials enable the garden room to integrate with the existing built form within the vicinity, and would not result in an incongruous or alien appearance when viewed in context with the immediate surrounding area.

Given the location of the site within the Cotswolds National Landscape, consideration is required as to the potential impacts that proposals may have on this designated area. The proposed development would not be visible from the principal elevation given its position to the rear, the overall restricted height and surrounding built form. Whilst additional fenestration is proposed including the roof lights, no external lighting forms part of the proposed scheme. The garden room would only be used incidentally and collectively when considered with the rear extension, is not considered to result in unacceptable light spill or adverse impacts on the dark skies within this designated area. The application site is nestled within an existing residential area and of established built form and is not positioned on the edge of the settlement to increase its prominence or visibility within this area. Whilst resulting in increased bulk and mass, it is considered that the proposed materials and fenestration would effectively integrate with the dwelling, its setting and the surrounding area without creating harm to the scenic quality or character afforded to this designated area.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed works would compliment and remain sympathetic to the main building and its plot, as well as the local vernacular and wider surrounding area. The proposed works preserve the character and appearance of the main building and the wider vicinity, as well as the distinctive character of the Cotswolds National Landscape, and

is therefore deemed to be acceptable and in accordance with WCS Core Policies 51 and 57, the Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2025-2030, the Wiltshire Design Guide and the relevant provisions within the NPPF.

Residential Amenity

Point vii of Core Policy 57 - Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that developments do not adversely affect neighbouring properties.

Policy P3 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires development to be appropriate for its location, taking account of its likely effects on health, living conditions and the environment. In particular, Policy P3(2)(b) requires development to avoid giving rise to unacceptable impacts on the living conditions of neighbouring residents and occupiers. In assessing amenity impacts, regard should be had to matters including daylight and sunlight, outlook, privacy, overbearing impacts and other effects on residential amenity.

The property is an end-of-terrace property, with the adjacent dwellings all featuring compact rear courtyard gardens. The dwellings have an intimate relationship by virtue of the existing built form and rear roofscapes, thereby vantage points to adjacent rear gardens and rear roofslopes/built form is possible from properties within the terrace to their neighbouring properties.

Letters of representation have been received by the occupants of No's 2, 3 and 4 High Street, citing concerns regarding the impact that the rear fenestration would have on their privacy. The original scheme proposed a large dormer window across the rear roof which was considered too dominant and to result in unacceptable overlooking and dominance to the adjacent dwellings. Initial revisions were received which removed the dormer windows and replaced with cabrio style velux windows, however when the surrounding properties were notified of these revisions, further objections were received which echoed previous concerns on the impact to privacy and increased overlooking. At this stage, a final set of revisions were received which altered the cabrio velux windows to standard rooflights which were positioned higher up on the rear roof slope than the previous proposals. The position of the rooflights are now comparable to others which feature across the rear roofscape of the terrace as a whole.

The concerns regarding the inclusion of fenestration to the rear roof slope are fully understood. As a result, during the site visit, the application site was observed from within the rear amenity spaces of No's 2 and 3, with observations also from vantage points from the rear pathway which runs along the rear of the terrace which enabled clear view of the roofslope of the application site from the angle of No.4. The intimate relationship between the properties was observed and in light of this revised plans negotiated.

The proposed rooflights would be set within the existing roof slope and, by virtue of their position, angle and orientation, would not facilitate direct overlooking of neighbouring habitable room windows or private garden areas of properties to either to the front, rear or side of the application site. Furthermore, the rooflights would not introduce opportunities for views that are materially different from those already available from the existing dwelling. Given the

separation distances involved, together with the nature of the rooflight openings and the oblique angles at which any views may be obtained, it is not considered that the proposal would give rise to an unacceptable loss of privacy for neighbouring occupiers. Accordingly, whilst the concerns raised by neighbouring residents are acknowledged, the proposed rooflights are not considered to result in any demonstrable harm to residential amenity in terms of overlooking, loss of privacy, overbearing impact or loss of outlook.

Concerns were also raised in relation to formal notice not having been issued to those who have an interest in the parking area and the associated access and footpath. These concerns were also fully understood and as a result of discussions, a replacement Certificate B on the application form was submitted and notice was served on the owners of this parcel of land. The proposed parking provision and garden room are also not considered to impact the amenity of adjacent occupiers as the garden room would effectively be concealed from view, with the parking provision being of a similar nature to how this parcel of land is currently utilised, therefore not exacerbating its existing functionality.

The proposed rear extension is not considered to result in unacceptable impact on residential amenity. The scale and form of the extension would be restricted to the ground floor, and the extension would feature a flat roof to reduce its overall dominance within the confined courtyard garden. Whilst it would extend across the rear façade, its scale and form is not considered to result in unacceptable overshadowing or overbearing effects.

Overall, it is considered that the proposal would not result in unacceptable impact on the residential amenity and would not result in unacceptable loss of privacy, loss of light, overshadowing or overbearing effects. The proposal therefore accords with Core Policy 57 point vii in respect of safeguarding residential amenity, Appendix D of the Wiltshire Design Guide and the NPPF.

Highways Impact

Core Policy 57 (xiv) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that development must meet the requirements of Core Policy 61. This policy requires proposals to be capable of being served by safe access to the highway network. Core Policy 64 seeks to ensure compliance with parking standards set out in the Local Transport Plan.

The transport policies of the NPPF seek to ensure that development provides safe and suitable access for all users and that any impacts on highway safety are appropriately considered.

The proposed development seeks to provide parking provision within an area which is already utilised by other householders for vehicular parking. There is currently no opportunity for parking provision adjacent to the dwelling due to the existing built form and extent of the residential boundary around the building. The area is located directly off of the A4 and currently enables space for multiple cars to park. The proposal does not seek to alter the existing access arrangements and the additional parking provision would not be considered to result in a cramped arrangement. Wiltshire Council Highways Officers have not objected to the application and therefore, the proposed development is not considered to result in adverse impact on highways safety. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Core Policies

57 (xiv), 61 and 64 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the NPPF, and the Wiltshire Local Transport Plan.

Heritage Impact

Section 72(1) of the same Act requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.

Core Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings. Core Policy 57 requires development to respond positively to local character and historic context through high quality design.

Policies HE4-HE10 of the National Planning Policy Framework recognise heritage assets as an irreplaceable resource and require proposals affecting heritage assets to be assessed having regard to their significance and the contribution made by their setting.

The property and land subject to the parking area and garden room are situated within the Box Conservation Area. The works to the rear of the main building would be largely concealed from view by virtue of its single storey built form. The rooflights to the front roof slope will be visible from within the local vernacular, however when observed in conjunction with the rooflights already in situ along the terrace, it is not considered that the rooflights would appear incongruous or out of place within the setting, drawing comparisons to their placement, size and scale with those already in place throughout the terrace. Similarly, the rear roof lights would also remain concealed from view from the front façade and thoroughfare within this part of Box.

The creation of the parking space would integrate with the established character and appearance of this area of land adjacent to the terrace, given the existing parking provision already present within this area. The garden room below would be afforded a degree of concealment given the topography of the site and its lower ground level in comparison with the parking area above, with the visual of the garden room softened by existing landscaping and vegetation. The scale and form of the garden room would be comparable to existing garden rooms in close proximity, thereby the development would not appear out of place or incongruous within the locality. Similar construction materials to the existing garden rooms also help to soften its appearance and enable the development to further integrate with the existing built form.

Collectively the scale, bulk and appearance of the proposed development is not considered to result in visual impact to the Box Conservation Area and would effectively integrate with the established character and appearance of the vernacular and surrounding area beyond, thereby not resulting in harm to the setting of the heritage asset.

The development is therefore considered to comply with Core Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as well as the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

Public Rights of Way

Transport implications are a key factor in assessing planning applications and proposals must demonstrate that there is safe and suitable for all users, including pedestrians, including protection and enhancement of public rights of way and active travel routes.

WCS Core Policy 60 seeks planning developments in accessible locations, whilst also mitigating the impact of developments on transport users, local communities and the environment. WCS Core Policy 61 states that the transport impacts of new developments need to be assessed in accordance with national guidance.

Public Right of Way BOX16 is located within the parking area and runs the length of this area and track and meets with Mill Lane to the west. The track is unmade, with several surrounding properties having pedestrian access from the track, to front doors and to the larger gardens and parking areas. The works do not propose any alterations to the track or PRow, and it is evident that other vehicles use the track to access their own parking spaces.

Wiltshire Council PRow Officers have no objections to the proposed works, assuming the applicant has a private vehicular right of access. The informatives provided by the Rights of Way Officer reflect those of the Highways comments and will be added to the planning permission. The works are not considered to obstruct, divert, or otherwise impede access along the routes. The proposed works do not encroach upon the definitive line of the right of way and as such, the proposal is considered to have no adverse impact on the public right of way or its users. Assuming that the Applicant has a private vehicular right of access, it is considered that the proposed development will not result in unacceptable impacts to existing access arrangements and the highway, nor will the proposal affect or affect or impede the right of way. The application is therefore in accordance with WCS Core Policy 60 and 61.

Drainage and Flood Risk

Core Policy 67 seeks to ensure development does not increase flood risk on-site or elsewhere and includes appropriate drainage where necessary. Policies F7 and F8 of the NPPF seek to ensure flood risk and drainage are appropriately managed.

The site lies within an area identified by mapping as at risk of groundwater flooding to both surface and subsurface assets. The proposal comprises a modest rear storey extension to the main dwelling, with the further creation of a parking space with garden room below. It is acknowledged that the off-road parking area has already been subject to previous developments of garden rooms beneath parking spaces. Whilst a degree of engineering works would be required to facilitate the garden room, its scale and mass is not considered to result in a significant increase in impermeable surfacing. Similarly, the increase in footprint from the proposed rear extension is limited when compared to the extent of built form being removed.

Given the scale and nature of the development, it is not considered that the proposal would materially alter existing drainage patterns or increase surface water runoff to the detriment of neighbouring land or properties. A proportionate approach to surface water management is therefore considered appropriate, and whilst the development is not expected to increase flood risk on or off the site, it is encouraged that advice is sought to ensure that the proposal complies with Building Regulations. Therefore, the proposal is considered to comply with WCS Core Policy 67 and the relevant provisions within the NPPF.

Bat SAC Zones of Impact

Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, including through ensuring that development avoids harm to protected species and habitats.

Policy N2 of the NPPF seeks to conserve and enhance biodiversity and support nature recovery. Development proposals should minimise impacts on habitats and species and, where relevant, demonstrate that appropriate mitigation measures are secured where harm cannot be avoided.

The wider landscape surrounding Box and Corsham is of international importance for bats. Locally, their habitat is protected through a Bat Special Area of Conservation (SAC) which is focused around the Box mine complex, just outside of the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan boundary. It is known that essential foraging and commuting routes supporting this SAC extend for several kilometres outside the SAC boundary, including the entire Corsham Neighbourhood Plan area. This Batscape Strategy sets out to influence and enhance the sustainable development of Box and Corsham through protecting important bat habitats within the designated Neighbourhood Plan area.

Although the application site is located within the Bat SAC Zone of Impact, the nature, scale, and location of the proposed works are not considered to give rise to any adverse effects on bats or their associated ecological networks. The development relates solely to a ground floor rear extension, parking space and garden room and does not involve the removal of mature vegetation, trees, hedgerows or other landscape features that typically provide key foraging or commuting habitat for SAC bat populations and the wider foraging resource and established commuting corridors within the surrounding landscape will remain unaffected. The conversion of the loft space is an area of slightly greater concern, but similar could be achieved without the need for planning approval. As such, no further information has been sought wishing to take a proportionate approach.

There is no evidence of roosting potential within the parts of the building affected by the works, and no structural features suitable for bats will be disturbed, destroyed, or modified as part of the proposal. Therefore, given the limited and localised nature of the works, the absence of direct impacts on potential roost features and the retention of all external habitat features that support bat activity, the proposal is not considered likely to give rise to any significant effects on bats or the integrity of the SAC. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal will meet with the requirements of policy CP50 to the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the Bat Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) Planning Guidance for Wiltshire (September 2015) and relevant legislative duties.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Householder planning applications are exempt from the requirement to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain under Schedule 7A, Section 4(2)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as inserted by the Environment Act 2021.

CONCLUSION

The proposal is considered to comply with the exceptions set out in policy GB7 of the NPPF and is not considered to constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

In other respects, the proposed development, by reason of its scale and positioning, is considered to enable a sympathetic addition that preserves the character and appearance of the main building and its setting, remaining subservient and proportionate to the building and its plot. Additionally, the works are fully contained within the existing built form and would not encroach into the open landscape nor cause unacceptable impacts upon the amenity or living conditions of surrounding residential occupiers. Furthermore, the proposed works are not considered to impact on the Bat SAC Zone of Impact or interrupt views both into and out of the Cotswolds National Landscape or the designated conservation area.

Accordingly, the development is considered to comply with the relevant provisions within the NPPF, Core Policies 11, 50, 51, 57, 58, 61, 64 and 67 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, policies CE1, CE4 and CE5 of the Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan, together with the Wiltshire Design Guide.

As such, the application is recommended for approval, subject to the conditions set out below.

RECOMMENDATION: That Planning Permission be GRANTED subject to 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 30.05.26

0222/26 B – Proposed Garden Room Plan, Elevations and Parking Layout received 18.05.26

0222/26 C – Proposed Floor Plans, Elevations and Block Plan received 14.09.26

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

INFORMATIVES:

The applicant should note that no construction / demolition vehicle access may be taken along BOX16 without prior consultation with the Rights of way Countryside Access Officer (CAO). Where appropriate any safety/mitigation/reinstatement measures must be approved by the CAO. It is an offence under section 131A of the Highways Act 1980 to disturb the surface of a public right of way without lawful authority to do so. The Highway Authority have the power to take enforcement action as necessary.

The applicant should note that it is a criminal offence to obstruct a public right of way under section 137 of the highways Act 1980 and therefore no materials, plant, temporary structures or excavations of any kind should be deposited / undertaken which obstruct or adversely affect the public right of way BOX16 whilst development takes place, without prior consultation with, and the further permission of, the highways authority at Wiltshire council.

The applicant should note that in order to access the site with a mechanically propelled vehicle (MPV), they will require a private right of vehicular access. Without this private right they would be committing an offence under Section 34 of the Road Traffic Act 1988. The granting of planning permission does not give the applicant or householder a vehicular right of access over the footpath. The applicant is advised to take legal advice to ensure they have a right of access.