

Design & Access Statement

To support a Householder Planning Application for the Partial Rebuilding, Extension and Alteration of Existing Dwelling, together with Erection of Carport and Ancillary Outbuilding.

Chapel Cottage, Chittoe, Chippenham, SN15 2EL

September 2026

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1. Introduction & Summary

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of an application for the partial demolition, rebuilding, extension and alteration of Chapel Cottage, Chittoe, together with the erection of an oak-framed carport and an ancillary garden room within the extensive residential curtilage.

The proposal has been developed as a considered alteration and improvement of the existing dwelling rather than as the creation of a new residential unit. The design responds to the existing building, its varied architectural character, the wooded setting and the established landscape framework of the site.

The principal works comprise:

- partial demolition of the existing dwelling;
- rebuilding and reconfiguration of parts of the house;
- a combination of single-storey and two-storey extensions;
- improvements to the internal arrangement and residential accommodation;
- retention, repair and reuse of existing building materials where appropriate;
- use of matching natural rubble stone, red brick, slate and clay tiles, together with areas of vertical timber or composite cladding;
- construction of a new oak-framed carport;
- construction of an ancillary garden room;
- associated landscaping and ecological enhancements;
- protection of retained trees and their root protection areas;
- replacement native tree planting;
- permeable surfacing;
- ecological mitigation and bat-roost enhancement; and
- replacement of the existing septic tank with a packaged treatment plant and improvements to surface-water drainage.

The proposal is illustrated in the accompanying planning drawing package, including the existing and proposed plans, elevations, sections, site plans and details.

2. Site Description

Chapel Cottage is an established residential property within a substantial, predominantly wooded residential plot at Chittoe.

The site has a strong landscape character, with established trees, hedges and vegetation providing substantial screening and enclosure. The existing house is a traditional dwelling which has been altered and extended over time and consequently incorporates a mixture of architectural forms and materials.

The submitted existing elevations identify:

- natural rubble stone;
- multi-red imperial facing brick;
- grey slate;
- traditional red clay tiles;
- traditional red concrete interlocking tiles;
- black uPVC casement windows;
- cast stone heads and cills;
- decorative brick detailing; and
- black metal half-round rainwater goods.

The existing building therefore already has a mixed material palette reflecting its incremental development. The proposed works have been designed to retain this established character while providing a coherent and contemporary response to the requirements of the dwelling.

The site plan identifies existing outbuildings, mature vegetation, tree root protection areas, the existing septic tank, public rights of way and the proposed locations of the new ancillary structures.

The wooded nature of the site is an important component of its character. The design consequently seeks to work within the established landscape framework rather than introduce an exposed or visually prominent form of development.

3. Design Principles & Planning Policy Assessment

The proposal has been informed by the principles of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, particularly:

- **Core Policy 48 – Supporting Rural Life**
- **Core Policy 50 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity**
- **Core Policy 51 – Landscape**
- **Core Policy 52 – Green Infrastructure**
- **Core Policy 57 – Ensuring High-Quality Design and Place Shaping**
- **Core Policy 58 – Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment**

These policies remain relevant considerations in Wiltshire decision-making. Recent Wiltshire planning material continues to identify Core Policies 48, 50, 51, 52, 57 and 58 as relevant policies for development proposals.

The proposal is also assessed against the current **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), revised September 2026**. The current Framework places particular emphasis on context-responsive design, landscape and nature, climate resilience, sustainable drainage, effective use of land and the protection of existing natural features.

The design therefore follows five principal objectives:

1. to improve the existing dwelling without creating an inappropriate level of visual or landscape impact;
2. to ensure that the scale, form and materials respond to the existing building and its rural setting;
3. to retain and protect the established landscape and tree framework;
4. to improve ecological and environmental performance; and
5. to provide a practical and accessible home suited to its long-term residential use.

3.1 Wiltshire Core Policy 48 – Supporting Rural Life

The proposal relates to the continued residential use and improvement of an established dwelling in a rural location.

It does not introduce a new dwelling or an unrelated urbanising use. The works enable the existing property to remain a viable and functional home while responding to the characteristics of the site.

The ancillary office/studio accommodation also provides appropriate space for home working within the established residential curtilage.

The proposal is therefore consistent with the objective of supporting an appropriate and sustainable rural way of life.

3.2 Wiltshire Core Policy 50 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity

The proposal incorporates ecological mitigation and enhancement measures, particularly in relation to bats.

Temporary and integrated bat-roost provision is proposed, together with the retention/re-purposing of an existing outbuilding as a mitigation structure. Native replacement planting is also proposed.

The proposal therefore demonstrates that biodiversity has been incorporated into the design and construction strategy.

3.3 Wiltshire Core Policy 51 – Landscape

The proposal responds positively to the landscape character of the site.

The wooded setting is retained as a principal characteristic, tree protection measures are incorporated and replacement native planting is proposed.

The scale and materials of the extensions and ancillary buildings have also been selected to ensure that the development assimilates into its landscape setting.

This approach accords with the policy objective of conserving and, where possible, enhancing landscape character and mitigating potential landscape effects through sensitive design and landscaping.

3.4 Wiltshire Core Policy 52 – Green Infrastructure

The proposal retains the substantial existing green infrastructure associated with the residential plot.

The scheme includes tree protection, replacement native planting and native garden planting. The design consequently retains the established relationship between the dwelling and its wooded garden rather than eroding the landscape framework of the site.

This is consistent with the policy objective of retaining and enhancing existing on-site green infrastructure.

3.5 Wiltshire Core Policy 57 – Ensuring High-Quality Design and Place Shaping

Core Policy 57 is particularly relevant to the application.

The policy seeks development that responds positively to its context, including landscape features, building form, height, mass, scale, materials and rooflines. Recent Wiltshire planning decisions continue to apply these considerations when assessing residential extensions and associated development.

The proposal responds to these requirements through:

- retention and adaptation of the existing dwelling;
- rationalisation and rebuilding of existing elements;
- controlled extension lengths and heights;
- use of traditional local materials;
- carefully limited areas of timber/composite cladding;
- retention and protection of trees;
- replacement planting;
- ecological enhancement;
- permeable surfaces; and
- appropriate ancillary building forms.

The proposal consequently represents a context-led response to the existing building and its landscape setting.

3.6 Wiltshire Core Policy 58 – Conservation of the Historic Environment

The proposal respects the established architectural character of the dwelling through the use of matching/reused stone, brick, slate and clay tiles.

Where contemporary materials are introduced, notably vertical timber/composite cladding, these are used as a visually recessive element to distinguish new work while maintaining a coherent overall appearance.

The proposal therefore seeks to conserve the established character of the property and its setting, subject to confirmation of any statutory heritage designation through the Council's records.

3.7 National Planning Policy Framework

The current NPPF places substantial emphasis on high-quality, context-responsive design. Policy DP3 states that development should respond to the history, character and features of its site and setting, including through the arrangement of buildings, materials and architectural features.

The proposal meets these objectives through its use of the existing dwelling as the starting point for the design, its contextual material palette and its retention of the site's landscape structure.

The NPPF also identifies nature, tree cover, green infrastructure and sustainable drainage as integral aspects of well-designed places.

The proposal responds through tree protection, native planting, bat mitigation, permeable surfaces and the proposed drainage strategy.

The NPPF further supports climate-responsive development, including the improvement of existing buildings and the use of sustainable drainage and landscape measures.

The proposal's adaptation and partial rebuilding of the existing dwelling, combined with material reuse, tree retention and sustainable drainage measures, is consistent with these objectives.

4. Use & Amount of Development

The principal use of the site remains C3 residential use.

The proposed alterations provide improved and more usable accommodation within the existing dwelling, including living, dining, kitchen, utility and bedroom accommodation.

The ancillary structures are intended to support the residential use of the property and are not proposed as separate residential accommodation.

The proposed carport provides covered parking associated with the dwelling.

The proposed garden room is shown on the submitted drawings as a garden room incorporating office/studio and ancillary leisure-related accommodation. The structure is clearly ancillary in its scale, position and relationship to the main dwelling.

The existing dwelling has a stated Gross Internal Area (GIA) of 132.81 sq m.

The proposed dwelling has a stated GIA of 174.73 sq m, representing an increase of approximately 41.92 sqm, or 31.6%.

The increase in floor area should, however, be considered in the context of the physical form of the proposal.

The scheme does not simply enlarge the existing building uniformly. It involves the removal and rebuilding of parts of the existing structure, rationalisation of the existing additions and the introduction of carefully composed extensions.

The proposed plans identify:

- a **6.2m extension**;
- a **4.94m extension**;
- a **5.1m rebuilt extension**; and
- a **9.0m rebuilt extension**.

The proposed arrangement consequently provides additional accommodation while allowing the building to be reorganised into a more coherent architectural composition.

The proposal remains firmly within the established residential use of the site.

5. Scale & Layout

A key design principle is that the extensions should not appear disproportionately large or visually dominant within the established landscape.

The proposed elevations demonstrate a varied roofscape and a combination of single-storey and two-storey elements rather than a single enlarged block.

The submitted dimensions include:

- 1.95m eaves and 4.1m ridge to one extension;
- 6.2m ridge to the principal two-storey extension; and
- the existing building is retained as the principal reference for the overall scale of the development.

Importantly, the proposal does not seek to increase the overall scale of the dwelling in a manner that would dominate the surrounding landscape. The principal design response is to reorganise and replace existing built form while introducing additional accommodation in appropriately scaled elements.

The carport is deliberately modest in scale, measuring approximately 7.4m by 5.6m, with an eaves height of approximately 2.46m and ridge height of approximately 4.5m. The garden room measures approximately 12.0m by 4.0m, with an eaves height of approximately 2.5m. The drawings also identify the potential for a retrofit green roof system. Both ancillary structures are therefore subordinate in height and form to the principal dwelling. The proposed layout has been designed around the existing building and established site characteristics.

Internally, the proposal improves the relationship between the principal living spaces and provides a more functional arrangement of rooms. The ground-floor proposals include kitchen/dining, living, family, snug, reading/study and utility-related accommodation, with bedroom and bathroom accommodation retained and reorganised at the upper levels.

Externally, the new elements are distributed within the existing residential curtilage rather than creating a new development parcel.

The carport is positioned as an ancillary structure and the garden room is located within the garden, where its landscape setting will assist in limiting its visual prominence. The layout also responds directly to the site's ecological and arboricultural constraints. The submitted site plan identifies root protection areas and specifies construction techniques intended to avoid unnecessary excavation within those areas.

This approach accords with the objectives of Wiltshire Core Policy 57, which expects development to respond positively to existing landscape features, building form, scale, materials, rooflines and the wider context.

6. Appearance and Design Approach

The existing dwelling has evolved through additions and alterations and contains a mixture of stone, brick, slate and tile. Rather than attempting to impose a wholly new architectural language, the proposal uses this existing palette as the basis for the alterations.

The proposed materials are identified on the drawings as:

Walls

- natural rubble stone repaired or replaced with matching stone where appropriate;
- breathable lime mortar repointing;
- reused red brick and new matching red brick where required; and
- vertical timber or composite cladding.

Roofs

- existing slate repaired or replaced with matching slate where appropriate;
- new matching slate to the rebuilt wing roof; and
- red clay tiles, including reused tiles and matching new tiles where required.

Windows and doors

- existing black uPVC units retained where appropriate;
- new windows and doors in black or dark grey aluminium or composite;
- new openings designed to relate to the existing window style.

Rainwater goods

- black metal half-round gutters; and
- round downpipes matching the existing treatment.

Eaves and verges

- clipped eaves;
- black composite or uPVC fascias, bargeboards and soffits; and
- wet-bed cement verges where appropriate.

The use of vertical timber/composite cladding provides a clear distinction between new and retained elements without competing with the established stone and brickwork. In the heavily landscaped setting, the material is also capable of weathering into the surrounding landscape.

The approach is consistent with the design objectives of current NPPF Policy DP3, which requires development to respond to its context through building arrangement, materials and architectural features while allowing appropriate innovation and change.

7. Landscape and Visual Impact

The site benefits from a substantial established landscape framework.

The proposal has been designed to work within this framework rather than diminish it. The existing trees and vegetation provide a high degree of visual enclosure and will assist in assimilating the proposed development into its surroundings.

The submitted site plan specifically identifies tree root protection areas. It also requires the carport to be positioned outside the identified root protection areas and specifies low-impact foundation techniques for the garden room.

The proposed access and path construction is also intended to minimise disturbance, using a permeable geotextile layer and cellular confinement system with permeable gravel or similar wearing course. Excavation, concrete foundations, kerbs and underground drainage are excluded from the identified root protection areas.

The landscaping proposals include:

- replacement native tree planting for trees identified for removal through the accompanying arboricultural information;
- native shrub planting;
- native herbaceous perennial planting; and
- reinstatement/softening of margins around hard landscaped areas.

This approach directly supports the objectives of Wiltshire Core Policies 51, 52 and 57, which seek to conserve landscape character, retain and enhance green infrastructure and integrate development with its natural setting.

The current NPPF similarly places emphasis on maintaining and enhancing tree cover, integrating green infrastructure and using landscaping to integrate development into its surroundings.

8. Trees and Arboricultural Considerations

An Arboricultural Impact Assessment and preliminary Method Statement has been undertaken and prepared by Dryad Tree Specialists Ltd. and accompanies this application, to be read in conjunction with this statement.

Trees are a significant characteristic of the site and have been treated as a fundamental design constraint rather than an incidental consideration. The submitted proposals identify tree root protection areas and incorporate measures intended to minimise disturbance to retained trees.

In particular:

- the carport is located outside identified root protection areas;
- low-impact helical/screw or other engineered point foundations are proposed for the garden room;
- new paths and driveway areas within proximity to trees are proposed using permeable construction;
- excavation and underground drainage are excluded from the root protection areas; and
- replacement native planting is proposed for trees identified for removal.

The proposal therefore seeks to balance the requirements of the development with the retention and enhancement of the site's established landscape structure.

9. Ecology and Biodiversity

Ecological considerations have informed the proposal, particularly in relation to bats. A Bat Emergence and Re-entry Survey has been undertaken by Arbtech Consulting Ltd and accompanies this application to be read in conjunction with this statement.

The submitted proposals incorporate specific mitigation and enhancement measures arising from the accompanying bat survey information.

These include:

- temporary bat boxes/replacement roosts to be installed before works commence;
- retention/re-purposing of an existing outbuilding as a pre-works mitigation structure for a Horseshoe Bat roost;
- an integrated crevice-type bat box within the new extension/rebuild; and
- a cavity-type bat box within the new extension/rebuild.

The drawings specify that bat boxes should generally be installed between approximately 3m and 5m above ground level, preferably at eaves level, with appropriate orientation and away from artificial lighting. These measures demonstrate that ecological mitigation has been incorporated into the design rather than treated solely as a post-consent matter.

The proposals for native replacement planting and native shrub/herbaceous planting will also contribute to habitat value and landscape connectivity.

This approach is consistent with Wiltshire Core Policy 50 and the current NPPF approach to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and incorporating features supporting priority species such as bats.

10. Sustainability & Drainage

The proposal involves the adaptation and partial rebuilding of an existing dwelling rather than the construction of a wholly new house.

This approach makes continued use of an established residential site and existing infrastructure while providing the opportunity to improve the environmental performance of the building through the construction process.

The design incorporates a number of measures supporting climate resilience and resource efficiency, including:

- retention and reuse of existing building fabric where appropriate;
- reuse of existing red brick and clay tiles;
- matching and repair of existing slate;
- permeable external surfacing;
- low-impact foundations for the garden room;
- protection and enhancement of existing tree cover;
- replacement native planting;
- improved foul-water treatment; and
- surface-water management through soakaways subject to infiltration testing.

The current NPPF identifies climate-responsive building design, landscaping, tree planting and sustainable drainage as important components of well-designed development.

The existing septic tank is proposed to be replaced by a packaged treatment plant.

Surface-water drainage will continue to use soakaways, with new soakaways proposed within the areas identified on the site plan. The drawings specify that the new soakaways are to be sized according to the equivalent roof area and remain subject to soil permeability and infiltration testing.

11. Access, Parking & Residential Amenity

The proposal does not require the creation of a new residential access arrangement and the existing access arrangements serving the dwelling are retained.

The proposed timber-framed carport provides covered parking within the residential curtilage. The carport measures approximately 7.4m x 5.6m, with an eaves height of approximately 2.46m and a ridge height of approximately 4.5m. The structure is open-sided and visually lightweight, with an oak frame appropriate to the rural and wooded character of the site. The proposed arrangement therefore provides a practical parking solution without the need for a visually intrusive garage extension to the principal dwelling.

The site plan also records public rights of way in the wider vicinity. The proposed development is contained within the established residential curtilage and does not propose a new public route or alteration to the recorded public rights of way. The proposal has been designed to protect the reasonable residential amenities of neighbouring properties. The site is substantially landscaped and enclosed, reducing the potential for the proposed extensions and ancillary buildings to appear visually dominant from surrounding properties. The proposed building heights and separation from surrounding development have been considered through the disposition of the extensions and ancillary structures. The extensions are concentrated around the existing dwelling rather than creating an isolated new building within the wider landscape.

The proposal therefore represents an appropriate form of residential intensification within an established residential plot without introducing a new dwelling or a materially urbanising form of development.

12. Heritage and Local Character

The existing dwelling has an established traditional character, expressed through its stone and brick elevations, pitched roofs, slate and clay tile finishes and traditional detailing. The proposal responds to this character through the retention, repair and reuse of these materials wherever appropriate.

Core Policy 58 requires the historic environment to be protected, conserved and, where possible, enhanced, while current national design policy requires development to respond to the history, character and features of its setting.

The proposal does not rely upon a new architectural language that would compete with the existing building. Instead, the design differentiates new work principally through the controlled use of vertical timber/composite cladding while retaining the principal traditional materials of stone, brick, slate and clay tile.

The Council's definitive heritage records should be read alongside the application to confirm whether any statutory designation or conservation-area considerations apply to the property. Nothing in this statement is intended to override the findings of the Council's heritage records or any separate heritage assessment that may be required.

13. Conclusion

The proposal represents a carefully considered improvement and partial rebuilding of an established dwelling at Chapel Cottage, Chittoe.

Although the proposed dwelling increases from 132.81 sqm to 174.73 sqm GIA, the additional accommodation is achieved through a combination of rationalised rebuilding and carefully proportioned extensions rather than an undifferentiated enlargement of the existing house.

The architectural response is rooted in the character of the existing building. Natural rubble stone, red brick, slate and clay tiles are retained, repaired or matched, while vertical timber/composite cladding is used selectively to provide a contemporary but recessive expression to new work.

The extensive landscape setting is treated as a fundamental design asset. Tree root protection areas are respected, low-impact construction methods are specified, permeable surfacing is proposed and native replacement planting will reinforce the established landscape structure.

Ecological mitigation is integrated into the scheme through replacement and permanent bat-roost provision and the retention/re-purposing of an existing outbuilding as part of the mitigation strategy.

The oak-framed carport and ancillary garden room are subordinate structures appropriately located within the residential curtilage. The carport is approximately 7.4m x 5.6m, while the garden room is approximately 12m x 4m with a 2.5m eaves height.

Overall, the proposals provide a coherent means of improving and adapting an existing rural dwelling while respecting its architectural character, landscape setting, trees, ecology and neighbouring amenity.

The scheme therefore represents a contextually appropriate form of development which accords with the relevant objectives of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the current NPPF, particularly those relating to rural life, high-quality design, landscape, green infrastructure, biodiversity, climate resilience and sustainable drainage.