

Planning Statement

April Cottage, Shaftesbury Road, Mere, Warminster, BA12 6BW



Site Location:	April Cottage, Shaftesbury Road, Mere, Warminster, BA12 6BW
Date:	02/10/2026
Planning Authority:	Wiltshire Council

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Homz has been instructed by Sarah Roberts (**“the Applicant”**) to prepare and submit a planning application to Wiltshire Council (**“the Local Planning Authority”**) for the retrospective change of use of part of the garage to an annexe, with the remaining part retained for garage use, at April Cottage, Shaftesbury Road, Mere, Warminster, BA12 6BW (**“the Site”**).
- 1.2 The drawings submitted in support of the application illustrate the extent of the Site and the proposed works.
- 1.3 This Planning Statement describes the Site and its surroundings, outlines the proposed development and relevant planning policy framework, and assesses the proposal against the Development Plan and other material planning considerations.

2. Site and Surroundings

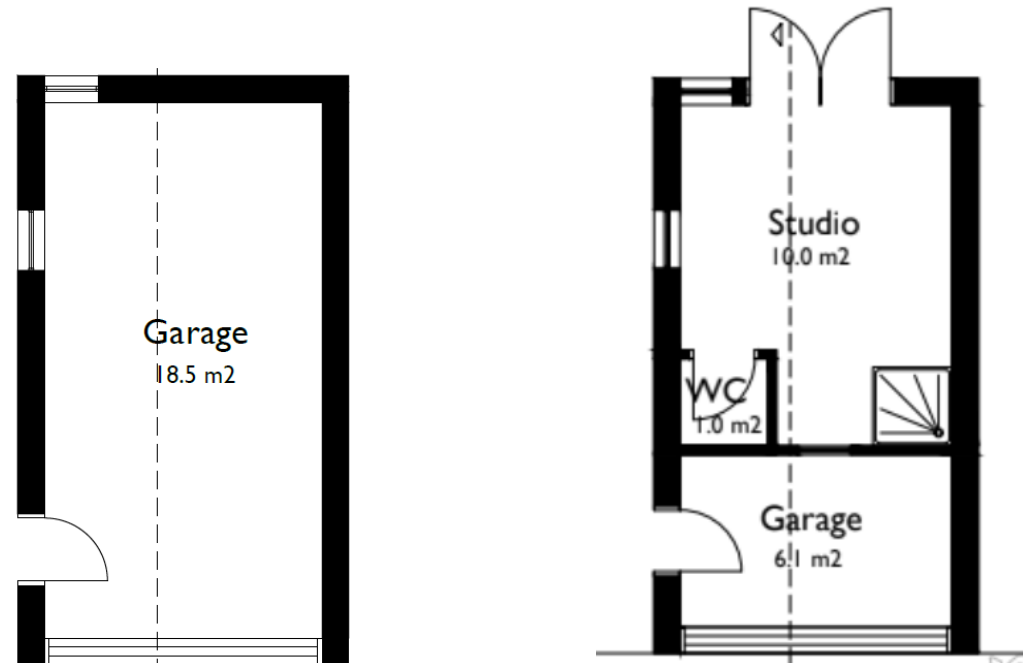
- 2.1 The Site is located within the residential curtilage of April Cottage, between the main dwelling and the neighbouring property known as Sunnybank, off Shaftesbury Road, Mere.
- 2.2 Available historic satellite imagery indicates that the building has been present on the Site since at least 2002.
- 2.3 The building was originally used as a garage. In June 2024, part of the building was converted to a self-contained annexe by a professional building contractor, with the works completed within approximately one month. The remaining part of the building was retained in garage use.
- 2.4 The annexe accommodation comprises a living/sleeping area, kitchen, WC and shower facilities. Although physically self-contained, it is proposed to remain ancillary to April Cottage and to form part of the same residential planning unit rather than a separate dwelling.
- 2.5 As part of the conversion works, alterations were also made to the external appearance of the building. These comprised the replacement of approximately three-quarters of the existing roof covering with materials matching the original garage roof, together with alterations to the ridge and fascia detailing and the addition of timber cladding to the external walls, excluding the front elevation facing Shaftesbury Road.
- 2.6 Two uPVC double-glazed external doors were also installed on the elevation facing the adjoining field. The overall form and pitch of the roof remained unchanged.
- 2.7 The existing overhead garage door serving the retained garage area was retained as part of the works. Notwithstanding these alterations, the overall footprint and internal dimensions of the building remain unchanged.
- 2.8 Following the conversion, the annexe accommodation was used as holiday accommodation until recently, with on-site parking available in association with that use.



***Figures 1 and 2: Site Views from Shaftesbury Road in August 2023 and March 2026
(courtesy of Google Maps)***

3. Description of Development

- 3.1 The proposed development seeks the retrospective retention of the partial conversion of the existing garage to a self-contained residential annexe ancillary to April Cottage, together with the retention of the remaining garage space, the pre-existing garage access door and overhead garage door, two uPVC double-glazed external doors and associated external alterations.
- 3.2 The external alterations comprise the replacement of approximately three-quarters of the existing roof covering with material matching the original garage roof, together with the addition of matching ridge and fascia detailing and timber cladding to the walls, excluding the front elevation facing Shaftesbury Road. The overall footprint and internal dimensions of the building remain unchanged.



Figures 3 and 4: Existing (Left) and Proposed (Right) Floor Plans

4. Policy Context

Legislation

- 4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2 Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires regard to be given to the provisions of the Development Plan and other material considerations when determining planning applications.
- 4.3 The proposed development has therefore been considered against the Development Plan as a whole, together with relevant national planning policy, supplementary planning guidance and other material planning considerations.

National Planning Policy

- 4.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Development Plan

- 4.5 The statutory Development Plan for the Site comprises the Wiltshire Core Strategy 2015 and relevant saved policies of the Salisbury District Local Plan.
- 4.6 The following policies are considered relevant to the proposed development:

Wiltshire Core Strategy 2015

- CP17: Mere Community Area Strategy
- CP50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- CP51: Landscape
- CP57: Ensuring High Quality Design & Space Shaping
- CP61: Transport & Development
- CP62: Development Impacts on the Transport Network
- CP67: Flood Risk

Saved Policy Salisbury District Local Plan

- C6 - Special Landscape Areas

Supplementary Planning Documents

4.7 The following Supplementary Planning Documents and guidance are considered relevant to the assessment of the proposal:

- **Wiltshire Design Guide**
- **Creating Places Design Guide SPG (April 2006)**
- **Achieving Sustainable Development SPG (April 2005)**
- **Wiltshire Local Transport Plan – Car Parking Strategy**

5. Assessment

Principle of Development

- 5.1 Core Policy 17 – Mere Community Area Strategy provides the relevant spatial policy context for development within the Mere Community Area.
- 5.2 The application seeks the retention of the partial conversion of the existing garage to a self-contained residential annexe ancillary to April Cottage, while retaining the remainder of the building in garage use. The annexe comprises a living/sleeping area, kitchen, WC and shower facilities.
- 5.3 Although the annexe is physically self-contained, the proposal does not seek the creation of a separate independent dwelling. The annexe would remain ancillary to April Cottage and form part of the same residential planning unit.
- 5.4 The building is longstanding, with available historic satellite imagery indicating that it has been present on the Site since at least 2002. The proposal therefore does not introduce a new building or additional residential unit, but instead seeks the continued use and adaptation of an established structure within the existing residential curtilage.
- 5.5 The annexe was previously used as holiday accommodation. The current application now seeks to establish its use as ancillary residential accommodation associated with April Cottage, thereby providing a direct functional relationship between the annexe and the principal dwelling.
- 5.6 Accordingly, the proposal represents an appropriate use of an existing building within the established residential curtilage and would not result in the creation of a separate dwelling. The principle of the development is therefore considered acceptable.

Design, Character and Appearance

- 5.7 Core Policy 57 – Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping requires alterations and changes of use to respond appropriately to their context, including in relation to built form, scale, roofline, materials and the character of surrounding development.
- 5.8 The external alterations comprise changes to the roof form and associated detailing, including the ridge and fascia, together with timber cladding and two uPVC double-glazed external doors. The pre-existing overhead garage door serving the retained garage area remains in place. The works have not increased the overall footprint or internal dimensions of the building.
- 5.9 The established scale, siting and overall form of the building are therefore retained, with no extension of the structure or material increase in its massing.

- 5.10 The light-coloured roof-edge and fascia detailing has a visual relationship with similar detailing evident on the neighbouring property at Sunnybank, providing a degree of visual continuity within the immediate built context.
- 5.11 While the timber cladding and uPVC doors differ from the traditional stone character of April Cottage, these alterations are not located on the front elevation facing Shaftesbury Road. From this principal public viewpoint, the building continues to present predominantly as a garage, with the pre-existing overhead garage door retained and the front elevation remaining stone-faced. As a result, the established garage appearance of the building is preserved when viewed from Shaftesbury Road, and the external alterations are limited in their visual prominence and do not materially alter the character of the site or its relationship with April Cottage.
- 5.12 Having regard to the retained scale and form of the building, its position within the residential curtilage and the relationship of the alterations with the immediate built context, the development is considered proportionate to the existing building and consistent with the principal design and place-shaping objectives of Core Policy 57.

Landscape and Visual Impact

- 5.13 Core Policy 51 – Landscape requires development to protect, conserve and, where possible, enhance landscape character, including settlement character, landscape settings, important views and the transition between built development and the countryside.
- 5.14 The Site is also located within a Special Landscape Area, where Saved Policy C6 of the Salisbury District Local Plan seeks to conserve landscape character through careful control of the location, scale and nature of development.
- 5.15 The proposal relates entirely to an existing and longstanding building within the established residential curtilage of April Cottage. Its established scale, siting and overall form are retained, and the external alterations do not result in additional built mass, an increased footprint or further encroachment into the adjoining countryside.
- 5.16 Although the alterations have changed the appearance of the former garage, their visual effects are confined to the existing building. The proposal does not alter the established spatial relationship between the existing residential development and the adjoining countryside.
- 5.17 Having regard to the existing residential context, the limited scale of the works and the absence of additional built development within the landscape, the proposal is not considered to result in material harm to the character or quality of the Special Landscape Area.

- 5.18 Accordingly, no material conflict is identified with the landscape protection objectives of Core Policy 51 and Saved Policy C6.

Residential Amenity

- 5.19 Core Policy 57 also requires development to have regard to the relationship between adjoining uses and the amenities of existing and future occupiers, including privacy, overlooking and disturbance.
- 5.20 The annexe has not been enlarged, and the two uPVC double-glazed external doors are positioned on the elevation facing the adjoining field. Accordingly, the development does not introduce additional built form or openings that would give rise to unacceptable enclosure, overlooking, overshadowing or loss of outlook to neighbouring properties.
- 5.21 The proposed use would remain ancillary to April Cottage and form part of the same residential planning unit. It would therefore operate as accommodation associated with the principal dwelling rather than as an independently occupied residential unit.
- 5.22 Given the existing siting of the building, the orientation of the external openings and the ancillary nature of the use, the proposal is not considered likely to result in unacceptable noise, disturbance, overlooking or loss of privacy.
- 5.23 The development is therefore considered compatible with surrounding residential uses and consistent with the amenity requirements of Core Policy 57.

Highways, Access and Parking

- 5.24 Core Policy 61 – Transport and New Development requires development to be capable of being served by safe access to the highway network, while Core Policy 62 – Development Impacts on the Transport Network seeks to ensure that development does not result in unacceptable effects on the transport network.
- 5.25 The proposal does not involve any alteration to the existing vehicular access arrangements serving April Cottage. On-site parking is available within the Site and part of the building remains in garage use.
- 5.26 As the annexe would remain ancillary to April Cottage rather than forming an independent dwelling, it would not generate a separate residential parking requirement associated with an additional dwelling.
- 5.27 The development would therefore continue to utilise the established access and parking arrangements without materially increasing pressure on the local highway network.

- 5.28 Accordingly, the proposal is considered consistent with Core Policies 61 and 62 and the relevant principles of the Wiltshire Local Transport Plan – Car Parking Strategy.

Biodiversity

- 5.29 Core Policy 50 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity seeks to protect biodiversity and ecological interests.
- 5.30 The proposal relates to the conversion and alteration of an existing building and does not involve an increase in footprint, additional land take or the loss of existing landscape features.
- 5.31 No ecological constraints affecting the Site have previously been identified.
- 5.32 The proposal would therefore not result in the loss of identified habitat or landscape features and is considered consistent with the objectives of Core Policy 50.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 5.33 Core Policy 67 – Flood Risk seeks to ensure that development appropriately addresses flood risk and surface-water drainage.
- 5.34 No flood-risk constraints affecting the Site have been identified.
- 5.35 Furthermore, the proposal does not increase the footprint of the existing building and therefore does not create additional roof area or materially increase impermeable built development.
- 5.36 The development would consequently not materially increase surface-water runoff or flood risk and is considered consistent with Core Policy 67.

Planning Balance

- 5.37 The proposal has been assessed against the Development Plan as a whole, including Core Policies 17, 50, 51, 57, 61, 62 and 67 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and Saved Policy C6 of the Salisbury District Local Plan, together with relevant supplementary planning guidance and other material considerations.
- 5.38 The proposal concerns the retention and adaptation of a longstanding building within the established residential curtilage of April Cottage. It does not involve the construction of a new building, the creation of a separate dwelling or any increase in the established building footprint. The scale, siting and general form of the building are retained, and the development does not result in further physical encroachment into the adjoining countryside.

- 5.39 The external alterations have changed the appearance of the former garage; however, their effects are confined to the existing building and are not considered to result in material harm to the character of the Site or the wider Special Landscape Area. No material adverse effects have been identified in respect of neighbouring residential amenity, highway safety, biodiversity or flood risk.
- 5.40 The proposal also provides positive planning benefits through the continued and efficient use of an existing building, the provision of self-contained residential annexe accommodation ancillary to April Cottage, the retention of garage and parking provision, and the avoidance of additional built development or land take. The annexe would provide accommodation for family members and guests associated with April Cottage while remaining part of the same residential planning unit and would not result in the creation of an additional dwelling.
- 5.41 Taken as a whole, the continued use of an established building, the provision of ancillary residential accommodation, the retention of existing garage and parking provision, and the absence of identified material planning harm support the conclusion that the proposal represents a proportionate and appropriate form of development having regard to the Development Plan and other material planning considerations.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The proposal seeks to regularise the retrospective partial conversion of the existing garage to a self-contained residential annexe ancillary to April Cottage, together with the retention of the remaining garage space and associated external alterations.
- 6.2 The development makes continued use of a longstanding building without creating a separate dwelling, increasing the building footprint or extending further into the surrounding countryside. The annexe would remain part of the same residential planning unit as April Cottage, while existing access, parking and garage provision would be retained.
- 6.3 Having regard to the Development Plan and other material considerations, the development is considered to be an appropriate and proportionate form of development, with no identified material harm to residential amenity, highway safety, biodiversity, flood risk or the wider Special Landscape Area.
- 6.4 It is therefore respectfully requested that Wiltshire Council grants retrospective planning permission for the retention of the development as proposed.
- 6.5 Should the Local Planning Authority require any further information in order to determine the application, please contact **Jiwon Kang** at **Homz UK** (jiwon@homz.uk). We would be pleased to provide any additional information as required.