VALE COTTAGE, STERT, DEVIZES

Construction of a replacement shed

PLANNING AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

Statement prepared by Victoria Richards, BSc (Hons), September 2026
Checked by Matthew Holmes, BA (Hons), MA MRTPI

1. Introduction

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Mrs C Begg-Smith and is submitted in support of a householder planning application for a replacement shed on land at Vale Cottage, Stert, Devizes.

1.2 This Statement aims to explain the design rationale for the proposed development. The Statement demonstrates how the proposals comply with the relevant national and local planning policies and have been undertaken to avoid any damage to heritage, tree and ecology features on the site.

2. Site Context

2.1 Vale Cottage is located at the western end of the village of Stert and the Stert Conservation Area, circa 1.5km southeast of Devizes. Stert is a linear settlement with its main point of access being at the eastern end of the village and from the A342.

Aerial view of the application site (www.google.co.uk)

2.2 Vale Cottage itself sits at the north end of the site and is a grade II listed building. Adjacent to the cottage is a two-storey building providing garaging and ancillary space. The property then has large gardens to the south and east of the cottage. There is a fall on the site from north to south and at the southern end of the site is a pond. The existing shed, the subject of this application, is located on the north boundary of the site and to the west of the cottage.

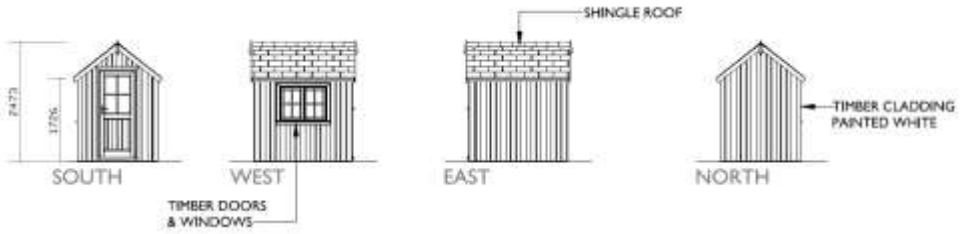
3. Relevant Planning History

3.1 The recent planning history for the property comprises:

- PL/2024/00195- Planning permission granted for a replacement perimeter fence and gates;
- PL/2024/00934- Planning permission granted for alterations to the outbuilding
- PL/2024/04755- Permission granted for a new swimming pool and pool house, new boat store, new garden store, new greenhouse and alterations to garden wall. An application to vary condition 2 to alter the design and position of the approved boat store and greenhouse is currently under consideration (reference PL/2026/05484).
- PL/2025/03948- Permission granted for a new treatment plan to replace existing foul drainage system

4. The Proposed Development

4.1 The proposal is to replace the existing shed located adjacent to the north boundary of the site. The replacement shed is designed to ensure the structure will continue to be appropriate for the setting of the listed building and the significance of the conservation area.



Proposed elevation plan extract (Favonius Architects)

5. Relevant Planning Policies

National Planning Policy

5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), August 2026, confirms that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Sustainable development is defined as encompassing economic, social and environmental factors. The economic involves building a strong, responsive and competitive economy. The social role entails supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations and by creating a high-quality built environment. The environmental role requires protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change.

5.2 Policy S3 of the NPPF confirms that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development proposals that accord with both an up to date development plan and the decision making policies of the NPPF should be approved without delay.

5.3 Policy DP3 of the NPPF requires proposals to respond to their context so that they integrate and enhance their site and its surroundings. The policy sets out key principles for well designed places, requiring development to respond to their context so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings. Substantial weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability or which help raise the standard of design more generally.

5.4 Policy HE4 requires heritage assets to be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. Policy HE5 states that assessments of the potential effects of development proposals on the significance of heritage assets (including through effects on their setting) should identify whether

proposals would be likely to have a positive effect, no effect, result in harm to the significance of a heritage asset (either from work affecting the asset itself or from development within its setting), or cause the total loss of the significance of a heritage asset.

5.5 Policy HE6 states that proposals which would have a positive effect on a designated heritage asset should be supported. For proposals which would harm the significance of a designated heritage asset, the effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals.

5.6 Policy HE9 refers to conservation areas. Development proposals within or affecting the significance of conservation areas should retain and conserve buildings and other features which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area where possible; and consider the area's special architectural or historic interest (as identified as part of the designation of the conservation area) in the design of development.

Local Planning Policy

5.7 The Development Plan for this part of Wiltshire comprises the Wiltshire Core Strategy (adopted 2015). Each relevant policy is considered in turn below:

5.8 Core Policy 1: 'Settlement Strategy' identifies the settlements where development will take place, Stert lies in the countryside outside the market town of Devizes.

5.9 Core Policy 50: 'Biodiversity and geodiversity' states that all development proposals should seek to enhance biodiversity.

5.10 Core Policy 57: 'Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping' A high standard of design is required in all new developments. Development is expected to create a strong sense of place through drawing on the local context and being complementary to the locality. Development should make an efficient use of land whilst taking account of the characteristics of the site and local context.

5.11 Core Policy 58: 'Historic Environment' Development should protect and where possible enhance the historic environment.

6. Design Considerations

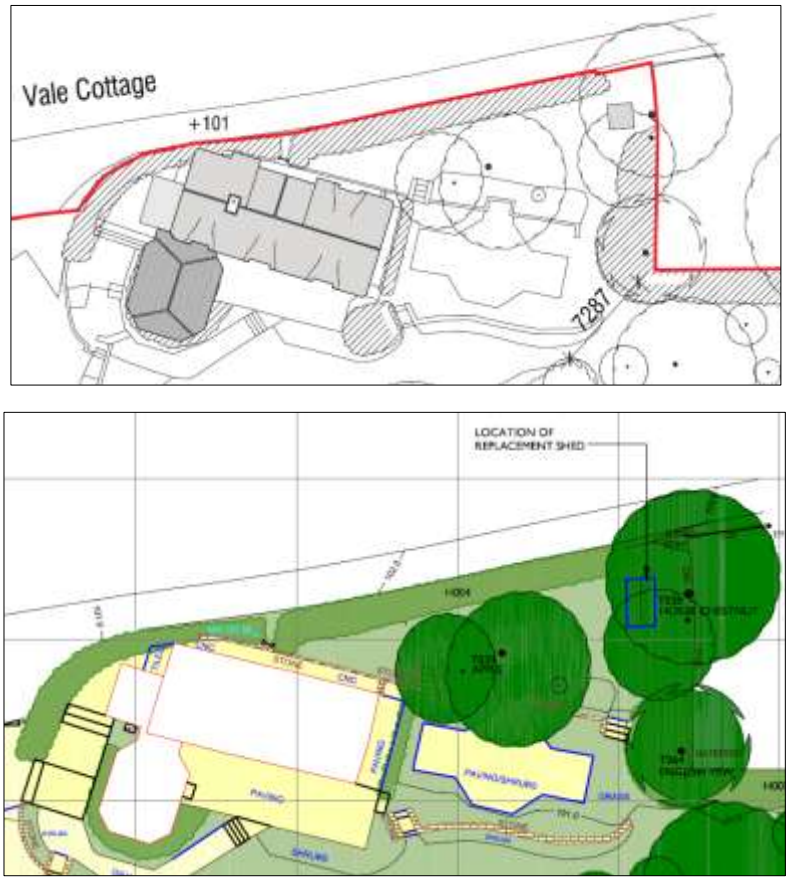
6.1 On the basis that the proposed works relate to the replacement of an existing shed within the application site the main considerations in this case are;

- Impact of the works on the character and appearance of the area
- Impact of the works on the Stert Conservation Area and the setting of the listed building (Vale Cottage)
- Impact of the works upon trees, landscaping and ecology.

Each of these matters is considered in turn in the following paragraphs

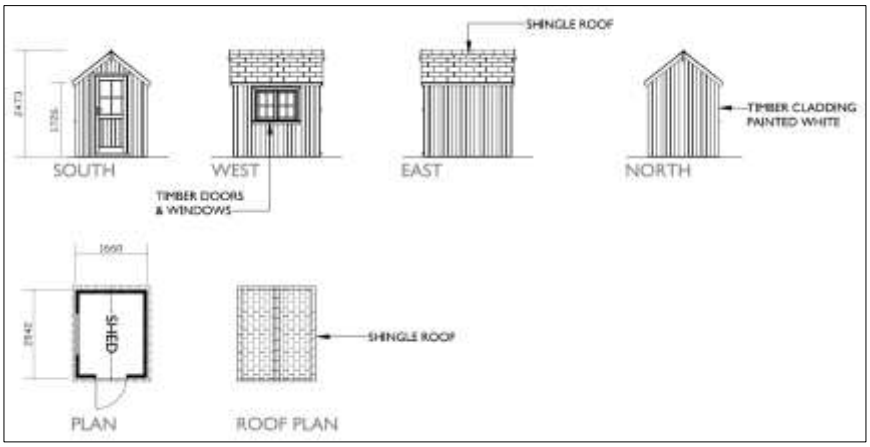
Design and Appearance considerations

6.2 The existing site plan extracts below shows the replacement shed will be in the same position as an existing shed. The overall site arrangement is therefore little changed. The dimensions of the replacement shed are similar to the existing, with a proposed footprint of 3.38sqm.



Existing (top) and proposed site plan extracts

6.3 The proposed shed will be finished in timber with a shingle roof, in keeping with the character and finish of other outbuildings within the wider application site. The sensitive scale and design of the replacement shed will ensure the structure is appropriate for the setting of the listed building and the conservation area.



Proposed elevation and floor plan extract (Favonius Architects)

6.4 The public vantage points from which the structure can potentially be glimpsed are from the lane at the north end of the site (which is also a public footpath) and from a footpath passing by approximately 100m away and to the south of the site. From both vantage points the proposed shed will be obscured by existing hedgerows and landscaping. The existing separation distance to the adjacent dwelling and intervening boundary treatment will preserve neighbour amenity. Therefore the proposed shed will not have a material impact upon the perception of the site, the character of the area or neighbour amenity.

Heritage considerations

6.5 As noted above, Vale Cottage is a grade II listed building. Additionally, the site falls within the Stert conservation area. The official listing for Vale Cottage describes it as follows;

"*Cottage. C16-early C17 possibly incorporating earlier work. Timber framed with wattle and daub and colourwashed brick noggings, thatched roof. Single storey and attic, 2½ bays extended in C20 to 3 bays. Framing 3 panels high with ogee corner braces, the centre bay of north side raised by further panel and gabled. Oversailing chamfered wall plate. Entrance within centre bay, recessed, and C19 timber casement windows. South front of brick with paned windows in segmental headed openings, and 3 raised dormers. East gable believed to contain cruck not now visible. Extension Tyrolean rendered blockwork with whitewashed gable. Orchard Cottage, Vale Cottage,*

Vine Cottage (q.v.) and Old Mill Cottage form a widely spaced group of interest, constructed or reconstructed c1640-60 by New College, Oxford, with similarities in construction, and again remodelled in mid C19." The listing does not describe any features within the garden of the cottage as being of note to the listing (although the garden will of course contribute to the setting of the cottage).

6.6 The LPAs Character Appraisal and Management Plan for the Stert Conservation Area (2007) describes the village as a small village but with a history that '*goes back to the pre-conquest period'*. It has '*always been a small settlement no greater in status than a village…The core of the village grew up around the church and the adjacent Manor Farmhouse. A substantial number of yeoman farmhouses and agricultural buildings survive whilst some later cottages filled in some of the gaps'*. The village is noted for stunning long distance views south and westward across the clay vale. Views from the south towards Stert are softened by woodland and individual trees. Vale Cottage is mentioned for its example of construction. Map 5 in the document identifies a number of significant trees and hedges in the conservation area, though none of those are in the grounds of Vale Cottage other than for on its front boundary with the lane. The general approach to conservation will lie with the preservation of the established 'status quo' rather than specific proposals for change. Any change will need to reinforce the existing character and appearance of the area. New development is to complement the established grain or settlement pattern, and should be appropriate in overall mass and scale and in the relationship with its context. Materials, detailing and finishes of high quality.

6.7 The garden to Vale Cottage and the structures within it are therefore a contributor to the wider character of the conservation area and to the setting of the listed building. However, the replacement shed is sensitively designed and in the same position as an existing shed therefore the proposal will not materially alter the relationship of the outbuilding with the listed building or the conservation area. The structure is of appropriate proportions so as to preserve views through the site. It is therefore concluded that the proposed replacement shed will preserve the special character and historic interest of the area and will have no effect on the significance of the designated heritage assets in accordance with NPPF policies and core policy 58.

Tree and landscape considerations

6.8 Trees on the site are protected by virtue of the inclusion of the site within the conservation area. The proposed position for the replacement shed is the same as the existing, which is within the RPA of two trees, however as the footprint is similar to the existing shed, there will be no additional pressure within the tree RPAs.

6.9 As a replacement structure the proposals do not require any significant alterations to the existing site layout or landscaping, and the impact on ecology will be negligible.

7. Conclusion

7.1 In accordance with the NPPF consideration needs to be given as to whether the proposals constitute sustainable development. In this case the proposals are sustainable for the following reasons:

- The proposed replacement shed is of an appropriate design and scale to preserve the landscape character of the conservation area.
- The proposals will preserve the significance of the designated heritage assets and will preserve protected trees.
- The proposals preserve the character and appearance of the area and have no impact on the amenities of surrounding properties.

7.2 It is therefore considered that the design rationale set out in this Planning and Heritage Statement demonstrate that the proposed development is acceptable.