



DESIGN ACCESS AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

in support of a

Householder Planning Application

for

Extensions and Alterations

at

Priory Lodge, Bradford On Avon

prepared by

Atelier 17 Ltd

Rev 02

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Planning Statement, Design Access and Heritage Statement has been prepared by Atelier 17 Ltd on behalf of the prospective new owners of the site.

It has been prepared in support of a House Holder Planning Application to extend and renovate the existing dwelling in the centre of Bradford On Avon

The proposal are illustrated on the drawings as listed adjacent.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT

Priory Lodge is a detached residence situated off Market Street within the heart of the Bradford-on-Avon Conservation Area.

- Building Origins & Evolution: Whilst traditional in aesthetic and character, the host building is a modern addition to the town centre, constructed in the 1970s. Following the partial demolition of the adjoining Priory in the 20th century, some historic



building materials salvaged, then sympathetically reused in the original construction of Priory Lodge. The building has undergone subsequent evolutionary changes, including a high-quality contemporary glass garden room addition.

- **Topography & Context:** While the immediate site layout is relatively flat, it occupies a position within the steep, terraced built environment on the town’s southern slopes.

- **Heritage Setting:** The property is surrounded by designated heritage assets, with Grade II listed buildings situated directly above, below, and to the east.

- **Landscape & Trees:** The site features three key protected specimens: two mature Yew trees (*Taxus baccata*) and a Tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*).

- **Visibility:** Despite its central urban location, the site is discreetly tucked away behind surrounding properties and topography. The primary public view is from Westbury Gardens across the river.

- **Design Approach & Site Investigation:** Extensive research and investigation into the sensitive nature of the site and its broader historic context have been undertaken. Crucial environmental considerations—including key views, orientation, micro-topography, ecological features, arboricultural

constraints, energy efficiency, and overall visual impact—have directly informed the design. The resulting scheme represents a bespoke response to these site-specific constraints, successfully balancing heritage preservation and ecological enhancement with the fulfilment of the client’s spatial requirements and design brief.



3.0 HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

The application site is located within the Bradford-on-Avon Conservation Area and sits directly within the immediate setting of several highly designated heritage assets. Historic map regression and local records indicate that the site of Priory Lodge formed part of the historic private grounds and gardens belonging to The Priory (historically Rogers’ Manor).

Policy Context: Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990; NPPF Section 16; Wiltshire Core Strategy (Policy 58: Conservation); Bradford on Avon Neighbourhood Plan (Policy GS1).

Historical Context of Adjacent Listed Buildings

1. The Priory / Priory House (Grade II) – East (Same Level)

Situated immediately to the east on the same ground level, Priory House represents the surviving west wing of The Priory, a grand late-medieval manorial residence heavily altered in the 18th and 19th centuries before being largely demolished in 1938. The surviving ashlar structures retain high-status Gothic traceried windows and detailed stonework. Priory Lodge sits within what were once the formal terraced grounds extending west and south of this main house.

2. The Priory Barn (Grade II*) – North (Upslope)

Positioned up slope to the north along Newtown, The Priory Barn is a Grade II* listed late-medieval tithe barn constructed in the late 15th century as a principal outbuilding to Rogers’ Manor/The Priory. Featuring heavy stone-tiled roofing, two-stage buttresses, and fine stone mullioned windows, its elevated placement above the site establishes a dominant medieval stone backdrop to the north.



Ashmead Plan (published 1837)



1st Edition OS (published 1887)



3rd Edition OS (published 1924)



Published 1767



The Priory



The Priory Barn



1a Newtown

3. 1a Newtown & Gatepiers (Grade II) – West of Priory Barn

Adjoining the Priory Barn to the west along the upper ridge, 1a Newtown is a 17th-century residential property constructed of coursed rubble with stone-tiled roofing, featuring restored stone-mullioned casements and prominent ashlar gatepiers. It forms an integral part of the historic terraced enclosure encircling the upper boundary of the site.

4. Conservation Area in General.

(i). Overview and Urban Structure

The area directly north of Westbury Gardens occupies the lower section of Bradford on Avon’s prominent south-facing slope (Southern Slopes). The topography rises steeply from the River Avon valley floor towards Market Street, Masons Lane, and Newtown.

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This specific character zone forms a vital transition between the formal riverside open space of Westbury Gardens (south) and the tightly packed, terraced urban grain climbing the hillside (north).

(ii). Key Special Architectural & Historic Qualities

Architectural Character & Vernacular

- Materials: Predominantly Bath/Ashlar Oolitic stone and rubble walling, natural stone slate roofs,

clay pantiles, frequent use of dormers and timber joinery (sashes and multi-mullioned casements).

- Scale and Density: High-density, terraced, and stepped vernacular structures interspersed with grander gentry houses (e.g., Westbury House, Grade II*).
- Retaining Walls & Enclosures: A defining characteristic is the extensive network of high drystone and coursed-rubble retaining walls with coping stones (often “cock-and-hen”), step terraces, and stone gateposts lining the narrow pedestrian lanes and alleyways.

Topography & Townscape Grain

- Buildings are arranged parallel to or perpendicular across contour lines, creating a distinctive “stacked” roofscape.
- The elevated positioning means that gables, secondary structures, roof slopes, dormers and chimney stacks are highly visible from lower viewpoints, particularly from Westbury Gardens and the Town Bridge.

(iii). Important Views & Landscape Setting

- Looking North from Westbury Gardens: Long-range and middle-distance views looking up the hillside showing the layered, stepping urban grain
- Looking South across the Valley: Views from high vantage points across roofscapes towards the River Avon corridor and southern valley edge.

- Key Spatial Links: Pedestrian links and narrow footpaths (weaving between Market Street and lower gardens) provide enclosed, framed visual vistas.

(iv). Priory Lodge - Formal NPPF Assessment of Significance

Formal NPPF Assessment of Significance

In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Historic England guidance (Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance), an assessment of the significance of Priory Lodge and its site has been undertaken across four key values:

- Evidential Value (Low):

As a 1970s residential dwelling, the standing structure holds low evidential value regarding historical construction methods. However, the building does contain salvaged historic stonework rescued from the partial demolition of The Priory, providing a physical link to the demolished manor. Below ground, the site forms part of the former historic garden curtilage of The Priory, retaining minor potential for subsurface archaeological remains associated with former garden terracing.

- Historical Value (Medium):

The site possesses medium historical associative value due to its direct spatial relationship with The Priory (Rogers’ Manor). While Priory Lodge itself is

a modern insertion, the land retains clear historical associations with the wider manorial estate and its subsequent 20th-century subdivision.

- Aesthetic Value (Medium):

The aesthetic significance of the existing building derives from its sympathetic incorporation of salvaged vernacular stone and traditional detailing, allowing it to harmonise with the surrounding historic structures. However, its aesthetic value is primarily anchored in its setting—specifically its position within the steep, terraced roofscape of Bradford-on-Avon and the contribution of its protected Yew and Tulip trees to the leafy, green character of the Conservation Area.

- Communal Value (Low to Medium):

While Priory Lodge is a private residential property with low direct public access, its position contributes to the collective visual amenity of the town. It forms part of the wider historic view across the River Avon from Westbury Gardens, contributing to the public’s appreciation of Bradford-on-Avon’s terraced hillside character.

4.0 DESIGN PROPOSALS & IMPACT ASSESSMENT ON HERITAGE VALUES

The application seeks to upgrade and expand the existing living accommodation through targeted single-storey additions and a controlled vertical



Existing View From Westbury Gardens



Proposed View From Westbury Gardens

extension.

- Architectural Strategy & Vernacular

Compatibility:

The proposed works have been conceived to be entirely sympathetic to the host building, respecting its origins, proportion, and architectural character.

Rather than introducing contrasting modern interventions, the additions draw directly from the vernacular traditions and design cues already established on the site:

- Complementary Vernacular Palette: The ground-floor extensions to the north and east will utilise traditional walling materials and detailing that replicate or harmoniously match the existing lodge structure and surrounding Cotswold stone context.
- Traditional Design Cues: Window lintels, cills, eaves details, and roof pitches for the ground-floor additions mirror the existing building’s proportions, ensuring the new elements read as seamless, natural evolutions of the host dwelling.

- High-Quality Slate Upper Level: To avoid the visual mass of a new floor, the raised roof profile, the new roof slopes and elevated short walls will be clad entirely in high-quality natural slate. This traditional roofing material reflects the broader roofscape palette of Bradford-on-Avon, allowing the upper volume to recede visually against the dark background of the hillside and surrounding stone roofs. It replaces the current cedar shingles which are

incongruous and now at their end of their viable life.

Proposed Extensions Summary:

- North Extension: A low-profile single-storey extension accommodating a utility room and garaging, designed in matching walling materials and /or colour palette.

- East Extension: A discreet two-storey extension providing an en-suite and dressing room at ground floor and as part of the first floor addition, the same facilities at first floor. This is designed to continue the host building’s established wall finishes and eaves lines.

- First-Floor Addition: Rather than adding a full two-storey masonry structure, the main roof pitch is lifted to form a first floor within the roof volume, incorporating short slate-clad walls.

Assessment of Proposals’ Impact on Heritage Values (NPPF Guidelines)

In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Historic England guidance (Conservation Principles), the potential impact of the proposed design on each core heritage value has been assessed:

- Impact on Evidential Value (Neutral / Positive): The proposals preserve all salvaged historic stonework

from the 1970s construction. Ground excavations within the former garden curtilage of The Priory will be executed via hand-digging, micro-piles, and floating floor slabs, ensuring that any unrecorded subsurface archaeological evidence or historic garden features are preserved without disturbance.

- Impact on Historical Value (Neutral): The historical association of the site with The Priory estate relies on its open spatial relationship and protected tree cover. By choosing a vertical roof-lift rather than a sprawling ground extension, the historic garden boundary and spatial layout are fully preserved, causing no harm to the historical integrity or understanding of the site’s manorial heritage.

- Impact on Aesthetic Value (Positive / Beneficial): The existing 1970s cedar covered roof form is replaced with a refined, slate-clad upper tier that integrates naturally into the hillside pattern of roofscape. The choice of dark natural slate allows the lifted volume to recede visually against the rising ground and backdrop of stone walls, linear roofs and terraced spacesz. The ground-floor additions adopt local vernacular details, enhancing the visual cohesion between the dwelling and surrounding heritage structures.

- Impact on Communal Value (Neutral): Public views from Westbury Gardens across the River Avon will see a modest, high-quality addition that mirrors the stepped, terraced roofscape

characteristic of Bradford-on-Avon. The scale and material palette ensure that the public appreciation of the Conservation Area’s historic hillside skyline is maintained without disruption.

Significance of the Site & Design Impact

- Historic Gardens Concept: Because the application site forms part of the former historic garden curtilage of The Priory, preserving open visual permeability and key mature tree cover (the protected Yew and Tulip trees) is vital to maintaining the historic integrity of the setting.

- Subservience to Listed Assets: The single-storey extensions to the north and east remain low-profile and physically detached from the listed boundaries, maintaining clear breathing room around Priory House, Priory Barn, and 1a Newtown.

- Impact Mitigation: Aspect Mitigation & Design Response: Setting of Priory Barn (Grade II*) & 1a Newtown The north extension is kept low and subservient, preventing any interruption to the historic retaining walls and elevated views up toward the barn and street frontage.

- Setting of Priory House (Grade II): The east extension respects the lateral boundary with Priory House, utilizing traditional vernacular walling to harmonise with surviving historic stonework.

Public Views (Westbury Gardens): The roof height is carefully controlled by using a raised roof design rather than a full additional storey. The slate finish ensures the structure blends into the stepped roofscape of the town slope when viewed from public vantage points across the river.

Visual Subservience: The choice of dark natural slate for the upper level visually reduces the scale of the vertical extension, ensuring it reads as a secondary element against the hillside.

5.0 OVERLOOKING & RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

Due to the elevated position on the southern slopes, managing overlooking and privacy—particularly towards the established garden downslope to the south—is a crucial design parameter.

- Restrained Window Proportion & Placement:** Despite the potential for expansive open views from the proposed first-floor accommodation, the scale and quantity of fenestration have been intentionally restrained. Glazing is not excessive and is strictly commensurate with the functional requirements of the internal spaces.

- Mitigation of Downslope Overlooking:** The relative position, height, and sizing of the upper-floor windows have been engineered to balance light and outlook against privacy. Window apertures avoid large, uninterrupted expanses of glass, preventing an

unneighbourly perception of being overlooked for properties and gardens lower down the slope.

- Side Elevation Privacy Controls:** High-level windows and obscure glazing are specified on sensitive side elevations to preserve mutual privacy with neighbouring listed properties situated above and to the east.

6.0 ARBORICULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS & RPA MITIGATION

The site hosts two mature Yew trees (*Taxus baccata*) and one Tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), all of which are subject to statutory protection.

Due to site constraints and spatial requirements, the proposed single-storey extensions to the north and east will encroach into portions of the Root Protection Zones (RPZs) of these protected trees.

To ensure long-term health and survival of the trees, sensitive construction techniques will be implemented in accordance with BS 5837:2012:

- Hand-Dug Excavations:** Any foundation work within the defined RPZs will be executed strictly using hand-digging techniques (or non-destructive air-spade excavation) under arboricultural supervision. No heavy mechanical plant or machinery will operate within the RPAs.

- Minimal Foundation Footprints:** High-void, low-impact foundations (such as micro-piles or pile-

and-above-ground beam systems) will be utilized to minimize soil displacement and avoid major structural roots.

- Floating Floor Construction:** Floors within the RPA encroachment zones will be constructed as slab-on-grade / floating floors set above existing ground levels. This avoids deep strip excavations, prevents soil compaction, and maintains natural air flow and moisture infiltration to the root systems below.

- Tree Protection Fencing:** Heavy-duty protective fencing and ground protection mats will be erected prior to work commencing to shield unexcavated RPA areas throughout the construction phase.

7.0 ECOLOGY & BIODIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

While Priory Lodge is situated in a domestic setting within the town centre, the site features an exceptionally well-established garden that serves as an essential ecological haven and wildlife corridor. The diverse habitats formed by mature planting, dense understory, retaining stone walls, and protected canopy trees (including the mature Yews and Tulip tree) contribute significantly to urban biodiversity in Bradford-on-Avon.

- Vertical Extension as Ecological Mitigation:** Protecting this high-value domestic habitat served

as a fundamental constraint throughout the design process. Rather than pursuing a larger ground-floor footprint—which would have required extensive site coverage and the disruption of established planting, root zones, and garden micro-habitats—the proposal prioritises a raised roof/first-floor development. This vertical solution satisfies the client’s spatial requirements while strictly preserving the footprint and ecological integrity of the surrounding gardens.

- **Protection of Wildlife Corridors:** Preserving mature trees, hedgerows, and ground cover maintains continuous foraging routes, nesting opportunities, and sheltered movement corridors for local fauna (including nesting birds, invertebrates, and small mammals).

- **Biodiversity Enhancement:** Integrated ecological enhancements (such as bat brick access panels within the slate-clad gables and bird nesting boxes concealed along eaves boundaries) will be incorporated to deliver a net ecological gain across the site.

7.0 SUSTAINABILITY & ENERGY PERFORMANCE

A primary objective of the comprehensive redevelopment is to significantly upgrade the building fabric, transforming an uninsulated 1970s dwelling into an energy-efficient, low-carbon home. The existing building suffers from a substandard

thermal envelope typical of its construction era, resulting in excessive heat loss and unnecessary carbon emissions.

- **Fabric-First Upgrade:** The primary sustainability focus is on drastic fabric improvement. The new roof structure, replacement wall linings, and floor assemblies will incorporate high-performance insulation, achieving U-values that exceed current Building Regulations. Advanced airtightness membranes and thermal-bridge-free detailing will minimise uncontrolled heat loss.

- **High-Performance Glazing:** Existing single- or basic double-glazed units will be replaced with high-specification, low-emissivity double/triple glazing with thermally broken frames, balancing passive solar gain during winter months with solar control coatings on southern elevations to prevent summer overheating.

- **Renewable & Green Technologies:** The proposal incorporates targeted micro-green technologies, including an efficient air-source or low-carbon heating system upgrade, low-energy LED lighting schemes throughout, and smart heating controls.

- **Water Conservation & Sustainable Drainage (SuDS):** Water efficiency will be improved via low-flow sanitaryware fittings. Surface water runoff from the new roof and ground extensions will be managed on-site using permeable paving and rainwater harvesting/butt systems for garden irrigation, easing pressure on

public drainage networks.

8.0 ACCESS

- **Vehicular Access:** The proposed garage extension maintains existing vehicular access off Market Street, enhancing secure off-street parking and utility access.#

- **Pedestrian & Level Access:** Level access is maintained across the flat site entry into the ground floor accommodation, ensuring easy movement throughout the main living areas, utility, garage, and new en-suite bedroom suite.

9.0 NON-HERITAGE PLANNING POLICY COMPLIANCE

Beyond heritage considerations, the proposed development has been evaluated against relevant national planning policy (NPPF) and local planning policies within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and Bradford-on-Avon Neighbourhood Plan:

A. Sustainable Development & Growth (NPPF Section 2 & Core Policy 1 / CP2)
The application site lies well within the defined principal settlement boundary of Bradford-on-Avon.

The proposal delivers the efficient re-use and extension of an existing residential site, making effective use of urban land in a highly sustainable,

walkable town centre location, fully supporting the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

B. High Quality Design & Residential Amenity (NPPF Section 12 & Core Policy 57)
Scale, Massing, and Context: Core Policy 57 requires development to respond positively to local character, scale, and density. The scheme complies by restricting ground extensions to single-storey profiles and integrating upper-level accommodation within a lifted roof profile clad in natural slate, avoiding an overbearing mass.

Living Conditions & Amenity: The scheme protects neighbour amenity regarding privacy, daylight, sunlight, and overbearing impact. Window design on the first floor is intentionally restrained to prevent unreasonable loss of privacy to downslope residential properties to the south, complying with local residential amenity standards.

C. Trees, Landscape & Biodiversity (NPPF Section 15 & Core Policy 50 / CP52)
Protection of Trees (CP52): Core Policy 52 mandates the protection of valuable landscape features and trees. The application is supported by an arboricultural mitigation strategy in accordance with BS 5837:2012, utilizing hand-digging and floating floors within the RPZs of protected Yew and Tulip trees.

Biodiversity Net Gain (CP50 & NPPF Para 180):

Rather than encroaching onto green garden space, the vertical roof extension preserves existing garden micro-habitats. Integrated bat/bird nesting features will secure a measurable ecological net gain.

D. Climate Change, Energy & Sustainable Construction (NPPF Section 14 & Core Policy 41)

The scheme fully aligns with local climate emergency objectives and Core Policy 41 (Sustainable Construction and Low-Carbon Energy) by upgrading an uninsulated 1970s dwelling to modern, high-performance thermal standards, incorporating low-carbon heating technologies, and employing SuDS surface water management.

E. Access, Parking & Highways (NPPF Section 9 & Core Policy 60 / CP61)

The extension maintains existing safe vehicular access onto Market Street and enhances enclosed garaging and off-street parking provision.

Due to its central location, the site benefits from high accessibility to public transport (bus and rail) and local amenities, encouraging active travel modes in accordance with CP60 and CP61.

9. CONCLUSION

The proposed development at Priory Lodge represents a carefully considered, high-quality architectural intervention designed specifically in response to the site’s rich heritage setting, stepped

topography, and ecological sensitivities.

Key Positive Aspects of the Scheme are:

- Sympathetic & Subservience-Led Heritage Design: The vertical roof extension, clad in natural slate, visually recedes into the town’s hillside roofscape. It respects key public views from Westbury Gardens and preserves the setting of nearby Grade II and Grade II* listed assets without causing heritage harm.

- Arboricultural Protection & Ecological Preservation: By prioritising a vertical roof lift rather than a sprawling ground-floor footprint, the scheme preserves the established garden habitats and wildlife corridors. Encroachments into the Root Protection Zones of the protected Yew and Tulip trees are mitigated using non-destructive hand-digging and floating foundation techniques in full compliance with BS 5837:2012.

- Controlled Residential Amenity: Window sizes and placements on the upper level have been strictly restrained to balance outlook with privacy, eliminating adverse overlooking toward downslope gardens to the south.

- Substantial Thermal & Environmental Upgrade: The proposals transform an inefficient 1970s thermal envelope into a low-carbon dwelling through fabric-first insulation, high-performance glazing, and

sustainable drainage solutions.

The proposals comply with relevant national policies set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as well as local planning guidance for the Bradford-on-Avon Conservation Area.

We therefore ask that planning permission and associated approvals are granted for this development.



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