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**DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT**

**SITE:- Ramblers Cottage, The Walk, Alvescot, OX18**

**CLIENT:- Seth Dixon**

**Proposed Development:-**

Proposed Single Storey Garden Room, Garden Shed, Workshop and Covered Courtyard

**Full Planning Application**

**Prepared By:- APH Associates Ltd**

**Drawing Nos:-** 2330-01-Survey  
2330-02-Block Plan  
2330-03-Proposed  
Site Plan

**Date:-** November 2023  
Revised – 13.12.23

## **Introduction**

Ramblers Cottage, The Walk, Alvescot is not a Listed Building but is within the Alvescot Conservation Area. It is a stone built structure and the roof is covered with natural stone slates.

The reason for the application is to remove the existing timber shed and covered storage area and construct a new garden room, garden shed, workshop and covered courtyard attached to the existing garage.

The proposed new structures will not impact on nearby Listed Buildings or on the character and visual appearance of the Conservation Area, and will be well screened from the road by trees and general vegetation.

## **Details of Development**

The New external walls will be timber framed with waney edged boarding to the external face to match existing. Oak Posts and Beams will be provided to form the new covered courtyard adjacent the garage.

Natural stone walls bedded and pointed in gauged mortar will be situated on the south east elevation of the garden room and north west gable end to the workshop.

The new external glazed doors will be fabricated from hardwood, with double glazed units and painted. The garden shed and workshop doors and frame will be timber and vertical boarding.

The new rainwater goods will be black upvc to match existing. The proposed roof finish will be Cardinal imitation stone slates laid in diminishing courses to match existing

The overall size of the new pitched roof garden room, garden shed and covered courtyard on plan is 11.300m x 4.100m and the workshop on plan is 8.000m x 4.100m with an overall height to the top of ridge of 4.190m and to the eaves of 2.325m.

The proposed new Carport with pitched roof will enhance the appearance of the Conservation Area as it will be constructed in a traditional manner using local material to match the existing.

The proposed new structures will not affect the neighbouring properties and does not affect their amenity area, right of light, is not over dominating and due to the area of the site, will sit comfortably in this location.

## **Planning History**

1 The Walk, Alvescot is in a Conservation Area and Planning Permission was granted for the sub-division of the existing property into three dwellings under planning reference no. 13/9785/P/FP dated 30th July 2013.

- 14/0952/P/S73 dated 26<sup>th</sup> August 2014 – Planning Permission was obtained for Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 13/0785/P/FP to allow amendments to design to include a single storey extension, two dormer windows and oil tank.
- 14/02092/HHD dated 8<sup>th</sup> January 2015 – Planning Permission was obtained for the installation of three velux windows to replace two dormer windows given permission for (14/0484/P/FP)
- 17/01874/HHD dated 9<sup>th</sup> August 2017 – Planning Permission was obtained for Proposed Pitched Roof 2-bay Carport (Amended Plans)
- 18/03249/HHD dated 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019 – Planning Permission was obtained for Single storey rear extension
- 22/01618/HHD dated 24<sup>th</sup> August 2022 – Planning Permission was obtained for Formation of 2 new window openings and timber windows (amended description)

## **Access**

The proposal would not result in a significant intensification of the existing access as indicated on the drawing and also provides adequate off road parking. The entrance to the site provides good visibility. The proposal would not therefore raise any undue concerns with regard to highway safety and access. The proposed hardstanding area will be finished with gravel to allow adequate ground drainage.

## **Ecology**

The proposed bat box will be a Schwegler Bat Box type 1FF, 1FQ or 1WQ and will be sited on the south east gable of the proposed workshop  
It is also intended to provide nesting opportunities for birds, which will be positioned on the north or east facing walls.

Providing additional roosting for bats and nesting birds as a biodiversity enhancement in accordance with paragraphs 174, 179 and 180 of the NPPF, together with Policy EH3 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

## **PLANNING POLICY**

The planning policies of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031, policies OS2, OS4, H6 and the advice given in the West Oxfordshire Design Guide and the NPPF, have been the basis for preparing this scheme.

OS2 Locating Development in the right places

OS4 Good Quality Design

H6 Existing Housing

EH9 Historic Environment

EH10 Conservation Areas

EH12 Traditional Buildings

EH16

Para 203, NPPF section 16:

The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset

## **Photos**



Existing North West Elevation of Shed



Existing North West Elevation of Shed



Existing South West Elevation of Covered Shelter

## **Statement of Heritage Significance**

### Alvescot

The small stone-built village of Alvescot lies 6 miles (9.7 km) south-west of Witney and 15 miles (24 km) west of Oxford, on gently rising ground some 3 miles (5 km) north of the river Thames. [\(fn. 1\)](#) Its ancient parish included the medieval settlements of Bromscott, Pemscoth, Alwoldsbury, and Puttes, which were all deserted during the later Middle Ages, and which are treated in the following account. In 1881 the parish covered 2,119 a., including 38 a. of detached meadow by the Thames; [\(fn. 2\)](#) the meadow was transferred to Clanfield in 1886, reducing Alvescot to 2,081 a. [\(fn. 3\)](#) Sixteen acres were transferred from Black Bourton in 1954, and 200 a. (81 ha.) were removed in 1985, leaving Alvescot with 1,897 a. (768 ha.) in 1991. [\(fn. 4\)](#)

### Parish Boundaries

Like the neighbouring parishes of Black Bourton and Kencot, Alvescot's ancient parish was long and narrow, running from north to south across varied soils (Figs 2 and 10). Possibly those boundaries reflected a planned partition, during the 10th or early 11th century, of part of the large royal manor of Bampton, to which Alvescot almost certainly belonged until the late Anglo-Saxon period. [\(fn. 5\)](#) Allocation of small detached meadows by the river Thames may have been part of the same process.

The parish's 18th-century boundaries (Fig. 10), essentially unaltered at inclosure in 1796–7, were probably those of the medieval parish, save for a few minor adjustments. On much of the east they followed Shill brook, on the south a probably ancient route called Calcroft Lane, and on much of the west Langhat ditch and another stream; elsewhere they mostly followed field and furlong boundaries. Short straight sections in the south-east may reflect partition of common pasture between Alvescot and neighbouring Black Bourton at an unknown date. [\(fn. 6\)](#) Puttes or Pitlands closes, south of Alvescot village, and Bazeland or Batesland closes, adjoining the southern boundary, belonged from the Middle Ages to two Clanfield manors, and until the 18th century paid tithe to Clanfield, though by the earlier 17th century they were counted for civil purposes as part of Alvescot parish, and were included within its perambulated boundaries. [\(fn. 7\)](#) In the early 13th century a Clanfield manor also included demesne in an area called Ruxhill, later in Alvescot's south-western corner; possibly the boundary there and at Batesland was adjusted later in the Middle Ages, perhaps following early inclosure. [\(fn. 8\)](#) Alvescot's southern boundary followed its modern course certainly by the 17th century, when it abutted closes in Clanfield, [\(fn. 9\)](#) though in the 1830s there was uncertainty as to whether Calcroft Lane itself lay in Clanfield or Alvescot. [\(fn. 10\)](#)

Parts of the western boundary were described in 1318, when local deponents outlined the boundaries of Bampton minster's decaying *parochia*, to which Alvescot had formerly belonged. [\(fn. 11\)](#) From a 'green way' in Clanfield, the Bampton boundary was said to run northwards to Alvescot Marsh in the south-eastern part of Alvescot parish; from there it followed a path 'north' (presumably north-westwards) to Kencot green in Kencot parish, and thence a high road to 'Shilton way'. The boundary described seems thus to have excluded Alvescot's south-western corner, though as the deponents often cited the nearest major road rather than tracing the boundary in detail, the western bounds of the *parochia* and of Alvescot parish may nevertheless have coincided. [\(fn. 12\)](#)

Alvescot's detached Thames-side meadow, in an area called Burroway, belonged to Alvescot manor by the late 12th century, and in the 19th century part of Burroway and much of the adjoining Sharney meadow remained tithable to Alvescot, suggesting that the connection was ancient. [\(fn. 13\)](#) The meadows were inclosed and their boundaries redefined in 1851, part of Sharney meadow, north of Burroway brook, becoming a detached part of Alvescot parish until 1886. [\(fn. 14\)](#) A detached meadow between Black Bourton and Bampton belonged to Alvescot manor and perhaps to Alvescot parish until the late 12th century, when it was exchanged. [\(fn. 15\)](#)

### Geology and Landscape

Much of Alvescot village, including the church, lies on Kellaways Sand and Clay, though its southern end, including the rectory house, lies on a small island of river gravels of Wolvercote Terrace deposits. The parish's southern part, chiefly common pasture and meadow until inclosure, lies mostly on river gravels and Oxford Clay, and its northern part, chiefly pasture and open-field arable, on Cornbrash and Forest Marble. There are tongues of alluvium along Shill brook and its tributaries. The land rises gently from c. 73 m. in the south to 111 m. in the north; the church stands at c. 91 m., on a slightly sharper rise overlooking the modern village. [\(fn. 16\)](#)

## Communications

The Black Bourton-Kencot road, along which much of the modern village stands, was in the 18th century part of the route from Bampton to Lechlade (Glos.). A section near the village was called Port Lane in 1796, perhaps recalling a medieval allusion to Bampton's market. The road was confirmed at inclosure that year, along with existing branch roads running northwards to Shilton and Burford, and north-eastwards to Brize Norton and Witney. (fn. 17) The latter road, part of an ancient, possibly Roman road from Witney to Lechlade, (fn. 18) crossed Shill brook at Shill ford, where a bridge existed by 1774 and was replaced in 1855. (fn. 19) A road or track running south-westwards from the Shilton road towards Kencot seems to have been suppressed at inclosure. Numerous lanes and access ways included Dunsbrook Lane, leading southwards towards Batesland closes and the former furze ground, whence it continued as a bridle path to Little Clanfield and Grafton (in Langford). (fn. 20) Lost roads include the path running north-westwards from Alvescot Marsh to Kencot green in 1318, (fn. 21) and an 'ancient' path called Church Lane running from Pemscott closes and Pitlands to Alvescot Marsh, long disused by 1631 when it was conjectured to have been part of a route from Pemscott to Bampton. (fn. 22)

A carrier to Faringdon (then Berks.), Cirencester (Glos.), and Witney was noted in 1864, and one to Witney in 1883. (fn. 23) A post office existed by 1847, run at first from the Plough Inn, later from a cottage nearby, and in the late 20th century from the village shop near the Red Lion inn. It became a money order and telegraph office before 1907 and closed after 1972. (fn. 24) Part of the East Gloucestershire Railway from Witney to Fairford (Glos.) was built across Alvescot parish in 1873, with a station (called Alvescot Station) just east of the boundary in Black Bourton. It became part of the GWR in 1890 and closed in 1962. (fn. 25) In 1907 trains were met from the Plough, which was a posting house and from which traps and carriages could be hired. Daily buses ran to Oxford, Witney, and Lechlade (Glos.) by 1939. (fn. 26)

## Settlement and Population

### *Early Settlement*

Undated cropmarks, perhaps prehistoric, have been noted in the south-west near Blagraves and Pemscott closes, in the extreme south near Calcroft Lane, and south-east of Alvescot village. Neolithic, Bronze-Age, and Romano-British pottery has been found in Blagraves close, (fn. 27) and more Romano-British pottery, suggesting settlement, east of the church around Gillens close. (fn. 28) A cropmark in the south-west has been suggested as a possible ploughed-out long barrow, (fn. 29) though the medieval surname 'of the barrow' was borne by freeholders who may not have been resident. (fn. 30) Little archaeological evidence of Anglo-Saxon settlement has been found, (fn. 31) but by the late 11th century there were small, scattered settlements at Alwoldsbury, Alvescot, Bromscott, Pemscott, and perhaps Puttes, all on the fringe of the large royal manor of Bampton, and in origin probably closely connected with it: the concentration of 'cot' place-names in the area generally is striking, and may well have denoted a particular type of low-status satellite settlement associated with the royal estate. (fn. 32)

### *Population from 1086*

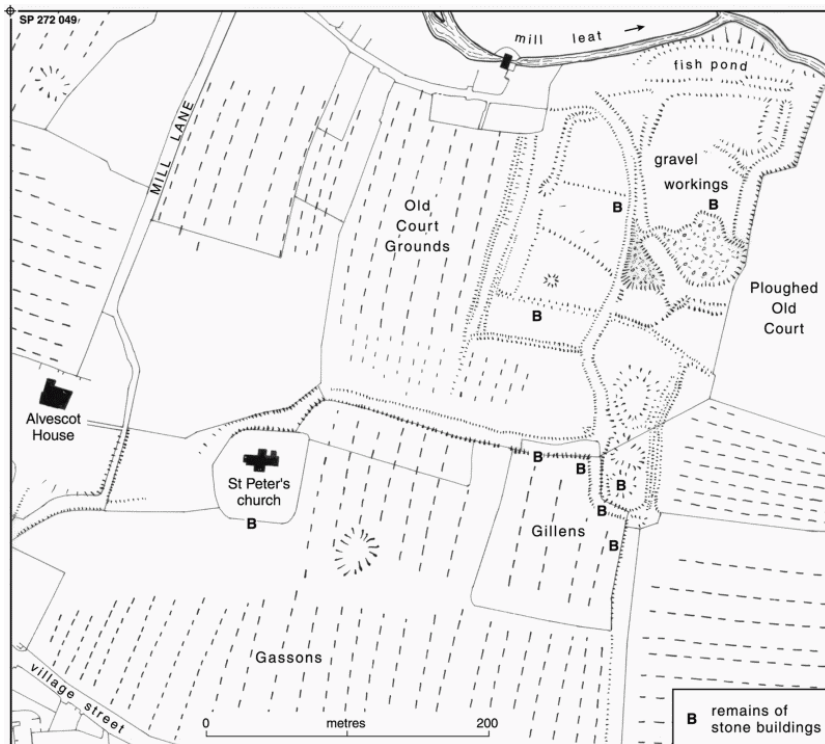
A total of 28 tenants was noted at Alvescot, Alwoldsbury, Bromscott, and Pemscott in 1086. (fn. 33) In 1279 there were 35 villeins and cottagers at Alvescot, Alwoldsbury, and Puttes, and 27 freeholders of whom most apparently resided; (fn. 34) in all there were probably over 50 households. Over 38 landholders from the whole parish were taxed in 1306, 42 in 1316, and 35 in 1327, (fn. 35) but in the mid 14th century 7 out of 13 villeins on Alvescot manor died presumably of plague, and their lands remained vacant in 1351. (fn. 36) Tofts mentioned in the late 14th century suggest continuing desertion: only 56 inhabitants over 14 paid poll tax in 1377, (fn. 37) and thereafter settlement was concentrated apparently in Alvescot village.

The population evidently remained well below 13th-century levels in the 16th century. Only 14 landholders were taxed in 1524 and 25 in 1542, (fn. 38) and 57 men swore the protestation in 1642, implying an adult population of 114; 24 houses were assessed for hearth tax in 1662, and 111 inhabitants were noted in 1676. (fn. 39) Unusually high mortality was recorded in 1684 during a smallpox outbreak, in 1707 when 12 inhabitants died of 'pestilential fever', and in 1728 when there was smallpox in Bampton, but from the mid 17th century baptisms generally outnumbered burials. (fn. 40) Rectors or curates in the later 18th century reported around 40 houses, and in 1778 there were said to be 38 houses divided into 50 tenements. (fn. 41) By 1801 there were 50 houses inhabited by 59 families, a total population of 339. Though pauper emigration was encouraged in the 1830s (fn. 42) the population rose slowly to 407 in 1861, when there were 89 houses; thereafter until the 1920s it fluctuated from around 300 to 390, falling to 278 by 1931. From the 1950s it rose to 333 in 1971, and in 1991 it was 325. (fn. 43)

### *Alvescot Village*

Alvescot (Aelfheah's cot) (fn. 67) had the smallest population among the various settlements recorded in 1086, and its later pre-eminence followed perhaps from the establishment of a church on Alvescot manor in the early 12th century. (fn. 68) All or part of the early settlement lay probably some 300 m. east of the church in and around Gillens close (Fig. 4), where pottery of medieval and possibly late Anglo-Saxon date has been found together with extensive stone-scatters. A notable boundary ditch, over 2 m. deep and with late Saxon infill, has been excavated in the north-east corner of Gillens close, running roughly south-west to north-east, and was overlain by one end of a substantial medieval stone-built house. (fn. 69) From Gillens close, a hollow way leads northwards towards Alvescot mill. Settlement in the area continued apparently until the 14th century or later, (fn. 70) though following the building of the church on what was probably rough pasture there may have been a shift westwards: a straight, possibly planned hollow way runs towards the church from Gillens close, and shallow ridge-and-furrow between the church and the mill may overlie earlier settlement. An enclosed manorial complex to the north is probably the site of Alvescot manor house, (fn. 71) though pottery finds seem not to confirm its existence before the late 12th or early 13th century, (fn. 72) and possibly it was preceded by an earlier house nearer the church. The manor house was abandoned probably by the later 14th century, and settlement around the church may similarly have been abandoned following 14th-century depopulation. (fn. 73)

Medieval pottery has also been found north of the former post office near the Kencot-Black Bourton road, (fn. 74) and later settlement was concentrated both along that road and around the edges of a large central green or common, which stretched from the church down to the parish's southern boundary (Figs 5 and 10). In the 18th century the common's eastern edge was marked by the lane to Park Farm and Lower End (later renamed West View), and its western edge by closes taken probably from earlier pasture. (fn. 75) Some early houses along the main road, set well back and not fully aligned on it, may represent encroachments on the common's northern edge, though later buildings were aligned along the roadside. The surname 'at green' was recorded in 1351, (fn. 76) and the name 'at hill', recorded in 1327, (fn. 77) referred perhaps to the prominent slope on which stand the church and the probable area of early settlement.





## Domestic Buildings and Village Development



### ***5. Alvescot village from the air, showing earthworks and former manorial site near St Peter's church (top right)***

*The 16th to Early 18th Century*

Most older houses in Alvescot ([fn. 81](#)) are of coursed or uncoursed limestone rubble with stone-slatted roofs, some of the stone slate coming probably from quarries on Alvescot Downs, which were mentioned from the mid 17th century. ([fn. 82](#)) Thatch, other than for agricultural buildings, may have been uncommon by the 19th century, ([fn. 83](#)) and no houses were thatched in the late 20th. The earliest surviving house is probably Manor Farm, north of the Kencot—Black Bourton road: by the 16th century it was the house for the former demesne farm, but though later sold with manorial rights it seems never to have been more than a tenanted farmhouse, and it acquired its name only in the 19th century. ([fn. 84](#)) The L-shaped building has a two-bay, two-storeyed east wing which seems never to have belonged to a fairly substantial mid 16th-century house; the wing's east chimney stack, originally external, has on the ground floor a fireplace bearing the date 1563, with the initials TB and AB for Thomas (d. c. 1557) and Alice Bond (d. c. 1578). ([fn. 85](#)) The roof has a central truss with a slightly moulded arched brace, originally exposed to the upper floor, which has one surviving timber-mullioned window. There was formerly a winder staircase in a shaped stone well on the north wall. The south bay of the three-bay north-west range may also be of 16th-century origin, but the rest of the house, including a one-bay former dairy and cheese room at the east end, ([fn. 86](#)) was built probably in the late 17th or early 18th century. A barn was attached on the north in the 18th century, as was the north-east cartshed. New windows were inserted in the 19th century ([fn. 87](#)) and again in the late 20th, when the house, dairy, and cartshed were extensively remodelled as one dwelling, and the barn and detached stables to the north as others. The entrance to the road was blocked at that time. ([fn. 88](#))

#### *The 20th Century*

The only later building of note is Alvescot (formerly Cedar) Lodge on the village's western edge, in origin a late 19th-century farmhouse in neo-Tudor style replacing an earlier building. ([fn. 113](#)) It became detached from its farmland in the 1890s, and in 1926 was extended northwards in an Arts-and-Crafts Cotswold style by Mrs A.L.F. Neville, incorporating a probably 18th-century dovecot and cow shelter. A single-storeyed projection on the east was added in 1938. ([fn. 114](#)) Freestanding classrooms were added after 1968 when

the house became a private sixth-form college and, later, a training centre for the National Communications Union. [\(fn. 115\)](#)

Council houses were built on Gassons close north of the Black Bourton road in the 1940s and 1950s, [\(fn. 116\)](#) and isolated houses south of the Black Bourton road and on the lane leading south from Park Farm. New building around West End continued in the 1990s, but expansion remained relatively limited, and Alvescot retained much of its rural character, notwithstanding the loss of traditional crafts and an influx of newcomers working else where. [\(fn. 117\)](#) A village hall was built south of the Black Bourton road in 1959, [\(fn. 118\)](#) and several agricultural buildings were converted into houses in the 1980s and 1990s. Electricity was available from 1933. [\(fn. 119\)](#)

A notable loss in the 20th century was the removal before 1960 of the 'stocks elm', a large and allegedly ancient tree south of the Black Bourton road on the edge of the former green, which formerly stood near the village stocks. [\(fn. 120\)](#) Presumably that was the 'town tree' mentioned in the 17th century, which stood on a path across the green leading from Butlers Court to the church. [\(fn. 121\)](#) The stocks, mentioned in 1796, survived in the late 19th century, and Southview cottage on the Black Bourton road, reputedly the former lock-up, retains at the rear a studded prison door with iron gratings. [\(fn. 122\)](#)

### **Justification**

The proposals are to remove the existing timber shed and covered storage area and tidy up the northeast corner of the site between the garage and the boundary to the village hall. This area of the site is well screened from the highway by existing trees and vegetation.

The construction of a new timber framed garden room, garden shed, workshop and covered courtyard attached to the existing garage would be beneficial to Ramblers Cottage by providing additional storage space for garden machinery and furniture, providing a garden room for the enjoyment of the occupiers together with a workshop for personal use.

It will not affect neighbouring properties due to its positioning on the site

