Supplementary Planning Statement

Proposal:	PL/2023/04959; Retention of mobile home and storage containers; erection of agricultural building; formation of hardstanding in association with agricultural uses; change of part of the land to seasonal tourist uses; use of pond for recreational fishing.
Site:	Becketts Pit Farm, Fairwood Road, Dilton Marsh, Westbury, Wiltshire.
Our Reference:	SPS_2341A.docx

Land Development and Planning Consultants Ltd. is a Rural Planning Practice based in Corsham, Wiltshire. The Practice was established in 1989 to provide advice and representation on the range of town and country planning issues relating primarily to the countryside, villages and the market towns of Wessex. Clients include individuals, developers, legal and land agencies, commercial and residential developers, local authorities and amenity groups.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Supplementary Statement has been drafted in response to a detailed set of queries raised by the planning officer in consideration of the above-mentioned application; a copy of the relevant email is reproduced as Appendix 1 of this statement.

1.2 The statement should be read in conjunction with the followings plans and reports, which reflects an updated list to that presented in support of the original application;

1.2.1	LDC.2341A_02B	Existing Site Plan;
1.2.2	LDC.2341A_09B	Proposed Site Plan;
1.2.3	LDC2341A_11B	Existing Site Plan;
1.2.4	LDC2341A_12A	Proposed Site Plan;
1.2.5	LDC2341A_13A	Storage Containers (Tool Storage);
1.2.6	LDC2341A_14A	Portacabin (Photovoltaics);

1.2.7	LDC2341A_15A	Storage Containers (Hay Store);
1.2.8	LDC2341A_16A	Portacabin (Hay Store);
1.2.9	LDC2341A_17	Fishing Stands;
1.2.10	LDC2341A_18	Bell Tent & Fencing Detail;
1.2.11	LDC2341A_19	Landscaping Details;
1.2.12	LDC2341A_20	Access Details.

2.0 Landscaping

2.1 Please find attached to this email drawing LDC.2341_19 which shows the proposed site layout and the additional landscaping proposed to assist assimilation of the site within the wider landscape.

2.2 It is noted that the landscape character of the site is dominated by the three embanked rail lines that form the north, east and south boundaries to the site. The proposed landscaping seeks to bolster the existing planting within and at the boundaries of the site, and help reduce the intrusion of the passing trains, and the 24hr site lighting emitted from the rail yards to the northeast of Becketts Pit Farm.

2.3 The material brought onto site to form hardstanding and access routes will be finished and dressed following a positive determination of the current application, as non-agricultural works to the site have ceased pending consideration of the development proposals.

2.4 The Applicant is eager to invest his time and effort in tidying up the site pursuant to the proposed mixed agricultural and tourist use of the site proposed within the application, subject of this supplementary statement.

3.0 Drainage strategy

3.1 Due to the low level of use of the foul water system, the Applicant has installed a sealed 1000L tank for the collection of foul waste from the camping toilets, showers and washing facilities. The tank is pumped out approximately four times per year. The installation of a powered package treatment plant in association with the current

scale of camping is considered to be unwarranted, and result in greater installation and operating costs to the business. Similarly, the single toilet and shower room within the mess and reception building is also connected to a tank which is pumped out at the same time as the camping facilities.

3.2 The damp nature of the ground at Becketts Pit Farm arises, to a significant extent, from the disturbed ground resulting from the original quarrying activities and later from the works to form the surrounding rail embankments. As part of the Applicant's longer term land improvements he proposes to install land drains in the western field to direct water percolating through the surface of the ground toward the existing pond. Consideration will be given to the installation of rainwater collection tanks adjacent to the proposed barn, but at this time the run-off from the buildings and porous hardstanding will be directed to groundwater via soakaways.

4.0 Operation of the campsite and fishing pond

4.1 The camping use of the site commenced in 2022, with bookings being taken between June and September inclusive through AirBnB.

4.2 The business owns 2no. lotus bell tents which sleep 4no. persons in a double and two single beds; cots are also available for infants. Check-in is after 3pm and check-out is by 10am.

4.3 Longleat is the major attraction and is the draw for around 70% of guests, although many stay for multiple nights visiting Stourhead, Stonehenge and Bath. The business is also happy to take single night bookings with guests enjoying the opportunity of wild swimming in the pond, and occasionally fishing.

4.4 Permission is requested for retention of the two existing tents and for 2no. additional tents to enable the business to grow over the next two seasons. Details of the bell tents are shown on drawing LDC2341A_18. Permission is also requested for the season to extend between April and October inclusive, in common with similar campsite businesses.

4.5 In order to make site management easier, the Applicant proposes pitching the tents on raised decking some 300mm high to prevent scarring of the grass, increasing longevity of the tents and to provide level accommodation to guests. The zone within which the tents will be pitched is shown on drawing LDC2341A_12A and an indicative detail of the decking in shown on drawing LDC2341A_18.

4.6 Five fishing stands are shown on drawing LDC.2341A_17, together with details of the stands. The stands are let per hour to a maximum of three private individuals at a time when not in use by guests of the campsite. Bookings are taken by the Applicant, and are at his discretion as priority is given to the camping guests and their enjoyment of the site.

5.0 Transport statement

5.1 The existing lawful agricultural use of Becketts Pit Farm gives rise to a maximum of 2no. two-way traffic movements per day; these are generated by the Applicant attending site in the morning to feed and check on livestock and a second visit at the end of the day.

5.2 Assess to the site is via a stoned track that joins Fairwood Road on a set of bends that have the effect of reducing the speed of traffic on the highway which is subject to the national speed limit. Views to the south-east are in the order of 48.4m to the centre of the highway providing excellent visibility of vehicles slowing as they cross the railway bridge and enter the bends.

5.3 Views to the west are also in the order of 59.4m, and greater when the verges are cut back. Views are also available from the access of vehicles entering the bends from the north, offering additional safety for vehicles emerging from Becketts Pit Farm.

5.4 The visibility splays are indicated on drawing LDC.2341A_20.

5.5 It is assumed that the majority of guests staying in the bell tents will travel to Becketts Pit Farm in a single vehicle. Between April and October inclusive, the tourist use has been observed to generate 1no. two-way movements per day by guests leaving in the

morning to visit an attraction and returning to the site in the evening. Therefore, 4no. two-way traffic movements per day, per tent is considered a reasonable assumption, plus an additional single way movements at arrival and upon leaving the site.

5.6 In practice an occupancy rate of 65% is considered to be a reasonable estimate for the site over the 7no. month period of operation, equating to 110no. days per year when all 4no. proposed tents could be occupied and a maximum of 4no. two-way vehicles could be recorded in association with the camping activity on site, or an average of an additional 3no. two-way vehicle movements per day generated by the site during the operational period (65% of 4no. two-way vehicle movements).

5.7 It is submitted that the increased vehicle movements generated by the tourist uses on the site will not compromise the highway capacity on Fairwood Road, or overburden the junction of Fairwood Road and the High Street at Dilton Marsh, particularly as traffic movements associated with the camping use will tend to be outside of peak time traffic on the local highway network.

5.8 Traffic generated by anglers visiting the site to fish are assessed to be 1no. two way trips up to 3no. times per week, and are also expected to fall outside of peak traffic times.

5.9 The existing traffic movements associated with the lawful use of the site, and the additional traffic movements arising from the uses for which regularisation is requested are summarised below.

Existing lawful uses	2no. two-way movements per day
Tourist uses (April to October inc.)	4no. two-way movements per day
Fishing use	0.4no. two-way movements per day
Total maximum traffic generation	7no.vehicle movements per day

5.10 It is submitted that an increase of 7no. two-way vehicle movements per day outside of peak time traffic periods will not have a material impact on highway safety or capacity on Fairwood Lane.

6.0 Ecology

6.1 Submitted in support of the application, subject of this Supplementary Statement is a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (PEA) prepared by Smart Ecology.

6.2 The report highlights the potential impact on Great Crested Newts (GCN) arising from the loss of grassland through formation of hardstanding and the loss of GCN refugia through the redeposition of hardcore material brought onto site to form the areas of hardstanding. The Applicant confirms his intention to enter into a District Level Licensing Scheme in conjunction with Natural England.

6.3 Opportunities for biodiversity enhancement are set out in Table 6-1 of the PEA report. The Applicant undertakes to erect bird nest boxes and bat boxes as per the recommendations contained within the report. In addition marginal habitats will be managed for the benefit of invertebrates.

7.0 Agricultural uses

7.1 The proposed barn will replace the incomplete steel frame structure to provide a total of 4no. bays for the storage of machinery and separate open bays (to reduce fire risk) that can be used flexibly for the farming practice. The two bays will provide sufficient space for overwintering of a small number of cows, and a location that can be used for lambing in the early spring. Moveable pig arcs are located within the pig enclosure, shown on drawing 09A and 12; the placing of the pig arcs on the agricultural land, for agricultural uses is not development, and therefore no planning permission is required.

7.2 We confirm that the existing photo-voltaic array will be relocated to the roof of the proposed barn and that the existing supported plant will be retained within the portacabin and relocated as a unit as shown in drawing LDC.2341A_14A.

7.3 We would be content to agree a condition requiring removal of non-agricultural materials and sundries or such items that are not required in connection with the proposed tourist or recreational fishing uses within an appropriate timeframe following the grant of planning permission.

8.0 Concluding notes

8.1 It is trusted that the local planning authority will be able to support the application in its submitted form. The Applicant would welcome the opportunity to discuss in detail the proposals and to provide further information as required to enable a comprehensive assessment to be undertaken. Please contact the Agent at the earliest opportunity should such details be necessary.

Appendix 1

Email from Planning Officer dated 2nd August 2023

From: Wiltshire Council <planning@sf.wiltshire.gov.uk>
Sent: Wednesday, August 2, 2023 11:52 AM
To: Planning <planning@ldpc.co>
Subject: Land Off Fairwood Road, Dilton Marsh, Wilts : PL/2023/04959

Wiltshire Council

Application No:	PL/2023/04959
Site Location:	Land Off Fairwood Road, Dilton Marsh, Wilts
Proposal:	Retention of mobile home and storage containers. Erection of agricultural building, portacabin, mess and reception building and tool storage and hay barn. Formation of hardstanding and track in association with agricultural uses. Change of use of part of land to seasonal tourist uses. Use of pond for recreational fishing.

Dear Mr Pearce

I am the case officer for this application and have reviewed the submission. My initial thoughts are that the principle may be acceptable provided that the applicant can demonstrate that the site can be served by adequate access (criterion iv of CP39) and will be cleared up and properly landscaped so that the tidying up of the site and robust landscaping of it would result in betterment in terms of visual amenity to the current situation (criterion iii of CP39).

In terms of the latter consideration, to this end, I would like confirmation in writing that the applicant is willing to tidy up the site and landscape it so that the proposal is compatible with the wider landscape setting and would no longer detract from the appearance of the landscape. I would also like a landscaping plan to demonstrate this. I note that the aggregate / hardstanding has been brought onto site to enable improved mobility of vehicles etc on the site however this should also be tidied up rather than appearing to be simply dumped. I am also not convinced that this solves the issues of drainage on site and the absence of an FRA, drainage strategy and surface water management plan is an issue. As such I would like an FRA given the site is susceptible to surface water flooding around the lake, (where the camping toilets and shower facilities are proposed) and groundwater flooding in the northwest (where the pigs and barn are proposed).

There are no details included as to the type of camping accommodation ie tents/caravans/mobile homes/permanent bell tents etc. There is also no information to confirm the number of pitches and people the site will accommodate at any one time (including the number of fishermen at any

one time) and I would request that this information is provided with a plan showing the location and number of different pitches/pods/caravan areas with a view that this would be conditioned.

I would like details of any animal shelters that may be required to house the pigs/sheep/cows/lambs and also details of manure storage, removal and management. I note that the mess building/reception is also intended to be used for looking after lambs and for the applicant to stay overnight occasionally when required in association with the livestock ie lambing. However such a mix of uses in one building seems unusual and I would expect a separate animal shelter or two to be required.

The submission contains two plans and photos for the portacabin but these look quite different from one another - are they the same portacabin? what is the wooden frame building in the photo? will this (and the additional materials spread across the site etc) be removed permanently? I would seek to condition this removal.

I note that there are solar panels in one of the photos adjacent to the portacabin and the proposed site plan shows these are to be relocated to the proposed barn whilst keeping the plant machinery associated with the solar panels in the portacabin located someway off- is this correct? Please could you clarify this?

I would also like to see the elevational / construction details of the proposed fishing stands.

I note that there is no ecology report included and I would like one given the location of the site within the Special Protection Area bufferzone for recreational impact on Salisbury Plain which may trigger the need for an HRA assessment. The site is also located within the Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy area and the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bat Special Area of Conservation. I would like confirmation from a professional ecologist as to whether bats are using the site either for feeding foraging and or roosting. Lighting is also an issue and I would like to see a lighting plan with lux levels.

I note that there is no Transport statement submitted with the application. The highways officer has requested more details regarding the likely number of trip rates and this relates to the number of and type of pitches proposed as part of the camping and the fishing proposals. There is also some concern raised over the visibility of the access and the highways officer indicates that the access track should be consolidated. As such a Transport Statement and a plan showing adequate visibility splays and improved consolidated access is also required. The highways officer's comments are available to view on the public planning pages.

I have had interest already from our local councillor regarding this application. I understand that she may make further comment and has been considering calling this to Committee. I have advised that in principle if the site can be tidied up this could be beneficial for not just the landscape, visual amenity and appearance of the immediate locality but also would provide benefits in terms of supporting a rural based business that could contribute to the local economy and employment provision for local people which carries significant weight as indicated in the NPPF.

Notwithstanding this, we have to ensure that the technical considerations are adequately addressed and that no harm arises in terms of drainage, public health, highway safety and biodiversity hence my request for further information above. Without such information it is difficult to conclude that the benefits outweigh the potential harm. I understand that this is a lot of additional information but I feel it is necessary so that I can ensure a robust assessment is undertaken and a high quality development can result.

I understand that this additional information requested will take some time to put together so I would request that you advise how long you consider this will take with a view to us securing a reasonable extension of time to the application's determination date. I have copied in the enforcement officer and the local councillor for their information.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

Gen Collins

Senior Conservation and Planning Officer

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