

Planning Statement

Erection of building comprising 4No. flexible B8 storage and distribution and/or Class E(g) Commercial, Business and Service units and erection of building for mixed agricultural and equestrian workshop, storage and estate office and stables, all following demolition of existing B8 storage building and site remediation, together with associated parking, servicing, drainage, infrastructure, biodiversity net gain and landscaping and alterations to existing vehicular access

**Building at Seagry House, off Henn Lane and
Startley Road, Upper Seagry, SN15 5HD**



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1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This short Planning Statement supports an application for the erection of a building comprising 4No. flexible B8 storage and distribution and/or Class E(g) Commercial, Business and Service units and the erection of a building for mixed agricultural and equestrian workshop, storage and estate office and stables. The development will follow the demolition of the existing B8 storage building and site remediation.
- 1.2 The Statement does not repeat the content of, and therefore should be read in the context of, the submitted Design and Access Statement (DAS Tea Architects July 2025) and the other reports submitted in support of this application. The DAS for instance describes the site, its location and its context. The scale and design of the buildings then reflects this and positively responds to the identified “constraints” and “opportunities”.
- 1.3 The Seagry House estate (the applicant) is centred on Seagry House and extends to approximately 102ha (253ac) and the site area is approximately 0.95ha (2.35ac). The Seagry House Estate is owned by a family and is a private estate. The site is in mixed agricultural and forestry use and has also supported the village in the past via, for example, the existing village cricket pitch.
- 1.4 The Estate runs (will continue to run) on various commercial activities from their land, including:
 - Grassland management / hay / cattle / sheep grazing
 - Woodland management and sale of timber
 - Equestrian and stables
- 1.5 The Estate are however looking to establish further commercial elements on the holding, in order to ensure the Estate operates from a position of financial sustainability and is able to maintain the land to a high standard, ensuring the visual quality of the area and continued prosperity of the woodlands. Such will include the commercial building now applied for but also horse grazing and additional stables and shooting.
- 1.6 With the brief to hand (see DAS), there is a need on the Estate for better facilities to service existing and proposed uses and to maintain their vehicles and equipment and provide staff with comfortable office spaces to work from. In particular:-
 - The workshop space is to be used for the storage and maintenance of machinery and tools used by the estate on a daily basis - tractors, estate vehicles, forestry equipment and machinery.
 - Office spaces will be used by current staff and provide more comfortable arrangements than the present set up.
 - Stables for existing and proposed horses.
 - Fuel storage is needed for agricultural and general machinery.
 - Secure storage for agricultural vehicles, ensuring longer lifespans and less vulnerability to theft.
 - Convenient on-site parking for staff and visitors.
 - Diversion of visitors and staff traffic away from the private main house and Lodge and the general context of Seagry Estate and listed gate piers. It will also preserve the existing roads around Seagry House / The Lodge which are gravel and not suitable for heavier traffic movements.

- 1.7 The elements listed above represent enhancements to current operations on the Estate. Alongside these enhancements are opportunities for the Estate to use parts of the land for commercial activities in addition to the Estate, to generate income and support the economic viability of the Estate and its position in the Village. These include:
- 4No. light industrial or storage units for rent to small, local businesses (Block B).
 - Stables to serve the estate and/or be rented out to locals (in Block A).
- 1.8 This application is therefore part of a wider general plan to develop and consolidate the Estate in the area and includes both support facilities for the existing farm / estate uses and 4No. commercial units through the redevelopment of the previously developed land site of a longstanding B8 warehouse building. Other than the two pairs of remnant historic gate piers, which are unaffected by the proposed development, the site has no above or below ground heritage context or constraints. The site is broadly level and is well screened by existing trees with an existing vehicle access which can be reasonable upgraded. There are however some potential general constraints associated with the contamination of the fibre cement cladding of the existing building (asbestos) and historic fuel storage tanks; drainage issues as the site is unsuitable for soakaways; some tree constraints (on and off site) and some ecology interest.
- 1.9 The site is within the reasonable physical extent of Upper Seagry, which is a Small Village with a reasonable range of local facilities and a bus service. The village is also in close proximity to excellent road links. Notwithstanding its past low key storage use, its village location means that it is in reasonable proximity to existing residential properties to the east, or at least the garages of The Courtyard and 39 Henn Lane (although more distant) and other Henn Lane properties to the south and south west and to Seagry House itself to the north west. Notwithstanding, maintaining a reasonable level of residential amenity was a consideration in developing the scale and design of the units and the uses now proposed and influenced the deletion of the B2 General Industrial use originally proposed.
- 1.10 Existing Development Plan (and emerging) policy supports the redevelopment of existing employment sites and the provision of new employment development within or on the edge of small villages. In addition, employment development can be supported in the countryside where justified e.g. for agriculture or forestry or other rural businesses. The recent commercial redevelopment of the Kingsway Nursery in Corston (NB: referred to in Planning History below) is a good example of Wiltshire Councils positive support for commercial development in rural areas and the delivery of the socio-economic benefits that this brings.
- 1.11 The application was preceded by a Pre-Application Enquiry this is summarised under Planning History and referred to under Planning Considerations below.

2 PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 The only planning history related to the application site itself comprises:-
- N/78/00730/OL – New agricultural workers dwelling - Permission 11 June 1978 (NB: No documents online).
 - N/04/00992/FUL - New Access to paddock – Permission 27 May 2004 (NB: No documents online).

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- N/05/00532/CLE - Use of Building for Storage (B8) Purposes – Lawful 12 July 2005. This certificate relates to the existing warehouse building (NB: former “chicken shed”).)

2.2 On the wider estate the following permissions are of interest:-

- 19/04594/FUL – Two timber stables and change of use – Permission 28 June 2019 (NB: An existing stable block).
- PL/2021/11339 – Greenhouse – Permission 29 April 2022 (NB: Permission to build in the Seagry House garden - expires 28 April 2025 – new permission granted – see below).
- PL/2024/10258 – Re-siting of approved greenhouse and relocation of tennis court – Permission 15 January 2025

2.3 And of general interest:

- 14/11574/OUT- Two new dwellings – Refused but appeal allowed 15 September 2015 (see below) and then 16/04077/FUL – 2 dwellings – Permission 20 July 2016, a revision of the above.
- 20/11605/FUL – Warehousing and ancillary design and administrative accommodation – Kingsway Nursery, Corston – Permission 19 October 2021 (see below)

Pre-Application Enquiry

2.4 The applicant submitted a Pre-Application Enquiry and received a formal response in April and a subsequent clarification email in May 2025. The bullet points below summarise both responses and these have been reflected in the application now submitted:-

- No objection to the erection of a mixed agricultural and equestrian workshop / stables.
- Economic Development consultee has no objections and are aware of the demand for smaller units in rural locations. The Council supports this and the benefits to local employment.
- Objection to B2 use on residential amenity grounds (*NB: B2 deleted from application*) and concern raised if “significant” increase in B8 use.
- Class E (g) commercial development can be supported.
- Scheme is sufficiently distant from nearby residents and is likely to only have a limited impact in terms of loss of light / overbearing impact but evidence required to confirm no unacceptable harm to residential amenity and the highway network. If just Class E (g) noise and odour reports not required.
- Upper Seagry is considered a Small Village for policy purposes. CS34 supports the provision of additional employment land within or adjacent to small villages. The Neighborhood Plan policies are supportive although the development is not considered to be “infill” as referred to in Policy SNP6.
- Detailed issues to be addressed include sustainability; the impact of the development on the character of the area and adjacent heritage assets; the impact on neighbour amenity and ecology.
- The design and materials proposed are considered acceptable.

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- Site benefits from a mature landscape setting and landscape and visual effects are likely to be minimal and localised. A Landscape Appraisal and details of soft landscaping are required.
- No arboricultural objections subject to the development being acceptable in relation to Beech trees T45 and T46, appropriate “no dig” specifications where necessary, and retention of London Plane T33 and Oak T23. Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan reports and drawings are required to support the application.
- Two sets of listed gate piers are located to the north although a separate Heritage Statement is not required and no additional information is required in respect of archaeology (*NB: notwithstanding this advice a Heritage Report is submitted to support the application*).
- Estate related element (Block A) unlikely to attract significant traffic and no objections on highway grounds. Block B would be likely to generate an increased level of traffic compared to the baseline and concern is raised if the increase in traffic is “significant”, especially if large/heavy vehicles.
- However, principles are supported including use of an upgraded Startley Road access and the Henn Lane access being retained for pedestrian / emergency access only. Details required.
- Car parking for the new commercial units (Block B) at 1/50m² GIA is required.
- A draft Construction Management Plan (CMP) is required to support the application and this should deal with (amongst other things) the method and management of the demolition (taking account of the appropriate contamination assessment) of the existing building. The planning permission is likely to be the subject to a planning condition requiring a CMP to be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of development.
- Information required in relation to manure storage (*NB: no manure storage proposed on site*).
- Appropriate ecology surveys are required having regard to existing and local designations and on and off site potential habitats and wildlife e.g. adjacent ponds (Great Crested Newts), trees, bats, birds, reptiles and badgers. Support application documents should show no net less and now the mandatory 10% biodiversity net gain.
- Site specific Flood Risk Assessment and outline drainage strategy required.
- The development should address Climate Change related issues e.g. minimising the need to travel, maximising the use of renewable energy e.g. ASHPs and sustainable construction, rainwater harvesting and meeting EV charger requirements. The application should be supported by a Sustainable Energy Strategy and attempt to achieve BREEAM Excellent as referred to in emerging planning policy

2.5 In addition to the above the applicant has also informally discussed the proposals with a close local resident and no objections were raised in principle.

3 PLANNING POLICY

3.1 The Development Plan comprises the saved policies of the North Wiltshire Local Plan (NWLP), the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) and the Seagry Neighbourhood Plan (SNP). Upper Seagry is defined as a “small village” and is situated in the countryside. Upper Seagry used to have a defined settlement boundary in the old NWLP but this was removed in association with the approval of the WCS. While some policies of the NWLP

are “saved” the principal policy context comprises the WCS (2015) and the SNP (2021). Also, material is the most recent National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF December 2024).

- 3.2 Upper and Lower Seagry are situated in the Chippenham Community Area and CS Policy 10 lists Upper Seagry as a “Small Village”. Policy CS1 states that development in small villages will be limited to that needed to help meet the housing needs of settlements and to improve employment opportunities and Policy CS2 states that at the Small Villages development will be limited to infill within the existing built area and will be supported where they seek to meet the housing needs of settlements or provide employment and where they respect existing character and form, do not elongate the village or consolidate an existing sporadic loose knit area of development related to the settlement.
- 3.3 The CS seeks to deliver resilient rural communities and there is a general support for diversification and flexible “start up” commercial units. Policy CS34 (quoted in the Pre-Application response received) states that employment development will be supported within and adjacent to small villages; where it relates to sustainable farming or farm diversification or where the development is essential to wider strategic interests.
- 3.4 There are then a range of more general policies relating to the appropriate delivery of required infrastructure (CS3); sustainable construction and low carbon-energy (CS41); the protection and enhancement of any ecological interests (CS50); landscape character (CS51); green Infrastructure (CS52); high quality design (CS57); the desire to reduce the need to travel by private car (CS60/61); the need for safe access (CS62) and flood risk and drainage (CS67).
- 3.5 Saved NWLP policy NE14 seeks to protect and retain trees and other ecological features.
- 3.6 The SNP (2021) includes a Vision for the future that a few small infill developments and small local businesses or further home working will have developed and has Objectives of allowing limited small scale sustainable development, including infill (Policy SNP6) and policies encouraging EV charging and broadband connectivity (SNP9 and 10).
- 3.7 The NPPF (2024) is an important material consideration. The NPPF has a presumption in favour of sustainable development and defines this as having social, economic and environmental components. “Previously developed land” is defined as land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure including the curtilage of the developed land....”, and requires significant weight to be placed on supporting economic growth including in rural areas and where related to diversification and the granting of planning permission unless there is substantial harm. “Good design” is noted as a key aspect of sustainable development and there is broad support for a “prosperous rural economy” via sustainable growth through “well designed, new buildings”. If there is significant harm to biodiversity or if irreplaceable veteran trees are to be lost permission should be refused.
- 3.8 The NPPF also requires net gains in biodiversity. However, the Government has formalised a requirement for 10% biodiversity net gain in any event.
- 3.9 The emerging Wiltshire Local Plan (WLP) was submitted for examination in December 2024. Some weight can be given to the plan at this time and of note is that Policy 64 supports employment development within or adjacent to Small Villages where this is appropriate to the role and function of the settlement and subject to compliance with a range of development control criteria. Policy 64 also supports employment development

where related to farming or other rural based businesses, and Policy 65 supports intensification of existing employment uses. Other policies generally seek to protect the local environment and deliver sustainable construction through high BREEAM standards, solar panels etc (Policy 85) and protection, mitigation and enhancement of ecology and trees including a 20% biodiversity net gain (see Policies 88 – 90).

- 3.10 The LPA also has a number of other general Supplementary Guidance Documents, including the Wiltshire Design Guide (2024) and Waste storage and collection: guidance for developers (2017), and these are referred to generally in supporting reports where relevant. The Seagry Community Design Statement (2020) is also of interest.

4 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 While the application initially falls to be considered against the Development Plan (read in the round) other material considerations include the direction of travel in the emerging Local Plan; the NPPF and the specific site and business circumstances of the applicant.
- 4.2 The Seagry Estate are seeking to consolidate and future proof the Estate and thus maintain and develop its socio-economic contribution to the local area (see below). Upper Seagry is a small village with a reasonable array of local facilities (see DAS) including bus services (see Transport Statement).
- 4.3 The site is “previously developed land” and planning policies support redevelopment and support development within or on the edge of small villages so a discussion on whether the site is “infill” or “within” or “on the edge” is academic. Notwithstanding this, the discussion under the appeal decision that allowed two dwellings to the east of the site (listed above) is of general interest. In this decision the Inspector notes that the Development Plan supports a limited level of development in villages to help retain vitality in rural communities and that that site was functionally associated with the settlements and reasonably fell within the existing built limits of the village. The same logic applies to the application site, reinforced of course by the fact that the site is formally “previously developed land”. Therefore, it is reasonably concluded that the development is acceptable in principle and this is reflected in the Planning Officer support for the development received through the Pre-Application Enquiry response(s).
- 4.4 The related positive planning consideration is the socio-economic benefit derived from commercial investment and job creation. This is referred to in more detail below but the weight given to this was usefully discussed in the Kingsway Nursery permission in Corston (also listed above). While this case did not relate to a “previously developed land” site in an existing village the Committee discussion and the weight given to the socio-economic benefits is of general interest (see North Area Planning Committee Minutes 13 October 2021). In this case the Committee considered that there was a clear social need to create employment opportunities and that the sustainability and economic development benefits outweighed any harm arising from, in that case, any alleged conflict with planning policy.
- 4.5 The existing storage use on the application site is low scale but with existing access off both Henn Lane and Startley Road. The existing building is also in poor condition and there is some embedded contamination issues associated with the fibre cement cladding and the past storage of fuel (see submitted Phase 1 and Phase 2 Geo-Environmental report AG Geo-Consultants May 2024). The building will therefore be demolished and the contamination mitigated as part of the first phase of redevelopment and in strict

compliance with prevailing legal requirements and generally in accordance with a Construction Management Plan to be submitted to and agreed with the LPA.

- 4.6 The local and wider context of the site is described in the submitted Design and Access Statement and the design and detail of the proposed development reflects this. The site has no heritage constraints and as detailed in the accompanying Landscape Visual Assessment, is well screened / assimilated into its context. There are houses to the east (The Courtyard) which look towards the site although their outlook is to a certain extent obscured by their existing garage court. Notwithstanding, the residential amenity of these houses is reflected in the scale and design of the Block B units proposed (and by the deletion of the originally proposed B2 General Industrial uses from the application).
- 4.7 There are some general ecology constraints, which can be mitigated and 10% biodiversity net gain can be provided and maintained on site and within the Estate via details to be formally submitted and approved pursuant to required pre-commencement planning conditions.
- 4.8 The site is not suitable for soakaway drainage (confirmed by pre-application testing – see submitted Geo-Environmental report) and a specific on site surface water management, storage and discharge system is proposed. Foul drainage will discharge to the existing pumping station to the south west via a new sewer connection.
- 4.9 The existing access can be retained and improved to provide safe vehicle access and the modest level of increased traffic can be safely accommodated on the existing highway network. The primary access will be via Startley Road with a secondary access retained off Henn Lane.

Land Contamination, Demolition and Construction Management

- 4.10 The application is accompanied by a Phase 1&2 Desk Study & Ground Investigation (AG Geo-Consultants May 2024) and a draft CMP. These reports take account of a previous building and ground surveys and advice and also specific soakaway testing. The FRA and drainage strategy (see below) also takes account of this report. The existing storage building is in poor condition with a former chicken shed use and is clad in fibre cement wall and roof sheeting. The building will be demolished as a first phase of redevelopment and remediation will proceed in accordance with appropriate other legislation and regulations but also generally in accordance with a Tree Protection Plan and strategy (see below) and a CMP. The CMP (see submitted draft) will propose actions in coordination with the location and timing of the erection of tree protection measures and ecology mitigation and then specify the hours of operation; actions in respect of traffic management, demolition and construction waste management and the methods to mitigate residential amenity or any other harm.

Heritage

- 4.11 While it was agreed at Pre-Application stage that a Heritage Statement was not a formal application requirement the application is nevertheless, for completeness, supported by an Archaeology & Heritage Assessment (ACD Environmental June 2025). This identifies the legacy listed gate piers of the long lost original Seagry House as of interest but unharmed by the development and also concludes that there is very low archaeological potential and thus no below ground interest issues that need be formally addressed.
- 4.12 Generally, the development is considered to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of this edge of village site via the demolition of the existing

dilapidated building and the redevelopment of the site with modern and sympathetically designed replacement buildings.

Arboriculture

- 4.13 The site and its general context is defined and screened by a number of trees (including two TPOd trees in the garden of Oak Hill House to the east and south). A tree survey has been undertaken and this is reflected in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment / Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan report that supports the application scheme (Hillside Trees June 2025). Appended to this report is a Tree Schedule and an Arboricultural Method Statement. The tree survey identifies the key Category A and B trees but also notes that the majority of the trees as Category C and/or U and of poor quality (including Sycamore and Ash). Some poor quality, self seeded, diseased and dangerous trees can or have been removed (pre and post purchase) without general or specific adverse impact on the character or appearance of the area
- 4.14 Alongside the tree survey compliance with the Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan will ensure that retained trees can be reasonably accommodated and protected within the context of the proposed development. This includes tree protection and the use of specific construction techniques where existing longstanding trackways are being improved to serve the proposed development and/or where hard surfacing or drainage needs to be laid out. The development will proceed in accordance with the Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan and this in turn will be reflected within a specific CMP to be prepared, submitted and approved by the LPA prior to the commencement of development.
- 4.15 Alongside the above and reflecting the existing context, existing ecology and ecology enhancement and sustainability the development is also supported by specific soft and hard landscaping schemes (see below).

Landscape Impact and Landscaping

- 4.16 The application is supported by a Landscape Visual Assessment (ACD Environmental July 2025) and specific soft and hard landscaping plans and boundary details. The LVA considers the development from 13 distant and close views (see Table 2 and Appendix D) and concludes that post development the effects are in all but one view Negligible. The only Minor effect is the change associated with the redefined Startley Road access and proposed wall and gates.
- 4.17 The proposed Startley Road access wall and gates and the soft and hard landscaping has then been developed having regard to the general street scene context and the LVA and on site and immediately adjacent retained trees and specific ecology, sustainability and drainage considerations.

Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain

- 4.18 The application is supported by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) and Biodiversity net gain Metric (all ACD Environmental July 2025). These are based on the appropriate research, review of tree survey information, site specific Ecology Surveys and in turn the soft and hard landscaping proposals. Site specific surveys have been undertaken in relation to Reptiles, Great Crested Newts and Bats and these have concluded that nearby ponds accommodate GCN; that there are grass snakes on site but that there is only limited bat interest. These are then reflected in the soft landscaping proposals and on and off site mitigation and enhancement.

- 4.19 There are no ecology constraints that prevent the development in principle and the applicant has secured a Great Crested Newt District Level Licence. The development can proceed without unacceptable harm while also delivering net gain partly on-site and partly off-site. The completed Metric notes an on-site net change of minus 5.01% in habitat units but a gain of 628% in hedgerow units and therefore off site net gain is proposed. This could be on land to the north or west of the Estate and via the planting of approximately 0.4ha of existing arable land with 0.2ha of woodland and 0.2ha of mixed scrub. This will be formally agreed and secured by the resubmission of this information with appropriate detail and an appropriate long term Landscape and Ecological Management Plan pursuant to the now required pre-development planning conditions.

Transport Statement and Access

- 4.20 There are three existing accesses that serve the current warehouse building. The first is a longstanding internal access track to the north that runs off the existing Seagry House drive to the front / east of the house. This will remain but will only be used for ordinary existing and future estate traffic moving between the new building (Block A) back and forth to the wider existing estate. The access of Henn Lane jointly serves the existing warehouse and The Courtyard development. This will be retained but downgraded such that in the future it only serves The Courtyard and as emergency access for the new commercial units (Block B). The Startley Road access will be upgraded as the main access to the new commercial Block B and as a main access from the highway to the Block A estate building. The existing track will also be upgraded such that its width, alignment and surface treatment is suitable for the increased flows while protecting retained trees.
- 4.21 The application is supported by a Transport Statement (Neil Brant Consulting July 2025) and detailed access / internal road layout plan and tracking that concludes and demonstrates that the site is policy compliant in terms of parking, manoeuvring and EV charging and is sustainably located within reasonable walking distances of bus stops and Upper and Lower Seagry and Startley and cycle distances that include Malmesbury and the northern edge of Chippenham.
- 4.22 While the precise mix of intended uses in the 4No. commercial units in Block B is currently not fixed an estimate of Trip generation has been made. There is no increase associated with a B8 use but a slight increase of 15 AM/PM peak trips associated with a Class E (g) use. In reality the impact will likely be somewhere between the two. Notwithstanding even in a worse case the impact on the local highway network is Negligible and there would be no demonstrable adverse impact.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 4.23 The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment and outline drainage strategy (Sustain Enviro July 2025). The report concludes that there is no flood risk. Also, as set out above, pursuant to formal soakaway testing it has been concluded that the site is not suitable for a soakaway based surface water drainage strategy. Having regard to this and working with the architect and sustainability consultants (see below) a scheme has been developed that initially retains and uses surface water on site, before management and reuse and/or final discharge to either the existing Startley Road ditch and culvert to the pond and ditches to the east (as existing) or to the ponds and ditches to the south west (as existing). In this way there is no increase of flow to the existing surface water drainage network and the development will drain in a managed and sustainable way.

- 4.24 Foul drainage will be to the existing WW pumping station located to the south west of the site via a new sewer.

Sustainability

- 4.25 Following discussion at Pre-Application stage it has been agreed that the development does not have to comply with BREEAM Excellent standards. Notwithstanding, the drive to sustainable development is both an aim of Wiltshire Council and the applicants. The proposed development through the redevelopment of previously developed land, the delivery of broader socio-economic gains and specific design and design features reflects this aim.
- 4.26 The drive towards sustainable development is reflected in the orientation and design of the buildings and proposed materials; the use of solar panels and ASHPs; the use of harvested water; sensitive soft landscaping and the provision of EV charging. This is detailed and set out in the DAS and FRA and explained in the submitted Sustainable Energy Strategy (SCS 2025). These reports set out the framework within which the development has been designed and laid out and how it will be brought forward and managed in a sustainable way.

Socio-economic

- 4.27 An Employment Land Review for Wiltshire Council (Hardisty Jones September 2003) is of general relevance and is a background document underpinning policies in the emerging Local Plan (See footnote 21, page 195). This notes a growing but ageing Wiltshire population; net out commuting; demand outstripping supply; significant shortfall to meet demand and specifically a weaker supply of smaller office and industrial units in the A350 FEMA and new sites likely to be needed in, “..the rural parts...” of this area and that consideration should be given to the need for a “criteria based policy” that enable rural sites to be developed. (NB: possible revisions to CS Policy 34 noted and see emerging Policies 64 and 65.)
- 4.28 In this context and recognising that sustainable development has economic, social and environmental objectives, supporting a long established local employer is a key material consideration. The development proposed directly supports the Seagry Estate business that currently employs 5 people and supports numerous other sub-contract businesses. The business has been operating from the site for the last 5 years and is an important local employer, woodland manager and contributor to the local economy and has positively sponsored the local Cricket club in the past. Retention, expansion and diversification of the Estate business is important both to the applicants and the wider local economy.
- 4.29 The development has been designed to reflect applicant needs, likely demand and the need and demand for higher quality units. The size and proposed flexibility of the 4No. Block B Units reflect anticipated local need and demand while Block A is specific to the Seagry Estate needs. Generally, the application site is previously developed land and is well located in the context of the existing village on a bus route and with good local vehicle access including to the strategic road network. Overall, the development represents a commercial investment of approximately £1,500,000.
- 4.30 Direct and indirect employment generation is a material consideration in favour of the proposals. The proposed development will generate direct and indirect employment and related economic benefits. Using the Employment Density Guide (HCA 2015) and

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based on an assumption of use across the development (as **Table 1** below) a potential number of jobs can be estimated:-

Type of Occupation	Sqm	Sqm per job	FTE
The Seagry Estate	507	N/A	6*
Class E (g)**	580	12-47	48-12
B8 Storage or distribution***	580	70	8
Total	1667		62-26

Table 1: Direct Employment Generation (Derived from HCA Employment Densities Guide 2015)

*actual figure plus 1, ** assume 2 units as managed workspace, *** assume 2 units

- 4.31 On the basis of the above the proposed development is capable of delivering between 26 and 62 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs. However, a different mix of occupiers e.g. more office / light industrial or more B8 would generate more or less jobs but the contribution is still a benefit e.g. 4No. Class E (g) managed workspace uses could deliver between 96 and 25 jobs or a potential total of 102 and 31 jobs.

Adjustments

- 4.32 Appropriate adjustments are required to the direct employment generation to take account of factors such as leakage, displacement, substitution, and multiplier effects (see HCA 'Additionality Guide – Fourth Edition' 2014 and the note at **Appendix 1**)

Net Employment Generation

- 4.33 Once the above adjustments have been made it is possible to identify the net employment generation i.e. gross employment generated *minus* leakage, displacement and substitution, *plus* multiplier effects, and this is set out in **Table 2** below.

Maximum Gross Employment	96-25
Less estimated leakage (10%)	9.6-2.5
Less displacement and substitution (25%)	24-6.5
Plus multiplier effects (1.21)	20-5.25
Total Net Employment	82-21

Table 2: Net Employment Generation

Employment Additionality

- 4.34 When considering the significance of the net employment generation associated with the proposed development, it is necessary to consider this in the context of a reference point of what may have occurred without the development taking place. This is the concept of 'additionality' – the extent to which something happens as a result of the 'intervention' (the proposed development) that would not have occurred without it.
- 4.35 In this particular instance, the 'reference case' – i.e. the proposed development not taking place – assumes that the proposed site remains "as is" and simply supports a low number of existing employees, say only 5 on the Estate and 1 in the warehouse.

Employment Additionality – Conclusions

- 4.36 It is clear from the analysis undertaken above that when the proposed development is considered against the baseline (i.e. no redevelopment) scenario, it will therefore result in the creation of up to (reasonable estimate) **76-15** net FTE jobs.
- 4.37 To provide a useful measure of the financial contribution that this additional employment will generate, a 2023 figure for Wiltshire Council for Gross Value Added (GVA) was noted at £12,192 per position (See Cabinet Report 12 September 2023). An additional 76-15 FTE jobs would therefore generate in the order of an additional **£926,592 - £182,880** per annum for the local economy.
- 4.38 While the above figures are only estimates, even a much more modest level of job creation would still represent a significant economic benefit derived both directly and indirectly through the additional employment opportunities that will be created by the proposed development. This level of direct investment also represents a significant contribution to the local and wider economy.
- 4.39 Finally on direct job creation, it is important to note that this job creation discussion derives specifically from the operational (i.e. post-development) phase. Numerous job opportunities will also be created during the construction phase of development. These often derive from locally sourced contractors appointed to provide construction services for different elements of the scheme.
- 4.40 While numerous research papers have been undertaken to consider how to assess employment generation specific to the construction phases of development none of these have led to an industry-wide standard and estimates can therefore vary significantly. This Statement does not, therefore, seek to quantify specifically the level of employment created during the construction phase, and concentrates on the longer-term and general benefits associated with the operational phase. Construction phase jobs will however be in addition to the benefits identified.
- 4.41 In addition to the socio-economic benefits of direct and indirect jobs the redevelopment of this long standing previously developed land site will deliver direct environmental benefits through the mitigation of contamination and through “good design” and the proposed landscaping and associated ecology gains. The development will consequently address all three objectives of sustainable development.

5 PLANNING CONDITIONS

- 5.1 In addition to the usual plans list condition the applicant would be happy to discuss and accept other reasonably worded planning conditions (or informatives) including in relation to the submission and approval of design details; details of biodiversity net gain, general phasing and details in relation to drainage, construction and landscape and ecological management.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 This application is previously developed land currently occupied by a dilapidated B8 Warehouse building that has some residual contamination. The site is within a reasonable definition of the village of Upper Seagry and is well enclosed and screened by existing trees. The site has two existing accesses with the access off the Startley Road proposed to be upgraded as the main access to the proposed development.
- 6.2 Two buildings are proposed, Block A will serve the existing Seagry Estate and comprise workshops, office space and stables. Block B will comprise 4No. commercial units and

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a flexible permission is sought for B8 and or Class E (g) uses. The initially proposed B2 use has been deleted from the application following pre-application advice.

- 6.3 The pre-application advice received was otherwise positive, supporting the redevelopment subject to details satisfactorily addressing the issues of sustainability, drainage, highway safety, arboriculture, landscape impact and ecology.
- 6.4 An extensive array of reports are submitted to address the above and the development can be brought forward without unacceptable harm to residential amenity or any other of the identified interests of acknowledged importance, while also delivering socio-economic gains specifically in respect of job creation, commercial investment and the positive retention and enhancement of landscaping and biodiversity net gain.
- 6.5 There are no highway safety or other technical objections to the development proposed and in addition to creating new jobs a permission will directly support the local economy and a longstanding local business. The development is in accord with the Development Plan and, when considered against the three elements as defined, is Sustainable Development that deserves support.