

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

PLANNING STATEMENT

**PERMISSION IN PRINCIPLE FOR THE
PROPOSED ERECTION OF UP TO FIVE
DWELLINGS**

**ON LAND OFF CORSHAM ROAD, WHITLEY,
MELKSHAM, WILTSHIRE, SN12 8QF**

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Our Reference: LPC.5771

October 2025

CONTENTS

ITEM	TITLE	PAGE
1.0	Introduction	3
2.0	Site Description	4
3.0	Proposed Development	6
4.0	Planning Policy Context	7
5.0	Planning Assessment	10
6.0	Conclusions	22

Appendices

Appendix A: Wiltshire Housing Land Supply Statement (July 2025)

Appendix B: APP/Y3940/W/24/3345598

Land at Glenmore Farm, Westbury BA13 4HQ

Appendix C: Council Briefing Note No.24-20

Implications of Revised NPPF

Appendix D: Appeal Ref: APP /Y3940/W/24/3345527

Land at West Street, Great Somerford, Wiltshire

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 LPC (Trull) Ltd have been instructed by Mr Tom Nicholas to submit a Permission in Principle (PiP) application for the erection of up to five detached dwellings on land to the south of 214B Corsham Road, Whitley, Melksham, Wiltshire, SN12 8QF.
- 1.2 The application approach is defined in the National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), as below;

The permission in principle consent route is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development which separates the consideration of matters of principle for proposed development from the technical detail of the development. The permission in principle consent route has 2 stages: the first stage (or permission in principle stage) establishes whether a site is suitable in-principle and the second ('technical details consent') stage is when the detailed development proposals are assessed.

- 1.3 This establishes that the application is a two-stage process, with the first stage solely intended to establish whether the site is suitable in principle and the second stage then considering the detailed development proposals and potential impacts. The Government's guidance sets out that the scope of the first stage of permission in principle is limited to location, land use and the amount of development.
- 1.4 Accordingly, the purpose of this Planning Statement is focused on the principle of development at this location only. Any further details in respect of the intended new house development and its acceptable assimilation will be submitted at the technical details stage. The statement will however provide an overview of the planning policy context and an assessment of the key material planning considerations, demonstrating the proposal's acceptability within the context of the Government's presumption in favour of sustainable development.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION & PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 The application site comprises an area of land to the south-east of Whitley on the eastern flank of the B3353 Corsham Road as shown on the Location Plan below:-



Location Plan

- 2.2 The site covers an area of circa. 0.3ha of land which is proposed to be developed. The site is not covered by any local or national landscape or ecological designation, or any site specific constraints from a planning perspective. The site is level and can be accessed via the B3353 Corsham Road.



Aerial Photograph

- 2.3 A review of the planning history of the site reveals one previous planning application, reference 16/11951/FUL, which sought full planning permission for the erection of one self-build dwelling on part of the site. The application was refused in 2016 due to conflict with the residential development policies of the Local Plan, however, there have been many material updates to national planning policy since this decision which as discussed further below.
- 2.4 The application site (and entire field) was also recently assessed as part of the allocation of sites for the neighbourhood plan. The made Plan allocated some larger sites as discussed below, however the current application site was found to be suitable for development. This is confirmed within the NP Site Assessment Report by AECOM which states the site is unconstrained with no landscape or biodiversity designations.

3.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The proposal seeks 'permission in principle consent' for the erection of up to five dwellings on the application site. The PiP application has a narrow focus with only the principle of the proposed residential development being considered. The second stage which involves the 'technical details consent' will follow should the 'permission in principle consent' be granted.
- 3.2 The PPG confirms that the scope of permission in principle is limited to **location, land use and amount of development**. However, issues relevant to these 'in principle' matters should be considered at the permission in principle stage. Other matters should be considered at the technical details consent stage (Paragraph: 012 Reference ID: 58-012-20180615).
- 3.3 The proposed dwellings would be served by a new vehicular entrance from the B3353 Corsham Road within a central position along the western boundary of the site, which would benefit from good visibility splays due to the straight alignment of the road at this point, and typical road speeds. The intention will be to provide two storey dwellings of a scale and layout that respect the pattern of the established built environment.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy

4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (published December 2024, updated 7 February 2025), and associated PPG, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions. The policies within the following chapters of the NPPF are relevant to the assessment of the proposed development:-

- Chapter 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Chapter 4 – Decision-making
- Chapter 5 – Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes
- Chapter 9 – Promoting Sustainable Transport
- Chapter 11 – Making Effective Use of Land
- Chapter 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places
- Chapter 15 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

The Local Development Plan

4.2 The NPPF highlights that planning law (section 70 [2] of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38 [6] of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.3 The associated PPG confirms that the same applies to an application seeking permission in principle; “A decision on whether to grant permission in principle to a site following a valid application ... must be made in accordance with relevant policies in the development plan unless there are material considerations, such as those in the National Planning Policy Framework and national guidance, which indicate otherwise” (Paragraph: 011 Reference ID: 58-011-20180615).

4.4 The development plan relevant to the proposed development is the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) (adopted January 2015), which includes saved policies from the former West Wiltshire District Plan 2004, and the ‘made’ Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2 (JMNP2) 2020 – 2038 (August 2025) The key policies relevant to the ‘in principle’ matters of location, land use and amount of development, are:-

- Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy
- Core Policy 2: Delivery Strategy
- Core Policy 15 Spatial Strategy: Melksham Community Area
- Core Policy 60 Sustainable Transport
- Core Policy 61 Transport & Development
- JMNP2 Policy 3 Flood Risk and Natural Flood Management
- JMNP2 Policy 6 Housing in Defined Settlements
- JMNP2 Policy 19 Separation of Settlements

Emerging Planning Policy

4.5 The WCS was adopted in 2015 and is therefore being reviewed. The review is termed the ‘Local Plan Review’. The draft Wiltshire Local Plan (WLP) rolls forward the strategy for housing and employment delivery in the WCS, and updates the housing and employment requirements for the period 2020 to 2038.

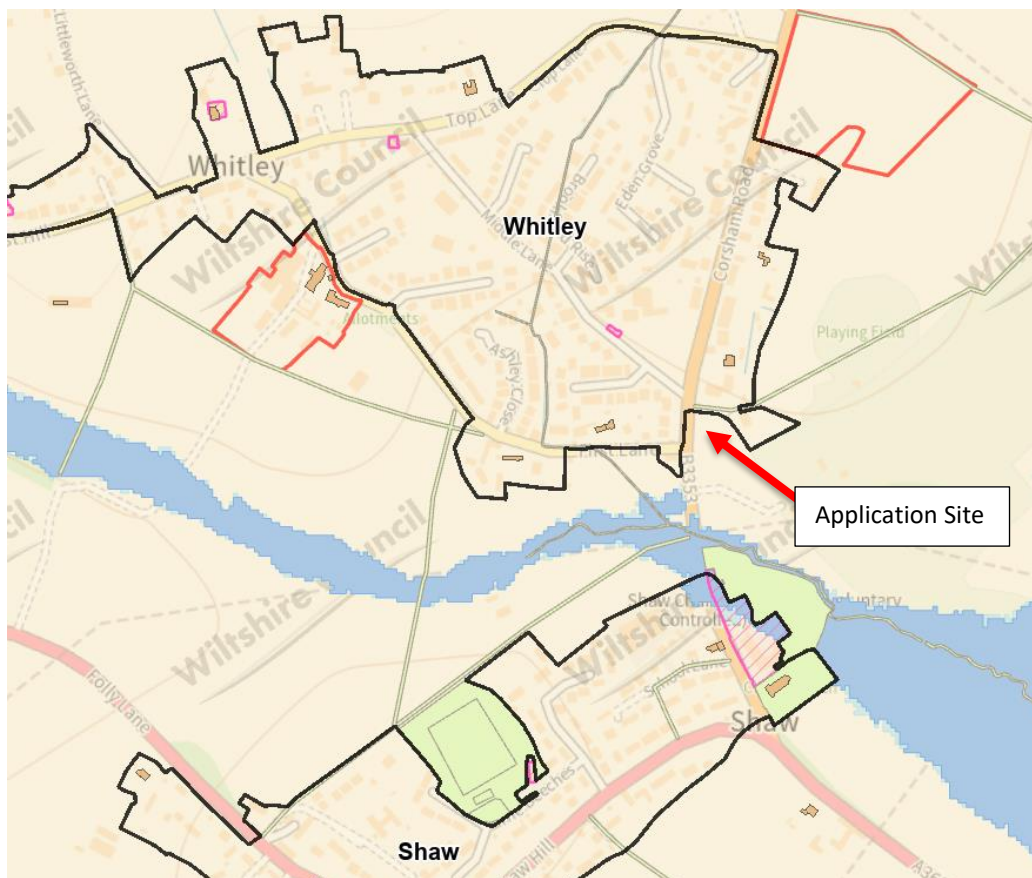
4.6 The draft WLP was submitted to the Secretary of State for Housing Communities and Local Government for independent examination on 28 November 2024. The recently updated Wiltshire Local Development Scheme (September 2025) outlines that the Council expects to adopt the WLP by the end of June 2026.

4.7 There are no fundamental changes proposed to the Spatial Strategy of the Local Plan, as presented within Pre-Submission Draft (2020 – 2038) (Regulation 19) Wiltshire Local Plan (September 2023), however the draft plan pre-dates the recently published NPPF (12 December 2024). A key purpose of the WLP is to ensure the Local Plan for Wiltshire is up to date and consistent with national planning policy, however the NPPF has been

updated several times during the plan making process, and there was a significant update as a result of the new Labour Government which post-dates the aforementioned version of the WLP. The progression of the plan-making progress does benefit from certain transitional arrangements but due to the recent update to national planning policy there are significant areas that are not up-to-date as discussed further below.

Local Plan Policies Maps

- 4.8 The adopted Local Plan is accompanied by the Policies Maps, which provides a spatial representation of the Local Plan policies. The site falls within Flood Zone 1 and is not covered by any local or national landscape or ecological designation, or any site specific constraints, from a planning perspective.



Local Plan Policies Map

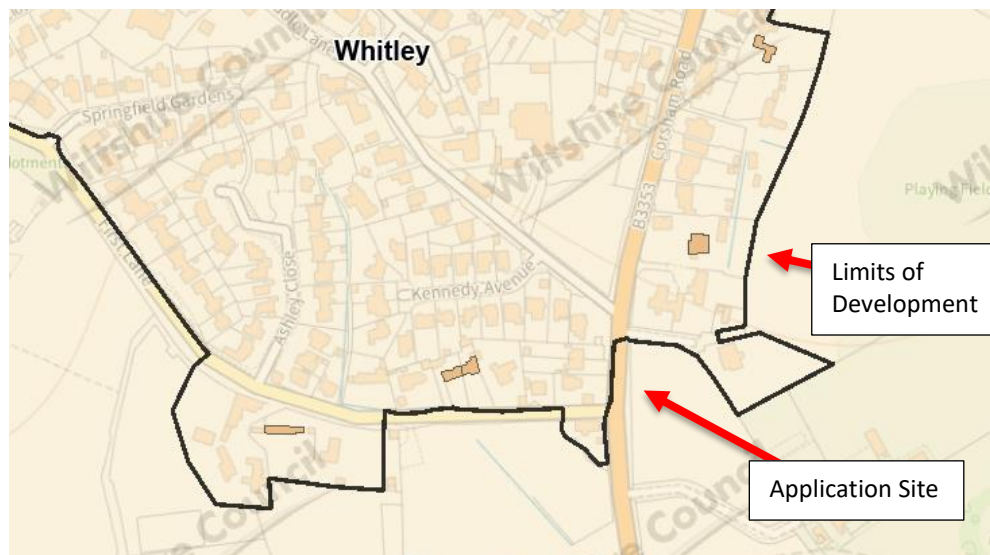
5.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The planning considerations associated with this permission in principle application are limited to **location, land use and amount of development**. These matters associated within the principle of development will be addressed below in order to demonstrate that the site can comfortably accommodate up to five dwellings without any adverse local or environmental impacts.

Site Sustainability & Accessibility

- 5.2 The WCS includes a Spatial Strategy which sets the foundations for how 'sustainable development' is defined and applied within Wiltshire. It has three key elements; a Settlement Strategy, Delivery Strategy and Infrastructure Requirements. The settlement and delivery strategies define where development will be the most sustainable across Wiltshire's settlements.
- 5.3 Core Policy 1 'Settlement Strategy' and Core Policy 2 'Delivery Strategy' of the WCS outline that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development within the Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages and development should be restricted to within the Limits of Development other than in exceptional circumstances as set out within the relevant core policies contained within the plan, i.e. the 'exception policies' or via a Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.4 In the Melksham Community Area, where the site is located, the most sustainable location to which most growth is directed is the 'Market Town' of Melksham (and Bowerhill), with the surrounding 'Large Villages' (namely Atworth, Seend, Semington, Shaw / Whitley and Steeple Ashton) being able to accommodate some growth in order to help retain the vitality of these communities. The WCS states that at Large Villages "development will predominantly take the form of small housing and employment sites within the settlement boundaries. Small housing sites are defined as sites involving fewer than 10 dwellings (i.e. not a major application)".

- 5.5 The Spatial Strategy of the WCS reflected within Policy 6 ‘Housing at Defined Settlements’ of the JMNP2 which states that “housing outside settlement boundaries will be managed in accordance with the adopted Development Plan and should meet evidenced local housing need”. The proposed development is designed to meet the current local need for housing within a sustainable location as discussed further below.
- 5.6 The application site lies adjacent to the Limits of Development of Whitley and is well related to the established built environment, as shown on the map and aerial view below. The proposed scheme will be in-keeping with the development along Corsham Road and will be well enclosed by the existing mature boundary treatments.

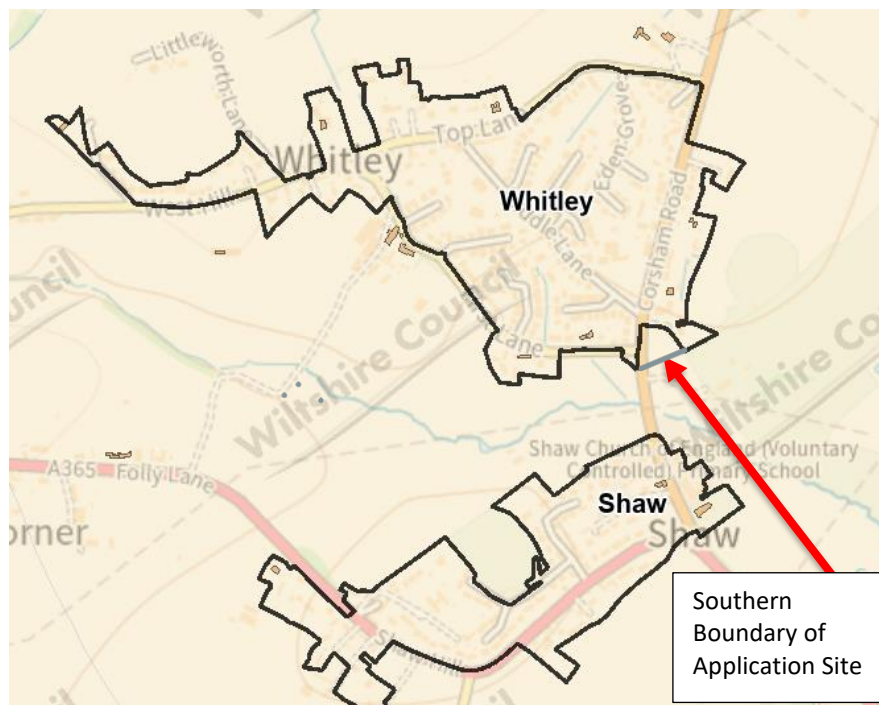


Local Plan Policies Map



Aerial Photograph (source: Google 2025)

- 5.7 The JMNP2 seeks to ensure individual settlements retain their charter and identify and prevent the coalescence of settlements. Policy 19 'Separation of Settlements' seeks to ensure that new development proposals therefore respect the separation between settlements, including Whitley and Shaw. The southern boundary of the application site has been carefully drawn to ensure the villages does not encroach further south towards Shaw, as shown on the map below. The layout of the development will respect the separation distance and landscape between both settlements and provides an opportunity to further strengthen the southern boundary through further landscaping.



Local Plan Policies

- 5.8 The site adjoins Corsham Road which has a footpath on either side of the road leading to facilities within Whitley and south towards Shaw. There is also a bus stop directly in front of the site, as identified on the aerial photograph above, which has many services in both directions throughout each day (services 14, 68, 69, 271, 272, 273, 555, x69) connecting the site to the larger settlement of Melksham and Trowbridge.
- 5.9 The NPPF advises that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken

into account in both plan-making and decision-making, however the current site is well served by a number of bus services which offers a genuine convenient alternative choice of means of travel for future occupiers. This site is therefore considered to be an accessible location and the development would accord with Core Policies 60 and 61 of the WCS which together support development in locations which reduce the need to travel and support sustainable transport alternatives to the use of the private car.

- 5.10 Notwithstanding the accessibility of the site via sustainable modes of transport, the Spatial Strategy of the WCS does support small scale development at Whitley & Shaw as set out within Core Policy 15. The village has a Primary School, Post Office and Cafe, a Public House & Restaurant (The Pear Tree), and sports facilities. It is recognised that the proposed development does not strictly align with the Spatial Strategy of the WCS due to the location of the site outside the Limits of Development, however, this factor does not make the site any less sustainable than one nearby within the Limits of Development, and a key material planning consideration which weighs heavily in favour of the proposal is its ability to meet current local housing need, in line with national policy as outlined below.

Status of the Local Plan

- 5.11 The Spatial Strategy of the WCS is now out of date. The Council's Housing Land Supply Position is now 2.42 years, as detailed within the Wiltshire Housing Land Supply Statement (base date April 2024 / published June 2025). A copy of the statement can be seen in Appendix A.
- 5.12 The Council's Housing Land Supply Position and the weight to be attributed to the Spatial Strategy of the WCS has been the focus on numerous appeals recently. An initial key appeal decision earlier this year was for a residential development scheme on Land at Glenmore Farm, The Ham/Hawkeridge Road, Westbury (appeal reference 3345598). A copy of the appeal decision notice can be seen in Appendix B. The Council

did not defend the appeal due to its Housing Land Supply Position (which was 2.03 years supply), and the Inspector stated the following within the decision notice dated 21 January 2025 :-

*“41. Aside from the emerging Local Plan, which has only just been submitted for Examination, there is no other obvious remedy to the shortfall in the short or medium term. This overall position indicates that **the development plan is failing to meet its strategic challenges**. Thus, **its settlement strategy and limits of development are not working effectively**. These policies are therefore of **limited weight**, as is the conflict with them.” (emphasis added)*

- 5.13 In light of the above, due to the age of the WCS and the substantial shortfall in housing land supply, it is considered that limited weight should be attributed to the conflict with the Spatial Strategy of the WCS, which as noted above is not working effectively and is failing to deliver housing in a strategic plan-led way. This conclusion is important and is considered further below within the Planning Balance section.

Principle of Development Conclusion

- 5.14 In summary, the **location, land use** and **amount of development** is considered to be acceptable in principle. The site can be accessed via sustainable modes of transport, and the development can be designed to ensure it does not appear out of place with the established pattern of the built-environment or contribute towards the coalescence of Whitley and Shaw. The scheme can be designed to ensure no unacceptable harms to landscape character, visual amenity, the amenity of the occupiers of neighbouring properties, the historic environment, or highway safety.

Housing Need and Planning Balance

- 5.15 The NPPF states it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed to support the Government’s objective of **significantly boosting the supply of homes**” (emphasis added) (paragraph 61). The level of need identified within the development plan should not be seen an upper limit, and new development that is

otherwise sustainable should not automatically be refused, in particular in the context of the Council's housing land supply position.

- 5.16 The Council's most up to date Housing Land Supply Statement (HLSS) details that it has 2.42 years of deliverable housing land supply as mentioned above. The Wiltshire Local Plan (WLP) will identify future levels of need for new homes and employment land over the period 2020-2038, and it has reached the Examination 19 stage. However, the evidence that underpins the draft WLP was prepared in accordance with the now superseded December 2023 version of the NPPF.
- 5.17 The Council therefore published a Briefing Note (No.24-20) (available to view in Appendix C) which sets out the implications of the new NPPF and revisions to the standard methodology on its housing land supply position. It explains that due to the change to the standard methodology, which is used to calculate local housing need, the number of homes the Council must plan for on an annual basis has increased from 1,917 to 3,525 (the annual Local Housing Need figure), an increase of 84%.
- 5.18 The Briefing Note explains that "the changes to the NPPF now require Wiltshire to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, including a 5% buffer, and must apply the revised Local Housing Need for decision-taking immediately". The Council therefore confirms that the tilted balance should be applied to housing application and highlights that **"the magnitude of the shortfall in supply is now substantial** and the weight to be given to improving housing supply greater compared to when the council had a more marginal supply" (emphasis added). The Council also advises within the Briefing Note that the application of the presumption in favour of sustainable development should be considered within the national aim of radically boosting the supply of housing.
- 5.19 In terms of the implications for plan-making, the Council confirms that because the housing requirement in the emerging Local Plan will meet less than 80% of the revised Local Housing Need, the Council will be expected to begin work on a new Local Plan promptly (when the revised

plan-making system comes into force in 2025). However, when the new Local Plan is adopted, the five-year Housing Land Supply position will be determined based on the previous Local Housing Need calculation, albeit the updated NPPF requires a 20% buffer to be added, which in essence will require a six-year Housing Land Supply position to be demonstrated.

- 5.20 The Director of Planning clearly advises within the Briefing Note that “To meet this increased buffer, the council will need to continue to approve planning applications to ensure a sufficient housing land supply can continue to be met at, and beyond, this date”.
- 5.21 In these circumstances, NPPF paragraph 11d advises that policies which are most important for determining the application (which in this case would include Core Policies 1, 2 and 15) should not be considered up to date. As a result, the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out at Paragraph 11d of the Framework is engaged, so permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.
- 5.22 There are no policies within the NPPF, which aim to protect areas or assets of particular importance, that provide a strong reason for refusing the proposed development. The tilted balance is therefore engaged and is considered below.
- 5.23 It is considered that there would be no adverse impacts associated with the approval of the PiP application that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. In terms of the benefits, the proposed development would result in the provision of new dwellings that would contribute towards the substantial deficit in the Council’s five-year housing land supply, which is a significant benefit that should be given substantial weight.
- 5.24 The NPPF recognises that “Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, are essential for Small and Medium Enterprise housebuilders to deliver new

homes and are often built-out relatively quickly.” (paragraph 73). The proposal is deliverable within a short timeframe which will ensure it contributes to the substantial shortfall in the Council’s housing land supply.

- 5.25 The development would also produce short term benefits to the construction industry, and the development would also generate ongoing revenue for the Council from Council Tax etc.. There will also be further modest benefits that would result from the additional support to the vitality of the local community from the future occupiers of the development. These benefits should also be given moderate weight in favour of the proposed development. The development would also deliver ecological benefits associated with the requirement to deliver 10% Biodiversity Net Gain that will be considered during the technical details stage.
- 5.26 In terms of the harms, it is recognised the proposed development does not strictly align with the Spatial Strategy of the WCS due to the location of the site, however only limited weight should be attributed to this factor within the overall planning balance because Core Policies 1, 2 and 15 are now out of date and are not working effectively, as concluded by the Planning Inspectorate. It is also important to recognise that the site is within a settlement which is identified as being suitable for small scale growth by the Local Plan, and it has good access to local facilities and is an accessible location benefiting from a good bus service to wider services and facilities in surrounding higher tier settlements. The site is well contained and it will be demonstrated during the technical details stage that the development would not result in any site specific harms, or to the wider environment that cannot be adequately mitigated. The introduction of planting along the southern boundary will ensure the development is well screen and contained to ensure the landscape gap is not unacceptable compromise, and the development will in essence round off this part of Whitley.
- 5.27 The proposed development would contribute towards the Government’s aim of significantly boosting the supply of homes in a sustainable location and it is contended that when considering the overall tilted balance, which

includes regard to the key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, and securing well-designed places, there would be no adverse impacts that stem from the development that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole. The moderate to substantial benefits that weigh in favor of the proposed development outweigh the limited harm associated with the lack of a planned approach.

- 5.28 The contribution made by the approval of minor developments and single dwellings throughout the Wiltshire Council area towards addressing housing needs should not be underestimated and now has greater importance considering the Council's substantial housing land supply deficit and the Government's objective to radically boost the supply of housing, as identified by the Council within the aforementioned Briefing Note

The Neighbourhood Planning Process

- 5.29 The NPPF advises, at Paragraph 14, that "In situations where the presumption (at paragraph 11d) applies to applications involving the provision of housing, the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with the neighbourhood plan is likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, provided the following apply:
- a) the neighbourhood plan became part of the development plan five years or less before the date on which the decision is made; and
 - b) the neighbourhood plan contains policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement (see paragraphs 69-70)."
- 5.30 The NPPF advises at Paragraph 69 that "Strategic policy-making authorities should establish a housing requirement figure for their whole area, which shows the extent to which their identified housing need (and any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas) can be met over the plan period. The requirement may be higher than the identified housing

need if, for example, it includes provision for neighbouring areas or reflects growth ambitions linked to economic development or infrastructure investment. Within this overall requirement, strategic policies should also set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations”.

- 5.31 The JMNP2 was ‘made’ in August 2025 and contains housing allocations, however the allocations do fall short of the identified housing requirements (the housing need figure itself is not a ceiling on new development but the bare minimum required to meet local need). This is acknowledged within the Plan which states that “At Shaw and Whitley, **JMNP2 is continuing to take the lead in planning for local housing needs and allocates approximately 55 dwellings (15 fewer than the emerging Local Plan housing requirement)**. This approach takes account of locally valued landscapes and the distinctiveness of Shaw and Whitley” (Paragraph 4.8.9) (emphasis added).
- 5.32 The JMNP2 plan period aligns with the emerging WLP (up to 2038) and therefore is informed by the evidence based which underpins the WLP. In line with Paragraph 69 of the NPPF, the WLP Rural Housing Requirements (September 2023) report indicates that 73 dwellings should be accommodated at Whitley and Shaw over the plan period. The JMNP2 does not allocate a sufficient yield from sites to meet this level of need.
- 5.33 Notwithstanding the shortfall noted above, the fact that there has now been an **84%** uplift in the level of local housing need as a result of the revised NPPF is a significant material planning consideration. The housing requirement identified within the current and emerging Local Plan is not an upper limit and is not a restriction on further sustainable development, but it is clear that the housing figures within the Local Plan are now out of date and need to be significantly increased. The development currently proposed will help meet the local housing need and more strategically will contribute towards the Council’s current housing supply shortfall.

Wiltshire Council 'Tilted Balance' Example

- 5.34 Whilst it is recognised that all cases should be considered on their own merits there are a number of very recent decisions on applications where the Council's current housing land supply shortfall has been considered and the tilted balance applied. Permission in Permission, reference PL/2024/08878, for a single dwelling on land at No 1, Lamberts Marsh, Southwick, was granted following an earlier refusal due to the location of the site outside the defined Limits of Development for the Large Village. The Case Officer noted that "in the absence of adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the NPPF as a whole, officers in acting reasonably and mindful of the difficulties a refusal of this PIP would present, the application is recommended for approval".
- 5.35 A more recent example is Permission in Permission, reference PL/2025/00407, for a single dwelling on Land at School Lane, Lea, Malmesbury, SN16 9PQ granted on the 10 April 2025, which was again granted following an earlier refusal. The Case Officer noted that considering the reduced weight that must be given to the harm arising from the technical breach in planning policy, "it is not considered in this case that the adverse impacts of permitting the development proposed would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. Following the process required in the tilted balance, therefore, it is recommended that the principle of development of a single dwelling at this site should not be resisted.". It is considered that the same conclusion should be reached for the development the subject of this current application.
- 5.36 There are also many recent decisions by the Planning Inspectorate which are material to the consideration of this current application. One recent appeal example is against the decision of the Council to refuse PiP for 2 No. Dwellings on Land at West Street, Great Somerford, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN15 5EH (appeal ref APP/Y3940/W/24/3345527). The site is located outside, but adjoining, the defined Limits of Development for the Large village of Great Somerford.

- 5.37 The appeal was however allowed on the 19th November 2024 (a copy of the Decision Notice can be seen in Appendix D). The Inspector stated there would be conflict with Core Policies 1 and 2 of the WCS because the site lies outside the defined settlement boundary and therefore in the countryside for planning purposes. However, the development of rural homes in an accessible location which would help to support rural communities, services and facilities is a positive aspect of the scheme that weighs in its favour. The tilted balance was applied and the following conclusions reached:

“When assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole, the adverse impact does not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of two additional homes on a windfall site. Consequently, the presumption in favour of sustainable development indicates that permission should be granted.” (paragraph 31).

- 5.38 These examples demonstrate that any conflict with the Spatial Strategy of the Local Plan is given limited weight within the overall planning/tilted balance, which certainly does not demonstrably outweigh the benefits of housing delivery, especially when considering the current national planning policy position which seeks to boost the supply of housing and the local shortfall in housing delivery to meet the minimum need. These examples and the precedent set weight heavily in favour of granting PiP for the current application.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The application seeks Permission in Principle for the construction of up to five detached dwellings on land to the south of 214B Corsham Road, Whitley, Melksham, Wiltshire, SN12 8QF. The proposal would contribute towards the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes and would contribute towards the Council's own strategy to address its housing land supply shortfall.
- 6.2 The site lies adjacent to the defined Limits of Development for Whitley which is a settlement identified as being suitable for small scale developments by the Spatial Strategy of the Local Plan. The site is also accessible on foot to public transport services which connect the site to higher tier settlements with a greater range of facilities. The proposal would result in the provision of up to five dwellings tailored towards meeting local need and would respect the layout, height and appearance of neighbouring houses. The site can be developed without unacceptable harm to landscape character, visual amenity, the historic environment or highway safety.
- 6.3 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The proposal benefits from the presumption of sustainable development (Paragraph 11.d.ii of the NPPF), due to the Council's current 2.42 years housing land supply position, and therefore permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.
- 6.4 The Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2 was recently 'made' however it does not meet the identified level of housing need for Whitley and Shaw as identified by the Council. The tilted balance is not therefore disengaged. However, notwithstanding this point, the proposed development would align with the objectives of the plan by providing new housing within a

sustainable location to meet local housing need without any unacceptable environmental or landscape impacts.

- 6.5 The proposed development would deliver both social and economic benefits and there would be no planning harms, apart from the speculative nature of the application thus not aligning with the plan-led approach as outlined within the Wiltshire Core Strategy. However, due to the age of the Local Plan and the Council's substantial housing land supply shortfall the weight to be given to the harm is limited. It is considered that significant weight should be placed on the benefits of the proposed development and therefore any adverse impacts of granting permission would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 6.6 In light of the above, having considered the individual planning merits of the proposal, it is considered that the material considerations indicate that permission should be granted. It is therefore respectfully requested that permission in principle be granted.