
**LOWER DUNGE FARM, BRATTON ROAD, WEST
ASHTON, WILTSHIRE BA14 6AX**

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL

FOR

**ERECTION OF LIVESTOCK BUILDING, AGRICULTURAL
STORAGE BUILDING AND ASSOCIATED WORKS –
REVISED SCHEME TO PL/2025/02802.**

Prepared by:

WHLandscape

On behalf of:

TAC PAGE & PARTNERS

Project Reference: 25.2049

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APPOINTMENT

WH Landscape Consultancy Ltd (WHLandscape) has been appointed by TAC Page & Partners to produce a Landscape and Visual Statement for the erection of a new livestock building, agricultural storage building and associated works on land at Lower Dunge Farm, Bratton Road, West Ashton, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 6AX. This application is to replace the existing consented scheme Ref: PL/2025/02802.

WHLandscape has an established track record of appraising development proposals. The practice has considerable experience in the field of landscape and visual assessment and uses tried and tested techniques developed and recognised by the Landscape Institute, Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, and Natural England.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report provides a statement of the potential landscape and visual issues associated with a proposed agricultural development on land at Lower Dunge Farm, Bratton Road, West Ashton, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 6AX ('the site'). The proposals do not meet all of the criteria set out in Part 6, Class A of the GPDO and therefore does not constitute permitted development. The site is in the administrative area of Wiltshire Council. Although in the countryside, the site lies outside of any 'protected' landscape.

1.2 The application will see the construction of large steel portal-framed agricultural buildings, including a livestock building (approximately 37.8m x 46.0m) and a covered muck store (approximately 30.5m x 41.5m). The buildings will include a concrete apron to their front (totalling 608.5m²), and a 12.2m wide space between the two buildings. The overall site area is approximately 0.41 hectares (ha) and occupies an area of former arable land to the immediate north west of an existing large agricultural storage barn and associated hardstanding. The three buildings together will form a close-knit group to form a modern farmyard that will be similar in scale and arrangement to others in the locality.

1.3 The proposed buildings will be constructed using a steel portal frame set into concrete footings, enclosed to the rear, and partially to the sides, with 2.2m high precast concrete panels to the lower sections with tin cladding in Juniper Green to their upper sections. Sheeted gates will be used to contain the livestock for the livestock building. The front of the muck store will be largely open. The roof materials will comprise Profile 6R fibre cement panels, finished in a 'natural' colour, with galvanised 180mm gutters. Each building will have several translucent rooflights within the roof. A concrete floor slab will provide the finished floor level for each building. To the rear of the livestock building will be a pair of 12ft sheet gates to provide additional access into the land behind the building.

1.4 Access into the site is to be taken via the existing concrete hardstanding, which itself is accessed via a gated entrance from the minor road to the north – Bratton Road. No changes to the existing access are proposed.

1.5 The site is in the administrative area of Wiltshire Council within the parish of West Ashton. The parish extends from the south-eastern edge of Trowbridge to the north, to the parishes of Bratton and Edington, to the south.

1.6 It is important to note that the Applicant currently has prior approval (as permitted development) for a substantially similar scheme comprised of a livestock building and muck store/silage clamp on land to the south, just off Capps Lane. This has not been constructed, and the proposals at Lower Dunge Farm will be constructed in place of the permitted development. This LVA has found that the location of the proposals, from a landscape and visual perspective, are in a favourable location when compared with the permitted development.

1.7 This report is for a “non-EIA project”. The Landscape Institute has advised in relation to Landscape and Visual Appraisals / Statements outside a formal EIA process in its ‘Statement of Clarification 1/13’ that:

In carrying out appraisals, the same principles and process as LVIA may be applied but, in so doing, it is not required to establish whether the effects arising are or are not significant. [...] The emphasis on likely ‘significant effects’ in formal LVIA stresses the need for an approach that is proportional to the scale of the project that is being assessed and the nature of its likely effects. The same principle – focussing on a proportional approach – also applies to appraisals of landscape and visual impacts outside the formal requirements of EIA.

1.8 This statement therefore provides an assessment of the levels of the effect without commenting on their “significance”. Furthermore, this appraisal only considers the proposed development as described, and its findings should not be considered prejudicial against any other future land use proposals for the site, which should each be assessed on their own merits.

1.9 For this report, the policy context is taken from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2025) and the Wiltshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document (adopted by Wiltshire Council in January 2015). The baseline landscape character has been taken from Natural England National Character Area Profile (NCA) 117: ‘Avon Vales’, and; the Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment Local Landscape Character Area 11C: Trowbridge Rolling Clay Lowland.

2. SCOPE AND APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

2.1 The LVA process is based on the following guidance:

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. 3rd ed. (GLVIA 3).
- An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment.

2.2 The LVA is a tool used to identify and appraise the likely effects of change resulting from development, both on the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity. Landscape Effects relate to changes to components of the landscape resource as a result of development. Visual Effects relate to the appearance of development, its effect on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by users of the landscape. The study area to be considered includes the site itself and the full extent of the wider landscape with the potential to be influenced by the development.

2.3 BASELINE LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL STUDY

2.3.1 The baseline study reviews the existing landscape and visual resources to determine and describe the conditions against which changes resulting from the development can be measured or predicted and appraised. The process comprises three stages, namely a desk study, field survey and baseline analysis. The baseline study helps identify the landscape and visual receptors which are considered susceptible to change as a result of the development and includes description, classification and evaluation. It forms the basis against which to appraise the Magnitude of Effect and, if necessary, the Significance of Effect of development on landscape and visual resources.

DESK STUDY RESOURCES

2.3.2 The following resources have been used to inform the field survey and the analysis:

Mapping

- Ordnance Survey maps and vertical aerial photography
- Definitive Rights of Way Map (Hampshire County Council)
- Geology: Geology of Britain Viewer (British Geological Survey)
- Pedology: Soilscales Map (Soilscales)
- Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) mapping (Natural England)
- Designations: Magic Interactive Mapping (Defra) & Local Policies Map (Wiltshire Council)
- Heritage assets: The National Heritage List for England (Historic England)

Planning Policy

- NPPF (2025)
- Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) (Adopted January 2015)

Character Assessment

- NCA: 117. Avon Vales
- Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment (2005).

FIELD SURVEY

2.3.3 The desk study informs the field survey. Of particular relevance are the Ordnance Survey maps, aerial photography and the Landscape Character Assessments. The field survey is then used to gain a full appreciation of the relationship between the site and study area. The field work is supported by mapped viewpoints and photographic records, representative of, and relevant to, the development.

BASELINE ANALYSIS

2.3.4 The findings of the desk study and field survey inform the baseline analysis, which helps in determining the landscape value of the study area through description, classification and evaluation of the landscape and visual resources relevant to the application site and surrounding study area. Determining the value of the landscape as a resource helps in identifying specific landscape and visual receptors that have the potential to be affected by the development.

Landscape value

2.3.5 Landscape value is the relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society; a landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a variety of reasons, however having specific components of value does not mean an area is a valued landscape. Furthermore, while designations can be an indicator of value, the presence of detracting components may mean the value of a designated area locally varies across its geographic extent. Moreover, as identified in GLVIA 3, *“the fact that an area of landscape is not designated either nationally or locally does not mean that it does not have any value”*.

2.3.6 Typically, value is determined against a series of predefined factors, to establish an overall landscape value of either Low, Medium, or High, with the importance of any designations also being taken into account. Additionally, the specific value of the site, as a component of the landscape resource, is also considered.

Landscape Receptors

2.3.7 Landscape receptors will be selected to help ascertain the specific aspects of the landscape resource that have the potential to be affected by the proposed development. Potential receptors include individual elements or features of the study area, both on and off site, as well as the distinct landscape character of the study area as a whole.

Visual Receptors

2.3.8 Visual receptors will initially be identified from where the desk study suggests that the proposed development may be visible, before being verified as part of the field survey. Views will primarily be recorded from Public Rights of Way (PRoWs) and other areas with public access, as well as public roads with full public and permissive access. Residential views will be considered, where appropriate, through the use of representative viewpoints. It should be noted views may be recorded from areas which the desk study suggests have no intervisibility with the site, moreover not all potential visual receptors will be recorded during the field survey (e.g. if there is an obvious lack of intervisibility).

2.4 APPRAISAL OF LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

2.4.1 The landscape appraisal addresses changes in the fabric, character and/or key elements or features of the landscape resource. The visual appraisal addresses changes in visual amenity, and the implication of those changes on specific visual receptors.

2.4.2 The appraisal of effects aims to:

- Estimate the sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors as a function of their value and their susceptibility to change.
- Identify the Magnitude of Effect of the development.
- Provide an appraisal of the effects and, subsequently, the Nature of Effect, in a logical and well-reasoned fashion.
- Indicate suitable mitigation measures.

2.4.3 The appraisal will consider the likely effects of the proposed development in the context of Receptor Sensitivity in order to determine the Level of Effect on landscape and visual receptors, with mitigation measures recommended if required. The overall landscape and visual effects of the development will then be reappraised to determine the effectiveness of the recommended mitigation at both implementation and once established.

2.4.4 To maintain consistency, the determination of sensitivity and the prediction of magnitude have been guided by pre-defined criteria. However, by its very nature, the LVA process requires a significant amount of interpretation and professional judgement.

2.4.5 Designations which may affect the sensitivity of receptors, or how an effect may be perceived, will be taken into consideration where appropriate. In terms of listed buildings and other designated heritage assets as receptors, this report will only consider the potential effects on the historic landscape settings of these structures/areas. It should be noted that, although a development may be visible from a listed building or other designated historic asset, this does not automatically mean that there is an effect on its historic landscape setting.

NATURE OF EFFECT

2.4.6 Change as a result of development may be Positive or Adverse, to varying degrees, or Neutral. Neutral effects are those where change is considered to have neither a Positive nor Adverse effect on the landscape or visual resource being considered. The calculation of a high Level of Effect does not mean that change is automatically Adverse; Nature of Effect is considered independently to the calculation of Level of Effect. Mitigation can change the Nature of Effect post development, with the aim being to lower the Magnitude of Effect and reduce Adverse effects as far as possible, ideally through mitigation measures that have a Positive effect on landscape and/or visual resources.

3. LANDSCAPE PLANNING CONTEXT

3.1 The following policy has been taken from the planning documents which are pertinent to the development of the site. The following policy extracts are considered to be relevant to the application. The policies listed will be used to guide the appraisal of the proposed development.

3.2 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

3.2.1 Originally published in March 2012, with the most recent revision being in February 2025, the NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced. Of particular relevance to this assessment is Section 15. Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment, specifically paragraph 187, which states that "Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by":

a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);

and:

b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland [...]

3.3 WILTSHIRE CORE STRATEGY

3.3.1 The development plan for Wiltshire consists of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) (Adopted January 2015) and 'saved' policies of the former West Wiltshire District Local Plan (2004) that were incorporated into it. Wiltshire Council is currently in the process of preparing a new Local Plan, which will cover the period to 2038. The draft Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State at the end of 2024. The first stage of hearings in relation to the Duty to Cooperate were held on 24 June 2025. Stage 2 will commence on 11 November 2025, and it is expected that it will be formally adopted in 2026. Until this happens it carries only limited weight, and the current Wiltshire Core Strategy remains in place as the development plan for the district.

3.3.2 The WCS Interactive Policy Map shows the application site is located outside of any Settlement Framework Policy Boundary and lies outside of the Salisbury Plain Special Landscape Areas (SLA1 and

SLA2) in an area of countryside ('white' land). There are no specific designations on the Policies Map that cover the application site or its immediate environs.

3.3.3 The site has no specific landscape designations. However, **Core Policy 51 (Landscape)** has some relevance generally.

CORE POLICY 51: LANDSCAPE

Development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and must not have a harmful impact upon landscape character, while any negative impacts must be mitigated as far as possible through sensitive design and landscape measures. Proposals should be informed by and sympathetic to the distinctive character areas identified in the relevant Landscape Character Assessment(s) and any other relevant assessments and studies. In particular, proposals will need to demonstrate that the following aspects of landscape character have been conserved and where possible enhanced through sensitive design, landscape mitigation and enhancement measures:

- i. The locally distinctive pattern and species composition of natural features such as trees, hedgerows, woodland, field boundaries, watercourses and waterbodies.*
- ii. The locally distinctive character of settlements and their landscape settings.*
- iii. The separate identity of settlements and the transition between man-made and natural landscapes at the urban fringe.*
- iv. Visually sensitive skylines, soils, geological and topographical features.*
- v. Landscape features of cultural, historic and heritage value.*
- vi. Important views and visual amenity.*
- vii. Tranquillity and the need to protect against intrusion from light pollution, noise and motion.*
- viii. Landscape functions including places to live, work, relax and recreate.*
- ix. Special qualities of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and the New Forest National Park, where great weight will be afforded to conserving and enhancing landscapes and scenic beauty.*

Proposals for development within or affecting the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), New Forest National Park (NFNP) or Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site (WHS) shall demonstrate that they have taken account of the objectives, policies and actions set out in the relevant Management Plans for these areas. Proposals for development outside of an AONB that is sufficiently prominent (in terms of its siting or scale) to have an impact on the

area's special qualities (as set out in the relevant management plan), must also demonstrate that it would not adversely affect its setting.

4. BASELINE LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL STUDY

4.1 SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT

4.1.1 The application site lies to the south east of a large poultry farm – Oakstone Farm – which itself lies approximately 0.5km to the south east of the agricultural hamlet at Dunge which is primarily comprised of Dunge Farm, Grange Farm and Lower Dunge Farm. Dunge Farm is a sprawling complex of farm buildings that include both traditional and modern, larger, buildings, and includes a Grade II Listed farmhouse. As second Grade II Listed farmhouse is found at Lower Dunge farm. To the south of Dunge is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) – a Medieval moated site.

4.1.2 The site lies within a broad, gently rolling, lowland vale that forms the catchment for the River Avon. The landscape is generally rural in character, although contains significant areas of settlement, including the county town of Trowbridge and the market town of Westbury. Transport corridors include the mainline Plymouth to Paddington railway, and branch lines from Westbury to Bath (via Trowbridge and Bradford-on-Avon) and Swindon (via Melksham and Chippenham). The principal road through the area is the A350 primary route that connects the M4 to the north of the county with the south coast, via the local towns of Chippenham, Melksham, Westbury and Warminster. The B3098 lies to the south of the area, and this connects the villages that lie within the foothills on the northern edge of Salisbury Plain.

4.1.3 Bratton Road, a minor rural road, lies approximately 15m to the north of the site, separated by a mature roadside hedgerow and verge. The road is the principal means of connection between West Ashton village, and the villages to the south east, including Bratton and Edington. For the most part the road is flanked by verges and drainage ditches, and dense hedgerows that creates visual enclosure, with only occasional glimpsed views across the lowland landscape, although higher ground to the south, where the land rises up into the scarp on the edge of Salisbury Plain, often forms a backdrop in views from the road.

4.1.5 The application site abuts the existing agricultural development, including a modern agricultural store and hardstanding. Although glimpsed from Bratton Road, hedgerow vegetation is effective in obscuring this from Bratton Road. To the north the poultry farm is substantially screened by mature hedgerow and mixed shelter belt planting, although there are a few small pockets of visibility from surrounding public rights of way, although it is generally well-absorbed into its rural setting.

4.2 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

4.2.1 The following Landscape Character Assessments have been used to establish the baseline character of study area:

- *Profile (NCA) 117: Avon Vales (NE522 - 2014).*
- *Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment (2005).*
- *West Wiltshire District Landscape Character Assessment (2006).*

4.2.2 Only the information pertaining to the LCAs and LCTs in which the site is located has been listed (or highlighted by underlining) in order to help establish overall landscape character or the site's receiving landscape, as well as to determine the site's contribution to this landscape character, and any elements or features that help in defining the wider landscape. It is important to note that, due to the extent of individual Character Areas and Types, some of the listed information, particularly from the larger-scale studies, may not be wholly relevant to the site and its surrounding landscape.

NATIONAL CHARACTER AREA PROFILES

4.2.3 In 2012, Natural England, as part of its responsibilities in delivering the Natural Environment White Paper, Biodiversity 2020 and the European Landscape Convention, revised the National Character Area Profiles to make environmental evidence and information easily available to a wider audience. The site and entire study area fall within the NCA 117: Avon Vales.

4.2.4 Typical characteristics Of the Low Weald are broadly described as an undulating, low-lying landscape of mixed, predominantly pastoral agriculture and small limestone-built towns, cut by the (Bristol) River Avon and its tributaries, and surrounded to the west, south and east by higher land. Woodlands lie on the steeper slopes and by watercourses, and in a few other areas within a structured farmland of medium to large fields and now straggly hedgerows.

4.2.5 The key characteristics of this NCA are as listed below with those deemed most relevant to the Site and its setting underlined.

- ***An undulating clay vale with a mix of arable and pasture.***
- ***Small- and medium-sized fields with mostly hedgerow boundaries with few hedgerow trees, varying in shape from irregular piecemeal enclosure to rectilinear planned enclosure.***
- ***Numerous low ridges with local views over towns and villages.***
- ***Wide River Avon corridor, with an ancient pattern of flood meadows and closely associated settlements and more recent development.***
- ***Transport corridors along roads and watercourses, heavily influential on all development in the NCA.***

- ***Large historic parks and mansions, often established from former monastic establishments.***
- ***Attractive stone-built centres to market towns that reflect the former agricultural productivity and wealth of the area.***
- ***Wide views across whole area from higher areas of surrounding chalk downs.***

4.2.6 Based upon this analysis, the site and its receiving landscape are considered to be moderately representative of this National Character Area. The landscape contains part of a large field that has predominantly been used for arable production, but with occasional years where it has supported modified grassland and used for livestock grazing. This lies within the broad undulating vale of the River Avon. Views towards the site are often broken up by intervening tree cover, however there are wide views across the area from the chalk downs to the south.

WILTSHIRE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT (2005)

4.2.7 This Technical Study was commissioned by Wiltshire County Council and undertaken by Land Use Consultants between January 2004 and April 2005. It identified 16 Landscape Types within the county, and then each of these was sub-divided into geographically specific Landscape Character Areas. The appraisal site falls within the Landscape Character Type 11: Rolling Clay Lowland, and, more specifically, Landscape Character Area (LCA) 11C: Trowbridge Rolling Clay Lowland.

4.2.8 Key characteristics of the Rolling Clay Lowlands landscape character type (LCT) are as follows:

- ***Gently rolling lowland based on Clay.***
- ***Mixed arable and pastoral land use with pasture concentrated around the water courses.***
- ***Variable field pattern with network of full hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees.***
- ***Presence of streams marked by lines of willows and crossed by modest bridges.***
- ***Woodland blocks including some ancient woodland and wet woodland of high ecological value plus scattered mature trees.***
- ***Small number of meadows of neutral and unimproved grassland.***
- ***Scattered settlement of towns, small villages and farmsteads, many using vernacular materials of brick, half timber, stone, tiles and thatch.***
- ***Roads largely minor and rural with a few trunk roads and sections of motorway.***
- ***Views vary from semi-enclosed by intact hedgerows, riparian vegetation and woodland blocks to more open with views to the rising scarps of the chalk uplands.***
- ***A largely peaceful, rural landscape.***

4.2.9 LCA 11C itself is described as follows:

‘Area 11C: Trowbridge Rolling Clay Lowland lies at the mid point of the east of the county with the Chalk uplands of Salisbury Plain West to the south and the Avon Open Clay Vale to the north. Trowbridge Rolling Clay Lowland is a gently undulating, largely rural area of mixed arable and pasture land. Medium to large rectangular fields are bounded by thick hedgerows with mature hedgerow trees. Combined with scattered woodland blocks (some ancient) and rich riparian vegetation along the stream lines the hedgerows make this a semi-enclosed landscape allowing intermittent views to the steep scarps of the Chalk uplands. Settlement is sparse to the east of the area with scattered nucleated and linear villages and farmsteads. Building materials are red brick and tiles to the east and stone for the older buildings to the west, with some more brick and modern stone in more recent developments. To the west there is more settlement including the southern part of Trowbridge with some large scale industrial buildings and modern housing estates tending to extend along roads south towards North Bradley, Southwick and Westbury. This western section of the area, which also contains the A350 trunk road and a concentration of railway lines, is considerably less rural and tranquil than the east of the area.’

4.2.10 The condition of the landscape is classed as **Good** with areas of mixed pastoral and arable farmland with intact hedgerows, some woodlands and hay meadows of high ecological value and villages of vernacular materials. There are a few elements in poorer condition such as hedgerow trees that are over-mature with few replacement young trees.

4.2.11 The varied land use of mixed arable and pastoral farming, some coniferous planting (which has affected the character of the historic woodlands) and the influence of prominent urban edges and transport corridors (including noise and light pollution) make the strength of character **Moderate** overall.

4.2.12 The strategy for the Rolling Clay Lowland Landscape Type is to ‘*conserve the peaceful rural landscape with its hedgerow network, rich riparian vegetation, remnant meadows, ancient woodlands and pattern of small villages and scattered farmsteads and to **strengthen** its character through measures to minimise the urbanising influence of large towns, new settlement and transport routes and to improve the woodlands and farmlands by encouraging management to retain or enhance their biodiversity and historic character.*’

WEST WILTSHIRE DISTRICT LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT (2006)

4.2.13 West Wiltshire District Council commissioned Chris Blandford Associates in 2006 to prepare a finer grain landscape assessment and strategy for the (then) district. The assessment was prepared

as part of the evidence base support policies for the emerging Local Development Framework at the time and was subsequently adopted as supplementary planning guidance. Although now dated (it was adopted nearly 20 years ago) it currently provides the most detailed scale (1:25,000) assessment of landscape character for the study area of this report. The site falls within the Rolling Clay Lowland LCT, and, more specifically, Landscape Character Area E6: Bulkington Rolling Clay Lowland.

4.2.14 Key Characteristics of the Rolling Clay Lowland (Landscape Type E) include the following:

- *Gently rolling lowland based on clay.*
- *Mixture of arable and pastoral farmland, delineated by mature hedgerows, with mature hedgerow trees often visible.*
- *Variable field pattern.*
- *Presence of streams marked by lines of willows and crossed by bridges.*
- *Scattered woodland blocks, including some ancient woodland.*
- *Scattered settlement pattern, with several settlements exhibiting traditional materials, including brick, half-timber, stone, tiles and thatch.*
- *Network of minor, rural roads crossing the landscape.*
- *Predominantly rural landscape, with an overall strong sense of tranquillity away from major road corridors and settlement edges.*

4.2.15 LCA E6: Bulkington Rolling Clay Lowland is located towards the east of the former District, overlooked by the Chalk Downland Edge and its associated villages. The LCA is crossed by a main railway corridor and is accessible via a series of minor roads, which connect to the main A361 to the north.

4.2.16 The Visual Character of the Melksham Open Clay Vale is summarised as follows:

‘Landscape within this area is gently rolling to the north, in close proximity to Bulkington, becoming flatter towards the south and is predominantly underlain by clay. The relatively narrow course of Summerham Brook crosses the area and occasional drainage ditches are visible at field boundaries. Character is dominated by an intricate patchwork of arable and pasture (dairy farming) fields, interspersed with patches of rough grassland. Field boundaries are generally delineated with intact hedgerows (low or medium in height) with several single mature deciduous trees at field boundaries also contributing to the character of the area. Field pattern is regular, consisting of predominantly medium and occasional large fields. The area has a predominantly rural character and is served by a series of narrow (often single track) rural lanes, which lead from the periphery towards the centre of the area and are not well connected (often terminating in dead ends). These narrow lanes lead to a series of scattered, often isolated farmsteads, which contribute to a sparse settlement pattern.

[...]

Overall, sense of tranquillity is generally strong however; there is occasional noise and visual intrusion from the railway corridor, which crosses the area. The general lack of vertical elements also contributes to the character of the area. A strong recognisable sense of place is apparent, as a result of views to the wooded chalk downland edge, which forms the southern boundary to the area.'

BIODIVERSITY

'Farmland dominates the landscape in this character area. The hedgerow field boundaries with mature deciduous trees serve as wildlife corridors and provide nesting opportunities for birds. Summerham brook corridor, together with several scattered ponds also contribute to the nature conservation importance of the area. Few woodland copses and shelterbelts are present in the area. The railway embankment in the south of the area provides excellent habitat for wildlife. In addition the whole area is a valuable habitat for bats. No ancient woodland remains. Part of Steeple Ashton (near Keeper's Cottage in the north of the area) is designated a geological SSSI due to the presence of Corallian Limestone.'

EVALUATION

Current Condition

4.2.17 *'Overall, landscape within the area appears to be in relatively good condition. Hedgerows at field boundaries are generally intact, which contributes to a coherent landscape pattern. There are generally few elements (other than the railway corridor), which detract from the coherent rural character of the area.'*

Inherent Landscape Sensitivities

4.2.18 The study identifies the following inherent sensitivities, although it must be stressed these were identified prior to the most recent expansions of Melksham and Bowerhill, since when the baseline landscape conditions have changed markedly.

Key Sensitivities

- *Intact hedgerows at field boundaries.*
- *Strong recognisable sense of place as a result of open views to chalk downland edge.*
- *Generally strong sense of tranquillity throughout the area.*
- *Sparse and isolated settlement pattern.*
- *Network of minor rural roads, which contribute to an overall rural character.*
- *General lack of vertical elements.*

Key Landscape Changes

- ***Maturing hedgerow trees which will eventually die and without replacement, lead to loss of existing intact landscape pattern.***
- ***Pressure for expansion at edges of Bulkington village.***
- ***Potential visual intrusion from new modern farm buildings.***
- ***Pressure on minor rural roads and potential greater visual intrusion from additional signage and lighting.***

Management Strategy and Objectives

4.2.19 The overall strategy for the area is to conserve the intact hedgerow network and strong landscape and isolated settlement pattern. As with the landscape sensitivities cited above, this strategy was set out nearly two decades ago, prior to some significant changes in the baseline landscape condition (in particular the urban expansion of Westbury and Trowbridge, and the expanses of field scale solar PV arrays to the north of Westbury), however, they still remain relevant today as overarching landscape management objectives. Specific management objectives (not all are relevant for this project) are to:

- ***Conserve and manage the mature hedgerow network and replace where lost or over maturing with native species appropriate to the local area.***
- ***Minimise incremental improvements to minor road corridors (such as signage and lighting) which may impact on the predominantly rural character of the area.***
- ***Conserve and enhance the landscape setting of Bulkington.***
- ***Seek ways to mitigate the visual impact of the main A361 road corridor.***
- ***Introduce arable field margins as an important nature conservation feature.***
- ***Conserve open views to the wooded chalk downland edge.***

4.3 THE STUDY AREA

4.3.1 The study area has been established for the purposes of this assessment as a 3.0km radius from the application site. This was considered appropriate following the initial desk study when it became clear that the proposals, whilst they would be well-enclosed in close- and medium-distance views, had the potential to be overlooked from longer distance views from the edge of the scarp to the south.

4.3.2 Topographically, the majority of the study area is defined as a broad low-lying vale, with the higher ground of the chalk downlands of Salisbury Plain to the south which is often forms a backdrop to the vale.

4.3.3 Tree cover across the study area is variable, with more significant areas of woodland around the villages and hamlets and some of the older farmsteads, as well as some significant hedgerow trees north of Bratton Road, and individual oaks that mark former field boundaries (to the west and south of the site). Overall, partly as a consequence of the flat topography whereby tree cover has a 'coalescing' effect where it merges, the study area presents a well-treed character, and the tree cover has the effect of creating visual enclosure and restricting views across the landscape.

4.3.4 The visual character of study the area as a whole is quite intimate and enclosed, therefore, although in places – for example where there are gaps in roadside vegetation – the landscape briefly opens up visually to allow views across grazing paddocks or arable fields. However, the views across these areas are visually contain by tree cover in the mid-distance, and, once away from the elevated land on the edge of the Chalk downland, there are no notable longer distance views across this part of the vale.

4.3.5 The site itself is visually open to the west where it forms part of a larger field, however it is enclosed by roadside hedgerow to the east on Bratton Road (the site is set back approximately 10m from the field boundary) and is partially enclosed by the existing farm building immediately to the south.

4.3.5 There are no natural environment or heritage designations within the site, and very few within the study area (there are only two Grade II Listed farmhouses within 1.0km of the site), although there are several other Listed buildings within a wider 3.0km radius (including three Grade I buildings around the Edington Priory). There is a number of SSSIs, including Picket and Clanger Woods SSSI, Steeple Ashton SSSI and Bratton Downs SSSI, within the study area, although due to the distance from the site (the nearest is Steeple Ashton SSSI at approximately 1.75km distant) the proposals can have no possible impact on any of these.

4.3.6 There is a small network of footpaths in the study area – mostly to the north of Bratton Road, but also a promoted or long-distance route (the Mid Wilts Way /White Horse Trail) to the west of the site. There are no public rights of way within the site itself.

4.3.7 Access through the study area is principally contingent on the B3098 Road and the network of minor roads and lanes that connect the villages. The nearest main road is the A350, to the north of

West Ashton, whilst the West Country mainline railway cuts east to west through the study area to the south of Capps Lane.

4.3.8 The Agricultural Land Classification of the site and for the surrounding field is Grade 3 (Good to Moderate).

4.4 BASELINE ANALYSIS

4.4.1 The findings of the desk study and field survey have been used to determine the landscape value of the study area, and subsequently identify specific landscape and visual receptors that have the potential to be affected by the development. The effect of the development on these receptors has been calculated, leading to an overall determination of the effect on both the landscape resource and the visual amenity of the study area.

LANDSCAPE VALUE

4.4.2 The landscape setting of the site generally presents as a typical settled rural landscape, with intrinsic landscape and scenic quality, and a defined sense of place derived from its location relevant to the chalk downland that forms a backdrop in views to the south. Traffic using the B3098 or the minor roads between the villages have a minor effect on tranquillity, although away from these the footpaths and bridleways remain largely tranquil.

4.4.3 The study area lies within the wider landscape setting of the Salisbury Plain Special Protection Area and Special Area of Conservation – designations which confer significant landscape value. However, due to the site's distance the proposals will have no effect on these.

4.4.4 Overall, the study area is largely representative of the landscape described in the relevant character assessments, particularly in respect of its topography, land uses, tree and hedgerow cover, settlement and field patterns and the relatively quiet, settled character of this rural landscape. There are no restrictive landscape designations, or settings of heritage assets, that will be affected by the proposals. There are several pockets of deciduous woodland within the study area, and these form some areas of Priority Habitat within 0.5km of the site (none of this is Ancient). No woodland or other priority habitats will be affected by the proposals.

4.4.5 There are numerous modern farm buildings, ancillary structures, overhead cables, storage barns, outdoor storage areas etc. in the study area (e.g. to the west at Oakstone Farm) that, particularly when

combined with the existing farm building immediately adjacent to the site, have the effect of lowering the landscape's overall sensitivity to change. Overall, the condition of the landscape is *Moderate* and the strength of landscape character is also assessed as *Moderate*. The value of the landscape within the study area, which makes up part of the wider landscape setting for West Ashton, Steeple Ashton, Bratton and Edington, is assessed as *Medium*. The landscape of the study area is NOT a 'valued landscape' under Section 15 of the NPPF, and the overall sensitivity to change is *Medium*. The site itself, which is adjacent to an existing agricultural building, and is flanked by a large poultry farm to the west, has a lower sensitivity to change to this type of proposed development than other pockets of land within the study area that are otherwise more remote from existing development.

LANDSCAPE RECEPTORS

4.4.6 The following landscape receptors have been identified as being aspects of the landscape resource that have the *potential* to be affected by the proposed development:

- The established landscape components which define the landscape in which the site is located.
- Boundary vegetation and its importance in respect of screening the site, as well as contributing to landscape structure within the wider study area.
- Grade 3 Agricultural land.

VISUAL RECEPTORS

4.4.7 The following visual receptors locations have been identified as having *potential* intervisibility with the proposed development:

- Users of minor Roads around the application site;
- Users of local public rights of way (in particular the White Horse Trail / Mid Wilts Way);
- Occupants of the agricultural hamlet at Dunge.
- Visitors to Bratton Castle/Westbury White Horse and Edington Hill (Piquet Hill).

LEVEL OF EFFECT

4.4.9 An appraisal has been carried out to determine the overall Level of Effect of the development proposals in terms of both the landscape resource and the visual amenity of the study area.

4.4.10 It should be noted that, while specific receptors have been identified for consideration, this does not necessarily mean that they will be adversely affected by the proposals. Moreover, where

there may be high level Adverse effects on specific receptors, this does not automatically mean that there will be high level Adverse effects on the study area as a whole.

4.4.11 The Level of Effect can be expressed as a correlation between the Magnitude of Effect and Landscape or Visual Sensitivity in a single matrix to determine the level, as shown in Table 1. However, it must be noted that the matrix is not in itself a substitute for professional judgement, for which allowances must be made. Although mitigation measures are often proposed where the Level of Effect is Minor or None, it is the Major and Major/Moderate categories which provide the highest Level of Effect in terms of effect on the landscape and visual resources.

Table 1: Level of Effect as a Correlation of Sensitivity and Magnitude, Applicable to the Landscape Resource and Visual Amenity

Landscape or Visual Sensitivity	Magnitude of Effect			
	<i>Substantial</i>	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>Slight</i>	<i>Negligible</i>
<i>High</i>	Major	Major/Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/Minor
<i>Medium</i>	Major/Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/Minor	Minor
<i>Low</i>	Moderate	Moderate/Minor	Minor	Minor/None
<i>Negligible</i>	Moderate/Minor	Minor	Minor/None	None

5. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL

5.1 THE LOCAL AREA AND RECEIVING LANDSCAPE

5.1.1 The landscape of the local area is characterised as rolling plateau arable farmland, with more open arable fields on the hilltops, ridges and upper valley slopes, and more wooded valley that incise the plateau. Views are often restricted to shorter and medium-distance views due to the effect of visually intervening vegetation within the fairly flat topography, although there are some elevated far-reaching views across the area from the chalk downland edge the south of the study area. The minor roads in the study area are often flanked by dense hedgerows that restrict outward visibility across the landscape, although field gateways and breaks in the hedgerows allows some glimpsed views across the vale.

5.1.2 The area is sparsely settled with small pockets of settlement and individual farmsteads, occasionally hidden by shelter belt planting. The site's receiving landscape has few defining landmarks or historic features, although there are some surviving historic landscape features such as the field patterns/enclosures and the network of lanes, and a few Grade II Listed buildings (including the farmhouse at Lower Dunge Farm itself – although not intervisible with the site). The Westbury White Horse is a regional landmark, and is a Victorian re-modelling of an earlier figure of a horse cut into the chalk hillside. Bratton Castle, which lies above the White Horse, is an Iron Age hillfort, and is managed by English Heritage.

5.1.3 The condition of the landscape within the vale diminished with increased levels of settlement and post-war agricultural intensification which resulted in the loss of many hedgerows. Nonetheless, this remains an attractive landscape with an inherent value as rural countryside.

5.1.4 There are very few public rights of way within 1.0km of the application site. These include the White Horse Trail / Mid Wilts Way, which is a promoted long-distance route (sections of this close to the site are poorly waymarked, or cross open ploughed fields). ON the scarp to the south there are promoted viewpoints at the White Horse / Bratton Castle which allow far-reaching views across the vale below.

5.1.5 Beyond the site's immediate environs are numerous isolated dwellings, farmsteads and clusters of settlement that give the landscape a settled farmland character. There are numerous examples of similar agricultural buildings/complexes within this grain of development.

5.1.6 There are no designated areas of nature conservation value within the site, and very few within the surrounding area although the site lies within the SSSI Impact Risk Zone (established to assess likely impacts on SSSIs/SACs/SPAs & Ramsar sites) for a number of SSSIs, including Picket and Clanger Woods SSSI, Steeple Ashton SSSI and Bratton Downs SSSI. Salisbury Plain, beyond the study area to the south, includes Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC). There are a few areas of deciduous woodland in the site's environs that appear on the Priority Habitat Inventory (none of this is Ancient or Ancient Replanted). There are no trees with TPOs either within or immediately adjacent to the site which could be affected by the proposed development, and the site itself is made up of former arable land that has been set aside. This has very limited intrinsic ecological value.

5.2 LANDSCAPE STUDY

5.2.1 The site itself does not represent a specific element or feature defined as a key characteristic of the study area, although it does form part of several much broader key characteristics in respect of the area's settled rural landscape.

5.2.2 The scale and design of the proposed buildings will be similar to those of the adjacent agricultural building, although the proposals will be enhanced by the use of timber spaced boarding which has the potential to be more subdued in appearance than some of the external materials used in the existing building, particularly as it weathers, and this will have a mitigating effect that will help to integrate the proposals into its setting.

5.2.3 The Landscape Value of the study area as a whole is *Medium* based on its generally *good* condition and *moderate* strength of character. Whilst the landscape has intrinsic value as countryside and as productive farmland, the overall Susceptibility to Change of the application site as a component of the landscape is *Medium* in respect of the development proposed. There is an established complex of similar agricultural buildings in the area, and the proposed buildings will combine with the adjacent storage barn to form agricultural complex. Best practice dictates that new agricultural buildings should be located with existing buildings unless site constraints or operational requirements clearly dictate that this is not possibleⁱ. The overall landscape sensitivity of the receiving landscape to this type of development is assessed as *Medium to Low*.

5.2.4 The proposals will combine with the adjacent land uses to form a farm complex and will not be out of place within the prevailing agrarian context of the receiving landscape. The scale and design of the proposed buildings will be similar to those of the adjacent agricultural building, whilst the external materials used will ensure the buildings appear less stark in their landscape setting when seen from the footpath to the south.

5.2.5 The existing baseline character of the appraisal site includes an area of former arable land that forms a discreet corner of a much larger arable field. The site lies adjacent to an existing large agricultural storage barn, and near a large poultry farm.

5.2.6 No new highway access will be created – the site will be served by the existing access to the adjacent barn on Bratton Road. As the site is predominantly flat the proposals will not require any notable ‘cutting-in’, and there will be no notable earthworks nor localised changes in topography. No vegetation will need to be removed for the proposals or to create a new access, and therefore all surrounding hedgerows will remain intact.

5.2.7 Natural England are only a statutory consultee when proposed development is likely to cause the loss (or likely cumulative loss) of 20ha or more of BMV (best and most versatile land). The proposals will see the loss of approximately 0.41Ha of arable land, which has an Agricultural Land Classification of 3: Good to Moderate (sub-grade not specified) – far short of the threshold. Therefore, the loss of this land should be weighed up as part of the planning balance in favour of the benefits in enhancing farming operations at the site.

5.2.8 The effect on the historic fabric of the landscape will be negligible. There is no intervisibility with any designated heritage assets (Bratton Castle is too distant from the site to be affected), nor will the proposed building effect the setting for any local listed buildings. While the construction of the proposed agricultural buildings will result in the loss of a small corner of an arable field, its impact on the wider historic field pattern is considered negligible.

5.2.9 The development proposals will not conflict with the relevant key issues, strategies, objectives and policies identified in the Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment. Furthermore, the proposals will not detract from the defining characteristics of LCA E6: Bulkington Rolling Clay Lowland.

5.2.10 The proposals will increase the size of the existing farm complex by approximately two thirds, leading to an intensification of agricultural built form. However, due to the site's baseline character, as well as the site's low-lying position and the proposal's high level of visual containment within the local landscape (see Visual Study below), the site will not be perceived as an unexpected or incongruous feature in the landscape and will retain the receiving landscape's established character.

5.2.11 In terms of the landscape resource as a whole therefore, based on the proposed layout provided at the time of writing, the Magnitude of Landscape Effects is assessed as *Slight* and, based on the *Medium to Low* landscape sensitivity, the Overall Level of Landscape Effects is assessed as *Minor*.

5.2.12 In terms of the wider setting, the proposals will not significantly detract from the surrounding landscape, with the buildings being of a style that is commensurate with the prevailing rural agricultural character of the area. The proposals will not significantly change the pre-development condition of the landscape, and the development is considered to have a *Neutral* effect on the receiving landscape as a whole.

5.3 VISUAL STUDY

REPRESENTATIVE PHOTOGRAPHS

5.3.1 For the purpose of this report, close views are between 0m – 500m from the proposed development and medium views are between 500m – 1000m, and long views from further than 1000m. Views are representative and not totally exclusive (See Appendix 3: Viewpoint Photographs for enlarged copies of the selected viewpoints).

5.3.2 The Viewpoints were visited in October 2025 after early leaf fall, when leaf cover was between minimum and maximum. The seasonal differences (seasonality), in respect of potential effects arising from the varying degree of screening/filtering of views by vegetation that will apply in summer and winter, have been considered in the appraisal of all recorded viewpoints; as per the recommendation of GLVIA3. It is important to note that the recording of viewpoints during different seasons is not a prerequisite of the consideration of seasonality, as GLVIA3 states:

The timing of the assessment work and the project programme will also influence the practicality of covering more than one season.

BRATTON ROAD

VIEWPOINT 1

Approximate distance from site: 450m

OS map elevation: Between 80-85m AOD



VIEWPOINT 2a

Approximate distance from site: 20m

OS map elevation: Between 70-75m AOD



VIEWPOINT 2b

Approximate distance from site: 20m

OS map elevation: Between 70-75m AOD



VIEWPOINT 3

Approximate distance from site: 315m

OS map elevation: Between 70-75m AOD



Close-distance views towards the application site from Bratton Road (Viewpoint 3 is from the entrance to PRow (bridleway) WASH10) on approach from the east and west, and adjacent to the farm entrance.

Principal receptors will be occupants of cars, moving quickly through the landscape. These receptors will experience these views fleetingly, and will only glimpse the site above the hedgerow on approach from the west/adjacent to the site or through the farm entrance. Users of the PRow will have more prolonged exposure to the view, although the route to connect with the Mid Wilts Way uses a short section of Bratton Road that takes one away from the site (*i.e.* to the west).

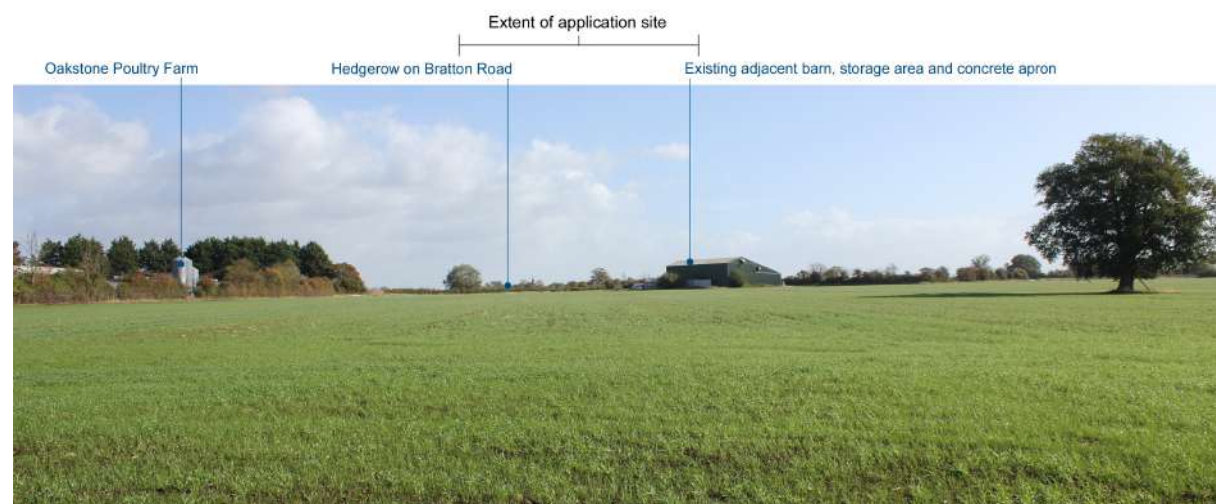
Existing shelter belts, tree cover and roadside hedgerow vegetation will partially obscure views of the proposals on approach (the views are fully obscured on approach from the west), although a substantial amount the proposed barns will be visible from adjacent to the farm entrance. However, although the proposals will be a new feature that will result in a permanent change, they will be seen in the context of the existing adjacent farm building (and to a lesser degree the adjacent poultry farm). The proposals follow good practice guidance where they are sited adjacent to existing farm development: the proposed barns will visually connect with the existing farm building and will be perceived as a modern farmyard that is an established visual characteristic of the study area. The proposals will not be seen as an incongruous or unexpected feature, therefore.

WHITE HORSE TRAIL / MID WILTS WAY

VIEWPOINT 4 (White Horse Trail / Mid Wilts Way (WASH11) – adjacent to site, facing E)

Approximate distance from site: 315m

OS map elevation: Between 70-75m AOD



VIEWPOINT 5 (White Horse Trail / Mid Wilts Way (WASH11) – adjacent to site, facing NE)

Approximate distance from site: 355m

OS map elevation: Between 70-75m AOD



VIEWPOINT 6 (White Horse Trail / Mid Wilts Way (BRAT28) - near Capps Lane)

Approximate distance from site: 500m

OS map elevation: Between 70-75m AOD



Close- and medium-distance views towards the application site from a section of PRow (footpath) WASH11 / BRAT28 that crossed the fields to the west/south of the application site. Viewpoints 4 and 5 (WASH11) are from the PRow within the field immediately adjacent to the application site, whilst Viewpoint 6 is from the entrance to PRow BRAT28 where it meets Capps Lane. Both sections of the PRow form part of the Mid Wilts Way / White Horse Trail long distance routes.

Principal sensitive receptors will be recreational walkers using this section of the PRow, and who will be moving slowly through the landscape with more prolonged exposure to the view. The adjacent modern farm building and a substantial amount of buildings within the poultry farm are visible in Viewpoints 5 and 6.

Existing tree cover and field hedgerow vegetation will substantially obscure views of the proposals on approach from Capps Lane (VP7) (the views from WASH11 adjacent to Oakstone Farm are fully obscured by shelter belt planting and built form at the Poultry Farm on approach from the west), although once clear of the field boundary, views east from WASH11 adjacent to the site will offer clear visibility of the cattle building (partially obscured by the existing adjacent barn from the PRow further to the south). The muck store will be largely obscured by the cattle shed.

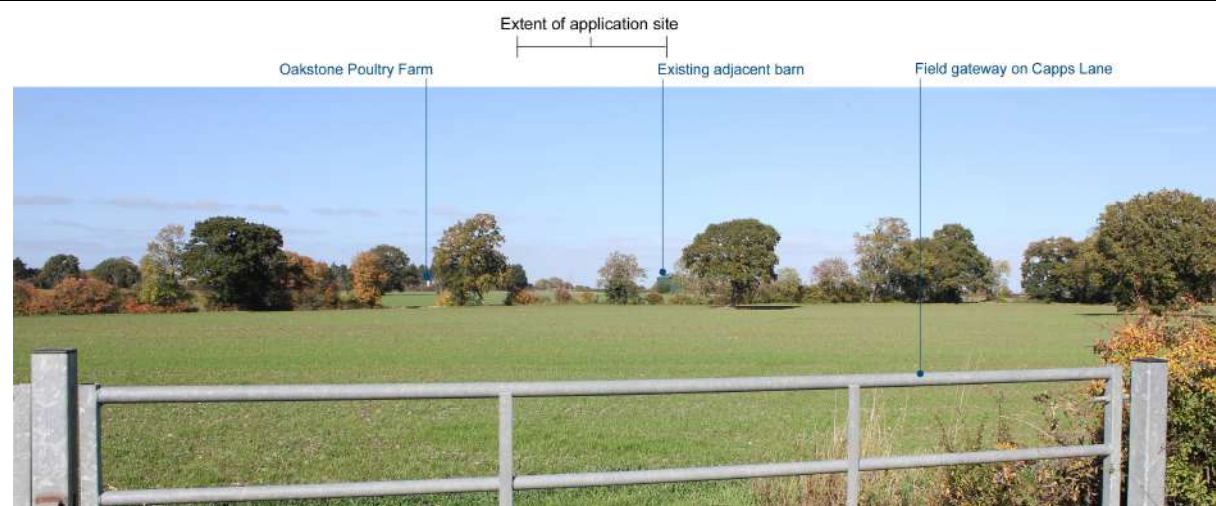
However, although the proposals will be a new feature that will result in a permanent change in views for a short section (approximately 375m) of the PRow, they will be seen in the context of the existing adjacent farm building and poultry farm. The proposals follow good practice guidance where they are sited adjacent to existing farm development: the proposed barns will visually connect with the existing farm building and will be perceived as a modern farmyard that is an established visual characteristic of the study area. The proposals will not be seen as an incongruous or unexpected feature, therefore.

CAPPS LANE, B3098, MONASTERY ROAD AND OTHER MINOR ROADS

VIEWPOINT 7 (Capps Lane)

Approximate distance from site: 530m

OS map elevation: Between 70-75m AOD



VIEWPOINT 8 (B3098 between Bratton and Edington)

Approximate distance from site: 2.4km

OS map elevation: Between 100-105m AOD



VIEWPOINT 9 (Monastery Road)

Approximate distance from site: 2.4km

OS map elevation: Between 65-70m AOD



VIEWPOINT 10 (Minor Road between Horsecroft Farm and Crossroads Farm)

Approximate distance from site: 1.1km

OS map elevation: Between 85-90m AOD



Medium- and longer-distance views from surrounding roads. Principal receptors will be occupants of cars, moving quickly through the landscape. These receptors will experience these views fleetingly.

Due to the flat/gently rolling nature of the broad vale below the Salisbury Plain scarp, tree and hedgerow cover has the effect of visually intervening in views across the landscape, as evidenced by Viewpoints 7, 9 and 10, above. Here, the distance of views is largely determined by field hedgerows, with few longer distance views possible. However, the scarp often appears as a backdrop in views where it rises above the rolling clay lowland. The B3098 runs along the Bratton and Edington Greensand and Chalk Terrace, at the foot of the scarp, and allows some more elevated, and farther-reaching, views across the landscape (VP9).

Due to the visual nature of the landscape, the proposals will not be visible from the minor roads and lanes within the wider study area. Where there are more elevated and longer distance views from the B3098, the proposals will be at a great distance from the receptor, and will be glimpsed only fleetingly where they will be largely lost within the existing landscape structure/other numerous farmsteads. The balance and make-up of the view will remain unaltered, therefore.

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY TO NORTH EAST OF SITE

VIEWPOINT 11 (Bridleway SASH27 - White Horse Trail / Mid Wilts Way east of East Town)

Approximate distance from site: 1.7km

OS map elevation: Between 80-85m AOD



VIEWPOINT 12 (Bridleway WASH10 - White Horse Trail / Mid Wilts Way south of East Town)

Approximate distance from site: 1.1km

OS map elevation: Between 85-90m AOD



Long-distance views south/south east, taken from bridleways SASH27 and WASH10 (both part of the Mid Wilts Way / White Horse Trail). minor road near Langston Cross, on approach from the east.

Principal sensitive receptors will be recreational walkers using this section of the PRow, and who will be moving slowly through the landscape with more prolonged exposure to the view. The adjacent modern farm building and a substantial amount of buildings within the poultry farm are visible in Viewpoints 5 and 6.

Existing tree cover and hedgerows will largely obscure views of the proposals from the network of PRowS to the north and north east of the site, although there will be very occasional glimpsed views through field gateways or breaks in the hedgerow where parts of the upper section of the new buildings will be visible in the distance. Due to the long distances involved, however, the proposals will remain a small element in the view, and will be seen in context with the adjacent farm building, which is also visible in these views. The proposals will not be visually prominent, nor conflict with the established visual character of the study area where farm buildings are an established feature. The balance and make-up of the view will remain largely unaltered, therefore.

LONG DISTANCE VIEWS FROM DOWNLAND EDGE/GREENSAND TERRACE, SOUTH OF B3098

VIEWPOINT 13 (Edington (Piquet) Hill)

Approximate distance from site: 2.9km

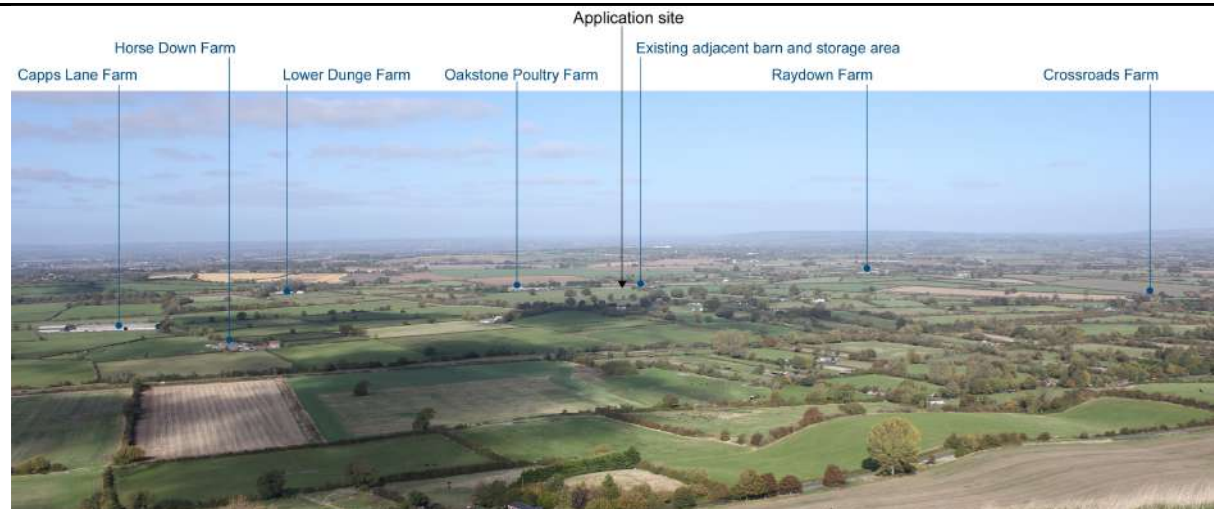
OS map elevation: Between 170-175m AOD



VIEWPOINT 14 (Westbury White Horse / Bratton Castle)

Approximate distance from site: 2.45m

OS map elevation: Between 200-205m AOD



VIEWPOINT 15 (Newtown Chalk Downland Edge)

Approximate distance from site: 3.6Km

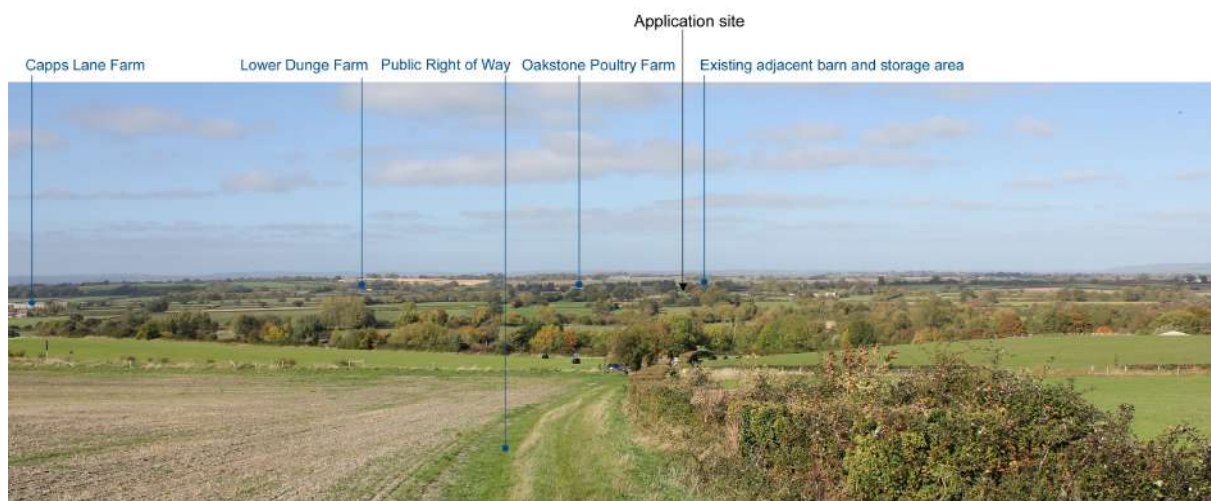
OS map elevation: Between 120-125m AOD



VIEWPOINT 16 (PRoW (bridleway) BRAT 7, south of B3098 on Bratton and Edington Greensand and Chalk Terrace)

Approximate distance from site: 2.0km

OS map elevation: Between 110-115m AOD



Long-distance views north-west, north and north east towards the site; taken from publicly accessible land/PRoW on the Bratton and Edington Greensand and Chalk Terrace or the Bratton Chalk Downland Edge (VP15 is from Newtown, near the entrance to bridleway WEST35). The principal sensitive receptors will be recreational visitors who will have an interest and a prolonged exposure to these views (VP15 will primarily be experienced by occupants in moving vehicles on their way to/from the White Horse). These receptors are more sensitive to perceived change, therefore.

The adjacent farm building and parts of the poultry farm at Oakstone Farm are just visible with the naked eye, although are small and inconspicuous features that are largely lost in the settled landscape of the wider vale.

The proposals will visually blend with existing farm buildings and will have no material effect on the visual baseline condition.

SUMMARY OF VISUAL EFFECTS

5.3.3 The Overall Visual Sensitivity of the study area is considered Medium, when taking into account the nature of sensitivity receptors/receptor locations. While a large part the visual character of the local landscape is defined by its rural character, and where the proposals will be seen as an expected feature of a 'working' landscape, the vale as a whole forms part of a panorama when viewed from elevated locations on the edge of the scarp at Bratton Castle, the White Horse, and Piquet (Edington) Hill. The sensitivity of receptors in these locations is high where people come to take in the view.

5.3.4 Due to a combination of roadside hedgerows, pockets of woodland and a flat landscape, the visual envelope of the development will be quite restricted for close- and medium-distance views, with the exception being the White Horse Trail / Mid Wilts Way, which crosses the field to the south of the application site, approximately 26m distant, and from where, for a short section (approximately 360m), the new development will be clearly visible (partly obscured by the adjacent building to the east of this section), regardless of seasonal change.

5.3.5 By extending the existing agricultural development to the north west, the proposals will result in a slight change to established visual character in the local area, the effect of this on the visual amenity and visual character of the study area will be limited, with the proposals being read as part of the existing farm.

5.3.6 From the more sensitive elevated receptor locations to the south, although the proposals will be visible (just), the effect on the visual baseline will negligible due to the distances involve – and the visual blending that will result – where the proposals will be comfortably absorbed amongst other similar agricultural development.

5.3.7 Overall, the proposals will not be an unexpected or incongruous feature within its landscape context. The receiving landscape is one where agricultural built form is an established visual component, and as such the visual character of the area will not be affected by the proposals. As such the Overall Magnitude of Visual Change is *Slight*, resulting in the Overall Level of Visual Effect being *Minor*.

5.4 CONSTRUCTION EFFECTS

5.4.1 During construction, plant and materials may be partially visible from close-distance viewpoints (likely limited to Bratton Road, adjacent to the farm entrance). However, construction effects associated with the development will be temporary and will have no lasting adverse effects on the recorded landscape and visual receptors. Appropriate storage of construction materials and equipment will help minimise any effects during construction.

5.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

5.5.1 GLVIA3 states that existing development, and schemes with extant planning consents, should be considered as part of the baseline conditions (GLVIA, para. 7.13), although current planning applications, yet to be determined should be considered (usually as part of an EIA). At the time of writing there are currently no notable current planning applications, either of a similar type to the proposals or contrasting, that would form the basis for the consideration of cumulative impacts with the proposed agricultural development within the appraisal site.

6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The key considerations when determining the acceptability of the potential landscape and visual effects of the proposals are the receptors that will be potentially affected by the development and how far any effects are/can be mitigated. Of particular importance to the consideration of the developments overall effect is whether the proposed agricultural buildings will have an unacceptable adverse effect on the landscape character and visual amenity of the study area, in particular the unique character associated with LCA E6: Bulkington Rolling Clay Lowland, the adjacent LCAs or the more visually sensitive LCAs to the south of the B3098. Key mitigating factors to be considered are:

- The appraisal site lies adjacent to an existing agricultural building and close to an established poultry farm (in preference to the permitted development site to the south, which is more remote in its setting) within an undesignated landscape.
- Due to the proposed siting, appearance and scale of the proposals, they do not have the potential to affect the setting of any designated heritage assets, scheduled monuments or other designated landscapes.
- The proposed development will not unduly affect views on approach from the north west, south east on approach from Bratton Road, nor from other close- and medium- distance receptor locations to the east or south (the site is visually divorced from land to the north), although it will be clearly visible in close-distance views from the White Horse Trail / Mid Wilts Way for a length of approximately 350m where it crosses the open arable field. The visual effects on this receptor are reduced by the nature of the development and its proximity to existing agricultural buildings.
- The proposed development will not be visible from the wider landscape (i.e., beyond the immediate environs of the site) with the exception of long-distance views from the scarp to the south where the effect on the visual baseline will be negligible due to the distances involved (greater than 2.5 km) and the visual blending that will occur with other similar agricultural developments.
- Overall neither the fabric of the landscape nor the visual character of the area will be affected by the proposals, and the Overall Level of Visual Effect will be *Minor*.

6.2 There will be some localised changes resulting from an intensification in built form where the existing farm complex is extended, and this will have a minor effect on landscape character and views from Footpath WASH11 to the west. There will also be a minor effect on the minor road to the east of the farm (Bratton Road) where there will be a glimpsed view of the proposed development from moving vehicles on approach from the east and adjacent to the site and the farm entrance. However,

the development will visually blend with the existing farm building and poultry farm, and will not represent a break with the established baseline character.

6.3 As a result of the assessment of landscape and visual effects, it has been determined that the proposed development can be undertaken so that it integrates into the local landscape, maintaining its rural character and that of the wider landscape. By virtue of the proposals being located adjacent to existing farm buildings, within a landscape with a relatively high degree of visual enclosure resulting from intervening topography, tree cover and roadside/field boundary hedgerows, they will not be unacceptably visually intrusive in the landscape nor have a detrimental impact on the appearance of the local area and the more sensitive landscapes of Salisbury Plain/scarp to the south.

6.4 The proposed development can be undertaken in compliance with the relevant guidance and policies in the NPPF, the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the relevant local landscape character assessments. The overall levels of expected landscape and visual effects on the character and appearance of the landscape are considered acceptable in the context of the proposed development.

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<https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/9710/West-Wiltshire-Landscape-Character-Assessment/pdf/11102101_Draft_Final_LCA_12-06.pdf?m=1660649930387>

ⁱ Section 8 of the South Devon AONB Planning Guidance

ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL

WHL-2049-01: SITE LOCATION PLAN



KEY:

- Extent of application site

Public Rights of Way

- Footpath

- Bridleway

Roads

- A-road

- B-road

- Road generally more than 4m wide

- Road generally less than 4m wide

- Other road, drive or track

Railway

- Track multiple or single

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Project:
Lower Dunge Fm, Bratton Rd, W. Ashton, Wilts BA14 6AX

On behalf of:
TAC Page & Partners

Drawing title:
Location Plan

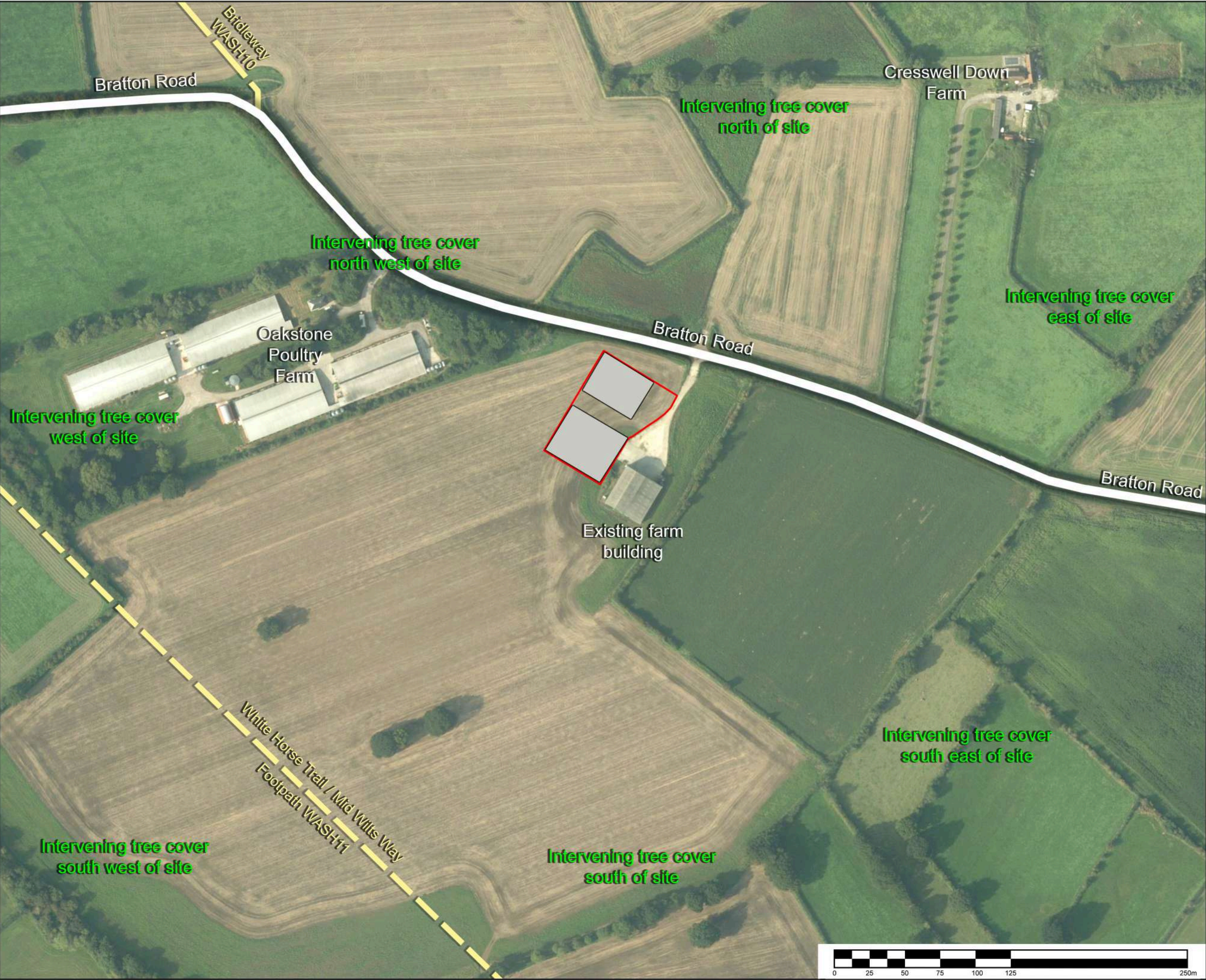
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WHL-2049-01

Scale:
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Rev:
DB: RL

Date:
Nov 2025
CB: WH

WHL-2049-02: VERTICAL AERIAL



KEY:

- Application site boundary
- Approximate position of proposed cattle shed and muck store

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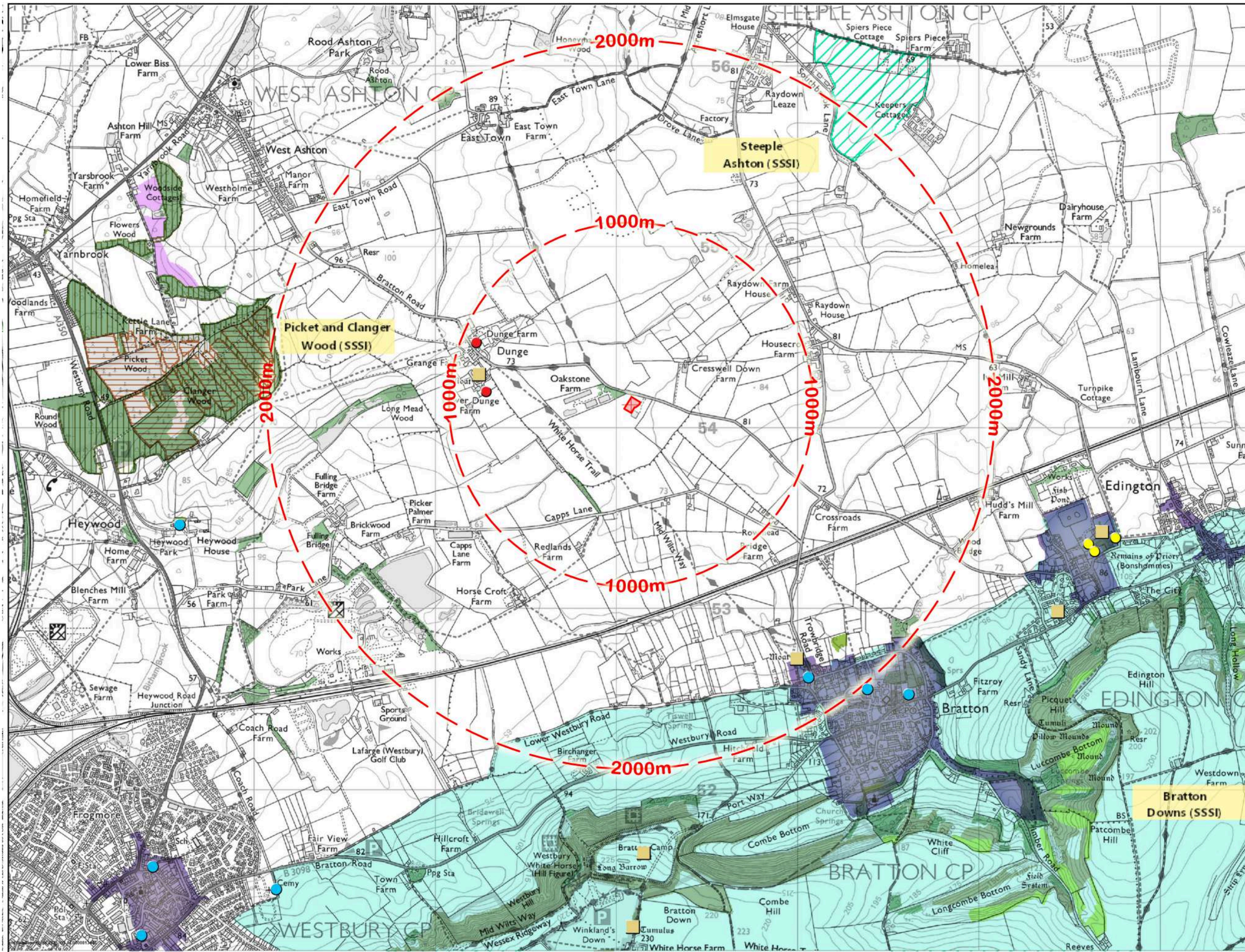
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Project: Lower Dunge Fm, Bratton Rd, W. Ashton, Wilts BA14 6AX		
On behalf of: TAC Page & Partners		
Drawing title: Vertical Aerial and Photographic Viewpoint Locations		
Drawing number: WHL-25.2033/01	Rev: 	Date: Sep 2025
Scale: 1: 2500 @ A3	DB: RL	CB: WH

WHL-2049-03: LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS



KEY:

- Extent of application site

- Off-set from centre of site

Heritage Designations

- Grade I Listed building

- Grade II* Listed Building

- Grade II Listed building/structure (within 1.0km of site)

- Scheduled Monument

- Conservation Area

Natural & Semi Natural Designations

- Ancient Woodland

- Ancient Woodland (re-planted)

- Priority Habitat Inventory - Deciduous Woodland

- Priority Habitat Inventory - Traditional Orchards

- Priority Habitat Inventory - Lowland calcareous grassland

- Priority Habitat Inventory - Lowland Meadows

- Priority Habitat Inventory - Good quality semi improved grassland

- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

- Special Landscape Area (SLA)

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On behalf of:
TAC Page & Partners

Drawing title:
Landscape Designations

Drawing number:
WHL-2049-03

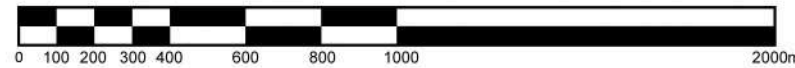
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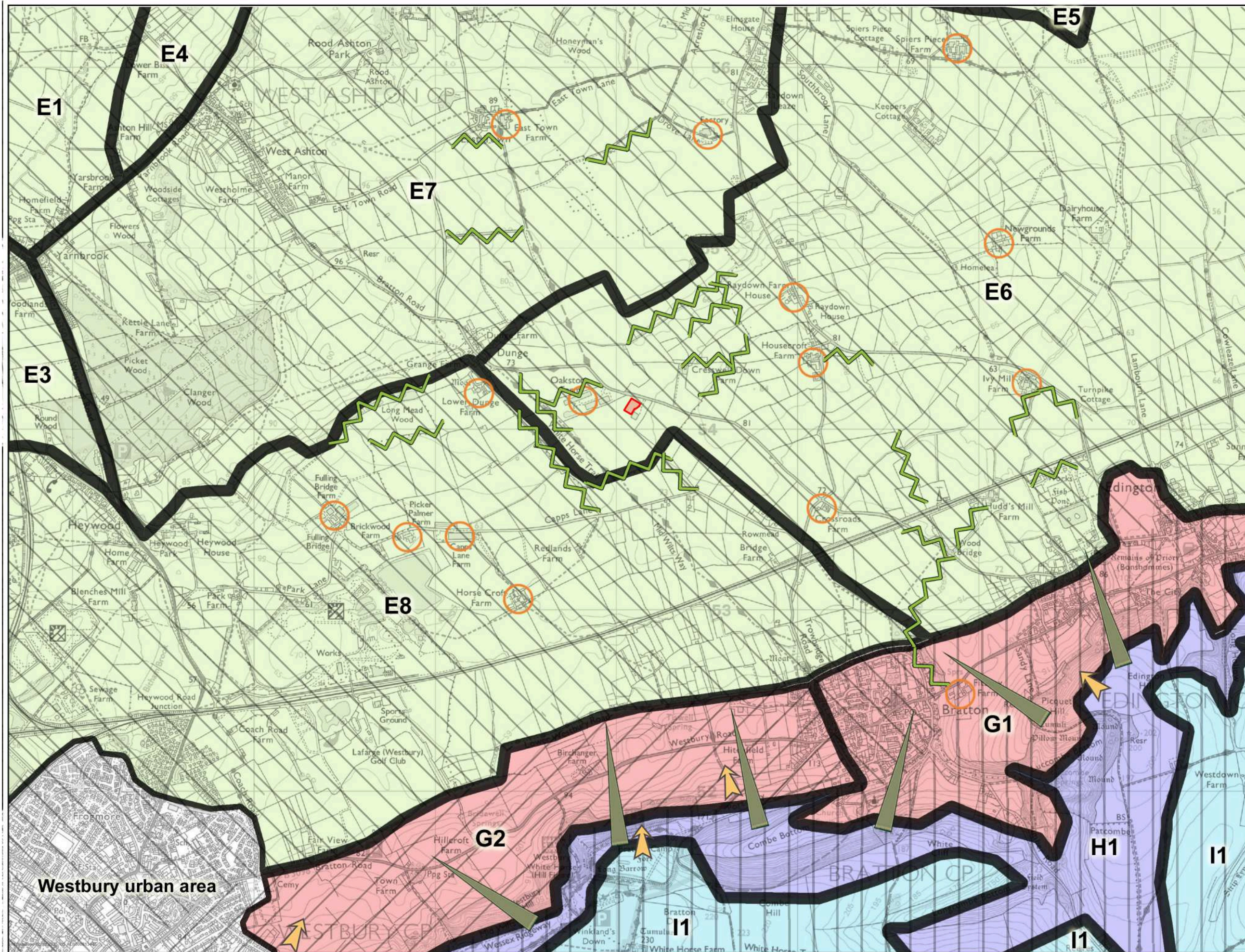
Date:
Nov 2025

CB: WH

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WHL-2049-04: LANDSCAPE CHARACTER & VISUAL ANALYSIS



KEY:

- Extent of application site

WILTSHIRE (COUNTY LEVEL) LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPES/AREAS

- Type 11 Rolling Clay Lowland**
- LCA 11C: Trowbridge Rolling Clay Lowland
- Type 6 Greensand Terrace**
- LCA 6A: Warminster Terrace
- Type 3 High Chalk Plain**
- LCA 3A: Salisbury Plain West

WEST WILTSHIRE DISTRICT LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT (2006) TYPES / AREAS

- Type E Rolling Clay Lowland**
- LCA E1: Wingfield Rolling Clay Lowland
- LCA E3: North Bradley Rolling Clay Lowland
- LCA E4: Green Lane Rolling Clay Lowland
- LCA E5: Steeple Ashton and Keevil Rolling Clay Lowland
- LCA E6: Bulkington Rolling Clay Lowland
- LCA E7: West Ashton Rolling Clay Lowland
- LCA E8: Heywood Rolling Clay Lowland
- Type G Greensand and Chalk Terrace**
- LCA G1: Bratton and Edington Greensand and Chalk Terrace
- LCA G2: Westbury Greensand and Chalk Terrace
- Type H Chalk Downland Edge**
- LCA H1: Bratton Chalk Downland Edge
- Type I Chalk Downland**
- LCA I1: Salisbury Plain West Chalk Downland

LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

- Dip slope/terrace (Salisbury Plain scarp)
- Visually intervening vegetation
- Local farmsteads visible from high ground
- Open Views from high ground

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On behalf of:
TAC Page & Partners

Drawing title:
Landscape Character and Visual Analysis

Drawing number:
WHL-2049-05

Scale:
1:20,000 @ A3

Rev:
DB: RL

Date:
Nov 2025

CB: WH

WHL-2049-05: PHOTOGRAPHIC VIEWPOINT LOCATIONS



KEY:
 - Extent of application site
 - Representative Viewpoint location, direction & number

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On behalf of:
TAC Page & Partners

Drawing title:
Photographic Viewpoint Locations

Drawing number:
WHL-2049-05

Rev:
DB: RL

Date:
Nov 2025

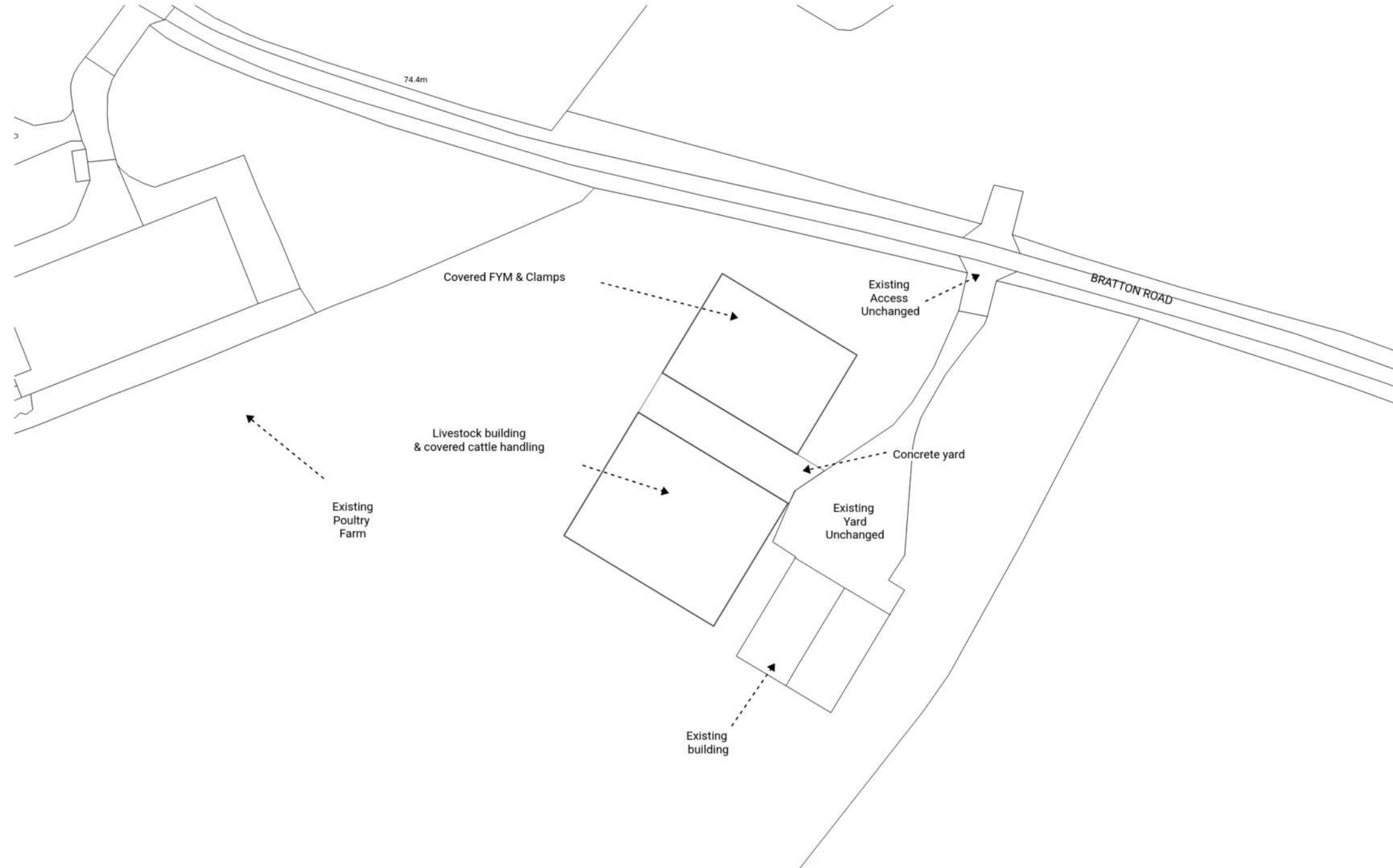
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WH

APPENDIX 1:

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS:

(PREPARED BY WOOLEY & WALLIS)





Vented Ridge

Fibre Cement Roof in Natural Colour

Tin Cladding in Juniper Green

South West Elevation

15ft Sheet Gates

North East Elevation

2 x 12 ft Sheet Gates

Pre- cast Concrete Panels

WOOLLEY
& WALLIS

4-5 HUGHENDEN YARD, MARLBOROUGH
WILTSHIRE, SN8 1LT
Tel: 01672 515252
www.w-w.co.uk

Client:

TAC Page & Partners

Site Address:

Lower Dunge Farm
Bratton Road
West Ashton
Trowbridge
BA14 6AX

Drawing Title:

Proposed Livestock Building
Elevations

Drawn by:

LDP

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Sheet:

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Date:

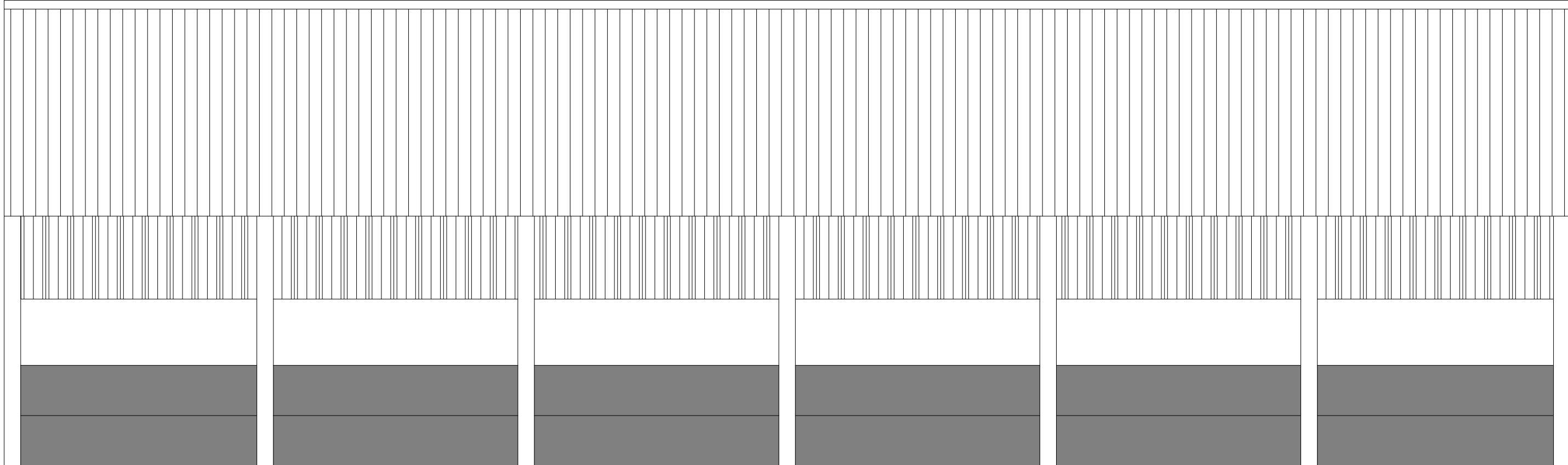
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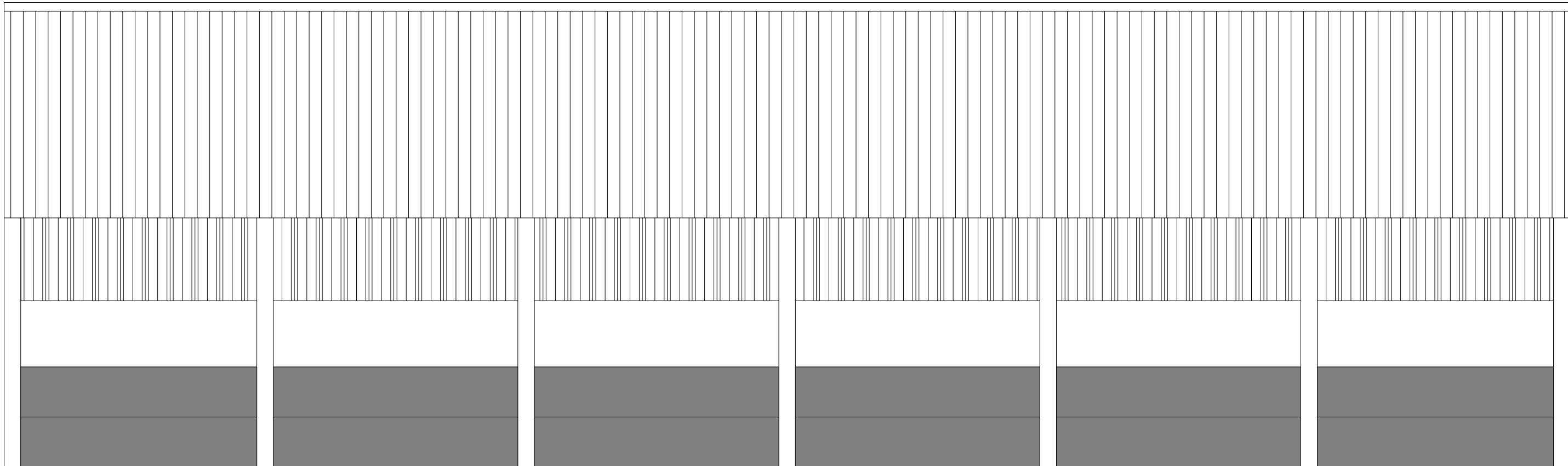


Fibre Cement Roof in Natural Colour

Tin Cladding in Juniper Green

Pre-cast Concrete Panels
(2 x 1.2m High)

South East Elevation



South West Elevation

WOOLLEY
& WALLIS

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Tel: 01672 515252
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Client:

TAC Page & Partners

Site Address:

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West Ashton
Trowbridge
BA14 6AX

Drawing Title:

Proposed Livestock Building
Elevations

Drawn by:

LDP

Scale:

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Sheet:

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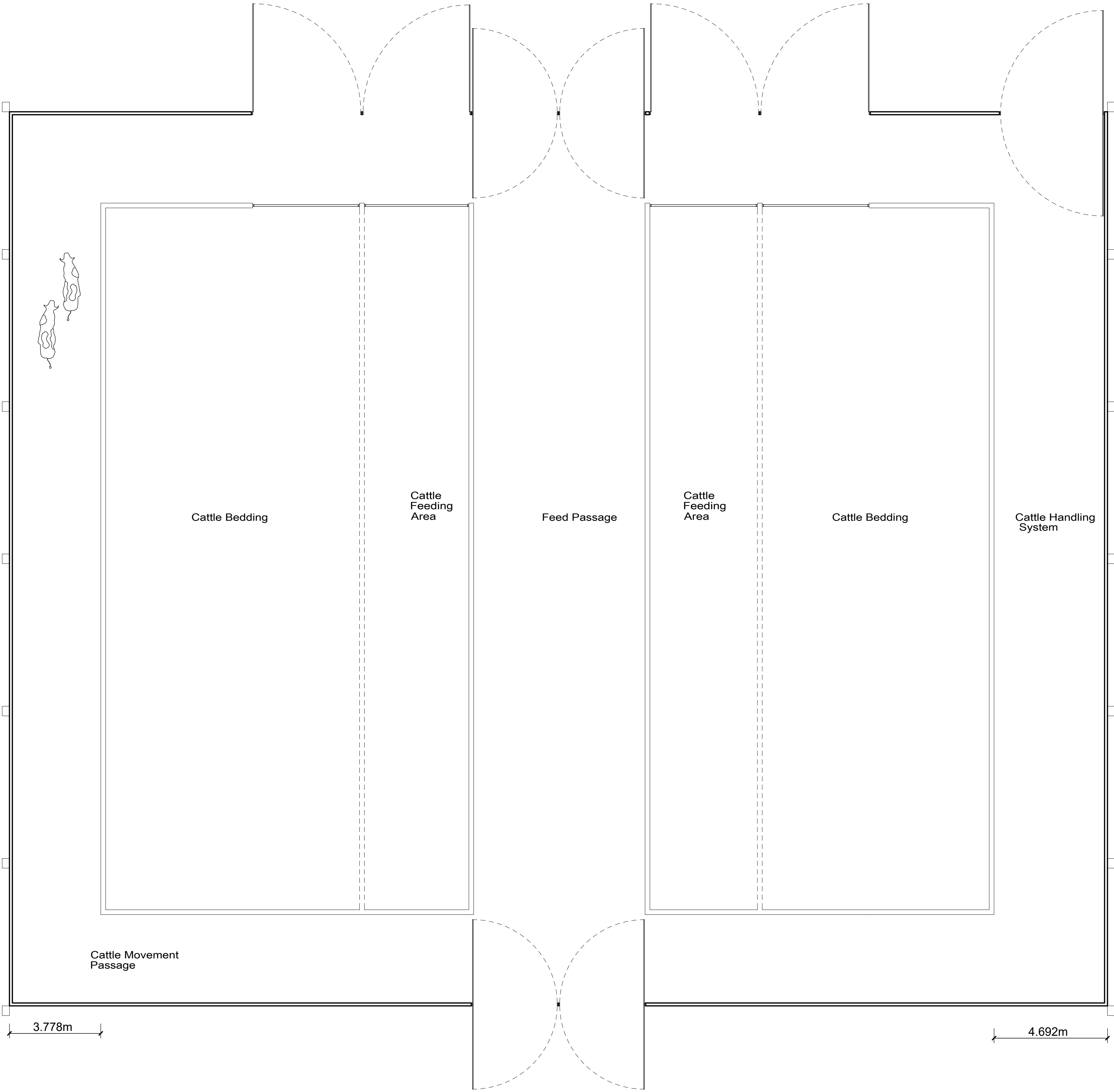
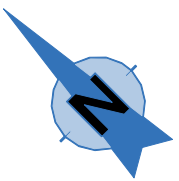
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Drawing No:

TP-LIVESTOCK2

Rev:

-





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Client:

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Site Address:

Lower Dunge Farm
Bratton Road
West Ashton
Trowbridge
BA14 6AX

Drawing Title:

Proposed Livestock Building
Floorplan

Drawn by:

LDP

Scale:

1:100

Sheet:

A1

Date:

03/09/2025

Drawing No:

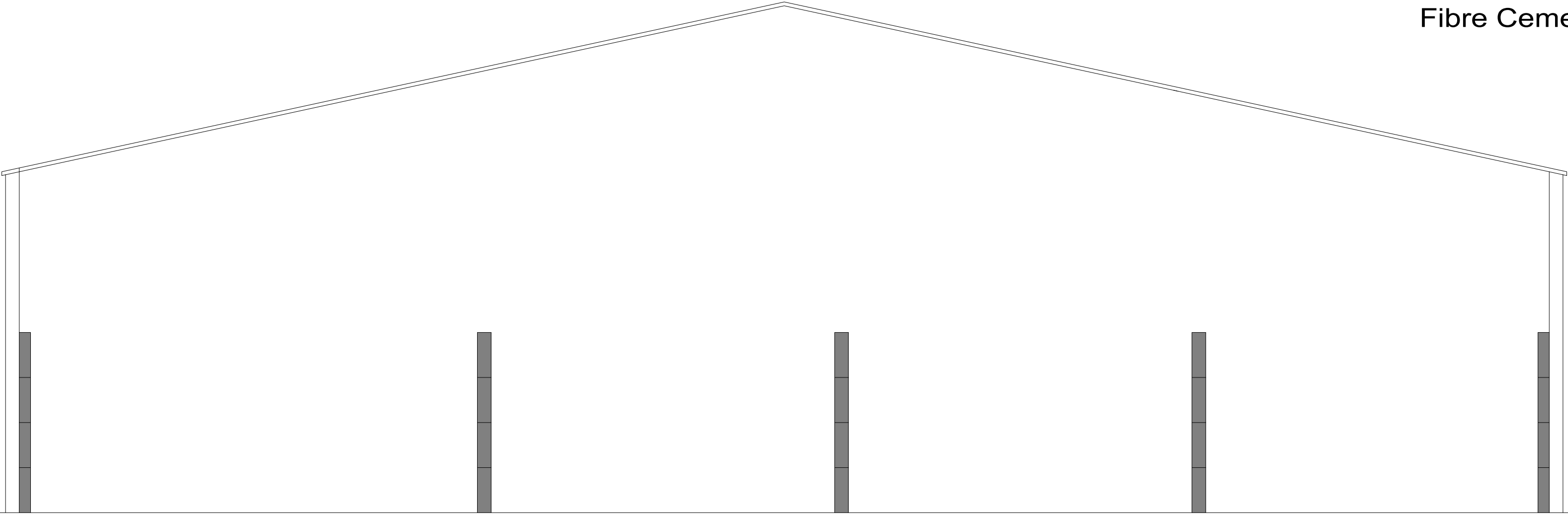
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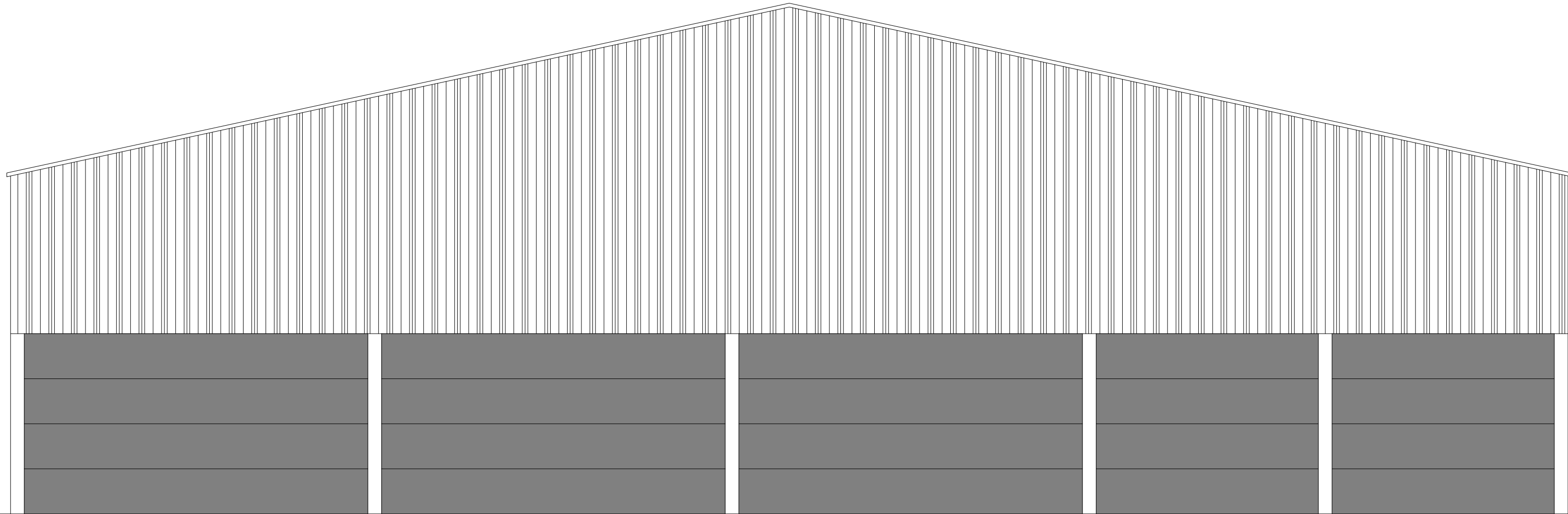


Fibre Cement Roof (Natural Colour)



Proposed South West Elevation

Vented Tin Cladding (JUNIPER GREEN)



Proposed North East Elevation

Pre Cast Concrete Panel (1.2m x 4 units)

WOOLLEY
& WALLIS

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Tel: 01672 515252
www.w-w.co.uk

Client:

TAC Page & Partners

Site Address:

Lower Dunge Farm
Botton Street
West Ashton
Trowbridge
BA14 6AX

Drawing Title:

Proposed Store
Elevations

Drawn by:

LDP

Scale:

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Sheet:

A1

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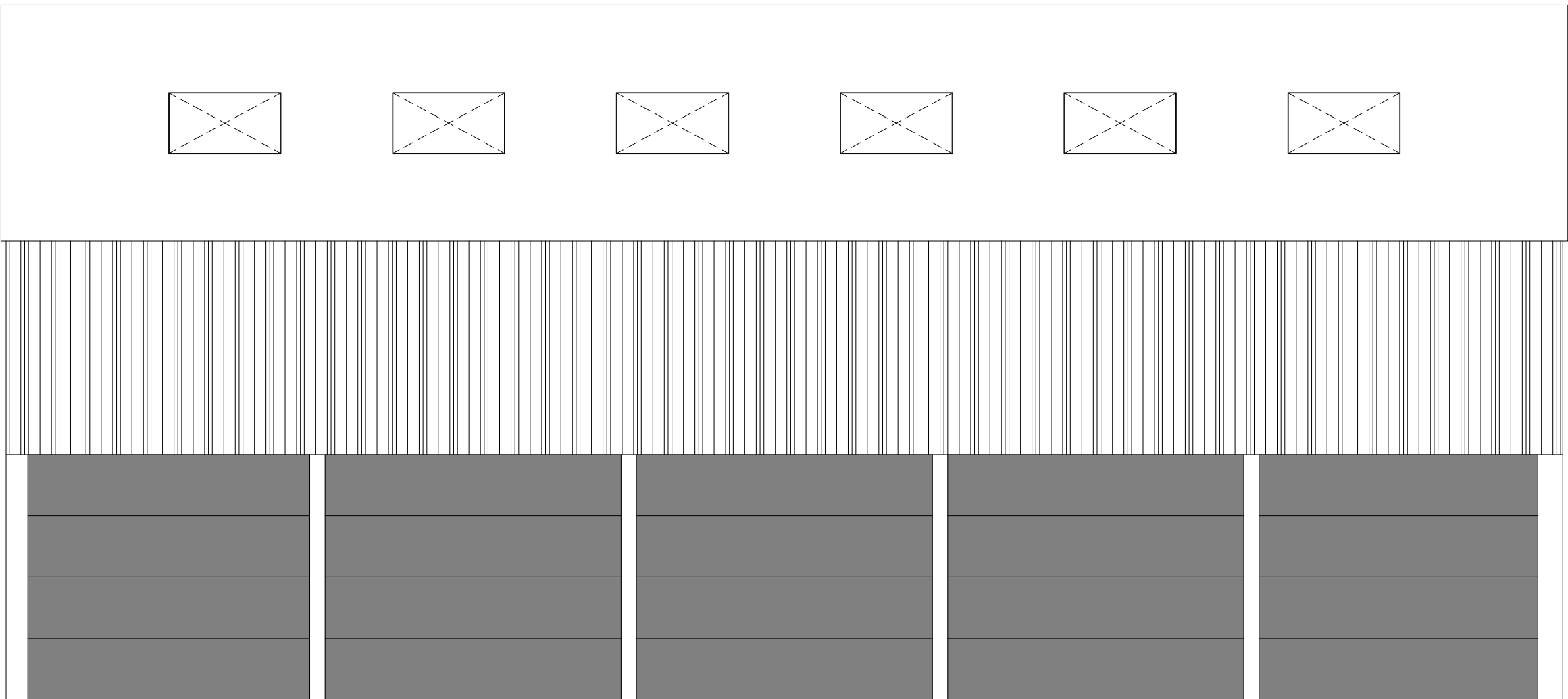
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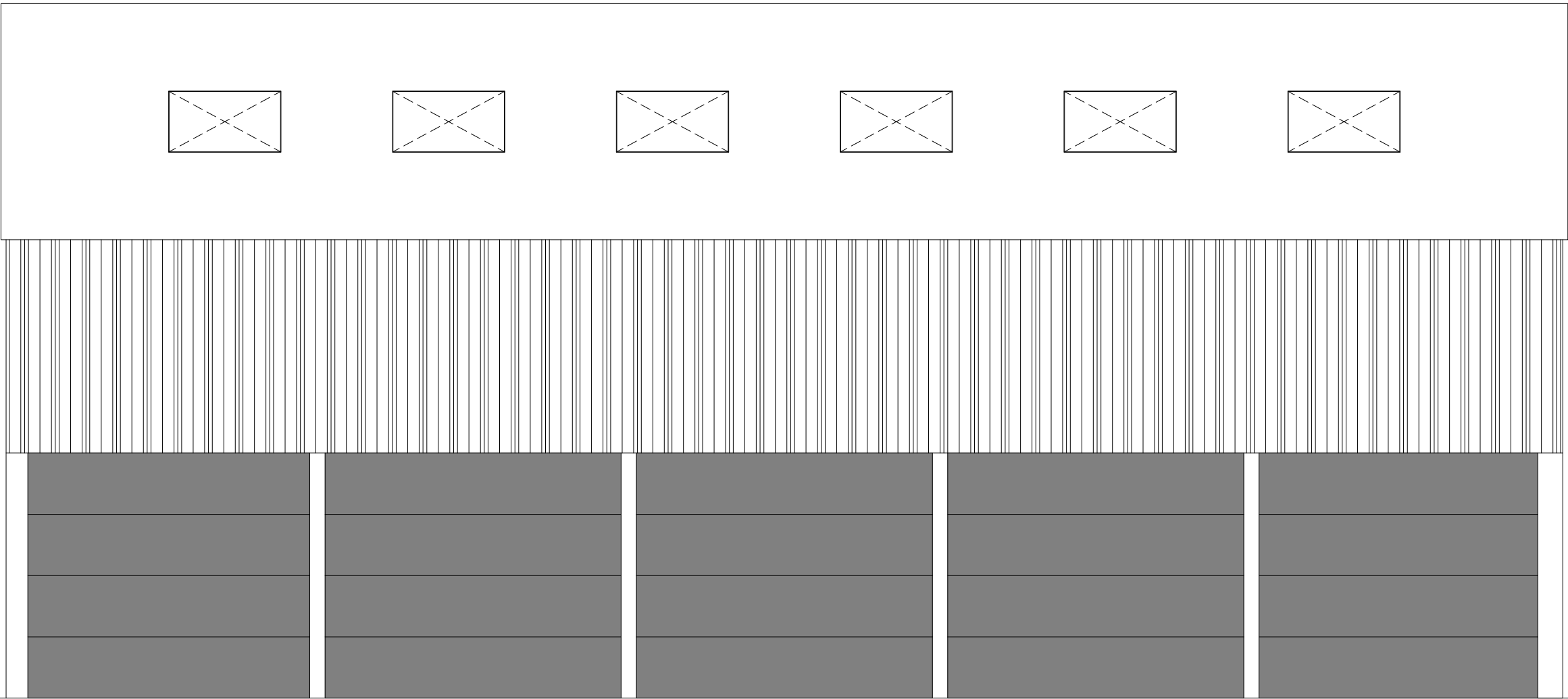
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Proposed North West Elevation

20% Roof Lights

Fibre Cement Roof (Natural Colour)



Proposed South East Elevation

Vented Tin Cladding (JUNIPER GREEN)

Pre cast Concrete Panel (1.2m x 4 units)

WOOLLEY
& WALLIS

4-5 Hughenden Yard, Marlborough
Wiltshire, SN8 1LT
Tel: 01672 515252
www.w-w.co.uk

Client:

TAC Page & Partners

Site Address:

Lower Dunge Farm
Bratton Road
West Ashton
Trowbridge
BA14 6AX

Drawing Title:

Proposed Store
Elevations

Drawn by:

LDP

Scale:

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Sheet:

A1

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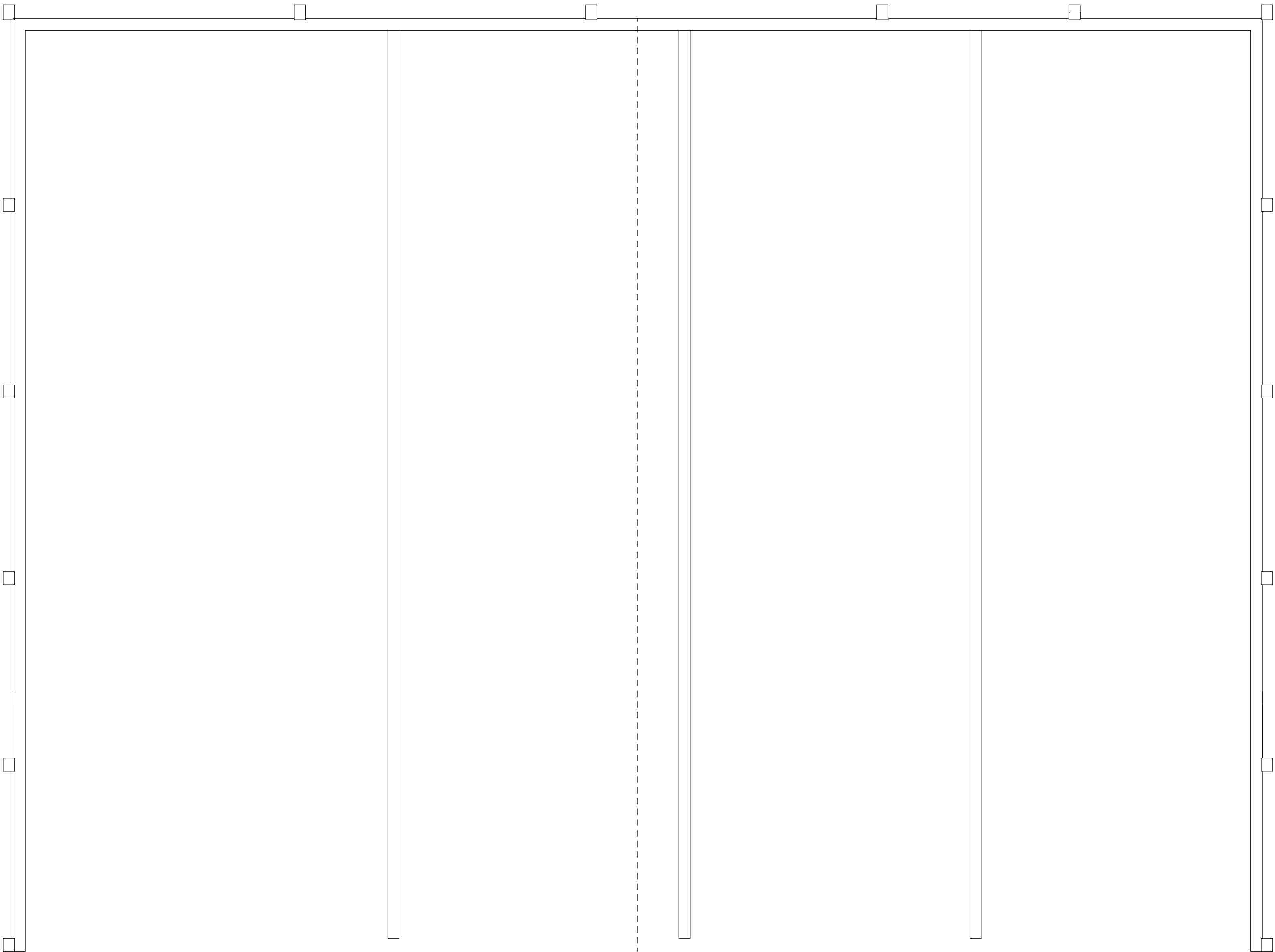
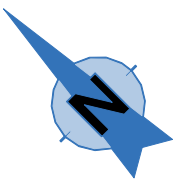
03/09/2025

Drawing No:

TP-MUCK2

Rev:

-



Ridgeline

Open Front

WOOLLEY

& WALLIS

4-5 HUGHENDEN YARD, MARLBOROUGH

WILTSHIRE, SN8 1LT

TEL: 01672 515252

WWW.WW.CO.UK

Client:

TAC Page & Partners

Site Address:

Lower Dunge Farm
Bratton Road
West Ashton
Trowbridge
BA14 6AX

Drawing Title:

Proposed Muckstore
Floorplan

Drawn by:

LDP

Scale:

1:100

Sheet:

A1

Date:

03/09/2025

Drawing No:

TP-MUCK3

Rev:

-

APPENDIX 2:

ANNOTATED VIEWPOINT PHOTOGRAPHS

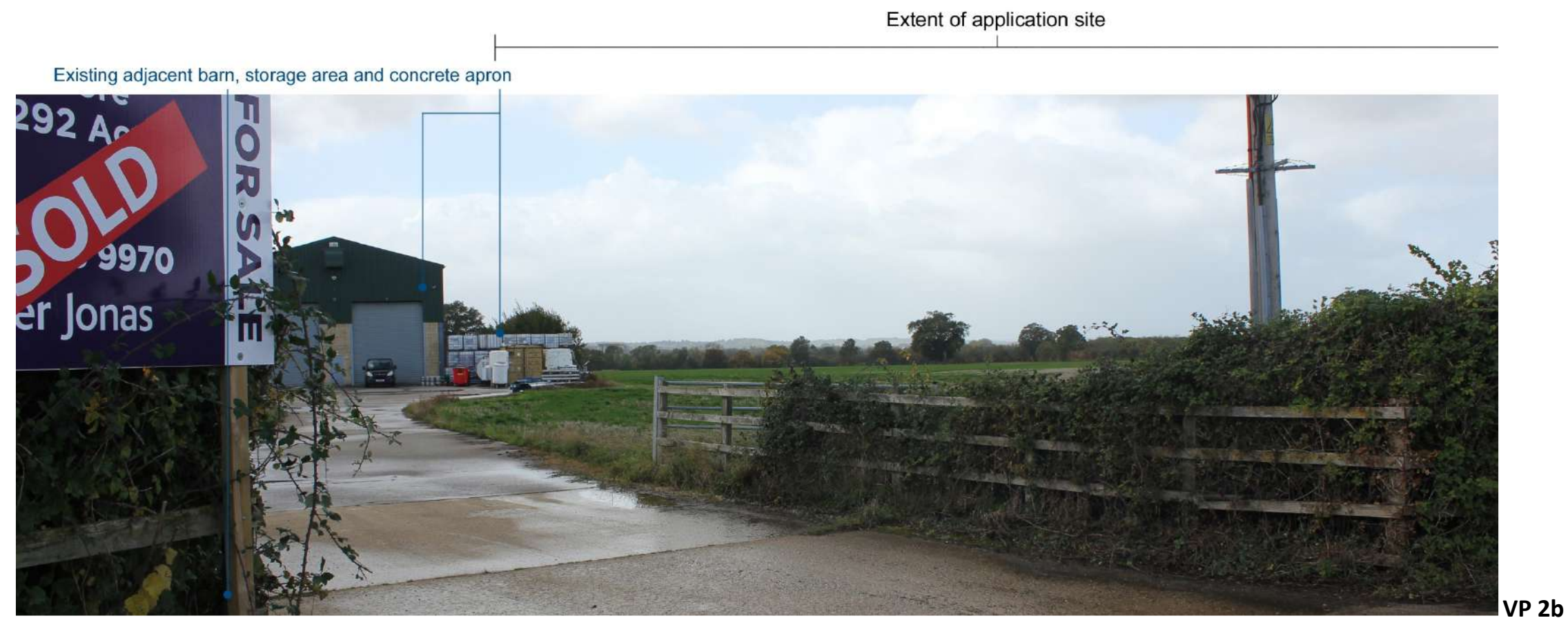
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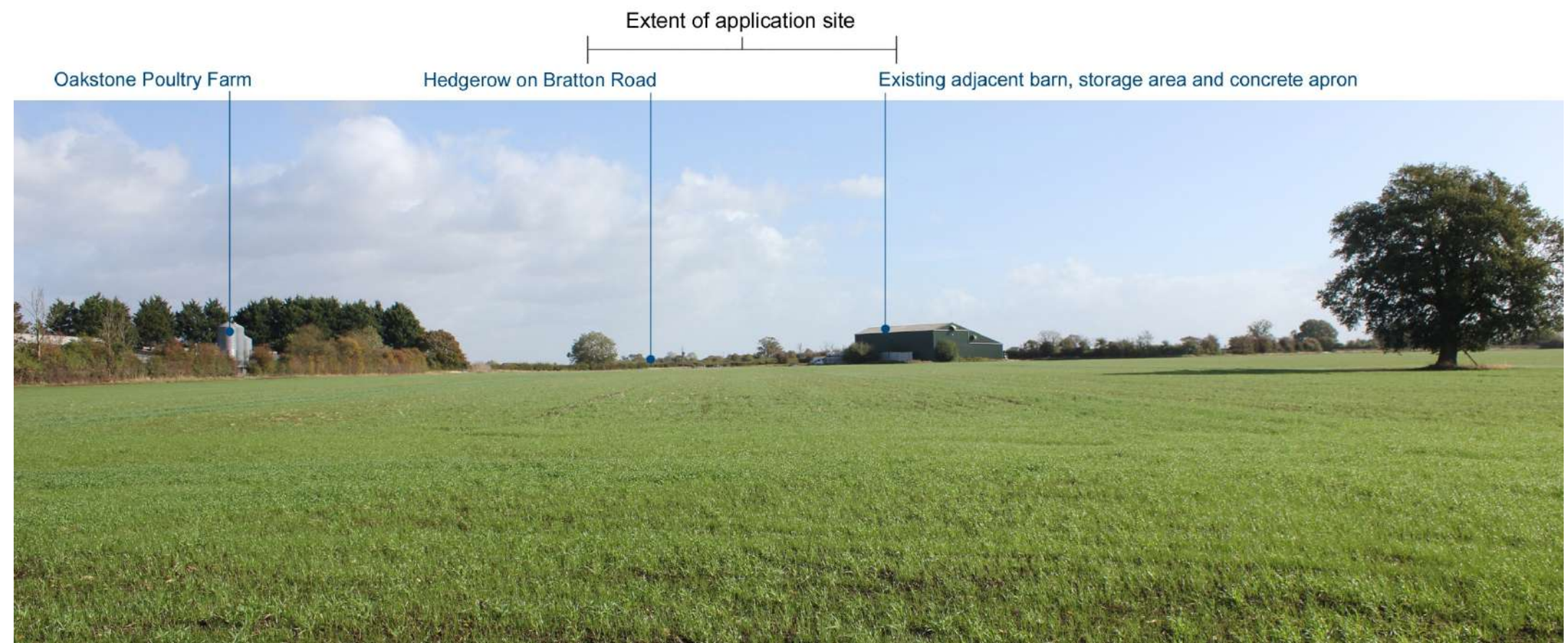


VP 1



VP 2a





VP 4

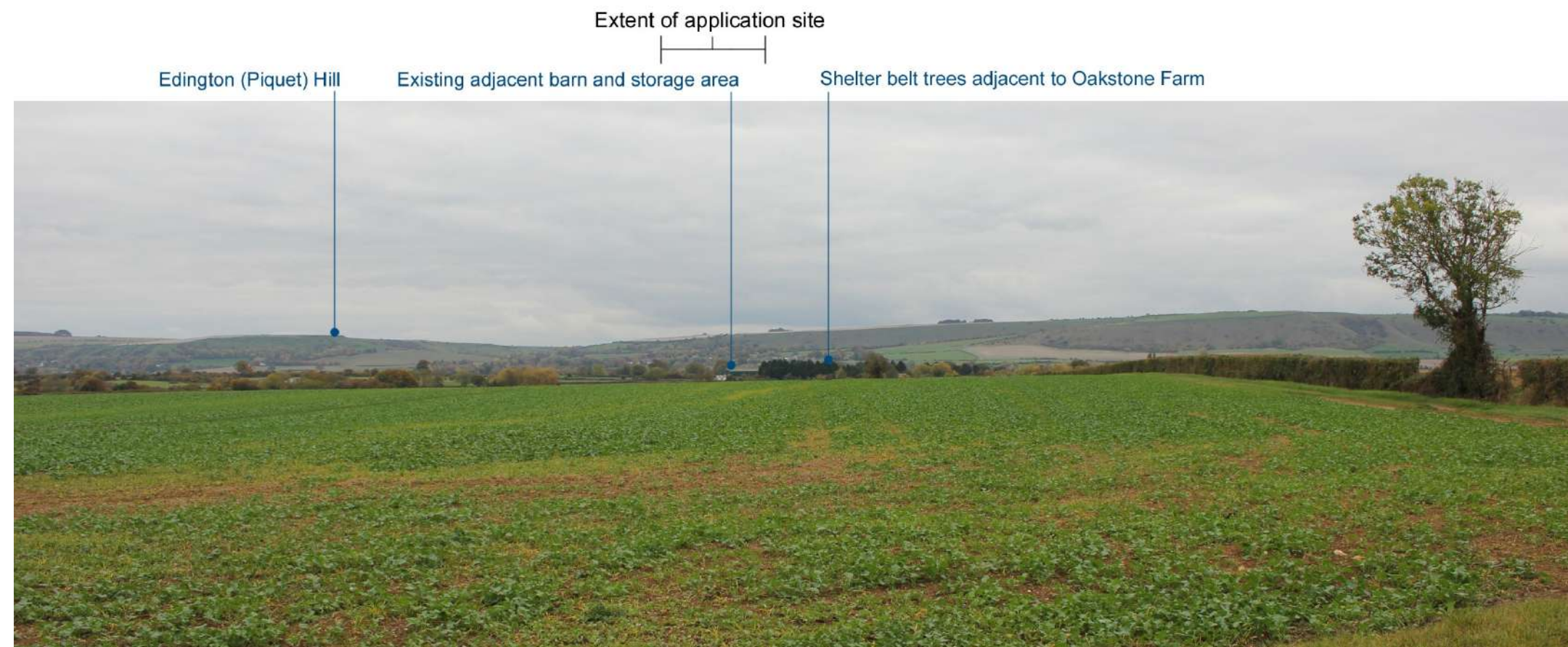


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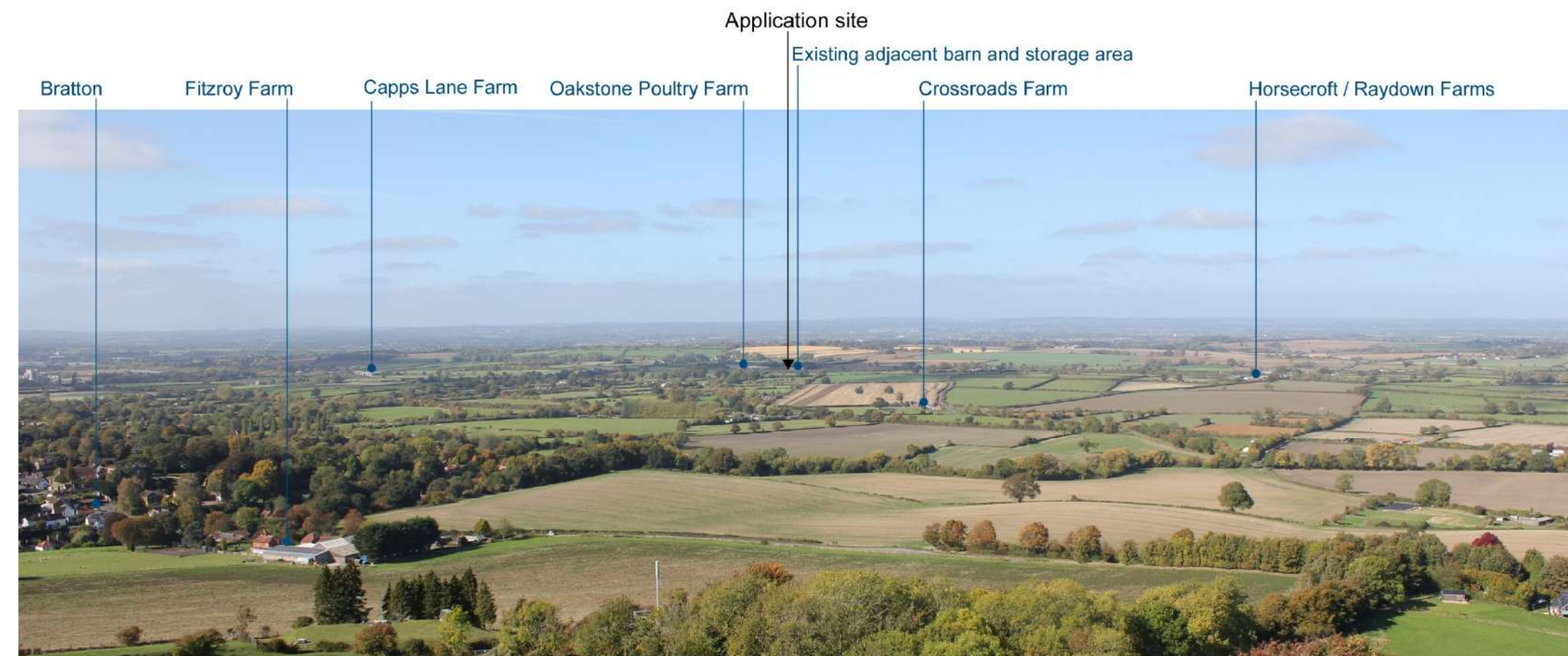




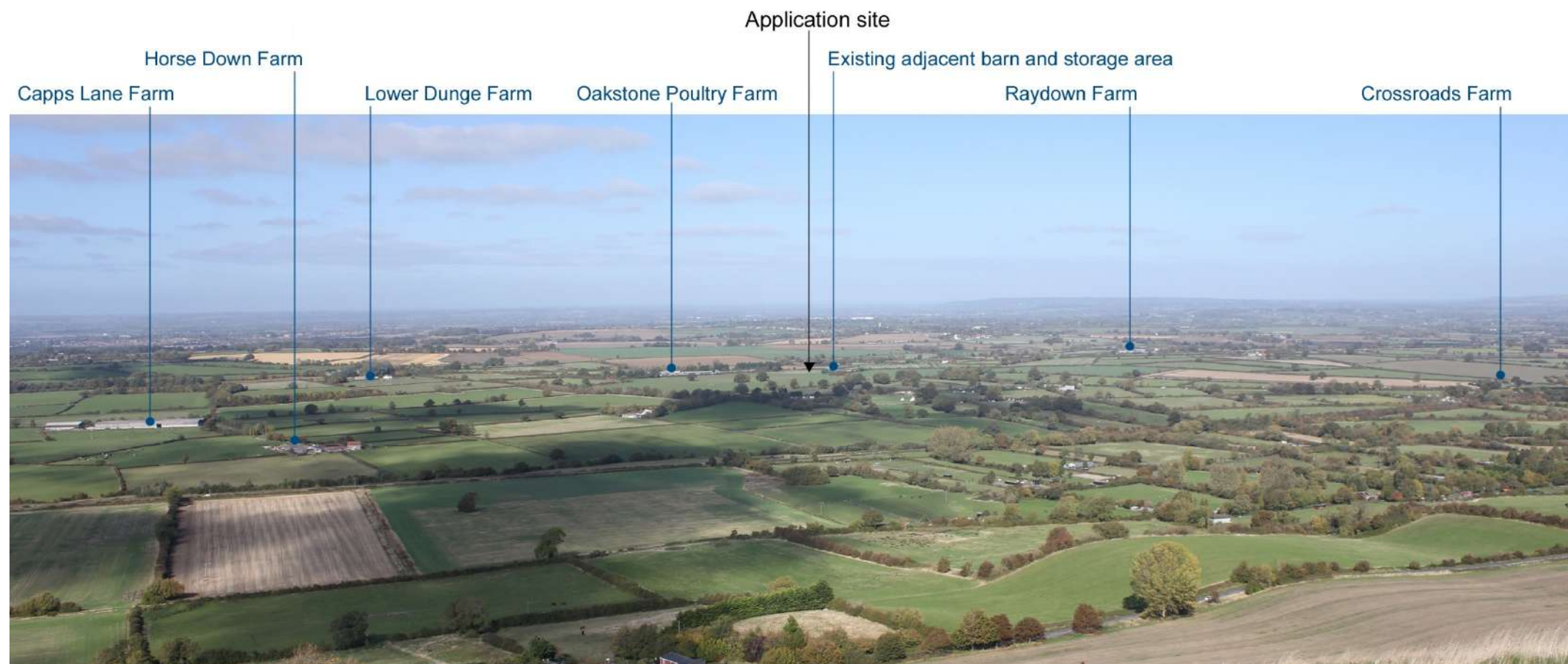




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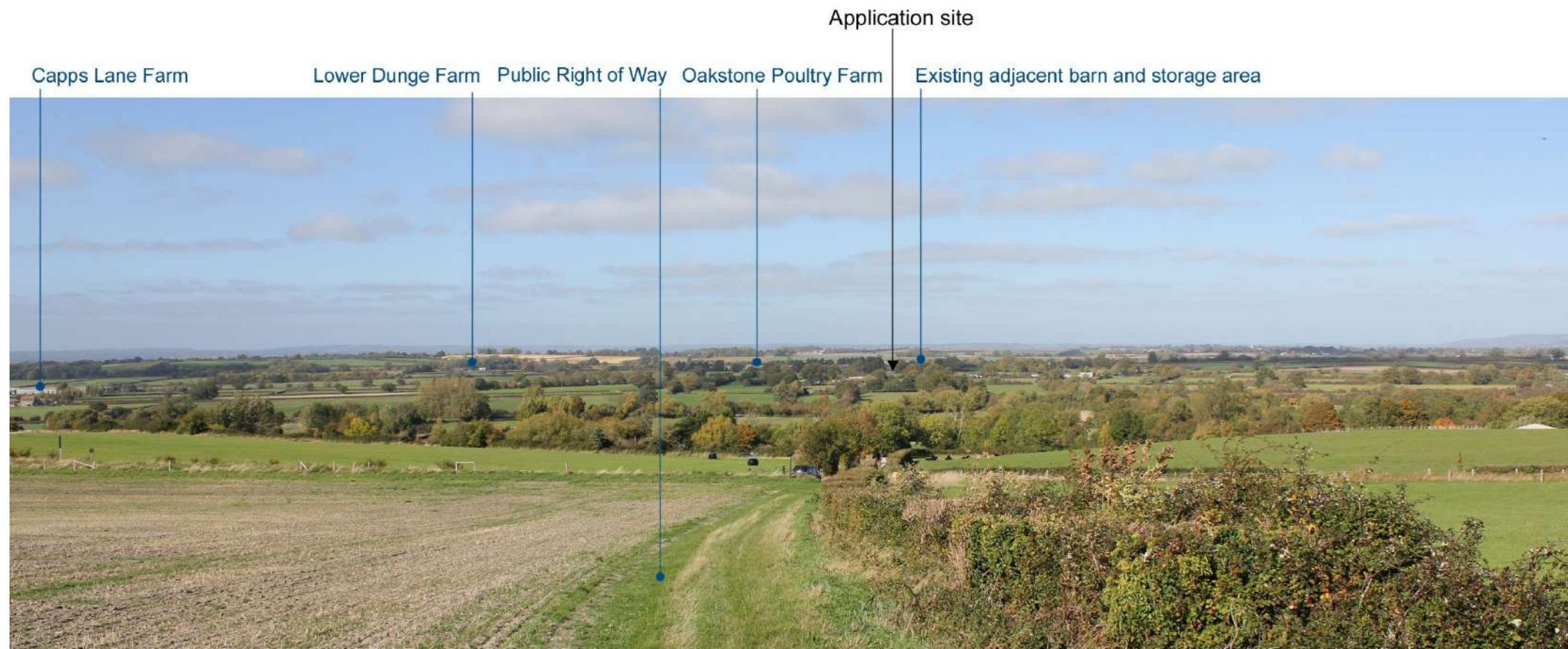
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VP 14



VP 15



VP 16

