

Planning Statement for the '*Erection of a single dwelling for Independent Active Older Persons, Associated Parking, Landscaping and other associated works*' on land to the rear of No. 11 Quemerford, Calne, Wiltshire SN11 0AR.

Planning Statement on Behalf of the Applicant:

Box Property Group

9th August 2024

LPA Ref:
Our Ref: BOX/001/RG-PS
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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Impact Planning Services Ltd., (IPS), has prepared this statement on behalf of the Applicant; Box Property Group, in support of a full planning application for the development of a single dwelling for occupancy by active independent older persons on land to the rear of no. 11 Quemerford, Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 0AR.
- 1.2 This site was previously subject to an application (ref: PL/2022/03438), validated 3rd May 2022, for *“the erection of a new dwellinghouse.”* The application was undetermined by Wiltshire Council within the statutory period for decision by 28th June 2022. That application was then the subject of a written representations appeal (Ref: APP/Y3940/W/22/3303889) on grounds of non-determination. It was dismissed by the Planning Inspector on 6th March 2023.
- 1.3 This new proposal is similarly for the erection of one dwelling but, for permanent occupation by independent older persons, dependent relatives and carers, on the vacant land to the rear of no. 11 Quemerford. The proposal has fully considered and responded to the Inspector’s findings in dismissing the appeal.
- 1.4 This proposal has been designed to meet the housing needs for active independent older people, as part of an initiative to help meet the housing needs of the ageing population in Wiltshire. It is a rising issue and therefore important to deliver suitable accommodation for those defined as active older people, who are conventionally regarded as those over 55 years of age¹. The proposed scheme offers suitable accommodation for older people to remain within their community and established social network, whilst remaining independent. The location is also safe and secure, within easy reach of facilities and services, such as the Asda Express and the Talbot Inn next door. This proposal is considered to be entirely in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CP46.
- 1.5 In responding to the needs of independent older people, the scheme proposes principally ground floor accommodation, with guest accommodation at the first floor. The aim is to provide low maintenance, energy efficient accommodation to provide safe and

¹ Defined in the Glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework as *“People over or approaching retirement age, including the active, newly-retired through to the very frail elderly; and whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing through to the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs”*. Retirement housing is often designed and marketed for those over the age of 55.

secure living space for those downsizing to reduce costs for those typically in retirement on fixed incomes.

- 1.6 Following analysis of the Inspector's findings in the previously dismissed appeal scheme, the form and scale of the building, positioning on the plot and the proposed external materials are all intended to reflect the traditional pattern of development which is apparent from an appreciation of the existing urban grain. This includes an analysis of the historic pattern of development, particularly since the 1960s, the prevalence of residential development in depth utilising former domestic curtilages, older historic buildings once used as stable and / or carriage accommodation and a plethora of ancillary outbuildings and structures. Notable departures have been made from the original loose pre-1945 pattern of development as, over the decades, decisions have been made to permit new residential enclaves and infilling, either side of the A4. This is apparent from the mapping extracts at **Appendix A**.
- 1.7 This statement provides an overview of the relevant development plan and national planning policy documents. It assesses the proposed scheme against these policies and other relevant material considerations. It also analyses and addresses the matters raised by the previously dismissed appeal. The structure of this statement is as follows:
- Section 2 describes the site and its surroundings, and reviews the more recent planning history of the site;
 - Section 3 provides a description of the proposed development;
 - Section 4 identifies local development plan policies and other material considerations which are relevant to the proposal;
 - Section 5 considers the proposal in light of these policies and other material considerations, including analysis of the dismissed appeal; and
 - Section 6 forms the summary, planning balance and contains the conclusions of the Statement.

2.0 Site Context

- 2.1 The application site comprises 0.067 ha (or 0.16 acre) of vacant land to the rear of no. 11 Quemerford. It originally formed part of the residential curtilage of 11 Quemerford but has been severed from that property for some time. It is located in the built framework of Calne, a market town located in north Wiltshire, in an area called Quemerford which lies approximately 1.9km (1.2 miles) from Calne town centre, 9.5 km (5.9 miles) east of Chippenham and 25 km (15.5 miles) south west of Swindon.
- 2.2 The site lies within the defined settlement boundary of Calne, in an area which has formed part of the built framework since the late 19th century. There is clear evidence of 'back land' development and non-linear development surrounding the site, in particular from 2003 onwards, which is depicted in supporting maps (see **Appendix A**) demonstrating the gradual change in the urban grain or pattern of development. This is discussed in more detail in section 5 below.
- 2.3 The site is a vacant plot and is currently an overgrown former garden with brambles and low quality vegetation, bounded by timber fencing, containing some hedgerows and trees to the north and easterly boundaries.
- 2.4 Access is taken immediately to the north of the A4, Quemerford, via a paved driveway which is shared with no. 11, from which the site is accessed via another gated driveway located between no. 11 and 13 Quemerford. The access arrangements and visibility from this plot have previously been considered acceptable by Wiltshire Council's (WC) Highways Officer under the terms of the previous planning application (ref: PL/2022/03438) at the site.
- 2.5 The northern site boundary lies adjacent to the curtilage of dwellings at Wessington Park and neighbours the 18th Century origin Grade II Listed Talbot Public House at the north-west boundary. The site is bounded by residential properties at three sides, with the main road – the A4 to the immediate south. Further to the south, there is a row of properties originally developed in a linear/ribbon development format, but notably with more recently constructed housing sites to the rear (comprising Trinity Park, Ebor Gardens and Ebor Paddock).

Planning History

- 2.6 The site has been the subject of two previous applications for single dwelling houses, as published on Wiltshire Council's planning applications website. A permission

(PL/2021/06657) was also granted to extend the adjacent dwelling at no. 11.

- 2.7 An application (ref: PL/2021/05709) for the erection of a new dwellinghouse was refused on 29th November 2021. The proposed development was for a four-bed, 2 storey family dwelling. The reasons for refusal cited the detrimental impact on the existing townscape, the prevailing form of development and the proximity to the surrounding residential development. The decision notice, Case Officer's report and site proposal plans are attached to this Statement at **Appendix B**.
- 2.8 The Case Officer's report noted little design or architectural connection between Wessington Park and the traditional form of properties along the A4 and that there were no properties, at such a large scale, built in the rear curtilage of these properties. It was also noted that the proposed dwelling's design was not of high quality or responding positively to the townscape in terms of layout, building line and streetscape.
- 2.9 The Case Officer further raised concerns that the building would not portray an ancillary outbuilding. Furthermore, the material of the gravel driveway triggered comments on noise created by vehicle movement in between no. 11 and 13.
- 2.10 The second application (ref: PL/2022/03438) for the erection of a dwellinghouse on land to the rear of the existing property remained undetermined beyond the statutory period and consequently appealed against the non-determination. The application sought to address the concerns from the previously refused application.
- 2.11 The second application differed to the first single dwelling. The principal difference being the orientation of the proposal, the rear of the proposal elongated and narrowed towards the north eastern boundary, which proposed a more regular dwelling in the setting. It proposed a reduction in form, consequently reducing the impact on views from the A4 (see **Appendix C**). The proposal was also set back further from the north east boundary, which is shared with 39 Wessington Park.

Appeal - APP/Y3940/W/22/3303889

- 2.12 The site has been subject to an appeal against Wiltshire Council for the failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on the application PL/2022/023438 for the 'erection of a new dwellinghouse'. The appeal was dismissed on 6th March 2023 (see **Appendix D**).
- 2.13 The main issues the inspector considered were identified as: "...the effect of the

proposed development on: a) the character and appearance of the area; and b) the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers of nos. 11 and 13 Quemerford, with respect to noise and disturbance.” (para 3).

- 2.14 The first issue therefore assessed the character and appearance of the proposal in relation to a part of the urban area of Quemerford considered to be predominantly characterised by traditional residential development, but which varies in its precise style and appearance. However, the Inspector found that the properties along Quemerford maintain a clear linear arrangement and have a strong presence within the street scene.
- 2.15 The Inspector also found that the appeal site, to the rear garden of no. 11 and its relationship with the surrounding area: would result in a “...*back land form of development that would be in marked contrast with the prevailing pattern of development...*” (para 6) and the siting of the proposed dwelling and lack of street frontage would be out of character and: “...*the incongruous relationship that the proposed dwelling would share with neighbouring properties would still be appreciable from the public domain...*” (para 7). [IPS emphasis]
- 2.16 The Inspector accepted that there was more modern development in the surrounding areas such as Wessington Park and housing estates to the south (para 8) however viewed the appealed development in its more immediate setting. The appearance of a backland dwelling as viewed from the street scene was clearly regarded as the incongruity. The Inspector declined to accept the example of development in depth at no. 7 without being supplied with evidence which led to the permission (para 9).
- 2.17 To support this application, research has been conducted into the historic development (**Appendix A**) which reveals that most, if not all, development of back land formed domestic curtilages which have been infilled since the 1960s and 70s. The former loose linear pattern has been consolidated and, importantly, the character and appearance of this part of Calne has not been considered of sufficient environmental quality to warrant inclusion within a Conservation Area.
- 2.18 The Inspector’s main concern were the views from the public vantage points, the back land development in no. 11 would present itself as incongruous to the surrounding form. It should be acknowledged that the previous (appealed) proposal was for a 4 bedroomed family dwelling. The siting of that proposal meant that it would be apparent from public vantage points. As such it would appear intrusive and disturb the established linear character of the properties fronting the A4.

- 2.19 By contrast, the siting and scale of the proposed dwelling have responded in order to create a visually discreet outcome. So while the driveway serving the dwelling would be apparent, that would not lead to a publicly visible house in tandem with the frontage property. This can be seen in the submitted Perspective Views, View 01 on sheet P-1668-110 prepared to demonstrate the efficacy of the proposed siting by NC Architects. From the adjacent public house car park the building would be visible however, that vantage point is not from the street frontage and consequently any appreciation of the linear character would be influenced by the similar form of once ancillary adjacent buildings. The proposed dwelling in this context would appear consistent with the building pattern adjacent the car park.
- 2.20 Furthermore, whilst the Inspector agreed that there was in depth development in the locality, it was considered that the appeal proposal would not be: “...*particularly representative of the predominant layout and character in which this proposal would sit...*” (para 10). Again, the architectural design of that appeal proposal was essentially a chalet bungalow as would be perceived from the street scene. The appeal proposal was not therefore typical of ancillary buildings traditionally located to the rear of frontage development. The application, by contrast, is a distinctively ancillary form of architectural form typically associated with say former cart sheds, stable blocks and barns. Importantly, it is set to one side of the plot, which is also typical of this form of building traditionally enabling access and operational use from the side elevation.
- 2.21 The Inspector confirmed that the site is in a sustainable location for residential development, but that the: “...*proposed layout would nonetheless be uncharacteristic of the surrounding pattern of development...*” (para 11) and “...*would be at odds with the prevailing layout of neighbouring built form...*” (para 12), which resulted in conflict with Core Policy 57 requiring development to make efficient use of land whilst also respecting the character of the surrounding area, due to its large form in such a restricted setting with surrounding garden amenity space. As above, the revised proposal positively responds to this criticism.
- 2.22 The Inspector found (para 13) that the proposal would conflict with Policy BE2 of Calne Community Neighbourhood Plan which requires proposals to be of high-quality design because the proposal did not reinforce local distinctiveness in relation to settlement patterns. Furthermore, that it did not accord with Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states that development should be sympathetic to local character, as the proposal did not reflect the surrounding character being a back land

development which was visible from the A4 public vantage point.

- 2.23 The second arising issue from the appeal related to any materially detrimental harm to the living conditions for adjacent residents, in reference to Core Policy 57.
- 2.24 WC was satisfied that the proposed development would not result in harmful loss of privacy or overbearing impacts to neighbouring properties, however concern was expressed regarding potential noise or disturbance in relation to the relationship of the access drive and parking arrangements that would share with both nos. 11 and 13. The Inspector however did not consider (see para 15-19) that the development would result in materially detrimental noise or disturbance impacts and that the proposal would accord with Policy 57 of the Core Strategy.
- 2.25 The Inspector consequently dismissed the appeal essentially solely on the basis of the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area. The appeal decision and the proposed development is assessed and analysed further in section 5 and describes how these revised proposals address the concerns raised by the appeal Inspector together with the advantages associated with the design and importantly the form of development proposed i.e. independent older person's accommodation.
- 2.26 Although permission was granted to extend 11 Quemerford (ref: PL/2021/06657) on 26th August 2021, the permission was not implemented.
- 2.27 A notable permission (ref: 15/06384/FUL) was granted for a '*single storey dwelling with annex*' at 7 Quemerford for the occupation of retired persons with potential annex accommodation for carers was granted in September 2015, which has since been established and occupied.
- 2.28 No. 7 was considered as an extension to the existing built form and outbuildings. This is an important distinction as discussed above as he previously refused applications at no. 11, the proposed dwellings were regarded as incapable of being regarded as anything other than incongruous with: '*...little prospect of the new dwelling being mistaken for ancillary outbuilding, given its substantial scale...*' (pg. 4 of Officer's Report, attached at **Appendix B**) which led to the refusal of previous applications on the application site and could not rely on the dwelling at no.7 as an argument for back land development, due to its prevailing form and massing compared to the host building, no. 11. Therefore, the relationship with the proposal and the host dwelling have been considered and are discussed in more detail below.

3.0 Proposed Development

3.1 The application seeks full planning permission and is supported with the following drawings, documents and plans.

Document Title	Reference	Produced by
Application form		Impact Planning Services Ltd.
Planning Statement	BOX/001/RG-PS	Impact Planning Services Ltd.
Location Plan	P-1668-120A	NC Architects
Existing Site Plan	P-1668-100A	NC Architects
Proposed Site Plan	P-1668-101A	NC Architects
Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations	P-1668-102A	NC Architects
Existing and Proposed Site Sections	P-1668-105	NC Architects
Site Plan Showing Surrounding Development	P-1668-107A	NC Architects
Perspective Views	P-1668-110	NC Architects
Constraints and Opportunities Plan	P-1668-111	NC Architects
Design and Access Statement	1668 D & A Statement_04-07-2024	NC Architects
Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment	552756jc11Jun24DV01_BNGA	Greengage
Statutory Small Sites Metric		Greengage

3.2 The scale and form of the dwelling is designed specifically to meet the needs of independent (active) older persons and the accommodational needs of such persons from the age of 55 years to the point when supervised care or extra care would result in a move to a nursing home. The accommodation provides for a principal bedroom on the ground floor together with guest accommodation at the first floor.

- 3.3 The first floor guest accommodation could be used however either for a dependent relative, an office or should one older resident, say of the couple, require an on-site carer or indeed respite care. This accommodation is therefore intended to avoid splitting up couples who may have lived together for decades when one requires a level of care, which might have to otherwise be provided in a nursing home remote for the partner. The accommodation is therefore intended to enable older couples to remain together for longer than often distressingly occurs today. This importantly also assists in relieving pressure on the NHS for hospital bedspaces as suitable accommodation is available following treatment and recovery.
- 3.4 The extent of domestic curtilage is also commensurate with older persons who do not wish to maintain larger garden areas but are provided with sufficient private amenity space to enjoy sitting out and adequate spatial separation from adjacent residential curtilages. The curtilage also contains sufficient room for parking and enables vehicles to enter and leave the site in forward gear.
- 3.5 The development comprises a 1.5 storey 3-bed dwelling in the architectural form of a converted outbuilding. The materials will be as per the local design guide, a schedule of the proposed materials can be seen on drawing P-1668-101A. External elevations will comprise Cotswold stone construction on the south elevation with wooden cladding on the northern elevation. The western elevation proposes wooden cladding. These can be seen on drawing P-1668-102A.
- 3.6 The scale, massing and orientation of the dwelling responds to the Inspector's concern regarding the appearance of a back land house in the street scene along Quemerford and from public vantage points from the A4. The building is set to the north west boundary of the plot as to make the building visually discreet from the public highway.
- 3.7 The dwelling proposed is an approx. 16m x 6m, sited adjacent toward the western boundary, with a total floor area of 112 square metres. The incorporation of a porch with a green roof contributes to the limited space available for biodiversity net gain. See drawing ref: P-1668-101A, Proposed Site Plan.
- 3.8 The 3-bedroomed dwelling is designed for active independent older persons that facilitates downsizing whilst providing sufficient room for the occupants to have storage and adequate space for guests to visit.
- 3.9 The ground floor of the proposed building will contain an open-plan living room, kitchen

and diner, along with a washroom and glass doors opening onto a garden area. The ground floor incorporates a large double bedroom and an ensuite bathroom. Floor plans are depicted in drawing ref: P-1668-102A, Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations.

- 3.10 The first floor will contain two smaller bedrooms, each with en-suite washroom and skylight windows. There are no windows to the north of the property, to prevent overlooking of the property to the north at Wessington Park.
- 3.11 Access to the proposed development will remain as existing, using a paved block driveway down the eastern side of the no. 11. The parking arrangements are the same that were proposed with the previous application and appeal. These arrangements were accepted and provide adequate turning, having resolved issues raised previously during consultation stages.
- 3.12 The property is proposed to meet the needs of an ageing population through the delivery of an accessible threshold, sufficient space for retrospective fitting of stair lifts, open plan, adaptable spaces and accessible fixtures and fittings - which are compliant with M4(2) of the Building Regulations.
- 3.13 The building is also intended to be energy efficient and provided with both photovoltaic roof panels and a ground level air source heat pump. The intention is to make the property as energy efficient. An EV charging point would also be provided (subject to an installer's recommended location) or adjacent to the front elevation of the proposed building within the car port bay.
- 3.14 As the dwelling is intended to serve the needs of independent older persons it is considered that this form of accommodation is entirely appropriate for this particular site but may not be so regarded as such for a more conventional family home and accordingly it is proposed that the occupancy of the property be restricted by condition as follows:

"The dwelling the subject of this approval shall be only permanently occupied by:

- Persons over 55 years of age where the property is their principal place of residence;*
- Persons living as part of a single household with such a person or persons including dependant relatives and carers; or*
- Persons who were living as part of a single household with such a person or persons but who have since died.*

Reason: The condition is regarded as necessary as it restricts occupation in order to respond to the particular circumstances of the site and beneficial merit of the form of residential accommodation being provided.”

- 3.15 The development offers a modest but nonetheless valuable contribution to the existing housing land supply shortage which WC has been facing for a number of years and will contribute to the need of mixed tenure of housing to support an ageing population, allowing residents to remain within their existing social networks and to offer the potential to downsize.
- 3.16 It is also considered that given the site’s characteristics, the previous appeal decision and desire to maintain the dwelling for downsizing by older independent persons, a condition ought to be imposed on any grant of permission withdrawing permitted development (PD) rights to extend under the terms of Schedule 2, Part 1, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 or GPDO.
- 3.17 The proposal also includes landscaping details which propose the retention of the existing hedgerows and trees to the north west and east boundary, with enhanced landscaping to provide a net gain to the biodiversity value of the site. Native, berry producing hedgerow planting is proposed surrounding the two parking spaces and turning bay.
- 3.18 The parking bay is designed for a wall to be situated behind the mixed hedgerow planting to visually portray a courtyard from the main road, which is further enhanced by a pergola style car port.
- 3.19 Further details to the design of the proposal can be seen in the submitted Design and Access Statement and submitted drawings.

4.0 Planning Policy Context

Development Plan

- 4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (The Act) requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the statutory development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires that the authority shall have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any material considerations.

Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015)

- 4.2 The development plan comprises the Wiltshire Core Strategy, which was adopted in 2015 and Calne Neighbourhood Plan (February 2018). The Core Strategy covers the period up to 2026. The Strategy is regarded as out-of-date. As at the time of writing of this Statement, a Regulation 19 stage consultation upon a new Local Plan has been completed. This review of the Core Strategy is long overdue.
- 4.3 It is however likely that some further modification will now be required to the emerging Local Plan as a consequence of the Government's recent publication of intended draft revisions to the NPPF, related announcements and the adoption of a revised *standard method* for the calculation of the area's housing requirement. The latter indicates a substantial increase in housing provision in Wiltshire.
- 4.4 **Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy** establishes the settlement hierarchy within Wiltshire and sets out the levels of housing and employment development expected to be delivered over the plan period up until 2026. Calne is defined as a Market Town and therefore has the ability to support sustainable patterns of living through their current levels of facilities, services and employment opportunities. Quemerford is located to the south of the main market town centre, however it is classified as part of Calne.
- 4.5 **Core Policy 2** sets out the minimum housing and employment land provision required within each housing market area within the County. North and West Wiltshire is required to deliver a minimum of 24,740 dwellings. Within the defined limits of development as defined in the settlement map, there is presumption in favour of sustainable development at Market Towns. The proposal is located within the settlement boundary.
- 4.6 **Core Policy 8 Spatial Strategy: Calne Community Area** defined Calne as a Market

Town. Across the Local Plan period, the Calne Community Area is expected to provide 1,605 homes, with 1,440 to be delivered at Calne.

- 4.7 Paragraph 5.41 supports this Policy and sets out key issues within the Community Area which planning decisions should seek to respond to in determining planning applications.
- 4.8 **Core Policy 41** requires development proposals to demonstrate that design measures are included which are intended to reduce energy demand and sustainable construction techniques have been utilised.
- 4.9 **Core Policy 45: Meeting Wiltshire's Housing Needs** states that new housing must be well designed to address local housing needs, incorporating a range of types, tenures and sizes of homes.
- 4.10 **Core Policy 46: Meeting the Needs of Wiltshire's Vulnerable and Older People** requires planning decisions to meet the specific needs of older people and promote independent living. The Policy continues to state:
- “... Housing schemes should assist older people to live securely and independently within their communities. Residential development must ensure that layout, form and orientation consider adaptability to change as an integral part of design at the outset, in a way that integrates all households into the community...”* [IPS emphasis].
- 4.11 **Core Policy 50** requires all development proposals to incorporate appropriate measures to avoid and reduce disturbance to wildlife and habitats. This policy continues to state that all development proposals should also seek opportunities to enhance the biodiversity value of a site.
- 4.12 **Core Policy 51: Landscape** states that: *“...development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character...”*
- 4.13 **Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping** requires all forms of development to be designed to a high standard, complementing the locality, creating a strong sense of place. Applications must be accompanied by information that demonstrates how the proposal makes a positive contribution to Wiltshire through: relating positively to the landscape setting (criterion ‘i’), retaining natural features and mitigating the loss of some features (criterion ‘ii’), responds positively to the layout, built form, height, massing, scale and materials (criterion ‘iii’), having regard for adjoining

uses and preserving residential amenity (criterion ‘vii’) and also using high standards of building materials and landscaping (criterion ‘xii’).

- 4.14 **Core Policy 58: Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment** requires development to protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment. This means that designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved and where possible enhanced in an appropriate matter.
- 4.15 **Core Policy 61: Transport and New Development** requires new development to be located and designed to reduce the reliance on private car for travel. Criterion ‘ii’ requires proposals to demonstrate that they are capable of being served by a safe access.

Calne Community Neighbourhood Plan (2016 – 2026)

- 4.16 The Calne Community Neighbourhood Plan 2016 – 2016 was *made* in February 2018 and sets out the vision, objectives and policies to ensure that Calne and the Parish of Calne Without, maintains their uniqueness. The main objectives are to (a) promote high quality and sustainable growth, (b) protect and enhance the built environment, (c) protect and enhance the natural and built environment, countryside and landscape setting and (d) improve Calne Town Centre.
- 4.17 **Policy H3: Housing Mix** - this policy emphasises the Core Strategy objective to supply the right mix of housing. Stating that: “...*specific consideration should be given to the inclusion of bungalows and other types of accommodation suitable for people who are elderly and/or disabled. Specific consideration should also be given to the inclusion of plots for self-build houses...*”.
- 4.18 **Policy H4: Settlement Boundaries and Housing Sites** states that small windfall housing proposals will be supported provided that they:
- “...*accord with the limits of development provisions of Wiltshire Core Strategy Core Policy 2; and*
- *have a capacity appropriate, both individually and cumulatively, to the size, role and function of the settlement or part of the settlement within which they are located; and*
 - *consider and address their interaction with the surrounding area; and*
 - *have a safe highway access.*”

- 4.19 **Policy GA1: Sustainable Transport** states that developments must demonstrate how opportunities for sustainable use of transport are maximised.
- 4.20 **Policy BE1: Integration and Landscaping** states that all development proposals must provide appropriate landscaping to integrate the existing and new built form and landscape.
- 4.21 **Policy BE2: Design Principles and Local Distinctiveness** sets out that all development must be designed to a high quality that reinforces local distinctiveness, including in relation to materials, built form and settlement patterns. Therefore, design should be guided by the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials, detailing, roof orientation, relationship to back of pavement, wall to window ratios, proportion of windows, plan depth, plot width and access, the site and its surroundings including considerations of flood risk management.

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.22 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was most recently revised in December 2023. This document forms the overarching policy for the function of the planning system. This version of the NPPF is however likely to be replaced before the end of 2024 by a further revision recently published in draft for consultation purposes.
- 4.23 **Paragraph 11** sets out the ‘golden thread’ running through plan making and decision-taking in the planning system. For: “...*decision taking this means:*
- *Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or*
 - *Where there are no relevant development plan policies or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
 - i. *The application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
 - ii. *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...*”

- 4.24 Wiltshire Council cannot currently demonstrate a minimum 5-year supply of deliverable housing land, as established within recent appeal decision ref: APP/Y3940/W/21/3275053² dated 23/11/2023, stating the land supply position as 4.2 years. Local planning authorities (LPAs) are still required to maintain a minimum 5-years' residential land supply, however from December 2023, where LPAs have an emerging local plan [as in this case] which has been submitted for examination [Regulation 18 or 19] for a two-year period i.e. until December 2026, such authorities need only demonstrate a 4 years' residential land supply. In this case and therefore, the presumption or tilted balance is not currently engaged.
- 4.25 The release of the draft National Planning Policy Framework in July 2024 suggests a forthcoming reversal of the policy introduced by the Conservative administration in December 2023. Therefore, the intention is that the 5-year land supply requirement will be reinstated for all local planning authorities, without discounts by the end of the year.
- 4.26 It should be noted that WC has consistently experienced a shortfall in housing land provision since 2020, prior to the recently adopted NPPF, which the current proposal (targeted at the specific, identified housing needs for older people) may be useful towards meeting local housing need.
- 4.27 **Paragraph 38** requires local planning authorities to approach decisions on development proposals in a positive and creative way. Authorities should use the full range of planning tools available and work proactively with applicants to secure developments to secure improved economic, social and environmental conditions. Importantly, decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
- 4.28 **Paragraph 60** states that: *"...it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirement are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. The overall aim should be to meet as much of an area's identified housing need as possible, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community..."*.

² Dated 23rd November 2023 at Purton Road, Swindon (attached at **Appendix E**)

- 4.29 **Paragraph 63** requires that the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies³ including, but not limited to housing for older people in the form of retirement housing.
- 4.30 Older people are defined within Annex 2: Glossary. It includes those over or approaching retirement age including the active, newly retired through to the very frail elderly. The policy specifically identifies the need to provide retirement housing. This application is intended to meet the needs of active, independent older people from the age of 55 years, which is conventionally the age threshold applied to retirement housing schemes.
- 4.31 **Paragraphs 75 to 79** relate to the maintenance and delivery of a minimum of 5 years' worth of housing of which supply must be monitored and updated annually. Paragraph 77 however cross refers to paragraph 226 which reduces the minimum supply requirement to 4 years' worth in circumstances (which apply to this case) where an emerging Local Plan has been submitted for Examination. This reduced requirement applies until December 2026.
- 4.32 **Paragraph 96** requires planning decisions to ensure development achieves healthy, inclusive and safe places together with beautiful buildings that: promote social interaction (criterion 'a'), are designed to be accessible and safe (criterion 'b') as well as support healthy lifestyles (criterion 'c').
- 4.33 **Paragraph 115** states that planning permission should only be refused permission on highways grounds in the event that there would be an unacceptable impact on highways safety, or that the residual cumulative impact on the local highways network would be severe.
- 4.34 **Section 11** focuses on making effective use of land. Highlighted at **paragraph 123** that decisions should promote effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses.
- 4.35 **Paragraph 124** states at point d) that decisions should promote and support the delivery of underutilised land and buildings if this would help meet identified needs of housing where land supply is constrained.

³ In this case Core Strategy (2015) Policy CP46 is the most relevant policy.

- 4.36 **Paragraph 127** states that local planning authorities should take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land that is currently undeveloped but not allocated for a specific purpose in plans, where this would help to meet identified development needs.
- 4.37 **Paragraph 128** states that planning decisions should support development proposals that make efficient use of land. The decisions particularly should consider identified needs for certain types of housing (criterion 'a'), local market conditions (criterion 'b'), availability and capacity of infrastructure (criterion 'c'), the desirability of maintaining the prevailing character and setting of an area (criterion 'd') and also, the importance of securing well designed and beautiful places (criterion 'e').
- 4.38 **Paragraph 135** states that: “...*planning policies should ensure that developments:*
- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
 - b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
 - c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
 - d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
 - e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
 - f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”*
- 4.39 **Paragraph 180** expects development proposals to contribute and enhance the natural and local environment. There are six criteria within this policy that include the request that planning decisions protect valued landscapes (criterion 'a'), as well as minimise the

impacts upon and deliver biodiversity net gains (criterion 'd').

- 4.40 **Paragraph 200** requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage asset affected, including any contribution to the setting. Material and detail submitted should be proportionate to the asset's significance and no more than sufficient to understand the potential impacts.
- 4.41 **Paragraph 205** requires that the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset should be considered and great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. This is irrespective of the level of potential harm.
- 4.42 **Paragraph 206** continues, by stating that: *"Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification ... "*
- 4.43 **Paragraph 207** states that: *"Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use."*
- 4.44 **Paragraph 208** states that: *"...where a proposal leads to less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use..."*.
- 4.45 **Paragraph 209** requires planning decisions to consider the effect of an application on the significance of assets and apply a balanced judgement to the scale of harm to the asset(s).
- 4.46 **Paragraph 212** requires Local Authorities to look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas to better reveal or enhance their significance. Proposals that are adjudged to secure development which makes a positive contribution to an asset, should be treated favourably.
- 4.47 **Paragraph 226** within Annex 1 of the NPPF provides that in certain circumstances local planning authorities will only be required to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of four years' worth of housing (with a buffer, if applicable, as set out in paragraph 77) against the housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against local housing need where the strategic

policies are more than five years old (unless they have been subject to a review). These circumstances are explained as:

“...This policy applies to those authorities which have an emerging local plan that has either been submitted for examination or has reached Regulation 18 or Regulation 19 (Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012) stage, including both a policies map and proposed allocations towards meeting housing need. This provision does not apply to authorities who are not required to demonstrate a housing land supply, as set out in paragraph 76. These arrangements will apply for a period of two years from the publication date of this revision of the Framework...”

Wiltshire Emerging Local Plan

- 4.48 In July 2023, Wiltshire Council published an initial draft Local Plan for consideration by the Full Council Planning Committee and approval for the full public consultation. Whilst this draft Local Plan may only be accorded limited material weight, particularly in the light of the likely changes to the NPPF envisaged in the draft revision recently published for consultation.
- 4.49 The policies will require reconsideration once the draft NPPF is published in its final version. It is our view that the implications of the intended revisions to national policy for housing provision in the emerging Local Plan are significant and will require substantial changes. While the draft NPPF is undergoing consultation the intended “*direction of travel*” is clear. The Regulation 19 public consultation period for this plan was completed in November 2023.
- 4.50 Policy 1: Settlement Strategy defines Calne as a market town. Market towns have the potential for significant development and have the ability to support sustainable patterns of living in Wiltshire through their current facilities and services.
- 4.51 Policy 2: Delivery Strategy sets out the housing requirement of approximately 36,740 homes across the Plan period 2020 to 2038. As part of the ‘phase 1’ requirement (2024 to 2031, some 10,290 additional dwellings will be required. This is likely however to significantly change.
- 4.52 Policy 9: Calne Market Town sets out the anticipated development planned for Calne. Development should provide a balanced approach to housing growth that allows the wide range of housing needs of Calne to be met whilst preserving the special

characteristics of the market town including heritage and landscape qualities. This policy anticipates that over the plan period (2020 to 2038) approximately 1,230 homes will be provided in Calne.

- 4.53 Policy 70: Sustainable Transport requires proposals to deliver infrastructure which prioritises and promotes walking and cycling, delivering electric vehicle charging infrastructure and mitigating impacts of proposals.
- 4.54 Policy 71: Transport and New Development: anticipates the prioritisation of most vulnerable highway users (disabled persons, pedestrians, cyclists etc), through to emergency vehicles, car shares, taxis, private vehicles and finally freight and goods vehicles. This policy also seeks to ensure that development proposals deliver safe access points and avoid conflicts between different types of road users.
- 4.55 Policy 78: Meeting Wiltshire's Housing Needs: states that both new market and affordable homes should be well designed to address a local housing need, through delivery of different types, tenures and sizes of homes that deliver mixed and balanced communities. Homes for older people will be supported when assisting people to live securely and independently within their communities. The requirements continue to state:

"...Residential development must ensure that layout, form and orientation consider adaptability to change as an integral part of design at the outset, in a way that integrates all households into the community.

When this is no longer possible, there are a range of models providing specialist accommodation for older people, ensuring people can continue to enjoy living in their local area with the level of care they require provided.

Developers will be required to demonstrate how their proposals respond to the needs of an ageing population in accordance with the Council's most up to date information on the need for older person's accommodation. In Principal Settlements and Market Towns specialist accommodation for older people such as extra care housing, nursing care homes and dementia care homes should be considered. Proposals for extra-care accommodation to be sold or let on the open market are not considered exempt from the need to provide affordable housing..."

- 4.56 Policy 88: Biodiversity and Geodiversity states that development proposals must demonstrate appropriate mitigation hierarchy, through protecting existing features of

value, limiting impacts of development upon valued habitats or species, as well as provide appropriate opportunities for improving opportunities for the value of the site.

- 4.57 Policy 89: Biodiversity Net Gain states that development proposals must achieve a minimum of 20% Biodiversity Net Gain, or higher. Sites where net gain is provided (on or off site) must be managed and monitored by the applicant or an appropriate body funded by the applicant for a minimum period of 30 years post-delivery of the development.
- 4.58 Policy 95: Flood Risk requires major developments to achieve a 20% or better greenfield runoff rate, with the requirement for runoff to be managed as near to the site as possible. Flood risk drainage strategies are expected to be capable of managing a 1 in 100-year flood event, plus appropriate climate change variation.
- 4.59 Policy 98: Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping: requires that development proposals secure high-quality design through thirteen criteria. These include enhancing local distinctiveness (criterion i), retaining and enhancing important natural features and taking opportunities to deliver biodiversity net gains (criterion ii), responding positively to distinctive local characteristics (criterion iii), taking opportunities for incorporating sustainable building design (criterion v) and having regard for the compatibility for adjacent land uses (criterion vi). Further requirements include securing high quality public open spaces (criterion x), ensuring accessibility for all users (criterion xii) and delivering development with high quality materials and finishes, quality landscaped areas, street furniture and ensuring that design has regard to any local guidance on design (criterion xiii).

Studies, Research and Reports into the Provision of Housing for Older Persons

- 4.60 The UK's population is rapidly ageing. In 2023, around 11 million people in England were aged over 65. This equates to approximately one in five of the overall population. The provision for older people's housing has been discussed throughout recent research which is discussed in more detail below.

The Mayhew Review - Future Proofing Retirement Living: Easing the Care and Housing Crises (December 2022).

- 4.61 There have been many reports following research and studies into meeting the needs of an ageing population nationally. The *baby boomer* generation currently represents a growing challenge for adult care services and the NHS in particular with significant

pressure being placed upon hospital wards unable to accommodate the needs of patients pending the release of older patients to appropriate accommodation.

- 4.62 The provision of suitable accommodation, not only in the form of care and extra care homes but also in terms of housing suitable for the needs of older people wishing to remain independent within their community, is now a fundamental challenge to the planning system. The Mayhew Review⁴ forms an independent review of the retirement housing sector is designed to inform the *Older People's Housing Task Force*, a government initiative that arose out of the '*People at the Heart of Care: Adult Social Care Reform White Paper*' published in December 2021. Views that informed the findings of this report are gathered from a wide range of operators in the retirement sector, architects, investors, think-tanks and academics.
- 4.63 Paragraph 2 on page 48, of the report states that approximately 7,000 homes targeted at the retirement age population had been constructed annually (across 10 years), a significantly greater number are required to meet the demographic changes that are leading to an increase in the age of the UK population.
- 4.64 Pages 49 and 50 expand on the economic factors that influence the choices of the older demographic in what type of properties they occupy. In particular, it is noted that older residents remain in larger family homes once their children have moved out, due to the support of finance for moving homes being unavailable, owing to the asset rich and cash poor nature of much of this demographic. Therefore, the housing industry must supply appropriate, attractive and affordable homes to encourage downsizing and making larger family homes become available into the housing market.
- 4.65 At page 55 of the document, part of the survey conducted by the research team summarises the concerns of personnel with the actions of planning authorities to delivering targeted housing. In particular, it is noted that fewer young people can afford to get onto the housing ladder, that is an impact of inappropriate downsizing properties for older people who instead choose to remain in their large family home that may not be suitable for their needs.
- 4.66 Page 55 continues to state that Carterwood Analytics provided data and research that:

⁴ See extracts at **Appendix F**.

“...analysed the number of planning applications for retirement housing that were granted, refused or pending from 2017 as at 2021. We found significant variability in the number of planning applications accepted or refused and heard anecdotal evidence that planning authorities actively discouraged applications for older living developments.

In its latest report⁵, Irwin Mitchell, a provider of legal and financial services which is active in this area, states that over a third of local authorities do not currently have clear policies in place to support housing for older people...”

- 4.67 Page 57 states that: *“...competition and pressure from standard housing builders were crowding out retirement housing. As an example, West Oxfordshire District Council formally adopted its Local Plan in 2018, covering a period from 2011 to 2031. In a district where 30% of the population is over 65, there was not a single allocation for retirement housing...”*
- 4.68 As part of the conclusions of the Mayhew Review report, it is considered that the delivery of more extra care and housing specifically targeted at meeting the needs of older persons will not only increase health and wellbeing for the older demographics of communities, but crucially free up open market homes. This latter benefit is expected to lead to a reduction (up to 50,000 units) in the number of new market homes requiring construction per annum across the country.
- 4.69 The report concludes with 6 main recommendations for the housing industry, which may be impacted upon service providers, developers, local authorities and the market. These can be summarised as:
- Building more homes targeted at meeting the needs of older persons wishing to downsize.
 - Integrating retirement communities within the existing fabric of settlements.
 - Repurposing high streets to re-use redundant buildings.
 - Reforming planning rule and policy to prevent the financial incentive of delivering homes for older people lagging behind that of general open market development.

⁵ Unlocking Potential for Seniors Housing: Meeting the Needs of An Ageing Society.
<https://www.irwinmitchell.com/news-and-insights/in-focus/seniors-housing-report>

- Providing tax incentives and grants to encourage downsizing and climate proofing.
- Providing greater financial advice for older people and manage the complexities of moving home later in life.

Too Little, Too Late? Housing for an Ageing Population (June 2020)

- 4.70 The Too Little, Too Late?⁶ report was formed by Dr Les Mayhew alongside the University of London, ARCO and Centre for the Study of Financial Innovation.
- 4.71 Within the foreword, key statistics of the existing situation within the housing market for older people. Paragraph 2 notes that less than 3% of the UK's housing stock is generated to meet the needs of older people specifically. Paragraph 3 notes that there are 15 million 'surplus' bedrooms within the UK, of which half are within properties owned by over 65s. Paragraph 4 continues, to state that many older people are spending longer than necessary in hospitals, as an effect of a social care crisis within the UK, that leads to costs for the NHS and over stretched care services.

Royal Town Planning Institute – Practice Advice: Housing for Older People (November 2022)

- 4.72 The Royal Town Planning Institute consulted with stakeholders relevant to the delivery of homes, older persons housing operators and charitable foundations aiming to improve services and infrastructure for older people.
- 4.73 Appendix 1 of the report sets out key demographic statistics for the ageing population within the UK. In 2020, 18.5% of the population in England were aged 65 or older. Page 29 continues to set out the impact of the ageing population upon health services, noting that £7.8 billion has been spent on long term care and support for older people. Attached to this is the BRE estimate⁷ that the cost of poor housing for older people costs the NHS approximately £1.4 billion annually.
- 4.74 Section 2 sets out key principles for designing properties suitable for older people. These include the need for space to be flexible and with design principles maximising natural daylight and sunlight. Other aims for development are requested to include adaptable

⁶ See extract at **Appendix G**.

⁷ BRE (2021) BRE report 'The Cost of Poor Housing in England' finds poor housing is costing NHS £1.4bn a year in article published 9th November 2021.

spaces, accessible outdoor spaces, shared community spaces and good access to local services. Homes are also recommended to ensure energy efficiency measures such as good insulation, passive solar design, green roofs and renewable energy sources. A further key consideration for homes for older people is the need to deliver storage space for mobility aids, cycles and also personal belongings.

- 4.75 Section 3 sets out the principles for delivering housing for older people, such as encouraging open and honest discussions between those delivering homes, local authorities, politicians and the public. By consulting at an early stage, a higher quality of development may be secured and by consulting with older people, the target demographic may contribute to securing development that will meet their needs.
- 4.76 Page 9 states that homes should be delivered to a defined accessibility standard (Part M4[2] of the Building Regulations) and within locations that allow for occupants to live independently.
- 4.77 See relevant extracts at **Appendix H**.

Age UK: Policy Position Paper – Retirement Housing (July 2019)

- 4.78 Further research by Age UK found that by 2035, it is estimated that a shortfall of some 400,000 homes for older people will exist within the UK. As existing, it is estimated that just 4% of older households live in accommodation specially design or designated for occupancy by older people.
- 4.79 The aim of this report seeks to secure a range of retirement housing options that meet their individual needs and aspirations.

Chief Medical Officer's Annual Report 2023: Health in an Ageing Society

- 4.80 The report is about improving the quality of life rather than longevity. It outlines how to maximise independence and minimise time in ill health for people reaching older age and the end of their life. The report sets out a series of recommendations that range from medical interventions to how the built environment can contribute to a better quality of older living.
- 4.81 Section 6 discusses the physical environments that enable independence. The built environment can be used to promote older adults physical and mental health, for example the availability of exercise opportunities and active travel, which they consider safe.

- 4.82 Section 6.1 states that where a person lives is fundamental to ensuring they can remain healthy, active and independent in later life. The quality of housing for a large proportion of the UK's older population is a health risk, being unsuitable for their needs and being cold and damp. Findings show that the majority of people will live in housing that is not specifically built for a particular age group which means a renewed focus is needed on the quality of general needs housing. This is key to enabling older adults to maintain independence and stay in their communities for longer. It is estimated that around 96% of people over 55 years live in mainstream homes and around 80% of homes that will exist in 2050 have already been built.
- 4.83 Further to which, the neighbourhoods and housing developments within which homes are situated are also key to supporting an ageing society. Developments should be accessible to services, preferably through active travel, to enable older people to participate in communities, stay active and enjoy life, which lead to a reduction in loneliness and social isolation.

Wiltshire Local Housing Needs Assessment Update (Volume 2) – February 2023

- 4.84 Section 6 addresses the housing needs of older persons. Paragraph 6.4 states that most older people anticipate remaining within their local communities, with many remaining in their larger, family home. However, those that do wish to relocate would be wishing to find a suitable downsizing property within their existing communities.
- 4.85 Paragraph 6.9 of this report states that population projection underlying the Local Housing Need figure for Wiltshire shows a substantial increase in the older population during the period 2021-2038 by some 32,920 in the over 75 years category alone. Paragraph 6.11 continues to state that the current 51,991 over 75 population within Wiltshire requires 13,049 specialist homes, whilst data shows as existing, there is unmet need of over 7,300 homes (thus just 5,741 currently exist). Over the period 2020-2038 a need for some 15,572 homes for older people is identified (paragraph 6.13).
- 4.86 In calculating the future need for homes for older people, the provision of 5,741 units for a 51,991 population equates to in excess of 110 homes per 1000 persons. Applying this rate to the 32,920 additional older people within Wiltshire equates to a need of an additional 3,635 homes.

Planning for Calne - July 2023 (Wiltshire Council)

- 4.87 A set of Place Shaping Policies were stated for the direction of growth for Calne. PSP1

Housing needs indicate that a balanced approach to housing growth is needed to allow the housing needs of Calne to be met whilst preserving the special market town feel of the town.

- 4.88 The draft Local Plan for Wiltshire indicate that 630 homes are to be accommodated at Calne up to 2038.
- 4.89 This document further identified sites that are suitable for larger housing development and employment sites. Site 4 is to the north of the A4 in Quemerford and is identified as a site which can include employment and other community facilities.

Consultation draft NPPF (July 2024)

- 4.90 A clear change in national planning policy, as evidenced in the recently published draft NPPF (30/07/2024) proposes to restore the minimum of 5 years land supply with no discount and proposes to introduce a new standard methodology for the calculation of each LPA's housing requirement. While this mandatory requirement remains the starting point for local plan preparation, in WC's case, it will significantly increase the level of housing provision.
- 4.91 An immediate review of the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan will be required. It is highly unlikely that once the new NPPF is finally published later this year, that WC will be able to demonstrate a minimum of 5 years' land supply. A modest proposal such as this can, nevertheless, make a valuable contribution to land supply and given the extent of Parish Council local support ought to be regarded as immediately beneficial to the Authority's land supply situation.

5.0 Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

- 5.1 The site lies within the urban framework of Calne, a market town in Wiltshire, as defined in Policy 2 and Policy 8 of the WCS. In accordance with Core Policy 2 of the development plan, for residential development to be deemed acceptable, it must provide homes for an identified local need and respect the existing character and form of the settlement.
- 5.2 The Calne Community Neighbourhood Plan Policy H3 states the support for development considering the 'elderly' and Policy H4 seeks the need to consider windfall sites, which have not been allocated and that come available to address the shortfall of

housing. The application site proposes a sustainably located plot of vacant, underutilised land which is compatible in land use terms with adjacent residential development and would, as a consequence of the built form and layout complement the surrounding built forms.

- 5.3 The site proposes a suitable windfall site for the delivery of one dwelling which will contribute to the ongoing shortfall which WC cannot consistently supply. While the NPPF requires LPAs to maintain a 5 years' minimum residential land supply, it is currently reduced to 4 years in circumstances, as in this case, where a local plan has been submitted for Examination (Regulation 19). However, the consultation draft of the NPPF, released 30/07/24) proposes the removal of the '4-year rule' and that LPAs will shortly have to provide a minimum of 5-years' worth of land supply.
- 5.4 Therefore, the modest contribution in a sustainable location, on vacant land in a residential area, within a market town would be beneficial for WC to begin utilising suitable land and working towards having a minimum 5-year supply and providing the homes needed.

Housing for Independent Older Persons

- 5.5 Greater national focus is becoming afforded to the needs of an ageing demographic, especially in rural counties such as Wiltshire. Concerns are being raised regarding the ageing population, longevity, public health and social welfare costs and critically, loneliness amongst older people.
- 5.6 These issues are driving the need to find accommodation solutions which will inevitably lead to the need to find accommodation options for ageing members of the population who want to downsize and remain independent, but importantly, close-by their existing social network.
- 5.7 Whilst a modest contribution of a single dwelling, the proposal presents an opportunity for older people to downsize and therefore, result in the release of a larger family dwelling onto the market. Furthermore, the property will provide sufficient space and curtilage to be an attractive option for downsizing, older people. Which, for one downsizing property sold results in two family homes⁸ released into the market (which

⁸ Chain Reaction: The Positive Impact of Specialist Retirement housing on the generational divide and first-time buyers. WPI and Homes for Later Living (August 2020). Pg. 4.

tend to be previously underoccupied) for a family to move into.

- 5.8 The evidence to justify the delivery of a specific tenure of housing comes from the Census and a series of reports including the 2011 Census Profile and the All-Party Parliamentary Group report on '*Rural Housing for our Ageing Population*', April 2018. Older people range from those approaching retirement to the very elderly, including those recently retired and with mobility ranging from active to the very frail⁹.
- 5.9 Calne was identified to deliver some 1,440 dwellings in the plan period of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. This development would contribute an extra dwelling to this delivery and further contribute to the diversity of tenure and type of dwellings, specifically for active independent older persons.
- 5.10 It is also noted that initial findings from the 2021 census reveal that the population of England and Wales has grown to greater than 59,500,000 people, which is 6.3% higher than the 2011 census population of over 56 million. Importantly, the number of persons aged 65 years or older has eclipsed the number of the under 15s population, representing 18.6% of the population (increased from 16.4% of the population being aged 65+ at the 2011 census). Some 21.9% of the Wiltshire population are over 65 years of age, demonstrating that Wiltshire must be more responsive to the needs of older people with a greater proportion of older people than average in the UK.
- 5.11 The wider benefit of the proposal is the contribution to the overall housing land supply in Wiltshire. Core Policy 45 specifically notes the need to provide a mix of dwelling types for the population. A dwelling would be appropriate for the current unused site and would make efficient use of a vacant plot of land within the market town.

Assessment of the Appeal - Urban Grain and Surroundings

The reasons for dismissing the previous Appeal¹⁰, as set out in section 2, stated the detrimental elements of the previous proposal and how to positively address them in this application. The following will discuss how this proposal addresses the concerns raised by the Inspector, particularly the character and appearance of the area and the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers at nos. 11 and 13. The proposal has been

⁹ As defined within the glossary of the NPPF.

¹⁰ APP/Y3940/W/22/3303889, **Appendix D**.

formulated to address the concerns from the Inspector, such as the principle of ‘back land’ development at this site and the Inspector’s view that the proposal would not fit into the urban grain of the surrounding area.

Urban Grain

- 5.12 The Inspector found that, at para 5: “...*properties along Quemerford maintain a clear linear arrangement and ... have a strong presence within the streetscene...*”. However, from a more detailed analysis of the historic development, it is evident that the development pattern of the area of Calne, known as Quemerford, does not demonstrate a particularly consistent linear form.
- 5.13 There is a history of modern development which does not maintain a consistently strong street scene predominance which has over time, particularly post 1945, led to a sequence of development pockets taking advantage of say domestic curtilages in order to create a mixed pattern of both linear ribbon and in depth development. This has been the pattern of successive decisions made in the more recent past as underutilised urban sites have been promoted in response to government policy.
- 5.14 To support this application, at **Appendix A** are two Figure Ground maps which depict the urban grain of the area with a basemap of 1993-1994 and using recent OS basemaps (most recent being 2024) to show new modern development ranging from 2003 onwards. The original 1993-1994 map shows housing and the built environment in dark blue, the modern additions, post-2003, are shown in black. This map illustrates the modern additions to Quemerford and the non-linear pattern in the more modern developments. Further seen in drawing ref: P-1668-107A, Showing Surrounding Development.
- 5.15 The Inspector further stated that at paragraph 7 that: “... *[the] position and lack of street frontage would be out of character with the underlying form of neighbouring development...*”. The historical mapping however provides examples of development which lacks street frontages. This is now a characteristic of the street scene. Such is the neighbouring housing development at Wessington cul-de-sac which does not provide a defining street frontage. Therefore, it has been demonstrated that this type of development is suitable through other similar development in the area.
- 5.16 There is evidence of fragmented development to the rear of existing neighbouring properties over the last 30 years and that the surrounding development pattern is not

linear or uniform to the street frontage. There has been a series of development surrounding the site and on the opposite side of the A4, which illustrates that development pattern is not linear. It is therefore considered that this proposal would neither disturb the existing pattern nor be incongruous with surrounding development.

- 5.17 This plot of land offers potential for infill development and a modest contribution of one dwelling to the area within an extremely sustainable location. Whilst considering potential impacts of overlooking and overshadowing, the development makes use of skylights and full-length windows. The orientation of the development has been considered to ensure adequate delivery of lighting for the occupiers, whilst considering the privacy and amenities of neighbours.
- 5.18 There are no windows to the north of the property, further preventing the potential for overlooking and respecting neighbouring properties' privacy. The reduced 1.5 storey respects the privacy of the neighbouring property at no. 13. The proposal design uses rooflights for glazing.
- 5.19 The proposal contributes to the existing form of the surrounding built framework and has been designed sensitively to its built environment. However, the Inspector stated this matter was not a concern, including the access way, therefore this has not been revised, and still provides the same un-contested driveway and turning bay arrangement.
- 5.20 The rear of the proposal considers the impact onto the rear property by having no windows on the upper floor and contributes a slanted roofline to ensure that their views from their gardens are not impacted.
- 5.21 The adjacent Grade II listed public house, to the north west boundary, will not be impacted as the property has considered the openness of the public house and its relationship with no 7. Boundary treatments have been considered to ensure that there will be limited impact on this garden and open car park.

Back land Development

- 5.22 In response to the concerns raised by the Inspector at the previous appeal, the development was found to impact with the character and appearance of the area and that the development would: "...*appear as a separate, incongruous, back land dwelling...*" (para 9). This site lies within the urban framework of Calne, a market town within Wiltshire and this proposal has been sensitively designed and orientated to reflect the urban framework and grain of development, and mirror previous permissions for

similar development at no. 7.

- 5.23 From the maps at **Appendix A**, it is evident that ‘*back land*’ development is consistent within the neighbourhood – whether this is new housing, which is shown at property no. 7 (adjacent to the public house), or garages to the rear of neighbouring properties at no. 15 and 17. These structures still contribute to the urban grain and shows that the pattern of development is not linear. The scale of the proposal has been formulated to ensure the building appears ancillary or subservient to the primary street frontage properties, whilst complementing the character and appearance of subservient ‘back land’ structures in the vicinity.
- 5.24 It is therefore argued, as depicted in the supporting map which includes the proposed development, that it is not considered to be: “... *uncharacteristic of the surrounding pattern of development...*” (para 11) nor “...*at odds with the prevailing layout of neighbouring built form...*” (para 12). The massing and footprint of the proposal has been designed consistent with the scale and form surrounding built framework.
- 5.25 Regarding the argument of the Inspector finding that the previous proposal was a form of back land development, the subsequent property at no. 7 (ref: 15/06384/FUL) was granted approval on 10th September 2015 for development of a dwelling and annex which developed the length of the rear garden amenity space. This development is 60m west of the site and can be seen from the proposal site.
- 5.26 The development at property no.7 does not offer any “*strong boundary treatments*” (para 5) nor fronts onto the main road. The Inspector noted that when viewed from public vantage points no. 7 was not regarded as back land development and that the design was more: “...*akin to a sizeable single storey extension to no. 7...*” (para 9). Therefore, the redesign of this proposal to a narrow 1.5 storey dwelling, sized at a modest 16m by 6m, which is concealed by the built form of no. 11, demonstrating a limited impact from the public vantage points of the A4. To which being sited close to the north-west boundary will further ensure the proposal has little visual impact from the A4 road, reflecting the pattern of development at no.7.
- 5.27 The proposal comprises a considerate and well-designed development, restricting the scale of properties to 1.5 storeys, limiting the impact on the neighbouring properties and being visually contained from the street scene by the frontage of property no. 11. Limited prominence has been demonstrated at the similar and well-established development at no. 7. This proposal aims to reflect this approved design as an ancillary building and has

considered the views from the A4 (as depicted in drawing ref: P-1668-110, Perspective Views by NC Architects).

- 5.28 As discussed above, the siting and architectural form of the proposed dwelling is entirely consistent with an ancillary building historically developed to the rear of host frontage building. Its vernacular architectural style and importantly siting are typical of such buildings. It would not be regarded as visually incongruous from the adjacent public house car park and is visually discreet from public vantage points within the street scene.

Access and Servicing

- 5.29 The existing access for no. 11 will remain as existing and provide access for the proposed development. It is proposed that the residential occupancy of older persons have a reduced volume of traffic and movement by private car will be limited. Car use by older persons tends to be reduced.
- 5.30 The property will provide for the parking of two cars. A number of older persons households only have one or two cars, as per the lower number of occupants in older person households. The sustainability of the location is notable, sitting 135m from the nearest bus stop, with frequent 30-minute services. A journey to Calne town centre is approximately 4 minutes.
- 5.31 The sustainability of this site is appropriate for active independent older persons as the site is an approx. 400m away from a convenience shop: Asda Express, which is accessible by foot along the footpath of the A4. The town centre is an approx. 20 minutes walk from the site.

Drainage

- 5.32 The foul water is proposed to be managed by connecting to an existing foul sewer system. Surface water is proposed to be as existing, through the use of existing drains.

Ecology

- 5.33 The site has been subject to a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (BNGA) using the Small Sites Metric (SSM), which was conducted by Greengage Environmental Ltd with a site survey conducted on 16th April 2024. The report (ref: 552746jc11Jun24DV01_BNGA) noted that the habitats on site types translate to '*vegetated garden*' and '*developed land; sealed surface*'.
- 5.34 From April 2024, biodiversity net gain was introduced as a requirement under Schedule

7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act) to provide a 10% biodiversity net gain and no net loss on small sites of 9 dwellings or less. This requirement makes it mandatory for an uplift either onsite, through offsite biodiversity units or statutory biodiversity credits.

- 5.35 The site was previously domestic curtilage as a private garden. This has been considered within the assessment, scrubs that are currently on site is proposed to be kept, however under the Small Sites Metric vegetated garden this does not warrant a condition value. The baseline value for this site is 0.13 habitat units.
- 5.36 The report details ecological mitigation and enhancement recommendations which contribute to further increasing the ecological value of the scheme. A biodiverse green roof is proposed over the doorway canopy.
- 5.37 It should be noted that an area of existing vegetation, from the baseline, is proposed retention. However, BNG Trading Rules are not met owing to the loss of low distinctiveness habitat which is not being proportionately replaced on site. The onsite areas of biodiversity are low scoring habitat units of scrub, grass and tussocky. not considered to be significant due to the small scale of habitat creation and type of habitats.
- 5.38 The off-setting credits for achieving biodiversity net gain are to be provided by 6 trees planted will be planted within the Applicant's other land under his ownership, details for this are set out in the BNGA report. This contributes to a 10.71% net gain.

Energy Efficiency

- 5.39 There is a number of measures proposed to enhance the energy efficiency of the proposed dwelling. Solar photovoltaics are proposed for delivery on the roof and an air source heat pump proposed to the front left of the dwelling (see Proposed Site Plan ref: P-1668-101).

Heritage

- 5.40 Grade II listed building to the north west of the site was deemed as being significant for its age, architectural qualities and historic interest as a public house on a main thoroughfare. The Inspector considered the proposed development would have a neutral effect and have no material impact.

6.0 Planning Balance and Conclusions

- 6.1 This proposal would contribute a modest contribution to the imminent 5-year land supply, proposed in the draft NPPF 2024 reversing the 4-year supply required for Council's with an emerging plan within Regulation 18 or 19 stage. Therefore, the provision of this development would contribute to the arising need WC will have to find land to supply the housing need set out by the current administration.
- 6.2 Significant weight should be accorded to the intention of this proposal, to be restricted to occupancy of primary residents aged 55 years and older¹¹, to meet a housing need for independent, downsizing older people, as identified within the Calne Community Neighbourhood Plan and nationally, within various studies.
- 6.3 Substantial weight should be accorded to satisfying Core Policy 45 and 46 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. The proposal aims to supply housing for the older population through contributing a suitable type and size of home for older persons to occupy. Further to which, paragraph 63 of the NPPF requires that the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies¹² including, but not limited to housing for older people.
- 6.4 It is important to emphasise the impact that downsizing offers the opportunity for currently under-occupied family homes to be released back into the housing market for occupation by families bringing with that a restoration of support for social and economic infrastructure such as primary schools, local shops, community facilities etc.
- 6.5 The proposal has been designed in consideration of the age group that will be occupying the property at a building standard appropriate for adaptation (Building Regs M4(2)), which owes the proposal to a high accessibility standard and allows adaption for the future occupiers if this was to be required. It further addresses the concerns of orientation and the pattern of development in the previous Appeal. The design accords to Policy BE2 of the Community Neighbourhood Plan and is designed to a high quality and reinforces and reflects the local distinctiveness through the specified design, considering the surrounding massing and density of the neighbourhood.

¹¹ As secured by enduring condition applicable to all permanent occupants as set out in paragraph 3.14 of this Statement.

¹² In this case Core Strategy (2015) Policy CP46 is the most relevant policy.

- 6.6 In addressing Section 11 and paragraph 124 of the NPPF, the proposal supports promoting land for effective use, this vacant plot of land in the neighbourhood of Quemerford offers an appropriate land use of housing in Calne's urban area. Which is further supported by the sustainability of the site and its accessibility to the town centre and amenities.
- 6.7 The proposal has been formed to facilitate safe access to the adjacent highway and provides sufficient access to allow residents to access the frontage of the property. There are no residual cumulative impacts that would result in severe impacts upon the safety of, or operation of the highway, thus the tests of NPPF Paragraph 115 satisfied.
- 6.8 Limited weight is accorded to the impact on the Grade II listed building to the north west boundary, within the previous Appeal the Inspector ruled the proposal would have a neutral effect and have no material impact.
- 6.9 The proposal is considered to accord with the policies of adopted development plan (including the Neighbourhood Plan) and in accordance with national policy as expressed at paragraph 11 c) of the NPPF ought to be permitted. It is respectfully requested that permission for this development is granted subject to conditions.

APPENDICES

A. Figure Ground Map of Historic Development

Site Location: Land to the Rear of 11 Quemerford,
Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 0AR

Title: Figure Ground Map showing Proposal

Proposal is to scale.

Map Produced by: Impact Planning Services Ltd

Produced on 29/04/2024

Map Name: Figure Ground Map

Map date: **BASE MAP 1993-1994**

Scale: 1:2,500

Printed at: 1:2,500



Key

Blue - 1993 - 1994 established
development

Black - Development post-2003



Produced by
Groundsure Insights
www.groundsure.com



Supplied by:
<http://www.blackwellmapping.co.uk>
comments@maps.blackwell.co.uk

Site Location: Land to the Rear of 11 Quemerford,
Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 0AR

Title: Figure Ground Map Pre-2003

Proposal is to scale.

Map Produced by: Impact Planning Services Ltd

Produced on 29/04/2024

Map Name: Figure Ground Map

Map date: **BASE MAP 1993-1994**

Scale: 1:2,500

Printed at: 1:2,500



Key

Blue - 1993 - 1994 established
development



Produced by
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Supplied by:
<http://www.blackwellmapping.co.uk>
comments@maps.blackwell.co.uk

**B. Application PL/2021/05709 Case Officer's Report, Proposal
Plans and Decision**

The Town and Country Planning Act 1990
Refusal of Full Planning Permission
Application Reference Number: PL/2021/05709
Decision Date: 29 November 2021

Applicant: Mr A Fenwick
11, Quemerford, Calne, SN11 0AR

Particulars of Development: Erection of a new dwellinghouse
At: 11 Quemerford , Calne, SN11 0AR

In pursuance of their powers under the above Act, the Council hereby REFUSE TO GRANT PERMISSION for the development referred to in the above application and plans submitted by you, for the following reason(s):

Refusal Reasons: (3)

- 1 The proposal would not respond positively to the existing townscape in terms of building layout, building line and streetscape as is required by policy CP57 to the Wiltshire Core Strategy. Neither does the proposal reinforce local distinctiveness or respond positively to the existing townscape in terms of its relationship to the back of pavement, plan depth and plot access which would be entirely contradictory to the prevailing pattern of development in the locality thereby failing the requirements of policy BE2 to the Calne Community Neighbourhood Plan. In this respect and having regard to the character of the locality within which the application site is contextualised, the proposed new dwelling cannot be regarded as being of a high quality or to be well designed as is required by section 12 to the NPPF.
- 2 In the context of the prevailing form of development along this part of the A4, the design and materials proposed for the new dwelling render the proposal to be a poor form of development. The design of the proposal is not of a high quality and would not be sympathetic to the local character as is clearly required by section 12 to the NPPF. Further, the proposal would not respond positively to the existing townscape in terms of its elevational design, materials, streetscape and rooflines, and would not integrate the new building into its setting as is required by policy CP57 to the Wiltshire Core Strategy. Similarly, the proposal is not designed to a high quality that reinforces local distinctiveness and would not reflect local heritage design and characteristics as is required by policy BE2 to the Calne Community Neighbourhood Plan.
- 3 By reason of the very close proximity of surrounding residential development, the chosen layout and design, and position to the immediate rear of an established pattern of development, the proposal would result in an unacceptable impact upon the amenity and living conditions of both existing and future residents. Accordingly, the proposed development cannot be considered to meet with the requirements of policy CP57 to the Wiltshire Core Strategy. For the same reasons, neither does the proposal promote the health and well-being or a high standard of amenity as is required by section 12 to the NPPF.

Sam Fox ~ Corporate Director, Place

NOTES

1. **Appeals.** If the applicant is aggrieved by the decision of the local planning authority to refuse permission, they may appeal to the Secretary of State for the Environment in accordance with Section 78(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 within six months of the date of this decision. (Information and forms relating to the appeals process can be found at the Planning Portal - <http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/appeals>).

DELEGATED REPORT

11 QUEMERFORD, CALNE

PL/2021/05709

PROPOSAL

The application seeks planning permission for the erection of a new dwellinghouse in the rear garden of an existing residential property, known as No. 11 Quemerford, Calne.

The submitted plans suggest accommodation to be substantial with 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms/w/c's, separate sitting room, living room, "sunroom" and kitchen areas set across two floors. A detached pitched roof double-bay garage is also proposed. The design does not appear to follow any particular style and materials are specified as facing brick walls with reconstituted detailing around windows and plain clay tiled roof. Windows and doors are confirmed as being hardwood.

The plans do not suggest a raising of the existing ground level but can be scaled to show the dwelling would be some 7.0m tall to ridge and 2.5m tall to eaves.

The dwelling is laid out in a pavilion form within the application site, with a generally similar amount of land between it and each of the common boundaries to surrounding residential properties. Access is to be taken from the existing driveway serving No.11 Quemerford (albeit with a roughly triangular area of land at the frontage to the highway to be given over to the proposed new dwelling, but with vehicle crossing rights "in favour of the existing house"). The means of access would be hard up against the neighbouring property, No.13, extending to almost the entire length of the common boundary, including its back garden.

APPLICATION SITE

The application site comprises the rear garden to No.11 Quemerford, No.11 itself is an early C20th detached residential property fronting the main A4 highway, set within a well-defined residential curtilage. The property is unlisted but displays some pleasing architectural elements such as decorative weather boarding, open eaves and full height chimneys so redolent of its origins.

No.11 has recently been granted planning permission for the addition of a rear extension of substantial scale. That extension is to extend back from what appears to be the original element of property primarily in place of the existing single storey flat roof projection. Critically, the permission allows for the creation of a first-floor terrace area of substantial size.

No.11 is but one of many residential properties South East of the Talbot PH that present to the A4 main road along this part of Quemerford. Those properties are of a pre and inter war vintage and provide for a largely uniform presentation to the public highway in a traditional architectural language. They provide for a strong and consistent *building line* and limited gaps or driveway entrances between each property, which is reflective of their age. To the rear of the application site is Wessington Park, a much more modern, brick-built housing estate and which is accessed via a formal highway junction some distance to the South. There is very little design or architectural connection between Wessington Park and those traditional *ribbon* type properties built along the A4 and there are no residential properties which have been constructed in the rear gardens to any of the properties which front the A4 along this part of Quemerford which do not have their own dedicated access and frontage to the public highway.

The application site is within the settlement boundary for Calne, as defined within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and whilst the application site is not covered by any particular planning policy designation but is adjacent to the Talbot Public House (Grade II listed).

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

88/2896/FUL Dwelling – refused for the following reasons:

- 1.The relationship of the site with neighbouring development to the front rear and side of the site is likely to lead to an unsatisfactory form of development not in keeping with the open character of the area and result in an adverse effect on the privacy and amenity of existing development.
- 2.The use of the access onto the A4 would result in disturbance and loss of amenity to the adjacent neighbour by reason of the increased traffic that would be generated by this proposal.

PL/2021/06657 First floor extension to existing dwelling at the site (No.11) – Granted condition planning permission 14th October 2021.

ISSUES

The principal considerations in the determination of this application are:

- Principle
- Layout, and character and appearance of locality
- Residential amenity
- Design and materials of dwelling
- Highway safety and parking

CONSULTATION

Calne Town Council - No comment received

Highway Engineer – No objection

“There is sufficient parking for both the existing and the proposed dwelling. Access via the highway is adequate to serve a small increase in the daily vehicular movements, after construction.”

REPRESENTATIONS

Three (3) letters of objection were received from neighbours. Relevant issues raised:

- Any two-storey dwelling house or workshop will likely overlook the surrounding bungalows causing serious privacy issues.
- The construction of such a large dwelling/workshop will inevitably involve considerable noise and pollution to local residents. We have already experienced this issue when inconsiderate contractors felled trees without prior warning. Many of the residents are elderly and vulnerable. Foul language and loud radios are not acceptable.
- There is a public right of way that runs parallel along the back of the rear gardens to the local church. It follows this path should not be encompassed within the new property boundaries.
- Suggest a new fence is constructed at least 6ft away from neighbouring property and parallel to the other back gardens.
- Plans suggest five bar gate which is not what has been constructed on site. Concerned about accuracy of plans
- Proposal for workshop in rear garden refused in recent past – therefore concerned garage proposed would become workshop in few months
- Sewer pipes run length of gardens and could be impacted
- Imposing building proposed, especially gardens are rather small
- New house would be extremely close to boundary fence at 38 Wessington Park and would be of a height that could affect the level of daylight and privacy.
- A number of trees in the garden have already been cut down in anticipation of a successful application.

ASSESSMENT

Under the provisions of section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. At the current time the statutory development plan in respect of this application consists of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) (Adopted January 2015) the 'saved' policies of the North Wiltshire Local Plan (NWLP) 2011 (adopted June 2006) and The Calne Community Neighbourhood Plan

Principle

Core Policy 1 of the WCS sets out that Calne is defined as a 'Market Town' within Wiltshire which are defined as settlements that have the ability to support sustainable patterns of living in Wiltshire. Core Policy 2 sets out that within the defined limits of development there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Accordingly, the principle of new residential development in this location is established as being acceptable providing it constitutes sustainable development and the detail of the proposal complies with other relevant policies of the WCS and the Calne Community Neighbourhood Plan. Those detailed matters are considered within the sections below.

Layout, character and appearance of locality

No.11 is overwhelmingly contextualised by traditional residential development to the South East of the Talbot PH, extending past the junction with Wessington Park, all of which fronts the A4. Indeed, as previously established, those dwellings fronting the NE side of the A4 along this part of Quemerford are traditionally laid out pattern – directly presenting to the road, each property having an individual curtilage which extends back from that road frontage to the common boundary with those properties at Wessington Park, in almost a *burgage* type arrangement. A visually strong boundary treatment of stone walls and railings reinforce the presence to the road frontage. Properties on the South West side of the A4 in the locality are somewhat neutral in terms of their role in defining the character of the locality, since a reasonably substantial wall and landscaping screen the dwellings themselves, with access taken from Ebor Gardens, not the A4.

This locality is emphatically not defined by development in depth, where other residential properties have been built directly behind in a tandem or backland fashion, where accesses are shared and run alongside common boundaries. Where buildings can be found in the rear gardens of those frontage dwellings, they are domestic outbuildings ancillary to the dwellings they site behind. That clear prevailing character somewhat dissipates as Wessington Park is entered, but of course that is a modern housing estate with very little to connect it with the A4 in design, layout and pattern. In additional information submitted by the applicant, it is claimed that there is other "backland development" in the locality, but all those buildings identified are, by turns, either domestic out-buildings, further afield (especially that North West of the talbot PH) or part of the Wessington Park estate. That additional information is not considered to be an accurate expression of the character of the locality which contextualises the application site.

In this particular case, and in direct contrast to the established pattern of development in the locality, the proposal would involve the subdivision of the existing curtilage to No.11s and the placement of a new dwellinghouse immediately behind that of the existing dwelling with a shared access running the substantive length of the curtilage and common boundary. In general terms, in forming the new planning unit, and to accommodate the extent of the development proposed some half of the curtilage would be given over to the new dwelling and the resultant garden shape and proportions for each of the two dwellings would be the existing property is entirely irregular compared to burgage style plots in and around the contextualising locality.

Such an alien layout of the development will have a tangible destructive effect upon the prevailing character of the locality South East of the Talbot PH along the A4 frontage. The *opened-up* frontage shown on the submitted plans (so as to provide the needed manoeuvring space) will clearly dilute the visually strong and substantively unbroken stone frontage walls and railings across the properties between the Talbot PH and the Wessington Park junction. As if to reinforce that insertion of the widened access, the formalisation of an also widened driveway (currently the aperture of the driveway running past No.11 is narrowed by fencing) will constitute a wide and uncharacteristic

access in a locality where absolutely none currently exist. The parking for No.11, which is currently to the side and rear of the property would also be displaced by development taking place to a position immediately in front of No.11, thereby guaranteeing a highly suburban character of development in an area that is more traditional (demonstrably, none of the properties along the NE side of the A4 between the Talbot PH and Stockley Lane present in such a manner). Just as significantly, the widening of the access and driveway will allow for views of the new dwelling to be had as substantial built form behind the otherwise frontage development along this part of the A4. There is very little prospect of the new dwelling being mistaken for ancillary out-building, given its substantial scale.

It is noted that planning permission was sought for similar backland type development for this site back in the 1980s. That application was refused permission and, despite the local and national policy environment changes over the intervening years, the substantive reasons used remain at that time remain highly relevant and reflective of the unacceptable impacts identified now.

Accordingly, and having regard to the character of the locality within which the application site contextualised, the proposed new dwelling cannot be regarded as being of a high quality or well designed as is required by section 12 to the NPPF. In particular, the proposal would not respond positively to the existing townscape in terms of building layout, building line and streetscape as is required by policy CP57 to the Wiltshire Core Strategy. Neither does the proposal reinforce local distinctiveness or respond positively to the existing townscape in terms of its relationship to the back of pavement, plan depth and plot access which would be entirely contradictory to the prevailing pattern of development in the locality thereby failing the requirements of policy BE2 to the Calne Community Neighbourhood Plan.

Residential amenity

The proposed dwelling has been sited within the application site in a *pavilion* type arrangement with roughly equal distances between its elevations and each respective boundary. The intervening garden cannot be said to be large, extending to between c.2.0m to No.13 at the side and c.4.0m to the No.39 Wessington Park at the rear. The access drive to the new dwelling appears to run the substantive length of the newly created plot hard up against the boundary to the immediately adjoining neighbour, No.13 Quemerford, with a large external parking and turning area, all of which is to be surfaced with gravel.

The development will result in new first floor windows in each of its four new elevations, including those to the nearest neighbours at No.13 Quemerford and No.39 Wessington Park. Indeed, those windows are undeniably close to the respective common boundaries (within a handful of metres in each case) and would afford clear views into the rear gardens of both of those neighbouring properties and clearly such a relationship will result in unacceptable impacts upon the amenity, privacy and living conditions of those neighbours. None of the windows are proposed to be obscure but, in any event, even if those windows were to be obscured (perhaps by way of planning condition) the extreme proximity of new windows at an elevated level would always result in the neighbouring occupiers feeling oppressed by the new development and take away the privacy that is reasonably expected by those residential occupiers. Fencing of a typical domestic height would not mitigate such impacts either.

Precisely because of the extremely small amenity space given over to the new dwelling, it is clear that the occupants of the new dwellinghouse would suffer from very little privacy themselves – both when using their small garden areas but also into their windows – since the property would be overlooked on three sides. Whilst views of the application site would clearly be possible from the first-floor rear windows to No.13 Quemerford, the most direct and adverse overlooking would most directly arrive from the first-floor windows in the rear of No.39 Wessington Park to the rear (only some 6.0m distant), but also from the (then) separately occupied No.11 Quemerford at the immediate front. In this latter regard, it should be noted that planning permission has been recently granted for a substantial first floor balcony to the rear of No.11 (under planning permission PL/2021/06657). That planning permission remains extant and capable of implementation until October 2024 and would afford largely uninterrupted views across the application site. Such a high-level balcony provides for enfilade views across the application site and would have a highly adverse impact upon the privacy of future occupants of the proposed dwelling. The intervening single storey garage proposed not likely to significantly mitigate that impact. Although not yet implemented, the permission the existence of the 2021 extant planning permission for a first-floor balcony is a highly significant planning consideration weighing against the grant of planning permission.

In addition to the impacts upon residential amenity considered above is the relationship of the new access drive to the existing dwellings. The plans show a driveway that would be routed immediately beside and between the two

existing properties fronting the A4, those being Nos.11 and 13. The use of the access drive by the proposed new dwelling would clearly be of a nature and intensity associated with the use and occupation of a residential dwellinghouse. That would include early morning and late-night use, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, in summer and in winter when the days are short and nights are long and always without notice or prior reference to the immediate neighbours. Such use is of course entirely expected and reasonable in a residential setting – but of course in this instance the driveway runs in very close proximity to the most sensitive parts of Nos.11 and 13 such as their rear gardens, where the occupiers will rightly expect the most privacy and perhaps quietest conditions. Indeed, No.13 in particular is fitted with windows in both the ground and first floor in the flank elevation and the proposal sees what would be an actively used driveway running hard up against them with apparently no concession to the obvious impact the noise, disturbance, activity and headlights from manoeuvring vehicles and people would cause. That noise, disturbance, activity and highlight spill could and likely would occur along the entire length of the new driveway which runs hard up against that boundary with the rear garden to No.13 where the aforementioned expectation of privacy and calm is rightly expected of the occupier (in fact, the proposed new garage where most manoeuvring and noise might be expected being sited precisely at the point where the most private areas of Nos.11 and 13 are located). The driveway is specified as being gravel (which typically crunches) as if to compound the impacts. Such arrangements cannot be found anywhere within the vicinity which defines the character of the application site. It goes without saying that to permit such an arrangement would all but guarantee conditions most likely to cause neighbour disputes and would therefore constitute a poor form and less than high quality development which is required by section 12 to the NPPF.

By reason of the identified impacts upon the amenity and living conditions of both existing and future residents, the proposed development cannot be considered to meet with the requirements of policy CP57 to the Wiltshire Core Strategy. For the same reasons, neither does the proposal promote the health and well-being or a high standard of amenity as is required by paragraph 130 to the NPPF.

Design and appearance

The proposal is for the erection of a detached dwellinghouse and associated pitched roof double-bay garage. The design adopts full gables and accommodation in the roofspace, with several dormer style windows. Its architectural approach is perhaps typical of modern residential development but is adrift from that of the surrounding, far more traditional properties which front the A4 between the Talbot PH and the junction with Stockley Lane. Existing dwellings on the NE side of the A4 are clearly defined by traditional proportions, relatively steep gables within none being of the dormer bungalow type design adopted by the proposal.

Similarly, the proposed dwelling seeks to make use of red-brick walling with limited reconstituted stone detailing for the window surrounds which directly contrasts with the dominant use of natural stone for the majority of the properties along this part of this A4, with only limited red-brick being seen. The use of natural stone is redolent of the application sites position within a market town in this part of North Wiltshire and the application does very little to respect that prevailing character.

In particular, No.11 itself as well as the properties immediately either side (including the listed Talbot PH) are well proportioned properties of traditional proportions with high quality detailing such as eaves and gabled windows. None are of a dormer bungalow type design and all make use of natural as the predominant material (noting that the dwellings at 13 and 15 making only limited use of brick at ground floor level in an entirely traditional way that reinforces their appearance).

Dwellings at Wessington Park and Ebor Gardens do not greatly contribute to the design character of the dwellings along this part of the A4. Although clearly divergent from the traditional design and materials from that used in The Talbot PH (indeed the Talbot is of a design and construction that contributes to the character and appearance of the A4 as it extends to the SE towards Cherhill) the actual impact of the development upon the setting of The Talbot as a Grade II listed building is not thought to be great, with no harm caused.

In the context of the prevailing form of development along this part of the A4, the design and materials proposed for the new dwelling render the proposal to be a poor form of development. The design of the proposal is demonstrably not of a high quality and would not be sympathetic to the local character as is clearly required by the NPPF – recently changed precisely so as to require such attributes from new development. Further, the proposal would not respond positively to the existing townscape in terms of its elevational design, materials, streetscape and rooflines

and would not integrate the new building into its setting as is required by policy CP57 to the Wiltshire Core Strategy. Similarly, the proposal is not designed to a high quality that reinforces local distinctiveness and would not reflect local heritage design and characteristics as is required by policy BE2 to the Calne Community Neighbourhood Plan.

Highway safety and parking

Access to the application site from the A4 would be via the existing access to No.11 (shared with its neighbour No.13), with a driveway running the length of the plot to the dwelling at the rear. The plans suggest that the access would be shared by all three properties with the existing hardstanding in front of No.11 would remain, along side an area of land to be given over for manoeuvring with vehicle crossing rights.

The Council's Highway Engineer is of the opinion that there would be an adequate and safe access to the public highway so as to serve the expected daily vehicular movements associated with a single dwelling.

Equally, the large double garage along with the substantial gravelled turning and external parking space within the proposed plot is clearly sufficient parking space.

On the narrow issue of the need for a safe access to the highway and sufficient parking space, the proposal is acceptable and would comply with the requirements of policy CP61 to the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

Other matters

Representations have raised concerns regarding the potential for noise and disturbance through the construction phase. In the normal course of events, it is not necessary for the consideration of planning applications to place great emphasis upon the noise and disturbance connected to construction, since such matters can be adequately addressed via other legislation, notably the nuisance act.

The potential for the garage to be used as a workshop has also been raised as a concern. However, the application seeks permission for a domestic garage ancillary to the dwellinghouse also being proposed. In the event of planning permission being granted, it would be a breach of planning control to make use of the garage for commercial or purposes otherwise not ancillary to the dwelling it relates, and a separate planning permission would be required. Although such an application would need to be considered on its own merits, for the same reasons discussed, it is perhaps uncontentious to suggest that a proposal to use the garage as a commercial workshop in this location would be supported.

Some representations have suggested that there is a right of way at the rear of the property leading to the church and allotments. The Council's definitive map does not note a Public Right of Way crossing the application site (or any of the adjoining properties) and it is therefore inferred that the right of way is a private one. The existence of a private right of way is a matter between the applicant and third parties, with no role for the Local Planning authority during the determination of this planning application.

It is alleged within representations that trees were chopped down within the application site in anticipation of a successful planning application. There is no reason to dispute the claims within the representations (although it is noted that the application form completed by the applicant suggests no trees or hedges on or adjacent to the site), but in any event, there is no record of Tree Preservation Orders on the site and the site is not within any Conservation Area and any removal of trees would not have required prior approval of the Local Planning Authority.

CONCLUSION

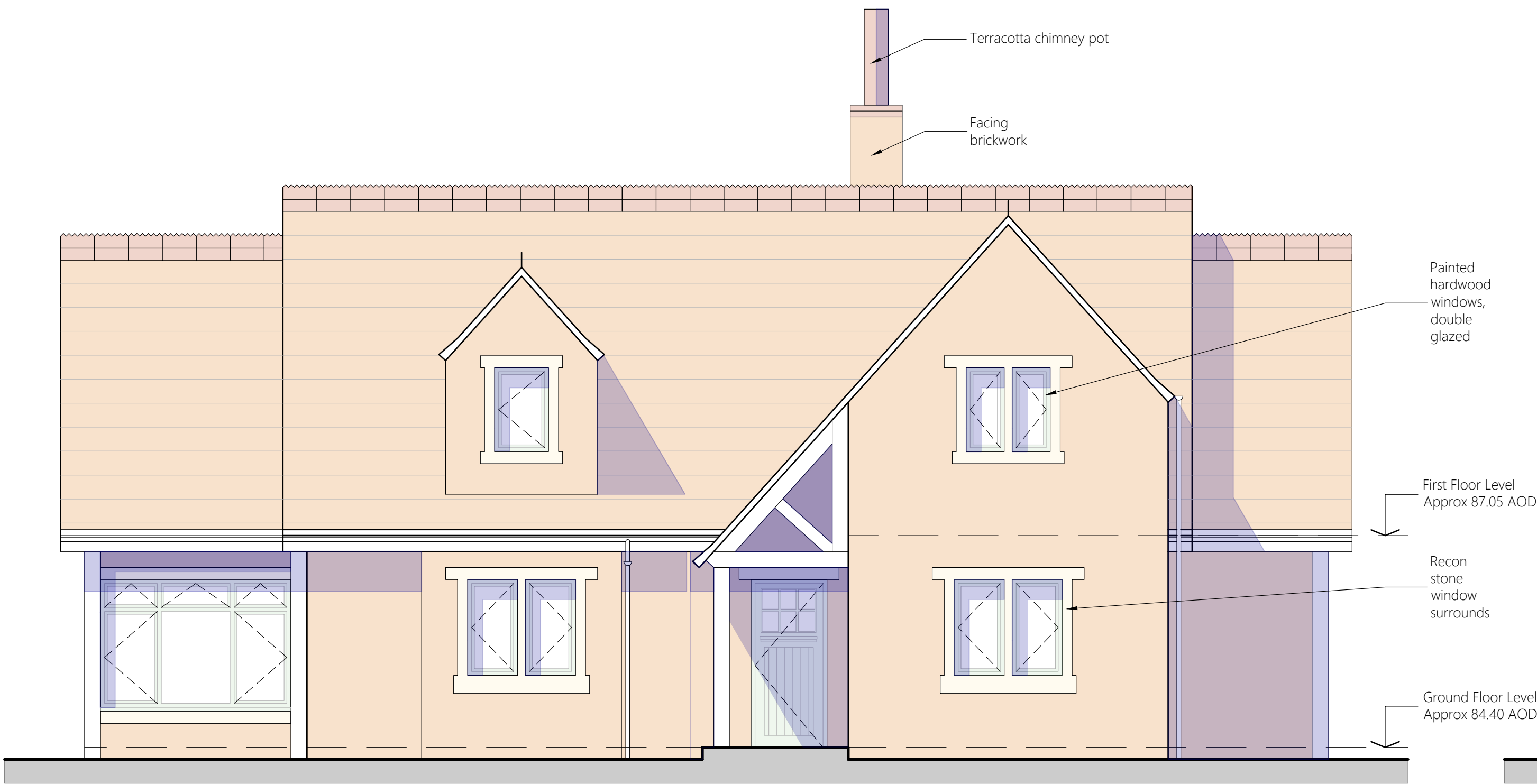
The proposed development represents a poor form of development and fails to meet the clear requirements of policies CP57 to the Wiltshire Core Strategy, policy BE2 to the Calne Community Neighbourhood Plan as well as section 12 to the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION: That Planning Permission be REFUSED for the following reasons:

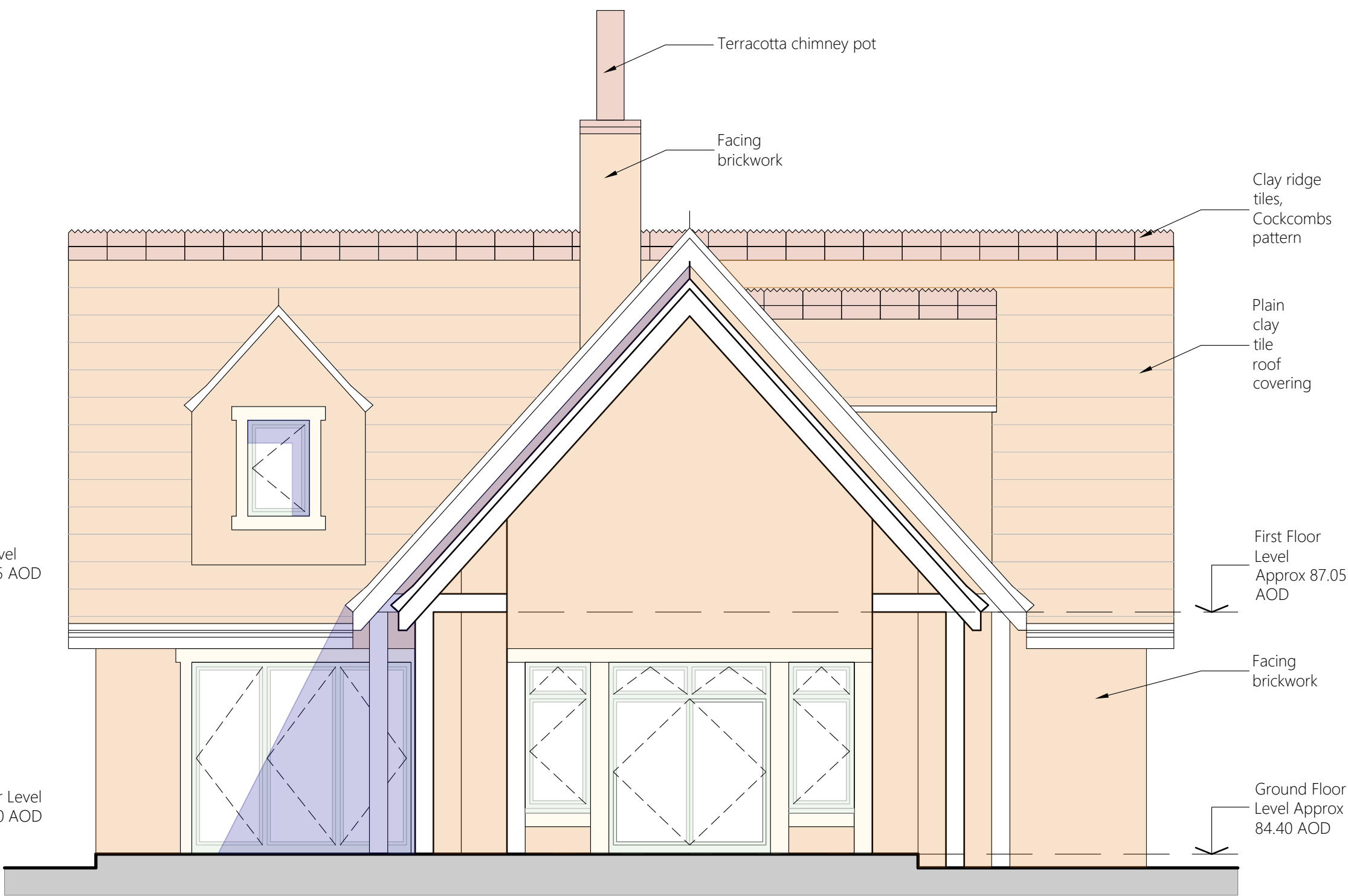
The proposal would not respond positively to the existing townscape in terms of building layout, building line and streetscape as is required by policy CP57 to the Wiltshire Core Strategy. Neither does the proposal reinforce local distinctiveness or respond positively to the existing townscape in terms of its relationship to the back of pavement, plan depth and plot access which would be entirely contradictory to the prevailing pattern of development in the locality thereby failing the requirements of policy BE2 to the Calne Community Neighbourhood Plan. In this respect and having regard to the character of the locality within which the application site is contextualised, the proposed new dwelling cannot be regarded as being of a high quality or to be well designed as is required by section 12 to the NPPF.

In the context of the prevailing form of development along this part of the A4, the design and materials proposed for the new dwelling render the proposal to be a poor form of development. The design of the proposal is not of a high quality and would not be sympathetic to the local character as is clearly required by section 12 to the NPPF. Further, the proposal would not respond positively to the existing townscape in terms of its elevational design, materials, streetscape and rooflines and would not integrate the new building into its setting as is required by policy CP57 to the Wiltshire Core Strategy. Similarly, the proposal is not designed to a high quality that reinforces local distinctiveness and would not reflect local heritage design and characteristics as is required by policy BE2 to the Calne Community Neighbourhood Plan.

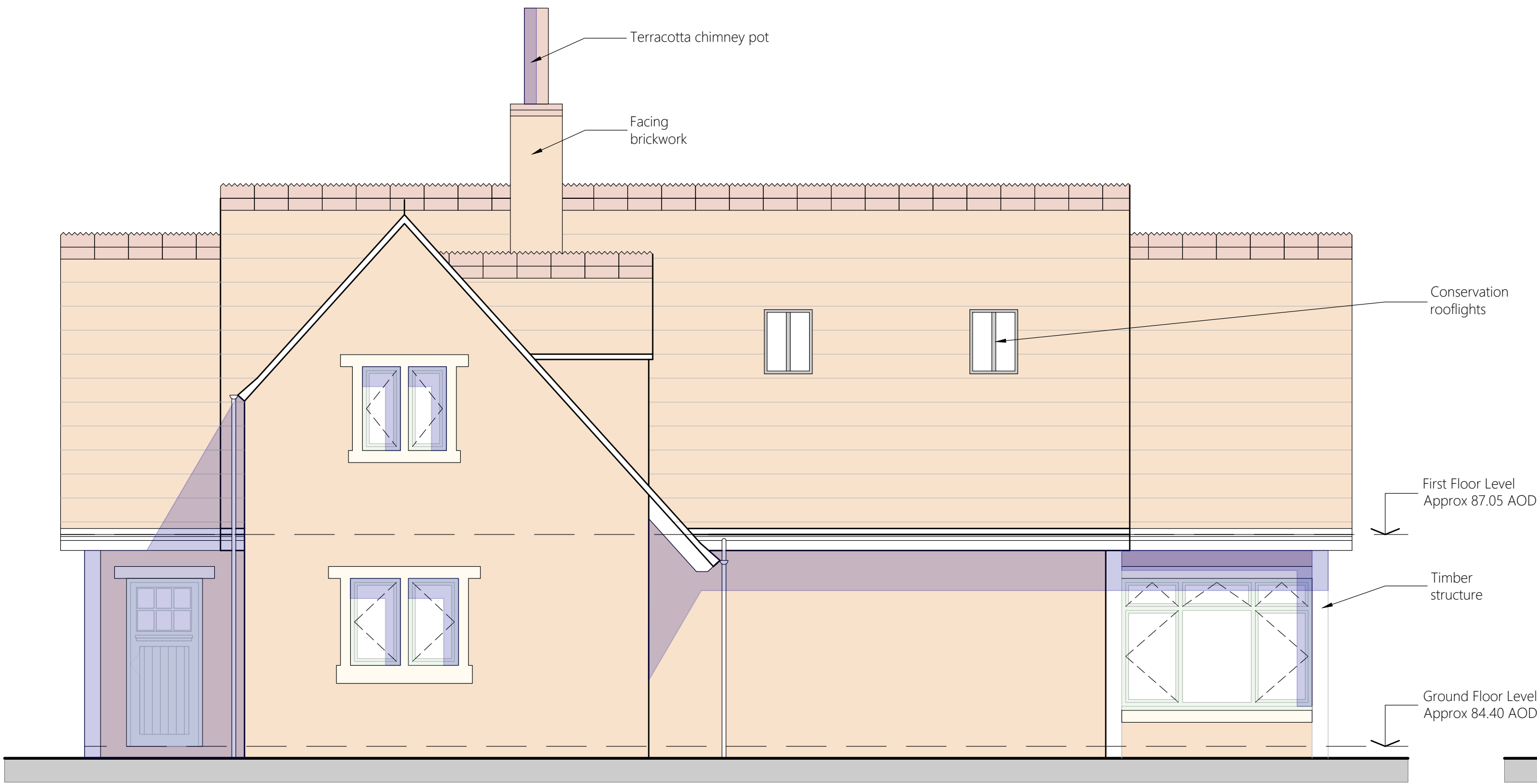
By reason of the very close proximity of surrounding residential development, the chosen layout and design, and position to the immediate rear of an established pattern of development, the proposal would result in an unacceptable impact upon the amenity and living conditions of both existing and future residents. Accordingly, the proposed development cannot be considered to meet with the requirements of policy CP57 to the Wiltshire Core Strategy. For the same reasons, neither does the proposal promote the health and well-being or a high standard of amenity as is required by section 12 to the NPPF.



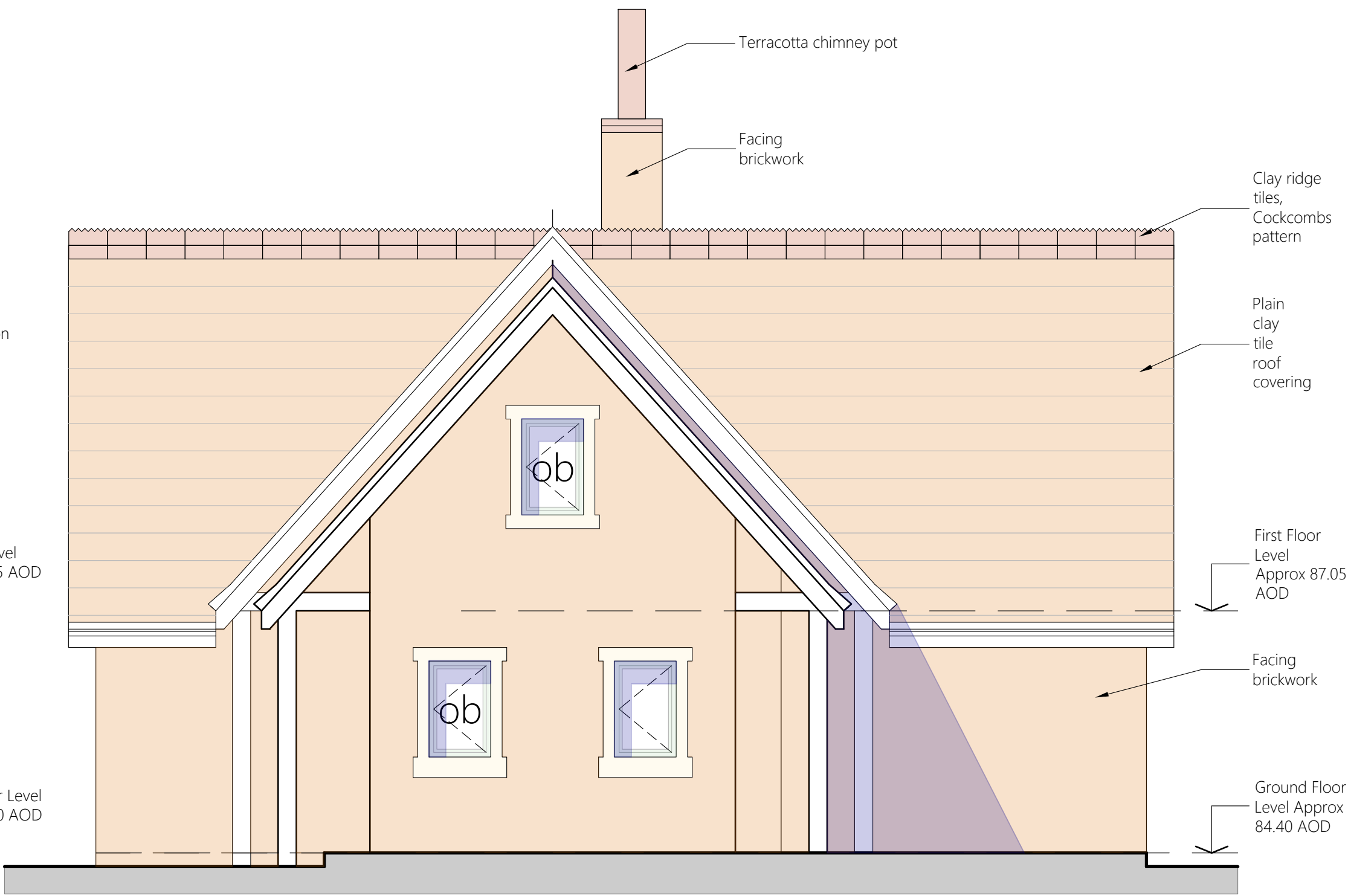
1. South East Elevation (Main Elevation)



2. South West Elevation



3. North West Elevation



4. North East Elevation

INSPIRE ARCHITECTS

Heywood House
Heywood
Wiltshire
BA13 4NA
info@inspirearchitects.co.uk
01749605006

GENERAL NOTES

All works proposed shall be conducted in accordance with the related H&S / CDM regulations. Where doubt arises over any aspect of safety, consult the principal designer.

Should any discrepancy be found on this drawing or related project information then the matter must be brought to the attention of Inspire Architects for resolution as soon as possible.

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Revision	Drawn	Checked	Date
P1	NC	NC/RT	01.06.21



PROJECT NAME
New Dwelling
11 Quemerford, Calne, SN11 0AR

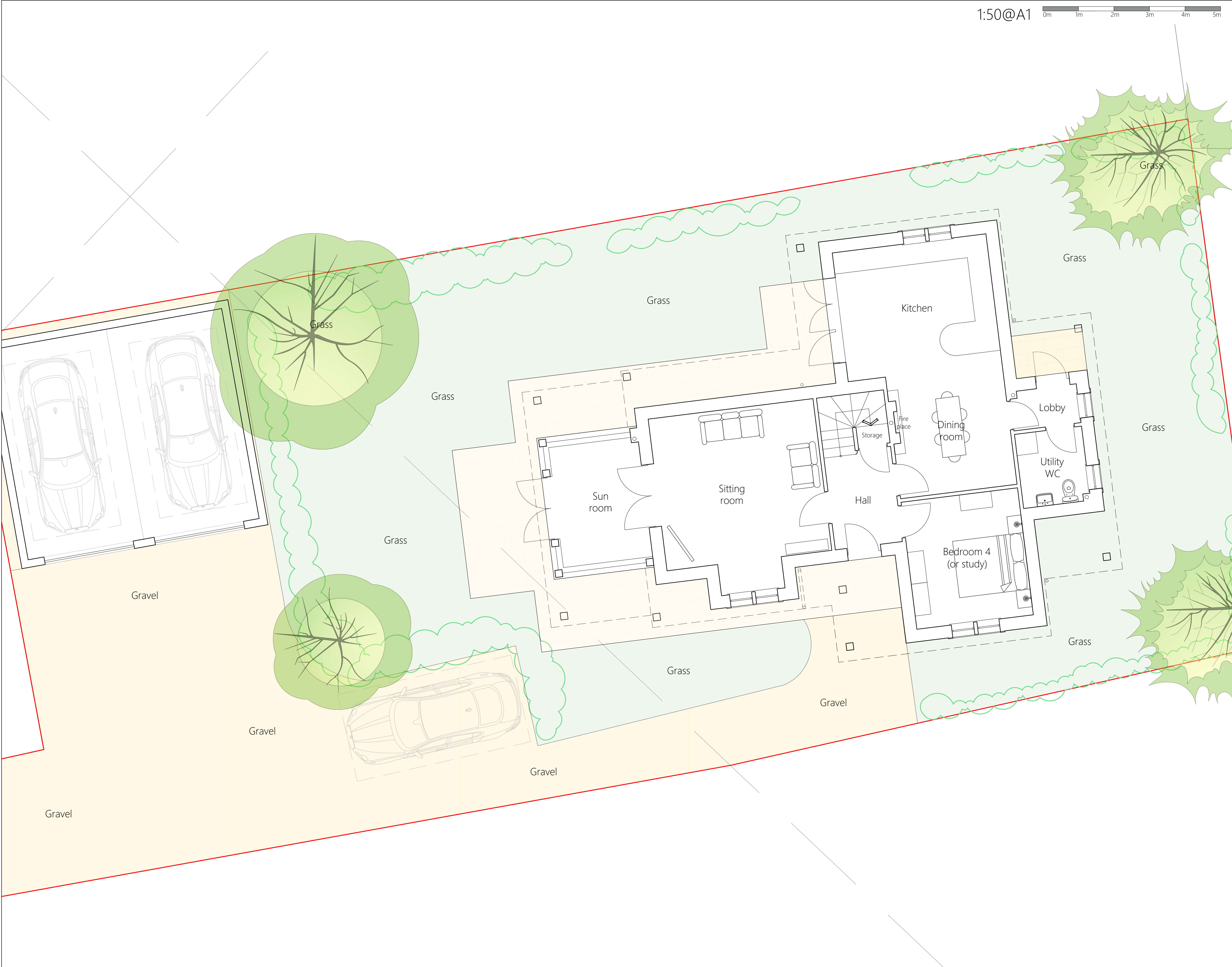
CLIENT
Box Property Group

SHEET NAME
House Elevations

STATUS
Planning

SHEET SIZE A1
SCALE 1:50 @A1

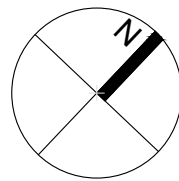
PROJECT NUMBER 2038.02
DRAWING NUMBER 500



1:50@A1



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P1	NC	NC/RT	01.06.21
Revision	Drawn	Checked	Date



PROJECT NAME
New Dwelling
11 Quemerford, Calne, SN11 0AR

CLIENT
Box Property Group

SHEET NAME
Site Plan
Property Layout

STATUS
Planning

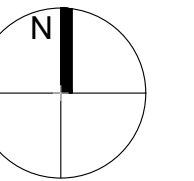
SHEET SIZE
A1

SCALE
1:50 @A1

PROJECT NUMBER
2038.02

DRAWING NUMBER
202

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info@inspirearchitects.co.uk
01749605006



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Proposed house.
Parking for 3no cars

All windows in this elevation designed to prevent overlooking to properties in Wessington Park. All windows to non-habitable space (bathrooms) have frosted glass. remaining window on ground floor is behind a tall fence.

New House

Existing 1.8m high fence

New Timber
5 Bar Gate

Existing house. Parking for
up to 4no cars.

Parking for existing property
(2no cars)

Existing

Parking for existing property
(2no cars)

Existing 1.8m high fence

Gravel

Gravel

Gravel

 Gravel

Existing 1.8m high fence

Area in application are and in the ownership of the proposed property to have vehicle crossing rights in favour of the existing house.

P1	NC	NC/RT	01.06.21
Revision	Drawn	Checked	Date



New Dwelling
11 Quemerford, Calne, SN11 0AR

Box Property Group

Site Plan
Proposed Arrangement

Planning

SHEET SIZE	SCALE
A1	1:125 @A1

PROJECT NUMBER	DRAWING NUMBER
2038.02	201

C. Application PL/2022/03438 Proposal Plans and Elevations

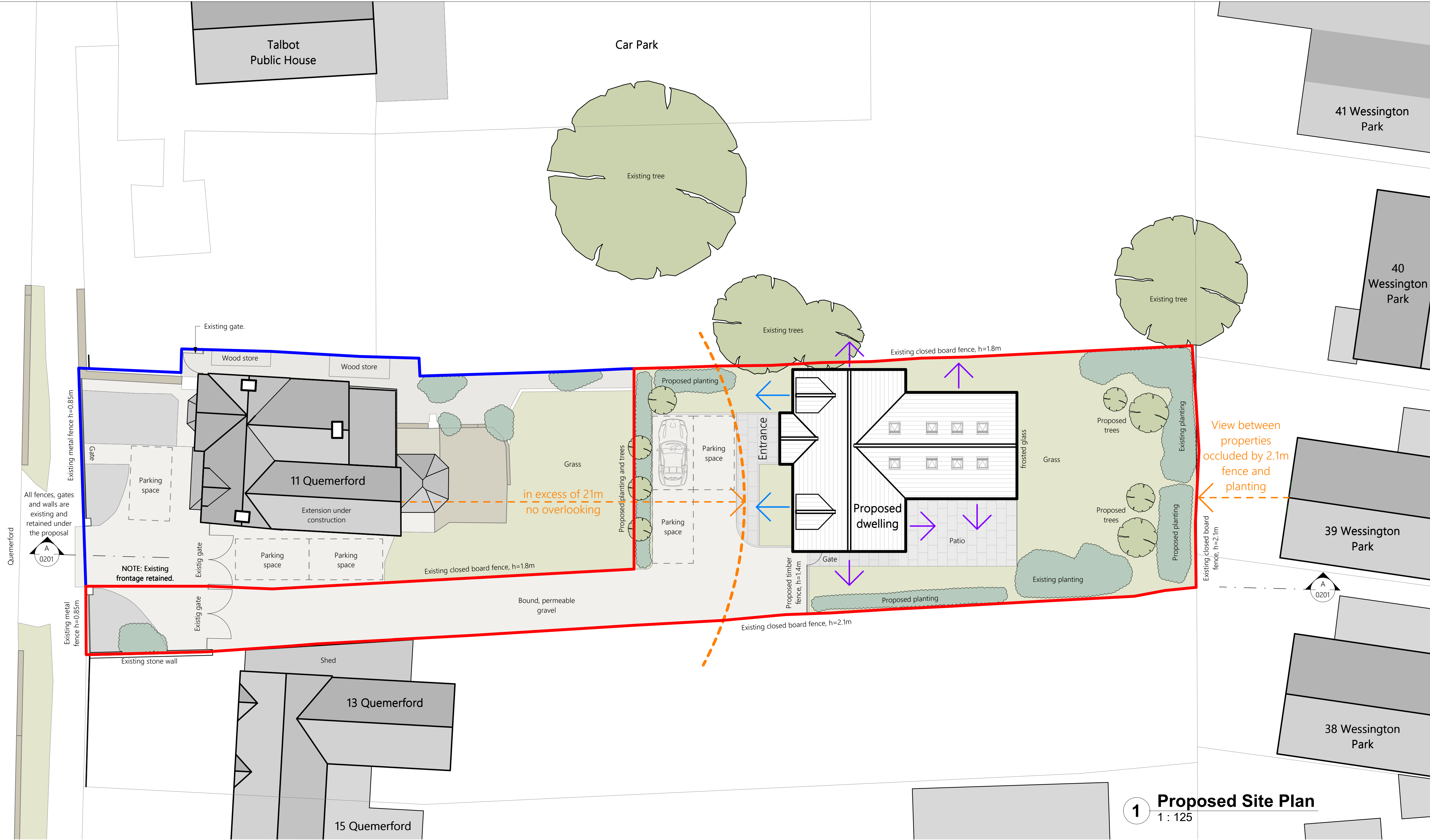


④ Timber fascia, off-white.

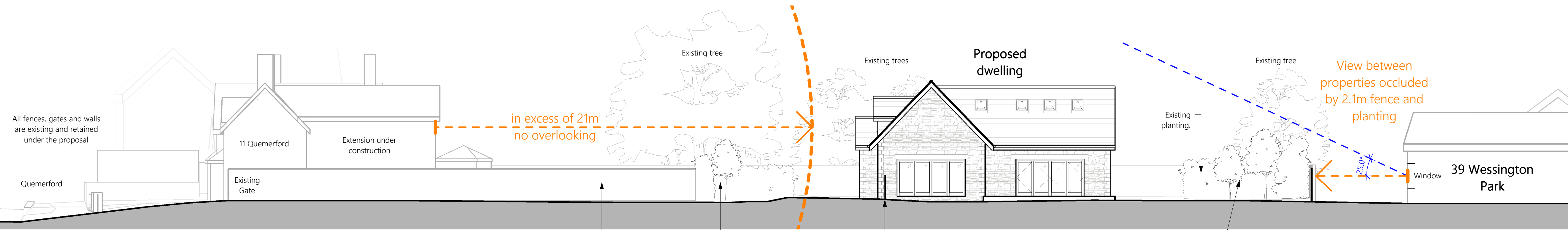


INSPIRE
Architects

DRAWING NUMBER
0500

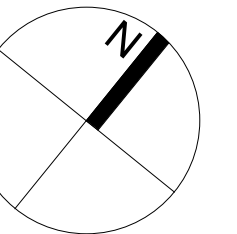


1 Proposed Site Plan
1 : 125



2 Proposed Site Section
1 : 125

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KEY:

- Application Boundary = Site Area = 647m²
- Adjoining land in ownership of applicant (449.4m²)
- Right to light indication line.

SITE INFORMATION:

11 Quemerford
Calne
SN11 0AR
Wiltshire

- Proposed ground floor windows only.
- Proposed ground floor and first floor windows.



PROJECT NAME
New Dwellinghouse 11 Quemerford

CLIENT
Box Property Group

SHEET NAME
Proposed Site Plan and Section

STATUS
Planning

SHEET SIZE
A1

SCALE
As indicated @ A1

REVISION DATE
28.04.2022

REVISION
P4

PROJECT NUMBER
2038.02

DRAWING NUMBER
0201

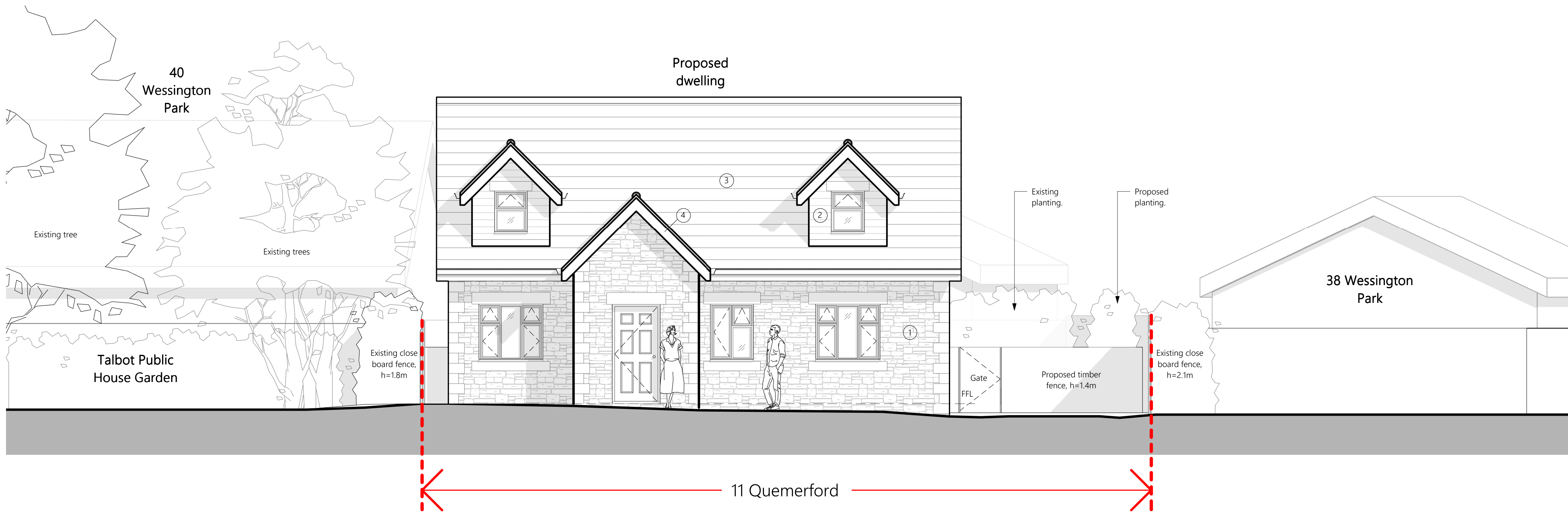
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 Proposed house.

DRAWING NUMBER



1 Proposed South-West Elevation
1 : 50



2 Proposed North-East Elevation
1 : 50

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0m 1m 2m 3m 4m 5m

GENERAL NOTES

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Key:

- 1 Stone, buff.
- 2 Timber cladding to dormers.
- 3 Clay roof tiles.
- 4 Timber fascia, off-white.

P2	MI	NC	28.04.2022
P1	MI	NC	11.04.2022
Revision	Drawn	Checked	Date



PROJECT NAME
New Dwellinghouse 11 Quemerford

CLIENT
Box Property Group

SHEET NAME
Proposed S-W and N-E Elevations

STATUS
Planning

SHEET SIZE
A1

SCALE
1 : 50 @ A1

REVISION DATE
28.04.2022

REVISION
P2

PROJECT NUMBER
2038.02

DRAWING NUMBER
0501

**D. Appeal Decision Ref: APP/Y3940/W/22/3303889 dated
06/03/23**



The Planning Inspectorate

3C Eagle Wing
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol
BS1 6PN

Direct Line: 0303 444 5356
Customer Services:
0303 444 5000

Email: west2@planninginspectorate.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/planning-inspectorate

Your Ref: PL/2022/03438

Our Ref: APP/Y3940/W/22/3303889

Heidy Wilson
Wiltshire Council
Monkton Park Office
Chippenham
Wiltshire
SN15 1ER

06 March 2023

Dear Heidy Wilson,

Town and Country Planning Act 1990
Appeal by Box Property Group Ltd
Site Address: 11 Quemerford, Calne, SN11 0AR

I enclose a copy of our Inspector's decision on the above appeal(s), together with a copy of the decision on an application for an award of costs.

If you wish to learn more about how an appeal decision or related cost decision may be challenged, or to give feedback or raise complaint about the way we handled the appeal(s), you may wish to visit our "Feedback & Complaints" webpage at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/planning-inspectorate/about/complaints-procedure>.

If you do not have internet access you may write to the Customer Quality Unit at the address above. Alternatively, if you would prefer hard copies of our information on the right to challenge and our feedback procedure, please contact our Customer Service Team on 0303 444 5000.

The Planning Inspectorate is not the administering body for High Court challenges and cannot change or revoke the outcome of an appeal decision. If you feel there are grounds for challenging the decision you may consider obtaining legal advice as only the High Court can quash the decision. If you would like more information on the strictly enforced deadlines and grounds for challenge, or a copy of the forms for lodging a challenge, please contact the Administrative Court on 020 7947 6655.

Guidance on Awards of costs, including how the amount of costs can be settled, can be located following the Planning Practice Guidance.

<http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/appeals/how-to-make-an-application-for-an-award-of-costs/>

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service. It would be appreciated if you could take some time to complete this short survey, which should take no more than a few minutes complete:

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Thank you in advance for taking the time to provide us with valuable feedback.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Hardy

Sarah Hardy

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-inspectorate-privacy-notice>

Where applicable, you can use the internet to submit documents, to see information and to check the progress of cases through GOV.UK. The address of the search page is - <https://www.gov.uk/appeal-planning-inspectorate>



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 February 2023

by Lewis Condé Msc, Bsc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6 March 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3940/W/22/3303889

11 Quemerford, Wiltshire, Calne SN11 0AR

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission
 - The appeal is made by Mr Alistair Fenwick, Box Property Group Ltd, against Wiltshire Council.
 - The application Ref PL/2022/03438, is dated 3 May 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as 'The erection of a new dwellinghouse'.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Whilst the Council did not issue a decision on the planning application, it has provided a statement setting out the reasons why it would have refused planning permission. This has informed the main issues of the appeal.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on: a) the character and appearance of the area; and b) the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers of nos. 11 and 13 Quemerford, with respect to noise and disturbance.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. The appeal site predominantly forms part of the rear garden of no. 11 Quemerford, which comprises a large detached, two-storey dwelling set within a sizeable plot. The surrounding area has a suburban residential character.
5. The section of Quemerford in which the appeal site sits is predominantly characterised by traditional residential development that varies in its precise style and appearance. Nevertheless, properties along Quemerford maintain a clear linear arrangement and, for the most part, have a strong presence within the streetscene. Indeed, most buildings along the neighbouring section of Quemerford are set out on a consistent building line, fronting onto the main highway, behind front gardens with strong boundary treatments. This creates a consistent pattern and grain of development.
6. The proposed dwelling would be accessed from the main highway via a driveway that would run between no.11 and no. 13 Quemerford (nos. 11 and

- 13), with the proposed dwelling sitting behind no.11. As such, it would result in a backland form of development that would be in marked contrast with the prevailing pattern of development.
7. I recognise that the existing boundary frontage of no. 11 is to be retained. Additionally, the appearance of the proposed dwelling, in terms of its overall scale, architectural features and use of materials are sympathetic to the surrounding built form. However, the proposed dwelling's position and lack of street frontage would be out of character with the underlying form of neighbouring development. Furthermore, although located to the rear of no. 11 and only 1.5 storeys in height, the incongruous relationship that the proposed dwelling would share with neighbouring properties would still be appreciable from the public domain.
 8. I observed that more recent housing development exists off Wessington Park largely to the rear of the appeal site, while there are also relatively modern housing estates located to the south, accessed via Trinity Park and Stockley Lane. The layout and built form in these areas diverge from that found along Quemerford, instead comprising of dwellings that are laid out in cul-de-sacs and closes with less defined building lines. However, the proposed development would primarily be viewed in its more immediate context on Quemerford.
 9. The appellant highlights that the surrounding area already contains backland forms of development. Notably, a nearby development to the rear of no. 7 Quemerford (no. 7) has been identified. However, I have been provided with very little detail of the circumstances of that permission. In addition, from my observations on site, the development to the rear of no. 7, when viewed from public vantage points, did not obviously read as a backland dwelling. This was due to its design being more akin to a sizeable single storey extension to no. 7. Conversely, where views of the appeal scheme would be possible from the public realm, its relationship with the surrounding built form would more clearly appear as a separate, incongruous, backland dwelling.
 10. Additional examples of backland developments in the wider area have also been brought to my attention by the appellant. Again, I have little information before me as to the circumstances of these developments. However, from the evidence before me and my observations on site, these were located some distance from the appeal site. As such, while there are already existing backland developments nearby, I still did not find these to be particularly representative of the predominant layout and character of the area in which the proposal would sit. Consequently, the presence of these other examples does not lead me to a different view in this case.
 11. Whilst I agree that the site is in a sustainable location for residential development, the proposed layout would nonetheless be uncharacteristic of the surrounding pattern of development.
 12. Overall, I find that the proposed development would be at odds with the prevailing layout of neighbouring built form. It would therefore have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. As such, it would conflict with Policy CP57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (adopted 2015) (Core Strategy). The policy establishes that, amongst other matters, new development must make efficient use of land whilst taking account of the characteristics of the site and its local context, to deliver development that

relates effectively to the immediate setting and to the wider character of the area.

13. The proposal would also conflict with Policy BE2 of the Calne Community Neighbourhood Plan (Made 2018) (Neighbourhood Plan). The policy provides amongst other matters, that all development must be designed to a high quality that reinforces local distinctiveness, including in relation to settlement patterns.
14. It would also not comply with the principles set out in Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which states that development should be sympathetic to local character.

Living Conditions

15. Core Strategy Policy CP57, amongst other matters, also requires that new developments have regard to their compatibility with adjoining uses and to the impact on the amenities of existing occupants.
16. The Council is satisfied that the proposed development would not result in a harmful loss of privacy or overbearing impacts to neighbouring properties. From the evidence before me and my observations on site I have found no reasons to disagree. The Council's concern instead lies with the relationship that the access drive and parking arrangements for the proposed dwelling would share with both nos. 11 and 13.
17. The parking spaces for the proposed dwelling would be sited adjacent to the rear garden boundary with no. 11. Although I note from the application drawings that sufficient space has been retained to incorporate planting alongside the rear boundary with no.11. This could be suitably secured by a planning condition on any grant of permission. Meanwhile, the proposed access drive would lead off the main highway and be routed between the flank walls of both no. 11 and 13. The access drive would be sited particularly close to the side elevation of no. 13, which contains windows at both ground and first floor level that face onto the proposed driveway.
18. Both the proposed access drive and parking spaces would therefore share a close relationship with the adjacent dwellings. However, it is not unusual for a driveway to a single dwelling to pass close to a neighbouring dwelling or its garden in suburban locations. The proposal would result in some additional brief noise associated with vehicle movements and also possible fleeting disturbance from headlights at night. However, given the scale of the development, and the likely associated level of vehicle movements, the overall level of noise and disturbance is likely to be somewhat limited in nature.
19. Consequently, I do not consider the proposal would result in significant noise or disturbance that would unacceptably harm the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers at nos. 11 and 13. I therefore find, in respect of safeguarding the living conditions of neighbouring residents, the proposal accords with Policy CP57 of the Core Strategy.

Other Matters

20. The Grade II Listed Talbot Public House lies closely to the north-west of the appeal site. The public house is already bound on three sides by residential properties, while the A4 highway lies immediately to its south. The Council has

not raised concerns in relation to the effects of the proposed development on the Grade II listed building. Nevertheless, I have a statutory duty, under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

21. Based on the evidence before me and my observations on site, the building is of 18th Century origin and has been constructed in coursed limestone rubble, brick gable stacks and a stone slate roof. It displays an attractive double frontage and has previously been extended to the rear, probably in the mid to late 19th Century. I deem that the significance of the listed building primarily lies in its age, architectural qualities, and historic interest as a public house on a main thoroughfare.
22. The overall scale of the proposed development, its use, and relationship with the listed building is such that I am satisfied that the development would preserve the setting of the listed building. It would have a neutral effect that would have no material impact on its setting and significance, nor lessen the ability to identify its historic nature.
23. I note the appellant's frustrations with the way the Council dealt with the application, particularly its lack of communication. However, this is a matter for the Council to address, and I have determined the appeal on its own merits.

Planning Balance

24. The Council acknowledge that it is unable to demonstrate a 5-year supply of housing sites. Paragraph 11(d)ii of the Framework therefore applies. This requires an assessment of the proposal against the policies of the Framework taken as a whole.
25. Whilst paragraph 60 of the Framework refers to significantly boosting the supply of housing the provision of one additional unit would make little meaningful difference. When judged against some of the core planning principles, the proposal would perform well in that it would provide a new dwelling, in a sustainable location and make efficient use of land. However, good design is also a key aspect of sustainable development.
26. The proposal would provide a small social benefit through the provision of a new dwelling. It would also provide economic benefits through the creation of employment during the construction process, and further spend of residents in the local economy. However, given the scale of the proposed development each of these associated benefits would be individually and cumulatively modest.
27. The appellant has also identified various other attributes associated with the proposed development. These include that it would comply with all national space standards, is designed to protect neighbouring amenity, would actively promote the use of alternative sustainable modes of transport, and is also policy compliant in terms of archaeology, heritage, drainage, and ecology matters. However, these are each to be expected of new development proposals. Accordingly, they are neutral matters in the planning balance as opposed to benefits.
28. Against the above, the harm to the character and appearance of the area identified would be significant. As a result, the environmental role of sustainable development would not be achieved. Notably, the Framework sets

an expectation that development should be well designed so that it is sympathetic to local character, including the surrounding built environment. Policies CP57 of the Core Strategy and BE2 of the Neighbourhood Plan are therefore consistent with the Framework. Even taking account of the Council's failure to deliver sufficient housing, the conflict between the proposal and the development plan should be given significant weight in this instance.

29. Overall, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole, I find that the adverse impacts of the proposed development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. Consequently, the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply.

Conclusion

30. The appeal scheme conflicts with the development plan as a whole and there are no other considerations, including the Framework's provisions, which outweigh this finding. Therefore, for the reasons given above and considering all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

Lewis Condé

INSPECTOR



Costs Decision

Site visit made on 10 February 2023

by Lewis Condé Msc, Bsc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6 March 2023

Costs application in relation to APP/Y3940/W/22/3303889

11 Quemerford, Wiltshire, Calne SN11 0AR

- The application is made under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, sections 78, 322 and Schedule 6, and the Local Government Act 1972, section 250(5).
 - The application is made by Mr Alistair Fenwick, Box Property Group Ltd, against Wiltshire Council.
 - The appeal was against the non-determination of an application under Section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) for 'The erection of a new dwellinghouse'.
-

Decision

1. The application for an award of costs is refused.

Preliminary Matter

2. The applicant seeks a full award of costs and has highlighted that the interest on the purchase price of the property and loss of market value on the development are sought to be re-couped.
3. However, the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) is quite clear that costs that are unrelated to the appeal are ineligible. Awards cannot extend to compensation for indirect losses, such as those which may result from alleged delay in obtaining planning permission. As such, should costs have been awarded, these would only relate to unnecessary or wasted expense related to the appeal process.

Reasons

4. The PPG advises that, irrespective of the outcome of the appeal, costs may only be awarded against a party who has behaved unreasonably and thereby caused the party applying for costs to incur unnecessary expense in the appeal process.
5. The appellant contends that an award of costs is justified on the grounds of non-determination of the application and due to a lack of dialogue from the local planning authority (LPA) during the application process.
6. The PPG further advises that if it is clear that the LPA fail to determine an application within the time limits, it should give the applicant a proper explanation as to why there is a delay in determination. Furthermore, in an appeal against non-determination, the LPA should explain its reasons for not reaching a decision within the relevant time limit.

7. The LPA acknowledges that it was unable to determine the application within the statutory time limit, citing that a lack of resources contributed to the delay and level of communication the applicant received. However, the LPA contests that it failed to engage with the applicant, highlighting that it responded to a request for a meeting on site by explaining the resourcing issues that the Council faced.
8. The applicant suggests that there was a wider lack of engagement from the Council from then on after, however, has not provided any specific details (e.g. communications that went unanswered). It is also claimed that the applicant was unaware that the Council's resourcing issues was specifically affecting his own application.
9. I consider it good practice for LPAs to explicitly inform an applicant when there will be delays in processing of an application(s) and the reasons for the delays. It is also clear that the applicant should not have to chase the LPA to issue its decision. However, I am mindful that numerous LPAs are facing similar resourcing difficulties alongside high volumes of work. As such, whilst the actions of the Council in this instance may be frustrating to the applicant, it is not necessarily symptomatic of unreasonable behaviour on the Council's part.
10. Furthermore, the LPA has prepared an appeal statement that has set out the reasons why it would have refused the application. The statement is detailed and precisely sets out the relevant policies of the development plan that the proposal would conflict with. It also pays due regard to national planning policy. As such, even if the application had been determined in a timely manner by the LPA, an appeal would still have been necessary for the proposed development.
11. As will be seen from my appeal decision, I have found that the LPA had reasonable concerns regarding the impact of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area which justified dismissal of the appeal.
12. It therefore follows that I cannot agree unnecessary expense during the appeal process has been demonstrated, because of unreasonable behaviour by the LPA. An award for costs is therefore not justified.

Lewis Condé

INSPECTOR

**E. Appeal Decision Ref: APP/Y3940/W/21/3275053 dated
23/11/2023**



Appeal Decision

Hearing Held on 4 October 2023

Site visits made on 3 & 4 October 2023

by Hollie Nicholls FdA MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 November 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3940/W/21/3275053

Land at Purton Road, Swindon

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Beachcroft Land Ltd, Carole Ann Lindsey, John Webb & Sally Ballard against the decision of Wiltshire Council.
 - The application Ref 20/10523/OUT, dated 25 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 9 April 2021.
 - The development proposed is an outline application for a residential development of up to 79 dwellings and associated infrastructure with all matters reserved with the exception of access on land at Purton Road Swindon.
 - This decision supersedes that issued on 13 July 2022. That decision on the appeal was quashed by order of the High Court¹.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for outline application for a residential development of up to 79 dwellings and associated infrastructure with all matters reserved with the exception of access on land at Purton Road Swindon in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 20/10523/OUT, dated 25 November 2020, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Procedural Matters

2. As above, the original Decision was quashed owing to a procedural fairness issue. I refer to that decision as the 2022 Decision. An earlier appeal decision² for a similar scheme on the appeal site was issued in 2020 which I refer to as the 2020 Decision.
3. In view of the outline nature of the application with only access detailed at this stage, all plans, save for the site location plan³ and access arrangement plan⁴, have been treated as indicative.
4. A S106 agreement dated 8 February 2022 (the Principal S106) had previously been submitted to address the third reason for refusal (RfR). A supplementary unilateral undertaking (UU) (Supplemental UU) was submitted shortly after the close of the hearing and is dated 12 October 2023. I deal with these further below.

¹ High Court Order dated 4 October 2022

² APP/Y3940/W/18/3202551

³ Plan Ref P18-1721_06-2 dated 20/11/2020

⁴ Plan Ref 2900.07B dated 15/02/2021

5. Since the 2022 Decision, a zone of influence (ZoI) has been designated around the *North Meadow and Clattinger Farm Special Area of Conservation* (SAC). Through its position within the outer ZoI (i.e. within 9.4km) and the additional residents that would be drawn to the development, the proposal would be likely to result in harm to the integrity of the SAC. Thus, it has been necessary to consider this as a main issue in the appeal.
6. Due to a number of material changes of circumstance that arose in between the original hearing and the resumption, the parties submitted an updated *Statement of Common Ground – Housing Need and Supply* (SoCGH) and updated statements pertaining to their respective positions on this topic. The original *Statement of Common Ground* (SoCG)⁵ was also taken into consideration.

Main Issues

7. The main issues in this appeal are:
 - whether the location of the development accords with the development plan;
 - the effects of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area;
 - whether the Council can demonstrate an adequate supply of housing land; and
 - the effects of the proposal on the SAC.

Reasons

Location of development

8. The residential estates around the Cowleaze area and Mustang Way on the western edge of Swindon are the closest settled areas to the site. Whilst the site closely adjoins the urban area of Swindon, it falls within the unitary authority area of Wiltshire Council. Swindon falls under the jurisdiction of Swindon Borough Council. In this context, any housing delivered on the site would contribute to that required by Wiltshire Council, but any future residents would have a greater reliance on Swindon for its employment opportunities and day-to-day facilities. The points about the housing more likely serving Swindon and the reliance by future residents on Swindon was made in both the 2020 and 2022 Decisions and my opinion is that these are logical conclusions to reach given the site's proximity to the same.
9. The Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) (CS) and the Purton Neighbourhood Plan (Made 2018) (NP), the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan (WHSAP) (2020) and the saved policies of the North Wiltshire Local Plan (LP) are the key documents forming the development plan for the area.
10. Policy CP1 of the CS sets out the settlement strategy for the area, identifying a hierarchy of settlements to which development will be directed with the aim of achieving sustainable development. The closest Wiltshire-based settlement of Purton, some distance from the site, is classified in the CS as a 'Large Village' which offers a limited range of employment, services and facilities and where developments will be limited to that which will meet the housing needs of the settlements.

⁵ Signed November 2021

11. CS Policy CP2 provides a more detailed delivery strategy for at least 42,000 homes, disaggregated into a minimum housing requirement across four identified Housing Market Areas (HMAs). The HMA relevant to the site, the North and West Wiltshire HMA, is to receive the largest proportion of the housing growth over the plan area. Policy CP19 sets out the target for housing in the *Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Area*, apportioning the greater amounts to the main named settlements, and leaving a residual figure of 345 dwellings for the remainder of the Community Area for the plan period.
12. The NP makes various allocations for at least 94 dwellings over the plan period to 2026 through Policies 13 and 14, including on sites outside of the defined settlement as part of a proactive plan-led approach despite the targets in the CS for the Community Area having been achieved. In any event, when read as a whole, it is clear that the NP is not supportive of development outside of its allocations.
13. Some exceptions apply to housing in the countryside provided for within CS (paragraph 4.25) and saved Policy H4 of the LP, though none are relevant to the appeal proposal. It is on the above basis that the SoCG sets out that the appeal site falls outside of any defined development limits identified within the CS, WHSAP and NP, constitutes open countryside in planning policy terms and is in conflict with the spatial strategy and distribution aims of the development plan.
14. The CS adoption was premised upon an early review that would seek to address the objectively assessed need for housing, which was at that time a figure of around 2,000 homes greater than the 42,000 homes included within the CS. Though the WHSAP, the Chippenham Site Allocations Plan and a number of neighbourhood plans have been adopted, the review of the CS has only recently led to the publication of the Regulation 19 draft Wiltshire Local Plan (eWLP) in September 2023, the consultation on which was ongoing throughout September and October of 2023. Though the parties note that the site would move into the presently untested Swindon Housing Market Area under the eWLP, there is agreement that the eWLP can only attract limited weight at the present time.
15. Consequently, the agreed position of the parties and a view that I have also reached independently is that the appeal proposal is in conflict with the strategy of the NP, Policies CP1, CP2, CP13 of the CS and Policy H4 of the LP.

Character and appearance

16. The site itself has a pastoral nature and connects with the wider countryside beyond, turning into a woodland backdrop in views from the appeal site. It is separated from the village of Purton by some distance, whereas the closest adjoining urban edge of Swindon exists on the other side of the railway at Cowleaze and across the other side of Purton Road at Mustang Way. It does not display any particularly valuable features and its sense of tranquillity is disrupted by the presence of housing and the busy road network nearby.
17. I noted on my visit that the undulating topography of the area and the existence of areas of woodland and trees means that the site is relatively enclosed in a visual sense and that views towards it are limited to areas from the railway, the railway bridge along Old Purton Road, in glimpses from Old Purton Road and the Cowleaze area. From all of these respective viewpoints,

despite the enclosure by trees along many hedgerow boundaries, viewers are aware of the urban fringe context in which they are positioned or are passing through.

18. The appeal proposal would change the scene from one of an open, undeveloped pastoral field to an urban form of development. It would also create an impact from the highly engineered access onto Purton Road, necessitating an area of Old Purton Road being realigned as well.
19. In the SoCG, the parties agreed with the Inspector's conclusions in the 2020 Decision that the urbanisation of part of the route along Old Purton Road and the breaking through of the field boundary would be detrimental to users' experiences of it and that there would be a degree of harm from the views of housing on currently open fields. The magnitude and extent of harm is agreed between the parties as limited and very localised.
20. I have reviewed the respective cases before the Inspector in the 2022 Decision and the reasoning behind the findings of considerable harm affecting more than a very localised area in that Decision. My assessment of the site and its surroundings is that the urbanisation of the appeal site would still appear logical and would not undermine the appreciation of the countryside beyond Purton Road and the railway. The landscape character and appearance effects would be localised, though there would be a degree of harm from the engineering works and opening up of Purton Road and Old Purton Road to facilitate the access. Otherwise, I envisage the housing would take on a character much like that of surrounding neighbourhoods, within which landscaping would have an important role to play in providing an appropriate transition between the development and adjoining countryside.
21. By reason of the harm to the character and appearance of the area, albeit limited, the proposal is in conflict with, in particular, Core Policy 51 CP51. This Policy requires development to protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character.

Housing land supply

22. The *SoCGH* sets out the parties' agreement that the Council can demonstrate somewhere between a 4.22 year land supply with a shortfall of 1,677 homes and a 4.58 year land supply with a shortfall of 900 homes against the minimum local housing need across Wiltshire in the context of paragraph 74 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Neither party considers it necessary to further narrow the difference between their respective positions and nor do I.
23. To provide context to the 5 year supply position, the *SoCGH* also sets out that the Council has been unable to demonstrate a five-year land supply since February 2020. An Action Plan (2020) sought to tackle the issue by encouraging the positive consideration of "*speculative applications where there are no major policy obstacles material to the decision other than a site being outside settlement boundaries or unallocated*".
24. It is also agreed in the *SoCGH* that a five-year land supply will not be able to be restored at least until the eWLP is adopted, which according to the latest Local Development Scheme, would be the final quarter of 2024 at the earliest.

25. I have seen and heard evidence about the housing land supply position in Swindon and the incomparability of the supply position statements on a like-for-like basis. Whilst any housing delivered on the site would adjoin Swindon and its occupiers would inevitably look to it for employment and facilities, it would not contribute to the supply on which Swindon Borough Council could rely.
26. In view of the above, a key agreement between the parties is that given the Council's inability to demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing land, paragraph 11 d) of the Framework is engaged in this case. I carry this into the planning balance below.

Effects on the SAC

27. The SAC is split into two units; North Meadow and Clattinger Farm. It is designed under the Habitats Regulations⁶ for its lowland hay meadow land cover (*Alopecurus pratensis*, *Sanguisorba officinalis*), and is also notable for its high proportion of snake's head fritillary, *Fritillaria meleagris*, which is characteristic of damp lowland meadows.
28. Much of the North Meadow unit of the SAC is accessible to the public as Common Land, with the Thames Valley Path and North Meadow National Nature Reserve offering extensive recreational walking routes. The reported increases in visitor numbers from an increase in the local population and increased propensity to visit the countryside has threatened the condition of the SAC through increased trampling and associated soil and vegetative changes, littering and nutrient changes from dog fouling. As the proposal would result in an increase in the population within the outer ZoI, it has the potential to result in likely significant effects in the absence of mitigation when considered either alone or in combination with other projects. An Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations is consequently required.
29. The *North Meadow and Clattinger Farm Special Area of Conservation Interim Recreation Mitigation Strategy* (May 2023) (Interim Strategy) sets out an agreed strategy across the authority areas of Swindon, Wiltshire and the Cotswolds in order to mitigate the potential in-combination impacts of new housing development in the vicinity of the SAC over the next five years. Within the outer ZoI, i.e., 4.2 – 9.4km from the North Meadow component of the SAC, all new residential development will be expected to provide mitigation in the form of contributions towards *Strategic Access Management and Monitoring* (SAMM) measures. The SAMM contribution amount has been set at £323 per net additional dwelling towards measures such as: employment of an on-site warden; awareness raising campaigns; temporary walk boards and other similar infrastructure, and monitoring. Such contributions are required by way of S106 agreement or similar deed constructed as such under S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act.
30. Schedule 5 of the completed Supplemental UU secures the payment of the mitigation contribution to the Council prior to the commencement of development. The definition of the mitigation contribution sets out that it is to be used for expenditure on environmental and ecological mitigation measures for the impact of the development on the SAC which will be in the control of

⁶ The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended

the Council in accordance with the Interim Strategy which it intends to adopt imminently, following the precedent set by the partner authorities.

31. I have consulted Natural England (NE) as the appropriate nature conservation body. NE has confirmed that the relevant Protected Site and qualifying features have been appropriately identified and that it is satisfied that the avoidance and mitigation measures secured are appropriate to avoid an adverse effect.
32. As competent authority, subject to the terms of the Supplemental UU, I am satisfied that the proposed development would not adversely affect the integrity of the SAC and would thus accord with the expectations of the Habitats Regulations.

Other Matters

Ecology

33. The findings in the 2020 Decision in relation to ecology and the County Wildlife Site (CWS) within which the site sits were based on surveys previously undertaken and encapsulated in a report dated 2019⁷. The SoCG outlines the parties' agreement that the comprehensive surveys completed in 2019 remained valid until the start of the 2022 survey season. The resumed hearing took place in October 2023 and was attended by the project ecologist who had previously undertaken the comprehensive surveys. He offered his view that the characteristics of the site and its ecological value have not changed in the intervening period and that the conclusions of the original surveys remain valid.
34. The agreed suggested conditions set out the requirement for the approval of a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) which shall be informed by up to date ecology surveys prior to commencement of development. Therefore, I can be satisfied that the design, ecological enhancement and management measures proposed to be secured by way of condition would outweigh the loss of part of the CWS and provide protection for priority species and habitats. Whilst the parties agreed to attach significant weight to the potential ecological benefits, my view is that these attract limited positive weight.

Highways Access

35. It is common ground between the parties that the scheme would not result in unacceptable highways impacts in relation to the capacity of the surrounding road network or the operation of any particular junctions. Despite that concerns have been raised locally in connection with the waiting times to emerge onto Purton Road (B4534) in the vicinity of the site, my view having regard to the evidence is that there would not be a materially harmful effect on the surrounding road network. The Local Elected Member requested a set of traffic lights in the vicinity of the access, but the requirement for such has not been raised by the Council's highways specialist and I find no reason to reach an alternative conclusion.
36. In respect of the proposed access arrangement, a local resident that lives adjacent to the site in *Elborough Bridge Cottage* has raised concerns. He runs a business that involves the use of unusually large vehicles, i.e., a 'Hummer

⁷ 2019 Ecology Surveys

Limousine' and other limousines. The vehicles access his dwelling and business premises through Old Purton Road and into a walled and gated entrance accessed from it.

37. As depicted in the submitted access arrangement plan⁸, the access to the site would involve cutting through Old Purton Road, both realigning it on a curve and providing a crossing point and altering levels so that the junction arrangement ties in with Purton Road at an elevated level. These works would adjoin the access to Elborough Bridge Cottage. Evidence⁹ submitted on behalf of the local resident indicates that the works would force changes to the way that the business currently operates. It also asserts that limousines would be forced to partially encroach onto the opposite carriageway on exiting Old Purton Road and taking up the entire width of the realigned Old Purton Road on navigating the proposed bend.
38. My site visit involved looking at the area to the side of Elborough Bridge Cottage where the business's vehicles are stored, which is large enough to allow for vehicle manoeuvring to facilitate exiting in forward gear. Whilst vehicles are initially washed and maintained in front of the Cottage, it was indicated that vehicles have to exit the Cottage gates and make a return trip up and down Old Purton Road to access the hardstanding parking area to the side. This to me seems rather illogical and increases the instances of vehicles and pedestrians and cyclists coming into contact along a route which currently has relatively limited vehicle use.
39. It appeared to me that there is sufficient space on the hardstanding to the side of the Cottage for washing and maintenance to be undertaken and I do not consider it unreasonable to suggest that such an adjustment could be made if necessary. The widening of the Cottage access through partially realigning one side of the stone boundary wall would be an alternative solution, should it be required.
40. In terms of overrunning into the opposite carriageway on exiting Old Purton Road, I consider that a similar scenario already likely occurs when the Hummer Limousine is used to exit Old Purton Road and turn left to join the roundabout connecting Purton Road with Sparcells Drive, Mead Way and Cowleaze. Though it would be a suboptimal arrangement, the relative infrequency of trips involving this vehicle suggest to me that the instances of conflict would be minimal, such as to equate to negligible highway safety effects. Similarly, the instances of an opposing vehicle needing to pass limousines whilst navigating the bend are unlikely, given that Elborough Bridge Cottage is the only dwelling served by Old Purton Road.
41. My overall conclusion on the access arrangement with Elborough Bridge Cottage is that there would be negligible effects on highway safety as a result of the development. The detailed engineering solution for the access would be prepared at a future stage and could optimise the available space and level change to simplify the access and egress manoeuvres.
42. I have also had regard to the potential disruption that would occur during any construction phase. There would be a need for arrangements to be made for

⁸ Plan Ref 2900.07B dated 15/02/2021

⁹ Technical Note – 6036/02 (dated March 2023)

continued access during the construction phase which could be managed by way of construction method statement condition. Any inconvenience of this nature would be of a temporary duration until such time as the permanent access were complete and available for use.

Other matters raised for consideration

43. I have taken account of the views of local residents and elected representatives in connection with the appeal, covering a range of topics, including the main issues as addressed above. The request made at the hearing for contributions towards local facilities and services administered by the Parish Council and Local Elected Member would be collected through the Community Infrastructure Levy charging regime which is in operation, in addition to any financial contributions to mitigate the effects of the development to be secured by way of a planning obligation.
44. I heard from a local resident at the hearing that a five year supply of housing land could be demonstrated by the Council, contrary to the acceptance otherwise in the SoCG. Though he referred to evidence he had offered to substantiate this in connection with two other appeals, that has not been provided to be in writing or detailed more beyond that offered at the hearing. In the absence of robust evidence to the contrary, my view is that a five year supply of housing cannot be demonstrated.
45. A number of local residents raised concerns that developing the site would diminish their enjoyment of it and adjoining areas of countryside. However, it was made clear to me that the site is not a publicly open space and that any access to it by walkers has been tolerated, rather than granted formally. The loss of a public space is therefore not a consideration of relevance.

Planning obligations

46. The Principal S106 provides for 40% affordable housing distributed in clusters on site, with a 60/40 tenure split between affordable rent and shared ownership; the provision of 8 self-build/custom build plots; financial contributions towards early years education facility provision; waste recycling facilities; public open space, play equipment and ongoing maintenance of the same. With particular regard to the affordable housing, the Principal S106 requires that said dwellings are allocated in accordance with the 'Allocations Policy' in the administrative area of Wiltshire. This will mean that the 40% affordable housing could assist in meeting the area's affordable housing need which the SoCGH notes has been described in various recent appeal decisions¹⁰ as '*demonstrable*', '*pressing*', '*pronounced*' and '*substantial*'.
47. I am satisfied that the terms of the Section 106 agreement are necessary in order to make the development acceptable in planning terms. It therefore accords with the test for obligations set out in the Framework.
48. The supplemental UU provides specifically for the financial contribution towards mitigating the effects of increased recreational pressures on the SAC. For reasons set out above, I also consider that this obligation is necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms. The two planning obligations

¹⁰ Including appeal Refs: APP/Y3940/W/22/3312268, APP/Y3940/W/21/3275477, APP/Y3940/W/19/3236860, APP/Y3940/W/21/3278256, APP/Y3940/Q/21/3278923 & APP/Y3940/W/21/3282365

would serve independent functions, but both would be equally binding on the Appellant company and any successors in title. I therefore take them both into account.

Planning Balance

49. In view of its location outside of any defined settlement or specifically allocated site, the appeal proposal is in conflict with the NP, Policies CP1, CP2, CP19 of the CS and Policy H4 of the LP. Whilst these policies are the most important policies for determining the appeal, the conflict with them attracts reduced weight on the basis of the absence of a five year housing land supply.
50. There would also be harm to the character and appearance of the area in conflict with Policy CP51 of the CS, tempered by the localised and limited degree of harm that would occur.
51. I acknowledge the agreement that the site is in a sustainable location on the edge of Swindon with good accessibility to services, facilities and employment opportunities. This attracts positive weight in favour of the scheme, though to the extent that it would reduce the acknowledged problem of out commuting from the area is less clear.
52. In my view, the agreed shortfall in supply of between 900 and 1,677 homes is compelling. The key benefit of the scheme and one which attracts substantial weight is therefore the delivery of up to 79 dwellings which would contribute to redressing the housing land supply deficit. Given the agreement of the Appellant to a condition requiring reserved matters applications to be submitted within 18 months of the grant of any outline planning permission, and absence of apparent constraints to early delivery, it appears to me that the delivery of housing on the site could commence without undue delays.
53. The scheme would also make a valuable contribution towards meeting the area's compelling affordable housing needs, offering two tenure options and at agreed affordability levels. This is also a benefit of the scheme that attracts substantial weight. The provision of self-build/custom build plots is another positive aspect of the scheme, although proportionately less so given the modest numbers of plots that would be provided.
54. There would be economic benefits from the construction phase of the scheme and also from the subsequent occupation of the dwellings. Whilst I acknowledge that the construction phase economic benefits would be temporary in duration, when taken together with the longer-term economic advantages to the area from additional residents, they are collectively capable of attracting great weight. I also attach limited weight to the ecological benefits of the scheme.
55. The use of planning conditions and obligations to secure mitigation measures would offset the impacts of the development, but they are of overall neutral effect on the planning balance. I place the provision of drainage infrastructure into this category of being of overall neutral effect.
56. In my view, the totality of the considerations and benefits that would be generated by the development significantly and demonstrably outweigh the adverse impacts when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. My conclusion is, therefore, that the appeal should be determined

other than in accordance with the development plan and should therefore succeed.

Conditions

57. I have considered the suggested planning conditions in the context of the Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance. Editing has been undertaken where necessary in the interests of clarity and precision.
58. As the scheme is in outline form, conditions are necessary to secure the specified reserved matters and within the agreed shortened timeframe of 18 months to expedite delivery. A condition is also necessary to set out the standard time period for commencement after approval of the reserved matters and to specify which are the approved plans, in the interests of certainty.
59. In the interests of the ecological value and character and appearance of the area, a condition requiring a LEMP is necessary. Similarly, in order to protect existing trees during the construction phase, a condition is necessary to secure the provision of protective measures for existing trees. On the same vein, a landscape phasing plan is necessary to secure by way of planning condition to ensure a high quality of development.
60. Given the potential of the site to contain archaeological features, a condition is required to secure an archaeological investigation throughout the construction phase.
61. In order to protect the environmental quality and amenities of local residents during the construction phase, conditions are required to secure a construction environmental management plan. For reasons of protecting the ecological value of the site, a condition is necessary prohibiting the installation of any external lighting unless a strategy is submitted and approved.
62. To maintain the safety and efficiency of the highway network, a condition is necessary to secure the construction detail of the access. A condition is also required to secure a method statement detailing construction phase arrangements, including for residents of Elborough Bridge Cottage.
63. In order to minimise the carbon impacts of the development, a condition is necessary to secure ultra-low energy infrastructure within the scheme. For similar reasons, a condition requiring the approval and implementation of a residential travel plan is also necessary.
64. A condition is necessary to ensure that surface water drainage works are undertaken to avoid flooding or other related environmental effects.
65. Lastly, in the interests of securing the satisfactory living conditions of future occupiers, a condition is necessary to ensure the employment of appropriate noise minimisation measures where necessary.

Conclusion

66. For the foregoing reasons, the appeal is allowed.

Hollie Nicholls
INSPECTOR

APPEARANCES

FOR THE APPELLANT:

Mr Killian Garvey	Kings Council
Mr Neil Tilley	Pegasus Planning
Mr Guy Wakefield	Ridge and Partners Planning
Mr Ian Thomas	Appellant

FOR THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:

Mr Piers Riley-Smith	Kings Council
Mr Adrian Walker	Wiltshire Council
Mr Christopher Roe	Wiltshire Council

INTERESTED PARTIES:

Mr Darren Smith	Local resident and business owner
Mr Frances Molland	Local resident

DOCUMENTS:

Document 1	Report on the examination into the Wiltshire Core Strategy (1 December 2014)
Document 2	S106 Unilateral Undertaking (draft)

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED AFTER THE HEARING:

Document 3	Updated list of suggested planning conditions
Document 4	Completed unilateral undertaking

SCHEDULE OF PLANNING CONDITIONS:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of two years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved.
2. Applications for the approval of reserved matters, namely Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale, shall be submitted before the expiration of 18 months from the date of this decision.
3. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
 - Site Location Plan ref. P18-1721_06-2
 - Proposed Access Plan ref. 2900.07B
4. Prior to commencement of development, a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The content of the LEMP shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following information:
 - a) Include and take account of the results of up to date ecology surveys;
 - b) Description and evaluation of features to be managed;
 - c) Landscape and ecological trends and constraints on site that might influence management;
 - d) Aims and objectives to maintain and avoid any harm / damage to features of ecological interest, in addition to safeguarding populations of protected species and providing for significant ecological / biodiversity enhancements within the proposed site as outlined in red and blue on Site Location Plan P18-1721_06-2, including long term objectives to ensure management in perpetuity;
 - e) Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives as set out in points a)-c) above;
 - f) Prescriptions for management actions for the site outlined in red and blue on Site Location Plan P18-1721_06-2;
 - g) Preparation of a work schedule for implementation and management (including an annual work plan capable of being rolled forward over a 5 year period);
 - h) Details of the body or organisation responsible for implementation of the plan;
 - i) Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures which shall include measurable target;
 - j) Details of the legal and funding mechanisms(s) by which the long term implementation of the plan will be secured by the developer with the management body/ies responsible for its delivery;
 - k) Where the results from monitoring show that the conservation aims and objectives of the LEMP are not being met, how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed, and implemented;

- l) Timescales for implementation, delivery, monitoring and any contingencies and/or remedial measures.

The LEMP shall be implemented in full in accordance with the approved details with the timescales set out in the approved details.

- 5. Prior to commencement of development above slab level, details of all external facing materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 6. Prior to commencement of development a written programme of archaeological investigation including a timeframe for onsite work and offsite work such as the analysis, publishing and archiving of the results, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The programme shall be carried out in accordance with the approved timeframe.
- 7. Prior to commencement of development the protective fencing as detailed on the Tree Protection Plan Reference 190802-2.0-PR-AIA-MW contained within the Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) by Treework Environmental Practice shall be erected on site in accordance with the Tree Protection Plan. The protective fencing shall remain in place for the entire development and until all equipment, machinery and surplus materials have been removed from the site. Such fencing shall not be removed or breached during construction operations.

No retained tree/s shall be cut down, uprooted or destroyed, nor shall any retained tree/s be topped or lopped other than in accordance with the approved plans and particulars. Any topping or lopping approval shall be carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998.

If any retained tree is removed, uprooted, destroyed or dies, another tree shall be planted at the same place, at a size and species and planted at such time, that must be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

No fires shall be lit within 15 metres of the furthest extent of the canopy of any retained trees or hedgerows or adjoining land and no concrete, oil, cement, bitumen or other chemicals shall be mixed or stored within 10 metres of the trunk of any tree or group of trees to be retained on the site or adjoining land.

- 8. Prior to commencement of development a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:
 - a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities;
 - b) Identification of 'biodiversity and tree protection zones';
 - c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements;
 - d) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.
 - e) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works;
 - f) Responsible persons and lines of communication;

- g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person(s);
- h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs; and
- i) Ongoing monitoring, including compliance checks by a competent person(s) during construction and immediately post-completion of construction works.

The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details.

9. Prior to commencement of development, a Construction Method Statement, which shall include the following:
- a) the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
 - b) loading and unloading of plant and materials;
 - c) storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
 - d) the erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate;
 - e) wheel washing facilities;
 - f) measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction;
 - g) a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works;
 - h) measures for the protection of the natural environment.
 - i) hours of construction, including piling (if required) and deliveries; and
 - j) drainage arrangements during the construction works;
 - k) vehicle routing for construction vehicles including site access management strategy to manage access within Old Purton Road during construction works and arrangements for access to Elborough Bridge Cottage;
 - l) Name of responsible person to be contacted in case of emergency, which shall be advertised on signage within sight of the public highway.

The approved Construction Method Statement shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details.

10. Prior to commencement of development full details of a right hand turn lane shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in line with drawing 'Proposed Access Plan' ref. 2900.07B. As part of the package of full details to be submitted this shall include full construction details, safety audit, visibility splays (2.4m x 120m), deceleration / turning length provision, swept path analysis, provision for footways and pedestrian crossing facilities in Purton Road (B4534). No part of the development shall be commenced until the works within the agreed scheme of works to the highway has been completed, surfaced and laid out in accordance with the approved details. It shall be maintained in the approved form.
11. Prior to commencement of development full details of geo-technical and construction details of the access in line with drawing numbered 2900.07B which includes the provision of the site access, the Old Purton Road realignment, the proposed crossing point in Purton Road (B4534), including swept path analysis including vehicles contained within Appendix AJK8

(Proposed Site Access) of the PEP 'Appeal Statement' (dated December 2021). No part of the development shall be commenced until the access has been completed, laid out in accordance with the approved details and surfaced to base course level. It shall thereafter be maintained in the approved form without modification.

12. Prior to commencement of development a scheme of Ultra Low Energy Vehicle infrastructure shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority, including details of which dwellings shall be afforded access to the Ultra Low Energy Vehicle infrastructure, has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority for its approval in writing. Thereafter, the scheme shall be completed in strict accordance with the approved details and no dwelling occupied until it's allocated Ultra Low Energy Vehicle infrastructure has been provided and made available for use. Thereafter the Ultra Low Energy Vehicle infrastructure shall be permanently retained.
13. Prior to commencement of development above slab level, a landscape phasing plan shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for its approval in writing. Thereafter, the landscaping shall be completed in accordance with the approved timescales.
14. No external lighting shall be installed on the site until an external lighting strategy is submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This will include details on the type of light appliance, the height direction and position of fitting, illumination levels and light spillage in accordance with the appropriate Environmental Zone standards set out by the Institute of Lighting Engineers in their publications "Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light (ILE, 2005)" and Guidance Note 08/18 Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK (which shall take precedence) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submission shall:
 - a) Identify those areas / features on the whole site that are particularly sensitive for foraging / commuting bats;
 - b) Show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications, including a Lux plot) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places; and
 - c) Specify luminaries, heights and positions of fittings, direction and other features, e.g., cowls, louvers or baffles.

The development shall thereafter be retained in accordance with the approved details.

15. Prior to the completion of development or in the first planting and seeding season within or following first occupation of the approved dwellings, all soft landscaping comprised in the approved details of landscaping, as required by the reserved matters applications and details required by conditions within this decision notice shall be carried out.

All shrubs, trees and hedge planting shall be maintained free from weeds and shall be protected from damage by vermin and stock. Any trees or plants which, within a period of five years, die, are removed, or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season

with others of a similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Prior to completion of the development all hard landscaping shall also be carried out in accordance with the approved details or in accordance with a programme to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

16. Prior to occupation of the development a Residential Travel Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the approved details.
17. Prior to occupation of the development, surface water drainage works shall have been implemented in accordance with details that shall first have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the lead local flood authority. Before any details are submitted to the Local Planning Authority an assessment shall be carried out of the potential for disposing of surface water by means of a sustainable drainage system, having regard to Defra's non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems (or any subsequent version), and the results of the assessment shall have been provided to the Local Planning Authority. Where a sustainable drainage scheme is to be provided, the submitted details shall:
- i) provide information about the design storm period and intensity, the method employed to delay and control the surface water discharged from the site and the measures taken to prevent pollution of the receiving groundwater and/or surface waters;
 - ii) Include a timetable for its implementation; and,
 - iii) provide, a management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include the arrangements for adoption by any public authority or statutory undertaker and any other arrangements to secure the operation of the scheme throughout its lifetime.

Upon implementation, the scheme shall thereafter be permanently retained in accordance with the approved details.

18. Prior to occupation of residential dwellings, the design recommendations and mitigation measures specified in the Noise Impact Assessment Report AS9441.170717.NIA2.1 shall be implemented and attained in full and, thereafter maintained in perpetuity.

----- END OF SCHEDULE -----

**F. Extract of the Mayhew Review: Future Proofing Retirement
Living (December 2022)**

The Mayhew Review

Future-proofing retirement living

Easing the care
and housing crises



Health and Care

Community

Prevention

International

Inequalities

Life expectancy

Economy

Finance and Wealth

Full report

Executive summary

The UK is failing to adapt to the far-reaching changes to society caused by an ageing population. Fundamental change is needed in the way we provide care to older people and in their housing options. Care needs to become more preventative, more people-centred and to be delivered more efficiently. These warnings have been spelt out in many parliamentary and government documents and policies,^{1,2} but they are yet to translate into shifts in either housing policy or the delivery of care to older people.

The demographic trends are clear. The population aged 65+ is set to increase from 11.2 million today to 17.2 million by 2040. It will be much more evenly spread than at present, with older people accounting for 25-30% of the population in many areas. The vast majority will live in standard housing while as many as 6.2 million will live alone – half of them aged 80+ – piling pressure on geographically dispersed care services.

Our focus is on housing. Older people are living longer and remaining in their homes for longer. Those homes are becoming increasingly under-occupied as children leave. According to current policy, the answer is to build more starter homes, but the pace of change required is beyond the reach of the building industry.³ If we were building enough new homes, house prices would fall – but they are not.

Extrapolating these trends leads to some uncomfortable conclusions, including that the next generations will struggle to own their own homes, which has an impact on decisions to start families; and that the social care system will flounder because there are not enough workers to deliver care to a widely dispersed older population. Keeping older people in hospital is not an option since it simply blocks beds and increases waiting lists. The UK Government's recent

¹E.g. see: Housing for older people. Second Report of Session 2017–19. House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee. <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmcomloc/370/370.pdf>

²Housing an ageing population: a reading list. Number 09239, 3 June 2021 <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9239/CBP-9239.pdf>

³Fixing our broken housing market. Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2017 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/590464/Fixing_our_broken_housing_market_-_print_ready_version.pdf

'People at the Heart of Care' White Paper⁴ states that every decision about care is also a decision about housing. Our review finds that specialist retirement housing helps older people stay healthier for longer, especially when coupled with access to round-the-clock care. It reduces the burden on the NHS, delays transfer into care homes and frees up housing lower down the ladder. It also takes the stress out of later living.

The White Paper states the Government's ambition which is to enable people to live independently and healthily in their own homes, or ones that they might move into (author's emphasis). Meanwhile, the Government's Levelling Up White Paper says: "For older people trapped in non-decent or unsuitable accommodation, the UK Government will work to increase the choices available to them."⁵ This review puts forward the case for more retirement developments with access to care and facilities that enhance wellbeing.

Retirement housing has come a long way since the boom years of the 1980s and 1990s. It is of higher quality and generally private or voluntary sector owned and operated, rather than statutory public sector provision. It offers independent living, comfortable lifestyles and a range of amenities that are attractive to both buyers and renters. Increasingly developments are in larger groupings with care provided as well as better facilities.

This report argues that the necessary changes require a life course approach. If everybody lived in homes that were appropriate in size for their needs, it has been estimated that 50,000 fewer homes would need to be built each year.⁶ Almost as many bedrooms are being decommissioned through under-occupation as are being replenished by new homes. In contrast, we estimate that for each bedroom added to the retirement stock, two to three are released in mainstream housing.

⁴[People at the Heart of Care: adult social care reform white paper](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/people-at-the-heart-of-care-adult-social-care-reform-white-paper). Department of Health and Social Care, 2021. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/people-at-the-heart-of-care-adult-social-care-reform-white-paper>

⁵Levelling up the United Kingdom (2022), Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1052708/Levelling_up_the_UK_white_paper.pdf

⁶Too Little, Too Late? Housing for an ageing population (2020), CSFI [Too+little+too+late_FINAL+-+June++2020.pdf \(squarespace.com\)](https://www.squarespace.com)

Housing policy needs to focus as much on last-time buyers as on first-time buyers and to dismantle barriers to the strategic shift required. Around 80% of the 65+ population own their homes outright. The potential to redeploy that wealth is a key factor driving investment in the sector, which is supported by pension funds and other investors.

Currently, specialist retirement housing only accounts for 10% of all older households in the UK. Our analysis suggests considerable scope for the sector to expand rapidly and to be spread more evenly to deal with shortfalls in many areas. If business carries on as usual, the report estimates that 87% of the older population will live in standard housing compared with 81% now, resulting in three million extra older households. In other words, today's shortages in specialist housing will be magnified.

At present an average of around 7,000 retirement homes are built annually out of a total new-build of about 200,000. We evaluate programmes that entail the acceleration of building to 10,000, 30,000 and 50,000 new retirement units a year. The third scenario is especially significant because it implies around 25% of all new homes built would be specialist retirement accommodation, representing a radical departure from present housing policy which focuses on first-time buyers.

Any of these scenarios would not only shift the balance away from standard housing, but also displace more expensive nursing and residential care as people would be healthier and supported in their own homes for longer. Tellingly, even the 50,000-a-year scenario would not stem the growth in older households – an even greater rate of building would be necessary. But it would at least ease the care crisis and free up homes.

Retirement developments come in many forms – from isolated buildings to whole 'villages'. The industry trend is towards larger developments, typically with 60-200 units, and they may well be in or close to urban areas as well as on greenfield sites. Increased size enables both a better range of amenities and greater economies of scale in providing round-the-clock care. But the availability of such developments is far from commonplace.

They are often labelled 'integrated retirement communities' (IRCs) because they include 24/7 staffing, and communal services and

facilities. Their number is hard to pin down but is probably 600, with an average size of 100 units, based on criteria such as the number of amenities. Whether end of life care is also provided is unclear, but about 20% offer nursing and residential care facilities, according to Care Quality Commission (CQC) registration data.

Based on 100 units per development, our scenarios translate into a requirement for 100, 300 or 500 new developments a year. Apart from greenfield sites, some operators repurpose sites in declining town centres, blending in with local infrastructure. A building programme on this scale would also be an opportunity to upgrade the energy efficiency of the housing stock.

A key question is why fewer such developments are being built in the UK than in countries like New Zealand, Australia and the US. The simplistic answers are a mix of institutional inertia, out-of-date images of retirement living, an emotional attachment to the family home and a belief that the state will support people in old age.

The real situation is rather more complicated. Industry surveys show that people want to downsize but that they are put off by the lack of suitable alternatives, especially in the areas where they presently live. They are concerned about the cost and complexity of moving, security of tenure if they rent and maintenance costs if they buy. Also, what happens if they run out of money or need to move into nursing or residential care?

One problem we highlight is the lack of consistency in planning decisions. Sites designated for retirement developments attract infrastructure levies, unlike applications to build new residential and nursing care. This skews developers towards what is acceptable to a local authority rather than best practice in modern retirement living.

We found significant variability in the number of planning applications that were refused or went to appeal and heard anecdotal evidence that planning authorities discouraged applications for retirement developments. One reason for this is split responsibilities within the system: housing policy and planning are determined at a district level while social care is a county council function.

Our recommendations address these challenges by taking a whole-system, life course approach:

Recommendations

A. Build more retirement homes

Building more retirement housing would make more efficient use of the housing stock and bear down on house prices. Only around 7,000 retirement units are being built each year, which falls far short of what is required. A bigger industry-wide building programme would have the effect of displacing people in both standard housing and residential care.

- **We recommend an accelerated programme of retirement housing construction with up to 50,000 new units a year**

B. Integrated retirement communities

Integrated retirement communities can provide care services as well as communal facilities, with management and other staff on site. On average, only about 15 large IRCs have been built each year since 2010. Shortfalls in the supply of retirement homes suggest this number should be multiplied to mirror trends in other countries like Australia or New Zealand.

- **We recommend a significant expansion in the number of integrated retirement communities built each year and that all regions should benefit from their introduction**

C. Repurpose high streets

By 2040, in most areas, between 25% and 30% of the resident population will be aged 65+. Meanwhile, changes in shopping habits, accelerated by the pandemic, have left many high streets with vacant property. This has fuelled increasing interest in repurposing town centre buildings to provide retirement housing, including the larger apartments that would increase choice for downsizers.

- **We recommend that integrated retirement living should include more developments in town centres as part of the levelling up process and local regeneration programmes**

D. Reforms to planning rules

The number of planning applications turned down, or bogged down in appeals, indicates barriers to the building of retirement communities in many areas. A lack of coordination between housing departments at a district level and the social care function of county councils is part of the explanation. Another is that outdated planning designations and infrastructure levies discourage investment in larger retirement developments.

- **We recommend closer working between planning and social care departments to ensure the need for retirement housing with access to care is factored into local authority plans**
- **We recommend that planning departments put retirement housing on a level playing field with other building developments**

E. Tax incentives and grants

Various financial incentives could be applied to encourage downsizing by last-time buyers and home improvements by those who purchase from them. Reductions in Stamp Duty have been shown to increase housing transactions, while grants could be targeted at the least energy efficient homes. Where downsizing is not an option, older people should be helped to adapt their homes.

- **The government should conduct research on financial incentives that would increase downsizing among older households**
- **Stamp Duty for last-time buyers should be put on an equal footing with first-time buyers with sales up to £425,000 under the Government's tax-cutting proposals included in the nil rate band**
- **Home buyers who improve energy efficiency by retrofitting should be entitled to a Stamp Duty rebate if they improve the thermal efficiency at the point of purchase**

F. Financial advice and paying for care

There is a gap in the provision of advice to homeowners who would like to move into more suitable accommodation in later life. This often entails switching from owner-occupation to renting or leasing, and other complexities linked to moving home and the social care cap. The end result is that few people who are interested in downsizing actually do so.

- **We recommend that financial advice is available for last-time buyers who want to move into retirement housing or similar accommodation**
- **Residents in retirement housing should receive a social care assessment soon after needs are identified so the cost of the care received counts towards the social care cap**

And there is one overall recommendation:

- **The Government's Older People's Housing Task Force should be mandated to implement recommendations and report on the outcomes**

Professor Les Mayhew, International Longevity Centre –UK (ILC-UK) and Bayes Business School, City, University of London, London

Barriers and opportunities

To recap, the arguments for change so far are that:

- There is a chronic shortage of retirement accommodation with access to care.
- There is increasing under-occupation of the existing housing stock which constricts the supply of family homes and increases house prices.
- The potential exists to release thousands of homes each year for younger purchasers by building more retirement accommodation.
- To make them attractive, retirement homes need to be in viable communities or clusters in places where people want to live. They also need to be of good quality and to have good access to care and other amenities.
- The evidence is that housing with care is good for health and wellbeing, and economies of scale mean that care costs are lower, so there is alignment with health and social care prevention policies.
- Larger retirement developments are increasingly becoming the norm. They are able to provide a wider range of facilities and accommodation types, and to offer care.

Given the demographic trends, there could be a large market for retirement housing – but it hasn't happened yet. At present, a majority of older people's housing-with-care caters for those eligible for subsidised accommodation, supported through the benefit system and by charitable foundations.

Most older people with housing wealth are ineligible for social rented accommodation. From the slow pace of development of retirement housing, it could be surmised that they are not interested in downsizing. Surveys show, however, that many would like to move, but there is a lack of suitable properties where they want to live and those that are available are too expensive.

On paper, the financial capability to move into retirement accommodation exists, with 47% of older households worth £500,000 or more, based on the ONS Wealth and Assets Survey.²⁴ A survey by

²⁴See ONS Wealth and Assets Survey. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/personalandhouseholdfinances/incomeandwealth/datasets/totalwealth-wealthingreatbritain>

Legal and General, the insurer and provider of investment products, found that not only was there insufficient choice, moving was too stressful and paying Stamp Duty was a problem.²⁵

There are also institutional and financial barriers – especially the planning system which reinforces inertia. Our previous analysis found that only 70,000 new retirement homes were added in the previous 10 years (i.e. 7,000 a year), but our scenarios suggest that building needs to be on a far bigger scale to release homes and provide more age-appropriate housing.

However, this is about more than just increasing supply. There is a need for: independent financial advice to help people decide what to do; housing policies that recognise the contribution of retirement housing to overall housing needs; flexible planning policies that focus on local requirements; and a social care system that works more closely with housing departments on how best to deliver care.

We consider each of the main barriers and opportunities in turn.

Inertia

Respondents to our survey are clear that the goal for retirement housing is to maximise choice. As one respondent put it: "There should be adequate provision of all forms of specialist housing to meet the needs of our ageing population. There needs to be a choice of properties – there is no one size fits all."

We identify inertia as a catch-all description of features of the health and care economy that perpetuate the status quo and throw up barriers to fresh ideas and modern alternatives. To understand the capacity for change, we need to start with ownership and tenure. Of the 8 million older households, 75% own their homes, 20% are social rented and 6% private rented.

Broadly speaking, older people in socially rented accommodation will tend to source their care needs from the local authority. Housing needs tend to be overseen by their social landlords and a resident is more likely to move into residential care as care needs increase.

While in their own homes, these are more likely than in the private sector to have been adapted for assisted independent living. Because

²⁵L&G Last Time Buyers Report. <https://www.legalandgeneralgroup.com/media-centre/reports/last-time-buyers-1>

the building fabric is maintained by social landlords, they will generally be more thermally efficient and have a lower carbon footprint.

The Government's policy commitment to support people in their own homes makes sense in the socially rented sector. With local authority social care budgets under pressure, the tendency will be to delay transfers into residential care, although there may be options to move people renting from a housing association into specially adapted accommodation. Providing care to this dispersed population increases pressure on social care budgets.

For those in the private rented sector, such options are less obvious although they may still receive benefits and help to adapt their home. The fact that we expect more older people to be private renting in the next decades could be a problem. Flats are more likely to be in old converted houses, rather than purpose built for older inhabitants. The cost of care is higher, on top of higher rents and maintenance expenses. So, a potential policy gap is emerging for this group, which will involve private sector landlords.

Homeowners, in principle, have more flexibility than the previous categories since the wealth stored in their homes means they could afford to move to new accommodation, if a suitable option is available. Inertia in their case has been attributed to an emotional attachment to their current homes, but surveys suggest this is simplistic.

In this group there may be multiple circumstances – some, for example, will be asset rich and income poor and so less able to finance a move. The financial complexities will themselves generate inertia as homes are usually their main possession and not something they want to put at risk. Independent financial advice is, therefore, essential for personal security and to ensure value for money, especially as the stress of moving is cited as a key reason for people staying put.

Those making the transition to specialist retirement accommodation encounter a tenancy structure that is the mirror image of what we see in standard or mainstream housing. Table 6 shows that social renting is by far the main type of tenancy, accounting for 72.6% of all retirement property units, which compares with only 20% among all older households. The majority are in developments owned and operated by the voluntary and statutory sectors.

Leasing or buying accounts for 26% of all retirement accommodation contracts, but outright purchase or market rents are in a very small minority. This compares with far higher levels of home ownership in mainstream housing – in the region of 75%. Shared ownership, in which properties are part-owned and part-rented, is a growing category in the retirement sector but still relatively new. This can be advantageous in affordability terms and maintenance costs.

To summarise, although inertia derives from multiple sources, it is arguable that the group most able to afford to move – homeowners – are the least likely to do so, judging by, for example, Stamp Duty receipts. Policies that address their latent willingness to move are more likely to be successful, with knock-on benefits to the housing market as a whole, than ones that ignore their aspirations.

Table 6: UK retirement properties by tenure type and management type (000s property units)

Tenure type (000s of properties)	Statutory	Voluntary	Private	Not known	Total all units	%
Rent (social)	162.1	390.1	0.5	0.4	553.1	72.6
Rent (market)	0.0	0.9	2.1	0.1	3.1	0.4
Lease	0.5	44.4	120.9	6.4	172.2	22.6
Buy	0.2	16.0	8.6	2.0	26.7	3.5
Other	0.0	7.2	0.1	0.0	7.3	1.0
Total	162.8	458.5	132.2	8.8	762.4	100.0

Financial planning

Related to the inertia issue are the complications of financial decision making in later life. People can be confused about which option would suit them best based on their circumstance, health and other considerations. Of these, finance is probably the most important factor since it involves a decision about whether to rent or buy, the affordability of suitable accommodation and so on.

Potential downsizers may also be more generally worried about the future following a 'trigger' event such as the loss of a partner. Financial advice is expensive and comparing the terms and conditions of different purchase or rental options is complex. This is, therefore, a

policy gap that needs addressing if we want more people to become last-time buyers.²⁶

To quantify the cost of retirement accommodation, the figures in Table 7 are supplied by the ExtraCare Charitable Trust which operates 16 villages and other retirement properties. The numbers vary depending on the village but they provide a range of what to expect. Service charges and amenities are extra but less than £100 a week in total.

Table 7: Specimen costs of buying and renting based on data provided by the Extra Care Charitable Trust which operates 20 villages and schemes: Low, Mid and High range

ExtraCare sales	Low (Earlsdon Park)	Mid (Solihull)	High (Hughenden)
Shared Ownership (from 50%)	£(000s)	£(000s)	£(000s)
1 Bed	£111.3	£140.0	£170.0
2 Bed	£136.3	£162.5	£215.0
Outright Standard Size			
1 Bed	£222.5	£280.0	£340.0
2 Bed	£272.5	£325.0	£430.0
Outright Large			
2 Bed only	£390.0	£450.0	£550.0

Rental charges	£s p. week	£s p. week	£s p. week
1 Bed	£125.0	£124.0	£140.0
2 Bed	£145.0	£144.0	£159.0

Where downsizing involves the sale of a main property and the purchase of a new one, the cost of the new property should be less than the net proceeds from selling the old, after taking removal and transaction expenses into account. If there is a shortfall, a mortgage would put a strain on monthly outgoings and it may, in any case, be difficult for an older person to get one.

²⁶Last time-time buyer: Housing finance for an ageing society (2019), CSFI.
<https://openaccess.city.ac.uk/id/eprint/21800/>

We can identify two types of potential downsizer – existing homeowners, and renters. Those without housing equity are more likely to do nothing and be supported in their own home by the local authority. Those growing old in social housing will be council tenants or tenants of housing associations, which work closely with local authority social care services.

Many of the residents will be of limited income – generally the state pension, pension credit and some disability benefits such as Attendance Allowance and Council Tax Reduction. Their care needs will be fulfilled by the local authority subject to a needs assessment and means testing. The pattern is to support them in their own home with potential transfer to residential care at a later point.

It is helpful to set out the pros and cons of alternative accommodation costs for all income/wealth groups. Box 1 lists the main options, A to E, in which the primary decision is whether to do nothing, rent, lease, or buy. For example, the 'do nothing' option applies until death or a forced move into residential care. This is the largest group.

There are different considerations under each option: the amount of equity released, security of tenure, Stamp Duty, gifting, inheritance tax, and paying for residential or long-term care. In the 'do nothing' option, no cash is released but the home may need expensive adaptations. The owner may be asset rich, but if they are income poor, maintenance costs could be a problem if they stay put.

Box 1: Pros and cons of different ways of paying for accommodation costs

Categor	Downsize option	Equity released	Security of tenure	Stamp Duty	Gift opportunity	IHT*
A	Do nothing	X	✓	X	X	✓
B	Rent	✓	X	X	✓	X
C	Lease	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
D	Buy	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
E	Residential care	✓	✓	✓	✓	X

Key: ✓ more likely to apply; X less likely to apply; *IHT = Inheritance Tax

Equity released is the difference in price after all taxes and transaction and moving costs have been paid. The 'do nothing' option can release cash using equity release, also known as a lifetime mortgage

Security of tenure depends on whether a person rents, owns, leases, or is liable for care fees. A rental agreement is usually least secure because landlords have the right of eviction depending on the tenancy agreement, while residential care depends on ability to afford fees

Stamp Duty is paid on the purchase of a property depending on its value. No duty is payable if the home is worth less than £250,000 (£425,000, if a first time buyer) and no Stamp Duty is due on rental properties

Gift opportunity is the giving of money to children or others if money is released as a result of downsizing. It is free of tax if the person making the gift survives for 7 years

***Inheritance tax (IHT)** depends on the value of the estate, over the relevant allowance, on death.

Category	Pros	Cons
A	- No need to move home - No transaction costs	- Liable for future maintenance and repairs - Home may need expensive adaptations - Inflexible
B	- Cash rich from sale of home - No Stamp Duty to pay - Flexible - No repair costs	- Less security, potentially expensive - Accommodation quality and choice variable
C	- Security of tenure - No external repairs to pay - Cash released from sale of home - Gift opportunity - No rent to pay	- Service charges/ground rent payable - Wealth locked up in fixed asset - May not get money back - Liability for Stamp Duty - Inflexible
D	- Security of tenure - No external repairs to pay - Cash released from sale of home - Gift opportunity - No rent to pay	- Liable for maintenance and repair bills - Wealth locked up in fixed asset - May not get money back - Liability for Stamp Duty - Inflexible
E	- Fees are inclusive of living costs - No Council Tax to pay	- Security of tenure subject to ability to pay - Lack of independence - Fees are expensive and exclude care costs - Tends to be forced move, not lifestyle choice

Homeowners with substantial resources will be influenced by gifting opportunities, the fear of running out of money – how long do they expect to live – and being evicted if they rent. Financial risks depend on the stage of life. A person aged 65 in 2022 considering downsizing can expect to live another 21 years, of which around 11.5 years will, on average, be in good health.

The schemes vary in nature but are rarely expressed in terms of their net present value, nor are the assumptions on which they are based transparent. This is why independent financial advice is important. Developers could provide access but there are possible conflicts of interest. The Government could help by promoting access to independent financial advice.

This group will seek reassurance that they have enough resources to last them to the end of their lives; that they can fulfil other later-life objectives; and that their remaining life will be comfortable, with no financial shocks. But not everyone is the same. Some people are more concerned about whether they will get their money back if they sell, and other guarantees.

Providers have developed financial arrangements that spread costs over the period of residency, shielding the owners of the units from unexpected shocks and ensuring that outgoings are better aligned with income. A good example of this is the deferred fees model, which allows housing equity to be used to pay for deferred expenses.

Pioneered in countries such as Australia and New Zealand, the original purchase lease is guaranteed to be returned to you minus maintenance charges, administrative fees and outstanding charges. This effectively shields leaseholders from financial shocks through better alignment of outgoings with retirement income. Potential customers need access to expert financial advice before taking the plunge.

Category E concerns transfer into residential care. These moves tend to occur towards the end of life once care needs have escalated to the point where residential care is the best option. Care home fees are expensive, but some residents are local authority supported and a few by the NHS. The duration of stay is usually less than two years

Homes may need to be sold to pay for care. There are products such as immediate needs annuities that pay fees to death. In our scenarios,

we have argued that care-supported retirement housing can delay transfers to care homes where the costs can be dramatically higher.

The planning system

A shortage of supply of affordable housing is perhaps the biggest problem facing the UK – this applies to retirement housing even more than to starter homes. Although 60% of UK properties have three bedrooms or more, this applies to only about 2.1% of all apartments. So, anyone wanting to retire to a large serviced apartment is likely to be disappointed. Even two-bedroom retirement apartments are fairly scarce.

Respondents to our survey laid the blame for the shortfall squarely on the planning system, which drew more criticism than any other issue. As one respondent put it: "Planners are hopelessly out of touch and are probably ageist. Examples are plentiful where there is policy blindness on older people in local development plans. Planners remain defensive and reactive... The world has moved on but the planners are stuck in the permafrost." Another said: "There is a housing crisis... with millions homeless, living in unsuitable or overcrowded accommodation. Younger generations are priced out. Older people at the other end of the spectrum include many who have done well from property price increases, living in their properties that may not be suitable for their needs."

To gauge the extent of the problem, data was provided for this review by Carterwood Ltd, market analysts in health and social care. We analysed the number of planning applications for retirement housing that were granted, refused or pending from 2017 as at 2021. We found significant variability in the number of planning applications accepted or refused and heard anecdotal evidence that planning authorities actively discouraged applications for older living developments.

In its latest report, Irwin Mitchell, a provider of legal and financial services which is active in this area, states that over a third of local authorities do not currently have clear policies in place to support housing for older people. It adds that while there has been an improvement over the past five years, there's much to be done, otherwise "there will not be enough suitable housing for older people in coming years".²⁷

²⁷Unlocking Potential For Seniors Housing: Meeting The Needs Of An Ageing Society. <https://www.irwinmitchell.com/news-and-insights/in-focus/seniors-housing-report>

One specific piece of feedback is that local authorities do not want the extra health and social care costs that might be the result. Another reason is that while housing policies are determined at a district council level, responsibility for social care is a county council function – but it is not clear whether unitary authorities handle this any better. A key issue is that retirement living and care homes are seen as one, whereas in fact they are treated differently within the planning system.

Given that by 2040, 25-30% of the UK population will be aged 65+, this seems short-sighted – especially as the older generation will be healthier. Many will still be working and have much more spending power than their parents' generations. They will bring much needed economic vibrancy to areas that have lost employment and whose town centres need revitalising.

We also found that the percentage of applications that were refused or pending varied by local area. For example, there was a weak but significant correlation suggesting it is more difficult to get planning permission in areas with existing retirement housing. Favoured sites are mostly in middle, central and south-east England, but this does not explain the dearth of capacity in other areas including Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland

The picture is mixed. For example, we found that the east of England has the fourth highest retirement provision of all regions, but the second highest percentage of refused or pending planning applications. In contrast, Wales is 10th in terms of retirement provision and has the lowest percentage of refused or pending applications. The reality is that the process of getting planning permission is littered with protracted appeals rather than decisions informed by need.

A second and knottier problem is the technical application of planning designations which deter certain types of development and skew others into outdated models of retirement living. These persist in treating care homes and retirement living as separate entities under the planning system. Retirement developments that combine both are hard to classify and could fall foul of technical quirks.

For example, care homes do not have to contribute to affordable housing through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The levy is a formulaic method for ensuring that housing developments contribute to the cost of the infrastructure they will rely on, such as roads and schools. Care homes have an advantage over retirement

housing builders in this regard. In effect, the latter are treated similarly to standard house builders, but without other types of subsidy such as Help to Buy or the affordable housing programme.

Possible solutions include a planning policy presumption in favour of older housing with care – recognising that it is a hybrid form of retirement living. Our round-table of key stakeholders concluded that some local authorities already exercised some flexibility. Work needs to be done to educate all local authorities about the advantages of new models of retirement living as opposed to slavishly following precedent.

It was also concluded that land supply was not the main problem, but there was a presumption in planning applications in favour of developments that supported existing local employment over changes of use. It is unclear how this affects planning applications for retirement housing, but it could negatively affect plans to redevelop and repurpose some parts of declining high streets. If so, this should be re-examined.

Otherwise, it was felt that competition and pressure from standard housing builders were crowding out retirement housing. As an example, West Oxfordshire District Council formally adopted its Local Plan in 2018, covering a period from 2011 to 2031. In a district where 30% of the population is over 65, there was not a single allocation for retirement housing.

An economic case needs to be made in favour of retirement housing based on the spending power of residents and job creation. The industry lacks an authoritative set of definitions for emerging forms of specialised accommodation for older people. The concept of integrated retirement living helps with this and should reduce the number of planning refusals and protracted appeals processes.

In summary, there is no way of escaping the effects of demographic ageing. Local authorities need to accept that their planning guidance must include a requirement to address the need for older people's housing based on more modern models of later-life provision. They should work closely with health and social care services, and support initiatives to help people downsize into more age-appropriate accommodation.

Next steps: recommendations

Previous chapters have highlighted the consequences of demographic ageing, including the inadequate supply of retirement housing, inefficient use of the housing stock and growing concerns about the health and wellbeing of older people. Box 2 sets out six areas for action, A-F. Each one feeds into important policy areas such as house prices, levelling up and reducing carbon emissions.

Box 2: Policy measures and their impacts

Categor	Policy measure	Lower house prices	More efficient use of housing	Reduced carbon emissions	Levelled up communities	Better health and wellbeing
A	Build more retirement homes	✓	✓✓			✓
B	Integrated retirement communities		✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓
C	Repurposing declining high streets		✓	✓	✓	✓
D	Reforms to planning rules	✓	✓		✓✓	
E	Tax incentives to accelerate down-sizing		✓✓	✓	✓	
F	Financial advice for last time buyers	✓	✓		✓	✓

Key: ✓ effect mainly applies; ✓✓ effect strongly applies

Notes:

- A. Build more retirement homes:** Retirement housing puts downward pressure on house prices by releasing surplus bedrooms that can be occupied by young families, in turn freeing up smaller homes for first-time buyers
- B. Integrated retirement communities:** Well-designed retirement communities combine modern facilities with access to 24/7 care in attractive developments, accelerating downsizing and improving health and wellbeing
- C. Repurposing declining high streets:** Changing shopping habits have left some high streets in urgent need of regeneration. Repurposing them to include retirement living would reduce under-occupation and contribute to levelling up across the UK
- D. Reforms to planning rules:** Under existing planning rules retirement developments are financially disadvantaged, deterring private investors and discouraging levelling up
- E. Tax incentives and grants to accelerate downsizing:** Tax incentives and grants to encourage downsizing and climate proofing, especially on change of ownership, would improve the efficient use and sustainability of the housing stock
- F. Financial advice for last-time buyers:** Last-time buyers or renters need independent financial advice to deal with the financial and legal complexities of moving home in later life

A. Build more retirement homes

Building more retirement housing would have a positive economic impact by making more efficient use of the housing stock and by bearing down on house prices. There is also a health and wellbeing dividend from living in purpose-built housing linked to a retirement community with round-the-clock access to care, although the range of services depends on the type of development.

We build on the finding of a previous report that if everybody lived in homes that were appropriate in size for their needs, an estimated 50,000 fewer homes would need to be built each year, assuming current levels of house building.³⁰ This is because under present policies almost as many bedrooms are being decommissioned through under-occupation as are being replenished through new construction, which is clearly nonsensical. More downsizing would greatly improve the efficient use of the housing stock.

Only around 7,000 retirement units are being built each year, which falls far short of what is required. Evidence suggests not only a shortage of supply but also of choice – for instance, there is a lack of modern apartments of sufficient size to appeal to downsizers, which is contributing to inertia. HMRC data suggests that of the 930,000 annual property purchases in England only 10% of buyers are aged 65+, and yet they account for 28% of all households.

As for levels of retirement building, two broad cases were presented – one termed 'business as usual' and the other an accelerated programme of retirement housing development. A bigger building programme would have the effect of displacing people in both standard housing and residential care. Under the most ambitious scenario (C), 50,000 new retirement homes would be added per year, whereas 'business as usual' would deepen the shortfall and the housing crisis.

Building 50,000 retirement units a year would equate to around 25% of all new housing starts at current levels, and so involve a significant change to housing policy. Interestingly, it would not be enough by itself to stem the growth in under-occupation – that would require more than 100,000 new homes a year – but it would be a big step forward.

- **We recommend an accelerated programme of retirement housing construction with up to 50,000 new units a year**

³⁰Too Little, Too Late? Housing for an ageing population (CSFI 2020) [Too+little+too+late_FI-NAL+-+June++2020.pdf \(squarespace.com\)](https://www.squarespace.com)

B. Integrated retirement communities

Policy measure B in box 2 advocates building more integrated retirement communities with domiciliary care provided. Round-the-clock care keeps people healthier for longer, with reduced spells in hospital, fewer visits to A&E, delayed transfers to nursing care and even extended lives. Although, in theory, the same effect could be produced in the wider community, the cost and complexity of care coordination would be much greater.

We also found that integrated retirement communities are more likely to provide a range of amenities that are attractive to residents and potential residents, making a change in lifestyle more appealing. We estimate that there are over 600 such communities in the UK with an average size of around 100 property units. Retirement operators suggest that 60 units is a reasonable minimum for delivering the expected benefits.

The problem is that access to such communities is limited – the vast majority are located in England in a belt straddling a broad band from the north-west to the south-east. If all new retirement units were located in large integrated communities, as many as 500 with an average of 100 units each would need to be built annually under scenario C. The average number built since 2010 is far less at around 15, so again this would be a major shift in approach.

- **We recommend a significant expansion in the number of integrated retirement communities built each year and that all regions should benefit from their introduction**

C. Repurpose high streets

The third policy measure in Box 2 is repurposing high streets. The traditional model of moving to a retirement area on the coast, buying a bungalow, or moving overseas to a sunnier climate has peaked for various reasons. Changes in shopping habits, accelerated by the pandemic, have left many high streets with boarded-up shops and much less activity.

There is increasing interest in repurposing town centres as a way of reinvigorating run-down commercial districts. There are already examples of developments in converted and repurposed historic buildings or abandoned churches. This would not require a huge shift

since 80% of retirement developments are already located in towns or cities, albeit often on the fringes.

By 2040, in most areas, between 25% and 30% of the population will be aged 65+. This supports the idea that high streets could become hubs for older living in wider mixed-aged communities. Close-to-home urban retirement options are strictly limited. The properties that are built tend to be small, often no more than one bedroom in fairly cramped conditions. We know that many more people would be happy to downsize if the right types of property were available.

- **We recommend that integrated retirement living should include more developments in town centres as part of the levelling up process and local regeneration programmes**

D. Reforms to planning rules

Measure D in Box 2 calls for reforms to the planning process, the effect of which would increase the supply of retirement housing by allowing more building in areas that are poorly served or where demand is high. One obstacle is that many local authorities shy away from the perceived extra social care costs. Another is a lack of coordination between housing departments at a district level and the social care function at county council level.

The first concern is arguably misplaced as many retirees are affluent and bring spending power to an area. The second is due to a lack of joined-up thinking at different levels of local government. But there is also a third problem which is the planning process itself. Planning designations discourage or skew applications, so that designers are motivated towards what will get approved rather than what will deliver the most benefits in terms of the wider health and care economy.

The industry is lobbying for a level playing field between retirement housing, standard housing and care homes. The formulaic levy for ensuring that housing developments contribute to the cost of infrastructure exempts care homes, while standard housing is subsidised through Help to Buy or the affordable housing programme. So, retirement developments lose out.

- **We recommend closer working between planning and social care departments to ensure the need for retirement housing with access to care is factored into local authority plans**

- **We recommend that planning departments put retirement housing on a level playing field with other building developments**

E. Tax incentives and grants

Measure E in Box 2 refers to financial incentives to encourage downsizing by last-time buyers and the provision of sustainable housing. These could take the form of tax breaks or grants depending on which problem was being addressed. It also encompasses areas of policy where there is discretion, such as grants to pay for home adaptations to assist older living, or to improve a home's thermal efficiency – grants have long been available for home insulation, for instance.

Since higher rates of Stamp Duty tend to reduce housing transactions, discretionary discounts are a potential lever to encourage last-time buyers to move. Research found that abolishing Stamp Duty for older households would improve their willingness to downsize. A guiding principle should be that first- and last-time buyers should be put on an equal footing, with Stamp Duty for purchases up to £300,000 nil-banded or abolished altogether. While the Government's latest proposals raise the tax threshold, first-time buyers continue to be prioritised via exemption at prices up to £425,000 compared with £250,000 for everybody else.

The Committee on Climate Change (CCC), which advises the Government, notes that energy use in homes accounts for 14% of total UK greenhouse gas emissions.³¹ Stamp Duty breaks could also be employed to encourage home owners to make thermal efficiency improvements at the point of moving into a property. Thermal efficiency is rated on a scale from A (very efficient) to G (very inefficient). Stamp Duty rebates could target homes lower down the scale.

Recommendations:

- **The government should conduct research on financial incentives that would increase downsizing among older households**

³¹UK housing: Fit for the future? (2019) Committee on Climate Change, <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/uk-housing-fit-for-the-future/>

- **Stamp Duty for last-time buyers should be put on an equal footing with first-time buyers with sales up to £425,000 under the Government's tax-cutting proposals nil-banded**
- **Home buyers that improve energy efficiency by retro-fitting should be entitled to a Stamp Duty rebate if they improve the thermal efficiency at the point of sale**

F. Financial advice and paying for care

The final policy measure concerns the provision of financial advice. While there is state-backed advice for people about pensions and the more affluent pay for wealth planning, a gap exists for people who would like to move into more suitable accommodation in later life. This often entails switching from owner-occupation to renting or leasing. Industry surveys show that many would like to move but relatively few go through with it. One reason is the complexity and stress involved. People want to know the benefits of renting or buying, the service charges if they rent and the maintenance costs if they buy, and what happens if they run out of money.

There has been some innovation, such as the creation of shared ownership schemes in which the buyer owns part of the property and pays rent on the rest. In the deferred fee model, pioneered in countries such as Australia and New Zealand, the original purchase lease is guaranteed to be returned to the buyer minus maintenance costs, administrative fees and outstanding charges. Such arrangements shield people from financial shocks by better aligning their regular outgoings with fixed retirement income.

Under the latest social care reform proposals, care needs will be assessed and any charges for care will count towards the social care cap. The local authority identifies what kind of care and support is needed and how it should be paid for under a means test. Living in specialist retirement accommodation should remove the need for any adaptations, but residents should still have access to an assessment and advice on how to fund any recommended alterations.

- **We recommend that financial advice is available for last-time buyers who want to move into retirement housing or similar accommodation**
- **Residents in retirement housing should receive a social care**

**G. Extract of Too Little Too Late? Housing for an Ageing
Population (June 2020)**

Too Little, Too Late? Housing for an ageing population

Professor Les Mayhew



Too Little, Too Late? Housing for an ageing population

Professor Les Mayhew

Executive Summary

Chapter One: Introduction and background

Last year's CSFI report by Professor Les Mayhew, entitled *The Last-Time Buyer: housing and finance for an ageing society*, contained an arresting statement in favour of downsizing: "If people lived in homes more suited to their needs, 50,000 fewer homes would need to be built each year."

The underlying demographics are stark. By 2040, the UK population will have grown to about 73m – nearly 10% more than today. But much more significant is the projection that nearly one in four people will be aged 65+. That represents a 41% increase in that age group to nearly 18m.

A key point about an ageing society is that average household size shrinks because older people tend to live alone or in couples. Between 2020 and 2040, the number of UK households is set to rise by around 3.7m to 32.3m. The growth in older households – over half of them one-person – is set to account for 36% of the increase.

But far from the supply of housing for older people increasing to meet this challenge, it has plummeted since 1990. This report argues that downsizing is both necessary and desirable. To make it an attractive option, the supply of good-quality age-friendly housing needs to increase substantially. Public policy barriers – including planning and taxes – need to be reduced.

Chapter Two: The demographic case for downsizing

Households have been shrinking for four decades, while dwelling sizes have not changed much. The existing stock is skewed towards family homes, with 60% having three or more bedrooms.

The *Last-Time Buyer* report introduced the Dwelling Index to measure average household sizes at different ages. For this research, we have developed a new measure, the Bedroom Index, which shows whether there is a surplus or deficiency of bedrooms at each age.

The UK has nearly 29m households, with an estimated 2.86 bedrooms per dwelling. This equates to about 82m bedrooms, of which just over 15m are 'surplus', using reasonable assumptions about the number needed for different sizes of household. The trend towards decreasing household size is projected to inflate this bedroom surplus to 20.3m in 2040.

The surplus is concentrated in the older age group. For the 65+ cohort, the number of surplus bedrooms is on track to almost double from 6.6m in 2000 to 12.8m by 2040, unless behaviour and public policy change. The youngest households have a bedroom deficit.

Chapter Three: Retirement housing in the UK

The overall picture is of a dramatic shortfall in retirement, or age-appropriate, accommodation compared with the scale of building required based on demographic analysis.

Only 750,000 homes – less than 3% of the UK stock – cater specifically for the retirement market, and this represents only 9.4% of households aged 65+. Around 7,000 new retirement properties have been added annually since 2010; however, this compares with an expected average annual rise of 180,000 in the number of 65+ households to 2030.

The segment grew rapidly in the 1980s thanks to local authorities and voluntary (not-for-profit) organisations, but the Community Care Act 1990 switched the focus to keeping vulnerable adults in the community. After this, the pace of development shrank to a quarter of its peak.

Currently, the voluntary sector accounts for two thirds of the stock, followed by local authorities. By far the most common form of tenancy is social renting. The private sector stands at 12.4% of the stock, but it now supplies as many new properties as the voluntary sector.

Keeping older people fit and engaged is crucial. According to recent studies, retirement communities with on-site support can reduce hospital admissions, cut A&E visits and delay transfers to nursing homes. But the barriers to building more of them are considerable – notably difficulty in getting planning permission.

Chapter Four: Making a difference

Surveys have shown that up to a third of older households are amenable to downsizing, but that only a small minority actually do so. Key reasons have included a lack of suitable properties and anxiety about annual charges.

Although 60% of all properties have three bedrooms or more, this applies to just 10% of all apartments – of which 44% have only one bedroom. So the scope to move from a large family home to a 3-bedroom modern serviced apartment is extremely limited – and expensive.

On the planning front, a study of UK local authorities found that fewer than 10% had clear policies on housing needs for older people, including the number of dwellings required and how to provide them. Combined with planning barriers, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that older people are not a priority for local authorities.

A holistic approach would take into account the health and social care benefits of age-appropriate housing. This argues for greater collaboration between social care, health and housing teams to devise new models of provision.

Personal decisions to downsize are affected by financial factors. These include whether downsizing will release cash, after transaction costs, for other purposes such as enhancing retirement income or gifting to heirs. A typical purchaser would require the equity in their original property to be well above the average price of the new one, and for annual charges to be affordable.

More flexible charging models, notably deferred fees, have emerged to make purchase prices more affordable and to help retirees plan their outgoings. Some costs are rolled up for payment out of housing equity on death or sale of the property. This model is attracting investment from large institutions, such as Legal & General, Octopus Healthcare and Schroders, which could amount to £60bn over the next decade.

If leasing or buying a smaller property is involved, stamp duty will apply. The evidence suggests that stamp duty deters downsizing. Average stamp duty per transaction has increased at 12.3% per annum since 2008-09, whereas house prices have only gone up by 4% a year.

Chapter Five: Conclusions

Under-occupation of the housing stock caused by an ageing population has created a dysfunctional housing market. Older households are only 40-60% efficient based on space usage, whereas space is at a premium for younger ones.

Far too few dwellings are being built that cater for older people. Retirement housing has only accounted for about 125,000, or 2%, of all new homes built since 2000, but each year around 700,000 people turn 65 years of age.

With the number of households growing more quickly than the population, average household size is set to continue its decline. This causes increasingly inefficient use of the housing stock. The number of 'surplus' bedrooms is forecast to exceed 20m by 2040, 60% of them in older households.

Government policy is that that people should be supported to live in their own homes independently, and that they should not have to sell up to pay for care. How can this policy be reconciled with the call for downsizing?

A new policy on social care is due to be unveiled later this year. It should acknowledge that the present policy of supporting people in their own homes – scattered through mainstream housing – may not be affordable in the long run. Also, the promise that no social care user should have to sell his or her home to meet care costs needs to be clarified:

- It should not be interpreted as discouraging downsizing. Indeed, the policy should highlight the benefits of doing this.
- The policy should not be seen as recommending that older people should stay put come what may – particularly if there is more suitable accommodation available.
- The government should affirm that people living independently in retirement communities that offer care services are living in their ‘own homes’ and should be supported as such.

Another policy circle that needs to be squared concerns the government’s net zero carbon emissions target. The

Committee on Climate Change found last year that emissions reductions from UK homes had stalled. Given an inflexible housing stock, the provision of modern age-appropriate accommodation and efficient use of space must be part of the policy mix. The present ‘just build more’ dictum pays little attention to climate-related problems.

On stamp duty, we suspect that the government simply wants to protect this revenue stream. But the evidence shows that lower stamp duty rates would increase transactions and so underpin revenues. This argues for tax incentives to encourage downsizing. Last-time buyers should be treated in the same way as first-time buyers, with stamp duty for purchases up to £300,000 nil-banded or abolished.

Policies affecting housing should all pull in the same direction, but it is not clear that policy makers have grasped the scale of the problem. This report proposes a more holistic approach to housing policy and population ageing. We support the idea of a national plan, with requirements for local authorities and local health and social care services to deliver in accordance with it.

Recommendations

For the Government

1. Far too few homes are being built to cater for older people, who therefore tend to stay put in dwellings that are increasingly under-occupied. This calls for a national strategy and for government departments and local authorities to be accountable for its delivery.
Recommendation: A new government strategy on housing for older people should be established as a key part of the housing mix. It should call for a joined-up approach between departments dealing with housing and health, with a cross-departmental mechanism to reconcile differences and identify gaps.
2. Important supply-side constraints to providing purpose-built developments include planning permission and the indifference of many local authorities to the needs of older residents.
Recommendation: In line with the national strategy, local authorities should be required to have a plan for retirement housing, including identifying appropriate sites.
3. If more people lived in retirement communities, their health and wellbeing would improve. Health and social care costs would be more manageable and services easier to deliver.
Recommendation: The NHS should acknowledge these benefits, which are largely ignored in its long-term strategy and in planning services for older people.
4. Government policy that people should not be forced to sell their homes to pay for social care sends a mixed message.
Recommendation: The government should promote the benefits of downsizing and incentivise people to do it before social care is needed.

5. Stamp duty tends to jam up the housing market and can add significant costs to downsizing.
Recommendation: 'Last-time' buyers should be put on an equal footing with first time buyers with property purchases of up to £300,000 nil-banded.

For the industry and its customers

6. While there is plenty of interest in downsizing, surveys show that the number actually doing so is low. A key reason is the shortage of suitable housing at affordable prices.
Recommendation: House-building priorities need to change to cater for this market.
7. Financial arrangements built into leases that align the outgoings of retirees with their income, which is often fixed, help avoid large unexpected costs. The deferred fees model achieves this by rolling up some costs until the property is sold.
Recommendation: Models that defer costs until housing equity is released should be encouraged and monitored for transparency of costs to residents and returns to investors.
8. The financial aspects of downsizing may be complicated and include questions about value for money and security of tenure.
Recommendation: Independent guidance should be available to cover all aspects of the purchase process. The Money and Pensions Service is a possible vehicle for this.
9. Retirement housing has an important role to play in meeting the UK's target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050.
Recommendation: Retirement communities should aim to be carbon neutral and use renewable energy. Retrofitting retirement dwellings should be supported by the taxpayer

H. Extract of RTPI – Housing for Older People (November 2022)



RTPI

Royal Town Planning Institute

**RTPI
Practice
Advice**

NOVEMBER 2022

HOUSING FOR OLDER PEOPLE

Planning for the future

Endorsed by:



**Older People's Housing
Champions**



Setting Standards for
Retirement Communities



**Chartered
Institute of
Housing**

1. Summary

England's population is ageing and growing. A safe, accessible, well-maintained, and affordable home in a location that provides access to essential local services and opportunities for social connections is a vital component of a happy and healthy older age and directly related to good planning principles. Research by the Centre for Ageing Better¹ found that the vast majority of people want to stay in their own home as they age. However, much of the existing housing stock does not meet the needs of older people and allow them to do this comfortably.

91% of homes in England fail basic accessibility standards. There is a strong need for investment in the quality of our existing housing stock and to install adaptations to help older people living independently for longer. We also need to ensure that all new build homes meet the accessible and adaptable standard which the government has recently committed to. Alternate options to mainstream housing, like retirement communities, also have the potential to solve some of these problems, but the supply of these specialised housing options is low² and not equally distributed.

Older people are not a homogenous group with the same housing requirements. Their needs and aspirations are diverse and therefore, the solutions must be equally diverse. Common assumptions are made that most older people want to downsize or enter specialist accommodation as they age, but older people are motivated by the same reasons as other age groups when it comes to housing choices—such as having space for guests, moving to a nicer area, or better access to greenspace. All housing must be accessible and easily adaptable to meet individual/household needs, giving the opportunity to age in place. Ultimately, the 'right' housing for older people is determined by older people themselves. Maintaining a meaningful dialogue with older people across all stages of the planning process is paramount to ensure that their needs are met.

The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), Chartered Institute for Housing (CIH), Centre for Ageing Better, the Older People's Housing Champions Network and Associated Retirement Community Operators (ARCO) have joined together to publish this practice advice. These five organisations recognise that to successfully improve both the quantity and quality of housing for older people an integrated, collaborative approach across multiple sectors is required. They also recognise that there are opportunities to improve current practices. The complex nature of the issues requires improved understanding of other sectors and the adoption of a truly partnership approach.

All five organisations agree that the town planning system plays a pivotal role in the delivery of housing for older people. This practice note outlines the role of town planners and how they work with professionals from the housing, social care sectors and with specialist developers to plan for and deliver age-friendly housing. It summarises expert advice, outlines key national policy and focuses on good practice through a series of case studies,

¹ Centre for Ageing Better (2021) [Good Home Inquiry](#)

² Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research (2021) [Understanding supply, demand and investment in the market for retirement housing communities in England](#)

which although are UK (particularly England) based, should provide principles of good planning in other jurisdictions.

The audience for this advice is primarily RTPI members, but it is also relevant to other built environment professionals, housing, health and social care providers, along with charities and local politicians.

2. Housing design

The following principles developed by the Housing for Older People Panel for Innovation (HAPPI) have become mainstreamed within the older people's housing sector and they are near universally applied in new developments and are widely accepted as standard. Whilst the design of individual homes is vitally important to how people can live well as they age, it is only one aspect of the issue. Quality housing needs to be built in the right location, integrated into accessible neighbourhoods, with good, safe access to local shops and health care services, public transport and the natural environment.

The HAPPI principles are³:



Credit: Building Research Establishment

Space and flexibility - generous internal space standards, with potential for three habitable rooms and designed to accommodate flexible layouts,



Jacobs Gate, Sheffield Credit: Gladman Retirement Living

Daylight - care is taken with the placement, size and detail of windows to ensure plenty of natural light, and to allow daylight into circulation spaces,

³ For full details see www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/Design-building/HAPPI/



Credit: The Orders of St John Care Trust

Outdoor space - building layouts maximise natural light and ventilation by avoiding internal corridors and single-aspect flats. Apartments have balconies, patios, or terraces with enough space for tables and chairs as well as plants,



Credit: Building Research Establishment

Adaptability – homes are adaptable and designed to be ‘care ready’ so that new and emerging technologies, such as telecare and community equipment, can be readily installed,



Tree Top Village, Walker

Circulation space – building layouts promote circulation areas as shared spaces, encouraging interaction, supporting interdependence and avoiding an ‘institutional feel’, including the imaginative use of shared balcony access to front doors and thresholds, promoting natural surveillance and providing for ‘defensible space,



Tree Top Village, Walker

Shared facilities – in all but the smallest developments (or those very close to existing community facilities), multi-purpose space is available for residents to meet, with facilities designed to support an appropriate range of activities – perhaps serving the wider neighbourhood as a community ‘hub’, as well as guest rooms for visiting friends and families,



Redwood Glades, Hull. Credit: Tony McAteer/Gleeds

Natural environment – public realm design measures ensure that homes engage positively with the street. New trees and hedges are planted, and mature planting is preserved to provide wildlife habitats, as well as colour, shade and shelter,



Credit: McCarthy and Stone

Sustainable design – homes are energy-efficient and well insulated, but also well ventilated and able to avoid overheating by, for example, passive solar design, the use of native deciduous planting supplemented by external blinds or shutters, easily operated awnings over balconies, green roofs and cooling chimneys,



Credit: McCarthy and Stone

Storage – adequate storage is available outside the home together with provision for cycles and mobility aids, and storage inside the home meets the needs of the occupier,



Jacobs Gate, Sheffield, Credit: Gladman Retirement Living

External shared surfaces and 'home zones' - shared external surfaces, such as 'home zones' give priority to pedestrians rather than cars, with due regard to the kinds of navigation difficulties that some visually impaired people may experience.

3. Principles for delivering housing for older people

There are many factors that have an impact on the quality and suitability of housing for older people. The RTPI, Chartered Institute of Housing, Centre for Ageing Better and ARCO have worked together to identify key principles for how professionals from all parts of the older people's housing sector – town planning, housing, adult social care, registered housing providers and specialist housing developers should work collaboratively to provide the best outcomes for older people. The focus of these principles is dialogue—open, honest conversations between professionals that ultimately lead to working partnerships. By adhering to these principles, professionals should be able to make meaningful improvements to working practices. These principles also work at different scales at the plan or strategy level, through to individual developments, large or small, urban or rural.

Dialogue – engage in honest and open discussions.

Between professionals working in different sectors, local politicians and the public there can be misunderstandings in the delivery of housing for older people. By engaging in a positive manner, with clearly outlined aims and objectives, it means that they can more easily align with partners, to achieve better outcomes. This is not a one-off action; working partnerships require time and on-going dialogue to fully mature.

There is a social reluctance to plan for old age. This results in many older people moving into specialist housing at a crisis point. People need to be given the confidence to view moving to older people's housing as a positive choice. Including older people in these discussions can remove negative perceptions and instil trust. Understanding the needs and wants of older people also enables planners and developers to work together in providing desirable housing outcomes. For example, the [Framework for Creating Age-Friendly Homes in Greater Manchester](#) was produced with input from the Greater Manchester Older People's Network—a network comprised of older people living in the area.

Sector – explain how your sector works.

Planning, housing, adult social care and health care professionals must all operate within differing regulations and timings. Do not assume that partners have a full understanding of the constraints each other works within. Clarity from the outset of a project means that misunderstandings and delays can be minimised and opportunities taken. In terms of planning this will include the stages of the local plan process and the role of the Planning Inspectorate in approving the plan.

Shared language – take steps to provide clarity about terminology.

There is a great deal of different terminology used within the housing for older people sector. Research by ARCO found that there are several terms regularly used to describe older people's housing, often used interchangeably and for different audiences. It is not the place of this advice to dictate what the terminology should be. All parties should agree which terms are being used and what they mean in practice from the outset. This will help to build confidence and avoid confusion and delays (see Jacobs Gate case study).

Partnership – take a collaborative, joined up approach to delivery and management. This can take many forms, from early consultation with housing and social care colleagues when drafting the local plan, to a joined-up approach to allocating social housing (see Highlands case study) to joint public/private developments (see Hinckley case study). Regular cross-sector meeting, key contact points and staff secondments are crucial to making this approach work effectively.

Strong policies – include measurable policies in plans and strategies. The local plan and housing strategy should contain strong measurable policies that align with each other and wider corporate objectives (see Leeds case study).

Evidence – back up policies with a good evidence base. To meet the scrutiny of the local plan inquiry, the policies need to be supported by a strong evidence base. By working collaboratively with other sectors, for example commissioning research the evidence can be strengthened (see Central Bedfordshire case study).

Engagement – understand what local residents want and need. Qualitative data on the views of local people is important when planning future housing. Older people need to be fully engaged in the planning of older peoples' housing for it to meet their needs. Engagement in the development process promotes confidence in the quality of the housing, encouraging older people to downsize into specialist housing before they reach a crisis point. Confidence is further enhanced by industry standards like the ARCO Consumer Code.

Accessible – homes should conform to HAPPI principles or meet the M4(2) 'accessible and adaptable dwellings' standards and are built within accessible neighbourhoods. Houses for older people must conform to national guidelines on accessibility, Part M Building Regulations and BS 8300. They must also be built in accessible locations that give people the ability to age in place. Easy, safe access to local shops and services can help people to remain independent. The principles of the 20-minute neighbourhood apply when locating housing for older people (see Barking and Dagenham case study).

Equitable – housing for older people should be affordable for all. There needs to be a supply of older people's housing across tenures, affordability and location, that is inclusive and meets the needs of diverse backgrounds to reduce inequalities (see Hinckley case study).

4. Planning for older people's housing

The previous section identifies key principles for delivering housing for older people, the case studies outlined below demonstrate how they can be put into practice. They are:

- Incorporate and review older peoples housing planning policies - Leeds City Council,
- Develop a joined-up approach between adult social care, housing and planning – Central Bedfordshire Council,
- Develop an age-friendly strategy – Clarion Housing,
- Integrate older people's housing and health care – Newbridge Village, Hull,
- Take a positive approach to pre-application discussions - Jacobs Gate, Sheffield,
- Develop mixed tenure sites through innovative partnerships – Hinckley, Leicestershire,
- Deliver housing for older people through infill sites – Barking and Dagenham,
- Build an integrated retirement community – Mayfield, Watford,
- Take a partnership approach delivering independent living solutions in rural areas – Telford Centre, Fort Augustus, Scottish Highlands.

Case study: Incorporate and review older peoples housing planning policies - Leeds City Council

When Leeds City Council updated its core strategy in 2019, it focused on updating key aspects of the housing policy. This included the introduction of accessible housing standards. Policy H10: Accessible Housing Standards⁴, states that new build residential development should include a proportion of accessible dwellings. It specified targets of 30% M4 (2) 'accessible and adaptable dwellings' and 2% M4 (3) 'wheelchair user dwellings' of Part M building regulations.

Leeds City Council is one of only a very small number of planning authorities in England to successfully include such a policy within its local plan. Whilst it could be perceived that the accessible housing targets are too low, the figures have nevertheless been challenged by developers. Planners worked with local groups and charities, to provide proportionate evidence to justify the policy, as the plan went through examination by the Planning Inspectorate. Planners at Leeds City Council understand that in reality the introduction of the standards accounts for a very small proportion of homes within the city. However, they view the standards as a starting point, and a clear indication has been given to the housing industry that the figure will increase. The Council is monitoring the impact of the policy, through the planning applications validation process.

A further review of the Local Plan was due to be started in 2022 to respond to Leeds City Council's Climate Emergency declaration. The planning team is taking this as an opportunity

⁴ [Core Strategy for Leeds](#)

to further refine the accessible housing policy, as it is not working as well as they hoped. The current Policy H10: Accessible Housing Standards states, “any departures from the policy would need to be justified by evidence of viability considerations”, this allows developers to challenge the policy and use the data to support their own objectives. As part of the plan review the policy is likely to be altered to require a proportion of accessible homes. A policy stance that is much more prescriptive and measurable.

An overarching influence on the local plan is the City’s strategic objectives in the ‘Best Council Plan’⁵, which are underpinned by the three pillars of inclusive growth, health and well-being and tackling the climate emergency. An age-friendly Leeds is a key priority for the plan and Leeds has taken a joined-up approach to implementing it. Initiatives like the Planning and Design for Health and Wellbeing Group, which meets to share knowledge and best practice, provides effective communication channels between directorates. The cross-directorate integration is enhanced by coordinated links to the local community. A partnership manager, from the Centre for Ageing Better is hosted within the Public Health Older People’s Team. They work with groups like the Leeds Older People’s Forum to engage with a wide audience of local older people. The Older People’s Forum were consulted at each stage of the planning policy review process to complement the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) data as evidence for change. A recent report ‘The State of Ageing in Leeds’⁶, outlines the experiences and opinions of older people living in the city. It will be used to inform future policy and initiatives.

Leeds City Council holds the view that a place designed to meet the needs of older people is a place that meets the needs of everyone. To fully imbed this approach the design team has given training to elected members and developers. For elected members it provides them with the confidence to challenge developers and ask questions. For developers it clearly sets out the Council’s aspirations and helps to build cultural change.

This iterative approach to policy development by Leeds City Council demonstrates an adaptability and willingness to learn by trialling and refining policy stances. Effective, measurable planning policy is key to delivering overarching Council objectives. As Martin Elliot, Head of Strategic Planning within Planning and Sustainable Development says, “planning is the glue that pulls the Best Council plan under the three pillars together under a place making agenda for resilient communities”.

⁵ Leeds City Council (2020) [Best Council Plan](#)

⁶ Centre for Ageing Better (2021) [The State of Ageing in Leeds: What life is like for the people aged 50 and over in Leeds](#)