

# ATLAS

## PLANNING GROUP

### PLANNING STATEMENT

Levetts Farm

Clench Common

SN8 4DR

January 2026

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## INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Statement has been prepared by Atlas Planning Group in support of an application seeking full planning permission for the demolition of agricultural building and the erection of replacement barn with associated access track, landscaping and works at Levetts Farm, Clench Common, Marlborough, SN8 4DR.
- 1.2 The Statement will assess the development proposals in the context of national and local planning policy found within the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), Wiltshire Council's Core Strategy (2015) and the Wiltshire Design Guide (2024).

## SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The application site relates to an existing agricultural building situated within an established agricultural holding of approximately 1.77 hectares. The holding lies within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape and is predominantly made up of grazing land. A farm track to the north of the site provides access for agricultural machinery.
- 2.2 Local farmers use the holding for hay production and the Applicant hosts sheep during the summer months. The existing agricultural storage building has a timber frame structure with corrugated metal sheeting forming the external walls and roof.



Figure 1 – Extent of agricultural holding

## RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 The relevant planning history for the site is as follows:

### FULL PLANNING PERMISSION - E/2012/0631/FUL

3.2 In May 2012, an application seeking full planning permission for the demolition of both agricultural buildings and their replacement with two holiday let units as well as the creation of new vehicular access was submitted to Wiltshire Council. Planning Permission was granted in July 2012.

### FULL PLANNING PERMISSION - PL/2024/04111

3.3 In August 2024, an application seeking full planning permission for operational works in association with the change of use of the adjacent agricultural building under Class R, Part 3, Schedule 2 of the General Permitted Development Order (2015) (as amended) was submitted to Wiltshire Council. Planning permission was granted in October 2024.

### FULL PLANNING PERMISSION - PL/2025/01682

3.4 In February 2025, an application seeking full planning permission for the demolition of the barn and erection of a Use Class C1 aparthotel was submitted to Wiltshire Council. Planning permission was granted in April 2025

### FULL PLANNING PERMISSION - PL/2025/04899

3.5 In June 2025, an application was submitted to Wiltshire Council seeking full planning permission for the demolition of the adjacent agricultural building and the erection of a Use Class C3 dwellinghouse. Planning permission was granted in December 2025.



Figure 2 - Approved site landscape plan (PL/2025/04899)

## THE PROPOSAL

4.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of agricultural building and the erection of a replacement barn with associated access track, landscaping and works.

4.2 The description of development is as follows:

*“Demolition of agricultural building and erection of replacement barn with associated access track, landscaping and works”*

4.3 The replacement barn has been repositioned on the holding and will be sited in closer proximity to the access track secured under planning permission PL/2024/04111. There will continue to be a sufficient separation distance between Levett's Farmhouse, and the site of the existing barn will be returned to pasture.

4.4 Externally, the barn will comprise vertical timber cladding with a standing seam zinc roof. Importantly, the barn will be comparable in terms of footprint and scale, and the proposed ridge height will be lower than the existing building. Three sets of doors will serve the barn to allow for the easy manoeuvring of farm vehicles around the holding.

4.5 The barn will also be located a further distance from the recently approved Aparthotel on the site, and the proposal will replace an agricultural building which is in a poor state of repair. The Aparthotel will benefit from being located further away from the agricultural building, and the site will continue to be well-contained within the established hedgerow and trees which form the boundary treatment.

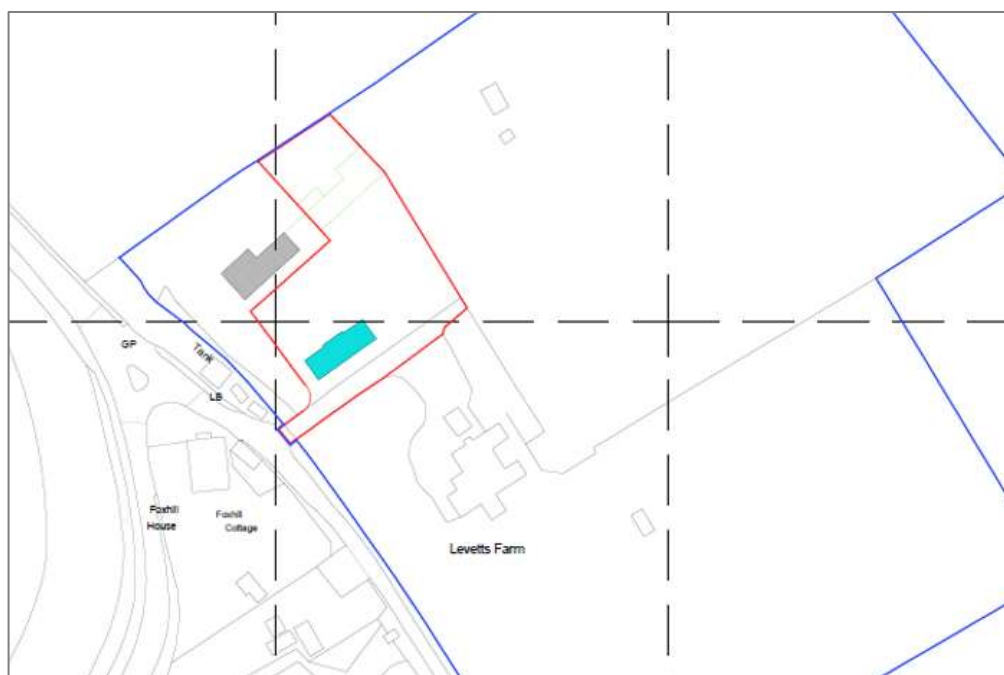


Figure 3 - Proposed site plan

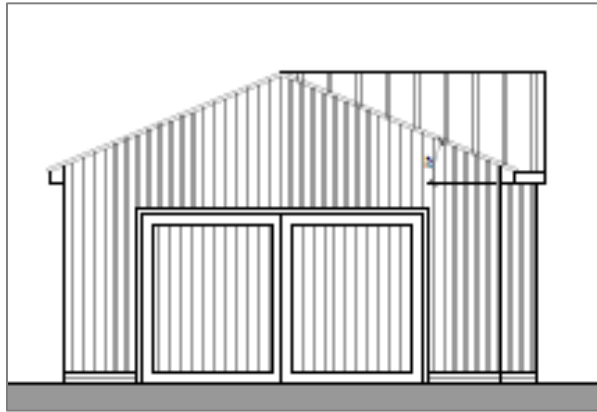


Figure 4 – Proposed north east elevation

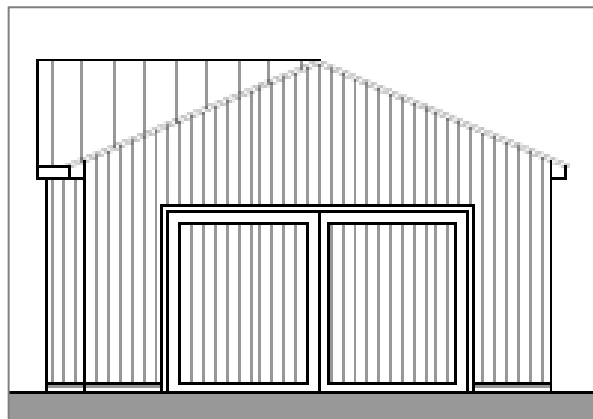


Figure 5 - Proposed south west elevation

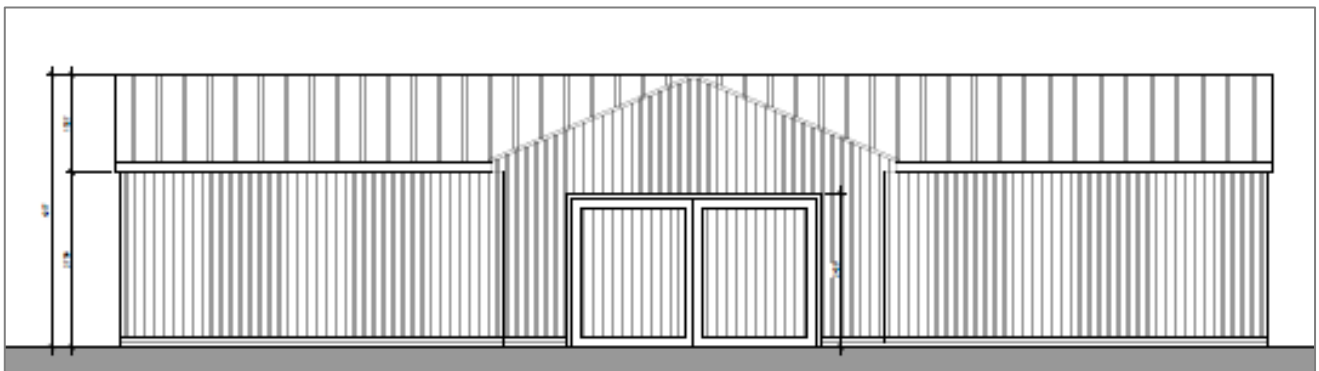


Figure 6 - Proposed south east elevation

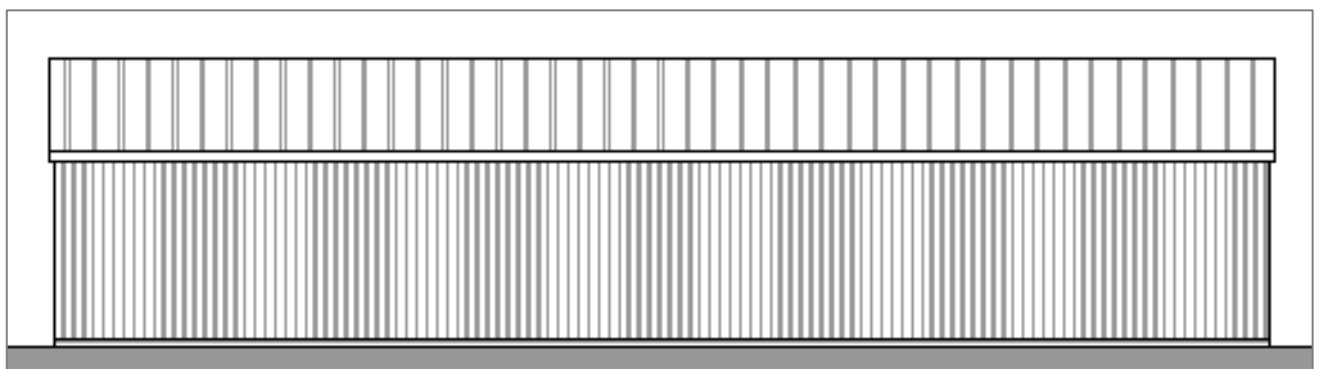


Figure 7 - Proposed north west elevation

## PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 Wiltshire Council's Core Strategy (2015) is the Council's primary Development Plan Document and the starting point for determining planning decisions within the county. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) provides a national tier of policy and decision-making guidance for the planning system and forms a material consideration for all planning decisions.
- 5.3 The policies and guidance contained within the statutory DPD and all other relevant material considerations have been reviewed to ensure the current proposal is an appropriate form of development for the application site.

## PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

- 5.4 The Settlement and Delivery Strategies of the Core Strategy are designed to ensure new development fulfils the fundamental principles of sustainability, as advocated in the NPPF.
- 5.5 Core Policy 1 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy sets out the 'Settlement Strategy', and identifies four tiers of settlements - Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres, and Large and Small Villages. Only the Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages have settlement boundaries.
- 5.6 Core Policy 2 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy sets out the 'Delivery Strategy'. It identifies the scale of growth appropriate within each settlement tier, stating that within the limits of development, as defined on the policies map, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development at the Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages.
- 5.7 Levetts Farm lies outside of any defined settlement boundary. Core Policy 2 outlines that development will not be permitted outside the limits of development, unless it meets the exemption policies detailed in paragraph 4.25 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) or would be classified as infill development within then built area.
- 5.8 The proposals seek the erection of a replacement barn within the open countryside. Although the current application does not meet any of the exemption policies detailed in Paragraph 5.24 of the Core Strategy, agricultural development is supported by Core Policy 34 and Core Policy 48 supports rural life.

5.9 Core Policy 34 states that Outside the Principal Settlements, Market Towns and Local Service Centres, developments that:

- ii. Support sustainable farming and food production through allowing development required to adapt to modern agricultural practices and diversification; or*
- iii. Are for new and existing rural based businesses within or adjacent to Large and Small Villages; or*
- iv. Are considered essential to the wider strategic interest of the economic development of Wiltshire, as determined by the Council*

Will be supported where they:

- v. Meet sustainable development objectives as set out in policies of this Core Strategy, and*
- vi. Are consistent in scale with their location, do not adversely affect nearby buildings and the surrounding area or detract from residential amenity; and*
- vii. Are supported by evidence that they are required to benefit the local economic and social needs; and*
- viii. Would not undermine the delivery of strategic employment allocations; and*
- ix. Are supported by adequate infrastructure*

5.10 As aforementioned, local farmers use the holding for hay production to feed livestock and the existing barn is used for hay and equipment storage. The Applicant also hosts sheep during the summer months.

5.11 Since the existing storage building is in a poor state of repair and situated just 12 metres from the Aparthotel approved under application PL/2025/0168, it is considered essential that the building is replaced and relocated so that the Applicants can make much better and productive use of their holding.

5.12 Objective RLM 10 of the NWDMP seeks to “*support investment in new agricultural infrastructure and redevelopment of farm buildings where it increases the sustainability of local businesses and aligns with AONB purposes*”.

5.13 Paragraph 88 of the NPPF supports a prosperous rural economy by enabling growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas through well-designed new buildings and the development of agricultural businesses.

- 5.14 NPPF Paragraph 89 also states that planning decisions should recognise that buildings for agricultural purposes *“may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport)”*.
- 5.15 For the reasons above, the proposed replacement barn is in accordance with Core Policy 34 and 48 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, and the overarching principle of national policy with regard to supporting a prosperous rural economy.
- 5.16 The principle of development should therefore be considered acceptable.

## DESIGN AND IMPACT ON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- 5.17 Core Policy 51 requires development to protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and must not result in any harmful impact. It also requires proposals to demonstrate that landscape character is conserved and where possible enhanced through sensitive design, landscape mitigation and enhancement measures.
- 5.18 Core Policy 57 requires a high standard of design for all new developments. Amongst other criteria, new developments must show that they enhance local distinctiveness; respond positively to the existing townscape; be sympathetic to and conserve historic buildings; and have regard to the impact on amenities of existing occupiers.
- 5.19 Indeed, Levett's Farm lies within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape and it is acknowledged that NPPF para 189 states that *“Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection”*.
- 5.20 However, the site is in agricultural use, and the proposals seek to replace an existing unsightly agricultural building on the holding. Externally, the replacement barn would comprise vertical timber cladding under a standing seam zinc roof.
- 5.21 The particular use of timber cladding would help to retain the relationship with the natural materials of the North Wessex Downs, and the site of the existing barn would be returned pasture which will open up the landscape to north of the site.

- 5.22 Although the barn would be repositioned on the holding, the proposal would be comparable in footprint to the existing building and have a lower ridge height. This means that the replacement barn would not be a prominent addition to the North Wessex Downs, and the established hedgerow and trees bounding the site will be retained meaning that only glimpsed views from the public right of way network (Footpaths SAVE 12 and SAVE9) would be achievable.
- 5.23 In any case, even if views from the wider landscape were achievable, the barn has the appearance of a typical modern agricultural building which one would expect to see in this rural setting. In our view, the proposal will result in a minor benefit to the landscape by removing the existing building which is in a poor state of repair.
- 5.24 On this basis, it is considered that the development accords with NPPF Para 189, Core Strategy Policies 51 and 57, and the North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan.

#### RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

- 5.25 Core Strategy Policy 57 of the WCS '*Ensuring High Quality Design & Space Shaping*' requires developments to ensure the impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties is acceptable.
- 5.26 In terms of neighbouring amenities, Levetts Farmhouse is the nearest residential property situated approximately 40 metres south east of the application site and benefits from intervening boundary treatment. This separation distance is sufficient to ensure that there would be negligible risk of overshadowing or loss of light occurring.
- 5.27 In terms of noise, the holding is already maintained by farm vehicles so noise from the farming activities in this location would already be reasonably expected. The current application would not result in an intensification of the use of the holding and any farm vehicles will be in operation during daytime periods only. As such, vehicle movements associated with the barn would not give rise to unwanted noise and disturbance on the nearest noise sensitive receptors.
- 5.28 After all, Levetts Farm is located in a rural area, and it is not uncommon for farming activity to take place close to residential properties in villages and rural locations. There is nothing unusual about the siting of the proposed barn.
- 5.29 As such, the proposal accords with Core Policy 57.

## HIGHWAYS

- 5.30 Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states that *“Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, **would be severe**, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios”*.
- 5.31 Vehicle access to the site will continue to be provided from the farm track to the north of the holding. An access track secured under planning permission PL/2024/04111 will also serve the agricultural building and aparthotel.
- 5.32 As aforementioned, the existing building is in agricultural use. Since the proposals relate to a replacement barn, vehicle movements in connection with the development will be comparable to the existing situation. Additionally, the proposal will result in a highways betterment with the agricultural building being located closer to the public highway.
- 5.33 On this basis, the development would not have a severe detrimental impact on the operation and safety of the local highway network.

## ECOLOGY

- 5.34 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF requires decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Core Strategy Policy 50 ‘Biodiversity and Geodiversity’ requires proposals to demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation and geological value as part of the design rationale. The policy also requires all proposals to incorporate appropriate mitigation measures to avoid and reduce disturbance of sensitive wildlife species and habitats. All development should seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity.
- 5.35 This application is accompanied by an Extended Phase 1 Ecological Assessment produced by Phillips Ecology (April 2024). The report confirms that the barn holds negligible potential for roosting bats and the site is considered to have low potential for other species.
- 5.36 As set out at NPPF Para 193, opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated into part of the design. Importantly, biodiversity enhancements have been incorporated into the design which include the 1 x Woodstone Bird Box and 1 x Barn Owl Box. These enhancement

measures can be secured by planning condition, and the applicant has confirmed agreement to purchasing off-site biodiversity units.

5.37 Given the above, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Core Policy 50.

## PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of agricultural building and erection of replacement barn with associated access track, landscaping and works.
- 6.2 Whilst the site lies outside of any defined settlement boundary, the site is in agricultural use and the proposals seek to replace an existing agricultural storage building.
- 6.3 Given the existing storage building is in a poor state of repair and situated just 12 metres from the Aparthotel approved under application PL/2025/0168, it is considered essential that the building is replaced and relocated so that the Applicants can make much better and productive use of their holding. The principle of development should therefore be considered acceptable.
- 6.4 Indeed, the site lies within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. However, the replacement barn will be comparable in footprint to the existing building and have a lower ridge height. Externally, the barn will comprise vertical timber cladding under a standing seam zinc roof which would help to retain the relationship with the natural materials of the landscape.
- 6.5 For these reasons, we respectfully ask that Wiltshire Council approve this application without delay.