

ATLAS

PLANNING GROUP

PLANNING STATEMENT

THE FORMER DURRINGTON LIBRARY

75 BULFORD ROAD

DURRINGTON

SP4 8EU

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 the existing building and the construction of a pair of semi-detached dwellings, landscaping and associated works at the Former Durrington Library, 75 Bulford Road, Durrington, SP4 8EU.

SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 The application site relates to a temporary porta cabin and associated hardstanding, previously used a library. The site has been vacant since 2023 when Durrington Library was moved to the Village Hall located on Durrington high street.



Figure 1: Existing building

2.2 The site is bounded by Avon Valley Practice to the north, Bulford Road to the east and residential dwellings and their curtilage to the south and west. Access is provided directly off Bulford Road.

2.3 The site lies within the settlement boundary of Durrington.

2.4 According to the Environment Agency's flood map for planning the site is located within Flood Zone 1, which is the lowest risk of flooding. The Environment Agency also classify the application site to have a 'very low' likelihood of surface water flooding.

2.5 The site is not located in close proximity to any listed buildings nor is it located within a conservation area.

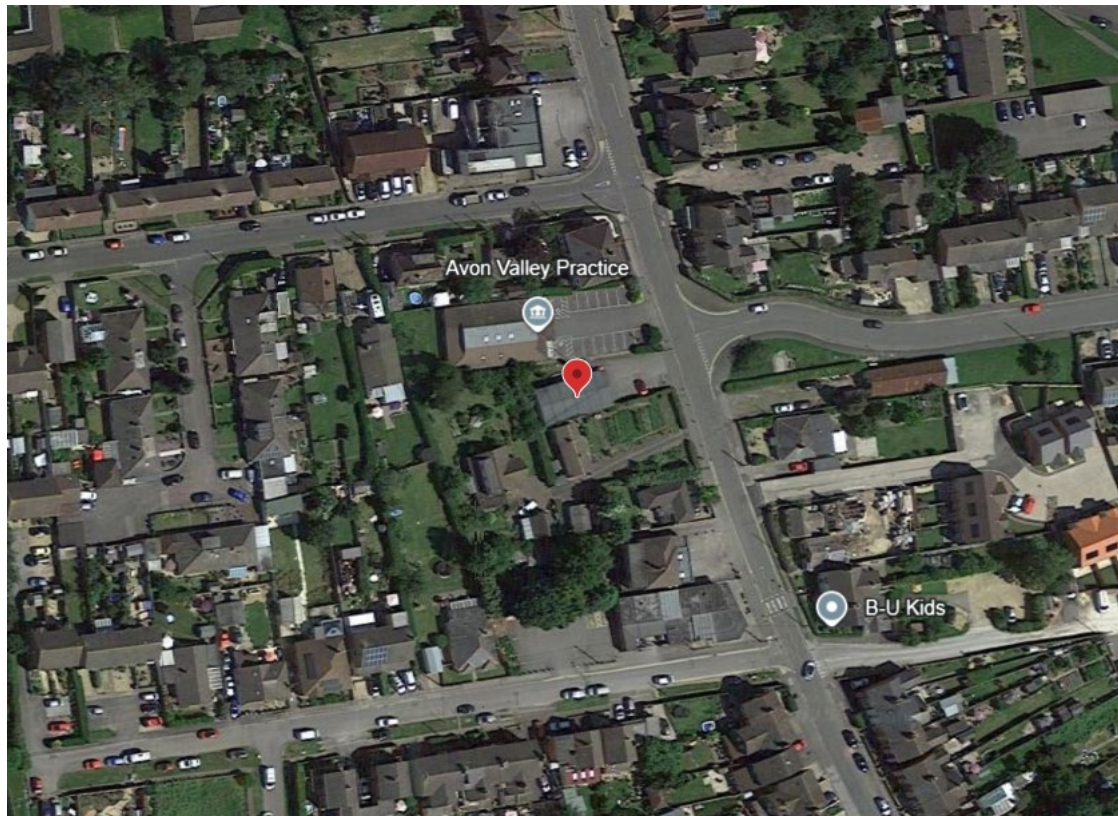


Figure 2: Aerial view of the application site

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

FULL APPLICATION – PL/2025/03532

- 3.1 In April 2025 an application was submitted to *‘Demolish the former porta cabin library and erect 4 x1 bedroom flats, with car parking and access.’*
- 3.2 The application was refused in June 2025 On the grounds the proposed development would result in a loss of a community facility within Durrington in line with CP49 of the Local Plan.
- 3.3 The proposal was also deemed to be unacceptable in design, bulk and massing terms. The scale design of the building was considered to be overbearing and not in keeping with the street scene and wider character of the area. As a result, it was found that the proposal would harm the amenities of the surrounding residents.
- 3.4 The development was also found to not provide sufficient private amenity spaces for the future occupiers.
- 3.5 This current application proposes an alternative scheme which aims to address the concerns raised within the previously refused application.

THE PROPOSAL

4.1 The description of development is as follows:

‘Demolition of the existing porta cabin building and the construction of a pair of semi-detached dwellings, landscaping and associated works.’

- 4.2 The proposal seeks to demolish the existing disused porta cabin building and replace it with a pair of high-quality semi-detached dwellings, constructed with brickwork and plain clay roof tiles, ensuring the development complements the nearby residential properties. Both the dwellings will consist of 3 bedrooms, one of which will have an en-suite.
- 4.3 Two parking spaces for each of the dwellings are to be provided on the hardstanding on the eastern side of the site. Access is to remain from the existing access point off Bulford Road.
- 4.4 Spacious rear gardens, with rear patios have been provided for both the dwellings. Additional landscaping will be undertaken to ensure future residents have sufficient high-quality amenity space.

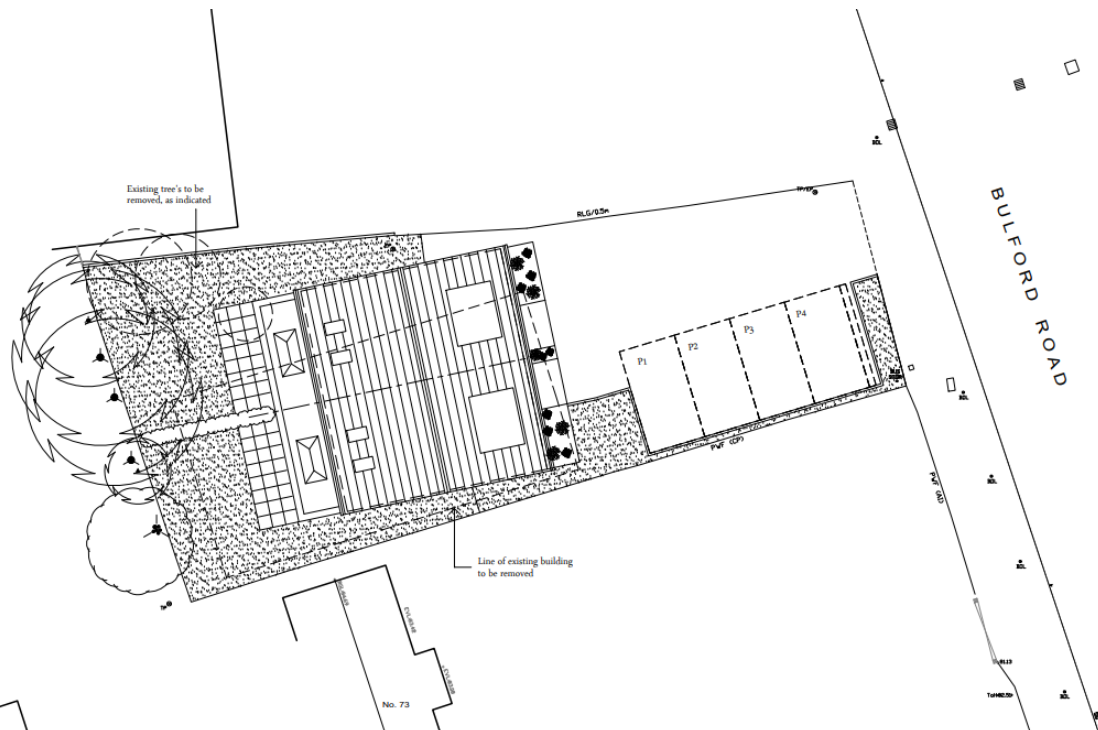


Figure 3: Proposed Site Plan

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, in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Section 38(6) also requires determination must 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 planning decisions. Additionally, it is important in this case to have regard to the fallback position that the site benefits from, and as set out in more detail below, forms a material consideration.
- 5.3 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, Paragraph 11 of the NPPF requires proposals that accord with the Development Plan to be approved without delay.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

- 5.4 Core Policy 1 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy sets out the 'Settlement Strategy' for the county and identifies four tiers of settlement - 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 defined limits of development/settlement boundaries.
- 5.5 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.
- 5.6 The application site is located within the village of Durrington, which under Core Policy 2 is defined as a Market Town. Core Policies 1 and 2 support development in market towns which falls within the settlement boundaries set out within the policies map. As the application site falls within the settlement boundary of Durrington, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 5.7 Within the previously refused application PL/2025/03532, the Officer stated a reason for refusal was that proposed development would result in the loss of a community facility that is protected under CP49 and paragraphs 88(d) and 98(c) of the NPPF, Meaning a marketing exercise would need to be carried out in order to determine that the site is not viable for a community use.

5.8 However, the supporting text of CP49 confirms that the policy applies to the “smaller settlements of Wiltshire” and then references footnote 98, which specifically outlines which settlement tiers CP49 should be applied to. The footnote states the following.

Footnote 98:

‘For the purposes of Core Policy 49, the smaller settlements of Wiltshire are defined as those Local Service Centres, Large Villages and Small Villages listed in Appendix E, or any smaller settlement not defined in the settlement hierarchy.’

5.9 Under Appendix E of the Core Strategy Durrington is defined as a Market Town. Nowhere within the policy wording or supporting text does it state CP49 should be applied to Market Towns. The policy applies only to the “smaller settlements of Wiltshire”. As such, CP49 should not be applied to this site and the primary reason for refusal raised within application PL/2025/03532, regarding the loss of a community facility or service protected under CP49 is flawed and the associated marketing requirements are not relevant in this case.

Market Towns	
Amesbury (including Bulford and Durrington)	Marlborough
Bradford on Avon	Melksham and Bowerhill Village
Calne	Royal Wootton Bassett
Corsham	Tidworth and Ludgershall
Devizes	Warminster
Malmesbury	Westbury

Figure 4: Extract from Appendix E of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015)

5.10 It must also be noted that the library has since been moved to the Durrington Village Hall, meaning the community of Durrington have not lost access to a library and there is no need to retain the existing use, therefore making the application site redundant.

5.11 Moreover, the NPPF requires each Local Planning Authority to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years’ worth of housing against their housing

requirement, or four years' worth of housing if they have an emerging Local Plan at an advanced stage of preparation.

5.12 Wiltshire's latest Housing Land Supply Statement (June 2025) confirms they can only provide 2.42 years supply against the 5-year minimum requirement set out in the NPPF. This shortfall is substantial.

5.13 In accordance with the NPPF, where there is a shortfall in housing supply the "tilted balance" set out at paragraph 11d) is engaged. This means that this application should be approved unless there are adverse impacts that both **significantly and demonstrably** outweigh the benefits associated with providing a high-quality home at this site.

5.14 As the proposed development makes efficient use of currently underutilised land, accords with all the relevant local and national policies and is not in conflict with CP49. The principle of development at the site is therefore considered acceptable subject to other material planning considerations, which are addressed in subsequent sections of this Statement.

DESIGN AND IMPACT UPON THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA

5.15 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.

5.16 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.

5.17 The Wiltshire Design Guide (WDG) elaborates on Core Policy 57, aligning with the principles of the National Design Guide. It emphasises ten key characteristics of design across its sections. In Section 3.0, the guide emphasises the importance of new developments respecting and enhancing local character, encouraging inclusivity and community cohesion. Section 4.0 underscores the need for developments to harmonise with topography, optimise land use, and prioritise quality detailing, encouraging walkability, accessibility, sustainability, and community. Section 6.0 emphasises supporting biodiversity and protecting the historic environment through integrated natural features. Section 8.0 advocates for

a mix of home tenures and sizes, supported by diverse local services, promoting social inclusivity and catering to various life stages.

- 5.18 More specifically, the 'homes and buildings' section prioritises well-being in both internal and external environments, encouraging social interaction and seamlessly integrating into neighbourhoods. Homes must adhere to national standards regarding internal space, including minimum dimensions for bedrooms and built-in storage. Additional storage for new technologies is encouraged, and planning drawings must detail room dimensions and furniture layouts. Internal storage for daily needs and space for household items must be readily accessible, and garages should accommodate parking and storage. Compliance with 'Secured by Design' standards is required, and apartments should generally be dual aspect with natural light in hallways and bathrooms. Noise levels must meet standards, and windows facing each other should be designed to minimise direct sightlines. Private amenity space, such as gardens or balconies, is essential for dwellings, with minimum requirements outlined. Overall, careful consideration of space and amenities is crucial for higher-density developments to ensure access, privacy, and quality of life for residents.
- 5.19 A reason for refusal under the previous application (PL/2025/03532) was that *'the proposed development by virtue of its design, bulk, massing, flat-roofed form, and choice of materials would result in a large, utilitarian structure that appears visually intrusive, unattractive, and incongruous within the existing street scene. The scheme fails to achieve a high standard of design and does not contribute positively to local character or create a strong sense of place, as it does not draw upon or complement the established context of the area.'*
- 5.20 In response to the above, the proposed development has been re-designed to now include a pair of three-bedroom semi-detached dwellings, which enhances both the functionality and visual appeal of the site, when compared to the previously refused flats and existing situation.
- 5.21 The surrounding area is predominantly residential and features a mix of one and two storey detached and semi-detached houses. The majority of these existing properties mostly utilise materials such as red brick and plain clay tiled roofs, with some having a white rendered finished.



Figure 5: Existing dwellings along Bulford Road

- 5.22 The design of the proposed dwellings has been carefully considered to ensure they now complement the existing character of the area. The proposed dwellings will be two-storey in nature with a dormer on the front elevation. This two-storey nature of the dwellings ensures the proposal will not appear overbearing within its plot, as it would be a similar height and scale to the other two storey dwellings along Bulford Road.
- 5.23 In terms of the design of the dwellings themselves they have been designed to a high standard and will incorporate high-quality materials that are in keeping with the local vernacular and will complement the surrounding properties. Both the proposed dwellings will consist of red brick walls and plain clay roof tiles, which will create a cohesive and visually appealing development that harmonises with the surrounding architecture.
- 5.24 Both of the dwellings adhere to the Nationally Described Space Standards, providing adequately sized living spaces. Floorplans have been submitted to demonstrate that the rooms are appropriately sized and shaped for comfortable living. Additionally, each dwelling will benefit from a good amount of rear private outdoor space, ensuring a good quality of life for any future residents.
- 5.25 The existing porta cabin on the site is abandoned, with the windows currently being boarded up. It is of no architectural merit and does not enhance the appearance of the application site or contribute significantly to the wider area. Therefore, the addition of a pair of well-designed semi-detached dwellings not only makes effective use of the site but also results in an enhancement to the existing character and appearance of the site and its immediate surroundings.

- 5.26 Overall, the proposed dwelling is of a high-quality home for the site which results in an enhancement to the existing character and appearance of the site and its surroundings. The design, scale, massing and height are sympathetic to, and consistent with other properties within the area. It is therefore considered that the scheme accords with Core Policies 51 and 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the NPPF.

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

- 5.27 Paragraph 124 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- 5.28 Moreover, decisions should ensure that developments optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development, and create places which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users (Paragraph 135f of the NPPF).
- 5.29 Core Strategy Policy 57 '*Ensuring High Quality Design & Space Shaping*' requires development to ensure the impact on the amenities of existing occupants/neighbours is acceptable and also ensure that appropriate levels of amenity are achievable within the development itself.
- 5.30 The proposed layout of the dwellings has been carefully designed to minimise the impact on neighbouring properties. The positioning of windows has been strategically considered to prevent direct overlooking into adjacent homes and gardens.
- 5.31 With regards to the amenities of the residents at 73 Bulford Road, there is only one window proposed on the first-floor southern elevation, which would be constructed out of obscured glass as it serves a bathroom. Therefore, there is no opportunity for overlooking into the property, its private rear garden or front garden. Additionally, as the proposed dwelling is located to north of 73 Bulford Road it should be considered the proposal will not cause an adverse level of overshadowing or loss of daylight to the 73 Bulford Road.
- 5.32 Regarding the amenity of residents at 71 Bulford Road. Due to the positioning of the proposed dwelling within its plot and the exiting boundary screening offered by the mature trees and hedges along the western boundary of the plot. There will be no opportunity for direct overlooking from the first-floor windows on the rear elevation into the property at 71 Bulford Road. The rooflights situated on the

western elevation are positioned in such a way where views into 71 Bulford Road would not be achievable. As a result, they would not give rise to any overlooking issues and instead just provide adequate levels of natural light into each of the ensembles.

5.33 Additionally, the existing and proposed boundary treatments, including fencing and hedging, will further enhance privacy for both the new and existing residents, particularly at ground floor level.

5.34 Future occupiers of the proposed dwellings will also benefit from a high quality of residential amenity, with high levels of sunlight and daylight provision into each dwelling. As well as sufficient private useable outdoor space to the rear of the dwellings and associated off-street car parking.

5.35 For these reasons, the proposal is considered to accord with Core Policy 57.

HIGHWAYS

5.36 Paragraph 109 of the NPPF recognises that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas. Additionally, Paragraph 116 of the NPPF sets out how development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

5.37 Core Strategy Policy 61 requires new development to be located and designed to reduce the need to travel particularly by private car, and to encourage the use of sustainable transport alternatives.

5.38 Both the proposed dwellings are 3 bedrooms, Wiltshire's Car Parking Strategy (2011) stipulates a minimum of 2 car parking spaces for dwellings of 3 bedrooms.

Bedrooms	Minimum spaces
1	1 space
2 to 3	2 spaces
4+	3 spaces
Visitor parking	0.2 spaces per dwelling (unallocated)

Figure 6: Wiltshire Car Parking Standards

5.39 The proposal includes the provision of 4 car parking spaces, 2 for each of the dwellings, all of which are located on the eastern side of the site. As can be seen from the tracking below all the parking spaces allow for vehicles to enter and leave the site in a forward gear. This arrangement was also found to be acceptable under the previously refused application (PL/2025/03532).

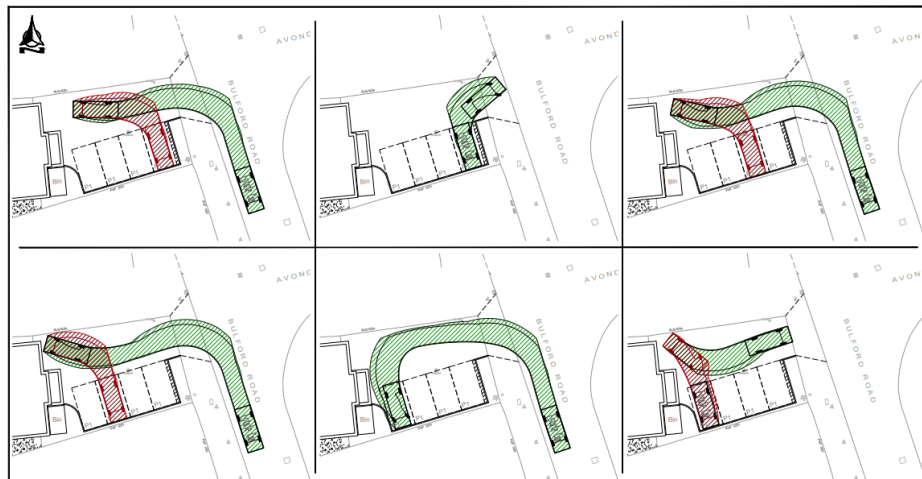


Figure 7 – Vehicle tracking

5.40 The site benefits from an existing access point provided via a dropped curb directly off Bulford Road, this arrangement is to be maintained under this proposal.

5.41 As such the proposal is in full accordance with Core Policy 61 and Paragraph 115 of the NPPF.

ECOLOGY

5.42 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 also seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity.

5.43 An Ecological Impact Assessment was undertaken by Eclipse Ecology (January 2026). The report found there to be no evidence of any priority habitats within the application site and confirmed that the development would not result in harm to any species or their habitats.

5.44 Several ecological enhancements were proposed within the report including:

- Integrate two bee bricks within a south facing wall at a minimum height of 1m.

- Integrate four swift bricks into the outer vertical walls.
- Use wildlife friendly planting where possible

5.45 As such, the proposal is not considered to impact protected species and is considered to be acceptable in this regard.

5.46 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) refers to a policy that requires developers to ensure that the biodiversity value of the site after development must be higher than it was before development. The legislation introducing biodiversity net gain was the Environment Bill that was introduced to Parliament in January 2020. In April 2024 the 10% BNG requirement became mandatory for all small sites.

5.47 The application is also accompanied by a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment and calculation produced by Eclipse Ecology (January 2026), which demonstrated that the proposal would result in an 27.64% net gain in habitat units. There are no baseline hedgerow units within the development site, meaning there is no change.

RIVER AVON SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION

5.48 The application site is within the catchment of the River Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC). SACs are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2019. These are a network of sites designated for supporting habitats or species of high nature conservation importance in the European context. Any activity that has a detrimental effect on these European sites is made an offence under the Regulations. As this site falls within the catchment of the River Avon SAC, the proposal has the potential to cause adverse effects alone or in combination with other developments through the discharge of phosphorus in wastewater.

5.49 As this site falls within the catchment of the River Avon SAC, the proposal has the potential to cause adverse effects alone or in combination with other developments through the discharge of phosphorus in wastewater. Following a Cabinet: 6 February 2024 Revised Nutrient Neutrality Strategy, the Council has revised its approach for developments requiring nutrient credits in the Hampshire Avon. A Council led scheme of phosphorus credits is available for planned development at a fix cost per kilogram of phosphorus, provided supply of mitigation is available.

5.50 As the proposal constitutes 'planned development', the application is therefore accompanied by a nutrient calculation to determine the number of credits required.

5.51 Therefore, the proposal fully accords with the requirements of CP50 and the aspirations of the NPPF more generally which include enhancing the natural environment.

ARBORICULTURAL IMPACTS

5.52 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF also states that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment and paragraph 136 identifies trees as making ‘an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change.

5.53 Wiltshire Core Strategy Policies CP50, CP511, CP52 and CP57 which amongst other criteria, restrict development which would result in the loss of trees, hedges or features that contribute to the character of the area.

5.54 A detailed Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan have been produced by Wadey Tress (January 2026) and accompany this application. The plan indicates that three small category ‘C’ trees along the northern boundary of the application site will need to be removed in order to facilitate the development. However, these trees are low quality and do not offer any significant amenity when viewed outside the site.

5.55 The remaining trees are located along the western boundary of the application site, meaning they will not likely be affected during the construction process. The Tree Protection Plan also highlights how the remaining trees will be retained and protected during the construction phase. The trees on the western boundary of the application site will be protected by tree protection fencing to ensure both the trees and their Root Protection Area’s (RPA) are not damaged during construction.

5.56 In conclusion, the proposed development aligns with the NPPF and Wiltshire Core Strategy policies by mitigating the removal of three low-quality trees, while protecting the remaining trees to maintain the area's character and ecological value.

PLANNING BALANCE & CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a pair of semi-detached dwellings, landscaping and associated works.
- 6.2 The application site lies within the settlement boundary of Durrington therefore there is a presumption of sustainable development.
- 6.3 The design of the dwellings has been carefully considered to ensure the development would reflect and complement the existing character of the area. The scale and height of the dwellings also ensures that the development would not appear overbearing or cramped within the street scene. Additionally, the design and positioning of the windows ensure the amenities of both existing and future residents are protected.
- 6.4 Due to the positioning and orientation of the dwellings, the distances between neighbouring dwellings and the positioning of the windows the development would not result in any undue overlooking or loss of outlook. Further to this, the highway arrangements are also considered acceptable.
- 6.5 Therefore, it can be seen that the proposal is in accordance with all the relevant National and Local Policies and has addressed any concerns received within the previous application.
- 6.6 As such, we commend the proposal to you and respectfully request that Wiltshire Council approve this application without delay.