

Erection of link extension

Hesdin Estate, Thoulstone,
Chapmanslade, Wiltshire, BA13 4GF

Planning Statement

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Document Information

About

This document has been prepared for Hesdin Estate by Squires Planning.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Planning Statement has been prepared by Squires Planning in support of an application by Hesdin Estate for the:
- “Erection of link extension”*
- 1.2. This statement provides an overview of the site, its context and the proposed development before considering the material considerations relevant in the determination of this application.
- 1.3. The submitted application comprises the following plans and documents:
- Drawing No. TF SK275 Rev B – Location Plan
 - Drawing No. TF SK190 Rev B – Site Layout As Consented
 - Drawing No. TF SK189 Rev A – Layouts As Consented
 - Drawing No. TF SK188 Rev B – Elevations As Consented
 - Drawing No. TF SK190 Rev E – Site Layout Proposed
 - Drawing No. TF SK189 Rev D – Ground Floor Layouts Proposed
 - Drawing No. TF SK294 – First Floor Layouts Proposed
 - Drawing No. TF SK295 – Elevations SW NW Proposed
 - Drawing No. TF SK296 – Elevations SE NE Proposed
 - Proposed CGI's
 - Historic Environment Assessment dated February 2026 by Armour Heritage
- 1.4. This statement should be read in conjunction with all of the submitted plans and documents, which form the application as a whole.

Site & Situation

- 1.5. The wider site is situated to the east of Chapmanslade adjacent to the A36 approximately halfway between Westbury (to the west) and Frome (to the east) within an area of countryside. Access to the wider site is achieved via an existing road that runs from the A36 to the A3098. The wider site comprises 9 properties created via both conversion works and new builds (3 properties still under construction, of which 2 are subject of this application), as well as associated ancillary structures including garaging and swimming pools, and landscaped garden areas. There are dedicated car parking areas on site together with two vehicular accesses to the public highway.
- 1.6. Thoulstone Farmhouse, situated on the wider site, is a Grade II Listed Building and a number of other structures on site are deemed to be curtilage listed. The site also falls within a locally designated landscape area. Other than these heritage and landscape considerations the site is not affected by any other planning designations.

- 1.7. The wider site can be seen in its context below in Figure 1.

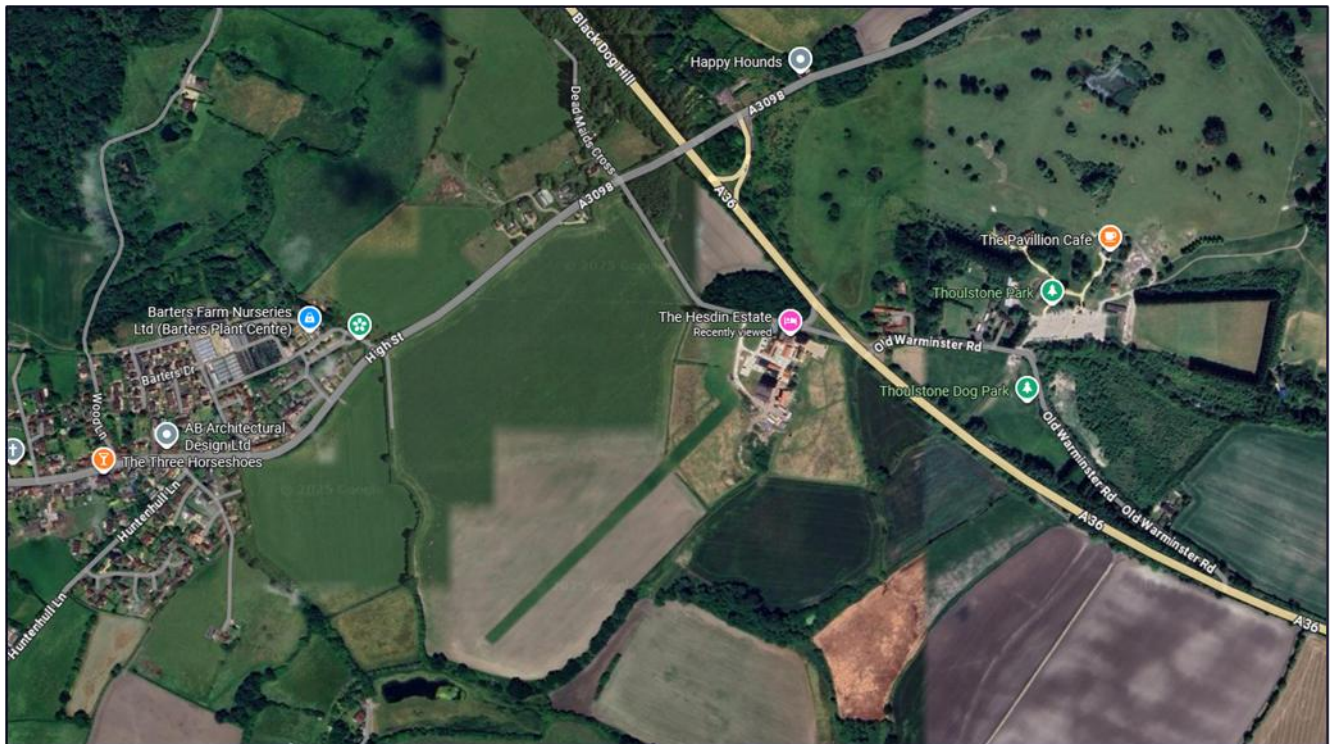


Figure 1 - Site Context

- 1.8. As described, this proposal relates to the 5 of the 3 units under construction, with this forming the application site (red line area) for the proposal. Below is an extract from the submitted Location Plan, confirming the development area.



Figure 2 - Location Plan exert

Planning History

- 1.9. The site has an extensive and complicated planning history. However, of particular importance to this pre-application proposal is permission PL/2024/09973, which was granted for the flexible use of the site for C3 dwellinghouses and as a holiday accommodation complex (Sui Generis) in line with the provisions of Schedule 2, Part 3, Class V of the GPDO.
- 1.10. The site is currently operating under the holiday accommodation use and it is the intention of the applicant to enhance this use and ultimately maintain it as the permanent use of the site, hence this proposal. The current operation provides luxury holiday homes with space for up to 140 guests (upon completion of the last 3 units).
- 1.11. Full details of the operation can be found at <https://hesdin.co.uk/>
- 1.12. Planning permission PL/2021/06497 was granted for the demolition of existing agricultural building and erection of three residential dwellings. These properties are currently under construction, and they are the subject of this application. They are also covered by permission PL/2024/09973 and thus are able to be used for holiday accommodation purposes once complete.

2. The Proposed Development

- 2.1. This application seeks the “*Erection of link extension*”. This proposed link extension is a single storey element with a plunge pool on its roof. It will connect the approved Plots 2 and 3. Below is a CGI visualisation of the proposal.



Figure 3 - CGI Visualisation

- 2.2. The link extension comprises a flat roof structure with a cantilevered plunge pool set on the roof. The roof will also double as a decking area available; for outside use. The link extension is essentially a glass box that sits directly between Plots 2 and 3. It will be constructed using matching facing materials and fenestration to the approved properties. Internally, both Plots 2 and 3 will have access to the link extension at both ground and first floor level, with the ground floor internal area being a shared dining room.
- 2.3. The extension is designed so that it can provide greater flexibility and amenity offering to the approved holiday accommodation use. Once the 3 properties are completed, they will, as per the rest of the site, be used for holiday accommodation. Having the link allows for Plots 2 and 3 to either be let as a single large property or still be retained as 2 lets with optional and/or communal use of the dining room and decking/pool area.
- 2.4. As such, the driving purpose of this proposal is to support the approved holiday accommodation use by providing flexible additional amenities which will allow for greater operational flexibility and wider guest appeal.

3. Planning Policy

- 3.1. Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 confirm that planning decisions should be taken in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 3.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2024) (“the NPPF”) provides further clarity on how this should be done in the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out at paragraph 11 which states:

“For decision-taking this means:

c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date [emphasis added], 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.”

- 3.3. It is therefore appropriate that one must first consider whether the proposed development accords with an up-to-date development plan. For this site, the adopted development plan consists of:
- Wiltshire Core Strategy adopted 2015
 - Saved Policy C3, West Wiltshire District Plan (1st Alteration) 2004
- 3.4. Policy contained in the NPPF is also a material consideration as well as other relevant policy guidance and legislation.
- 3.5. The most relevant policies are outlined below.

Wiltshire Core Strategy, adopted 2015

- 3.6. **Core Policy 39: Tourist Development.** The policy sets out the relevant tests for new tourist development. Additionally, it also confirms that *“Extensions to existing facilities should be appropriate in scale to their location and help to ensure the future viability of the business, including farm diversification schemes.”*
- 3.7. **Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity.** The policy seeks the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity features. It requires proposals to demonstrate how features are protected and how enhancements will be achieved.
- 3.8. **Core Policy 51: Landscape.** The policy seeks development to protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character. It confirms that *“Proposals should be informed by and sympathetic to the distinctive character areas identified in the relevant Landscape Character Assessment(s) and any other relevant assessments and studies.”*

- 3.9. **Core Policy 58: Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment.** The policy states that *“Development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment.”*
- 3.10. **Core Policy 61: Transport and Development.** The policy seeks 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.
- 3.11. **Core Policy 62: Development Impacts on the Transport Network.** The policy states *“Developments should provide appropriate mitigating measures to offset any adverse impacts on the transport network at both the construction and operational stages. Proposals for new development should not be accessed directly from the national primary route network outside built-up areas, unless an over-riding need can be demonstrated.”*
- 3.12. West Wiltshire District Plan, Saved Policy C3, **Policy C3: Special Landscape Areas.** The saved policy identifies ‘special landscape areas’, including The Corsley Heath to Chapmanslade Greensand Ridge. The policy says the landscape character of the SLAs *“will be conserved and enhanced”* by resisting development that is considered detrimental to the *“high quality”* of the landscape. The policy supports, in principle, development *“essential to the social and economic well-being of the rural community or desirable for the enjoyment of its amenities”*

National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.13. The NPPF is the overarching national policy framework for England. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans can provide for housing and other development in a sustainable matter. As set out in paragraph 2, the NPPF must be taken into account in preparing the development plan and is a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 3.14. Paragraph 8 sets out the objectives for sustainable development. These are:
- a) **an economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure
 - b) **a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being.
 - c) **an environmental objective** – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 3.15. The NPPF clearly supports the building of a strong and competitive economy. It is clear at paragraph 85 that *“Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for*

development.” Additionally, paragraph 87 makes clear that planning policies and decisions should recognise and address specific locational requirements of different sectors.

- 3.16. Supporting a prosperous rural economy is also a key objective of the NPPF. Paragraph 88 states *“Planning policies and decisions should enable:*
- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, new buildings*
 - b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;*
 - c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and*
 - d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.”*
- 3.17. In addition, paragraph 89 confirms *“Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. 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). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.”*
- 3.18. Paragraph 207 of the NPPF expects local planning authorities in the determination of applications to require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. And that the level of detail to be *“proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance”*.
- 3.19. Paragraph 215 of the NPPF says 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”* and paragraph 220 says that *“Not all elements of a Conservation Area ... will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area ... should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 214 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 215, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area”*.

Emerging Planning Policy

- 3.20. Wiltshire Council submitted the Wiltshire Local Plan to the Secretary of State for Housing Communities and Local Government for independent examination on 28 November 2024. The first stage of hearings in relation to the Duty to Cooperate were held on 24 June 2025. Stage 2 of the Plan’s examination is scheduled to commence on 11 November 2025.

- 3.21. Whilst it is unlikely that the Wiltshire Local Plan will have finished examination and moved towards adoption in advance of the pre-application response, and thus only limited weight can be given to it at this time, the following policies are considered relevant.
- 3.22. **Policy 69: Tourist and related development.** In relation to existing facilities the policy states *“All proposals for tourism and related development, including the intensification of existing tourist facilities must demonstrate as appropriate that they will: not have a detrimental impact on landscape, heritage assets, biodiversity and the amenity of local residents; avoid unacceptable traffic generation and promote active and sustainable travel options; not lead to adverse impacts such as light, noise and odour impacts, particularly in rural or isolated locations. Assessments may be required to address the potential for adverse effects associated with new development; be capable of accessing local services and a local employee base; not significantly impact the vitality of town centres; and not replace permanent dwellings, and be restricted to either short-term holiday uses or enable the on-site retention of key staff where necessary.”*
- 3.23. **Policy 88: Biodiversity and Geodiversity.** This policy essentially reflects existing Core Strategy Policy 50.
- 3.24. **Policy 89: Biodiversity Net Gain.** The policy requires development to achieve a minimum of 20% biodiversity net gain or higher as stipulated in national legislation and/or policy or supplementary guidance, over the pre-development biodiversity value as measured by the latest Biodiversity Metric.
- 3.25. **Policy 91: Conserving and enhancing Wiltshire’s landscapes.** This policy essentially reflects existing Core Strategy Policy 51.

Other Material Policy Considerations

- 3.26. Outside of the Development Plan and the Framework, there are other material policy considerations that need to be discussed in relation to this development; in this case:
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
 - Wiltshire Design Guide (2024)

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

- 3.27. The PPG, provided as an online resource, adds further context to the NPPF and it is intended that the two documents should be read together. The guidance is also a material consideration when making decisions on planning applications.
- 3.28. The section titled ‘Historic Environment’ is of particular relevance and states that when it comes to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment, in the case of buildings, the risks of neglect and decay of heritage assets are best addressed by ensuring that they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation.

Wiltshire Design Guide

- 3.29. The Design Guide is for any applicant or assessor of planning applications and design proposals within the Local Authority of Wiltshire. Core Policy 57 also sets out expectations which applicants

must give regard to when designing development proposals. Therefore, as an SPD, the primary aim of this Wiltshire Design Guide is to elaborate on Core Policy 57.

Appropriate Weight

- 3.30. Regarding the weight that is given, Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 state that the determination of applications must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance, full weight is given to the relevant policies within the Wiltshire Core Strategy, as it forms the relevant part of the Development Plan.
- 3.31. As it forms the basis of Government policy for planning applications, substantial weight should be given to the policies of the Framework. This should not be at the expense of the Development Plan since it is up to date.

4. Main Considerations

4.1. In this section we will consider the main issues relevant to the proposed development, having had regard to the site's context, planning history and relevant planning policies. It is considered that the following matters form the main considerations:

- Principle of development
- Heritage
- Design
- Sustainability

4.2. Each of the above main considerations are fully assessed below.

Principle of development

- 4.3. As a form of tourist development, given the holiday accommodation use of the site, the main policy context relating to the principle of development is covered by Core Policy 39 of the Core Strategy. Additionally, paragraphs 88 and 89 of the NPPF are relevant, due to the site's location within the countryside and the developments input to the rural economy.
- 4.4. Core Policy 39 confirms that *"Extensions to existing facilities should be appropriate in scale to their location and help to ensure the future viability of the business, including farm diversification schemes."* As an existing facility (albeit this part under construction) this part of the policy is most relevant. The key test therefore is whether the extension is appropriate in scale to their location. This proposal is for a modest single storey extension with associated plunge pool. It has a floor area of 54.72sqm and essentially fills a gap between two approved properties. It is therefore exceptionally limited in scale and has no wider impact. With this being the case, it is clearly appropriate in scale to the sites location.
- 4.5. Additionally, the policy confirms that the extension will help to ensure future viability of the business. As previously described this extension allows for greater flexibility in operation allowing for different rental configurations. Further, it provides additional amenities for guests, again improving the overall attraction. Finally, the elements included within this proposal, specifically the lunge pool and decking area, are features that you would expect to find at a holiday accommodation complex. This adds to the existing swimming pool on site and thus again improves the overall amenities offered.
- 4.6. The NPPF at paragraphs 88 and 89 support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas. Paragraph 88 confirms that planning decisions should enable *"sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside"*.
- 4.7. As set out above, this is a modest extension to the already approved new build properties. It does not, in any way, cause harm to the character of the countryside.
- 4.8. It is clear for the above that the proposal is supported in principle by Core Policy 39 and the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

Heritage

- 4.9. As part of this application we have provided a Historic Environment Assessment, produced by Armour Heritage. The assessment confirms that there are two designated heritage assets that have the potential to be affected by the proposal, these being; Thoulstone Farmhouse, a Grade II Listed Building; and Spinney Farmhouse, also Grade II Listed. The assessment also considered the impact of the proposal on archaeological remains.
- 4.10. The assessment has been conducted in line with current national policy and guidance including the NPPF and Historic England guidance on significance and setting.
- 4.11. The assessment concludes that the proposed link building and roof level plunge pool will result in **no harm** to the significance or setting of either Thoulstone Farmhouse (Hesdin Manor) or Spinney Farmhouse.
- 4.12. Further, in terms of archaeological impact, the assessment states *“With regard to buried archaeological remains, although the wider area is known to have a varied archaeological background, the Site itself has been subject to extensive and recent ground disturbance associated with the demolition of 20th century agricultural structures and the construction of the consented residential units. It is therefore considered that the potential for the survival of meaningful archaeological remains within the footprint of the proposed development is extremely low.”*
- 4.13. Given the clear evidence presented in the submitted Historic Environment Assessment, that has fully considered the impact on the significance of the identified heritage assets, and found no harm, the application is wholly acceptable in heritage terms, complying with the Development Plan and NPPF. Moreover, the proposal meets the statutory tests set out in the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Design

- 4.14. Core Policy 57 seeks to ensure high quality design and place shaping. The policy is supported by the Design Guide which itself provides additional detail on design matters. It should be noted that the Design Guide is primarily aimed at new residential proposals, particularly larger schemes that have wider urban design considerations. As such, there is no specific design guidance applicable to this proposal, over and above the general principles of good design.
- 4.15. The proposed link extension is appropriate in size, scale and bulk. It harmonises with the approved built form and does not create an overly dominant or incongruous addition. It has matching facing materials and continues the overall approved aesthetic. The decking area and swimming pool are features expected to be found within a holiday accommodation complex and thus, they do not appear out of context or at odds with the wider character. Whilst a large part of the site's character is derived from its historic nature and rural setting, the new build properties are contemporary in their design aesthetic, whilst echoing the rural characteristics of the site. Thus, the proposed extension fits with that already approved design approach.
- 4.16. The proposed extension and its associated features are therefore appropriate in design terms, achieving high quality design. The proposal is therefore in accordance with Core Policy 57 and the NPPF in design terms.

Ecology

- 4.17. The proposed extension covers any area between two new build properties currently under construction. These properties also replaced a previous large scale agricultural barn. As such, the extension is on an area of land that is being developed and was previously developed. With that being the case, the proposal does not result in the loss of any on-site habitat.
- 4.18. With this being the case, despite exceed 25sqm in size, given there is no loss of existing habitat, the proposal meets the *de minimis* exemption for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).
- 4.19. Should any additional ecological enhancements be deemed appropriate these can be provided and secured by way of condition.

Sustainability

- 4.20. Paragraph 8 of the Framework sets out the three overarching objectives of sustainable development. These are independent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways, so that opportunities can be taken to secure new gains across each of the different objectives. As previously mentioned, these objectives are economic, social and environmental. However, they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. In the case of this application, all of the objectives are considered relevant.
- 4.21. The proposed development is anticipated to contribute to the economic objective of sustainable development. In the short term, the construction phase of this project will provide a modest but crucial economic stimulus, through financial expenditures on construction activities, materials, and labour. However, the main economic benefit it the support the development will provide for the vitality and viability of a rural business, by offering greater flexibility in letting offerings and adding to the mix of amenity offerings the holiday accommodation complex offers.
- 4.22. In terms of the social impact, whilst this is limited, it is still positive by providing potential guests with greater accommodation offering and a wider choice of facilities.
- 4.23. The proposal helps to meet the environmental objective by providing an extension to previously approved new build properties, rather than utilising undeveloped land. Additionally, whilst not subject to BNG (due to meeting the *De Minimis* exemption) the scheme can still provide for biodiversity enhancement if deemed necessary, by way of planning conditions.
- 4.24. Overall, the scheme provides for positive gains in all three objectives of sustainable development.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. The proposed “*Erection of link extension*” is acceptable in principle being a modest extension to already permitted properties within the holiday accommodation complex. It is supported by Core Policy 39 and the relevant provisions of the NPPF, supporting an existing rural based tourist business, by providing greater operational flexibility and a wider range of on site amenities. This supports the vitality and viability of the business as a whole.
- 5.2. The developments impact on the significance of the identified heritage assets, namely Thoulstone Farmhouse, a Grade II Listed Building; and Spinney Farmhouse, also Grade II Listed, has been fully assessed and considered. It has been found that there is no harm to these assets. Further, there is no impact on any archaeological features.
- 5.3. The proposed link extension is of an appropriate design, harmonising with approved properties. It is of a complementary aesthetic and provides facilities that would be expected within a holiday accommodation complex. The extension has no wider impact and does not affect the overall historic and rural character of the wider site. The extension continues the contemporary aesthetic established by the approved new build properties.
- 5.4. Whilst being exempt for BNG, should ecological enhancement be deemed necessary, these can be secured by condition.
- 5.5. Finally, the proposal will lead to positive gains in all three objectives of sustainable development with economic support through helping to maintain the vitality and viability of the business, social gain through greater choice and amenities for guests, and environmental gain through the reuse of previously developed land.
- 5.6. Overall, this Statement has reviewed the relevant Development Plan Policy Framework as it applies in this case, together with the other material considerations. On the evidence presented, it has been demonstrated that the proposal accords with all relevant Development Plan policies and national guidance, and there are no other material considerations present to override them. Therefore, it is requested that planning permission be granted.



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