



**HOUSING AND PLANNING ACT 2016
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING
(PERMISSION IN PRINCIPLE) REGULATIONS 2017**

PLANNING STATEMENT

**RE: APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION IN PRINCIPLE
FOR NEW SELF BUILD SINGLE DWELLING**

LAND ADJOINING NO.13 'FAIRVIEW', BUSHTON, WILTSHIRE, SN4 7PX

Date: March 2026
Ref: AP/M/M-081

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CONTENTS:

	Page No:
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. SITE LOCATION, DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT	2
3. LEGISLATIVE AND PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK	4
4. PLANNING ASSESSMENT	11
5. CONCLUSION	16

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared by **Plan-A Planning and Development Ltd** in support of an application seeking Permission in Principle (PIP) for the development of a self-build dwelling on land adjoining no.13 'Fairview', within the village of Bushton on land outlined in red on the location plan submitted with this application.
- 1.2 The application seeks confirmation that the proposal is acceptable in principle, taking account of those policy considerations and other material considerations which can be taken into account as part of an application for PIP.
- 1.3 This Statement describes the context and character of the site and surrounding area. It evaluated the site's planning history and other planning decisions in the locality which are of relevance. The proposal is then assessed against the national and local policy framework and in the context of relevant material considerations.
- 1.4 Having taken all relevant planning consideration into account, this statement concludes that permission in principle should be granted.

Submission Documents

- 1.5 This PIP application is supported by the following drawings:
- SK_100– Location Plan
 - SK_102REVA - Indicative Site Plan
- 1.6 Given the limited scope of issues that can be taken into account at the PIP application stage, only the red line which defines the boundary of the application site (shown on the **Location Plan**) is currently for determination. All the other drawings are indicative and intended simply to illustrate how a new dwelling *could* be accommodated within the proposed plot. They do *not* form part of the application itself. Such details will be considered at the subsequent Technical Detailed Consent stage.

2. SITE LOCATION, DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT

Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The village of Bushton is approximately 5 miles to the south west of junction 16 of the M4 motorway and Swindon beyond. Royal Wotton Bassett lies approximately 3 miles to the north of the village.



Fig 1: Site Location (Google Earth extract, accessed March 2026)

- 2.2 The application site comprises a square parcel of land on the south eastern edge of the village of Bushton (marked in red above). The site immediately adjoins a residential dwelling and domestic curtilage to the north and east. Directly opposite the site is another residential dwelling and outbuildings. The site is well connected to the village, and the Bushton Village Hall lies approximately 100m to the north west of the site.
- 2.3 The site is situated outside of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, approximately 0.6km from its northern edge.
- 2.4 The application site currently comprises a flat grassed area surrounded by a mature boundary hedgerow, interspersed with mature trees, on all sides. The application site benefits from having existing direct (gated) access off the main road in the South West corner of the site.

Site Context

- 2.5 The application site lies on the southern edge of the village, immediately adjoining existing residential development to the north and east. Immediately opposite the site across the main road is an existing residential dwelling.
- 2.6 The village itself is a linear village as development over time has occurred along the main road. The village boundary is defined at its southern edge by the Bushton village signs and the 40mph speed limit signage (see Figure 2 below). The whole of the application site is located to the north of the existing signage and is therefore considered to be within the village boundary.



Figure 2: Existing Bushton village and speed limit signage, site entrance to the right of the photo

- 2.7 There is a clear distinction in landscape terms between the application site and land to the south and east. Land to the south and east is clearly being used as farmland whereas in stark contrast, the mature hedgerow surrounding the site and its grass surface gives it a domestic appearance.
- 2.8 The application site is not subject to any landscape designations and lies within Flood Zone 1.
- 2.9 There are no Listed Buildings in close proximity to the site. Open farmland abuts the site to the south.
- 2.10 Vehicular access into the site is via the existing access gate as shown in Figure 2.

3. LEGISLATIVE AND PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 3.1 The provisions pertaining to the Permission in Principle (PIP) route to obtaining planning permission were introduced by the Housing and Planning Act 2016, the Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulations 2017 and the Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) Order 2017 and came into force on 1 June 2018.
- 3.2 The PIP consent route is a two-stage process. The first (PIP) stage establishes whether a site is suitable in principle and, if successful, is followed by a second 'Technical Details Consent' (TDC) stage, when the detailed development proposals are assessed. The scope of PIP is limited to the **location, land use and amount of development**, and only matters relating to these 'in principle' issues are to be considered as part of the first stage. All other matters should be considered at the TDC stage.
- 3.3 Decision pertaining to PIP applications must be made by the local planning authority no more than 5 weeks from the day a valid application is received.
- 3.4 As with planning decisions made in respect of other application routes, the determination of a valid PIP application must be made in accordance with relevant Development Plan policies, unless there are any material planning considerations which indicate otherwise. In this case, the Development Plan comprises the Wiltshire Core Strategy (adopted January 2015) and the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan (adopted February 2020). It is unclear what status the replacement Wiltshire Local Plan given the latest Inspectors letter suggesting that the whole plan is withdrawn.
- 3.5 Relevant policies within the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) must also be taken into account, as the Framework is a material planning consideration in its own right.
- 3.6 Given the current **significant** lack of a demonstrable 5-year supply of housing land in Wiltshire, currently **only 2.03 years**, the so called 'tilted' balance' set out in paragraph 11 of the NPPF is engaged (as stipulated by Footnote 8 of the Framework). This means that 'relevant development plan policies' which are most important for determining the appeal are deemed '**out of date**'. Nevertheless, this does not render development plan policies totally irrelevant, but the *weight* that can be attributed to them must accordingly be **significantly discounted**. A summary of the policies considered most relevant to the assessment of the current application is therefore set out below.

Self Build

- 3.7 Central Government has been consistent in seeking to boost the supply of Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding from as far back as the 2011 Housing Strategy for England and there is national demand for this type of housing. More recently funding has been announced by the Government to support the growth of this sector through 'Help to Build' and the Bacon Review has set out a series of recommendations to Government including changes to the NPPF.
- 3.8 The requirement to deliver Self-Build and Custom Build homes is now enshrined in national policy through both the NPPF and the PPG with the latter recommending that local authorities undertake a robust assessment of demand utilising secondary data sources.
- 3.9 Local authorities are statutorily required to address this demand through granting sufficient development consents to meet the demand for Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding arising from their Self-Build Register within their administrative area.
- 3.10 The definition set out in section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 states that a self-build or custom housebuilding is a development for completion by:
- a) individuals,
 - (b) associations of individuals, or
 - (c) persons working with or for individuals or associations of individuals,
- 3.11 The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016) imposes a duty on local authorities to provide sufficient permissions to meet the demand set out in their register(s). The applicants have been on the self-build register since 20 August 2018 as individuals and as such meet the above requirement.

Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015)

Core Policy 1 – Settlement Strategy

- 3.12 The Council's Settlement Strategy seeks to define where development will be the most sustainable and will help to deliver a stronger economy. Policy CP1 sets out the authority's settlement hierarchy, which comprises four tiers of settlement, defined according to their role and function and how they interact with their wider hinterland, the bottom tier are 'small villages'. Although not defined as a 'small village' in the Core Strategy, as will become clear it

is considered that the application site is in a sustainable location and as such the addition of one new dwelling will help to meet the unmet housing need.

- 3.13 Under the terms of CP1, development at 'small villages' is generally limited to that needed to help meet the housing needs of settlements and to improve employment opportunities, services and facilities.

Core Policy 2 – Delivery Strategy

- 3.14 Policy CP2 sets out a Delivery Strategy to support CP1, including indicative housing figures for each Housing Market Area (HMA). CP2 specifies a minimum housing requirement of 24,740 dwellings over the period 2006-2026 for the North and West Wiltshire HMA (within which the application site is located) out of a total 42,000 dwellings overall (almost 60% of the identified requirements for the County).
- 3.15 The supporting text to the policy makes it clear that the disaggregation of housing figures identified for each Community Area are not intended to be so prescriptive or inflexible as to be ineffective in delivering the housing that is needed. Instead, the figures are intended to provide a strategic context for the preparation of Housing Site Allocation Development Plan Documents and to plan for appropriate infrastructure provision.
- 3.16 Policy CP1 states that, within the defined limits of development in 'small villages,' there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that development at Large and Small Villages will be limited to that needed to help meet the housing needs of settlements and to improve employment opportunities, services and facilities. CP2 stipulates that proposals for development at the Small Villages will be supported where they seek to meet housing needs of settlements or provide employment, services and facilities provided that the development:
- i) Respects the existing character and form of the settlement
 - ii) Does not elongate the village or impose development in sensitive landscape areas
 - iii) Does not consolidate an existing sporadic loose knit areas of development related to the settlement.

Core Policy 45 - Meeting Wiltshire's Housing Needs

- 3.17 This policy seeks to meet Wiltshire's housing needs. The policy states: *"New housing, both market and affordable, must be well designed to address local housing need incorporating a range of different types, tenures and sizes of homes to create mixed and balanced communities. Housing size and type, including any distinction between flats and houses, will be expected to reflect that of the demonstrable need for the community within which a site is located. The Wiltshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment identifies the housing needs of Wiltshire. Any variation to this will need to be justified through the production of new sound evidence from either an updated Strategic Housing Market Assessment or other credible evidence source."*
- 3.18 Notwithstanding the above Core Strategy policies, it is of considerable significance that the Core Strategy contains no policies specifically relevant to the provision of Self Build and Custom Build housing. In fact, neither term features in the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy is silent on the matter.

The Wiltshire Strategic Market Housing Assessment 2011 (SHMA 2011)

- 3.19 This assessment identifies the strategic housing requirement for the Core Strategy 2015. The assessment is silent on the matter of Self Build and Custom Build. It appears not to identify Self Build or Custom Build as a part of the housing market or to have researched the need for self build sites within Wiltshire.

The Swindon and Wiltshire Strategic Market Housing Assessment 2017 (SHMA 2017)

This assessment identifies the strategic housing requirement for the Wiltshire Site Allocations Plan and Emerging Local Plan. The assessment does identify Self Build and Custom Build as a part of the housing market.

The 2017 states at paragraph 5.53:

"Paragraph 50 of the NPPF identifies that local planning authorities should plan for people wishing to build their own homes,". At paragraph 5.54: "Over half of the population (53%) say that they would consider building their own home (either directly or using the services of architects and contractors); but it's likely that this figure conflates aspiration with effective

market demand. Self-build currently represents only around 10% of housing completions in the UK, compared to rates of around 40% in France and 70 to 80% elsewhere in Europe.”

At paragraph 5.55: “Given the historic low supply of self-build homes and the challenges in bringing schemes forward it seems unlikely that self-build will make a significant contribution locally to meeting housing need in the short term. However, new planning guidance (from April 2016) may stimulate demand. Each Council should, therefore, put arrangements in place to comply with the Act and new planning guidance.”

At paragraph 5.61: “A survey to ascertain levels of demand for self-build could be undertaken in future; however, it would be important to ensure that appropriate questions are designed that can effectively separate aspiration from effective market demand.”

The SHMA 2017 identifies that there is likely to be a significant demand for Self Build in Wiltshire; that the UK is substantially behind our European neighbours in Self Build provision and that the supply of Self Build homes is historically low.

The SHMA 2017 identifies that Councils should put in place arrangements to provide for Self Builders and suggests a survey could be undertaken to establish the likely demand within Wiltshire. To date we understand that no such survey has been undertaken.

Core Policy 48 – Supporting Rural Life

3.20 CP48 explains the Council’s approach towards supporting rural communities in locations outside defined ‘limits of development’ of Principal Towns, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages, as well as beyond the existing built-up areas of Small Villages. The policy is based on four key objectives:

- Protecting the countryside and maintaining local distinctiveness;
- Supporting the sensitive re-use of built assets to help meet local needs;
- Supporting improved access between places and to services; and
- Supporting the community in taking ownership of local services.

Other Material Policy Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 3.21 The NPPF (which was last updated February 2025) sets out the Government's planning policies for England, together with guidance on how they are expected to be applied. It is a material consideration in its own right in the determination of planning applications.
- 3.22 The NPPF confirms that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, which encompasses the three overarching and interdependent economic, social and environmental objectives. It confirms that planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions. In doing so, Local Planning Authorities are instructed to take local circumstances into account to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area (paragraph 9 of the Framework refers).
- 3.23 At the heart of the NPPF is a clear presumption in favour of sustainable development (see paragraphs 10 and 11). 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 (such as is in cases where there is no five year housing land supply), granting permission unless: policies in the Framework provide a strong reason for refusing the proposals; or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits having particular regard to key policies such as directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land and securing well-designed places (NPPF para. 11 refers).
- 3.24 The Framework instructs LPAs to approach decision-making in a positive and creative way, and to *"work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area"*. The Framework stipulates that decision-makers at every level should *"seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible"* (paragraph 39 refers).
- 3.25 Paragraph 61 emphasises the Government's objective of *"significantly boosting the supply of homes"* whilst paragraph 124 confirms that planning decisions should promote the effective use of land. Additionally, paragraph 125 supports the development of under-utilised land

and buildings, especially where this would help to meet identified needs for houses especially where land supply is constrained.

- 3.26 Paragraph 73 acknowledges that, in identifying land for new homes, small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are essential for small and medium enterprise housebuilders to deliver new homes that are often built out relatively quickly. It goes on to confirm that in promoting the development of a good mix of sites, local planning authorities should use tools such as permission in principle to help bring small and medium sized sites forward.
- 3.27 In rural areas, the Framework stipulates that decisions should be responsive to local circumstances, supporting housing developments that reflect local needs (paragraph 82 refers). To promote sustainable development in rural areas, the Framework confirms that housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, it acknowledges that development in one village may support services in a village nearby (paragraph 83 of the Framework confirms).
- 3.28 To achieve appropriate densities, paragraph 129 confirms that proposals should take into account the availability of suitable land for different types of housing (and other forms of development), local market conditions and viability, the availability of infrastructure and services (including potential for improvement), as well as the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character (or promoting regeneration and change), alongside the importance of securing well-designed attractive and healthy places.

Draft Clyffe Pypard Parish Neighbourhood Plan

- 3.29 Although the CPPNP – that includes Bushton - was not adopted, the resident responses to the Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaires of 2018 and October 2020 are considered relevant.
- 3.30 In 2018, more than 50% of the residents who responded supported the development of new homes of 1-10 unit schemes which the majority settling on 4-10 unit schemes. In 2020, over 95% of households responded to the questionnaire. Almost 63% of households supported the provision of affordable homes for local people, subject to number, design and location.

4. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Permission in Principle

- 4.1 As referred to in para 3.2 above, the scope of a PIP is limited to an assessment of the **location**, **land use** and **amount of development** proposed. All other considerations are addressed at the subsequent TDC stage.

Location

- 4.2 The urgent delivery of new housing in the area is of critical importance, due to the fact that Wiltshire Council are currently unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply and that they haven't granted enough planning permissions to meet the demand for self-build plots.
- 4.3 In light of the revised NPPF and amended 'Standard Method' for calculating Local Housing Needs (LHN), the Council currently have a confirmed housing land supply of **only 2.03 years**. As a consequence of this, relevant housing delivery policies within the Core Strategy, and the associated 'settlement boundaries', cannot be considered up-to-date. Greater emphasis therefore needs to be placed on the need to grant consent for 'windfall' schemes such as this that are sustainably located, and which will contribute to boosting the supply of homes (NPPF para 61 refers).
- 4.4 NPPF para 11 d) confirms that, where those policies which are most important for determining the application are 'out-of-date' (as is currently the position in Wiltshire), permission should be granted unless:-
- i. *"the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong 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, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination"*
- 4.5 In this case, the site is *not* located within any protected area nor within the context of assets of particular importance. The development of this site would also make effective use of under-used land that is well related to facilities and services available within Bushton and will therefore help to support the vitality of the village.

- 4.6 Furthermore, it is known that Wiltshire Council has not granted planning permission for enough Self Build Plots to meet demand, as required by the Self Build and Custom Build legislation. As such, the Council is in breach of its legal duty. Since 2019, in data provided by Wiltshire council in Application PL/2021/09852 Wiltshire council has not met its Self build register requirements.
- 4.7 The Core Strategy has no relevant policies for the provision of Self Build and Custom build housing.
- 4.8 Although there is no adopted settlement boundary for Bushton, an analysis of the development of Bushton over time and the positioning of street furniture and road infrastructure would suggest that the application site is on the edge but within the settlement boundary. As Figure 2 demonstrates, the application sits entirely within the settlement, given its position to the north of the signage identifying the village name and change in the speed limit. Furthermore, the site adjoins residential development to the north, east and west and is well related to existing homes in this part of the village.
- 4.9 The application site forms part of the village in every sense, aside from there not being a defined settlement boundary in the adopted Core Strategy. Furthermore, if assessed against the criteria set out in Policy CS2 for Small Villages the application site is consistent with them and is considered to be situated within a sustainable location.
- 4.10 As a reminder, Policy CS2 states that proposals for new dwellings in small villages will be supported where:
- i) Respects the existing character and form of the settlement
 - ii) Does not elongate the village or impose development in sensitive landscape areas
 - iii) Does not consolidate an existing sporadic loose knit areas of development related to the settlement.
- 4.11 It is considered that the application site is consistent with the character and form of the settlement. Bushton has developed in largely piecemeal, ad hoc way with a linear pattern of development on either side of the main road going through Bushton, centred upon Bushton Village Hall. The northern extent of the settlement is the T-junction of the main road and Withy Bed. The southernmost extent is at the point marked both the signage and domestic fencing marking the extent of residential curtilage associated with the property Merrythatch

(see Figures 2 and 3). The application site is parallel with the residential curtilage associated with Merrythatch.



Figure 3: Residential property 'Merrythatch' opposite the site

- 4.12 It is abundantly clear that the application site is considered locally as forming part of the existing settlement, albeit not yet formally recognised as such by the LPA in the Core Strategy.
- 4.13 It is considered that the creation of 1 x self-build dwelling in the location suggested on the supporting drawings would not extend new development into the surrounding countryside. It would appear as part of the existing established residential curtilage both to the north and the west of the application site.



Figure 4: Existing site entrance and mature, dense natural boundaries

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- 4.14 Furthermore, the site is bounded by mature, dense vegetation, which provides effective screening and a buffer between the site and agricultural land to the south and east (see Figure 4 above).
- 4.15 The application site comprises 'under-developed' land that is very well related to the existing pattern of development around it. It also benefits from good access to a reasonable range of local services and facilities, without being wholly reliant on use of the private car. It is understood that local schools and colleges provide school buses that pick up and drop off from Bushton.
- 4.16 The development of a single dwelling at the site would also be in keeping with the density and grain of adjoining development. In view of its specific context and relationship to the existing settlement, this site therefore represents an appropriate location for development.
- 4.17 Whilst the site is not situated within a settlement boundary for the village, owing to its particular context and relationship with existing development and positioning relative to the location and speed signage, it is regarded a reasonably sustainable location.
- 4.18 Whilst there is a technical policy conflict with the Council's 'out of date' spatial strategy, the adopted Core Strategy has patently failed to deliver the housing needed in the area, both market housing and self-build. It is considered that such conflict can only be regarded as 'slight' and not considered severe enough as to render any harm arising from it as having any great weight.
- 4.19 Accordingly, the grant of permission for housing development in this location would not result in any adverse impacts that would significantly or demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

Land Use and Amount of Development

- 4.20 In view of the existing residential properties immediately adjacent to the application site, the proposed use of the plot for the development of a single new dwelling is contextually appropriate. It would complement existing residential development along the main road. Furthermore, the development of a new dwelling would be consistent with the existing pattern and grain of development in this part of the village, whilst making more effective use of the site.

- 4.21 As part of its provisions for identifying land for new homes, NPPF paragraph 73 confirms that small and medium sized sites such as this can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are essential for small and medium enterprise housebuilders who deliver new homes that are often built out relatively quickly. The Framework goes on to confirm that in promoting the development of a good mix of sites, local planning authorities should use tools such as permission in principle to help bring small and medium sized sites forward.
- 4.22 Whilst access and highways are technical issues that will be addressed at the TDC stage, it is worth noting that the application site already benefits from having a vehicular access, although the plans show that the access could be safely moved. Vehicle movements associated with the proposed quantum of development would have a minimal impact upon the local highway network.
- 4.23 Whilst scale and design are also issues that will be dealt with at the TDC stage, the indicative drawings show how a reasonably sized family home could easily be accommodated within the proposed plot.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 Applications for stage one PIP are to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, but only with regard to an assessment of the proposal's location, land use and the amount of development.
- 5.2 Of overriding importance in this case is the Council's confirmed housing land supply of only 2.03 years and that the Council have not issued sufficient planning permissions to meet the demand for self build plots. As a consequence of this, the Development Plan policies most relevant to determining the application are out-of-date and the tilted balance under NPPF para 11 d) is engaged.
- 5.3 The application site is not located within any protected area or within the context of assets of particular importance. It has already been established that the site falls within a reasonably sustainable location with access to the Village Hall where a lot of activities take place and that can be accessed on foot. The proposals would also make effective use of under-used land. It is also recognised that self-build has many advantages over a more traditional build including sustainability and the use of local businesses to assist with the project.
- 5.4 Accordingly, the grant of permission for a self-build dwelling in this location would not result in any adverse impacts that would *significantly or demonstrably* outweigh the benefits, and no material harm or other material considerations have been identified that would prejudice the presumption in favour of sustainable development. This application for Permission in Principle can therefore safely be granted.