

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

**PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT,
INCLUDING HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**PROPOSED ERECTION OF SELF-BUILD
DWELLING**

**LAND AT 30 KENT END, ASHTON KEYNES,
SWINDON, WILTSHIRE, SN6 6PU**

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CONTENTS

ITEM	TITLE	PAGE
1.0	Introduction	3
2.0	Site Description & Planning History	4
3.0	Proposed Development	5
4.0	Planning Policy Context	6
5.0	Planning Assessment	10
6.0	Heritage Impact Assessment	20
7.0	Housing Need & Planning Balance	27
8.0	Conclusions	31

Appendices

Appendix A: Council Briefing Note No.24-20
Implications of Revised NPPF

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement & Heritage Impact Assessment, has been prepared to support the submission of a planning application seeking full planning permission for the erection of a detached self-build dwelling within the curtilage of 30 Kent End, Ashton Keynes, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN6 6PU.
- 1.2 This statement will describe the location of the site and will set out what is proposed by the planning application. The statement will then provide an overview of the planning policy context and an assessment of the key material planning considerations, demonstrating the proposal's acceptability.
- 1.3 The application follows a pre-application enquiry ENQ/2025/00591 which confirmed the principle of development would be acceptable due to the sustainable location of the site, however key site specific issues would need to be addressed i.e. surface water flooding, and design and impact on the historic environment, in order to receive a favourable recommendation. This planning application therefore presents a revised proposal and is supported by the relevant technical site specific assessments and reports in order to address the constructive feedback received.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

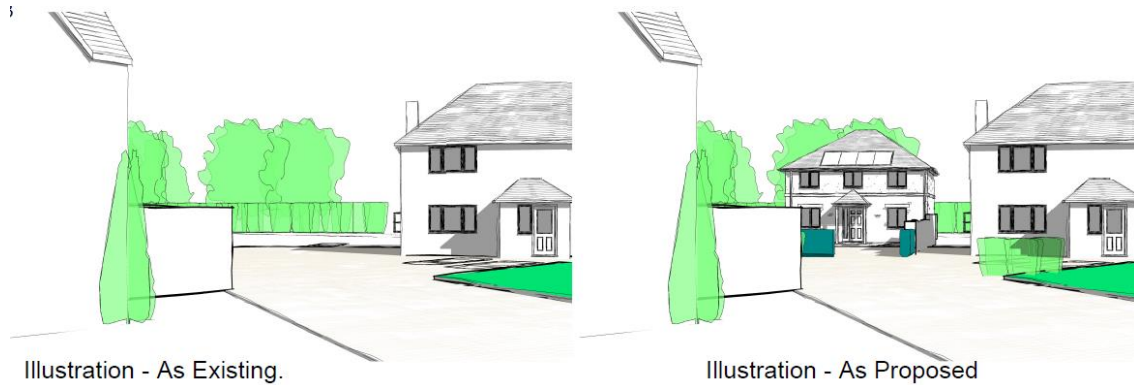
- 2.1 The application site relates to land within the residential curtilage of No.30 Kent End within the village of Ashton Keynes, as identified on the Location Plan below.



- 2.2 In terms of the planning history of the site, no planning applications relate to the application site. A 'notification of proposed works to trees in a conservation area' (reference PL/2024/01813) was made to remove one tree in front of the existing dwelling in 2004 but nothing further at the property. The pre-application enquiry, reference ENQ/2025/00591, was made in 2024 and the feedback received has informed this current planning application as discussed further below.

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a new detached self-build dwelling to the north-west of the existing semi-detached dwelling as shown in the illustration below.



3.2 The proposal will be a self-build development by the applicants, Mr and Mrs Chivers. The existing dwelling at No.30 will remain within the same family ownership (as identified in blue on the Location Plan) but will be a separate planning unit.

3.3 The planning application is supported by the following documents and existing and proposed plans:-

- Drawing No.PL10. Title. Site and Location Plan
- Drawing No.PL20. Title. Site Plan – As Proposed
- Drawing No.PL21. Title. Plans – As Proposed
- Drawing No.PL22. Title. Elevations – As Proposed
- Drawing No.PL23. Title. Illustration
- Document. Planning Application Form
- Document. Community Infrastructure Levy Form
- Document. Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (January 2026) by Cotswold Environmental.
- Document. Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy by Cole Easdon
- Draft Unilateral Undertaking
- Draft Section 111 Agreement

4.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy

4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions. The policies within the following chapters of the NPPF are relevant to the assessment of the proposed development:-

- Chapter 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Chapter 4 – Decision-making
- Chapter 5 – Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes
- Chapter 9 – Promoting Sustainable Transport
- Chapter 11 – Making Efficient Use of Land
- Chapter 12 – Achieving Well-designed Places
- Chapter 15 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment
- Chapter 16 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

4.2 The NPPF highlights that planning law (section 70 [2] of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38 [6] of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Local Planning Policy

4.3 The development plan relevant to this site is the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) (adopted January 2015), including saved policies from the former North Wiltshire Local Plan, and represents the Council's primary strategic planning document, alongside the Ashton Keynes Neighbourhood Plan (AKNP) (2015 – 2026) (made May 2017). The key policies relevant to the assessment of the proposed development are considered to be:-

- **WCS** Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy

- **WCS** Core Policy 2: Delivery Strategy
- **WCS** Core Policy 13: Spatial Strategy for Malmesbury Community Area
- **WCS** Core Policy 45: Meeting Wiltshire's Housing Needs
- **WCS** Core Policy 48: Supporting Rural Life
- **WCS** Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- **WCS** Core Policy 51: Landscape
- **WCS** Core Policy 54 (Cotswold Water Park)
- **WCS** Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design
- **WCS** Core Policy 58: Conservation of the Historic Environment
- **WCS** Core Policy 60: Sustainable Transport
- **WCS** Core Policy 61: Transport and Development
- **WCS** Core Policy 67: Flood Risk

- **AKNP** Policy HSP3: Additional Housing Developments
- **AKNP** Policy HSP4: Mix of Housing Types and Tenure
- **AKNP** Policy INP1: Flood Risk Mitigation in New Developments
- **AKNP** Policy ENP3: Enhancing Landscape Character
- **AKNP** Policy HCP1: Local Character

4.5 The following Supplementary Planning Documents and Briefing Notes are also relevant in the determination of this application:

- Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2026: Car Park Strategy
- Wiltshire Council Design Guide (2024)
- Wiltshire Council Briefing Note No.24-20 Implications of Revised NPPF and Revisions to the Standard Methodology on the Housing Land Supply (December 2024)

4.6 The adopted Local Plan is accompanied by the Policies Maps, which provides a spatial representation of the Local Plan policies. The application property lies within the defined Limits of Development for the settlement, the village Conservation Area, and the boundary of the Cotswold Water Park. The site adjoins a Public Right of Way, footpath reference AKEY26,

which runs along the western boundary, and Flood Zone 3 lies adjacent to the north-east boundary of the site as shown on the map below.



Wiltshire Core Strategy Policies Map

- 4.7 The Cotswold Water Park Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lies to the north of the site. The site does however lie within the North Meadow Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Zones of Recreational Influence (4.2km zone).

Emerging Planning Policy

- 4.8 The WCS was adopted in 2015 and is therefore being reviewed. The review is termed the 'Local Plan Review'. The draft Wiltshire Local Plan (WLP) was submitted to the Secretary of State for Housing Communities and Local Government for independent examination on 28 November 2024. There are no fundamental changes proposed to the Spatial Strategy of the Local Plan, as presented within Pre-Submission Draft (2020 – 2038) (Regulation 19) Wiltshire Local Plan (September 2023), however the draft plan pre-dates the recently published NPPF (12 December 2024).
- 4.9 The draft WLP was submitted to the Secretary of State for Housing Communities and Local Government for independent examination on 28 November 2024. The recently updated Wiltshire Local Development Scheme (September 2025) outlines that the Council expects to adopt the WLP by the end of June 2026. However, on the 17 November 2025 the WLP Inspectors postponed the hearing sessions scheduled for December 2025 due to a number of concerns in relation to the "Sustainability

Appraisal, Habitats Regulations Assessment, housing need and the housing requirement, and employment land, together with the plan period”.

- 4.10 The Council suggested a further programme of work to address the concerns raised, however, the Planning Inspectorate wrote to the Council on the 27 February 2026 advising that the Council should either (i) withdraw the Local Plan from examination or (ii) request that the Inspectors draft a final report (which would recommend non-adoption). The Council will not therefore have an up-to-date strategy or Local Plan to address and plan for its housing need for years to come.

5.0 KEY ISSUES AND PLANNING ASSESSMENT

5.1 In light of the context of the site and relevant national and local planning policies the key material planning considerations are considered to be:-

- i) Principle of Development
- ii) Impact on Highway & Pedestrian Safety
- iii) Design and impact on Neighbour Amenity
- iv) Impact on Natural and Historic Environment
- v) Impact on Ecology and Biodiversity
- vi) Impact on Local Environment (surface water, pollution etc)

5.2 The Council's initial view on the key material planning considerations was outlined as part of its response to pre-application enquiry ENQ/2025/00591. In summary, the Officer's view was that the development could potentially be acceptable, subject to resolution of key issues. The pre-application response identified what needs addressing before the proposal could be supported, primarily the scale and design of the dwelling needed to be amended. This application addressed each point to ensure a favourable outcome as outlined within the following sections.

Principle of Development

Site Sustainability & Accessibility

5.3 The WCS includes a Spatial Strategy which sets the foundations for how 'sustainable development' is defined and applied within Wiltshire. It has three key elements; a Settlement Strategy, Delivery Strategy and Infrastructure Requirements. The settlement and delivery strategies define where development will be the most sustainable across Wiltshire's settlements.

5.4 Core Policy 1 'Settlement Strategy' and Core Policy 2 'Delivery Strategy' of the WCS outline that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable

development within the Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages and development should be restricted to within the limits of development other than in exceptional circumstances as set out within the relevant core policies contained within the plan, i.e. the 'exception policies'.

- 5.5 The application site lies within the built up area of Ashton Keynes which is classified as a 'Large Village' by Core Policy 13 'Spatial Strategy: Malmesbury Community Area'. The proposed development therefore aligns with the Spatial Strategy of the WCS, and Policy HSP3 'Additional Housing Developments' of the AKNP which provides support for development on windfall and infill sites within the defined Limits of Development.
- 5.6 The proposed dwelling will be a self-build by Mr and Mrs Chivers and will therefore meet a defined local need in line with Core Policy 45 of the WCS and HSP4 of the AKNP. The application is supported by a draft Unilateral Undertaking which confirms the dwelling will be a self-build. The agreement can be finalised as soon as the application reference is known.

Impact on Highway & Pedestrian Safety

- 5.7 Core Policy 60 'Sustainable Transport' and Core Policy 61 'Transport and New Development' of the WCS seek to ensure that new development is as sustainable as possible in terms of its location and design and is capable of being served by safe access to the highway network. The sustainability of the site has been discussed above but in terms of the access arrangements the proposed drawings show the proposed parking areas and access onto the adopted highway.
- 5.8 The Highway Authority advised during the pre-application enquiry that the existing access "is suitable to be utilised as a shared access" but a sufficient amount of parking spaces would have to be provided for the existing and proposed dwellings, along with a turning area so cars can enter and exit the highway in forward gear. The proposed site plan demonstrates the parking standards will be met; two spaces are shown for

the proposed dwelling and two spaces for the existing dwelling. The public footpath, reference AKEY26, that runs alongside the western boundary of the site will not be impacted by the proposed development.

- 5.9 The application drawings demonstrate the proposed development will meet the required parking standards and therefore it is considered the proposal will fully comply with Core Policies 60 and 61 of the WCS.

Design and Impact on Neighbour Amenity

- 5.10 The NPPF states that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities (paragraph 131). These objectives are reflected within Core Policy 51 of the WCS which seeks to secure high quality design in all development.
- 5.11 The aim of the proposal is to provide a development that responds to the established character of the build environment in terms of land use and plot ratio, and a dwelling that is of an appropriate scale, design and appearance. The pre-application enquiry was supported by sketch plans of the proposed dwelling in order to receive initial feedback and design guidance from the Council to help develop and refine the design of the proposal.
- 5.12 The pre-app feedback noted that Officers had concerns with the “generic design of the proposed property and its setting directly adjacent to the host property at No 30 Kent End”. It was stated that “The design of the nearby properties to the west at No’s 28 & 29 are that of simple and subservient cottages, have a significantly smaller footprint and are relatively discrete from the roadside. By contrast, the design of the proposed dwelling would appear to have a footprint larger than the host property and significantly larger than the adjacent properties to the west”. As such, it was clearly advised that “whilst the principle of a new dwelling may be acceptable in this location, any subsequent submission would be required to

demonstrate a more cohesive and sympathetic development by way of a significant reduction in scale and bulk, roofscape and visual compatibility with the site and setting”.

5.13 The proposed dwelling has therefore been redesigned in light of the feedback received. The revised scheme is materially smaller, more sympathetic to the surrounding properties, and incorporates several architectural features drawn directly from the local context. The Architect has provided the following summary of the changes:-

1. Reduction in Size and Scale

- The Gross Internal Area has been reduced from **149 sqm to 105 sqm**, significantly reducing the overall massing.
- Both the eaves and ridge heights have been lowered so the new building will sit **below the height of No. 30A**, ensuring it reads as clearly subordinate.
- The proposed house will be positioned **away from No. 30**, providing a clear physical and visual separation between the two buildings.

2. Roof Form and Impact on the Retained Garden

- The roof will now use **plain tiles with bonnet hips**, matching the host property at **No. 30**.
- The hipped ends help soften the roof profile and reduce the visual impact on the **retained garden of No. 30**.

3. Architectural Detailing Reflecting Local Properties

- A **high stone string course** has been introduced, echoing the feature found on the semi-detached pair at **Nos. 30 – 31 and 32 - 33**.
- **Imitation stone sills and lintels** have been added to reflect the detailing seen on **No. 34**.
- A split in materials between the ground and first floor helps break up the elevations and reduces the perceived bulk of the building.

4. Materials and Ground Floor Treatment

- The ground-floor walls will be finished in **natural stone**, providing a high-quality and locally appropriate base.
- The combination of stone at ground level with lighter materials above ensures the building feels less dominant within the street scene.

5. Ecology and Wildlife Protection Measures

- One **integrated bat box** will be installed on a low-light elevation at least 3 m above ground level.
- A **house martin nest cup** will be incorporated under the eaves on

a **north- or east-facing elevation**, positioned 2.5–3 m above ground level with clear flight access.

- **Hedgehog access routes** will be maintained, with existing boundary fences already allowing free movement between gardens.
- A **temporary amphibian barrier** will be installed around the construction area, using a 300 mm high low-permeability membrane supported by stakes, with the base buried or pinned. This will remain in place throughout construction and be regularly inspected. Any amphibians found within the working area will be safely relocated to suitable habitat within the retained garden.
- These measures will be cross-referenced with the **Ecology Report** to ensure full alignment with the recommendations and compliance requirements.

6. Landscaping and Garden Arrangements

- The existing garden will be **largely retained**, with two small fruit trees removed; these will be replaced with **two young cherry blossom trees (*Prunus serrulata*)** to maintain seasonal interest and long-term planting structure.
- The subdivision fence is positioned so that around **50% of the existing sheds** remain with the donor property, though it will **not be installed immediately**, allowing the garden to remain shared in the interim.
- New hard landscaping around the dwelling will use **reconstituted stone paving**, providing accessible circulation, a small patio and a defined bin-storage area.
- A new **two-car permeable gravel parking area** will be created for the proposed dwelling, supporting natural drainage.
- A **beech hedge** will be planted to reinforce boundaries, soften views from the street and maintain the open character of the adjacent public right-of-way.

5.14 It is considered that when viewed from the public realm, a key viewpoint being from Kent End road as shown in the photograph above, the proposal would represent a natural infill development that would respect the established character of the built environment. The proposed development will comply with the objectives of Core Policies 57 ‘Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping’ and Core Policy CP58 ‘Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment’ of the WCS.

5.15 The proposed dwelling will comply with the Nationally Described Space Standard as required by the Wiltshire Design Guide. Furthermore, the layout of the dwelling, its orientation and separation distances, and associated amenity space have all been carefully considered to ensure compliance with the standard within the adopted Design Guide.



Photograph: Towards Site from Kent End

- 5.16 In terms of the impact on neighbour amenity, Core Policy 57 of the WCS seeks to ensure that new developments have regard to the compatibility of adjoining buildings and uses, and consider the impact on the amenities of existing occupants, and ensure that appropriate levels of amenity are achievable within the development itself, including the consideration of privacy, overshadowing, vibration, and pollution (e.g. light intrusion, noise, smoke, fumes, effluent, waste or litter).
- 5.17 The proposed development is compatible with the established use of the land and neighbouring residential properties. The dwelling has been positioned and orientated to ensure there is no direct or unacceptable overlooking of neighbouring dwellings, and will not appear overbearing or result in a loss of light to neighbouring properties. As such, the proposed development will not have an adverse impact on the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties and is considered to represent high quality design.

Impact on Natural and Historic Environment

Natural Environment

- 5.18 The NPPF advises that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscape and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside (paragraph 187). These objectives are

reinforced within Core Policy 51 of the WCS which seeks to ensure new developments do not have a harmful impact upon landscape character, while any negative impacts must be mitigated as far as possible through sensitive design and landscape measures.

- 5.19 The site does not lie within a protected landscape and falls within the established built-up area of Ashton Keynes. The proposed dwelling will be well related to, and seen against the backdrop of, the existing dwellings, and will not therefore have a harmful impact on visual amenity. The development will be well contained and will have no impact on wider landscape character therefore there would be no conflict with Core Policy 51 of the WCS.

Historic Environment

- 5.20 The NPPF includes policies on conservation of the historic environment with the main underlying purpose that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The policy objective is reinforced within Core Policy 58 of the WCS which seeks to ensure that new development protects, conserves, and where appropriate, enhances the significance of heritage assets. The proposed development has evolved in light of the pre-application feedback to ensure no harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as detailed within the Heritage Impact Assessment within Section 6 below.

Impact on Ecology and Biodiversity

- 5.21 The NPPF advises that new developments should protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity (paragraph 192) and Core 50 'Biodiversity and Geodiversity of the Local Plan outlines that development proposals must demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation and geological value as part of the design rationale. There is an expectation that such features shall be retained, buffered, and managed favourably in order to maintain their ecological value, connectivity and functionality in the long-term. Where it has been demonstrated that such features cannot

be retained, removal or damage shall only be acceptable in circumstances where the anticipated ecological impacts have been mitigated as far as possible and appropriate compensatory measures can be secured to ensure no net loss of the local biodiversity resource.

- 5.22 The application site is not covered by any local, national or European nature conservation designation. The site comprises the garden area of No.30 Kent End and therefore has limited ecological potential, however the application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal by Cotswold Environmental. The purpose of the survey was to undertake an appraisal of the site for its potential ecological value to notable and protected wildlife, and to look for evidence of such species. The report identified no protected species but recommended a series of enhancement measures which could be secured via condition.
- 5.23 The PEA report noted that a channel waterbody associated with the River Thames occurs immediately adjacent to the site's north-eastern boundary. While no direct impacts to this feature are proposed, its proximity to the development means that appropriate pollution prevention and site management measures will be required during construction. Accordingly, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) was recommended and can again be secured via condition to ensure the adjacent watercourse is suitably protected, including measures to control surface water runoff, prevent contamination, and clearly define working areas.
- 5.24 In terms of the requirement to secure Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), Core Policy 50 'Biodiversity' of the WCS outlines that new development should seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity, however it has become mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). The requirement is to deliver 10% BNG. However, because the scheme is for a self-build dwelling it is exempt from the need to deliver 10% BNG. The enhancement measures detailed within the PEA report will however be delivered.

- 5.25 The site lies within the impact zone of North Meadow, a Site of Special Scientific Interest and National Nature Reserve due to its exceptional example of lowland meadow. It is a component site of the North Meadow and Clattinger Farm Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The SAC is part of a network of European sites (Habitat sites) that are of international importance. Natural England has advised that in view of existing visitor levels, any additional residential dwelling, or overnight accommodation within a zone of influence is likely to lead to a loss of site integrity. Mitigation is needed to allow development to proceed, and this is most effective, and cost efficient, when delivered by a strategic approach.
- 5.26 Wiltshire Council and neighbouring authorities have therefore prepared a joint Interim Recreation Mitigation Strategy based on visitor surveys. This seeks to avoid impacts in the short term until a longer-term strategy is agreed. The PEA report outlines that “having regard to the small scale and nature of the proposal, its location within an existing settlement, and the absence of any functional linkage between the application site and the qualifying features of the SAC, it is considered that the development is unlikely to result in a likely significant effect on the SAC, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects”. However, should the Council conclude that the proposed development is required to contribute towards the mitigation strategy a Section 111 can be completed which would confirm payment prior to the commencement of the development. As such, there should be a favourable outcome to the Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Impact on Local Environment

Sustainable Construction

- 5.27 The Council has a Climate Strategy which seeks to reduce emissions and work towards making Wiltshire carbon neutral and the draft sustainable construction and carbon neutral policies within the emerging Wiltshire Local Plan will play a key role. The current ‘Sustainable Construction and Low-Carbon Energy’ policy (Core Policy 41) of the WCS does however

encourage new development to incorporate design measures to reduce energy demand, and retrofitting measures to improve the energy performance of existing buildings.

- 5.28 The proposed dwelling will be built to a high standard and will be as energy efficient as possible in terms of their method of construction and ongoing operation once occupied. The dwelling will include an EV charging and will maximise the potential energy input from renewable sources through on site Solar PV Panels as shown on the elevation drawings.

Flood Risk and Surface Water

- 5.29 The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy report by Cole Easdon. The report has been prepared to assess flood risk to the site and produce a drainage strategy for the development to ensure full compliance with Core Policy 67 of the WCS and the requirements of the NPPF.
- 5.30 Core Policy 67 'Flood Risk' of the WCS seeks to ensure that all new development include measures to reduce the rate of rainwater run-off and improve rainwater infiltration to soil and ground (sustainable urban drainage) unless site or environmental conditions make these measures unsuitable. The proposed drainage strategy has been informed by on site percolation testing by Paddock Geo Engineering and will result, in a betterment over the status quo with on-site storage as outlined within the submitted report.
- 5.31 The Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy report considers the potential for flooding from all sources and confirms the dwelling will be located within Flood Zone 1, as shown within on the Flood Risk Constraints and Proposed Surface Water Drainage Strategy Plan. In line with the NPPF, the site-specific flood risk assessment demonstrates that no built development within the site boundary, including access or escape routes, land raising or other potentially vulnerable elements, would be located on an area that would be at risk of flooding from any source.

6.0 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Heritage Legislation

- 6.1 The duty placed on the Council under sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is the requirement to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess. Furthermore, Section 72 of the Act outlines that when considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a Conservation Area special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

National Heritage Policy

- 6.2 The NPPF includes the policies on conservation of the historic environment (within Chapter 16) with the main underlying policy that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. It outlines that application for development should describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance (paragraph 207).
- 6.3 The NPPF advises that for heritage policy, 'significance' means "the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be **archaeological**, **architectural**, **artistic** or **historic**. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting" (emphasis added).
- 6.4 In terms of the key components mentioned above which give a heritage assets its interest, the Planning Practice Guidance (Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 18a-006-20190723) advises they can be interpreted as follows:-
- **archaeological interest:** As defined in the Glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework, there will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if

it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

- **architectural and artistic interest:** These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture.
- **historic interest:** An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

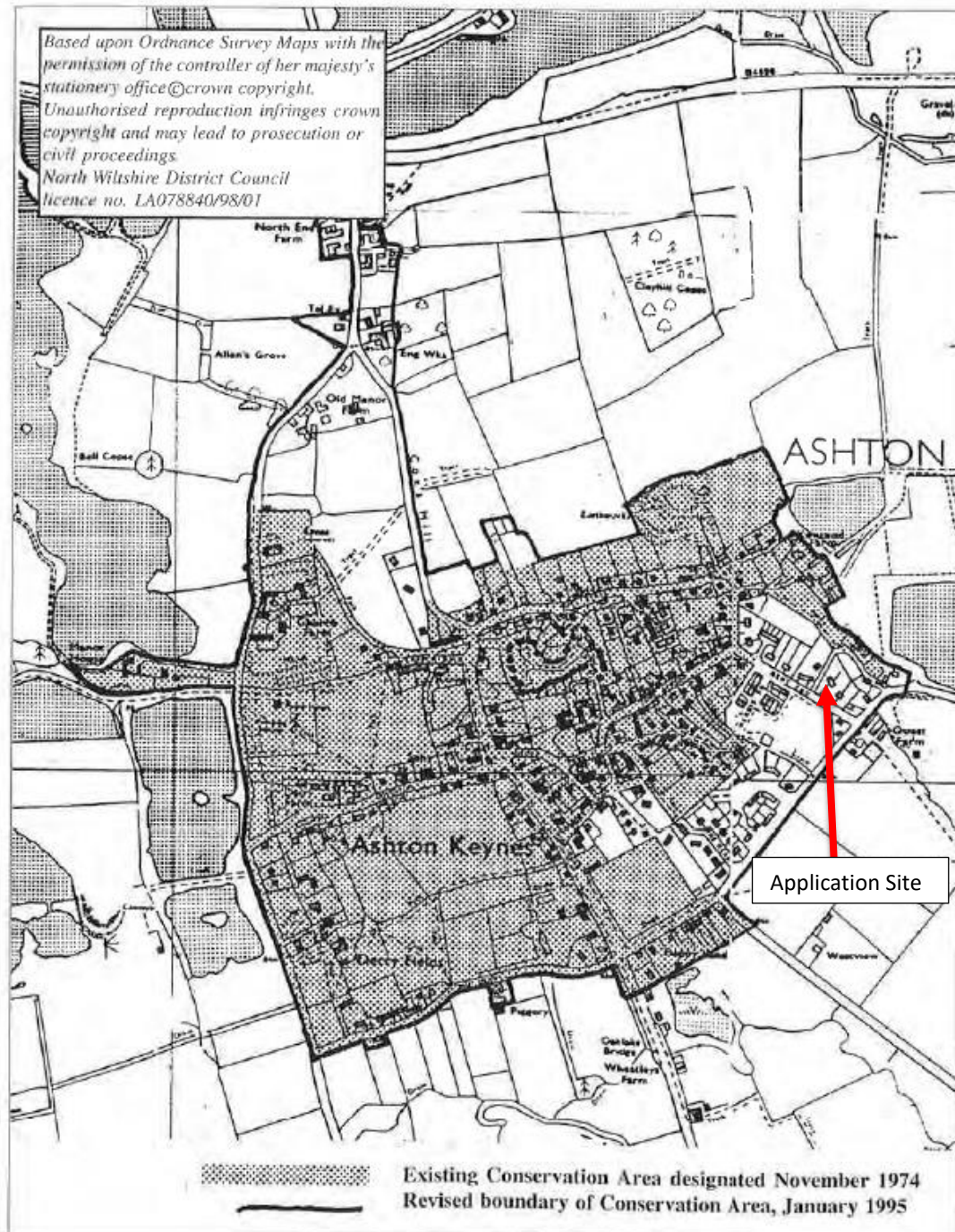
Local Heritage Policy

- 6.5 The development plan must be read as a whole but the following policies are of particular relevance from an historic environment perspective:-
- **WCS** Core Policy 57: Securing High Quality Design
 - **WCS** Core Policy 58: Conservation of the Historic Environment

Heritage Assets & Impact of Proposed Development

- 6.6 The application site falls within the Ashton Keynes Conservation Area. The Ashton Keynes Conservation Area Statement (January 1998) explains that the Conservation Area boundary was re-viewed in January 1995 to include the entire village. The previous 1974 boundary excluded North End and much of the modern development at the south. The map below shows the previous and existing boundaries.
- 6.7 The Conservation Area Statement acknowledges it was an unusual step to include large areas of post-war development but it was justified because:

- One of the most important and unique elements in the character of Ashton Keynes as a whole, is the historic grid of streets, regardless of the development which they give access to.
- All the newer estates are embedded within the grid structure of the village.
- The estates represent the later stages of the village's development architecturally and socially.

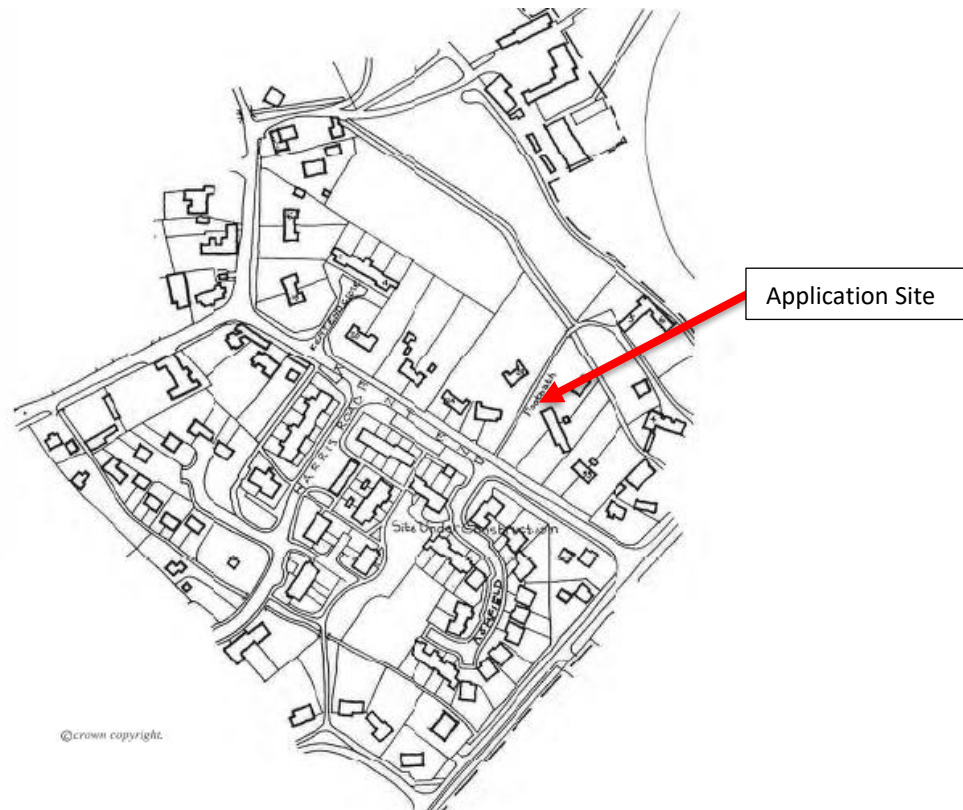


- 6.8 The Conservation Area Statement provides information about the history and evolution of the village and identifies 'Key Areas of Character' based on an assessment of 1. Protected buildings and features, 2. Buildings constructed before 1990, 3. Significant trees and foliage, and 4. Valuable open space, paths and water courses. The map below identifies the 'Key Areas of Character'. The current application site is not a Key Area of Character.

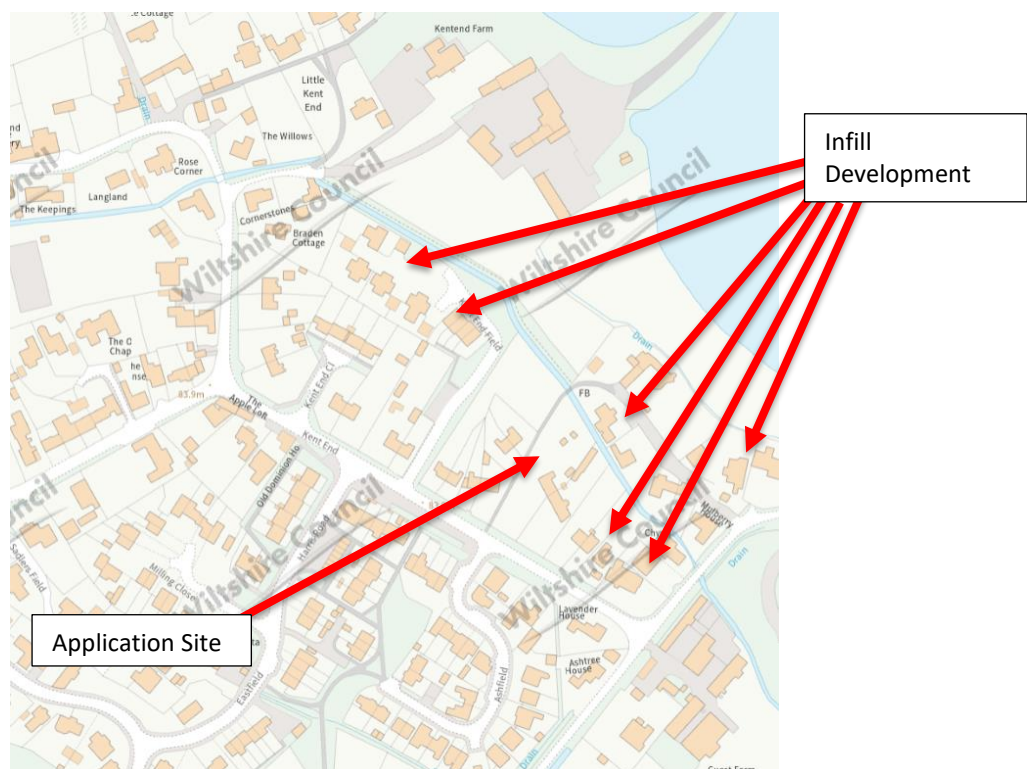


- 6.9 The Conservation Area Statement goes on to break down the Conservation Area into 14 character areas. The application site lies within Character Area No.11. Kent End (Middle). It explains that "Kent End North, Kent End Middle and Kent End South were originally one lane joining Back Street, Fore Street and Happy Lane. Much of the land surrounding it was fields and it is only when the present local authority housing was built the infrastructure changed to its present appearance. The significant features of this area are identified and in terms of settlement pattern it is made up of detached, terraced and semi-detached houses halfway back on both sides of the street. The lack of

a defined character and appearance is made clear within the Conservation Area Statement with mixed 'incongruous' material and construction along both sides of the road.



Character Area No.11. Kent End (Middle)



Up-to-date Map – Wiltshire Council – Planning Explorer

- 6.10 The Conservation Area Statement was published in 1998 and since this time the Kent End (Middle) Character Area has evolved further over the last couple of decades. The up-to-date map shown above identifies the new housing estates and infill dwellings within this area. They are within the immediate context of the application site and demonstrate that sympathetic infilling is part of the natural evolution of the village.
- 6.11 In terms of the immediate context of the site, the Council's Conservation Officer indicated during the pre-application stage that there are "two phases or style of pre-war Council housing with the division on the footpath that links Kent End to the Thames Path. To the east that runs between No's 20 – 29 that are consistent for their semi-detached cottage style of architecture, concrete recon stone rusticated blockwork and plain tile roof. The roofs have prominent gable dormers and shared central stack and the cottage style of No's 30 – 33 which are similarly modest pairs of semis with brick plinth, rendered walls and brown plain tile to hipped roofs and consistent eaves with shared chimney stack".
- 6.12 The Conservation Officer raised concerns with the siting, orientation, scale, massing, footprint, plan form and architectural design of the proposed new dwelling presented at the pre-application stage because it was considered to be "incongruous and harmful in this location of specific architectural cottage style pre-war council houses in large open gardens that make a recognised positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area".
- 6.12 The dwelling has however now been redesigned in light of the pre-application feedback to ensure it respects the overall scale and appearance of the neighbouring dwellings. The reason for including this character area within the extension to the Conservation Area was to highlight the "historic grid of streets, regardless of the development which they give access to" but also capture "the village's development architecturally and socially". The proposed development will not be at odds with the significance of this part of the conservation area and critically will not harm its character or appearance.

- 6.13 The established character is that of post-war residential development with the density of development increasing as a result of new infill estates, detached, and semi-detached dwellings. The maps above show an irregular pattern of development off the main street and development in-depth, back land, and infill development is not uncommon. The proposed dwelling is now of an appearance that respects the existing dwellings and the plot will be in-keeping with the established plot density and ratio of established properties surrounding the site.
- 6.14 In light of the above, and in paying special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and / or appearance of the Conservation Area, it is considered that the proposed development will not harm the significance or character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The development is therefore considered to be consistent with the aims and objectives of Core Policy 58 of the Local Plan.

7.0 HOUSING NEED & PLANNING BALANCE

- 7.1 The NPPF states it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed to support the Government's objective of **significantly boosting the supply of homes**" (emphasis added) (paragraph 61). The level of need identified within the development plan should not be seen as an upper limit, and new development that is otherwise sustainable should not automatically be refused, in particular in the context of the recent NPPF updates and the Council's housing land supply position.
- 7.2 The Council's most up to date Housing Land Supply Statement details that it has 2.42 years of deliverable housing land supply as mentioned above. The Wiltshire Local Plan (WLP) will identify future levels of need for new homes and employment land over the period 2020-2038, and it has reached the Examination stage. However, the evidence that underpins the draft WLP was prepared in accordance with the now superseded December 2023 version of the NPPF.
- 7.3 The Council has therefore published a Briefing Note (No.24-20 – December 2024) (available to view in Appendix A) which set out the implications of the new NPPF and revisions to the standard methodology on its housing land supply position. It explains that due to the change to the standard methodology, which is used to calculate local housing need, the number of homes the Council must plan for on an annual basis has increased from 1,917 to 3,525 (the annual Local Housing Need figure), an increase of 84%.
- 7.4 The Briefing Note explains that "the changes to the NPPF now require Wiltshire to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, including a 5% buffer, and must apply the revised Local Housing Need for decision-taking immediately". When the revised Local Housing Need figure is considered against the Council's Housing Land Supply figures which can be delivered within five years, it results in a **2.03 years supply** (now 2.42 years supply).

- 7.5 The Council therefore confirms that the tilted balance should be applied to housing application and highlights that “**the magnitude of the shortfall in supply is now substantial** and the weight to be given to improving housing supply greater compared to when the council had a more marginal supply” (emphasis added). The Council also advises within the Briefing Note that the application of the presumption in favour of sustainable development should be considered within the national aim of radically boosting the supply of housing.
- 7.6 In terms of the implications for plan-making, the Council confirms that because the housing requirement in the emerging Local Plan will meet less than 80% of the revised Local Housing Need, the Council will be expected to begin work on a new Local Plan promptly. However, when the new Local Plan is adopted, the five-year Housing Land Supply position will be determined based on the previous Local Housing Need calculation, albeit the updated NPPF requires a 20% buffer to be added, which in essence will require a six-year Housing Land Supply position to be demonstrated.
- 7.7 The Director of Planning clearly advises within the Briefing Note that “To meet this increased buffer, **the council will need to continue to approve planning applications to ensure a sufficient housing land supply can continue to be met** at, and beyond, this date” (emphasis added).
- 7.8 In these circumstances, NPPF paragraph 11d advises that policies which are most important for determining the application (which in this case would include Core Policies 1, 2 and 13) should not be considered up to date. As a result, the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out at Paragraph 11d of the Framework is engaged, so permission should be granted unless 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.
- 7.9 There are no policies within the NPPF, which aim to protect areas or assets of particular importance, that provide a strong reason for refusing

the proposed development. The tilted balance is therefore engaged and is considered below.

The Planning / Tilted Balance

- 7.10 It is considered that there would be no adverse impacts associated with the approval of full planning permission that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. In terms of the benefits, the proposed development would result in the provision of a new self-build dwelling that would contribute towards the substantial deficit in the Council's five-year housing land supply, which is a significant benefit that should be given substantial weight. The delivery of a self-build dwelling to meet an identified local need should also be given substantial weight in the planning balance,
- 7.11 The development would also produce short term benefits to the construction industry and the development would also generate ongoing revenue for the Council from Council Tax etc. There will also be further modest benefits that would result from the additional support to the vitality of the local community from the future occupiers of the development. These benefits should also be given moderate weight in favour of the proposed development.
- 7.12 The proposed development will be within a sustainable location and aligns with the Spatial Strategy of the Local Plan. Furthermore, it is considered that the site can accommodate a dwelling without any harmful site specific impact. As such, whilst the proposed development is considered to be in accordance with the Local Plan, there are certainly no planning harms that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 7.13 The contribution made by the approval of minor developments and single dwellings throughout the Wiltshire Council area towards addressing housing need should not be underestimated and now has greater importance considering the Council's substantial housing land supply deficit and the Government's objective to radically boost the supply of

housing, as identified by the Council within the aforementioned Briefing Note

8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the construction of a self-build dwelling within the curtilage of 30 Kent End, Ashton Keynes, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN6 6PU.
- 8.2 The site lies within the built-up area and defined Limits of Development for Ashton Keynes and therefore the principle of the development aligns with the Spatial Strategy of the Local Plan. The proposal would result in the provision of a single self-build dwelling which would respect the height and appearance of neighbouring houses, and can be provided without unacceptable harm to character and appearance of the Conservation Area, visual amenity, neighbour amenity, flood risk, or highway safety.
- 8.3 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The proposal benefits from the presumption of sustainable development (Paragraph 11.d.ii of the NPPF), due to the Council's current 2.42 years housing land supply position, and therefore permission should be granted unless 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.
- 8.4 The proposed development would deliver both social and economic benefits and there would be no planning harms. The proposal would contribute towards the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes and would contribute towards the Council's own strategy to address its housing land supply shortfall.
- 8.5 In light of the above, having considered the individual planning merits of the proposal, the scheme is considered to be in accordance with both national and local planning policies and therefore it is respectfully requested that full planning permission be granted.