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Design & Access Statement

Proposed Two New Dwellings (One Being Self-build) & Landscaping at Land Adjoining Kings Lodge, 3 Little Common, North Bradley, Wiltshire, BA14 0TX

This statement should be read in conjunction with submitted plans AH2026/29

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the erection of two new dwellings on land adjoining Kings Lodge, Little Common, North Bradley. The proposal seeks permission for a high-quality, small-scale residential development comprising two detached dwellings, one of which is intended to be delivered as a self-build unit.

The development has been carefully designed having regard to the site's context, surrounding built form, and relevant planning policy at both national and local levels. The application is supported by a comprehensive set of drawings, including the site layout and detailed floor plans and elevations, alongside an ecological assessment prepared by ABR Ecology.

2. Site and Surroundings

The application site lies within the established settlement of North Bradley and is surrounded on all sides by residential development. The plot represents a natural infill opportunity within an otherwise continuous built-up frontage. The immediate character of the area is defined by a mix of detached and semi-detached dwellings set within generous plots, with a consistent residential grain and pattern of development.

Importantly, the context of the site is evolving, with a current live planning application (PL/2022/05426) for approximately 62 dwellings located immediately to the north. This reinforces the residential nature of the locality and demonstrates that the wider area is being actively considered suitable for additional housing growth. As such, the site cannot reasonably be described as isolated or detached from the settlement; rather, it forms part of a logical and coherent extension of existing residential form.

The site also benefits from an existing access arrangement, further confirming its established relationship with the surrounding built environment.

3. Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 11(d) is of critical importance in this case, as Wiltshire Council is currently unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

The Council's own evidence confirms a housing land supply of approximately **2.42 years**, representing a significant and substantial shortfall. As a result, the "tilted balance" is engaged, meaning that planning permission should be granted unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

Recent updates to the NPPF further strengthen this position by requiring that any policies which restrict development must be supported by **strong reasons** for refusal, rather than simply clear reasons. This raises the bar significantly for resisting sustainable housing proposals.

The NPPF also requires decision-makers to give substantial weight to:

- Boosting housing supply
- Making effective use of land
- Delivering well-designed places
- Supporting a range of housing types, including self-build

This proposal aligns positively with all of these objectives.

Wiltshire Core Strategy

The Wiltshire Core Strategy sets out a settlement-led approach to development, with Core Policies 1 and 2 directing growth toward sustainable locations. North Bradley is identified as a Large Village, where development that meets local needs and respects the character of the area is supported.

While policies relating to development outside settlement boundaries (such as Core Policy 2 and Core Policy 48) seek to restrict new housing, it is clear from recent decisions and officer reports that these policies cannot be afforded full weight in the current context of housing undersupply.

Core Policy 43 supports the delivery of housing, while Core Policy 57 requires high-quality design and protection of amenity. The proposal complies fully with these policies.

Material Considerations & Recent Decisions

The recently approved application at 3 Little Common (PL/2025/08250) provides highly relevant and compelling justification for the current proposal.

In that case, the Council accepted that:

- The site, despite being outside the defined settlement boundary, was in a “relatively sustainable location” due to its proximity to North Bradley and Trowbridge, as well as access to services and transport links .
- The lack of a five-year housing land supply meant that restrictive development plan policies could not be given full weight, and the presumption in favour of sustainable development applied .
- Even a single dwelling would make a meaningful contribution toward addressing the housing shortfall, which was afforded weight in the planning balance .
- Development that caused no harm in terms of character, amenity, highways, or ecology should be supported under the tilted balance .

Critically, the officer concluded that although the proposal conflicted with certain restrictive policies, the housing land supply shortfall and sustainability of the location outweighed that conflict, leading to approval.

The parallels with the current proposal are clear and compelling. In fact, the current application site is in a stronger position, as it:

- Lies within an established residential frontage rather than open countryside
- Represents clear infill development
- Sits adjacent to significant proposed residential growth

Accordingly, the reasoning applied in PL/2025/08250 should be given substantial weight in the determination of this application.

4. Design and Layout

The proposed development has been carefully designed to respond to the character and grain of the surrounding area. The site layout demonstrates a logical arrangement of two dwellings that reflect the established pattern of development along Little Common. The positioning of the buildings respects existing building lines and maintains appropriate spacing between neighbouring properties, ensuring that the development integrates comfortably into its surroundings.

The layout shown on the submitted plans provides each dwelling with a clearly defined curtilage, including private rear gardens and on-site parking. The arrangement avoids any sense of overdevelopment and retains an appropriate balance between built form and open space, respecting the rural setting.

In terms of scale, the proposed dwellings are two-storey properties that are consistent with the height and proportions of nearby houses. This ensures that the development does not appear dominant or incongruous within the street scene.

The elevations of the new dwellings illustrate simple, well-proportioned facades with pitched roofs, regular window patterns, and materials that are typical of the locality. This ensures that the dwellings will sit comfortably alongside existing properties and contribute positively to the overall character of the area.

Internally, the dwellings have been designed to provide high-quality accommodation. The floor plans show spacious and functional layouts, including open-plan kitchen and dining areas, separate living rooms, and well-proportioned bedrooms. The design ensures good levels of natural light and a high standard of amenity for future occupants.

5. Access and Highways

A key advantage of the proposal is that it utilises an existing access point. This is a significant material consideration, as it avoids the need for new access arrangements or alterations to the highway network. The existing access has been demonstrated to operate safely and effectively, and there is no evidence to suggest that the modest increase in vehicle movements associated with two additional dwellings would give rise to any highway safety concerns.

Adequate on-site parking is provided for both dwellings, ensuring compliance with local standards and avoiding any pressure on the surrounding highway network.

6. Sustainability of the Location

The site is inherently sustainable, being located within an established settlement that benefits from access to local services and facilities. Its position within North Bradley ensures that future occupants will be able to access day-to-day amenities without reliance solely on private vehicles.

The sustainability of the site is further reinforced by recent planning decisions in the area, which confirm that similar sites are considered appropriate for residential development. The proximity of the approved and emerging development to the north strengthens the argument that this location is suitable for continued growth.

7. Ecology & Biodiversity

An ecological assessment prepared by ABR Ecology accompanies the application and confirms that the site is not subject to any significant ecological constraints.

In respect of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), it is noted that one of the proposed dwellings is intended as a self-build unit, plot 1. In accordance with current regulations, self-build developments are exempt from the requirement to deliver a mandatory 10% biodiversity net gain.

Notwithstanding this exemption, the proposal will still seek to deliver biodiversity enhancements where practicable as part of the detailed design, in accordance with good practice and the overarching objectives of Core Policy 50. The inclusion of features such as bat and bird boxes will ensure that the development makes a positive contribution to biodiversity proportionate to its scale.

Overall, the proposal demonstrates a responsible and policy-compliant approach to ecology, with appropriate assessment, mitigation, and enhancement measures embedded within the development.

8. Residential Amenity

The proposed development has been designed to ensure that there are no unacceptable impacts on the amenity of neighbouring properties. The layout provides sufficient separation distances to avoid overlooking or loss of privacy, and the scale and positioning of the dwellings ensure that there will be no significant overshadowing or overbearing effects.

Future occupants of the proposed dwellings will benefit from a high standard of amenity, including well-designed internal spaces and private outdoor gardens.

9. Planning Balance and Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposed development represents a sustainable and policy-compliant form of residential development. It delivers two new dwellings, including a self-build unit, in a location that is demonstrably suitable for housing.

The proposal accords with the overarching objectives of the NPPF, particularly the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the need to significantly boost housing supply. Given that Wiltshire Council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, substantial weight must be given to these considerations. The tilted balance is therefore engaged, and planning permission should be granted unless the adverse impacts of the development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefits.

In this case, no such adverse impacts have been identified. The proposal is of an appropriate scale, respects local character, raises no highway or ecological concerns, and would make a valuable contribution to housing delivery in the area.

When considered alongside recent planning decisions and appeal outcomes, which clearly support similar forms of development in comparable locations, it is evident that this proposal should be viewed favourably. The development represents a logical infill opportunity within an established residential area and constitutes sustainable development in every respect.

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that planning permission be granted.