

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

THE PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990

**REDEVELOPMENT OF EXISTING STABLE YARD AT 61 WEST STREET,
GREAT SOMERFORD, WILTSHIRE, SN15 5EH TO ACCOMMODATE 1No
NEW DWELLING, INCLUDING PROVISION OF NEW ACCESS**

**PLANNING STATEMENT
(including Design Commentary)**

Prepared by

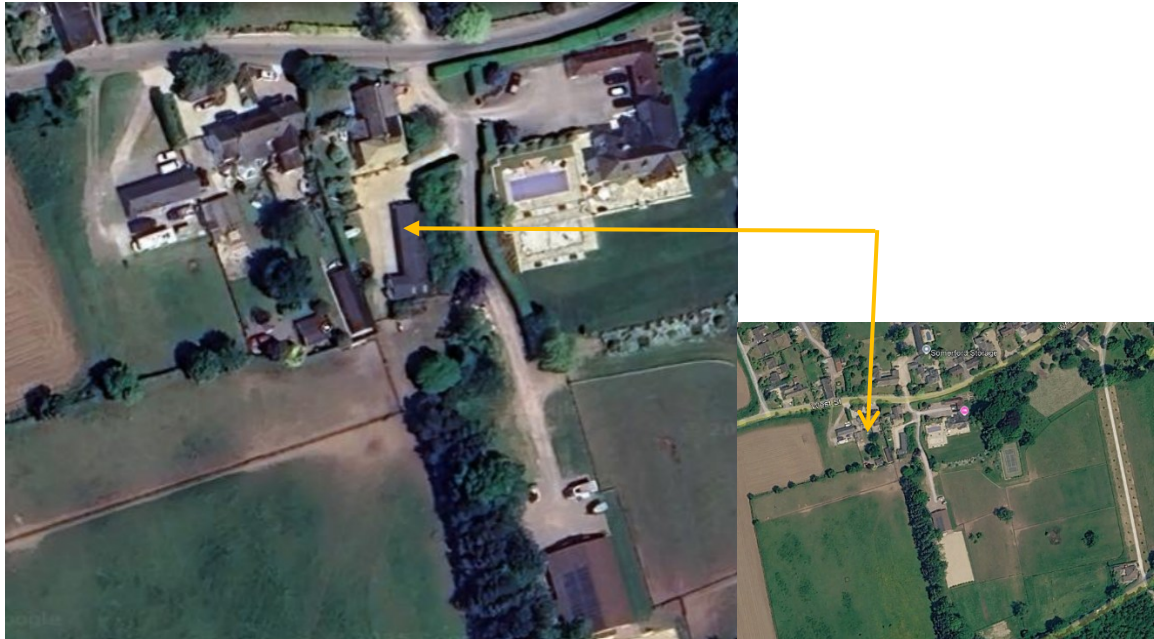
**Simon Chambers, BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI
Director
LPC (Trull) Ltd**

Our Reference: SWLC.LPC6090

April 2026

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 LPC (Trull) Ltd have been instructed by Ms Bailes to present her planning application for the erection of 1No detached dwelling, redeveloping the existing equestrian yard and replacing the existing buildings, at No 61 West Street, Great Somerford, Wiltshire, SN15 5EH.



- 1.2 As your record will confirm a recent application for a similar development, despite extensive discussions and adherence to the planning advice received, and considerable expense to pursue a Planning Obligation ensuring the 'self-build' status of the new property, was recently refused (LPA Ref PL/2025/03194).
- 1.3 That application was refused for a single reason as inserted below

1. The application fails to demonstrate that a safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users. The proposal therefore fails to comply with Core Policies 57 and 61 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, and Paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework which require development to provide safe and suitable access for all users.

Mindful of the advice at Article 35 to The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), such that all decisions to refuse planning permission must state clearly and precisely the **full** reasons for resisting the development there is

only one issue that has been identified in opposition to the grant of permission.

- 1.4 It is the purpose of this overarching Planning Statement, to not make excessive comments therefore on those matters which are common ground and can be drawn from the case officer's (Ms S Stockley) recent decision report, and therefore provide, without prejudice to the principle of sharing the established access to the application land with No 61, a focused commentary regarding the acceptable use of the established field access to the stable yard being redeveloped to serve the new dwelling. For completeness a design commentary and proportionate impact assessment regarding the area's character and appearance will reassess the relevant planning considerations arising against national and local planning policy. It will be shown, by full reference to the officer's recent decision report that the new dwelling's design is unchanged from that previously submitted and in and of itself is an acceptable addition to the village contextually and by reference to the needs for housing generally.

2.0 THE APPLICATION SITE AND PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 2.1 No 61 West Street is a semi-detached property, owned by the applicant. Planning permission was granted by application 18/01201/FUL to extend No 61 and those works can be seen as part of the contextual photographs inserted below. The details of the site to be redeveloped are shown on the next page too.



No 61 southern 'front' aspect



No 60 facing east with No 61 attached in background



View looking north through stable yard



main stable buildings

2.2 Access to both Nos 60 and 61 is physically shared with Lady's Walk House to the east. That access extends to serve land associated with Lady's Walk House in depth to the south and planning permission was recently granted for the erection of a new garage to be positioned towards the shared boundary (LPA Reference: PL/2024/09364). The following photographs, include details of the current shared access arrangements.



Access drive branching east to Lady Walk House



Access to No 60 from West Street

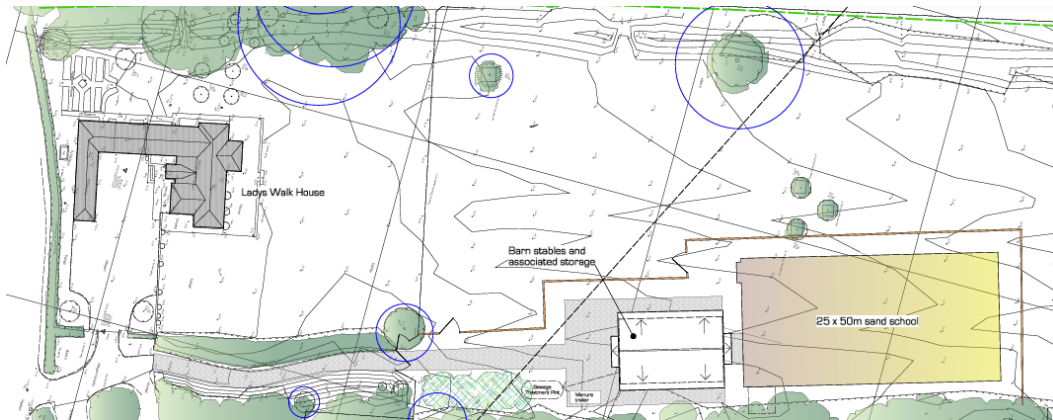


Access to No 61 and to the right through the gates

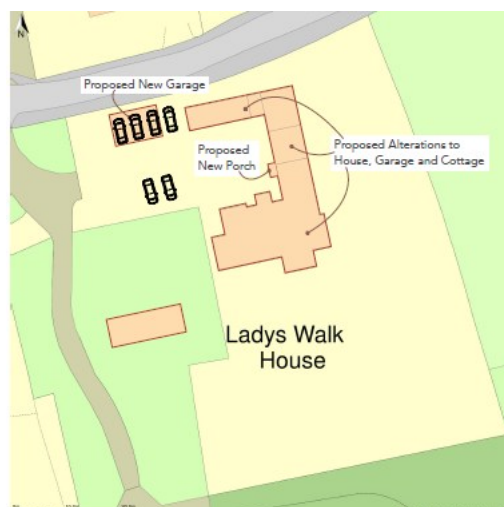


2.3 Further south, and served from the same point of access, works have been completed pursuant to application PL/2024/05246, described as erection of

'barn style stable block, sand school and associated landscaping'. The new development is shown below and extends much further south from West Street than the application site.

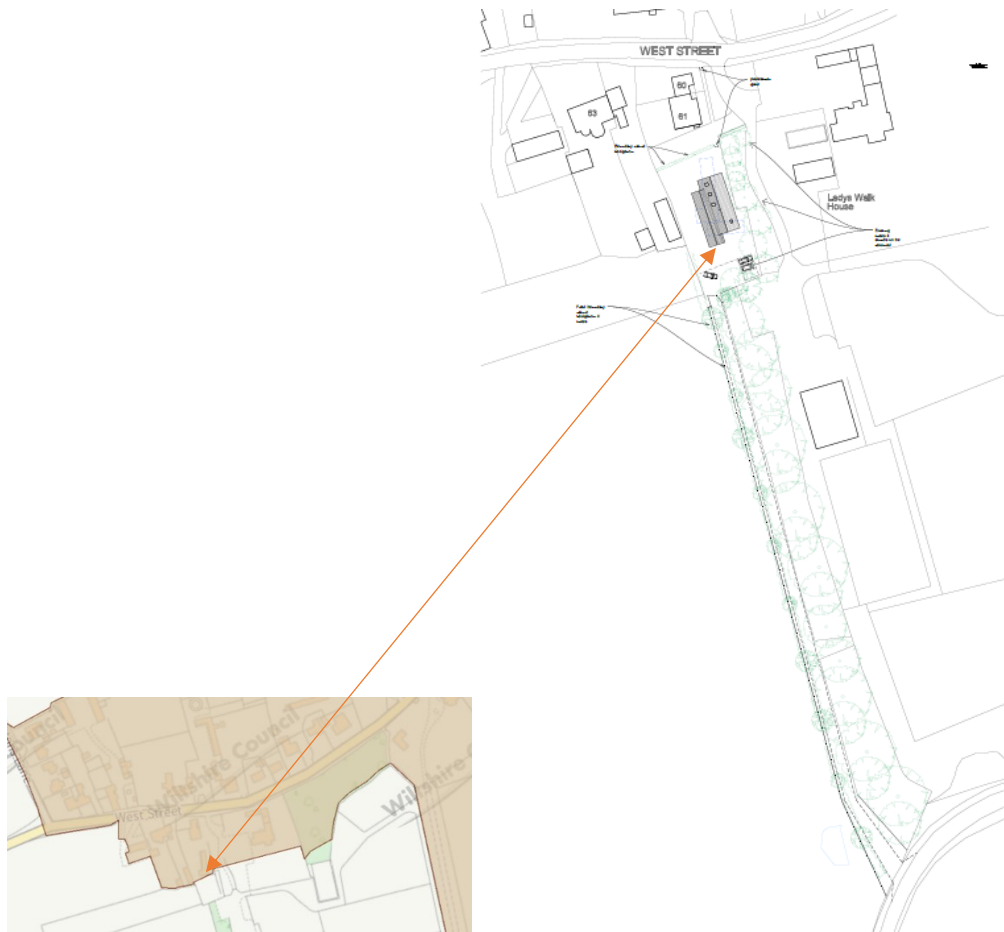


Additionally works are ostensibly completed regarding the new garage to the road frontage to the same side as the swimming pool complex (evident in the aerial photograph previous inserted on page 2), also approved in 2024 and shown on the site plan extract inserted below.



- 2.4 The recently refused application was served off the shared drive from West Street. That access to the stable yard though will now be closed. Without prejudice, the access from the paddock to the south will instead be used in association with the yard's residential redevelopment. Part of the site lies within the village Conservation Area, as shown by the plan extract (coloured brown) also inserted alongside the new site plan inserted on the following page. Pedestrian access is maintained from West Street to serve the new dwelling utilising land in the control of my client and her partner, running in

front of Nos 60 and 61, (Certificate B has been served on her partner who owns the neighbouring property). The path does not materially change the residential use of the land and avoids the land in the neighbour's control, without prejudice to the ongoing rights to pass. Details of the new pedestrian gate are included with the application details and as an alternative boundary treatment is permitted development. Its delivery can be conditionally controlled as a Grampian matter.



- 2.5 Over and above the neighbours' recently approved developments it is material to note that planning permission was recently granted by application PL/2023/09139 for the creation of new dwelling nearby to the west, as shown on the aerial photograph on the following page. That site is within the defined village settlement boundary. However, to the east, Permission in Principle has also recently been granted at appeal (LPA reference PL/2023/06033) for the erection of up to two new dwellings on the land also identified on the aerial view. This second site is outside the village settlement boundary.



- 2.6 The application proposal lies within the settlement boundary, as shown by the Development Plan extract taken from your Council's interactive proposal map inserted below.



- 2.7 The Inspector's appeal decision in respect of application PL/2023/0603 is material though as she noted, 'The settlement boundary to Great Somerford is fragmented and irregular, particularly along West Street'. Notwithstanding therefore that that site lay in the countryside, where the development would normally be contrary to policy, she also noted, 'The overall sense travelling along the road is being within a loosely developed village interspersed with gaps provided by field frontages'. Additionally, she said that, 'I observed considerable variation in property frontages along West Street. This variation forms part of the overall character of the area and does not detract from the

GSCA' (Great Somerford Conservation Area). The enclosed application is of course single storey by design and replaces the existing stable yard buildings. so does not introduce a significant visual change.

- 2.8 Having concluded that the proposed change to accommodate 2No new dwellings could protect and conserve the locally distinctive character of the village and its landscape setting, sympathetic to and conserving the historic environment, the Inspector considered the site's accessibility. 'The site is located a short distance from the centre of Great Somerford where there is a shop/post office and public house. A primary school is located a little further away'. These services and facilities were said to meet the basic day to day needs for future occupants. She concluded that pedestrian's and cyclist's access existed to the village. Overall, and noting the available bus service, she further concluded new occupants 'would have access to services and facilities both within the village and elsewhere by bus. They would not be wholly reliant on the private car to do so and in this rural village location, this would be appropriate. Furthermore, development here may help to support existing services and facilities within the village grow and thrive'. The pedestrian links to West Street associated with the new dwelling ensure the same comments remain applicable to this application.

- 2.9 Finally, the appeal decision, based on the now outdated housing supply figure of 3.85 years, (it's now 2.42 years) considered the policy conflict to be effectively against out-of-date policies, engaging paragraph 11d) of the Framework.

'The absence of harm to character and appearance and the presentation of the character and appearance of the GCSA (sic) and its setting are neutral factors in the balance. However, the development of rural homes in an accessible location which would help to support rural communities, services and facilities is a positive aspect of the scheme that weights in its favour.

When accessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole, the adverse impact does not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of two additional houses on a windfall site. Consequently, the

presumption in favour of sustainable development indicates that permission should be granted.'

- 2.10 The Inspector's decision fully supports the application development proposed at No 61. As it sits within the defined settlement framework though it is of course maintained it sits full square with the relevant planning policy approach to village housing, whether out of date or not. The recent refusal of course reinforces this position as there was no in principle concerns raised outside the single reason for refusal as the full case to be considered.

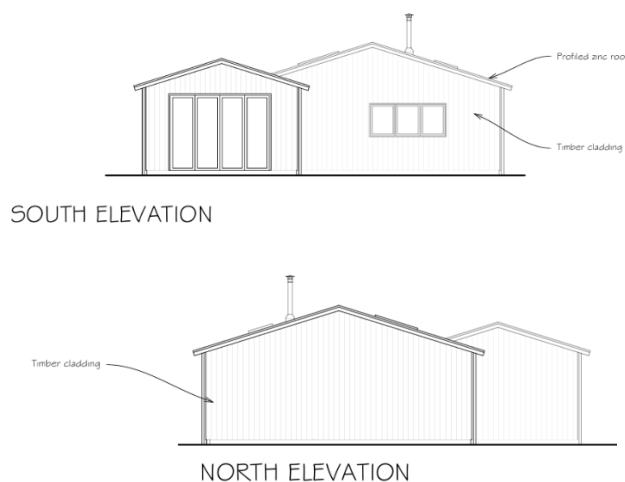
3.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The existing stable yard will be redeveloped to accommodate a single storey detached dwelling. The intended siting is shown by the layout plan extract inserted below. The house will share the existing field access from the south where the drive utilises the track positioned alongside the well established planted eastern boundary and will include a new mixed and native hedgerow with dispersed trees planted along its western side, bounding the rest of the field. A new hedge will be planted between the two properties to define the separation between No 61 and the new house.



3.2 No 61 has been reorientated by the previous two storey extension and now has a small fenced 'front' garden on its southern side, which will be retained leaving, a gravelled hardsurfaced area between it and the new house for parking and manoeuvring. There is sufficient space to accommodate at least 3No vehicles and allow them to turn so as to access and egress the host dwelling in a forward gear. The existing house's principal private amenity space runs to the west of the house, which was historically to the rear. The separation distance between the front of No 61 and the new house is set further than the existing stables and far enough to maintain both property's reasonable residential amenity.

3.3 The new house discretely positions the entrance on the western side of the built stagger minimising the change in the glimpsed view from The Street. The intention is that the character of the existing stables is retained and the new building does not therefore compete with the surrounding houses, employing a simple rural typology, reflective of many rural conversions. It will be constructed from unstained vertical timber boarding below a standing seamed zinc sheeted roof. The house in the main is orientated in terms of outlook over my client's land to the south west, where it transitions to the rural fringe of the village. Access from this side, and the proposed parking area, is into the open plan living area. Deliveries etc are expected to use the pedestrian access from the north.





WEST ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION

Details of the materials proposed, including the fenestration treatment (grey powder coated aluminium framed) are shown below and can of course be conditionally controlled.



- 3.4 The house has a linear footprint as shown below, addressing an intimate south western amenity space. The orientation maximises the open views to the rear, away from the nearest neighbours.



- 3.5 The accommodation proposed is a 4-bedroomed family house, specifically aimed at accommodating the applicant's large 'blended' family although the previously requested Planning Obligation intended to deliver the associated self-build status, (and of course by association negate the need to make a BNG contribution), will not be necessary this time as the intended planting along the access track delivers a substantial biodiversity benefit that can be conditionally delivered as part of the red lined application site. There is parking and turning space around south eastern corner of the residential curtilage. There will be a gravelled surface, maintaining the porosity and minimising impacts on the planted boundary.

4.0 DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- 4.1 Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 require that all

applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development plan comprises the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) and the Great Somerford (incorporating Startley) Neighbourhood Plan.

- 4.2 The following Core Strategy Policies are believed to be most applicable to the application assessment in principle.

CP1 – Settlement Strategy

CP2 – Delivery Strategy

CP13 – Malmesbury Community Area

CP50 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity

CP51 – Landscape

CP57 – Ensuring high-quality design and place-shaping

CP58 – Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment.

CP60 – Sustainable Transport

CP61 - Transport and Development

Great Somerford (incorporating Startley) Neighbourhood Plan 2016-20

The following Neighbourhood Plan Policies are considered to be relevant;

- Policy GSNP1 Proposed new development.

- 4.3 The adopted Wiltshire Design Guide (March 2024) has been prepared to support the implementation of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and is a material planning consideration.

- 4.4 The National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) provides the Government's planning policies for England and along with the online Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) explains how they should be applied. These are material planning considerations.

5.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 In light of the relevant planning policy framework identified, the key issues arising are believed to be as follows,

- Principle of development

- Design and impact on Conservation Area
- Residential amenity
- Highways
- Biodiversity

Principle

5.2 Wiltshire Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP2 alongside community area-based policies; CP13 in this instance, define a hierarchy of settlements based on a range of services infrastructure and facilities in those locations and seeks to direct most new development to the most sustainable locations in this hierarchy. Core Strategy Policy CP13 sets out the spatial strategy for Malmesbury Community Area (MCA). It explains that development in the MCA should be in accordance with the Settlement Strategy set out in CP1. Within CP13 Great Somerford is identified as a Large Village where limited development is supported under the terms of CP1 and CP2 to meet the general needs of the area.

5.3 The Council's current strategy for new housing is set out in Policies CP1, CP2 and CP13 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy 2015 (WCS) and the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan 2020 (WHSAP). Policy CP1 identifies four tiers of settlement within which sustainable development will take place, comprising Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large and Small Villages. CP2 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy sets out the 'Delivery Strategy'. It identifies the scale of growth appropriate within each settlement tier, stating that within the limits of development, as defined on the policies map, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development at the Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages. Consequently, subject to the accord with the rest of the issues outlined above there is no in principle objection to the application development. The officer's decision report for the recently refused application PL/2025/03194 states;

'Together, CP1 and CP2 ensure that new development is strategically located, sustainable, and supports the character and function of Wiltshire's communities.

The application site lies within the defined settlement boundary of Great Somerford, a Large Village, and therefore the principle of residential

development is supported, subject to compliance with other relevant policies. The proposal represents windfall development on previously developed land, consistent with the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development. It will contribute to housing supply in a sustainable location without reliance on private car travel for all day-to-day needs, aligning with the spatial strategy and objectives of CP1, CP2, and the NPPF.'

Design and impact on Conservation Area

- 5.4 Section 72 to the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that all development proposals within a Conservation Area should preserve or enhance the area's character and appearance. It is material to note that Section 66 of the same Act is not believed to be applicable in this instance as the site does not impact on the setting of any Listed Buildings.
- 5.5 Core Policy 57 states that new development is expected to create a strong sense of place through drawing on the local context and being complementary to the locality. Core Policy 58 aims to ensure that Wiltshire's heritage assets such as the Conservation Areas are protected and enhanced in order that they continue to make an important contribution to Wiltshire's environment and quality of life. It also confirms though that the designation of a Conservation Area or listed building does not necessarily preclude the possibility of new development and the Council is committed to working pragmatically with owners to find positive solutions.
- 5.6 Good design helps to provide a sense of place, creates or reinforces local distinctiveness, and promotes community cohesiveness and social wellbeing; The layout and design of new developments must also be based on a thorough understanding of the site itself and its wider context, and seek to maximise the benefits of the site's characteristics. This will require careful consideration of the site layout. No two sites share the same landscapes, contours, relationship with surrounding buildings, street pattern and features. The proximity of poor quality or indistinct development is not a justification for standard or poor design solutions. New development should integrate into its surroundings whilst seeking to enhance the overall character of the locality; A high standard of design is required in all new developments.

- 5.7 Paragraph 203 of the NPPF states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of (d) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 5.8 In this case the site's immediate context is defined by the utilitarian stable building and associated yard which makes no positive contribution to the area's character or appearance. Indeed, although the site transitions to the south, where the built up fringe includes several areas used for horse grazing, the dominant land use and related character in the groupings along West Street, where the new dwelling will be most apparent, is residential. By adopting an enhanced converted barn like appearance, the transition is maintained and the overall character and appearance are less changed. The design quality though is vastly superior to the existing stables. Furthermore, the access lies outside the Conservation Area and utilises an established link from the paddock and southern point of access.
- 5.9 The street is in fact dominated by the varied height natural stone walling that sit up to the highway edges and provides the characteristic enclosure to the built up areas of this part of the village. The application site contrasts with this character, but by reason of the orientation of Nos 60 and 61 they address the access and not the Street, so the application site is set away from the public street scene. Glimpsed through the existing access the new house will read as part of the rural fringe built grouping and being single storey is subservient to the nearest properties. It is orientated so as to effectively close the northern built pattern. The new pedestrian gate is a very minor change to the existing hedging, the loss of which is compensated substantially by new planting generally as part of the application.
- 5.10 The new house is of a similar spread to the buildings it replaces which will further ensure the prevailing character and appearance of the Conservation Area contextually is preserved. Indeed, by reference to the contribution made to the area's character and appearance by the existing utilitarian stables the proposed dwelling will be a positive change. The dwelling is slightly higher than the stables, although it is clearly subservient to Nos 60 and 61, and does not sit in the main vista along the shared drive. The Neighbourhood Plan at

paragraph 4.10 confirms that the sense of the village's rural setting is important, and that was of course assessed by the Inspector's decision referred to earlier-and is unchanged.

'The narrow, winding roads and lanes throughout the village provide a pleasing rural feel. Grass verges, stone walls, hedges, trees and views onto the countryside through gaps in the built settlement all enhance the rural setting.'

- 5.11 The publicly visible and sensitive design approach, complimenting the immediate neighbours and the prevailing mixed residential context, means on balance it will not harm, and most likely, enhance the area's character and appearance. Overall, it is therefore considered that the proposed works are of an acceptable scale, mass and design to maintain the character of the application site and would not be detrimental to the distant street scene, preserving the character of the Conservation Area and its setting to which it also impacts as of course part of the site lies outside the designated area.
- 5.12 Over and above the acceptable principle of the new dwelling in this location it has therefore also been carefully designed to reflect the prevailing irregular grain and pattern of housing in the immediate area. Moreover, as already explained, and in accordance with the tenant of the Wiltshire Design Guide, the new dwelling adds visual interest by comparison with the existing stables. The use of unstained timber cladding left to weather a subtle silver, below the recessive matt hued zinc sheeted roof introduces an attractive house, complementing the prevailing Conservation Area's rural fringe aesthetic. It will add positively to the overall mix of houses and types that creates the wider mixed character and appearance of the Village, which is clearly residential in character.
- 5.13 Policy CP57 of the adopted WSC requires a "high standard of design" for all new developments. This policy requires developments to "create a strong sense of place through drawing on the local context and being complementary to the locality" with applications encouraged to "make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire" and sets out a list of

fourteen criteria that proposals for new development must comply with. Within the list of 14 criteria, the following requirements are included:

- i. enhancing local distinctiveness by responding to the value of the natural and historic environment, relating positively to its landscape setting and the existing pattern of development and responding to local topography by ensuring that important views into, within and out of the site are to be retained and enhanced
- ii. the retention and enhancement of existing important landscaping and natural features, (e.g. trees, hedges, banks and watercourses), in order to take opportunities to enhance biodiversity, create wildlife and recreational corridors, effectively integrate the development into its setting and to justify and mitigate against any losses that may occur through the development
- iii. responding positively to the existing townscape and landscape features in terms of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, building line, plot size, elevational design, materials, streetscape and rooflines to effectively integrate the building into its setting.
- vi. making efficient use of land whilst taking account of the characteristics of the site and the local context to deliver an appropriate development which relates effectively to the immediate setting and to the wider character of the area.

5.14 The NPPF has an increased focus on delivering high-quality design and sets out in paragraph 131 that the "creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve". Paragraph 135 moreover sets out a series of six criteria to ensure development is of high quality over the lifetime of the development, being visually attractive and sympathetic to the local character and history and creates a strong sense of place. By careful integration and design in scale and harmony with its setting, as well as finishes, the new dwelling proposed is believed to result in a positive addition to the built environment.

5.15 Again, by reference to the recent case officer report under the similar heading, for completeness I have inserted the full assessment made which remains pertinent to the enclosed application regardless of the changed access arrangements.

'The proposal seeks the erection of a single-storey dwelling within the existing equestrian yard. The building is designed to reflect the rural vernacular and agricultural heritage of the site, adopting a form and materiality that is sympathetic to its context. Specifically, the dwelling would emulate the

appearance of two low-level bale timber-clad barns, arranged in a staggered formation with one element set further back. This layout creates visual interest and reduces the perceived massing, ensuring the development integrates with the irregular grain of surrounding properties.

The use of timber cladding and barn-inspired proportions reinforces the rural character, while the staggered arrangement helps to break up the built form and maintain openness within the plot. The proposed design responds positively to the mixed residential and equestrian context, complementing the prevailing character of West Street and the Great Somerford Conservation Area. Glimpsed views through the existing access will reveal a building that reads as part of a small cluster of properties, rather than introducing an incongruous or dominant feature.

Conclusion

The scale, massing, and materials have been carefully considered to preserve the rural aesthetic, while introducing a high-quality design that aligns with Core Policy 57 and paragraph 135 of the NPPF.

Impact on Heritage Assets

Policy Context

From the point of view of the historic environment the main statutory tests are set out within the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Paragraph 58B of the Planning Act 1990 requires that in considering whether to grant planning permission or permission in principle for the development of land in England which affects a registered park and garden, the LPA must have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the asset or its setting.

Section 72(1) of the Act requires the Council to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of designated Conservation Areas.

The NPPF outlines government policy for planning. Chapter 16 of the NPPF 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' sets out the Government's high-level policies concerning heritage and sustainable development. In particular:

Paragraph 208 requires LPAs should “avoid or minimise any conflict” between the heritage asset’s conservation (which includes achieving its optimum viable use) and any aspect of a proposal.

Paragraph 210 requires local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable new uses and of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraphs 212 requires “great weight” to be given to an asset’s conservation “irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.”

Paragraph 213 advises that harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset should require “clear and convincing justification”.

Paragraphs 213-215(214-216) require a balanced approach with any harm which would be caused being weighed against the potential public benefits which might be achieved.

Paragraph 220 advises that not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site 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 or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm or less than substantial harm as appropriate.

The Planning Practice Guidance provides guidance on interpreting the NPPF.

The Council’s Core Strategy Policy CP58 ‘Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment’ requires that designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner appropriate to their significance and encourages proposals which improve the condition of heritage assets at risk.

The Council’s Core Strategy CP 57: Ensuring high quality design requires a high quality of design in all new developments. The policy requires applicants to “demonstrate how the proposal will make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire through (amongst other things) responding to the value of the natural and historic environment and being sympathetic to and conserving historic buildings and landscapes. Development is required to respond positively to the existing in terms of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, building line, plot size, elevational design, materials, streetscape and rooflines to effectively integrate the building into its setting.

Assessment

Great Somerford Conservation Area is characterised by a loosely developed linear settlement pattern along West Street, interspersed with gaps that provide views to open countryside. Historic stone boundary walls, hedgerows, and varied building forms contribute to its rural character. The site lies within the Conservation Area (except for its southernmost part) and forms part of the rear garden of No. 61 West Street, currently occupied by utilitarian stables and hardstanding. These existing structures make no positive contribution to the area’s character.

The proposal is for a single-storey dwelling comprising two parallel, linked linear blocks with dual-pitched roofs, arranged in a staggered formation to break up massing. The design adopts a contemporary yet sympathetic approach, using timber vertical boarding, full-height glazing, and a zinc-profile roof. The Conservation Officer notes that the architectural philosophy is “more refined than previous designs” and that the broken plan form “assists significantly in reducing visual massing and scale so that it would be a less dominating new dwelling in the rear garden of No. 61 West Street.” The simplified material palette and low profile ensure the building integrates with the rural character of the Conservation Area. The development site is visually contained and set back from the public street scene. The proposed dwelling will not harm the setting of nearby listed buildings (West Street Farmhouse

and Westerton Farm Cottages) due to its scale, orientation, and separation distance.

The Conservation Officer supports the scheme subject to conditions on materials and detailing, noting that “the attempt to reduce the massing and scale has worked effectively” and that the dwelling is “sympathetic to the character of the Great Somerford Conservation Area.”

Conclusion

The proposal results in no harm to the significance of the Conservation Area and is considered to enhance its character compared to the existing situation. Conditions should secure high-quality materials (timber boarding, zinc roofing, hardwood or aluminium windows/doors) to ensure compliance with CP58 and NPPF Section 16’.

- 5.16 The new access track lies outside the Conservation Area and utilises an existing field track that will be simply gravelled in full and is discretely positioned along the high and well established eastern boundary. The track is further subsumed visually by the timber post and rail fencing and new planting along its western side. It will have a very narrow zone of visual influence and is entirely in keeping with the rural approach to the site. The access does not represent a material change of circumstances that dilutes the acceptability of the application development recorded above. The aerial image on page 2 also shows that there is an existing access to the east, which is far more open. The pedestrian path and gate are very minor changes and merely reinforces the perpendicular alignment of the neighbouring properties.

Residential Amenity

- 5.17 Policy CP57 criteria vii requires new developments to have "regard to the compatibility of adjoining buildings and uses, the impact on the amenities of existing occupants, and ensuring 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)".
- 5.18 Criterion f) of paragraph 135 of the Framework meanwhile requires the creation of “places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users”.

- 5.19 The proposed dwelling has a substantial separation from the nearest neighbours. The site itself is not one with a nil use and the new chapter of use is not believed to be materially different in terms of the potential externalities. The orientation and siting will ensure there is no loss of privacy between the existing and proposed, furthermore, it is not considered that the proposed dwelling would create harmful overshadowing or overbearing impacts to nearby occupiers. The proposed development would not have an adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers and would therefore comply with CP57 of the adopted WCS and paragraph 135 of the NPPF.
- 5.20 Once again for completeness, as the previous decision has indicated the full and precise basis to have resisted the previous application, I've inserted the relevant officer's comments under the heading of amenity below. The only change is of course that the parking and turning area is no longer shared, but a pedestrian route will be maintained to the east of the neighbours, without materially changing their reasonable residential enjoyment of the houses.

Assessment

'The proposed dwelling is located to the rear of No. 61 West Street, set well back from the public street frontage and screened by existing boundary treatments. This positioning ensures that the development will have no direct visual impact on the public realm and will not alter the established street scene.

The separation from neighbouring dwellings is substantial. The proposal sits behind No. 61, with a clear physical and visual break created by the shared access and parking area. As a result, there will be no immediate loss of privacy to No. 61, which will continue to look onto its own access and parking space. The orientation and layout avoid any direct overlooking between the existing and proposed properties. It should also be noted that No. 61 is within the applicant's ownership.

The new dwelling benefits from a private garden area to the side and rear, ensuring that its principal amenity spaces are not overlooked by neighbouring properties. The design and siting maintain appropriate separation distances, preventing any harmful intervisibility or overbearing impact.

The proposed dwelling is designed to meet the Nationally Described Space Standards for a property accommodating up to seven occupants. The internal layout provides sufficient living, sleeping, and storage areas, ensuring a high standard of amenity for future residents.

Conclusion

Given the site's existing use as a stable yard, the proposed residential use represents a less intensive and quieter activity, reducing potential externalities such as noise and odour. There are no anticipated issues relating to light intrusion or overshadowing due to the single-storey form and generous separation from neighbouring dwellings'.

Highway Impacts

- 5.21 The ground between the applicant and your Council that resulted in the single reason for refusal referred to earlier and is of course not accepted, and appears to have predetermined the third party dispute about the rights of access from the north, however, the enclosed application, reflecting conversations and in principle support for such an approach from Ms Stockley, utilises the secondary access to the stable yard from the south, off Seagry Road. There will be no material intensification of the existing arrangement. Furthermore, the available parking and manoeuvring space, is ample for the proposed dwelling. Views in either direction from the existing gateway are shown below. The is good visibility on the lightly trafficked road.





- 5.22 Criterion xiv of CP57 requires proposals to satisfy the requirements of CP61 (Transport and New Development). CP61 requires new developments to be “located and designed to reduce the need to travel particularly by private car, and to encourage the use of sustainable transport alternatives”. CP61 also requires in criterion ii that proposals would be “capable of being served by safe access to the highway network”. In addition, CP64 requires adherence to residential parking standards. The inspector’s recent comments reported earlier confirm this is a similarly sustainable location that is not entirely dependent on private motor vehicles. In any event, the NPPF recognises that the opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas (paragraph 110). In addition to the abovementioned policies, paragraph 116 of the Framework states that developments “should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe”.
- 5.23 In terms of the Council’s car parking strategy, this proposal would not materially affect the on-site car parking provision for No61. There are at least three (plus) spaces shown for the new dwelling with sufficient manoeuvring space to ensure access and egress in a forward gear. The parking provision in effect exceeds the required provision but ensures ample space for visitors to park clear of the highway too. Accordingly, the one additional house will

be satisfactorily assimilated as part of the overall new highway network, and the dispersed pattern of housing in the and around the defined village limits. There is no highway impediment to the application development.

Ecology

- 5.24 CP50 of the WCS requires that development leads to no net loss of biodiversity within an application site. The proposals have been supported by a Preliminary Roost Assessment prepared by Herdwick Ecology with regard to ecological impacts of the proposed new dwelling. The attached assessment explains that the buildings to be removed are of negligible potential for bat roosting and has been revisited since it was first prepared to support the previous application.
- 5.25 The fact the new house is proposed as a self-build proposal means that it is exempt from the BNG requirements. However, as previously explained the proposal will be considered on its own merits as the considerable screen planting intended to minimise the visibility of the eastern field track can be seen to represent a considerable enhancement and can be delivered as a matter of conditional control. The application includes an updated ecological assessment that clarifies the planting strategy addresses the BNG requirement calculated and can be managed as a single band of planting. It is of course material to further note that such minor applications are expected to be exempt from BNG after 31st July this year.
- 5.26 Additionally, in line with the requirements of Core Policy there is a further enhancement proposed for biodiversity (although the planting is a matter for general conditional control too). In that regard, the applicant will provide a simple timber bat roosting box, the details of which are shown below, along with siting on a boundary tree. These can of course be conditionally required.



6.0 CONCLUSION AND PLANNING BALANCE

- 6.1 The proposal would be of an acceptable form of development contextually, in terms of design and the overall scale and would result in limited implications for the character or setting of the application site, or the street scene and would not harm the character of the designated Great Somerford Conservation Area. Similarly, due to its location and scale, it is considered that the proposal is unlikely to have any impact on the amenities enjoyed by occupiers of adjacent dwellings.
- 6.2 The previous application indicates that the stated absence of a confirmed legal right of access was sufficient conflict, as an adverse impact of the proposal and significantly and demonstrably outweighed the limited benefits arising from a single dwelling. As such, the presumption in favour of sustainable development did not apply. However, as that conflict has been removed and a safe, suitable and convenient access is deliverable as part of the enclosed application the proposal can now be supported under the planning balance and in accordance with the tilted balance, which is believed to also be common ground
- 6.3 The proposal would, therefore, accord with the aims and objectives of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and other Government guidance and there are believed to be no reasons why planning permission should not be granted for the proposal.

- 6.4 Having said that the triggering of paragraph 11 d) to the NPPF adds significant weight to the grant of permission. The new house adds to the supply of sustainable housing in accordance with the encouragement at paragraph 61 to the NPPF, that seeks to boost the supply of village housing. Furthermore, it accords with the area's spatial strategy and will be achieved without harm to the area's character and appearance, heritage and ecological interests. There are no highway grounds or general amenity concerns and thus there are no reasons to resist the grant of permission as sought.
- 6.5 The Council has published a Briefing Note (No.24-20) 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%. This is clearly a matter of substantial weight.
- 6.6 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 there is a substantial shortfall.
- 6.7 Your 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". This changes the weight to be given to applications for positive additions to the housing supply generally. 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.
- 6.8 The application sits full square with the scale of support for housing in this location and as said there are no short comings arising from the changes

proposed to overcome the previous refusal reason that would warrant resisting the sustainable addition to local housing proposed.