

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Planning Statement

Address: Tutton Hill Barn, Tutton Hill, Colerne

On behalf of Joshua Batterham



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Tadman Planning Consultants Ltd and forms the supporting information to an application to convert an agricultural barn off Tutton Hill in Colerne into a single dwelling.
- 1.2 The purpose of this statement is to explain the background to the scheme and provide an assessment of the key planning issues set against the context of national and local planning policy and guidance, and any relevant material considerations.
- 1.3 This statement should be read in conjunction with the following supporting information:
- Site Location Plan;
 - Existing and Proposed Site Plan and Floor Plans
 - Design and Access Statement
 - Structural Survey
 - Draft Legal Agreement to secure the self-build dwelling – to follow

2.0 SITE CONTEXT AND THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application site forms part of Washmeres Farm, a smallholding extending to approximately 7 hectares of predominantly grazing land located on the southern edge of Colerne. The land is in agricultural use, with some equestrian use, and retains a clear rural and agricultural character.
- 2.2 The site itself comprises a concrete-framed agricultural barn of simple rectangular plan form with a shallow double-pitched roof. The north and west elevations are enclosed with solid walls, whilst the east and south elevations are more open, reflecting its original agricultural function.
- 2.3 The barn is positioned on land that slopes in a southerly direction away from the village, forming part of a wider valley landscape.
- 2.4 Access to the site is taken from Tutton Hill via an existing field access, with a gravel track leading to the barn. This access arrangement currently serves the agricultural use of the land and provides direct connectivity to the local highway network.
- 2.5 A public right of way runs along the western side of the application site, connecting Colerne village to the surrounding countryside and joining Tutton Hill to the south. Additional PROW's are located just north of the site. As such, the site is experienced in

part from the public realm, particularly in short and medium-distance views.

- 2.6 The site lies within the Bristol/Bath Green Belt and the Cotswolds National Landscape. However, it is not located within a Conservation Area and does not fall within the setting of any designated heritage assets.
- 2.7 The site is located within Flood Zone 1, indicating a low probability of flooding, and there are no known site-specific constraints arising from flood risk.

3.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The proposed description of development is as follows:

'Conversion of agricultural barn to a self contained dwelling (Use Class C3).'

- 3.2 The conversion works are contained within the existing structural envelope, retaining the primary frame, form and proportions of the building.
- 3.3 External alterations include the introduction of new full-height openings within the existing elevations and the installation of rooflight along the south roof slope. The design approach avoids domestic detailing, instead reflecting the simple and functional agricultural character of the building through the use of vertically clad elevations and a restrained material palette, including timber boarding and profiled sheeting.
- 3.4 The extent of residential curtilage has been kept to a minimum and will be defined by simple boundary treatments, including hedging and post-and-wire fencing.
- 3.5 External works are limited and comprise a small gravelled area for vehicle parking and turning adjacent to the building, with the remainder of the site retained as grass.
- 3.6 Access to the site will be taken via the existing vehicular entrance off Tutton Hill, with the existing track leading to the barn retained. The proposal includes provision for off-street parking and turning within the site.

Planning History

- 3.7 There is no recent or relevant planning history for this site.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Local Policy

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 require that planning applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, with regard also given to all other relevant material considerations.
- 5.2 The Council's Development Plan comprises:
- Wiltshire Core Strategy
 - Colerne Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.3 The following policies of the Core Strategy are relevant to the determination of this application:
- Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy
 - Core Policy 2: Delivery Strategy
 - Core Policy 11: Spatial Strategy: Corsham Community Area
 - Core Policy 41: Sustainable Construction and Low Carbon Energy
 - Core Policy 48: Supporting Rural Life
 - Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
 - Core Policy 51: Landscape
 - Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping
 - Core Policy 60: Sustainable Transport
 - Core Policy 61: Transport and New Development
 - Core Policy 64: Demand Management
- 5.4 The following policies of the Colerne Neighbourhood Plan are relevant to the determination of this application:
- Policy BE1: Character and Design
 - Policy BE3: Housing Policy
 - Policy BE5: Sustainable Design and Construction
 - Policy NE1: Landscape and Natural Environment
 - Policy NE2: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
 - Policy NE4: Key Views
 - Policy SE3: Lighting

5.5 Other possible Relevant Considerations (without limitation):

- Wiltshire Design Guide SPD 2024
- National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance

5.0 PLANNING ANALYSIS

Principle of the Development

- 5.1 Core Policy 1 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy sets out the settlement hierarchy, directing most development to principal settlements, market towns and villages. Colerne is identified as a Large Village within the Corsham Community Area.
- 5.2 Core Policy 2 supports a sustainable pattern of development, prioritising the use of employment land and previously developed land to reduce reliance on greenfield sites.
- 5.3 The policy also states that, within the defined limits of development, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development at the principal settlements although development will be permitted outside the defined limits of development if the proposal is permitted by other policies within the Core Strategy.
- 5.4 In this case the application site is not located within the defined limits for development within Colerne village however, the core strategy recognises that the re-use of existing rural buildings can represent a sustainable form of development in the countryside.
- 5.5 Core Policy 48 of the Core Strategy therefore supports the conversion and reuse of rural buildings where proposals respect the character of the building and its surroundings and avoids substantial rebuilding.
- 5.6 Assessing the proposal against Core Policy 48 it is acknowledged that, while it prioritises employment, tourism, cultural and community uses, it also explicitly allows for residential conversion where there is clear evidence that such uses are not practical.
- 5.7 In this case, the building is not well-suited to alternative non-residential uses for the following reasons:
- 5.8 Scale and form of the building: The barn is modest in size with a simple rectangular footprint and limited internal subdivision, which restricts its adaptability for commercial or community uses that typically require greater flexibility, servicing areas, or subdivision.

- 5.9 Functional agricultural character: The building is of a basic "At Cost" construction, with open elevations and a utilitarian appearance. Whilst suitable for conversion to a single dwelling, it does not readily lend itself to higher intensity or public-facing uses without substantial alteration, which would undermine its character and conflict with criterion (i) of Core Policy 48 – discussed further below.
- 5.10 Relationship to surrounding land: The barn sits within an actively managed field parcel, with no defined yard or separation that would support independent commercial or community activity. The introduction of such uses would likely require additional hardstanding, parking and associated paraphernalia, resulting in a more urbanised and intrusive form of development in comparison with a single residential dwelling.
- 5.11 Environmental and amenity considerations: Employment or tourism uses would be likely to generate increased levels of activity, vehicle movements and associated noise, which would be out of keeping with the quiet rural character of the site and would result in greater landscape and visual impacts than a discrete single residential use.
- 5.12 Viability of alternative uses: Given the building's modest scale, simple construction and lack of supporting infrastructure, it is unlikely to represent an attractive or viable proposition for employment or community uses. By contrast, residential conversion provides a viable and sustainable long-term use that secures the future of the building.
- 5.13 Taking these factors together, there is clear and robust justification that non-residential uses are not practical in this instance. The proposed residential use represents the most appropriate and sustainable form of re-use, consistent with the supporting text of Core Policy 48 and national planning policy.
- 5.14 In light of the above the proposal has been further assessed against the criteria within Core Policy 48 below although it should however be noted that, while the building is not eligible for a Class Q conversion, due to its location in a National Landscape, it would nevertheless meet the requirements of Class Q in relation to it being a building of permanent and substantial construction and therefore capable of conversion.

i. Structural soundness and extent of rebuilding

- 5.15 The application is supported by a Structural Report prepared by BTA Structural Design, which confirms that the existing building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without substantial rebuilding.
- 5.16 The proposal retains the primary concrete frame and overall form of the building, with only limited and necessary alterations required to facilitate the conversion to a dwelling.

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As demonstrated on the submitted drawings , the conversion works are contained within the existing envelope and preserve the simple rectangular plan form and shallow pitched roof which define the building's agricultural character. The proposal therefore fully complies with criterion (i).

ii. Impact on character, appearance and amenity

5.17 The building is of a simple, functional agricultural form and sits comfortably within the surrounding rural landscape. The proposed conversion has been carefully designed to retain this character, utilising a restrained palette of materials and maintaining the existing form and proportions. Openings are simple and reflect the agricultural vernacular, avoiding overtly domestic detailing.

5.18 The extent of domestic curtilage has been deliberately minimised, with boundary treatments limited to hedging and stock fencing, ensuring that the wider agricultural setting is preserved. Given the separation distances to neighbouring properties (in excess of 100m as set out in the Design and Access Statement), there will be no adverse impacts on residential amenity. The proposal therefore accords with criterion (ii).

iii. Access and infrastructure

5.19 The site is served by an existing access from Tutton Hill, which currently accommodates agricultural traffic associated with the use of the land. As confirmed in the supporting information, visibility in both directions is good and vehicle speeds are low due to the rural nature of the lane . The scale of traffic associated with a single dwelling would not materially exceed or intensify the lawful agricultural use. The site can therefore be served by adequate access and infrastructure in accordance with criterion (iii).

iv. Access to local services

5.20 The site lies on the edge of Colerne and benefits from its proximity to an established settlement which provides a range of day-to-day services and facilities.

5.21 The site is located approximately 300m from the centre of Colerne village, which provides a range of day-to-day services and community facilities including a public house, village shop and post office, and primary school. The village also benefits from a well-used community hub at The Old School, a recreation ground, and a church, all of which contribute to a strong and established local service base.

5.22 As such, the site has reasonable access to local services, satisfying criterion (iv).

v. Heritage assets

- 5.23 The building is not a designated heritage asset and is not located within the setting of any listed buildings or conservation areas. This criterion is therefore not directly applicable.
- 5.24 As a result it is considered that the proposal firmly complies with Core Policy 48 of the Core Strategy and is acceptable in principle.

Wiltshire's Housing Land Supply

- 5.25 While the proposal is considered acceptable in principle, Wiltshire cannot currently demonstrate a five-year housing supply and, it is understood, the Council maintains that they can only demonstrate a figure of 2.42 years of deliverable sites, although Appellants in recent appeals have argued it could be as low as 2.03 years' supply. Either way this is a substantial shortfall.
- 5.26 The Council has already confirmed in numerous planning reports that, as they cannot demonstrate a five-year housing supply when tested against the NPPF requirements, Core Policies 1, 2 and 11 cannot be given full weight.
- 5.27 The National Planning Policy Framework therefore advises that where a Council cannot demonstrate a five-year supply, the presumption in favour of Sustainable Development, the 'tilted balance', as set out in paragraph 11(d) applies.
- 5.28 Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF therefore applies, sets out a decision-taking framework that states that where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless:
- i. the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-design places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.*
- 5.29 As the site is located within the Green Belt and the Cotswolds National Landscape, which are both NPPF footnote 7 restrictions, ie they are areas or assets of particular

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importance referred to in paragraph 11 (d) i above, the acceptability of development within these areas is discussed further below.

Impact on the Green Belt

- 5.30 As the site is located within the Green Belt, strict controls exist to guard against inappropriate development, which is harmful by definition. Paragraph 154 of the NPPF sets out the forms of development that are considered not to represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
- 5.31 Criteria (h)(iv) of Paragraph 154 allows for the re-use of buildings within the Green Belt, provided that they are of permanent and substantial construction and that the development preserves openness and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.
- 5.32 In this case, the application relates to the conversion of an existing agricultural barn which is of permanent and substantial construction, as confirmed by the structural report submitted. The proposal retains the primary structure and envelope of the building, with only limited and necessary alterations, thereby clearly satisfying the requirement that the building is suitable for re-use.
- 5.33 In terms of openness, the development is contained entirely within the existing built form, with no material increase in footprint, height or volume. The proposal therefore does not result in encroachment into the countryside or the introduction of additional built mass.
- 5.34 The residential curtilage has also been kept to a minimum, with simple and rural boundary treatments, ensuring that the wider agricultural setting remains largely unaffected. As such, both the spatial and visual openness of the Green Belt are preserved.
- 5.35 The proposal would not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt. It does not contribute to urban sprawl, nor does it result in the merging of settlements or encroachment beyond the existing developed footprint. The building is already present within the landscape and the proposal represents a re-use rather than new development. The openness and character of the countryside are therefore maintained.
- 5.36 The proposal is therefore considered to be not inappropriate development within the Green Belt under paragraph 154(h)(iv) of the NPPF. As a result, the proposal would not provide a strong reason for refusing the development proposed as set out in paragraph 11(d) i of the NPPF.

Impact on the Cotswolds National Landscape

- 5.37 Core Policy 51 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires development to protect, conserve and, where possible, enhance the character and quality of Wiltshire's landscapes, with particular weight afforded to designated areas such as National Landscapes.
- 5.38 Paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework also places great weight on conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty within National Landscapes, and development proposals must demonstrate that they do not give rise to unacceptable harm to the special qualities of such areas. In addition, Section 245 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 introduces a statutory duty on decision-makers to seek to further the statutory purposes of protected landscapes.
- 5.39 The application site lies within the Cotswolds National Landscape, and due regard has therefore been given to the potential effects of the proposed development on landscape character and scenic quality.
- 5.40 The proposed conversion of the barn has been sensitively designed to retain the building's agricultural character, preserving its simple form, proportions and external appearance. The use of appropriate materials and restrained alterations ensures that the building continues to read as a traditional agricultural structure within the landscape, with only limited domestic features evident. The proposed hedge planting will also enhance biodiversity and improve the appearance of the site within the National Landscape.
- 5.41 In terms of public views of the site, Tutton Hill runs to the east of the site and there are a number of Public Rights of Way (PROW) close by.
- 5.42 The closest is PROW Cole7 which runs in a southeast/northwest direction and runs along the western boundary of the site and provides short range views of the dwelling.
- 5.43 In addition, PROW's Cole7A, Cole8 and Cole9 run to the north of the site providing medium range views of the dwelling within the valley below.
- 5.44 There are also some long-range views of the site from PROW BOX9 to the south and on the opposite side of the valley at Ditteridge however the village is approx 1.25km away where any changes to the building would not be discernible.
- 5.45 By virtue of its design, the building will retain a strong agricultural appearance within the landscape. In all but the closest views, the barn and its associated curtilage will read as a typical agricultural structure, with the domestic use only becoming apparent at close range. Even in these views, the extent of change is limited and sensitively handled, such

that the development would not appear visually intrusive or harmful to the character of the surrounding landscape.

5.46 The proposal would not give rise to significant visual intrusion or harm to the wider landscape character, nor would it materially affect key views, landscape features or the scenic qualities of the Cotswolds National Landscape. The development would therefore conserve landscape character and accord with Core Policy 51 and paragraph 189 of the NPPF.

5.47 Furthermore, when considered in the context of paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF, the effects of the proposal on the National Landscape are limited and localised and do not amount to a strong reason for refusal.

Design, Layout and Appearance of the Proposed Dwelling

5.48 The application is accompanied by a design and access statement which explains the design approach and is not repeated here.

5.49 Nevertheless, it is considered that the proposal represents a sensitive conversion of an existing agricultural building that will retain its inherent character but will provide a high quality level of residential accommodation.

5.50 The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Core Policy 57 of the Core Strategy and Policy BE1 of the Colerne Neighbourhood Plan.

Impact on Residential Amenity

5.51 There are no neighbouring residential properties within close proximity to the site and, given the distance of approx. 100m to the nearest dwelling, the development would not give rise to any adverse impacts in terms of overlooking, loss of privacy, overbearing impact or noise and disturbance. The proposal therefore fully safeguards the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

5.52 In terms of the living conditions for future occupants, the proposal has been carefully designed to provide a high standard of residential amenity including an adequate level of private outdoor space for day-to-day use.

5.53 Accordingly, the proposal accords with the objectives of Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, which seeks to ensure that development provides a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupants.

Sustainable Construction and Energy Efficiency

- 5.54 The proposal has been designed to incorporate a range of sustainable construction measures. At the outset, the scheme is based on the reuse and adaptation of an existing building, which is itself an inherently sustainable approach, reducing the need for new build construction and limiting the consumption of new materials.
- 5.55 Rainwater harvesting will be incorporated into the development for reuse in garden irrigation and for internal grey water purposes, helping to reduce potable water demand. The building has also been designed to maximise natural daylight and ventilation to the principal internal spaces, thereby reducing reliance on artificial lighting and mechanical systems.
- 5.56 The palette of materials will comprise natural, low embodied energy products, including timber flooring and clay tiles within wet areas. The thermal performance of the building will exceed current Building Regulations standards, with U-values understood to be approximately 20% better than the minimum requirements, thereby reducing heat loss and improving energy efficiency. The building will be highly insulated throughout and heated by an air source heat pump, providing an efficient low-carbon heating solution.
- 5.57 Overall, the proposal adopts a fabric-first approach to sustainability, combining the re-use of an existing structure with energy efficiency measures, water conservation and low-carbon technology in order to minimise environmental impact.
- 5.58 This approach accords with the aims of Chapter 14 of the NPPF which supports the re-use of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings, and recognises the role of renewable and low-carbon energy in addressing climate change.
- 5.59 At the local level, the proposal aligns with Core Policy 41 and 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy along with Policy BE5, all of which support development that incorporates measures to reduce energy demand and encourages sustainable construction and low-carbon energy generation. The re-use of the existing building, improved thermal performance, rainwater harvesting and installation of an air source heat pump are all consistent with those objectives.

Parking and Highway Safety

- 5.60 The proposed development will utilise the existing agricultural vehicular access from Tutton Hill which benefits from good visibility in both directions and where vehicle speeds on Tutton Hill are limited by its rural character. The proposal does not require the

formation of a new access and therefore avoids any additional impact on the highway network.

- 5.61 The existing track leading to the barn will be retained and is capable of accommodating the modest level of traffic associated with a single dwelling. The lawful agricultural use of the site already generates numerous vehicular movements, and the proposed residential use is unlikely to result in a material intensification over and above this baseline. As such, the impact on the local highway network would be negligible.
- 5.62 The proposal includes provision for three off-street parking spaces along with adequate turning space within the site, ensuring that vehicles can enter and leave in a forward gear. This arrangement accords with good practice in highway design and avoids the need for on-street parking or reversing movements onto the public highway. Electrical charging points will also be provided.
- 5.63 In policy terms, paragraph 115 of the NPPF states that development should only be refused on highway grounds where there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or where the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. In this instance, given the use of an existing access, the limited scale of development, and the low level of associated traffic movements, there would be no such impacts.
- 5.64 The proposal is therefore consistent with the requirements of Core Policy 61 and 64 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, which seeks to ensure that new development is served by adequate off street parking as well as safe and suitable access arrangements and does not have a detrimental impact on highway safety.

Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 5.65 As the proposed development is being brought forward as a self-build dwelling it therefore meets the relevant exemption listed within the BNG legislation.
- 5.66 The application building comprises a modern agricultural structure of concrete portal frame construction with metal sheet cladding and a sealed roof profile. Such buildings are typically characterised by a lack of crevices, voids, or suitable internal roof spaces that could provide roosting or nesting opportunities for protected species. In this instance, the structure is well-maintained and largely enclosed, with no evidence of gaps, weathered timbers, or features that would facilitate access for bats or nesting barn owls. Accordingly, the building is considered to have negligible potential to support roosting bats or barn owls, and no ecological constraints are anticipated in relation to these species.

Planning Balance

- 5.67 In this case, Wiltshire Council cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply and therefore paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged. As the site lies within the Green Belt and the Cotswolds National Landscape, both of which are identified as areas of particular importance under NPPF Footnote 7, it is first necessary to consider whether these designations provide a clear reason for refusing the development under paragraph 11(d)(i).
- 5.68 As set out above, the proposal does not constitute inappropriate development within the Green Belt under paragraph 154(h)(iv) of the NPPF, as it involves the re-use of a building of permanent and substantial construction, preserves openness, and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt. Accordingly, no Green Belt harm arises and there is no conflict with national policy in this respect.
- 5.69 In relation to the Cotswolds National Landscape, the proposal has been carefully designed to retain the agricultural character of the building and minimise its visual impact. The effects on landscape character and scenic beauty are limited and localised, and the development would conserve the special qualities of the National Landscape in accordance with Core Policy 51 and paragraph 189 of the NPPF. As such, the proposal does not give rise to any material harm and does not provide a strong reason for refusal.
- 5.70 It is therefore concluded that there are no strong reasons to refuse the application under paragraph 11(d)(i) of the NPPF. The proposal must therefore be assessed under paragraph 11(d)(ii), whereby planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 5.71 In this case, the proposal gives rise to limited to no harm. The development involves the re-use of an existing building, preserves the openness of the Green Belt, conserves the character of the National Landscape, safeguards residential amenity, and provides safe and suitable access. Against this, the proposal delivers a clear and tangible benefit in the form of an additional dwelling, contributing to housing supply in a context where there is a significant shortfall.
- 5.72 When assessed in the round, the benefits of the proposal significantly and demonstrably outweigh any limited adverse impacts. The presumption in favour of sustainable development is therefore engaged and weighs in favour of granting planning permission.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 This application seeks permission for the conversion of an existing agricultural barn to a single dwelling at Tutton Hill, Colerne. The proposal represents a logical and sustainable re-use of an existing rural building, making efficient use of previously developed land within the countryside.
- 6.2 The principle of development is supported by Core Policy 48 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, which allows for the conversion and re-use of rural buildings where they are of permanent and substantial construction and where the proposal respects the character of the building and its surroundings. The submitted Structural Report confirms that the building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without substantial rebuilding, and the design approach retains the simple agricultural form and character of the building. Furthermore, it has been robustly demonstrated that alternative non-residential uses are not practical in this instance, and that residential use represents the most appropriate and viable long-term use of the building.
- 6.3 In Green Belt terms, the proposal falls squarely within one of the exceptions set out in paragraph 154(h)(iv) of the NPPF, as it involves the re-use of a permanent and substantial building without materially affecting openness or conflicting with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt. The development is therefore not inappropriate and carries no definitional harm.
- 6.4 The site's location within the Cotswolds National Landscape has been carefully considered. The proposal has been sensitively designed to retain the agricultural appearance of the building and minimise its visual impact within the landscape. The extent of change is limited and localised, and the development would conserve the character, appearance and scenic beauty of the National Landscape in accordance with Core Policy 51 and paragraph 189 of the NPPF along with the policies in the Colerne Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.5 The proposal also performs well in all other respects. It would not give rise to any adverse impacts on residential amenity, given the separation to neighbouring properties, and would provide a high-quality living environment for future occupants in accordance with Core Policy 57. The development can be safely accessed via an existing access, with adequate parking and turning provision, and would not have any detrimental impact on highway safety, in line with Core Policy 61. In addition, the proposal incorporates a range of sustainable construction measures, including the re-use of the existing

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structure and the use of low-carbon technologies, aligning with the objectives of Core Policy 41 and national policy.

- 6.6 It is also a significant material consideration that Wiltshire Council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing land. As a result, the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged. As demonstrated, there are no strong reasons for refusing the development under paragraph 11(d)(i), and the proposal therefore falls to be assessed under the tilted balance.
- 6.7 Furthermore, Wiltshire Council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year housing land supply and, as such, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged. As set out in the planning balance above, there are no strong reasons for refusal and the proposal represents sustainable development when assessed against the Framework as a whole.
- 6.8 Overall, the proposal gives rise to limited to no harm and delivers clear benefits, including the provision of an additional dwelling and the re-use of an existing rural building.
- 6.9 Accordingly, the proposal accords with the development plan when read as a whole, and with the National Planning Policy Framework. Planning permission should therefore be granted.

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BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN EXEMPTION STATEMENT

This application is exempt from the statutory requirement to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). Under the provisions of the Environment Act 2021, and as implemented through the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024, certain forms of development are excluded from the mandatory 10% BNG requirement. This includes development which is to be carried out as a self-build or custom housebuilding project, as defined by reference to the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015.

In this instance, the proposal relates to the conversion of an existing agricultural building to a single self-build dwelling, to be occupied by the applicant, and therefore falls within the scope of the self-build exemption. As such, the development is not subject to the statutory biodiversity gain condition, nor is there a requirement to submit a biodiversity gain plan or demonstrate the achievement of a 10% net gain in biodiversity value.