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SUPPORTING STATEMENT

IN RELATION TO A PERMISSION IN PRINCIPLE APPLICATION FOR A SINGLE DWELLING

AT:

LAND AT AQUETONG FARM, CRESSWELL LANE, LEA, WILTSHIRE, SN16 9PE

APPLICANT: MR ANDY TAYLOR

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INTRODUCTION

This supporting statement has been prepared by WebbPaton LLP in support of a Permission in Principle (PiP) application on behalf of Mr Andy Taylor at Aquetong Farm, Cresswell Lane, Lea, Wiltshire, SN16 9PE. This proposal seeks to establish that the site is suitable to accommodate a single self-build dwelling.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks confirmation that the proposal is acceptable in principle, taking account of those policy considerations and other material considerations which form part of an application for a PiP.

As you will be aware this application is a two staged process, with the first stage solely intended to establish whether the site is suitable in principle and the second stage then considering the detailed development proposals and potential impacts.

The Government's guidance sets out that the scope of the first stage of permission in principle is limited to **location, land use** and the **amount** of development. Therefore, any technical matters should be considered at the later Technical Details Consent stage.

The concept of a PiP was introduced by the Housing and Planning Act 2016, the Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulations 2017 and the Town and County Planning (Permission in Principle) Order 2017. It is possible to apply for PiP for this development because it is not:

a. Major development;
b. Habitats development;
c. Householder development; or
d. Environmental Impact Assessment development.

Details of the initial plans and supporting information are outlined below in this supporting statement. A PiP application sets the principle for a maximum of 9 residential dwellings on an area of up to 1 hectare. This application is for a very modest singular self-build dwelling and therefore falls within this maximum number and area.

SITE LOCATION

The site is located within the village of Lea, Wiltshire. The 0.1-hectare greenfield site is located to the south-eastern side of the village and comprises an agricultural paddock in connection with Aquetong Farm. There are existing residential dwellings to the south and agricultural buildings to the west of the site and therefore the proposal would be considered natural infilling along the road. The site is bound by established hedgerow, tree planting and lies flat.

An existing vehicular access is located off Cresswell Lane, to the south of the site. The access is constructed from hardstanding and currently serves the agricultural field, along with the wider agricultural land beyond.

Lea benefits from a range of local services and facilities including St Giles Church, The Rose and Crown public house and Lea Village Hall which was built in 1934 and used by residents, local clubs and organisations. The Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Playing Field, which was acquired by the Parish Council in 1977, provides outdoor play areas and equipment for families and visitors to the Parish. Lea and Garsdon Church of England primary school is in Lea village and takes pupils from the Parish and surrounding villages.

The town of Malmesbury is a short distance away – some 2 miles to the northwest of the site - which benefits from local shops, restaurants, doctors' surgeries, sports facilities and schools.

The site is not located within the National Landscape and sits outside the conservation area. The site is located in fluvial Flood Zone 1, with a low risk of surface water flooding and there are no listed buildings within the vicinity.

Lea is served by the Coach Style bus services No.99 which runs between Swindon, Malmesbury and Chippenham and No. 93 which connects Malmesbury to Cirencester. A bus service operated by Swindon's Bus Company C62 which runs between Yate, Malmesbury and Cirencester College. The bus services stop in Lea regularly, with buses

arriving most hours of the day. There are several bus stops within the village including Church of St Giles, Lea Crescent, Old Bakery Close, Primary School and The Chestnuts.

There are no public rights of way through the proposed location of the dwelling directly, but there are links to nearby bridleways i.e. WT|LECL|12, adding to the sustainability of the potential dwelling.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application is for Permission in Principle and the scope of the application is limited to location, use and the amount of development. Other matters would need to be considered at the 'Technical Details' consent stage.

The proposal is for residential development consisting of a single self-build dwelling. The site extends to 0.1 hectares and provides enough land to sufficiently accommodate the proposed dwelling, with accommodation over two floors and appropriate parking, turning, landscaping and private amenity space. The existing access will be retained and utilised for the new development.

There is an established residential use of existing dwellings within the immediate surrounding area, meaning the construction of one dwelling would be in keeping with the surroundings and contribute to and become part of a small local community of dwellings.

Please note this is an initial concept, to which we are very much open to discussion with the Council as to the design and layout of this development. This indicative plan is by no means fixed but simply demonstrates for this application a single dwelling could be located on this site with adequate space for access and turning areas.

ACCESS & TRAFFIC MOVEMENTS

The existing vehicular access will remain unchanged under this proposal, being directly from Cresswell Lane. There is no requirement to amend the existing situation. As the proposal is for a modest residential dwelling, with perhaps two cars, there will not be a significant impact in traffic movements in and out of the site.

The proposed development signifies natural infilling within the development boundary, being flagged by residential properties and agricultural buildings. Existing farm machinery entering into the field has existed for decades and there has never been a highway objection on highway safety, access or parking grounds.

POLICY

This section sets out the context for determining the PiP for the proposed development in terms of national development plan policies. The compliance of the proposal with these policies is considered in detail below.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sets out that *the determination must be made in accordance with* the [development] *plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise*. In this case the Development Plan consists of Wiltshire Council's Core Strategy 2015.

Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that *plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.* This sets out that approval should be given without delay for *development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan.* The proposal is for a modest dwelling which can use up-to-date energy efficiency measures, and the application proposal is not considered to give rise to any adverse impacts which would 'significantly and demonstrably' outweigh the benefits.

Paragraph 72 of the NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities to maintain a five-year housing supply and Paragraph 78 adds a 5% buffer to this requirement. According to Wiltshire Council's 'Housing Land Supply Statement' published June 2025, the Local Housing Need deliverable supply is currently at 2.42 years, as seen in the snip below of Table 2a from Page 12. Therefore, Wiltshire Council are far below the required housing supply and certainly do not meet the 5% buffer required. It is therefore considered that the PiP should be considered favourably, with Wiltshire Council not having sufficient housing land supply. Although this proposal is on a small scale, it will still help towards meeting the housing supply.

Table 2a: 5-year Housing Land Supply position for Wiltshire (using Local Housing Need)

Area	Annual Local Housing Need (LHN)	5-year housing requirement	5-year housing requirement plus buffer*	Deliverable supply 2024-2029	Number of years deliverable supply
Wiltshire	3,525	17,625	18,506	8,945	**2.42**

** The Council's 2023 Housing Delivery Test result indicates that there is a requirement to add a 5% buffer to the housing requirement (see section 4 above)*

Wiltshire Core Strategy

The policies of most relevance to the consideration of this application concerning the location, land use and amount of development are as follows:

- CP1 – Settlement Strategy
- CP2 – Delivery Strategy
- CP13 – Spatial Strategy for the Malmesbury Community Area

Policy CP1 identifies the settlements where sustainable development will take place to improve the lives of all those who live and work in Wiltshire. Development at Large and Small Villages will be limited to that needed to help meet the housing needs of settlements and to improve employment opportunities, services and facilities.

Policy CP2 seeks to deliver development in Wiltshire between 2006 and 2026 in the most sustainable manner by making provision for at least 178ha of new employment land and at least 42,000 homes – of which 24,740 dwellings will be located in the North and West Wiltshire Housing Market Area. At the Small Villages, development will be limited to infill within the existing built area.

Policy CP13 sets out the delivery strategy for the Malmesbury Community Area. Lea is identified as a Small Village. Over the plan period, approximately 1,395 new homes will be provided of which about 885 should occur at Malmesbury and some 510 homes will be provided in the rest of the Community Area.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

The proposed development is eligible for consideration for PiP because it is not major development, habitats development, householder development or Environmental Impact Assessment development.

While the site is located within a village with no defined Settlement Policy Boundary, it is not isolated within the meaning of the National Planning Policy Framework. The site is bound by existing residential development to the south and agricultural buildings to the west. It is not considered that the proposed development would be a harmful extension to the village, instead being a logical location for new development. Notably, the site is within easy walking distance to the range of services and facilities within the local area as described above.

The Framework requires LPAs to identify a five-year supply of specific deliverable sites to meet housing needs, with an appropriate buffer (5% in this case). Following the adoption of the new standard methodology set out in national planning practice guidance, Wiltshire Council is only able to demonstrate a 2.42-year housing land supply. In addition, Appendix 6 of the Wiltshire Council Housing Land Supply Statement (June 2025) identifies a shortfall of 562 dwellings in the Malmsbury Community Area.

The economic role of the Framework requires proposals to contribute to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy. The proposal would encourage development and associated economic growth with future occupants undoubtedly contributing to the local economy and continued viability of local services in Lea and the surrounding villages. In addition, the proposed location of the development within an accessible location would contribute towards meeting the housing need in a Borough with no 5-year land supply and as such accords with the Government's objective of boosting the supply of housing.

The social role of the Framework requires planning to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities and states that it should create a high-quality built environment. The proposal provides an opportunity to deliver housing which will contribute to maintaining the vitality of the rural community.

In terms of the environmental element, the Framework requires that the natural, built and historic environment should be protected and enhanced and should mitigate against climate change. The proposal for a residential land use is compatible with the character of the surrounding area, and the site is well screened by extensive vegetation that will be retained. The proposal is therefore not considered to have any adverse effect on the historic or natural environment.

CONCLUSION

To summarise the above, and in terms of the requirements for PiP, the application site is suitable for residential development for the erection a single dwelling due to the following reasons:

Location

- The site, whilst currently agricultural land, is visually read as part of the built-up agricultural area of Lea. As such, it would not result in further encroachment into the 'open' countryside and should be classed as infill. As the proposed dwelling would not be *'isolated'*, the location wholly accords with the Framework that seeks to promote sustainable development in rural areas by encouraging homes to be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.
- Future residents of the proposed dwelling would benefit from the close proximity to local services and facilities by foot and by public transport. The proposed development is likely to sustain local services and facilities within Lea, as well as nearby settlements accessible by public transport, in accordance with paragraph 89 of the Framework.
- The location of the residential development would be situated within Flood Zone 1 (low probability of flooding).
- Development in this location would not result in the loss of existing landscape features.
- The site is well-screened with established hedges and trees surrounding the site, providing good levels of amenity and screening for neighbours and future occupiers.

Land Use

- The residential land use would be compatible with the predominate character and land use of the surroundings.
- The site is not within a Conservation Area and therefore the change of use to residential does not cause harm to the character or appearance of its setting.
- The proposed dwelling is likely to be arranged in such a way to continue the existing pattern of development alongside the public highway.
- The residential land use is a public benefit and would contribute towards meeting the housing need and accords with the Government's objective of boosting the supply of housing where the limits of development are out-of-date and no 5-year housing land supply exists.

Amount of Development

- Spatially the plot is sufficient in size with enough land to accommodate the erection of a single dwelling in keeping with the character and appearance of the surroundings.

Based on the above, there are clear benefits presented by the application proposal. In particular, the site can make a valuable contribution towards housing delivery at a time when the Council cannot demonstrate a 5-year supply of housing, and on a site for which the benefits are not outweighed by any adverse impacts, specifically in terms of landscape, habitats or heritage.

A well-designed proposal at the 'technical details' stage, for this minor development can be achieved which compliments the character and appearance of Lea, and which both positively contributes to, and benefits, the local area.