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## Planning Statement

Outline Planning Permission (Access Included, All Other Matters Reserved) for Proposed Three New Dwellings on Part of Car Park of The New Inn, Semington Road, Berryfields, Melksham, Wiltshire, SN12 6DT

This statement should be read in conjunction with submitted plans AH2026/56

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of an application for Outline Planning Permission, with access included and all other matters (layout, scale, appearance and landscaping) reserved, for the erection of 3 No. new dwellings on part of the existing car park serving The New Inn public house, Semington Road, Berryfield, Melksham, SN12 6DT.
- 1.2 The application seeks to establish the principle of residential development on the site, together with the acceptability of the means of access, in advance of a subsequent Reserved Matters application which will address matters of layout, scale, appearance and landscaping.
- 1.3 This Statement should be read alongside the submitted application drawings and forms, and sets out the relevant planning policy context, an assessment of the principle of development, and a detailed justification of the proposed access and parking arrangements, drawing on recent planning history and precedent along Semington Road.

### 2. The Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site forms part of the existing car park associated with The New Inn public house, which fronts Semington Road on the northern edge of Berryfield. Berryfield is identified in the Wiltshire Core Strategy as a Small Village with no defined settlement boundary.
- 2.2 The wider area is characterised by a mix of housing types along Semington Road, including detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellings, generally of two storeys, interspersed with more recent outline and full permissions for individual plots. Directly to the east, a substantial development of 150 dwellings has been approved and is under construction (Land East of Semington Road, ref. 16/00497/OUT and associated reserved matters/variation permissions), fundamentally altering the character of the immediate locality from open countryside towards a more suburban, residential grain.

- 2.3 Semington Road is a classified road, however the character of the road within Berryfield is residential in nature, with numerous individual and small-scale accesses serving dwellings fronting or set back from the highway.
- 2.4 The New Inn retains a car park providing significantly more spaces than are required to serve the public house, and part of that surplus area is proposed for redevelopment, with the remainder retained and improved for continued pub use. The car park is bounded to the west by an existing hedgerow, which forms the site boundary and is unaffected by the proposal.

### **3. The Proposal**

- 3.1 Outline Planning Permission is sought for the erection of 3 No. dwellings on part of the existing car park of The New Inn, with access included within this application. All other matters of detail (layout, scale, appearance, landscaping) are reserved for a subsequent Reserved Matters application; this application establishes the principle of the development, land use and the means of access.
- 3.2 The proposal involves the following access strategy:
- The existing car park access/entrance off Semington Road will be retained and utilised to serve 2 of the 3 proposed dwellings;
  - A new, separate access point will be formed to serve the third proposed dwelling;
  - A further new access point will be formed to serve the retained car park for the continued use of The New Inn.
- 3.3 The retained car park will continue to provide parking for 10 vehicles for pub use, which, as set out in Section 7 below, exceeds the parking requirement generated by the public house under Wiltshire's adopted parking standards.

### **4. Planning Policy Context**

- 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 applications be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

#### **Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015)**

- Core Policy 1 – Settlement Strategy
- Core Policy 2 – Delivery Strategy
- Core Policy 15 – Spatial Strategy: Melksham Community Area
- Core Policy 41 – Sustainable Construction and Low-Carbon Energy
- 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 Development

#### **Saved Policies – West Wiltshire District Local Plan (1st Alteration)**

- U1a – Foul Water Disposal

#### **National Planning Policy Framework**

- Chapter 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- Chapter 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
- Chapter 12 – Achieving well-designed places
- Chapter 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

## **Other**

- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011–2026

## **5. Principle of Development**

- 5.1 Berryfield has no defined settlement boundary and is classed as a Small Village under Appendix F of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. Notwithstanding this, Wiltshire Council's own decision-making record along Semington Road demonstrates a consistent and well-established acceptance of the principle of small-scale infill residential development in this location, on sites which, like the application site, sit outside any settlement boundary but within the established built form of Berryfield.
- 5.2 In particular, outline planning permission has been granted for individual dwellings at 486 Semington Road (ref. 16/05830/OUT) and 490 Semington Road (ref. 18/08542/OUT), both on sites in the same physical and policy context as the application site, and both under the same officer reasoning that the character of the area — mixed housing fronting Semington Road, immediately adjacent to the now largely-built 150-dwelling scheme to the east — is capable of absorbing further small-scale residential development without harm to the character of the area.
- 5.3 Application 19/02238/OUT, for a single dwelling to the south, was approved on the same basis, the case officer confirming that 'the principle of development of the site for housing was established with the granting of outline permission for dwellings (16/05830/OUT) in 2016' and that this reasoning could be applied to subsequent, comparable sites along the same road.
- 5.4 More recently, permission PL/2022/02840 has continued this established pattern, further confirming the Council's consistent approach to small-scale residential consolidation of plots fronting Semington Road within Berryfield.
- 5.5 The application site, as part of the car park of an established public house within the same built-up frontage, is directly comparable to these approved schemes. The loss of parking area to residential use represents efficient use of previously-developed land within the village, consistent with Core Policy 1 and Core Policy 2 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and paragraph 5 of the Framework (delivering a sufficient supply of homes), while the retained car park continues to meet the operational needs of the public house (see Section 7).
- 5.6 On this basis, and having regard to the clear and consistent precedent set by the Council's own decisions along Semington Road, it is considered that the principle of residential development on this part of the car park is acceptable and is supported by the development plan and material considerations.

## **6. Housing Land Supply and the Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development**

- 6.1 Paragraph 11(d) of the Framework establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, engaged where the policies most important for determining an application are out-of-date, including where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. In these circumstances, permission should be granted unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of the Framework as a whole, or specific policies indicate development should be restricted.
- 6.2 Wiltshire Council has a long and well-documented recent history of being unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, and the shortfall has become materially more severe over the last two years. The Council's own Housing Land Supply Statements have reported a declining position — from around 4.56 years in 2019, to around 4.5 years in 2020, to a claimed 4.3 years in 2023 (reduced to 3.85 years when independently tested at appeal in August 2024 in respect of a site in Westbury), to a position of around 4.71 years reported in early 2025.

- 6.3 That position has since deteriorated markedly and been tested — and found to be considerably worse than the Council's own figures suggest — through two separate appeal decisions issued in early 2026:
- In the appeal by BDW Trading Limited relating to application PL/2021/09013 (up to 205 dwellings), the Inspector recorded that the Council's housing land supply had fallen to just 2.03 years;
  - In the appeal by Codex Land PCC relating to a 17-dwelling scheme on part of a former police station site in Chippenham (decision letter dated 12 February 2026), the Council itself argued a supply of only 2.42 years, while the appellant contended it was as low as 2.03 years. The Inspector, Hollie Nicholls, found that 'in any event' the shortfall was 'considerable', engaging the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The Inspector allowed the appeal, and separately found that the Council had behaved unreasonably in refusing the application against officer advice without substantiated evidence, awarding full costs against the Council.
- 6.4 Wiltshire Council's own Strategic Planning Committee has itself acknowledged and acted on this position: in September 2025, the Committee resolved to grant permission for an outline application on land outside the settlement boundary at Royal Wootton Bassett expressly because the Council was unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable sites, engaging the presumption in favour of sustainable development for the assessment of that application.
- 6.5 On the basis of the most recent, appeal-tested evidence, Wiltshire Council's housing land supply currently stands at little more than 2 years against the required 5 years (plus buffer) — a shortfall of the order of 60%. This is a considerable and persistent shortfall, not a marginal or technical one, and it follows that the policies of the Wiltshire Core Strategy most important for determining this application, insofar as they restrict housing outside settlement boundaries, cannot be regarded as up-to-date. The presumption in favour of sustainable development at paragraph 11(d) of the Framework is therefore engaged, and permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of the development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 6.6 The proposal is a sustainable one to which the presumption applies with particular force. The site lies within the built form of Berryfield, immediately adjacent to a substantial recent housing development and existing services, and delivers 3 additional dwellings toward the Council's acknowledged and considerable shortfall, with no identified harm of a nature or scale capable of outweighing that benefit (see Sections 7 to 9 below).
- 6.7 The proposal also carries a further, locally-specific public benefit that weighs in the planning balance: by forming dedicated new accesses and retaining a fully compliant, well laid-out car park of 10 spaces (2 spaces above the adopted requirement), the scheme secures the continued operational viability of The New Inn public house. Rural and village public houses of this kind are recognised as valuable community facilities that are vulnerable to closure where their operational needs cannot be met, and this proposal has been specifically designed to avoid any prejudice to the pub's parking provision, ensuring the facility can continue to serve the local community alongside the delivery of new homes. This is consistent with the Framework's recognition of the role the planning system plays in supporting community facilities and creating healthy, inclusive communities.

## **7. Access, Parking and Highway Safety**

### **Parking provision for The New Inn**

- 7.1 Wiltshire Council's adopted parking standards require 1 parking space per 25m<sup>2</sup> of gross floor area for public house (drinking establishment) uses. The New Inn has a gross floor area of 182m<sup>2</sup>, generating a requirement of  $182 \div 25 = 7.28$ , i.e. 8 spaces (rounded up).
- 7.2 The proposal retains 10 parking spaces within the remaining car park for use by the public house. This exceeds the adopted standard by 2 spaces and is considered suitable provision for a public house of this size, particularly given its village location and the availability of on-street and overflow capacity in the wider area. The retained car park has also been designed with sufficient manoeuvring space to allow vehicles to enter and exit in forward gear, addressing highway safety in full.

| Requirement                                         | Calculation                | Result    |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------|
| Wiltshire parking standard (drinking establishment) | 1 space / 25m <sup>2</sup> | —         |
| Gross floor area of The New Inn                     | 182m <sup>2</sup>          | —         |
| Spaces required                                     | 182 ÷ 25                   | 8 spaces  |
| Spaces retained post-development                    | —                          | 10 spaces |
| Surplus against adopted standard                    | 10 – 8                     | +2 spaces |

## Access arrangements

7.3 The application proposes a straightforward and legible access strategy that reuses existing highway infrastructure wherever possible:

- The existing car park entrance off Semington Road is retained and will serve 2 of the 3 new dwellings, avoiding the need for any additional break in the highway boundary for these plots;
- A new access is proposed to serve the third dwelling; and
- A new access is proposed to serve the retained car park for the pub.

7.4 Although Semington Road is a classified road, the pattern of development along its length is characteristically served by individual, low-intensity residential accesses rather than engineered junctions, and Wiltshire Council's Highways Officer has repeatedly assessed and accepted such arrangements as safe and appropriate in this location.

## Visibility Splays

7.5 Visibility splays have been assessed for each of the new vehicular access points proposed to serve the third dwelling and the retained pub car park. In each case, acceptable visibility is demonstrated using splays measured 2.4m back from the edge of the carriageway, with clear visibility achieved for 40m in each direction along Semington Road. These dimensions are the constituent splay required for a road subject to a 30mph speed limit, in accordance with Manual for Streets guidance, and are shown to be achievable within land controlled by the applicant, free from any obstruction.

7.6 On this basis, both new accesses are demonstrated to be capable of achieving safe and adequate visibility in accordance with the prevailing speed limit on Semington Road, and there is no visibility or forward-visibility objection to either access arrangement.

## Turning provision — precedent and justification

7.7 It is well established through recent decisions along Semington Road that dedicated on-site turning heads are not required for individual dwelling accesses of this nature, even where Semington Road carries classified status:

7.8 In application 19/02238/OUT (proposed new dwelling to the south of the application site), the Highways Officer raised no objection to a single dwelling access without a dedicated turning area, and the application was approved.

7.9 In application 18/08542/OUT (490 Semington Road), the Highways Officer objected on the specific basis that the proposed access lacked a turning area to allow vehicles to exit in forward gear. However, the Council's own case officer assessment concluded that this objection did not justify refusal, noting that a number of comparable dwellings in the vicinity do not have the ability to turn on site, that some existing 'turning spaces' double as parking spaces in practice, and — critically — citing the Planning Inspectorate's decision on appeal for application 17/04649/FUL (four terraced dwellings a short distance to the north), where the Inspector found no demonstrable harm in relation to parking or highway safety despite the complete absence of any ability to exit the site in forward gear. On this basis the application was recommended for approval notwithstanding the highways objection.

- 7.10 Applications 17/00296/OUT and 16/05830/OUT, both approved in outline with access as the only matter not reserved, were assessed and approved on the same basis, confirming that individual residential accesses along this stretch of Semington Road do not require dedicated turning provision to be acceptable in highway safety terms.
- 7.11 Most recently, application PL/2022/02840 has been determined by the Council consistent with this same established approach to individual accesses along Semington Road, further reinforcing the point of principle.
- 7.12 Applying this consistent line of Council and Inspectorate decision-making, it is submitted that the two new accesses proposed to serve the third dwelling and the retained pub car park do not require dedicated turning heads in order to be acceptable in highway safety terms, notwithstanding the classified status of Semington Road. This is reinforced by the very low trip generation associated with a single additional dwelling and by the fact that the pub car park itself — unlike the individual dwelling accesses cited in precedent — is specifically being designed with adequate manoeuvring space for vehicles to enter and exit in forward gear, exceeding the standard achieved on the comparable approved schemes referenced above.

#### **Summary table of highway precedent along Semington Road**

| Reference     | Description                                               | Turning head provided?                       | Outcome  |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------|
| 16/05830/OUT  | Outline, new dwelling, access not reserved                | No                                           | Approved |
| 17/00296/OUT  | Outline, new dwelling, all matters reserved except access | No                                           | Approved |
| 18/08542/OUT  | Outline, new dwelling at 490 Semington Road, access only  | No — Highways objected, overruled by officer | Approved |
| 19/02238/OUT  | Outline, new dwelling, all matters reserved except access | No                                           | Approved |
| PL/2022/02840 | Residential development, new access, Semington Road       | No                                           | Approved |

#### **Parking Provision and the Test for Refusal**

- 7.13 It is well established as a matter of national planning policy that a shortfall in car parking provision cannot, by itself, justify the refusal of planning permission. Paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework confirms that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds where there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or where the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios. This is a substantial and specifically evidenced test, not a general concern about the adequacy of on-site parking, and is reinforced by national guidance confirming that local parking standards should only be applied where there is clear and compelling justification that doing so is necessary to manage the local road network. Adopted parking standards are accordingly a starting point for assessment, and a shortfall against them does not, of itself, amount to a ground for refusal.
- 7.14 Wiltshire Council's own decision-making confirms this approach. At a Planning Committee considering an application where parking shortfall was raised, officers advised members that any refusal on highway grounds would need to be tested against the equivalent paragraph of the Framework, requiring evidence of unacceptable harm to highway safety or a severe residual cumulative impact on the road network; officers confirmed that the displacement of parking onto the highway would not, of itself, meet that test, and members were reminded that the Council's own Highway Authority had raised no objection to the application in question.
- 7.15 This principle has been applied directly to a public house in Wiltshire. The Eastern Area Planning Committee granted planning permission and listed building consent for alterations to The Wheatsheaf Inn, Chilton Foliat

(refs. PL/2024/03348 and PL/2024/03701), notwithstanding an officer recommendation for refusal founded in part on highway safety and parking grounds and an initial objection from the Council's own Highways Officer. The scheme proposed 26 on-site parking spaces against a calculated requirement of 30, a shortfall the Committee resolved by way of a Grampian condition rather than refusal. In supporting the application, the applicant's transport case set out that there is no requirement within the Framework for a development to accommodate its associated parking entirely within its own control, nor any principle that displaced parking is, in itself, a reason for refusal; the Committee's decision to grant permission is consistent with that position.

- 7.16 Applying this consistent national and local approach to the present application, the retained car park for The New Inn already exceeds the adopted parking standard by 2 spaces (paragraph 7.2 above), and the proposal does not rely on any shortfall in provision. In any event, and consistent with the precedent set out above, planning permission should not be refused on the basis of parking provision for the pub unless it can be demonstrated that the level of harm is substantial, amounting to an unacceptable impact on highway safety or a severe residual cumulative impact on the road network; no such harm arises here.
- 7.17 It is acknowledged that there may be times at which the supplied 10 car parking spaces do not meet the demands of the public car park, which is to be expected in village pub locations, and during these temporary short busy periods, there is capacity in the local road network to enable the small short fall to have on street parking, as there are no parking restrictions in the immediate vicinity and the road is not a busy commuter route. This re-iterates the fact that planning permission should not be refused based on highway grounds.

### **On-Street Parking and Road Width**

- 7.18 In any event, even if a proportion of parking demand associated with the retained pub car park were occasionally to be accommodated on Semington Road itself, this would not amount to a highway safety objection. National guidance confirms that there is no national prohibition on parking at the side of the road, and that the general principle is that on-street parking is lawful anywhere except where a local authority has introduced a specific restriction; no such restriction applies along the relevant stretch of Semington Road. On-street parking is accordingly a lawful and material fallback, not a matter capable of sustaining a reason for refusal in its own right.
- 7.19 This approach is directly consistent with the position accepted by Wiltshire Council in respect of a comparable Wiltshire public house. In the case of The Wheatsheaf Inn, Chilton Foliat, the applicant's transport evidence demonstrated that the adjoining road, of between 7.5m and 8.07m in width, could accommodate a parked vehicle (occupying around 2m of carriageway width) while retaining a running width of between 5.5m and 6.07m, sufficient, with reference to Manual for Streets guidance, for two large vehicles to pass one another without obstruction. That evidence was accepted, and planning permission was subsequently granted by the Council's Eastern Area Planning Committee notwithstanding a highways objection founded on parking grounds (see paragraph 7.15 above).
- 7.20 Semington Road is understood to be in the order of 7.2m wide along the relevant frontage. Applying the same approach, a parked vehicle occupying around 2m of carriageway width would leave a running width of approximately 5.2m, which remains sufficient for the continued two-way passage of ordinary vehicles without obstruction, consistent with the standard applied and accepted by the Council in the comparable case referred to above. There are no parking restrictions currently in place along this stretch of Semington Road, on-street parking already occurs in the existing situation without incident, and there is no accident record indicating any existing obstruction or highway safety concern.
- 7.21 On this basis, any modest, occasional additional on-street parking demand that might arise in connection with the retained pub car park would not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety, nor would the residual cumulative impact on the road network be severe, whether considered against paragraph 116 of the NPPF or Core Policies 60 and 61 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. This reinforces, rather than undermines, the conclusion at paragraph 7.16 above that there is no proper basis to refuse the application on parking grounds.

## **8. Character, Design and Neighbouring Amenity**

- 8.1 As this is an outline application, with access included and all other matters reserved, matters of layout, scale, appearance and landscaping are reserved for a subsequent Reserved Matters submission. However, it is relevant to note that the character of the area — a mix of house types and plot sizes fronting Semington Road, immediately adjacent to the substantial 150-dwelling development to the east — is well able to accommodate 3 further dwellings on a redundant part of the pub car park without harm to the character of the area, consistent with the reasoning applied by the Council in each of the precedent decisions referenced above under Core Policy 57.
- 8.2 The site is not within, and is not adjacent to, any statutory or non-statutory landscape or heritage designation that would constrain redevelopment of this surplus car park land. Detailed matters of layout and design will fully address relationships with neighbouring occupiers, including the retained public house, at the Reserved Matters stage, in accordance with Core Policy 57.

### **Noise**

- 8.3 No acoustic noise assessment survey is considered necessary to support this application. The application site lies within an established residential setting, with existing dwellings surrounding The New Inn, including on the opposite side of Semington Road and to the rear of the site. Notwithstanding this long-standing residential context, there is no history of noise complaints associated with the operation of the public house, and its continued lawful use in this location has not given rise to any recorded statutory nuisance action or noise abatement notice.
- 8.4 The three proposed dwellings would in every case be sited at a greater distance from The New Inn than a number of existing dwellings that already sit comfortably alongside the pub, including those on the opposite side of Semington Road and those to the rear of the site, none of which have raised or experienced noise-related issues. The proposal therefore does not introduce a materially different or more sensitive relationship between the pub and neighbouring residential uses than already exists and is demonstrably well established without complaint.
- 8.5 Wiltshire Council's adopted Local Validation Checklist confirms that a noise assessment will normally be required where a residential development is proposed adjacent to or in close proximity of a noise-generating industrial use, a category which does not extend to an established village public house of this kind, particularly given the complete absence of any recorded complaint history. The Checklist further confirms that local information requirements must be reasonable, having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development, and that an applicant may set out in writing the reasons why a particular item is not considered necessary in the circumstances of the application, which this Statement does.
- 8.6 This proportionate approach is consistent with the Council's own Noise and Planning Technical Guidance, under which noise impact is not assessed in isolation but on a case-by-case, evidence-led basis, with no objection raised on noise grounds where no adverse effect is anticipated. It is also consistent with the 'agent of change' principle at paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework, under which an applicant introducing new noise-sensitive development is expected to assess the effect of an existing use only where there is a realistic prospect of a significant adverse effect on future occupiers. Given the settled residential context already surrounding The New Inn and the absence of any complaint history, no such prospect arises here.
- 8.7 On this basis, it is submitted that requiring a formal acoustic survey would be disproportionate to the scale and nature of this application and to the risk actually presented. This matter can properly be addressed, if considered necessary at all, by way of a standard noise-insulation condition at Reserved Matters stage rather than as a pre-application evidential requirement.

## 9. Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain

- 9.1 The application site comprises part of the existing car park of The New Inn and is predominantly surfaced with tarmac hardstanding. An existing hedgerow is present along the western boundary of the site. This hedgerow will be retained in its entirety and will be wholly unaffected by the proposed development, which is confined to the surfaced car park area.
- 9.2 Under the statutory biodiversity metric introduced by the Environment Act 2021, sealed, hardstanding surfaces such as the existing tarmac car park are classified as 'Developed land; sealed surface' and are assessed as having a baseline biodiversity value of zero. The western boundary hedgerow, while it carries a modest biodiversity value under the metric, is to be fully retained and is not proposed to be removed, reduced or otherwise altered by the development, and construction activity will be kept clear of its root protection area. As no habitat is proposed to be lost as a result of the development — the car park area being of zero baseline value and the only vegetated habitat on site being retained unaffected — no ecological impact assessment or habitat survey is required to inform this application.
- 9.3 In the absence of any trees or buildings on the site with the potential to support roosting bats, and with the only vegetated habitat feature on site — the western boundary hedgerow — being retained and unaffected by the works, there is no reasonable likelihood of the proposal affecting any protected or notable species. A Bat Preliminary Roost Assessment or other protected species survey is not considered necessary to support this application, consistent with Planning Practice Guidance and standing survey guidance, which direct such assessments toward proposals affecting buildings, structures, trees or hedgerows with roosting or habitat potential that are to be removed or altered, which is not the case here.
- 9.4 The mandatory requirement for development to deliver a 10% biodiversity net gain, introduced under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by the Environment Act 2021) and in force for minor development since April 2024, has since been amended by the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Amendments and Transitional Provisions) (England) Regulations 2026 (SI 2026/790), which insert a new exemption into the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024. With effect from 6 August 2026, development on a site no larger than 0.2 hectares is exempt from the mandatory biodiversity net gain requirement, provided that no priority habitat present on the site is negatively impacted by the development.
- 9.5 The application site, comprising only part of the existing car park of The New Inn together with the retained boundary hedgerow, extends to less than 0.2 hectares in its entirety and therefore falls within this new exemption. No priority habitat on the site is negatively impacted by the proposal: the car park area proposed for development is entirely hardstanding of zero baseline biodiversity value, and the only vegetated habitat feature on site, the western boundary hedgerow, is to be retained in full and left wholly unaffected by the works. The development accordingly satisfies both limbs of the exemption.
- 9.6 On this basis, no Biodiversity Gain Plan, biodiversity metric calculation or off-site/statutory credit provision is required to support this application. For completeness, and in the event that the application does not fall to be determined under these provisions for any reason, it is in any event noted that any mandatory net gain requirement would be readily and straightforwardly satisfied through the retained hedgerow, together with modest additional on-site landscaping, off-site biodiversity units or the statutory credit scheme as necessary, such that this matter does not raise any constraint on the principle of development established by this application.
- 9.7 On this basis, it is submitted that no ecological report or bat survey is required to support this outline application, and that there is no ecological objection to the proposed development.

## 10. Other Matters

- 10.1 Foul and surface water drainage will be addressed at Reserved Matters stage in accordance with saved Policy U1a of the West Wiltshire District Local Plan, following the precedent of 'no objection' responses secured from Wessex Water and the Council's Drainage Officer on comparable schemes along Semington Road.
- 10.2 A Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) liability will arise on implementation of any permission, in accordance with Wiltshire Council's adopted CIL Charging Schedule.

## 11. Conclusion

11.1 This Statement has demonstrated that:

- The principle of residential development on part of The New Inn car park is firmly supported by a consistent and recent pattern of approvals for comparable small-scale residential development along Semington Road (16/05830/OUT, 17/00296/OUT, 18/08542/OUT, 19/02238/OUT and PL/2022/02840);
- Wiltshire Council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing land — a considerable and appeal-tested shortfall, most recently found to be as low as around 2 years — engaging the presumption in favour of sustainable development at paragraph 11(d) of the Framework;
- The proposal is a sustainable form of development in an accessible village location, delivering new homes toward the Council's acknowledged shortfall while also securing the continued operational viability of The New Inn public house through the retention of compliant, well-designed car parking;
- The proposed access strategy — reusing the existing car park entrance for 2 dwellings and forming 2 new accesses for the third dwelling and the retained pub car park — is a logical, low-impact solution consistent with the pattern of individual accesses found elsewhere along this classified road;
- Dedicated on-site turning provision is not required for the new dwelling access, following clear precedent set by the Council and upheld on appeal by the Planning Inspectorate in relation to comparable sites along Semington Road;
- The retained pub car park will provide 10 spaces against an adopted requirement of 8, representing a surplus of 2 spaces, and will be designed with sufficient manoeuvring space to allow vehicles to exit in forward gear;
- In any event, national policy and Wiltshire Council's own recent decision-making, including for The Wheatsheaf Inn, Chilton Foliat, confirm that planning permission should not be refused for a shortfall in parking provision for the pub unless it is demonstrated that the harm is substantial, amounting to an unacceptable impact on highway safety or a severe residual cumulative impact on the road network, which is not the case here
- Semington Road, confirmed at 7.2m wide along the site frontage, is capable of lawfully accommodating on-street parking while retaining a running width of approximately 5.2m for two-way traffic to pass without obstruction, consistent with the approach accepted by Wiltshire Council in respect of a comparable road width at The Wheatsheaf Inn, Chilton Foliat;
- The car park area of the site is hardstanding with a baseline biodiversity value of zero, and the site's only habitat feature — a hedgerow on the western boundary — is retained in full and unaffected by the proposal, such that there is no ecological objection to the proposal and no ecological survey work is required to support this application; the application site also extends to less than 0.2 hectares with no priority habitat negatively impacted, such that the development is exempt from the mandatory biodiversity net gain requirement under the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Amendments and Transitional Provisions) (England) Regulations 2026;
- The New Inn already sits within an established residential setting with dwellings all around, including on the opposite side of Semington Road and to the rear of the site, none of which have raised or experienced noise complaints, and the proposed dwellings would all be sited further from the pub than these existing dwellings; a formal acoustic noise assessment is accordingly not required and would be disproportionate; and

- No matters have been identified that would justify a refusal of Outline Planning Permission.

11.2 For the reasons set out above, it is respectfully submitted that the application for Outline Planning Permission, with access included and all other matters reserved, for 3 No. dwellings on part of the car park of The New Inn, Semington Road, Berryfield, be approved.