Planning Statement

Main Barn, Eastern Range Barn and Byre/Stable Block, Church Farm, Lower Seagry, Chippenham, SN15 5EP

On behalf of Mrs H M Waddington

18th September 2026

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APPENDIX 1 - PL/2023/10825 Decision Notice/Approved Plans

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This Statement supports a full planning application for the conversion of a Class Q into Full Planning Permission for one new self-build dwelling at Church Farm, Lower Seagry, Chippenham. The application site comprises the Main Barn, Eastern Range Barn and a Byre/Stable Block.

1.2 The principle of residential development at the site is firmly established through the extant Class Q prior approval (Ref. PL/2023/10825), granted in February 2024 and valid until February 2027. The current proposal represents a clear betterment over the fallback class Q position in terms of design quality, sustainability, amenity, and heritage impact. This scheme retains the existing agricultural footprint, ridge and eaves height, and overall massing, while delivering a bespoke, energy-efficient home that meets modern standards, including M4(2) accessibility.

1.3 Church Farm is a historic farmstead comprising a farmhouse, traditional outbuildings, and the Grade II listed Tithe Barn and Church of St Mary. The application site sits within a cluster of modern agricultural buildings that make a neutral contribution to the heritage setting. The proposal has been carefully designed to preserve the rural character of the farmstead, avoid suburbanisation, and ensure no harm to the significance of nearby listed buildings. The scheme maintains existing building volumes, introduces controlled openings away from heritage assets, and incorporates sensitive materials and landscaping. A Heritage Assessment confirms that the development will conserve and enhance the wider setting.

1.4 The proposal aligns strongly with national policy, including the NPPF's objectives for sustainable development, high-quality design, heritage conservation, biodiversity enhancement, and housing delivery. It also accords with the Wiltshire Core Strategy—and is fully consistent with the Seagry Neighbourhood Plan's emphasis on small-scale, context-sensitive rural development, reuse of existing buildings, and support for self-build housing. Overall, the proposal delivers a well-designed, sustainable conversion that enhances the character of Church Farm, respects heritage assets, improves biodiversity, and provides a high standard of living accommodation. It represents a policy-compliant and locally supported form of rural development.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 On behalf of the applicant, Mrs H M Waddington, Arc Planning Associates has been instructed to submit a planning application for the conversion of a Class Q into Full Planning Permission for one new self-build dwelling at Church Farm, Lower Seagry, Chippenham, SN15 5EP. The application site comprises the Main Barn, Eastern Range Barn and a Byre/Stable Block.

2.2 This site falls within the administrative area of Wiltshire Council ('WC') and Seagry Parish Council.

2.3 The description of development comprises:

"Conversion of a Class Q into Full Planning Permission for one new self-build dwelling".

2.4 The application is submitted on the basis the approved Class Q application (LPA Ref PL/2023/10825) remains extant, and that this planning application provides betterment in terms of design, amenity and heritage impact.

Structure of Report

2.5 This Planning Statement sets out the detail of the proposed development, establishes the relevant planning policy framework against which the application is to be determined, and assesses the acceptability of the proposals in the context of that planning framework and other material considerations.

2.6 The Statement should be read in conjunction with the following reports and drawings:

- Planning Drawings - Refer to Stephen Johns Design Information Sheet
- Design and Access Statement - Stephen Johns Design
- Heritage Statement - Arc
- Drainage Statement - IMA
- Ecology Impact Assessment - Herdwick Ecology

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The principle of residential use at the site has already been established through the extant Class Q permission (reference PL/2023/10825), granted on 1st February 2024 and valid until 1st February 2027. That approval confirms the existing barn is capable of conversion without reconstruction, thereby providing a clear and lawful fall-back position for residential development.

3.2 A copy of the decision notice and approved plans are enclosed within **Appendix 1**.

Site and Surroundings

3.3 The application site is located within Church Farm on the southern edge of Lower Seagry, Chippenham within the administration area of Wiltshire Council and Seagry Parish Council. It comprises the Main Barn, Eastern Range Barn and a Byre/Stable Block, with the accompanying block plan identifying each structure and illustrating their respective positions within the farmyard.

3.4 The settlement forms one of two historic village components, comprising Lower Seagry and Upper Seagry, which have remained physically distinct from one another. The two settlements are approximately 1 km apart and are separated by open agricultural countryside, a relationship which has preserved the individual identity, rural setting and historic character of each place.

3.5 The wider landscape surrounding Lower Seagry is characterised by open agricultural fields enclosed by mature hedgerows and tree belts, which provide a strong visual framework to the settlement.

3.6 Church Farm forms one of the principal historic farmstead groups within Lower Seagry and retains much of its traditional agricultural character. It comprises a farmhouse together with various outbuildings and a Grade II listed tithe barn. There are also four modern agricultural barns (including the application site) located to the north-east, as well as a horse menage.

3.7 The formal garden and surrounding fields at Church Farm total circa 7.54ha. It is accessed via farm track of Lower Seagry (Road).

3.8 A copy of the list description for the tithe barn is enclosed within **Appendix 2**.

3.9 Main Barn is a two-storey utilitarian building with a form and function in line with its original agricultural purposes. It is constructed of painted concrete block set below a corrugated asbestos roof and large south facing double height doors.

3.10 Eastern Range Barn is a single-storey, open-sided structure facing south, most likely originally built as a milking shed or for other routine animal husbandry. It is functional in character and does not possess any architectural merit.

3.11 The Byre/Stable Block is a long, single-storey range with multiple open bays along its north-facing front elevation. It was formerly used for livestock housing or feed storage. The walls comprise a combination of cast concrete and corrugated steel panels, while the roof is formed from metal sheeting supported by timber trusses and purlins.

3.12 The site falls within a pocket of built form to the south of the settlement that is enclosed by open fields. To the south is the River Avon and beyond this is the M4 motorway.

3.13 The site is relatively constraint free and does not fall within the National Landscape Area or Conservation Area. Whilst the application site is Flood Zone 1, there is some surface water flooding which affects part of the site particularly along the farm access track and surrounding fields.

3.14 To the west of the site, includes the Grade II listed Church of St Mary's (including the T Sealy Monument located 6m east of Chancel, Two Unidentified Monuments 7m south-east of Chancel, Three Monuments south of the Transept, Three Monuments 9m south-west of South Porch, and Unidentified Monument 14m south-west of Porch) and the Grade II Tithe Barn at Church Farm. The site's heritage assets are detailed within the accompanying Heritage Statement.

3.15 A detailed description of the site and wider area, including historic context is included within the accompanying Design and Access Statement ('DAS') and Heritage Statement ('HS').

Figure 1 – The application site

3.16 Photographs of the Main Barn, Eastern Range Barn and a Byre/Stable Block barn, as well as the wider site are provided within the DAS and HS.

3.17 The nearest public right of way is situated in the field to the north and within Church of St Mary's.

Planning History

Planning Reference PL/2023/10825

3.18 On 21st January 2026 a planning application was submitted for the conversion of the class Q into full planning permission for one new self-build dwelling (this comprised the Main Barn, Eastern Range Barn and a Byre/Stable Block). This was registered under planning reference PL/2025/10016.

3.19 The key differences between the class Q and the planning application includes:

- The incorporation of the Byre/Stable Block as a garage/workshop and stores, and gym and garden room;
- Addition of an Air Source Heat Pump;

- The construction of an on-site battery storage in the outbuilding;
- The construction of a small flue (to serve a wood burner);
- The inclusion of a modest garden area (12m in depth) in line with the council's standards. This is because the prior approval development would not afford such a feature;
- Construction of a patio to the rear inside the new private garden;
- New openings, which are all east facing, namely away from the heritage asset, to provide better amenity to the relevant rooms. The window choices and fenestration have been selected to add character and design flair to the scheme.

3.20 The planning application was accompanied by the following documents:

- Planning Statement (MDP);
- Planning Drawings (MDP);
- Bat Survey (Herdwick Ecology);
- Flood Risk Assessment ('FRA') (IMA);
- Structural Appraisal (Mann Williams).

3.21 On 15th May 2026 the planning application was withdrawn by the applicant (Mr C Upton). It is understood the planning application was earmarked for approval.

Planning Reference PL/2023/10825

3.22 As stated, prior approval was given in 2024 for the change of use from 1 No. agricultural building to 1 No. residential dwelling (Class C3). Copies of the decision notice and approved plans are enclosed within **Appendix 1** and shown within **Figure 2** below.

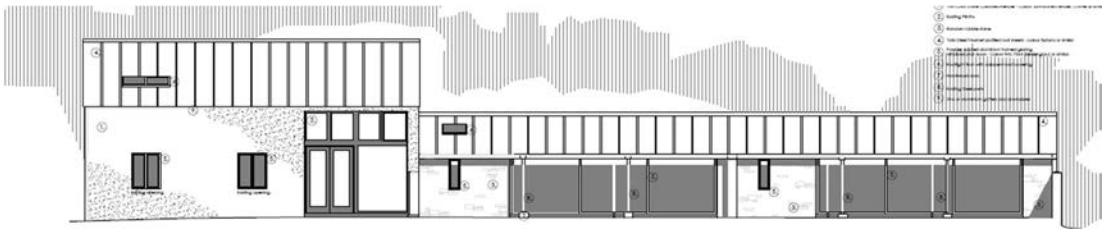

Figure 2 – Class Q South Elevation (Main Barn and Eastern Range Barn)

Other Planning History

- PL/2024/10810 - Prior notification of a change of use from 2 No. agricultural buildings to 3 No. residential dwellings (Class C3) as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) to include operational development. Approved: 07/02/2025. [*This application relates to the adjacent barns*].

- PL/2023/06516 - Prior notification of a change of use from 1 No. agricultural building to 1 No. residential dwelling (Class C3) as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) to include operational development - Refused.

- PL/2022/05837 - Erection of entrance gates and associated railings – Approved with Conditions.

- 13/04632/FUL - Installation of 16 Solar Panels on Farm Shed - Approved with Conditions

Pre-Application Advice

3.23 Informal discussions have taken place with Mr James Webster, Planning Officer at Wiltshire Council, regarding the proposals and the timings for the planning submission. These discussions were undertaken on 19th August 2026 by the applicant.

4. THE PROPOSALS

4.1 This planning application seeks conversion of a Class Q into Full Planning Permission for one new self-build dwelling at Church Farm, Lower Seagry on behalf of Mrs H M Waddington. The application site comprises the Main Barn, Eastern Range Barn and a Byre/Stable Block.

4.2 The description of development is as follows:

"Conversion of a Class Q into Full Planning Permission for one new self-build dwelling".

4.3 The proposed accommodation creates a four-bedroom dwelling with open-plan living space and a garage/workshop; together with car parking for at least two vehicles and an EV charging point.

4.4 Garden and amenity space is proposed to the north extending up to a new post and rail fence. The proposed garden amenity space measures 445m² and therefore exceeds Wiltshire Council's standards.

4.5 Access will be via the existing farm track.

4.6 The proposed south elevation in shown within **Figure 1** below.

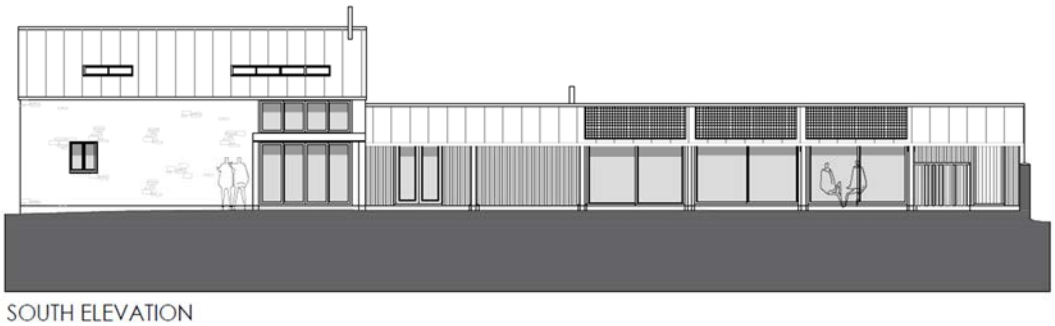

Figure 3 – Proposed South Elevation (Main Barn and Eastern Range Barn)

4.7 Key elements of the design are as follows:

- Main Barn and Eastern Range Barn:

    - Combination of retained agricultural structures and high-performance SIPS systems.
    - Designed to recreate the essence and essential character of the current barns but with a more bespoke and sustainable design, as well as improved internal layout;
    - Retention of the existing footprint, ridge height, eaves height and massing;
    - More coherent and functional layout than Class Q fallback;
    - Provision of accessible ground-floor accommodation;
    - Designed to meet M4(2) principles;
    - Introduction of controlled new openings for daylight and ventilation;
    - Sustainable building fabric for energy efficiency;
    - Creation of a new residential curtilage including a modest garden area to the north;
    - Domestic curtilage designed to avoid suburbanisation;

- Byre/Stable Block:

    - Conversion into ancillary domestic accommodation;
    - Reuse of the existing structure to preserve its agricultural character;
    - Designed to remain subordinate to the main dwelling and not used as a separate unit;
    - Provision of flexible domestic space (e.g., utility, home office, store).

- No Additional Built Form:

    - All development to be wholly within existing building envelope;
    - No outward expansion into countryside;
    - No increase in overall built mass.

- Access, Parking and Movement

- Utilisation of existing farm access;
- Provision of on-plot parking (2+ vehicles) and turning space;
- Maintain informal rural movement character.

- Landscape and Boundary Treatments

  - Retention of existing hedgerows and rural boundaries;
  - Introduction of native planting to reinforce landscape structure;
  - Avoid suburban boundary treatments.

- Sustainability Measures

  - Air-source heat pump heating;
  - Electric vehicle charging provision;
  - Secure cycle storage;
  - Improved insulation and glazing;
  - Discreet PV array on the Byre roof, screened from heritage assets.

- Biodiversity Enhancements

  - Installation of three integrated bat boxes (south/southeast elevation);
  - Installation of three swift boxes (north/northwest elevation, 6–7m high);
  - Use of wildlife-friendly planting and diverse lawn mix;
  - Sensitive lighting design to maintain dark corridors.

- Heritage Sensitive Design

  - Retain agricultural morphology to preserve the setting of:
    - Grade II listed Church of St Mary
    - Grade II listed Tithe Barn
  - No new built form introduced into their wider setting.

4.8 The enclosed DAS and planning drawings detail the layout and design of the building.

5. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 This section provides an assessment of the planning framework within which the proposed development is to be considered and identifies other material considerations relevant to the proposal.

5.2 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires that development proposals be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this context the following documents apply:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG);
- Wiltshire Core Strategy;
- Seagry Neighbourhood Plan ('SNP').

National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') (Updated 17th August 2026)

5.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated on 17th August 2026, following consultation on the December 2025 draft. The revised Framework provides a clearer distinction between plan-making policies and decision-making policies and continues to set the overarching national policy context for assessing development proposals. At its core remains the presumption in favour of sustainable development, which underpins both plan-making and decision-taking.

5.4 The updated NPPF continues to identify three interdependent objectives of sustainable development - economic, social and environmental - emphasising that these must be pursued in mutually supportive ways.

5.5 Policy S1 confirms that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

5.6 Policy S2 sets out the three overarching objectives:

a) Economic objective – supporting a strong, responsive and competitive economy by ensuring sufficient land of the right type is available in appropriate locations, and by coordinating infrastructure delivery.

b) Social objective – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities through the provision of a sufficient number and range of homes, and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places with accessible services and open spaces.

c) Environmental objective – protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment; making effective use of land; improving biodiversity; using natural resources prudently; minimising waste and pollution; and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low-carbon economy.

5.7 Policy S3 states decisions on development proposals should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Where a development proposal falls partly within and partly outside a settlement, policies S4 (development within settlements) and S5 (development outside settlements) should be applied.

5.8 Policy S4 states development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies within the NPPF.

5.9 Policy S5, 1 c states the reuse, extension, alteration or replacement of an existing building, provided that the existing building is of permanent and substantial construction, is lawful in planning terms, and any extension or alteration will not result in a disproportionate increase in size compared to the existing building. In the case of proposals for a replacement building, it should be for the same use and not disproportionately larger than the one it replaces.

5.10 Other Relevant NPPF Sections:

- Section 4 - Achieving sustainable development; S1-6;

- Section 5 - Meeting the challenge of climate change; CC1-3;
- Section 6 - Delivering a sufficient supply of homes; HO1-13;
- Section 7 - Building a strong, effective economy; E1-4;
- Section 12 - Making effective use of land; L1-3;
- Section 14 - Achieving well-designed and beautiful places; DP1-4;
- Section 15 - Promoting sustainable transport; TR1-8;
- Section 16 - Promoting healthy and safe communities; HC1-8;
- Section 17 - Pollution, public protection and security; P1-6;
- Section 18 - Managing flood risk and coastal change; F1-9;
- Section 19 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; N1-6;
- Section 20 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment; HE1-10.

National Planning Practice Guidance ('NPPG')

5.11 In March 2014, the then Department for Communities and Local Government launched its Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) web-based resource. This guidance provides a variety of practice guidance in respect of planning considerations. Relevant guidance from the National Planning Practice Guidance includes:

- Biodiversity Net Gain;
- Climate Change;
- Design: process and tools;

- Effective use of land;
- Flood Risk and Coastal Change;
- Healthy and Safe Communities;
- Historic Environment;
- Land Affected by Contamination;
- Light Pollution;
- Natural Environment.

Wiltshire Core Strategy

5.12 The Wiltshire Core Strategy was formally adopted on 20th January 2015 and provides an overarching planning policy framework for Wiltshire for the period up to 2026. The following policies are considered relevant:

5.13 Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy - This policy identifies the settlements where sustainable development will take place. Development is directed to Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large and Small Villages.

5.14 Core Policy 2: Delivery Strategy - This policy outlines the considerable overall housing need for the local authority area (42,000 homes). Outside of defined limits of development, development will not be permitted other than in circumstances as permitted by this plan.

5.15 Core Policy 10: Chippenham Community Area - Approximately 580 homes will be provided in the rest of the Community Area over the plan period.

5.16 Core Policy 45: Meeting Wiltshire's Housing Needs - New housing should address local housing need incorporating a range of different types, tenures and sizes of homes to create balanced communities.

5.17 Core Policy 48: Supporting Rural Life - Outside of defined limits of development of settlements, proposals for residential development will be supported where these meet the accommodation needs required to enable workers to live at or in the immediate vicinity of their place of work in the interests of agriculture or forestry or other employment essential to the countryside.

5.18 Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity - Amongst other things, this policy seeks to ensure that developments protect features of nature conservation and geological value and avoid disturbance to species and habitats. Biodiversity enhancement is encouraged.

5.19 Core Policy 51: Landscape **-** This policy states that development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and must not have a harmful impact upon landscape character. Amongst other things, this policy seeks to conserve landscape features of historic and heritage value and ensure developments do not harm important views and visual amenity. It also gives great weight to the conservation and enhancement of the landscape and scenic beauty within the AONB (now known as a National Landscape).

5.20 Core Policy 57: Ensuring High-Quality Design and Place Shaping - Amongst other things, this policy seeks to ensure that proposals are sympathetic to historic buildings and that they have regard to the amenities of existing occupants and the compatibility with adjoining buildings and uses.

5.21 Core Policy 58: Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment - This policy states that development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment in a manner appropriate to its significance.

5.22 Core Policy 60: Sustainable Transport - Amongst other things, this policy seeks to reduce the reliance on travel by private car and supports and encourages sustainable transport modes.

5.23 Core Policy 61: Transport and Development - New Development should be located and designed to reduce the need to travel, particularly by private car. Sustainable transport alternatives are encouraged.

New Wiltshire Core Strategy

5.24 Wiltshire Council has formally begun work on a new Local Plan and the Notice of Intention to Commence Local Plan preparation was issued on Tuesday 30th June 2026, with the 30-month plan process expected to begin on Friday 30th October 2026. Alongside this, the council has published a timetable setting out the key stages of the process with adoption expected April 2029.

Seagry Neighbourhood Plan

5.25 The Seagry Neighbourhood Plan ('SNP') 2019-2036 is a made part of the Development Plan (May 2021) and carries full weight in decision-making. The Plan does not allocate housing sites and confirms that Seagry has no formal requirement to deliver additional housing, but it supports limited, small-scale development where it respects the parish's rural character, historic settlement pattern and landscape setting.

5.26 Lower Seagry is identified as a historic rural hamlet with a distinctive agricultural morphology. The SNP emphasises that development should:

- Be small in scale and sympathetic to the rural context (Objectives O1, O2, O5, O6).
- Reuse existing buildings where possible, including agricultural structures (Overall Principles, section 4).
- Remain within existing building footprints and volumes when converting rural buildings (Overall Principles, section 4).
- Preserve the historic farmstead pattern, rural lanes, hedgerows and open countryside (Sections 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3).

- Avoid suburbanisation and maintain the soft, informal settlement edges of Lower Seagry.
- Deliver high-quality, locally distinctive design that reflects agricultural character (Section 5.8).
- Incorporate biodiversity enhancements and protect natural features (Section 5.4).
- Support custom and self-build housing where appropriate (Objective O7 and Section 5.10).
- Integrate sustainability measures including renewable energy and low-carbon design (Policy 5.11).

5.27 The proposal for one dwelling at Church Farm aligns strongly with SNP's objectives:

- The development is small-scale, comprising a single dwelling and ancillary accommodation, consistent with the SNP's expectation that new housing should be "no more than 1 or 2 houses on any site" (section 4).
- Re-use of existing agricultural buildings directly accords with the SNP's preference for redevelopment within existing footprints (section 4).
- The scheme preserves the agricultural character of Church Farm and maintains the historic farmstead grouping, in line with sections 5.1 (Landscape Setting), 5.3 (Historic Environment) and 5.8 (Character and Design).
- No outward expansion occurs into open countryside, meeting the SNP's requirement that development should "neither extend the settlement significantly nor create coalescence" (section 4).
- The proposal includes biodiversity enhancements, consistent with section 5.4 (Natural Environment and Biodiversity).

- The dwelling is a self-build, directly supported by section 5.10 (Custom and Self-Build Housing).
- Sustainability measures (ASHP, EV charging, PV array) align with section 5.11 (Sustainable Design and Renewable Energy).

5.28 The proposal represents exactly the type of limited, sensitive, small-scale development envisaged by the SNP. It proposes a single dwelling and the reuse of an existing rural building, preserves the historic farmstead pattern, maintains the rural character of Lower Seagry, enhances biodiversity, and delivers a high-quality, sustainable self-build home. The development is fully consistent with the Plan's Vision, Objectives and Core Principles.

Supplementary Guidance

5.29 The Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standards ('NDSS') (DCLG 2015) sets out the Government's nationally described space standards.

5.30 Wiltshire Council's Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) — particularly the Planning Obligations SPD (2015 and 2016 revisions) — provide detailed guidance on infrastructure requirements, planning conditions, and developer contributions. These SPDs confirm that small-scale residential conversions such as the proposed dwelling at Church Farm do not normally generate Section 106 obligations and are instead managed through proportionate planning conditions. The proposal reuses existing buildings, avoids new built form, and does not create additional infrastructure demand, aligning fully with the SPD framework and Core Policy 3 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

5.31 The Wiltshire Design Guide ('WDG') was adopted on 25th March 2024. Its key aim to elaborate on Core Policy 57. Core Policy 57 states: "*A high standard of design is required in all new developments, including extensions, alterations, and changes of use of existing buildings. Development is expected to create a strong sense of place through drawing on the local context and being complementary to the locality. Applications for new development must be accompanied by appropriate information to*

demonstrate how the proposal will make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire".

5.32 The development has been designed in accordance with the WDG and this is set out within the DAS.

Five-Year Housing Land Supply ('5YHLS')

5.33 According to Wiltshire Council the 5YHLS position is 2.42 years (for the whole authority area), therefore the titled balance is engaged under NPPF paragraph 11(d).

Housing Delivery Test

5.34 The Housing Delivery Test (HDT) was introduced in 2018 alongside various measures by the Government to increase housing delivery in the country through the planning system. The HDT measures the previous three years housing delivery in an authority area against the authority's housing requirement. Wiltshire Council score is 93%; the score is below the national 95% threshold, so it triggers a requirement for the council to prepare an HDT Action Plan explaining why delivery has fallen short and how it will be improved.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

5.35 As this is a self-build development it does not attract a CIL payment.

6. PLANNING ANALYSIS

6.1 This section provides an assessment of the proposed development against the planning framework and material considerations identified in this document. It considers the planning issues that underpin the determination of the application including:

- Principle of development;
- Design;
- Amenity;
- Heritage;
- Ecology;
- Flood Risk and Drainage;
- Highways;
- Other Matters.

6.2 These issues will be considered in turn, whilst section 6 concludes with the planning balance.

Principle of Development

6.3 This planning application seeks full planning permission for a self-build dwelling in place of the extant Class Q approval, together with the conversion of the Byre/Stable Block for domestic residential use. To maintain the rural character and setting of the site, the proposals retain the barn's agricultural form, proportions and massing.

6.4 The principle of residential development at the site has already been established through the extant Class Q approval (Ref. PL/2023/10825), granted on 1st February 2024 and valid until 1st February 2027. The full planning proposal therefore does not introduce new residential development; rather, it refines and improves the form that development takes. Local Planning Authorities ('LPAs') consistently treat an extant Class Q fallback as a realistic prospect unless it is demonstrably incapable of implementation. They also frequently conclude that a full planning proposal delivers a clear qualitative enhancement. Accordingly, the fallback is a material consideration that weighs positively in the planning balance.

6.5 Conversion of the Class Q into full planning permission delivers clear and measurable improvements. It enables a more coherent, higher-quality design that is sympathetic to the rural/agricultural character and heritage setting. It also allows better control over proportions, fenestration, materials and internal layout than the constrained Class Q envelope, resulting in improved sustainability performance and long-term functionality.

6.6 Class Q often necessitates the retention of poor-quality blockwork, asbestos roofing, failing frames and inadequate foundations. LPAs recognise that Class Q conversions can be structurally complex, less safe and less sustainable. Full planning permission allows a more robust and efficient construction approach, better landscape integration and controlled domestic curtilage design. It also enables a fabric-first strategy, renewable technologies and significantly improved airtightness.

6.7 In respect of access, parking and highway safety, full planning permission allows a more rational parking layout and improved turning arrangements. It can also deliver amenity benefits, including enhanced daylighting (through better fenestration), a more functional internal layout and policy-compliant amenity space.

6.8 The benefits of a conversion of the Class Q into full planning permission are set out in further detail below, and within the enclosed Design and Access Statement (DAS).

Local Plan Context

6.9 Core Policy 2 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy identifies a substantial housing requirement of 42,000 homes over the plan period. Although the site lies outside defined limits of development, the Class Q fallback establishes the acceptability of residential use. The

proposed scheme represents a clear qualitative enhancement over that fallback, delivering improved design, amenity, landscape integration and heritage betterment.

Design

6.10 The planning drawings and Design and Access Statement ('DAS') has been undertaken by Stephen Johns Design. The DAS states the design is rooted in the rural and agricultural character of Church Farm and Lower Seagry. The DAS emphasises that the scheme *"retains the existing agricultural form and character of the buildings"* and continues to read as part of the historic farmstead rather than a new suburban dwelling.

6.11 The key principles of design include:

- Retention of the existing footprints, ridge heights, eaves heights and massing, ensuring the buildings continues to appear as a converted rural structures;
- Controlled and proportionate new openings, designed to preserve the simple agricultural character of the elevations;
- A robust, rural material palette including lime render, timber elements, agricultural-style roofing materials and powder-coated aluminium windows, selected to reflect the farmstead context;
- Landscape integration through retention of existing hedgerows and rural boundary features, with supplementary native planting to reinforce the farmstead's landscape structure.

6.12 The internal arrangement refines the approved Class Q fallback to deliver a more coherent, functional and adaptable home. The DAS confirms that the layout provides *"a clear organisation of spaces, logical circulation routes, functional living areas, good natural daylight and ventilation."*

6.13 The Byre/Stable Block remains subordinate and functionally linked to the main dwelling, providing domestic accommodation without forming a separate residential unit.

6.14 The design incorporates a strong sustainability focus, including:

- Re-use of existing structures, retaining embodied carbon and reducing construction waste;
- Enhanced building fabric, improved insulation (through introduction of a SIPS Panel system) and high-performance fenestration;
- Low-carbon technologies, including air-source heat pump heating and electric vehicle charging;
- A discreet PV array positioned on the Byre roof and is screened from heritage assets;
- Biodiversity enhancements, including bat and bird boxes and native planting.

6.15 The site forms part of the established Church Farm complex and already contributes to the setting of the Grade II listed Church of St Mary's and Grade II listed Tithe Barn. The DAS states that the proposal *"preserves the agricultural morphology of the site and avoids new outward expansion of built form,"* ensuring no harm to the significance or setting of nearby heritage assets.

6.16 The proposed design represents a high-quality, contextual and sustainable conversion that:

- Preserves the rural character of Church Farm;
- Enhances the architectural coherence and long-term usability of the buildings;
- Avoids suburbanisation and maintains the historic farmstead pattern;
- Delivers a more robust and considered solution than the Class Q fallback.

6.17 The proposed accommodation creates a four-bedroom dwelling with open-plan living space and the conversion of the byre/stable block to form a garage/workshop; there is also car parking for two vehicles, associated landscaping and amenity space.

6.18 Some of the features of the proposed dwelling will emulate elements of the existing barn, and the fenestration has been altered to better suit the internal configuration.

6.19 The proposals are not considered to look out of place in this rural location, nor will it lead to harm to the nearby heritage assets or wider landscape setting. The development is therefore in accordance with Local Plan policies and the council's Design Guide.

Class Q Fall Back Design Vs Proposed New Build

6.20 The key differences between this and the consented class Q scheme is summarised within the table below:

Topic	Class Q	Proposed Scheme
Overall Form/Massing	Retains existing barn shell, concrete block walls, asbestos roof; no ability to refine massing.	Rebuild on same footprint, ridge and eaves; refined agricultural proportions; coherent massing.
Architectural Character	Utilitarian agricultural building with large, fixed openings; visually harsh.	Lime render, profiled metal roof, controlled glazing; heritage-sensitive agricultural character.
Internal Layout	Constrained by existing structure; awkward circulation; limited daylight; mezzanine with compromised headroom.	Fully optimised layout; clear zoning; improved daylight; proper first-floor suite; accessible ground-floor bedroom (M4(2) principles).
Gross Internal Area	Approx. 227m² (fixed by existing structure).	Similar overall GIA but better functional efficiency and spatial quality.
Outbuilding Treatment	Byre/Stable Block remains agricultural and unused.	Byre/Stable Block converted to garage/workshop/home office/gym; remains subordinate; retains agricultural form.
Heritage Impact	Domestic conversion of utilitarian barn risks suburbanisation; limited ability to improve materials or reduce harm.	Heritage-led design; controlled openings; improved materials; modest curtilage; clear betterment to setting of St Mary's Church and Tithe Barn.
Landscape Integration	Minimal landscape change permitted; domestic space poorly defined; parking visually harsh.	Native hedging, estate railings, permeable courtyard, gravel parking; modest garden; avoids suburbanisation; reinforces farmstead character.

Topic	Class Q	Proposed Scheme
Sustainability	Limited insulation upgrades; no ASHP, PV or battery storage allowed under Class Q.	ASHP, EV charging, battery storage, discreet PV array; modern thermal envelope; significantly improved energy efficiency.
Biodiversity	Minimal enhancements permitted; no integrated boxes.	Integrated bat and swift boxes; wildlife-friendly planting; dark-corridor lighting; measurable biodiversity gain.
Design Flexibility	Highly constrained by Class Q regulations; cannot alter form, openings, or materials meaningfully.	Full design flexibility within same envelope; allows high-quality, locally distinctive architecture.
Curtilage & Domestic Setting	Very limited garden depth; domestic area visually exposed.	Rationalised garden exceeding Council's standards; contained and rural in character; avoids suburban boundary treatments.
Long-Term Functionality	Compromised layout; limited adaptability; constrained servicing.	Modern, flexible, future-proofed home with improved servicing, accessibility and domestic utility.
Policy Alignment	Meets minimum Class Q criteria but offers no heritage, landscape or sustainability betterment.	Strong alignment with NPPF, Wiltshire Core Strategy and SNP; delivers clear public benefits.

Figure 4: Comparison Table - *Class Q Fall Back Design Vs Proposed New Build*

Amenity

6.21 The proposals will not increase the scale of development beyond that already established through the Class Q prior approval. Its form and siting ensure it would not appear visually intrusive or overbearing when experienced from neighbouring properties or their private gardens. As a result, the scheme would not harm the living conditions of existing occupants in terms of outlook or access to daylight. The conversion has also been designed to avoid any direct or close-range views towards neighbouring homes, thereby preserving privacy.

6.22 Given the small scale of the proposal, vehicle movements associated with the proposals would be limited and, importantly, would not exceed those already permitted under the Class Q fall-back. Such movements would not generate appreciable noise or disturbance and would not materially differ from the approved situation.

6.23 The proposal would safeguard the living conditions of surrounding occupiers with respect to outlook, daylight, privacy, and noise and disturbance. The development therefore accords with Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

6.24 Turning to future occupants, the internal layout and floorspace of the dwelling meet the requirements of the Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standards ('NDSS') (DCLG 2015), ensuring that accommodation would not be unduly cramped.

6.25 The dwelling would also benefit from a well-proportioned garden that would not be subject to unacceptable levels of shading. This represents a notable improvement over the approved Class Q scheme, which did not provide a meaningful external amenity area. The proposed 12-metre garden depth achieves an appropriate balance between providing high-quality outdoor space and avoiding unnecessary urbanisation of the site. Adequate separation distances would be maintained between the dwelling and surrounding buildings, preventing overlooking and any sense of visual enclosure. External areas would also remain below the World Health Organisation ('WHO') guideline threshold for the onset of moderate noise annoyance.

6.26 Overall, the proposal would deliver high standards of living conditions for future occupants, representing a clear betterment over the fall-back position and aligning with the development plan.

Heritage Impact

6.27 The enclosed Heritage Statement ('HS') confirms that the host building at Church Farm is a post-1948 agricultural structure of no architectural or historic significance, making a neutral contribution to its surroundings. It sits within a wider grouping of modern and traditional farm buildings that have substantially altered the historic character of the farmstead and the setting of the nearby Grade II listed St Mary's Church and The Tithe Barn. The HS identifies that these later agricultural buildings - including modern extensions to the Tithe Barn - now form an established part of the landscape and the heritage context.

6.28 The proposed conversion of the host building to a dwelling represents an opportunity to enhance this setting. The design retains the building's agricultural form, introduces only limited and appropriately scaled new openings, and improves the external appearance through sensitive material choices.

6.29 The scheme respects the significance of the adjacent listed buildings, avoids harm to their setting, and delivers a modest public benefit through the creation of a well-designed new home that supports the long-term conservation of the area.

6.30 Overall, the assessment concludes that the proposals comply with national and local heritage policy, respond positively to the site's constraints, and will result in a clear enhancement to the character and setting of the nearby heritage assets.

Ecology

6.31 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal ('PEA') and Roost Assessment ('RA') has been prepared by Herdwick Ecology. The assessments have reviewed habitats, protected species considerations, relevant legislation, and opportunities for ecological enhancement.

6.32 The site comprises hardstanding, modern agricultural buildings and a small area of grazed grassland, all of which were assessed as low ecological value.

6.33 A detailed internal and external inspection of the barn, open-fronted sheds and cattle shed found no bats or evidence of bats, and all structures were assessed as having negligible roosting potential.

6.34 No other protected species issues were identified due to the limited habitat within the red line boundary. While an old blackbird nest was recorded, impacts can be avoided through standard precautionary measures.

6.35 There are no statutory designated sites within 2km, no priority habitats within 500m, and no ponds within 250m of the site. The small, grazed field and young hedgerow are typical low-value agricultural habitats.

6.36 The PEA and RA set out proportionate mitigation including:

- Sensitive lighting design to maintain dark corridors;
- Avoidance of works during the bird nesting season unless checked beforehand;
- Standard construction safeguards (covering trenches, raising stored materials, hedgehog gaps in fencing).

6.37 Although the site is below the 0.2ha threshold for mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain ('BNG'), the scheme incorporates meaningful enhancements, including:

- Three integrated bat boxes on the south/southeast elevation;
- Three swift boxes installed at 6–7m height on the north/northwest elevation;
- Use of wildlife-friendly planting within the garden area.

6.38 In conclusion the PEA and RA confirm that the proposals avoid significant ecological impacts, comply with NPPF and Wiltshire Core Strategy policy 50, and will deliver a net gain in biodiversity through integrated enhancements. No further ecological surveys are required to support the application.

Flood Risk and Drainage

6.39 A Drainage Statement ('DS') has been prepared by IMA and this states the development is located within Flood Zone 1 and is considered to be at a very low risk of flooding.

6.40 In accordance with the SuDS hierarchy, the preferred drainage strategy for the proposed dwelling and the conversion of the existing outbuilding is to retain and utilise the existing farmstead surface water drainage system where appropriate. Surface water runoff from the courtyard, private driveway and parking areas will, where ground conditions permit, be managed by infiltration using permeable paving and/or a soakaway. Should infiltration prove to be unsuitable, an attenuated discharge to the

existing surface water drainage system will be provided in accordance with the requirements of the LLFA.

6.41 The proposed development results in only a minimal increase in peak surface water runoff of approximately 0.11l/s compared with the existing situation. Additionally, the incorporation of permeable paving within the courtyard area has the potential to reduce overall surface water discharge by allowing runoff to infiltrate directly into the ground, subject to suitable ground conditions.

6.42 There is no increase in flood risk to the surrounding area or downstream catchment area resulting from the development.

6.43 A dry access and evacuation route is wholly achievable within the farm boundary and beyond to the north into Lower Seagry and public highway network.

6.44 In summary the DS confirms that the proposed development is achievable in a sustainable manner, without increasing flood risk on Church Farm or within the greater catchment area and would be in accordance with both National Planning Policy Framework and Local Policies.

Highways

6.45 The site is of sufficient size to accommodate requisite off-street parking spaces at the proposed unit. In terms of highway safety, there would be no effects in this regard that differ from the previous approval. The local highway authority raised no objection previously and it would not be reasonable to do so now. It is therefore considered that the scheme would not prejudice vehicular or pedestrian safety, in line with the requirements of Core Policies 60 and 61 of the CS.

Other Matters

6.46 The site has been used solely for benign agricultural storage, and there is no evidence of land contamination that would prejudice the use of the barn for residential purposes. If necessary, a phase 1 contamination survey can be provided on request and relevant planning conditions added to the decision notice.

6.47 No trees on the site are affected, and it is therefore not necessary to undertake an arboricultural assessment. As can be seen from the accompanying site photographs.

6.48 It is not deemed necessary to prepare an Energy and Sustainability Statement, as these matters are covered within the enclosed DAS.

6.49 Furthermore, the site is located within a rural setting, and it is therefore not necessary to undertake a noise or air quality assessment.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 The proposals represent a well-considered and policy-compliant form of rural development at Church Farm, Lower Seagry.

7.2 The principle of residential use on the site is already firmly established through the extant Class Q approval (PL/2023/10825). The current proposal delivers a scheme that is demonstrably superior to the fallback in terms of design quality, sustainability, heritage impact, landscape integration and long-term functionality. It retains the agricultural morphology of the existing building, avoids any outward expansion into open countryside, and preserves the historic farmstead pattern that defines Lower Seagry's rural character.

7.3 The development accords with the National Planning Policy Framework, the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the Seagry Neighbourhood Plan. It delivers a single, small-scale dwelling - exactly the type of limited, sensitive growth envisaged for the parish - and does so within an existing building envelope, with no harmful landscape or heritage effects. The scheme provides biodiversity enhancements, modern energy-efficient construction, and low-carbon technologies, contributing positively to environmental objectives.

7.4 Technical matters including access, flood risk, ecology and amenity have been fully addressed through the accompanying assessments. No unacceptable impacts arise, and the proposal can be appropriately controlled through standard planning conditions.

7.5 In the context of Wiltshire's 2.42-year housing land supply, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged. The proposal delivers clear public benefits: a high-quality self-build home, the reuse of rural buildings, heritage betterment, biodiversity gains, and a more sustainable and resilient form of development than the fallback position.

7.6 Overall, the proposal represents a sustainable, well-designed and policy-supported form of rural development. Planning permission and listed building consent should therefore be granted.

APPENDIX 1 -

Wiltshire Council

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)

Prior approval Part 3 Class Q: Agricultural buildings to dwellinghouses - Prior Approval Granted

Application Reference Number: PL/2023/10825

Decision Date: 01 February 2024

Applicant:	Heather Waddington Church Farm , Lower Seagry, Lower Seagry, Wiltshire, SN15 5EP
Particulars of Development:	Prior notification of a change of use from 1 No. agricultural building to 1 No. residential dwelling (Class C3) as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) to include operational development
At:	CHURCH FARM, LOWER SEAGRY, CHIPPENHAM, SN15 5EP

The local planning authority has determined in this case that its prior approval will be required and that this prior approval is **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

Conditions: (3)

1 The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans received by the Local Planning Authority:

Location Plan 650/E/00
Existing Floor Plans 650-E-01
Existing Elevations 650-E-02
Existing Block Plan 650-E-03
Proposed Floor Plans 650-P-01 C
Proposed Elevations 650-P-02 E
Proposed Block Plan 650-P-03 B

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning

2 No development shall commence on site until an investigation of the history and current condition of the site to determine the likelihood of the existence of contamination arising from previous uses has been carried out and all of the following

steps have been complied with to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority:

Step (i) A written report has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority which shall include details of the previous uses of the site for at least the last 100 years and a description of the current condition of the site with regard to any activities that may have caused contamination. The report shall confirm whether it is likely that contamination may be present on the site.

Step (ii) If the above report indicates that contamination may be present on or under the site, or if evidence of contamination is found, a more detailed site investigation and risk assessment should be carried out in accordance with DEFRA and Environment Agency's "Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination CLR11" and other authoritative guidance and a report detailing the site investigation and risk assessment shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Step (iii) If the report submitted pursuant to step (i) or (ii) indicates that remedial works are required, full details have been submitted to the Local Planning Authority and approved in writing and thereafter implemented prior to the commencement of the development or in accordance with a timetable that has been agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority as part of the approved remediation scheme. On completion of any required remedial works the applicant shall provide written confirmation to the Local Planning Authority that the works have been completed in accordance with the agreed remediation strategy.

REASON: To ensure that land contamination can be dealt with adequately prior to the use of the site hereby approved by the Local Planning Authority.

3 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking or re- enacting or amending that Order with or without modification), there shall be no additions/extensions or external alterations to any building forming part of the development hereby permitted.

REASON: In the interests of the amenity of the area and to enable the Local Planning Authority to consider individually whether planning permission should be granted for additions/extensions or external alterations.

Parvis Khansari **- Corporate Director, Place**

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Project Church Farm, Lower Seagry, SN15 5EP		
Drawing Title Location Plan		
Drawn by	Date June 2023	
Scale 1:1250 @ A3	Drawing number 650/E/00	Revision

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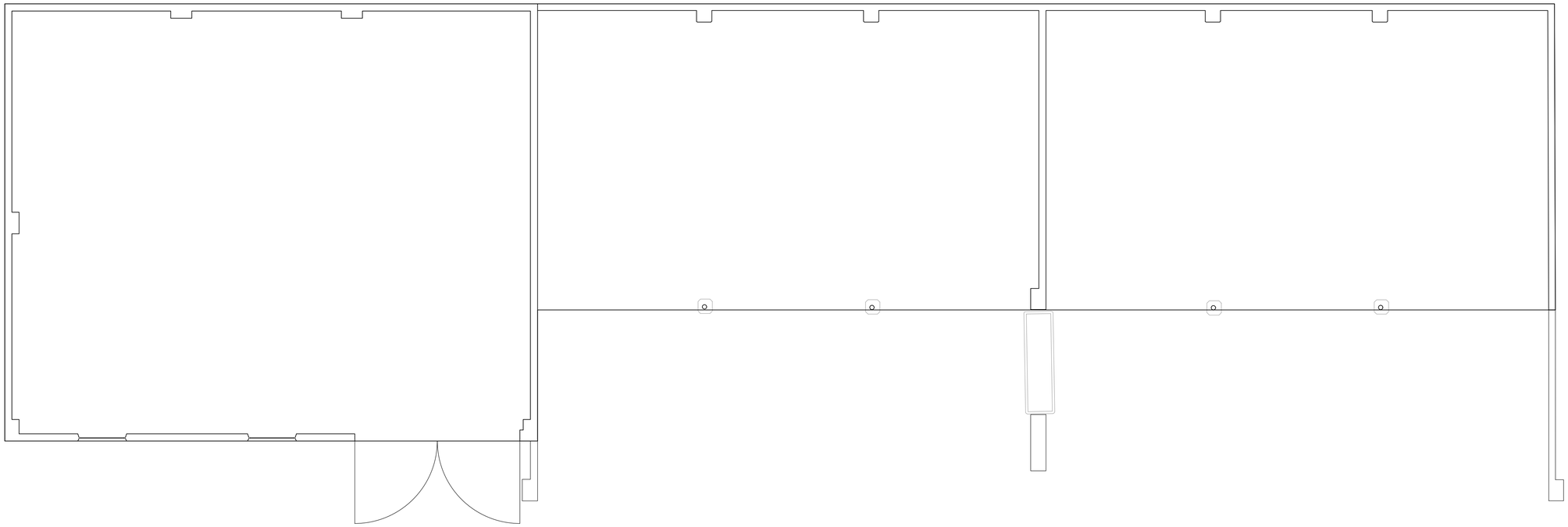

Ground Floor Plan as Existing

Existing Building Footprint = 238m²
Proposed redline curtilage = 237m²

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Revision

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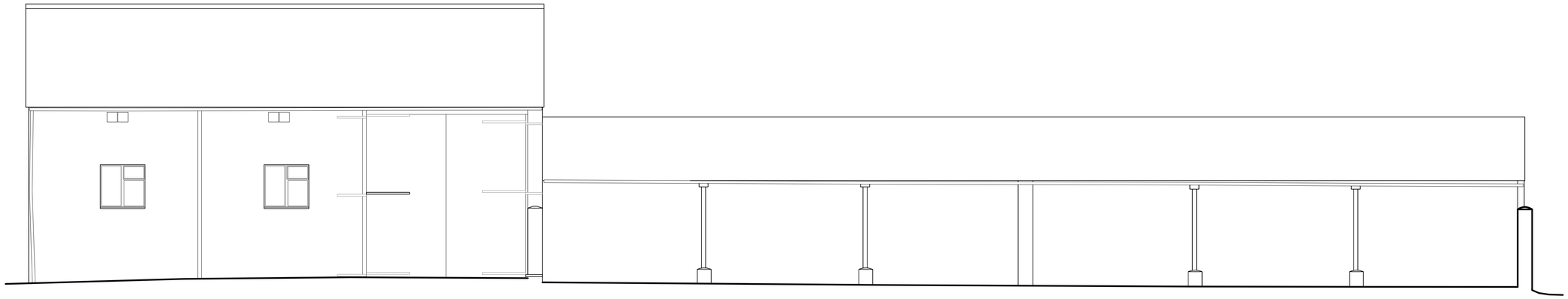
project title
Church Farm
Lower Seagry
SN15 5EP

drawing title
Existing Floor Plan



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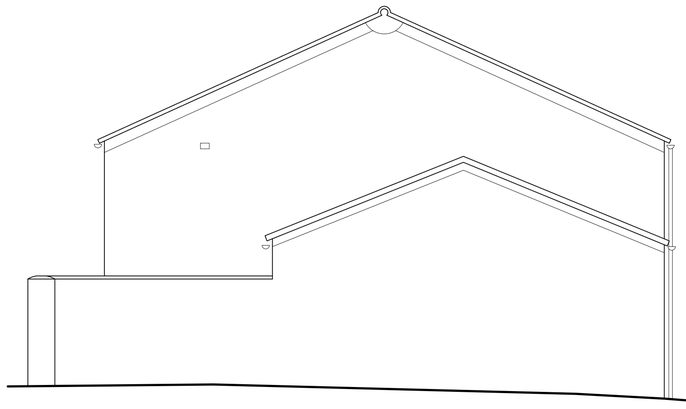

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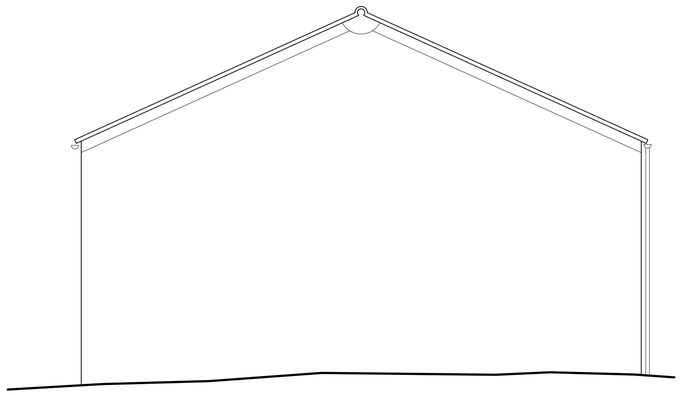

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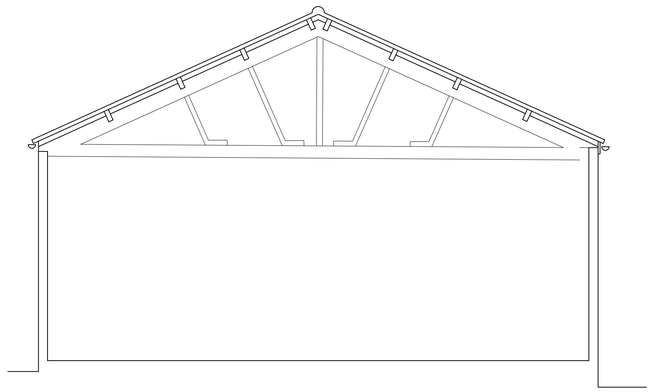

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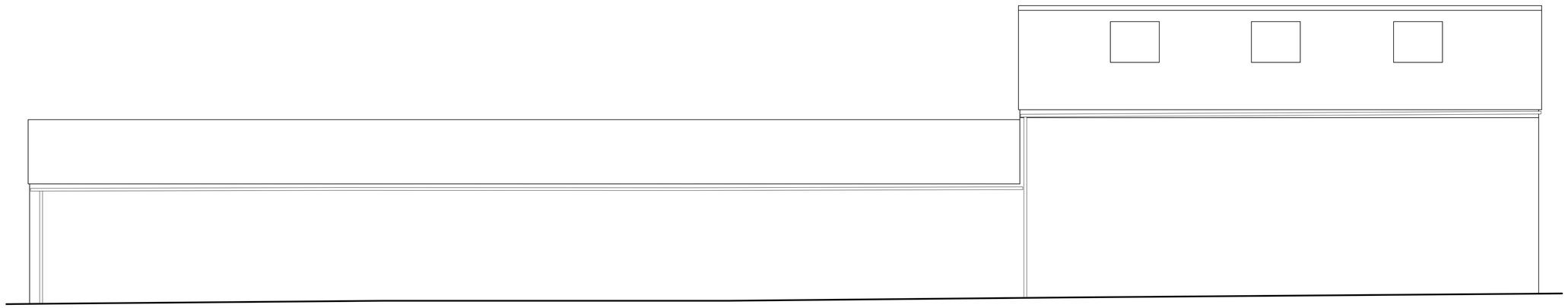

North Elevation.

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Existing Elevations

1:200 Block Plan

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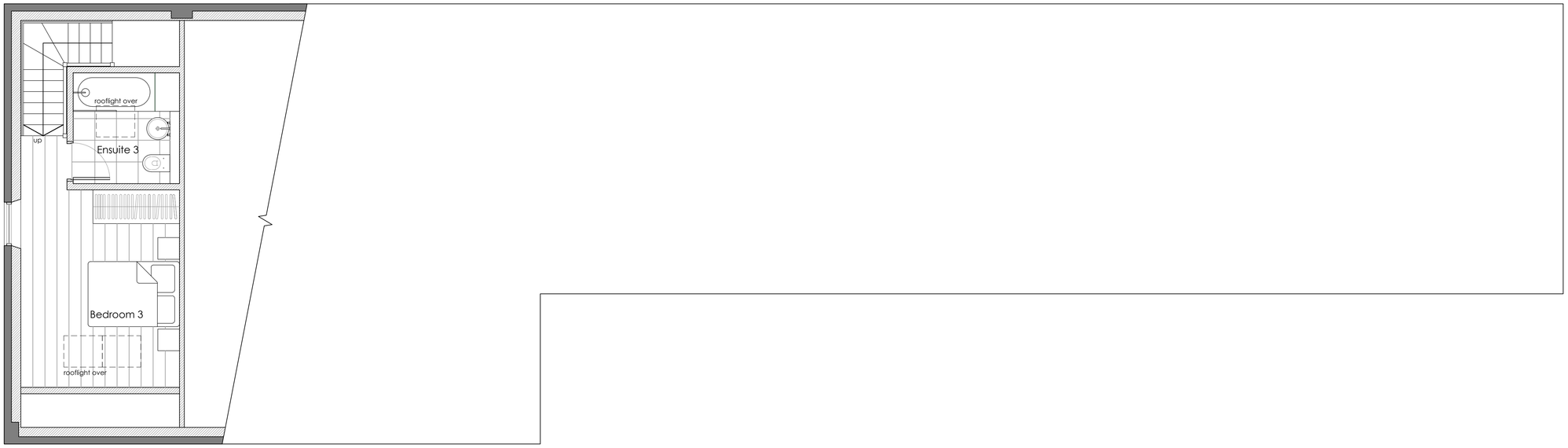
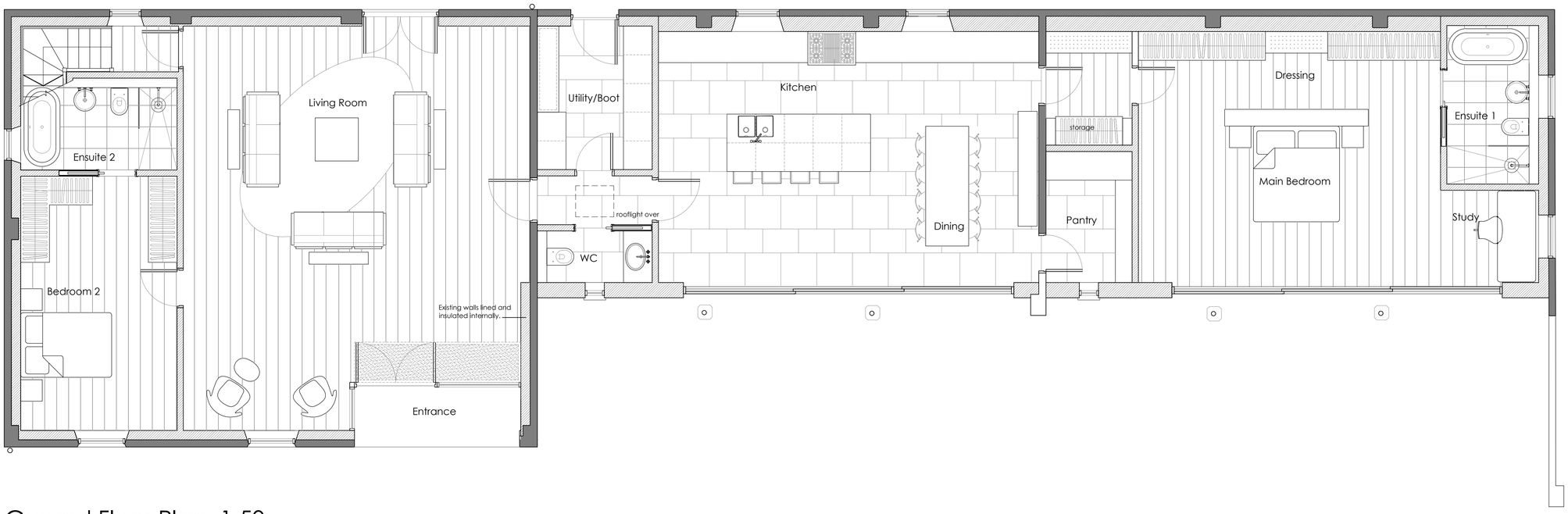
drawing title
Existing Block Plan



Mezzanine Plan. 1:50



Ground Floor Plan. 1:50

Gross internal floor area = 227m²

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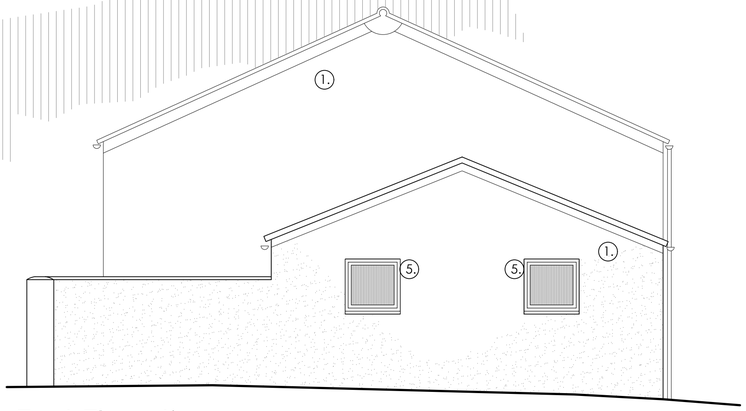
Church Farm
Lower Seagry
SN15 5EP

drawing title
Proposed Floor Plans
Floor Plans

1. Thin Coat Stone Coloured Render - Colour Johnstone's render, Chime or similar.
2. Existing Plinths
3. Random rubble stone.
4. Tata Steel Trisomet profiled roof sheets - colour Ephyra or similar
5. Powder coated aluminium framed glazing, windows and doors - Colour RAL 7044 (Seidengrau) or similar.
6. Rooflight flush with adjacent roof covering.
7. Hardwood door.
8. Existing Steel posts
9. Zinc or aluminium gutters and downpipes

South Elevation.



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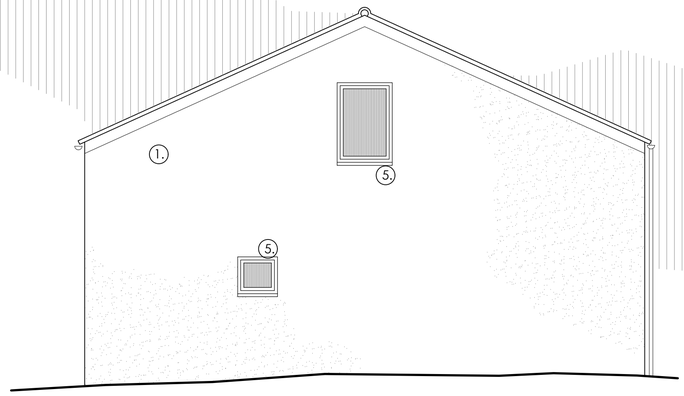

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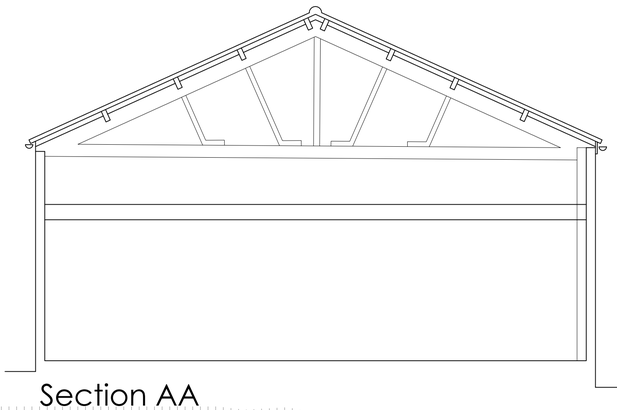

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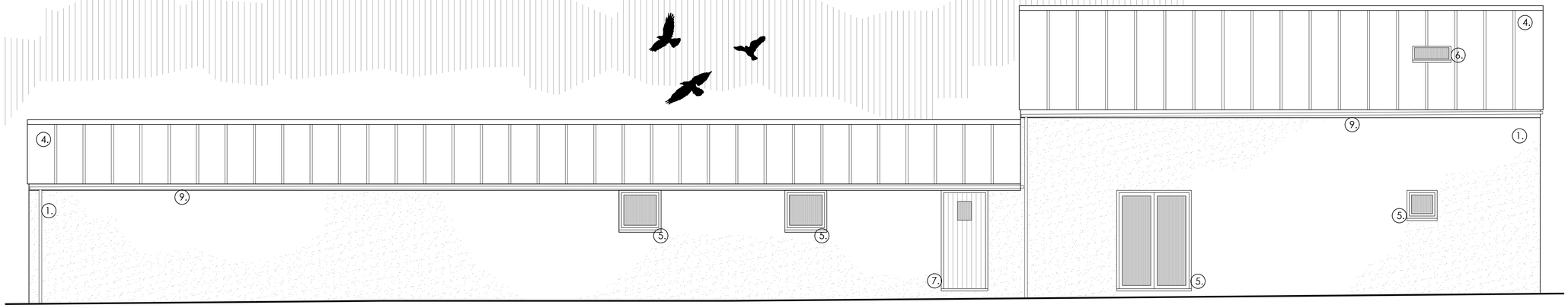

North Elevation.

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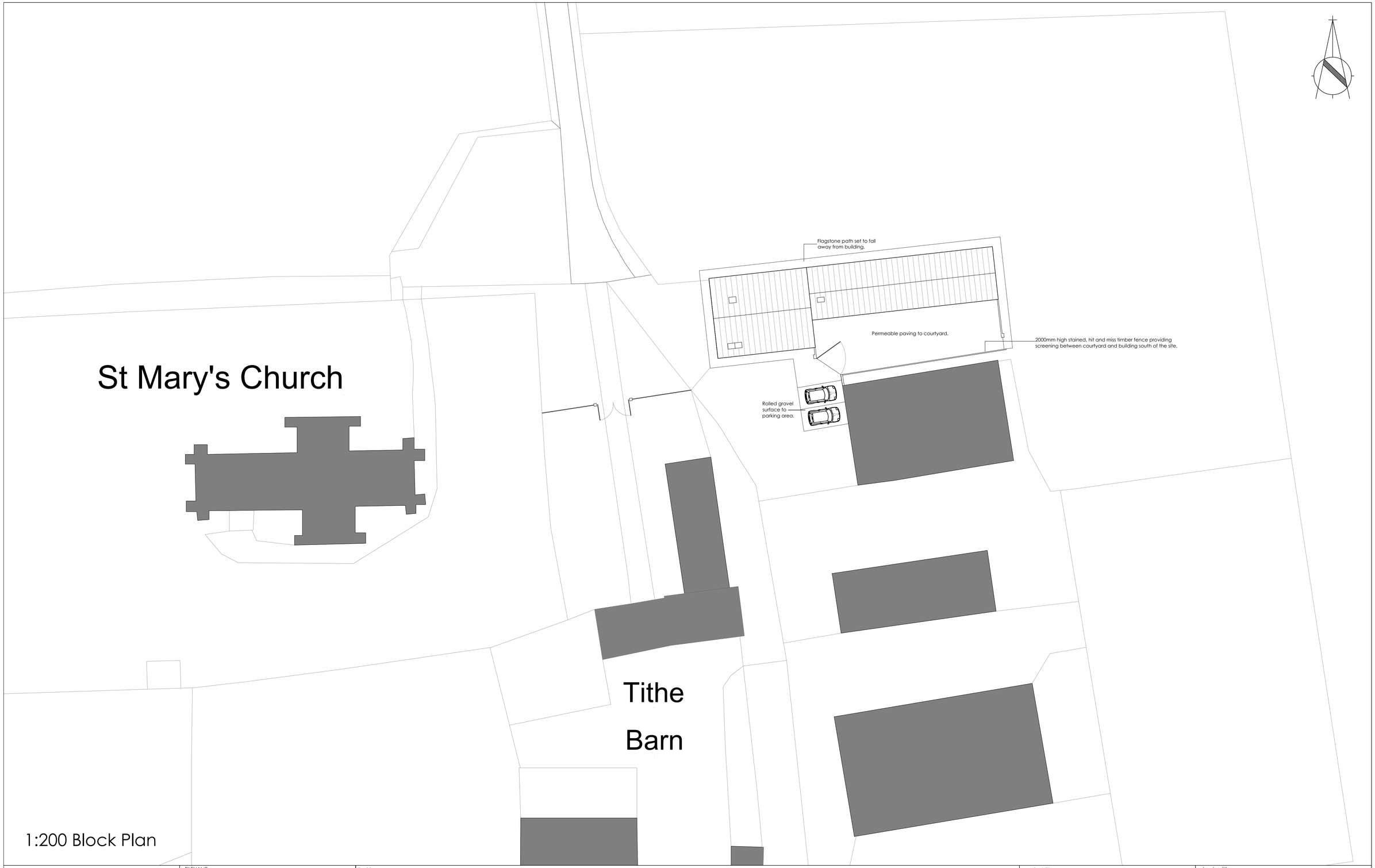

1:200 Block Plan

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drawing title
Proposed Block Plan