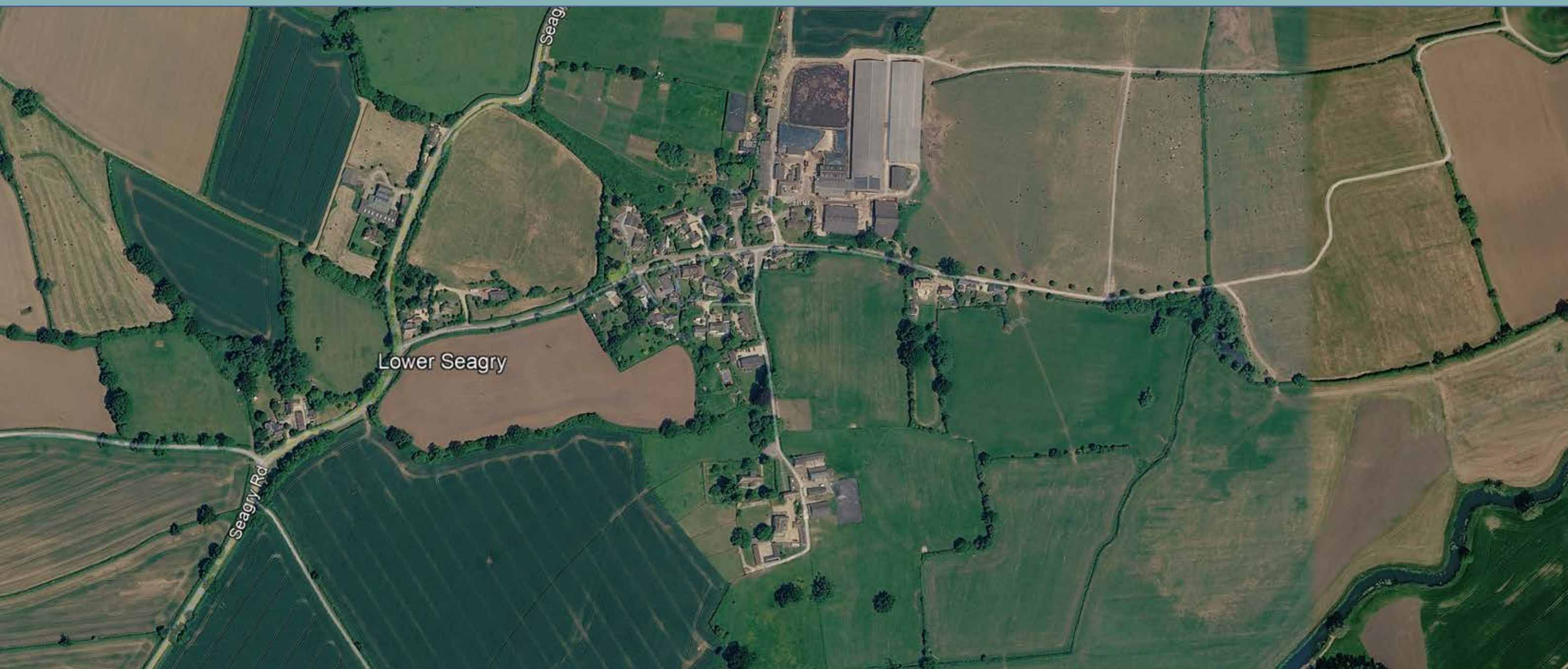


CHURCH FARM, LOWER SEAGRY, CHIPPENHAM

PROPOSED BARN CONVERSION
DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

AUGUST 2026



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Reference	: 1264 DAS 07
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Issued	: SEPTEMBER 2026

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1 INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a Full Planning Application for the conversion of an existing agricultural building The Old Cow Shed, Church Farm, Lower Seagry, Chippenham, SN15 5EP into a single self-build dwelling, together with the conversion of an adjacent existing outbuilding that will provide modest, ancillary domestic accommodation.
- 1.2 Description of Development:
"Conversion of a Class Q into Full Planning Permission for one new self-build dwelling."
- 1.3 The proposals build upon the established principle of residential conversion through the grant of Prior Approval under Class Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), application reference PL/2023/10825.
- 1.4 The grant of Prior Approval confirms the acceptability in principle of the residential use of the agricultural building and represents a material consideration in the determination of this application.
- 1.5 The proposals continue to utilise the existing agricultural building. As with both the approved Class Q scheme and the earlier, withdrawn application planning reference PL/2025/10016, the proposed development remains wholly contained within the existing building envelopes, thereby avoiding any material increase in the overall built form.
- 1.6 The proposal seeks to retain and re-use the existing agricultural structures creating a high-quality contemporary dwelling capable of meeting modern living standards.
- 1.7 Re-using the existing buildings also represents a sustainable form of development by retaining embodied carbon, reducing construction waste and making efficient use of an existing rural asset.
- 1.8 This Q Class to Full Planning Application provides an opportunity to secure a more coherent architectural solution that delivers enhanced design quality, improved functionality and accessibility, greater environmental performance and a well-considered long-term residential environment.

- 1.9 The proposals therefore represent an evolution of the approved scheme, achieving a development that continues to respond positively to its agricultural setting and respecting the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside.

- 1.10 The conversion of the buildings also provides a sustainable development opportunity. Re-using existing structures retains embodied carbon, reduces construction waste and makes efficient use of an existing rural asset. This approach is preferable to demolition and replacement and supports the long-term maintenance and beneficial use of the buildings.

PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

- 1.11 The purpose of this Design and Access Statement is to explain the evolution of the proposed development and demonstrate how the scheme has responded positively to its physical, environmental and policy context.
- 1.12 It describes the design principles that have informed the proposals and illustrates how the development has evolved to create a high-quality, sustainable and contextually appropriate place.
- 1.13 The Statement has been prepared in accordance with the Planning Practice Guidance on Design: Process and Tools and supports the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework, which places good design at the forefront of sustainable development.

- 1.14 Furthermore the proposals have also been informed by the principles of the National Design Guide and the Wiltshire Design Guide to create development that is attractive, functional, enduring and responsive to local character.

- 1.15 The document explains the site context, planning policy framework, design evolution, access strategy and sustainability considerations, demonstrating how the proposals preserve the rural character of Church Farm whilst delivering a sensitive and well-considered conversion of the existing agricultural buildings.

- 1.16 It also illustrates how the development makes efficient use of existing built assets, enhances the setting of the site and provides a high-quality home capable of meeting modern living requirements.

In preparing this Statement, regard has also been had to the principles established within the CABI publication Design and Access Statements – How to Write, Read and Use Them, particularly in demonstrating a clear design process and providing a transparent explanation of the rationale underpinning the proposals.



LOWER SEAGRY



CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

BUILT FORM AND ARCHITECTURE

SITE CONTEXT AND SETTLEMENT CHARACTER

- 1.17 Lower Seagry is a small rural hamlet within the civil parish of Seagry, Wiltshire, situated approximately 8 km north-east of Chippenham, 7.5 km south of Malmesbury and around 4.5 km from the M4 motorway.
- 1.18 The settlement forms one of two historic village components, comprising Lower Seagry and Upper Seagry, which have remained physically distinct from one another.
- 1.19 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.
- 1.20 The parish is situated within a predominantly rural landscape characterised by gently undulating farmland, mature hedgerows, scattered trees and a network of narrow country lanes. Lower Seagry retains a strong agricultural character and displays a settlement pattern that has evolved incrementally over many centuries rather than through large-scale or planned estate development.
- 1.21 The historic origins of the hamlet can be traced back to at least the medieval period, with records identifying the settlement as "Nether Seagry" during the early thirteenth century.
- 1.22 The parish also contains evidence of much earlier occupation extending to prehistoric and Saxon periods. This long period of gradual evolution is reflected in the varied architectural character, informal layout and historic farmstead pattern evident within the settlement today.
- 1.23 Lower Seagry remains relatively compact and dispersed in form, focused around the historic church and a series of farmsteads, cottages and individual dwellings arranged along a network of rural lanes.
- 1.24 The settlement does not exhibit a formal or suburban pattern of development, but instead reflects an organic rural morphology shaped by agricultural activity, historic land ownership and incremental change over time.



LOWER SEAGRY



2 ASSESSMENT



THE SITE CONTEXT





2 ASSESSMENT

- 1.25 Built form is generally low density, with individually designed buildings occupying generous plots, substantial garden areas and meaningful separation distances.
- 1.26 Mature planting, open spaces and gaps between buildings contribute to a spacious and verdant character, allowing the surrounding countryside to remain visually and physically connected to the settlement.
- 1.27 The Seagry Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2019–2036 identifies Lower Seagry as possessing a highly distinctive settlement pattern and strong local identity derived from its historic evolution and relationship with the surrounding countryside.
- 1.28 These are characteristics which the current proposals seek to respect and reinforce through the sensitive re-use of existing agricultural buildings rather than the introduction of new or unrelated built form.

LANDSCAPE SETTING

- 1.29 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.
- 1.30 The hamlet sits within a predominantly pastoral landscape where longer-distance views are often filtered or contained by vegetation, creating an intimate and enclosed rural environment.
- 1.31 The surrounding countryside is an essential component of Lower Seagry's character. It contributes significantly to the settlement's sense of place, reinforces its agricultural origins and provides a clear distinction between the built form of the hamlet and the wider rural landscape.
- 1.32 The transition between built form and countryside is generally gradual rather than abrupt.
- 1.33 Settlement edges are typically irregular, with farmsteads, gardens, paddocks, hedgerows and open land combining to create a soft and informal rural edge. This pattern reinforces the historic appearance of the village and avoids the harder, more urbanising character often associated with planned suburban development.

- 1.34 Existing hedgerows, tree belts and mature landscape features play an important role in containing views, softening built form and integrating development into the wider countryside.
- 1.35 The retention and reinforcement of this landscape structure is therefore an important design consideration for any development within or adjoining the settlement.
- 1.36 These characteristics are reflected in the arrangement of Church Farm, where buildings are grouped around existing farmyard spaces and working areas rather than being presented as formal frontage development. This established agricultural morphology has directly informed the design approach adopted within the proposals.

CHARACTER OF CHURCH FARM

- 1.37 Church Farm forms one of the principal historic farmstead groups within Lower Seagry and retains much of its traditional agricultural character.
- 1.38 The collection of barns, outbuildings and associated structures are arranged informally within the farmstead, reflecting the incremental evolution typical of historic Wiltshire agricultural holdings.
- 1.39 Although parts of the complex are no longer required for modern agricultural purposes, the buildings continue to make a positive contribution to the rural character of the site and to the wider identity of Lower Seagry.
- 1.40 Their scale, form, materiality and grouping remain legible as part of the historic agricultural development of the settlement
- 1.41 The proposed conversion seeks to retain this established agricultural character by working with the existing buildings rather than replacing them with new residential development.
- 1.42 The proposals preserve the existing scale, built envelope and farmstead arrangement, while introducing a viable long-term residential use capable of securing the continued maintenance and beneficial occupation of the buildings.
- 1.43 Importantly, the proposed development remains wholly within the existing building envelopes. As a result, the established relationship between the farmstead, the surrounding countryside and the wider settlement pattern would be preserved.

- 1.44 The approach avoids outward expansion of the built form and ensures that the proposal continues to read as the sensitive adaptation of an existing agricultural complex rather than as a new residential incursion into the countryside.

- 1.45 The design approach has therefore been informed by the particular qualities of Lower Seagry and Church Farm: its rural setting, historic settlement pattern, agricultural morphology, mature landscape structure and relationship with surrounding open countryside. The proposals represent a contextual and sustainable response which seeks to conserve these defining characteristics while enabling the long-term re-use of existing rural buildings.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

- 1.46 The historic environment forms a defining element of Lower Seagry's character and contributes significantly to the settlement's local distinctiveness, sense of place and rural identity. The hamlet retains a close relationship between its historic church, farmsteads, traditional buildings, rural lanes and surrounding agricultural landscape. Together, these features provide visible evidence of the settlement's medieval origins and its gradual evolution over time.
- 1.47 The focal point of the hamlet is the Grade II listed Church of St Mary, which occupies a prominent position within the settlement. The church, together with the surrounding historic farmsteads and agricultural buildings, establishes a strong sense of continuity within the landscape and reinforces the historic relationship between ecclesiastical, agricultural and domestic uses within Lower Seagry.

GRADE II LISTED CHURCH OF ST MARY

- 1.48 The Church of St Mary, List Entry No. 1200024, was listed Grade II in 1988 and was constructed in 1849 to the designs of J.H. Hakewill. The church is an accomplished example of Gothic Revival ecclesiastical architecture and contains a number of important historic features, including a circa 1200 stone font, fifteenth-century timber screen, medieval monuments and nineteenth-century stained glass.
- 1.49 The significance of the Church of St Mary derives from its architectural quality, historic and communal importance, evidential value as the principal religious building within the

parish, visual prominence within the settlement and its relationship with the surrounding historic village and agricultural landscape.			
1.50	Its setting is therefore not limited to the immediate churchyard, but includes the wider rural and historic context within which the church is experienced. This includes nearby farmsteads, traditional buildings, lanes, hedgerows and open countryside which together contribute to the appreciation of the church as part of a historic rural settlement.	1.56	This historic grouping remains readily legible and contributes positively to local distinctiveness and sense of place. The preservation of the established pattern of buildings, lanes, yards, boundary treatments and open countryside is therefore important in maintaining the character and significance of the area.
GRADE II LISTED TITHE BARN, CHURCH FARM		SETTING ASSESSMENT	
1.51	The Tithe Barn at Church Farm, List Entry No. 1363816, was listed Grade II in 1960 and is understood to originate from the fifteenth century. The statutory list description identifies the building as a former gatehouse range associated with the medieval grange of Bradenstoke Priory.	1.57	Historic England defines the setting of a heritage asset as the surroundings in which that asset is experienced. In this case, the setting of the Church of St Mary and the Tithe Barn is characterised by existing farm buildings and yards, agricultural land, rural lanes, hedgerows, open countryside, historic farmstead structures and the traditional built form of Lower Seagry.
1.52	The building is of high heritage significance due to its medieval origins, surviving historic masonry and structural features, association with the former priory estate, evidential value as part of the historic agricultural landscape and contribution to the wider historic farmstead group at Church Farm.	1.58	Importantly, the application site is not undeveloped land forming part of the open rural setting of the listed buildings. It is already occupied by existing agricultural buildings which form part of the established farmstead complex and contribute to the character and appearance of Church Farm.
1.53	The Tithe Barn is not experienced as an isolated heritage asset, but as part of a broader agricultural complex. Its significance is therefore closely connected to the continued legibility of the farmstead, the arrangement of buildings and yards, and the relationship between the built form and the surrounding rural landscape.	1.59	The application building therefore already forms part of the setting in which both designated heritage assets are experienced. Its retention and sensitive conversion would preserve the agricultural character of the site and maintain the established relationship between the farmstead, the listed buildings and the surrounding countryside.
SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WIDER HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT		1.60	The historic pattern of development remains readily legible through the arrangement of buildings, lanes, yards and former agricultural holdings. Traditional farm complexes continue to contribute positively to the character and appearance of the settlement by providing visual and historic links to its agricultural origins.
1.54	The significance of the designated heritage assets extends beyond the individual buildings themselves and is enhanced by their historic relationship with one another. Church Farm, the Tithe Barn and the Church of St Mary collectively illustrate the historic evolution of Lower Seagry from a medieval agricultural settlement associated with Bradenstoke Priory into the rural hamlet seen today.	1.61	The proposed development seeks to work with this established context. By retaining the existing agricultural buildings and containing the works within the existing built envelope, the proposal avoids introducing new built form into the surrounding countryside and preserves the spatial relationship between Church Farm, the Church of St Mary and the wider rural landscape.
1.55	The wider significance of the historic environment is derived from the historic farmstead grouping, the relationship between ecclesiastical and agricultural buildings, the agricultural landscape setting, the survival of traditional rural settlement patterns, and the views and spatial relationships between historic structures.	1.62	On this basis, the proposals are considered to preserve the setting and significance of the nearby designated heritage assets. The development would allow the continued beneficial use and maintenance of existing rural buildings while retaining the agricultural morphology and historic legibility of the farmstead group.
		MOVEMENT AND CONNECTIVITY	
		1.63	Lower Seagry is accessed principally via a network of narrow rural roads connecting to Great Somerford, Sutton Benger, Upper Seagry and Chippenham. The road network reflects the village's historic origins and is characterised by informal alignments, grass verges, hedged boundaries and a generally rural appearance.
		1.64	Traffic volumes are typically low, and the movement environment remains predominantly rural in character. Roads through the settlement are not heavily engineered and generally avoid urbanising features such as extensive kerbing, formal pavements, highway signage or road markings.
		1.65	Pedestrian movement is informal, reflecting the small scale of the settlement and its rural nature. Public rights of way and local footpaths provide access to the surrounding countryside and contribute to the recreational value of the area. This informal pattern of movement is an important part of the settlement's character and reinforces the close relationship between the hamlet and its rural landscape setting.
		1.66	The proposed development would utilise the existing access arrangements associated with Church Farm and would not materially alter the established movement pattern within the settlement. The proposals therefore respect the rural character of the local lane network and avoid the creation of a more suburban or urbanised access arrangement.

2 ASSESSMENT

TOWNSCAPE AND VILLAGE CHARACTER

- 1.67 The townscape and village character of Lower Seagry is defined by its historic rural settlement pattern, low-density form of development, generous plot sizes and strong relationship with the surrounding countryside.
- 1.68 Built form is generally arranged informally around lanes, farmsteads and open spaces rather than through a planned or estate-based layout.
- 1.69 Traditional buildings within the settlement commonly use locally distinctive materials including natural stone, brick, render and clay tiles. Boundary treatments, including native hedgerows, stone walls, post-and-rail fencing and mature planting, further reinforce the rural character of the hamlet.

Key characteristics that define the townscape and village character of Lower Seagry include:

- Historic rural settlement pattern focused around the church and former agricultural holdings.
 - Low-density development with generous plot sizes and significant spacing between buildings.
 - Strong visual and physical relationship between built form and the surrounding countryside.
 - Predominance of traditional materials, including natural stone, brick, render and clay tiles.
 - Mature landscape structure comprising hedgerows, trees, grass verges and informal boundaries.
 - Informal rural lanes with limited urbanising features.
 - Important views across surrounding agricultural land and towards historic buildings.
 - Presence of designated heritage assets which reinforce local distinctiveness and historic identity.
- 1.70 Using agricultural buildings, maintaining the established farmstead grouping and avoiding new outward expansion into open countryside, the scheme helps to preserve the character and appearance of Lower Seagry while securing an appropriate long-term use for existing rural buildings.



CHURCH FARM

THE SITE

- 1.71 The application site forms part of the established Church Farm complex at Lower Seagry and comprises an existing agricultural barn together with associated farm buildings and yard areas. For the sake of clarity these are identified as opposite:
- 1 - Main Barn Western Range
 - 2 - Eastern Range
 - 3 - Courtyard
 - 4 - Stable/ Byre
- 1.72 The principal building proposed for conversion occupies a contained position within the farmstead and forms part of an existing cluster of agricultural structures, rather than appearing as an isolated building within the open countryside.
- 1.73 The application site is located within the wider Church Farm holding. It is physically and functionally associated with the existing farmstead, but it does not form part of the curtilage of either the Grade II Listed Church of St Mary or the Grade II Listed Tithe Barn.
- 1.74 The site is already occupied by existing agricultural buildings and therefore forms part of the established built context of the farm rather than undeveloped countryside.
- 1.75 The site is not located within a Conservation Area, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty / National Landscape, Site of Special Scientific Interest or identified floodplain.
- 1.76 The wider setting is nevertheless sensitive by virtue of its rural character, relationship with nearby heritage assets and position within the historic settlement pattern of Lower Seagry.
- 1.77 The site area remains unchanged from the previous application and measures 0.1ha.
- 1.78 The existing buildings are agricultural in character, form and appearance.
- 1.79 Their scale, siting and relationship with the surrounding farmstead are typical of functional rural buildings which have evolved as part of the agricultural landscape.



- 1.80 The proposed development seeks to work with these existing characteristics, retaining the established built envelope and farmstead arrangement while securing a viable long-term use for the building that is no longer required.

Previous Planning Applications

- 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

PLANNING HISTORY

- 1.81 The Old Cow Shed benefits from Prior Approval under Class Q of Part 3, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, under application reference PL/2023/10825, for the conversion of an agricultural building to a dwellinghouse.
- 1.82 The Class Q approval is an important material consideration in the determination of this application. It establishes that the principle of residential conversion of the agricultural building has already been accepted and that the building is capable of being converted to residential use.

The prior approval confirmed, in principle, that:

- The building is capable of conversion.
- The existing structure is suitable for conversion to residential use. Residential occupation of the building is acceptable in principle.
- The proposed access arrangements are acceptable.

4 DESIGN

- The conversion would not give rise to unacceptable impacts in relation to heritage, highways, flooding, contamination, noise or landscape character.
- Established fallback position.
- It does not seek to introduce a new dwelling in open countryside, but instead proposes an alternative and more comprehensive design solution for the re-use of existing agricultural buildings within the established farmstead.
- The proposals provide an opportunity to secure a higher-quality and more coherent long-term residential conversion than would otherwise be delivered through the permitted development fallback.
- The application therefore represents a positive evolution of the approved Class Q scheme, retaining the same fundamental principle of re-use while allowing matters of design, sustainability, landscape and heritage setting to be considered in a more holistic manner.

OPPORTUNITIES

- 1.83 The site presents a clear opportunity to deliver a sensitive and sustainable conversion which responds directly to the established character of Church Farm and Lower Seagry.
- 1.84 The existing agricultural buildings provide an appropriate basis for residential re-use, allowing a new dwelling to be created without the need for substantial new built form within the countryside.
- 1.85 The proposal provides an opportunity to create a distinctive home with a strong sense of place and local identity.
- 1.86 By retaining the agricultural form, scale and arrangement of the existing buildings, the scheme can sit comfortably within the existing farmstead and preserve the character of the wider rural setting.
- 1.87 The site also provides the opportunity to deliver a flexible and adaptable self-build dwelling capable of meeting the changing needs of its occupants over time. The existing building envelope allows for generous internal accommodation while preserving the external scale and agricultural character of the building.
- 1.88 The proposals can also contribute positively to the local economy. Construction works would support local contractors, suppliers and

trades, while future occupants would contribute to the vitality of local services and enterprises.

- 1.89 There is also an opportunity to strengthen the landscape and ecological value of the site through supplementary native planting, improved boundary treatment, biodiversity enhancements and careful integration of domestic curtilage within the existing farmstead setting.
- 1.90 These measures would help reinforce existing landscape structure, improve habitat connectivity and soften the visual appearance of the development within its rural context.

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

- 1.91 The proposed development would provide economic, social and environmental benefits consistent with the objectives of sustainable development.
- 1.92 In economic terms, the development would support construction activity, local employment and supply chain expenditure.
- 1.93 The occupation of the dwelling would also introduce household expenditure into the local area, supporting nearby services, businesses and community facilities.
- 1.94 In social terms, the proposal would provide a new self-build dwelling and contribute, albeit modestly, to the diversity of local housing choice.
- 1.95 The creation of a permanent home within the settlement would support the continued vitality of the local community and make beneficial use of existing rural buildings which might otherwise remain underused.
- 1.96 In environmental terms, the proposal would secure the re-use of existing buildings, reducing the need for new construction and retaining the embodied carbon within the existing structure.
- 1.97 The scheme would incorporate appropriate sustainable design measures, including high levels of energy efficiency, electric vehicle charging, secure cycle storage and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement.
- 1.98 The development would therefore create a durable, resilient and resource-efficient dwelling while preserving the rural character of the site.

CONSTRAINTS

- 1.99 The rural character of the site requires the proposal to respond carefully to the surroundings in terms of scale, massing, materials, architectural language and landscape treatment.
- 1.100 The design should avoid suburbanising the appearance of the farmstead and instead preserve the agricultural character of the existing buildings.
- 1.101 The proximity of nearby heritage assets, including the Grade II Listed Church of St Mary and Grade II Listed Tithe Barn, requires careful consideration of setting, views, spatial relationships and the historic legibility of the wider farmstead group. The proposal must ensure that the significance of these assets is preserved.
- 1.102 The site's position within the existing farmstead also requires careful consideration of access, servicing, parking, domestic curtilage and boundary treatments. These elements must be integrated sensitively so that the completed development continues to read as part of the historic agricultural complex rather than as a conventional suburban dwelling.
- 1.103 Existing topography, drainage, services and underground utilities will need to be considered through the detailed design and construction process.
- 1.104 Highway safety
- 1.105 Ecology and biodiversity are important considerations. Existing habitats, boundary features and landscape structure should be protected during construction and enhanced where possible through new planting and appropriate biodiversity measures.
- 1.106 The proposals must also respond to local Design Guidance including the adopted Wiltshire development plan, Wiltshire Design Guide, the Seagry Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2019–2036 and the Seagry Community Design Guide.
- 1.107 These documents place importance in shaping and preserving local distinctiveness, rural character, landscape sensitivity, good design and the preservation of the historic environment.
- 1.108 Taken together, these and the opportunities and constraints should lead to a design approach focused on retention, sensitive adaptation and contextual enhancement.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

1.109 The design process has been informed by a clear understanding of the opportunities and constraints presented by the site, its rural setting, planning history and relationship with the wider historic farmstead. These factors have shaped the scale, form, appearance, access arrangements, landscape approach and sustainability strategy for the proposed development.

The primary design considerations include:

- The opportunity to re-use existing agricultural buildings in a sustainable and contextually appropriate manner.
- The need to preserve the rural and agricultural character of Church Farm.
- The relationship of the site with nearby designated heritage assets.
- The need to avoid outward expansion of built form into the surrounding countryside.
- The visual amenity of the site and its wider landscape setting.
- The requirement to provide a high-quality dwelling which is adaptable, energy efficient and suitable for modern living.
- The need to protect and enhance existing ecological features.
- The requirement to respond positively to the Wiltshire development plan, the Seagry Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2019–2036 and the Seagry Community Design Guide.



4 DESIGN

2.1 The design approach has been informed by the established rural character of Lower Seagry, the agricultural identity of Church Farm and the design principles set out within the Seagry Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2019–2036 and the Seagry Community Design Statement.

2.2 The Seagry Parish Neighbourhood Plan recognises that design quality is of particular importance because both Upper and Lower Seagry are highly distinctive in terms of their settlement pattern and buildings.

2.3 The Seagry Community Design Statement similarly emphasises that the relationship of any new building to the character of its surroundings is influenced not only by the design of the building itself, but also by its siting, scale, materials, landscape setting and relationship with neighbouring buildings.

2.4 The proposals have therefore been developed as a contextual response to the existing farmstead rather than as a new residential intervention in the countryside.

2.5 The scheme is based upon the retention and conversion of existing agricultural buildings and represents the continued evolution and beneficial re-use of Church Farm, rather than the introduction of new built development within a previously undeveloped location.

The design seeks to retain the simple agricultural character of the buildings while introducing the elements necessary to enable comfortable, efficient and adaptable residential occupation.

2.6 In this respect, the proposal follows the principle identified within the Seagry Community Design Statement that new design should respect the specific context of its site while also being clearly of its time.

RETENTION OF AGRICULTURAL CHARACTER

2.7 A central principle of the design approach is the retention of the existing “agricultural form and character” of the buildings; this reflects both the Q class application and the recently withdrawn application.

2.8 The proposed conversion works with the established built envelope and retains the fundamental qualities that allow the building to be understood as part of the wider farmstead.

2.9 The proposals retain the existing footprint, ridge heights, eaves heights, building proportions and overall agricultural massing. The scheme does not seek to enlarge the building materially or alter its form. As a result, the building will continue to read as a converted rural structure..

2.10 The external treatment has been carefully considered to preserve the agricultural character of the building while accommodating the functional requirements of residential use. New openings have been kept proportionate and controlled, reusing existing openings where possible. The proposed material palette has been selected to reflect the robust and simple character of agricultural buildings within the locality.

RESPECT FOR LOCAL CHARACTER

2.11 Lower Seagry is characterised by a combination of historic cottages, farmhouses, agricultural buildings, stone boundary walls, hedgerows, mature planting and narrow rural lanes.

2.12 Buildings are generally modest in scale and are commonly formed from simple pitched roof forms, robust materials and restrained detailing.

2.13 The proposed conversion acknowledges these local characteristics through the retention of simple roof forms, controlled fenestration, traditional and agricultural materials, and a restrained architectural language. The intention is not to create a suburban barn style dwelling within the farmstead, but to retain the legibility of the existing agricultural building while adapting it for a viable long-term use.

2.14 The resulting development would therefore remain rooted in the character of Church Farm and the wider rural settlement. Its appearance would reflect the agricultural origins of the building while allowing the conversion to provide a high-quality contemporary home.

4 DESIGN

SUSTAINABLE RE-USE

- 2.15
- The re-use of the existing agricultural buildings is a sustainable form of development. The proposals make efficient use of existing built fabric and avoids the need for a new dwelling to be constructed elsewhere within the countryside. The partial retention of the existing structure helps to reduce embodied carbon, minimise demolition and construction waste, conserve rural building stock and reduce pressure for greenfield development.
- 2.16
- This approach also supports the long-term maintenance and beneficial use of existing rural buildings which might otherwise become underused or fall into disrepair.
- 2.17
- The proposed dwelling will also incorporate appropriate sustainable design measures, including enhanced thermal performance, efficient building services, electric vehicle charging provision and secure cycle storage. These measures will assist in creating a durable, energy-efficient and resilient dwelling suitable for long-term occupation.

DESIGN EVOLUTION AND CLASS Q FALLBACK

- 2.18
- The approved Class Q scheme established the principle of converting the agricultural building and represents and provides a fallback position for residential use of the building.
- 2.19
- Whilst Class Q provides an important mechanism for the re-use of rural buildings, its permitted development framework can restrict opportunities to achieve better standards of architectural design, residential amenity, sustainability and long-term place-making.
- 2.20
- The withdrawn scheme sought to improve upon the approved Class Q position by delivering a more enhanced energy efficiency, better long-term adaptability and a stronger relationship between the dwelling, annex/ garage and its farmstead setting.
- 2.21
- This proposed scheme has been designed to build upon these principles and incorporate accessible-adaptable accommodation, including Part M4(2) within the constraints of converting an existing agricultural building.
- 2.22
- The layout provides accessible circulation, ground floor living accommodation, ground floor bedroom and bathroom provision, and flexibility to respond to the changing needs of occupants over time.

2.23 Importantly, the proposals remain firmly based upon the approved Q Class conversion and do not seek to introduce a materially larger dwelling or fundamentally alter the established scale, footprint or envelope of development.

2.24 The proposal should therefore be considered as a positive, natural evolution of the approved Class Q fallback, delivering a higher-quality and more sustainable permanent planning outcome.

AMOUNT

2.25 The amount of development remains closely related to the existing agricultural buildings and the approved Class Q conversion. The proposal does not seek to introduce substantial new built form, but instead reuses the existing building envelopes.

2.26	SCHEME	ELEMENT	
		FOOTPRINT	FLOOR AREA (GIA)
	A Q Class	238m²	217m²
	B Withdrawn Scheme	238m²	256.5m²
	C Proposed Scheme	238m²	253m²
	Schemes B/C Annex	98.2m²	82m²
	Number of dwellings 1 to schemes A, B, C. Ancillary accommodation (4) to schemes B+C		
	The proposed ancillary accommodation (4) within the existing outbuilding will remain subordinate to the main dwelling (1+2) in scale, use and function. It will be used only for purposes ancillary to the main dwelling and will not form a separate residential unit.		

BUILDING LAYOUT

- 2.27
- The proposed layout follows the established principles of the approved Class Q conversion while refining the internal arrangement to provide a more coherent, functional and adaptable home.
- 2.28
- Internal accommodation has been designed to provide a clear organisation of spaces, functional living areas, good natural daylight and ventilation, and strong visual connections



with the surrounding countryside and farmstead setting.

- 2.29
- The arrangement of accommodation makes effective use of the existing building proportions, without the need to extend beyond the established envelope.
- 2.30
- The dwelling will provide adaptable modern family accommodation while respecting the form and character of the existing agricultural structures.
- 2.31
- The adjacent outbuilding will be converted to provide ancillary domestic accommodation associated with the main dwelling. This accommodation will remain functionally linked to the principal dwelling and subordinate in both scale and purpose. It will not operate as an independent dwelling.

SCALE

- 2.32
- The proposals retain the overall scale established by the existing agricultural building and the approved Class Q scheme. No significant increase in height, footprint or massing is proposed.
- The retention of the existing ridge height, eaves height, footprint and simple building proportions ensures that the development remains consistent with the agricultural character of the farmstead. The converted building would continue to sit comfortably within the existing cluster of farm buildings and would not appear as an enlarged or intrusive form of development.

APPEARANCE

- 2.33
- The appearance of the development has been designed to reflect the agricultural origins of the building. The proposed material palette is simple, robust and appropriate to the rural setting.
- 2.34
- Materials include lime render to the Western Range (A), contrasting timber elements to the Eastern range (B), metal profiled roofing or an equivalent agricultural roofing material, and high performance powder-coated aluminium windows and doors. The detailed choice of materials can be secured through condition to ensure delivery of an appropriate and high-quality finish.
- 2.35
- The palette has been selected to complement the rural setting and ensure that the converted building retains an honest agricultural character. The design avoids overly domestic detailing and instead uses a restrained approach that reflects the building's original function and farmstead context.
- 2.36
- The introduction of new openings has been carefully considered to minimise visual impact while ensuring appropriate levels of daylight, ventilation and outlook for future occupants. Openings are positioned and proportioned to respect the simple character of the existing elevations to avoid a suburban appearance.

LANDSCAPING

- 2.37
- The site benefits from an established rural setting, with existing landscape features, hedgerows and boundary planting contributing to the character and containment of the farmstead. These features will be retained where possible.
- 2.38
- Additional planting will be introduced to reinforce the existing landscape structure, improve biodiversity and help integrate the converted dwelling within its rural surroundings. Native planting will be used where appropriate, reflecting the established wider landscape.
- 2.39
- The landscape strategy seeks to ensure that the dwelling remains visually connected to its agricultural and farmstead context.

Domestic garden areas, parking, access and boundary treatments should be designed carefully to avoid suburbanising the appearance of the farmstead.

- 2.40
- Vehicular access to the site will utilise the existing farm access arrangements. The Class Q approval previously confirmed the acceptability of the access arrangements, and no material alterations are proposed as part of this application.
- 2.41
- Adequate parking and turning space will be provided within the site allowing vehicles to enter and leave safely. Parking areas will be designed and surfaced in a manner appropriate to the rural farmstead setting, avoiding overly engineered or urbanising treatments.

PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

- 2.42
- Pedestrian access will be available from the existing access point. Routes around the dwelling have been considered to provide safe and convenient movement between the parking area, entrance points, garden areas and ancillary accommodation.
- 2.43
- The pedestrian environment will remain informal and rural in character, consistent with the wider movement pattern of Lower Seagry.

INCLUSIVE ACCESS

- 2.44
- The dwelling has been designed with accessibility and future adaptability in mind to meet the requirements of M4(2). The proposals incorporate level or gently graded access, accessible circulation, ground floor bedroom and bathroom accommodation, and flexibility to accommodate the changing needs of occupants over time.



4 DESIGN

REFUSE AND RECYCLING

- 2.45 As shown on the accompanying proposed site plan, dedicated hardstanding will be provided for refuse and recycling storage in appropriate containers.
- 2.46 Collection will be by roadside service as per existing local collection practices.

5 SUSTAINABILITY

SUSTAINABILITY

- 2.47 The proposed development has been designed to incorporate sustainable resource use through the re-use of existing buildings, improved building fabric, energy-efficient construction principles and measures intended to reduce operational energy demand.
- 2.48 The conversion of the existing agricultural buildings represents a sustainable form of development in itself. By retaining and adapting existing structures, the proposal reduces the need for new built form, retains embodied carbon, limits demolition and construction waste, and makes efficient use of an existing rural asset.
- 2.49 The scheme will incorporate energy-efficient building fabric, high-performance insulation, improved fenestration and efficient building services. Low-carbon technologies, including air source heat pumps, will further support the creation of a sustainable dwelling and assist in reducing carbon emissions over the lifetime of the development.
- 2.50 The design and construction of the scheme will therefore contribute to the three pillars of sustainability: economic, social and environmental.

THE PILLARS OF SUSTAINABILITY

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

- 2.51 The proposed development would support economic sustainability through construction activity, local employment and the use of local skills, suppliers and trades wherever practicable. The construction phase would generate expenditure within the local economy, while the future occupation of the dwelling would

support local services, businesses and enterprises.

- 2.52 The proposal would also secure the beneficial long-term use of existing rural buildings, helping to preserve the value and function of the Church Farm complex.

SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

- 2.53 The development would provide a new self-build dwelling and contribute to local housing choice within the rural settlement.
- 2.54 The creation of a permanent home within an existing building would support the continued vitality of the local community and help sustain local services and community facilities.
- 2.55 The dwelling has been designed to provide adaptable modern accommodation capable of responding to the changing needs of occupants over time. The provision of accessible ground floor accommodation, good internal circulation and a strong relationship with external amenity space will contribute positively to quality of life and long-term usability.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIODIVERSITY SUSTAINABILITY

- 2.56 The environmental benefits of the proposal derive principally from the re-use of the existing agricultural buildings. Retaining the existing structure reduces embodied carbon, minimises

construction waste and avoids the need for a new dwelling to be built on previously undeveloped land.

- 2.57 The scheme will adopt a fabric-first approach, with improved insulation, high-performance windows and doors, and careful detailing to reduce heat loss and long-term energy demand. Water-efficient fittings, including dual-flush WCs and flow-regulated taps and showers, will be incorporated to reduce water consumption.
- 2.58 During construction, waste will be managed, sorted and recycled wherever practicable, with the aim of minimising unnecessary waste arising from the works. Materials will be selected with regard to durability, suitability, environmental performance and appropriateness to the rural farmstead setting.
- 2.59 The proposals also provide opportunities for biodiversity enhancement through the retention of existing landscape features, supplementary native planting and the introduction of habitat features such as bird boxes, bat boxes and insect habitats. These measures will help improve ecological value and strengthen habitat connectivity within the wider rural landscape.

ENERGY CONSUMPTION



- 2.60 The proposed dwelling will be designed to reduce operational energy demand through a combination of passive design principles, improved building fabric and efficient building services.
- 2.61 The orientation and existing form of the building will allow the dwelling to benefit from natural daylight and controlled solar gain. New windows and rooflights provide good levels of daylight, ventilation and outlook while respecting the agricultural character of the building.
- 2.62 The surrounding landscape and farmstead context will provide a degree of shelter, helping to reduce exposure to prevailing winds and associated heat loss. The combination of aspect glazing, rooflights and openable windows will assist with natural ventilation and contribute to a comfortable internal environment.
- 2.63 Low-carbon heating, including air source heat pump technology, will be incorporated. Electric vehicle charging provision will also be provided within the site. A PV array is discretely located on the Byre roof screened from the Church adn Tithe Barn.
- WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
- 2.64 The scheme will seek to minimise potable water consumption through the use of water-efficient sanitary fittings, flow-regulated taps and showers, and dual-flush WCs. The detailed specification will be developed to meet Building Regulations requirements and, where achievable, to limit per capita water consumption to 120 litres or less per day.
- 2.65 Opportunities for rainwater attenuation and rainwater harvesting



will be considered as part of the detailed drainage and landscape strategy.

SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE

- 2.66 Hardstanding areas will be designed to reduce surface water run-off where practicable through permeable surfaces.
- 2.67 Surface water drainage will be designed to respond to the existing site conditions and will incorporate sustainable drainage principles where feasible.

CYCLE FACILITIES AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING

- 2.68 Secure cycle storage will be provided within the plot, within the appropriate ancillary building. This will encourage sustainable travel choices and provide practical storage for residents.
- 2.69 Electric vehicle charging provision will also be incorporated within the site, supporting the transition to low-emission transport.

AIR, NOISE AND LIGHT POLLUTION

- 2.70 Construction impacts will be managed through good site practices, including appropriate working hours, dust control, waste management and consideration for neighbouring occupiers.
- 2.71 External lighting will be carefully controlled to avoid unnecessary light spill and to preserve the rural character of the site. This approach will assist in protecting nocturnal wildlife.

- 2.72 The completed development is residential in nature and is not expected to give rise to significant noise, air quality or amenity impacts.

WASTE AND RECYCLING

- 2.73 Waste production during construction will be limited through careful material ordering, reuse of materials where practicable and appropriate sorting and recycling of construction waste.
- 2.74 On-plot provision will be made for the storage of refuse and recyclable waste in appropriate containers, as shown on the accompanying drawings. The storage area will be conveniently located for residents and designed to avoid visual harm to the farmstead setting.

MATERIALS

- 2.75 Material choice and sourcing are important elements of the sustainability strategy. Materials will be selected for their durability, environmental performance, compatibility with the existing agricultural buildings and suitability within the rural setting of Church Farm.

- 2.76 Where practicable, locally sourced materials and local construction skills will be used in order to reduce transport impacts and support the local economy. Timber products should be obtained from certified sustainable sources, and other materials should be selected with regard to their lifecycle performance, maintenance requirements and environmental credentials.

- 2.77 The proposed material palette will also contribute to sustainability by ensuring that the building remains robust, durable and appropriate to its rural context.

FLOOD RISK

- 2.78 The site is not located within an identified floodplain. The proposed development will nevertheless manage surface water appropriately through the use of suitable drainage measures and permeable external surfaces where practicable.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- 2.79 The proposed dwelling has been designed to provide a high-quality living environment with good levels of natural daylight, outlook and ventilation. Windows and rooflights



4 DESIGN

will help create bright internal spaces, while openable fenestration will provide natural and controllable ventilation.

2.80 The internal layout will provide functional and adaptable accommodation, with appropriate levels of privacy between spaces. The relationship with external amenity areas, views across the rural setting and access to open air will contribute positively to the wellbeing of future occupants.

2.81 The use of high-quality insulation, efficient heating systems and carefully considered ventilation will assist in creating a comfortable and healthy internal environment throughout the year.

PLANNING BALANCE AND SUMMARY

2.82 The proposal represents a sensitive and sustainable form of development and this builds directly upon the established planning position at Church Farm.

2.83 The principle of residential conversion has already been accepted through the grant of Prior Approval under Class Q, which confirmed the suitability of the existing agricultural building for conversion to residential use. This represents a significant material consideration in the determination of the current application.

2.84 The current Full Planning Application does not seek to introduce a new dwelling into open countryside or extend the built form of the farmstead into previously undeveloped land. Instead, it proposes the retention, adaptation and beneficial re-use of existing agricultural buildings within the established Church Farm complex.

2.85 The development therefore represents the continued evolution of the farmstead rather than a new residential incursion into the rural landscape.

2.86 The proposals remain firmly related to the approved Class Q fallback position. The existing footprint, ridge height, eaves height, overall scale and agricultural proportions of the principal building are retained.

2.87 The scheme would not result in a materially larger or more intrusive form of development than the approved conversion, but would allow a more considered, coherent and high-quality design solution to be secured through the Full Planning process

2.88 Substantial weight should be given to the benefits of re-using the existing rural building stock.

2.89 The proposal would retain embodied carbon, reduce demolition and construction waste, avoid unnecessary new-build development and secure the long-term maintenance and occupation of buildings which form part of the established agricultural character of Church Farm.

2.90 This is a positive and sustainable approach which accords with national and local planning objectives for the effective use of existing buildings and resources.

2.91 The design has been informed by the distinctive character of Lower Seagry, the agricultural identity of Church Farm and the principles set out within the Seagry Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2019–2036 and the Seagry Community Design Statement.

2.92 The proposal respects the site's rural context through the retention of the existing building envelope, simple agricultural forms, restrained detailing and appropriate materials.

2.93 The development would preserve the character and appearance of the wider farmstead and would continue to read as the conversion of an existing rural building. It would avoid suburbanising the site and would maintain the established relationship between built form, farmyard spaces and landscape.

2.94 The nearby designated heritage assets, including the Grade II Listed Church of St Mary and Grade II Listed Tithe Barn at Church Farm, are important components of the historic environment of Lower Seagry.

2.95 The proposal has been designed to preserve its' setting and significance by retaining the agricultural morphology of the site and avoiding new outward expansion of built form.

2.96 The application site is already occupied by existing agricultural buildings forming part of the context in which the wider farmstead and nearby heritage assets are experienced. The proposals would therefore have no materially greater impact on heritage significance than the approved Class Q scheme and would preserve the historic legibility of the farmstead group.

2.97 The proposal would also deliver a range of economic, social and environmental benefits. It would provide a new self-build dwelling, contribute to local housing choice, support construction

activity and local supply chains, and introduce future household expenditure into the local area.

2.98 Environmentally, the scheme would improve the performance of the existing building fabric, incorporate low-carbon technologies, provide electric vehicle charging and secure opportunities for biodiversity enhancement through new planting and habitat measures.

2.99 The dwelling has been designed to provide high-quality, adaptable and energy-efficient accommodation capable of meeting modern living standards.

2.100 The inclusion of accessible ground floor accommodation, good internal circulation, natural daylight, ventilation and strong connections to external amenity space will create a functional and durable home suitable for long-term occupation.

2.101 Any limited change arising from the domestic re-use of the buildings needs to be considered in the context of the extant Class Q approval. That fallback position establishes that residential use of the principal agricultural building is acceptable in principle.

2.102 The current application provides an opportunity to secure an improved design outcome, with greater control over materials, detailing, sustainability, landscape integration, access, servicing and long-term management.

2.103 In planning balance terms, the proposal offers clear and substantive benefits.

2.104 It would secure the beneficial re-use of existing agricultural buildings, preserve the agricultural character of Church Farm, respect the historic and rural qualities of Lower Seagry, deliver a high-quality self-build dwelling and provide a more comprehensive design solution than the permitted development fallback.

2.105 Overall, the development represents a logical, sustainable and high-quality evolution of the approved Class Q scheme.

2.106 The scheme responds positively to the site's context, preserves the character and appearance of the farmstead and wider rural setting, safeguards the significance of nearby heritage assets and accords with the objectives of national and local planning policy.