

DESIGN STATEMENT FOR EDUCATIONAL BUILDING AND VISITOR TOILETS FOR LOWER MOOR, OAKSEY

INTRODUCTION

This Design Statement is submitted in support of the planning application for a replacement visitor building at Lower Moor, Oaksey. The principle of development and the core necessity to provide a functional visitor facility at this site have already been robustly demonstrated and formally accepted under the previously approved application (Ref: N/06/01561/FUL). This proposal seeks to optimize that established need through a highly sustainable, low-impact and climate-resilient architectural solution.

PREVIOUS VISITOR BUILDING

Sadly the previous timber frame building did not stand the test of time and became structural unsafe forcing Wiltshire Wildlife to demolish the building in November 2024 for public safety.

Photographs of previous visitor building before it was removed.



DESIGN PHILOSOPHY AND FOUNDATION REUSE

The overarching design strategy prioritizes environmental stewardship, structural efficiency, and water resilience. The proposed building is engineered to be built directly over and utilize the site's existing concrete pad foundations. By anchoring the new structure precisely to this existing asset network, the project achieves major environmental benefits:

- **Zero Ground Disturbance:** It completely avoids new excavation, eliminating the risk of disrupting local subterranean ecology, soil structures, or root systems.
- **Embodied Carbon Reduction:** By reusing the existing concrete mass, the development significantly lowers its carbon footprint compared to a traditional new-build project.
- **Site Efficiency:** Construction timelines and heavy machinery requirements are drastically minimized, reducing localized noise and traffic.



FLOOD RESILIENCE AND ELEVATION

In response to local hydrological conditions, the building has been designed to maximize flood resilience. Rather than altering the local topography or filling the floodplain, the design cleverly utilizes the existing pad foundations to elevate the entire structure.

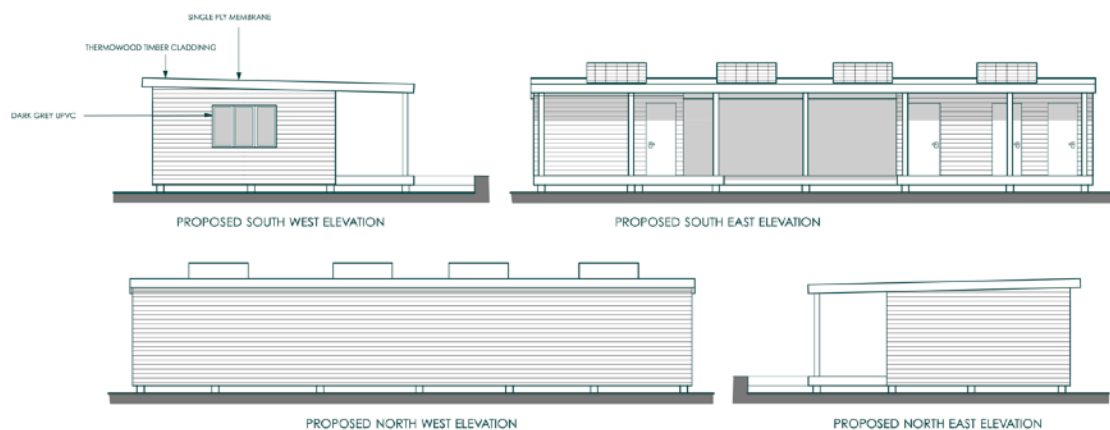
- **Elevated Floor Level:** The finished floor level (FFL) will be set approximately **520mm above ground level**, raising the usable areas safely above the flood level.

- **Floodable Undercroft Void:** By raising the building on the existing pads, an open, floodable void is maintained beneath the structure. This allows any potential floodwaters to flow freely through the undercroft without displacing water onto neighboring land or reducing the overall capacity of the localized floodplain.

MATERIALS, SCALE, AND APPEARANCE

The scale and massing of the replacement building has been carefully designed to align with the existing pad foundations while respecting the rural aesthetic of Lower Moor, Oaksey.

- **Materials:** The external walls will feature high-quality thermally treated softwood cladding (Thermowood). This material is chosen for its enhanced dimensional stability, resistance to decay, and sustainability. The timber will be allowed to naturally silver and weather over time, enabling the building to organically blend into its woodland and rural context.
- **Roofing:** A lightweight, durable single-ply membrane roof will provide excellent long-term weatherproofing while keeping the structural load minimal.
- **Scale:** The low-profile roof design ensures the building remains visually submissive within the sensitive landscape.



ACCESSIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

- **Access:** Fully compliant, step-free access strategies—such as integrated ramps will bridge the 520mm elevation from the existing site pathways, ensuring the visitor building remains welcoming and inclusive for all members of the public.

- **Renewable Energy:** The roof will host a **3kW solar panel array**, generating clean on-site energy to offset operational demands and meet sustainable building objectives.

CONCLUSION

This proposal represents a highly responsible, sustainable approach to development at Lower Moor. By reusing the existing pad foundations, allowing the timber to age naturally, and raising the floor level by 520mm to secure flood resilience, the scheme fulfills a proven community need with minimal environmental and visual impact. We respectfully request that planning permission be granted.