COTSWOLD
District Council

5 May 2026

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PLANNING AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Planning and Licensing Committee will be held in the Council Chamber - Council Offices, Trinity Road, Cirencester, GL7 1PX on **Wednesday, 13 May 2026 at 2.00 pm.**

Jane Portman
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Planning and Licensing Committee
(Councillors Dilys Neill, Ian Watson, Ray Brassington, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, David Fowles, Joe Harris, Nikki Ind, Julia Judd and Michael Vann)

Recording of Proceedings – The law allows the public proceedings of Council, Cabinet, and Committee Meetings to be recorded, which includes filming as well as audio-recording. Photography is also permitted.

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record any part of the proceedings please let the Committee Administrator know prior to the date of the meeting.

AGENDA

1. **Apologies**
   To receive any apologies for absence. The quorum for the Planning and Licensing Committee is 3 members.

2. **Substitute Members**
   To note details of any substitution arrangements in place for the meeting.

3. **Declarations of Interest**
   To receive any declarations of interest from Members relating to items to be considered at the meeting.

4. **Minutes** (Pages 9 - 18)
   To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 8 April 2026.

5. **Chair's Announcements**
   To receive any announcements from the Chair of the Planning and Licensing Committee.

6. **Public questions**
   A maximum of 15 minutes is allocated for an "open forum" of public questions at committee meetings. No person may ask more than two questions (including supplementary questions) and no more than two such questions may be asked on behalf of one organisation. The maximum length of oral questions or supplementary questions by the public will be one minute. Questions must relate to the responsibilities of the Committee but questions in this section cannot relate to applications for determination at the meeting.

   The response may take the form of:
   a) A direct oral response (maximum length: 2 minutes);
   b) Where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
   c) Where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated later to the questioner.

7. **Member questions**
   A maximum period of fifteen minutes is allowed for Member questions. Questions must be directed to the Chair and must relate to the remit of the Committee but may not relate to applications for determination at the meeting.

   Questions will be asked in the order in which they were received but the Chair

may group together similar questions.

The deadline for submitting questions is 5.00pm on the working day before the day of the meeting unless the Chair agrees that the question relates to an urgent matter, in which case the deadline is 9.30am on the day of the meeting.

A member may submit no more than two questions. At the meeting the member may ask a supplementary question arising directly from the original question or the reply. The maximum length of a supplementary question is one minute.

The response to a question or supplementary question may take the form of:

a) A direct oral response (maximum length: 2 minutes);
b) Where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
c) Where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated later to the questioner.

Schedule of Applications

To consider and determine the applications contained within the enclosed schedule:

8. **25/03351/OUT - Land North of Tops Nursery, Mickleton** (Pages 21 - 110)

Proposal

Outline planning application for demolition of existing buildings and for up to 95 dwellings with associated access and infrastructure, all other matters reserved at Land North of Tops Nursery, Broadway Road, Mickleton, Gloucestershire.

Case Officer

Martin Perks

Ward Members

Councillors Gina Blomefield and Tom Stowe

Recommendation

PERMIT subject to no objection from Biodiversity Officer and the completion of a S106 legal agreement covering affordable housing, self-build/ custom build housing, financial contributions to Biodiversity Net Gain monitoring, secondary education and library services.

9. **25/01623/FUL - Land at Grid Reference 401975 198339 - Spratsgate Lane , Siddington** (Pages 111 - 186)

Purpose

Installation of solar farm, associated infrastructure and grid connection cable run at Land at Grid Reference 401975 198339 Spratsgate Lane, Siddington, Cirencester.

Case Officer
Martin Perks

Ward Member
Councillor Mike Evemy

Recommendation
PERMIT subject to no objection from the Biodiversity Officer and the Environment Agency and the completion of a S106 legal agreement covering a Biodiversity Net Gain monitoring fee.

10. **25/02960/FUL - Shoecroft Barn, Ablington, Bibury, Cirencester Gloucestershire** (Pages 187 - 224)

Purpose
Conversion of ground floor of existing barns from general storage to cafe with retail area, including amendments to the lean-to and decking/patio area, and associated alterations at Shoecroft Barn Ablington Bibury Cirencester Gloucestershire GL7 5NU

Case Officer
Amy Hill

Ward Member
Councillor David Fowles

Recommendation
PERMIT subject to securing a legal agreement

11. **25/02961/LBC - Shoecroft Barn, Ablington, Bibury, Cirencester** (Pages 225 - 238)

Purpose
Conversion of ground floor of existing barns from general storage to cafe with retail area, including amendments to the lean-to and decking/patio area, and associated alterations at Shoecroft Barn Ablington Bibury Cirencester Gloucestershire GL7 5NU

Case Officer
Amy Hill

Ward Member
Councillor David Fowles

Recommendation
CONSENT

12. **25/03713/FUL - Hill Farm, Main Road, Oddington** (Pages 239 - 304)

Purpose
Replacement, part conversion and remodelling of existing General/Heavy Industrial buildings/site with a Rural Business Hub including associated landscaping and consolidated parking at Hill Farm, Main Road, Oddington

Case Officer
Amy Hill

Ward Member
Councillor David Cunningham

Recommendation
PERMIT

13. **24/01143/OUT - The Royal Agricultural University, Stroud Road, Cirencester** (Pages 305 - 368)

Purpose
Outline planning application with all matters reserved except for access, for a mixed-use development associated with the Royal Agricultural University comprising up to 24,012 sqm of floorspace for office (Use Class E(g)(i)), research and development (E(g)(ii)), education (F1(a)), conferencing (F1(e)), and café (E(b)) uses, Including the conversion of Trent Lodge to café use, associated parking, access and highway works, landscaping, public realm, utilities, and all ancillary works and structures. The development is known as The RAU Innovation Village and forms part of its wider masterplan, supporting research and innovation in food production, climate change, and land management at The Royal Agricultural University Stroud Road Cirencester

Case Officer
Ceri Porter

Ward Member
Councillor Mark Harris

Recommendation
That the application be PERMITTED subject to:
i. legal agreement(s) between the Applicant and the District Council and Gloucestershire County Council prior to the decision notice being issued;
ii. agreement of the draft conditions set out in the report together with any draft conditions as may be agreed by Members at Planning & Licensing Committee;

iii. delegated authority being given to the Head of Planning Services, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Planning & Licensing Committee, to amend and/or add to the suggested draft conditions where such amendments would not deviate significantly from the purpose of the draft conditions.

14. **Response to Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government Consultation: Fees for Planning Applications** (Pages 369 - 436)

Purpose

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) is consulting (23 March–18 May 2026) on reforms to planning application fees in England, to better resource Local Planning Authorities (LPA) and improve timeliness and quality of decision-making. The main proposal is a new National Default Fee Schedule set at around 90% of the estimated cost of processing each application type, updated annually for inflation, alongside a local variation model (enabled by the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025) allowing authorities to vary fees locally based on evidenced costs, potentially subject to a cap.

The consultation also proposes simplifying and restructuring fee categories (including for outline/full/reserved matters, agricultural development, prior approvals, permission in principle and s73/s73B applications) and seeks initial views on a ~10% surcharge on fees to help fund statutory consultees, with further detail to follow.

Recommendations

That the Planning and Licensing committee resolves to:

1. Agree to the consultation response and;
2. Delegate authority to the Head of Planning Services to respond to the consultation on behalf of Cotswold District Council.

15. **Sites Inspection Briefing**

Members for 3 June 2026 (if required)

Councillors Dilys Neill, Ray Brassingdon, Patrick Coleman, Julia Judd, Michael Vann

16. **Licensing Sub-Committee**
Members for 28 May to be notified (if required)

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COTSWOLD
District Council

Minutes of a meeting of Planning and Licensing Committee held on Wednesday, 8 April 2026

Members present:

Dilys Neill (Chair)	Ian Watson (Vice Chair)	
Ray Brassington	Daryl Corps	Nikki Ind
Nick Bridges	David Fowles	Michael Vann
Patrick Coleman	Joe Harris	

Officers present:

Marie Barnes, Lawyer	Justin Hobbs, Tree Officer
Harrison Bowley, Head of Planning Services	Andrew Moody, Senior Planning Officer
Julia Gibson, Democratic Services Officer	Amy Hill, Senior Planning Officer
Tyler Jardine, Trainee Democratic Services Officer	

261 Apologies

There were apologies from Councillor Julia Judd.

262 Substitute Members

There were no substitute Members.

263 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Joe Harris advised that he had previously met with the objectors to application 25/03700/FUL. Following legal advice from the Monitoring Officer, it was agreed that he would not participate in the debate or vote on the application. Councillor David Fowles referred to previous applications involving the Red Lion pub near Poulton and the Waggon and Horses pub, noting his past involvement in supporting the retention of pubs. He confirmed he had not been involved in relation to application 25/03700/FUL and approached the application with an open mind. Councillor Patrick Coleman declared he had been present at a Cirencester Town Council Planning Committee on 2 December 2025 where application 25/03700/FUL was

discussed. Councillor Coleman was also acquainted with the Objector speaker, Mr James Brown and has a shared interest in Corinium Brewery. He declared that he made no predetermination on the application.
Councillor Nick Bridges declared that he was a Cirencester Town Council member and that he approached application 25/03700/FUL with an open mind. He confirmed he knew some objectors but had not discussed the application with them.

264 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2026 were discussed.
Councillor Joe Harris apologised that he had not submitted formal apologies ahead of the meeting on 11 March 2026.

Councillor Fowles proposed accepting the minutes and Councillor Coleman seconded the proposal which was put to the vote and accepted by the Committee.

RESOLVED: To APPROVE the minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2026.

To approve the minutes of a meeting 11 March 2026 (Resolution)		
For	Ray Brassington, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, David Fowles, Dilys Neill and Ian Watson	7
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	Joe Harris and Nikki Ind	2
Carried		

265 Chair's Announcements

The Chair welcomed Councillor Nikki Ind as a new member of the Planning and Licensing Committee and expressed the Committee's appreciation of their appointment and anticipated contributions.
The Chair reminded members that if they were unable to attend a site inspection briefing (SIB), they should arrange a substitute.

Harrison Bowley, Head of Planning Services advised the Committee that a government consultation on Planning Committee reform was underway. Members were invited to submit any comments by 14 April for inclusion. A further consultation on fee regulations would be considered at the May Planning Committee meeting.
He reminded members of the annual Planning Committee training on 3 June 2026 which was required for committee membership and open to all Members, including prospective substitutes.

266 Public questions

There were no public questions.

267 Member questions

There were no Member questions.

268 25/03700/FUL - The Twelve Bells, 12 Lewis Lane, Cirencester.

The proposal was the Change of Use of a Public House (Sui Generis) to a Residential Dwelling (C3) with ancillary B&B outbuilding.

Case Officer: Amy Hill
Ward Member: Councillor Joe Harris
Recommendation: PERMIT.

The Chair invited the Case Officer to introduce the application who confirmed that there were no updates since the publication of the agenda and:

- Shared the location plan and accommodation layout, map of location of listed buildings and Conservation areas, photographs and floor plan.
- Shared a map of the location of pubs within 400m of the application
- Confirmed that the location was outside the defined town centre.

Speaker 1 – Objector – Mr James Brown
The speaker stated that the 12 Bells was a valued community asset, evidenced by over 150 objections, including from the Town Council, Civic Society, and the Council's Conservation Officer. They argued that there were no public benefits arising from the scheme, as the loss of the pub would outweigh any housing considerations, noting it provided a community meeting space and local employment. The speaker questioned the claim of non-viability, citing reported profitability, concerns about marketing and valuation, and a lack of independent evidence, and concluded that approval would result in harm to the community and set a negative precedent for other pubs.

Speaker 2 – Applicant – Mr Joe Seymour
The agent stated that a robust marketing exercise over 18 months failed to attract interest in continuing the pub use despite the reduced price. They argued this demonstrated lack of viability in line with policy requirements. The agent explained that planning decisions are guided by evidence and policy, and that the system supports the management of land-use change when current uses are no longer viable.

Speaker 3 – Ward Member – Councillor Joe Harris
The Ward Member stated that the application required a planning balance between the loss of a valued community asset in a sensitive historic setting and any public benefits.

They felt that no meaningful public benefits had been demonstrated, noting there was no net housing gain or wider regeneration benefit. The Ward Member argued that the policy test regarding community facilities had not been met, as neither need nor viability had been demonstrated, and questioned the evidence supporting the claim of non-viability, including reported profitability and marketing arrangements. They stated that required viability evidence, including independent valuation and trading information had not been provided. The loss of the pub would set an undesirable precedent for the erosion of community infrastructure.

Member Questions:

Members of the Committee asked a series of questions and noted that:

- The property had been marketed as going concern from January 2023 whilst with Christie & Fleurets, and subsequently with Moor Allen (from June 2024) who maintained the pub status despite placing a greater emphasis on residential potential.
- Historic England were consulted due to the potential impact on nearby scheduled ancient monuments and focused their comments on archaeological considerations rather than the impact on the Listed Building. The Conservation Officer had assessed the impact on the Listed Building and Conservation Area.
- The requirement for an independent valuation had been deemed not necessary due to the site's location just outside the town centre and its proximity to other pubs and similar facilities.
- Initial valuation details had been requested but could not be fully evidenced. During the marketing period there were approximately three expressions of interest and one viewing, with the asking price subsequently reduced. No conditional offers were made and no additional valuation information was requested.
- It was advised that, if the building remained unused as a pub, there was a risk of it being left vacant. Conversion to residential use would secure its ongoing active use and maintenance, which is generally beneficial for historic buildings.
- Available marketing information indicated net profits in excess of £100,000, although detailed supporting evidence and specific time periods for this figure were limited.
- The applicant had not operated the property as a pub. The consideration of officers focused primarily on the lack of demand for a party willing to operate the pub, rather than on financial performance.
- There would be no net increase in residential units, as the existing arrangement already included ancillary accommodation.
- The property was understood to have ceased operating as a pub approximately 18 months ago.
- Should the application be refused, the applicant could continue marketing the property and resubmit a future application, supported by additional viability evidence.

Member Comments:

- Members commented on the loss of the Grade II listed public house, the wider decline in local pubs, and referenced comparable cases. Concerns were raised regarding the robustness of the viability case and the lack of clear public benefit, including in relation to housing. The proposal was considered to result in the unjustified loss of the pub.
- The loss of the pub could increase travel to other pubs and potentially reduce local sustainability. The pub served as a wider community facility, hosting social and community activities, and concern was raised that alternative uses such as community ownership, mixed use or leasing had not been fully explored. It was further considered that the property had been priced out of continued pub use.
- A Member commented that viability was considered to be driven by market demand, noting the property had been marketed for a number of years without any offers to continue its use as a pub. It was observed that changing social and economic trends were impacting pub use and that residential use was preferred to avoid vacancy.

Reasons for REFUSAL:
Policy INF2: Avoid loss of community assets and need to demonstrate that there was no local demand for the facility or for an appropriate alternative community use. Insufficient information submitted to convince not viable.

Councillor David Fowles proposed and Councillor Daryl Corps seconded the proposal to REFUSE the application

RESOLVED: to REFUSE the application.

25/03700/FUL The Twelve Bells, Cirencester - To REFUSE (Resolution)		
For	Ray Brassington, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, David Fowles, Nikki Ind, Dilys Neill and Michael Vann	8
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	Joe Harris	1
Abstain	Ian Watson	1
Carried		

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269 26/00072/PLP - Land at Cerney Wick, Cirencester.

The application was for Permission in Principle for up to 6 dwellings at Land at Cerney Wick.
Case Officer: Andrew Moody
Ward Member: Councillor Mike Evemy
Recommendation: PERMIT.

The Chair invited the Case Officer to introduce the application who made the following points:

- There were no updates following agenda publication.
- Aerial photographs and site plans were shared.
- Cerney Wick was considered a non-principal settlement.

Public speaker 1 – Agent – Mr Joe Seymour

The agent stated that Officers had considered the application acceptable in terms of location, land use and scale of development. They noted that detailed design would be considered at a later stage, no highways objections had been raised, and that the proposed level of housing growth was proportionate in the context of local plan policies and comparable developments in other settlements.

Speaker 3 – Ward Member – Councillor Mike Evemy

The Ward Member advised that they were a long-standing resident of Cerney Wick and expressed concerns that the village was not a sustainable location for development, citing limited local facilities, reliance on car travel and the rural, linear character of the settlement. It was noted that the site represented an important green space with ecological value, and that development would harm the character and setting of the village.

Councillor David Fowles left the chamber at 15:44

SIB feedback

Members commented that the village was characterised by open spaces and that development of the site would harm its character, particularly given its scale in relation to the size of the settlement.
Green space within the village had already been reduced, including the loss of allotments, and concern was expressed about the cumulative impact of further development.
Members raised concerns regarding the sustainability of the location, noting the lack of public transport and reliance on private vehicles.
There was a good sized pub and beautiful views and walks.

Member Questions:

Members of the Committee asked a series of questions and noted that:

- The Council did not currently have a five-year housing land supply and that planning permission should generally be granted unless adverse impacts significantly outweighed the benefits.
- The site was not subject to heritage or landscape designations.
- Ecological matters, including surveys and biodiversity net gain, were not required at the Permission in Principle stage.
- Additional housing in smaller settlements may be considered to support nearby services and facilities in increasing sustainability of nearby settlements

Member Comments

- Members noted that the Council's housing land supply position and the tilted balance were key material considerations. It was considered that this limited the scope to refuse the application.
- Members acknowledged the issues between policy requirements and local concerns about the site.
- The potential for appeal costs and the likelihood of an unsuccessful refusal was noted.

Councillor Ian Watson proposed and Councillor Joe Harris seconded the proposal to PERMIT the application

RESOLVED: To PERMIT the application.

26/00072/PLP Land at Cerney Wick - To PERMIT (Resolution)		
For	Ray Brassington, Patrick Coleman, Joe Harris, Nikki Ind, Dilys Neill, Michael Vann and Ian Watson	7
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	Nick Bridges and Daryl Corps	2
Carried		

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270 25/00006 - Tree Preservation Order - 55 Thomas Street, Cirencester

To consider the Tree Preservation Order (TPO) made on a mature beech tree at 55 Thomas Street, Cirencester.

Case Officer: Justin Hobbs
Ward Members: Councillor Mark Harris
Recommendation: to CONFIRM the TPO.

The Chair invited the Case Officer to introduce the application who made the following points:

- There were no additional details.
- Photographs of the tree from various directions were shared along with background information of the TPO application.

Speaker 1 – Ward Member – Councillor Mark Harris
The Ward Member noted that the tree was a healthy and valued specimen, supported by the Council's Tree Officer and local Civic Society. Whilst acknowledging concerns regarding maintenance issues, such as leaf fall and shading, these were considered

insufficient to justify removal. The tree had been established for many decades and ongoing management and pruning could address associated issues.

Member Questions:
Members of the Committee asked a series of questions and noted that:

- Potential damage from tree roots was difficult to predict and usually evidenced through monitoring reports and insurance claims where issues arise. No evidence had been submitted to indicate that the tree had caused structural damage.

Member Comments:

- The tree was a mature, healthy and valued feature of the area pre-dating the dwelling.
- Members noted its contribution to local character and amenity.
- It was acknowledged that any maintenance issues could be managed through pruning rather than removal.
- A Tree Preservation Order would ensure any future works were controlled and assessed and if felled a replacement specimen could be insisted on.

Councillor Daryl Corps proposed and Councillor Ray Brassington seconded the proposal to PERMIT the application.

RESOLVED: To CONFIRM the TPO.

25/000006/TPO 55 Thomas Street, Cirencester - To CONFIRM (Resolution)		
For	Ray Brassington, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, Joe Harris, Nikki Ind, Dilys Neill, Michael Vann and Ian Watson	9
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

271 Sites Inspection Briefing

The Chair advised members to keep the 6 May 2026 free for a possible Site Inspection Briefing.
Councillors Dilys Neill (Chair), Ian Watson, David Fowles, Patrick Coleman, Nick Bridges.

272 Licensing Sub-Committee

There were no licensing sub-committees planned.

Planning and Licensing Committee
08/April2026
The Meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and closed at 4.20 pm

Chair

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PLANNING AND LICENSING COMMITTEE
13 May 2026

SCHEDULE OF APPLICATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION AND DECISION (HP)

- **Members are asked to determine the applications in this Schedule. My recommendations are given at the end of each report. Members should get in touch with the case officer if they wish to have any further information on any applications.**

- **Applications have been considered in the light of national planning policy guidance, the Development Plan and any relevant non-statutory supplementary planning guidance.**

- The following legislation is of particular importance in the consideration and determination of the applications contained in this Schedule:

  - **Planning Permission:** Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that "where in making any determination under the planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material consideration indicates otherwise. Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 - special regard to the desirability of preserving the (listed) building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest.

  - **Listed Building Consent:** Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 - special regard to the desirability of preserving the (listed) building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest.

  - **Display of Advertisements:** Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 - powers to be exercised only in the interests of amenity, including any feature of historic, architectural, cultural or similar interest and public safety.

- The reference to **Key Policy Background** in the reports is intended only to highlight the policies most relevant to each case. Other policies, or other material circumstances, may also apply and could lead to a different decision being made to that recommended by the Officer.

- Any responses to consultations received after this report had been printed, will be reported at the meeting, either in the form of lists of **Additional Representations**, or orally. Late information might result in a change in my recommendation.

- The **Background Papers** referred to in compiling these reports are: the application form; the accompanying certificates and plans and any other information provided by the applicant/agent; responses from bodies or persons consulted on the application; other representations supporting or objecting to the application.

PLANNING AND LICENSING COMMITTEE 13 May 2026
INDEX TO APPLICATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION AND DECISION

Parish	Application	Schedule Order No.
Mickleton	Land North of Tops Nursery Broadway Road Mickleton Gloucestershire 25/03351/OUT Outline Application	1
Siddington	Land At Grid Reference 401975 198339 Spratsgate Lane Siddington Gloucestershire 25/01623/FUL Full Application	2
Bibury	Shoecroft Barn Ablington Bibury Cirencester Gloucestershire GL7 5NU 25/02960/FUL Full Application	3
Bibury	Shoecroft Barn Ablington Bibury Cirencester Gloucestershire GL7 5NU 25/02961/LBC Listed Building Consent	4
Oddington	Hill Farm Main Road Oddington Gloucestershire GL56 0XW 25/03713/FUL Full Application	5
Cirencester	The Royal Agricultural University Stroud Road Cirencester Gloucestershire GL7 6JS 24/01143/OUT Outline Application	6

Outline planning application for demolition of existing buildings and for up to 95 dwellings with associated access and infrastructure, all other matters reserved at Land North of Tops Nursery Broadway Road Mickleton Gloucestershire

Outline Application 25/03351/OUT	
Applicant:	Newland Homes Ltd
Agent:	
Case Officer:	Martin Perks
Ward Member(s):	Councillor Gina Blomefield Councillor Tom Stowe
Committee Date:	13 May 2026
RECOMMENDATION:	**PERMIT subject to no objection from Biodiversity Officer and the completion of a S106 legal agreement covering affordable housing, self-build/custom build housing, financial contributions to Biodiversity Net Gain monitoring, secondary education and library services.**

1. Main Issues:

(a) Residential Development Outside a Principal or Non-Principal Settlement
(b) Housing Mix and Affordable Housing
(c) Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area
(d) Access and Highway Safety
(e) Impact on Residential Amenity
(f) Biodiversity
(g) Flooding and Drainage
(h) Archaeology

2. Reasons for Referral:

2.1 This application has been referred to Committee as it falls into the major development category for the purposes of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

3. Site Description:

3.1 This application relates to the northern part of an existing commercial plant nursery/garden centre and an adjoining field located adjacent to the south-western edge of the village of Mickleton. The application site measures approximately 5.5 hectares in area and is relatively flat. It consists of 2 distinct

elements. The southern part of the site occupies part of an existing horticultural operation and comprises glasshouses, horticultural buildings, outdoor storage, areas of grassland and areas occupied by orchard trees. A single dwelling (Sunnybrook) also lies adjacent to the north-eastern boundary of the application site. A mobile phone mast lies adjacent to the southern edge of an existing woodland which extends through the centre of the site. The southern part of the site extends around the north-eastern, north-western and south-western edges of an area of land occupied by a garden centre business and 8 dwellings. The aforementioned garden centre includes a tea room, barbers and hardware store. The garden centre adjoins the B4632 Broadway Road, which runs to its south-east. The application site also adjoins the aforementioned highway to the north-east and south-west of the garden centre. A 21st Century residential estate lies adjacent to the north-eastern boundary of the southern part of the application site. Two residential properties (Haycroft and Meondene), agricultural buildings and agricultural fields are located to its south-west, with the respective dwellings being located approximately 10m from the application site.

3.2 The northern part of the site occupies an arable field and measures approximately 1.7 hectares in size. Agricultural fields are located to the north-west and south-west of the field. As with the southern part of the application site, a 21st Century residential estate adjoins the north-eastern boundary of the field. Two dwellings (Harefield House and Clevelys) and a barn are located to the south-west of the field. The respective dwellings are located approximately 20-25m from the site.

3.3 The application site is located outside, but adjacent to, Mickleton Development Boundary as designated in the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031 The aforementioned boundary extends along the north-eastern boundary of the application site.

3.4 The site is located outside of the Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL). The CNL boundary extends along the south-eastern side of the B4632 Broadway Road which runs along the south-eastern boundary of the application site. Norton Hall Special Landscape Area is located approximately 220m to the west of the site. The application site itself is not subject to any particular landscape designations.

3.5 The site is located within Flood Zone 1.

3.6 Public Right of Way HMN12 extends in a roughly south-west to north-east direction through the centre of the application site. It also extends through the

field lying to the south-west of the site. Public Right of Way HMN11 also extends through the aforementioned field.

3.7 Public Right of Way HMN10 extends alongside the eastern boundary of the application site. It also extends in east-west direction through a field approximately 120m to the north of the application site.

4. Relevant Planning History:

Application Site

4.1 CD.5599 Outline application for the erection of commercial greenhouses (approx. 36,000 sq ft). Permitted 1975

4.2 16/04926/TELEC Notification under Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 Schedule 2, Part 16 for the erection of a 21m lattice mast, associated antennas, dishes and radio equipment cabinets within a fenced compound. Prior approval not required 2017

Tops Plants/Nursery/Arbour House/Harborlow adjacent to application site

4.3 CD.2288 Erection of a bungalow. Permitted 1958

4.4 CD.2288/A Vehicular access. Permitted 1867

4.5 CD.2288/C Outline application for an agricultural dwelling. Permitted 1969

4.6 CD.2288/C/Ap Bungalow. Refused 1969

4.7 CD.2288/C/AP/1 Erection of one bungalow. Permitted 1969

4.8 CD.2288/D Outline application for the erection of an agricultural worker's bungalow. Permitted 1977

4.9 CD.2288/D/Ap Erection of an agricultural worker's bungalow. Permitted 1977

4.10 CD.2288/E Continued use of existing building for sale of fresh produce. Refused 1980

4.11 CD.2288/F Continued use of existing building as a printing shop. Permitted 1982

4.12 CD.2288/G Erection of a single storey side extension and alterations to provide ancillary elderly person's annexe and enlarged living accommodation. Permitted 2007

4.13 10/04949/CLEUD Certificate of lawful existing use or development under Section 191 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for the continued use of dwelling without complying with agricultural occupancy condition (f) of planning permission CD.2288/C. Issued 2010

4.14 14/04048/OUT Erection of a single dwelling (Outline application). Permitted 2014

4.15 14/04050/OUT Erection of a single dwelling (Outline application). Permitted 2014

4.16 14/04379/OUT Erection of a single dwelling (Outline application). Permitted 2014

4.17 15/02137/FUL Construction of 1 new 4 bedroom detached dwelling. Permitted 2015

4.18 15/02143/FUL Erection of 1no. 2 bedroom dwelling. Permitted 2015

4.19 15/02269/FUL Proposed replacement of three chimney flues on greenhouse boiler installation with two chimney flues. Permitted 2015

4.20 15/03926/FUL Demolition of derelict and defective glass houses and sheds. Construction of 1no. 4 bedroomed 1.5 storey detached house with garage. Permitted 2015

4.21 15/04549/FUL Proposed Tea Room ancillary to Nursery. Permitted 2015

4.22 16/02322/FUL Erection of a bungalow. Permitted 2016

4.23 16/02323/FUL Erection of a bungalow. Permitted 2016

4.24 16/04422/FUL Erection of a bungalow. Permitted 2016

4.25 17/01757/REM Erection of a detached dwelling (Reserved matters application pursuant to permission 14/04050/OUT. Approved 2017

4.26 18/03317/FUL Removal of Condition 5 (restriction of cooking to a microwave) of permission 15/04549/FUL - Proposed Tea Room ancillary to Nursery. Permitted 2018

4.27 18/04432/FUL Erection of a single storey log cabin to provide a barber shop. Permitted 2019

Land to west and north of application site

4.28 25/04010/OUT Outline planning application for the demolition of buildings and erection of up to 170 new dwellings, public open space, landscaping, sustainable drainage system (SuDS) and creation of associated vehicular access point to Broadway Road and other associated infrastructure. (Some matters reserved). Decision pending

Land to north-east of application site

4.29 25/02213/OUT Outline planning application for the erection of 60 dwellings with means of access. Foxwold House, Land South-west Of Broad Marston Lane. Decision pending

5. Planning Policies:

- DS4 Open Market Housing o/s Principal/non-Pr
- H1 Housing Mix & Tenure to meet local needs
- H2 Affordable Housing
- EN1 Built, Natural & Historic Environment
- EN2 Design of Built & Natural Environment
- EN4 The Wider Natural & Historic Landscape
- EN5 Cotswolds AONB
- EN7 Trees, Hedgerows & Woodlands
- EN8 Bio & Geo: Features Habitats & Species
- EN14 Managing Flood Risk
- EN15 Pollution & Contaminated Land
- INF4 Highway Safety
- INF3 Sustainable Transport
- INF1 Infrastructure Delivery
- INF3 Sustainable Transport
- INF5 Parking Provision
- INF7 Green Infrastructure
- INF8 Water Management Infrastructure

6. Observations of Consultees:

6.1 Gloucestershire County Council Highways: No objection subject to conditions.

6.2 Gloucestershire County Council Lead Local Flood Authority: No objection subject to conditions.

6.3 Gloucestershire County Council Community Infrastructure: Requests £133,517.60 to secondary 16-18 education and £18,424 to library services

6.4 Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology: No objection subject to condition.

6.5 Gloucestershire County Council Public Rights of Way: *' Public right of way HMN12 has been identified as traversing the centre of the proposed development site. The character of the route does not look like it will undergo significant alteration, with the eastern section remaining predominantly green and the western section continuing alongside built form.*

It is recommended that particular consideration be given to pedestrian safety at the point where the route intersects the internal road network. A raised (humped) crossing at this location would provide an appropriate mitigation measure.

The submitted plan illustrates several potential connections from internal footways to adjoining land parcels. However, the most practical and beneficial for future residents would be a link from the site to public footpath HMN10, situated in the north-eastern corner of the site and indicated by the bold red mark on the accompanying plan below. Consideration should be given to incorporating this link within the design, as its absence may result in the creation of an informal desire line by users seeking access to the wider public rights of way network.'

6.6 Severn Trent Water: No objection subject to condition.

6.7 Thames Water: *' Thames Water has identified an inability of the existing water network infrastructure to accommodate the needs of this development proposal.'* A condition relating to water supply has therefore been recommended.

6.8 Warwickshire County Council: No response to date.

6.9 Stratford-on-Avon District Council: *' Stratford on Avon District Council wishes to offer no representation to the proposed development.'*

6.10 Biodiversity Officer: Further information requested.

6.11 Environmental and Regulatory Services Air Quality: No objection subject to conditions.

6.12 Environmental and Regulatory Services Contamination: No objection subject to condition.

6.13 Environmental and Regulatory Services Noise: No objection subject to conditions

6.14 Tree Officer: No objection subject to conditions

6.15 Landscape Consultant: Comments incorporated into report.

6.16 Housing Officer: Comments incorporated into report.

6.17 NHS Gloucestershire: No response to date.

6.18 Active Travel England: *'Following a high-level review of the above planning consultation, Active Travel England has determined that standing advice should be issued and would encourage the local planning authority to consider this as part of its assessment of the application.'*

7. View of Parish Council:

Response received on the 9th January 2026:

' National Planning Policy Framework

7.1 The NPPF (December 2024) states that the planning system should contribute to the achievement of sustainable development including the provision of homes and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner.

7.2 Sustainable development requires ensuring land of the right type is available to support growth, innovation and improved productivity and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure. New homes must have accessible services and open spaces to support health, social and cultural

wellbeing. It also requires the protection and enhancement of our natural, built and historic environment.

7.3 It is MPC's contention that the proposed development at Mickleton is not sustainable development for the following reasons.

7.4 Impact on traffic along the High Street (B4632)

7.5 The number of vehicles travelling along the High Street has increased enormously over the last few years as a result of the recent developments at Oak Grange and Shepherds Fold as well as the large developments at Meon Vale and Long Marston Airfield. This can be evidenced from data recorded by the MPC camera on Stratford Road which records the number of vehicles coming into the village and from surveys carried out by local residents on traffic volumes through the village. This data indicates that the High Street is already classed as a very busy road for a rural village location with an average of over 500 vehicles an hour using the road during a typical weekday. The type of vehicles include not only cars but also farm vehicles and many large lorries.

7.6 The High Street is in a conservation area with many historic Grade 2 listed buildings fronting onto it. In places the road is reduced to single file due to parked cars. This particularly applies at the junction with Chapel Lane.

7.7 The road has a number of bends which makes crossing for pedestrians very difficult. There is only one zebra crossing which is at the far end of the village some distance away from where most pedestrians need to cross in order to access village amenities.

7.8 Furthermore, Stratford-upon-Avon and Warwick District Councils are currently consulting on creating new settlements in Warwickshire and the Long Marston Airfield site between Meon Vale and Willicote has been identified as a preferred site for the development of up to 10000 houses. If this goes ahead then these residents will need to use the B4632 through Mickleton in order to access the A46 and A44 going south/south-west which will increase the traffic through Mickleton considerably. Current estimates are that approximately 13% of traffic generated from the proposed Long Marston site will travel through Mickleton.

7.9 The High Street and other roads through the village were never designed to cater for the large increase in traffic which has occurred over the last few years. The basic infrastructure is the same as it was 50 years ago when the volume and type of traffic using the road was considerably lower and different.

7.10 The roads are already heavily congested due to recent development and this is having a detrimental effect on the character of what is a typical Cotswold village (albeit that part of the village is technically on the border of the Cotswolds National Landscape) and the historic buildings which line the road.

7.11 Although we accept that due to the location of the proposed development at Tops Nursery not all traffic will need to come through the centre of the village, there will still be a significant proportion which will. This will therefore add to the congestion along the High Street and the detrimental effect on the character of the village.

Modes of transport

7.12 Any suggestion or proposal that vehicle congestion can be alleviated by walking, cycling or use of buses or trains is not realistic in practice and will simply not happen.

7.13 As we will demonstrate later in this submission, there is no realistic alternative to vehicle use in order to access the following essential services all of which are located at least 3 miles away from the village and cannot in most circumstances be conveniently reached by other forms of transport:

- *Places of employment.*
- *Medical practice.*
- *Pharmacy.*
- *Dentist.*
- *Primary and secondary schools.*
- *Post office.*
- *Supermarket or large grocery store.*
- *Gym or other leisure facility.*

7.14 The nearest train station is at Honeybourne and there is no bus service to there. There is a sporadic bus service to Moreton-in-Marsh (where there is a train station) but it is totally impractical to co-ordinate the bus and train departure and arrival times so residents use their cars instead.

7.15 There is a bus service through the village but it is infrequent and unreliable. In practice the vast majority of residents who use the buses are those who are unable to drive. Residents who have a car will opt to use it rather than relying on a bus.

7.16 There are no dedicated cycle ways in the village and cycling on the road is too dangerous other than for very experienced cyclists. Cycling to access essential services outside of the village is not a practical option because they are too far away and can only be reached using busy roads.

7.17 The access to the proposed development at Tops Nursery is off the Broadway Road and there is no pavement from there into the village. Consequently it will not be possible for residents to safely walk or cycle into the village.

7.18 If this proposed development is permitted then the reality is that every household will need to use their vehicles regularly in order to access places of employment, schools and essential services. There will also be a consequential increase in delivery and service vehicles all of which will add significantly to the congestion in the centre of the village.

Lack of essential village amenities

7.19 The village does not have a medical practice, a pharmacy, a dentist or a post office. The nearest ones are 3 miles away at Lower Quinton and Chipping Campden. The medical practices are already operating at capacity which makes it very difficult to get appointments. The new developments at Meon Vale and Long Marston Airfield are also putting extra strain on the medical and dental practices at Lower Quinton.

7.20 If the proposed development was to proceed then it is highly likely that new residents would not be able to obtain adequate local medical and dental care, and certainly nothing would be available to them within the village.

7.21 The village does have a local convenience store, a butcher and a delicatessen but none of these are adequate for the weekly grocery shop. The nearest large supermarkets are 9 miles away at Stratford-upon-Avon and Evesham.

7.22 As part of its Local Plan Review - Preferred Options Consultation, Cotswold District Council commissioned a Settlement Role and Function Study (November 2025) ("SRFS"). This assessed the sustainability of each settlement in its region. Mickleton recorded a score of 8.3 (see Table 14 of the SRFS) which placed it 14th out of the 16 principal settlements in the region. This clearly demonstrates that Mickleton does not have the services and facilities to support further development.

Education

7.23 The village primary school is a single form entry and is already operating at capacity. It does not have the space to be enlarged so construction of additional classrooms is not an option which means that children living in the village may not be able to attend their local village school and will have to travel several miles each day (by car) to attend other primary schools in the area.

7.24 The secondary school at Chipping Campden which has a large catchment area is full and has a waiting list. The nearest alternative secondary schools are at Stratford-upon-Avon and Evesham so once again children may need to travel 9 miles each day to attend secondary school. We would suggest that this is not an acceptable situation for children already living in the village or those who move into the village.

7.25 The proposed development has been designed to attract families. Where are the children going to be educated because there is little to no vacancies within schools which are within easy reach?

Employment

7.26 Mickleton is a rural village. The nearest centres of employment are at Evesham and Stratford-upon-Avon (both about 9 miles away) and even these towns do not have significant employment opportunities.

7.27 More major centres of employment are much further afield at Worcester, Cheltenham, Gloucester, Oxford, Coventry and Birmingham but none of these locations are easily accessible for people living in Mickleton.

7.28 As such we would argue that the proposed development at Mickleton is not likely to support growth, innovation and improve productivity and question whether there would be adequate local employment opportunities available for people moving into the development.

7.29 The working from home culture which arose due to necessity during COVID is now reversing as employers realise that productivity has been detrimentally impacted so any argument that employment opportunities can be satisfied by home working is not sustainable in the long term.

7.30 The SRFS also assessed the employment role of each settlement based on workplace population and employment density (see Table 12 of the SRFS). As a net exporter of working people and with an employment density of 139.5%.

Mickleton recorded a score of 1 (on the cusp of a score of 0) which placed it as one of the least sustainable settlements for employment. This is yet further evidence that more development in the village is not sustainable.

Utilities

7.31 Reports from Thames Water and Severn Trent cast some doubt on whether the current water and sewerage infrastructure in the village can support further development. Clearly no further development should be permitted in the village unless the relevant water authorities can categorically confirm that the current infrastructure will be upgraded to a level which can support the increased demands for water and sewerage services.

7.32 Similarly the village suffers from frequent power cuts, particularly in windy or stormy weather. Can the current electricity infrastructure support more development?

Impact on Landscape

7.33 The proposed development is for up to 95 dwellings on a site which is on the edge of the village as you approach along the Broadway Road from the south-west. The site is surrounded by open countryside on all sides except the east.

7.34 In our opinion the size of the proposed development would dominate the landscape as you approach the village and is therefore not appropriate for an edge of village development which should be low density, incorporate large open spaces and trees and blend in unobtrusively with the surrounding countryside.

7.35 The development would also have a detrimental impact on the overall landscape of the area particularly when viewed from the open countryside to the north and west of the site.

Population Increase

7.36 Between 2011 and 2021 the population of Mickleton increased by 38%. Taking account of all towns and larger villages within the Cotswold District Council's region, this was the second largest increase with only Moreton-in-Marsh recording a larger increase.

7.37 The population increase in other towns and villages within the region was much lower - for example the increase in Cirencester was only 6%. The total population increase across the whole of the CDC region was 9.6%.

7.38 It is quite clear that Mickleton has already incurred a disproportionate increase in population. It is simply not fair or reasonable for the village to continue to take the brunt of new development when it has already suffered large scale development over the last 10 years. If the proposed development is allowed to proceed then it is likely that this would result in the population of the village increasing by well over 50% since 2011 but with virtually no change to the village infrastructure and amenities.

7.39 Compared with other large villages in the CDC region, Mickleton has far fewer essential services and amenities yet it continues to be targeted for development. This is not sustainable development.

Local Plan

7.40 The CDC Local Plan 2011-2031 concluded that due to environmental constraints and the size of the village, recent growth and lack of developable and deliverable land, no further housing allocations would be made in Mickleton.

7.41 Although certain parts of the Local Plan now carry less weight due to the publication of the NPPF, this does not in any way alter the conclusions which CDC reached in the Local Plan about future development in Mickleton and the development boundary which should apply to the village. Those constraints still apply notwithstanding that central Government has increased CDC's housing target.

7.42 So if CDC concluded that development in the village was not sustainable when the Local Plan was published, why should it suddenly become sustainable now just because housing targets have altered?

Conclusion

7.43 The key question is whether the benefits of this proposed development outweigh the adverse impacts.

7.44 In practice what are the benefits? We would suggest that the only conceivable benefit is that it would increase the region's housing stock by 95 and create some affordable homes for those people who want to live in the

village but cannot afford to buy an existing property. It is difficult to see what other benefits would arise given the location of the site.

7.45 On the other hand and as already demonstrated, the adverse impacts include the risk of severe congestion within the centre of the village, additional strain on overstretched essential services such as medical and dental practices and schools and a detrimental effect on the overall character of the village and its landscape, the conservation area and the village's natural and historic environment.

7.46 The proposed development does not support growth nor improve productivity. It also does nothing to improve village infrastructure - on the contrary it puts additional strain on it. It harms rather than protects or enhances the village's natural and historic environment.

7.47 Mickleton is a rural village some distance away from local towns. It is not a town or a suburb and should not become one. Although parts of the village are not technically in the Cotswolds National Landscape it does border it and most visitors and objective people would see it as a typical Cotswolds village which needs to be protected. You only have to walk around the village to see that. It has already suffered extensive development, disproportionate compared with other nearby towns and villages. It cannot and should not be expected to accommodate further development.

7.48 In our view the adverse impacts of this proposed development would significantly outweigh the very limited benefit.'

8. Other Representations:

8.1 Approximately 35 objections, 1 support and 4 general comments received.

8.2 **Main grounds of objection are:**

i) Mickleton has had more than its fair share of development over the past few years with no improvement to the village infrastructure.

ii) No doctors, school at full capacity, poor public transport and very busy road network.

iii) Traffic levels have increased dramatically in recent years, and the road now experiences a continuous, non-stop flow of vehicles throughout the day.

This rise in traffic has already resulted in heightened noise levels, reduced safety, increased speeding and an overall decline in the quality of life for residents.

iv) The road infrastructure in this part of the village is already operating beyond safe and sustainable capacity. Any further housing development will inevitably introduce additional vehicle movements, placing yet more pressure on roads that are not suitable for increased congestion. The cumulative impact of further development would worsen what is already on the brink.

v) Approving this application would place unacceptable additional strain on the village's transport network, which is neither designed nor equipped to absorb further growth. The proposal risks fundamentally altering the nature of the community and eroding the safety and wellbeing of existing residents.

vi) Mickleton has a history of more homes without the facilities to go with it. The village has already absorbed a 38 per cent population increase since 2013. Whilst it may be the case that a small number of houses for local people from Mickleton may be appropriate, a development of this scale is not. The right homes in the right places is important.

vii) Mickleton does not appear to fit the term 'Principal Settlement' other than having space around it. The current population is around 2000, Stow on the Wold around 2000 and Chipping Campden 2400. The latter two are towns and have town centres with numerous facilities and car parking to match.

viii) The amenities that Mickleton currently has are barely coping with the population increase seen over the past 10 years. Key facilities lack parking which can cause severe congestion at certain times.

ix) During peak times parking on footpaths at key facilities to allow traffic to flow, is becoming a common occurrence at narrow spots.

x) The primary school is located in a very congested location at peak times and a travel survey carried for the MAID action group on 5.11.25 recorded nearly 231 car movements outside the primary school between 8.00 and 9.00a.m.

xi) No footpath/cycle way has been shown linking the Broadway Road to the High Street, this seems very unusual for such a large development. People will inevitably be walking along this road to the site especially when accessing school buses and walking towards Hidcote. It is not safe do so, especially when dark.

xii) Hardly any consideration has been given to traffic issues in the village and even less to how people will travel to their places of work.

xiii) In planning application 25/02213/OUT the CPRE states that 'Mickleton is poorly served by public transport and local services, leading to a high dependency on private cars. There are no realistic opportunities for sustainable travel such as walking, cycling, or public transport to nearby towns such as Chipping Campden or Stratford-upon-Avon'. In planning application 25/02213/OUT GCC Highways 20.10.25 also states: 'Cycling beyond the village is unlikely to be attractive to casual cyclists due to the local topography, narrow lanes, traffic levels and perceived speeds'. The Design and Access statement relating to the application rightly promotes sustainable communities with alternative travel methods, however in reality the options for Mickleton are compromised. The comments from consultees in 25/02213/OUT back this up.

xiv) The primary school is at or near capacity and in planning application 25/02213/OUT the GCC Community Infrastructure Team say that primary pupils will need to travel to schools outside Mickleton.

xv) Using the train station at Honeybourne also needs further investigation. Realistically it is unlikely that residents will cycle there for business travel. Does it even have spare car parking space available?

xvi) The reports state 'The made ground found across the site has been deemed chemically and/or physically unsuitable to remain beneath areas of soft landscaping, provision of a suitable thickness of capping soils may be required. The cover thickness is anticipated to be up to 600mm in private gardens and 300mm in common areas of soft landscaping survey carried out suggests contamination is evident and burying the top soil at depth of 600mm and using extra strength plastic pipes seems to be the solution.' In order to protect and encourage protected species wouldn't it be better to remove the contaminated soil completely.

xvii) Following developments in recent years our population is not far short of Chipping Campden which is a town not village and has plentiful services apart from the post office already mentioned (surgery, pharmacy, library etc etc). Mickleton has no such facilities so residents need to travel to get them, again adding to congestion on roads, pollution etc. Public transport, such as it is, does not meet needs now let alone if the population rises with this development. An expansion of around 60% would be a massive change in a relatively small village and endanger its existing character.

xviii) No one takes an holistic approach here. The village is in Gloucestershire but the huge Long Marston development in Warwickshire is just down the road and many of the residents there like us use Chipping Campden for services like the post office etc. The village simply does not have the space , infrastructure or facilities to cope with this development and we urge you to reject it.

xix) The plan itself is quite sympathetic to the area though we question that there is room for 95 houses. It is good that part of the development will sit on brownfield areas, and from that point of view it would be a benefit to the village. However, there are grave questions about the supply of water and electricity to site, as already the area suffers from outages and problems with water supply. Sewage too is a real concern, as this is already causing much difficulty in Willersey and Honeybourne where our sewage already goes to.

xx) There also seem to be concerns about water run-off, and the high water table on the proposed area to be built on. We would suggest extensive study be carried out on this, as failure to understand the ramifications of the build on the water table and run-aways could cause substantial problems for the rest of the village.

xxi) The village's own traffic counts already indicate that the main road through the village is at breaking point, and this situation will only worsen by allow another 200 cars into the local system.

xxii) The village relies on cars to exist. Everyone needs cars to go to the doctor, the dentist, a large supermarket, the cinema and major leisure activities, and this has pit s huge strain on the transport infrastructure. We have buses but these do not run at convenient times with very few journeys to Stratford or Evesham, and no link to our nearest railway station at Honeybourne.

xxiii) We do need additional 'affordable homes' in the village to house our own children, and those who want to come back to the village they were born in. These are shown on the Application, but any approval of the Application must include a cast iron guarantee that these will be built, and that they will be affordable in the true sense of the word.

xxiv) Build the infrastructure first is key to the Village being able to accept large scale additional building. In particular we need a pharmacy and doctor/dentist availability in the village. We need an expanded school to cope with children in any new development. Chipping's secondary school already has a 40 pupil witing list.

xxv) The road problem is the most difficult. It is absurd to make the statement that these 95 new houses will have little effect on it. When you add the vans, lorries and coaches that will come to service this number of houses you are looking at a vehicle every 5 or 6 seconds passing through the village from 6 am to 7 pm. What chance of even crossing the road then.

xxvi) The village has already suffered overdevelopment with an increase in population between 2011 and 2021 of 38%. We do not need any more houses.

xxvii) Recent developments in Mickleton have already increased the population by 30%. This application should be viewed alongside other development applications within the village together with road layouts, power supplies, water, drainage and sewerage which all need to be considered holistically not piecemeal. This is a submission ahead of the proposed increase of 60% housing in CDC' for Mickleton, an unwelcome overdevelopment of our village with no new amenities offered.

xxviii) The application says the local bus service is 'regular and convenient'. Not if you want to go to school, college or work in Stratford. There is no bus between 6.30 a.m. and 9.00a.m. The last buses back to Mickleton from either Stratford or Moreton in Marsh leave both the stations at 6.30.p.m. - no good for a night out, late train parents evening, shift work etc.. The buses, when running, often have 2 and 3 hour gaps between services There is no public transport to our nearest train station at Honeybourne which has a very small car park. Stratford Station and Moreton in Marsh stations are 40 to 45 minutes away by bus.

xxix) Why are three pedestrian links required between the development and Arbour Close/Porter Close? Apart from the existing PRoW, the two new links will involve destruction of established hedgerow - which was highlighted in the Design and Access Statement in Newlands planning application for its Arbour Close/Cotswold Edge development as "The existing network of hedgerows and vegetation form the basis of the green infrastructure network." The link close to Broadway Road will also destroy part of the community orchard established by Newland in its Arbour Close/Cotswold Edge development. It is perverse that the developer is now destroying or harming resources that formed a key part of its earlier development.

xxx) If three pedestrian links are provided, will each have a surface suitable for use by all potential users including pedestrians, wheelchair users, cyclists, pushchairs and horse-riders?

xxxi) There are no plans to include a pedestrian route along the Broadway Rd into the village, just links to public rights of way, which will mean people from this development will drive the short distance to reach the shop, butchers etc. Parking will then become more difficult in the village centre and crossing the road safely in the centre of the village will become more hazardous. There are no safe cycle routes out of the development to the school nor the centre of the village.

xxxii) Mickleton is being disproportionately targeted by developers and the Council because the majority of the village falls outside of the National Landscape. Since the 2016, the village has taken more than its fair share of housing and the proposal is now for a further 500-600 houses which will add more than 50% to the size of the village. Mickleton is a village and over development will ruin the feel of the village and convert it into another featureless "housing estate". No evidence has been provided the suggest that there is a requirement for such an increase level of housing within Mickleton.

xxxiii) A recent survey by residents showed an average of 1 vehicle travelling through the village centre every 7-9 seconds and a number of incidents of dangerous and inconsiderate driving. The road is not suitable for this volume of traffic nor the numerous heavy goods vehicles. Any increase in traffic volumes by any new developments will cause further issues.

xxxiv) The report on 'Building for a Healthy Life' is a lengthy document which makes a number of statements about how good the plans are whilst admitting at every stage that these plans are not in place nor is there any understanding of the actual site and the environment that these 95 houses are being placed.

xxxv) The indicative plan is wasteful of land, having many garages, that are not counted towards parking provision by GCC. In addition the extent of terraces appears limited. The 2 storey part of the development also makes no use of the roof, as floorspace, by incorporating dormers that are a common CDC feature. Using space in the roofs, has the effect of narrowing properties, and increasing density. With the current maximum number of units, the application should be refused, as it does not make efficient use of the land.

xxxvi) The latest pedestrian/cycle route plan shows a cycle route joining the existing footpath. However, it is unclear how this will assist cycle access into the village without using the 'main' road, as the road that the path comes out onto is a dead end road, the only access for cyclists would be via Pound Lane onto the main road. The other paths through the village are pedestrian only, not cycle routes.

xxxvii) Widening the existing path, lighting etc would destroy the nature of the path, disrupting birds/bats/insects etc.

8.3 **Main grounds of support are:**

i) *' Taking a holistic view of the level of need, that exists following the December 2024 NPPF, I agree to the principle of residential. Under the existing Local Plan, no residential allocations were included in this Principle Settlement. This is in contrast to around a 25% residential allocation in some Principal Settlements. In some Principal Settlements residential has grown by around 35%. I agree to the Principal of residential. However, with high level of need, Reg 18 nowhere near providing need, in the Preferred Scenario, my objection is effective use of land is not being made The number of units equivalent, should be 35 dph. The latest consultation on the NPPF, further emphasis higher density, making effective use of the land. If the number of units remains, planning permission should be refused, as effective use of land is not being made of the land. That is a valid reason for refusal.'*

8.4 **General comments are:**

i) I note that Mickleton is one of the proposed Strategic level growth locations in the current Local Plan Consultation.

ii) If the principle is agreed, only having 95 units would be an inefficient use of the land, in contradiction to the NPPF, which also emphasis the need for higher residential density. That is achievable by appropriate layout on and design.

iii) The existing historical guide of 30 units per Hectare, is no longer appropriate for existing circumstances, where the need for residential within CDC has been doubled.

iv) This site should be developed to a density of 35 units per Hectare, using the CDC net site area for 5.5 Hectares. The number of residential units should therefore be close to 124 units, that being 35 units per Hectare, not what has historically been the case of 30 units per Hectare (net).

v) As only 95 residential units are proposed, even if the principle of residential is considered appropriate,. the as application should be refused, as it would be making inefficient use of the land for residential, as there is the potential for more residential units than only 95.

vi) Limited weight can be afforded to the Cotswold District Council Local Plan Review (Preferred Options, November 2025), which remains subject to consultation and has not yet been tested through examination. While it is acknowledged that part of the application site has previously been identified under the adopted plan as having potential for expansion, and that the emerging plan anticipates further growth in Mickleton, this context heightens rather than diminishes the need for a cautious, plan-led and evidence-based approach to decision-making.

vii) The scale of growth currently proposed for Mickleton through the emerging Local Plan Review - up to 590 additional dwellings, equating to approximately 62% growth and one of the highest proportional increases proposed across the district - raises significant concerns regarding overdevelopment and cumulative impact. These concerns have been set out in detail in separate representations submitted to the Council in relation to the Local Plan Review. While those matters sit outside the determination of this application, they form important background context when assessing whether further development at this stage would be appropriate, sustainable and proportionate.

viii) In this regard, the proposal must be assessed not only on its individual merits, but also in terms of its potential to act as an enabling or gateway development for additional schemes that are either currently in preparation or have already been submitted. Approval of this application could materially alter the planning context by establishing a new development edge, access arrangements and infrastructure assumptions that may subsequently be relied upon to justify further adjoining development. This risk is a material consideration and is directly relevant to NPPF paragraph 15, which seeks to ensure that decisions are genuinely plan-led and that development is not delivered in a piecemeal or uncoordinated manner.

ix) The proximity of the site to existing residential properties, including those immediately adjoining the western edge of the village, further reinforces the need for careful scrutiny of impacts relating to amenity, character and the setting of the settlement. In such circumstances, it is particularly important that any proposal demonstrates, through robust and complete evidence, that impacts have been fully assessed and can be appropriately mitigated. When assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework, a number of fundamental matters remain unresolved.

x) The Local Highway Authority has requested that the application be deferred, identifying deficiencies in the submitted Transport Assessment and

expressing concern regarding pedestrian safety, accessibility and the sustainability of travel modes. In particular, inaccuracies relating to the stated distance to bus stops, the absence of continuous footways along sections of Broadway Road, and the Authority's conclusion that the development would be predominantly car-based indicate that the proposal has not yet demonstrated compliance with NPPF paragraphs 110 and 113, which require safe and suitable access for all users and prioritisation of sustainable transport modes.

xi) Environmental Health has advised that the application is currently unsupported by essential technical evidence, including a site-specific Noise Impact Assessment, an Acoustic Design Statement and a Construction Environmental Management Plan. Given the proximity of the B4632 and nearby commercial activity, and the relationship of the site to existing dwellings, the absence of this information prevents a robust assessment of likely impacts on residential amenity. This is directly relevant to NPPF paragraph 135(f), which seeks to ensure a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupants, and paragraph 187, which requires development to be appropriate for its location.

xii) In addition, Thames Water has confirmed that the existing water supply infrastructure is currently unable to accommodate the proposed development without network reinforcement or an agreed phasing strategy. In the context of the wider growth pressures being promoted for Mickleton, this raises legitimate concerns regarding infrastructure capacity, delivery timing and cumulative impact, which are material considerations under NPPF paragraphs 20 and 188.

xiii) Taken together, the outstanding consultee objections and requests for deferral indicate that the proposal has not yet demonstrated that it would constitute sustainable development as defined by NPPF paragraph 11. While it is acknowledged that, if development is to come forward in Mickleton, this site may represent a comparatively less intrusive option than some alternatives, this consideration carries limited weight when set against unresolved technical matters and the risk of facilitating further unplanned expansion.

xiv) Accordingly, while recognising the emerging policy context and the site's previous identification under the adopted plan, the application appears premature. The implications of approving this development - both in terms of its direct impacts and the precedent it may establish in the context of substantial further growth proposed for Mickleton - should be carefully and thoroughly considered before any planning decision is taken.

xv) If the development is to proceed it is important to implement that the indicated landscaping and preservation of woodland and trees between the existing Cotswold Edge Development and this further development by Newlands Homes as shown on the drawings submitted with application. It provides a physical and visual separation of these urban developments, preserves a local habitat for wildlife in the area and supports the proposed open space provision on the development.

xvi) The making of appropriate tree preservation orders and section 106 financial contribution from the developer would help secure the maintenance of the trees and woodland into the future.

8.5 **Weston Sub Edge Parish Council**

'8.5.1 Weston Sub Edge Parish Council wishes to register serious concerns regarding the proposed development of up to 95 dwellings on land north of Tops Nursery. The Parish Council fully supports the objection and detailed response submitted by Mickleton Parish Council, and wishes to add the following additional concerns.

8.5.2 We are particularly concerned that a proportion of the traffic generated by this development will inevitably pass through Weston Sub Edge in order to access surrounding villages and the wider road network. The roads within Weston Sub Edge are narrow, rural in character, and primarily serve a farming community. They were not designed to accommodate increased traffic volumes, particularly from additional residential development of this scale.

8.5.3 The Parish Council is concerned about the following issues:

8.5.4 The increase in traffic volumes and associated noise disturbance;

8.5.5 Highway safety, including the absence of continuous or safe footpath provision, forcing pedestrians to share narrow carriageways with vehicles;

8.5.6 Environmental impacts arising from increased vehicle movements through the village.

8.5.7 The lack of footpaths and safe pedestrian routes is of particular concern. Increased traffic without appropriate pedestrian infrastructure presents a clear risk to residents, walkers, and vulnerable road users, and is inconsistent with the principles of safe and sustainable development

8.5.8 In addition, Weston Sub Edge Parish Council shares Mickleton Parish Council's concerns regarding traffic flow within Mickleton itself. Mickleton High Street is narrow, frequently experiences congestion and bottlenecks, and lies within a historic environment. Increased traffic associated with this development would be likely to exacerbate congestion, detract from the character and appearance of the village, and potentially cause harm to historic buildings. It does not appear that these cumulative impacts have been adequately assessed or mitigated as part of the planning process.

8.5.9 Furthermore, the Parish Council is very concerned that local infrastructure is already operating at or beyond capacity. Schools, GP surgeries, and dental practices serving the area are under significant pressure, and there is no clear evidence that sufficient capacity exists to support an additional development of this size. The absence of secured infrastructure improvements further undermines the sustainability of the proposal.

8.5.10 Taken together, Weston Sub Edge Parish Council considers that the proposed development would result in unacceptable traffic, highway safety, infrastructure, and environmental impacts on both Mickleton and neighbouring villages, including Weston Sub Edge. These impacts further reinforce the conclusion that the development does not constitute sustainable development.'

8.6 **Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust**

5-page letter received, which set outs the following recommendations:

' <u>Recommendations</u>

8.6.1 The retained priority woodland should be treated as the organising element of both ecology and GI. Buffers should be widened wherever possible and supplemented with understorey shrubs, woodland edge planting and a clear management regime that keeps rear garden boundaries set back from root protection areas. Given the LNRS mapping and the way this woodland connects to further priority woodland immediately beyond the boundary, its long-term integrity and dark, undisturbed character should be non-negotiable.

8.6.2 Retention and enhancement of both orchard areas is strongly recommended. These compartments are likely the single largest drivers of habitat unit loss in the metric and their removal is not justified given the availability of layout options. Retaining them would greatly reduce the need for off-site offsetting and preserve a distinctive piece of local character. If necessary, the scheme should accept a modest reduction in dwelling numbers,

likely in the region of eight to ten units, in order to secure the orchards and create a more ecologically robust structure. Where orchard trees are in poor condition, replacement on a like-for-like or enhanced basis as traditional orchard should be required, rather than wholesale clearance.

8.6.3 Species-rich grassland creation should be significantly expanded, changing as much proposed amenity grass as possible within public open space into low nutrient meadow with differentiated cutting regimes. This is particularly important around the woodland edges, along SUDS margins and within the larger northern field parcel, where a continuous meadow block could be delivered rather than a series of small fragments. Hedgerows should be designed as the default form of rear and side boundary treatment wherever security and privacy considerations allow, with native species mixes and regular standard trees to create a continuous bat-friendly network

8.6.4 A detailed lighting strategy is essential and should be secured by condition. This strategy should follow the bat survey's recommendations by keeping light levels at woodland edges and hedgerows at or below 0.2 lux on the horizontal plane and 0.4 lux on the vertical plane, using warm white, low-intensity LED fittings, well-shielded columns or wall-mounted downlighters and short-duration PIR controls where appropriate. The aim should be to preserve dark corridors around the woodland and across key hedge lines, given the use of these areas by Brown Long-eared and Lesser Horseshoe bats.

8.6.5 An outline Construction Environmental Management Plan should be pursed at this stage. This should cover protection of woodland and hedgerow root zones with fenced exclusion areas, timing of vegetation clearance to avoid the bird nesting season, precautionary protocols for amphibians and hedgehog, pollution prevention measures for the SUDS and receiving water environment, and clear procedures for dealing with unexpected ecological issues during works.

8.6.6 A long-term Landscape and Ecological Management Plan should then govern the management of woodland, orchards, grassland and hedgerows over a minimum of thirty years. It would be reasonable to require occasional review of bat activity along woodland edges after occupation to ensure that lighting and management assumptions remain valid.

8.6.7 Finally, the BNG position needs to be revisited. The starting point should be redesigning the layout and GI so that on-site units approach or exceed the mandatory 10 per cent uplift, rather than assuming off-site offsetting from the outset. Only once on-site opportunities have been exhausted in line with the

mitigation hierarchy should off-site solutions be considered, and any such provision should ideally be secured within Gloucestershire so that it supports the county's Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

8.6.8 Taking the above together, the current scheme provides a basic GI structure but does not yet deliver an acceptable ecological outcome given the presence of priority woodland within the site and the strong LNRS woodland context. Without significant revision to retain the orchards, widen woodland buffers, expand species-rich grassland and secure robust lighting, CEMP and management mechanisms, it is difficult to conclude that the proposals achieve either meaningful biodiversity net gain or good practice in relation to nature recovery.'

8.7 **Cotswolds National Landscape Board**

13-page letter received, which includes the following comments:

'8.7.1 The application has been informed by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA, MHP, September 2025). We consider that the scope and methodology is sound, and viewpoint selection is representative and generally agree with its conclusions.

8.7.2 In terms of impact upon landscape character, the site lies outside of the CNL designation, and the development would generally accord with the LS&G. As such impacts upon the landscape character of the CNL itself would be indirect and as such we consider that the impact of the proposal would be negligible in landscape character terms.

8.7.3 In terms of visual impact, key views from within the CNL are viewpoints 11 and 12. Viewpoint 11 is located on the Heart of England Way, a promoted route. From these viewpoints, views towards the site are filtered by intervening vegetation however the rooftops of the nursery buildings are partially visible in somewhat intermittent views.

8.7.4 We agree with the LVIA's assessment that the high sensitivity receptors on these footpaths would experience a low/negligible nature of change in views resulting in a minor adverse effect. The main change would be the minor extension of built form across the northern part of the site, however much of this development would be single storey dwellings as well as landscaped public open space. Enhanced planting through the site would aid in breaking up the impact of any new built form.

8.7.5 The CNL, in particular the Escarpment, forms the backdrop to views from several viewpoints, particularly viewpoints 8 to 10 as well as from the right of way running through the site (viewpoints 4 to 7), though it is noted that views, particularly from the latter right of way, are heavily screened and filtered by intervening vegetation, buildings, earth mounds and supply storage stacks. Nonetheless, views to (as well as from) the Escarpment are one of the CNL's identified 'special qualities' as outlined at Section 4 of the CNL Management Plan.

8.7.6 We agree with the LVIA's assessment that receptors using the footpath through the site would experience a moderate beneficial effect by completion as views of the machinery and piles of storage material would be replaced by new dwellings with the landscaped setting of the site, attenuation pond and public open space. Views towards the CNL would not be more significantly impacted compared to the current baseline. Whilst the development would appear as a prominent addition in the foreground of views from the footpath to the north where the Escarpment is seen as a backdrop to the view, views of the Escarpment would be retained above the rooflines of the new dwellings. The taller dwellings are generally located in the area currently occupied by buildings with single storey dwellings proposed on the northern part of the site and development being pulled away from the northern boundary and further filtered through proposed planting.

8.7.7 Mitigation and enhancement measures are outlined at Section 9 of the LVIA and are generally supported, in particular the retention and enhancement of hedgerow and treed boundaries and new tree planting along the northern boundary and restoration of the northern hedgerow which to an extent reinstates historic field patterns.

8.7.8 In addition to the mitigation and enhancement measures proposed by the LVIA, we have further recommendations which should be reflected within any subsequent reserved matters submission, should, without prejudice, the LPA be minded to grant planning permission. These would accord with the Board's Management Plan policies and guidance and, in view of the duty outlined at s.85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (see Appendix 1 below), would seek to further the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the CNL, including its special qualities to ensure that the duty could be adequately discharged:

- *Materials, in particular roof tiles, should be muted in tone and reflect local building styles and materials to reduce the visual impact of the scheme for receptors located within the CNL.*

- *A Lighting Strategy should be developed and submitted as part of the pursuant reserved matters and/or discharge of condition applications in line with our advice below.*

8.7.9 On balance, we consider that, if the mitigations and enhancements outlined within the submission are secured and delivered through any reserved matters applications and subsequent discharge of conditions (including a LEMP) and the recommendations outlined above are reflected in the reserved matters scheme, the proposal would conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the CNL and its setting, would generally accord with the Landscape Strategy and Guidelines and would be sensitively located and designed to avoid and minimise adverse impacts on the CNL. Any minor adverse effect on intermittent views from within the CNL would be outweighed by the benefits of the proposal, especially the 40% affordable housing (38 homes) to be provided on site, particularly given the current shortfall in housing within Cotswold District which results in the invocation of the NPPF's 'tilted balance' (paragraph 11d)).

8.7.10 As such we consider that it would accord with Policy EN5 of the Cotswold Local Plan, as well as paragraph 189 of the NPPF and policy CE1 of the CNL Management Plan.

8.7.11 For avoidance of doubt, along with our recommendations relating to lighting below which could also be addressed through reserved matters submission and a discharge of conditions application, we consider that in the context of this proposal and considering what is proportionate and reasonable in this regard, the proposal would seek to further the purpose of CNL designation in line in terms of the duty at s.85 CRoW Act 2000, referred to above and in Appendix 1.

8.7.12 Without prejudice, if the LPA is minded to permit this application, it should provide proportionate, reasoned, and documented evidence to demonstrate how it sought to further the purpose, not merely through mitigation of harm but by taking all reasonable steps to further the purpose. If it is not practicable or feasible to take measures to further this purpose, the LPA should provide evidence to show why it is not practicable or feasible.'

8.8 **CPRE North Cotswolds District Committee**

8.8.1 'CPRE recognises that the revised housing targets have left the district vulnerable to speculative development on sites that are not supported by appropriate infrastructure and fall outside the scope of the existing local plan.

The Site and its Surroundings

8.8.2 We acknowledge that this site (MK13) is identified in the Council's Strategic Housing and Economic Land availability assessment (SHELAA) as a site suitable for development.

8.8.3 The site is described in the applicant's Planning Statement as a 'hybrid of greenfield/brownfield land'. CPRE's national policy is to support a 'brownfield first' strategy as a general principle. However, this would always be subject to robust assessment of individual sites at local level. We note for example, the detailed report from the Biodiversity Officer and agree that a full review of the proposals for securing Biodiversity Net Gain should be undertaken.

8.8.4 The site is adjacent to the boundary of the Cotswolds National Landscape and within its setting. We see that the Cotswolds National Landscape Board does not object to this application, subject to certain recommendations, including a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP).

8.8.5 That said, CPRE shares the concerns of the parish council, local residents and other consultees relating to lack of infrastructure and over-development.

Provision of Infrastructure

8.8.6 We are aware that 'Infrastructure First' is a prominent ambition of Cotswold District Council. Development that is not plan-led is less likely to benefit from long-term infrastructure planning and is unlikely to provide infrastructure benefits. Local services, such as hospitals, doctors, schools, transport infrastructure and sewage treatment works would therefore be likely to be further stretched due to the lack of planned investment and new facilities. The application site is poorly served by public transport and local services, which will lead to a high dependency on private cars. There are no realistic opportunities for sustainable travel such as walking, cycling or public transport to nearby towns such as Chipping Campden or Stratford-upon-Avon. Mickleton does not have a medical practice, a pharmacy, a dentist or a post office. The nearest medical facilities are 3 miles away at Lower Quinton and Chipping Campden and these are already at capacity. The village primary school is at capacity with no room to expand and the secondary school at Chipping Campden is over-subscribed. We also note the request from Severn Trent that a Holding Objection is imposed on this planning application as the proposed development may have a detrimental impact on the surrounding Network and Treatment Works, with the potential to cause flooding or pollution.

Employment Opportunities

8.8.7 There are very limited employment opportunities in Mickleton and the number of local businesses has, in fact, declined. The nearest centres of employment are at Evesham and Stratford-upon-Avon , which are only easily accessible by car. CPRE would argue that the proposed development is not likely to support growth, innovation and improve productivity, which are the key requirements of sustainable development (National Planning Policy Framework para 8).

Conclusion

8.8.8 It is important to emphasise that Mickleton is a rural village and, since 2011, has seen considerable development, increasing the population by some 38%. The cumulative effect of this recent development on the infrastructure of Mickleton has already had an adverse impact upon the village.

8.8.9 We would ask the council to carefully consider this development in the light of other applications within the village and together with the active consultation for significant expansion of the existing developments at Meon Vale and Long Marston.

8.8.10 We are particularly concerned about the potential cumulative impact on the village of application 25/04010/OUT, Outline planning application for the demolition of buildings and erection of up to 170 new dwellings, which would be adjacent to and wrap around this development.'

9. Applicant's Supporting Information:

- Arboricultural Implications Assessment and Arboricultural Method Statement
- Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment
- Dormouse Survey
- Biodiversity Net Gain Design Stage Report
- Biodiversity Metric Calculations
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- Dusk Emergence Surveys
- Design and Access Statement
- Desk Study and Ground Investigation Report
- Energy Statement
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

- Planning Statement
- Waste Management Plan
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy
- Transport Assessment
- Reptile Survey
- Building for a Healthy Life Pre-Assessment

10. Officer's Assessment:

Proposed Development

10.1 This application seeks Outline planning permission for the erection of up to 95 dwellings and associated works. Details relating to Access form part of this application. However, other details relating to Scale, Appearance, Layout and Landscaping are stated on the planning application form as being reserved for later approval should Outline permission be granted for this application. This application therefore seeks to establish the principle of development on the site rather than to obtain detailed planning approval for matters such as design or layout.

10.2 The submitted details include an illustrative layout plan which indicates that the proposed housing would extend around the north-western, north-eastern and south-western sides of an existing garden centre business and onto an agricultural field which is located to its north-west. As part of the proposal, it is proposed to remove a number of horticultural glasshouses lying to the north-west of the garden centre's retail area. New housing is proposed on the site of the buildings proposed for removal, as well as on storage areas, areas of grassland, scrub and on areas occupied by orchard trees. The housing proposed on the field to the north-west of the garden centre would extend beyond a woodland/line of trees that currently separate the field from the garden centre site. The existing field is set to grass.

10.3 Vehicular access to the proposed development would be via a new entrance located in the south-eastern boundary of the application site. It would open onto the B4632 Broadway Road. It would be located approximately 90m to the north-east of the main entrance into the existing garden centre. Pedestrian access is also proposed along the route of an existing Public Right of Way (HMN12) which runs in a south-west to north-east direction through the centre of the site. The existing route connects into an existing housing development located adjacent to the north-eastern boundary of the application site. A cycle path is also proposed to the south of the Public Right of Way. It would also extend into the existing housing development to the north-east of the

application site. The submitted illustrative layout plan also shows the creation of a potential pedestrian/cycle connection into Hamilton Close to the north-east.

(a) Residential Development Outside a Principal or Non-Principal Settlement

10.4 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that *'If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.'* The starting point for the determination of this planning application is therefore the current development plan for the District which is the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031.

10.5 In addition to the above, it is noted that policies in the current National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024) represent a significant material consideration when assessing this application. It is also noted that the Government published a new draft version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for consultation on the 16th December 2025. The consultation period for the aforementioned document expires on the 10th March 2026 and it is anticipated that a final version of the new NPPF will be released in Summer 2026. Whilst the draft NPPF is a consultation document, it is considered that the proposed policies within it are a material consideration and must be given a degree of weight at the present time. The relevant draft policies will be referred to in this report in addition to those policies in the existing NPPF.

10.6 The application site is located outside a Development Boundary as designated in the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031. It is also located outside a Non-Principal Settlement for the purposes of the aforementioned plan. The erection of new-build open market housing on the site is therefore covered by the f ollowing policy:

10.7 Policy DS4: Open Market Housing Outside Development Boundaries and Non-Principal Settlements

'New-build open market housing will not be permitted outside Principal and Non-Principal Settlements unless it is in accordance with other policies that expressly deal with residential development in such locations. '

10.8 The supporting text to Policy DS4 also states *'6.4.5: For the purposes of Policy DS4, any land that falls outside Development Boundaries and Non-Principal*

Settlements is referred to as countryside, even if it is technically previously developed land.'

10.9 The current scheme would result in the erection of new build open market housing outside a development boundary and is therefore contrary to the above policy.

10.10 Notwithstanding the above, it is noted that the Council also has to have regard to policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and guidance in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) when reaching a decision. The NPPF and the PPG represent significant material considerations. In particular, it is noted that the December 2024 update of the NPPF, in combination with the updated PPG on Housing and Economic Needs Assessment, introduced a new standard method for calculating local housing need. Prior to the December changes to the NPPF and PPG, the Council could demonstrate a 7.3 year supply of housing land. It was therefore comfortably meeting its requirement to provide a 5 year supply of such land. However, as a result of the aforementioned changes the Council can now only demonstrate a 1.8 year supply.

10.11 Prior to December 2024, the Council's 5 year supply was measured against the residual Local Plan housing requirement, which was 265 homes per year (based on the Housing Land Supply Report August 2023). However, the new standard method means that the Council's 5 year supply must now be measured against the standard methodology calculation of the number of homes needed in the district, which increased in December 2024 from 504 to 1036 homes per annum. The December changes to the NPPF therefore result in the Council having to deliver a far higher number of dwellings than that required prior to December 2024. As the supply figure is now under 5 years, it is necessary to have regard to paragraph 11 of the NPPF, which states:

11. Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

For decision-taking this means:

c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date , granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

10.12 Footnote 8 of the NPPF advises that *'out-of-date'* for the purposes of paragraph 11 includes *'for applications involving the provision of housing, situations where: the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites (with the appropriate buffer as set out in paragraph 78): or where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was substantially below (less than 75% of) the housing requirements over the previous three years.'* In light of this guidance, it is considered that Local Plan Policy DS4 is out-of-date at the present time and that paragraph 11 is engaged in such circumstances.

10.13 In the case of criterion d) i) of paragraph 11, it is noted that footnote 7 of the NPPF advises that areas or assets of particular importance can include National Landscapes. Harm to such an area could therefore provide a strong reason to refuse an application for housing even if a 5 year supply of housing land cannot be demonstrated. With regard to criterion d ii), it is necessary to weigh the benefits arising from the scheme, such as the delivery of housing, including affordable housing, against the adverse impacts of the proposal. These aspects of the proposal will be addressed later in this report. However, in the case of criterion d) ii), it is evident that the adverse impacts would have to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits in order for an application to be refused.

10.14 With regard to the consultation draft NPPF and new housing outside settlements, it is noted that the aforementioned document replaces the criteria set out in paragraph 11 with a new policy which sets out the type of development that is acceptable outside settlements. In instances when a Council cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable housing site, draft Policy S5 states:

10.15 S5: Principle of development outside settlements

'1. Only certain forms of development should be approved outside settlements, as set out in the following list. These 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 in this Framework:

j. Development which would address an evidenced unmet need (including, but not limited to, development proposals involving the provision of housing where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites or scores below 75% in the most recent Housing Delivery Test28), and where the development would:

i. be well related to an existing settlement (unless the nature of the development would make this inappropriate) and be of a scale which can be accommodated taking into account the existing or proposed availability of infrastructure; or

ii. ii. comprise major development for storage and distribution purposes which accords with policy E3.

2. In applying this policy, the circumstances in which the benefits of approving development proposals are likely to be substantially outweighed by adverse effects include, but are not restricted to, situations where the development proposal would fail to comply with one of the national decision-making policies which state that development proposals should be refused in specific circumstances. '

10.16 In the case of applications such as the one now submitted, it is evident that the draft policy states that, where there is a shortfall in housing land supply, such applications should be well related to an existing settlement and be of a scale which can be accommodated taking into account the availability of existing or proposed infrastructure. Paragraph 1 of Policy S5 states that such applications should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed the national decision-making policies in the draft NPPF. These aspects of the proposal will be addressed in the following sections of this report.

Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment

10.17 An assessment of the application site was undertaken as part of the Council's Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (2021) (SHELAA).

The site assessment looked at the site in conjunction with other land lying to the north and north-east of current application site. The application site was given refence MK13. The SHELAA states: *'The wider site comprises four separate SHELAA site submissions, which have been amalgamated together to consider whether any development in this location would be suitable. '* and *'MK12, MK13, MK18 and MK20 have been assessed together to consider whether any strategic benefits could be gained by allocating one or more of the sites or whether any parts of the sites, which might otherwise be unsuitable for housing or commercial development, could deliver other elements of a scheme.'*

10.18 With regard to site MK13, the SHELAA states:

10.18.1 'MK13: MK13 contains a plant nursery / garden centre (Tops Plants Nursery) in the central-southern part of the site. This garden centre accommodates several small businesses, including a café (Decades Tearoom) and a hair salon. The plant nursery also has several large greenhouses. A Public Right of Way (Mickleton Footpath 12) cuts east to west through the centre of the site. Adjacent to this public footpath is the storage area for the plant nursery, which is a visual detractor when passing through the site along the footpath. This area also contains a large telephone mast. The south-west of the site contains a small orchard and a grassed area. This is segregated from the agricultural land to the west by a conifer hedge. The south-eastern part of the site contains a bungalow (Sunnybrook), which is set back from Broadway Road by a large grassed area. This plot is segregated from the plant nursery by an outgrown hedgerow. Access is provided to Broadway Road via a track running along the eastern boundary of the site. The northern part of MK13 is a field in agricultural use. This is segregated from the plant nursery to the south by a dense overgrown hedgerow. There is also a copse of semi-mature trees located in the eastern part of the site, to the north of the public right of way. This field has been subdivided into three by post and rail fencing. The south-eastern and south-western boundaries of MK13 have an irregular shape, as these boundaries exclude several houses that have been built or have extant planning permission. The site is surrounded by arable farmland to the west; a large dwelling in extensive grounds to the north-west; pastoral farmland to the north; the recently completed 70 dwelling Cotswold Edge development to the east, which has a landscape buffer between the site and this development; and Broadway Road (B4632) to the south with agricultural land beyond.

<u>Summary</u>

10.18.2 MK13: even more so than MK12, this site has also gained a fragmented character. The subdivisions and various developments have created a

patchwork of land uses which bear little resemblance to the two fields which once resided here. A substantial part of the site has a developed feel already or has been degraded by the storage of materials and waste. The northern part of the site, which is still an agricultural field, is more sensitive to development than the other parts of the site, namely due to the impact on the wider landscape. The southern part of the site, however, is reasonably well screened and already has residential development along most of the southern and western boundaries. The most significant constraint appears to be how the site can be developed whilst ensuring the plant nursery / garden centre business can remain viable. If this can be achieved, the development of this site may be a suitable candidate for allocation in the Local Plan.'

'Recommendation

10.18.3 MK12, MK13 and MK18 are candidates for further consideration for allocation within the Local Plan. The allocation and masterplanning of these sites together would be more preferential than the sites coming forward individually. MK20 is unsuitable for housing development.

Indicative capacity

10.18.4 MK13: the density multiplier assumption indicates a capacity of 121 homes. However, the site is constrained by its shape and because of the proposal to retain and expand the plant nursery. A more cautious estimate of 100 homes is reasonable.'
'Summary

10.18.5 The development of any one of these sites would be a significant extension to Mickleton. However, it is logical and sound to consider them collectively, rather than seeing incremental and piecemeal development. In so doing, it will be possible to secure wider benefits and plan infrastructure and green infrastructure more strategically.'

10.19 The SHELAA assesses the current application site in combination with adjoining land and considers the respective sites in a strategic manner rather than as standalone entities. The site numbers in the SHELAA are based on a strategic planned growth of the settlement which would also include infrastructure improvements and a holistic approach to the growth of the settlement.

10.20 The current proposal would not bring about improvements to existing infrastructure or services in the village. In this respect, the ad-hoc nature of the application weighs against the proposal. However, it is also noted that this

Council is currently in the process of producing a new Local Plan which would cover the period from 2025-2043. As part of this process, the Council issued a document titled ' Local Plan Review Preferred Options Consultation' in November 2025. The aforementioned document sought public feedback on 7 potential spatial strategies, each of which is aimed at addressing the Council's requirement to deliver 18,650 new dwellings in the new Local Plan period. Paragraph 2.15 of the Preferred Options Consultation states that *' the Council's preferred development is Scenario 5, as it builds on the current adopted strategy which has successfully delivered the development needs of the adopted Local Plan period until the introduction of the new housing target in December 2024.'* Scenario 5 could potentially deliver 14,660 homes which would be more than the other scenarios. It would involve the allocation of sites in Principal Settlements, Non-Principal Settlements and Village Clusters and would support Rural Exception Sites in Rural Settlements and the creation of a new settlement(s) and/or strategic extensions to existing settlements.

10.21 The Council is likely to submit its draft Local Plan for consultation (Regulation 19) in August 2026. The next step would then be an Examination in Public where an independent Inspector appointed by the Planning Inspectorate would assess the soundness and legal compliance of the Plan. The Inspector would also consider representations made in response to the Regulation 19 consultation. If the Plan is found to be sound it would then become the adopted Development Plan for the District.

10.22 The village of Mickleton is identified as a Principal Settlement in both the current Local Plan and the Preferred Options Consultation paper. Table 2 of the latter document sets out that Mickleton could deliver approximately 439 additional dwellings in the period up to 2043. Mickleton has therefore been identified as a location that could potentially accommodate larger scale residential growth in the new Local Plan period. It is noted that the village is less constrained in heritage and landscape terms than most other settlements in the District. In addition, land is available for development around the settlement which means that housing could reasonably be delivered to address the Council's current and future housing needs. These matters are considered to constitute a significant material consideration when assessing this application.

10.23 With regard to the delivery of 95 dwellings on this site, it is of note that Mickleton has been subject to a significant level of new housing development in the current Local Plan period. The Council's 'Cotswold District Housing Land Supply Report - May 2025' states that 264 dwellings have been built in the village in the period dating from the 1st April 2011 to the 31st March 2024. In addition, as of the 1st April 2024 extant permissions totalled 2 dwellings. This

equates to a total of 266 dwellings. The aforementioned figure is noticeably higher than other similar and larger sized settlements in the District such as Andoversford - 74 dwellings, Blockley - 59 dwellings, Chipping Campden - 185 dwellings, Kemble - 80 dwellings, Lechlade - 117 dwellings or Willersey - 97 dwellings. The village has therefore been subject to development pressure in the current Local Plan period, with the population rising to 2,214 in 2021. The village's population is therefore approaching that of traditionally larger settlements such as Chipping Campden which had a population of 2,379 in 2021 (Cotswold District Role and Settlement Function Study - November 2025). In addition, the growth of the village in residential terms has not been accompanied by any corresponding growth in employment, health or social infrastructure.

10.24 In addition to this application, it is of note that this Council has received a number of other applications for residential development adjacent to the village of Mickleton in the last 12 months. The applications include:

25/01621/OUT Outline application for up to 120 dwellings with all matters reserved with the exception of access. Land North East Of Mickleton. Withdrawn September 2025

25/02213/OUT Outline planning application for the erection of 60 dwellings with means of access. Foxwold House, Land South-west Of Broad Marston Lane. Decision pending

25/04010/OUT Outline planning application for the demolition of buildings and erection of up to 170 new dwellings, public open space, landscaping, sustainable drainage system (SuDS) and creation of associated vehicular access point to Broadway Road and other associated infrastructure. (Some matters reserved). Land North Of Broadway Road. Decision pending

10.25 It is evident that the village is coming under significant development pressure at the current time.

10.26 The existing village contains a primary school, church, village hall, 2 public houses, butchers, convenience store, garden centre and hotel. It offers bus services to Stratford-upon-Avon and Chipping Campden/Moreton-in-Marsh It does not provide a GP surgery, secondary school, leisure centre, employment estate. It is of note that a post office, GP surgery and community building (Joseph Webb Hall) have closed in the current Local Plan period.

10.27 With regard to the proximity of the application site to existing services and facilities, it is noted that the eastern boundary of the application site is located approximately 450m from the village's primary school and approximately 750m from the convenience store. Other services/facilities such as the butchers, public houses and village hall are within the latter distance. The routes to the aforementioned facilities are relatively flat and include pedestrian footways. Bus stops on the village's High Street could be accessed via the pedestrian footpath route proposed in the north-eastern boundary of the application site. They are located approximately 500m from the site boundary. Paragraph 4.4.1 of Manual for Streets (MfS) states that walkable neighbourhoods are typically characterised as having a range of facilities within a 10-minute walking distance (c.800m). It is noted that MfS also states that this is not an upper limit, and that walking offers the greatest potential to replace short car trips, particularly those under 2km. In the context of the aforementioned guidance, it is considered that the site can provide reasonable pedestrian and cycle access to the school and other services/facilities within the village.

10.28 With regard to the attractiveness and safety of the available routes, it is noted that the north-eastern route to the village centre avoids main roads and passes through residential areas. It is also relatively flat and is illuminated. It is considered that the application site provides good connectivity to existing services and facilities for pedestrians and cyclists and does offer alternatives to the use of the private motor car in this respect. Whilst it is noted that future residents would likely be dependent on the use of the private motor car to undertake trips relating to retail, healthcare and leisure, the rural nature of the District means that the availability of all such services within a single settlement within the District is very limited. As a consequence, it is necessary to offer a degree of flexibility in relation to sites such as this, which can offer good accessibility to existing services and facilities in the settlement, whilst also being within relatively close proximity to other settlements, such as Chipping Campden or Stratford-upon-Avon, which can offer a range of other services and facilities. In addition, future residents would have reasonable access to bus services to locations such as Stratford-upon-Avon, Cheltenham and Chipping Campden. It is considered that there would be a reasonable range of transport modes on offer for future residents of the development in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 110 of the NPPF which states that *'..... Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making'*. It is

also considered that Paragraph 83 of the NPPF is of relevance to this proposal and represents a significant material consideration. It states that *'housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby'.*

10.29 The concerns of objectors regarding the amount of development now proposed, together with recent developments in the village and the limited infrastructure and services available in the settlement are noted. This is a concern that has been recognised previously by Officers when considering a proposal for 120 dwellings on land to the north-east of Mickleton in 2025 (25/01621/OUT). The aforementioned application was recommended for refusal and subsequently withdrawn by the applicant in September 2025. However, the aforementioned recommendation was made prior to the publication of the Preferred Options Consultation paper and its recommendation that Mickleton could accommodate over 400 additional dwellings in the new Local Plan period. It is therefore necessary to re-evaluate the level of growth that could reasonably be accommodated by the village and give weight to the direction of travel set out in the emerging Local Plan. In light of the accessibility of this site to existing services and facilities in the settlement, combined with the introduction of development on a site that has already been subject to development and the relatively modest level of development when assessed against the potential future growth identified in the emerging Local Plan, it is considered that it would not be possible to sustain an objection to this application on the grounds that it would represent an over-development of the village. In addition, the development of this site would not prejudice the potential release of other land to the north of the settlement for development. It would not therefore conflict with the aspirations of the emerging Local Plan or draft NPPF Policy S5 in this respect. In addition, the proposal is considered not to conflict with draft NPPF Policy TR3 which states that *' development proposals which could generate a significant amount of movement, in the context of the area within which they could be situated, should be in locations that are, or can be made sustainable, by limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes for residents and users, unless the nature of the use makes this impractical.'* Furthermore, draft Policy CC2 states that development should *' be located where a genuine choice of sustainable transport modes exists, and improve opportunities for walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport.'* and *' support good access to facilities to limit the need to travel, whether through the development's location, through development densities which improve*

catchment populations for local services, or by incorporating community facilities and premises that support local employment opportunities.'

10.30 In light of the information that is being released as part of the emerging Local Plan process and the potential future growth planned for the village, it is considered that the adverse impacts of the proposal on the settlement, its services and infrastructure and its rural character would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits arising from the delivery of additional housing, including affordable housing. This application is therefore considered not to conflict with paragraph 11 of the NPPF in these respects.

(b) Housing Mix and Affordable Housing

10.31 The following Local Plan policies are considered relevant to this application in terms of affordable housing, self-build/custom build housing and housing mix.

10.32 Policy H1 Housing Mix and Tenure to Meet Local Needs

1. *All housing developments will be expected to provide a suitable mix and range of housing in terms of size, type and tenure to reflect local housing need and demand in both the market and affordable housing sectors, subject to viability. Developers will be required to comply with the Nationally Described Space Standard.*

2. Any affordable accommodation with 2 or more bedrooms will be expected to be houses or bungalows unless there is a need for flats or specialist accommodation.

3. Proposals of more than 20 dwellings will be expected to provide 5% of dwelling plots for sale as serviced self or custom build plots, unless demand identified on the Local Planning Authority's Self-Build and Custom Register or other relevant evidence demonstrates there is a higher or lower level of demand for plots.

4. Starter Homes will be provided by developers in accordance with Regulations and national Policy and Guidance.

5. Exception sites for Starter Homes on land that has been in commercial or industrial use, and which has not currently been identified for residential development will be considered.

10.33 Policy H2 Affordable Housing

1. *All housing developments that provide 11 or more new dwellings (net) or have a combined gross floorspace of over 1,000 square metres, will be expected to contribute towards affordable housing provision to meet the identified need in the District and address the Council's strategic objectives on affordable housing.*

2. In settlements in rural areas , as defined under s157 of the Housing Act 1985, all housing developments that provide 6 to 10 new dwellings (net) will make a financial contribution by way of a commuted sum towards the District's affordable housing need subject to viability. Where financial contributions are required payment will be made upon completion of development.

3. The affordable housing requirement on all sites requiring a contribution, subject to viability is:

i. Up to 30% of new dwellings gross on brownfield sites; and
ii. Up to 40% of new dwellings gross on all other sites.

4. In exceptional circumstances consideration may be given to accepting a financial contribution from the developer where it is justified that affordable housing cannot be delivered on-site, or that the District's need for affordable housing can be better satisfied through this route. A financial contribution will also be required for each partial number of affordable units calculated to be provided on site.

5. The type, size and mix, including the tenure split, of affordable housing will be expected to address the identified and prioritised housing needs of the District and designed to be tenure blind and distributed in clusters across the development to be agreed with the Council. It will be expected that affordable housing will be provided on site as completed dwellings by the developer, unless an alternative contribution is agreed, such as serviced plots.

6. Where viability is questioned or a commuted sum is considered, an open book assessment will be required. The local planning authority will arrange for an external assessment which will be paid for by the developer.

10.34 The application site occupies an area of agricultural land, as well as land used for horticultural purposes. S336 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states that the definition of agriculture includes horticultural uses. S55 of the aforementioned Act also states that the use of any land for the purposes of

agriculture *'shall not be taken for the purposes of this Act to involve development of the land.'* In addition, Annex 2 of the NPPF excludes land which was last occupied by agricultural buildings from the definition of previously developed land. It is therefore considered that the site does not constitute previously developed land.

10.35 With regard to affordable housing, the proposed development seeks to provide 40% affordable housing (38 units) in accordance with the requirements of Local Plan Policy H2. The Council's Housing Officer states:

' The details of tenure, number of bedrooms and size of units should be included in the negotiated S106 agreement; were the application in its current form be approved then an indicative mix would look like.

40% affordable housing of 95 dwellings = 38, and of these;

15 x social rent, 12 x affordable rent and 11 x affordable sale such as shared ownership or first homes.'

10.36 It is considered that the scheme can deliver an acceptable level and mix of affordable housing in accordance with Policy H2, subject to the completion of a S106 legal agreement.

10.37 With regard to self-build/custom build housing, the delivery of 95 dwellings would require the provision of 5 serviced plots in accordance with the 5% requirement set out in Policy H1. This would be finalised as part of the S106 legal agreement process.

10.38 With regard to housing mix, it is considered necessary to ensure that a mechanism is put in place to secure an appropriate mix of affordable and market dwellings, as required by Local Plan Policy H1. It would not be possible to control the mix of the open market housing at the reserved matters stage, which is limited to matters relating to scale, layout, appearance, access and landscaping. The provision of larger, more expensive dwellings for open market sale can increase average house prices across the District, which can then increase the Council's housing needs and its housing affordability issues, both in the affordable and open market sectors. A higher average house price can mean that more persons fall into housing need. In contrast, the provision of smaller 1, 2 and 3 bed open market dwellings can more reasonably address such an issue. Figures from the Office for National Statistics indicate that the ratio between median house prices and median gross annual earnings in Cotswold District in 2024 (based on a 5 year average) was 14.64 times. In

comparison, the difference was 5.63 times in 1997. The provision of a high percentage of 4 and 5 bed dwellings simply adds to the price differential and does little to address the Council's issues relating to house price affordability.

10.39 The Council's Local Plan Partial Update Issues and Options Consultation document states that *'Building more and more houses to reduce house prices (or "Build, Build, Build", as Boris Johnson puts it) does not work, particularly in Cotswold District. There is much evidence to support this. Cotswold District has delivered significantly more housing than has been required in recent years, yet housing affordability has continued to worsen.'* With regard to potential future Local Plan policy, it goes on to state that *'smaller homes are generally more affordable, so a policy requirement could be introduced for a higher proportion of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom market houses, and fewer 4 and 5 bedroom houses.'* It is noted that Table A2.19 of the Gloucestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update Final March 2014 states that 80% of new market accommodation required in Cotswold District in the period up to 2031 would be 1, 2 and 3 bed units, with just 20% being 4 bed dwellings and above. The latest Office for National Statistics (ONS) figures issued at the end of October 2025 project that the number of one-person and multiple adult households without dependent children would rise from 71.7% to 76.4% of all households by 2032, and that average household sizes would drop from 2.54 to 2.24 in the same period. There is therefore a growing need for smaller units. In order to ensure that an appropriate mix of open market housing is provided, it is considered that the matter is addressed by condition which would require 80% of the proposed dwellings to be 1, 2 or 3 bed units. Subject to this requirement it is considered that the proposal would accord with Local Plan Policy H1.

(c) Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

10.40 The application site occupies an existing garden centre site, an area of woodland and agricultural land. The site is not subject to any specific landscape designations. However, the northern boundary of the Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL)(formerly known as the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) runs along the south-eastern edge of the B4632 Broadway Road, which in turn, runs adjacent to the south-eastern edge of the application site.

10.41 Whilst the site is located outside the CNL, it is located in close proximity to it. Development within the site could therefore have implications for the setting of the designated landscape. The Council, in performing or exercising any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, the CNL *'must seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of*

outstanding natural beauty.' (S85(A1) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000).

10.42 The following policies and guidance are considered applicable to this proposal:

10.43 Policy EN1 Built, Natural and Historic Environment

New development will, where appropriate, promote the protection, conservation and enhancement of the historic and natural environment by:

a. ensuring the protection and enhancement of existing natural and historic environmental assets and their settings in proportion with the significance of the asset;

b. contributing to the provision and enhancement of multi-functioning green infrastructure;

c. addressing climate change, habitat loss and fragmentation through creating new habitats and the better management of existing habitats;

d. seeking to improve air, soil and water quality where feasible; and

e. ensuring design standards that complement the character of the area and the sustainable use of the development.

10.44 Policy EN2 Design of the Built and Natural Environment

Development will be permitted which accords with the Cotswold Design Code. Proposals should be of design quality that respects the character and distinctive appearance of the locality.

10.45 Policy EN4 The Wider Natural and Historic Landscape

1.Development will be permitted where it does not have a significant detrimental impact on the natural and historic landscape (including the tranquillity of the countryside) of Cotswold District or neighbouring areas.

2. Proposals will take account of landscape and historic landscape character, visual quality and local distinctiveness. They will be expected to enhance, restore and better manage the natural and historic landscape, and any significant landscape features and elements, including key views, the setting of settlements, settlement patterns and heritage assets.

10.46 Local Plan Policy EN5 Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

1.In determining development proposals within the AONB or its setting, the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape, its character and special qualities will be given great weight.

2. Major development will not be permitted within the AONB unless it satisfies the exceptions set out in National Policy and Guidance.

10.47 Policy INF7: Green Infrastructure

1.*Development proposals must contribute, depending on their scale, use and location, to the protection and enhancement of existing Green Infrastructure and/or the delivery of new Green Infrastructure.*

2.New Green Infrastructure provision will be expected to link to the wider Green Infrastructure network of the District and beyond.

3. Green Infrastructure will be designed in accordance with principles set out in the Cotswold Design Code (Appendix D).

10.48 In terms of national guidance, the following paragraphs from the NPPF are considered relevant to the proposal:

10.49 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that decisions should ensure developments:

a) *'Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development.*

d) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.. '

10.50 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decision should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by *'protecting and enhancing valued landscapes'* and *'recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside'.*

10.51 Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states that *'great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in ... National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.'*

10.52 On the basis that the site is not located within the Cotswolds National Landscape nor a Special Landscape Area, it is considered that the site does not constitute a valued landscape for the purposes of paragraph 187. Notwithstanding this, paragraph 187 b of the NPPF states that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the local environment by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. The current site is seen in context with the agricultural landscape lying to the north, south and west of the settlement. The field to the north is considered to contribute positively to the rural setting of the village.

10.53 It is noted that an initial landscape appraisal of the site was undertaken as part of the SHELAA assessment of site MK13. It states:

'10.53.1 MK13: MK13 contains a plant nursery / garden centre (Tops Plants Nursery) in the central-southern part of the site. This garden centre accommodates several small businesses, including a café (Decades Tearoom) and a hair salon. The plant nursery also has several large greenhouses. A Public Right of Way (Mickleton Footpath 12) cuts 13 east to west through the centre of the site. Adjacent to this public footpath is the storage area for the plant nursery, which is a visual detractor when passing through the site along the footpath. This area also contains a large telephone mast.

10.53.2 The south-west of the site contains a small orchard and a grassed area. This is segregated from the agricultural land to the west by a conifer hedge.

10.53.3 The south-eastern part of the site contains a bungalow (Sunnybrook), which is set back from Broadway Road by a large grassed area. This plot is segregated from the plant nursery by an outgrown hedgerow. Access is provided to Broadway Road via a track running along the eastern boundary of the site.

10.53.4 The northern part of MK13 is a field in agricultural use. This is segregated from the plant nursery to the south by a dense overgrown hedgerow. There is also a copse of semi-mature trees located in the eastern part of the site, to the north of the public right of way. This field has been subdivided into three by post and rail fencing.

10.53.5 The south-eastern and south-western boundaries of MK13 have an irregular shape, as these boundaries exclude several houses that have been built or have extant planning permission.

10.53.6 The site is surrounded by arable farmland to the west; a large dwelling in extensive grounds to the north-west; pastoral farmland to the north; the recently completed 70 dwelling Cotswold Edge development to the east, which has a landscape buffer between the site and this development; and Broadway Road (B4632) to the south with agricultural land beyond

Landscape sensitivity:

10.53.7 MK13 evaluation: Low/Medium The parcel's landscape sensitivity to development is derived from its combination of rural and developed character and its location on the edge of the settlement. Over half of the parcel is developed and used as a plant nursery. The north of the parcel has an agricultural character that links it with the wider rural context. The adjacent settlement edge is present to the east and has an influence on the parcel. Due to development and activity within and adjacent to the parcel residential development is unlikely to appear as an incongruent addition to the local landscape. The boundaries are considered to be relatively weak. Development of the parcel would provide an opportunity to deliver robust Green Infrastructure features that also soften the transition between the settlement and wider landscape. The footpath that crosses the parcel would need to be accommodated within any proposal and could represent an attractive feature that promotes activity and connectivity with the wider landscape. The parcel should be considered within a wider strategy for the area so as not to provide inappropriate boundary features.'

10.54 This application is accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), which states the following:

10.54.1 'It is recognised there is a contrast in character between the southern (largely developed parcel) and the northern parcel of land. The northern parcel is situated on the settlement edge, conforms to the existing pattern of settlement and has a degree of containment with opportunities for landscape restoration resulting in an overall minor moderate adverse impact for the northern parcel before mitigation, and an overall negligible/ slight beneficial impact for the southern parcel.'

'10.54.2 Residents of the adjoining properties are assessed to experience moderate adverse effects before mitigation, but this change will be experienced in the context of existing built form present on site and residential dwellings surrounding. Users of the nursery are assessed to experience minor adverse views.

10.54.3 Views experienced by users of the footpath running through the site are assessed to be moderately beneficial due to many detracting elements present on site and the opportunity to improve the setting of the footpath and introduce locally characteristic details.

10.54.4 5 Users of the footpath to the immediate north of the site are assessed to experience substantial adverse effects for a short section of footpath due to the introduction of development where currently little is seen and views afforded over the study site towards the National Landscape. Proposals will retain high level views over the development towards Baker's Hill. Effects will be experienced for a short section of footpath to the immediate north of the site and there are notable opportunities for mitigation and enhancement. Overall, the level of harm assessed to local and longer distance views from the development proposals is identified to be moderate/minor during both operation and construction and not pass the threshold of significant harm.'

10.54.5 'In summary, the development is likely to result in minor adverse-negligible landscape impacts and minor adverse visual impacts before mitigation. Once mitigation measures have established the overall residual landscape and visual effects are assessed to be negligible. The level of harm assessed to landscape and visual receptors falls below the threshold of significant harm.'

10.55 In response, Officers consider that the application site is comprised of 2 distinct elements. The southern and central parts of the site form part an existing garden centre and its associated land/buildings. The northern part of the site consists of an agricultural field which is separated from the main body of the garden centre site by a woodland/line of trees. As a consequence, the field appears distinct in visual and landscape terms from the garden centre development to its south.

10.56 In terms of public views, the principal views of the site are from the B4632 to the south-east, Public Right of Way HMN12 which runs in a roughly east-west direction through the centre of the site, and from Public Right of Way HMN10 which runs around the eastern and northern edges of a field which borders the northern boundary of the application site. The aforementioned Public Right of Way is located approximately 130m from the application site where it runs along the northern edge of the respective field.

10.57 With regard to views from the B4632, it is evident that the existing garden centre, car park and associated buildings (including dwellings) are readily visible from the highway. However, it is also noted that the application site includes

green areas lying to either side of the garden centre, which are also visible from the B4632. At present, the green areas provide a landscape buffer between the garden centre and existing housing developments to the north-east, and between the garden centre and the open countryside to its south-west. As a consequence, the garden centre site appears distinct from the built area of the village to the north-east. It also acts as a transitional area between the main part of the settlement and the open countryside. With regard to the illustrative layout submitted with this application, it is noted that the applicant includes housing on parts of the existing green space. As a consequence, the green buffers that currently exist between the garden centre and existing village development/adjacent countryside could potentially be lost. In this respect, the proposal would result in the introduction of a notable increase in the presence of built development when viewed from the B4632. However, it is also noted that the final layout of the development would be established at the Reserved Matters stage should Outline permission be granted for this scheme. The applicant would need to demonstrate that the scheme provides adequate levels of green infrastructure in accordance with the requirements of Local Plan Policy INF7 as part of the Reserved Matters process. In this respect, it is considered that the site is of sufficient size to provide some flexibility in terms of the size, layout and arrangement of dwellings. It is therefore considered that a scheme could be devised which would limit the built presence of development alongside the B4632.

10.58 With regard to views of the site from the Public Right of Way that extends through the centre of the site, it is noted that the existing route passes alongside existing glasshouses, outdoor storage areas, a mobile phone mast and garden centre related infrastructure. The removal of the aforementioned buildings and storage areas would potentially open up the route. With suitable landscaping, it could represent a betterment for users of the Public Right of Way when compared to the existing arrangement. At present, the existing route through the garden centre provides little visual connectivity with the nearby countryside. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would be unlikely to cause adverse landscape or visual effects when experienced from the aforementioned Public Right of Way.

10.59 In contrast to the views experienced from the central Public Right of Way, views from the Public Right Of Way which runs alongside the field to the north of the application site are considered to be far more sensitive. The respective route offers extensive views southwards to the application site as well as to the east and west. The northern part of the application site has the character and appearance of an agricultural field and appears visually distinct from the developed land to its south. Moreover, contrary to the comments made in the

SHELAA report, the northern part of the site is not seen in context with any existing village development when viewed from the Public Right of Way to the north. Existing belts of trees to the south and east screen existing development with the result that the erection of any residential development on the northern part of the site would result in a very clear extension of built development into the open countryside. The northern part of the development therefore has the potential to appear as a standalone entity that would be visually distinct from existing housing in the settlement.

10.60 The Council has engaged a Landscape Consultant to assess the proposed scheme. The Consultant has advised the following in response to the illustrative plan initially submitted by the applicant:

' Landscape Character

10.60.1 The site lies within the Mickleton Vale Fringe landscape character area, which forms part of the wider Unwooded Vale landscape associated with the northern Cotswolds. This landscape is defined by gently undulating agricultural land, a mixture of arable and pastoral fields, intermittent hedgerows and hedgerow trees, and compact nucleated settlements that sit as clear and contained forms within their rural setting. Openness, farmland continuity and the clarity of settlement edges are central characteristics of this landscape, contributing to a strong sense of rural coherence and tranquillity.

10.60.2 Within this broader context the application site exhibits two markedly different character conditions. The southern and central parcels contain the former horticultural complex, with glasshouses, storage areas and hardstanding creating a more developed and visually cluttered environment. Although these elements diverge from the traditional agricultural baseline of the Vale Fringe, they are partially contained by surrounding vegetation, offering scope for enhancement through redevelopment.

10.60.3 The northern parcel, by contrast, presents an open agricultural field with a simple structure defined by hedgerows and small tree groups. It aligns closely with the defining characteristics of the Mickleton Vale Fringe and contributes directly to the perception of rural openness and the established separation between Mickleton and the wider countryside. Its form, land use and continuity with surrounding farmland give it a higher sensitivity to change than the developed parcels to the south. This distinction is central to understanding the likely scale of landscape effects.

10.60.4 The LVIA considers the effects during Construction and Operation (Completion) and Residual (Mitigation proposals established and matured). The assessment is made on the various landscape character areas, as well as a site-based assessment of the site and immediate surroundings.

10.60.5 Several of the landscape receptors would experience direct and permanent change. This is particularly evident within the northern parcel where development will occupy much of the existing landscape, replacing open fields with built form and associated infrastructure. Although the LVIA concludes that landscape effects on the Mickleton Vale Fringe is negligible because of the scale of development in comparison to the scale of the landscape character areas, this approach does not reflect recent guidance.

10.60.6 As set out in LITGN-2024-01-GLVIA3-N&C paragraph 3(3): "When taking account of geographic extent and duration, care should be taken to ensure that the resulting magnitude of effect judgement is not understated. The focus should be on what would be affected and where, not restricted to the proportion of a landscape character area or designated area affected."

10.60.7 In this case, the degree of change from open arable fields to a built extension, combined with the alteration to settlement setting, represents a higher magnitude of change than currently stated. On this basis, it is considered that the LVIA underestimates the magnitude of change and overall effects on the LCAs, particularly during construction and upon completion, when the introduction of new built form will fundamentally alter the existing character.

10.60.8 In terms of site-level landscape impacts, the applicant identifies that prior to the maturation of mitigation planting there would be a moderate adverse effect on the northern parcel, reflecting the loss of openness and the change to the existing rural landscape fabric. The LVIA then concludes that once structural planting has established and matured, the residual effects on the northern parcel would reduce to moderate-minor adverse.

10.60.9 However, this conclusion does not fully reflect the nature of the change proposed. The introduction of residential development within the northern parcel represents a fundamental shift in land use and landscape character, from open agricultural land to built form and associated infrastructure. Even with the introduction of additional planting, the transition from open farmland to residential development would constitute a high magnitude of change at a site-level. This is because mitigation measures can soften views and edges but cannot reinstate the existing agricultural character of the site.

Visual Amenity

10.60.10 The LVIA identifies PRoW MF10 and WSF7 as key receptors, which is appropriate given their proximity and the open nature of views from the northern field. The assessment states that there will a moderate adverse effect on Users of MF10 & WS7 because there will be notable alterations to key views. We note that these residual effects won't be achieved until at least year 15, which means there will be a substantial adverse impact on completion and for the early years when the residential parcel will appear very much as an isolated block of development in views which are current made up of predominately countryside and the CNL valley slopes in the distance. On this basis, it is considered that the scale, layout and positioning of built form within the northern parcel should be revisited in order to reduce visual impacts.

10.60.11 The central and southern parcels, by contrast, already contain built form and are partially enclosed by vegetation. Visual change here is likely to have a neutral effect. Sensitive redevelopment could therefore improve the experience along much of MF12 provided that the alignment, enclosure and landscape treatment are carefully considered.

Cumulative landscape and visual effects

10.60.12 It is noted that an outline planning application has also been submitted for land to the north-east of the site (ref. 25/02213/OUT). While the current proposal has been assessed in isolation within the submitted LVIA, the potential for cumulative landscape and visual effects arises when considering the combined influence of multiple developments around Mickleton.

10.60.13 The northern edge of the village is particularly sensitive in landscape terms, and the cumulative introduction of new built form in this area has the potential to alter the perception of settlement extent, rural openness and the transition between the village and the wider countryside. In particular, the combined effect of development to the north-east could result in a more continuous or expansive settlement edge, even if individual schemes are accompanied by mitigation planting.

10.60.14 On this basis, it is considered that a proportionate cumulative landscape and visual appraisal should be undertaken. This should examine how the proposed development would be experienced alongside other emerging schemes, with particular regard to changes in settlement form, landscape character and PRoW user experience.

Landscape Proposals

10.60.15 The submitted Public Open Space Plan illustrates areas of open space in the northern and eastern parts of the site, adjacent to existing woodland and tree belts. The Concept Plan places dwellings relatively close to the northern boundary. a more generous and multi-layered structure would provide a stronger transition, reduce visual prominence and respond directly to landscape character and visual amenity concerns. The drainage strategy remains focused on two principal attenuation basins. While these could provide capacity, their scale and location occupy a large proportion of the proposed open space, which may limit the usability of these areas. A more distributed SuDS approach across the site, incorporating smaller-scale features in line with the National SuDS Standards (2025), would better support landscape character, biodiversity and placemaking objectives.

10.60.16 There is limited information provided in relation to play provision within the scheme. Given the scale of development proposed, the inclusion of appropriately located and well-designed play space would be welcomed and should be considered if minded for approval.

Conclusion

10.60.17 In conclusion, the southern and central parts of the site comprise previously developed land associated with the former nursery and are relatively well contained by existing vegetation, are capable of accommodating change without resulting in an encroachment into open countryside.

10.60.18 The northern parcel, however, remains the most sensitive part of the site in landscape and visual terms. It is characterised by open agricultural land that aligns closely with the defining qualities of the Mickleton Vale Fringe and contributes to the rural setting and separation of the settlement. Development within this parcel would represent a fundamental change in land use and settlement pattern, altering openness, landscape character and the perception of the village edge. As set out in this response, the LVIA underestimates the magnitude of change associated with this transition, particularly during construction and upon completion, and overstates the extent to which effects would reduce once mitigation planting has matured.

10.60.19 Some degree of landscape and visual change is inevitable, particularly within the northern parcel and in views where development would currently be perceived against a predominantly rural backdrop. While the submitted LVIA demonstrates that mitigation can soften the appearance of development over

time, it does not fully address the change in character and the adverse effects within the northern part of the site. On this basis, while the principle of development at Tops Nursery is capable of being acceptable in landscape terms, this is contingent on changes to the northern parcel.'

10.61 In response to the comments of the Landscape Consultant, the applicant has amended the illustrative layout in order to increase the amount of green space within the field in the northern part of the site. The submitted plans also state that housing the respective area would be 1 or 1.5 storey in height. In response, the Landscape Consultant has advised:

10.61.1 'The revised arrangement represents a clear improvement. The increased separation from the northern boundary, repositioning of the attenuation basin and inclusion of additional structural planting respond positively to concerns regarding the strength of the settlement edge. The intention to deliver advance planting is also welcomed in principle, as this would assist in reducing landscape and visual effects earlier.

10.61.2 That said, it remains important to recognise that development within the northern parcel will still result in a degree of adverse landscape and visual effect. The site currently forms open agricultural land that contributes to the rural setting of Mickleton, and the introduction of built form into this parcel represents a permanent change in character. While mitigation can soften and reduce effects over time, it cannot fully offset the shift in land use and settlement pattern unless the northern parcel were omitted from the scheme entirely. The revised layout reduces the extent of perceived encroachment, but some residual harm will remain.

10.61.3 In relation to the SuDS example provided, we appreciate that attenuation basins are typically dry for much of the year and can form part of open space. However, the example shown appears primarily engineered to meet drainage requirements, with limited ecological diversity or multifunctional value. If a basin is to form part of the green infrastructure within this sensitive edge location, we would expect a more landscape-led and multifunctional design approach, incorporating varied landform, native planting and informal recreational value, so that it contributes meaningfully to green infrastructure rather than functioning solely as a drainage feature.

10.61.4 Overall, the revisions are a positive step and move the scheme in the right direction. Ultimately, the acceptability of the northern parcel will depend on the quality and long-term delivery of the landscape buffer and open space strategy.'

10.62 In light of the additional information that has been received, Officers consider that the development of the northern field would cause harm to the landscape and visual setting of the village. However, the harm is considered to be localised and of a magnitude which could be mitigated through the creation of a robust landscape scheme and a sensitive design approach. Such matters would be addressed as part of a Reserved Matters application. On balance, it is considered that the site could accommodate up to 95 dwellings in principle without causing a level of landscape and visual harm that would outweigh the benefits arising from the delivery of the proposed housing.

10.63 With regard to the impact of the proposed development on the setting of the CNL, it is noted that existing garden centre development and existing housing already have an influence on the relationship of the site to the designated landscape. The introduction of housing within the garden centre site is therefore unlikely to significantly change the relationship of the existing site to the CNL. When viewed from the higher land within the CNL to the south of the site, the garden centre site represents a minor component of a wider landscape view, which also includes the settlement of Mickleton. With regard to the field to the north, it is noted that existing woodland and trees would provide a degree of screening when viewed from vantage points in the CNL to the south. In this respect, the proposal should not have an adverse impact on the setting of the CNL. Views from the Public Right of Way to the north towards the CNL would largely place the development against a backdrop of existing trees rather than the rising land of the Cotswolds escarpment. It is also noted that the Cotswolds National Landscape Board considers that the development could be undertaken without causing harm to the setting of the CNL. In this respect, the proposal is considered not to conflict with Local Plan Policy EN5 and guidance in paragraphs 187 and 189 of the NPPF.

10.64 In the context of paragraph 11 of the NPPF, it is therefore considered that the landscape and visual impact of the scheme would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits arising from the delivery of the proposed housing.

(d) Access and Highway Safety

10.65 The proposed development would be served by a new vehicular access which would open onto the B4632 Broadway Road to the south-east. The proposed entrance would open onto a section of road which is subject to a 30mph speed limit. The aforementioned speed limit changes to a 60mph speed limit at a point approximately 30m to the south-west of the proposed entrance.

10.66 In addition to the proposed vehicular entrance, the applicant is also proposing to utilise Public Right of Way HMN12 which extends roughly through the centre of the site and which connects with existing housing development to the north-east of the garden centre. A separate cycleway/footpath is also proposed to the south of the woodland. It would also connect into the housing development to the north-east. A further pedestrian link is also proposed in the north-eastern boundary of the site, approximately 25m to the south of the proposed cycleway/footpath. Finally, a footpath connection into the Public Right of Way which runs to the north-east of the site is also proposed.

10.67 The following policies and guidance are considered applicable to this proposal:

10.68 Local Plan Policy INF4 Highway Safety

'Development will be permitted that:

a. Is well integrated with the existing transport network within and beyond the development itself, avoiding severance of communities as a result of measures to accommodate increased levels of traffic on the highway network;

b. Creates safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians, avoids street clutter and where appropriate establishes home zones;

c. Provides safe and suitable access and includes designs, where appropriate, that incorporate low speeds;

d. Avoids locations where the cumulative impact on congestion or other undesirable impact on the transport network is likely to remain severe following mitigation; and

e. Has regard , where appropriate, to the Manual for Gloucestershire Streets or any guidance produced by the Local Highway Authority that may supersede it.'

10.69 In addition, criteria 1 a and b of Local Plan Policy INF3: Sustainable Transport states that development will be permitted where it:

a. actively supports travel choice through provision, enhancement and promotion of safe and recognisable connections to existing walking, cycling and public transport networks ...;

b. gives priority to pedestrians and cyclists and provides access to public transport facilities taking account of the travel and transport needs of all people.'

10.70 Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states *'Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.'*

10.71 Draft NPPF Policy TR6:3 states that *'all development proposals should be capable of proceeding without having a severe adverse impact on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion, including cumulative impacts), or a unacceptable impact on highway safety, taking into account any mitigation measures proposed as well as any wider network improvements.'*

10.72 This application is accompanied by a Transport Assessment (TA) which includes information relating to matters such as vehicle speeds, traffic generation, access visibility, accessibility, pedestrian/cycle movements and highway safety.

10.73 With regard to vehicle speeds along the B4632, the TA includes the results of automated traffic counters. The recorded 85th percentile speeds are 39.2mph north-eastbound and 41.7mph south-westbound. The TA shows that the requisite visibility of 2.4m x 100m to the south-west and 2.4m x 103m to the north-east can be achieved.

10.74 With regard to traffic generation, the TA states that there would be 50 two way car trips in the AM Peak Hour and 47 in the PM Peak Hour.

10.75 The proposed vehicular entrance is considered to be of an acceptable design for the size and type of development that is being proposed. In addition, adequate visibility can be achieved from the entrance. The existing local road network is also considered to have sufficient capacity to accommodate the increase in traffic movements. Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) Highways raises no objection to the application. The scheme is considered to accord with Local Plan Policy INF4 and Section 9 of the NPPF in these respects.

10.76 With regard to pedestrian/cycle access and connectivity to existing village services and facilities, it is noted that the applicant is proposing to create dedicated cycle and pedestrian footways into the adjacent housing developments. The creation of such routes would ensure that future residents would not need to walk/cycle along the B4632 to the village. In addition, the

applicant has control over land connecting this site to the existing public highways in the housing developments to the north-east. It is therefore considered that pedestrian and cycle access to the village can reasonably be secured and implemented.

10.77 Works that affect the Public Rights of Way (such as re-surfacing/upgrading of paths) would require the separate consent of Gloucestershire County Council Public Rights of Way. As the existing Public Right of Way extending through the site is designated as a public footpath, it would not be possible for future occupants of the proposed development to cycle along the aforementioned route. The creation of a separate cycle route to the south of the woodland and other estate roads will allow cycle connectivity without causing conflict with the use of the public footpath.

10.78 It is considered that the proposed development can be undertaken without having an adverse impact on highway safety, Public Rights of Way or the operation of the local highway network. The proposal is considered to accord with Local Plan Policies INF3 and INF4 and Section 9 of the NPPF.

(e) Impact on Residential Amenity

10.79 The proposed development would be located adjacent to an existing garden centre, which also includes a variety of other businesses such as a hardware store, hairdressers, sweet shop and café. The aforementioned businesses would continue to operate should this development proceed. Officers have therefore had regard to the potential impact of existing commercial uses on future occupiers of the proposed development, as well as the potential implications that a residential development may have on the future operation of existing businesses. With regard to the latter, paragraph 200 of the NPPF states that planning decisions *'should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities... Existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development after they were established. Where the operation of an existing business or community facility could have a significant adverse effect on new development (including changes of use) in its vicinity, the applicant (or 'agent of change') should be required to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed'.*

10.80 The applicant has submitted a Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) with this application. The NIA has been assessed by the Council's Noise Officer who states: *'The Noise Impact Assessment suggests the initial site risk assessment noise levels of the majority of the site are low risk, with low to medium risk at*

the southern boundary from road traffic noise.' The Noise Officer has queried the fact that the noise survey was undertaken in January, which could represent a quieter part of the year. The applicant has confirmed that all commercial elements of the garden centre site were operating at that time. In response, the Noise Officer considers that this proposal should be subject to a condition which requires the submission of a follow-up NIA as part of a Reserved Matters application. It would assess the worst case scenario and set out measures to ensure good acoustic design and appropriate mitigation if required. In addition, the future positioning and layout of dwellings would be determined at the Reserved Matters stage. It is considered that the scheme could be undertaken in a manner that would protect future occupiers from unacceptable levels of noise or disturbance.

10.81 With regard to the agent of change matter, it is noted that a number of existing dwellings are located adjacent to the garden centre, which indicates that the 2 forms of development can co-exist in an acceptable manner. In addition, the types of activity undertaken on the garden centre site are not ones that operate over a 24 hour period, or are in themselves of a type which would need to be curtailed because of nearby residential development. It is therefore considered that the proposed development could be undertaken without prejudicing the operation of existing businesses on the garden centre.

10.82 In general terms, it is considered that the site is of sufficient size to provide adequate outdoor amenity space for individual dwellings. New dwellings could also be positioned so as to avoid have an adverse impact on the occupiers of existing dwellings near the site. The site is also of sufficient size to be able to accommodate a children's play area.

10.83 It is considered that the proposed development could be undertaken in a manner that would not have an adverse impact on residential amenity or on the activities undertaken within the existing garden centre. The proposal is considered to accord with Local Plan Policy EN15 and paragraphs 198 and 2012 of the NPPF in these respects.

(f) Biodiversity

10.84 The northern part of the application site is occupied by agricultural fields which are bordered by hedgerows and woodland. The southern and central parts of the site are occupied primarily by horticultural buildings and associated machinery, equipment and products. A woodland occupies the eastern part of the site and hedgerows extend along its eastern and western boundaries. Whilst orchard trees occupy parts of the site, the aforementioned trees have been

intensively managed as part of the garden centre operation. They do not therefore qualify as traditional orchard, or as a priority habitat.

10.85 Policy EN8 Biodiversity and Geodiversity: Features, Habitats and Species

1.Development will be permitted that conserves and enhances biodiversity and geodiversity, providing net gains where possible.

2.Proposals that would result in significant habitat fragmentation and loss of ecological connectivity will not be permitted.

3.Proposals that reverse habitat fragmentation and promote creation, restoration and beneficial management of ecological networks, habitats and features will be permitted, particularly in areas subject to landscape-scale biodiversity initiatives. Developer contributions may be sought in this regard.

4.Proposals that would result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats and resources, or which are likely to have an adverse effect on internationally protected species, will not be permitted.

5. Development with a detrimental impact on other protected species and species and habitats "of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity"(41) will not be permitted unless adequate provision can be made to ensure the conservation of the species or habitat.

10.86 This application is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA). In response to the findings of the PEA, a detailed Dormouse Survey, Dusk Emergence Surveys and a Reptile Survey have been undertaken. The PEA summary states:

10.86.1 'The grassland on site was identified as semi-improved neutral grassland. In order to qualify as a NERC Priority Habitat, grassland typically has to be unimproved (good semi-improved grassland can also qualify) and would have to be examples of grasslands such as lowland calcareous grassland or lowland dry acid grassland, habitats not found on site. The grassland was surveyed within the optimal period which did not find the grassland on site to be good semi-improved grassland and no further grassland surveys are deemed necessary.

10.86.2 There were two orchards on site and another area showing remnants of orchard. These are no longer managed but were formerly part of the nursery operation and intensively managed. They do not qualify

as traditional orchard, which is a NERC Priority habitat.

10.86.3 The semi-natural broad-leaved woodland is a habitat of more importance on site; however, does not classify as Lowland Deciduous Woodland which is a NERC Priority habitat.

10.86.4 The remaining habitats on site are common, of low to moderate ecological value and easy to replace.

10.86.5 Any impacts as a result of loss/changes to these habitats in terms of their vegetation are considered to be negligible.

10.86.6 The site provides potential habitat for a range of fauna. The following require further consideration/action:

- *Bats - Two buildings on site provide potential day roosting opportunities for bats and further dusk surveys are required. The site provides good bat foraging and commuting habitats and further bat activity surveys are required. Due to the number of trees on site, these were not inspected for potential roosting features and trees that are to be removal, subject to works or lighting should be subject to further inspection.*

- *Dormice - The site provides potential Hazel Dormouse habitats some of which would be directly affected and other areas indirectly affected by the development. A Dormouse survey is required to determine presence/absence of this species.*

- *Badgers and other mammals - Precautionary methods of working are advised with regards to potential passing of Badgers or presence of other common mammals.*

- *Birds - No further surveys are required at this time but details of timings of works to prevent impact upon nesting birds and suggestions for enhancement are given.*

- *Reptiles - The site provides areas of potential reptile habitat and further surveys are required.*

- *Amphibians - The site provides areas of good terrestrial amphibian habitat and there are nine ponds within 500 m of the site, one of which appeared to no longer be present and four of which could not be accessed for inspection. The remaining four ponds could be accessed for inspection*

which found one to be dry and the remaining three were subject to a Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) Assessment to determine their suitability for Great Crested Newts, as was a wet ditch within 500 m. The three ponds score above the 0.5 threshold at which further consideration is required and subsequent eDNA analysis of the Ponds 1, 2 and 3 in June 2023 returned a positive result for Pond 1. A District Licence Application will therefore be made.'

10.87 In response to the above, the Biodiversity Officer has assessed the submitted details and concurs that's that the proposal is unlikely to have an adverse impact on a variety of species including badgers, birds, reptiles and other mammals such as dormice. However, further information has been requested in relation to bats and Great Crested Newts. The Biodiversity Officer has also advised that the central woodland is classed as a priority habitat. The applicant has now provided information confirming the latter. In order to minimise the impact of the proposal on the woodland, the applicant is proposing to direct the main footpath and cycle routes to the south of the respective habitat. Whilst the Public Right of Way extending through the woodland will be retained, the current proposal would ensure that alternative pedestrian and cycle routes are available as an alternative to the woodland route thereby avoiding the need to introduce new hard surfaced routes and lighting within the woodland. It is therefore considered that the scheme could be undertaken in a manner that would mitigate the impact of development on the priority habitat.

10.88 With regard to bats, the Biodiversity Officer has advised:

10.88.1' Building 11 is to be demolished to facilitate the proposed development, which will result in the loss of the identified roost. The dusk emergence surveys report provides recommendations for mitigations and compensations which are largely sufficient. I am supportive of the proposed compensatory habitat creation for crevice dwelling bat species. However, as I am not supportive of the built form being so close to the eastern site boundary, the location of compensatory roosting features should be revised to be located on other suitable structures.

10.88.2 The bat activity surveys on site recorded the presence of five bat species, with most of the onsite activity attributed to Common Pipistrelle bats and observed in relation to boundary habitats and sheltered areas. I consider that the survey effort has sufficiently captured onsite bat activity, and that the recommendations within the report are sufficient.'

10.89 With regard to Great Crested Newts, the Biodiversity Officer states:

10.89.1 ' Nine ponds were identified within 500m of the site, and the site is within the amber impact risk zone as per the Great Crested Newt District Licensing Scheme. The PEA undertook HIS assessments on all accessible ponds, and states that eDNA analysis of ponds undertaken in June 2023 returned a positive result for GCN in pond 1. The report states that an application will be made to join the District Licensing Scheme. However, no demonstration that the applicant has joined the scheme, and thus secured appropriate mitigation, has been provided.

10.89.2 Therefore, evidence that the applicant has entered into the District Licensing Scheme is required to be submitted prior to determination to enable the LPA to review the proposals in light of the derogation tests as outlined in the ODPM Circular 06/2005 and in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), and to ensure that the species concerned will be conserved at a favourable conservation status.'

10.90 At the time of writing this report, discussions are ongoing between the applicant and the Biodiversity Officer in relation to bats and Great Crested Newts.

10.91 It is noted that Great Crested Newts and bats are European Protected Species. It is therefore necessary to have regard to ODPM Circular 06/2005 (para 116) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), and consider the proposal against the 3 'derogation' tests, as set out in Regulation 55 of the aforementioned Regulations :

'a) The preserving of public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment:

b) There must be no satisfactory alternative:

c) The action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.'

10.92 If the applicant were to enter the Great Crested Newt District Licensing process (which is operated by NatureSpace and authorised by Natural England), then the derogation tests relating to the aforementioned species would be addressed as part of the aforementioned licence process. If the applicant were

to pursue the more traditional licence route with Natural England, then this Council will need to demonstrate that the proposal reasonably addresses the above mentioned tests. The loss of bat roosts would also require a separate licence from Natural England and would be subject to the 3 derogation tests.

10.93 At the present time, it is considered that the delivery of the new housing would represent an overriding public interest. In addition, the developed nature of the site and its proximity to a Principal Settlement means that it represents a sustainable location for new development and that there is no satisfactory alternative. Criterion c is currently being addressed as part of the ongoing surveys and discussions between the applicant and the Biodiversity Officer and would need to be satisfactorily addressed in order for this application to be granted planning permission. Officers will provide an update to Committee Members on the 13th May.

10.94 With regard to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), the Biodiversity Officer stated initially that the *'the submitted BNG information demonstrates the following: 30.72% net loss in area habitat units, 19.33% net gain in hedgerow units.'* In response, the applicant has submitted additional information, including updated calculations. The latest information states:

10.94.1 'The proposed development and proposed landscape will result in a habitat net percentage change of -11.36%. This is a deficit of 4.79 habitat units to achieve a 10% gain. Trading rules are also unsatisfied.

10.94.2 There is a hedgerow net percentage change of +17.14%. This is a gain of 1.13 hedgerow units which exceeds the required target of 10% gain and meets trading rules.

10.94.3 There is a watercourse net percentage change of 0%. This is a deficit of 0.05 watercourse units to achieve a 10% gain.

10.94.4 As a loss/insufficient gain for habitats and watercourses has been demonstrated, Biodiversity Offsetting will be required for habitats and hedgerows.'

10.95 In order to meet BNG requirements, the applicant will need to provide off-site enhancements. The applicant's Biodiversity Net Gain Design Stage Report April 2026 states: *'Additional off-site land used by the developer or provided by an offsetting provider will need to be registered on the national biodiversity gain sites register before, or at the same time as, or after units are bought. A legal*

agreement will be required to secure a site for BNG and set out who will undertake the BNG creation, enhancement and management for 30 years.'

10.96 An update will be provided at the Committee meeting.

(g) Flooding and Drainage

10.97 The site is located within Flood Zone 1, which is the lowest designation of Flood Zone and one in which new residential development can be acceptable in principle. The applicant has submitted a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy to accompany this application. The aforementioned document indicates that surface water drainage would be addressed via the creation of on-site attenuation. It is proposed to create an attenuation basin in the northern part of the site. Water would be released at a controlled rate into an adjacent watercourse.

10.98 GCC Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) in its role as a statutory consultee for surface water drainage matters considers that the proposed drainage measures are acceptable subject to conditions. The proposed development is therefore considered to be able to deal with surface water drainage taking into account the impact of climate change.

10.99 With regard to foul drainage, Severn Trent Water has identified capacity issues in its existing network. Upgrades will therefore need to be undertaken in order to accommodate this development. A condition is therefore recommended that will require the submission of a foul drainage plan prior to the commencement of development.

10.100 Thames Water has also requested a condition covering water supply in order to ensure that adequate water can be provided to future occupants of the proposed development.

10.101 Subject to the attachment of the respective conditions, it is considered that the proposed development is acceptable in terms of foul and surface water drainage and water supply in accordance with Local Plan Policy INF8.

(h) Archaeology

10.102 With regard to archaeology, GCC Archaeology initially advised:

'This geophysical survey identified several linear and curvilinear anomalies in the north of the application site that may be of archaeological origin, as well as

parallel linear anomalies suggesting ridge and furrow cultivation and unidentified anomalies. Based on this, the submitted Desk Based Assessment identified at least moderate potential for prehistoric and Roman remains within the proposal area. Due to standing structures and current site usage, not all of the proposed development area was available for survey. Based on the archaeological background above there is potential for archaeological deposits of unknown significance to be present within the application site, on which ground works and intrusions required for the proposed development may have an adverse impact.'

10.103 Following further discussions with the applicant, GCC Archaeology has advised the following:

10.103.1 'Based on the area of the site unavailable site for trenching pre-determination due to the combined coverage of buildings and tree cover, in this case it would be proportionate to allow trial trenching to further investigate the archaeological risk to take place through condition rather than prior to the determination of the application. It should be noted that if the trial trenching uncovers evidence for significant archaeology then further mitigation by archaeological excavation may be necessary.

10.103.2 I advise that I have no objection in principle to the proposed development. However, I recommend that a programme of investigation is undertaken to identify and record any archaeological remains which may be adversely affected by ground works required for the construction of this scheme.'

10.104 Subject to condition, it is considered that the proposed development can be undertaken without having an adverse impact on archaeology.

Other Matters

10.105 With regard to the arboricultural impact of the scheme, the Tree Officer advises:

10.105.1 'The site is not presently in a conservation area or impacted by any Tree Preservation Orders.

10.105.2 I have reviewed the arboricultural implications assessment and arboricultural method statement (dated August 2025) submitted with the application. The information is thorough and BS5387 compliant.

10.105.3 Most trees and tree groups on site are of lower arboricultural quality (as defined in BS5837). Current proposed site layout will see a significant proportion of trees on site retained. The arboricultural information submitted suggests site specific tree protection measures in relation to the current indicative site layout plan. At reserved matters stage when site plans are finalised, site specific tree protection measures will need to be re-submitted.

10.105.4 Individually identified trees and 7 tree groups will be removed to enable current site plans. Adequate on site new tree planting will be required to mitigate for this loss.

10.105.5 It is noted that a number of the tree groups on site could benefit from management such as removal of dead/poorer specimens and new tree planting. This should be included as part of finalised landscaping plans submitted at reserved matters stage.'

10.106 The Tree Officer raises no objection subject to condition. The proposal is considered to accord with Local Plan Policy EN7.

10.107 With regard to contamination, the applicant has submitted a Desk Study and Ground Investigation Report with this application. The Council's Contamination Officer has advised:

10.107.1 ' No asbestos was encountered across the site in any samples taken, however, the document mentions that an asbestos management plan will need to be undertaken prior to demolition due to the asbestos shed roofing. I concur with this but also argue that a completion report should also be conducted and submitted to the appropriate authority for review.

10.107.2 The document concludes that further remediation is required, and a remediation strategy should be finalised and submitted to the local authority. I concur with this recommendation; however, I believe the site has not been fully characterised through the findings of the intrusive site investigation. Where "hot spots" of contamination have been found, these will need to be investigated further as part of a remediation scheme for these areas. The contamination hotspot WS07 has not been delineated, and thus the extent of the arsenic contamination has not been fully determined. This is true for the PAH exceedances in WS01, WS04 and SP01-01 also. Whilst the extent of contamination could be contained within the source (shallow made ground in WS01/WS04 and stockpiled materials in SP01-01), the true extent of contamination is not known, and thus, the options appraisal in the subsequent

remediation report cannot be adequately evaluated with the best sustainability practices in line with the LCRM framework.'

10.108 The Contamination Officer raises no objection subject to condition. It is considered that the proposed development can be undertaken in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN15.

10.109 The proposed scheme would result in the loss of a number of horticultural buildings associated with the existing garden centre. However, it is also noted that the garden centre has diversified in recent years. A number of other uses such as a hardware store, hairdressers, sweet shop and fruit and vegetable retailer are now present on the site. The viability of the site as a business is therefore not solely dependent on plants produced in the horticultural buildings proposed for removal. In addition, a number of existing glasshouses are to remain. This will enable the existing garden centre to still operate as a horticultural operation. It is therefore consider that the proposed housing and existing businesses can reasonably co-exist.

10.110 With regard to energy efficiency and climate change, the applicant has submitted an Energy Statement which indicates that the developer would adopt a fabric first approach, which would involve the incorporation of additional insulation in dwellings, in addition to features such as air source heat pumps and solar panels. The submitted Energy Statement indicates that the development would exceed current Building Regulation requirements in these respects. It is considered that the proposed development is seeking to reasonably address the impact of climate change.

10.111 With regard to financial contributions, GCC Community Infrastructure requests contributions of £133,517.60 to secondary 16-18 education and £18,424 to library services. Having regard to the size of the development it is considered that the requested contributions are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the proposed development and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. The contribution request is considered to accord with Regulation 122 of the Community and Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010. The aforementioned contributions would be secured through a S106 legal agreement.

10.112 This application is liable for the Community Infrastructure (CIL) and there will be a CIL charge payable. Section 143 of the Localism Act 2011 states that any financial sum that an authority has received, will, or could receive, in payment of CIL is a material 'local finance consideration' in planning decisions.

11. Conclusion

11.1 It is considered that the proposed development would make a notable contribution to the Council's supply of housing land and the delivery of affordable housing. These aspects of the proposal are considered to weigh significantly in favour of the proposed scheme. Whilst the proposed scheme would result in an encroachment of development into the open countryside and increase the size of the settlement, it is necessary to take into account the emerging Local Plan's direction of travel and its identification of Mickleton as a potential as a focus of growth in the coming Local Plan period. Having regard to the requirements of paragraph 11 of the NPPF, it is considered that the adverse impacts of the scheme would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefits. It is therefore recommended that the application is granted permission subject to the recommendation set out at the top of this report.

12. Proposed Conditions:

1. Application for the approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the Local Planning Authority by three years from the date of this decision notice.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. The development shall be started by 2 years from the date that the last of the reserved matters is approved.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

3. The development shall not be started before approval of the details relating to Appearance, Layout, Landscaping and Scale have been given in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: These are "reserved matters" and were listed in the application for later approval. This is only an outline planning permission and these matters require further consideration by the Local Planning Authority. This condition is imposed to comply with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.

4. This decision relates to drawings: 890-01 A, 890-AC 01 B and illustrative plans 890-05 G, 890-06-01 B, 890-07 A, 890-15 A,

Reason: For purposes of clarity and for the avoidance of doubt, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

5. No dwelling shall be occupied until a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) Management and Maintenance Plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include the arrangements for adoption by any public authority or statutory undertaker and any other arrangements to secure the operation of the scheme throughout its lifetime, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved SuDS Management and Maintenance Plan shall be implemented in full in accordance with the agreed terms and conditions.

Reason: To ensure the continued operation and maintenance of drainage features serving the site and avoid flooding in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN14.

6. No development shall commence on site until a detailed Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) Strategy document has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, this should be in accordance with the proposal set out in the approved submission (Concept Drainage Strategy Plan; 890-FRA-01-A). The SuDS Strategy must include a detailed design and a timetable for implementation. The SuDS Strategy must also demonstrate the technical feasibility/viability of the drainage system through the use of SuDS to manage the flood risk to the site and elsewhere and the measures taken to manage the water quality for the lifetime of the development. The approved scheme for the surface water drainage shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is first occupied.

Reason: To ensure the development is provided with a satisfactory means of drainage and thereby preventing the risk of flooding in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN14. It is important that these details are agreed prior to the commencement of development as any works on site could have implications for drainage, flood risk and water quality in the locality.

7. No development shall commence on site until a Construction Phase Surface Water Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall outline what measures will be used throughout the period of the construction of the development to ensure surface water does not leave the site in an uncontrolled manner and put properties elsewhere at increased risk of flooding. The construction phase shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plans.

Reason: To ensure the construction phase of the development has a satisfactory means of drainage that does not increase the risk of flooding from the site in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN14.

8. i) No development shall take place until a remediation scheme, specifying the measures to be taken to remediate the site to render it suitable for the development hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

ii) The Remediation Scheme, as agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved timetable of works and before the development hereby permitted is first occupied. Any variation to the scheme shall be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority in advance of works being undertaken. On completion of the works the developer shall submit to the Local Planning Authority written confirmation that all works were completed in accordance with the agreed details.

If, during the course of development, any contamination is found which has not been identified in the site investigation, additional measures for the remediation of this contamination shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The remediation of the site shall incorporate the approved additional measures.

Reason: To ensure any contamination of the site is identified and appropriately remediated in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN15. It is important that these details are agreed prior to the commencement of development as any on-site works could have implications for pollution and humna health.

9. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved (including demolition and all preparatory work), a scheme for the protection of retained trees, in accordance with BS5837:2012, including a Tree Protection Plan(s) (TPP) and an Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Specific issues to be dealt with in the TPP and AMS:

a) Full details of any facilitation pruning.

b) Location and installation of services, utilities and drainage.

c) Methods of demolition within the root protection area (RPA as defined in BS5837:2012) of retained trees.

d) Details of construction within the RPA or that may impact on the retained trees.

e) A full specification for the construction of any roads, parking areas and hard surfacing, including details of the no dig-specification and extent of the areas of the roads, parking areas and hard surfacing to be constructed using a nodig specification. Details shall include relevant sections through them.

f) Detailed levels and cross-sections to show that the raised levels of surfacing, where the installation of no-dig surfacing within RPAs is proposed,
demonstrating that they can be accommodated where they meet with any adjacent hard surfacing or structures.

g) A specification for protective fencing to safeguard trees during both demolition and construction phases and a plan indicating the alignment of the protective fencing.

h) Tree protection during construction indicated on the TPP with construction activities clearly identified as prohibited in this area.

i) Details of site access, temporary parking, on site welfare facilities, loading, unloading and storage of equipment, materials, fuels, waste as well as any areas to be used for concrete mixing and fires.

j) Details of any boundary treatments within RPAs.

k) Methodology and detailed assessment of any root pruning.

l) Details of arboricultural supervision and inspection by a suitably qualified arboriculturist.

m) Methods to improve the rooting environment for retained and proposed trees and landscaping.

The development thereafter shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: Required prior to the commencement of development to satisfy the Local Planning Authority that the trees to be retained will not be damaged during demolition or construction and to protect and enhance the appearance and character of the site and locality, in accordance with policies EN1 & EN7 and pursuant of section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

10. No dwelling shall be occupied until confirmation has been provided to, and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, that either:

i) all water network upgrades required to accommodate the additional demand to serve the development have been completed; or

ii) a development and infrastructure phasing plan has been agreed with Thames Water to allow development to be occupied. Where a development and infrastructure phasing plan is agreed no occupation shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed development and infrastructure phasing plan.

Reason: The development may lead to no / low water pressure and network reinforcement works are anticipated to be necessary to ensure that sufficient capacity is made available to accommodate additional demand anticipated from the new development in accordance with Local Plan Policy INF8.

11. Prior to the commencement of development, a foul water drainage scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The drainage scheme shall:

i) Include the design of all on and off-site foul sewerage infrastructure, the diameters of proposed pipes and the capacity of any on or off-site storage;

ii) Include a timetable and programme for the provision of the foul sewerage infrastructure; and

iii) Demonstrate that, where connection to a public sewer is proposed, the additional foul sewerage discharge can be accommodated within the public sewer system without increasing the risk of flooding or backing up of the existing system on the site or elsewhere. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and the approved timetable and programme.

Reason: In order to ensure that the development hereby permitted is provided with a satisfactory means of foul drainage as well as reducing the risk of creating or exacerbating a flooding problem and to minimise the risk of pollution in accordance with Local Plan Policies EN14 and EN15. It is important that these details are agreed prior to the commencement of development in order to ensure that the proposal will not have an adverse impact on foul drainage and to ensure that adequate infrastructure can be provided.

12. An application for Reserved Matters shall include a follow-up Noise Impact Assessment which shall be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The assessment must be conducted by a suitably qualified Acoustician, accredited by the Institute of Acoustics (IOA). The report shall:

1. be an amendment of the Noise Impact Assessment (by rappor acoustics ref: January 2026 revision 2 dated February 2026), accounting for any design or layout changes.

2. assess 'worse case' noise from the neighbouring commercial site(s).

3. demonstrate full compliance with the relevant noise standards.

4. demonstrate that, upon completion of the development, good acoustic design will be used to ensure that the rating level assessed at external amenity spaces shall not exceed the background sound level.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity and in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN15.

13. Prior to the commencement of development, a site-specific Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan must demonstrate the adoption and use of the best practicable means to reduce any adverse impact to the surrounding environment and community in terms of noise, vibration, dust and lighting. The plan must detail, at a minimum:

i) Procedures for maintaining good public relations including a comprehensive complaints procedure.

ii) All works and ancillary operations which may be audible at the site boundary, including hours of operation.

iii) Deliveries and removals, including hours of operation.

iv) Mitigation measures (as defined in 'BS 5528: Parts 1 and 2: 2009 Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites') and how they shall be used to minimise noise disturbance.

v) Procedures for emergency deviation of the agreed working hours.

vi) Control measures for dust and other air-borne pollutants.

vii) Measures for controlling the use of site lighting whether required for safe working or for security purposes.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of surrounding occupiers during the construction of the development in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN15..

14. No development shall take place within the application site until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: It is important to agree a programme of archaeological work in advance of the commencement of development, so as to make provision for the investigation and recording of any archaeological remains which may be present. The archaeological programme will advance understanding of any heritage assets which will be lost, in accordance with paragraph 218 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

15. An application for reserved matters shall include a drawing/schedule which sets out the proposed size and mix of dwellings and which shall include the number of bedrooms in each respective dwelling. No more than 20% of the dwellings shall have 4 bedrooms or more, with the remainder of the development being 1, 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings. The development shall be undertaken fully in accordance with the approved drawing/schedule.

Reason: In order to ensure that the development contains an appropriate mix of dwellings in accordance with the requirements of Local Plan Policy H1.

16. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted (other than demolition, remediation and works associated with the provision of the vehicular site access) the principal site access from the B4632 Broadway Road (including visibility splays) shall be constructed and completed to at least bindercourse level in accordance with drawing 'Proposed Site Access 890-ACC-01 B'. The principal site access shall be completed to an adoptable standard fully in accordance with the aforementioned approved details prior to the first occupation of all the dwellings hereby permitted.

The construction of a temporary site access(es), together with details relating to its/their removal and the restoration of the respective land following the completion of the development hereby permitted, shall first be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the development shall be undertaken fully in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Local Plan Policy INF4.

17. Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, a timetable for the adoption of the estate roads and the completion of other roads, cycle paths and footpaths, including details relating to the future maintenance and management of the unadopted roads, cycle paths and footpaths shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details and maintained/managed in accordance with those details thereafter.

Reason: In order to ensure that the road and footpath network is completed and thereafter maintained to an acceptable standard in the interests of highway safety and in accordance with Local Plan Policy INF4 and Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

18. Prior to commencement of the development hereby permitted, a Construction Management Plan (CMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be undertaken fully in accordance with the approved CMP. The CMP shall include but not be restricted to:

i) Parking of vehicle of site operatives and visitors (including measures taken to ensure satisfactory access and movement for existing occupiers of neighbouring properties during construction);

ii) Advisory routes for construction traffic;

iii) Any temporary access to the site;

iv) Locations for loading/unloading and storage of plant, waste and construction materials;

v) Method of preventing mud and dust being carried onto the highway;

vi) Arrangements for turning vehicles;

vii) Arrangements to receive abnormal loads or unusually large vehicles;

viii) Highway Condition survey;

ix) Methods of communicating the Construction Management Plan to staff, visitors and neighbouring residents and businesses;

x) Delivery and construction hours.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Local Plan Policy INF4. It is important that these details are agreed prior to the commencement of development as any on site works or construction/delivery traffic could have implications for the safe operation of the highway.

19. An application for Reserved Matters shall include a detailed scheme for the provision and future maintenance and management of Public Open Space, including the provision of a Local Equipped Area of Play, litter bins, benches, dog waste bins, associated hard and soft landscaping and a timetable for their completion.

The scheme shall thereafter be provided, maintained and managed in accordance with the approved details and timetables.

Reason: To ensure that future residents will have access to areas of open space and recreation and to ensure that such areas are provided and maintained to a satisfactory standard for the longer term in accordance with Local Plan Policies INF2 and EN2

Informatives:

1. IMPORTANT: BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN CONDITION - DEVELOPMENT CANNOT COMMENCE UNTIL A BIODIVERSITY GAIN PLAN HAS BEEN SUBMITTED (AS A CONDITION COMPLIANCE APPLICATION) TO AND APPROVED BY COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL.

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition") that development may not begin unless:

(a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and

(b) the planning authority has approved the plan in writing.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Cotswold District Council. There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will

require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply. If the onsite habitats include irreplaceable habitats (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitats) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans. Advice about how to prepare a Biodiversity Gain Plan and a template can be found at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/submit-a-biodiversity-gain-plan.

Information on how to discharge the biodiversity gain condition can be found here: https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/planning-and-building/wildlife-and-biodiversity/biodiversity-net-gain-bng/

2. Noise

A good acoustic design process should be followed in accordance with Professional Practice Guidance on Planning and Noise (ProPG) to ensure that the internal noise criteria are achieved with windows open. In cases where the desired internal levels cannot be achieved with windows open, the development should be designed so that noise levels are minimised as far as practical with windows open. In addition, mechanical ventilation and cooling should be provided in accordance with ProPG, where it is justified to do so. Mechanical ventilation and cooling should be treated as an alternative to passive design measures. There should be installed in addition to minimising noise levels with windows open using passive means, for example building orientation, room orientation and facades treatments.

The commercial site rating level shall be assessed in accordance with the BS4142:2014+A1(2019).

3. If the trees are not in your ownership, you may require the permission of the owner before any works can be carried out. It is the applicant's responsibility to obtain the necessary permissions from the tree owner. It may be prudent to seek independent legal advice before proceeding.

A1

DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING

All dimensions to be checked on site prior to manufacture of prefabricated items. Any discrepancy or query to be reported and clarified before associated work proceeds. All construction to be in accordance with relevant Trade and Professional Standards and Guidelines, Statutory requirements and product manufacturers' specifications. Read in conjunction with Finishing specification, Workmanship specification, all other associated drawings issued and details which may be issued from time to time.



Rev	Description	Date	Initial	Checked
A	Red line amended	17/03/2026	SS	

Newland HOMES

Tops Nursery, Mickleton

Location Plan

0m 50m 100m

SS
Drawn

1:1000@A1
Scale

26.09.2022
First issue

890-01
Drawing No.

A
Revision

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PROW

PROW

BROADWAY ROAD

Existing retained businesses:
Tops Garden Centre
Salons
Barbers
Hardware Store

Key

1. Main vehicular access to the site
2. Exisiting Public Rights of Way
3. Green buffers
4. Attentuation basin with ecological benefits and features
5. Existing Telecoms Mast
6. Existing substation to be upgraded
7. Retained woodland & tree belt
8. Public Open Space
9. Existing retained businesses
10. Exisitng residential dwellings
11. Proposed tree lined streets
12. Proposed sustainable swales

Exisiting PROW

Proposed/possible pedestrian links

Primary Street

Secondary Street

Tertiary Street

5m 0m 5m 10m 20m

Newland HOMES

Tops Nurseries, Mickleton

Concept Plan

FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

Drawn	CS
First issue	07/07/2025
Scale	1:500@ A1
Drawing No.	890-05
Revision	G

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Proposed pedestrian route to link to PROW

Proposed pedestrian and/or cycle routes to link from proposed new estate road to existing footpath network

5m 0m 5m 10m 20m

Newland HOMES

Tops Nurseries, Mickleton

Proposed Pedestrian / Cyclye Route Plan

FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

SS
Drawn

1:500@ A1
Scale

Aug 2025
First issue

890-06-01
Drawing No.

B
Revision

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A1

Harefield House

Track

Meondene

Cotswold Cottage

Cotswold Lodge

Haycroft

Arbour House

Patterdale House

Victoria House

Russet Cottage

Harborlow

Bramble Cottage

Sunnybrook

DIXO

PORTER CLOSE

BROADWAY ROAD

3.0m

3.0m

2.0m

5.5m

2.0m

88.0m

88.0m

2.4m x 215m Junction Visibility (60mph)

2.4m x 90m Junction Visibility (30mph)

0 10 20 30 40 50

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Key

- Site Boundary
- Highway Extents
- S38 Highway Extents
- Proposed Access
- Proposed Junction Visibility

Notes

1. The proposed junction is based on a topographic survey undertaken by Maptec Surveys Ltd in September 2022.
2. The visibility requirements have been calculated based on the speed limits of Broadway Road of;

   East - 30 mph

   West - 60 mph
3. The resulting visibility requirements are thus;

   East - 2.4m x 90 m

   West - 2.4m x 215 m

REV		DATE	INITIAL
B	Plan extended to show additional pedestrian / cycle path accesses. S38 Highway extents added. Southern pedestrian link removed.	24.03.26	BJ
A	Access location adjusted. Junction radii reduced to 8m. Footpath link and tactile crossing added.	01.09.25	BJ
-	First issue	12.01.23	BJ

Newland HOMES

TOPS Nursery, Broadway Road, Mickleton

Proposed Site Access

BJ
Drawn

1:500 @ A1
Scale

12.01.2023
First issue

890 - ACC - 01
Drawing No.

B
Revision

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Installation of solar farm, associated infrastructure and grid connection cable run at Land at Grid Reference 401975 198339 Spratsgate Lane Siddington Cirencester Gloucestershire

Full Application 25/01623/FUL	
Applicant:	Aura Power Developments Ltd
Agent:	
Case Officer:	Martin Perks
Ward Member(s):	Councillor Mike Evemy
Committee Date:	13 May 2026
RECOMMENDATION:	**PERMIT subject to no objection from the Biodiversity Officer and the Environment Agency and the completion of a S106 legal agreement covering a Biodiversity Net Gain monitoring fee**

1. Main Issues:

(a) Provision of Renewable Energy
(b) Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area
(c) Impact on the Setting of Heritage Assets
(d) Access and Highway Safety
(e) Impact on Residential Amenity & Glint and Glare
(f) Biodiversity
(g) Drainage and Flooding

2. Reasons for Referral:

2.1 This application has been referred to Planning and Licensing Committee as it falls into the major development category for the purposes of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) 2015.

3. Site Description:

3.1 This application relates primarily to a group of agricultural fields which are located to the east of the village of Ewen. The application fields are located approximately 350m from the aforementioned village at their closest point. The application site measures approximately 52 hectares in size and includes the aforementioned fields, as well as the site of a new substation, and the routes of a construction access road and an underground cable line. The main body of the site slopes gently downwards in a north-south direction. Land levels drop

approximately 5m across the site. It consists of a network of existing fields which are bordered by hedgerows. The southern part of the application site extends around an area of existing woodland measuring approximately 1.4 hectares in size.

3.2 The eastern boundary of the main body of the application site adjoins a Class C metalled highway (Spratsgate Lane). A native species hedgerow extends along the aforementioned site boundary. Agricultural fields lie to the east of Spratsgate Lane. The southern boundary of the site also extends alongside a Class C highway (Ewen Road). The aforementioned boundary is defined by a mix of hedgerows and trees. A farmhouse (Southleaze Farm) is located on the southern side of Ewen Road opposite the application site. A group of farm buildings and an outdoor caravan storage area lie to the south of the aforementioned dwelling. The site is bordered by agricultural fields to its west and north.

3.3 In addition to the above, the application site red line also includes a proposed cable route which would extend from the main body of the application site to an existing electricity substation located on Wilkinson Road on the southern outskirts of Cirencester, approximately 2km to the north of the proposed solar farm. The red line also includes the route of a proposed construction site access which would utilise an existing field entrance located off Spratsgate Lane approximately 180m to the north of the main part of the application site. The proposed construction road would run in a westerly direction for approximately 380m from the aforementioned entrance before heading southwards to the main body of the application site.

3.4 The application site also includes the south-eastern corner of an existing field which is located approximately 1.25km to the north of the proposed solar panels. The aforementioned location is bordered by Spratsgate Lane to the east and a metalled, un-marked road which extends from Spratsgate Lane to the village of Ewen to the south-west. This part of the site would house a substation/plant compound which would be accessed by an existing field entrance which opens to the road to the south.

3.5 The site is not subject to any specific landscape designation. The boundary of Kemble and Ewen Special Landscape Area (SLA) lies to the west and north-west of the application site. It is located approximately 340m from the application site at its closest point.

3.6 A number of Grade II listed buildings are located to the north of the application site. The listed buildings are 'Furzen Leaze Farmhouse', the 'Barn and Stable at

Furzen Lea Farmhouse' and a pair of cottages 'Furzen Leaze Cottages'. The Barn and Stables and Furzen Leaze Farmhouse are located approximately 350m and 400m to the north of the main body of the application site respectively. Furzen Leaze Cottages are located approximately 550m to the north of the main body of the application site.

3.7 The site is located approximately 590m to the east of Ewen Conservation Area.

3.8 The 'Settlement South East of Chesterton Farm' Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) is located approximately 1.4km to the north of the main body of the application site. The proposed cable route is located approximately 450m to the east of the SAM at its closest point.

3.9 The majority of the application site is located within Flood Zone 1. A section of the central part of the main body of the site falls within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The aforementioned area is linear in form and extends in a roughly north-south direction alongside an existing drainage ditch. In addition, a section of the proposed cable route lying approximately 600m to the north of the application site crosses an area of land classified as falling within Flood Zones 2 and 3.

3.10 Public Right of War BSN7 runs in an east-west direction approximately 370m to the north of the main body of the application site.

3.11 The Cotswold Water Park Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located approximately 450m to the east of the main body of the application site at its closest point.

3.12 The central and eastern parts of the main body of the application site are located within Siddington parish. The 2 westernmost fields are located within Kemble and Ewen parish.

4. Relevant Planning History:

None

5. Planning Policies:

- INF10 Renewable & Low Carbon Energy Develop't
- EN1 Built, Natural & Historic Environment
- EN2 Design of Built & Natural Environment
- EN4 The Wider Natural & Historic Landscape
- EN7 Trees, Hedgerows & Woodlands
- EN8 Bio & Geo: Features Habitats & Species

- EN14 Managing Flood Risk
- EN15 Pollution & Contaminated Land
- INF3 Sustainable Transport
- INF4 Highway Safety
- INF5 Parking Provision
- INF7 Green Infrastructure

6. Observations of Consultees:

6.1 Gloucestershire County Council Highways: No objection

6.2 Gloucestershire County Council Lead Local Flood Authority: No objection subject to condition.

6.3 Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology: No objection subject to conditions

6.4 Biodiversity Officer: Further information required.

6.5 Landscape Consultant: No objection subject to conditions

6.6 Tree Officer: No objection

6.7 Environmental and Regulatory Services Noise: Comments incorporated into report.

6.8 Environment Agency: Awaiting response in relation to updated Flood Risk Assessment.

6.9 Natural England: No objection subject to conditions.

6.10 Historic England: *'Historic England provides advice when our engagement can add most value. In this case we are not offering advice. This should not be interpreted as comment on the merits of the application.'*

6.11 Civil Aviation Authority: No response to date.

6.12 Ministry of Defence: *'Following review of the application documents, the proposed development would be considered to have no detrimental impact on the operation or capability of a defence site or asset. The MOD has no objection to the development proposed.'*

6.13 Cotswold Airport: No response to date.

7. View of Parish Councils:

7.1 **Siddington Parish Council**

No response to date.

7.2 **Kemble and Ewen Parish Council**

'Customer made comments in support of the Planning Application'

8. Other Representations:

8.1 Approximately 6 objections, 68 support and 1 general comments received.

8.2 **Main grounds of objection are:**

i) We have lived in the village for approximately 20 years enjoying the open countryside surroundings of a village location. We are supportive of renewable energy projects and as a nation becoming more energy independent and less reliant on fossil fuels; however this renewable roll out needs allocated on suitable, appropriate and ideally brownfield locations and certainly not in open countryside causing lasting negative landscape and visual impact and loss of quality agriculture land. This proposed development is certainly not suitable both in scale and setting within its surroundings.

ii) Negative visual impact on landscape and visual amenity significantly changing the character of the rural area.

iii) Loss of good quality agricultural land, and importance to maintain good quality land for food production, food security and biodiversity. Under Planning Guidance priority should given to less fertile or brownfield sites for solar development. As stated earlier, if consented, this will be the 3rd solar farm within three miles of each other, resulting in a total loss of approximately 450 acres of farm land in open countryside.

iv) In the Applicants' Agricultural Land Classification and Land Holding Assessment in Para 3.5.1 it states that over 20% of the application site is graded as "good to very good". In Figure 2 below, please note that the best Graded land is located in the protruding finger of land closest to the village of Ewen. This further emphasises our earlier statement that this plot of land should be

removed from the application. When this farmland was sold to the current owner in 2022, it was explicitly marketed as "100 acres of Grade 1 agricultural land," with the soils described as being "in good heart" in the sales brochure.

v) Cultural heritage and historical impact on the Listed Buildings. The proposed development is in direct sight of Listed Buildings and will cause harm to the historic environment. We noted that in the Applicant's proposals results are assessed as "causing an appreciable change to identifiable character to the setting of three designated assets in the form of Furzen Leaze Farmhouse, Furzen Leaze barn and stable complex and Furzen Leaze Cottage".

vi) I see from the initial map that it is intended that the connection to the grid passes under the road for much of its length. We in Somerford Keynes are fed up with all the digging of the highway and constant delays that look likely to continue for some years. For much of its length the cable could easily pass under the land owned by the current owner. Please ensure that with this and other applications that the cables and pipes are kept away from the public highway wherever possible.

vii) Flooding - Although this land is in the Parish of Siddington, it will not affect Siddington but it will have a detrimental effect on the hamlet of Shorncote, which is where all the excess water run off ends up. Last November, we had a storm and the Ewen/spratsgate lane crossroads was impassable with over two feet of water. This water finds its way down the road and into the Ewen drain which then runs eastwards across my land. The drain could not cope and burst its banks all the way along my land to the quarry. We also had a torrential river running down the single track road, about 4 foot deep in places (a car got stuck there.) 10 properties were badly flooded. A lot of this water came off the land included in this planning application. If it is covered in solar panels, this will hugely exacerbate the risk of flooding. The rain will not fall equally over the land but in concentrated lines and will not be absorbed. It would be disastrous for Shorncote on a regular basis.

viii) Suitability of the land - This land was sold in 2022 by Moore Allen. It was sold as lot 1, which was a total of 432 acres. About one quarter of this land was classified as grade 1; it is all described as..... being in arable production apart from the gardens and woodland. 'On the soil survey plan the soils are shown as mainly Elmton 2 series, comprising productive limestone loamy soils. The soils are in good heart.' This does not sound like the type of ground on which to put a solar farm. It is good, productive arable land. We all want to try to produce cleaner electricity, but why use excellent farmland? There must be more suitable sites.

ix) The height and size of the panels. The panels are apparently going to be 3.5m high. They are going to be an eyesore to anyone living close by. There doesn't seem to be much provision for screening. They will be particularly close to the Timbrell's farmhouse. The hedges will need to be thicker and higher. A high bund would help to hide the glare from the panels affecting motorists and nearby residents. They will be seen from miles around otherwise. If planning is approved, it would be good to leave a 20/30 metre strip between the perimeter hedge and the start of the panels.

x) Inverters - I do not know if the inverters emit any sounds but it would be sensible to have them set away from the outer boundaries, so they do not disturb residents.

xi) I have lived near the site for 22 years, during which I have enjoyed the undisturbed surrounding open countryside. Whilst I am strongly supportive of renewable energy it should not be at any cost, particularly in cases of over development of solar farms in a small area of open countryside such as Ewen.

xii) The general principle of need requires to be carefully weighed against the potential adverse effects of harm arising.

xiii) The proposal would have a significant adverse visual impact and severely harm the character and appearance of this scenic rural area. The solar farm will be visible from at least 12 neighbouring properties. It will also be visible from two rural village roads which currently display a broad, unobstructed view of the Cotswold rural landscape. The proposed solar panels would undoubtedly form a most striking dominant feature of the visible landscape, and the proposed scheme of screening would do little to ameliorate this harmful impact, particularly during the winter and autumn.

xiv) Adverse cumulative impact and overdevelopment of solar farms in this area. There already exists the development of 2 solar farms at Siddington and Kemble Wick. To develop another solar farm on the proposed site between these two in such a small area of countryside is, regardless of need, over industrialisation and over development. The CDC area covers 450 square miles, yet there would be 3 solar farms clustered around the small village of Ewen.

xv) The developer could easily remove the unnecessary western rectangular protrusion which causes the greatest visual harm to the largest number of impacted houses in the village.

xvi) A period of 40 years does not constitute temporary. Appeal decisions indicate that solar development would be perceived as a permanent rather than a temporary feature within the landscape, and that little weight be given to the aspect of the potential reversibility of the proposal in landscape and visual terms.

xvii) I don't support solar farms, as they are unsightly. Nuclear is more practical (& hydro electric).

xviii) Impact on Landscape Character and Visual Amenity. The site at Spratsgate Lane sits within open countryside that contributes to the characteristic lowland Cotswold landscape and the setting of nearby villages. The introduction of extensive solar arrays, security fencing, inverter stations, and associated infrastructure would urbanise and industrialise what is currently a predominantly undeveloped and tranquil landscape. The site's openness means the development is likely to be visible from surrounding public rights of way and nearby properties, leading to a significant and harmful visual impact.

xix) Harm to the Setting of the Cotswolds National Landscape (AONB)

xx) Proximity to the Cotswold Water Park and SSSI Designations. There is a credible risk of indirect impacts, including alteration of local hydrology affecting connected lakes, wetlands, and drainage systems, disturbance to sensitive bird species, particularly during construction phases and through ongoing operational activity , disruption of ecological connectivity between farmland and designated conservation areas.

xxi) Loss of Agricultural Land

xxii) Traffic and Access via Rural Lanes

xxiii) The siting of this development in this location raises concerns about incremental industrialisation of the rural landscape. Approval may set a precedent for further similar proposals in the area, particularly given the availability of relatively flat agricultural land. The cumulative impact of multiple solar developments could fundamentally alter the character of this part of the Cotswolds.

xxiv) Given the sensitivity of this location-close to protected landscapes, ecologically important areas, and rural communities- there is a strong case that alternative sites should be prioritised. Brownfield land, previously developed

sites, or large-scale rooftop installations would provide renewable energy benefits without the same level of environmental and landscape harm.

8.3 **Main grounds of support are:**

i) My family and I have lived in listed Farmhouse building since 2023. As the farmhouse been referenced in other comments on this planning application we feel it appropriate for us to comment. For the avoidance of doubt, although we live on Furzen Leaze Farm in the listed farmhouse, we do not have anything to do with the proposed solar farm and it is not on our land. With the caveat that the developer needs to accommodate the needs of directly affected resident's (in our case this is mainly during construction re: noise and dust) - we support this development.

ii) These fields have always struggled to make a profit and have had to be intensively farmed for many years. As a result, there has been a declining soil health year-after-year and a notable drop in biodiversity. The land needs resting for many years in order to recover. In our view, the best thing that can happen to this land is to find a profitable way to put it to back to nature/wild-flowers for a while, have a no-pesticides policy, graze it with sheep as/when needed and provide the sheep, birds, bugs and general nature with bit of shade from the increasingly hot days. Solar panels seems to be an ideal way to fund the regeneration of biodiversity - but with the caveat that whenever the panels do get removed in the future, provisions are made to ensure the deconstruction does not contaminate the soil.

iii) Support our farmers to make a profit from their lower quality land so they can pay for the work needed on their higher quality land. The proposed solar farm site is almost all relatively low quality/low profit farmland. The campaign 'no farmers, no food' includes the farmers right to make the best use of the land in order to subsidies the farming operation. If it was great quality farmland which allowed them to make a regular profit, then they would still be farming it. But it isn't. We need to support those who are genuinely farming - by allowing them to diversify and make a profit when farming. -If this land wasn't used for solar, then we wouldn't be surprised if it was used for housing. The solar/biodiversity increase combo seems like a better use for this land.

iv) Raises money for the local council and local community. Currently, this agricultural land is exempt from paying business rates. Once it is generating electricity, it will be paying an extra £50k+ per year to our local council and this will help fund our local services and local community.

v) Little to no effect on the setting of the listed buildings. Potentially, these solar panels will affect the view from the listed building where we live, however it is fairly straight-forward to screen them and if we see some of the sheep-adorned solar panels in the winter then that's fine by us - we would see that as a fair trade-off for the biodiversity gains. And if we had to choose between infertile fields, new-build houses or a solar farm full of sheep - we would definitely choose the solar farm full of sheep.

vi) This gives a chance for the developer to fix potential issues with drainage around the site (if there are any).

vii) All of the above is caveated with the developer needing to do their best to accommodate all resident's needs (not just ours), but in summary: we support this application due to the gain in biodiversity, the contribution towards farming profitability, the good use of the land (I can't think of any better & profitable uses of this land) and extra council/community funding.

viii) As long as the landscaping promises are kept, I think it's a good idea.

ix) I am happy with solar energy (it's housing that is my concern - there is overdevelopment). The landscaping is welcome and important - I like the rural atmosphere.

x) I welcome support for wildlife.

xi) Traffic must be managed properly during construction.

xii) We must be pragmatic about our energy mix. We need to complement wind, nuclear, etc. Recent events remind us we need energy security.

xiii) Supportive of clean energy.

xiv) It will help to bring bills down.

8.4 **General comments are:**

i) Aura Power has publicly indicated that a Community Benefit Fund (CBF) will be provided in connection with this scheme. If the developer considers it necessary to appoint an external administrator, I am currently informed that GrantScape is being considered—though this has not, to my knowledge, been formally confirmed in any planning documentation. Similarly, it appears no written agreement is yet in place. The same developer's other project at Kemble

Wick, due to begin operation in 2025, remains - to date - without a concluded CBF arrangement, despite earlier assurances.While I fully recognise that CBFs are not material planning considerations and cannot be secured through planning conditions or obligations, I do believe there is value - in terms of community confidence and transparency - in ensuring that any such fund is clearly defined and agreed before determination. In this case, the absence of a timetable or draft framework risks creating uncertainty about how local community benefit will be realised in practice.

ii) Aura has emphasised its long-term involvement with the site, and while I appreciate the intention to deliver a meaningful CBF, the use of external administrators may reduce direct accountability over time. An early, written agreement - even one separate from the planning process - would help address these concerns. By way of precedent, Siddington Parish Council previously negotiated and received an upfront CBF payment of £80,000 from a different solar developer for a similar-scale scheme. That arrangement, though outside the planning process, helped foster community support and provided a clear, locally controlled outcome.

iii) I therefore respectfully encourage the planning authority to invite the applicant to clarify its proposed CBF arrangements ahead of determination. Such clarity could be included in a non-material informative or addressed via a separate undertaking, as appropriate. This would help ensure that the community sees tangible, timely benefit from the scheme, and maintain trust in the process.

8.5 **South Cerney Parish Council**

8.5.1. 'South Cerney Parish Council wishes to echo the comment by Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust calling for a thirty-year Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan for the site.'

and *'South Cerney Parish Council wishes to make the following comments:*

8.5.2 The Parish Council wishes to echo the comments made by the Environment Agency in that the flood risk assessment is non-compliant.

8.5.3 The proposed panels appear to be too close to existing hedges (3.5m) instead of the usual 20m in as other applications.

8.5.4 It has not been demonstrated that the bio-diversity net gain would be increased by 10%.

8.5.5 The land mitigation strategy / land management plan is poor, not referring to dead Ash trees or new hedging.'

8.6 **Cirencester Town Council**

' Although this site lies within an adjoining Parish, CTC is pleased to comment and supports the installation of a solar farm, associated infrastructure, ancillary battery storage units and grid connection cable run at this site. The site comprises largely Grade 4 agricultural land (with smaller areas of lower grade 3 land), appropriate for this kind of development under NPPF and it includes a comprehensive proposal to achieve 61.63% net gain for habitats and 11.62% net gain for hedgerows, well above the statutory requirement. Further, CTC supports recommendations made by the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust regarding conditions to be attached to any consent. CTC notes the solar farm is proposed to be operational for a temporary period of 40 years and welcomes the fact that after this the equipment would be removed and the land reinstated to its current use.'

8.7 **Somerford Keynes Parish Council**

8.7.1 ' The Somerford Keynes Parish Council (SKPC) met on the 14/07/25 and voted unanimously to object to this application, having reviewed the application, the objection submitted by Andrew Timbrell, and having discussed the application with Harry Timbrell and Marcia Timbrell at the meeting.

8.7.2 It is worth noting that the Timbrell family have been farmers in Somerford Keynes Parish for several generations. They are extremely valued members of our community. They farm much of the land around Somerford Keynes using regenerative methods that are better both for the environment and wildlife. The Timbrells maintain their own and others' hedges to support wildlife, and they maintain their ditches in an exemplary manner, which is extremely important for the parish's surface water drainage system, and to minimise flooding.

8.7.3 While the SKPC supports renewal energy in principle, and recognizes the need for rapid action to net zero carbon, we trust that the planning office will give the Furzen Leaze solar farm application critical and careful consideration. In particular, we hope the council's concerns, as outlined below, will be taken into account.

8.7.4 In the event that the development is approved, we have noted several mitigation measures that would lessen the impacts of the solar farm on

neighbours and road uses, and we hope these measures will be required as a condition of approval

8.7.5 Concerns:

1. Land Classification

A main cause for concern is the high quality of the land that will be used for this project. We have obtained sales particulars from the agents, Moore Allen and Innocent, in Cirencester. When the Furzen Leaze land was recently sold, of the 432 acres which constituted Lot 1, 418 acres were in arable production, with 100 acres in the northern part of the land being Grade 1 land. While we understand that the Grade 1 land is not included in the solar farm application, the remainder is good quality Grade 3 land, and most likely is Grade 3A because it has been used in recent years to grow potatoes. Having grade 3A adjacent to Grade 1 land is a rarity, and makes it very valuable for agriculture. The council feels it is a complete waste of really good farming land to use it for a solar farm.

2. Flood Risk

Another main cause for concern is how the solar farm will create more frequent and worse flooding in our parish. We are aware that the drains in the Furzen Leaze fields do not work well already. The neighbouring village of Shorncote flooded very badly as recently as November 2024, when runoff from these fields ran into the Ewen ditch. This ditch then burst its banks and flooded the village really badly. The solar farm will exacerbate this problem, as the panels will concentrate runoff, reduce rain water infiltration into the ground, and thus runoff will be faster, more channelled and intense.

3. Visual Impact, Glint and Glare

The council is also very concerned about that the panels, being 3.5 meters tall, are going to be visible from miles around and their reflection (glint and glare) will be seen from the adjacent roads, potentially causing accidents. We do not think that that the developer's proposed remedies will be effective year-round, and we feel that they will be inadequate overall.

4. Proximity of the development to Southleaze Farm.

The council feels that the developer has ignored and/or seriously downplayed the impacts that the solar farm will have on its nearest neighbour, Southleaze Farm. We feel this is unfair and unacceptable

8.7.6 Mitigation (if development is approved)

If, despite objections, the application does gain approval, there are several areas of mitigation that the SKPC feels are highly warranted, as follows:

a. Due to the existing poor drainage of the land, during construction extra precautions should be taken to avoid exacerbating flooding beyond that already experienced.

b. New field drains should be installed to better drain the fields within the solar farm, and caution should be taken not to damage any existing field drains.

c. Hedgerows along the boundaries of the development and along roadside should be allowed to grow to at least 3.5 meters tall (the height of the panels) and the sides of the hedges should be trimmed in such a way as to ensure thickness and density. Earth bunds should be added in critical locations to block solar farm visibility.

d. The developer should be required to address the amount of ash dieback present in the hedges, and expected future dieback, and to carry out remedial planting in advance of the ash trees dying and creating new gaps in the hedging. Existing gaps in hedging should be addressed as a first step.

e. The developer should acknowledge that they have no control over the poplar tree plantation that they say will provide screening, and they should be required to provide effective vegetative screening well before the plantation is felled or the plantation trees reach the end of their lifespans.

f. The proposed solar panels located alongside the site boundaries parallel to Ewen Road and Spratsgate Lane should be pushed back significantly from the boundary (and the road) to reduce glint and glare impacts on traffic using these roads, and to lessen the overall impact on Southleaze Farm. This would benefit the solar farm, because if the vegetation screening will be as effective as the proponents have stated, an additional setback will help avoid shading and maximise sunlight capture by the nearest panels.

g. Noise during construction should be mitigated, and noise from the operation of the solar farm, in the form of humming of inverters, should be reduced by making sure that inverters are only installed well away, i.e. 100 yards away, from habitation, including the nearest neighbour, Southleaze Farm.

The SKPC hope that mitigation measures are required during construction (when most achievable), and that mitigation measures are maintained during the operational life of the solar farm.'

8.8 **Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust**

'Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

8.8.1 The proposed 61.63% net gain for habitats and 11.62% net gain for hedgerows, to be delivered entirely on-site, is strongly supported by GWT. This represents a strong outcome in biodiversity terms, well above the statutory requirement.

8.8.2 Key proposals include:

- *Conversion of arable fields to species-rich grassland across and between the array rows*
- *Over 500m of new hedgerow planting with enhancement of existing hedgerows*
- *Creation of wildflower margins, improving ecological connectivity with Woodland Core Habitat (Fox Covert) and the wider landscape*

8.8.3 Given the site's identification as a Wetland Opportunity Area within the NRN, we would also encourage the applicant and local planning authority to explore opportunities for inclusion of wetland features or damp grassland areas over the lifetime of the project.

8.8.4 However, GWT notes that no formal 30-year Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan has been submitted. For a project of this scale, it is critical that a full plan is secured by condition. This should clearly set out:

- *Detailed management prescriptions for all habitat areas*
- *Timetables for establishment and ongoing works*
- *Monitoring methods, success criteria and reporting frequency*
- *Adaptive management mechanisms, to ensure delivery of the BNG trajectory Protected and Priority Species*

8.8.5 We are satisfied that appropriate survey effort has been undertaken for key species groups, including amphibians, birds, bats, badgers, and reptiles. We note that skylark territories have been recorded within the site. The principle of skylark mitigation is accepted — however, we would recommend that this is finalised prior to construction, with provision of either:

- *Dedicated skylark plots (bare ground or short sward areas), or*
- *Appropriately phased and varied grassland management to maintain suitable nesting opportunities.*

8.8.6 We also welcome measures proposed for hedgehogs and reptiles, and the maintenance of habitat permeability for bats and other species through fencing design and new planting.

Glare Impacts on Wildlife

8.8.7 While a Glint and Glare Study has been submitted, it addresses only aviation, highways, and human visual receptors. It does not assess potential impacts on wildlife receptors, particularly:

- *Foraging and flight paths of breeding and wintering birds*
- *Bats using the network of hedgerows and nearby woodland edges*
- *Nocturnal invertebrates*

8.8.8 Given the site's location within 0.5 km of the Cotswold Water Park SSSI (with known importance for waterfowl) and the documented presence of a range of birds within the site, GWT considers that a targeted ecological review of potential glint/glare effects should be secured by condition. If required, mitigation could then be incorporated into panel alignment or habitat design

CEMP Requirement

8.8.9 No full Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been submitted with this application.

Given the following factors:

- *Presence of an active badger sett*
- *Proximity to SSSI and NRN habitats*
- *Confirmed populations of protected and priority species*
- *The scale and extent of groundworks required (arrays, battery units, grid connection cable run).*
- *It is essential that a detailed CEMP be prepared and approved prior to commencement. This should cover:*
- *Species protection measures during construction*
- *Soil handling, compaction prevention and restoration*
- *Pollution control and water management*

- *Lighting strategy for the construction phase*
- *Post-construction habitat establishment and aftercare, integrated with the BNG Plan*

Trees, Hedgerows, and Soils

8.8.10 Tree and hedgerow losses are minimal and are well-compensated through proposed planting. The site consists largely of Grade 4 agricultural land (with smaller areas of lower grade 3 land), which is appropriate for this form of development under national planning policy.

8.8.11 We also welcome the applicant's commitments to soil health improvement and reversible land management — which are important to securing long-term sustainability and future land-use options

Recommendations

8.8.12 We recommend the following conditions be attached to any consent:

1. Delivery of the BNG Plan and 30-year Habitat Management Plan

2. Final skylark mitigation agreed and secured

3. Ecological review of glint/glare impacts on wildlife, with mitigation incorporated as necessary

4. Submission and approval of full CEMP prior to commencement

5. Bat- and dormouse-sensitive lighting strategy, consistent with BCT/ILP guidance

6. Soil management and restoration measures captured within the CEMP.'

9. Applicant's Supporting Information:

- Biodiversity Net Gain Statement
- Ecological Impact Assessment
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy
- Surface Water Management Plan
- Heritage Impact Assessment
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- Magnetometer Survey Report

- Noise Impact Assessment
- Solar Photovoltaic Glint and Glare Study
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment
- Health and Safety Executive Report
- Planning Design and Access Statement
- Agricultural Land Classification:
- Transport Statement
- Overplanting Statement
- Geo-physical Survey Report
- Ecological Impact Assessment
- Archaeological Evaluation Report
- Statement on the grid connection and need for solar

10. Officer's Assessment:

Proposed Development

10.1 This application seeks planning permission for the creation of a 25MW solar farm and associated development, including the creation of a cable route linking the site to an existing electricity substation located on Wilkinson Road on the southern edge of Cirencester. The application site measures approximately 52 hectares in size and consists primarily of a group of existing agricultural fields. The majority of the cable route would extend through fields running along the western side of Spratsgate Lane before extending under the highway on the southern edge of Cirencester.

10.2 The applicant's Planning Statement states the following:

'The following elements will be included in the development:

- *Tracker photovoltaic panels (providing 63,392 panels in total);*
- *75no. inverters: to enable the direct current (DC) generated by the panels to be converted to alternating current (AC) electricity;*
- *10no. transformers: to increase the generated electricity;*
- *1no. DNO control room;*
- *1no. Customer switch room;*
- *Internal cable connections: electric cabling either mounted on the back of the panels or underground across the site;*
- *Internal access tracks;*
- *Access works;*
- *Perimeter fencing;*
- *Tree planting;*

- *Native hedgerow planting.'*

10.3 The proposed solar panels would be arranged in rows across the application site. The top of each panel would be approximately 3.5m above ground level at its steepest elevation, with the bottom of each panel being approximately 0.5m above the ground. The elevation of the solar panels would vary during the course of the day as the panels track the sun. The 3.5m measurement is therefore a maximum height.

10.4 In addition to the proposed solar panels, the submitted scheme also includes the installation/siting of number of associated buildings housing transformers, inverters, switch rooms and associated equipment. The aforementioned buildings generally take the form of functional metal clad structures which range from approximately 3m to 4m in height. A compound containing battery storage units would be located adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site.

10.5 It is proposed to erect a 2m high deer proof fence around the site of the solar panels. It is also proposed to erect 4m high CCTV columns around the edge of the application site.

10.6 The proposed cable route would extend under fields and part of a highway. The cable trenches would extend to a depth of approximately 1.5m under the fields and 1.2m under the highway, The top of the cables would be approximately 1.1m and 0.9m respectively below ground level. The cable route would measure approximately 0.5m in width. The trenches would be backfilled and surfaced to match their surroundings once the cables were in place.

10.7 The proposed solar farm would be accessed via an existing field entrance which opens onto an existing lay-by lying alongside the western side of Spratsgate Lane. A new access track would be created from the aforementioned access point to the main body of the solar farm site. It would be surfaced in gravel/crushed stone and measure approximately 5m in width. It would extend approximately 380m to the west of Spratsgate Lane before extending southwards to the application site.

10.8 The scheme also includes the creation of a substation compound in the south-eastern corner of an existing field located approximately 1.25km to the north of the proposed solar panels. The site is bordered by Spratsgate Lane to the east and by a metalled road leading to the village of Ewen to the south. The compound would be accessed via an existing field entrance located approximately 100m to the south-west of the proposed compound. A stone surfaced track would link the substation site to the existing highway.

10.9 The solar farm would have an operational period of 40 years. At the end of the aforementioned period the solar panels and associated equipment would be removed from the site and the land reinstated to its current use.

10.10 It is noted that planning permission has been granted for 4 other solar farms within the vicinity of the application site. The respective developments are:

10.10.1 13/03656/FUL Construction of a 15.5 MW Solar Farm and ancillary development, Crucis Park, Barnsley Road, Ampney Crucis. Permitted 2013

10.10.2 15/01923/FUL Proposed development of solar photovoltaic modules including access, temporary construction compound; single and double inverter platforms; transfer station; collecting station; security fencing; CCTV cameras and poles; landscaping; and associated works and infrastructure including underground cable along London Road verge and Witpit Lane verge and related equipment to allow connection to the electricity distribution network, Land Parcel East Of Witpit Lane, Preston. Permitted 2015

10.10.3 20/04499/FUL Construction of a temporary 19.94MW Solar Farm, to include the installation of Solar Panels with transformers, a DNO substation, customer substation, security fence, landscaping and other associated infrastructure (including a temporary construction access point), Ashton Road, Siddington. Permitted 2021

10.10.4 21/02735/FUL Installation of a solar farm comprising an array of ground mounted solar PV panels with associated infrastructure including housing for inverters, transformers and electrical equipment, a substation compound, fencing, security cameras, access tracks, associated landscaping and cabling for grid route of approx. 7.9 kilometres in length. Land At Grid Reference 398111 195688, Kemble Wick, Kemble. Permitted 2022

10.11 The site at Ampney Crucis measures approximately 34 hectares in size. It is currently operational. It is located approximately 6km to the north-east of the solar farm now proposed.

10.12 The site at Preston measures approximately 45.5 hectares in size and was projected to be capable of generating up to 23.38MW of electricity. It is currently operational. It is located approximately 4km to the north-east of the solar farm now proposed.

10.13 The site at Siddington measures approximately 32 hectares in size and lies adjacent to the southern edge of the aforementioned village. It is currently

operational and is located approximately 1.1km to the north-east of the solar farm now proposed.

10.14 The Kemble Wick site extends to an area of approximately 72.81 ha with approximately 19.78 ha in Wiltshire and 53.03 ha in Cotswold District. In addition to the area occupied by the solar farm, it is also proposed to lay underground cables for a length of approximately 7.9km between the solar farm and the southern edge of Cirencester (at the south-western end of Wilkinson Road). The approved development is predicted to have a generation capacity of up to 49.9 Megawatts. The scheme is under construction and is located approximately 3.7m km to the south-west of the solar farm now proposed.

Development Plan

10.15 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that *'If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.'* The starting point for the determination of this application is therefore the current development plan for the District which is the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031. In addition, the 2 fields forming the western part of the main body of the application site are located within Kemble and Ewen parish. Development on the respective fields is therefore also subject to the Kemble and Ewen Neighbourhood Development Plan 2020-2031.

10.16 It is noted that policies in the current National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024) represent a significant material consideration when assessing this application. It is also noted that the Government published a new draft version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for consultation on the 16th December 2025. The consultation period for the aforementioned document expires on the 10th March 2026 and it is anticipated that a final version of the new NPPF will be released in Summer 2026. Whilst the draft NPPF is a consultation document, it is considered that the proposed policies within it are a material consideration and must be given a degree of weight at the present time. The relevant draft policies will be referred to in this report in addition to those policies in the existing NPPF.

(a) Provision of Renewable Energy

10.17 The proposed development is intended to provide a renewable source of electricity generation and to reduce dependence on fossil fuels thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

10.18 In considering this application, it is necessary to have regard to the UK Government's recent commitment to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 100% relative to 1990 levels by 2050. In June 2019, parliament passed legislation (Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019) to ensure that the commitment to achieve 'net zero' is legally binding. The need to reduce dependence on fossil fuels has therefore been recognised at a national level.

10.19 In July 2019, Cotswold District Council declared a climate emergency. It is committed to making its activities net zero by 2045, achieving 100% clean energy uses across a full range of functions by 2030 and embedding climate change emergency considerations in all work areas, decision making processes, policies and strategies.

10.20 With regard to planning policy and guidance, the following is considered relevant to this application:

10.21 Cotswold District Local Plan Policy INF10: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development states:

1.Proposals for the generation of energy from renewable or low carbon sources will be permitted, provided it is demonstrated that:

a. any adverse impacts individually and/or cumulatively, including; visual amenity; landscape character; heritage assets; biodiversity, water quality and flood risk; highways, residential amenity, including shadow flicker, air quality and noise, are or can be satisfactorily mitigated.

b. It is of an appropriate type, scale and design for the location and setting;

c. It is compatible with surrounding land uses, such as military activities; and

d. It avoids using the best and most versatile agricultural land unless justified by compelling evidence.

2.The infrastructure and all associated apparatus and structures relating to the installation must be removed, and the site reinstated where appropriate, should it become redundant for energy generation purposes.

10.22 In terms of national guidance, paragraph 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that the *'The purpose of the planning system is to*

contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.'

10.23 With regard to meeting the challenge of climate change, paragraph 161 of the NPPF states that *'the planning system should support the transition to net zero by 2050 and take full account of all climate impacts …'* It goes on to state that planning *'should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings, and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.'*

10.24 Paragraph 168 of the NPPF states:

'When determining planning applications for all forms of renewable and low carbon energy developments, local planning authorities should:

a) not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy, and give significant weight to the benefits associated with renewable and low carbon energy generation and the proposal's contribution to a net zero future;

b) recognise that small-scale and community-led projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse emissions;

10.25 Draft NPPF Policy W3: Renewable and low carbon energy development and electricity network infrastructure states:

1. In considering proposals for renewable and low carbon energy development and electricity network infrastructure, substantial weight should be given to:

a. The benefits of such development for improving energy security, supporting economic development and moving to a net zero future;…

2. Applicant should not be required to demonstrate the need for renewable or low carbon energy development and electricity network infrastructure. Where proposals for this form of development come forward outside areas which have been identified as suitable for them they should be acceptable when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework, taken as a whole.

3. Where development is expected to be time-limited, applications should be accompanied by proposals for decommissioning and site restoration, including details of how these measures are expected to be implemented.'

10.26 The Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) states:

'Increasing the amount of energy from renewable and low carbon technologies will help to make sure the UK has a secure energy supply, reduce greenhouse gas emissions to slow down climate change and stimulate investment in new jobs and businesses. Planning has an important role in the delivery of new renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure in locations where the local environmental impact is acceptable.

Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 5-001-20140306'

10.27 It is evident that national and local planning policy and guidance are supportive, in principle, of renewable and low carbon energy development. With regard to this application, information submitted with the planning application states that *The Proposed Development, with an installed capacity of some 25MW would have an estimated power output of some 44,244MWh per annum, which would provide sufficient electricity to power over 15,000 homes.'* The current proposal will therefore make a significant contribution to the supply of renewable energy to the local area.

10.28 It is considered that the provision of renewable energy of the scale proposed represents a significant benefit that weighs in favour of the proposed scheme. Notwithstanding this, it is necessary to weigh this benefit against the potential impacts of the scheme. The impacts of the proposal will be covered in the following sections of this report.

(b) Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

10.29 The application site occupies an area of open countryside to the east of the village of Ewen and to the south-west of the village of Siddington. The area proposed for the solar panels forms part of a network of agricultural fields, with scattered dwellings and farm buildings located to its north, west and south.

10.30 The following Local Plan policies are considered to be applicable to this proposal:

10.31 Local Plan Policy EN1 Built, Natural and Historic Environment states:

New development will, where appropriate, promote the protection, conservation and enhancement of the historic and natural environment by:

a. Ensuring the protection and enhancement of existing natural and historic environmental assets and their settings in proportion with the significance of the asset;

b. Contributing to the provision of multi-functional green infrastructure;

c. Addressing climate change, habitat loss and fragmentation through creating new habitats and the better management of existing habitats;

d. Seeking to improve air, soil and water quality where feasible; and

e. Ensuring design standards that complement the character of the area and the sustainable use of the development.

10.32 Local Plan Policy EN4 The Wider Natural and Historic Landscape states:

1. *'Development will be permitted where it does not have a significant detrimental impact on the natural and historic landscape (including the tranquillity of the countryside) of Cotswold District or neighbouring areas.*

2. Proposals will take account of landscape and historic landscape character, visual quality and local distinctiveness. They will be expected to enhance, restore and better manage the natural and historic landscape, and any significant landscape features and elements, including key views, the setting of settlements, settlement patterns and heritage assets.'

10.33 Whilst the site is not located within Kemble and Ewen Special Landscape Area, the following policy has been taken into account when making this recommendation:

10.34 Local Plan Policy EN6 Special Landscape Areas states:

'Development within Special Landscape Areas will be permitted provided it does not have a significant detrimental impact upon the special character and key landscape qualities of the area including its tranquillity'.

10.35 In terms of the Kemble and Ewen Neighbourhood Plan, the following policies are considered applicable to the western part of the application site:

10.36 Policy KE6 - Green Infrastructure

'The network of Green Infrastructure (GI) within the neighbourhood plan area will be protected for its recreation, open space and wildlife value. New GI, particularly where it creates links to the existing GI network and improves access to the countryside for informal recreation and net gains in biodiversity will be supported. Development will only be permitted where it retains/protects/enhances the recreational, biodiversity, water management and other functions of the GI network. New development should enhance linkages to the wider existing GI network and improve access to the countryside for informal recreation, where appropriate.'

10.37 Policy KE11 -Landscape

Proposals for development should:

a) Retain and where possible enhance those landscape assets which are of benefit to the quiet enjoyment of the rural landscape by residents and the community. In identifying such areas regard will be had to the Kemble Landscape Appraisal undertaken by Tyler Grange;

b) Maintain the physical and visual separation between Kemble and Ewen to retain the sense of identity of the distinct settlements;

c) Reinforce the Thames valley landscape in respect of its recreational value and visual amenity creating a quiet and tranquil valued rural landscape;

d) Maintain and enhance field pattern and enclosure where possible;

e) Enhance valued landscape features which are in decline or in poor condition;

f) Avoid further aesthetic erosion of the landscape/farmed edge of the villages; and

g) Protect views and vistas identified in the Kemble Landscape Appraisal and the Kemble and Kemble Station Conservation Areas Appraisal undertaken by Montagu Evans from significant detrimental impact.

10.38 With regard to national policy, Paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by *'recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside'.*

10.39 It is noted that the solar farm development is proposed for a 40 year period after which the land will be restored to agriculture. In this respect, the proposed development is reversible and one which would not result in a permanent change to the character and appearance of the landscape. However, a period of 40 years is still considered to represent a significant length of time and, one which would result in the perception of a permanent change for many people who live and work in the area. In this regard, it is considered reasonable to assess this proposal on the grounds that it would result in changes to the landscape which are more akin to a permanent change rather than a short term alteration.

10.40 The application site forms part of a relatively open and gently undulating agricultural landscape that is characteristic of the wider landscape lying between the villages of Ewen to the west, Siddington to the north-east and Somerford Keynes to the south. The area proposed for the solar arrays is largely bordered by hedgerows with an area of woodland lying adjacent to the southern edge of the application site. Notwithstanding this, it is also noted that 2 overhead electricity power lines run in close proximity to the western edge of the application site. The power lines are supported by metal pylons and run parallel with one another.

10.41 This application is accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) which has assessed the site from a number of public vantage points, including the local highway network and Public Right of Way BSN7.

10.42 In terms of public views, the site is bordered to its south and east by roads. A further road runs to the west and north of the site. Public Right of Way BSN7 runs in an east-west direction approximately 370m to the north of the main body of the application site.

10.43 Views from the roads to the east and south of the main body of the site are largely screened by existing roadside hedgerows. Whilst glimpsed views would be available from field entrances and above hedgerows in certain instances, the existing roadside hedgerows are of a size that would provide significant levels of screening in most cases. In addition, the attention of road users tends to be on the highway rather than the adjacent landscape thereby reducing the visual and landscape impact of the proposal when compared to the experience of pedestrians using a Public Right of Way for instance. In addition, the existing woodland located adjacent to the southern part of the site would also provide a further degree of screening of the central part of the site when viewed from the south. New tree planting is also proposed along a section of the southern boundary of the application site. The submitted LVIA indicates a

moderate/minor effect when viewed from the road to south and no effects when viewed from Spratsgate Lane to the east (due to existing hedgerows).

10.44 With regard to views from the lane to the west/north of the site, it is noted that the site is separated from the aforementioned highway by fields. There would therefore be a degree of separation between the solar panels and the respective lane. In addition, existing trees and vegetation provide a significant degree of screening when viewed from the west. Views of the site from the north are more open, with the site forming part of an expansive view which incorporates both the site and the wider landscape. Moreover, the views in question place the site in context with 2 lines of electricity pylons which are notable features within the landscape. The proposed panels would also be located approximately 350m from the lane at its closest point. In light of their distance from the lane, the relatively low height of the solar panels and the presence of the existing electricity pylons, it is considered that the landscape and visual impact of the proposed development when viewed from the lane to the north would be limited. The LVIA indicates a minor effect at the end of the construction period reducing to no effects after a period of 10 years when new landscaping has had an opportunity to develop.

10.45 With regard to Public Right of Way BSN7, it is noted that the existing footpath extends through countryside, as well as a farmyard and along a farm drive. Whilst views southwards towards the proposed solar panels are available, views are also influenced by existing farm development and the entrance drive. Agricultural fields located to the immediate south of the Public Right of Way will be retained as at present, thereby providing a buffer between the footpath and the application site. The LVIA identifies a moderate effect at the end of the construction stage which reduces to minor positive in the ten year period after construction following the introduction of new hedgerow planting along the site's northern boundary. Whilst Officers do not necessarily concur with the latter opinion, it is considered that the landscape and visual effects of the proposal on the experience of the users of the Public Right of Way would not be substantial or significant. The distance of the solar panels from the route of the Public Right of Way, combined with new landscaping, are considered to mitigate the impact of the proposed development when viewed from the Public Right of Way.

10.46 With regard to other elements of the proposal, it is considered that the construction access road would have the appearance of a stone surfaced agricultural track which would not appear out of character with its rural setting. In addition, the proposed underground cable route would have no discernible impact on the character or appearance of the landscape following its

completion. Finally, the new substation is well screened by existing roadside hedgerows and is modest in size. It is considered that its introduction can justified on landscape terms given the wider environmental benefits arising from the delivery of renewable energy.

10.47 The Landscape consultant engaged by this Council to review this application provided the initial response to this application:

'Landscape Character

10.47.1 The application site falls within the Cornbrash Lowlands Landscape Character Type as defined in the Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment (2006), and more specifically within the Siddington and South Cerney Cornbrash Lowlands Local Character Area.

10.47.2 This is a gently undulating agricultural landscape characterised by a regular rectilinear field pattern, defined by hedgerows and occasional mature trees. The area is generally sparsely settled and retains a strong rural character, although the openness of some field compartments and the limited vertical structure in places can increase the visibility and prominence of development.

10.47.3 The landscape strategy for this character area is to conserve and reinforce the traditional field structure and rural character, restore fragmented hedgerows, and avoid the introduction of large-scale or industrial features that would contrast with the prevailing pattern, scale, or texture of the landscape.

10.47.4 In this context, infrastructure such as ground-mounted solar arrays has the potential to erode the simplicity and openness of the local landscape unless it is carefully designed and effectively mitigated. The degree to which the proposals follow existing field boundaries, respond to the grain of the landscape, and establish effective visual screening will be essential in limiting effects on local character and ensuring successful long term integration.

10.47.5 While the submitted LVIA broadly follows GLVIA3 and includes an assessment of both landscape and visual receptors, there appears to be a disproportionate emphasis on viewpoint-based analysis in forming judgements about landscape effects. This is particularly evident where the assessment of landscape character is often expressed in terms of what is visible from a given viewpoint, rather than from a broader understanding of the landscape unit as a whole.

10.47.6 For example, changes to land use, the introduction of perimeter fencing and infrastructure, and the inclusion of engineered elements have the potential to affect the landscape's rural character and perceived coherence, even where views are filtered or screened. These effects relate not only to visibility but to the function and integrity of the landscape at the site level and within the wider LCT. As such, impacts on these characteristics and the perception of rural land management may be under-represented when conclusions are drawn through the viewpoint based analysis of landscape impacts.

10.47.7 Similarly, the assessment correctly notes that the Cornbrash Lowlands are of medium landscape value with moderate susceptibility, and that the proposal would introduce new characteristics into the landscape. However, the extent to which the development would influence the receiving landscape character, particularly its simplicity, rectilinear field structure and agricultural function has not been fully explored.

10.47.8 On this basis, a more balanced approach that considers landscape impacts on the Site's character and the relevant landscape character areas (local and national) is needed. This would help to ensure that conclusions on landscape effects are not overly dependent on what is seen from viewpoints but reflect the broader implications of development on local character, fabric and structure.

Visual Amenity

10.47.9 From a visual impact perspective, the LVIA includes 10 viewpoints supported by Type 3 photomontages in line with LI Technical Guidance Note 06/19. The visualisations demonstrate that the proposed arrays would be partially or wholly screened in most middle and long-range views.

10.47.10 Shorter-range receptors along Ewen Road, Spratsgate Lane and local PRoWs would experience the greatest degree of change. From VP1 and VP5 in particular, the arrays would be intermittently visible during winter months and prior to the full establishment of hedgerow planting. However, these effects would reduce over time.

10.47.11 Visual effects are assessed by the applicant as predominantly Minor or Moderate/Minor. This is generally supported, although for some receptors, particularly walkers on footpaths BSN7 and the Thames and Severn Way, a more cautious Moderate effect may be appropriate in the early operational years. Nevertheless, these are not considered significant/substantial.

Cumulative Impact

10.47.12 The submitted LVIA includes consideration of potential cumulative landscape and visual effects, particularly in relation to the existing Siddington Solar Farm located to the east of the application site. While the introduction of a further solar farm will contribute to a degree of adverse change, particularly through the further loss of agricultural land use and the introduction of additional infrastructure into the rural landscape, we are satisfied that this will not give rise to substantial/ significant cumulative effects at a landscape character area scale. This conclusion reflects the physical separation between the two sites, the retained field patterns, intermittent tree cover and a visually enclosed rural character that will remain legible, provided the proposed mitigation planting is successfully implemented and managed over time.

10.47.13 From a visual standpoint, while there may be limited locations, such as along the Thames and Severn Way, where both schemes are perceptible in sequence, such views would remain filtered and intermittent. With the proposed mitigation in place and subject to successful establishment, we consider the risk of substantial cumulative visual effects to be low and adequately addressed.'

10.48 In response to additional information provided the applicant, the Landscape consultant advises:

' Review of Submitted Information

Landscape Character

10.48.1 The applicant has reiterated that the LVIA (March 2025) acknowledges long-term significant adverse effects on the character of the site itself and sets out the elements giving rise to this change. While this clarification is noted, it is also important to acknowledge that landscape character can be affected regardless of visibility. Although the consultant has used viewpoints to illustrate how the influence of the development will be limited where it is not widely seen, changes to land use, landscape fabric and perceptual qualities still represent a degree of character effect even where views are contained. That said, we recognise that these adverse effects are not judged to be significant at the wider Cornbrash Lowlands LCT scale or long-term.

Visual Amenity

10.48.2 The submitted CZTV (bare earth) illustrates theoretical visibility between Furzen Leaze, Siddington and Kemble Wick solar farms. While the

applicant asserts that intervening vegetation, settlement and landform would prevent significant cumulative views, we note that sequential and localised awareness of the schemes may still arise for sensitive receptors such as walkers on PRoWs, particularly the Thames and Severn Way and routes north of Ewen.

10.48.3 On balance, given the physical separation, intervening features and visual enclosure, we agree that the risk of significant cumulative landscape or visual effects across the study area is low.

Landscape Proposals

10.48.4 The applicant confirms hedgerows would be maintained at 2.5-3.5m height, which aligns with our previous recommendations. This, alongside species-rich hedgerow mixes and occasional standard native trees, should be explicitly secured through a conditioned Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP).

Conclusion

10.48.5 The further information submitted addresses elements of our earlier consultation, particularly around cumulative effects and mitigation detail.

10.48.6 On this basis, the proposals are not considered to result in unacceptable landscape or visual harm subject to the recommended conditions being applied.''

10.49 In visual terms, it is considered that the proposed development would be relatively well screened by existing and proposed vegetation. The visual impact of the scheme is therefore considered to be limited when viewed from public vantage points. In terms of landscape character, it is considered that the proposal would have a discernible impact on the existing agricultural character of the landscape. The introduction of solar panels and associated development would therefore result in a more heavily engineered landscape which would be at odds with the informal, undeveloped character of the existing fields. In this respect, the proposal is considered to cause a degree of harm to the landscape. However, for the reasons set out by the Landscape consultant above, it is considered that the harm is not significant and would not outweigh the benefits arising from the delivery of renewable energy.

10.50 The concerns of objectors regarding the cumulative impact of this scheme in combination with other recently permitted solar farm schemes in the area are noted. However, due to the distances between the respective sites, it is

considered that there is no physical or visual interconnectivity between the individual developments. As such, each site would appear as a standalone development and the combination of the approved and proposed developments is considered not to have an adverse cumulative impact on the prevailing landscape character of the area.

10.51 The proposed development is considered not to have an adverse impact on the setting of Kemble and Ewen Special Landscape Area (SLA) by virtue of the distance of the development from the aforementioned area and the level of intervening vegetation.

10.52 It is considered that the introduction of the solar farm would have an impact on the character and appearance of the area. However, this impact will be mitigated by proposed new landscaping and green infrastructure. The impact of the proposed development is also considered to be relatively localised. It is considered that the landscape and visual impacts of the proposal are outweighed by the benefits arising from the provision of renewable energy and the need to address the issue of climate change.

(c) Impact on the Setting of Heritage Assets

10.53 The proposed solar farm is located to the south of 3 Grade II listed buildings - 'Furzen Leaze Farmhouse', the 'Barn and Stable at Furzen Lea Farmhouse' and a pair of cottages 'Furzen Leaze Cottages'. The Barn and Stables and Furzen Leaze Farmhouse are located approximately 350m and 400m to the north of the main body of the application site respectively. Furzen Leaze Cottages are located approximately 550m to the north of the main body of the application site.

10.54 The site is located approximately 590m to the east of Ewen Conservation Area.

10.55 The 'Settlement South East of Chesterton Farm' Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) is located approximately 1.4km to the north of the main body of the application site. The proposed cable route is located approximately 450m to the east of the SAM at its closest point.

10.56 Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that when considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the Local Planning Authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it

possesses. Considerable importance and weight must be given to the aforementioned legislation.

10.57 In addition to Local Plan Policy EN1 (referred to in the previous section), the following Local Plan policy is also considered applicable to this proposal:

10.58 Policy EN10 Designated Heritage Assets states:

1. *'In considering proposals that affect a designated heritage asset or its setting, great weight will be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.*

2. Development proposals that sustain and enhance the character, appearance and significance of designated heritage assets (and their settings), and that put them to viable uses, consistent with their conservation, will be permitted.

3. Proposals that would lead to harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset or its setting will not be permitted, unless a clear and convincing justification of public benefit can be demonstrated to outweigh that harm. Any such assessment will take account, in the balance of material considerations:

- *The importance of the asset;*
- *The scale of harm; and*
- *The nature and level of the public benefit of the proposal.'*

10.59 Local Plan Policy EN12 Non-Designated Heritage Assets

1. *'Development affecting a non-designated heritage asset will be permitted where it is designed sympathetically having regard to the significance of the asset, its features, character and setting.*

2. Where possible, development will seek to enhance the character of the non-designated heritage asset. Proposals for demolition or total loss of a non-designated heritage asset will be subject to a balanced assessment taking into account the significance of the asset and the scale of harm or loss.

3. The assessment of whether a site, feature or structure is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset, will be guided by the criteria set out in Table 6.'

10.60 The following Neighbourhood Plan policy is of relevance when considering the matter of archaeology:

Policy KE10 - Archaeology

'Any future proposals for development within and around Kemble and Ewen villages should be accompanied by a thorough assessment of the potential effects on archaeological heritage assets in accordance with guidelines issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and in accordance with a brief approved by the Historic Environment Service of Gloucestershire County Council. This work must be carried out prior to the submission of any planning application. Where possible, and appropriate, development proposals should seek to incorporate archaeology in such a way that any conserved remains can be accessed by the public and that suitable signage and information is provided to and on the site to promote such access and aid interpretation of the asset.'

10.61 In terms of national policy, Paragraph 210 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states *'in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*

a) The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

b) The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

c) The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.'

10.62 Paragraph 212 states *'when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.'*

10.63 Paragraph 215 states that *'where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.'*

10.64 Paragraph 216 of the NPPF states that *'the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required*

having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.'

10.65 This application is accompanied by a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA), which has assessed the potential impact of the proposed development on both designated and non-designated heritage assets as well as features of archaeological interest.

10.66 The listed buildings located to the north of the main body of the application site sit within a relatively flat and open agricultural landscape. Furzen Leaze Farmhouse faces to the south and is bordered to its east, south and north by fields. A farmyard comprising agricultural and equestrian buildings is located to approximately 40m to the south-west of the farmhouse. Within the aforementioned group of buildings is the listed barn and stable. Furzen Leaze Cottages are located approximately 200m to the north-west of the listed barn and stables.

10.67 With regard to Furzen Leaze Farmhouse, the area immediately adjacent to the property will remain unchanged. However, the introduction of the solar array to the south of the farmhouse is considered to have an impact on the wider landscape panorama of the listed building. The network of fields which contribute to the rural setting of the heritage asset would be diminished as a result of this proposal. However, it is also noted that the fields lying to the immediate south of the listed building would be retained, thereby creating a landscape buffer between the proposed solar farm and the heritage asset. New landscape planting would also help to mitigate the landscape and visual impact of the development. Officers consider that the proposal would cause less than substantial harm to the setting of the listed farmhouse, with the harm being at the lower end of less than substantial due to the degree of separation between the application site and the listed building. The HIA states that *'it is considered that the level of harm would be a slight adverse impact'* on the heritage asset.

10.68 With regard to the listed barn and stable, it is noted that the aforementioned building forms part of a group of pre and post war agricultural/equestrian buildings. In addition, the southern elevation of the barn and stable lie immediately adjacent to a post war portal framed building. Other post war buildings are also located to its south and south-west. Existing buildings thereby act as visual buffer between the application site and the listed barn/stable. As a consequence, the historic setting of the heritage asset within the landscape has been diminished as a result of the introduction of more modern developments. There is very little visual intervisibility between the listed building and the site of the solar farm. In addition, the proposed development

would not have an adverse impact on the relationship between the historic barn/stable and the listed farmhouse. The HIA states that *' the impact of the proposed scheme is therefore considered to result in a negligible level of harm to an asset of medium value, resulting in a negligible adverse effect.'* Officers concur with this finding.

10.69 With regard to Furzen Leaze Cottages, the aforementioned pair of cottages are set further away from the solar farm than the other listed buildings referred to previously. In addition, the cottages are bordered by hedgerows with further vegetation and a farm access road lying to their south. In combination with the distance of the heritage asset from the proposed solar farm, it is considered that the proposal would result in a very low level of harm to the setting of the cottages. Officers concur with the findings of the HIA which states *' Due to the limited intervisibility between the asset and the Site, combined with the minor contribution made to significance by the wider setting, the proposed scheme is considered to result in a negligible level of harm to an asset of medium value, resulting in a negligible adverse effect.'*

10.70 With regard to other designated heritage assets, such as Ewen Conservation Area and 'Settlement South East of Chesterton Farm' Scheduled Ancient Monument, it is considered that the proposed development would not have an adverse impact on the setting of the aforementioned assets by virtue of distance and a lack of physical or visual interconnectivity between the application site and the respective conservation area and SAM.

10.71 The conclusion of the HIA states:

10.71.1 'The proposals results are assessed as causing an appreciable change to identifiable character to the setting of three designated assets in the form of Furzen Leaze Farmhouse, Furzen Leaze barn and stable complex and Furzen Leaze Cottage. These assets are Grade II Listed and the potential harm to significance is respectively identified as slight adverse, negligible adverse and negligible adverse. No other designated heritage assets, including any Scheduled Monument or Conservation Area, have the potential to suffer an appreciable adverse effect. Buried archaeological features within and on the northern edge of the Site are also assessed as having a setting but the assets are poorly dated or understood and the harm to their setting cannot be entirely accurately assessed but is currently considered to be negligible adverse. No appreciable adverse effect on settings has been identified on any other non-designated heritage asset.

10.71.2 The proposals would also undoubtedly result in some very minor change to amenity views in regard to the wider Kemble and Ewen Neighbourhood Plan area, but this would not be identifiable as 'harm' to the setting of any heritage asset.

10.71.3 In the opinion of this report the proposals would result in less than substantial harm at the lower end of the scale to the setting of Furzen Leaze Farmhouse, barns and stable complex and the cottage, as well as to the setting of a number of buried archaeological features and the significance of buried archaeological remains. The potential effects may be mitigated through a number of solutions, including the proposed planting and/or design solutions, and/or preservation by record and/or preservation in situ.'

10.72 It is considered that the proposed development would cause less than substantial harm to the setting of the 3 listed buildings located to the north of the proposed solar farm. Due to a combination of distance, proposed landscape planting and limited intervisibility, it is considered that the harm would be at the lower end of less than substantial. As a consequence, it is necessary to weigh the identified harm against the public benefits of the proposal in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 215 of the NPPF. In this instance, it is considered that the creation of the solar farm would deliver significant public benefits through the generation of renewable energy in accordance with the Government's objectives to cut greenhouse gas emissions and to achieve 'net zero'. The proposal would provide renewable electricity for several thousand homes which is considered to represent a level of public benefit that outweighs the harm to the listed buildings. It is therefore considered that there are strong grounds to support this application, notwithstanding the less than substantial harm to the 3 listed buildings.

10.73 With regard to non-designated heritage assets, the HIA identifies the presence of cropmark sites within and along the northern boundary of the application site. The aforementioned sites are considered to be of archaeological interest and have been subject to archaeological investigation. Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) Archaeology has reviewed the submitted application and advises:

10.73.1 'The county Historic Environment Record shows that a number of cropmarks have been recorded from the National Mapping Programme within the proposed development site which appear as several enclosures and linear features which likely represent settlement of unknown date. The nearest Scheduled Monument to the proposed development titled "Settlement SE of Chesterton Farm" (NHLE no. 1003444) is Roman in date and is situated just over

1km from the proposed solar arrays. Archaeological investigations in the nearby vicinity have highlighted the potential for remains from the prehistoric to medieval periods.

10.73.2 The result of geophysical surveys and trial trench evaluation within the site have identified and recorded a number of remains of archaeological interest. The main focus of activity appears on the higher ground in the northern and eastern part of the site and consists of a number of ditched enclosures/field systems, gullies, pits and post-holes as well as two prehistoric ring ditches. Features containing fired clay, pottery, charcoal, ceramic building material and animal bone are indicative of settlement activity dating to the Romano-British and prehistoric periods.

Impact on Significance:

10.73.3 The Heritage Impact Statement/Geophysical Survey/Trial Trench Evaluation have demonstrated that the site has clear potential to contain significant remains from the prehistoric and Romano-British periods.

Recommendations:

10.73.3 For the reasons given above, any forthcoming planning decision must secure a programme of archaeological mitigation work in the form further archaeological investigation work and a mitigation strategy/Management Plan for the preservation in situ/protection and/or preservation by record of archaeological remains impacted by the proposals from construction and during lifetime/decommissioning of the solar farm.'

10.74 Historic England has provided the following response to the application: *'Historic England provides advice when our engagement can add most value. In this case we are not offering advice. This should not be interpreted as comment on the merits of the application.'*

10.75 The HIA has also identified the routes of the Thames and Severn Canal and the Cheltenham and Great Western Union Railway as non-designated heritage assets. The route of the canal is located approximately 345m northwest of the solar array site and 85m west of the substation site. It has been infilled and its route is defined for the most part by a hedgerow. The former railway line runs to the north of the solar farm and is approximately 170m to the north of the proposed substation lying to the west of Spratsgate Lane. Having regard to the distance of the proposed development from the aforementioned features, it is

considered that the proposal would not have an adverse impact, or cause harm to, the significance of the non-designated heritage assets.

10.76 It is considered that the proposed development is in accordance with Local Plan Policies EN1, EN10 and EN12, Neighbourhood Plan Policy KE10 and Section 16 of the NPPF.

(d) Access and Highway Safety

10.77 The proposed solar farm would be accessed via an existing field entrance located to its north. The existing entrance opens onto a lay-by which lies adjacent to the western side of Spratsgate Lane. The aforementioned lane is a metalled 2 way Class C highway which is subject to the national speed limit. The aforementioned entrance would be used during the construction and operational phases of the development. It opens onto a relatively straight section of road. Adequate visibility can be provided in both directions to enable safe access and egress to the application site. Swept path analysis plans have also been submitted in order to demonstrate that construction vehicles can manoeuvre safely into and out of the site.

10.78 The submitted details also demonstrate that a safe means of access and egress can be secured to and from the proposed substation to the north of the main application site.

10.79 With regard to construction traffic, the submitted Transport Statement states;

'Access to Spratsgate Lane from the strategic road network will be from the A419 to the south-east of the Site, via the B4696 Spine Road East and Spine Road West. Construction vehicles would then egress the Site to then north along Spratsgate Lane, returning to the A419 via Wilkinson Road and Love Lane Industrial Estate. This proposed one-way system of Site access and egress will help to limit the impact of development-related traffic along each section of the local highway network.'

10.80 Construction traffic can therefore access the site without the need to drive through villages near the application site.

10.81 In terms of traffic generation, it is anticipated that the construction phase of the development would last for 6-8 months, with approximately 100-150 staff being present on site during this phase. Construction hours would typically be between 07:30 and 18:00 on weekdays and 08:30 and 13:00 at weekends.

10.82 With regard to HGV movements, the Transport Statement states:

'during the phase of establishing works at the Site (weeks 1- 6) there is expected to be a total of approximately 24 two-way delivery-related movements per day on weekdays and 10 on Saturdays, on average. During the main construction phase (weeks 7 - 26), there is expected to be 6 two-way delivery-related movements per day on weekdays and 3 on Saturdays on average over the 20-week period.'

10.83 In relation to traffic movements in general, the Transport Statement states:

' In total, there will be a maximum of approximately 86 two-way movements per day on average throughout the main construction period and a peak traffic generation of 144 two-way movements per day during the initial 6-week period of peak activity in the phase of establishing works.'

10.84 Traffic count data from 2019, which relates to a stretch of Spratsgate Lane located to the north of the application site, recorded a two-way average annual daily flow of approximately 5,300 vehicles, including 166 daily two-way HGV movements. In the context of the level of traffic already using the local highway network and the relatively short term nature of the construction period, it is considered that the proposal would not conflict with paragraph 116 of the NPPF, which states *'development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.'* It is also considered that proposal accords with Local Plan Policy INF4: Highway Safety.

10.85 On completion, the solar farm will require very limited vehicular access, other than for maintenance and general management.

10.86 Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) Highways has assessed the application and raises no objection to the proposal.

10.87 It is considered that the proposed development can be undertaken without having an adverse impact on highway safety or the operation of the local highway network in accordance with Local Plan Policy INF4 and Section 9 of the NPPF.

(e) Impact on Residential Amenity & Glint and Glare

10.88 The application site borders agricultural fields, woodland and 2 highways. Notwithstanding this, a number of dwellings are also located near the application site. The closest of these is South Leaze Farm which is located on the southern side of Ewen Road approximately 30-40m from the southern boundary of the application site. 2 further dwellings (Shooter's Hill Bungalow & Shooter's Hill Cottage) are located approximately 170m & 220m respectively to the west of the application site. Other dwellings such as Ashwater House and Lodge are located approximately 280m to the north-west of the site. Furzen Leaze Farmhouse, Furzen Leaze Cottages, 3 & 4Furzen Leaze Cottages and Sandy Lane Farm are located to the north of the site.

10.89 In terms of noise and disturbance, the operational phase of the solar farm is considered not to have an adverse impact on local residents. Noise would be limited to transformers, inverters and associated plant which is considered not to have an unacceptable impact on local residents given the separation distance between the aforementioned equipment and existing properties. In addition, it is noted that plant and machinery at the Siddington solar farm is located approximately 50-60m from dwellings, which is closer than that proposed as part of this application. For instance, plant/buildings would be located approximately 120m to the north of South Leaze Farm to the south. An area of woodland would also be positioned between the aforementioned features and the respective dwelling.

10.90 It is noted that the construction phase of the development is likely to cause disturbance to local residents. However, in light of the relatively short term nature of the construction phase and the proposed operating hours it is considered that the potential impact would be limited and not at a level that would conflict with the requirements of Local Plan Policy EN15: Pollution and Contaminate Land.

10.91 The applicant has submitted a Noise Impact Assessment which stats that noise levels generated by the proposed development would be lower than existing background noise levels.

10.92 The Council's Environmental and Regulatory Services Noise Officer states:

10.92.1 The report suggests that the modelled sound level at Southleaze Farm would be +1dB above background during the early morning. I do have reservations in relation to the Noise Impact Assessment not accounting for tonality. The report suggests that due to the propagation distance a tone would

be difficult to perceive, however, BS4142 does not define a specific distance for a tone to be audible. It applies a penalty for the characteristics of a sound, and given the nature of the plant it would seem appropriate for a penalty to be included even as a worst-case scenario. Therefore, I have a concern the report may under represent the level of impact.

10.92.2 That said, the duration of exposure is suggested to be low in terms of impact in the early morning (04:45 to 07:00) from the inverters. However, any noise impact would be during the spring/summer months when people are more likely to have windows open. I would consider, as the report suggests it is unlikely to constitute an adverse impact in terms of BS4142. However, given the borderline modelled predictions and also no accounting for tonality I would recommend (in addition to my previous conditions) that a post verification report is submitted in line with the following condition;

10.92.3 Within 6 months of first use of the development, a noise validation report shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This noise validation report shall be completed by a suitably qualified Acoustician, accredited by the Institute of Acoustics (IOA) and/or the Association of Noise Consultants (ANC). This report must demonstrate compliance with the relevant noise criteria, outlined within the approved Noise Impact Assessment [J005206-8674-SH-03] and where necessary suggest any mitigation measure that may be required.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the locality, especially for people living and/or working nearby, in accordance with the NPPF and local planning policy EN15.'

10.93 The suggested condition has been updated to ensure that the condition is suitably precise and enforceable.

10.93.1 Within 6 months of first use of the development hereby permitted, a Noise Validation Report shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Noise Validation Report shall be completed by a suitably qualified Acoustician, accredited by the Institute of Acoustics (IOA) and/or the Association of Noise Consultants (ANC). The report shall demonstrate that the development is in compliance with the relevant noise criteria, outlined within the approved Noise Impact Assessment [J005206-8674-SH-03] and, if this is not being achieved, shall set out measures to ensure compliance with the aforementioned assessment and a timetable for the implementation of such measures. The development shall be retained/maintained in accordance with the approved details thereafter.

Reason*: To protect the amenity of the locality, especially for people living and/or working nearby, in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN15 and paragraph 198 of the National Planning Policy Framework.*

10.94 The proximity of the proposed development to South Leaze Farm to the south is noted. At present, the aforementioned property is separated from the application site by a road. Roadside vegetation and a woodland are located to the north of the dwelling. As a consequence, there would be a degree of screening between the aforementioned property and the rows of solar panels. Existing vegetation combined with new roadside planting would provide a degree of screening between the proposed development and South Leaze Farm. It is recommended that the proposed landscaping condition also requires additional landscape planting along the southern boundary of the application site to the east of the existing woodland. It is also noted that Ashwater House and Lodge to the north-west of the application site are also bordered by vegetation which would provide a degree of screening of the site when viewed from the aforementioned properties.

10.95 It is considered that the proposed development can be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of Local Plan Policy EN15 and guidance contained in paragraph 198 of the NPPF.

10.96 The issue of glint and glare has been considered as part of the application submission. The applicant has commissioned a Solar Photovoltaic Glint and Glare Study which has assessed the potential impact of the development on local residents, as well as road users and aviation. In the case of residential properties, the study indicates that the development would have no impact on most properties within the vicinity. A low impact is identified in relation to the dwellings located to the north of the application site and a moderate impact on Shooter's Hill Bungalow & Shooter's Hill Cottage to the west. The study states:

10.96.1 'For two dwellings, solar reflections are predicted for more than three months per year but less than 60 minutes on a given day. Partial screening in the form of existing vegetation and/or buildings has been identified for the dwellings. Additional mitigating factors have been identified in the form of reflections coinciding with direct sunlight and the significant separation distance between the dwellings and reflecting panels, which reduce the level of impact. A low impact is predicted upon these dwellings, and mitigation is not recommended.

10.96.2 For two further dwellings, solar reflections are predicted for less than three months per year and less than 60 minutes on a given day. Partial screening in the form of existing vegetation has been identified. A low impact is predicted, and mitigation is not recommended.

10.96.3 For the remaining two dwellings, the solar reflections are predicted to occur for more than three months of the year but less than 60 minutes on any given day. Partial screening in the form of existing vegetation and/or terrain has been identified for the dwellings. No significant mitigating factors which could reduce the level of impact have been identified. A moderate impact is predicted, and mitigation is recommended.'

10.97 Additional landscape planting can be added to the western boundary of the application site as part of landscaping scheme in order to mitigate the impact of the proposal on the properties in question.

10.98 In terms of the impact of glint and glare on the local road network, the study has identified that the majority of the road network will not be subject to change. A low impact is predicted for approximately 100m of Spratsgate Lane, however, this will be outside the road user's primary field-of-view. A further 300m section of Spratsgate Lane would potentially be subject to a moderate impact as the solar reflections occur within the primary field of view. It is proposed to condition additional landscape planting to address this matter.

10.99 With regard to aviation, the study identifies a low impact in relation to South Cerney Airfield, Cotswold Airport and Oaksey Park Airport. No mitigation is proposed. The Civil Aviation Authority, Ministry of Defence and Cotswold Airport haven been consulted as part of the application process. The Ministry of Defence has raised no objection. No response has been received from any of the other aforementioned bodies.

10.100 Subject to the additional landscape planting mentioned above, it is considered that the proposed development would not have an unacceptable impact in relation to glint and glare. The panels are designed so that light is reflected in a diffuse manner. Reflected light is therefore broken up in contrast with light that would reflect from a window or car windscreen.

10.101 It is considered that the proposed development can be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of Local Plan Policy EN15 and guidance contained in paragraph 198 of the NPPF.

(f) Biodiversity

10.102 The application site consists primarily of arable fields bordered by hedgerows. An area of woodland lies adjacent to the southern part of the main part of the site. A drainage ditch also extends in a north-south direction through the site. Ponds are also present within the site. The application site is located approximately 400m from the Cotswold Water Park Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). It falls with the impact risk zone of the aforementioned SSSI.

10.103 This application is accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA).

10.104 The Council's Biodiversity Officer provided the following initial comments in response to this application:

'Designated sites

10.104.1 The site is within a SSSI impact risk zone which requires the consultation of Natural England, and the Cotswold Water Park SSSI is approximately 400m from the site. Measures to safeguard the SSSI and Siddington Canal Local Wildlife site are recommended to be included within a CEMP. As no birds for which the SSSI is designated have been recorded using the site, I consider that the proposed mitigations to safeguard the SSSI are likely to be sufficient in this instance and can be secured by condition if other biodiversity issues are resolved.

Habitats

10.104.2 The site is predominantly arable, with hedgerows and trees present on field boundaries and site peripheries and an on-site pond. Hedgerows, mature trees and the pond are largely to be retained, and protection measures to safeguard these habitats are proposed in the EcIA. A buffer zone of 5m around retained hedgerows is proposed, but further information for the buffer around the retained on-site pond is required as this has not been stated.

Protected species

10.104.3 Great Crested Newts - Areas of the site fall within the amber and red impact risk zones as per the Great Crested Newt District Licensing Scheme, and there are 55 ponds within 500m of the site. One of the identified ponds (P3) is located on-site, with P1 and P2 off-site.

10.104.4 The eDNA surveys from P2 (approximately 175m from the site boundary) returned a positive result for GCN. P1 was recorded as seasonally dry, and P3 and P4 returned negative eDNA results for GCN. No assessment for population size has been undertaken on P2. Not all ponds within 500m of the site have been assessed for their potential to support GCN, and some of these ponds appear to be connected to the site. With reference to the NatureSpace consultee comments provided 3rd July 2025, I agree that the site itself provides suitable terrestrial habitats for GCN including the arable land. Therefore, based on the information submitted, I do not feel that the proposed mitigation in the form of a PWMS is likely to be sufficient, and in order for the works to be undertaken lawfully, they will need to proceed under licence. This can be through entering into the District Licensing Scheme or via the traditional licensing route with Natural England.

10.104.5 The details of an appropriate mitigation route through the entering of a suitable licensing scheme are required to enable the Council to discharge its statutory obligations in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

10.104.6 Badgers - A single sett entrance was recorded on the western site boundary which was assessed to be active. Section 3.29 states that a 30m exclusion buffer has been incorporated into the site layout, which appears to be consistent with drawing GBR0110.DEV.M2.001.0.E.j. This is likely to be sufficient. Sections 3.30 to 3.34 are considered to be sufficient to safeguard badgers, and measures are to be detailed within a CEMP, to be secured by condition if all other biodiversity issues are resolved.

10.104.7 Bats - The EcIA assessed that a complete season of bat activity surveys was not required due to the proposals not impacting any of the identified trees, and the retention of the majority of on-site suitable habitats. The on-site hedgerows are likely to be a key feature for local bat populations, and at present, it cannot be fully understood how bats may be using the site or be impacted by the proposals. Therefore, further surveys should be undertaken to understand how bats are using the site and to inform any further mitigation requirements.

10.104.8 Birds - The bird surveys recorded the presence of at least 15 priority bird species in addition to nonpriority and green-list species. It is proposed to deliver at least five skylark plots in farmland adjacent to the site within the ownership boundary. The EcIA recommends that a farmland bird mitigation strategy and management of the plot for at least 10 years is secured by condition. This off-site plot of land within the ownership boundary has not been

assessed for its viability to provide suitable mitigation and compensatory habitat for skylark.

10.104.9 It is noted from the breeding bird survey information that a number of skylarks were recorded outside of the red line boundary and within the blue line boundary, though no skylarks were recorded within the proposed mitigation site itself. Streetview imagery of the proposed mitigation site also appears to indicate that the site has powerlines running over and around some of the site boundaries which would potentially act as predator perches. Therefore, it is not clear that the proposed mitigation plot for skylarks will be suitable and further assessment of this plot is required. Circular 06/2005 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact Within The Planning System sets out that it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted. Skylarks are also listed as a species of principle importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, and the LPA has a duty to conserve and enhance priority species in accordance with the NERC Act 2006, Chapter 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework, local plan policy EN8 and to comply with the biodiversity duty. In addition to this, other red listed and priority bird species such as linnet and yellowhammer were recorded on site during the bird surveys. It is likely that retained hedgerows and buffer zones of 5m will be sufficient to ensure that the site remains suitable for these species.

10.104.10 I agree with the assessments and recommendations pertaining to wintering birds.

10.104.11 Dormice - I agree with the assessments and recommendations pertaining to Dormice. The EcIA proposes that precautionary measures will be included within a CEMP, which is sufficient in this instance, and can be secured by condition if all other biodiversity issues are resolved.

10.104.12 Reptiles - The majority of habitats suitable for reptiles are to be retained, and the EcIA recommends that a PWMS for reptiles. It is my view that this approach is sufficient in this instance, and a PWMS should be secured by condition if all other biodiversity issues are resolved.

10.104.13 Other species - Assessments and recommendations for hedgehogs and brown hare in the EcIA are considered to be sufficient. It is stated in sections 3.62 and 3.66 that fencing will have openings at its base level to maintain connectivity for these species. I am supportive of the retention of connectivity

across the site, though it should be noted that no indicative proposals of where holes in fencing will be are included with the application.'

10.105 In response to the above comments and ongoing discussions with the Biodiversity Officer, the applicant has set aside a field to the west of the application site for skylark mitigation. In addition, battery storage containers have been removed from this proposal in order to reduce the potential impact of noise on bat species using nearby hedgerows and woodland. At the time of writing this report, the applicant had also commissioned additional Great Crested Newt surveys. It is expected to be able to provide Committee Members with an update at the meeting to be held on the 13th May.

10.106 It is noted that Great Crested Newts are a European Protected Species. It is therefore necessary to have regard to ODPM Circular 06/2005 (para 116) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), and consider the proposal against the 3 'derogation' tests, as set out in Regulation 55 of the aforementioned Regulations :

'a) The preserving of public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment:

b) There must be no satisfactory alternative:

c) The action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.'

10.107 If the applicant were to enter the District Licensing process (which is operated by NatureSpace and authorised by Natural England), then the derogation tests would be addressed as part of the aforementioned licence process. If the applicant were to pursue the more traditional licence route with Natural England, then this Council will need to demonstrate that the proposal reasonably addresses the above mentioned tests. At the present time, it is considered that the delivery of renewable energy would be represent an overriding public interest. In addition, due to the size of land necessary to facilitate the creation of the solar farm, including the ability to provide a connection to the National Grid, it is considered that there is no satisfactory alternative to the current scheme. Criterion c is currently being addressed as part of the ongoing surveys and discussions between the applicant and the Biodiversity Officer.

10.108 Natural England has raised no objection subject to condition.

10.109 With regard to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), the applicant is seeking to provide such enhancements on-site. The submitted biodiversity metric calculations set out the following enhancements - *'55.29% net gain in area habitat units, 10.10% net gain in hedgerow units and 29.17% net gain in watercourse units'*. In response, the Biodiversity Officer has requested further clarification about a number of the calculations within the metric. At the time of writing this report, discussions are still ongoing between the applicant and Biodiversity Officer. However, it is also anticipated that this matter will be resolved before the May Committee meeting and that the applicant will be able to demonstrate the necessary 10% enhancement. If this is the case, a S106 legal agreement will be required to secure a BNG monitoring fee.

(g) Drainage and Flooding

10.110 The majority of the application site is located within Flood Zone 1, which is the lowest designation of flood zone and one in which new development of the type proposed can be acceptable in principle. A section of the central part of the main body of the site falls within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The aforementioned area is linear in form and extends in a roughly north-south direction alongside an existing drainage ditch. In addition, a section of the proposed cable route lying approximately 600m to the north of the application site crosses an area of land classified as falling within Flood Zones 2 and 3.

10.111 This application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy. The aforementioned document states that the majority of the site will continue to have a permeable surface thereby allowing rainwater to infiltrate into the ground as at present. The strategy has taken account of additional rainfall arising from climate change. Rainwater from the panels will typically collect under the panels. The presence of tussock grass can prevent soil erosion and the flow of surface water to other parts of the site and beyond. In addition, it is proposed to create a *'perimeter wide cross-contoured vegetated swale'* along the downstream boundary of the site which would intercept any additional southward flow. Permeable surfaces are proposed for the access track and around new buildings. The footprint of new buildings would be represent a very minor part of the site as a whole and is considered not to result in a material change to existing surface water flows across the site. Measures are also proposed to avoid soil compaction during the construction phase of the development.

10.112 The cable route, by virtue of its limited width, is considered not have an unacceptable impact on drainage or flooding.

10.113 Gloucestershire County Council Lead Local Flood Authority raises no objection to the application. It states:

' Flood Risk

10.113.1 The Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy shows that, while parts of the site are in flood zone 2 and 3, due to the nature and location of the development risk is considered low. The Risk of Flooding from Surface Water maps show the risk is low.

Surface Water Management

10.113.2 As long as the vegetation beneath the solar panels is kept intact, research has shown the solar panels should not have a significant impact on the surface water runoff from the site. The access tracks will be constructed of permeable material and the transformer stations, batter storage units and other control rooms add up to a relatively minor increase in impermeable area, are relatively spread across the site and will allow some infiltration beneath some of the structures. These are unlikely to have a significant impact on the runoff from the site either. The document also outlines how the impact the construction of the site will have on runoff will be minimised.

10.113.3 There are ordinary watercourses within the boundary of the site and any alterations to allow access tracks to pass over them or to install the cables beneath them will may require consent under S.23 of the Land Drainage Act, 1991. This is a separate process to the planning process and is carried out by Cotswold District Council.'

10.114 The Environment Agency (EA) has requested additional information in relation to the FRA. The EA has requested further details relating to the impact of climate change and justification for the data included in the FRA. The applicant has provided an updated FRA in response to the comments of the EA. At the time of writing this report, a further response is awaited from the EA. However, it is considered that this matter can reasonably be resolved. Officers will provide a further update at the Committee meeting.

10.115 It is considered, subject to no objection from the EA, that the proposed development can be undertaken without having an adverse impact on flooding

or drainage in accordance with Local Plan Policies EN14 and guidance in Section 14 of the NPPF.

Other Matters

10.116 The proposed scheme would result in the development of agricultural land. Whilst the introduction of the solar panels would not preclude the use of the land for grazing purposes, it would no longer be suitable for arable farming. The applicant has submitted an Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) report with this application. It states:

'A detailed ALC survey has determined that agricultural land within the 47.9ha Study Area, is limited predominantly to Grade 4 (i.e., 23.4ha or 48.8% of the Study Area), with smaller proportions of Grade 2 (i.e., 8.7ha or 18.2% of the Study Area), Subgrade 3a (i.e., 1.2ha or 2.5% of the Study Area), and Subgrade 3b (i.e., 14.6ha or 30.5% of the Study Area).'

10.117 It is evident that the majority of the application site falls outside the best and most versatile land category. Such land falls into the Grade 1, 2 and 3a categories. Paragraph 187 of the NPPF states that planning should recognise *' the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and the wider benefits of the natural capital and ecosystem services - including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land...'* Criterion 1b of draft NPPF Policy N2 states that development proposals should *'use areas of poorer quality agricultural land in preference to that of higher quality, where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary (taking into consideration land which is classified as best and most versatile agricultural land, and its grade).'*

10.118 In this instance, it is considered that the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile land are limited in this instance and do not outweigh the benefits arising from the delivery of renewable energy. In addition, the land can be returned to agriculture following the cessation of the use of the solar farm.

10.119 The proposed development would be located sufficient distance from hedgerows and trees so as to prevent an unacceptable impact on such landscape and arboricultural features having regard to Local Plan Policy EN7. The Tree Officer raises no objection to this application.

10.120 The applicant has requested a 5 year period in which to implement the development instead of the usual 3 years. In light of the size of the proposed

scheme and the complexities involved in the development of both the solar farm and the cabling route, it is considered reasonable to extend the time period for commencement from 3 to 5 years.

10.121 This application is not liable for the Community Infrastructure (CIL) and there will be no CIL charge payable.

11. Conclusion

11.1 It is considered that the proposed development would make a significant contribution to the delivery of renewable energy and would accord with national and local planning policy and guidance which seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help to contribute to net zero. It is noted that the proposed development would have an impact on the character and appearance of the landscape and the setting of 3 listed buildings. However, it is considered that these impacts would be mitigated by a combination of distance, in terms of the heritage assets, and the introduction of new landscape planting. It is also considered that other issues, such as those relating to biodiversity, can also be reasonably mitigated by condition and S106 agreement. The proposal is considered not to be unacceptable in any other respects. Subject to the outstanding comments from Biodiversity and the Environment Agency being satisfactorily addressed, it is considered that the benefits of the proposal in terms of the provision of renewable energy outweigh its other impacts. It is therefore recommended that the application is granted permission subject to the recommendation above.

12. Proposed Conditions:

1. The development shall be started by 5 years from the date of this decision notice.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawing number(s):

AP.3, AP.4, AP.5, AP.6, AP.7, AP.8, AP.9. AP.12, AP.14, AP.16

AP.10 BLOCK PLAN ISSUE 03 (JG), AP.11 SITE LOCATION PLAN ISSUE 03 (JG)

GBR 0110.DEV.M2.001.0.E.I Module Array Layout

Reason: For purposes of clarity and for the avoidance of doubt, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. Within 12 months of the cessation of their use for electricity generating purposes the solar panels together with any supporting apparatus, mountings, foundations, inverters, platforms, collecting stations, transfer station, fencing and other associated equipment shall be permanently removed from the land fully in accordance with a decommissioning statement that has first been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the landscape is restored to a condition appropriate for its location in the open countryside in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN4.

4. Prior to the decommissioning of the site, an Ecological Assessment and Mitigation report detailing measures to protect protected species and their habitats during the decommissioning of the site shall be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The site shall be decommissioned fully in accordance with the approved report.

Reason: To safeguard protected and priority species, priority habitats during the decommissioning of the solar farm in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN8, paragraphs 187, 192 and 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Council's duty under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

5. No development shall commence on site (including any site clearance/preparation works), until a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing. Details shall provide the following, which shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The CEMP must be completed by a suitably competent person.

i) The parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors

ii) Loading and unloading of plant and materials

iii) Wheel-wash washing facilities and road-cleaning arrangements

iv) Measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction

v) A scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from site preparation and construction works

vi) Measures for the protection of the natural environment

vii) Hours of work on site, including deliveries and removal of materials

viii) Full details of any piling techniques to be employed if relevant and any relevant noise mitigation measures required

ix) Location of temporary buildings and associated generators, compounds, structures and enclosures, and

Reason: To protect the amenity of the locality, especially for people living and/or working nearby, in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN15. It is important that these details are agreed prior to the commencement of development as any on-site works could have implications for local residents in terms of noise and general disturbance.

6. Within 6 months of first use of the development hereby permitted, a Noise Validation Report shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Noise Validation Report shall be completed by a suitably qualified Acoustician, accredited by the Institute of Acoustics (IOA) and/or the Association of Noise Consultants (ANC). The report shall demonstrate that the development is in compliance with the relevant noise criteria, outlined within the approved Noise Impact Assessment [J005206-8674-SH-03] and, if this is not being achieved, shall set out measures to ensure compliance with the aforementioned assessment and a timetable for the implementation of such measures. The development shall be retained/maintained in accordance with the approved details thereafter.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the locality, especially for people living and/or working nearby, in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN15 and paragraph 198 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

7. No development shall commence on site until a detailed Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) Strategy document has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, which shall be in accordance with the proposals set out in the approved submission (Surface Water Management Plan; 1010_Furzen_Leaze_SWMP_v2i_20260319; March 2026). The SuDS Strategy must include a detailed design, infiltration tests carried out to the standard of BRE 365, maintenance schedule and confirmation of the management arrangements. The SuDS Strategy must also demonstrate the technical feasibility/viability of the drainage system through the use of SuDS to manage the flood risk to the site and elsewhere

and the measures taken to manage the water quality for the lifetime of the development. The approved scheme for the surface water drainage shall be implemented fully in accordance with the approved details before the development is first put in to use.

Reason: To ensure the development is provided with a satisfactory means of drainage and thereby preventing the risk of flooding in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN14. It is important that these details are agreed prior to the commencement of development as any works on site could have implications for drainage, flood risk and water quality in the locality.

8. Prior to the first use of the development hereby approved, a comprehensive landscape scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme must show details of all planting areas, tree and plant species, numbers and planting sizes. The proposed means of enclosure and screening should also be included, together with details of any mounding, walls and fences and hard surface materials to be used throughout the proposed development. The landscape scheme must also include additional landscape screening in the areas highlighted in red in Figure 28 and Figure 29 of the Solar Photovoltaic Glint and Glare Study April 2025, as well as new tree and hedgerow planting along the length of the southern boundary of the application site adjacent to the Ewen road.

Reason: To ensure the development is completed in a manner that is sympathetic to the site and its surroundings in accordance with Cotswold District Local Plan Policy EN4.

9. The entire landscaping scheme shall be completed by the end of the first full planting season (1st October to the 31st March the following year) immediately following the completion of the development or the site being brought into use, whichever is the sooner.

Reason: To ensure that the landscaping is carried out and to enable the planting to begin to become established at the earliest stage practical and thereby achieving the objective of Cotswold District Local Plan Policy EN4.

10. Any trees or plants shown on the approved landscaping scheme to be planted or retained which die, are removed, are damaged or become diseased, or grassed areas which become eroded or damaged, within 5 years of the completion of the approved landscaping scheme, shall be replaced by the end of the next planting season. Replacement trees and plants shall be of the same size and species as those lost, unless the Local Planning Authority approves alternatives in writing.

Reason: To ensure that the planting becomes established and thereby achieves the objective of Cotswold District Local Plan Policy EN4.

11. No development or preparatory groundworks shall take place until a strategy for further evaluation (where required), and if necessary, an Archaeological Management Plan and Mitigation Methodology based on the full evaluation results, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include making provision for the preservation, future management and/or investigation of the archaeological remains informed by the evaluation results and associated solar scheme details.

The Archaeological Management Plan and Mitigation Methodology shall include a timetable and the following components (the completion of each to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority will result in a separate confirmation of compliance for each component): -.

(i) Fieldwork investigation and/ or preservation in situ of archaeological remains;

(ii) a post-excavation assessment report and an updated project design for the analytical work - to be submitted for approval within six months of the completion of fieldwork.

(iii) a programme of analysis, production of an archive report and submission of a publication synopsis and preparation of a publication report to be completed within two years of the approval of the updated project design.

(iv) deposition of the physical archive with a museum or store approved by the planning authority, unless otherwise agreed, and deposition of the digital archive with the Archaeology Data Service (or other CoreTrustSeal repository) to be completed within two years of the approval of the updated project design; and

(v) Management plan measures that ensure preserved archaeological remains are protected during the construction, operation and decommissioning stages of the solar farm. Confirmation that this has been achieved should be provided within 3 months of the completion of decommissioning works.

The archaeological strategy outlined in the Archaeological Management Plan and Mitigation Methodology shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and timings.

Reason: To safeguard heritage assets of primarily archaeological interest within the approved development boundary from impacts relating to any groundworks

associated with the development scheme and to ensure the proper and timely preservation and/or investigation, recording, reporting, archiving and presentation of heritage assets of archaeological interest affected by this development, in accordance with national policies 202 and 218 contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It is important that these details are agreed prior to the commencement of development as any on-site works could have implications for features of archaeological interest.

12. No development including demolition, site clearance, materials delivery or erection of site buildings, shall start on the site until measures to protect trees/hedgerows on and adjacent to the site have been installed in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

These measures shall include:

i) Temporary fencing for the protection of all retained trees/hedgerows on and adjacent to the site whose Root Protection Areas (RPA) fall within the site to be erected in accordance with BS 5837(2012) or subsequent revisions (Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction). Any alternative fencing type or position not strictly in accordance with BS 5837 (2012) shall be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the start of development. The RPA is defined in BS5837(2012).

ii) Construction Exclusion Zone (CEZ): The area around trees and hedgerows enclosed on site by protective fencing shall be deemed the CEZ. Excavations of any kind, alterations in soil levels, storage of any materials, soil, equipment, fuel, machinery or plant, site compounds, cabins or other temporary buildings, vehicle parking and delivery areas, fires and any other activities liable to be harmful to trees and hedgerows are prohibited within the CEZ, unless agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

The approved tree protection measures shall remain in place until the completion of development or unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure adequate protection measures for existing trees/hedgerows to be retained, in the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN7. It is important that these details are agreed prior to the commencement of development as any on-site works could have implications for the well-being of trees and hedgerows.

Informatives:

1. IMPORTANT: BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN CONDITION - DEVELOPMENT CANNOT COMMENCE UNTIL A BIODIVERSITY GAIN PLAN HAS BEEN SUBMITTED (AS A CONDITION COMPLIANCE APPLICATION) TO AND APPROVED BY COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL.

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition") that development may not begin unless:

(a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and

(b) the planning authority has approved the plan in writing.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Cotswold District Council. There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. Based on the information available this permission is one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply. If the onsite habitats include irreplaceable habitats (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitats) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans. Advice about how to prepare a Biodiversity Gain Plan and a template can be found at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/submit-a-biodiversity-gain-plan

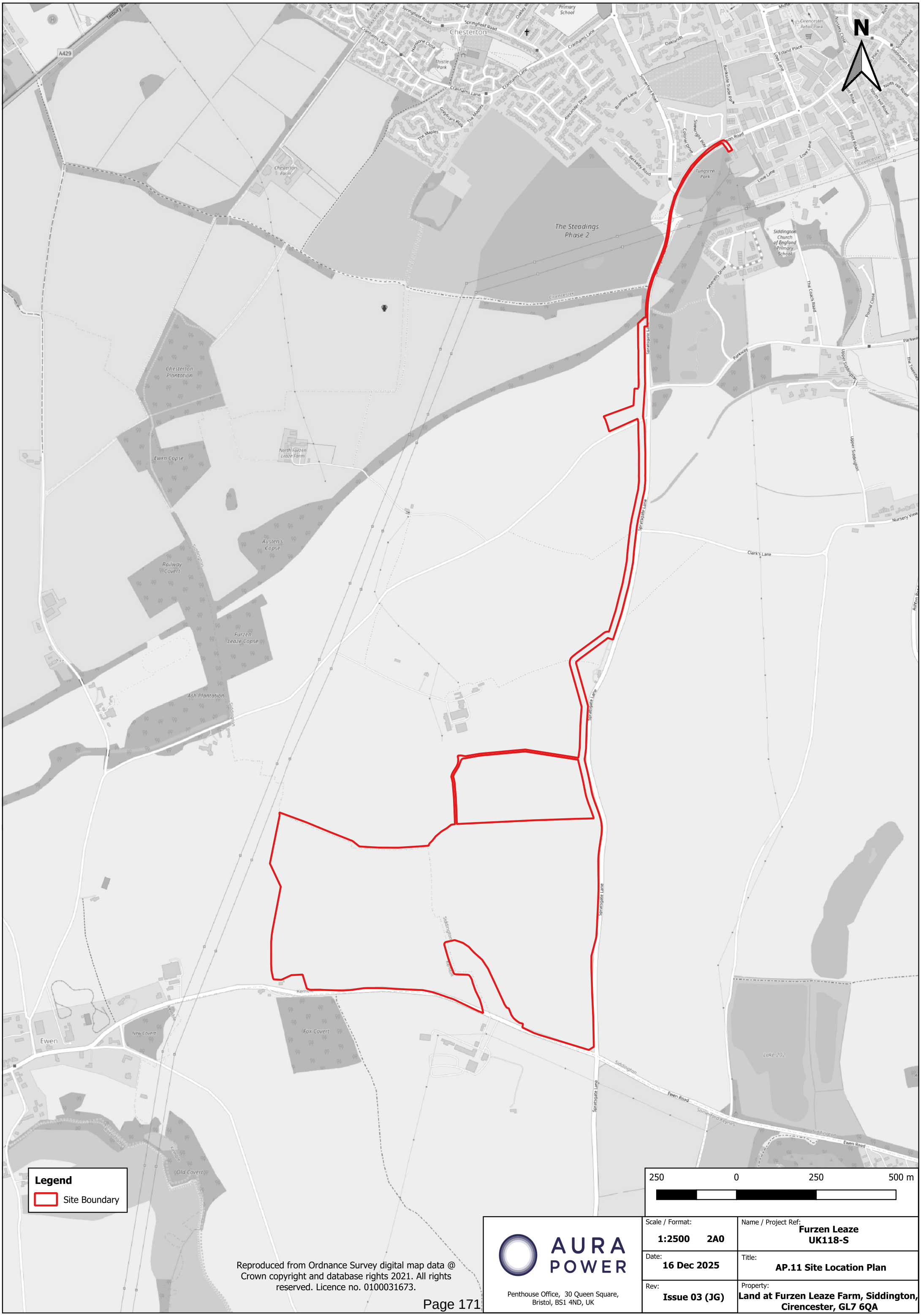
Information on how to discharge the biodiversity gain condition can be found here:

https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/planning-and-building/wildlife-and-biodiversity/biodiversity-net-gain-bng/

2. i) The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) will give consideration to how the proposed sustainable drainage system can incorporate measures to help protect water quality, however pollution control is the responsibility of the Environment Agency.

ii) Future management of Sustainable Drainage Systems is a matter that will be dealt with by the Local Planning Authority and has not, therefore, been considered by the LLFA.

iii) Any revised documentation will only be considered by the LLFA when resubmitted through suds@gloucestershire.gov.uk e-mail address. Please quote the planning application number in the subject field.

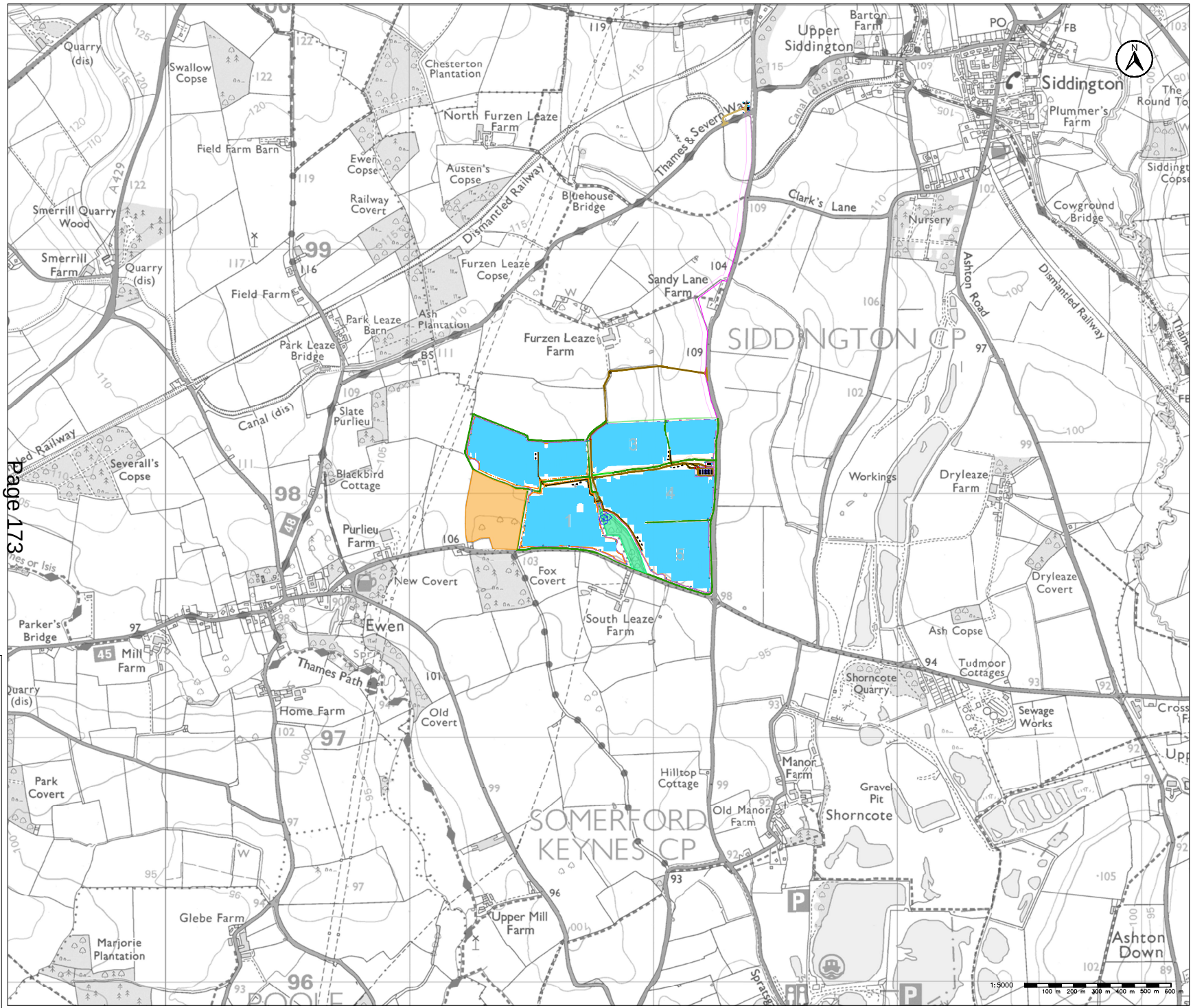


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AURA POWER
Penthouse Office, 30 Queen Square, Bristol, BS1 4ND, UK

Scale / Format: 1:2500 2A0	Name / Project Ref: Furzen Leaze UK118-S
Date: 16 Dec 2025	Title: AP.11 Site Location Plan
Rev: Issue 03 (JG)	Property: Land at Furzen Leaze Farm, Siddington, Cirencester, GL7 6QA

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Geographical Coordinates	
Country:	Great Britain
Address:	Siddington, Cirencester, UK
	Furzen Leaze
Latitude:	51.681633°
Longitude:	-1.975869
Altitude:	103.....107

Legend

- Fence
- Access Track
- Gate
- PV Array
- Transformer station
- Spare Parts Container 20ft
- Hedgerows To Be Enhanced
- New Hedgerows
- CTTV Camera
- Battery Energy Storage System
- Ponds + 10m buffer
- Woodland with 15m buffer from panels
- DNO Control Room
- Customer Switchroom
- Skylark Mitigation
- Cable Corridor

Before undertaking any civil works, the location of overhead lines, buried cables, gas and water pipes are to be checked on site and also the corresponding owners of the utilities are to be contacted

GBR0110.DEV.M2.001.0.E.j

E.j	14 May 25	AD	JG	HS	PPA Setback Added to Fld 2
E.i	29 Apr 25	AS	AD	HS	CCTV Cameras Added
E.h	07 Apr 25	AD	JG	HS	Cable Corridor Added, Hedge Extended in Fld 6.3, Substation Access Track, Changed
E.g	25 Mar 25	AD	JG	HS	Fenced Two Fields Land Hedgerows Added
E.f	18 Mar 25	JE	JG	AC	Fences changed, panels re-oriented
E.e	17 Dec 24	JE	AD	AC	Panels added into fields, Tracks revised,
E	11 Nov 24	MBA	NWZ		Layout update, Tracks revised,
D	11 Nov 24	MBA	NWZ		Layout update, Updated fence and transformer clearance,
C	11 Oct 24	JSA	NWZ		Layout update, Updated constraints and Boundary,
B	30 Aug 24	JSA	NWZ		Layout revision, 3P East/West Layout, All constraints from previous layout are retained, Road Pathing adjusted,
A	07 Aug 24	GA	NWZ		Layout revision, 1P Tracker Layout, All constraints from previous layout are retained, Road Pathing adjusted,
0	01 Aug 24	GA	NWZ		Original drawing
Rev.	Date	Dwg.	Chec.	Appr.	Revision Description



Notes

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Supplier

Author	Matrix	European Pitch
Designed	Ramos	Date
Checked	Santiago	11 Nov 2024
Approved	Nolasco	11 Nov 2024

Project: Furzen Leaze Solar Farm

Planning Phase: Preliminary Design

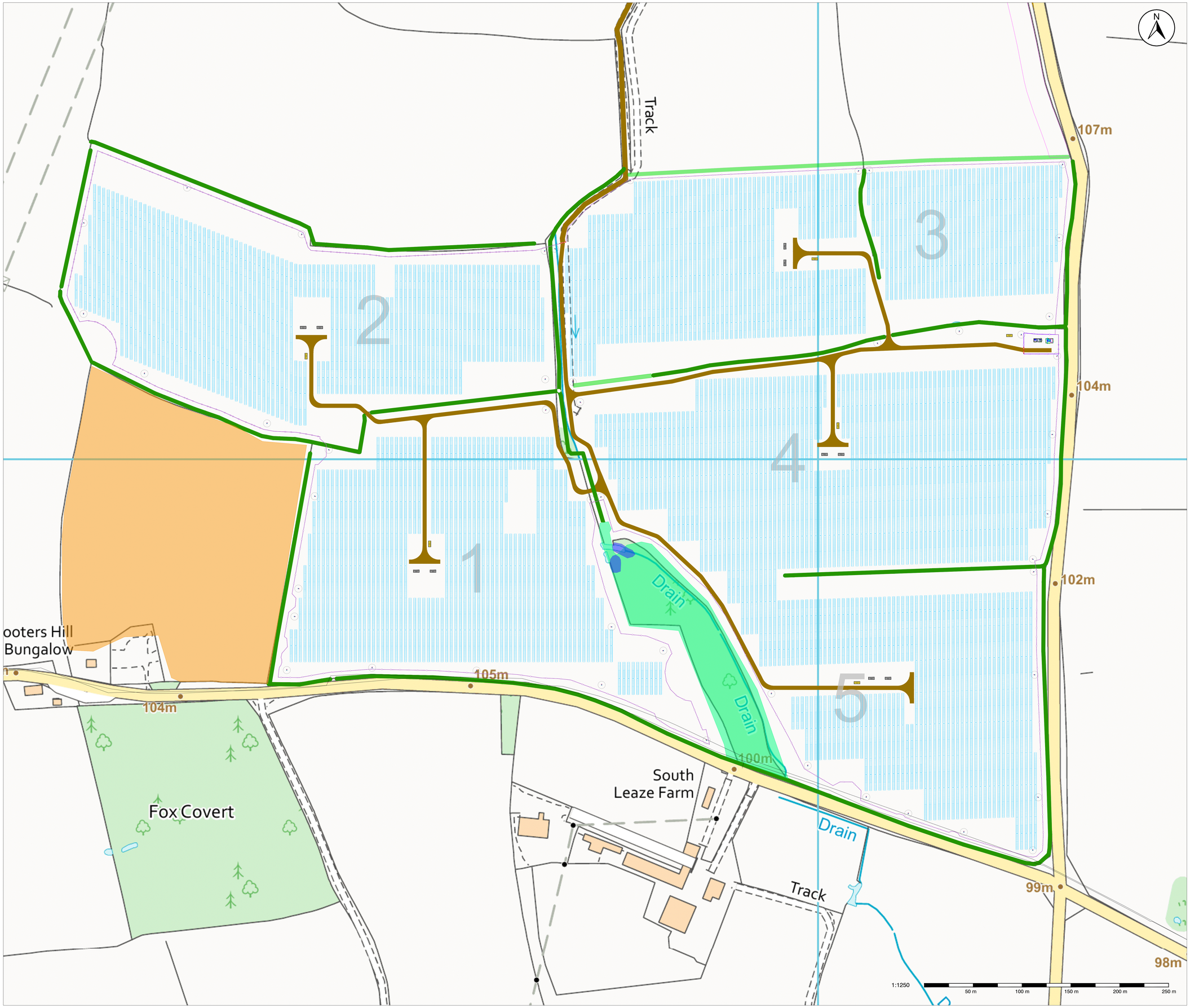
Size	A2_210x297	Drawing Scale	1:5000
Page	001 / 001	Status	14 May 2025

Title: Module Array Layout

Document No.: GBR 0110. DEV. M2. 001. 0. E.j

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Geographical Coordinates	
Country:	Great Britain
Address:	Siddington, Cirencester, UK
	Furzen Leaze
Latitude:	51.881633°
Longitude:	-1.975869
Altitude:	103.....107

Legend

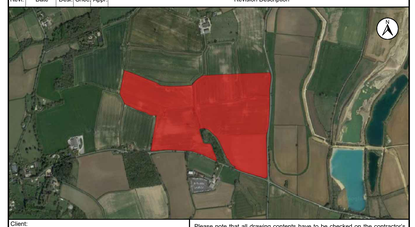
- Fence
- Access Track
- Gate
- PV Array
- Transformer station
- Spare Parts Container 20ft
- Hedgerows To Be Enhanced
- New Hedgerows
- CTTV Camera
- Pond - 10m buffer
- Woodland with 15m buffer from panels
- DNO Control Room
- Customer Switchroom
- Skylark Mitigation
- Cable Corridor

Before undertaking any civil works, the location of overhead-lines, burried cables, gas and water pipes are to be checked on site and also the corresponding owners of the utilities are to be contacted

Document-no.:

GBR0110.DEV.M2.001.0.E.I

Rev.	Date	Desi.	Chec.	Appr.	Revision Description
E.l	29 Apr 26	JG	AD	GW	Transformers repositioned.
E.k	24 Apr 26	JG	AD	AK	BESS compound removed
E.j	14 May 25	AD	JG	HS	RPA Setback Added In Field 2
E.i	29 Apr 25	JG	AD	HS	CCTV Cameras Added
E.h	02 Apr 25	AD	JG	HS	Cable Corridor Added, Hedge Extended in Field 3, Substation Access Track Changed
E.g	20 Mar 25	AD	JG	HS	Avoided Tree in Field 1 and Hedgerows Added
E.f	18 Mar 25	JE	JG	AK	Access changed, panels re-orientated
E.a	17 Dec 24	JE	AD	AK	Panels added into field 3. Tracker version.
E	11 Nov 24	MSA	MAE		Layout update. Tracker version.
D	11 Nov 24	MSA	MAE		Layout update. Updated fence and transformer clearance.
C	11 Oct 24	JGA	MAE		Layout update. Updated constraints and boundary.
B	02 Aug 24	JGA	MAE		Layout revision; 3P East/West Layout. All constraints from previous layout are retained. Road Pathing adjusted.



Client:

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Supplier:

Version:	Metric	European Proj.
	Name	Date
Designed	Santiago	11 Nov 2024
Checked	Manees	11 Nov 2024
Approved		

Project:	*Furzen Leaze Solar Farm*
Planning Phase:	Preliminary Design
Size:	A0_1189x841
Drawing Scale:	1:1250
Page:	001 / 001
Status:	29 Apr 2026

Title:

Module Array Layout

Document-No.: GBR 0110. DEV. M2. 001. 0. E.I

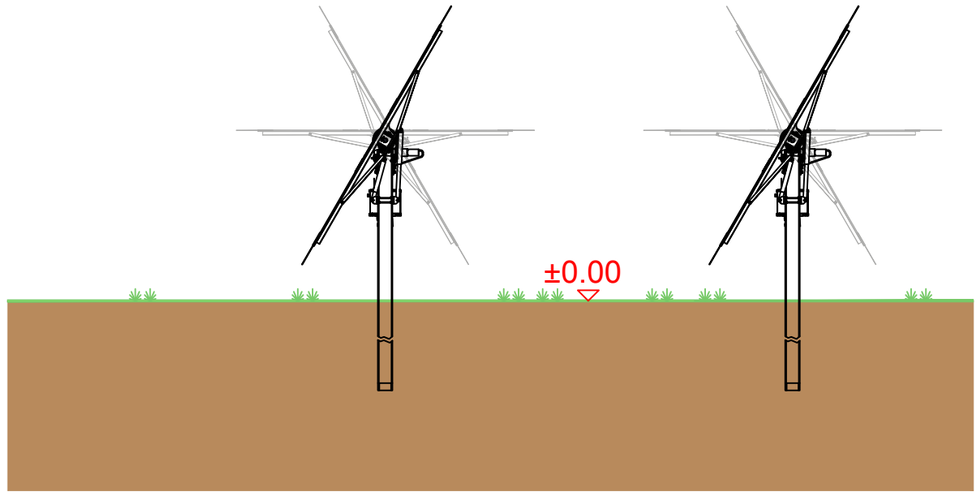
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Datum: 29/04/2026 11:33:09 ACAD Datei: g:\shared drives\13 - uk\uk-06 autocad\furzen leaze - autocad\1. current site layout\internal layout e.j\furzen leaze technical layout e.l.dwg-(Layout)

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1 Typical Substructure

not to scale
tracker racks



Orientation	ca. 1P SAT
Module dimensions [mm]	ca. 2384 x1134
Plane Tilt β [°]	ca. +/-60
Azimuth [°]	0
Clearance *c* [m]	min. 0.50
Height *h* [m]	max. 3.5
Pitch *p* [m]	min. 4.68
Aisle width *a* [m]	min. 2.30
Width *w* [m]	ca. 2.38
Post height h_P [m]	max. 1.70

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NOTES

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LEGEND

N/A

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	JG	AD		13.03.25
0	ORIGINAL ISSUE			
	AD			27.11.23

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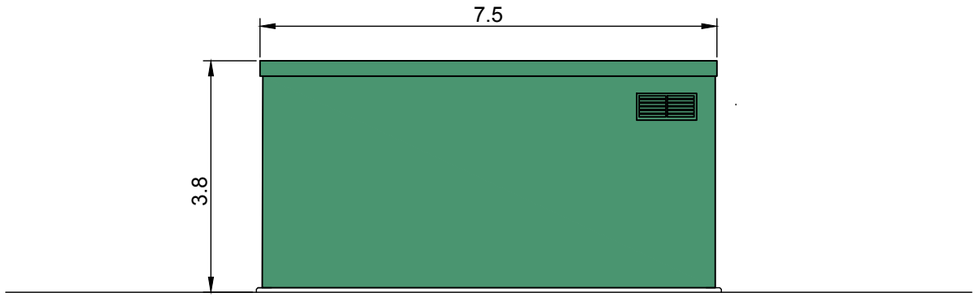
Penthouse Suite, 30 Queens Square, Bristol, BS1 4ND
info@aurapower.com
www.aurapower.com

Project Title:	Furzen Leaze
Description:	UK118-S
Location co-ord:	51.681320°, -1.976058°
Site address:	Land at Furzen Leaze Farm, Siddington, Cirencester, GL7 6QA
Drg No:	AP.16
Drawing Name:	Typical Panel Substructure
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Unit:	Metres
Revision No:	1
Drawn by:	JG
Checked by:	AD
Date:	13/03/2025

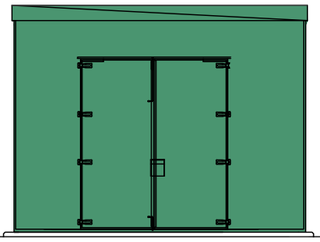
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DNO CONTROL BUILDING

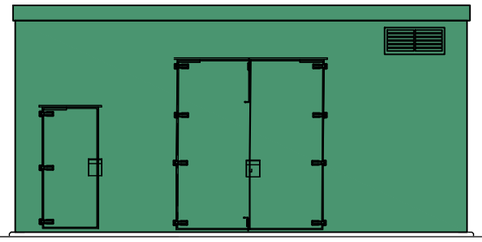
SIDE ELEVATION



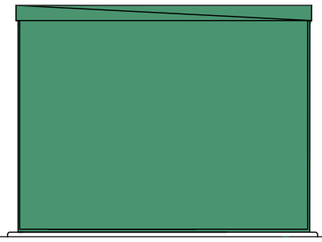
FRONT ELEVATION



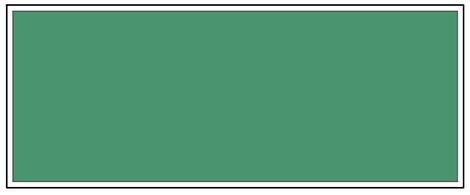
SIDE ELEVATION

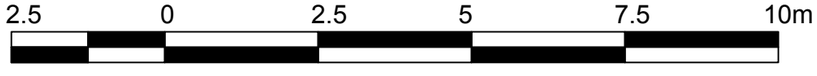


BACK ELEVATION



PLAN VIEW





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LEGEND

N/A

1	DIMENSIONS CHANGED			
	JG	AD	HSJ	19/03/2025
0	ORIGINAL ISSUE			
	AD			26/01/2023

References

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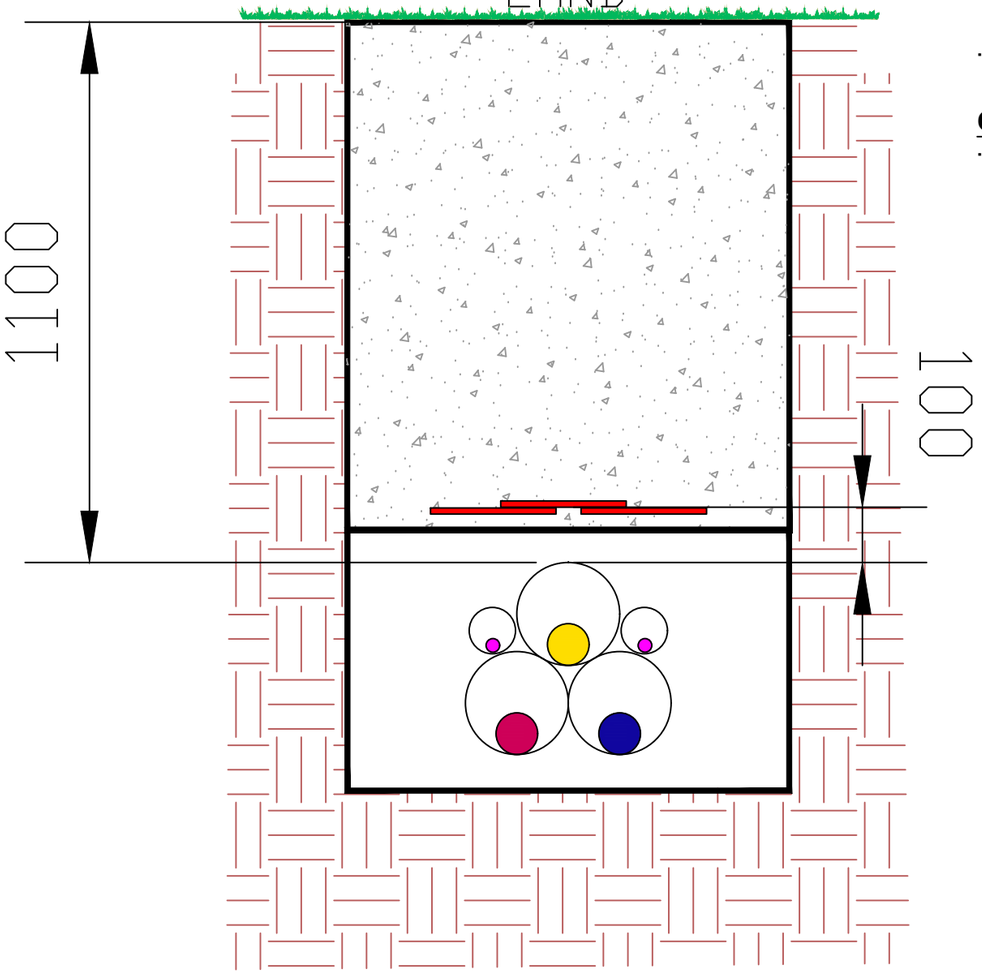
Project Title:	Furzen Leaze
Project Code:	UK118-S
Location co-ord:	51.681320°, -1.976058°
Site address:	Land at Furzen Leaze Farm, Siddington, Cirencester, GL7 6QA
Drawing No:	AP.3
Drawing Name:	DNO Control Room
Scale:	1:100
Unit:	Metres
Version No:	1
Drawn by:	JG
Checked by:	AD
Date:	19/03/2025

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SECTION A-A

CABLES TO BE INSTALLED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SSE SPECIFICATION

NORMAL ARABLE LAND



EHV CABLE & DUCT

- 33kV 3 x 1-Core 630mm² CABLE WITH STRANDED COPPER CONDUCTOR TO SSE SPEC
- EMTELLE CLASS1 200mm OD uPVC DUCT

CABLE PROTECTION

- STOK BOARD (CABLE TILES) TO ENATS 12-23 FOR USE AT 33kV MUST BE INSTALLED 100mm ABOVE TOP OF CABLE DUCT. TILES TO BE LAID OVER ENTIRE RUN OF CABLE AND JOINTS.

Do not scale from this drawing

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1	ORIGINAL ISSUE			
	JG	AD	HSJ	19/03/2025
0	ORIGINAL ISSUE			
	JE			

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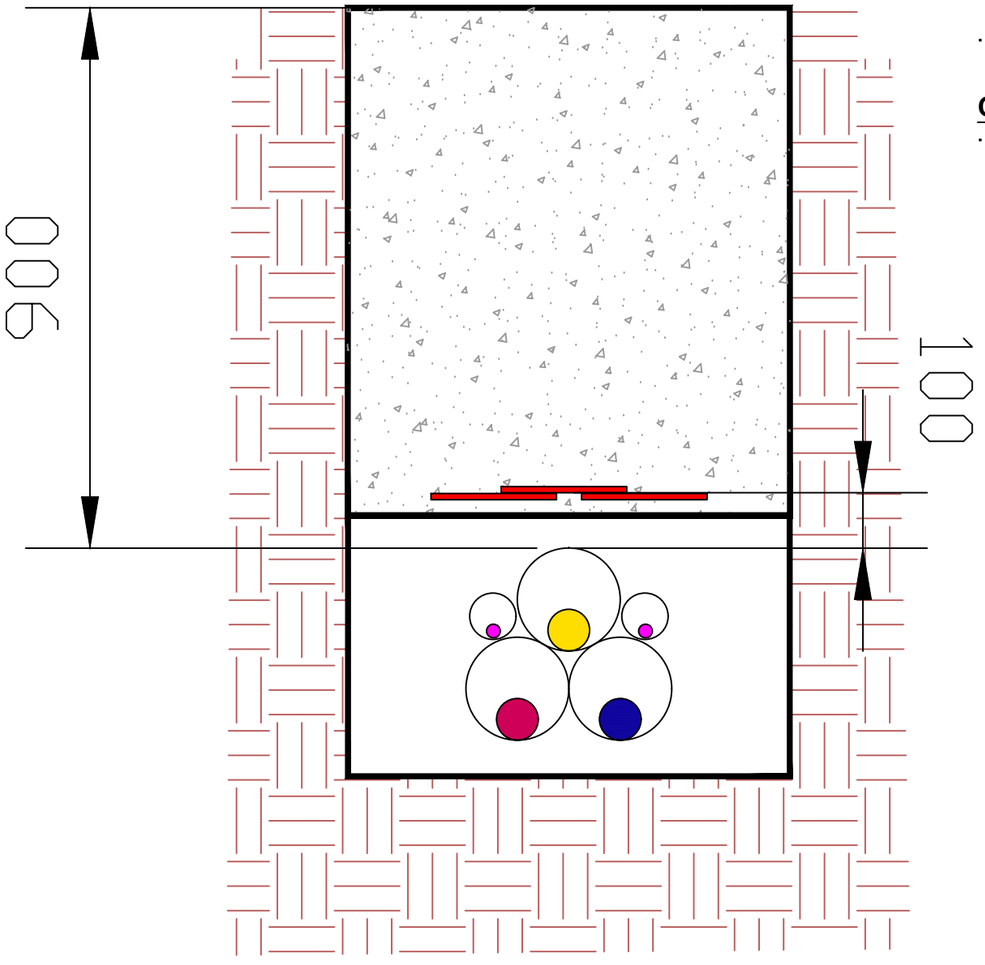
Project Title:	Furzen Leaze Solar Farm
Project Code:	UK118-S
Project Size:	25MW
Location co-ord:	51.681320°, -1.976058°
Site address:	Land at Furzen Leaze Farm, Siddington, Cirencester, GL7 6QA
Drawing No:	AP.12
Drawing Name:	33kV Cable Cross Section
Scale:	N/A
Unit:	Milimetres
Version No:	1
Drawn by:	JG
Checked by:	AD
Date:	19/03/2025

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SECTION A-A

CABLES TO BE INSTALLED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SSE SPECIFICATION

CARRIAGEWAY



EHV CABLE & DUCT

- 33kV 3 x 1-Core 630mm² CABLE WITH STRANDED COPPER CONDUCTOR TO SSE SPEC
- EMTELLE CLASS1 200mm OD uPVC DUCT

CABLE PROTECTION

- STOK BOARD (CABLE TILES) TO ENATS 12-23 FOR USE AT 33kV MUST BE INSTALLED 100mm ABOVE TOP OF CABLE DUCT. TILES TO BE LAID OVER ENTIRE RUN OF CABLE AND JOINTS.

Do not scale from this drawing

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1	ORIGINAL ISSUE			
	JG	AD	HSJ	19/03/2025
0	ORIGINAL ISSUE			
	JE			

References

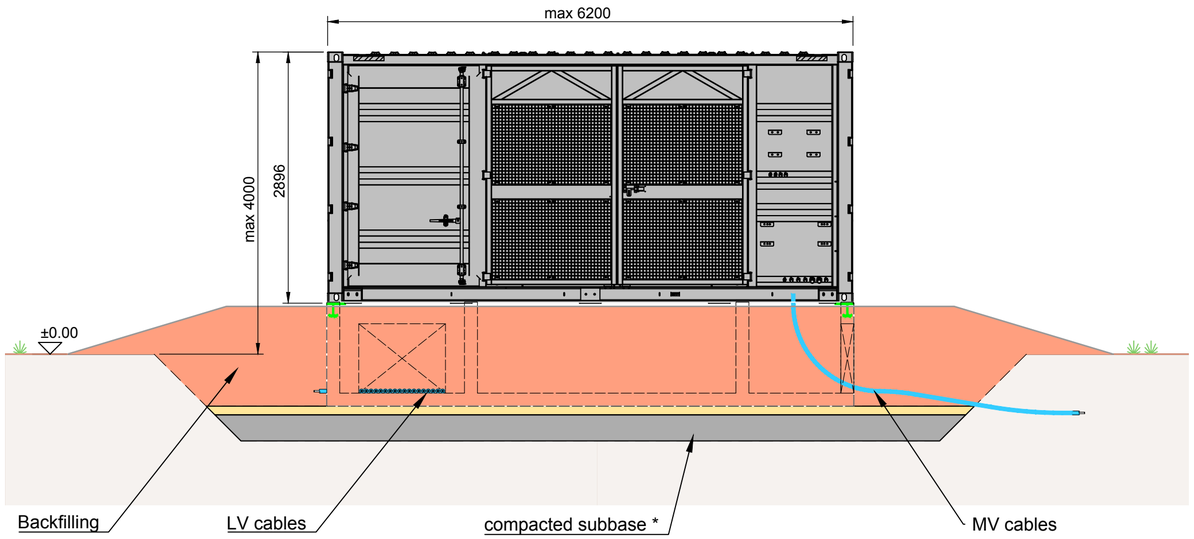
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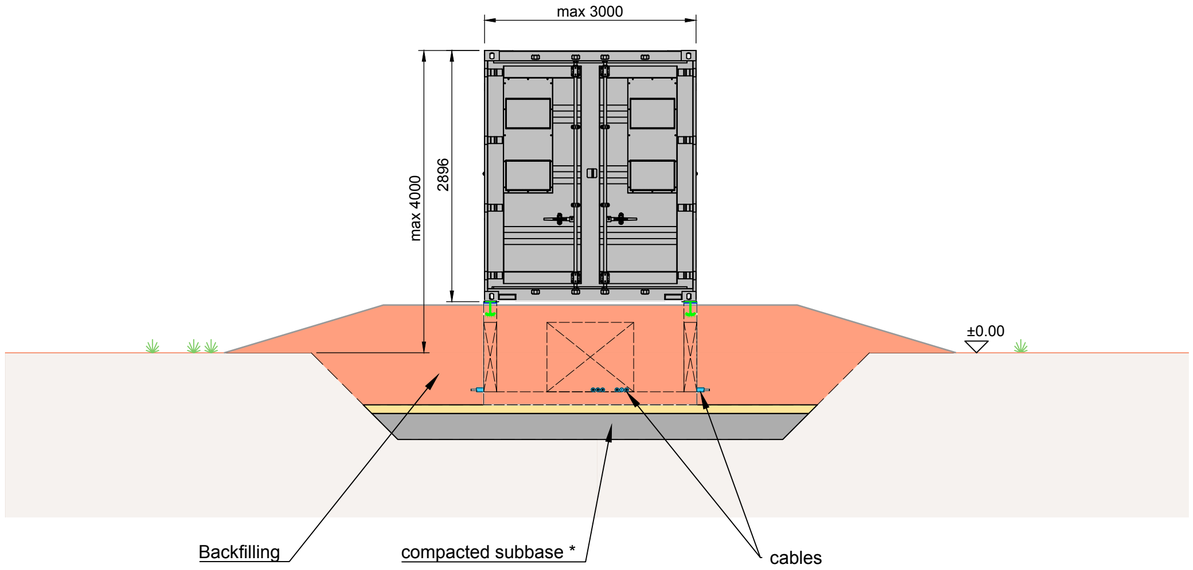
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Project Code:	UK118-S
Project Size:	25MW
Location co-ord:	51.681320°, -1.976058°
Site address:	Land at Furzen Leaze Farm, Siddington, Cirencester, GL7 6QA
Drawing No:	AP.12
Drawing Name:	33kV Cable Cross Section
Scale:	N/A
Unit:	Milimetres
Version No:	1
Drawn by:	JG
Checked by:	AD
Date:	19/03/2025

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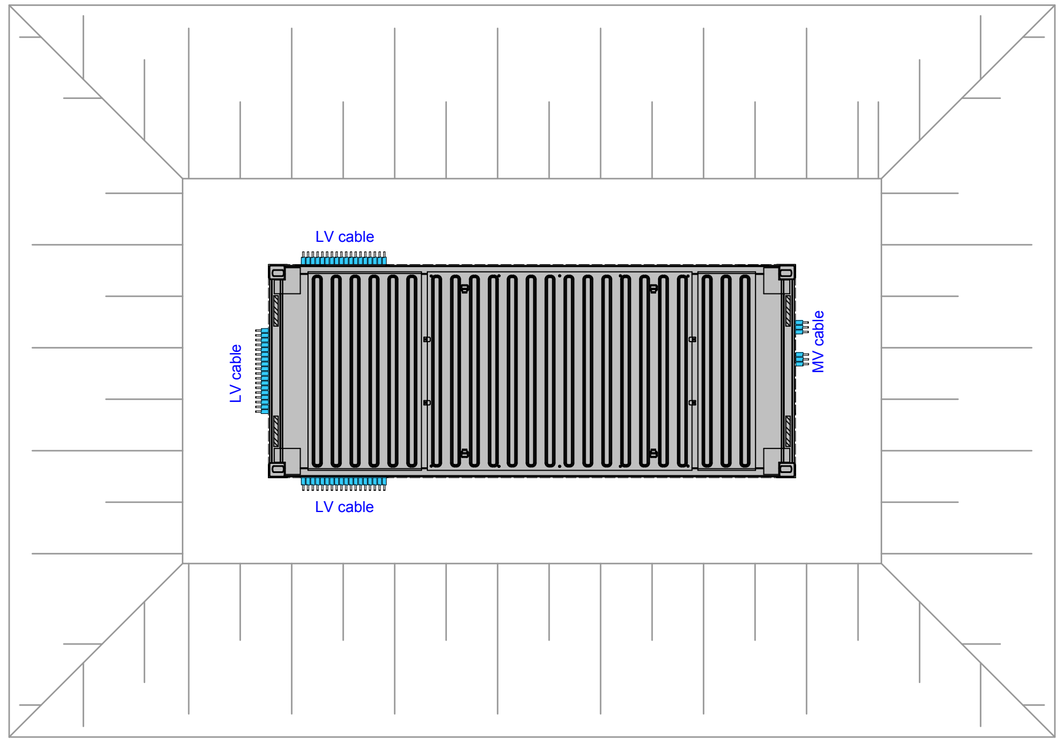
1 Elevation - front view
M 1:50



2 Elevation - side view
M 1:50



3 Top view of transformer
M 1:50



- All dimensions in mm
- External appearance depending on transformer manufacturer
- Exterior color of the transformer according to customer specific requirements

* To be determined on the basis of the total weight, the cellar design and the soil assessment

Revi.	Date	Desi.	Chec.	Appr.	Revision Description
1	13 Mar 25	JG	AD	HSJ	Project name updated
0	20 Apr 23	SVE	MMA		Original drawing

Engineering Design:
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Supplier:

Project: *Furzen Leaze Solar Farm*
Planning Phase: Approval Design
Size: A2_594x420 | Drawing Scale: 1:50
Page: 001 / 001 | Status: 13 Mar 25

Title: Transformer Station

Document-No.: AP.14 | Revision: 1

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Conversion of ground floor of existing barns from general storage to cafe with retail area, including amendments to the lean-to and decking/patio area, and associated alterations at Shoecroft Barn Ablington Bibury Cirencester Gloucestershire GL7 5NU

Full Application 25/02960/FUL	
Applicant:	Bibury Trout Farm
Agent:	Andrew P Jones Associates
Case Officer:	Amy Hill
Ward Member(s):	Councillor David Fowles
Committee Date:	13 May 2026
RECOMMENDATION:	**PERMIT subject to securing a legal agreement**

1. Main Issues:

(a) Principle of Development
(b) Design and Impact on Heritage Assets
(c) Impact on Cotswolds National Landscape
(d) Impact on Residential Amenity
(e) Highways Safety
(f) Biodiversity and Geodiversity

2. Reasons for Referral:

2.1 No formal request for a call-in was received by the Ward Member. In discussion with Officers, due to local interest and objections including from consultees, Officers opted to call the application to the review panel.

2.2 The Review Panel agreed the request for the application to be considered at the Planning and Licensing Committee, as it was necessary to consider the highways implications of the development in light of Gloucestershire County Councils representations in response to the case. It was also agreed that a Site Inspection Briefing would be undertaken.

3. Site Description:

3.1 This application relates to a grade II listed converted stone barn and associated lean-to and linear buildings, located on the north-western edge of the village of Bibury. The buildings are used for office/commercial purposes in connection with Bibury Trout Farm to the south/south-east, with accommodation above.

3.2 The application site has been drawn close to the existing buildings, with access to the road. To the north-eastern boundary is the Bibury to Ablington Road and is defined by a drystone wall. To the west is an agricultural field, including a recently constructed agricultural building, and to the south is the Trout Farm and River Coln.

3.3 The site is located within the Bibury Conservation Area and the Cotswolds National Landscape.

3.4 The River Coln is designated as a Main River by the Environment Agency. The application buildings are elevated above the aforementioned river and are located within Flood Zone 1.

4. Relevant Planning History:

4.1 CD.3062 Change of use of barn from agricultural to use as a store in connection with water undertaking. Permitted 1962

4.2 CD.3062/A Change of use from barn to dwelling. Permitted 1962

4.3 CD.3062/B Change of use of barn into dwelling. Permitted 1962

4.4 CD.3062/C Conversion of listed building into dwelling and outbuilding into flat to accommodate staff. Erection of a garage. Alteration of vehicular access. Permitted 1974

4.5 CD.3062/D Alterations to and use of lean-to as light industrial. Permitted 1977

4.6 CD.3062/E Conversion of listed building to use as living accommodation for the Bibury Trout Farm Manager. Use of most of ground floor as storage. Permitted 1979

4.7 CD.3062/F Erection of a chimney stack. Permitted 1987

4.8 CD.LBC134/A Erection of a chimney stack and removal of existing flue. Permitted 1987

4.9 CD.3062/G Erection of a single unit mobile home for use by the assistant fishery manager. Permitted 1990

4.10 03/01448/LBC Conversion of ground floor store into residential accommodation. Permitted 2003

4.11 03/01449/FUL Conversion of ground floor store into residential accommodation ancillary to existing dwelling on the first floor. Permitted 2003

4.12 09/00809/FUL Conversion of ground floor store into ancillary residential accommodation. Permitted 2009

4.13 09/00810/LBC Conversion of ground floor store into ancillary residential accommodation. Permitted 2009

4.14 12/02549/FUL Renewal of planning permission 09/00809/FUL to incorporate ground floor store into residential accommodation. Permitted 2012

4.15 12/02551/LBC Renewal of planning permission 09/00810/LBC for internal alterations, insertion of windows, change to external door and the demolition of lean-to store. Permitted 2012

4.16 21/04793/FUL Change of Use of Shoecroft Barn and historic outbuildings for use as an events venue. Refurbishment and alterations to include replacement of lean-to with Dutch barn extension, erection of entrance link building and garage extension. Alterations to fenestration and reinstatement of historic vehicular entrance. Withdrawn 2022

4.17 21/04794/LBC Change of Use of Shoecroft Barn and historic outbuildings for use as an events venue. Refurbishment and alterations to include replacement of lean-to with Dutch barn extension, erection of entrance link building and garage extension. Alterations to fenestration, modern internal floors and partitions, and reinstatement of historic vehicular entrance. Withdrawn 2022

4.18 22/02853/FUL Change of use of Shoecroft Barn and historic outbuilding to provide x5 holiday lets, refurbishment and alterations to include replacement of lean-to with extension and garage extension, and external alterations. Permitted December 2022

4.19 22/02854/LBC Change of use of Shoecroft Barn and historic outbuilding to provide x5 holiday lets, refurbishment and alterations to include replacement of lean-to with extension and garage extension, and alterations to fenestration, modern internal floors and partitions. Permitted December 2022

4.20 23/03980/FUL Erection of a café/gift shop. Permitted 2024

4.21 25/00840/FUL Conversion of ground floor of existing barns from general storage to cafe with retail area, including amendments to the lean-to, creation of a decking/patio area, and associated alterations. Withdrawn 2025

4.22 25/00841/LBC Conversion of ground floor of existing barns from general storage to cafe with retail area, including amendments to the lean-to, creation of a decking/patio area, and associated alterations. Withdrawn 2025

4.23 26/00015/FUL Retrospective car park adjacent to Shoecroft Barn and alterations to access. Pending consideration

5. Planning Policies:

- TNPPF The National Planning Policy Framework
- CDCLP CDC LOCAL PLAN 2011-2031
- EC1 Employment Development
- EC3 All types of Employment-generating Uses
- EC5 Rural Diversification
- EC6 Conversion of Rural Buildings
- EC7 Retail
- EC8 MainTown Centre Uses
- EC9 Retail Impact Assessments
- EC10 Tourist Facilities & Visitor Attractions
- EN1 Built, Natural & Historic Environment
- EN2 Design of Built & Natural Environment
- EN4 The Wider Natural & Historic Landscape
- EN5 Cotswolds AONB
- EN7 Trees, Hedgerows & Woodlands
- EN8 Bio & Geo: Features Habitats & Species
- EN9 Bio & Geo: Designated Sites
- EN10 HE: Designated Heritage Assets
- EN11 HE: DHA - Conservation Areas
- EN13 HE:Conv'n of non-domestic historic bldgs
- EN14 Managing Flood Risk
- EN15 Pollution & Contaminated Land
- INF3 Sustainable Transport
- INF4 Highway Safety
- INF5 Parking Provision

6. Observations of Consultees:

6.1 Conservation Officer: No objections (following amendments)

6.2 Biodiversity Officer: No objections

6.3 Gloucestershire County Council Highway Officer: Objection

6.4 Environment Agency: No response received

7. View of Parish Council:

Bibury Parish Council:

7.1 "Bibury Parish Council is frustrated that this application has been allowed so soon after its predecessor with the only changes being to Decking /Gravel.

7.2 Over 100 residents objected to this recently Highways also objected. We strongly OBJECT to this application. We will put our detailed objection on the planning application as I am mindful of the consultees deadline."

7.3 Bibury Parish Council unanimously OBJECT to 25/02960/FUL - Conversion of ground floor of existing barns from general storage to cafe with retail area, including amendments to the lean-to and decking/patio area, and associated alterations - Shoecroft Barn Ablington Bibury Cirencester Gloucestershire GL7 5NU

Overtourism

7.4 Bibury Parish Council agrees that overtourism by the Trout farm, resulting high volumes of visitors, is having a negative impact on the local environment, community, and the overall visitor experience, the village cannot sustainably manage and maintain its character.

7.5 This application 25/02960/FUL we understand will be open to non-trout farm visitors therefore we believe will lead to another increase in visitor numbers.

7.6 The Trout Farm already has a large café in its grounds as well as existing extended café facility selling ice cream opposite the main site. The village has another four catering businesses for the public all serving food and drink, Policy EC10 New or extended tourist facilities and visitor attractions (excluding accommodation) (ii) d. is an identified opportunity that is not met by existing facilities;

7.7 9.10.4. The Local Plan ensures that new tourism development is effectively and appropriately controlled to protect the high quality natural and built environment of the District, especially in the AONB. The term 'special affinity' has been used in order to protect the character of Cotswold towns and the countryside.

7.8 EC10: 9.10.6. The area's popularity with visitors is not sufficient justification for the location of new tourist attractions. Any large-scale visitor development will generally be considered to be unacceptable if it would harm the landscape or features of historic interest, or have a harmful impact on the transport network.

Access

7.9 The access to Shoecroft barn is on a single carriageway country lane used by rural agricultural vehicles, emergency vehicles and residents, this lane is constantly grid locked and verges eroded by tourist vehicles using the Trout farm main car park which is often full to overflowing in the summer therefore a new café as a standalone destination with traffic arriving will only exacerbate car parking and access to the Trout farm overflow car parks which have been overused this summer, not only creating enormous frustration to residents from Ablington and Bibury alike, but causing great danger to both pedestrians and drivers, contrary to policy INF4 Avoiding severance of communities, also EC10 9.10.6, EN15 the air can be polluted through gaseous emissions through local traffic generation in a conservation area.

7.10 The culmination of all these factors has created an unsafe public road with constant conflicts between traffic, cyclists and pedestrian's and cumulative congestion and the negative impacts on residents' movements are severe contrary to INF4 which with this possibility of another cafe facility open to the public from the roadside increasing potential footfall and increase safety risk, more emissions, noise and more frustration to the people who live here.

7.11 The nearest fire station is in Northleach and their quickest and preferred route to access Bibury and surrounding villages in an emergency is to use the lane from Ablington into Bibury, this already busy lane (due to Trout farm visitors and car parks) will have an increased traffic flow due to expansion of Trout farm facilities. Gloucestershire Highways have Objected to this planning application.

POLLUTION

7.12 There are no details of foul water drainage, although Thames Water are now addressing the foul water pollution in Bibury, we understand a substantial increase in foul water from a café of this size would be detrimental to the sewage capacity at the Ablington end of the village, especially with any overflow being so close to the River Coln. If cesspits are to be considered the runoff will be extremely close to both the drinking water aquifer and the river Coln. EN15 10.15.3 therefore need to be designed appropriately and in discussion with the Environment Agency and as a Parish Council we consider there is not enough detail of this important part of the planning application. It is important that there are controls to ensure an adequate and safe water supply for residents.

7.13 Groundwater feeds into both public and private water supplies. These supplies may be affected through pollution and may be depleted through surface water and drainage systems which do not allow for natural infiltration of water through soils.

7.14 While there's no single, universally applicable figure, a cafe could use between 600 to 1000 gallons of water per day. Toilet flushes alone can account for a significant portion of this, with each flush potentially using 5 to 10 litres of water.

7.15 Noise pollution will increase as more visitors come to bigger tourist café facilities EN15 10.15.4 In areas where the community values quiet enjoyment and tranquillity, noise can be similarly detrimental, as can vibration, dust, smell and the intrusion of light and heat. Considering these points, Bibury Parish Council Strongly Object to this application.

7.2 They also submitted a "May Day Bank Holiday 2025 - Examples of dangerous traffic situations on the Ablington Road - Sunday 4th May 2025" document and a section of a report regarding traffic issues.

8. Other Representations:

8.1 102 third party representations have been received, objecting to the application on the grounds of:

i. Additional vehicle trips (customers, staff, servicing) on constrained local roads (narrow carriageways, limited footways, pinch points).
ii. Pedestrian safety concerns on routes with limited/absent footways and conflicts with vehicles/cyclists.

iii. Increased congestion/queuing in peak periods and knock-on impacts for village movement.
iv. Parking shortfall/overspill leading to unsafe or obstructive parking and pressure on residential streets.
v. Potential effects on emergency/service vehicle access during busy periods.
vi. No parking indicated on the plans.
vii. Increased noise and general disturbance from additional visitors, vehicles, and outdoor activity.
viii. Light spill and loss of tranquillity from increased evening/operational lighting
ix. Noise pollution
x. Increased litter and general nuisance associated with higher footfall.
xi. Harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the village's historic character.
xii. Harm to the National Landscape including effects on tranquillity and landscape character through intensification/commercialisation.
xiii. Concerns regarding impacts on the listed building and the setting of heritage assets.
xiv. Potential effects on protected species/habitats and calls for more robust ecological survey evidence.
xv. Ecological enhancement measures previously included not provided with this application.
xvi. Trees shown as removed on the site plan (but not mentioned on the application form)
xvii. Potential for pollution and water-quality impacts affecting the River Coln and wider water environment.
xviii. Concerns about adequacy of drainage/foul sewage arrangements to accommodate café use and lack of information submitted.
xix. Overprovision of cafés/retail locally and potential impact on existing businesses
xx. Inconsistencies in the Heritage, Design and Access Statement and overall poor quality of submission
xxi. Frustration application was validated given quality of submission
xxii. Limited changes from the previous application
xxiii. Proliferation of planning applications submitted
xxiv. Inclusion of previously not mentioned farm manager's accommodation
xxv. Concern over site becoming an events venue
xxvi. Lack of compliance with condition
xxvii. Erosion of working farm into a solely tourist based enterprise
xxviii. One business causing detriment to the village without benefits to the village
xxix. Lack of compliance with conditions

xxx. Footpath not installed in accordance with condition on application 21/02486/FUL
xxxi. Potential light spill/pollution
xxxii. No retail impact assessment (EC9)
xxxiii. Proposal does not comply with economy policies
xxxiv. Applications a waste of time and money, and causes distress
xxxv. Strategic management plan of the Trout Farm required
xxxvi. Concerns over potential future creep of development

9. Applicant's Supporting Information:

- Ecological Impact Assessment prepared by Darwin Ecology dated July 2025
- Heritage, Design and Access Statement dated March 2025

10. Officer's Assessment:

10.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that 'If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.' The starting point for the determination of this application is therefore the current development plan for the District which is the adopted Cotswold District Local Plan 2011 - 2031.

10.2 The policies and guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are also a material planning consideration. In addition to the above, it is noted that the Government published a draft version of the NPPF on the 16th December 2025. The consultation period for the aforementioned document expired on the 10th March 2026 and it is anticipated that a final version of the NPPF will be released in Summer 2026. Whilst the draft NPPF is a consultation document, it is considered that the proposed policies within it are a material consideration and must be given a degree of weight at the present time.

Background and Proposed Development

10.3 The application seeks the conversion of the ground floor of the existing building into a café with retail area, including amendments to the lean-to and decking area.

(a) Principle of Development

10.4 The proposal would be used in connection with the existing tourist attraction at Bibury Trout Farm, although would be accessed separately. Local Plan Policies EC1, EC3, EC5, EC6, EC8 and EC10 are considered relevant.

10.5 Local Plan Policy EC1 (Employment Development) states that:

Employment Development will be permitted where it:
a. supports the creation of high quality jobs in professional, technical and knowledge-based sectors and seeks to support economic opportunities which capitalise on the strength of existing academic and training institutions and research organisations;
b. maintains and enhances the vitality of the rural economy;
c. enables opportunities for more sustainable working practices, including home-working; development will be permitted where it:
d. supports and improves the vitality and viability of Primary, Key, District and Local Centres; or
e. supports sustainable tourism in ways that enables the District to attract higher numbers of longer-stay visitors

10.6 Local Plan Policy EC3 (Proposals for all types of Employment-Generating Uses) states:

Outside Development Boundaries, and outside established employment sites, proposals for small-scale employment development appropriate to the rural area will be permitted where they:
a. do not entail residential use as anything other than ancillary to the business; and
b. are justified by a business case, demonstrating that the business is viable; or
c. facilitate the retention or growth of a local employment opportunity

10.7 Local Plan Policy EC5 (Rural Diversification) states:

Development that relates to the diversification of an existing farm, agricultural estate, or other land-based rural business will be permitted provided that:
a. the proposal will not cause conflict with the existing farming operation including severance or disruption to the agricultural holding that would prejudice its continued viable operation;
b. existing buildings are reused wherever possible; and
c. the scale and design of the development contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area.

10.8 Local Plan Policy EC6 (Conversion of Rural Buildings) states that:

The conversion of rural buildings to alternative uses will be permitted provided:
a. the building is structurally sound, suitable for and capable of conversion to the proposed use without substantial alteration, extension or re-building;
b. it would not cause conflict with existing farming operations, including severance or disruption to the holding that would prejudice its continued viable operation; and
c. the development proposals are compatible with extant uses on the site and existing and planned uses in close proximity to the site.

10.9 Local Plan Policy EC8 (Main Town Centre Uses) includes:

4. All proposals for main town centre uses should:
a. be consistent with the strategy for the settlement;
b. help maintain an appropriate mix of uses in the Centre; and
c. contribute to the quality, attractiveness and character of the settlement, including the Centre, and the street frontage within which the site is located. …
7. When considering proposals for main town centre uses beyond the identified Centre boundaries, (in edge of centre or out of centre locations), proposals will be permitted that are:
a. accessible and well connected to the Centre by public transport, walking and cycling;
b. contribute to the quality, attractiveness and character of the settlement and the street frontage within which the site is located;
c. maintain or improve, where possible, the health and wellbeing of the District's residents through increased choice and quality of shopping, leisure, recreation, arts, cultural and community facilities; and
d. except where the proposal is in conformity with an allocation for main town centre uses elsewhere in the Plan, comply with the sequential test, by demonstrating that there are no sequentially preferable sites or premises to accommodate the proposed development, taking into account the need for flexibility in the scale and format of proposals
8. In addition to Clause 7 criteria (a)-(d) proposals for retail, leisure and office uses outside of defined centres will be assessed in relation to their impact on:
a. the vitality and viability of those defined town centres within the catchment area of the proposal; and
b. existing, proposed and committed town centre investment in defined centres within the catchment area of the proposal.
Such assessments should, where appropriate, extend to an assessment of the cumulative effects, taking into account other committed and recently completed developments.

10.10 Local Plan Policy EC10: Development of Tourist Facilities and Visitor Attractions states:

New or extended tourist facilities and visitor attractions (excluding accommodation) will be permitted provided the proposal:
a. has a functional relationship and special affinity with the historic and natural heritage of the area;
b. is well related to the main tourist routes;
c. is an identified opportunity that is not met by existing facilities; and
d. as far as possible, use is made of existing buildings, particularly agricultural buildings in the countryside, with the number and scale of new buildings kept to a minimum.

10.11 The supporting text at paragraph 9.10.4 for this policy goes on to say *'The term 'special affinity' has been used in order to protect the character of Cotswold towns and the countryside. Attractions for which there is no special justification for their location in that particular area, will not normally be permitted. The nature of the attraction should rely on its location within the Cotswolds. The A-roads of the District tend to form the main tourist routes.'*

10.12 In terms of national guidance, Paragraphs 85 states:

Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future.

10.13 Paragraph 88 of the NPPF states:

Planning policies and decisions should enable:
a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, new buildings;
b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and
d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

10.14 Paragraph 89 of the NPPF states:

Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.

10.15 Bibury Trout Farm comprises an established farm and tourist attraction within the village of Bibury. The proposal seeks the conversion of the ground floor of an existing building to a café with an ancillary retail area.

10.16 In principle, the proposal is considered acceptable under Policy EC1, as it would maintain and enhance the vitality of the rural economy. No additional residential use is proposed and, given the functional link to the existing Trout Farm attraction, the development would facilitate the growth of local employment opportunities. The proposal therefore accords with Policy EC3.

10.17 The Trout Farm has already diversified into tourism-related uses, and the proposal is considered to represent a continuation of this diversification of an existing farm enterprise. It would involve the re-use of existing buildings and, given the established tourist activity on the wider site, would not give rise to conflict with ongoing farming operations. The scale and form of development are considered appropriate, with the design contributing positively to the character and appearance of the area (discussed further below). The proposal therefore complies with Policy EC5.

10.18 The building is of solid construction and capable of conversion with limited external alteration. The proposed use would be compatible with existing uses in and around the site and would not prejudice agricultural operations. As such, the proposal accords with Policy EC6.

10.19 The primary use of the ground floor would be as a café, with the retail element limited in scale and ancillary to that use. Bibury does not have a specific strategy and is not an identified Centre. As such, this location is considered not to be 'Out of Centre' for the purposes of Local Plan Policy EC8. The utilisation of an

existing building is considered to contribute to the quality, attractiveness and character of the settlement.

10.20 At a national level, the proposal would support economic growth and productivity in accordance with Paragraph 85 of the NPPF, which gives significant weight on the need to support economic growth. In relation to Paragraph 88, the proposal comprises the expansion of a business and further diversification in a rural area through the conversion of existing buildings.

10.21 Bibury is located on a B-road and functions as a significant tourist destination. Whilst café provision already exists both within the village and at Bibury Trout Farm, the applicant has identified a need for additional provision, noting that a previously approved café elsewhere on the site is no longer intended to be implemented. The proposal would utilise an existing (listed) building, which is not considered to be adversely affected by the change of use. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to comply with Policy EC10.

10.22 The significant tourism pressures affecting Bibury are acknowledged, with traffic and parking issues representing an established concern within the village and subject to ongoing involvement from Gloucestershire County Council. However, the proposal is considered likely to predominantly serve existing visitors, providing small-scale facilities that would encourage visitors to remain longer and better manage their experience of the village, rather than materially increasing overall visitor numbers. In this regard, and notwithstanding the detailed consideration of traffic and parking impacts set out below, it is noted that an established car park opposite the building is authorised for use as overflow parking for the Trout Farm and in practice also serves visitors to Bibury more generally. On this basis, the proposal is unlikely to result in significant additional vehicle movements, with many café users anticipated to already be visiting the village.

10.23 The proposal is therefore considered to support the principles of sustainable tourism by making efficient use of existing infrastructure, reusing an existing building without encroachment into the wider countryside, and enhancing visitor facilities in a manner proportionate to its rural context. Taken together, these factors are considered to respect the character and appearance of the countryside and to accord with the objectives of Paragraph 88 of the Framework.

10.24 A pedestrian route between the car park and the Trout Farm has now been provided, with access available to the front of the site.

10.25 It is recognised that the site is not centrally located within the village and is not well served by public transport. However, Paragraph 89 of the Framework acknowledges that sites to meet rural business needs may need to be located adjacent to or beyond settlement boundaries. The impact on the local highway network is addressed in the highways section below.

10.26 Overall, the proposal is considered acceptable in principle, supported by relevant Local Plan policies and the NPPF.

(b) Design and Impact on Heritage Assets

10.27 Shoecroft Barn is a grade II listed building. The Local Planning Authority is therefore statutorily required to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the building, its setting, and any features of special architectural or historic interest it may possess, in accordance with Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (for planning permission).

10.28 The barn also lies within the designated Bibury Conservation Area, wherein the Local Planning Authority is statutorily obliged to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area, in accordance with Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

10.29 Considerable weight and importance must be given to the aforementioned legislation.

10.30 Local Plan Policy EN1 seeks where appropriate, to promote the protection, conservation and enhancement of the historic and natural environment.

10.31 Local Plan Policy EN2 states that *"Development will be permitted which accords with the Cotswold Design Code. Proposals should be of design quality that respects the character and distinctive appearance of the locality."*

10.32 Local Plan Policy EN10 states:

"1 In considering proposals that affect a designated heritage asset or its setting, great weight will be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.
2 Development proposals that sustain and enhance the character, appearance and significance of designated heritage assets (and their settings), and that put them to viable uses, consistent with their conservation, will be permitted.

3 Proposals that would lead to harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset or its setting will not be permitted, unless a clear and convincing justification of public benefit can be demonstrated to outweigh that harm. Any such assessment will take account, in the balance of material considerations:
- The importance of the asset;
- The scale of harm; and
- The nature and level of the public benefit of the proposal."

10.33 Local Plan Policy EN11 states:

"Development proposals, including demolition, that would affect Conservation Areas and their settings, will be permitted provided they:
a. Preserve and where appropriate enhance the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area in terms of siting, scale, form, proportion, design, materials and the retention of positive features;
b. Include hard and soft landscape proposals, where appropriate, that respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
c. Will not result in the loss of open spaces, including garden areas and village greens, which make a valuable contribution to the character and/or appearance, and/or allow important views into or out of the Conservation Area.
d. Have regard to the relevant Conservation Area appraisal (where available); and
e. do not include internally illuminated advertisement signage unless the signage does not have an adverse impact on the Conservation Area or its setting."

10.34 Local Plan Policy EN13 states that proposals to extend or alter non-domestic heritage assets that have already been converted will be permitted where the works would preserve the significance of the asset, its setting and/or the character or the appearance of the surrounding landscape in a manner that is proportionate to the significance of the asset.

10.35 Section 12 of the NPPF reiterates that achieving well designed and high-quality places and buildings is importance.

10.36 Section 16 of the NPPF seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment. Paragraph 210 states that Local Authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and

distinctiveness. Paragraph 212 states that when considering the impact of the proposed works on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Paragraph 213 states that any harm to or loss of significance, through alteration or development within the asset's setting should require clear and convincing justification. Paragraph 215 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

10.37 The main threshing barn forms part of the Bibury Trout Farm complex and contributes to the character of the site through its historic agricultural form and fabric. The barn has previously been converted to non-agricultural uses, with a number of unsympathetic modern alterations already present. As such, while the building retains heritage value as a listed structure, its sensitivity to change has been reduced in certain areas.

10.38 The proposal involves the conversion of the ground floor of the barn to a café with ancillary retail use in connection with the established use of the site as Bibury Trout Farm. The change of use would not result in the loss of an historic agricultural function and would provide a viable use that supports the ongoing maintenance and use of the listed building. The principle of conversion is therefore considered reasonable.

10.39 The proposals include the compartmentalisation of the ground and first floor. The removal of the modern stair with two new openings in the historic western gable considered acceptable. The other physical works to the threshing barn appear to involve alterations to modern fabric, and are considered uncontentious.

10.40 The western lean-to is a modern and unsympathetic addition which makes a limited contribution to the overall significance of the listed building. The proposed alterations to this element, including raising the roof by approximately 30cm, would not materially alter its character or compete with the principal barn and are therefore considered acceptable.

10.41 The proposed link between the lean-to and rear shelter shed has been reduced in size from that originally proposed. This aspect is now considered to be deferential and subordinate, and reducing the awkward roof junctions. The Conservation Officer has confirmed this aspect is now considered reasonable.

10.42 Regarding the shelter shed, this would remain an open, covered external space rather than being enclosed. Amended plans have also omitted the intended concrete floor slab, with the flooring to now be renovated. The impact on the shelter shed is therefore considered acceptable.

10.43 To the south of the building, the replacement of the existing steps with wider steps and the introduction of a small terrace area are proposed. The use of dry-stone retaining walls is considered appropriate to the rural context of the site and would soften the appearance of these changes. Overall, this element of the scheme is not considered to harm the appearance or setting of the listed building.

10.44 Taken together, the proposed works are considered to preserve the significance of the listed building and its setting.

10.45 The site is located on the northern edge of the Bibury Conservation Area. The Bibury Conservation Area Statement does not identify the site itself as being of particular significance beyond the presence of the listed building. The land in and around the site has a managed and man-made appearance, with a character that differs from the historic core of the village

10.46 The proposal utilises the existing barn, with the alterations subservient to the principal barn and of a design that respects the character and appearance of the site. Given the significance of the barn is considered to be preserved, the contribution this makes to the Conservation Area is would likewise be preserved. Accordingly, it is considered that the proposed development would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

10.47 The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Local Plan Policies EN2, EN10, EN11, and EN13, and NPPF Sections 12 and 16.

(c) Impact on the Cotswolds National Landscape

10.48 The site is located within the Cotswolds National Landscape (formerly known as the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty). Section 85(A1) of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 (as amended by Section 245 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023) states that relevant authorities have a duty to seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty.

10.49 Local Plan Policy EN1 states that new development will, where appropriate, promote the protection, conservation and enhancement of the historic and natural environment by:

a. ensuring the protection and enhancement of existing natural and historic environmental assets and their settings in proportion with the significance of the asset;
b. contributing to the provision and enhancement of multi-functioning green infrastructure;
c. addressing climate change, habitat loss and fragmentation through creating new habitats and the better management of existing habitats;
d. seeking to improve air, soil and water quality where feasible; and
e. ensuring design standards that complement the character of the area and the sustainable use of the development.

10.50 Local Plan Policy EN4 states that development will be permitted where it does not have a significant detrimental impact on the natural and historic landscape (including the tranquillity of the countryside) of Cotswold District or neighbouring areas, and that proposals will take account of landscape and historic landscape character, visual quality and local distinctiveness. They will be expected to enhance, restore and better manage the natural and historic landscape, and any significant landscape features and elements, including key views, the setting of settlements, settlement patterns and heritage assets.

10.51 Local Plan Policy EN5 Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) states that in determining development proposals within the AONB or its setting, the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape, its character and special qualities will be given great weight.

10.52 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by *'protecting and enhancing valued landscapes' and 'recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside'*.

10.53 Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states that *'great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in … National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.'*

10.54 The site is located on the edge of the village and forms part of a transitional area that relates more closely to the built form and infrastructure of Bibury than to the open countryside beyond. The immediate context is influenced by a

range of built and man-made features, including a Thames Water pumping station and car park to the north, a large agricultural building to the west, and managed ponds to the south. As such, the site is experienced within a modified landscape context that is distinct from the more rural character of the surrounding National Landscape.

10.55 The proposed development would not result in a significant change to the character or appearance of the site. The principal barn already has a quasi-residential appearance, and vehicles are currently present within and around the site. The proposed external café use would be oriented toward the village, rather than outward into the surrounding landscape, thereby limiting its visual and experiential impact on the wider National Landscape.

10.56 The need for external lighting is considered limited, as café use would primarily occur during daylight hours. Nevertheless, recognising the importance of tranquillity and dark skies within the National Landscape, a planning condition restricting the extent and operation of external lighting is recommended to ensure that any potential impact is appropriately controlled.

10.57 Overall, the proposal is considered not to have an adverse impact on the intrinsic qualities, character or natural beauty of this part of the National Landscape.

10.58 Concerns have been raised regarding potential noise impacts, including from amplified music. While cafés are not generally associated with significant noise generation of this nature, it is acknowledged that uncontrolled noise could affect the tranquillity of the area and nearby residential amenity. As a precautionary measure, a condition restricting amplified music is recommended.

10.59 Subject to the recommended conditions, the proposal is considered to conserve the landscape character and scenic beauty of the National Landscape and therefore complies with Local Plan Policies EN4 and EN6.

(d) Impact on Residential Amenity

10.60 Local Plan Policy EN2 requires development to accord with the design code, which contained guidance on impacts on residential amenity.

10.61 Local Plan Policy EN15 states that:

Development will be permitted that will not result in unacceptable risk to public health or safety, the natural environment or the amenity of existing land uses through:
a. pollution of the air, land, surface water, or ground water sources; and/or
b. generation of noise or light levels, or other disturbance such as spillage, flicker, vibration, dust or smell.

10.62 The proposed development relates to the conversion of the ground floor to café use. The planning history supports the lawful use of the first and second floor as lawfully residential, which aligns with the agent's assertion of a managers flat. Mixed-use arrangements with residential accommodation located above or adjacent to commercial uses, including cafés, are common in built-up areas and are not inherently incompatible. Café use would be expected to operate primarily during daytime hours. Given the potential presence of residential accommodation above, a condition restricting the hours of operation is recommended in order to safeguard residential amenity.

10.63 The barn is located within an active area of Bibury Trout Farm, where non-residents are already present, and there is limited scope for private external amenity space associated with the upper floors. Future occupiers would reasonably expect a degree of activity associated with the site and its surroundings. In this context, the proposed café use is not considered to result in an unacceptable impact on the amenity of any occupants of the building.

10.64 Concerns have also been raised regarding the potential for noise impacts on nearby residents, including those more central within Bibury/Arlington, particularly from music and customer activity. A condition restricting amplified music is recommended in order to prevent adverse impacts. With regard to general customer noise, given the separation distances to nearby dwellings and the existing levels of activity and background noise within Bibury, the proposal is not considered likely to give rise to unacceptable harm to residential amenity.

10.65 The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the residential amenity considerations of Local Plan Policies EN2 and EN15.

(e) Highways Safety

10.66 Local Plan Policy INF4 states that development will be permitted that provides safe and suitable access and has regard, where appropriate, to the Manual for Gloucester Streets.

10.67 Local Plan Policy INF5 states that development will provide residential and non-residential vehicle parking where there is clear and compelling evidence that such provision is necessary to manage the local road network.

10.68 Section 9 of the NPPF promotes sustainable transport. Paragraph 115 of the NPPF states that in applications for development, it should be ensured that:

a) sustainable transport modes are prioritised taking account of the vision for the site, the type of development and its location;
b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;
c) the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code; and
d) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree through a vision-led approach.

10.69 Paragraph 116 states:

Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.

10.70 It is recognised that traffic and parking within Bibury are significant and longstanding issues, arising primarily from the village's popularity as a tourist destination. Temporary traffic management measures are currently in place, including restrictions on parking and large coaches, but congestion and visitor pressures remain a concern for residents. Objections to the proposal have raised concerns regarding additional traffic movements and pedestrian safety, particularly in relation to the car park to the north of the site and its interaction with the village road network.

10.71 The car park to the north of the site was originally approved as an overflow facility for Bibury Trout Farm and continues to be operated by the business. While its use is not formally restricted, it functions in practice as a key parking area for visitors to both the Trout Farm and the village. The car park has capacity for approximately 150 vehicles.

10.72 A café use outside the centre of a settlement would typically be expected to generate vehicle trips. However, given the exceptional level of tourism within Bibury and the site's immediate proximity to the principal visitor car park, it is

anticipated that the primary users of the café would be existing visitors to the village or the Trout Farm. On this basis, the proposal is considered more likely to result in the reassignment of trips and an extension of visitor dwell time, rather than generating a significant number of new vehicle movements.

10.73 While the proposal would place additional demand on the adjacent car park, this must be considered in the context of the car park's original purpose as an overflow facility for the Trout Farm. Given the floorspace proposed (internal and external), Appendix F of the Local Plan indicates a parking requirement of approximately 15 spaces, which could be accommodated within the existing provision. In addition, the agent has advised that the conversion is proposed as an alternative to the erection of an alternative café/gift shop (23/03980/FUL). While this is smaller in size than the current proposal, by restricting the erection of this, it would reduce overall additional parking requirement.

10.74 The Highway Authority has raised concerns regarding the potential for the café to become a destination in its own right and the absence of a formal traffic impact assessment. While these concerns are noted, it is considered that a significant proportion of visitors to Bibury already park in the car park opposite the site. For these users, visiting the café would not result in additional vehicular movements or the need to walk along the highway network. Conversely, visitors parking in the village centre have alternative cafés available closer to those parking locations.

10.75 In order to ensure that the traffic impacts remain limited and predictable, it is considered reasonable and necessary to restrict the use of the ground floor to a café with ancillary retail only, excluding other potential Use Class E activities which could give rise to different traffic and parking characteristics.

10.76 In addition to visitors, there would be some traffic generated from staff, deliveries and similar. The existing access is considered suitable for these traffic movements. While not within the site boundaries, there is existing parking utilised by staff of the Trout Farm, along with the aforementioned car park. While these would result in additional traffic movements, given the expected staff numbers (10), these traffic movements are considered not to result in unacceptable impact on highway safety, nor the residual cumulative impacts on the road network as a result of the proposed development being severe.

10.77 In the absence of clear evidence from the Highway Authority demonstrating that the proposal would result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or that the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe, it is not considered that the application could be reasonably refused on highways

grounds. The proposal therefore accords with Local Plan Policies INF4 and INF5 and Paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

(f) Biodiversity and Geodiversity

10.78 This application is accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment which has assessed the site and surrounds for the presence of bats and other protected species. The aforementioned report identified that the main barn (above ground floor level) was of high suitability for roosting bats, and that the other sections were of negligible suitability. As the proposed works would not impact features suitable for roosting bats, the Biodiversity Officer has advised no further surveys are required in this instance. They have advised that the mitigations recommended within sections 6.10 to 6.14 of the EcIA to safeguard bats are accorded with, and a condition is recommended.

10.79 The proposal may affect nesting swallows, with recommendations to safeguard birds and to compensate for the loss of nests provided. Conditions to secure suitable enhancement of the site have also been provided.

10.80 Given the potential for bats, and potential increases in pressure to add external lighting, it is considered that a condition restricting external lighting is also attached.

10.81 It is noted that third party comments have been received regarding wildlife in the area, including river. Whilst these are noted, the proposal is considered to affect these habitats given the limited physical works involved and existing activity on the wider site.

10.82 The Biodiversity Officers raises no objection to the application. It is considered that the proposal accords with Local Plan Policy EN8.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

10.83 While every grant of planning permission in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the biodiversity gain condition, commencement and transitional arrangements, as well as exemptions, mean that certain permissions are not subject to biodiversity net gain. The red site boundary is constrained closely to the built form of the development, and as such is considered that the area of habitat affected directly would be *de minimis* and therefore exempt from BNG.

(g) Flooding and Drainage

10.84 The application site is located within a Flood Zone 1 which is the lowest designation of Flood Zone and one in which new holiday let development can be acceptable in principle. Notwithstanding this, the site is located adjacent to the River Coln, which is designated as a Main River by the Environment Agency. The River Coln and land to its south fall within a Flood Zone 3.

10.85 The proposed development will not result in a limited increase in the amount of built development on the site. Whilst the Drainage Engineer and Environment Agency did not comment on this application, they raised no objections to the previous application the impacts of which remain the same.

10.86 Concerns were raised in regard to the lack of details regarding drainage. Surface water drainage will be covered by a condition; however, the sewage would be connected to the mains. The agent has advised the building has been connected to the mains, and ensuring suitable capacity would be within the remit of Thames Water.

10.87 It is considered that the proposed development can be undertaken without having an unacceptable impact on flooding or drainage in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN14 and Section 14 of the NPPF.

Other Matters

10.88 The proposed development is not liable for a charge under the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations 2010 (as amended). This is because it is less than 100m2 of new build that does not result in the creation of a dwelling, and therefore benefits from Minor Development Exemption under CIL Regulation 42.

10.89 It is noted that not all trees surrounding the site have been annotated on the proposed plans. These are outside the site boundaries and would not be directly affected by the proposal. It has also been advised on the application form that no trees would be affected by the development. As such, the granting of permission for the proposed development is considered not to grant the removal of said trees.

11. Conclusion:

11.1 The proposal is considered to comply with Local Plan Policies and material considerations. To ensure that the alternative café/gift shop is not erected, thus

ensuring compliance with Local Plan Policy EC10 and reducing parking pressures, securing a legal agreement to ensure both proposals cannot be constructed is recommended. The recommendation is therefore for permission, subject to securing a legal agreement.

12. Proposed Conditions:

1. The development shall be started by 3 years from the date of this decision notice.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawing number(s):

1621/500 REV C; 1621/501 REV B; and 1621/502 REV B

Reason: For purposes of clarity and for the avoidance of doubt, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended), the ground floor of the building hereby permitted shall be used only as a café (Use Class E(b)) with an ancillary retail area not exceeding 40 sqm (Use Class E(a)), and for no other purpose (including any other use within Use Class E).

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure that the traffic and parking impacts remain limited and predictable, having regard to Local Plan Policies INF4 and INF5 and the NPPF.

4. The premises, including patio area and open sided single-storey structures, shall not be open to customers outside the following hours:
08:00 to 16:00 on any day.

Reason: To safeguard residential amenity and the tranquillity of the National Landscape, having regard to Local Plan Policies EN15, EN4 and the NPPF.

5. No amplified music or amplified speech shall be played within the premises or any external area associated with the development, and no external loudspeakers (including within the open fronted buildings) shall be installed, operated or used at any time.

Reason: To protect the amenities of nearby residents and the tranquillity of the Cotswolds National Landscape, having regard to Local Plan Policies EN15 and EN4 and the NPPF.

6. No external lighting shall be installed on the building or within the application site unless and until a detailed external lighting scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include:
a) a plan showing locations, mounting heights and light spillage contours;
b) luminaire specifications (type, wattage/brightness, colour temperature);
c) hours of operation and control measures (timers, PIRs, dimming);
d) measures to prevent upward light spill and light intrusion beyond the site.

The lighting shall thereafter be installed and operated strictly in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To protect the tranquillity and dark skies of the Cotswolds National Landscape and to avoid adverse impacts on protected species (including bats), having regard to Local Plan Policies EN4, EN5, EN8 and the NPPF.

7. The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the recommendations contained within sections 6.8 to 6.17 and 7.2 to 7.3 of the Ecological Impact Assessment (Darwin Ecology, July 2025 - received 19th September 2025). All of the recommendations shall be implemented in full according to the specified timescales, and thereafter permanently retained.

Reason: To ensure wildlife is protected in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), Circular 06/2005, paragraphs 187, 192 and 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy EN8 of the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011- 2031 and in order for the Council to comply with Part 3 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

8. Prior to first use, details of the provision of 3no. compensatory swallow nest cups installed on the building, 1no. bird box affixed to a suitable onsite tree and 1no. bat box affixed to the western gable end of the building shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. The details shall include a drawing showing the types of features, their locations within the site and their positions on the elevations of the building, and a timetable for their provision. The approved details shall be implemented in accordance with the approved specification and programme of implementation and be retained thereafter.

Reason: To protect and enhance the site for biodiversity in accordance with paragraphs 187, 192 and 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy EN8 of the Cotswold District Council Local Plan, and for the Council to comply with Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

9. Prior to the construction of any external wall of the development hereby approved, samples of the proposed walling and roofing materials shall be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and only the approved materials shall be used.

Reason: To ensure that, in accordance with Cotswold District Local Plan Policies EN2, EN10 and EN11, the development will be constructed of materials of a type, colour, texture and quality that will be appropriate to the site and its surroundings.

10. The timber cladding shall not be treated in any way and shall be left to weather and silver naturally and shall be permanently retained as such thereafter.

Reason: Traditionally timber cladding was untreated, and this method is considered to be the most appropriate, in accordance with Local Plan Policies EN2, EN4, EN5, EN10 and EN11.

11. No new doors or windows shall be installed until details have been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted details shall be as a scale of 1:10 or 1:20, with details of mouldings and profiles as a scale of 1:1, and shall also include details of the final colour/finish.

Reason: To ensure that the doors and windows are designed and finished in a manner which is appropriate to the character of the building, in accordance with Local Plan Policies EN2, EN10 and EN11.

12. New rainwater goods shall be of cast iron construction or a substitute which has been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and shall be permanently retained as such thereafter.

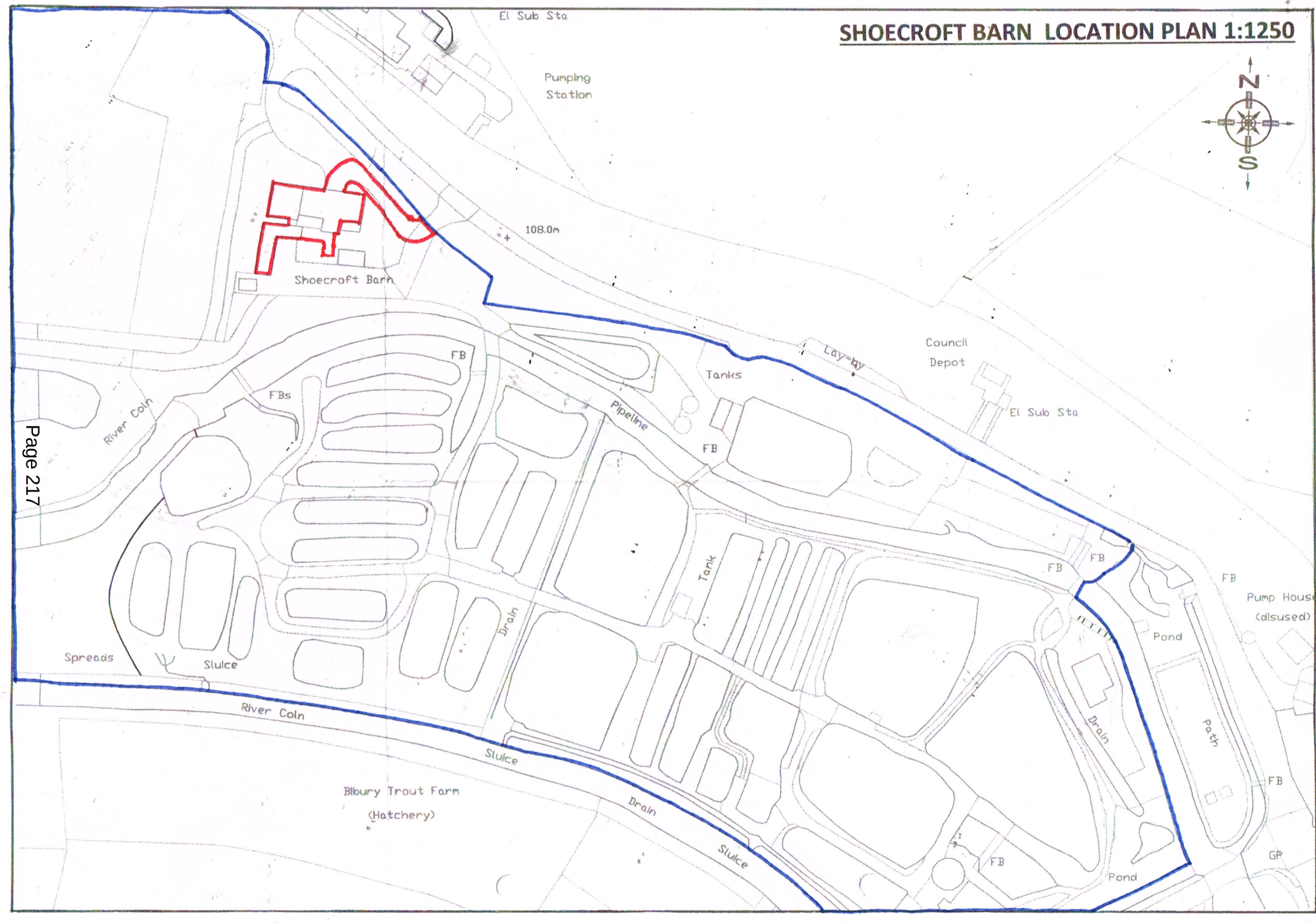
Reason: To ensure that the rainwater goods are constructed of a material appropriate to the character of the building, in accordance with Local Plan Policies EN2, EN10 and EN11.

Informatives:

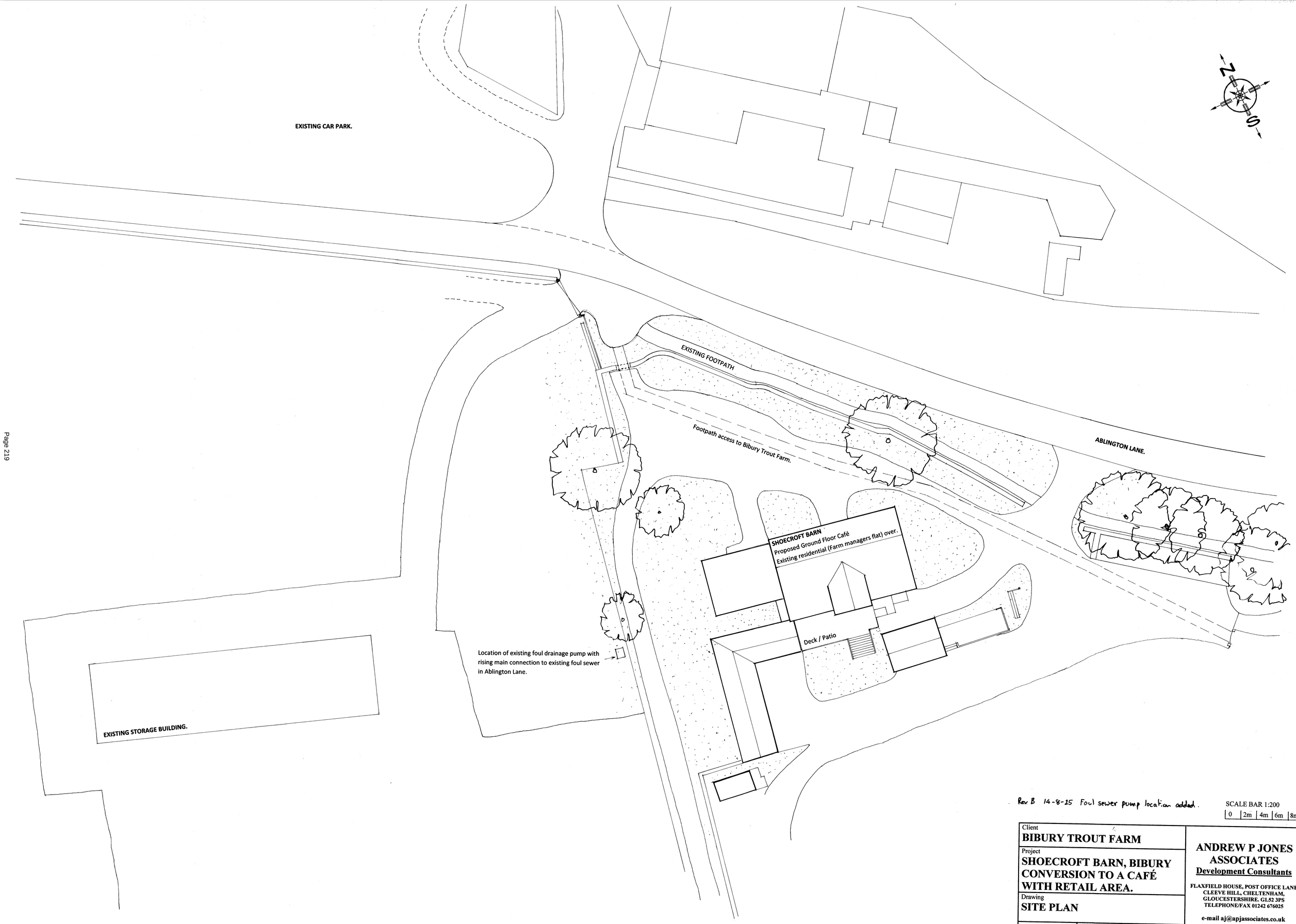
1. The works permitted are as per the approved plans and the details within the submitted Heritage, Design and Access Statement do not form part of the approved works.

2. Please note that the proposed development set out in this application would be liable for a charge under the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations 2010 (as amended), however, no CIL is payable as the Cotswold CIL Charging Schedule gives this type of development a zero rate. However, if the nature of the development were to change, you are advised to contact the Council to discuss the requirement for planning permission and CIL liability.

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SHOECROFT BARN LOCATION PLAN 1:250
El Sub Sta
Pumping Station
108.0m
Shoecroft Barn
FB
FBs
River Coln
Pipeline
Tanks
Lay-by
Council Depot
El Sub Sta
FB
Tank
Drain
Spreads
Sluice
River Coln
Sluice
Bibury Trout Farm
(Hatchery)
Drain
Sluice
FB
FB
FB
Pump House
(disused)
Pond
Drain
Path
FB
GP
FB
Pond
N
S

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Rev B 14-8-25 Foul sewer pump location added.

SCALE BAR 1:200

0	2m	4m	6m	8m

Client
BIBURY TROUT FARM

Project
SHOECROFT BARN, BIBURY CONVERSION TO A CAFÉ WITH RETAIL AREA.

Drawing
SITE PLAN

Drg No 1621/502 'B'	1:200@A1	3-3-25

ANDREW P JONES ASSOCIATES
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Kitchen formed within existing building with concrete block wall extended as required to enclose building footprint and clad externally with timber boarding on battens over a dpm and finished internally with plasterboard on an insulated timber frame.

New timber staircase to first floor apartment, enclosed within concrete block wall.

New external timber doors. (See elevations)

New access door to apartment over.

Powder coated aluminium glazed screen doors.

Serving hatch formed in wall.

New door opening through existing wall.

Existing opening block up.

Existing door removed.

Previously blocked up opening to be reopened.

Male wc formed with insulated stud partitions.

New suspended timber floor to line with existing and supported on concrete sleeper walls.

Link between kitchen and existing barn formed with timber clad blockwork to match.

New powder coated aluminium folding screen doors to replace existing aluminium doors.

Existing stone floors to be renovated.

All timber posts and roof timbers to be retained and renovated as required.

Timber partitions between bays.

Metal spiral staircase to be removed and floor opening made good.

Female wc formed with insulated stud partitions.

New suspended timber floor to line with existing and supported on concrete sleeper walls.

Existing patio area reconfigured as shown with the installation of a natural stone retaining wall to facilitate a level gravel surface and support for a new stairway. Wall extend in height to form a balustrade wall.

FRIDGE
LOBBY
SHOP AREA
CAFÉ
KITCHEN
FEMALE WC
STORE
DIS. WC
MALE WC

GROUND FLOOR

New timber staircase to first floor apartment enclosed within a concrete block wall.

EXISTING APPARTMENT
(Farm managers accommodation)

FIRST FLOOR

Rev C 21-1-26 Concrete floor omitted, renovate stone added
Rev B 14-8-25 Further general amendments
Rev A 22-5-25 General amendments.

SCALE BAR 1:100
0 | 1m | 2m | 3m | 4m

Client
BIBURY TROUT FARM

Project
SHOECROFT BARN, BIBURY CONVERSION TO A CAFÉ WITH RETAIL AREA.

Drawing
FLOOR PLANS AS PROPOSED

Drg No 1621/500C	1:100@A2	24-2-25

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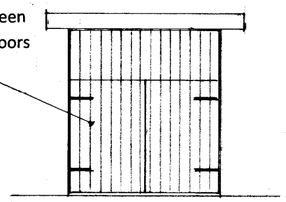


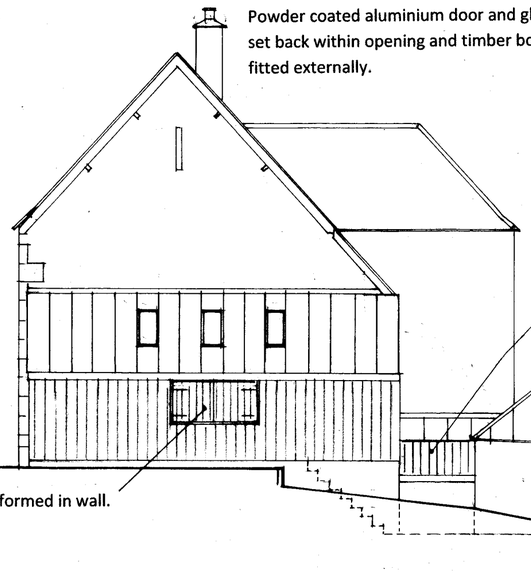
Proposed kitchen formed within the existing lean-too extension, renovated with concrete block walls clad in vertical timber boarding. Roof structure to be lifted by 300mm at the point of contact with the stone barn and the pitch is to be adjusted by 1 degree to maintain a useable ceiling height at its lowest point. The corrugated iron roof is to be replaced with a seamed metal roof finish.

SOUTH WEST ELEVATION

New access door to first floor apartment.

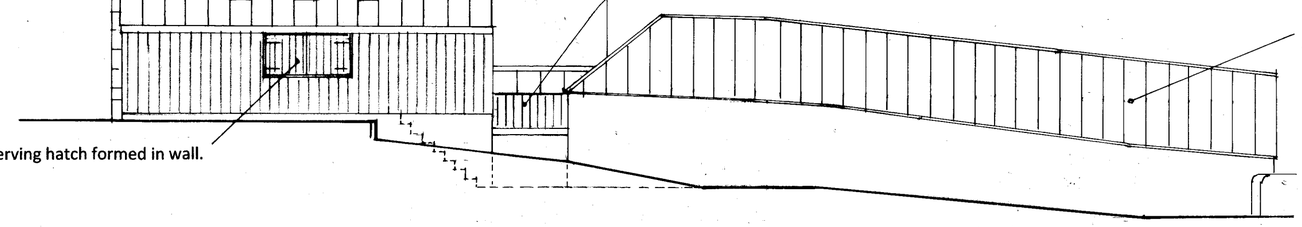
Powder coated aluminium door and glazed screen set back within opening and timber boarded doors fitted externally.





Link between the kitchen and the barn to be constructed in concrete block, partly ground retaining and finished with timber boarding, and a seamed metal roof to match.

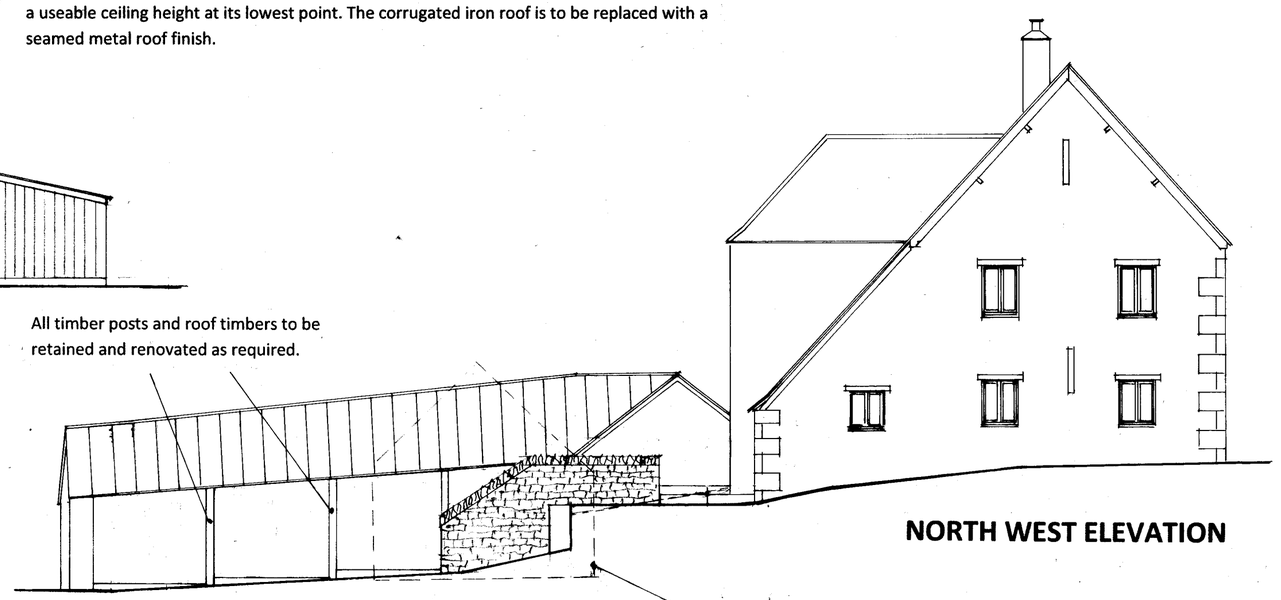
Serving hatch formed in wall.



Existing corrugated roof finish to be removed and replaced with a seamed metal roof finish on existing structure.

SOUTH EAST ELEVATION

All timber posts and roof timbers to be retained and renovated as required.



NORTH WEST ELEVATION

Note. Existing single storey building (See floor plan) not shown for clarity.

New powder coated aluminium folding glazed doors to replace existing aluminium doors with a replacement glazed screen over to match.



NORTH EAST ELEVATION

Existing patio area reconfigured as shown with the installation of a natural stone retaining wall to facilitate a level gravel surface and support for a new stairway. Wall extend in height to form a balustrade wall.

Rev B 14-8-25 Further general amendments.
Rev A 22-5-25 General amendments.

Client: **BIBURY TROUT FARM**		**ANDREW P JONES ASSOCIATES** Development Consultants
Project: **SHOECROFT BARN, BIBURY CONVERSION TO A CAFÉ WITH RETAIL AREA.**		FLAXFIELD HOUSE, POST OFFICE LANE CLEEVE HILL, CHELTENHAM, GLOUCESTERSHIRE. GL52 3PS TELEPHONE/FAX 01242 676025
Drawing: **ELEVATIONS AS PROPOSED**		e-mail aj@apjassociates.co.uk
Drg No 1621/501B	1:100@A2	25-2-25

SCALE BAR 1:100
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Conversion of ground floor of existing barns from general storage to cafe with retail area, including amendments to the lean-to and decking/patio area, and associated alterations at Shoecroft Barn Ablington Bibury Cirencester Gloucestershire GL7 5NU

Listed Building Consent 25/02961/LBC	
Applicant:	Bibury Trout Farm
Agent:	Andrew P Jones Associates
Case Officer:	Amy Hill
Ward Member(s):	Councillor David Fowles
Committee Date:	13 May 2026
RECOMMENDATION:	**CONSENT**

1. Main Issues:

(a) Design and Impact on Heritage Assets

2. Site Description:

2.1 This application relates to a grade II listed converted stone barn and associated lean-to and linear buildings, located on the north-western edge of the village of Bibury. The buildings are used for office/commercial purposes in connection with Bibury Trout Farm to the south/south-east, with accommodation above.

2.2 The application site has been drawn close to the existing buildings, with access to the road. To the north-eastern boundary is the Bibury to Ablington Road and is defined by a drystone wall. To the west is an agricultural field, including a recently constructed agricultural building, and to the south is the Trout Farm and River Coln.

2.3 The site is located within the Bibury Conservation Area and the Cotswolds National Landscape.

2.4 The River Coln is designated as a Main River by the Environment Agency. The application buildings are elevated above the aforementioned river and are located within Flood Zone 1.

3. Relevant Planning History:

3.1 CD.3062 Change of use of barn from agricultural to use as a store in connection with water undertaking. Permitted 1962

3.2 CD.3062/A Change of use from barn to dwelling. Permitted 1962

3.3 CD.3062/B Change of use of barn into dwelling. Permitted 1962

3.4 CD.3062/C Conversion of listed building into dwelling and outbuilding into flat to accommodate staff. Erection of a garage. Alteration of vehicular access. Permitted 1974

3.5 CD.3062/D Alterations to and use of lean-to as light industrial. Permitted 1977

3.6 CD.3062/E Conversion of listed building to use as living accommodation for the Bibury Trout Farm Manager. Use of most of ground floor as storage. Permitted 1979

3.7 CD.3062/F Erection of a chimney stack. Permitted 1987

3.8 CD.LBC134/A Erection of a chimney stack and removal of existing flue. Permitted 1987

3.9 CD.3062/G Erection of a single unit mobile home for use by the assistant fishery manager. Permitted 1990

3.10 03/01448/LBC Conversion of ground floor store into residential accommodation. Permitted 2003

3.11 03/01449/FUL Conversion of ground floor store into residential accommodation ancillary to existing dwelling on the first floor. Permitted 2003

3.12 09/00809/FUL Conversion of ground floor store into ancillary residential accommodation. Permitted 2009

3.13 09/00810/LBC Conversion of ground floor store into ancillary residential accommodation. Permitted 2009

3.14 12/02549/FUL Renewal of planning permission 09/00809/FUL to incorporate ground floor store into residential accommodation. Permitted 2012

3.15 12/02551/LBC Renewal of planning permission 09/00810/LBC for internal alterations, insertion of windows, change to external door and the demolition of lean-to store. Permitted 2012

3.16 21/04793/FUL Change of Use of Shoecroft Barn and historic outbuildings for use as an events venue. Refurbishment and alterations to include replacement of lean-to with Dutch barn extension, erection of entrance link building and garage extension. Alterations to fenestration and reinstatement of historic vehicular entrance. Withdrawn 2022

3.17 21/04794/LBC Change of Use of Shoecroft Barn and historic outbuildings for use as an events venue. Refurbishment and alterations to include replacement of lean-to with Dutch barn extension, erection of entrance link building and garage extension. Alterations to fenestration, modern internal floors and partitions, and reinstatement of historic vehicular entrance. Withdrawn 2022

3.18 22/02853/FUL Change of use of Shoecroft Barn and historic outbuilding to provide x5 holiday lets, refurbishment and alterations to include replacement of lean-to with extension and garage extension, and external alterations. Permitted December 2022

3.19 22/02854/LBC Change of use of Shoecroft Barn and historic outbuilding to provide x5 holiday lets, refurbishment and alterations to include replacement of lean-to with extension and garage extension, and alterations to fenestration, modern internal floors and partitions. Permitted December 2022

3.20 23/03980/FUL Erection of a café/gift shop. Permitted 2024

3.21 25/00840/FUL Conversion of ground floor of existing barns from general storage to cafe with retail area, including amendments to the lean-to, creation of a decking/patio area, and associated alterations. Withdrawn 2025

3.22 25/00841/LBC Conversion of ground floor of existing barns from general storage to cafe with retail area, including amendments to the lean-to, creation of a decking/patio area, and associated alterations. Withdrawn 2025

3.23 26/00015/FUL Retrospective car park adjacent to Shoecroft Barn and alterations to access. Pending consideration

4. Planning Policies:

TNPPF The National Planning Policy Framework

5. Observations of Consultees:

5.1 Conservation Officer: No objections (following amendments)

5.2 Biodiversity Officer: No objections

5.3 Gloucestershire County Council Highway Officer: Objection

5.4 Environment Agency: No response received

6. View of Parish Council:

Bibury Parish Council:

6.1 "Bibury Parish Council is frustrated that this application has been allowed so soon after its predecessor with the only changes being to Decking /Gravel.

6.2 Over 100 residents objected to this recently Highways also objected. We strongly OBJECT to this application. We will put our detailed objection on the planning application as I am mindful of the consultees deadline."

6.3 Bibury Parish Council unanimously OBJECT to 25/02960/FUL - Conversion of ground floor of existing barns from general storage to cafe with retail area, including amendments to the lean-to and decking/patio area, and associated alterations - Shoecroft Barn Ablington Bibury Cirencester Gloucestershire GL7 5NU

Overtourism

6.4 Bibury Parish Council agrees that overtourism by the Trout farm, resulting high volumes of visitors, is having a negative impact on the local environment, community, and the overall visitor experience, the village cannot sustainably manage and maintain its character.

6.5 This application 25/02960/FUL we understand will be open to non-trout farm visitors therefore we believe will lead to another increase in visitor numbers.

6.6 The Trout Farm already has a large café in its grounds as well as existing extended café facility selling ice cream opposite the main site. The village has another four catering businesses for the public all serving food and drink, Policy

EC10 New or extended tourist facilities and visitor attractions (excluding accommodation) (ii) d. is an identified opportunity that is not met by existing facilities;

6.7 9.10.4. The Local Plan ensures that new tourism development is effectively and appropriately controlled to protect the high quality natural and built environment of the District, especially in the AONB. The term 'special affinity' has been used in order to protect the character of Cotswold towns and the countryside

6.8 EC10: 9.10.6. The area's popularity with visitors is not sufficient justification for the location of new tourist attractions. Any large-scale visitor development will generally be considered to be unacceptable if it would harm the landscape or features of historic interest, or have a harmful impact on the transport network.

Access

6.9 The access to Shoecroft barn is on a single carriageway country lane used by rural agricultural vehicles, emergency vehicles and residents, this lane is constantly grid locked and verges eroded by tourist vehicles using the Trout farm main car park which is often full to overflowing in the summer therefore a new café as a standalone destination with traffic arriving will only exacerbate car parking and access to the Trout farm overflow car parks which have been overused this summer, not only creating enormous frustration to residents from Ablington and Bibury alike, but causing great danger to both pedestrians and drivers, contrary to policy INF4 Avoiding severance of communities, also EC10 9.10.6, EN15 the air can be polluted through gaseous emissions through local traffic generation in a conservation area.

6.10 The culmination of all these factors has created an unsafe public road with constant conflicts between traffic, cyclists and pedestrian's and cumulative congestion and the negative impacts on residents' movements are severe contrary to INF4 which with this possibility of another cafe facility open to the public from the roadside increasing potential footfall and increase safety risk, more emissions, noise and more frustration to the people who live here.

6.11 The nearest fire station is in Northleach and their quickest and preferred route to access Bibury and surrounding villages in an emergency is to use the lane from Ablington into Bibury, this already busy lane (due to Trout farm visitors and car parks) will have an increased traffic flow due

to expansion of Trout farm facilities. Gloucestershire Highways have Objected to this planning application.

POLLUTION

6.12 There are no details of foul water drainage, although Thames Water are now addressing the foul water pollution in Bibury, we understand a substantial increase in foul water from a café of this size would be detrimental to the sewage capacity at the Ablington end of the village, especially with any overflow being so close to the River Coln. If cesspits are to be considered the runoff will be extremely close to both the drinking water aquifer and the river Coln. EN15 10.15.3 therefore need to be designed appropriately and in discussion with the Environment Agency and as a Parish Council we consider there is not enough detail of this important part of the planning application. It is important that there are controls to ensure an adequate and safe water supply for residents.

6.13 Groundwater feeds into both public and private water supplies. These supplies may be affected through pollution and may be depleted through surface water and drainage systems which do not allow for natural infiltration of water through soils.

6.14 While there's no single, universally applicable figure, a cafe could use between 600 to 1000 gallons of water per day. Toilet flushes alone can account for a significant portion of this, with each flush potentially using 5 to 10 litres of water.

6.15 Noise pollution will increase as more visitors come to bigger tourist café facilities EN15 10.15.4 In areas where the community values quiet enjoyment and tranquillity, noise can be similarly detrimental, as can vibration, dust, smell and the intrusion of light and heat. Considering these points, Bibury Parish Council Strongly Object to this application.

6.2 They also submitted a "May Day Bank Holiday 2025 - Examples of dangerous traffic situations on the Ablington Road - Sunday 4th May 2025" document and a section of a report regarding traffic issues.

7. Other Representations:

7.1 102 third party representations have been received, objecting to the application on the grounds of:

i. Additional vehicle trips (customers, staff, servicing) on constrained local roads (narrow carriageways, limited footways, pinch points).
ii. Pedestrian safety concerns on routes with limited/absent footways and conflicts with vehicles/cyclists.
iii. Increased congestion/queuing in peak periods and knock-on impacts for village movement.
iv. Parking shortfall/overspill leading to unsafe or obstructive parking and pressure on residential streets.
v. Potential effects on emergency/service vehicle access during busy periods.
vi. No parking indicated on the plans.
vii. Increased noise and general disturbance from additional visitors, vehicles, and outdoor activity.
viii. Light spill and loss of tranquillity from increased evening/operational lighting
ix. Noise pollution
x. Increased litter and general nuisance associated with higher footfall.
xi. Harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the village's historic character.
xii. Harm to the National Landscape including effects on tranquillity and landscape character through intensification/commercialisation.
xiii. Concerns regarding impacts on the listed building and the setting of heritage assets.
xiv. Potential effects on protected species/habitats and calls for more robust ecological survey evidence.
xv. Ecological enhancement measures previously included not provided with this application.
xvi. Trees shown as removed on the site plan (but not mentioned on the application form)
xvii. Potential for pollution and water-quality impacts affecting the River Coln and wider water environment.
xviii. Concerns about adequacy of drainage/foul sewage arrangements to accommodate café use and lack of information submitted.
xix. Overprovision of cafés/retail locally and potential impact on existing businesses
xx. Inconsistencies in the Heritage, Design and Access Statement and overall poor quality of submission
xxi. Frustration application was validated given quality of submission
xxii. Limited changes from the previous application
xxiii. Proliferation of planning applications submitted
xxiv. Inclusion of previously not mentioned farm manager's accommodation
xxv. Concern over site becoming an events venue
xxvi. Lack of compliance with condition

xxvii. Erosion of working farm into a solely tourist based enterprise
xxviii. One business causing detriment to the village without benefits to the village
xxix. Lack of compliance with conditions
xxx. Footpath not installed in accordance with condition on application 21/02486/FUL
xxxi. Potential light spill/pollution
xxxii. No retail impact assessment (EC9)
xxxiii. Proposal does not comply with economy policies
xxxiv. Applications a waste of time and money, and causes distress
xxxv. Strategic management plan of the Trout Farm required
xxxvi. Concerns over potential future creep of development

7.2 The majority of issues raised relate to the planning application and addressed in the report for the planning application.

8. Applicant's Supporting Information:

- Ecological Impact Assessment prepared by Darwin Ecology dated July 2025
- Heritage, Design and Access Statement dated March 2025

9. Officer's Assessment:

9.1 The policies and guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are also a material planning consideration. In addition to the above, it is noted that the Government published a draft version of the NPPF on the 16th December 2025. The consultation period for the aforementioned document expired on the 10th March 2026 and it is anticipated that a final version of the NPPF will be released in Summer 2026. Whilst the draft NPPF is a consultation document, it is considered that the proposed policies within it are a material consideration and must be given a degree of weight at the present time.

<u>Background and Proposed Development</u>

9.2 The application seeks the conversion of the ground floor of the existing building into a café with retail area, including amendments to the lean-to and decking area.

9.3 As an application for listed building consent, this application is concerned exclusively with heritage impacts arising from physical works to the listed building. All other material planning considerations sit outside its scope and are addressed within the separate planning application.

(a) Design and Impact on Heritage Assets

9.4 Shoecroft Barn is a grade II listed building. The Local Planning Authority is therefore statutorily required to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the building, its setting, and any features of special architectural or historic interest it may possess, in accordance with Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (for listed building consent).

9.5 The barn also lies within the designated Bibury Conservation Area, wherein the Local Planning Authority is statutorily obliged to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area, in accordance with Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

9.6 Considerable weight and importance must be given to the aforementioned legislation.

9.7 Section 12 of the NPPF reiterates that achieving well designed and high-quality places and buildings is importance.

9.8 Section 16 of the NPPF seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment. Paragraph 210 states that Local Authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Paragraph 212 states that when considering the impact of the proposed works on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Paragraph 213 states that any harm to or loss of significance, through alteration or development within the asset's setting should require clear and convincing justification. Paragraph 215 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

9.9 The main threshing barn forms part of the Bibury Trout Farm complex and contributes to the character of the site through its historic agricultural form and fabric. The barn has previously been converted to non-agricultural uses, with a number of unsympathetic modern alterations already present. As such, while

the building retains heritage value as a listed structure, its sensitivity to change has been reduced in certain areas.

9.10 The proposal involves the conversion of the ground floor of the barn to a café with ancillary retail use in connection with the established use of the site as Bibury Trout Farm. The change of use would not result in the loss of an historic agricultural function and would provide a viable use that supports the ongoing maintenance and use of the listed building. The principle of conversion is therefore considered reasonable.

9.11 The proposals include the compartmentalisation of the ground and first floor. The removal of the modern stair with two new openings in the historic western gable considered acceptable. The other physical works to the threshing barn appear to involve alterations to modern fabric, and are considered uncontentious.

9.12 The western lean-to is a modern and unsympathetic addition which makes a limited contribution to the overall significance of the listed building. The proposed alterations to this element, including raising the roof by approximately 30cm, would not materially alter its character or compete with the principal barn and are therefore considered acceptable.

9.13 The proposed link between the lean-to and rear shelter shed has been reduced in size from that originally proposed. This aspect is now considered to be deferential and subordinate, and reducing the awkward roof junctions. The Conservation Officer has confirmed this aspect is now considered reasonable.

9.14 Regarding the shelter shed, this would remain an open, covered external space rather than being enclosed. Amended plans have also omitted the intended concrete floor slab, with the flooring to now be renovated. The impact on the shelter shed is therefore considered acceptable.

9.15 To the south of the building, the replacement of the existing steps with wider steps and the introduction of a small terrace area are proposed. The use of dry-stone retaining walls is considered appropriate to the rural context of the site and would soften the appearance of these changes. Overall, this element of the scheme is not considered to harm the appearance or setting of the listed building.

9.16 Taken together, the proposed works are considered to preserve the significance of the listed building and its setting.

9.17 The site is located on the northern edge of the Bibury Conservation Area. The Bibury Conservation Area Statement does not identify the site itself as being of particular significance beyond the presence of the listed building. The land in and around the site has a managed and man-made appearance, with a character that differs from the historic core of the village

9.18 The proposal utilises the existing barn, with the alterations subservient to the principal barn and of a design that respects the character and appearance of the site. Given the significance of the barn is considered to be preserved, the contribution this makes to the Conservation Area is would likewise be preserved. Accordingly, it is considered that the proposed development would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

9.19 The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Sections 12 and 16 of the NPPF.

Other Matters

9.20 The Biodiversity implications have been addressed via the associated planning application, with the conditions associated with that application attached to this for completeness.

10. Conclusion:

10.1 The proposal is considered to comply with the above considerations, and is therefore recommended for permission.

11. Proposed Conditions:

1. The development shall be started by 3 years from the date of this decision notice.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. Prior to the construction of any external wall of the development hereby approved, samples of the proposed walling and roofing materials shall be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and only the approved materials shall be used.

Reason: To ensure that the building is repointed using materials and a finish that is appropriate to the building which is listed as being of architectural and historic interest, thereby preserving the special architectural or historic interest which it possesses in accordance with Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. The timber cladding shall not be treated in any way and shall be left to weather and silver naturally and shall be permanently retained as such thereafter.

Reason: Traditionally timber cladding was untreated, and this method is considered to be the most appropriate in order to preserve the special architectural or historic interest which the Listed building possesses in accordance with Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

4. No new doors or windows shall be installed until details have been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted details shall be as a scale of 1:10 or 1:20, with details of mouldings and profiles as a scale of 1:1, and shall also include details of the final colour/finish.

Reason: To ensure that the doors and windows are designed and finished in a manner which is appropriate to the character of the building, which is listed as being of architectural or historic interest, thereby preserving its special interest and sustaining its significance, in accordance with Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

5. No repairs or renovations shall be undertaken to the L-shaped shelter shed, including to its timber posts, roof structure, or flooring, until a detailed specification and method statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The specification shall include a survey of the existing structure and flooring, and an assessment of its condition.

Reason: To ensure that the repair and refurbishment of the L-shaped shelter shed is appropriate to the character of the building, which is listed as being of architectural or historic interest, thereby preserving its special interest and sustaining its significance, in accordance with Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the National Planning Policy Framework. These are important details which need to be undertaken in a manner which ensures that they serve to preserve the special merit of the building.

New rainwater goods shall be of cast iron construction or a substitute which has been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and shall be permanently retained as such thereafter.

Reason: To ensure that the rainwater goods are constructed of a material appropriate to the character of the building, which is listed as being of architectural or historic interest, thereby preserving the special architectural or historic interest which it possesses in accordance with Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

6. The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the recommendations contained within sections 6.8 to 6.17 and 7.2 to 7.3 of the Ecological Impact Assessment (Darwin Ecology, July 2025 - received 19th September 2025). All of the recommendations shall be implemented in full according to the specified timescales, and thereafter permanently retained.

Reason: To ensure wildlife is protected in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), Circular 06/2005, paragraphs 187, 192 and 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy EN8 of the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011- 2031 and in order for the Council to comply with Part 3 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

7. Prior to first use, details of the provision of 3no. compensatory swallow nest cups installed on the building, 1no. bird box affixed to a suitable onsite tree and 1no. bat box affixed to the western gable end of the building shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. The details shall include a drawing showing the types of features, their locations within the site and their positions on the elevations of the building, and a timetable for their provision. The approved details shall be implemented in accordance with the approved specification and programme of implementation and be retained thereafter.

Reason: To protect and enhance the site for biodiversity in accordance with paragraphs 187, 192 and 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy EN8 of the Cotswold District Council Local Plan, and for the Council to comply with Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Informatives:

1. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawing number(s):

1621/500 REV C; 1621/501 REV B; and 1621/502 REV B

Reason: For purposes of clarity and for the avoidance of doubt, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

2. The works permitted are as per the approved plans and the details within the submitted Heritage, Design and Access Statement do not form part of the approved works.

Replacement, part conversion and remodelling of existing General/Heavy Industrial buildings/site with a Rural Business Hub including associated landscaping and consolidated parking at Hill Farm Main Road Oddington Gloucestershire

Full Application 25/03713/FUL	
Applicant:	Gavin & Roxbury Limited
Agent:	SF Planning Limited
Case Officer:	Amy Hill
Ward Member(s):	Councillor David Cunningham
Committee Date:	13 May 2026
RECOMMENDATION:	**PERMIT**

1. Main Issues:

(a) Principle of Development
(b) Design and Impact on the Cotswolds National Landscape
(c) Impact on the setting of Oddington Conservation Area
(d) Impact on Residential Amenity
(e) Highways Safety and Sustainable Transport
(f) Biodiversity and Geodiversity
(g) Flood Risk and Drainage

2. Reasons for Referral:

2.1 The Councils Non-Executive Scheme of Delegation outlines that Applications which involve 100sqm non-residential building floorspace or sites over 1 hectare in size must be determined by the Planning and Licensing Committee and may not be determined under delegated powers.

3. Site Description:

3.1 The application site comprises a collection of modern agricultural buildings currently used for B2 industrial purposes, a bungalow, and surrounding agricultural land extending to approximately 1.6 hectares. Land to the west of the buildings has been levelled and is used for parking and storage, including a number of storage containers. Overall, the site slopes gently from west to east.

3.2 The site is located in open countryside to the north of the village of Upper Oddington, on the opposite side of the A436. It lies approximately 2.2

kilometres east of Stow-on-Wold. Vehicular access is obtained from the highway to the south, serving both the application site and agricultural fields to the north and east. The wider area is characterised by open agricultural fields.

3.3 The site lies within the Cotswolds National Landscape. The Oddington Conservation Area is located approximately 40 metres to the south of the site and terminates on the southern side of the A436. As such, the site lies within the setting of the Conservation Area.

3.4 A Public Right of Way, Oddington Footpath 5, crosses the south-western corner of the site.

4. Relevant Planning History:

4.1 17/00611/CLEUD - Certificate of Lawful Existing Use or Development under Section 191 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for the occupation of a dwelling in breach of condition h) - agricultural occupancy restriction of permission CD.5849 - Permitted 09/03/2017;

4.2 17/02258/FUL - Removal of Condition h) (agricultural occupancy restriction) of permission CD.5849 - Permitted 11/07/2017;

4.3 22/01634/CLEUD - Certificate of Lawful Existing Use or Development under Section 191 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for the use of the site as B2 Use (General Industrial) and associated ancillary uses - Permitted 10/08/2022;

4.4 22/04337/FUL - Change of use of the land from agricultural to outdoor live performance venue (sui generis), an engineering operation resulting in a sunken amphitheatre, erection of a kitchen pod, installation of a permanent pavilion base, temporary use of part of the site for car parking, laying out of an access track (part retrospective) - Refused 14/09/2023;

4.5 22/04303/FUL - Erection of a marquee pavilion, installation of outdoor lighting structures and installation of other 'pod' structures for a temporary period each calendar year from 30 April to 1 October to facilitate outdoor leisure events - Refused 14/09/2023;

4.6 23/03675/FUL - Change of use of existing general/heavy industrial site (use class B2) to flexible use (use class E(g)i [offices] and E(g)iii [light industrial]) - Permitted 14/08/2024;

4.7 25/01141/FUL - Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of replacement dwelling including associated parking, reinstatement works and wider landscaping - Permitted 23/07/2025

5. Planning Policies:

- TNPPF The National Planning Policy Framework
- EC1 Employment Development
- EC2 Safeguarding Employment Sites
- EC3 All types of Employment-generating Uses
- EC5 Rural Diversification
- EC6 Conversion of Rural Buildings
- EN1 Built, Natural & Historic Environment
- EN2 Design of Built & Natural Environment
- EN4 The Wider Natural & Historic Landscape
- EN5 Cotswolds AONB
- EN7 Trees, Hedgerows & Woodlands
- EN8 Bio & Geo: Features Habitats & Species
- EN9 Bio & Geo: Designated Sites
- EN10 HE: Designated Heritage Assets
- EN11 HE: DHA - Conservation Areas
- EN14 Managing Flood Risk
- EN15 Pollution & Contaminated Land
- INF3 Sustainable Transport
- INF4 Highway Safety
- INF5 Parking Provision

6. Observations of Consultees:

6.1 GCC Public Rights of Way: No objections as long as the route remains unaffected

6.2 GCC Highways Officer: Full comments attached as Appendix A

6.3 GCC Minerals and Waste: Additional information required

6.4 GCC Local Lead Flood Authority: No objection subject to conditions

6.5 CDC Tree Officer: No objections subject to conditions

6.6 CDC Flood Risk Officer: Additional information required

6.7 CDC Economic Development Lead: Support

6.8 CDC Environmental Health Officer (Land contamination): No objections subject to condition

6.9 CDC Environmental Health Officer (Noise): No objections subject to condition

6.10 CDC Biodiversity Officer: No objections subject to conditions

6.11 Cotswolds Conservation Board: No site-specific comments

7. View of Town/Parish Council:

7.1 Oddington Parish Council: *'The Parish Council supports this application which is a marked improvement over the existing barns. The Council also welcomes the provision of accommodation for start up businesses and the employment opportunities that will follow on from this. We note that one of the new barns is slightly higher than the existing barn. Without wishing to compromise future use, the Council wonders whether the height could be reduced.'*

8. Other Representations:

8.1 One third party representation has been received, raising general comments.

- Supported the concerns by the Parish Council
- Application for a replacement house included the removal of buildings and re- landscaping associated with the amphitheatre
- Seeks to secure these aspects as part of this application, in case the house isn't constructed.

9. Applicant's Supporting Information:

- Photos of existing buildings to be demolished
- Biodiversity Net Gain Design Stage Report Version 1.2 prepared by AllEcology dated November 2025
- Dusk Emergence Survey Covering Note - Dusk Emergence Surveys for Bats prepared by AllEcology dated April 2025
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Version 1.2 prepared by AllEcology dated November 2025
- Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool (received 21st November 2025)

- Rural Business Hub At Hill Farm, Oddington: A Local Employment Opportunity Economic (Retention And Growth) Benefits Statement
- Design and Access Statement prepares by SOTA dated November 2025

- Letter reference 5363 from David M Boswell BSc (Hons) MSc Geo-Environmental Engineer for Wilson Associates (Consulting) Limited dated 2nd September 2024
- Flood Risk Assessment, Drainage & Maintenance Strategy prepared by davidsonwalsh dated 19.02.2026 Revision D
- Arboricultural Survey, Impact Assessment and Protection Plan MHP ref: 24060A BERRY BANK, ODDINGTON_TS AIA TPP_V2
- Planning Statement by SFPlanning dated November 2025
- Landscape & Visual Impact Statement LS6335/HF/Doc001B dated November 2025
- Report (structural) Issue 002 dated 04/10/2025 Job number 24/236
- Transport Statement prepared by rappor revision 03 dated December 2025
- Framework Travel Plan prepared by rappor revision 02 dated December 2025
- Covering Letter from agent (SFPlanning) dated 6th January 2026 (updated 19 March 2026)

10. Officer's Assessment:

10.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that 'If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.' The starting point for the determination of this application is therefore the current development plan for the District which is the adopted Cotswold District Local Plan 2011 - 2031.

10.2 The policies and guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are also a material planning consideration. In addition to the above, it is noted that the Government published a draft version of the NPPF on the 16th December 2025. The consultation period for the aforementioned document expired on the 10th March 2026 and it is anticipated that a final version of the NPPF will be released in Summer 2026. Whilst the draft NPPF is a consultation document, it is considered that the proposed policies within it are a material consideration and must be given a degree of weight at the present time.

Background and Proposed Development

10.3 The application seeks the redevelopment of the site to create a rural business hub to support local Cotswold-based start-up businesses, providing flexible incubation space for small-scale rural economic activity. The proposed uses comprise a mix of E(g), B2 and B8 uses. While the Planning Statement initially

referred to E Class uses more generally, this has subsequently been clarified by the applicant's agent.

10.4 The existing lawful use of the buildings and yard is B2 (general industrial). There is also an extant permission allowing E(g)(i) (offices) and E(g)(iii) (light industrial) uses. The existing B2 use became lawful through immunity from enforcement action rather than the grant of planning permission and, as such, is not subject to planning controls in respect of matters such as transport impacts, noise, or operating hours.

10.5 The site also includes the area of land currently containing a bungalow, the removal of which has been previously approved alongside the provision of a replacement dwelling to the north of the site.

10.6 Barn 1 would be retained and converted, with the removal of an existing open-sided section measuring approximately 308 square metres. The remaining building would have a footprint of approximately 22.6 metres by 31.6 metres. It would have an overall height of 8.4 metres, with main eaves at 6.4 metres and a lean-to section with eaves at 3.1 metres. The building would feature a low stone wall of approximately 1.1 metres around its base, with ash cladding above, designed to weather naturally to a silvered finish. The roof would be finished in metal sheeting and incorporate integrated solar panels.

10.7 Barn 2 would be a newly constructed building measuring approximately 12 metres by 32 metres, with an open porch area on the eastern side measuring 3 metres by 12 metres. To the rear would be a bin storage area and three parking spaces, each with EV charging provision. The building would have eaves heights of approximately 4.3 metres and an overall ridge height of 8.8 metres. Materials would comprise silvered ash cladding, a low stone wall, and a metal roof with integrated solar panels. Oak louvres would be used over areas of glazing to reduce light spill and minimise the visual impact of openings.

10.8 Barn 3 would also be newly constructed and would measure approximately 14 metres by 8.8 metres, with an overhang to either side. It would have an overall height of approximately 8.3 metres and eaves at 3.9 metres. The building would employ a matching palette of silvered ash cladding, a low stone wall, and a metal roof.

10.9 Barn 4 would replace an existing building on the site and would have a footprint of approximately 23 metres by 10 metres. It would have an overall height of approximately 7 metres and main eaves at 3.6 metres. The building would be

constructed using Cotswold stone walling, a reconstituted stone roof, and aluminium glazing.

10.10 The majority of parking would be located to the north of the site, broadly in the area currently occupied by the bungalow to be removed. This would provide 34 car parking spaces, including 9 spaces with EV charging provision. A further 5 spaces would be provided to the south of the site, including 4 accessible spaces and 1 EV charging space, resulting in a total of 42 car parking spaces across the site. The southern part of the site would also include provision for 7 covered bicycle spaces and 5 motorcycle spaces.

(a) Principle of Development

10.11 Local Plan Policy EC1 relates to employment development. It outlines that Employment Development will be permitted where it:

a. supports the creation of high quality jobs in professional, technical and knowledge based sectors and seeks to support economic opportunities which capitalise on the strength of existing academic and training institutions and research organisations;
b. maintains and enhances the vitality of the rural economy;
c. enables opportunities for more sustainable working practices, including homeworking
d. supports and improves the vitality and viability of Primary, Key, District and Local Centres; or
e. supports sustainable tourism in ways that enables the District to attract higher numbers of longer-stay visitors.

10.12 Local Plan Policy EC3 relates to proposals for employment generating uses. In relation to sites outside of development boundaries and outside of established employment sites, such as the site, the policy outlines that proposals for small-scale employment development appropriate to the rural area will be permitted where they:

a. do not entail residential use as anything other than ancillary to the business; and
b. are justified by a business case, demonstrating that the business is viable; or
c. facilitate the retention or growth of a local employment opportunity

10.13 Supporting paragraph 9.3.7 advises that *'Generally, Policy EC3 encourages employment proposals which support or restructure the local economy through the provision of incubation space for small-scale rural economic activity.'*

10.14 Established employment sites are listed within Appendix E of the Local Plan and are safeguarded by Local Plan Policy EC2 (Established Employment Sites). Whilst the application site is not identified as an established employment site, it is currently in lawful employment use and, in this regard, the objectives of safeguarding and promoting employment uses are considered relevant to the assessment of the proposal.

10.15 Local Plan Policy EC5 supports proposals for rural diversification where:

a. the proposal will not cause conflict with the existing farming operation including severance or disruption to the agricultural holding that would prejudice its continued viable operation;
b. existing buildings are reused wherever possible; and
c. the scale and design of the development contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area.

10.16 Local Plan Policy EC6 supports the conversion of rural buildings where:

a. the building is structurally sound, suitable for and capable of conversion to the proposed use without substantial alteration, extension or re-building;
b. it would not cause conflict with existing farming operations, including severance or disruption to the holding that would prejudice its continued viable operation; and
c. the development proposals are compatible with extant uses on the site and existing and planned uses in close proximity to the site.

10.17 Paragraph 85 of the NPPF states that:

Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential.

10.18 Paragraph 88 states that:

Planning policies and decisions should enable:

a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, new buildings;
b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and
d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

10.19 Paragraph 89 outlines that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable. The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.

10.20 In this case, Local Plan Policy EC1 is supportive in principle of the proposed development. By accommodating HG Ventures (the applicant's business) alongside providing space for local enterprises, the proposal would enhance the vitality of the rural economy and provide opportunities for more sustainable working practices, including reduced commuting to out-of-district locations.

10.21 Policy EC3 does not define a specific floorspace threshold for what constitutes 'small-scale' development, and site-specific circumstances are therefore a key consideration. In this instance, the internal floorspace would increase by approximately 27%. While Barn 2 would be of a comparable mass to Barn 1, Barns 3 and 4 would be substantially smaller. Overall, the proposal is considered reasonable to assess as small-scale employment development. The submitted Economic (Retention and Growth) Benefits Statement sets out the aims of the business and the growth of HG Ventures. Whilst this does not constitute a full financial business case, it is considered reasonable to conclude that the proposal would be viable.

10.22 Policy EC5 requires proposals not to conflict with existing farming operations; however, agricultural activities have ceased on the site and surrounding land. The main building would be reused, along with some smaller structures. Matters relating to design are considered elsewhere in this report, but the development

is considered to be of a scale and design that would contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area.

10.23 Policy EC6 is also relevant. A survey has been provided demonstrating that the main building is capable of conversion. While the appearance of the building would be significantly altered, its overall form would be retained and it would continue to read as an agricultural building. The principle of conversion of the building to office use has previously been established, and therefore, notwithstanding the extent of the works, the proposal is considered to comply with criterion (a) of Policy EC6. Given the absence of ongoing agricultural uses, the proposal would not prejudice farming activities, and as a proposal for commercial use on a site in lawful B2 use, it is considered compatible with surrounding uses.

10.24 Paragraph 88 gives significant weight to supporting economic growth, which the proposal would meet. Paragraph 89 of the NPPF specifies that development should *'not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable.'* This is discussed further in the transport section below.

10.25 Overall, while the proposal would include significant alterations to the existing buildings and an overall increase in built form, it is considered to represent an appropriate intensification of use on a small-scale employment site, supported by Policy EC1, EC3, EC5 and EC6.

(b) Design and Impact on the Cotswolds National Landscape

10.26 The site is located within the Cotswolds National Landscape (formerly known as the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty). Section 85(A1) of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 (as amended by Section 245 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023) states that relevant authorities have a duty to seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty.

10.27 Local Plan Policy EN1 states that new development will, where appropriate, promote the protection, conservation and enhancement of the historic and natural environment by:

a. ensuring the protection and enhancement of existing natural and historic environmental assets and their settings in proportion with the significance of the asset;

b. contributing to the provision and enhancement of multi-functioning green infrastructure;

c. addressing climate change, habitat loss and fragmentation through creating new habitats and the better management of existing habitats;

d. seeking to improve air, soil and water quality where feasible; and

e. ensuring design standards that complement the character of the area and the sustainable use of the development.

10.28 Local Plan Policy EN2 states that *'Development will be permitted which accords with the Cotswold Design Code. Proposals should be of design quality that respects the character and distinctive appearance of the locality.'*

10.29 Local Plan Policy EN4 states that development will be permitted where it does not have a significant detrimental impact on the natural and historic landscape (including the tranquillity of the countryside) of Cotswold District or neighbouring areas, and that proposals will take account of landscape and historic landscape character, visual quality and local distinctiveness. They will be expected to enhance, restore and better manage the natural and historic landscape, and any significant landscape features and elements, including key views, the setting of settlements, settlement patterns and heritage assets.

10.30 Local Plan Policy EN5 Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) states that in determining development proposals within the AONB or its setting, the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape, its character and special qualities will be given great weight.

10.31 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by *'protecting and enhancing valued landscapes'* and *'recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside'*.

10.32 Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states that *'great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in ... National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.'*

10.33 Paragraph 190 of the NPPF states that *'[w]hen considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes, permission should be refused for major development67 other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest.'*

10.34 Footnote 67 clarifies that *'For the purposes of paragraphs 190 and 191, whether a proposal is 'major development' is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined.'*

10.35 Cotswold District Council endorsed the Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2025-2030 on the 8th May 2025, with relevant policies within. Particularly Policy CE13: 'Development and infrastructure - principles' relates to the CNL Board Landscape Strategy and Guidelines and Landscape Character Assessments.

10.36 In terms of sensitivity, the majority of the application site and its surroundings fall within Landscape Character Type (LCT) 17: Pastoral Lowland Vale and Landscape Character Area (LCA) 17B: Vale of Moreton as defined in the Landscape Strategy and Guidelines for the Cotswolds National Landscape.

10.37 The CLCA identifies the isolated development such as conversion of farm buildings that might compromise rural landscape character, dispersed settlement patterns and views to the neighbouring Farmed Slopes including farm buildings converted to residential use as a Local Force for Change. The CLCA states that the Potential Landscape Implications of such development can include:

- *'Visual intrusions introduced to the landscape;*
- *Erosion of the sparse settlement pattern of the Pastoral Lowland Vale;*
- *Loss of characteristic open landscape;*
- *Introduction of 'lit' elements to characteristically dark landscapes;*
- *Upgrading of minor roads and lanes in areas of new development and introduction of suburbanising features such as gateways, kerbs, and lighting;*
- *Loss of tranquillity;*
- *Suburbanisation and domestication of agricultural landscape by the introduction of gardens e.g ornamental garden plants and boundary features, parking areas, lighting, and conversion of tracks to manicured drives and ornamental gateways;*
- *Appearance of 'mini parklands' out of context with the surrounding landscape;*
- *Appearance or extension of stables and 'white tape' field boundaries for horses and ponies (see 17.9 below);*
- *Damage to road verges and roadside hedges and walls and the creation of informal passing places'*

10.38 The LCA's Landscape Strategies and Guidelines section states:

- *'Avoid isolated development, that will intrude negatively into the landscape and cannot be successfully mitigated;*
- *Conserve areas of dark skies;*
- *Oppose new housing in the Pastoral Lowland Vale (unless special circumstances apply in accordance with Paragraph 55 of the NPPF and development conserves and enhances the AONB as required by the CRoW Act 2000;*
- *Avoid conversion of isolated farm buildings;*
- *Conserve the distinctive rural and dispersed settlement pattern;*
- *Restore existing stone farm buildings and structures in preference to new built development;*
- *When restored or converted to new uses, buildings must retain their historic integrity and functional character. Sound conservation advice and principles must be sought and implemented;*
- *Maintain the sense of openness and consider the impact of development, including cumulative development on views to and from the adjacent landscape types such as the Farmed Slopes and High Wold and on the setting of the AONB;*
- *Control the proliferation of suburban building styles and materials;*
- *Landscaping schemes accompanying development should encourage the planting of appropriately sized native trees, shrubs and traditional fruit varieties, whilst discouraging large alien tree species such as eucalypts and conifers and inappropriate cultivars of native species, particularly on fringes of open countryside;*
- *Respect traditional position of agricultural buildings and their relationship to the surrounding land;*
- *Introduce vehicle weight restrictions to prevent damage to verges and roadside boundaries.'*

10.39 In assessing the proposal, it is important to consider the baseline circumstances of the site. The site is currently characterised by regularised industrial activity, including noise, lighting and vehicle movements, which already detract from the tranquillity and natural character of the National Landscape.

10.40 To the south and west the area is bound by hedgerows and fencing to varying extents. The land slopes down towards the north east and is experienced from a public footpath, Oddington Footpath 5, to the west. At present, users of this footpath experience largely open views of the engineered yard and open storage associated with existing industrial use. The proposed development includes new hedgerow planting to better separate the footpath from

operational areas and is therefore considered to enhance the experience of users.

10.41 The design approach has evolved through pre-application discussions to achieve a high-quality response appropriate to a countryside location outside the main village. The majority of the buildings would be clad in ash timber, designed to weather naturally, reflecting agricultural vernacular materials. Stone detailing is used at lower levels, where concrete or blockwork might otherwise be expected, with the smallest building constructed entirely in stone. This approach is considered appropriate in response to the differing scales of the buildings, with the larger structures benefiting from a lighter timber appearance. The overall form, detailing (including louvres and overhangs), and site layout are considered to align with the principles of the Cotswolds Design Code.

10.42 The built form has been arranged compactly to limit encroachment into the wider National Landscape. The principal parking area is located to the north of the site, partly on land previously occupied by the bungalow to be removed, and is limited in wider views. While some light spill is anticipated from parking activity, this is considered acceptable in balance, given the compact layout achieved. Additional planting along the eastern boundary would further mitigate the impact of headlights and activity, and external lighting would be controlled by condition to ensure it is limited, downward-directed and time-restricted.

10.43 Having regard to the existing and permitted uses on the site, it is acknowledged that traffic movements would increase to some extent. However, against the established baseline, the resultant impact is considered limited, and it is not considered that the proposal would cause harm to the special qualities of the Cotswolds National Landscape.

10.44 While the proposal constitutes major development for the purposes of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 (as amended), it is considered that, taking account of the existing built form and lawful industrial use on the site, the nature, scale and setting of the proposal would not amount to major development for the purposes of Paragraph 190 of the NPPF.

10.45 Overall, the proposal is considered to represent an appropriate design and layout which would conserve the special qualities of the Cotswolds National Landscape, in accordance with Local Plan Policies EN2, EN4 and EN5.

(c) Impact on the Setting of Oddington Conservation Area

10.46 The site lies within the setting of the Oddington Conservation Area.

10.47 Local Plan Policy EN10 states:

'1 In considering proposals that affect a designated heritage asset or its setting, great weight will be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.
2 Development proposals that sustain and enhance the character, appearance and significance of designated heritage assets (and their settings), and that put them to viable uses, consistent with their conservation, will be permitted.
3 Proposals that would lead to harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset or its setting will not be permitted, unless a clear and convincing justification of public benefit can be demonstrated to outweigh that harm. Any such assessment will take account, in the balance of material considerations:
- The importance of the asset;
- The scale of harm; and
- The nature and level of the public benefit of the proposal.'

10.48 Local Plan Policy EN11 Designated Heritage Assets - Conservation Areas states:

'Development proposals, including demolition, that would affect Conservation Areas and their settings, will be permitted provided they:
a. Preserve and where appropriate enhance the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area in terms of siting, scale, form, proportion, design, materials and the retention of positive features;
b. Include hard and soft landscape proposals, where appropriate, that respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
c. Will not result in the loss of open spaces, including garden areas and village greens, which make a valuable contribution to the character and/or appearance, and/or allow important views into or out of the Conservation Area.
d. Have regard to the relevant Conservation Area appraisal (where available); and
e. do not include internally illuminated advertisement signage unless the signage does not have an adverse impact on the Conservation Area or its setting.'

10.49 Section 16 of the NPPF seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment. Paragraph 210 states that Local Authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; the positive

contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Paragraph 212 states that when considering the impact of the proposed works on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Paragraph 215 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

10.50 The Oddington Conservation Area lies approximately 40 metres to the south of the application site, terminating on the southern side of the A436. The site is visible from parts of the Conservation Area, particularly from the junction of the A436 with the unnamed road through Oddington, and in certain views along the A436. The A436 forms a clear and established physical boundary between the Conservation Area and the application site.

10.51 From within the Conservation Area, the site is experienced in the context of the A-road and its associated traffic and infrastructure. The proposal would result in an intensification of activity on the site, including increased vehicle movements and some additional lighting. However, the site is already in lawful industrial use and is characterised by established built form and activity. In light of the existing baseline conditions, the degree of separation provided by the A436, and the nature of the surrounding context, the proposed development would not result in harm to the significance of the Conservation Area or its setting.

10.52 Accordingly, the proposal is considered to preserve the setting of the Oddington Conservation Area and to accord with the requirements of Local Plan Policies EN10 and EN11 and the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

(d) Impact on Residential Amenity

10.53 Local Plan Policy EN15 Pollution and Contaminated Land advises that:

'1. Development will be permitted that will not result in unacceptable risk to public health or safety, the natural environment or the amenity of existing land uses through:
a. pollution of the air, land, surface water, or ground water sources; and/or
b. generation of noise or light levels, or other disturbance such as spillage, flicker, vibration, dust or smell.

2. Unless proposals would result in no unacceptable risk to future occupiers of the development and/or the surrounding land, development will not be permitted:
a. that is located on or in the vicinity of land that is contaminated or suspected of being contaminated; and/or
b. on land that contains or which potentially would create through development a pathway for migration of a potentially hazardous substance into a sensitive receptor.
3. In respect of affected sites the developer and/or landowner will be required to undertake appropriate investigation(s) and to carry out necessary remedial works.'

Contaminated Land

10.54 The submitted geotechnical investigation identified the potential presence of asbestos-containing materials on the site and recommended that further investigation and testing be undertaken. This recommendation has been reviewed and supported by the Council's Environmental Protection Officer. Accordingly, it is recommended that a planning condition be imposed to secure additional investigation and, where necessary, appropriate remediation measures.

Noise and disturbance

10.55 Part of the site benefits from a Certificate of Lawfulness confirming that the existing lawful use is B2 (general industrial). This lawful use applies to the area containing both the existing and proposed buildings and is not subject to planning controls in respect of noise, hours of operation or other operational restrictions.

10.56 While the Council's Environmental Health team has suggested a number of conditions to control noise arising from the site, it is considered that, in light of the existing lawful B2 fallback position, such conditions would not meet the tests of reasonableness or necessity.

10.57 Conditions relating to the construction phase of the development, including the control of construction noise and disturbance, have also been recommended by Environmental Health. These are considered reasonable and proportionate and are recommended to be included as part of any planning permission granted.

(e) Highways Safety and Sustainable Transport

10.58 The current lawful use of the site is industrial in nature, which is likely to generate a relatively limited number of vehicle trips but with a higher proportion of large vehicles. By comparison, office-based uses typically generate a greater number of vehicle trips, concentrated around peak hours of the day.

10.59 In terms of the sustainability of the location, it is noted that Local Plan Policy INF3 requires that:

'Development will be permitted that assists in delivery of the objectives of the Local Transport Plan and in particular:
a. actively supports travel choice through provision, enhancement and promotion of safe and recognisable connections to existing walking, cycling and public transport networks (including, where appropriate, the rail network);
b. gives priority to pedestrians and cyclists and provides access to public transport facilities taking account of the travel and transport needs of all people;
c. does not have a detrimental effect on the environment by reason of unacceptable levels of noise, vibration or atmospheric pollution;
d. ensures links with green infrastructure including Public Rights of Way and, where feasible, wider cycle networks;
e. makes a positive contribution, where appropriate, to the restoration of former railway lines by retaining existing embankments, cuttings, bridges and related features;
f. incorporates, where feasible, facilities for secure bicycle parking and for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles;
g. accommodates, where appropriate, the efficient delivery of goods and supplies; and
h. considers the needs of people with disabilities by all modes of travel.'

10.60 Paragraph 115 of the NPPF requires that:

'In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:
a) sustainable transport modes are prioritised taking account of the vision for the site, the type of development and its location;
b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;
c) the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code; and

d) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree through a vision-led approach.'

Sustainability of the Location

10.61 The Local Highways Authority have commented on this application, noting that: *'It is not considered to be a sustainable site in that any cycle route to the site is unattractive due to the level and speed of traffic on the A436 and the lack of any segregated facility as well as the topography in the area. Public transport is not an attractive option due to the frequency of the services as well as the walking route from the stops to the site along narrow unlit roads with no segregated provision and a need to cross the A436 to access the site again with no facilities or lighting to allow safe crossing of a busy, fast section of highway.'*

10.62 It is, however, also relevant that the site is already developed and in lawful industrial use. National and local policy recognises that rural employment sites will not always be located in highly sustainable locations, and supports the diversification and growth of rural businesses. The proposal would provide a type of flexible business accommodation not currently available in the local area and has the potential to reduce longer-distance commuting by providing employment opportunities closer to where people live.

10.63 The site also benefits from an extant permission granted in 2024 for flexible E(g)(i) (office) and E(g)(iii) (light industrial) uses. That permission did not restrict the proportion of office floorspace, the number or type of vehicle trips, or operating hours, although it was subject to a condition requiring the submission of a Travel Plan. The current proposal would increase overall floorspace by approximately 27%.

10.64 The submitted Transport Statement assesses the traffic impacts on the basis that the previously approved scheme could be 100% office use. Under that scenario, and with the proposed scheme assuming 80% office use, the predicted traffic movements would increase from:

- 20 to 22 vehicle movements in the AM peak;
- 23 to 25 vehicle movements in the PM peak; and
- approximately 150 to 170 total daily vehicle trips.

10.65 On this basis, the percentage increase in traffic movements would be limited. To ensure that trip generation does not exceed these assessed levels, a planning

condition restricting office floorspace to a maximum of 80% is considered necessary and reasonable.

10.66 With regard to reducing dependence on private motor vehicles, the Transport Statement submitted advises:

'6.23 The applicant, upon occupation of the development by their business, will provide branded bikes to members of staff who live within ten miles of the application site or who wish to travel to/from the railway station at either Kingham (a 20-minute cycle based on Google Maps) or Moreton-in-Marsh (a 31-minute cycle based on Google Maps). The proposed site plan demonstrates that showers will be provided on-site to allow cycle commuters to change into work clothes upon arrival.

6.24 The applicant will invest in an EV to operate a morning and evening shuttle service for staff from / to Kingham railway station, a 9-minute drive from the application site. These EV measures are compliant with the NPPF which includes ultra-low and zero-emission vehicles within the definition of sustainable travel.'

10.67 The application demonstrates that travel choice is being promoted as part of the development. While this is limited by virtue of the location, it is acknowledged that NPPF Paragraph 110 notes that *'opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.'* In this case, the development would promote cycling as an alternative mode of transport, proposes a shuttle bus to and from the train station, and would otherwise support the use of electric vehicles. When considering the proposals, in combination with the existing context and uses, it is considered that the scheme satisfies the NPPF and Local Plan requirements to promote travel choice within this rural location.

10.68 The Highways Officer has gone on to advise that whilst they consider the application should be refused, should the application be recommended for permission that this should be subject to conditions requiring the submission of a Travel Plan (beyond the Framework Travel Plan submitted with the application) with a mechanism to require contributions to require ongoing monitoring of mechanisms specified. There is a current Framework Travel Plan submitted; however, the strategy of the site, to have small businesses rent each unit, results in difficulties in giving detailed specifics for each use at this stage. While it has been advised that the applicant will relocate to the site, most end users have yet to be determined.

10.69 The Framework Travel Plan includes sections on the objective framework for full Travel Plans for each occupier, increasing awareness of sustainable travel options among staff, encourage less reliance on the car and improve the health of staff. This also includes intentions to survey and monitor the effectiveness of the Travel Plans. Section 5 includes more specific measures including the appointment of a Travel Plan Coordinator. As well as information, the main measures proposed include the provision of branded bikes to *'members of staff who live within ten miles of the application site or members of staff travelling to/from the train stations at Kingham (a 20- minute cycle) and Moreton-in-Marsh (a 31-minute cycle)'* and *'an electric vehicle to operate a morning and evening shuttle service from/to Kingham railway station, a 9-minute drive from the application site.'*

10.70 The Highways Officer has required the full Travel Plans. The Framework Travel Plan is clear that these will be produced, and it is therefore considered reasonable that these are submitted prior to the occupation of each unit. While the Highway Authority has suggested contributions towards monitoring, it is noted that the 2024 permission included travel planning measures without such contributions. On balance, it is considered reasonable that monitoring be undertaken by the appointed Travel Plan Co-ordinator rather than secured through financial contributions.

10.71 The provision of 13 electric vehicle charging points is also proposed and is considered appropriate given the likely reliance on private car travel.

Highways Safety and Impacts on the Road Network

10.72 NPPF Paragraph 116 outlines that:

' Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.'

10.73 Local Plan Policy INF4 outlines that:

'Development will be permitted that:
a. is well integrated with the existing transport network within and beyond the development itself, avoiding severance of communities as a result of measures to accommodate increased levels of traffic on the highway network;

b. creates safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians, avoids street clutter and where appropriate establishes home zones;
c. provides safe and suitable access and includes designs, where appropriate, that incorporate low speeds;
d. avoids locations where the cumulative impact of congestion or other undesirable impact on the transport network is likely to remain severe following mitigation; and
e. has regard, where appropriate, to the Manual for Gloucestershire Streets or any guidance produced by the Local Highway Authority that may supersede it.'

10.74 The Highway Authority has advised that it would recommend refusal due to concerns regarding the sustainability of the site and potential highway safety impacts. However, no objection was raised on highway safety grounds in respect of the 2024 permission for flexible employment uses on the site, nor in relation to a previously proposed events use.

10.75 It is acknowledged that the proposal would result in an increase in traffic movements at peak times. However, adequate visibility is available, or can be achieved, at the site access onto the A436. Subject to the maintenance of visibility splays in perpetuity, it is considered that the proposal would not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

10.76 Overall, it is concluded that the development would not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety or a severe impact on the local highway network. The proposal promotes sustainable transport measures to a degree that is proportionate to its rural context and is therefore considered to accord with Local Plan Policies INF3 and INF4 and Section 9 of the NPPF.

10.77 The presence of the Public Right of Way and comments from the County Council's Public Rights of Way Officer are noted. As the proposed works are located to the east of the footpath, no direct impact is anticipated. Nevertheless, an informative is recommended to remind the applicant of their duty to ensure that the route is kept safe, clear and unobstructed during construction and operation.

(f) Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Habitats and Protected Species

10.78 Local Plan Policy EN8 outlines that development will be permitted that conserves and enhances biodiversity and geodiversity, providing net gains

where possible. Furthermore, it outlines that proposals that would result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats and resources, or which are likely to have an adverse effect on internationally protected species, will not be permitted.

10.79 Section 15 of the NPPF also outlines that development should conserves and where possible enhances biodiversity and geodiversity and should not result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats and resources.

10.80 The application included the submission of a Preliminary Ecological Survey (PEA), and the Biodiversity Officer has accepted the information, advising that a sensitive lighting strategy is required to ensure that surrounding habitats, enhancement features, and wildlife corridors are not subject to nocturnal lighting. This is recommended to be secured by condition. Furthermore, conditions are recommended by enhancement features for bats and nesting birds detailed in the PEA. This is required to comply with Policy EN8 of the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011- 2031.

Biodiversity Net Gain

10.81 The information submitted advises that the proposal includes on sites gains of:

- 61.83% net gain in area habitat units
- 154.50% net gain in hedgerow units

10.82 As such, a 30-year landscape and ecological management plan condition is recommended. Subject to this, it is considered that BNG requirements would be met.

Trees

10.83 Local Plan Policy EN7 requires development to conserve and enhance natural assets likely to be affected, including trees, hedgerows, and woodland of high landscape amenity, ecological or historical value as well as veteran trees.

10.84 The proposed works do not affect protected or veteran/ancient trees. Some B grade trees would need to be removed, and the proposed planting is considered to suitably mitigate the harm the loss of these would cause. The demolition of some structures would affect the root protection area of a group of trees. To ensure this is undertaken without harming the retained trees a sequential method statement will be required. The incursion into the root protection of another tree, to provide the parking area, is considered unlikely

to result in significant harm. As such, the Tree Officer has not raised any objections to the application.

(g) Flood Risk and Drainage

10.85 Local Plan Policy EN14 requires that proposals should not increase the level of risk to the safety of occupiers of a site, the local community or the wider environment as a result of flooding, through the appropriate application of the sequential and exception tests, and the provision of site specific flood risk assessments where applicable. It requires the incorporation of flood risk management and mitigation measures in the design and layout of development proposals that provide adequate provision for the lifetime of the development, and that include a Sustainable Drainage System unless this is demonstrably inappropriate. This is in accordance with Section 14 of the NPPF.

10.86 The site is located within a Flood Zone 1, which is the lowest designation of flood zone, and the proposed type of development is acceptable in principle in Flood Zone 1.

10.87 Consultations were undertaken with both the Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) and Cotswolds Flood Risk Management Officer. Due to the scale of the development the development falls within the remit of the LLFA.

10.88 The initial submission of the application included insufficient drainage information with regard to surface water management. Following this a Flood Risk Assessment, Drainage & Maintenance Strategy was submitted. The information submitted within this included infiltration testing, and this was considered suitable by the LLFA, subject to the submission and approval of a detailed Sustainable Drainage System Strategy. A condition requiring this is recommended.

Other Matters

Waste - Minerals Safeguarding

10.89 The site is located within a mineral safeguarding area as defined within the Local Minerals Plan. Policy MS01 Non-mineral developments within Mineral Safeguarded Area advises:

'Non-mineral development proposals within a Mineral Safeguarded Area (MSA) will be permitted provided: -
I. they are exempt from safeguarding requirements as set out in the list contained in table 2; or

II. needless sterilisation of mineral resources will not occur; or
III. the mineral resources of concern are not economically valuable; or
IV. it is appropriate and practicable to extract minerals prior to development taking place;
V. the overriding need for development outweighs the desirability to safeguard mineral resources.'

10.90 It is noted that the majority of the district is within a mineral safeguarding zone, including the site. The site has already been subject to development, and as such is not suitable for mineral extraction. During the engineer operations associated with the development there is the potential for viable deposits to be located, given the site it is considered that this would comprise limestone. The Waste and Minerals Officer has advised an investigation should be undertaken to see whether there are any viable deposits which could be utilised within the development.

10.91 The agent has advised that *'The existing site is covered in crushed stone, f foundations and concrete. It might be difficult to extract any useful stone for the project given the limited extent of foundations (and where they are needed it related to land already disturbed). Indeed, if any stone is found then it may be more appropriate to use this in the construction of the permitted replacement dwelling.'*

10.92 Given the current development on the site, level of existing disruption, and scope of works, the level of any stone found is considered likely to be limited. It would be at a scale which could be incorporated within the stone buildings on the site or on the previously approved dwellinghouse. Overall, it is not considered reasonable to delay the positive determination of the application to undertaken further investigation.

Previous works

10.93 A third party comment was received in relation to requiring works undertaken for the unlawful amphitheatre is restored by condition. A condition is attached requiring this with the application for planning permission for a replacement dwellinghouse. This was justified due to the encroachment of the dwellinghouse further away from the existing built form on the wider site. This is not applicable to the current development, and as such is not considered necessary to ensure the development is acceptable.

CIL

10.94 The proposed development is not liable for a charge under the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations 2010 (as amended).

11. Conclusion:

The proposal is considered to comply with Local Plan Policies and material considerations, as such is recommended for permission.

12. Proposed Conditions:

1. The development shall be started by 3 years from the date of this decision notice.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawing number(s):

P_051_003; P_051_004; P_051_005; P_051_006; P_051_007; P_051_008; P_051_009; P_051_010; P_051_011; P_051_012; P_051_013; and P_051_015

Reason: For purposes of clarity and for the avoidance of doubt, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved (including demolition and all preparatory work), a scheme for the protection of retained trees, in accordance with BS5837:2012, including a tree protection plan(s) (TPP) and an arboricultural method statement (AMS) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Specific issues to be dealt with in the TPP and AMS:
a) Full details of any facilitation pruning.
b) Methods of demolition within the root protection area (RPA as defined in BS5837:2012) of retained trees.
c) Methodology and detailed assessment of any root pruning.

The development thereafter shall be implemented in strict accordance with the approved details.

Reason: Required prior to the commencement of development to satisfy the Local Planning Authority that the trees to be retained will not be damaged during demolition or construction and to protect and enhance the appearance and character of the site and locality, in accordance with policies EN1 & EN7 and pursuant of section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

4. A. No development shall take place until a site investigation of the nature and extent of contamination has been carried out in accordance with a methodology which has previously been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The results of the site investigation shall be made available to the local planning authority before any development begins. If any significant contamination is found during the site investigation, a report specifying the measures to be taken to remediate the site to render it suitable for the development hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority before any development begins.

B. The Remediation Scheme, as agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved timetable of works and before the development hereby permitted is first occupied. Any variation to the scheme shall be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority in advance of works being undertaken. On completion of the works the developer shall submit to the Local Planning Authority written confirmation that all works were completed in accordance with the agreed details.

If, during the course of development, any contamination is found which has not been identified in the site investigation, additional measures for the remediation of this contamination shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The remediation of the site shall incorporate the approved additional measures.

Reason: To ensure any contamination of the site is identified and appropriately remediated. In accordance with Cotswold District Council Local Planning Policy EN15 and Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

5. No below or above ground development shall commence until a detailed site waste management plan or equivalent has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The detailed site waste management plan must identify:

- the specific types and amount of waste materials forecast to be generated from the development during site preparation & demolition and construction phases; and the specific measures will be employed for dealing with this material so as to:

- minimise its creation, maximise the amount of reuse and recycling on-site; maximise the amount of off-site recycling of any wastes that are unusable on-site; and reduce the overall amount of waste sent to landfill.

In addition, the detailed site waste management plan must also set out the proposed proportions of recycled content that will be used in construction materials. The detailed site waste management plan shall be fully implemented as approved unless the local planning authority gives prior written permission for any variation.

Reason: To ensure the effective implementation of waste minimisation and resource efficiency measures in accordance with adopted Gloucestershire Waste Core Strategy: Core Policy WCS2 - Waste Reduction and adopted Minerals Local Plan for Gloucestershire Policy SR01.

6. No above-ground development shall commence until full details of the provision made for facilitating the management and recycling of waste generated during occupation have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. This must include details of the appropriate and adequate space and infrastructure to allow for the separate storage of recyclable waste materials. The management of waste during occupation must be aligned with the principles of the waste hierarchy and not prejudice the local collection authority's ability to meet its waste management targets. All details shall be fully implemented as approved unless the local planning authority gives prior written permission for any variation.

Reason: To ensure the effective implementation of waste minimisation and resource efficiency measures in accordance with adopted Gloucestershire Waste Core Strategy: Core Policy WCS2 - Waste Reduction.

7. No above ground development shall commence until details on the materials to be used in the construction of the development have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The construction materials should achieve at least 10% of the construction (by value) from materials derived from recycled and sustainable sources. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted details.

Reason: To ensure the effective implementation of waste minimisation and resource efficiency measures in accordance with adopted Gloucestershire Waste Core Strategy: Core Policy WCS2 - Waste Reduction.

8. Prior to the commencement of the development, a construction management plan detailing how noise and dust is to be minimised and controlled during site clearance and construction. It shall include measures to be employed to prevent the

egress of mud, water and other detritus onto the public and any non-adopted highways.

The hours of work for the construction of the development shall be restricted to 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00-13:00 on Saturday with no working on Sunday or Bank Holidays.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of surrounding occupiers during the construction of the development in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN15 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

9. A 30-year Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved being undertaken. The plan shall be prepared in accordance with the principles set out in the Biodiversity Gain Plan and must include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following information:
i. Description and evaluation of features to be managed, including locations shown on a site map;
ii. Establishment details, including preparation of the land;
iii. Landscape and ecological trends and constraints on site that might influence management;
iv. Aims and objectives of management, including ensuring the delivery of at least a 10% net gain in habitat units;
v. Appropriate management options for achieving the aims and objectives;
vi. Prescriptions for all management actions;
vii. A work schedule matrix (i.e. an annual work plan) capable of being rolled forward over 5 or 10 year periods;
viii. Details of the body or organisation responsible for the implementation of the plan;
ix. Ongoing monitoring of delivery of the habitat enhancement and creation details to achieve net gain as well as details of possible remedial
measures that might need to be put in place; and
x. Timeframe for reviewing the plan.

The LEMP shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details, and all habitats shall be retained in that manner thereafter. Notice in writing shall be given to the Council when the habitat creation and enhancement works as set out in the Biodiversity Gain Plan have commenced and once all habitat creation and enhancements have been completed.

Reason: To secure the delivery of at least a 10% biodiversity net gain through successful establishment and management of all newly created and enhanced habitats in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as

inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021), paragraph 187, 192 and 193 of the NPPF, and Local Plan policy EN8.

10. Prior to the first use/occupation of the development hereby approved, a comprehensive landscape scheme shall be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme must show the location, size and condition of all existing trees and hedgerows on and adjoining the land and identify those to be retained, together with measures for their protection during construction work. It must show details of all planting areas, tree and plant species, numbers and planting sizes. The proposed means of enclosure and screening should also be included, together with details of any mounding, walls and fences and hard surface materials to be used throughout the proposed development.

Reason: To ensure the development is completed in a manner that is sympathetic to the site and its surroundings in accordance with Cotswold District Local Plan Policies EN2, EN4 and EN5.

11. Prior to the construction of any external wall of the development hereby approved above slab level, samples of the proposed walling and roofing materials have been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and only the approved materials shall be used.

Reason: To ensure that, in accordance with Cotswold District Local Plan Policies EN2, EN4, and EN5, the development will be constructed of materials of a type, colour, texture and quality that will be appropriate to the site and its surroundings.

12. No development shall commence on site until a detailed Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) Strategy document has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Unless otherwise agreed in writing, this should be in accordance with the proposal set out in the approved submission (Proposed Site Plan; 24194-13-C). The SuDS Strategy must include a detailed design, maintenance schedule, confirmation of the management arrangements, a timetable for implementation. The SuDS Strategy must also demonstrate the technical feasibility/viability of the drainage system through the use of SuDS to manage the flood risk to the site and elsewhere and the measures taken to manage the water quality for the lifetime of the development. The approved scheme for the surface water drainage shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is first put in to use/occupied.

Reason: To ensure the development is provided with a satisfactory means of drainage and thereby preventing the risk of flooding. It is important that these details are agreed

prior to the commencement of development as any works on site could have implications for drainage, flood risk and water quality in the locality.

13. Prior to the construction of any external stone walls of the development hereby approved, a sample panel of walling of at least one metre square in size showing the proposed stone colour, coursing, bonding, treatment of corners, method of pointing and mix and colour of mortar shall be erected on the site and subsequently approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the walls shall be constructed only in the same way as the approved panel and shall be permanently retained as such thereafter. The panel shall be retained on site until the completion of the development.

Reason: To ensure that in accordance with Cotswold District Local Plan Policies EN2, EN4 and EN5, the development will be constructed of materials of a type, colour, texture and quality and in a manner appropriate to the site and its surroundings. Retention of the sample panel on site during the work will help to ensure consistency.

14. Details of the 'plant' and 'bike' store, including their elevations and materials, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be implemented prior to the first use of the development hereby approved and shall be retained thereafter for their approved purposes.

Reason: To ensure a suitable appearance and the provision of covered cycle storage, in accordance with Local Plan Policies EN2, EN4, EN5 and INF5.

15. Prior to first use of the buildings hereby permitted, details of the provision of 4no. bird boxes, and 4no. integrated bat boxes or an accessible roof void with internal bat boxes, shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. The details shall include a drawing showing the types of features, their locations within the site, and a timetable for their provision. The approved details shall be implemented in accordance with the approved specification and programme of implementation and be retained thereafter.

Reason: To protect and enhance the site for biodiversity in accordance with paragraphs 187, 192 and 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy EN8 of the Cotswold District Council Local Plan, and for the Council to comply with Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

16. The erection of fencing for the protection of any retained tree shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details specified in MHP Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree drawing number 24060.503 Rev C before any development including demolition, site clearance, materials delivery or erection of site buildings, starts on the site. The approved tree protection measures shall remain in

place until the completion of development or unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority. Excavations of any kind, alterations in soil levels, storage of any materials, soil, equipment, fuel, machinery or plant, site compounds, latrines, vehicle parking and delivery areas, fires and any other activities liable to be harmful to trees and hedgerows are prohibited within any area fenced, unless agreed in writing with the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure adequate protection measures for existing trees/hedgerows to be retained, in the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN7.

17. Any trees or plants shown on the approved landscaping scheme to be planted or retained which die, are removed, are damaged or become diseased, or grassed areas which become eroded or damaged, within 5 years of the completion of the approved landscaping scheme, shall be replaced by the end of the next planting season. Replacement trees and plants shall be of the same size and species as those lost, unless the Local Planning Authority approves alternatives in writing.

Reason: To ensure that the planting becomes established and thereby achieves the objective of Cotswold District Local Plan Policies EN2, EN4 and EN5.

18. Prior to the installation of external lighting for the development hereby approved, an external lighting plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The details shall show how and where external lighting will be installed (including the type of lighting, timers, and heat in Kelvin), so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not affect compensatory bat roosts or biodiversity enhancement features, or disturb or prevent nocturnal species using wildlife corridors. All external lighting shall be installed only in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in these details.

Reason: The prevent adverse impacts on species afforded protections under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The proposals are also considered contrary to paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Chapter 15) and Policy EN8 of the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011- 2031.

19. Prior to any part of the development hereby authorised being brought into beneficial use the access, parking and turning areas serving the site shall be laid out, constructed, hard surfaced and positively drained to a suitable outfall to ensure no loose material or water runs onto the highway and once any part of the development is brought into use shall be maintained as such thereafter.

Reason: To ensure suitable parking, turning and access areas are provided in accordance with Local Plan Policies INF3 and INF4.

20. Before any part of the development hereby authorised is brought into beneficial use the visibility splays shown on the submitted plans shall be cleared of all obstruction to visibility greater than 0.9m above the level of the carriageway and once any part of the development is occupied shall be maintained as such thereafter.

Reason: To provide suitable visibility in the interests of highway safety in accordance with Local Plan Policy INF4.

21. Prior to the first occupation or beneficial use of each phase or unit (or group of units) of the development hereby permitted, a Travel Plan for that phase or unit(s) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The Travel Plan shall include:
a) baseline information and a survey methodology for monitoring the travel mode choices of staff and visitors;
b) objectives and targets for increasing the use of sustainable modes of travel;
c) measures to encourage travel by sustainable modes;
d) a timetable for implementation of those measures;
e) a scheme for monitoring and review, including the appointment of a Travel Plan Co-ordinator and the submission of annual monitoring reports to the Local Planning Authority; and
f) remedial measures to be implemented if the approved targets are not being met.
The relevant phase or unit shall not be occupied or brought into beneficial use until the Travel Plan for that phase or unit has been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
The approved Travel Plan shall thereafter be implemented, monitored and reviewed in accordance with the approved details. Annual monitoring reports shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for a period of not less than five years from the date of first occupation or beneficial use of the relevant phase or unit.

Reason: To promote and secure sustainable travel choices, and to ensure that the development is implemented and operated in a manner which encourages travel by sustainable modes, in accordance with Policy INF3 of the Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

22. No more than 80% of the total floorspace hereby approved shall be used for office purposes (Use Class E(g)) at any time.

Reason: To limit peak traffic movements generated by the development, in accordance with Local Plan Policy INF4.

23. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order (as amended), the buildings hereby permitted shall be used only for flexible uses within Use Classes E(g), B2 and B8, and for no other purpose whatsoever, including any other purposes within Class E.

Reason: The development has been assessed and permitted as a small business hub. Other uses, including alternative uses within Use Class E, would materially alter the character of the site and result in impacts on the surrounding area that have not been assessed as part of this permission.

24. Only Barn 1 and Barn 2, as identified on approved drawing P_051_003, shall be used for purposes within Use Class B2.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN15.

Informatives:

1. IMPORTANT: BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN CONDITION - DEVELOPMENT CANNOT COMMENCE UNTIL A BIODIVERSITY GAIN PLAN HAS BEEN SUBMITTED (AS A CONDITION COMPLIANCE APPLICATION) TO AND APPROVED BY COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL.

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition (the biodiversity gain condition) that development may not begin unless:

(a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
(b) the planning authority has approved the plan in writing.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Cotswold District Council. There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. Based on the information available, this permission is one which will require the approval of an overall biodiversity gain plan, as well as a phase biodiversity gain plan for each phase of development before works commence. This is because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply. If the

onsite habitats include irreplaceable habitats (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitats) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans. Advice about how to prepare these Biodiversity Gain Plans and templates can be found at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/submit-abiodiversity-gain-plan

Information on how to discharge the biodiversity gain condition can be found here: https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/planning-and-building/wildlife-andbiodiversity/biodiversity-net-gain-bng/

The Gloucestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) has been published by Gloucestershire County Council. This strategy must be used to inform the Strategic Significance Multiplier in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric or the Small Sites Metric, depending on which version has been submitted. As part of your discharge of condition application the biodiversity metric will need to be updated to refer to the published LNRS.

Please speak to your project ecologist for further advice or alternatively, you can engage with the Council's pre-application advice service: Get advice on your planning application - Cotswold District Council

The applicant will need apply to approve the details reserved by the 30-year Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) and the Biodiversity Gain Plan at the same time. A step-by-step guide on how to apply for approval of conditions can be found here: https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-permission/step-bystep-guide-to-planning-permission/

Nesting birds: The applicant is reminded that, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended, it is an offence to remove, damage and destroy a nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built. Planning permission for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this Act. Trees, hedgerows, scrub and other vegetation, such as dense ivy, are likely to contain nesting birds between 1st March and 31st August. Clearance of suitable habitat should therefore be undertaken outside the breeding season for birds to ensure their protection, i.e. works should only be undertaken between August and February, unless a recent survey has been undertaken by a competent ecologist to assess the nesting bird activity on site during this period and has shown it is absolutely certain that nesting birds are not present.

2. The Footpath should not be obstructed by vehicles, building materials or construction work at any time, maintaining and safeguarding public access at all times, if there is any suggestion that it will, whether through a need for a temporary closure or permanent diversion then contact should be made with the Public Right of Way team at the earliest opportunity.

Please note:

1) No change to the surface of the public right of way can be approved without consultation with the County Council and there must be no interference with the public right of way, either during development or once it has been completed, unless: -
a) The development will temporarily affect the public right of way; then the developer must apply and pay for a temporary closure of the route to us in Public Rights of Way (preferably providing a suitable alternative route); if any utilities are going to cross or run along a PROW then a section 50 license needs be sought and granted - via GCC Streetworks department. Information regarding section 50 Licenses and an application form can be found at: https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/highways-licencespermits-and-permissions/
b) Important: if the development will permanently affect any public right of way, then the developer must apply for a diversion of the route through the Local Planning Authority, under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as part of the planning application process. Absolutely no development should take place affecting the route of the path prior to the confirmation of a TCPA path diversion order through the LPA. The area Public Right of Way Officer should be consulted as part of this process.

2) Additionally:-
a) There must be no encroachment on the width of the public right of way.
b) No building materials may be stored on the public right of way.
c) Vehicle movements during construction should not unreasonably interfere with the use of the public right of way by walkers, etc., and the developer or applicant is responsible for safeguarding the public use of the way at all times.
d) No additional temporary or permanent barriers (e.g. gates, stiles, wildlife fencing) may be placed across the public right of way and no additional gradients or structures (e.g. steps or bridges) are to be introduced on any existing or proposed public rights of way without the consent of the county council.

3. Please note that the proposed development set out in this application would be liable for a charge under the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations 2010 (as amended), however, no CIL is payable as the Cotswold CIL Charging Schedule gives this type of development a zero rate. However, if the nature of the development were to change, you are advised to contact the Council to discuss the requirement for planning permission and CIL liability.

Cotswold District Council
Trinity Road
Cirencester
Gloucestershire
GL7 1PX

Highways Development
Management
Economy Environment and
Infrastructure
Shire Hall
Westgate Street
Gloucester
GL1 2TG

16 December 2025
Your ref: 25/03713/FUL
Ask for: Malcolm Jones

Dear Amy Hill

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
(DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2015
ARTICLE 18 CONSULTATION WITH HIGHWAY AUTHORITY

PROPOSAL:	**Replacement, part conversion and remodelling of existing General/Heavy Industrial buildings/site with a Rural Business Hub including associated landscaping and consolidated parking**
LOCATION:	**Hill Farm Main Road Oddington Gloucestershire**
APPLICANT:	**Gavin And Roxbury Limited**

Gloucestershire County Council, the Highway Authority acting in its role as Statutory Consultee has undertaken a full assessment of this planning application. Based on the appraisal of the development proposals the Highways Development Management Manager on behalf of the County Council, under Article 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order, 2015 has **no objection subject to conditions and financial obligations.**

The justification for this decision is provided below.

I am aware of the previous comments on the planning application for the Amphitheatre and the previous objection to the application for conversion to light industrial.

It is not considered to be a sustainable site in that any cycle route to the site is unattractive due to the level and speed of traffic on the A436 and the lack of any segregated facility as well as the topography in the area. Public transport is not an attractive option due to the frequency of the services as well as the walking route from the stops to the site along narrow unlit roads with no segregated provision and a

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need to cross the A436 to access the site again with no facilities or lighting to allow safe crossing of a busy, fast section of highway.

The applicant should be required to provide a Travel Plan for a development of this kind in this unsustainable location to include various measures to support more sustainable travel and this is considered to be a reasonable compromise in this situation.

The existing B2 use on the site and the proposed change to light industrial Class E(g)(iii), B2 and B8 may be considered to have some policy support and to vary the existing fallback position for commercial use on the site.

It is considered that the site is not suitable to cater for high levels of daily traffic in this location as, whilst it has been previously stated that the access was suitable for large numbers of occasional off-peak trips that is considered to be very different to a high level of peak hour trips.

The highway authority would recommend that an application such as this be refused on the grounds of the unsustainable location of the site and the potential impact of the traffic on highway safety and capacity unless further information were provided to demonstrate that any impact on highway safety was not unacceptable.

However, it is acknowledged that there is a history of the highway authority not objecting to some applications, objecting to others in the past and the existing permission giving a fall back position, that this may make an objection problematical for the LPA as they have previously ignored objections on highway grounds and therefore if the application is to be approved it be subject to the following conditions:

Before any part of the development hereby approved is brought into beneficial use and irrespective of any document currently submitted a Travel Plan will be submitted to and approved by the LPA which will include a monitoring methodology which is will include a survey methodology for assessing the travel mode choices of employees and customers, an initial series of targets for modal shifts for employees and customers and a secondary series of measures should the initial targets not be achieved. These secondary measures could include contributions to improving infrastructure to support sustainable travel modes as well as or instead of other measures to drive change. The Travel Plan once approved will be monitored and managed including an agreed surveying system to identify travel choices of customers and staff, changes in those travel choices and submission of annual reports from the Travel Plan Co-ordinator to the Local Authority for at least five years from the occupation of the final part of the development or until the targets in the Travel Plan are met.

Tel: 01452 42
Email: malcolm.jones@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Prior to any part of the development hereby authorised being brought into beneficial use the access, parking and turning areas serving the site shall be laid out, constructed, hard surfaced and positively drained to a suitable outfall to ensure no loose material or water runs onto the highway and once any part of the development is brought into use shall be maintained as such thereafter.

Before any part of the development hereby authorised is brought into beneficial use the visibility splays shown on the submitted plans shall be cleared of all obstruction to visibility greater than 0.9m above the level of the carriageway and once any part of the development is occupied shall be maintained as such thereafter,

The development hereby approved shall be primarily for B2, B8 and E(g)(iii) uses and any

office use shall be incidental to that use and limited to 20% of the floor area of the building and there shall be no retail use on the site.

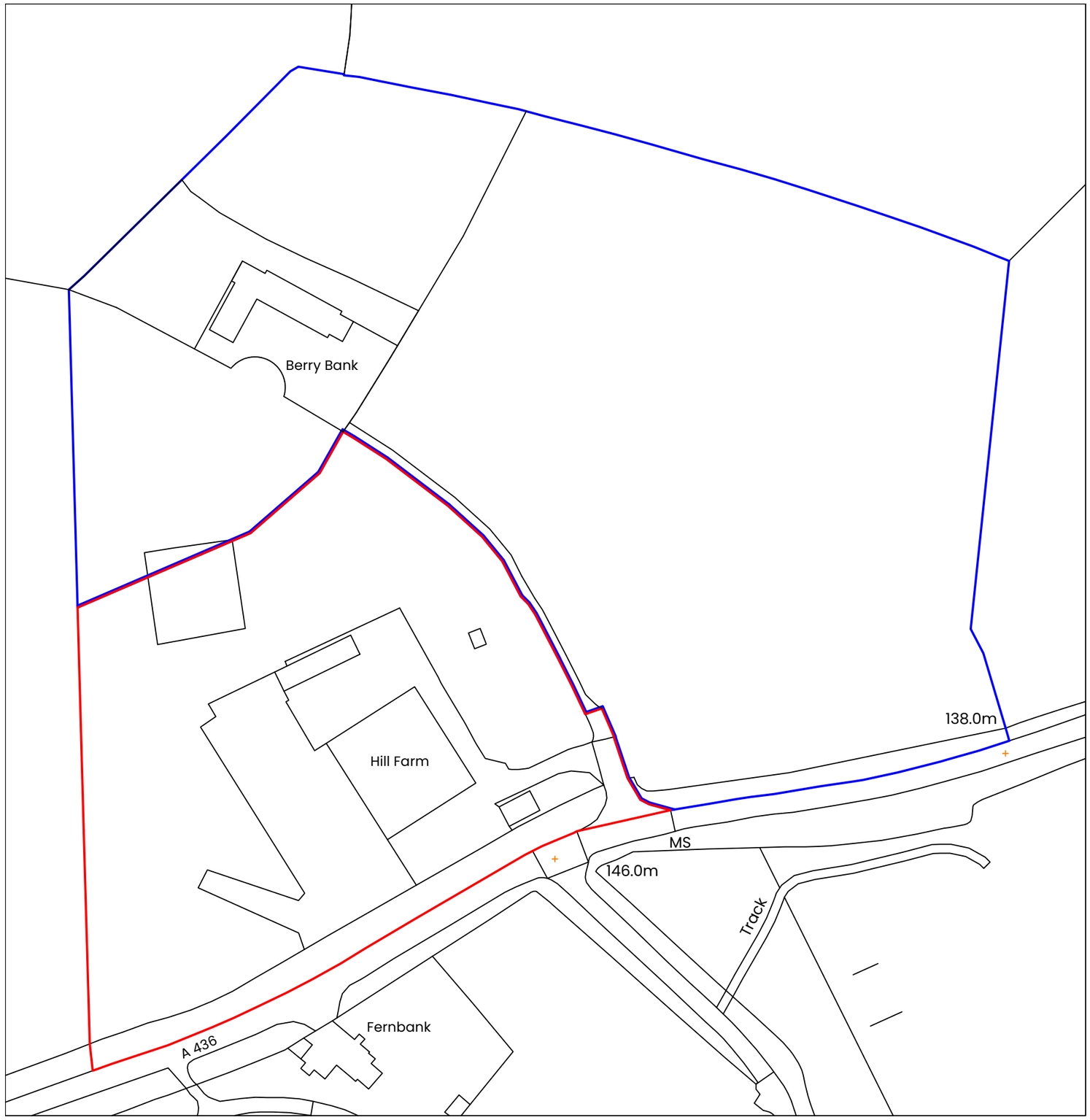
The Highway Authority has undertaken an assessment of the planning application. Based on the analysis of the information submitted the Highway Authority concludes that there would not be an unacceptable impact on Highway Safety or a severe impact on congestion. There are no justifiable grounds on which an objection could be maintained.

Yours Sincerely

Malcolm Jones
Principal Highway Development Officer

Tel: 01452 42
Email: malcolm.jones@gloucestershire.gov.uk

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Location Plan
Scale: 1:1250 @ A3

Notes

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STATE OF THE ART
ARCHITECTURE

Title:	Location plan
Project:	Hill Farm, Oddington
Client:	Mr G Johnstone
Date:	September 2025
Dwg Number:	P_051_001 **REV:** __
Scale:	1:1250 @ A3
Status:	**PLANNING**

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SOTA

STATE OF THE ART ARCHITECTURE

Title: Proposed Master Plan

Project: Hill Farm, Oddington

Client: G Johnstone

Date: September 2025

Dwg Number: P_051_003 **REV:** _ _

Scale: 1:500 @ A1

Status: **PLANNING**

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Proposed Master Plan
Scale: 1:500 @ A1

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Notes

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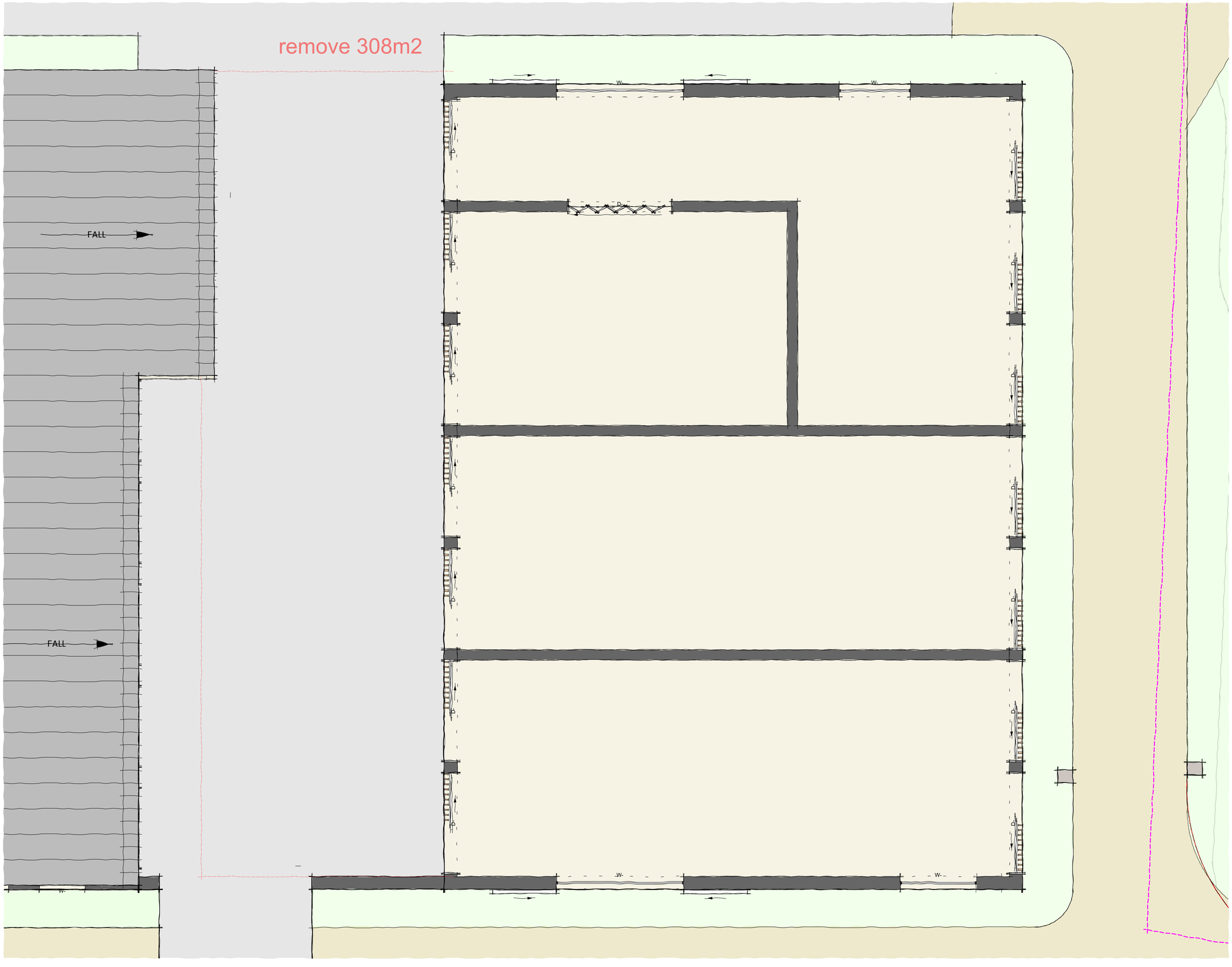
Proposed Site Plan
Scale: 1:250 @ A1

SOTA
STATE OF THE ART
ARCHITECTURE

Title: Proposed Site Plan
Project: Hill Farm, Oddington
Client: G Johnstone
Date: September 2025
Dwg Number: P_051_004 **REV:** __
Scale: 1:250 @ A1
Status: **PLANNING**

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Proposed Floor Plan - Barn 1
Scale: 1:100 @ A2

Notes
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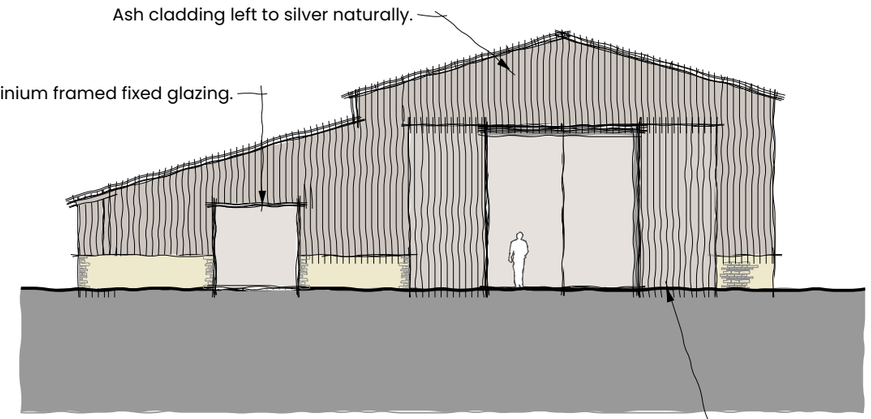
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SOTA
STATE OF THE ART
ARCHITECTURE

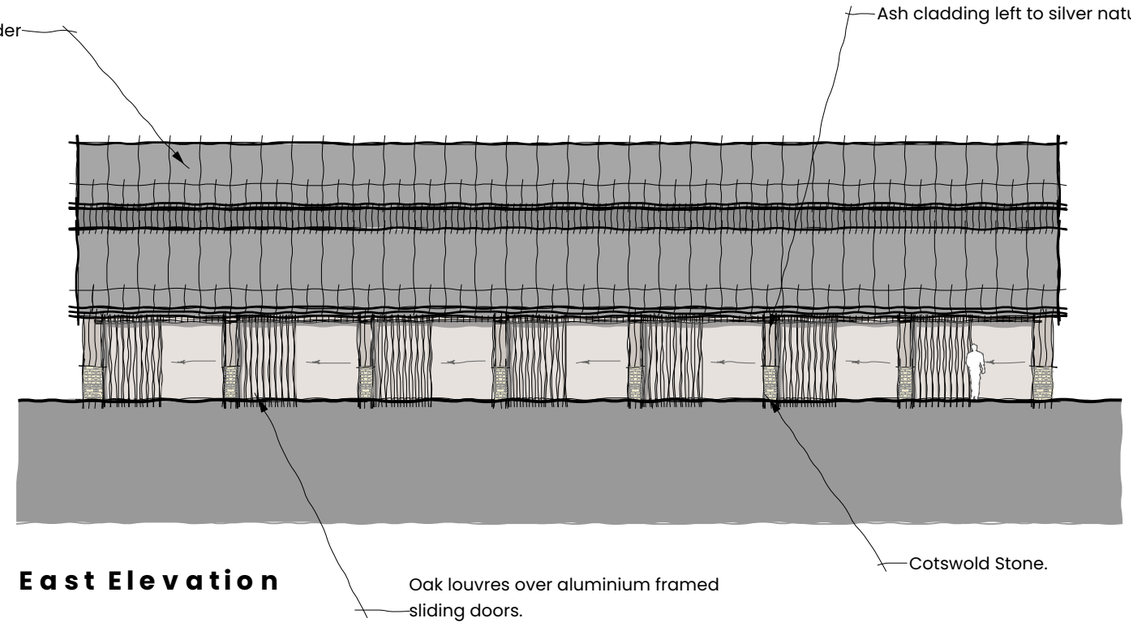
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Project:	Hill Farm, Oddington
Client:	G Johnstone
Date:	September 2025
Dwg Number:	P_051_005 **REV:** __
Scale:	1:100 @ A2
Status:	**PLANNING**

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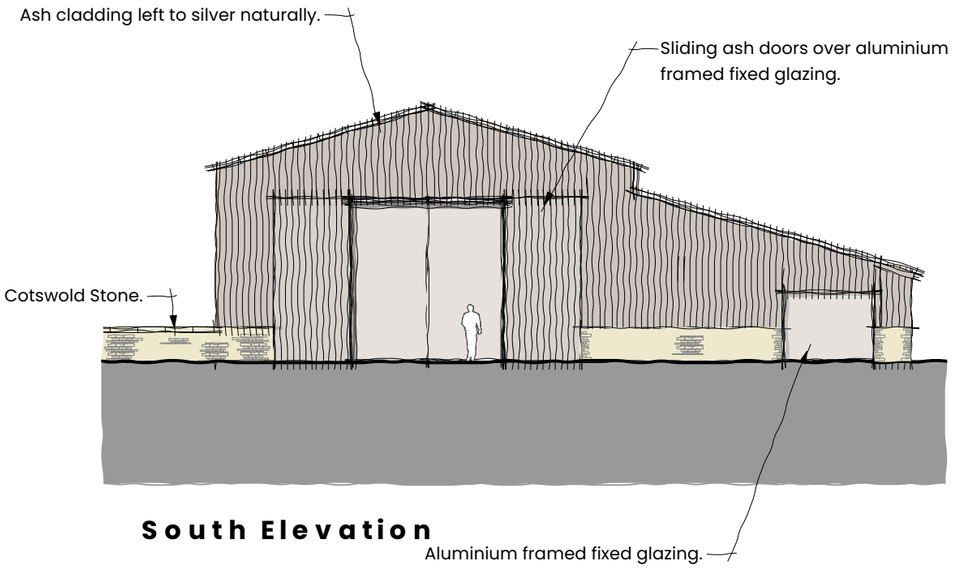
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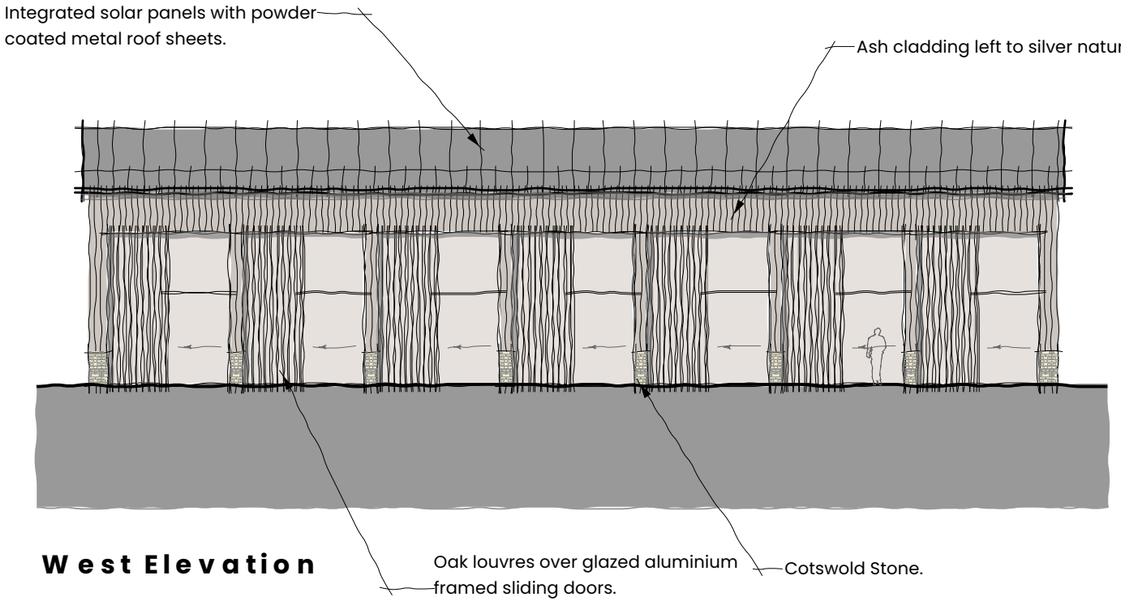
North Elevation



East Elevation



South Elevation



West Elevation

Barn 1 Proposed Elevations
Scale: 1:200 @ A3

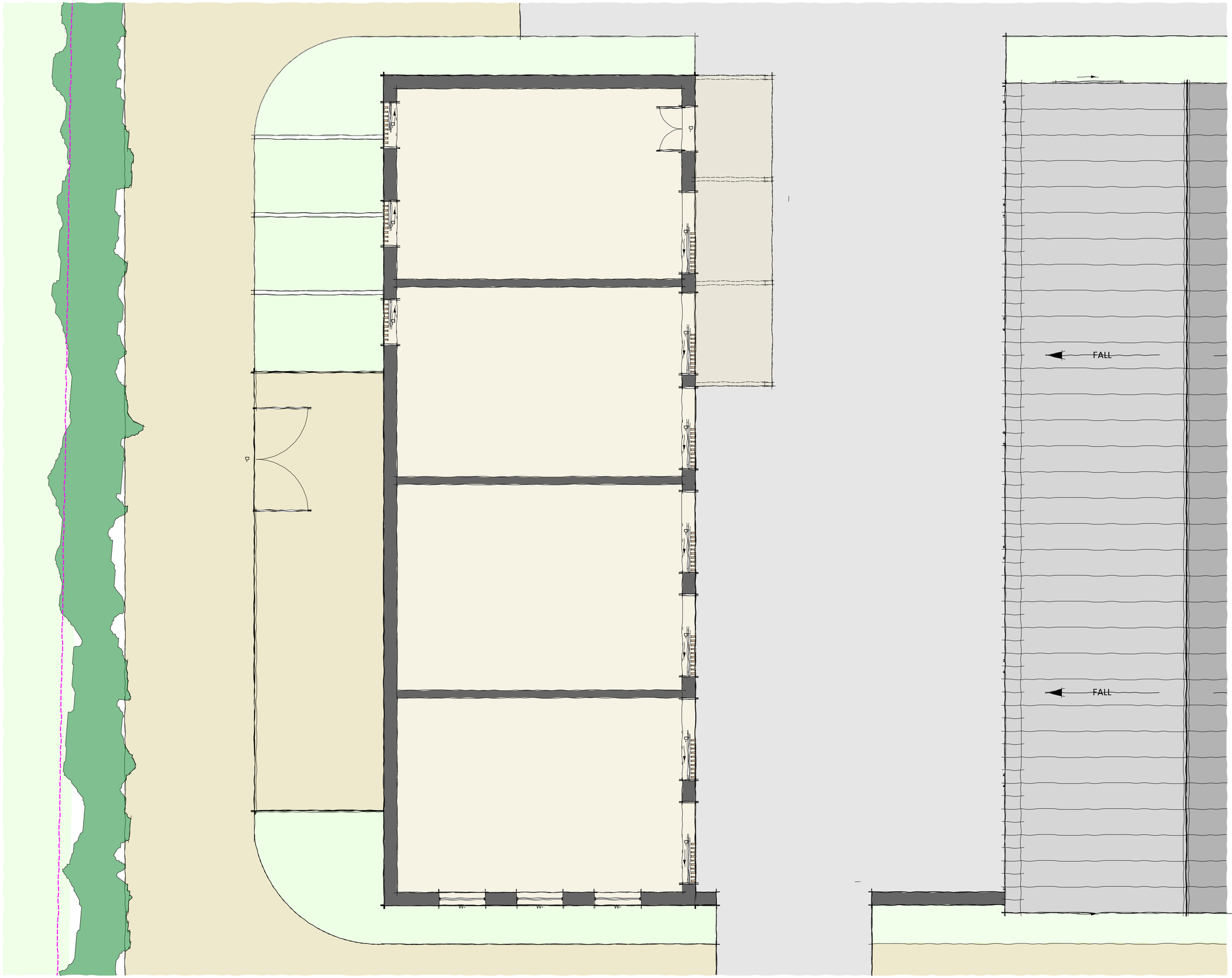
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SOTA
STATE OF THE ART
ARCHITECTURE

Title: Barn 1 Proposed Elevations
Project: Hill Farm, Oddington
Client: G Johnstone
Date: September 2025
Dwg Number: P_051_010 **REV:** __
Scale: 1:200 @ A3
Status: **PLANNING**

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Proposed Floor Plan - Barn 2
Scale: 1:100 @ A2

Notes
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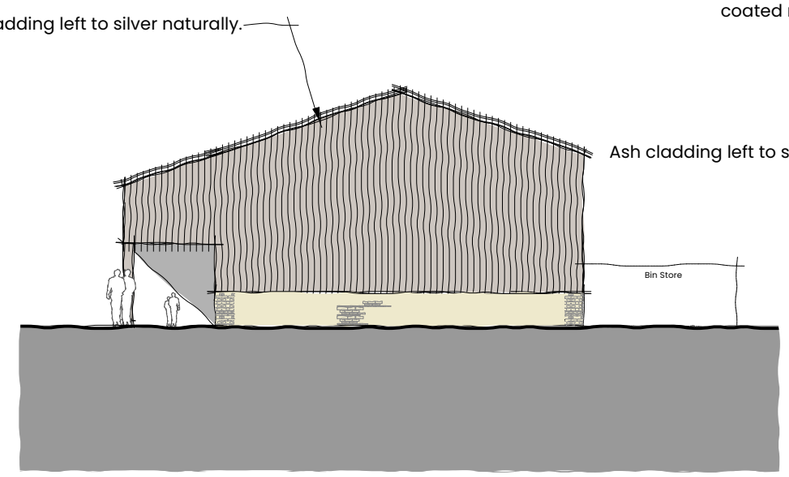
SOTA
STATE OF THE ART
ARCHITECTURE

Title: Proposed Floor Plan Barn 2
Project: Hill Farm, Oddington

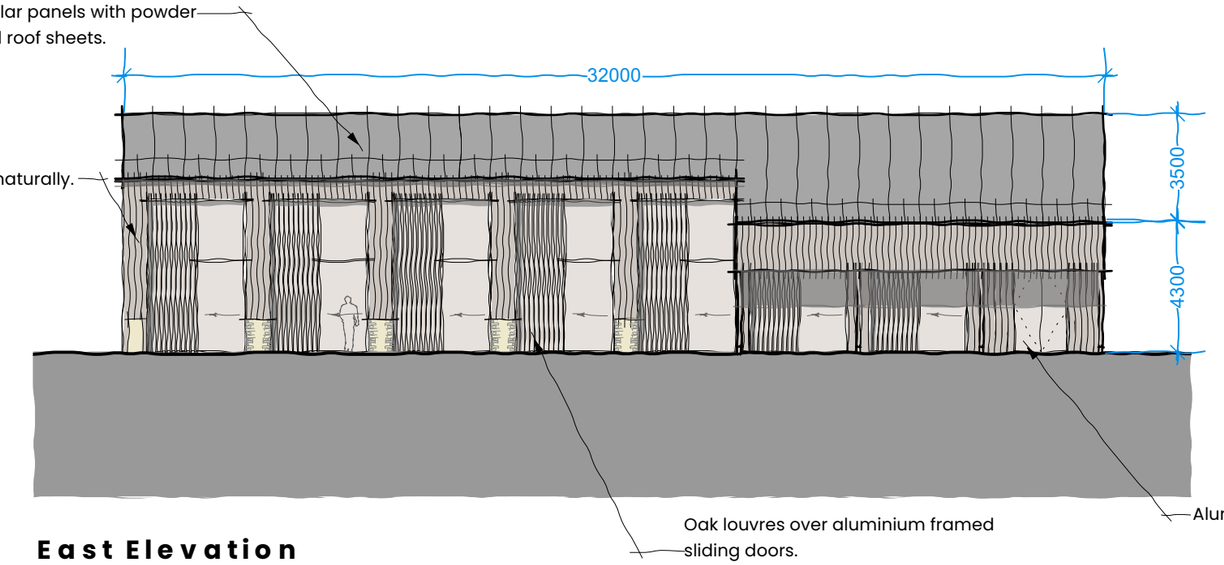
Client: G Johnstone
Date: September 2025
Dwg Number: P_051_006 **REV:** __
Scale: 1:100 @ A2
Status: **PLANNING**

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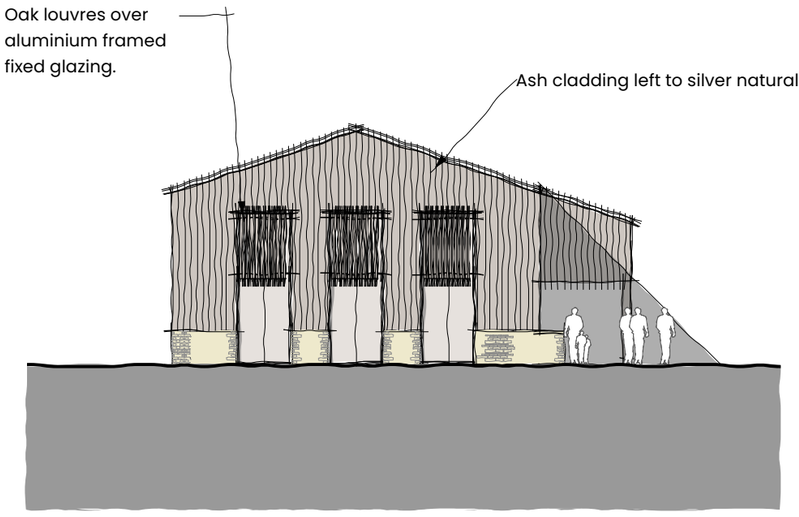
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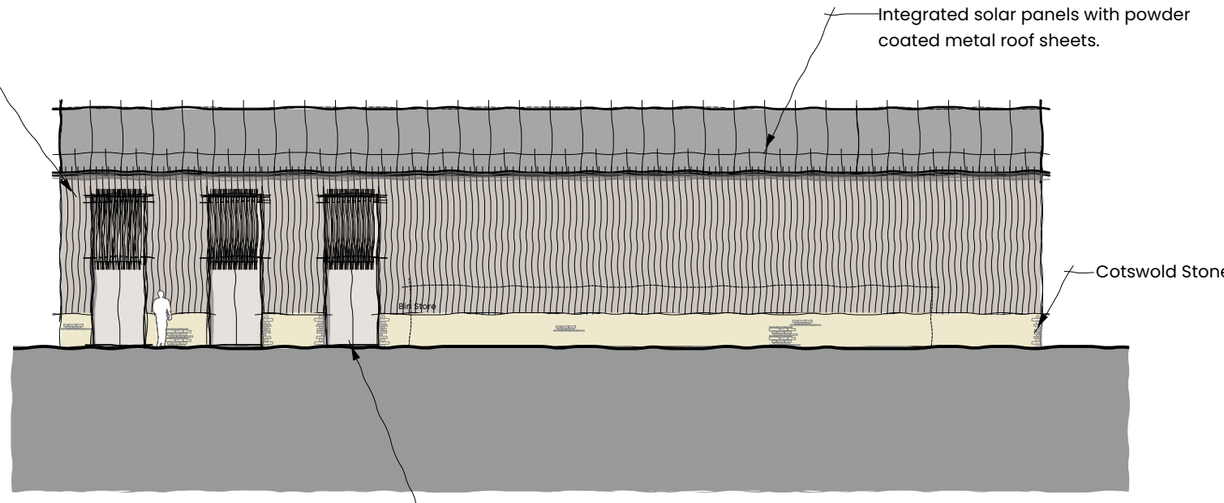
North Elevation



East Elevation



South Elevation



West Elevation

Barn 2 Proposed Elevations
Scale: 1:200 @ A3

Notes

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SOTA
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ARCHITECTURE

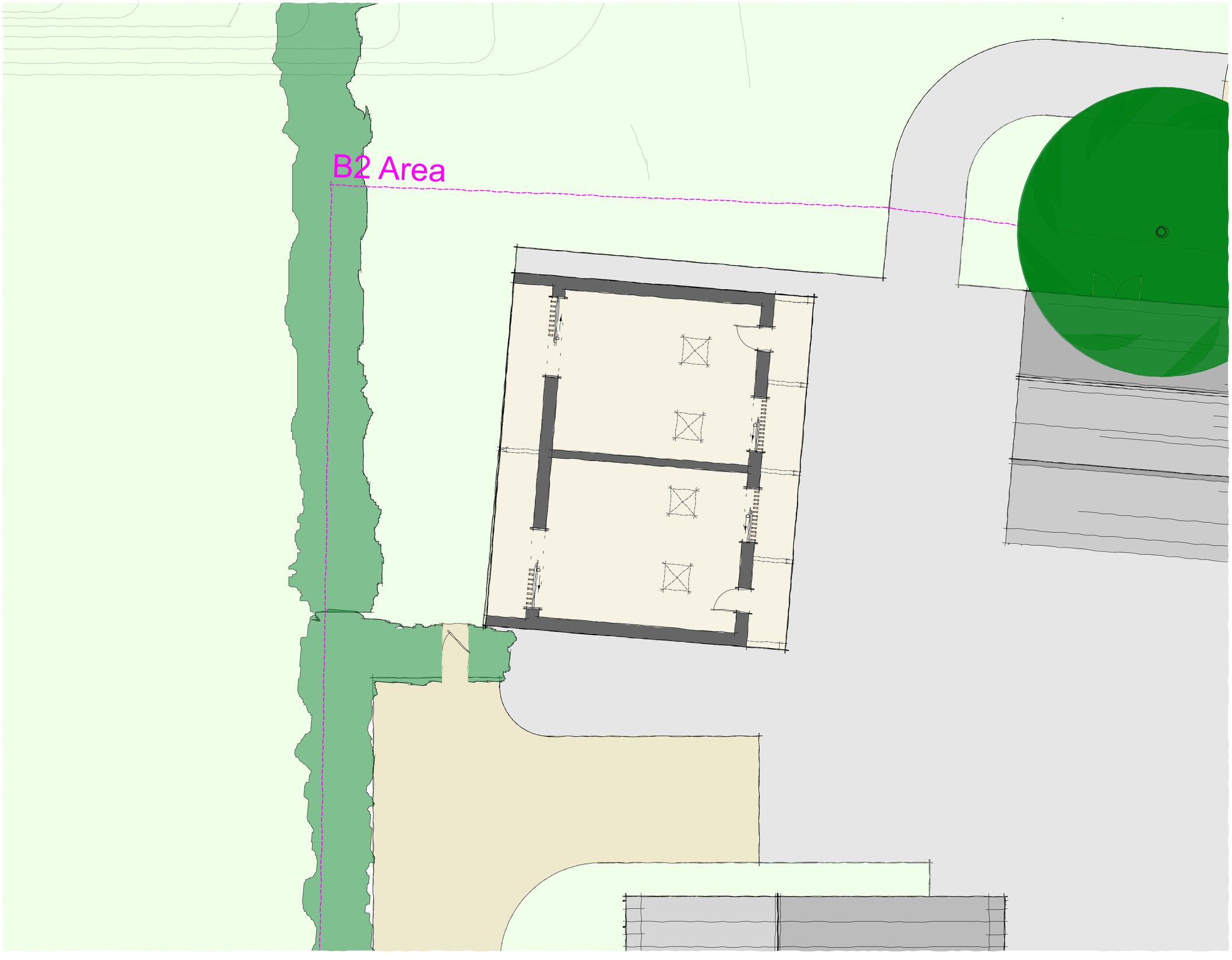
Title: Barn 2 Proposed Elevations

Project: Hill Farm, Oddington

Client: G Johnstone
Date: September 2025
Dwg Number: P_051_011 **REV:** __
Scale: 1:200 @ A3
Status: **PLANNING**

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Proposed Floor Plan - Barn 3
Scale: 1:100 @ A2

Notes

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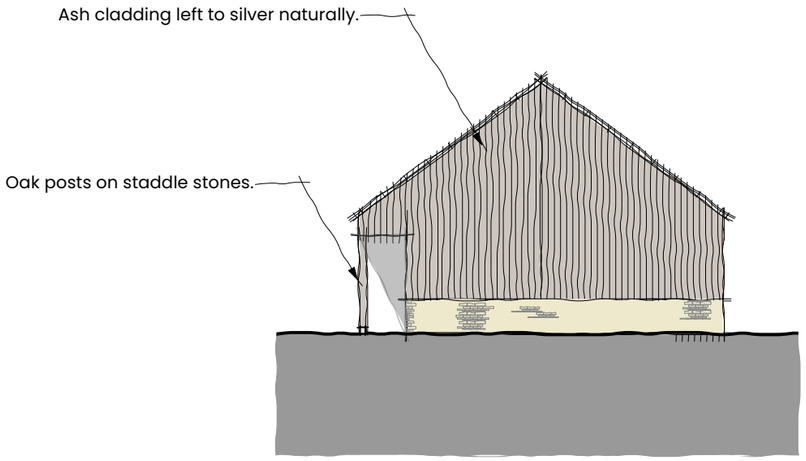
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SOTA
STATE OF THE ART
ARCHITECTURE

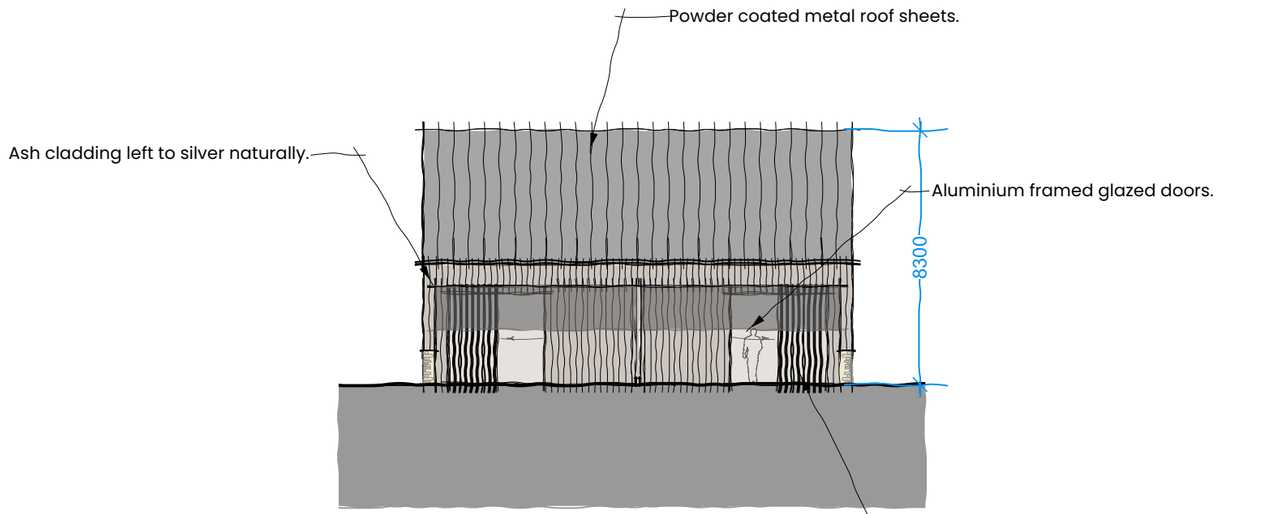
Title:	Proposed Floor Plan Barn 3
Project:	Hill Farm, Oddington
Client:	G Johnstone
Date:	September 2025
Dwg Number:	P_051_007 **REV: __**
Scale:	1:100 @ A2
Status:	**PLANNING**

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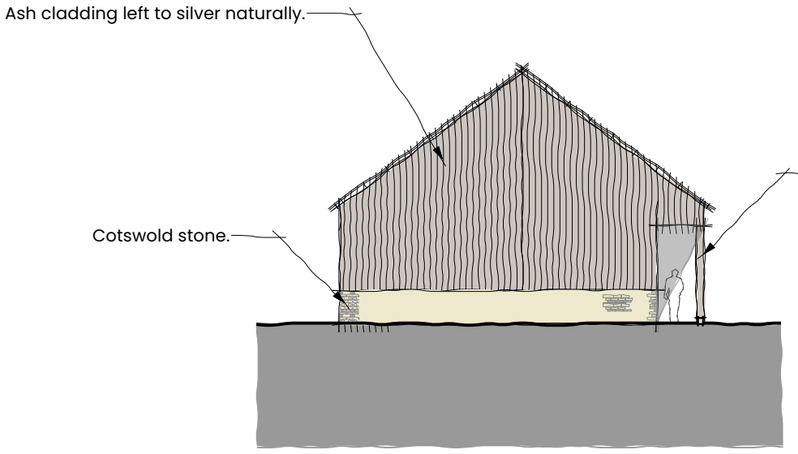
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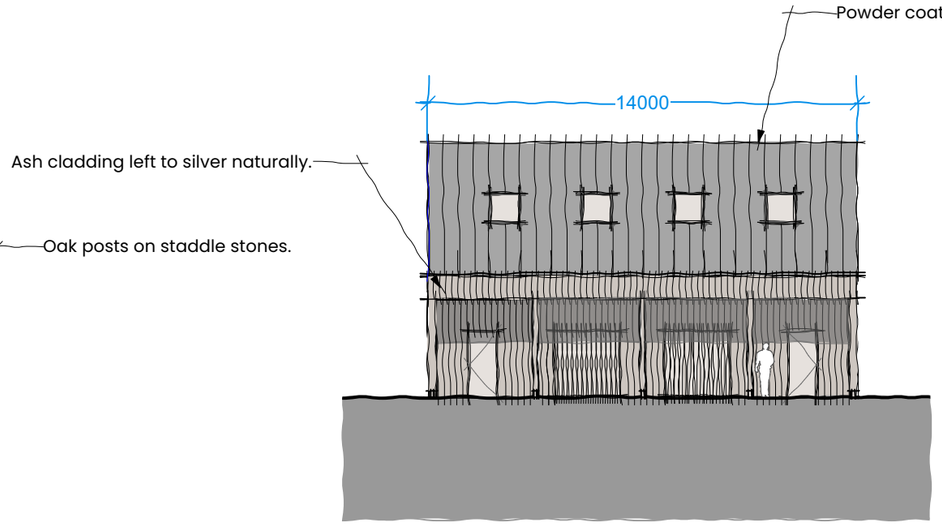
North Elevation



East Elevation



South Elevation



West Elevation

Barn 3 Proposed Elevations
Scale: 1:200 @ A3

Notes

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SOTA
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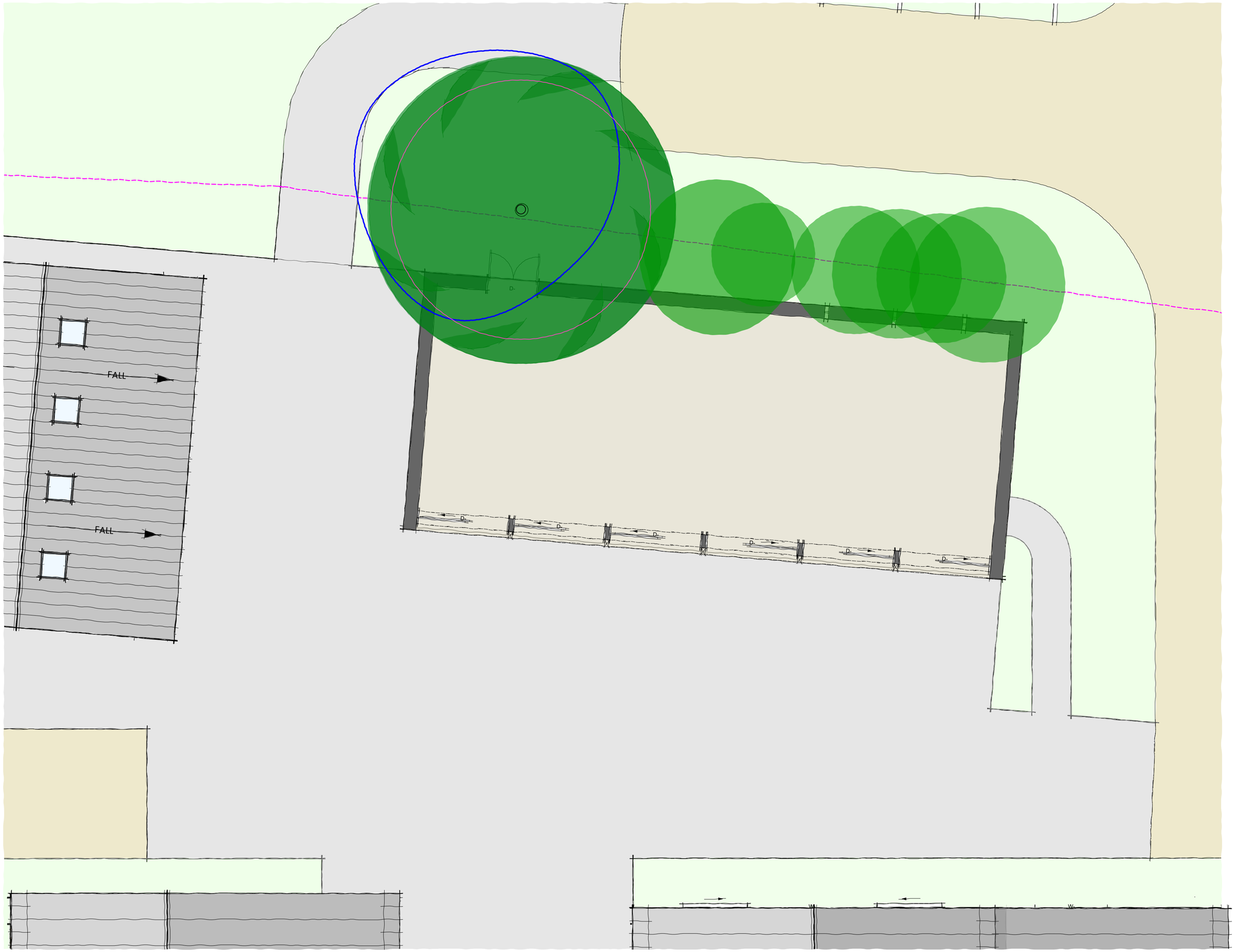
Title: Barn 3 Proposed Elevations

Project: Hill Farm, Oddington

Client: G Johnstone
Date: September 2025
Dwg Number: P_051_012 **REV:** __
Scale: 1:200 @ A3
Status: **PLANNING**

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Proposed Floor Plan - Barn 4
Scale: 1:100 @ A2

Notes
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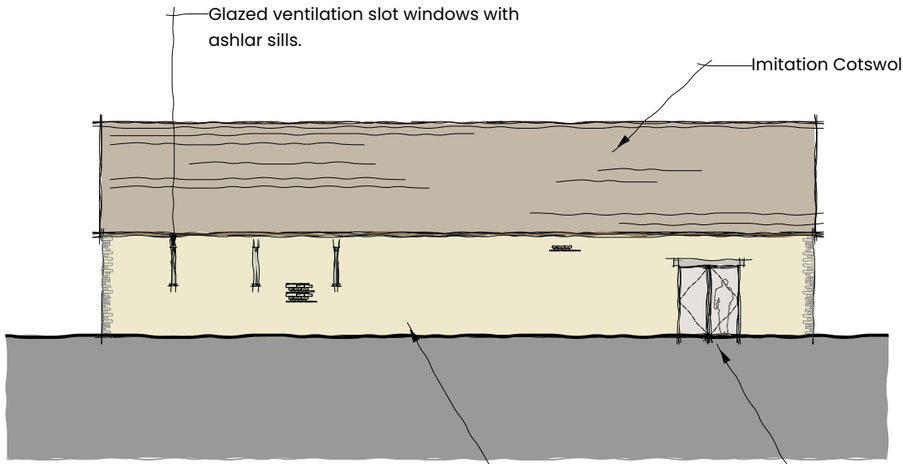
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SOTA
STATE OF THE ART
ARCHITECTURE

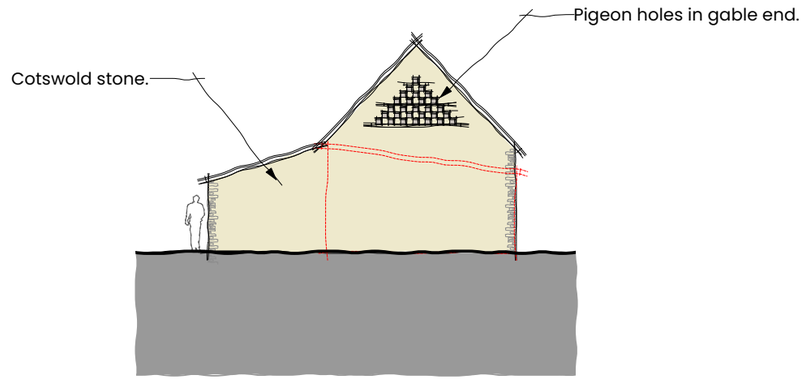
Title:	Proposed Floor Plan Barn 4
Project:	Hill Farm, Oddington
Client:	G Johnstone
Date:	September 2025
Dwg Number:	P_051_008 **REV:** __
Scale:	1:100 @ A2
Status:	**PLANNING**

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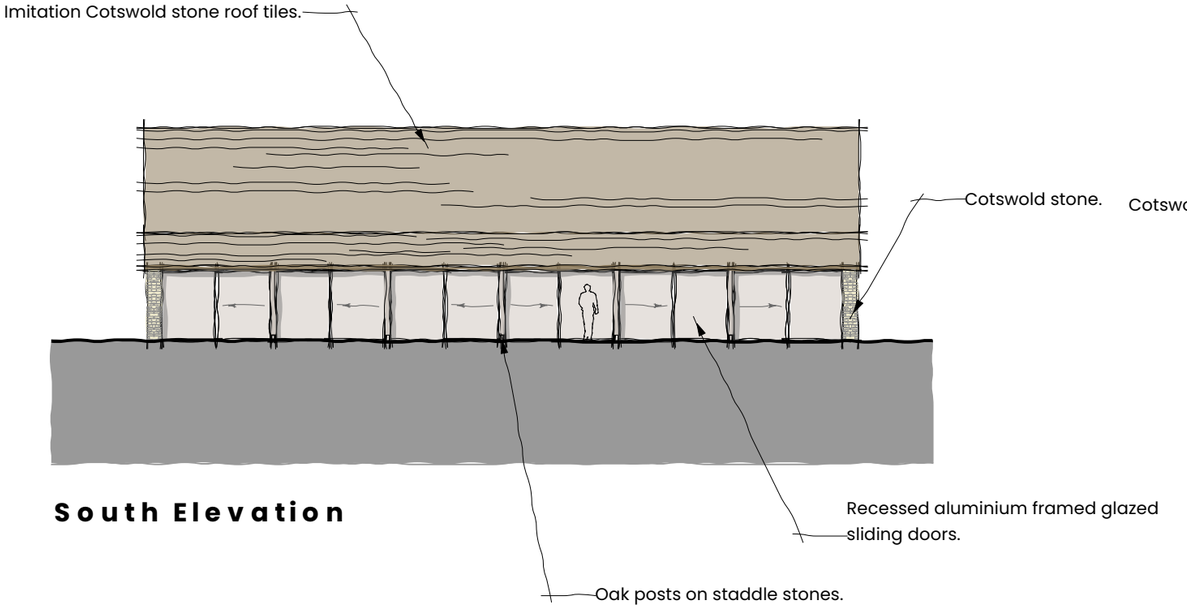
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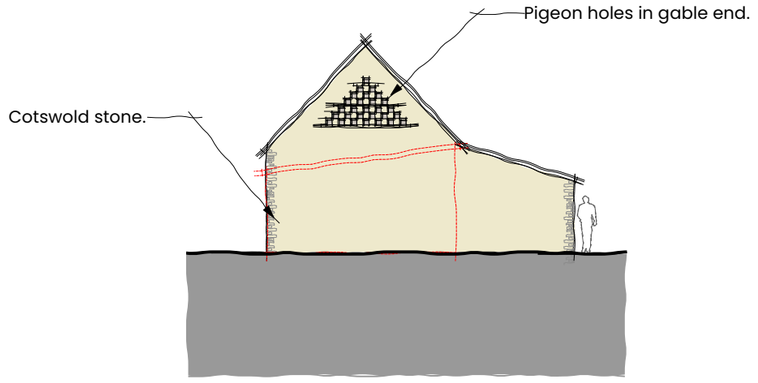
North Elevation



East Elevation



South Elevation



West Elevation

Barn 4 Proposed Elevations
Scale: 1:200 @ A3

Notes

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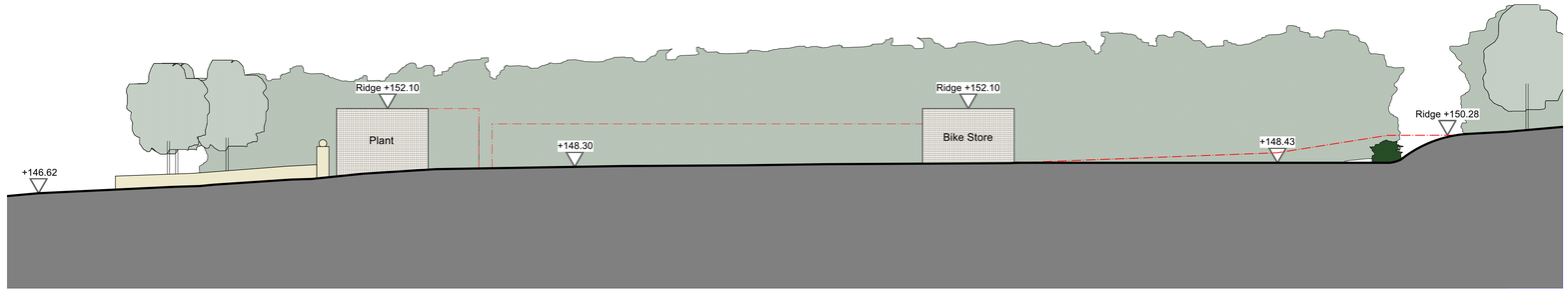
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SOTA
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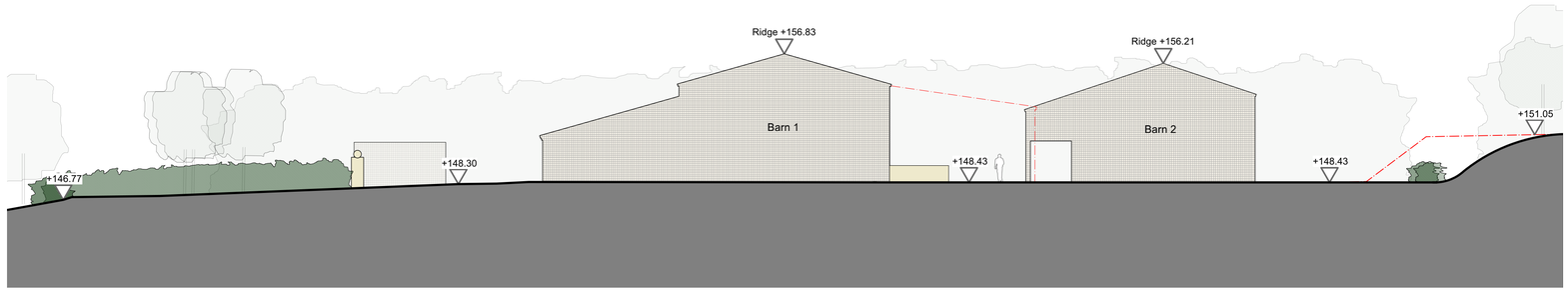
Title: Barn 4 Proposed Elevations
Project: Hill Farm, Oddington
Client: G Johnstone
Date: September 2025
Dwg Number: P_051_013 **REV:** __
Scale: 1:200 @ A3
Status: **PLANNING**

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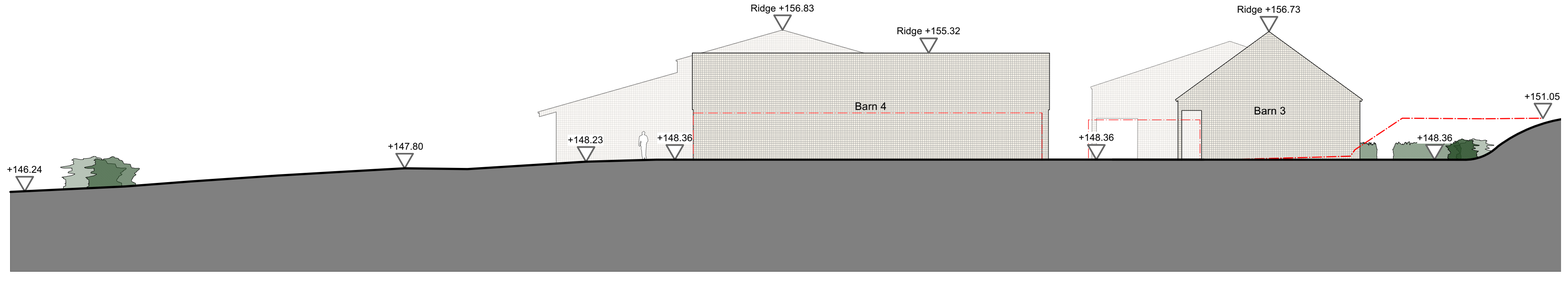
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Proposed Section AA

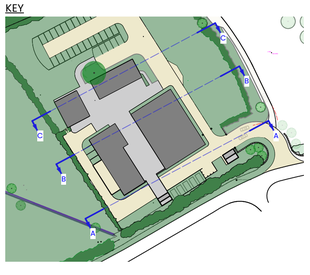


Proposed Section BB



Proposed Section CC

KEY



Proposed Sections
Scale: 1:200 @ A1

Notes
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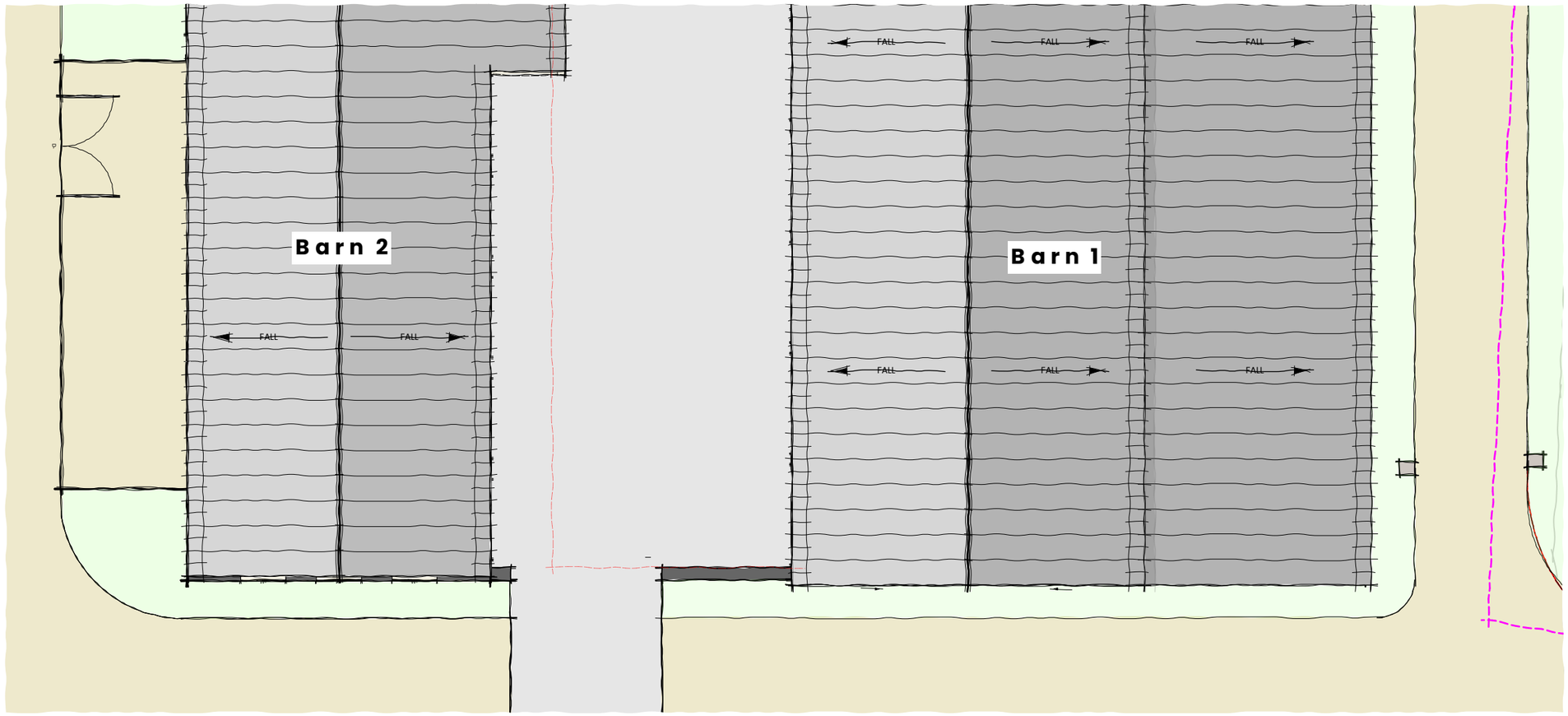
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SOTA
STATE OF THE ART
ARCHITECTURE

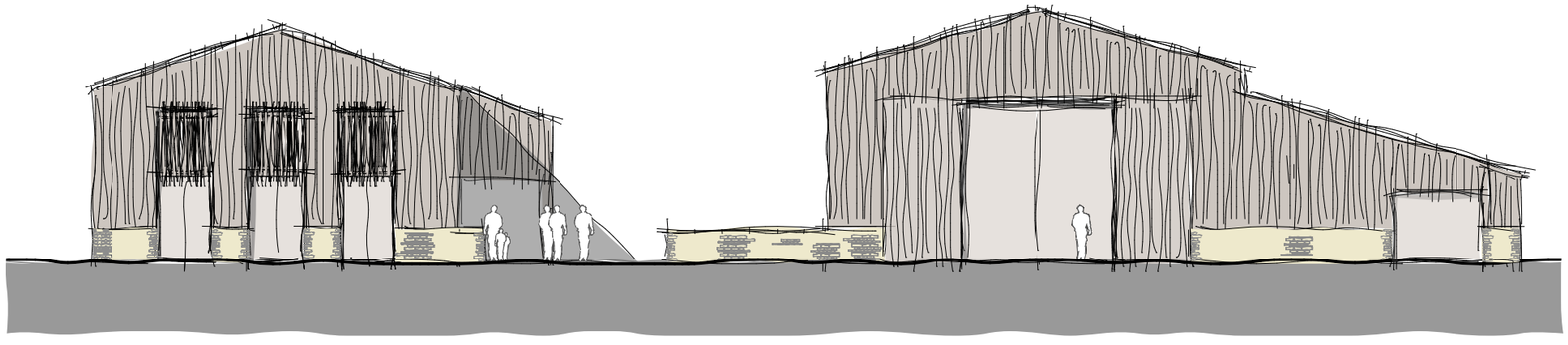
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Project: Hill Farm, Oddington
Client: Mr G Johnstone
Date: October 2025
Dwg Number: P_051_015 **REV:** _ _
Scale: 1:200 @ A1
Status: **PLANNING**

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Key Plan



Barn 2 & Barn 1 Proposed South Elevation
Scale: 1:200 @ A3

Notes
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3. All levels are in metres above ordnance datum unless otherwise stated.

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5. This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all Architectural and structural drawings; and the NBS Spec.

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rev	date	description
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SOTA
STATE OF THE ART ARCHITECTURE

Title: Barn 2 & Barn 1 Proposed South Elevation
Project: Hill Farm, Oddington

Client: G Johnstone
Date: September 2025
Dwg Number: P_051_009 **REV:** __
Scale: 1:200 @ A3
Status: **PLANNING**

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Outline planning application with all matters reserved except for access, for a mixed-use development associated with the Royal Agricultural University comprising up to 24,012 sqm of floorspace for office (Use Class E(g)(i)), research and development (E(g)(ii)), education (F1(a)), conferencing (F1(e)), and café (E(b)) uses, Including the conversion of Trent Lodge to café use, associated parking, access and highway works, landscaping, public realm, utilities, and all ancillary works and structures. The development is known as The RAU Innovation Village and forms part of its wider masterplan, supporting research and innovation in food production, climate change, and land management at The Royal Agricultural University Stroud Road Cirencester Gloucestershire GL7 6JS

Outline Application 24/01143/OUT	
Applicant:	The Royal Agricultural University
Agent:	Ridge And Partners LLP
Case Officer:	Ceri Porter
Ward Member(s):	Councillor Mark Harris
Committee Date:	13 May 2026
RECOMMENDATION:	**That the application be PERMITTED subject to:** **i. legal agreement(s) between the Applicant and the District Council and Gloucestershire County Council prior to the decision notice being issued;** **ii. agreement of the draft conditions set out in the report together with any draft conditions as may be agreed by Members at Planning & Licensing Committee;** **iii. delegated authority being given to the Head of Planning Services, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Planning & Licensing Committee, to amend and/or add to the suggested draft conditions where such amendments would not deviate significantly from the purpose of the draft conditions.**

1. Main Issues:

(a) Principle of Development
- Local Plan Policy EC4 - Special Area
- Major Development in the Cotswolds National Landscape (Paragraph 190 of the NPPF)

(b) Landscape Impact on Cotswolds National Landscape

(c) Design & Impact on Heritage Assets
(d) Highways Safety & Parking
(e) Impact on Residential Amenity
(f) Biodiversity and Geodiversity
(g) Trees
(h) Minerals & Waste Management

2. Reason for Referral:

2.1 This application has been referred to Planning and Licensing Committee as it falls into the major development category as set out within the Council's Executive Scheme of Delegation.

3. Site Description:

3.1 The application site sits on the western edge of Cirencester and forms a wedge shape located between the Stroud Road (A419) to the north and Tetbury Road(A433) with the roundabout where both roads converge to the east.

3.2 To the west is the existing Royal Agricultural University (RAU) Campus, its tree lined drive and entrance from Tetbury Road plus sports facilities. The site is bounded with mature hedgerow and trees to the north, east and south. Apart from a belt of trees/woodland, the western boundary is currently open with the RAU buildings beyond.

3.3 Trent Lodge is a stone building located to the north of the site where its immediate setting has been impacted by new buildings and associated parking. The building style is similar, but smaller in scale, to the main Victorian Gothic campus building, The Lodge was converted in 2018 to create office space and provide an extension to the accommodation offered in the Alliston Centre.

3.4 Steadings Cottages are a pair of late-Victorian workers cottages that sit opposite a collection of farm buildings that once formed the Royal Agricultural Veterinary Hospital, adjacent to Tetbury Road and the Fosse Way.

3.5 The site is gently rolling. The highest point of the site along the Stroud Road is approximately 133m AOD. The topography very gradually falls southwards to the lowest point of the site located at mid-way towards the southern boundary site which sits at approximately 126.630m AOD.

3.6 Ridge and furrow features dating back to the medieval period can be found to the northern area of the site.

3.7 A high pressure gas pipeline, which also affects The Steadings site, follows an alignment under the RAU campus to the west of this site.

3.8 During the lifetime of this application, a tree preservation order has been made (21st October 2025) protecting individual trees, groups of trees, an area of trees and 2 woodlands on site. The TPO title is Land at The Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester, Gloucestershire 2025 (CDC ref 25/00004/MIX).

4. Background and Relevant Planning History:

4.1 Outline planning permission was granted for the whole site in April 2007 (01/01011/OUT) for the erection of commercial buildings (floor area approximately 34,373 sq. metres) for uses comprising education, research, agricultural business and a conference facility, together with the associated infrastructure works.

4.2 This permission was renewed in May 2013 (10/00964/OUT) with an extended implementation timescale of five years. Conditions 3 (Approved Drawings) and 4 (Scale of Buildings) of which were amended in 2020 under application ref. 18/01104/FUL.

4.3 A Reserved Matters application pursuant to the above outline permission was submitted in October 2020 (20/03566/REM) and remains undetermined. This essentially can be considered an extant permission.

4.4 In May 2004 planning permission was granted (04/00665/FUL) at Trent Lodge for the conversion from student accommodation to office accommodation. Part of the site at Bailey Lodge received planning permission in 2017 for the erection of a new 2 storey office & research facility, including demolition of a 2-storey residential property, new hard landscaping, cycle storage and car parking. This application was amended through a non-material amendment application in 2017 (17/03536/NONMAT). The resultant development is now known as the Alliston Centre.

5. Planning Policies:

- CDCLP CDC LOCAL PLAN 2011-2031
- SA1 South Cotswold - Principal Settlements
- EC1 Employment Development
- EC4 Special Policy Areas
- EN1 Built, Natural & Historic Environment
- EN2 Design of Built & Natural Environment

- EN4 The Wider Natural & Historic Landscape
- EN5 Cotswolds AONB
- EN7 Trees, Hedgerows & Woodlands
- EN8 Bio & Geo: Features Habitats & Species
- EN10 HE: Designated Heritage Assets
- EN11 HE: DHA - Conservation Areas
- EN12 HE: Non-designated Heritage Assets
- INF1 Infrastructure Delivery
- INF3 Sustainable Transport
- INF4 Highway Safety
- INF5 Parking Provision
- INF7 Green Infrastructure
- INF8 Water Management Infrastructure
- INF9 Telecommunications Infrastructure
- NPPF National Planning Policy Framework

6. Observations of Consultees:

6.1 *Cotswold National Landscape Board* - No objection. Agree that the proposal represents major development in a National Landscape but considers it to meet

6.2 *GCC Highway Authority* - Following the submission of additional information and a revised layout removing the access to Plot 2 off Tetbury Road, no objection is raised subject to conditions (including the provision of a toucan crossing on Stroud Road) and a S106 agreement securing Travel Plan monitoring fees.

6.3 *Active Travel England* - Recommend deferral. The Transport Assessment Addendum (TAA) provides distribution of active travel trips in the local area and acknowledges the Cirencester Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. The TAA proposes to provide a contribution to pedestrian and cycling links in Cirencester but does not set out how this pledged contribution would be provided. This repeats ATE's earlier comments on the original submission.

6.4 *National Highways* - No objection.

6.5 *GCC Lead Local Flood Authority* - No objection. Consider that the drainage strategy is an acceptable solution. No conditions recommended.

6.6 *CDC Biodiversity Team* - Following submission of amended details, no objection subject to conditions, Naturespace District licence for great crested newts and securing BNG 30-year monitoring through a S106 agreement.

6.7 *Natural England* - Consider the LPA is best placed to determine any impacts on the CNL, in consultation with the CNLB. Based on the plans submitted, Natural England has no objection.

6.8 *CDC ERS Noise* - Further Assessment would be required at Reserved Matters stage

6.9 *CDC Tree Officer* - Whilst accepting of some loss of trees, there is concern regarding the loss of protected group G9 and the proximity of development to root protection areas. Conditions are recommended regarding tree protection and replacement planting.

6.10 *CDC Conservation Team* - 'Less than substantial harm' identified to heritage assets with Plot 3a potentially eroding the rural setting of the listed RAU college. There are concerns regarding the layout and impact on the entrance to Cirencester and setting of Trent Lodge that is narrower than it need be.

6.11 *County Archaeologist* - Recommends a condition requiring a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation

6.12 *Historic England* - Offer no advice. Recommend views of CDC advisors.

6.13 *Thames Water* - Insufficient capacity for foul water disposal and water supply. Recommend a Grampian condition that requires either the completion of the relevant upgrades or an agreed phasing plan prior to first occupation.

6.14 *National Grid asset Protection* - No National Grid Electricity Transmission infrastructure assets affected by the proposal.

6.15 *CDC Air Quality* - Raise questions regarding the traffic modelling and lack of Steadings Cottages as a receptor. The traffic modelling and queries have been responded to however the Applicants need to submit an addendum/statement to the air quality information in response to the revised layout for review.

6.16 *GCC Minerals & Waste Planning Authority* - No objection. Recommend conditions regarding waste management plans.

6.17 *Cirencester Civic Society* - considers that scrutiny of the proposed access arrangements by expert consultees is required and the Society looks forward to seeing further details of the reserved matters in future applications.

6.18 *Health & Safety Executive* - The proposed development is not within any of its consultation zones therefore the Land Use Planning Team has no comments to make.

7. View of Town/Parish Council:

Cirencester Town Council:

7.1 Support this application in principle, having regard to: the RAU's standing as the UK's leading specialist university for agriculture and land use; its role as a key economic asset for the District as a whole; and its allocation as a Special Policy Area in the Local Plan.

7.2 CTC welcomes elements of the proposals that will encourage and support active travel, cycling and use of public transport. CTC was previously concerned about the risk of pollution.

7.3 Previous presentations included student accommodation within the site that now seems to have been removed. CTC would like student accommodation to be reinstated into the proposals to avoid negative impacts on the local housing market.

7.4 Plot 2 proposed access is directly onto Tetbury Road, near to the Stroud Road Roundabout - why not onto the Stroud Road Roundabout itself?

7.5 Have potential noise levels from Trent lodge been assessed - and if necessary, could its proposed new use be moved?

8. Other Representations:

8.1 *Cirencester College* - The College is broadly supportive of the OPA proposals. They would like to be involved in any transport consultation exercise, given our proximity and our need to transport over 3000 students to our site every day and as one of the largest T Level providers in the region, offering a diverse range of subjects hope that the RAU will consider offering our students work placement opportunities during the construction and operational stages.

8.2 Five representations were received to the original submission in support of the original layout and one to the revised layout removing the second access onto Tetbury Road. The comments are summarised as follows:

- The proposal represents a sustainable development, which would be a great addition to Cirencester's employment opportunities, and a seedbed for new ideas and new technologies to germinate and grow.
- We support the coherent vision to minimize environmental damage and limit the development's climate impact.
- The proposals accord with Local Plan Policy EC4, which creates the exceptional circumstances required for major development within the CNL.
- CDC has previously allowed around 37,000 m2 of new floor space on this site.
- The uses proposed are clearly linked and integral to the RAU.
- Requiring some of the proposed floor space to be located within The Steadings would not be logical, as that land is not owned by the RAU, and is separated from it by the busy Tetbury Road.
- The site is not typical of the character of the CNL.
- The applicants have demonstrated how the proposed amount of development could be accommodated, without overdevelopment of the site.
- To ensure pedestrian permeability, there should be two controlled pedestrian crossings on the Stroud Road and one on the Tetbury Road.
- Please ensure that Tetbury benefits from any new or extended public transport services, as connectivity between Tetbury, Kemble and Cirencester is currently inadequate.
- A mechanism will be required to prevent student numbers rising above specified levels until new student accommodation is provided somewhere on the RAU campus.
- The proposed design principles are excellent. If they are adhered to, this will be an exemplary development.
- A mechanism will be required to link the development to the RAU.
- A mechanism will be required to ensure the new shared roundabout on the Tetbury Road is delivered ready for use in sync with whichever development comes first (RAU or The Steadings).
- A mechanism will be required to secure improvements to public transport services, delivery of on and off-site active travel infrastructure, and effective travel planning.
- This location, adjacent to the RAU and The Steadings, will facilitate walking to work.
- The Very Light Railway (VLR) would serve people travelling to the site from locations such as Swindon, Stroud, Gloucester and Cheltenham.
- Disagree with the Conservation Officer's conclusions about impacts on the listed Royal Agricultural College and the Cirencester Conservation Area(s). The distance between Plot 3a and the listed buildings is sufficient to avoid any harmful impact on the latter, particularly if this part of the development

is largely restricted to two storeys in height. The proposed development will be sufficiently set back from the Tetbury Road, and the approach to Cirencester will be urbanized by The Steadings development in any case.
- Trent Lodge is a non-designated heritage asset, and the proposed development will have no unacceptable impacts upon it.
- The central green space is a key aspect of the design and should not be compromised to address unfounded concerns about impacts on heritage assets or the CNL.
- Concerns over a small number of trees are not sufficient to warrant a reduction in the proposed floor space.
- National planning and related policies are very supportive of employment developments with science park characteristics, particularly when linked with educational establishments.
- The government wants to see growth of the type proposed here. Refusal would surely be overturned at appeal.

8.3 Six representations objecting to the proposal were received for the original submission, with one further to the revised scheme. The comments are summarised as follows:

- What is the evidence for need for the development and how it would increase enrolment
- Query calculations for net zero. Aiming for net negative carbon impact would be more appropriate for an institution with such close links to the environment. Development causes climate change.
- Could they refurbish and repurpose existing buildings?
- Increased highway congestion particularly at peak times that are already gridlocked.
- Parking in the wider area will increase - already difficult with college.
- Impact on neighbouring residents at Bartonbury including proximity of development - request measures to screen development.
- Royal Agricultural University Estates Masterplan March 2024

8.4 Savills has submitted a representation on behalf of Bathurst Estates Limited raising concerns with the proposal:

- the RAU scheme should be treated as an "Agent of Change" relative to the Steadings development;
- failure to show Tetbury Road dualling
- Fourth arm of the Steadings roundabout
- Road Safety Audit is required
- Phasing Strategy is problematic

- Highway impact conclusions are unchallenged.

9. Applicant's Supporting Information:

- Planning Development Specification (Version 1.3) - October 2025.
- Site Location Plan - Drawing Number RAU-ART-XX-XX-D-A-40001 Revision P03 (17/04/2024).
- Proposed Parameter Zone Plan - Drawing Number RAU-ART-XX-XX-D-A-40002 Revision P12 (10/10/2025).
- Demolition Plan - Drawing Number RAU-ART-XX-XX-D-A-40100 Revision P03 (17/04/2024).
- Parameter Plan - Land Use and Access - Drawing Number RAU-BDL-XX-XX-D-L-00810 Revision P07 (10/10/2025).
- Tree Retention and Removal - Drawing Number RAU-BDL-XX-XX-D-L-00808 Revision P06 (10/10/2025).
- Parameter Plan - Green Infrastructure - Drawing Number RAU-BDL-XX-XX-D-L-00809 Revision P07 (10/10/2025).
- Access on Tetbury Road Drawing Number M001262-1-1-DR-009 Rev A (for information).
- Swept Path Analysis Drawing Number M001262-1-1-DR-008 Rev A (for information).
- Swept Path Analysis Drawing Number M001262-1-1-DR-007 Rev A (for information).
- Swept Path Analysis Drawing Number M001262-1-1-DR-006 Rev A (for information).
- Stroud Road Toucan Crossing as shown on Drawing M0001262-1-1-DR-005 - Rev A
- Pedestrian Route to Overflow Car Park
- Stroud Road Western Access Visibility Splay - Drawing Number M001262-1-1-SK01 Revision A (15/03/2024) (for information).
- Stroud Road Eastern Access Visibility Splay - Drawing Number M001262-1-1-SK02 Revision A (15/03/2024) (for information).
- Environmental Statement

10. Officer's Assessment:

10.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that 'If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.'

10.2 The starting point for the determination of this application is therefore the current development plan for the District which is the adopted Cotswold District Local Plan 2011 – 2031. Cirencester Neighbourhood Plan is currently at Regulation 16 stage and has not yet been adopted (Made). This is currently afforded little weight.

10.3 The policies and guidance within the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are also a material planning consideration.

10.4 On 16 December 2025, the Government published a consultation on reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Whilst changes to the structure and wording are proposed, these could be subject to further change and can only be given very limited weight at this stage.

Proposed Development

10.5 Outline planning permission is sought (with all matters reserved except for access), for a mixed-use development associated with the Royal Agricultural University comprising up to 24,012 sqm of floorspace for office (Use Class E(g)(i)), research and development (E(g)(ii)), education (F1(a)), conferencing (F1(e)), and café (E(b)) uses, including the conversion of Trent Lodge to café use, associated parking, access and highway works, landscaping, public realm, utilities, and all ancillary works and structures.

10.6 As part of the RAU's review of accommodation, they have identified that 'whilst growth in undergraduate student numbers can largely be accommodated through improvements to the existing built estate, this is not the case if we are to continue to grow our research and innovation activities where space is already limited. Therefore, unlike other specified zones of the campus masterplan, the research and innovation zone is identified as a series of new build phased-developments to expand the campus to the east – the Innovation Village.

10.7 The application proposal is supported by an Environmental Statement, submitted in accordance with relevant Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations.

10.8 The development would be known as 'The RAU Innovation Village' and forms part of its wider masterplan, supporting research and innovation in food production, climate change, and land management.

10.9 The proposed development would be phased with Phase 1 (Plot 1 zone a, Plot 1 zone b, Plot 4a and Plot 4b) that is located closest to Trent Lodge and the Alliston Centre. Phase 1 would be accessed from the two existing access points on Stroud Road. Pedestrian and cycle access through the site would be provided in conjunction with a toucan crossing on Stroud Road.

10.10 Phase 2 (Plots 2, Plot 3A zone a, Plot 3A zone b, Plot 3B and 3C) is proposed to be accessed off the new roundabout to be constructed as part of the Steadings development on Tetbury Road.

10.11 Phase 3 would involve the retrofit of Trent Lodge into a hospitality/restaurant facility and café.

10.12 A parameter plan sets out the maximum heights for buildings within different plots. The site is proposed to be split into a series of plots, each of which have different height parameters, as shown on the Built Form and Heights Parameter Plan.

10.13 Plot 1 would be primarily two storeys, located alongside Trent Lodge and the Alliston Centre. A three-storey element is proposed to the West. Plot 2 is proposed to be a maximum of three storeys. Plot 3 would a maximum of three storeys. Plot 3c would be single storey, acknowledging it's more sensitive location in the parkland setting. Plot 4 would be two storey where it sits most sensitively within the setting of Trent Lodge and the Alliston Centre. A single storey element (Plot 4b) is then proposed to the east, to the south of residential properties Bartonbury House and Bartonbury Mead.

(a) Principle of Development

10.14 Local Plan Policy EC4 – Special Policy Areas

10.15 The Cotswold District Local Plan (Local Plan) identifies three substantial organisations where the Council recognises the need for certainty for a long-term approach to their sites. Policy EC4 defines these as Special Policy Areas of which the RAU is one.

10.16 At the RAU site policy EC4 states that 'proposals for the expansion of the existing University campus, including associated development for educational, training, business and research development, student accommodation and other operational floorspace, will be permitted.'

10.17 Policy EC4 requires Masterplans for the respective sites to be produced in consultation with the local community and, subject to the approval of the Local Planning Authority,

10.18 Under Policy EC4, any masterplan should seek to ensure the character of the parkland setting is not compromised, adequately addresses transport and access details in a phased manner to ensure that the site practicably integrates with different uses near the site (Deer Park School, Cirencester College and the Steadings. The masterplan should demonstrate that the proposal supports the vitality and viability of Cirencester Town Centre, takes into account the gas pipeline buffer zone and does not result in a net loss of playing fields/sports facilities.

10.19 The proposal is submitted with a masterplan document (Royal Agricultural University Estates Masterplan, March 2024). The document sets out the Mission and Vision for the RAU with Corporate Goals of Quality, Reach and Sustainability that are underpinned by 8 key principles. The masterplan seeks to zone related uses together in the following groups:

- teaching & learning
- research & innovation
- commercial & heritage
- student enrichment & support
- RAU sport
- Student accommodation

10.20 This is illustrated on a visual plan at 4.2 of the 'Estates Masterplan' document. This identifies the different zones with the research and innovation village, (the subject of this application) located to the east of the overall masterplan. This outline application for this section of the overall campus includes a masterplan that reflects the 'Estates Masterplan'.

10.21 A Statement of Community Involvement (March 2024) has been submitted that sets out how the RAU has sought views of the community through a variety of exhibitions, meetings, and drop-in sessions with the general public and stakeholders from December 2022.

10.22 Economic impacts are considered further in the report, however it must be noted that the Socio-Economic chapter of the ES supporting the proposal concluded that overall, 'together with the cumulative scheme, there will be Beneficial cumulative effects in terms of job creation, local economic performance (GVA), fiscal contributions (business rates) and open space

provision'. The proposal in terms of the innovation village seeks to provide a cluster of businesses and researchers across food production, climate change and land health/management with direct links to the RAU itself. This forms part of the description of development. The Council's Economic Development lead officer summarises that the proposal projections by Savills provide 'credible projections from a well-respected national firm of consultants and that overall, the proposal would create highly-skilled and well-paid jobs, helping to retain graduates in the area. The proposal 'seeks to tackle some major national and international challenges and, in doing so, will help grow the district and the county's reputation as a place to study, research and grow a business. It is consistent with national and local economic strategies and, if successful, will deliver significant economic benefits.

10.23 The gas pipeline is avoided as part of the proposal and the scheme does not result in the loss of any playing fields.

10.24 Matters regarding highways and access and links with the surroundings are dealt with under the relevant section in the report however it is considered that in general, the proposal accords with the requirements of Policy EC4 for Special Policy Areas.

Major Development in the Cotswolds National Landscape (Paragraph 190 of the NPPF)

10.25 The site is located entirely within the Cotswolds National Landscape (formerly AONB) where great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape. Notwithstanding Local Plan Policy EC4 and the planning permission, it is considered that the proposal constitutes major development, based on the definition contained in Footnote 67 of the NPPF by virtue of its nature, scale and setting, and its potential to have a significant adverse impact on the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the National Landscape.

10.26 Policy CE11 of the Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan also states that proposals for major development in the National Landscape, including allocations in Local Plans, must comply with national planning policy and guidance. Development should also have regard to, and be compatible with, the major development guidance provided in the Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan.

10.27 As such, and notwithstanding the Special Area Policy support of policy EC4 and fallback of an extant planning permission, the Local Planning Authority must

have regard to paragraph 190 of the NPPF that sets out the assessments that must be undertaken when considering applications for major development in such landscapes. These are:

(a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;

(b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and

(c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

10.28 The first test (a) for this proposal is therefore whether there is a need for the development. Here the decision maker should not simply weigh all material considerations in a balance as a standard, but should refuse planning permission unless satisfied that the exceptional circumstances apply, and that the development is in the public interest.

10.29 In this instance, Gloucestershire Local Growth Plan (November 2025) and the Council's 'Green Economic Growth Strategy' identifies the RAU as a key local asset and that agritech, land management and associated industries as key growth sectors for the District. The RAU represents a crucial economic asset for not just Cirencester but regionally in the South-West and ultimately, worldwide. Important in the need to address the challenges of climate change (the contribution of agriculture to it) and national food security.

10.30 As a leading institution for agricultural research in the United Kingdom, it is logical there would be benefits (in socio-economic terms) for the RAU to group together research and development and businesses association with private and third sector innovators close to the learning centre. Paragraph 7.4 of the submitted Planning Statement outlines that "The adjacency to the RAU provides the opportunity for engagement with the academic research community which is a known pull-factor for those operating within the innovation space."

10.31 The submission sets out the projected jobs and investment generated by the Innovation Village proposal that is estimated at over 125 jobs during the construction phases and up to 1,230 net additional direct FTE jobs. In addition, the proposal would support between 155 and 615 FTE of off-site local jobs through indirect and induced effects across the sub-region (Gloucestershire).

10.32 This is supplemented by the site being defined as a Special Policy Area in the current and emerging Local Plan.

10.33 Given this, it is considered that there is a demonstrable national need for the development to address climate change and associated impacts. The proposal would also result in clear economic benefits for the local area and wider district/region.

10.34 In terms of developing on this site within the National Landscape rather than a site located outside the protected landscape, it is considered that the RAU has been providing agricultural education and acting as a key contributor to the land-based sector for 180 years. The very nature of the proposed Innovation Village, as outlined above, needs the pull of the adjacent RAU and would provide a talent pipeline for graduates.

10.35 In terms of test (c) that requires 'any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated', the Landscape Impact section of this report assesses this in detail. Ultimately, it is considered that any such impact could be moderated.

10.36 Given that tests (a), (b) and (c) of Paragraph 190 in respect of justifying exceptional major development in the National Landscape are considered to be met, the final assessment is whether the proposed development would be in the public interest.

10.37 The RAU is identified as important employer and asset within the District. The proposed development specifically seeks innovation in agriculture and the land-based sector to address the challenges of the climate crisis. The development would bring clear economic benefits to local, district and wider region therefore it is considered that the proposal would be in the public interest and the requirements of Paragraph 190 of the NPPF.

(b) Landscape Impact on Cotswolds National Landscape

10.38 The site is located within the Cotswolds National Landscape (formerly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty). Section 85(A1) of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 (as amended by Section 245 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023) states that relevant authorities have a duty to seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty.

10.39 Local Plan Policy EN1 Built, Natural and Historic Environment states:

New development will, where appropriate, promote the protection, conservation and enhancement of the historic and natural environment by:

a. Ensuring the protection and enhancement of existing natural and historic environmental assets and their settings in proportion with the significance of the asset;

b. Contributing to the provision of multi-functional green infrastructure;

c. Addressing climate change, habitat loss and fragmentation through creating new habitats and the better management of existing habitats;

d. Seeking to improve air, soil and water quality where feasible; and

e. Ensuring design standards that complement the character of the area and the sustainable use of the development.

10.40 Local Plan Policy EN4 The Wider Natural and Historic Landscape states:

1. Development will be permitted where it does not have a significant detrimental impact on the natural and historic landscape (including the tranquillity of the countryside) of Cotswold District or neighbouring areas.

2. Proposals will take account of landscape and historic landscape character, visual quality and local distinctiveness. They will be expected to enhance, restore and better manage the natural and historic landscape, and any significant landscape features and elements, including key views, the setting of settlements, settlement patterns and heritage assets.

10.41 Local Plan Policy EN5 Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) states:

1. In determining development proposals within the AONB or its setting, the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape, its character and special qualities will be given great weight.

2. Major development will not be permitted within the AONB unless it satisfies the exceptions set out in National Policy and Guidance.

10.42 Local Plan Policy INF7: Green Infrastructure states:

1. Development proposals must contribute, depending on their scale, use and location, to the protection and enhancement of existing Green Infrastructure and/or the delivery of new Green Infrastructure.

2. New Green Infrastructure provision will be expected to link to the wider Green Infrastructure network of the District and beyond.

3. Green Infrastructure will be designed in accordance with principles set out in the Cotswold Design Code (Appendix D).

10.43 In terms of national guidance, Paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes' and 'recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside'.

10.44 Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states that ' great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in ... National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.'

10.45 In addition to the above, the Council's Cabinet, at its meeting on the 8th May 2025, resolved to ' endorse the recommendation of the report that the Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2025-2030 be used...' 'as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications (where compatible with relevant Local Plan and national policy)'

10.46 Policy CE1 of the Management Plan states that proposals that have the potential to impact on, or create change in, the landscape of the Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL), should be delivered in a way that is compatible with and seek to further the conservation and enhancement of the landscape character of the location, as described by the CNL Board's Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Strategy and Guidelines. There should be a presumption against the loss of key characteristics identified in the landscape character assessment.

10.47 Policy CE.3 refers to local distinctiveness and requires that though proposals that are likely to have an impact on distinctiveness should have regard to be compatible with and reinforce this local distinctiveness.

10.48 Within the Management Plan, the site is located within a defined Landscape Character Type 11: Dip-slope Lowland and Landscape Character Area 11A South and Mid Cotswolds Lowlands.

10.49 Dip-slope landscapes are described as being sensitive to large scale developments that might interrupt wide views across the landscape however the presence of more intensively managed landscapes makes the Dip-slope

Lowlands generally less sensitive than remoter and more elevated landscapes on the High Wold and High Wold Dip-slope. Areas where a strong woodland framework exists are particularly suited to accommodate development. However, development proposals should avoid extensive new woodland planting to screen developments, as this would compromise the open character of the landscape and long views across the Dip-Slope Lowlands'.

10.50 For development for the expansion and infilling of settlements there are implications identified in the Management Plan such as intrusion, degradation of views from and across the Dip-slope Lowland, erosion of settlement patterns, loss of tranquillity and suburbanisation.

10.51 The triangular site has Stroud to the north with the buildings of Cirencester College and Deer Park beyond. To the south is Tetbury Road and to the east is the roundabout where the two roads meet. The overall site is bounded by mature hedgerows and trees but open towards the RAU campus to the west.

10.52 Within the site, the Cotswolds National Landscape Boards describes is as follows: "The northern part of the site mainly comprises unmanaged grassland and exhibits some relict, small scale parkland characteristics. Trent Lodge is located within the northern part of the site alongside the more modern building of the Alliston Centre. The southern part of the site is more enclosed and there is a more wooded area at the southernmost part of the site with the Monarch's Way footpath running through the site between the RAU's sports pitches and Tetbury Road."

10.53 The site is considered to be isolated from its wider landscape character type. As such it does not display the key landscape characteristics or special qualities of this part of the National Landscape. The application submission determines the landscape impact of the scheme to not be significant with only two viewpoints assessed as being of moderate significance at 2 points on Stroud and Tetbury Road. Impacts on views from the National Landscape would not be significant.

10.54 In terms of tranquillity, the site is already influenced by traffic and activity associated with its location between the A419 Stroud Road and A429 Tetbury Road. Having regard to this existing baseline, and to the findings of the submitted Transport Assessment, the proposal is not considered likely to materially alter levels of tranquillity within the wider National Landscape. Any change would be localised to the site and its immediate surroundings and would not result in an adverse impact on tranquillity as experienced across the wider Cotswolds National Landscape.

10.55 In terms of the impact of light and dark skies, the proposal is in outline. The Lighting chapter of the ES recommends a mitigation by design approach should be utilised to reduce the impact on sensitive receptors from an early stage to ensure that the impact is minimised. Lighting is therefore recommended to be controlled during construction via a Construction Environmental Management Plan and with a Detailed Lighting Design Strategy for external lighting.

10.56 Overall, it is considered that the scale and extent of the development within the National Landscape is limited. The Cotswolds National Landscape Board having visited the site and reviewed the submission concludes that "any identified minor harm to its natural beauty is capable of being mitigated in the medium to long-term and would, to a degree, be compensated for by the identified enhancements delivered through the scheme."

10.57 Applying the great weight in seeking to further the conservation and enhancement of the landscape and scenic beauty of the National Landscape, it is considered that the application accords with policies EC4 and EN4 of the Local Plan, paragraph 182 of the NPPF and policy CE1 of the Board's Management Plan.

(c) Design and Impact on Heritage Assets

10.58 In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, in accordance with Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act, 1990.

10.59 The boundary of the application site is located on average 350m from, and within the wider rural setting of the Royal Agricultural College, a grade II listed building. The site also lies behind, and within the setting of a Milestone at NGR SP 010, which is also a grade II listed building.

10.60 The Conservation Officer in their response state that "the application site, whilst forming part of the broader, rural setting of the listed building, generally lies well to the east of the listed building and its immediate setting, and is therefore likely to have a negligible impact."

10.61 The site lies between the Tetbury Road and the Stroud Road, both of which form important historic approaches to the historic town, and designated

conservation areas of Cirencester that is located approximately 350m away to the north east.

10.62 Policy EN1 states that new development should promote the protection, conservation and enhancement of the historic and natural environment by several measures, including: ensuring the protection and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings; addressing climate change; and ensuring that the design of proposals should complement the character of the area.

10.63 Policy EN2 requires development to accord with the Cotswold Design Code, and that proposals should respect the character and distinctive appearance of the locality. The supporting text states that: 'Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and addressing climate change, is indivisible from good planning and should contribute positively to making placed better for people' (paragraph 10.2.1). Paragraphs D.59 – D.62 provide guidance regarding sustainable design and states that 'the potential impacts of climate change can be addressed through a variety of means, from the incorporation of better insulation a renewable energy technologies, to adaptations for severe weather events, and the use of local and recycled building materials. Re-use of existing buildings is also often more environmentally sustainable than demolition and new build.'

10.64 The Design Code also stresses that sustainable design needs to be responsive to the character of the area and the sensitivities of the site.

10.65 Policy EN4 states that development should take into account historic landscape character and local distinctiveness, and would be expected to enhance, restore or better manage significant historic landscape features, including key views, the setting of settlements, settlement pattern, and heritage assets.

10.66 Policy EN10 reiterates the NPPF concern that great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets. It states that proposals that sustain the character, appearance and significance of designated assets will be permitted, but that proposals that would harm the significance of an asset or its setting would not be permitted unless outweighed by mitigating public benefit.

10.67 Policy EN11 states that proposals that affect conservation areas or their settings would be permitted providing that, amongst other things; it would preserve or where appropriate enhance the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area in terms of siting, scale, form, proportion, design, and materials; and that it will not result in a loss of open spaces, including garden

areas and village greens, which make a valuable contribution to the character and/or appearance of the conservation area. It also states that internally illuminated signage will not be permitted unless it does not have an adverse impact on the Conservation Area or its setting.

10.68 Policy EN12 states that proposals which affect a non-designated heritage asset would be permitted 'where it is designed sympathetically having regard to the significance of the asset, its features, character and setting'. It also states that 'Proposals for the demolition or total loss of a non-designated heritage asset will be subject to a balanced assessment taking into account the significance of the asset and the scale of harm or loss'. The accompanying information (Table 6, pages 154-5) lays down a series of criteria for selection as a non-designated heritage asset (based upon Historic England criteria), which includes architectural interest, historic interest, representativeness, aesthetic value, group value, and sense of completeness, advising that is not necessary for a building to meet all the criteria in order to be considered a non-designated heritage asset.

10.69 Whilst there is no statutory provision to seek to preserve the setting of conservation areas under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework identifies conservation areas as designated heritage assets, and places great weight on sustaining the significance of such assets through alterations to them and their settings.

10.70 The Conservation Officer has raised concern that the combination of the proposed buildings in Plot 2 due to their orientation and height would result in development with no visual gap through the buildings and erode the rural approach to Cirencester. This concern is noted however, the proposal is for outline planning permission with an illustrative masterplan and appearance, layout, landscaping and scale for consideration at Reserved Matters stage.

10.71 For Phase 2 of the proposal to be occupied, the roundabout and dualling of the highway along Tetbury Road (to serve the approved Steadings development) would need to be completed. Once these works are in place, with the Steadings development on the opposite side of Tetbury Road, the character of the approach to Cirencester along Tetbury Road would be very modified.

10.72 It is also considered that the illustrative masterplan for the site has the space to retain suitable planting buffers along the road to soften any development. This would be combined with the requirement for replacement tree mitigation and a comprehensive landscaping plan.

10.73 In terms of Trent Lodge in the north of the site, this is considered to a non-designated heritage asset. The building is to be retained however the Conservation Officer is concerned that the proposals in Plot 1 and Plot 4a would encroach on the western elevation and create a cone of visibility. The illustrative layout would focus views towards the central parkland and as an outline application, the specific layout would be considered at the relevant Reserved Matters application.

10.74 The Steadings cottages (late Victorian cottages), on the Tetbury Road would be demolished as part of the proposed development. The Conservation Officer response makes no comment on this element of the proposal. Whilst the cottages are not listed or locally listed, they are considered to be of sufficient historic interest to constitute a 'non-designated heritage asset' (albeit of low heritage interest). The buildings are not clearly inter-visible with the RAU and their location would be close to the proposed roundabout on Tetbury Road and would facilitate the development of Plots 3. In accordance with Local Plan policy EN12, the loss of the non-designated heritage asset has been subject to a balanced judgement having regard to the significance of the asset and the scale of harm or loss. The proposal would result in the total loss of the asset, which carries negative weight. However, given the asset's limited significance and the justification for the development in this location (including delivery of the EC4 allocation and associated economic, research and education benefits), the resulting harm is considered acceptable on balance

10.75 In heritage terms, the proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of designated heritage assets, arising principally from the effect of the proposed built form on the wider rural setting of the Grade II listed Royal Agricultural College and the historic approaches to Cirencester, including the setting of the Cirencester Conservation Area. The level of harm is considered to be at the lower end of the less than substantial spectrum, having regard to the separation from the principal listed building, the outline nature of the application, the scope for detailed design, layout, scale and landscaping to be controlled at reserved matters stage, and the existing and permitted changes to the character of the Tetbury Road approach. In accordance with paragraph 215 of the NPPF, the identified less than substantial harm to designated heritage assets must be given great weight and weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Those benefits are substantial and include the delivery of a specialist Innovation Village directly associated with the RAU, supporting nationally and locally important research and innovation in agriculture, food production, climate change and land management; the creation of significant skilled employment and wider economic benefits; support for graduate retention and business growth; the delivery of a highly sustainable form of

development; and biodiversity, landscape and public realm enhancements. Taking these benefits together, and applying considerable importance and weight to the conservation of designated heritage assets, it is considered that the public benefits of the scheme clearly outweigh the identified less than substantial heritage harm.

10.76 Overall, the proposal is considered to be acceptable, having regard to the statutory duty under section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Local Plan Policies EN10, EN11 and EN12, and paragraphs 212, 215 and 216 of the NPPF.

Archaeology

10.77 Archaeological investigation has previously been carried out at the proposed development site including archaeological desk based assessment, geophysical survey and trial trench evaluation. The result of archaeological investigation has identified archaeological remains of a later prehistoric field system and former Roman quarries as well as remnants of medieval ridge and furrow in the south-east part of the site.

10.78 The County Archaeologist agrees with the conclusions of the ES that based on the significance of archaeological remains identified within the site that a programme of archaeological investigation and recording and level 2/3 historic building recording of Trent Lodge and The Steadings cottages would be an appropriate form of mitigation.

10.79 Accordingly, a condition securing a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation is recommended.

(d) Highways

10.80 Paragraph 110 of the NPPF advises that The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.

10.81 Paragraph 116 of the NPPF continues that Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable

impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.

10.82 Proposals should prioritise pedestrians and cyclists both within the scheme and outside development sites. The NPPF advices at 118 that 'All developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a vision-led transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed.'

10.83 This proposal is supported by these documents and in discussions with the Highway Authority at Gloucestershire County Council and Active Travel England (ATE) regarding the access strategy, parking, active travel links and the impact assessment of the proposals. A revised Addendum Transport Assessment has been submitted by the applicant and the second access onto Tetbury Road to serve Plot 2 has been removed.

10.84 The Highways Authority has provided comments on the proposal. These comments break down the topics in a clear and understandable manner and are therefore reproduced in full below:

"Access Strategy

10.84.1 It is noted that the access strategy for the proposed development has largely been agreed as part of previous consultation.

10.84.2 The issue of a secondary access off Tetbury Road has now been removed.

10.84.3 Two existing priority accesses are to be used for access off Stroud Road. Stroud Road in the vicinity of both accesses is subject to a 30mph speed limit and therefore visibility of 43m in each direction needs to be maintained through vegetation clearance and this will be conditioned on any approval.

10.84.4 Phase 2 of the development is reliant on the implementation of a roundabout access off Tetbury Road, which will be delivered as part of the adjacent Steadings development. The proposals are to create a northern arm off this roundabout for access to the site. Drawing M0001262-1-1-DR-005 – Rev A has been provided showing this access to include the northern arm off the roundabout to the development. This has been checked and accepted and

suitable vehicle tracking has been provided showing that the largest vehicle (refuse vehicle) anticipated to use the site can do so safely without conflict.

10.84.5 Phase 2 of the development cannot be brought into use until this roundabout access is delivered in full and this is suitably conditioned.

Pedestrian/Cycle Access

10.84.6 It is noted that the roundabout access, which will be conditioned to be delivered in full prior to Phase 2 of the development commencing, contains a 3m footway/cycleway to/from the development with a toucan crossing proposed across Tetbury Road.

10.84.7 This will link to a 3m footway/cycleway on the southern side of Tetbury Road, which will be delivered by the Steadings development, which will route to/from Cirencester city centre.

10.84.8 Given that the RAU application, in particular Phase 2, will be reliant upon the above footway/cycleway for external pedestrian/cycle access, then this will be conditioned for delivery prior to Phase 2 being implemented.

10.84.9 A toucan crossing is proposed across Stroud Road which will link to a pedestrian link routing through the site. This has been subject to a Road Safety Audit (Stage 1) and it is accepted that the issues identified can be dealt with at detailed design stage.

10.84.10 It is noted that a proposed improvement scheme for the Stroud Road/Tetbury Road junction (to be delivered by the Steadings development) includes for widening in the location of the toucan crossing, which has not been taken into account. However, this crossing is likely to supersede those works and is required to be implemented prior to occupation of Phase 1 of this application.

Off-Site Pedestrian/Cycle Links

10.84.11 It is disappointing that despite consultation over recent months regarding of off-site connections to Cirencester town centre and Kemble, no improvements have been put forward other than a proposed toucan crossing close to the site.

10.84.12 Notwithstanding this, with a proposed toucan crossing across Stroud Road, there is a connection between the site to the town centre along Stroud Road/Tetbury Road.

10.84.13 It is noted in the TAA, a number of route recommendations for improvements particularly along this route contained in the Cirencester LCWIP, but it is disappointing that this application does not put any of these forward for implementation. Given this, a suitable contribution will be sought towards the implementation of the recommendations within the LCWIP which will be discussed with Cotswold DC and the applicant.

10.84.14 Phase 2 of the development will not come forward until the proposed roundabout access to include a footway to the north of Tetbury Road and a 3m footway/cycleway to the south of Tetbury Road is implemented.

Parking

10.84.15 It is noted that the level of car parking proposed falls below the maximum car parking standards set out by Cotswold District Council with no set guidelines on parking standards set by Gloucestershire County Council for employment development.

10.84.16 The proposal is for a total provision of 431 dedicated parking spaces.

10.84.17 Discussions have been held with the applicant with regards to a 'fall back' position, whereby if the modal shift targets were not met and there is a shortfall in parking provision once operational then additional parking would be required. The applicant has identified an area within the ownership of the university where this will be located and has committed to providing a suitable footway within the site that will link to the main site.

10.84.18 A suitable parking strategy will be required to be provided through a condition on any approval, which will need to be agreed with the local highway authority.

Highway Impact

10.84.19 A previous consultation response highlighted inaccuracies with the software used, junction naming and model outputs.

10.84.20 The TAA provided in March 2026 provides a clearer set of results and utilises Junction 11 (Picady and Arcady) and Linsig modelling. The assessment

scenarios and junctions to be assessed have been agreed previously and include the main site access junctions (two existing accesses on Stroud Road and main roundabout access off Tetbury Road), the Tetbury Road/Stroud Road roundabout and the Tetbury Road/Chesterton Lane junction.

10.84.21 It is noted that there is an improvement scheme in place and permitted through the Steadings application to signalise and widen in sections the Tetbury Road/Stroud Road roundabout, dual the section of Tetbury Road between this roundabout and the proposed access roundabout and signalise the Tetbury Road/Chesterton Lane junction.

10.84.22 The Highway Authority is satisfied with the level of assessment provided for the implementation of Phase 1 of the development. The main point of impact would be the Stroud Road/Tetbury Road roundabout and there are no conflicts between the site and this point. The opposite college/school is likely to operate at different times during the day than the proposed development.

10.84.23 No assessment has been provided of the individual impact of the development once the full development (including Phase 2) is complete. The assessment instead focuses on the combined impact of both this development and the full completion of the adjacent Steadings development with the full infrastructure completed as part of that development. Therefore, it is considered that the full mitigation associated with the Steadings development (to include the signalisation of the Stroud Road/Tetbury Road roundabout and Tetbury Road/Chesterton Lane junction) would be required to be completed prior to Phase 2 of the development coming forward and this will be conditioned.

Framework Travel Plan

10.84.24 A Framework Travel Plan has been provided which provides very ambitious targets for modal shift from the private car to more sustainable modes.

10.84.25 The majority of measures relate to within the site, although measures such as a car sharing scheme and shuttle service for employees between the site and Kemble Station/Cirencester town centre will assist with achieving targets.

10.84.26 It will be the responsibility of the applicant to deliver the travel plan with ongoing monitoring to ensure that the targets therein are met.

10.84.27 With reference to GCC's Transport Planning Advice Sheet 'Workplace/Employment Travel Plans', the Highway Authority will seek a cash bond/deposit as part of the S106 agreement. This bond / cash deposit will be returned in instalments to the developer / occupier on successful delivering of measures and completion of agreed targets within the Travel Plan. Should the developer / owner fail to deliver the Travel Plan and meet the agreed targets, then GCC will use the bond / cash deposit to implement Travel Plan measures on behalf of the developer / owner. The developer/ owner(s)/ occupier(s) should apply reasonable endeavours not to obstruct GCC or a third party appointed by GCC to access the workplace/ employment site to deliver marketing and promotional initiatives in relation to the Travel Plan."

10.85 Subject to conditions and S106 for monitoring, the Highway Authority considers that there would not be any severe residual transport harm as a result of the development, therefore raises no objection.

10.86 ATE has however requested the proposals be deferred as they consider that the proposed mitigation is minimal and does not adequately consider beyond the site boundary the quality, safety and attractiveness of the active travel networks that connect the site to the local area.

10.87 At the time of writing the report, it was understood that the applicant was involved in further discussions with ATE to reach a mutual agreement in respect of a form of contribution to active travel networks.

(e) Impact on Residential Amenity

10.88 The nearest residential properties to the application site, not within the applicant's ownership, is the group of properties at Bartonbury, to the north east.

10.89 The application is supported by a Proposed Parameter Zone Plan. This sets out maximum heights and storeys for plots on the site.

10.90 Plot 4b would be located to the south of Bartonbury Croft. This zone is given a maximum height of 1 storey (135.000 AOD). The illustrative masterplan shows a building located over 10m away. Beyond this to the south-east of the residential properties is Plot 2. Whilst this plot has a maximum parameter of 3 storeys, as illustrated on the masterplan buildings would be approximately 30m from the boundary separated by open spaces.

10.91 The Parameters Plan therefore acknowledges that the nearest buildings to neighbouring residents need to be lower and the masterplan demonstrates that there is sufficient space to ensure plots can be developed with sufficient space to avoid any detriment in terms of loss of light or overshadowing.

10.92 In terms of impact from activity at the proposal site, there would no doubt be a change to the existing environment experienced by residents. The Green Infrastructure Plan (00809-P07) identifies indicative landscaping to all boundaries with the properties at Bartonbury. Any Reserved Matters application would be subject to detailed landscaping and boundary treatments.

10.93 The ERS Noise Officer considers that the measures proposed in the ES are satisfactory. They note that further acoustic assessment(s) would be required at reserved matters stage, and noise limits to be set would be subject to further review and future site noise assessments.

10.94 Noise and disturbance arising during the construction phase of the development can be mitigated by an operating hours restriction which would form part of a Construction Environment Management Plan condition to include the recommendations of the acoustic report. The CEMP should include a requirement for barriers during construction to provide noise protection for: residential property; offices at Cirencester Office Park; and the existing offices on site (The Alliston Centre).

10.95 During site operation once complete there should be further noise control for plant serving the development than that outlined in the applicant's noise report. With respect to paragraph 15.126 of the ES (Chapter 15: Noise and Vibration), I would disagree that minor adverse effects of plant noise are acceptable, given that the applicant has a blank canvas, and applying good principles of acoustic design, the target for noise impacts from should be set at negligible, not minor adverse. For anticipated noise from Trent Lodge, a proposed licensed venue, it is likely that this development will also require air handling plant and equipment to allow operation with closed windows and doors when music as entertainment is employed. This could also be secured as part of Reserved Matters.

10.96 Detailed matters regarding drainage and landscaping to boundaries would also be considered at Reserved Matters stage.

10.97 Given the above, whilst there would be an impact on the amenity currently enjoyed by residents, with the parameters defined, landscaped boundaries to

be agreed and controls on working hours secured, this impact would not be to such a degree as to warrant a refusal of planning permission.

Air Quality

10.98 The submitted Air Quality information has concluded that during construction, the impact from dust could be negligible where good site practice and a site management plan control emission.

10.99 During the operational phase of the site impacts are predicted to be negligible and therefore, not significant with no mitigation required. Notwithstanding this, mitigation in the form of a travel plan, would be included to ensure the impact of operational traffic on existing sensitive receptors are minimised.

10.100 The Councils ERS Air Quality officer has queried matters within the submitted Transport Assessment, why Steadings Cottages was not included as a sensitive receptor and how the revised layout (removing the second access) would impact air quality. Whilst these details have been provided, at the time of writing this report, additional information is still awaited from the applicant. Subject to this satisfactorily addressing air quality, it is considered that the proposed development is suitable without could be undertaken without further mitigation. This matter will be reported to Members at Committee.

Crime & Disorder

10.101 With regard to designing out crime, the final layout and design of the scheme would be addressed at any Reserved Matters stage and would have regard to comments from Gloucestershire Constabulary. It is however considered that there is the ability to deliver a scheme that would reasonably prevent crime and disorder and address the requirements set out in Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 which states that 'it shall be the duty of each authority to which this section applies to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent,

(a)crime and disorder in its area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment); and
(b)the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in its area; and
(c)re-offending in its area; and
(d)serious violence in its area.'

10.102 It is considered that the proposal accords with guidance in the Cotswold Design Code.

(f) Biodiversity and Geodiversity

10.103 Policy EN8 of the Local Plan refers to 'Biodiversity and Geodiversity: Features, Habitats and Species'. This policy states:

1. Development will be permitted that conserves and enhances biodiversity and geodiversity, providing net gains where possible.

2. Proposals that would result in significant habitat fragmentation and loss of ecological connectivity will not be permitted.

3. Proposals that reverse habitat fragmentation and promote creation, restoration and beneficial management of ecological networks, habitats and features will be permitted, particularly in areas subject to landscape-scale biodiversity initiatives. Developer contributions may be sought in this regard.

4. Proposals that would result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats and resources, or which are likely to have an adverse effect on internationally protected species, will not be permitted.

5. Development with a detrimental impact on other protected species and species and habitats "of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity"(41) will not be permitted unless adequate provision can be made to ensure the conservation of the species or habitat.

Priority Habitats

10.104 The site contains 'other lowland mixed deciduous woodland' that is a priority habitat type listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

10.105 The project ecologist has provided the following justification statement for its partial loss: "No direct impacts are anticipated on area 9. Impacts on area 10 are limited to the removal of some individual trees, which will not reduce the canopy extent of the woodland – these trees are proposed for removal due to their poor arboricultural condition, and the built form of the development will not encroach upon the woodland.

10.106 Areas 6 and 17 would lose small areas, totalling 200sqm, in order to facilitate parking requirements. The configuration as proposed was required as moving the parking spaces to the east of the Alliston Centre would require encroachment on the historic setting/views out of Trent Lodge. Movement of the spaces to the south of the Alliston Centre would require significant realignment of the proposed buildings and result in a much larger area of hardstanding, including loss of part of the woodland at area 10. Therefore, the current proposed position of the parking spaces represents the most efficient configuration and minimises woodland loss, whilst also considering other constraints."

10.107 This justification is considered satisfactory.

10.108 In respect of irreplaceable habitats, the Council's Tree Officers have reviewed potential veteran trees and, following a site visit, agree with the ecologist's/arboriculturist's assessment that, although both trees display some veteran characteristics, the identified specimens are not veteran trees.

10.109 Further information was requested regarding potential veteran trees within hedgerows H5 and H8. These were also not concluded to be veteran.

10.110 T28 is the only tree on-site that has been formally confirmed as a veteran tree. This tree would be retained within the proposal therefore no bespoke compensation is required.

10.111 The ecological surveys carried out to support and inform this application identified the presence of a variety of protected and priority species. To ensure that these protected and priority species are adequately safeguarded during the construction phase, the Biodiversity Team recommend that a Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEMP) be secured via a pre-commencement condition. The CEMP is also recommended to include mitigation measures to ensure habitats of high intrinsic ecological value are safeguarded.

10.112 Given the age of several of the survey datasets, the CEMP would be required to be informed by updated ecological surveys to ensure that the mitigation measures implemented are robust, current, and appropriate.

10.113 In respect of roosting bats, the submitted surveys confirmed the presence of day roosts bat roosts by a low number of soprano pipistrelle, common pipistrelle and an unconfirmed bat species in B1 a, B3 and B7. In addition, the identified roosting locations (discrete locations at the eaves of roofs/from under

tiles but above lining) have also been identified as suitable 'non-classic' hibernation features.

10.114 As the proposal would involve the demolition of buildings B1a and B7 and the reconfiguration of building B3, a licence would need to be obtained from Natural England to enable works to proceed lawfully. For a licence to be agreed, a suitable mitigation scheme is required to ensure that suitable compensatory roosts are available post development.

10.115 A licence can only be agreed if the proposed development can meet the following three tests:

1. the consented operation must be for 'preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment'; (Regulation 55(2)(e))
2. there must be 'no satisfactory alternative' (Regulation 55(9)(a)); and
3. the action authorised 'will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range' (Regulation 55(9)(b)).

10.116 With regard to the first test, the proposed development would support the expansion of the RAU, an internationally recognised institution agri-tech and a represents a crucial economic asset for the region. The development would therefore be of overriding economic interest. There would be no way satisfactory alterative for developing the site, and the mitigation strategy as set out in Section 5 of the bat report (Keystone Ecology, dated September 2024 Version 3) it is considered likely to provide adequate compensatory measures that will successfully maintain the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range and as such, would meet Reg 55(9)(b) of the Habitats Regulations. It is therefore considered that the derogation test can be met by this application provided the actions conditioned are implemented in full.

10.117 The likely absence of bat roosts within B1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 and from T8 has been ascertained. Whilst no bats were observed emerging from or re-entering B2, old bat droppings were found beneath the ridgeline within the loft void. Their presence indicates past roosting activity; however, building B2 would remain unaffected by the proposed works and this roosting location does not require further consideration.

10.118 Incidental sightings of great crested newts (GCN's) were recorded adjacent to Pond 6 (located southwest of the development site boundary) during a 2023 reptile survey, and their presence was therefore assumed. Given the proximity of Pond 6 and the anticipated loss of suitable terrestrial habitats because of the proposed development, a licence would be required to ensure that works proceed lawfully. There are two licensing options available to the applicant: the traditional licensing route or the district level licensing route. The applicant has submitted a NatureSpace report confirming the scheme's eligibility for district level licensing and the correct payment has been made. The full NatureSpace standard conditions are therefore recommended on any decision to meet the requirements of the district licensing scheme.

10.119 In respect of lighting, as suitable habitats for nocturnal species (including European protected bat species) have been identified, a condition in respect of a detailed onsite lighting strategy is recommended. Such a condition would tie in with the requirement to reduce light spill within the National Landscape and would ensure that linear connectivity between the site and the wider ecological network of hedgerows and woodlands is maintained and compensatory habitat for protected species remains appropriately dark.

Biodiversity Net Gain

10.120 Biodiversity net gain (BNG) is a way of creating and improving biodiversity by requiring development to have a positive impact ('net gain') on biodiversity. In England, BNG is a mandatory requirement. Under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021), subject to some exceptions, every grant of planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition that the biodiversity gain objective is met ("the biodiversity gain condition"). This objective is for development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat. This increase can be achieved through onsite biodiversity gains, registered offsite biodiversity gains or statutory biodiversity credits.

10.121 The applicant has confirmed biodiversity net gain will be delivered on-site and veteran trees will not be impacted by the proposed development (despite the minor error shown in the most recent biodiversity metric).

10.122 Following clarification, a revised biodiversity metric has been submitted that would result in a 14.14% increase in onsite habitat units and a 15.07% increase in hedgerow units. This exceeds the minimum 10% requirement.

10.123 A condition is therefore recommended to ensure the establishment, and on-going management and monitoring details, a 30-year Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan. As the proposal would result in significant on-site gains, a S106 agreement is required to secure the monitoring fees required.

(g) Trees

10.124 Although this is an Outline application with all matters reserved except for access, parameter and illustrative site wide plans have been submitted.

10.125 A tree preservation order (TPO) was made on 21st October 2025 protecting individual trees, groups of trees, an area of trees and 2 woodlands on site. The TPO title is Land at The Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester, Gloucestershire 2025 (CDC ref 25/00004/MIX). Most of the trees protected by the TPO are proposed to be retained under the current proposals and I will refer to them in my comments below.

10.126 Tree Officers have reviewed the Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) (including an arboricultural survey) dated October 2025 and are satisfied that the survey is thorough and methodology used is generally in accordance with BS5837:2012.

10.127 Concerns is raised regarding the proximity of buildings and hard surfacing to close to protected trees T22, T29, & T31 as they appear to be on the very edge of the Root Protection Areas (RPAs) of all these trees and a working area would be required around all trees with an allowance for future canopy growth of a walnut tree. As an outline planning application, the specific RPA's would be provided in detail at Reserved Matters stage.

10.128 Tree T28 is identified as a potential veteran. The Tree Officer considers this to be a veteran pollard tree. The tree is protected by the TPO and identified as T7 on the TPO schedule. The NPPF affords veteran trees robust protection and they are considered irreplaceable habitats. NPPF para 193 (c) states:

(c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists;

10.129 The Tree Officer considers that the tree survey adheres to this advice giving the tree an RPA of 16.5m from the tree. However, it should be borne in mind that due to the amount of basal growth around the tree, the measurement of the

stem diameter could be based on an estimation. The illustrative masterplan positions buildings and hard surfacing outside the buffer zone of this tree and this needs to be sacrosanct throughout development.

10.130 Due to the veteran status of T28 a proposed new road has been moved away from this tree. The road is now proposed to run through a small area of woodland to the south of T28. This woodland is protected with a specimen Turkey Oak within it that is proposed to be retained. At reserved matters stage, if no alternative to routing the road through this area of woodland, the Tree Officer would accept this subject to tree removals being kept to an absolute minimum, T1014 being retained, and the surfacing and construction of the road through the woodland using low impact and no dig methodology.

10.131 The current proposed access into the site would result in very little direct arboricultural loss. A small section of hedge identified as H2 on the tree survey would be removed to allow access. As a consequence of having the location at this point, group G9 and 5 individual trees would be lost to allow development in Plot 3A.

10.132 Group G9 is a group of 3 early mature Wellingtonia trees and the Tree Officer does not support the removal of these trees. They are protected by the TPO and listed as G1 on the TPO schedule. Being close to the A429 the trees already have existing public amenity value and this will become even greater as the trees continue to grow. Mature Wellingtonia trees locally will grow to 30m. There are a number of mature Wellingtonia's closer to the main university buildings. They are in keeping with the setting and retaining these trees will provide a continuity of this tree species in the vicinity.

10.133 The loss of the protected trees as a result of the proposed development would be regrettable and would give rise to a degree of localised and permanent harm to existing arboricultural value and landscape character. The Council attaches significant weight to the protection of trees for their ecological, visual and amenity benefits.

10.134 However, national planning policy does not seek the outright prevention of development where the loss of trees is unavoidable, provided that the harm is fully understood, justified and appropriately mitigated. Paragraphs 174 and 180 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) recognise that development may result in the loss of natural features but require decision makers to avoid significant harm where possible, minimise impacts, and provide suitable mitigation or compensation where harm cannot be avoided.

10.135 In this case, the site is defined by policy EC4 as a Special Area for development within the adopted Local Plan, and substantial weight is therefore afforded to the principle of development in accordance with section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The proposals would deliver significant economic and public benefits, in terms of employment generation that attracts considerable positive weight in the planning balance, consistent with the NPPF's objective to support sustainable economic growth (NPPF paragraphs 8 and 81).

10.136 While the removal of a number of protected trees conflicts with local and national policy aims to conserve and enhance the natural environment, the submitted arboricultural evidence demonstrates that the loss is largely unavoidable to enable the development of this strategically important site. The illustrative masterplan has scheme has been informed by an iterative design process that has sought to retain quality specimens where practicable, reduce impacts through root protection measures, and incorporate replacement planting and long term landscape enhancement across the wider site.

10.137 Having regard to policy EC4, the significant economic benefits of the proposal, and the proposed mitigation and replacement planting that is recommended as a condition, it is considered that the harm arising from the loss of protected trees is outweighed by the public benefits of the development. The proposal is therefore consistent, on balance, with the NPPF's planning balance and its approach to decision making where competing policy objectives arise.

(h) Minerals & Waste Management

Minerals

10.138 The site is located within a mineral safeguarding area as defined within the Local Minerals Plan. Policy MS02 refers to safeguarding mineral infrastructure and states

Waste management

10.139 The application is accompanied by a broad Waste Minimisation Statement. Gloucestershire County Council as Minerals & Waste Planning Authority has reviewed the submission and recommends

10.140 Non-mineral developments located on / or adjoining a safeguarded mineral infrastructure site will not be permitted unless: -

I. the risk of incompatibility with current and future mineral-related operations is sufficiently mitigated or avoided; or

II. there is no longer a requirement to safeguarded the site for mineral infrastructure purposes to support the supply of minerals serving Gloucestershire and beyond; or

III. a suitable replacement mineral infrastructure site has been identified and permitted; or

IV. the overriding need for the development outweighs the desirability to safeguard mineral infrastructure.

10.141 It is important to note that a large proportion of the district is located in a mineral safeguarding zone therefore safeguarding all such areas from future development would be prohibitive for the growth within the district. The policy is worded such that it does allow for development within safeguarded areas where an over-riding need for development outweighs the desirability to safeguard minerals.

10.142 In this instance, the site is identified within the current Local Plan, previous Local Plan and also within the merging Local Plan as a Special Policy Area where development of the RAU site is supported. Taking this into account in combination with the emphasis within the NPPF at paragraph 224 as far as practicable, provide for the maintenance of landbanks of non-energy minerals outside National Landscapes, officers consider the proposal adequately addresses mineral safeguarding..

Sustainability & Climate Change

10.143 As embedded in the NPPF, sustainability should be integral to all new development and should encourage opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems.

10.144 The application is supported by a Sustainability Brief and Materials Strategy. This states that The development will be beautiful, carbon neutral, rich in nature and will inspire innovation through its environment. It will demonstrate new innovations in sustainability, energy usage, build quality, materials and landscaping to be a truly net-zero and exemplary sustainable development, the likes of which does not presently exist anywhere.

10.145 As a regenerative project the scheme would assist RAU's net-zero transformation strategy and will also seek to contribute to the energy balance of the whole site - with its generation exceeding supply. The buildings would

achieve the Passivhaus Plus standard, radically reducing their energy use while also creating comfortable, healthy environments for occupants. This emphasis on user-facing wellbeing will be enhanced as the scheme will also achieve the WELL Building Standard and BREEAM Outstanding. There is an emphasis on improving the public transport offer, encouraging walking, cycling and car sharing through the Travel Plan.

10.146 A condition is recommended to ensure all Reserved Matters applications are developed in accordance with the strategy. Subject to this, matters relating to sustainability are considered to be acceptable.

Flood Risk & Drainage

10.147 The proposed development is in flood zone 1 and at low risk from surface water flooding, where development is acceptable in principle.

10.148 Policy EN14 of the Local Plan refers to 'Managing Flood Risk'. It states:

1. Development proposals must avoid areas at risk of flooding, in accordance with a risk-based sequential approach that takes account of all potential sources of flooding. Proposals should not increase the level of risk to the safety of occupiers of the site, the local community or the wider environment as a result of flooding.

2. Minimising flood risk and providing resilience to flooding will be achieved by:

a. applying the sequential test for assessment of applications for development in Flood Zones 2 and 3, applying the exception test where necessary and in that event requiring developers to demonstrate that both limbs of the exception test can be satisfied;

b. requiring a site specific flood risk assessment for:

i) Proposals of one hectare or greater in Flood Zone 1;

ii) All proposals in Flood Zones 2 and 3: or

iii) Proposals in an area in Flood Zone 1 that has critical drainage problems.

3. The design and layout of development proposals will take account of flood risk management and climate change and will include, unless demonstrably inappropriate, a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS).

4. Developers will, where required, fund flood management and/or mitigation measures for the expected lifetime of the development including adequate provision for on-going maintenance.'

10.149 In addition, criteria 1a and 1c of Local Plan Policy INF8 Water Management

' a. take into account the capacity of existing of-site water and wastewater infrastructure and the impact of development on it, and make satisfactory provision for improvement where a need is identified that is related to the proposal.' and

' c. incorporate suitable Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) where appropriate,'

10.150 In respect of surface water drainage and the risk of flooding elsewhere caused by the development the drainage strategy proposes the use of deep re soakaways to manage surface water runoff. No surface water is proposed to be discharged to the public sewer network.

10.151 The LLFA consider this to be an acceptable solution compatible with a SuDS approach and therefore has no objection to the proposal.

10.152 The LLFA has stated there would be no benefit by the imposition of drainage conditions on a permission granted against this application that used a drainage strategy as described in the Flood Risk Assessment & Outline Drainage Strategy at revision P01 dated March 2024 published by Infrastructure Design Studio. A compliance condition is therefore recommended with this document.

10.153 In terms of foul water disposal, Thames Water has advised that the network does not have sufficient capacity to support the proposed development. Given this, they recommend a Grampian condition requiring all sewage works upgrades necessary to accommodate the additional flows from the development to be completed; or, for a development and infrastructure phasing plan to be agreed and put in place, prior to the occupation of any of the proposed buildings. This is considered to represent a reasonable and appropriate method of control to ensure the development would not detrimentally impact the sewage system. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with Local Plan Policy INF8.

10.154 With regard to water supply, Thames Water has also identified an inability of the existing water network infrastructure to accommodate the needs of the development proposal. A similar condition is therefore recommended to that with foul water disposal that requires development can only be occupied when the upgrades have been completed or a phasing plan is agreed.

Planning Obligations

10.155 The NPPF (paragraph 56) states that 'local planning authorities should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of conditions or planning obligations. Planning obligations should only be used where it is not possible to address unacceptable impacts through a planning condition.'

10.156 Section 106 planning obligations would be required to mitigate the impacts of the development and are currently being considered by officers but could potentially cover the following matters.

Highways Contributions

10.157 £372,000 - Employment/Workplace Travel Plan bond/deposit with Gloucestershire County Council (calculation based upon GCC's Transport Planning Advice Sheet – Employment/Workplace Travel Plans for 1240 employees x £60 x five year Travel Plan monitoring).

Biodiversity

10.158 £6,642.30 - (including an additional 5% due to the number of habitats being created) with Cotswold District Council to secure establishment, and on-going management and monitoring details, a 30-year Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan condition (calculation based on the current BNG Monitoring Fee Schedule and amount index linked between date of the S106 agreement and when payment is received by the Council).

11. Conclusion:

11.1 The application proposal would facilitate the provision of an Innovation Village for the RAU, identified as one of the Districts larger institutions and employers. As a recognised key economic asset both for Cirencester and the district/ southwest region, the establishment of an Innovation Village to be symbiotically linked with the established educational establishment will provide local and wider economic benefits. This economic benefit is given significant weight.

11.2 Although major development within a National Landscape, the proposal meets the exceptional requirements for the principle to be acceptable.

11.3 Moderate harm has been identified due to the loss of a group of trees that are subject to a preservation order. No harm is identified to heritage assets although there are potential design details that could be further addressed or mitigated at Reserved Matters stage.

11.4 Biodiversity Net Gain would be provided on site above the minimum 10% level.

11.5 The proposal would provide an exemplar form of sustainable development that seeks to exceed current planning policy requirements including Passivhaus Plus standard, Well Building Standard, BREEAM Outstanding and Building with Nature standard;

11.6 Use of recycled and low- carbon materials and use construction methods that reduce environmental impacts. full time equivalent jobs during operation.

11.7 The submitted Transport Assessment and addendum has demonstrated that the proposal can be constructed in a phased approach, subject to conditions and provision of mitigation. Sustainable access to the site could be provided including an ambitious travel plan without causing severe highway impact.

11.8 The planning history of the site is also a material consideration insofar as there is technically an extant outline planning permission with a an undetermined Reserved Matters application. The weight attached to planning history is a matter of planning judgement. In this case, the extant outline permission is for the a larger footprint (34,373sqm) than that currently proposed and, should the associated Reserved Matters be approved, could be implemented. Although the probability of this is unlikely, it could not be completely dismissed and therefore the planning history is given moderate weight.

11.9 Active Travel England has recommended deferral subject to an appropriate contribution to sustainable routes outside the development site. The applicant was meeting with Active Travel England at the time of this report being completed and the outcome of that meeting will be reported to Members.

11.10 Subject to confirmation of any Active Travel England contribution, it is considered that any adverse impacts identified would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits that would arise from the proposals and

Members are recommended to resolve to grant permission subject to the required legal obligations and draft conditions.

12. Proposed Conditions:

1. Application for the approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the Local Planning Authority by three years from the date of this decision notice.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. The development shall be started by 2 years from the date that the last of the reserved matters is approved.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

3. The development shall not be started before approval of the details relating to Appearance, Layout, Landscaping and Scale have been given in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: These are "reserved matters" and were listed in the application for later approval. This is only an outline planning permission and these matters require further consideration by the Local Planning Authority. This condition is imposed to comply with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.

4. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved access details shown on:

Access on Tetbury Road Drawing Number M001262-1-1-DR-009 Rev A (for information).
Swept Path Analysis Drawing Number M001262-1-1-DR-008 Rev A (for information).
Swept Path Analysis Drawing Number M001262-1-1-DR-007 Rev A (for information).
Swept Path Analysis Drawing Number M001262-1-1-DR-006 Rev A (for information).
Stroud Road Toucan Crossing as shown on Drawing M0001262-1-1-DR-005 - Rev A

Reason: To ensure a safe and suitable access in accordance with Policy INF 4 of the Cotswold District Plan.

5. All reserved matters applications submitted pursuant to this outline planning permission shall be in general accordance with the principles and parameters set out in:

Illustrative Masterplan (drawing number RAU-ART-XX-XX-D-A4005 P04).
Site Location Plan - Drawing Number RAU-ART-XX-XX-D-A-40001 Revision P03 (17/04/2024).
Proposed Parameter Zone Plan - Drawing Number RAU-ART-XX-XX-D-A-40002 Revision P12 (10/10/2025).
Demolition Plan - Drawing Number RAU-ART-XX-XX-D-A-40100 Revision P03 (17/04/2024).
Parameter Plan - Land Use and Access - Drawing Number RAU-BDL-XX-XX-D-L-00810 Revision P07 (10/10/2025).
Tree Retention and Removal - Drawing Number RAU-BDL-XX-XX-D-L-00808 Revision P06 (10/10/2025).

Reason: To ensure that the detailed design of the development accords with the approved development framework and delivers a coherent and comprehensive form of development.

6. No development within any phase shall commence until a Standalone Phasing Strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The Standalone Phasing Strategy shall:

(i) define the boundary of all Phases on a Phasing Plan;
(ii) identify all infrastructure to be delivered and when;
(iii) identify the minimum on-site pedestrian & cycle routes, open space and landscaping to be provided within each phase so that the phase would function satisfactorily as a standalone development if subsequent phases are not delivered.

Reason: To ensure the comprehensive and coordinated development of the site, to enable the timely and effective delivery of infrastructure, mitigation and environmental measures, and to ensure that the impacts of the development can be appropriately managed as it comes forward in phases. A phasing strategy is necessary to provide clarity on the sequencing of development and to safeguard amenity, environmental interests and the proper planning of the area in accordance with the development plan and national planning policy.

7. Each reserved matters application submitted pursuant to this outline permission shall include a Phase Delivery Statement that must::

(a) identify the phase to which it relates; and

(b) demonstrate compliance with the approved Standalone Phasing Strategy, including drawings showing all infrastructure, pedestrian routes, open spaces, landscaping and phase boundary/edge treatments to be delivered as part of that phase.

Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Phase Delivery Statement and the works shall be retained thereafter and maintained.

Reason: To ensure the comprehensive and coordinated development of the site, to enable the timely and effective delivery of infrastructure, mitigation and environmental measures, and to ensure that the impacts of the development can be appropriately managed as it comes forward in phases.

8. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved (including demolition and all preparatory work), a scheme for the protection of retained trees for each phase identified in accordance with the , in accordance with BS5837:2012, including a tree protection plan(s) (TPP) and an arboricultural method statement (AMS) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Specific issues to be dealt with in the TPP and AMS:

a) Full details of any facilitation pruning.
b) Location and installation of services, utilities and drainage.
c) Methods of demolition within the root protection area (RPA as defined in BS5837:2012) of retained trees.
d) Details of construction within the RPA or that may impact on the retained trees.
e) A full specification for the construction of any roads, parking areas and hard surfacing, including details of the no dig-specification and extent of the areas of the roads, parking areas and hard surfacing to be constructed using a no-dig specification. Details shall include relevant sections through them.
f) Detailed levels and cross-sections to show that the raised levels of surfacing, where the installation of no-dig surfacing within RPAs is proposed, demonstrating that they can be accommodated where they meet with any adjacent hard surfacing or structures.
g) A specification for protective fencing to safeguard trees during both demolition and construction phases and a plan indicating the alignment of the protective fencing.
h) Tree protection during construction indicated on the TPP with construction activities clearly identified as prohibited in this area.
i) Details of site access, temporary parking, on site welfare facilities, loading, unloading and storage of equipment, materials, fuels, waste as well as any areas to be used for concrete mixing and fires.
j) Details of any boundary treatments within RPAs.
k) Methodology and detailed assessment of any root pruning.

l) Details of arboricultural supervision and inspection by a suitably qualified arboriculturist.
m) Methods to improve the rooting environment for retained and proposed trees and landscaping.

The development thereafter shall be implemented in strict accordance with the approved details.

Reason: Required prior to the commencement of development to satisfy the Local Planning Authority that the trees to be retained will not be damaged during demolition or construction and to protect and enhance the appearance and character of the site and locality, in accordance with policies EN1 & EN7 and pursuant of section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

9. No development, including any site clearance, shall commence within any phase of the development until a Construction Environmental Management Plan - Biodiversity (CEMP-B) informed by an up-to-date ecological impact assessment for that phase has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority as part of, or prior to determination of, the relevant Reserved Matters application. The CEMP-B shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities;
b) Identification of "biodiversity protection zones";
c) Details of deep excavations to be infilled or ramped access provided to prevent pitfall danger to mammals;
d) Measures taken to safeguard habitats of high intrinsic ecological value, including hedgerows, woodlands, standalone trees, the veteran lime tree and ecologically valuable lines of trees;
e) Precautionary working method statement to safeguard protected and priority species, including dormice, reptiles, ground-nesting birds, barn owl, badger and commuting and foraging bats;
f) Non-native invasive species removal method statement for Cotoneaster spp., Japanese Knotweed and Few-flowered leek;
g) Practical measures (both physical and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements);
h) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features (e.g. daylight working hours only starting one hour after sunrise and ceasing one hour before sunset);
i) The timing during construction when ecological or environmental specialists need to be present on site to oversee works;
j) Responsible persons and lines of communication;

k) The role and responsibility on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similar person;
l) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs, including advanced installation and maintenance during the construction period;
m) Ongoing monitoring, including compliance checks by a competent person(s) during construction and immediately post-completion of construction works.

The approved CEMP-B shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To protect biodiversity in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, the Circular 06/2005, paragraphs 187, 192 and 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Local Plan policy EN8, and Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

10. The development shall not commence, including any site clearance, until a 30-year Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP), prepared in accordance with an approved Biodiversity Gain Plan, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved HMMP shall be strictly adhered to and implemented in full for its duration and shall contain the following:

a) Description and evaluation of the features to be managed;
b) Ecological trends and constraints on site that may influence management;
c) Aims, objectives and targets for management linked to the Gloucestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy;
d) Description of the management operations necessary to achieving the aims and objectives;
e) Prescriptions for management actions;
f) Preparation of a works schedule, including an annual works schedule;
g) Details of the monitoring needed to measure the effectiveness of management;
h) Details of the timetable for each element of the monitoring programme;
i) Details of the persons responsible for the implementation and monitoring;
j) Mechanisms of adaptive management to account for necessary changes within the work schedule to achieve the required targets; and
k) Reporting on year 1, 2, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30 with biodiversity reconciliation calculations at each stage.

The HMMP shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details, and all habitats shall be retained in that manner thereafter. Notice in writing shall be given to the Council when the habitat creation and enhancement work as set out in the

Biodiversity Gain Plan have commenced and once all habitat creation and enhancements have been completed.

Reason: To secure the delivery of at least a 10% biodiversity net gain through successful establishment and management of all newly created and enhanced habitats in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021), paragraph 187, 192 and 193 of the NPPF, and Local Plan policy EN8.

11. No development shall take place within the application site until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: It is important to agree a programme of archaeological work in advance of the commencement of development, so as to make provision for the investigation and recording of any archaeological remains which may be present. The archaeological programme will advance understanding of any heritage assets which will be lost, in accordance with paragraph 211 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

12. No development hereby permitted shall take place except in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Council's Organisational Licence (WML-OR138, or a 'Further Licence') and with the proposals detailed on plan "The Royal Agricultural University: Impact plan for great crested newt District Licensing (Version 1)", dated 11st November 2025.

Reason: In order to ensure that adverse impacts on great crested newts are adequately mitigated and to ensure that site works are delivered in full compliance with the Organisational Licence (WML OR138, or a 'Further Licence'), section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Circular 06/2005 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

13. No development hereby permitted shall take place unless and until a certificate from the Delivery Partner (as set out in the District Licence WML-OR138, or a 'Further Licence'), confirming that all necessary measures regarding great crested newt compensation have been appropriately dealt with, has been submitted to and approved by the planning authority and the authority has provided authorisation for the development to proceed under the district newt licence. The delivery partner certificate must be submitted to this planning authority for approval prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved.

Reason: In order to adequately compensate for negative impacts to great crested newts, and in line with section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Circular 06/2005 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

14. No development hereby permitted shall take place except in accordance with Part 1 of the Great Crested Newt Mitigation Principles, as set out in the District Licence (WML-OR138, or a 'Further Licence') and in addition in compliance with the following:

- 6 Works which will affect likely newt hibernacula may only be undertaken during the active period for amphibians.
- Capture methods must be used at suitable habitat features prior to the commencement of the development (i.e., hand/destructive/night searches), which may include the use of temporary amphibian fencing, to prevent newts moving onto a development site from adjacent suitable habitat, installed for the period of the development (and removed upon completion of the development).
- Amphibian fencing and pitfall trapping must be undertaken at suitable habitats and features, prior to commencement of the development.

Reason: In order to ensure that adverse impacts on great crested newts are adequately mitigated and to ensure that site works are delivered in full compliance with the Organisational Licence (WML OR138, or a 'Further Licence'), section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Circular 06/2005 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

15. Prior to commencement of development hereby permitted details of a construction management plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved plan shall be adhered to throughout the demolition/construction period. The plan/statement shall include but not be restricted to:

o Parking of vehicle of site operatives and visitors (including measures taken to ensure satisfactory access and movement for existing occupiers of neighbouring properties during construction);
o Advisory routes for construction traffic;
o Any temporary access to the site;
o Locations for loading/unloading and storage of plant, waste and construction materials;
o Method of preventing mud and dust being carried onto the highway;
o Arrangements for turning vehicles;
o Arrangements to receive abnormal loads or unusually large vehicles;
o Highway Condition survey;

o Methods of communicating the Construction Management Plan to staff, visitors and neighbouring residents and businesses.

Reason: In the interests of safe operation of the adopted highway in the lead into development both during the demolition and construction phase of the development.

16. Prior to commencement of development of each Phase , details of a parking strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include the methodology of how the site parking will be monitored and the triggers requiring the implementation of additional parking in the event of a shortfall in provision. The additional provision shall be provided in accordance with the approved 'Monitor and Manage' strategy.

Reason: To mitigate against any future shortfall in parking provision

17. Prior to the commencement of development, each reserved matters application shall be accompanied by a detailed site waste management plan or equivalent to be submitted and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The detailed site waste management plan must identify: - the specific types and amount of waste materials forecast to be generated from the development during site
preparation & demolition and construction phases; and the specific measures will be employed for dealing with this material so as to:

I. minimise its creation, maximise the amount of reuse and recycling on-site;
II. maximise the amount of off-site recycling of any wastes that are unusable on-site; and
III. reduce the overall amount of waste sent to landfill.
IV.
In addition, the detailed site waste management plan must also set out the proposed proportions of recycled content that will be used in construction materials.
The detailed site waste management plan shall be fully implemented as approved unless the local planning authority gives prior written permission for any variation.

Reason: To ensure the effective implementation of waste minimisation and resource efficiency measures in accordance with adopted Gloucestershire Waste Core Strategy: Core Policy WCS2 - Waste Reduction and adopted Minerals Local Plan for Gloucestershire Policy SR01.

18. Prior to the first occupation or use of Phase 1 (Plot 1 zone a, Plot 1 zone b, Plot 4A and Plot 4B) of the development hereby approved, the following off site highway works shall be fully constructed and made available for use:

* Stroud Road Toucan Crossing as shown on Drawing M0001262-1-1-DR-005 - Rev A

All works shall be implemented fully in accordance with the approved details and completed to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority prior to occupation. The crossing shall thereafter be retained and maintained for its intended purpose.

Reason: To ensure that adequate highway infrastructure is provided to accommodate the traffic generated by Phase 2 of the development in the interests of highway safety and the free flow of traffic, in accordance with Policy INF4 of the Cotswold Local Plan.

19. Prior to the first occupation or use of Phase 2 (Plots 2, 3A Zone A, 3A Zone B, 3B and 3C) of the development hereby approved, the following off site highway works shall be fully constructed and made available for use:

a) The Site Access Roundabout off Tetbury Road, in accordance with Drawing [insert drawing number and revision]; and
b) The works known as "Tetbury Road Dualling – Consented Scheme" approved under planning permission 16/00054/OUT, in accordance with Drawing ITB6173?GA?100?085 (or any subsequent approved revision).

All works shall be implemented in full in accordance with the approved details and completed to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority prior to occupation.

Reason: To ensure that adequate off-site highway capacity and safe access arrangements are in place to accommodate the traffic generated by Phase 2, in the interests of highway safety and the efficient operation of the highway network, in accordance with Policy INF4 of the NPPF.

20. Prior to the first use of the development hereby permitted, a detailed Travel Plan that promotes sustainable forms of travel to the development site shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and agreed in writing. The submitted details shall use Modeshift STARS Business to carry out this process and include mechanisms for monitoring and review over the life of the development and timescales for implementation. The approved Travel Plan shall be implemented, monitored and reviewed in accordance with the approved details

Reason: To reduce vehicle movements and promote sustainable access.

21. Prior to the first use/occupation of Phase 1 (Plot 1 zone a, Plot 1 zone b, Plot 4a and Plot 4b) hereby approved visibility splays at the existing access points to Alliston Centre and Trent Lodge shall be provided from a point 0.6m above carriageway level at the centre of the access to the application site and 2.4 metres back from the near

side edge of the adjoining carriageway, (measured perpendicularly), for a distance of 43 metres in each direction measured along the nearside edge of the adjoining carriageway and offset a distance of 0.6 metres from the edge of the carriageway. These splays shall thereafter be permanently kept free of all obstructions to visibility over 0.6m in height above carriageway level.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

Prior to the first use/occupation of any building hereby permitted, an electric vehicle infrastructure strategy and implementation plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall contain details of the number and location of all electric vehicle charging points shall comply with BS EN 62196 Mode 3 or 4 charging and BS EN 61851, and Manual for Gloucestershire Streets. Buildings and parking spaces that are to be provided with charging points shall not be brought into use until associated charging points are installed in strict accordance with approved details and are operational. The charging point installed shall be retained thereafter unless replaced or upgraded to an equal or higher specification.

Reason: To promote sustainable travel and healthy communities.

22. The development shall not be occupied until confirmation is provided that either:

1. All necessary upgrades to the foul water network to accommodate additional flows from the development have been completed; or
2. A phasing plan for development and infrastructure, agreed with Thames Water and the Local Planning Authority, is in place.
Where such a plan exists, no occupation shall occur other than in accordance with the approved phasing schedule.

Reason: Network reinforcement is likely to be required to support the proposed development. These upgrades are essential to avoid the risk of sewer flooding and pollution incidents. If the Local Planning Authority considers this condition inappropriate or is unable to include it in the decision notice, it is essential to consult with Thames Water's Development Planning Department at Devcon.team@thameswater.co.uk before determining the application.

23. No development shall be occupied until confirmation has been provided that either:

1. All water network upgrades required to accommodate the additional demand to serve the development have been completed; or

2. A development and infrastructure phasing plan has been agreed with Thames Water to allow development to be occupied. Where a development and infrastructure phasing plan is agreed no occupation shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed development and infrastructure phasing plan.

Reason - The development may lead to no / low water pressure and network reinforcement works are anticipated to be necessary to ensure that sufficient capacity is made available to accommodate additional demand anticipated from the new development

24. Prior to the first use/occupation of any building in hereby permitted for each Phase, full details of hard and soft landscaping shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in general conformity with the Parameter Plan - Green Infrastructure - Drawing Number RAU-BDL-XX-XX-D-L-00809 Revision P07. The details shall include proposed tree/hedgerow planting. The details shall include location, species and sizes, planting specifications, maintenance schedule, provision for guards or other protective measures. The details shall include the tree pit design and location, type and materials to be used for hard landscaping including specifications.

All planting shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details in the first planting season following the completion or first occupation/use of the development, whichever is the sooner. The planting shall be maintained in accordance with the approved schedule of maintenance. Any trees or plants which, within a period of five years from the completion of the planting, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.

Reason: To ensure adequate provision for trees/hedgerows, in the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area in accordance with policies EN1 & EN7 and pursuant of section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

25. Prior to the submission of each reserved matters application, or phase thereof, a site specific Acoustic Assessment shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The assessment shall take account of the detailed layout, scale and proposed uses of that phase and shall include, where necessary, updated baseline surveys and predictive noise modelling.

The Acoustic Assessment shall demonstrate that:

a) Noise barriers and/or other suitable acoustic mitigation measures will be provided during the construction phase to protect:

- nearby residential properties;
- offices at Cirencester Office Park;
- the existing offices on site (The Alliston Centre); and

b) The cumulative noise emissions from all fixed plant and equipment serving the development shall be designed and operated such that the rating level of noise does not exceed the existing background noise level at the nearest noise sensitive receptor, such that the impact is negligible in accordance with the relevant British Standards; and

c) Any necessary mitigation measures identified, including barriers, enclosures, silencers, operational restrictions or alternative design solutions, shall be fully incorporated into the detailed design of the relevant phase.

The approved mitigation measures shall be implemented in full prior to the commencement of the relevant phase or, where applicable, prior to first occupation of that phase) and shall thereafter be retained and maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure that future phases of the development do not give rise to unacceptable noise impacts, to safeguard the amenity of nearby noise sensitive receptors, and to secure appropriate mitigation in accordance with the approved development framework, the National Planning Policy Framework, and relevant local plan policies.

26. All reserved matters applications submitted pursuant to this outline planning permission shall be prepared in accordance with the approved Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy prepared by Infrastructure Design Studio, Revision P01, March 2024.

Reason: To ensure that the detailed design of the development accords with the agreed flood risk and drainage principles and that flood risk is appropriately managed for the lifetime of the development.

27. No building in each shall be occupied until a SuDS Management and Maintenance Plan for the lifetime of the development, which shall include the arrangements for adoption by any public authority or statutory undertaker and any other arrangements to secure the operation of the scheme throughout its lifetime, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved SuDS Management and Maintenance Plan shall be implemented and thereafter managed and maintained in full in accordance with the agreed terms and conditions.

Reason: To ensure the continued operation and maintenance of drainage features serving the site and avoid flooding in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN14.

28. All reserved matters applications submitted pursuant to this outline permission shall accord with the principles, commitments and performance targets set out in the approved Sustainability Brief and Materials Strategy (Architype, December 2023).

Each reserved matters application shall be accompanied by a Sustainability and Materials Compliance Statement demonstrating how the proposals conform with the approved Sustainability Brief and Materials Strategy, or, where any deviation is proposed, setting out clear justification for the variation and evidence that the alternative approach would achieve equal or better environmental performance.

Reason: To ensure that the development delivers high standards of environmental sustainability, longevity and design quality, and accords with the approved development framework and local planning policy objectives.

29. No above-ground development shall commence until full details of the provision made for facilitating the management and recycling of waste generated during occupation have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. This must include details of the appropriate and adequate space and infrastructure to allow for the separate storage of recyclable waste materials. The management of waste during occupation must be aligned with the principles of the waste hierarchy and not prejudice the local collection authority's ability to meet its waste management targets. All details shall be fully implemented as approved.

Reason: To ensure the effective implementation of waste minimisation and resource efficiency measures in accordance with adopted Gloucestershire Waste Core Strategy: Core Policy WCS2 - Waste Reduction

30. Prior to the installation of external lighting for the development hereby approved, a lighting design strategy for biodiversity shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The strategy will:

a) identify the areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for nocturnal wildlife; b)show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their commuter route.

All external lighting shall be installed only in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the strategy.

Reason: To protect nocturnal wildlife in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), Circular 06/2005, paragraphs 187, 192 and 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Chapter 15), Policy EN8 of the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031 and in order for the Council to comply with Part 3 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Informatives:

1. IMPORTANT: BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN CONDITION - DEVELOPMENT CANNOT COMMENCE UNTIL A BIODIVERSITY GAIN PLAN HAS BEEN SUBMITTED (AS A CONDITION COMPLIANCE APPLICATION) TO AND APPROVED BY COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL.

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition (the biodiversity gain condition) that development may not begin unless:

(a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
(b) the planning authority has approved the plan in writing.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Cotswold District Council. There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. Based on the information available, this permission is one which will require the approval of an overall biodiversity gain plan, as well as a phase biodiversity gain plan for each phase of development before works commence. This is because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply. If the onsite habitats include irreplaceable habitats (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitats) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans. Advice about how to prepare these Biodiversity Gain Plans and templates can be found at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/submit-a-biodiversity-gain-plan.
Information on how to discharge the biodiversity gain condition can be found here:

https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/planning-and-building/wildlife-and-biodiversity/biodiversity-net gain-bng/

The Gloucestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) has been published by Gloucestershire County Council. This strategy must be used to inform the Strategic Significance Multiplier in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric or the Small Sites Metric,

depending on which version has been submitted. As part of your discharge of condition application the biodiversity metric will need to be updated to refer to the published LNRS. Please speak to your project ecologist for further advice or alternatively, you can engage with the Council's pre-application advice service: Get advice on your planning application - Cotswold District Council.

2. NATURESPACE

It is recommended that the NatureSpace Best Practice Principles are considered and implemented where possible and appropriate.

It is recommended that the NatureSpace certificate is submitted to this planning authority at least 6 months prior to the intended commencement of any works on site.

It is essential to note that any works or activities whatsoever undertaken on site (including ground investigations, site preparatory works or ground clearance) prior to receipt of the written authorisation from the planning authority which permits the development to proceed under the District Licence (WML-OR138, or a 'Further Licence') are not licensed under the great crested newt District Licence. Any such works or activities have no legal protection under the great crested newt District Licence and if offences against great crested newts are thereby committed then criminal investigation and prosecution by the police may follow.

It is essential to note that any ground investigations, site preparatory works and ground / vegetation clearance works / activities (where not constituting development under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) in a red zone site authorised under the District Licence but which fail to respect controls equivalent to those detailed in the planning condition above which refers to the NatureSpace great crested newt mitigation principles would give rise to separate criminal liability under the District Licence, requiring authorised developers to comply with the District Licence and (in certain cases) with the GCN Mitigation Principles (for which Natural England is the enforcing authority); and may also give rise to criminal liability under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and/or the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (for which the Police would be the enforcing authority).

3. This permission does not authorise the obstruction, stopping up or diversion of any public right of way. Where the development would affect a public footpath/PROW, the route must remain open and unobstructed unless and until the appropriate legal Order has been made, confirmed and brought into effect. Any preliminary obstruction or interference may constitute an offence and may prejudice the making/confirmation of an Order. The applicant is advised to contact Gloucestershire County Council Public Rights of Way team (prow@gloucestershire.gov.uk) at an early stage, and to submit

any necessary application for a diversion/stopping up Order under the relevant legislation (including section 257 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 where applicable).

4. Works on the Public Highway

The development hereby approved includes the carrying out of work on the adopted highway. You are advised that before undertaking work on the adopted highway you must enter into a highway agreement under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980with the County Council, which would specify the works and the terms and conditions under which they are to be carried out.

Contact the Highway Authority's Legal Agreements Development Management Team at highwaylegalagreements@gloucestershire.gov.uk allowing sufficient time for the preparation and signing of the Agreement. You will be required to pay fees to cover the Councils costs in undertaking the following actions:

Drafting the Agreement
A Monitoring Fee
Approving the highway details
Inspecting the highway works

Planning permission is not permission to work in the highway. A Highway Agreement under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 must be completed, the bond secured and the Highway Authority's technical approval and inspection fees paid before any drawings will be considered and approved.

Impact on the highway network during construction

The development hereby approved and any associated highway works required, is likely to impact on the operation of the highway network during its construction (and any demolition required). You are advised to contact the Highway Authorities Network Management Team at
Network&TrafficManagement@gloucestershire.gov.uk before undertaking any work, to discuss any temporary traffic management measures required, such as footway, Public Right of Way, carriageway closures or temporary parking restrictions a minimum of eight weeks prior to any activity on site to enable Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders to be prepared and a programme of Temporary Traffic Management measures to be agreed.

Protection of Visibility Splays

The applicant's attention is drawn to the need to ensure that the provision of the visibility splay(s) required by this consent is safeguarded in any sale of the application site or part(s) thereof.

Travel Plan

The proposed development will require a Travel Plan as part of the transport mitigation package (together with a Monitoring Fee and Default Payment) and the Applicant/Developer is required to enter into a legally binding Planning Obligation Agreement with the County Council to secure the Travel Plan.

Gloucestershire County Council has published guidance on how it expects travel plans to be prepared, this guidance is freely available from the County Councils website. As part of this process the applicant must register for Modeshift STARS and ensure that their targets have been uploaded so that progress on the implementation of the Travel Plan can be monitored.
Modeshift STARS Business is a nationally accredited scheme which assists in the effective delivery of travel plans, applicant can register at www.modeshiftstars.org

Construction Management Plan (CMP)

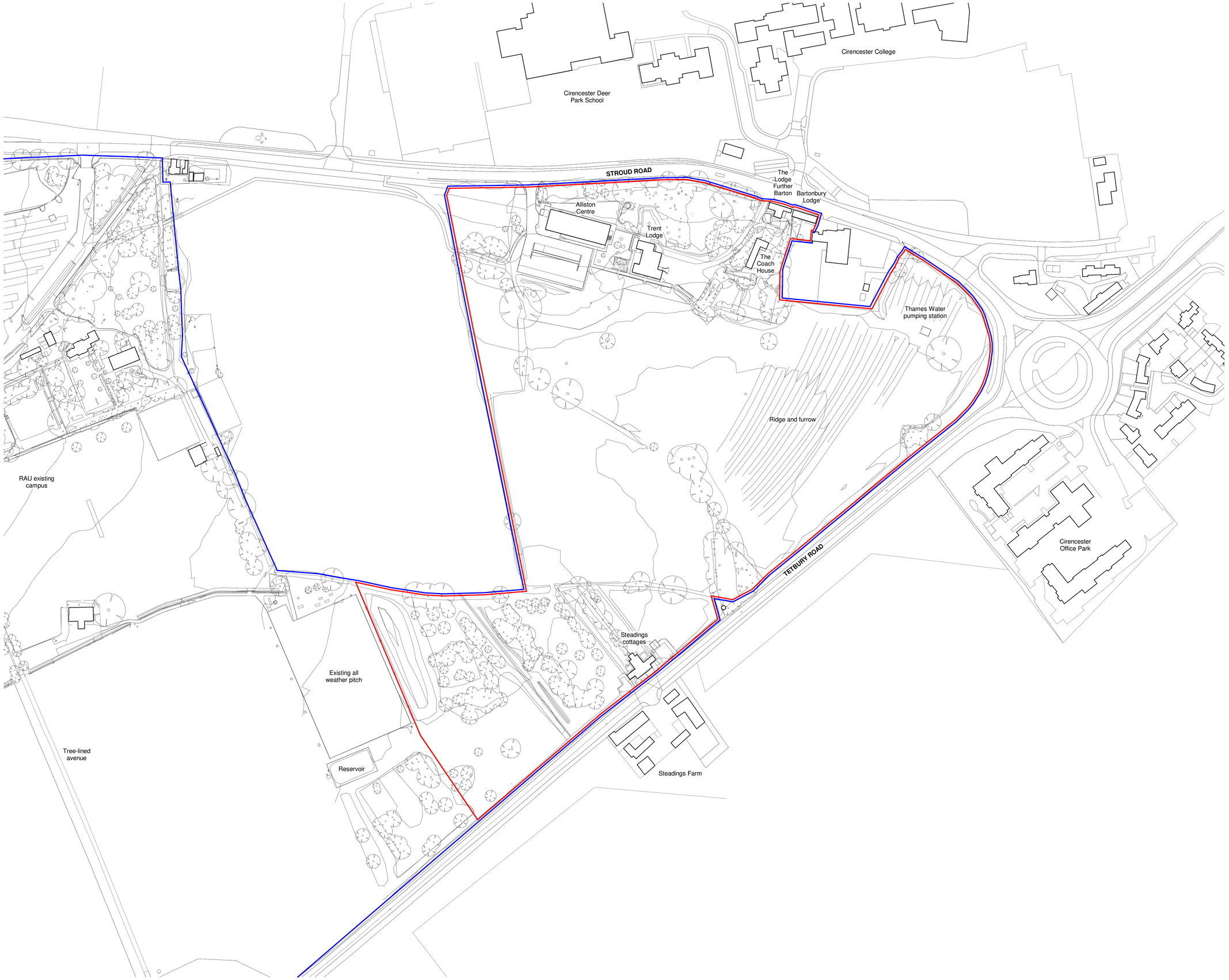
It is expected that contractors are registered with the Considerate Constructors scheme and comply with the code of conduct in full, but particularly reference is made to "respecting the community" this says:
Constructors should give utmost consideration to their impact on neighbours and the public

• Informing, respecting and showing courtesy to those affected by the work;
• Minimising the impact of deliveries, parking and work on the public highway;
• Contributing to and supporting the local community and economy; and
• Working to create a positive and enduring impression, and promoting the Code.

The CEMP should clearly identify how the principal contractor will engage with the local community; this should be tailored to local circumstances. Contractors should also confirm how they will manage any local concerns and complaints and provide an agreed Service Level Agreement for responding to said issues.

Contractors should ensure that courtesy boards are provided, and information shared with the local community relating to the timing of operations and contact details for

the site coordinator in the event of any difficulties. This does not offer any relief to obligations under existing Legislation.



Graphic Scale 1:1250

0 62.5 125m

Notes

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North

Key:

- Application site
- Applicant owned land

Rev	Date	Description	Drawn	Checked
P03	28/03/24	Issued for Planning	KdS	EP
P02	22/03/24	Issue to DT	AG	MM
P01	01/03/24	Issue to DT	AG	EP

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Project
Royal Agricultural University Innovation Village

Client
Royal Agricultural University

Drawing Title
Location Plan

Project	Originator	Zone	Level	Type	Role	Number
RAU -	ART -	XX -	XX -	D -	A-	**40001**

Status	Description	Rev
S4	For Approval	**P03**
Date	Scale	Drawn
01/03/24	1 : 1250 @ A1	AG
Internal Proj Ref	Model Ref	Checked
10388	70000	EP

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Graphic Scale 1:1000

0 50 100m

Notes

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North

Key:

- Biodiverse green roof
- Accessible roof terrace providing external break-out space overlooking landscaped areas
- South facing mono-pitched roof with photovoltaic panels
- Bio-solar roof, flat biodiverse roofs with photovoltaic array
- Existing roof finish

To be read in conjunction with Illustrative Landscape Masterplan and Illustrative three-dimensional massing envelope drawings

Rev	Date	Description	Drawn	Checked
P04	07/10/25	Update to road layout	IR	EP
P03	30/05/25	Issued for Planning	AG	EP
P02	05/04/24	Updated Key	AG	EP
P01	28/03/24	Issued for Planning	KdS	EP

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Project
Royal Agricultural University Innovation Village

Client
Royal Agricultural University

Drawing Title
Illustrative Masterplan

Project	Originator	Function	Space	Form	Role	Number
RAU -	ART -	XX -	XX -	D -	A -	**40005**

Status	Description	Rev
S4	For Approval	**P04**

Date	Scale	Drawn
28/03/24	1:1000 @ A1	AG

Internal Proj Ref	Model Ref	Checked
10388	70000	EP

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COTSWOLD District Council

Council name	**COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL**
Name and date of Committee	**PLANNING AND LICENSING COMMITTEE – 13 MAY 2026**
Subject	**RESPONSE TO MINISTRY FOR HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION: FEES FOR PLANNING APPLICATIONS**
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Juliet Layton - Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning
Accountable officer	Geraldine LeCointe – Assistant Director of Planning Services
Report author	Harrison Bowley – Head of Planning Services
Summary/Purpose	The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) is consulting (23 March–18 May 2026) on reforms to planning application fees in England, to better resource Local Planning Authorities (LPA) and improve timeliness and quality of decision-making. The main proposal is a new National Default Fee Schedule set at around 90% of the estimated cost of processing each application type, updated annually for inflation, alongside a local variation model (enabled by the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025) allowing authorities to vary fees locally based on evidenced costs, potentially subject to a cap.

	The consultation also proposes simplifying and restructuring fee categories (including for outline/full/reserved matters, agricultural development, prior approvals, permission in principle and s73/s73B applications) and seeks initial views on a ~10% surcharge on fees to help fund statutory consultees, with further detail to follow. This report provides an overview of the consultation and a draft of the Council's proposed responses to the questions set out.
Annexes	Annex A – Copy of Consultation.
Recommendation(s)	That the Planning and Licensing committee resolves to: 1. Agree to the consultation response and; 2. Delegate authority to the Head of Planning Services to respond to the consultation on behalf of Cotswold District Council.
Corporate priorities	• Delivering Housing
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	YES
Consultees/ Consultation	This is a consultation undertaken by Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government to which Cotswold District Council will respond as a Local Planning Authority. The consultation is available to all parties to respond to.

Overview of Key Proposals

This open government consultation asks for views on changing how planning application fees work in England, with the overall aim of moving fees closer to cost recovery and reshaping the system for the future.

The consultation proposes:

- A new national "default" fee schedule set at around 90% of estimated processing costs, intended to raise fee income closer to the cost of running development management services, and to act as a baseline for a new model where fees may vary locally.
- Simplifying and restructuring fee categories, including introducing some new fees, to reduce complexity for applicants and users of the system.
- A surcharge linked to statutory consultees, proposed at around 10% of the national default fee, to be applied via the planning fee system.
- Principles for locally set fees (a "local variation" approach), including seeking views on whether there should be a cap on locally set fees.
- Reviewing the future role of discretionary services (notably Planning Performance Agreements and pre-application advice) in light of higher default fees and the introduction of local variation.

Responses to Consultation Questions

Q1. Do you support the proposed National Default Fee Schedule, set at 90% of full estimate cost?

Response:

Yes - Cotswold District Council (CDC) supports in principle the introduction of a National Default Fee Schedule set at 90% of estimated full cost, as a pragmatic step

towards addressing the well-evidenced gap between fee income and the cost of determining planning applications.

CDC also supports the principle that the national default should provide a robust baseline for the new local variation model, enabling councils to evidence and justify departures from default fees where local costs warrant this.

Q2. Are there any proposed fees in the National Default Fee Schedule that you consider to be unrepresentative of 90% of estimated full cost levels for LPAs (either too low or too high)?

Response:

Yes - CDC believes some proposed fees may remain unrepresentative:

- Discharge of Conditions - The survey evidence identifies discharge of conditions as consistently under-priced across LPAs. CDC notes that condition discharge can be resource-intensive, particularly where multiple conditions require iterative submissions and coordination with specialist consultees.
- Outline Planning Consent - The consultation highlights that outline applications (especially for major development) are frequently under-priced and that modern outline submissions can involve extensive technical material and prolonged engagement over multi-phase schemes. CDC supports reforms that better reflect complexity, not just site area.

In responding to the consultation, the Council would emphasise the importance of recognising the continuing "structural" under-recovery that will remain even if the proposed National Default Fee Schedule is implemented, because some statutory consents and controls will still not attract any fee, specifically including listed building consent and consent for works to protected trees, which Government proposes should remain exempt. This is particularly relevant for authorities such as Cotswold District Council where heritage assets, conservation areas and environmental

constraints are a significant feature of the area and generate a sustained workload across validation, specialist assessment, consultation, negotiation and decision-making. In practice, this means that a notable proportion of the planning service will continue to be funded from general budgets, even if fee income for "fee-charging" applications moves closer to cost recovery. CDC therefore considers that, if Government's policy intention is genuinely to improve capacity and performance, it should ensure councils are not left carrying an unrecoverable cost burden for these exempt regimes. If the intention remains to exempt such applications from fee's, Government should identify an alternative funding mechanism for example, specific grant support, an agreed cross-subsidy approach within the fee framework, or other system-wide resourcing measures.

Q3. Do you support the proposed changes to the fee structures for outline, full and reserved matters applications for residential and non-residential development as set out in the proposed National Default Fee Schedule?

Response:

Yes – CDC supports the proposed changes in principle, as the consultation recognises that the current fee structures for residential and non-residential development have become overly complex, can be confusing for applicants and administrators, and do not always reflect the scale or work involved in determining modern applications.

Q4. What further changes, if any, do you think should be made to the structure of fees for outline, full and reserved matters applications?

In your response, you may wish to comment on: whether a more simplified banding structure would be preferable to increments per unit or per area how fees could better reflect varying site characteristics or levels of complexity whether the current approach to mixed use development fees should be simplified how fees should

operate for large multi-phase developments, including whether it remains appropriate to have maximum fee levels or caps for reserved matters applications whether an additional band or higher fee should apply to applications requiring EIA. Please provide evidence where possible.

Response:

CDC would support exploring a clearer banded approach (for example, by dwelling number ranges or floorspace ranges) where it would improve predictability and reduce administrative complexity, as the consultation suggests. A banded structure can be easier for applicants to understand and for authorities to administer, and may better align with the reality that workload often increases in "steps" rather than in perfectly linear increments.

CDC supports the consultation's suggestion that applications requiring Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) can create significantly higher workloads due to complex technical material and the need for specialist input. CDC support the proposal to an additional band or uplift for EIA development (for outline and full applications) to better align fees with the resources required to process these cases.

Q5. Do you support the proposed changes to the fee structures for applications for agricultural development as set out in the proposed National Default Fee Schedule?

Response:

Unsure – CDC supports the direction of travel to simplify and rationalise planning fee structures, and recognises the consultation's intention to address the existing agricultural fee framework which is widely viewed as overly complex, with multiple thresholds and bespoke calculation methods that can be difficult for applicants to understand and for authorities to administer.

However, CDC is not fully convinced that the agricultural element of the proposed National Default Fee Schedule (Appendix/Annex A) achieves the stated objective of simplification in practice. While the consultation indicates an intention to bring

agricultural fees into closer alignment with the approach for other non-residential development, the resulting structure still appears to retain a level of complexity that may continue to generate confusion, inconsistent charging, and avoidable validation queries.

CDC would therefore support the proposed changes subject to Government:

- providing a simplified, clearly banded structure for agricultural development (with fewer thresholds and clearer "which category applies" rules), and/or worked examples to demonstrate how fees should be calculated in common scenarios; and
- confirming that any increases remain modest and proportionate for typical agricultural proposals, with particular attention to smaller-scale rural schemes.

CDC would welcome further refinement of Appendix/Annex A to ensure the agricultural fee schedule is genuinely simpler, transparent and consistently applied, while maintaining fairness for rural enterprises and reflecting the actual level of assessment required.

Q6. Do you support the proposal that PiP applications should attract a flat fee for 2 bands?

- *PiP applications for developments of up to 9 dwellings*
- *PiP applications for developments of 10 to 49 dwellings*

Response:

No – CDC does not support moving to a two-band flat fee for Permission in Principle (PiP) applications as currently proposed. While the Council recognises the consultation's broader aim of simplifying fee categories and introducing new fees (including for PiP), simplification should not come at the expense of a fee structure that reasonably reflects the work required to assess proposals.

In CDC's experience, PiP submissions are often high-level but still require the authority to undertake meaningful assessment of key constraints and "in-principle" considerations (for example, heritage and landscape impacts, sustainability considerations, access and drainage capacity), particularly in a district with significant environmental and heritage sensitivities. The Council also finds that a low proportion of PiP applications progress to a subsequent full/technical consent, which can result in duplicated effort when schemes do come forward, and limited planning benefit when they do not.

A two-band flat fee risks under-recovering costs for larger and more complex PiP proposals (including constrained sites), and risks creating unreasonable incentives for applicants to pursue PiP as a lower-cost route even where it offers little practical value.

Q7. Do you agree with the proposed fee level for PiP applications for:

a) developments of up to 9 dwellings - £825?

b) developments of 10 to 49 dwellings - £3,150?

Response:

No - CDC does not agree that the proposed national default fees for Permission in Principle (PiP) applications are appropriate. While the scope of PiP is more limited than a full planning application, the Council must still undertake sufficient assessment to determine whether development is acceptable in principle, including consideration of key site constraints. In a constrained district, this can require a level of officer input that is not materially different from other application routes, and medium-scale PiP proposals can generate significant workload even at an "in-principle" stage, particularly where sites are complex and require meaningful assessment of impacts and deliverability.

CDC is also concerned that the proposed flat fees appear low when compared with the existing statutory PiP fee, which is currently charged on an area-based basis

(£531 per 0.1 hectare or part thereof from 1 April 2026). For many small sites the current area-based fee would exceed £825 (for example, a 0.2ha site would equate to £1,062), and for sites typically associated with 10–49 dwellings the current area-based approach would commonly produce a fee higher than £3,150. This suggests the proposed flat fees may represent a reduction in many cases, creating a risk of systematic under-recovery and sitting uneasily with the consultation's stated aim of aligning fees more closely with cost.

CDC therefore considers that any move to flat fees should not result in fee levels that are below the typical outcomes generated under the current area-based methodology for PiP. Alternatively, Government should retain an area-based approach (or adopt a hybrid model) to better reflect the variability in site characteristics and complexity, and to avoid under-charging for constrained or higher-workload PiP submissions.

Q8. Do you think the three-band fee structure currently used for section 73 applications remains appropriate?

If no, what changes would you propose and why? Please provide evidence to support your view.

Response:

Yes

Q9. Should section 73 and section 73B applications be charged using the same fee structure?

Response:

No - Section 73 and section 73B should not be charged using the same fee structure because they enable different scopes of change and can require materially different levels of assessment.

Section 73 is constrained to variations of conditions and cannot lawfully be used to amend the description of development, whereas section 73B is intended to permit broader variation (including the description), subject to the "not substantially different" test.

As a result, a section 73B proposal may, in practice, look much closer to a reconsideration of the permission as a whole than a targeted condition change, potentially involving wider consultation and re-assessment of key impacts. Charging the two routes identically risks mispricing applications relative to the work required and may create incentives to use the broader route where a narrower one would suffice.
A more proportionate approach would be to retain a distinct (higher) fee framework for s73B.

Q10. Do you think the fee for discharging conditions should be charged per condition rather than per application?
If yes, what do you consider to be an appropriate fee per condition? Please provide evidence to support your view.
Response:
Yes – CDC strongly support charging for the discharge of conditions per condition rather than per application because each condition generally requires a separate assessment (often involving different evidence, consultation, and officer expertise). The current approach allows a single submission to cover multiple conditions under one fee, which can significantly under-recover costs where numerous conditions are bundled into one request.
National guidance is clear that conditions should be used sparingly and proportionately (i.e., tailored to specific issues, not standardised, and used fairly and reasonably). A per-condition fee would support that principle by creating a clearer

relationship between workload and charge, and by discouraging unnecessary conditions.

This aligns with Government evidence that some categories (including discharge of conditions) have been identified by LPAs as underpriced, contributing to resourcing pressures in development management.

The Resourcing in Planning Services: A Benchmark round-up (June 2015) found in 2015 that there was an average cost of processing a discharge of conditions application of £268, reflecting a significant deficit comparable to the fee received. A per condition fee should include a fixed cost per application, covering administration and registration, with a variable per condition fee applied for each condition applied to be discharged. For example, for a householder development there would be a £35 administrative charge, and then £35 per condition applied for after that, applying to discharge 2 conditions would result in a fee of £105.

It is accepted that any fee would need to be clearly evidence, and the 90% cost recovery principle applied.

Q11. Should applications for the approval of biodiversity gain plans be subject to a separate fee to reflect the specific work involved?

If yes, what do you consider to be an appropriate fee level? Please provide evidence to support your view.

Response:

No – CDC generally finds that discharging that BGP condition is no more resource intensive than other technical conditions. There is a monitoring and reporting requirement associated with BGP conditions, however, this should be funded through alternative mechanisms.

Q12. Do you have an alternative suggestion on how the fee structure for discharge of conditions could be improved?

Response:

Yes – as per response to Q10.

Q13. Do you support the proposal to apply a flat fee of £310 for all other existing prior approval applications that are currently free of charge as well as the proposed prior approval under Class B of Part 15 (if brought forward)?

Response:

Yes.

Q14. Do you agree with the proposed fee for CAAD applications of £964? If no, what do you consider to be an appropriate fee? Please provide evidence to support your view.

Response:

Yes.

Q15. Do you support the introduction of a new national default fee for section 106A applications?

If yes, what would represent an appropriate structure and fee(s)? Please provide evidence to support your view.

If you do not support this proposal, please explain why.

Response:

Yes - Section 106A applications require assessment against statutory tests and compliance with prescribed procedural requirements (including notification/publicity), and frequently require legal input. A national default fee would support cost recovery and consistency, aligning with the consultation objective of moving towards fees reflecting the cost of processing applications. Appropriate structure: a banded fee based on the scale/complexity of the original permission (e.g., non-major vs major), with indicative fees of £500 / £1,250 / £2,500.

This approach is justified by published benchmarking of planning application processing costs (productive hourly rate ~£48/hr) and the multi-step nature of S106A applications under the 1992 procedural regime.

Q16. Are there any other existing fee categories not mentioned above that you believe would benefit from restructuring? If yes, please specify which categories and explain how you think they should be improved.

Response:

No.

Q17. Do you agree with our working proposal that the planning fee surcharge should be in the region of 10% of the national default fee (subject to further policy development and consultation)?

Response:

Yes

Q18. Do you have any comments on how local fee setting will operate? In particular, is there any additional information that you would wish to see covered through guidance?

Response:

CDC welcomes the move to a local variation model alongside a continuing national default fee, as this should help fees better reflect genuine local costs while maintaining a consistent baseline across England. To ensure the model operates transparently and fairly in practice, CDC considers that clear national guidance will be essential on the process, evidence requirements and safeguards that sit around locally-set fees.

In particular the following guidance would be considered essential:

- Process and governance – Guidance should set out a clear, standardised process for adopting local variations, including: who can approve variations (and the role of members), recommended consultation/publication steps, notice periods, implementation dates and transitional arrangements.
- Cost evidence - CDC would like guidance to specify a standard cost-recovery methodology (ideally with templates) so that councils evidence fees in a consistent way.
- Interaction with discretionary services and PPAs - Given the consultation's explicit intention to review PPAs and pre-application charging alongside fee reform, CDC would welcome guidance that clarifies the future role of PPAs and other discretionary charges under the new model.
- Ringfencing and reinvestment expectations - CDC considers it important that guidance is explicit about expectations for retention/reinvestment of fee income into the planning application service so that increased or locally varied fees demonstrably deliver service improvements. This is particularly relevant given wider evidence that planning fee income is not always retained within planning services, and the policy intention that improved resourcing should drive better speed and quality of decision-making.

Q19. Do you think local fee variations should be capped? If so, what level would be appropriate - 15%, 25% of the national default fee, or another figure?

- *yes - 15%*
- *yes - 25%*
- *yes - other (please specify)*
- *no*
- *unsure*

Please explain your reasoning

Response:

No – CDC does not consider a cap on local fee variations to be necessary. The proposed local variation model is intended to allow authorities to set fees that reflect evidenced local costs, while remaining constrained by cost-recovery principles and supported by transparency requirements and Secretary of State oversight/intervention powers. In that context, an additional cap risks being an unnecessarily restrictive layer of control, potentially limiting an authority's ability to recover legitimate costs and invest in improving performance, which is the stated purpose of the reforms.

Notwithstanding this, if a cap were implemented, a 25% cap should be imposed to allow greater flexibility.

Q20. In the context of localised planning fees, what are your views on the future role of PPAs, pre-application advice and other discretionary charging regimes? Please provide any suggestions, experiences or evidence to support your view.

Response:

CDC considers that Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs), pre-application advice and other discretionary charging regimes should remain an important and legitimate part of the planning system, even with the introduction of a National Default Fee Schedule and local fee variation powers. The Council agrees that application fees should be the principal mechanism for resourcing the statutory development management service; however, it is critical that PPAs and pre-application services are not restricted or removed in a way that undermines timely delivery and effective scheme evolution.

CDC has major reservations about any approach that seeks to displace PPAs and pre-application engagement on the assumption that higher application fees alone can absorb this workload. In practice, complex proposals frequently require sustained

front-loaded negotiation, issue-resolution and iterative design work (often involving multiple consultees and specialist inputs). PPAs and charged pre-application services are currently one of the principal mechanisms by which LPAs can resource this work proportionately and transparently.

If PPAs or charged pre-application services were materially restricted, the likely effect would be to shift negotiation and issue-resolution into the statutory application period, increasing pressure on already constrained determination timetables. This would risk doing the opposite of the policy intent, potentially slowing determination, increasing the number of "stop-start" validation/consultation cycles, and reducing the scope to resolve issues proactively. CDC does not consider that the proposed fee uplifts (even with local variation) automatically compensate for the loss of bespoke resourcing, particularly for large/complex schemes where the workload is both intensive and time-critical.

Q21. Do you have any views on how the proposals in this consultation might affect you, the group or business you represent, or others – particularly those with protected characteristics? If so, please explain who might be affected and how. Is there anything that could be done to mitigate any impact identified?

Response:

Cotswold District Council does not consider that the proposals are likely to have significant direct adverse impacts on people with protected characteristics. Planning fees are generally a small proportion of overall development costs and the reforms are intended to improve the speed and quality of decision-making by better resourcing planning services.

However, there is a potential for indirect impacts where higher fees affect those with more limited financial resources (for example, some householders or small businesses), including disabled people where adaptations are needed. Existing

safeguards and exemptions (including where no fee is required for certain householder applications that provide access for a disabled person) should be retained and clearly signposted

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Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

Open consultation

Fees for planning applications

Published 23 March 2026

Applies to England

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Scope of the consultation

This consultation seeks views on proposals to:

- establish a new national default fee schedule, based on 90% of estimated costs, to bring planning fees to a level closer to cost recovery and act as a baseline from which a new local fee setting model will operate
- introduce new fees and restructure existing fee categories in order to reduce complexity for users
- implement a surcharge on planning fees for statutory consultees, set in the region of 10% of the national default fee
- establish the key principles behind local fee setting, as well as seek views on the potential to implement a cap on locally set fees
- review the future role of discretionary services such as Planning Performance Agreements and pre-application advice in light of proposed increases to default fees and the introduction of the local variation model

Geographical scope

These proposals relate to England only.

Impact assessment

We will use feedback from the consultation to inform our assessment of the impact of the measures.

Body responsible for the consultation

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

Duration

This consultation will last for 8 weeks from 23 March 2026 to 18 May 2026.

Enquiries

For any enquiries about the consultation please email: planningfees@communities.gov.uk

How to respond

You may respond by completing the online survey (https://consult.communities.gov.uk/planning/fees-for-planning-applications-consultation).

We strongly encourage responses via the online survey, particularly from organisations with access to online facilities, such as local authorities, representative bodies, and businesses.

Consultations on planning matters receive a high level of interest across many sectors. Using the online survey greatly assists our analysis of the responses, enabling more efficient and effective consideration of the issues raised for each question.

Alternatively you can email your response to the questions in this consultation to: planningfees@communities.gov.uk

If you are responding in writing, please make it clear which questions you are responding to.

Written responses should be sent to:

> Fees for Planning Applications Consultation
> Third Floor, Fry Building
> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
> 2 Marsham Street
> London
> SW1P 4DF

When you reply it would be very useful if you confirm whether you are replying as an individual or submitting an official response on behalf of an organisation and include:

- your name
- your position (if applicable)

- the name of organisation (if applicable)
- an address (including post-code)
- an email address
- a contact telephone number

Introduction and background

Ensuring local planning authorities (LPAs) have the resources they need to deliver timely, high-quality planning decisions is essential to achieving our mission to unlock economic growth and deliver 1.5 million new homes this Parliament. A new National Default Fee Schedule, designed to better reflect the costs LPAs incur, is a key step towards better resourcing LPAs and driving better outcomes including faster determination times, improved service standards and stronger performance across the planning system.

Planning application fees are currently set nationally in England by central government to help LPAs meet the costs of determining applications. These fees will be increased in line with inflation from 1 April 2026. However, even with this adjustment and earlier uplifts there remains a substantial gap between fee income and service costs. In 2024/25, the annual shortfall is estimated to be around £330 million. This underfunding limits LPA capacity, leading to delays and poorer decision-making.

The Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 introduced new powers for local fee setting which will enable LPAs to set their own planning application fees through a local variation model. Under this approach, a national default fee will remain in place and apply to all LPAs, unless an LPA chooses to vary from the default fee for any or all application fee categories to reflect their own costs recovery needs. This flexibility will allow LPAs to secure the funding necessary to strengthen their capacity, invest in skilled staff, and deliver a more efficient, high-quality planning service.

Importantly, local fee-setting is not about increasing fees without change. It is about creating a system that supports efficiency and innovation, helping LPAs to reduce costs over time. The national default fee should not be considered a minimum. Where efficiency gains are achieved, such as through improved processes, new ways of working, or through digital tools and emerging technologies like AI, these savings should be reflected appropriately in locally-set fees so that charges remain proportionate and aligned with the actual cost of delivering the service.

These proposals also sit alongside wider proposed reforms in the draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published for consultation on 16 December 2025, to support a more efficient planning system. These

include streamlined requirements for medium-sized developments and greater standardisation of information, conditions and section 106 planning obligations. These measures will improve efficiency and productivity in LPAs and reduce the costs of processing planning applications.

Following engagement with LPAs, this consultation seeks views on a proposed National Default Fee Schedule as the foundation for the local variation model. It also proposes restructuring certain existing fee categories, and introducing new fees for prior approval applications, permission in principle, and applications to vary planning permissions under section 73 and section 73B. We also invite feedback on how local fee setting should operate in practice, including whether a cap on local variations is appropriate and how these changes might affect the future role of planning performance agreements (PPAs) and other discretionary charges.

The Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 also introduced powers to levy a surcharge on planning fees to help fund organisations such as national statutory consultees which support the planning application process. To enable informed responses to the wider proposed increases to the national default fee, this consultation seeks initial views on the surcharge being in the region of 10% of the national default fee, even where local variations exist. We will consult in due course on further details of the surcharge via a separate consultation, including the types of planning applications where the surcharge would apply.

While we recognise these proposals will mean additional costs for applicants, everyone stands to benefit from a properly funded and well-functioning planning system, and by strengthening the financial sustainability of LPAs and statutory consultees. These measures sit alongside wider reforms to help to encourage innovation through digital tools and streamlined processes, to help build a planning system that is quicker, smarter, and more responsive, unlocking economic growth and accelerating the delivery of much-needed homes across the country.

With these anticipated improvements across the system, LPAs will be expected to provide a faster and more reliable local planning service. The performance of LPAs will be scrutinised more closely to ensure that all planning applications are determined quickly and to the required standard. Where an LPA falls short, action will be taken to ensure that performance is improved.

National Default Fee Schedule

Between August and September 2025, the Local Government Association (LGA) and Planning Advisory Service (PAS) surveyed LPAs in England (https://www.local.gov.uk/pas/topics/localised-fee-setting) to understand how well current planning fees reflect the actual cost of processing applications and to identify where the biggest cost recovery challenges lie.

The survey found that no planning fee fully covers the cost of determining a planning application, with shortfalls ranging from 18% for the least underpriced to 60% for the most underpriced. The applications most frequently considered underpriced, identified by 92% of LPAs, were applications to remove or vary a condition following grant of planning permission (section 73 applications) for major developments and applications to discharge conditions. Outline planning applications, particularly for major developments, and section 73 applications for non-major developments, were also highlighted, with 88% of LPAs considering them to be underpriced. These application types were also identified as the highest priority for review.

In response to the survey evidence, we are proposing a new National Default Fee Schedule as set out in Annex A. The proposed National Default Fee Schedule would increase all current planning fees to 90% of the estimated full cost of processing each application type. For applications where no direct evidence was available, proposed fee increases have been based on comparable application types. In some cases, fees and the maximum caps have also been adjusted to ensure alignment across similar application categories.

The proposed increases vary according to the current shortfall for each application type. For example, to achieve 90% of the estimated cost, the increase for householder applications for the enlargement, improvement or alteration of an existing dwellinghouse is £27, around 8% of the fee as indexed from 1 April 2026. For major section 73 applications, the increase is more significant at £1,074, around 52% from the fee as indexed from 1 April 2026. The maximum application fee would increase by around 25% from £427,537, as indexed from 1 April 2026 to £513,512. The national default fee would continue to be uplifted annually in line with inflation to maintain its real value over time.

Setting the national default fee at 90% of the full estimated cost provides a strong contribution towards the actual costs that LPAs face when determining applications and will provide an immediate boost to resourcing. This approach should mean that many authorities will be able to adequately meet their costs through the new national default fee rates. We are not proposing full cost recovery for 2 key reasons. First, in some cases, full cost recovery could result in fees exceeding actual costs for some LPAs, particularly where efficiencies have already been achieved. Second, setting fees at 90% creates an important incentive for LPAs to continue driving service improvements and reducing costs, for example through greater digitisation, streamlined processes, or investment in modern project

management systems. Local variation powers will still allow LPAs to set their own fees where this can be evidenced and justified.

We are not proposing to introduce national fees for applications for listed building consent or works to protected trees. These special control consents have historically been exempt from fees in order to encourage owners to engage proactively with LPAs, reduce the risk of unauthorised works to listed buildings or protected trees, and recognise that the conservation of historic buildings and the natural environment is a public good.

Therefore, while the national default fee will make a significant contribution toward reducing the annual shortfall in operating costs that LPAs face, we recognise that full cost recovery across the entire planning application service will not be possible, as certain applications and services will continue to not attract fees. It is also acknowledged that as service and efficiency gains are realised the overall cost of delivering the service may change over time. To ensure the system remains fair to both applicants and authorities, the National Default Fee Schedule will be reviewed regularly, as well as being automatically annually adjusted for inflation, to ensure it continues to reflect actual costs and provides an appropriate baseline for all fee-charging application types.

Question 1

Do you support the proposed National Default Fee Schedule, set at 90% of full estimate cost?

Yes / No / Unsure

Please explain your reasoning.

Question 2

Are there any proposed fees in the National Default Fee Schedule that you consider to be unrepresentative of 90% of estimated full cost levels for LPAs (either too low or too high)?

Yes / No / Unsure

If yes, please specify which application categories and provide evidence to support your view, including what you believe the fee should be.

Restructuring of existing fee categories and new application fees

As part of developing the National Default Fee Schedule, we are also considering whether there are opportunities to improve existing fee arrangements. We want to ensure that fee structures are simpler, more transparent, and better reflect both the scale of development and the level of work involved in determining applications. Our focus is on those areas identified by LPAs as top priorities for review, but we would welcome views on any other opportunities for improvement.

Fees for outline, full and reserved matters applications

We are seeking views on proposals to simplify and update the fee structure for outline, full, and reserved matters applications. Feedback from LPAs has highlighted that the current fee structures for residential (category 1) and non-residential (category 2) development has become increasingly complex, with multiple categories, baseline fees and differing methods of calculation. This can lead to inconsistency, confusion for applicants, and fees that do not always reflect the nature of the development.

To address this, the proposed National Default Fee Schedule adjusts existing bandings to align with the proposed new medium-sized development category and removes baseline fees to create a simpler and more consistent structure. We invite feedback on these proposed amendments.

We are also mindful that development patterns and the complexity of applications have changed significantly since the current fee structures were first introduced. In particular, outline applications for major developments now often require significantly greater levels of assessment than in the past, and many of the larger outline applications are now for complex multi-phase developments. LPAs must review many detailed technical statements, undertake extensive statutory consultation, and continue to process related reserved matters applications over many years.

Because outline fees are based on site area alone, they do not always reflect the differing complexities associated with contrasting site characteristics — for example, a low-density greenfield residential development may be simpler to assess and determine than a high-density brownfield residential development of the same hectarage. Similar issues arise for mixed use development, which can be complicated to calculate,

particularly where multiple categories interact. A simplified approach may therefore provide a fairer and more proportionate system.

Another area for potential reform is the structure of fee increments. At present, many fees increase per unit, per dwelling, per 75 sqm, or per 0.1 hectare. We are considering whether a simplified banding system (for example, fixed fees for developments of 10–24, 25–49, or 50–99 dwellings) may offer a more practical, predictable and proportionate approach.

We are also reviewing the role of the existing maximum fee caps. These caps currently provide a clear upper limit and can give applicants certainty, especially for large or complex schemes. In addition, for applicants seeking the approval of reserved matters a flat fee applies where the maximum fee for the full application has already been reached. In practice, this can be complex to administer, especially for large multi-phase developments delivered over extended timeframes. In a system that allows LPAs greater flexibility to vary fees locally, maximum fees may become less meaningful. We are therefore interested in views on whether maximum fees and caps on fees for approval of reserved matters remain appropriate, or whether their removal could support a simpler and more proportionate fee structure overall.

Finally, we also recognise that some major applications require environmental impact assessment (EIA) under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, creating a significantly higher workload for LPAs. The need to review complex technical information, and sometimes to seek external specialist advice, increases the cost of processing such applications. We are therefore considering whether an additional band for EIA development would help ensure greater alignment between fees charged and the actual work involved.

Overall, while the proposed changes in the National Default Fee Schedule would simplify some elements of the existing fee structures, we are keen to understand views on whether there is scope for more fundamental reform of the approach to outline, full and reserved matters fees. In particular, we are interested in views on how fee structures could better reflect modern development patterns, multiphase strategic schemes, the complexity of large mixed use or brownfield regeneration projects, and the need for clarity and fairness for applicants.

Question 3

Do you support the proposed changes to the fee structures for outline, full and reserved matters applications for residential and non-residential development as set out in the proposed National Default Fee Schedule?

Yes / No / Unsure

Please explain your reasoning.

Question 4

What further changes, if any, do you think should be made to the structure of fees for outline, full and reserved matters applications?

In your response, you may wish to comment on:

- whether a more simplified banding structure would be preferable to increments per unit or per area
- how fees could better reflect varying site characteristics or levels of complexity
- whether the current approach to mixed use development fees should be simplified
- how fees should operate for large multi-phase developments, including whether it remains appropriate to have maximum fee levels or caps for reserved matters applications
- whether an additional band or higher fee should apply to applications requiring EIA

Please provide evidence where possible.

Fees for applications for agricultural development

The current fee structure for agricultural development (category 3) is widely viewed as overly complex, with multiple thresholds and bespoke calculation methods that differ from the approach used for other non-residential development. This complexity can make fees harder for applicants to understand and administer, and does not always provide a clear or proportionate relationship between the scale of development and the assessment required.

In many cases, the considerations involved in determining proposals for agricultural buildings, such as landscape and visual effects, access, drainage and environmental impacts are broadly comparable to those associated with other forms of non-residential development. However, the agricultural fee structure has developed separately over time, resulting in a more fragmented and less transparent system.

As part of the proposed National Default Fee Schedule, we are proposing to rationalise the fee structure for agricultural development. The aim is to simplify existing arrangements and bring them into closer alignment with the structure used for other non-residential buildings. This approach is intended to improve transparency for applicants, reduce administrative complexity, and more accurately reflect the level of work involved in determining agricultural applications. We welcome views on the proposed approach and on any further opportunities to simplify and improve the fee structure for agricultural development.

Question 5

Do you support the proposed changes to the fee structures for applications for agricultural development as set out in the proposed National Default Fee Schedule?

Yes / No / Unsure

Please explain your reasoning.

Fees for permission in principle applications

Permission in principle (PiP) was introduced in 2017 as a proportionate mechanism to give developers and landowners certainty that a site is suitable for housing-led development without requiring a full planning application at the outset. If PiP is granted, the applicant must then secure technical details consent to obtain full planning permission for the residential development. The fee for technical details consent is the same as that for approval of reserved matters.

Currently, PiP can be granted either through inclusion of a site on Part 2 of a Brownfield Land Register or by an application to the LPA for, or inclusive of, minor residential development (up to 9 dwellings). To encourage greater use of PiP, particularly for sites suitable for SME builders, the draft NPPF consultation proposes extending the PiP application route to sites suitable for medium development (10 to 49 dwellings, up to 2.5 hectares).

The fee for PiP applications, as indexed from 1 April 2026 is £531 per 0.1 hectare. However, PiP applications are designed only to establish the principle of development, meaning the scope of assessment is limited and does not involve detailed matters such as design, transport or sustainable drainage or negotiation of section 106 negotiations. While we recognise larger PiP applications will need greater assessment if the PiP route is

extended to medium development, a finely-grained hectarage scale could lead to high fees for these applications which are difficult to justify given the scale of the assessment (for instance, a 2 hectare application would attract a £10,620 fee). We therefore believe PiP applications should attract a simple flat fee structure similar to section 73 applications.

We propose introducing the following fee bands. The second band would apply only if, following consideration of responses to the draft NPPF consultation, we decided to extend the PiP route to sites suitable for medium development:

- PiP applications for developments of up to 9 dwellings - **£825**
- PiP applications for developments of 10 to 49 dwellings – **£3,150**

This approach recognises that larger sites may require more consideration, even at the in-principle stage, while remaining lower than the fee for an outline planning application of comparable scale. We welcome views on both the proposed structure and the level of the proposed fees.

Question 6

Do you support the proposal that PiP applications should attract a flat fee for 2 bands?

- PiP applications for developments of up to 9 dwellings
- PiP applications for developments of 10 to 49 dwellings

Yes / No / Unsure

If no, what alternative approach would you suggest and why? Please provide evidence to support your view.

Question 7

Do you agree with the proposed fee level for PiP applications for:

a) developments of up to 9 dwellings - £825?

Yes / No / Unsure

If no, what do you consider to be an appropriate fee? Please provide evidence to support your view.

b) developments of 10 to 49 dwellings - £3,150?

Yes / No / Unsure

If no, what do you consider to be an appropriate fee? Please provide evidence to support your view.

Fees for section 73 and section 73B applications

Section 73 applications allow applicants to seek permission to develop without complying with conditions attached to an existing planning permission (i.e. to vary or remove those conditions). These applications should focus on the change to the planning condition but can involve complex considerations, particularly for major schemes, as often there can be significant changes to the design of the development. The government is also aware that some developers seek through section 73 applications to revisit fundamental issues of viability which can lead to renegotiations of planning obligations, including affordable housing obligations, creating further work for LPAs.

Section 73B, introduced by the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, provides for a new statutory route to vary an existing planning permission to make material changes to the description of development as well as conditions, provided the effect of the varied permission is substantially the same as the existing permission. We are committed to implementing this new route later this year.

In 2025, we introduced a new 3-tier fee structure for section 73 applications. Under the proposed National Default Fee Schedule, these fees would increase to the following:

- householder: **£112**
- non-major: **£825**
- major: **£3,150**

We propose fee parity for section 73B across all bands. This removes any perverse incentives, simplifies user choice between routes and facilitates appropriate migration to section 73B where material variation will be the better procedural route.

Despite the recent restructure and increase in section 73 fees, feedback from LPAs and the recent survey indicates that fees for major section 73 applications remain below the actual cost of processing them. Major section 73 applications were ranked as the highest priority for review in the survey. LPAs have highlighted that the level of work required for these applications

often varies considerably depending on the scale and complexity of the original permission. We expect similar considerations will apply to major section 73B cases too.

Notably at present, the scope of assessment required for section 73 applications can differ considerably, from minor adjustments to compliance or technical conditions to more substantive changes to a development. We are therefore keen to gather views on whether the existing 3-band structure remains suitable for both section 73 and section 73B applications, or whether a restructured approach would better reflect the varying levels of work involved. This could include, for example, introducing an additional band for very large or complex schemes, or differentiating fees where the variance of the condition is about a specific matter compared to a more general amendment to development.

Question 8

Do you think the three-band fee structure currently used for section 73 applications remains appropriate?

Yes / No / Unsure

If no, what changes would you propose and why? Please provide evidence to support your view.

Question 9

Should section 73 and section 73B applications be charged using the same fee structure?

Yes / No / Unsure

Please explain your reasoning.

Fees for applications to discharge conditions and approve biodiversity gain plans

Applications to discharge planning conditions were identified in the recent survey of LPAs as one of the application types most in need of review. These applications play an important role in ensuring developments comply

with planning requirements, but they also place a significant resource demand on LPAs and have been routinely identified by the sector as a key factor contributing to delays in the commencement of development.

The draft NPPF consultation includes a new policy encouraging the use of national model planning conditions which the government will be developing to promote greater standardisation and consistency on the use of conditions. This will help ensure that conditions requiring further approvals from LPAs are applied in a more consistent manner, supporting a more efficient planning process.

Under the proposed National Default Fee Schedule, it is proposed that the fee for applications to discharge conditions would increase to **£125** for householders and **£435** for all other developments.

In response to the increasing role for Mayors in the planning system as part of the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill, we also propose to make it clear this fee would apply where a Mayor is discharging conditions attached to a mayoral development order or a permission for a development of potential strategic importance granted by the Mayor.

As an alternative we are considering whether fees for the discharge of conditions should instead be charged on a per-condition basis rather than per application. A per-condition approach may offer a more proportionate reflection of the work involved, but could also result in significantly higher fees where multiple conditions are discharged together. We welcome views on whether a per-condition fee structure would be preferable, and if so, what an appropriate per-condition fee level might be. We also invite suggestions on any other ways in which the current fee structure for discharging conditions could be improved.

We are also mindful that the approval of biodiversity gain plans is a statutory requirement for many new developments. Approval is secured through a statutory pre-commencement condition, which currently attracts the same fee as other applications to discharge conditions. However, we recognise that assessing biodiversity gain plans can involve more complex considerations and will require specialist input, such as from ecologists. We are therefore seeking views on whether an application for the approval of biodiversity gain plans should be treated separately from other planning conditions and charged a fee which reflects the specific work involved. If so, we welcome views on what an appropriate fee level would be.

Question 10

Do you think the fee for discharging conditions should be charged per condition rather than per application?

Yes / No / Unsure

If yes, what do you consider to be an appropriate fee per condition? Please provide evidence to support your view.

Question 11

Should applications for the approval of biodiversity gain plans be subject to a separate fee to reflect the specific work involved?

Yes / No / Unsure

If yes, what do you consider to be an appropriate fee level? Please provide evidence to support your view.

Question 12

Do you have an alternative suggestion on how the fee structure for discharge of conditions could be improved?

Fees for prior approval applications

Prior approval applications are a specific type of application required for certain forms of permitted development under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (“the GPDO”). They allow LPAs to assess and approve details relating to specific impacts of a development, such as transport and flooding, before work can proceed. While these applications are generally simpler than full applications, they still place a resource demand on LPAs who are required to assess these applications in line with statutory requirements.

With the exception of prior approval applications for new dwellings, which already attract a fee per dwelling, and prior approvals for telecommunications development, most other prior approval applications currently attract the same flat fee, which is proposed to increase to £310 under the National Default Fee Schedule. However, some prior approval applications currently attract no fee at all, despite placing a comparable level of demand on LPAs in terms of time and resources. This includes, for example, Class D (toll road facilities) of Part 9 and Class A (development by gas transporters) of Part 15 of Schedule 2 of the GPDO.

In addition, the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero recently consulted on amending the right at Class B of Part 15 of Schedule 2 of the GPDO to allow for the installation or replacement of larger electrical substations, with the proposal that this right be subject to prior approval in certain protected areas. In response to the consultation, some respondents suggested that if the proposed changes are brought forward, the prior approval should be subject to a fee.

To ensure consistency and to recognise the comparable resource implications for LPAs, we consider that all prior approvals that currently have no fee should have the same flat fee of £310 as for other prior approval applications. We also consider that the new prior approval under Class B of Part 15 should be subject to the same fee, if the proposed changes are brought forward.

Question 13

Do you support the proposal to apply a flat fee of £310 for all other existing prior approval applications that are currently free of charge as well as the proposed prior approval under Class B of Part 15 (if brought forward)?

Yes / No / Unsure

Please explain your reasoning.

Fees for applications for certificates for appropriate alternative development

Certificates of appropriate alternative development (CAADs), issued under the Land Compensation Act 1961, play an important role in the compulsory purchase process. They allow landowners or acquiring authorities to establish what description of development could reasonably have been permitted on land in the absence of the scheme underlying a compulsory purpose. This determination can influence the valuation of the land for compensation purposes by identifying a certain description of development (if any) for which planning permission can be assumed would have been granted on the land if the compulsory purchase was not going ahead. The permission indicated in a CAAD can briefly be described as that which a landowner might reasonably have expected to sell their land in the open market with if it had not been acquired by compulsory purchase.

Applications for a CAAD often require a detailed and robust assessment of the planning prospects of hypothetical development scenarios. Unlike other certificate processes that confirm an existing or proposed use, applications for a CAAD often involve complex policy interpretation, consideration of multiple alternative outcomes, and the use of planning judgement including preparation of formal reasoning for the granting or refusing of a CAAD application which will support the assessment of compensation processes. This can result in a high level of resource intensive analytical work.

At present, the fee for an application for a CAAD is set at the same level as a certificate of lawful use for existing development, which does not reflect the greater complexity and resource requirements involved. To ensure that fees more accurately correspond to the level of assessment required, and to support a more proportionate recovery of costs by LPAs, we propose increasing the fee for applications for a CAAD to £964. This represents 90% of the estimated, inflation adjusted cost for a medium-scale CAAD application based on separate analysis undertaken by the Department for the CAAD process reforms implemented under the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023.

Question 14

Do you agree with the proposed fee for CAAD applications of £964?

Yes/No/Unsure

If no, what do you consider to be an appropriate fee? Please provide evidence to support your view.

Fees for section 106A Applications

Section 106A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is the statutory route for modifying or discharging planning obligations. Where an obligation no longer serves a useful purpose, or would serve that purpose equally well, subject to modifications, section 106A allows applicants to seek its removal or modification. This process does not revisit the full planning application, but only focuses on whether the specific obligation should be modified or discharged.

As set out in the consultation on Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system, published on 16 December 2025, the government recognises the practical constraints associated with the existing, statutory route to modify or discharge planning

obligations via section 106A, and the limits that any policy or guidance reforms could achieve. The consultation therefore seeks views on how the process of modifying planning obligations under section 106A, where needed once a section 106 agreement has been entered into, could be improved. The consultation of reforms to the NPPF forms part of a wider review of the statutory framework for modifying or discharging existing planning obligations.

At present, there is no national fee for applications made under section 106A, although we are aware that some authorities charge their own locally-set administrative fees for handling these applications. In order to provide greater transparency and consistency for applications, it is proposed that a new national default fee for section 106A applications be introduced. Any proposed fee would need to reasonably account for the costs to an LPA of processing such an application, while equally accounting for the variation that can incur when assessing planning obligations.

Question 15

Do you support the introduction of a new national default fee for section 106A applications?

Yes/No/Unsure

If yes, what would represent an appropriate structure and fee(s)? Please provide evidence to support your view.

If you do not support this proposal, please explain why.

Other fee categories

We welcome any additional views on whether there are other existing fee categories, not mentioned in this section, which could benefit from restructuring to be simpler, more transparent and better reflect the work involved in determining applications.

Question 16

Are there any other existing fee categories not mentioned above that you believe would benefit from restructuring?

Yes / No / Unsure

If yes, please specify which categories and explain how you think they should be improved.

Planning fee surcharge for statutory consultees

The Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 introduced new powers to provide for a surcharge on planning fees, which could be used to help fund organisations such as national statutory consultees which support the planning application process. We intend to consult on proposals to introduce this surcharge in due course. However, we recognise that it is necessary to provide some indication of the level at which the surcharge will be levied, in order to enable informed responses to this wider fee consultation.

Following initial analysis, the government is proposing that the surcharge would be set in the region of 10% of the national default fee, even where local variations exist.

We think it is appropriate to set the surcharge in relation to the national default fee, as the local factors which impact on local planning authority costs and which may justify fee variation, are unlikely to apply in relation to statutory consultation.

There are further policy choices, including the range of applications which should be subject to the charge, and whether some types of application should be subject to a zero or lower rated charge, on which we will consult in due course.

The surcharge will apply only to Town and Country Planning Act 1990 applications, and will not apply in relation to local plans and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects under the Planning Act 2008. In accordance with the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025, surcharge funds will need to cover “relevant costs” linked to casework. We expect the surcharge to support wider housing and growth objectives, by delivering service improvements, including improving the reliability of the service statutory consultees can provide and streamlining their engagement in the planning application process.

Question 17

Do you agree with our working proposal that the planning fee surcharge should be in the region of 10% of the national default fee (subject to further policy development and consultation)?

Yes / No / Unsure

Please explain your reasoning.

Local fee setting

While a national default fee, set at a level that recovers around 90% of estimated costs, represents a major improvement in resourcing for LPAs, we recognise that local circumstances differ, and some LPAs may wish to go further. The new powers introduced in the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 allow LPAs to be given the flexibility to set their own fees locally to meet their actual costs. This offers authorities a real opportunity to deliver a more sustainable, responsive, and transparent planning service.

This section explains how we anticipate local fee-setting will operate in practice. We invite feedback on this approach and on whether there is anything further that should be included in guidance to support implementation.

Following this consultation, government will set out further details in regulations, where required by the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025, and through guidance. Support will also be available from PAS to help LPAs implement these requirements effectively.

Key Principles

The local variation model will empower LPAs to set fees to reflect their own local costs. To ensure the system remains fair, transparent, and easy to navigate for applicants, local fee setting will operate within the following principles. These principles will help ensure that fees are evidence-based, proportionate, and applied consistently across all LPAs:

1. Flexibility to vary from the national default fee
LPAs may choose to vary from the national default fee for one or more fee categories. While the national default fee is expected to be appropriate in most cases, local variation provides LPAs with the flexibility to reflect specific local costs.

2. Public consultation and notification requirements
Before setting their own planning fees, LPAs will be expected to undertake a public consultation. Where fees are being adjusted only to reflect the annual inflation uplift, consultation will not be required. LPAs must still provide public notification at least 28 days before any new or adjusted fees, including annual inflation uplift, take effect.

3. Publishing local fee schedules and evidence
To ensure transparency for all users LPAs must publish a clear “local fee schedule” identifying which fees follow the national default fee and which have been locally varied. LPAs must also publish the evidence base used to justify any locally-set fees, demonstrating how the charge reflects the actual cost of the service.

4. Local fees must operate within existing national fee categories
All locally-set fees must operate within the national fee categories defined by government. LPAs cannot create new categories, introduce alternative fee structures, or charge fees for application types that do not have a national fee, such as listed building consent or work to protected trees. This ensures consistency and fairness across the system.

5. National exemptions and guarantees must be maintained
Nationally specified exemptions, reductions and refunds, including the Planning Guarantee, must continue to apply and be implemented consistently to ensure equal treatment of applicants.

6. Fees should reflect average cost estimates and not exceed cost recovery
LPAs should ensure that any locally-set fees are based on the average cost of determining the application type. Fees cannot be set above cost recovery for that category.

7. Cross-subsidisation between fee categories is not permitted
While some variation within an individual application fee category is inevitable, LPAs must not set fees above cost recovery for one application category to subsidise another, including categories where no fee is charged.

8. Local fees should be reviewed regularly
LPAs will be expected to review local fees regularly to ensure they continue to reflect actual costs. This may include annual adjustments in line with inflation, consistent with the approach taken for the national default fee.

9. Planning fee income must be ringfenced for the statutory planning decision-making function.
It is a legislative requirement that all income from planning fees must be retained for delivering the statutory planning decision-making function. Any surplus from one year to the next must be used exclusively for this purpose.

10. Planning fees must not fund wider planning services

Planning fees must not exceed cost recovery in order to fund other planning functions such as plan-making, enforcement, or CIL and section 106 monitoring.

Calculating costs

Each LPA will have its own approach of establishing the cost of delivering its planning application service. While the government is not prescribing detailed requirements for how these calculations should be undertaken, we recommend that LPAs have regard to the following components:

1. Direct planning application service staff costs
Salaries and associated costs for planning officers, case officers and administrative staff directly involved in processing and determining planning applications, including servicing planning committees.

2. In-house specialist advice costs
Salaries and associated costs for internal technical specialists, such as planning policy, highways, design and conservation, environmental health, ecology, and other relevant disciplines, where their work relates directly to determining the application or they act as formal consultees.

3. External specialist advice
Commissioned expertise not available in-house (e.g., ecology/habitats, highways modelling, engineering, landscape/visual, viability, noise/air quality), including technical input from other local authorities.

4. Indirect costs
Proportionate overheads such as office accommodation, utilities, IT systems, and corporate support services.

5. Activity-based costs
Time and resources for specific tasks, including validation, consultation and publicity, site visits, report writing, committee preparation, and decision-making.

6. Legal costs
Only where required and directly related to processing and determining the application, such as drafting section 106 agreements where costs are not covered through the agreement.

7. Training and capability
Proportionate costs for essential professional training and development, including training for planning committee members, to maintain service quality and competence.

8. Digital enablement and data
Investment in digital platforms, software, and data management tools that support efficient application processing.

Secretary of State Intervention

To ensure oversight, LPAs that set their own planning fees must notify the Secretary of State at least 28 days before the changes take effect. This notification should confirm which fees differ from the national default fee. LPAs will not need to notify the Secretary of State when applying annual inflation adjustments.

The Secretary of State has the power to intervene if an LPA is considered to have set fees at an inappropriate level, whether too high or too low, without adequate justification. Intervention may occur at any time following notification from the LPA. The intervention process would begin by the Secretary of State first directing the LPAs to review its fees or provide additional evidence. If following review, or in the event of non-compliance, the fees are still considered to be inappropriate, the Secretary of State may direct the LPA to adopt the national default fee or a different fee, for example to align with fees charged by adjoining or similar authorities.

Question 18

Do you have any comments on how local fee setting will operate? In particular, is there any additional information that you would wish to see covered through guidance?

Local variation cap

To enable LPAs to recover their full costs, local fee setting could remain uncapped, provided fees are evidence-based. This approach also recognises that costs in some areas, particularly in London, can be significantly higher due to factors such as increased staffing and accommodation costs. Allowing uncapped fees may therefore offer greater flexibility for authorities, while still requiring transparency and justification. Even under an uncapped system, the Secretary of State would retain the ability to intervene where a fee is considered unreasonable.

Alternatively, we are considering whether it would be appropriate to set a ‘local variation cap’, for example somewhere in the range of 15 to 25% above the national default fee, provided this is supported by evidence. This could strike a balance between giving LPAs flexibility to address genuine costs shortfalls while preventing excessive fees that might be at greater risk of exceeding actual costs or reduce incentives for efficiency. Under this proposal any fee set outside the cap would automatically be subject to review by the Secretary of State. We would welcome views on these options.

Question 19

Do you think local fee variations should be capped? If so, what level would be appropriate - 15%, 25% of the national default fee, or another figure?

- yes - 15%
- yes - 25%
- yes - other (please specify)
- no
- unsure

Please explain your reasoning

Planning performance agreements and discretionary charging

Under the Local Government Act 2003, LPAs already have powers to set their own fees for discretionary services such as planning performance agreements (PPAs), pre-application advice, and fast-track services. PPAs are designed to promote proactive and collaborative engagement between LPAs and applicants on complex planning proposals. They are particularly useful where specialist resources are required and timescales beyond statutory determination periods are required. Through a PPA, applicants can agree a bespoke timetable and service level in return for an additional fee.

PPAs have traditionally played an important role in supporting collaborative working on large-scale or technically complex developments and in providing additional resourcing for LPAs. However, with the introduction of a new National Default Fee Schedule and powers for LPAs to set their own

fees, we believe it is an appropriate time to consider the role of PPAs in delivering and resourcing planning services.

For example, how might the ability to set a localised planning fee reduce the need for PPAs as a mechanism for funding core planning activities. On the other hand, we know that many developers, particularly those promoting large or complex schemes, value PPAs as a way of agreeing bespoke timetabling and supporting collaborative working. Even within a new National Default Fee Schedule and localised fee setting, developers may still prefer the option of PPAs for tailored service enhancements.

Our intention is that planning fees, rather than PPAs, should be the primary mechanism for resourcing planning services. It is recognised that PPAs can still play a valuable role for larger and more complex schemes where bespoke arrangements are genuinely needed. However, their role may need to be clarified to ensure they remain focused on service enhancements rather than core planning functions. In addition, LPAs may wish to continue offering other discretionary services on a bespoke charging basis, such as pre-application advice and fast-track services.

Question 20

In the context of localised planning fees, what are your views on the future role of PPAs, pre-application advice and other discretionary charging regimes?

Please provide any suggestions, experiences or evidence to support your view.

Public Sector Equality Duty

We would like to hear about any potential impacts of the proposals in the consultation on businesses, or of any differential impacts on persons with a relevant protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010 compared to persons without that protected characteristic, together with any appropriate mitigation measures, which may assist in deciding the final policy approach in due course.

Question 21

Do you have any views on how the proposals in this consultation might affect you, the group or business you represent, or others – particularly

those with protected characteristics?

If so, please explain who might be affected and how.

Is there anything that could be done to mitigate any impact identified?

Annex A: Proposed national default fee schedule

Operations

Category of Development	Fee applicable from 1 April 2026	Proposed National Default Fee
1. The erection of dwellinghouses (other than development in category 6)	(1) Where the application is for outline planning permission and— (a) the site area is less than 0.5 hectares, £610 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area; (b) the site area is at least 0.5 hectares but does not exceed 2.5 hectares, £659 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area; (c) the site area exceeds 2.5 hectares, £16,291 and an additional £196 for each 0.1 hectare (or part	(1) Where the application is for outline planning permission and — (a) the site area is less than 0.5 hectares, **£719** for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area; (b) the site area is at least 0.5 hectares but does not exceed 2.5 hectares, **£896** for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area; (c) the site area exceeds 2.5 hectares, **£896** per 0.1 hectare for the first 2.5 hectares and an additional **£267** for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 2.5 hectares, subject to a

Category of Development	Fee applicable from 1 April 2026	Proposed National Default Fee
	thereof) in excess of 2.5 hectares, subject to a maximum in total of £213,769. (2) Where the application is for permission in principle, £531 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area.* (3) In any other case — (a) where the number of dwellinghouses to be created by the development is fewer than 10, £610 for each dwellinghouse; (b) where the number of dwellinghouses to be created by the development is at least 10 but no more than 50, £659 for each dwellinghouse; (c) where the number of dwellinghouses to be created by the development is more than 50, £32,578 and an additional £196 for each dwellinghouse in excess of 50, subject to a maximum in total of £427,537.	maximum in total of **£290,625**. (2) In any other case— (a) where the number of dwellinghouses to be created by the development is fewer than 10, **£752** for each dwellinghouse; (b) where the number of dwellinghouses to be created by the development is at least 10 **but no more than 49, £818** for each dwellinghouse; (c) where the number of dwellinghouses to be created by the development is **50 dwellinghouses or more, £818 per dwellinghouse for the first 49 dwellinghouses** and an additional **£236** for each dwellinghouse in excess of 49, subject to a maximum in total of £513,512. * **A new separate fee category is proposed for applications for permission in principle.**

Category of Development	Fee applicable from 1 April 2026	Proposed National Default Fee
2. The erection of buildings (other than buildings in categories 1, 3, 4, 5 or 7)	(1) Where the application is for outline planning permission and— (a) the site area is less than 1 hectare, £610 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area; (b) the site area is at least 1 hectare but does not exceed 2.5 hectares, £659 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area; (c) the site area exceeds 2.5 hectares, £16,291 and an additional £196 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 2.5 hectares, subject to a maximum in total of £213,769. (2) Where the application is for permission in principle, £531 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area.* (3) In any other case — (a) where no floor space is to be created by the	(1) Where the application is for outline planning permission and — (a) the site area is less than 1 hectare, **£719** for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area; (b) the site area is at least 1 hectare but does not exceed 2.5 hectares, **£896** for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area; (c) the site area exceeds 2.5 hectares, **£896** per 0.1 hectare for the first 2.5 hectares and an additional **£267** for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 2.5 hectares, subject to a maximum in total of **£290,625**. (2) In any other case— (a) where no floor space is to be created by the development, £357; (b) where the area of gross floor space to be created by the development does not exceed 40 square metres, **£357**; (c) where the area of gross floor space created by the development exceeds

Category of Development	Fee applicable from 1 April 2026	Proposed National Default Fee
	development, £309; (b) where the area of gross floor space to be created by the development does not exceed 40 square metres, £309; (c) where the area of gross floor space created by the development exceeds 40 square metres but is less than 1000 square metres, £610 for each 75 square metres (or part thereof); (d) where the area of gross floor space created by the development is at least 1000 square metres but does not exceed 3750 square metres, £659 for each 75 square metres (or part thereof); (e) where the area of gross floor space created by the development exceeds 3750 square metres, £32,578 and an additional £196 for each 75 square metres (or part thereof) in excess of 3750 square metres,	40 square metres but is less than 1000 square metres, **£705** for each 75 square metres (or part thereof); (d) where the area of gross floor space created by the development is at least 1000 square metres but does not exceed 3750 square metres, **£759** for each 75 square metres (or part thereof); (e) where the area of gross floor space created by the development exceeds 3750 square metres, **£759** per 75 square metres for the first 3,750 square metres and an additional **£226** for each 75 square metres (or part thereof) in excess of 3750 square metres, subject to a maximum in total of **£513,512**. * **A new separate fee category is proposed for applications for permission in principle.**

Category of Development	Fee applicable from 1 April 2026	Proposed National Default Fee
	subject to a maximum in total of £427,537.	
3. The erection, on land used for the purposes of agriculture, or buildings used for agricultural purposes (other than buildings in category 4)	(1) Where the application is for outline planning permission and— (a) the site area is less than 1 hectare, £610 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area; (b) the site area is at least 1 hectare but does not exceed 2.5 hectares, £659 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area; (c) the site area exceeds 2.5 hectares, £16,291 and an additional £196 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 2.5 hectares, subject to a maximum in total of £213,769. (2) Where the application is for permission in principle, £531 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area.* (3) In any other case—	(1) Where the application is for outline planning permission and— (a) the site area is less than 1 hectare, **£719** for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area; (b) the site area is at least 1 hectare but does not exceed 2.5 hectares, **£896** for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area; (c) the site area exceeds 2.5 hectares, **£896** per 0.1 hectare for the first 2.5 hectares and an additional **£267** for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 2.5 hectares, subject to a maximum in total of **£290,625**. (2) In any other case— (a) where the area of gross floor space to be created by the development does not exceed 465 square metres, **£147**; (b) where the area of gross floor space to be created by the development exceeds

Category of Development	Fee applicable from 1 April 2026	Proposed National Default Fee
	(a) where the area of gross floor space to be created by the development does not exceed 465 square metres, £127; (b) where the area of gross floor space to be created by the development exceeds 465 square metres but does not exceed 540 square metres, £610; (c) where the area of gross floor space to be created by the development exceeds 540 square metres but is less than 1000 square metres, £610 and an additional £610 for each 75 square metres (or part thereof) in excess of 540 square metres; (d) where the area of gross floor space to be created by the development is at least 1000 square metres but does not exceed 4215 square metres, £5,270 and an additional £659 for each 75 square metres (or part thereof) in excess of 1000 square metres;	**465 square metres but does not exceed 1000 square metres, £707** for each 75 square metres (or part thereof) in excess of 465 square metres; (c) where the area of gross floor space created by the development is at least 1000 square metres but does not exceed 4215 square metres, **£742** for each 75 square metres (or part thereof) in excess of 465 square metres (d) where the area of gross floor space to be created by the development exceeds 4215 square metres, **£742** per 75 square metres (or part thereof) in excess of 465 square metres for the first 4215 square metres (or part thereof), and an additional **£221** for each 75 square metres (or part thereof) in excess of 4215 square metres, subject to a maximum total fee of £513,512. * **A new separate fee category is proposed for applications for permission in principle.**

Category of Development	Fee applicable from 1 April 2026	Proposed National Default Fee
	(e) where the area of gross floor space to be created by the development exceeds 4215 square metres, £32,578 and an additional £196 for each 75 square metres (or part thereof) in excess of 4215 square metres, subject to a maximum in total of £427,537.	
4. The erection of glasshouses on land used for the purposes of agriculture	(1) Where the area of gross floor space to be created by the development does not exceed 465 square metres, £127. (2) Where the area of gross floor space to be created by the development exceeds 465 square metres but is less than 1000 square metres, £3,405. (3) Where the area of gross floor space to be created by the development is 1000 square metres or more, £3,677.	(1) Where the area of gross floor space to be created by the development does not exceed 465 square metres, **£147**. (2) Where the area of gross floor space to be created by the development exceeds 465 square metres but is less than 1000 square metres, **£3,950**. (3) Where the area of gross floor space to be created by the development is 1000 square metres or more, **£4,267**.
5. The erection, alteration of replacement of plant or machinery	(1) Where the site area is less than 1 hectare, £610 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area.	(1) Where the site area is less than 1 hectare, **£660** for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area.

Category of Development	Fee applicable from 1 April 2026	Proposed National Default Fee
	(2) Where the site area is at least 1 hectare but does not exceed 5 hectares, £659 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area. (3) Where the site area exceeds 5 hectares, £32,578 and an additional £196 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 5 hectares, subject to a maximum in total of £427,537.	(2) Where the site area is at least 1 hectare but does not exceed 5 hectares, **£712** for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area. (3) Where the site area exceeds 5 hectares, **£712** per 0.1 hectare for the first 5 hectares and an additional **£212** for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 5 hectares, subject to a maximum in total of **£513,512**.
6. The enlargement, improvement or other alteration of existing dwellinghouses	(1) Where the application relates to a single dwellinghouse, £548. (2) Where the application relates to 2 or more dwellinghouses, £1,083.	(1) Where the application relates to a single dwellinghouse, **£575**. (2) Where the application relates to 2 or more dwellinghouses, **£1,130**.
7. The carrying out of operations (including the erection of a building) within the curtilage of an existing dwellinghouse, for purposes ancillary to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse as such, or the erection or construction of gates, fences, walls or other means of	£272	**£285**

Category of Development	Fee applicable from 1 April 2026	Proposed National Default Fee
enclosure along a boundary of the curtilage of an existing dwellinghouse.		
8. The construction of car parks, service roads and other means of access on land used for the purposes of a single undertaking, where the development is required for a purpose incidental to the existing use of the land.	£309	**£357**
9. The carrying out of any operations connected with exploratory drilling for oil or natural gas.	(1) Where the site area does not exceed 7.5 hectares, £725 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area. (2) Where the site area exceeds 7.5 hectares, £54,255 and an additional £215 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area in excess of 7.5 hectares, subject to a maximum in total of £427,537.	**£994** per 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) for the first 7.5 hectares and an additional **£282** per 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 7.5 hectares, subject to a maximum in total of **£513,512**.
10. The carrying out of any operations (other than operations coming within category 9) for the winning and working of oil or natural gas.	(1) Where the site area does not exceed 15 hectares, £366 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area.	**£458** per 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) for the first 15 hectares and an additional **£270** per 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 15 hectares,

Category of Development	Fee applicable from 1 April 2026	Proposed National Default Fee
	(2) Where the site area exceeds 15 hectares, £54,896 and an additional £215 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 15 hectares, subject to a maximum in total of £111,159.	subject to a maximum in total of **£146,309**.
11. The carrying out of any operations not coming within any of the above categories.	(1) In the case of operations for the winning and working of minerals— (a) where the site area does not exceed 15 hectares, £333 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site; (b) where the site area exceeds 15 hectares, £49,786 and an additional £196 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 15 hectares, subject to a maximum in total of £111,159. (2) In any other case, £309 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area, subject to a maximum in total of £2,676.	(1) In the case of operations for the winning and working of minerals— **£458** per 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) for the first 15 hectares and an additional **£270** per 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 15 hectares, subject to a maximum in total of **£146,309**. (2) In any other case, **£425** for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area, subject to a maximum in total of **£3,682**.

Uses of land

Category of Development	Fee applicable from 1 April 2026	Proposed National Default Fee
12. The change of use of a building to use as one or more separate dwellinghouses.	(1) Where the change of use is from a previous use as a single dwellinghouse to use as 2 or more single dwellinghouses — (a) where the change of use is to use as fewer than 10 dwellinghouses, £610 for each additional dwellinghouse; (b) where the change of use is to use as at least 10 but no more than 50 dwellinghouses, £659 for each additional dwellinghouse; (c) where the change of use is to use as more than 50 dwellinghouses, £32,578 and an additional £196 for each dwellinghouse in excess of 50 dwellinghouses, subject to a maximum in total of £427,537. (2) In all other cases— (a) where the change of use is to use as fewer than 10	(1) Where the change of use is from a previous use as a single dwellinghouse to use as 2 or more single dwellinghouses— (a) where the change of use is to use as fewer than 10 dwellinghouses, **£700** for each additional dwellinghouse; (b) where the change of use is to use as at least 10 **but no more than 49** dwellinghouses, **£799** for each additional dwellinghouse; (c) where the change of use is to use as **at least 50** dwellinghouses, **£799 per dwellinghouse for the first 49 dwellinghouses** and an additional **£237** for each dwellinghouse in excess of 49 dwellinghouses, subject to a maximum in total of **£513,512**. (2) In all other cases— (a) where the change of use is to use as fewer than 10 dwellinghouses, **£700** for each dwellinghouse;

Category of Development	Fee applicable from 1 April 2026	Proposed National Default Fee
	dwellinghouses, £610 for each dwellinghouse; (b) where the change of use is to use as at least 10 but no more than 50 dwellinghouses, £659 for each dwellinghouse; (c) where the change of use is to use as more than 50 dwellinghouses, £32,578 and an additional £196 for each dwellinghouse in excess of 50 dwellinghouses, subject to a maximum in total of £427,537.	(b) where the change of use is to use as at least 10 **but no more than 49** dwellinghouses, **£799** for each dwellinghouse; (c) where the change of use is to use as **at least 50** dwellinghouses, **£799 per dwellinghouse for the first 49 dwellinghouses** and an additional **£237** for each dwellinghouse in excess of 49 dwellinghouses, subject to a maximum in total of **£513,512**.
13. The use of land for— **(a) the disposal of refuse or waste materials,** **(b) the deposit of material remaining after minerals have been extracted from land, or** **(c) the storage of minerals in the open.**	(1) Where the site area does not exceed 15 hectares, £333 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area. (2) Where the site area exceeds 15 hectares, £49,786 and an additional £196 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area in excess of 15 hectares, subject to a maximum in total of £111,159.	**£458** per 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) for the first 15 hectares and an additional **£270** per 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 15 hectares, subject to a maximum in total of **£146,309**.
14. The making of a material change in use of a building or	£610	**£732**

Category of Development	Fee applicable from 1 April 2026	Proposed National Default Fee
land (other than a material change of use in category 12 or 13(a), (b) or (c)).		

Fees for other applications

Reserved matters	Fee applicable from 1 April 2026	Proposed National Default Fee
Approval of reserved matters following outline approval.	Full application fee due; or If Full Application already paid, £610.	Full application fee due; If Full Application already paid, **£749**.

Permission in Principle	Fee applicable from 1 April 2026	Proposed National Default Fee
Where the application is for Permission in Principle	£531 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area.	**2) Where the application is for, or inclusive of, development for:** **(a) up to 9 dwellings, £825** **(b) between 10 and 49 dwellings, £3,150**

Matter relating to conditions or amendments	Fee applicable from 1 April 2026	Proposed National Default Fee
Removal or variation of a condition (to develop land without compliance with conditions previously attached).	Where the application relates to a householder application, £89.	Where the application relates to a householder application, **£112**.

Matter relating to conditions or amendments	Fee applicable from 1 April 2026	Proposed National Default Fee
	Where the application relates to major development, £2,076. In any other case, £608.	Where the application relates to major development, **£3,150**. In any other case, **£825**.
Discharge of condition(s) – Approval of details and/or confirmation that one or more planning conditions have been complied with.	Where it relates to householder development, £89. In any other case (including condition relating to the submission of a Biodiversity Gain Plan), £309.	Where it relates to householder development,**£125**. In any other case (including condition relating to the submission of a Biodiversity Gain Plan), **£435**.
Non-material changes to planning permission or permission in principle.	Where the application relates to householder development, £46. In any other case, £309.	Where the application relates to householder development, **£53**. In any other case, **£360**.

Certificates of lawful use or development	Fee applicable from 1 April 2026	Proposed National Default Fee
Existing use or operation.	Same as Full Application fee.	Same as Full Application fee.
Existing use or operation – lawful not to comply with any condition or limitation.	£309	**£360**
Proposed use or operation.	Half the Full Application fee.	Half the Full Application fee.

Prior Approval Applications (under permitted development rights)	Fee applicable from 1 April 2026	Proposed National Default Fee
Householder development: **- Larger rear extension or other alteration of a dwellinghouse (Part1 Class A).** **- Building upwards to extend a dwellinghouse (Part 1 Class AA).**	£249	**£310**
Change of use from commercial, business and service uses (Use Class E) to dwellinghouses (Part 3 Class MA).	£260 for each proposed dwellinghouse.	**£323** for each proposed dwellinghouse
Change of use of other buildings) to dwellinghouses (Part 3, Classes M, N, Q).	£249 £536 if it includes building operations in connection with the change of use.	**£310** **£667** if it includes building operations in connection with the change of use.

Prior Approval Applications (under permitted development rights)	Fee applicable from 1 April 2026	Proposed National Default Fee
Construction of new dwellinghouses: **- Demolition of certain buildings and construction of new dwellinghouses (Part 20 Class ZA).** **- Extending certain existing buildings upwards to create new dwellinghouses (Part 20 Classes A, AA, AB, AC, AD).**	Where the number of new dwellinghouses is fewer than 10, £441 for each new dwellinghouse. Where the number of new dwellinghouses is at least 10 but no more than 50, £476 for each new dwellinghouse. Where the number of new dwellinghouses is more than 50, £23,550, and an additional £142 for each dwellinghouse in excess of 50, subject to a maximum in total of £427,537.	Where the number of new dwellinghouses is fewer than 10, **£597** for each new dwellinghouse. Where the number of new dwellinghouses is at least 10 but **no more than 49, £638** for each new dwellinghouse. Where the number of new dwellinghouses is **at least 50, £638 per dwellinghouse for the first 49 dwellinghouses**, and an additional **£185** for each dwellinghouse in excess of 49, subject to a maximum in total of **£513,512**.
Electronic communications (Part 16 Class A).	£610	**£760**
All other applications for prior approval	£249	**£310**

Other applications continued	Fee applicable from 1 April 2026	Proposed National Default Fee
Applications for Urgent Crown Development, made to the Secretary of State.	Same as fee for application for planning permission.	Same as fee for application for planning permission.

Other applications continued	Fee applicable from 1 April 2026	Proposed National Default Fee
Monitoring of mining and landfill sites.	Where the whole or part of the site is active, £523. In any other case, £174.	Where the whole or part of the site is active, **£607**. In any other case, **£202**.
Certificates of appropriate alternative development.	£309	**£964**
Application or deemed application is made or deemed to be made by or on behalf of a club, society or other organisation (including any persons administering a trust) which is not established or conducted for profit and whose objects are the provision of facilities for sport or recreation.	£610	**£675**

Fees for Applications for Consent to Display Advertisements

Category of Development	Fee applicable from 1 April 2026	Proposed National Default Fee
1. Advertisements displayed externally on business premises, the forecourt of business premises or other land within the curtilage of business premises, wholly with reference to all or any of the following matters— **(a) the nature of the business or other activity carried on the premises;**	£174	**£192**

Category of Development	Fee applicable from 1 April 2026	Proposed National Default Fee
(b) the goods sold or the services provided on the premises; or **(c) the name and qualifications of the person carrying on such business or activity or supplying such goods or services.**		
2. Advertisements for the purpose of directing members of the public to, or otherwise drawing attention to the existence of, business premises which are in the same locality as the site on which the advertisement is to be displayed but which are not visible from that site.	£174	**£192**
3. All other advertisements.	£610	**£675**

About this consultation

This consultation document and consultation process have been planned to adhere to the Consultation Principles issued by the Cabinet Office.

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent, and where relevant who else they have consulted in reaching their conclusions when they respond.

Information provided in response to this consultation may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and UK data protection legislation. In certain circumstances this may therefore include personal data when required by law.

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, as a public authority, the Department is bound by the information access regimes and may therefore be obliged to disclose all or some of the information you provide. In view of this it would be helpful if you

could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will at all times process your personal data in accordance with UK data protection legislation and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties. A full privacy notice is included below.

Individual responses will not be acknowledged unless specifically requested.

Your opinions are valuable to us. Thank you for taking the time to read this document and respond.

Are you satisfied that this consultation has followed the Consultation Principles? If not or you have any other observations about how we can improve the process please contact us via the complaints procedure (https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-local-government/about/complaints-procedure).

Personal data

The following is to explain your rights and give you the information you are entitled to under UK data protection legislation.

Note that this section only refers to personal data (your name, contact details and any other information that relates to you or another identified or identifiable individual personally) not the content otherwise of your response to the consultation.

1. The identity of the data controller and contact details of our Data Protection Officer

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) is the data controller. The Data Protection Officer can be contacted at dataprotection@communities.gov.uk or by writing to the following address:

> Data Protection Officer,
> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government,
> Fry Building,
> 2 Marsham Street,
> London
> SW1P 4DF

2. Why we are collecting your personal data

Your personal data is being collected as an essential part of the consultation process, so that we can contact you regarding your response and for statistical purposes. We may also use it to contact you about related matters.

We will collect your IP address if you complete a consultation online. We may use this to ensure that each person only completes a survey once. We will not use this data for any other purpose.

Sensitive types of personal data

Please do not share special category (https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/lawful-basis-for-processing/special-category-data/#scd1) personal data or criminal offence data if we have not asked for this unless absolutely necessary for the purposes of your consultation response. By 'special category personal data', we mean information about a living individual's:

- race
- ethnic origin
- political opinions
- religious or philosophical beliefs
- trade union membership
- genetics
- biometrics
- health (including disability-related information)
- sex life
- sexual orientation

By ‘criminal offence data’, we mean information relating to a living individual’s criminal convictions or offences or related security measures.

3. Our legal basis for processing your personal data

The collection of your personal data is lawful under article 6(1)(e) of the UK General Data Protection Regulation as it is necessary for the performance by MHCLG of a task in the public interest/in the exercise of official authority vested in the data controller. Section 8(d) of the Data Protection Act 2018 states that this will include processing of personal data that is necessary for the exercise of a function of the Crown, a Minister of the Crown or a government department i.e. in this case a consultation.

Where necessary for the purposes of this consultation, our lawful basis for the processing of any special category personal data or ‘criminal offence’ data (terms explained under ‘Sensitive Types of Data’) which you submit in response to this consultation is as follows. The relevant lawful basis for the processing of special category personal data is Article 9(2)(g) UK GDPR (‘substantial public interest’), and Schedule 1 paragraph 6 of the Data Protection Act 2018 (‘statutory etc and government purposes’). The relevant lawful basis in relation to personal data relating to criminal convictions and offences data is likewise provided by Schedule 1 paragraph 6 of the Data Protection Act 2018.

4. With whom we will be sharing your personal data

MHCLG may appoint a ‘data processor’, acting on behalf of the Department and under our instruction, to help analyse the responses to this consultation. Where we do we will ensure that the processing of your personal data remains in strict accordance with the requirements of the data protection legislation.

5. For how long we will keep your personal data, or criteria used to determine the retention period.

Your personal data will be held for 2 years from the closure of the consultation, unless we identify that its continued retention is unnecessary before that point.

6. Your rights, e.g. access, rectification, restriction, objection

The data we are collecting is your personal data, and you have considerable say over what happens to it. You have the right:

a. to see what data we have about you

b. to ask us to stop using your data, but keep it on record

c. to ask to have your data corrected if it is incorrect or incomplete

d. to object to our use of your personal data in certain circumstances

e. to lodge a complaint with the independent Information Commissioner (ICO) if you think we are not handling your data fairly or in accordance with the law. You can contact the ICO at https://ico.org.uk/ (https://ico.org.uk/), or telephone 0303 123 1113.

Please contact us at the following address if you wish to exercise the rights listed above, except the right to lodge a complaint with the ICO: dataprotection@communities.gov.uk or

> Knowledge and Information Access Team,
> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government,
> Fry Building,
> 2 Marsham Street,
> London
> SW1P 4DF

7. Your personal data will not be sent overseas.

8. Your personal data will not be used for any automated decision making.

9. Your personal data will be stored in a secure government IT system.

We use a third-party system, Citizen Space, to collect consultation responses. In the first instance your personal data will be stored on their secure UK-based server. Your personal data will be transferred to our secure government IT system as soon as possible, and it will be stored there for 2 years before it is deleted.

OGL

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