



PLANNING STATEMENT

**Construction of one new dwelling and associated parking and landscaping**

**November 2023**

**The Sanctuary, Old Monmouth Road, Longhope**

*Stephen and Jean Waters*

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# 1.0 Introduction and site context

## Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by SF Planning Limited on behalf of the applicants, Stephen and Jean Waters. Full planning permission is sought for the provision of one new dwelling and associated parking and landscaping at The Sanctuary, Old Monmouth Road, Longhope, Gloucestershire, GL17 0NZ.
- 1.2 This application is submitted following a positive pre-application response from the Forest of Dean District Council. This statement demonstrates that the proposal is wholly in accordance with the relevant policy considerations.
- 1.3 This statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted application and other supporting documentation, including the accompanying plans.

## Site Context

- 1.4 The application site lies off Old Monmouth Road in Longhope as identified on the Google Map extract below:

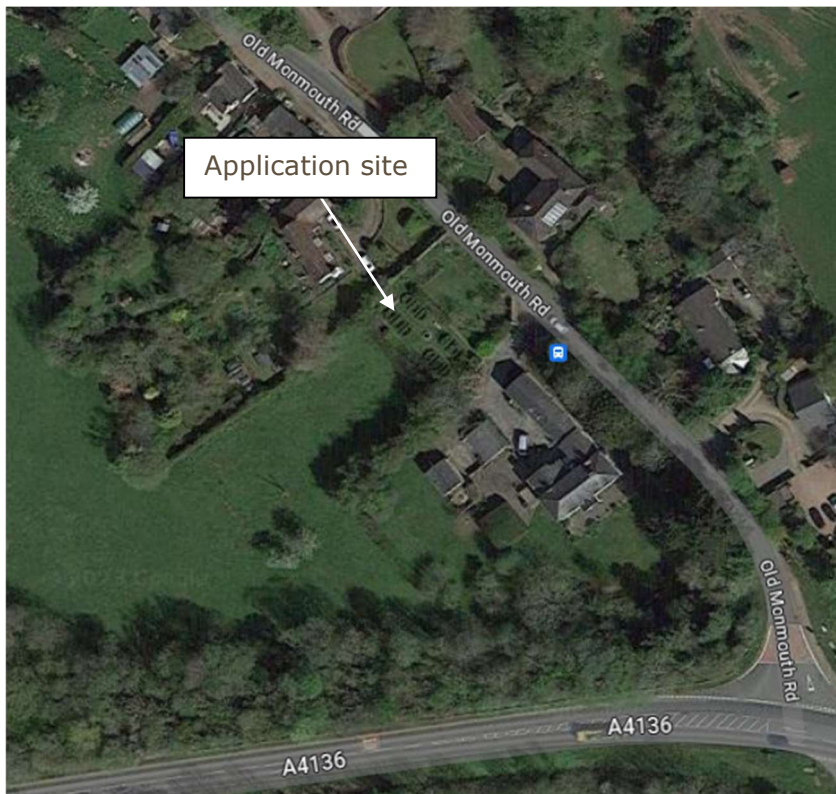


Figure 1 – Aerial view of the application site

- 1.5 The application site is currently part of the associated amenity/garden land for the existing property, The Temple. The site is enclosed by a tall stone wall meaning that the site is barely visible from the road.
- 1.6 The site is located in the settlement boundary of Longhope as shown on the following policies map extract:

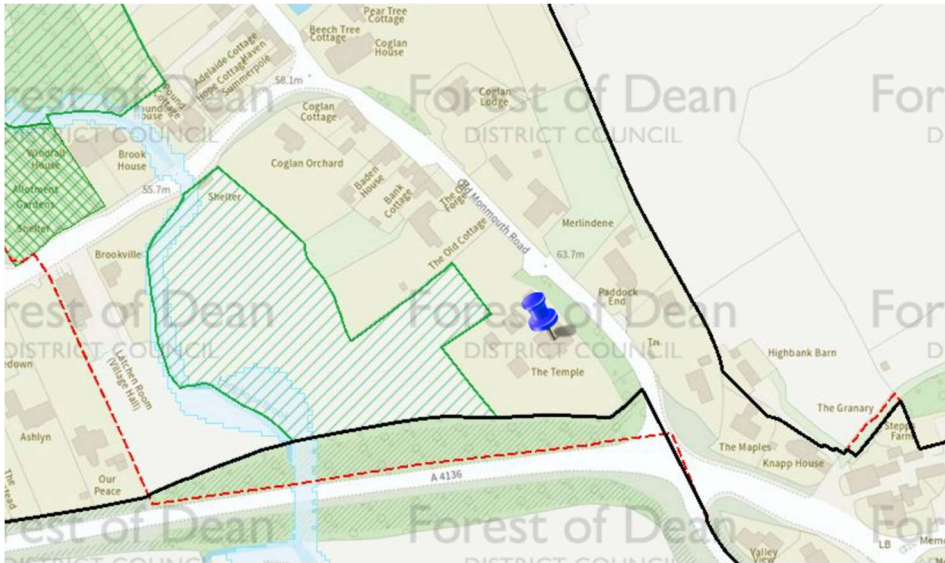


Figure 2 – Policy map extract (settlement boundary identified by black line)

- 1.7 In terms of landscape designations, the site lies within the Longhope Conservation Area. This has been considered accordingly as part of the development of the proposal.
- 1.8 The site’s location within the conservation area is identified in the following map extract:

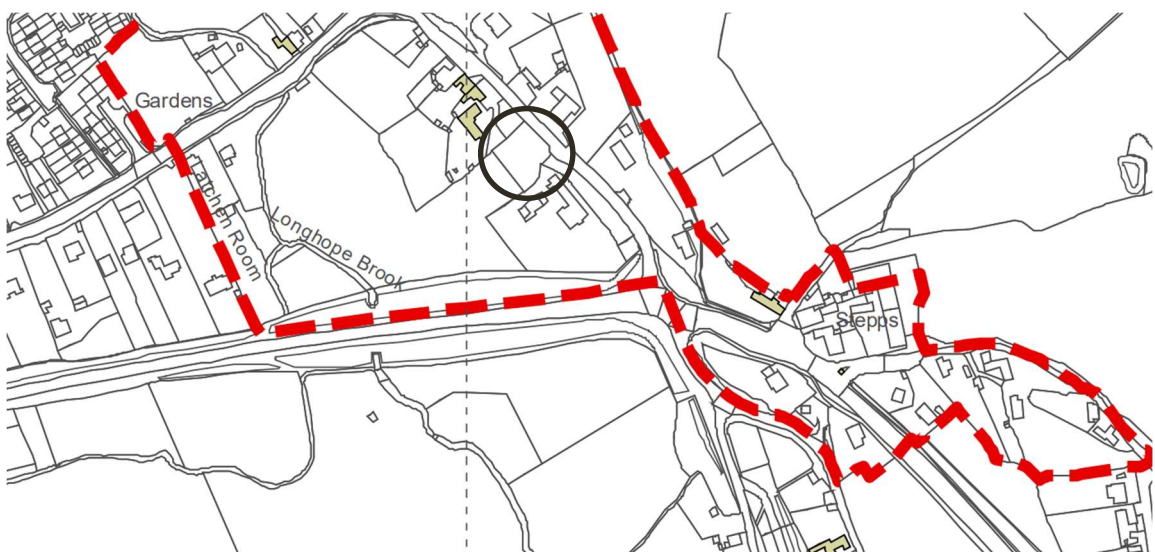


Figure 3 – Conservation Area map extract (CA identified by red line)

- 1.9 The site is also located in Flood Zone 1 on the EA Flood Map for Planning.
- 1.10 Separately, there are a number of listed buildings in proximity to the site as indicated by the following Historic England map extract:

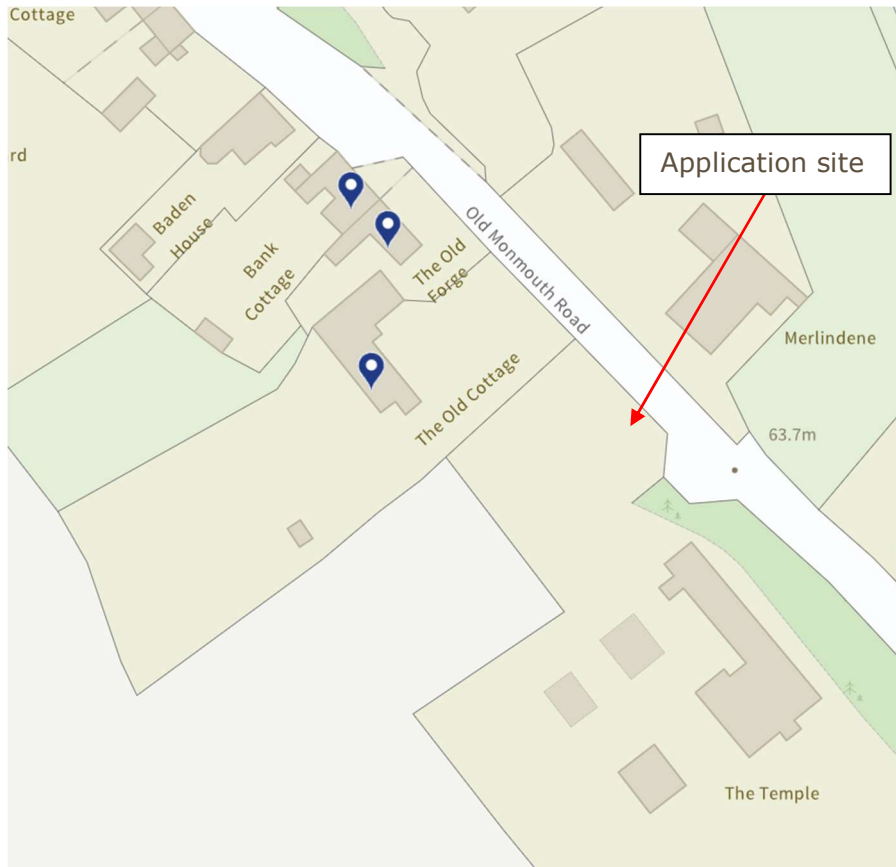


Figure 4 – Historic England map extract

- 1.11 There are various forms of residential development in the vicinity, mainly comprising medium and large dwellings in good-sized plots.
- 1.12 There are a range of amenities within the locality including a post office, convenience store, village hall and recreation ground.
- 1.13 There are also regular bus services which are accessible from the site, including the no.33 service between Ross-on-Wye and Gloucester, and the no.24 service between Coleford and Gloucester.

## 2.0 Planning history and the proposal

### **The Proposal**

- 2.1 The application seeks planning permission for the provision of a sensitively designed single storey two bedroom dwelling with associated parking and landscaping.
- 2.2 The proposal will be sympathetic to existing residential development and will provide a small (but important) contribution to the council's housing supply.
- 2.3 The dwelling will be built closely to Passivhaus standards and will be of a contemporary design. The proposal will provide an attractive and sympathetic form of development which will enable the occupants' to remain living in the village, since their current residence (at The Temple adjacent) is no longer suitable as Jean Waters is reliant on a wheelchair; the property is not accommodating of this.
- 2.4 Having lived in the Longhope area for over 40 years, the occupiers are very keen to remain in the community. The current house with different levels presents many challenges to life in a wheelchair. The intention is to build a bespoke home that meets Mr and Mrs Waters' needs on land adjoining their present property; enabling them to continue living in the village, with all the necessary amenities close by.

### **Planning History**

- 2.5 There is no recent planning history associated with the site, although details of the pre-application enquiry are as follows:

P0226/23/PREAPP – 'Construction of one new single storey dwelling in the garden of The Temple, Old Monmouth Road, Longhope.  
Pre-application advice given 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023

- 2.6 Overall, the pre-application advice confirms that the proposal is considered to be acceptable in principle subject to compliance with the relevant policy considerations.
- 2.7 The following chapters will set out how the scheme has evolved to its current form, through input from the design team and following the recommendations received at pre-application stage.

## 3.0 Policy considerations

3.1 To assess the acceptability of the proposal, it is necessary to consider the relevant policies of both the adopted development plan and the relevant national planning policy.

3.2 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in line with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Moreover, Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act states that Local Planning Authorities should have regard to:

*"(a) the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application;  
(b) any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application;  
(c) any other material considerations."*

3.3 The proposal should be considered against the relevant policies of the Forest of Dean Core Strategy (2012), the Forest of Dean Allocations Plan (2018), the Longhope Neighbourhood Development Plan (2018) as well as guidance and national planning policy contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Forest of Dean Residential Design Guide should also be considered insofar as is relevant to the proposal.

### **Principle of Development**

3.4 Policy CSP.1 of the core strategy states *"The design and construction of new development must take into account important characteristics of the environment and conserve, preserve or otherwise respect them in a manner that maintains or enhances their contribution to the environment, including their wider context. New development should demonstrate an efficient use of resources. It should respect wider natural corridors and other natural areas, providing green infrastructure where necessary."* In this regard, policy CSP.1 is explored further under the Design chapter; the characteristics of the site and any constraints have been given due regard as set out in the accompanying supporting documentation.

3.5 Policy CSP.4 of the core strategy sets out that *"New development must contribute to reinforcing the existing settlement pattern in a manner which emphasises the importance of the towns."* In addition, policy CS.4 confirms *"Most changes in towns and villages will be expected to take place within the existing settlement boundaries."* In the case of the application site, it is well-located within the existing settlement boundary of Longhope.

3.6 Furthermore, policy CSP.4 states "New development will be concentrated at the towns in a manner that relates closely to the intended role of each, taking advantage of the individual characteristics of each and in keeping with the settlement policies. Proposals will be expected to improve the quality of their environment with special regard being paid to the quality of the town centres, the general rural character of the district and any protected environments such as Conservation Areas."

3.7 It is considered that the proposal constitutes a well thought-out design which will improve the quality of the local environment. The proposal will comprise an attractive design which is compatible with the existing settlement pattern, as explored further in the Design chapter. In addition, special regard has been had in terms of the site's position in the conservation area as set out later in this statement.

3.8 Policy AP1 of the Forest of Dean allocations plan sets out the following:

**AP 1**

**Sustainable Development**

In assessing planning applications the primary consideration will be whether or not the development proposed is sustainable with the overall aim of improving the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Allocations in accord with the CS and the AP and in any completed neighbourhood plans <sup>(5)</sup> are considered to be able to be implemented in a sustainable manner and planning applications in accord with these will be permitted subject to any other material considerations. Particular reference will be made to the guidance in the CS, AP and NPPF/ NPPG in making the required judgements.

Figure 5 – Policy AP 1 of the allocations plan

3.9 The proposal accords with policy AP1 of the allocations plan given it constitutes sustainable development as demonstrated by this statement and the accompanying supporting documentation. It is considered that the proposal adheres to the aims and objectives of the core strategy, the allocations plan as well as the Longhope NDP, and these are all referred to accordingly throughout the statement.

3.10 Turning to the requirements of the NPPF, the council must significantly boost the supply of housing in its area in accordance with paragraph 60.

3.11 The introduction of the Housing Delivery Test (HDT) at paragraph 76 of the NPPF emphasises the need for local planning authorities to monitor the delivery of their housing requirements; to ensure sites are built out. The proposed development will assist the council in meeting its targets.

3.12 Paragraph 69 supports development of small and medium sites and recognises the important contribution that these sites can have to a five year supply. Local Authorities are required to "support the development of windfall sites through



*their policies and decisions-given great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes”.*

3.13 In addition, criterion d, paragraph 120 sets out that planning policies and decisions should *“promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively.”*

3.14 Given that the application seeks the reuse of an underutilised site for residential development within the existing settlement boundary of Longhope, it is clearly acceptable in principle. Indeed, this is confirmed by the pre-application advice which specifies *“I can confirm that the proposed application site is situated within the defined settlement boundary of Longhope, therefore in line with National and Local Policy is considered to be in a sustainable location. As a consequence, in principle the application is acceptable in accordance the with National Planning Policy Framework, Policies CSP.1 and CSP.4 of the Core Strategy and Policy AP.1 of the Allocations Plan.”*

## Design

3.15 The criteria under policy CSP.1 of the core strategy sets out the objectives relating to design, environmental protection and enhancement as shown below:

**Policy CSP. 1**

**Design, environmental protection and enhancement (strategic objective: providing quality environments)**

The design and construction of new development must take into account important characteristics of the environment and conserve, preserve or otherwise respect them in a manner that maintains or enhances their contribution to the environment, including their wider context. New development should demonstrate an efficient use of resources. It should respect wider natural corridors and other natural areas, providing green infrastructure where necessary.

In achieving the above, the following will be considered:

- The effect of the proposal on the landscape including AONBs and any mitigation/ enhancement that is necessary or desirable
- The impact on any protected sites (natural and historic sites and heritage assets and potential for avoiding and/ or mitigating any impacts, or providing enhancement, should the development be acceptable
- The requirements of the management plans of the AONBs
- Whether the existing infrastructure is adequate- additional provision will be required where it is not.
- Whether the development is at risk from flooding, whether it can be permitted taking into account any risks; and the sequential approach and any mitigation that may be necessary to ensure the development is safe and flood risk is not increased elsewhere
- The impact of the development on any land contamination or risk to the development from ground instability including the mining legacy- Proposals must undertake appropriate remediation measures and verification works where contamination and /or stability issues are identified
- The potential for the development to cause pollution and any mitigation measures to avoid pollution or make environmental improvements where existing problems occur
- The provision of water supply and the development's impact on groundwater, watercourses and any protected abstractions
- Any potential impact on the sterilisation of mineral resources and consideration of the potential for the prior extraction of those mineral resources ahead of development
- Proposals for waste minimisation and management

Development that is not able to be satisfactorily accommodated in respect of the above will not be permitted

Figure 6 – Policy extract from Forest of Dean Core Strategy

- 3.16 The proposal has taken into account the characteristics of the site which are of significance and these have been given due regard; the submitted ecological information, tree survey, drainage strategy and further analysis within this statement provides appropriate justification for the relevant matters.
- 3.17 Any impacts on protected sites (such as natural and historic sites) are considered accordingly under the Ecology and Heritage sections. It is considered that the development is acceptable in terms of the ecological and heritage considerations of pertinence to the site.
- 3.18 In addition the Energy section outlines the energy efficiency measures that are to be introduced as part of the proposed development. In this regard it should be noted that the proposal will be built as close to passivhaus standards as possible.
- 3.19 With regard to the Longhope NDP policy H2.a confirms "*All new housing development should be of high-quality design. The design and location of new development should be resilient to the effects of climate change and flooding.*" The proposal is clearly of high quality design and is designed to be resilient to the effects of climate change and flooding. The submitted design and access statement and accompanying drawings show the design of the proposed dwelling. The main facing materials are timber cladding and stone, with zinc roofing and stone chimneys. This helps to create an attractive and sympathetic development which integrates well with its surroundings. The Energy chapter considers climate change resilience in further detail, and flooding has been considered accordingly as part of the Drainage section.
- 3.20 Turning to the NPPF, the design of the proposal is in accordance with paragraph 130 in that it will:
- function well and add to the area’s overall quality;
  - be visually attractive as a result of its good architecture, layout, and the introduction of new soft landscaping;
  - be sympathetic to local character;
  - maintain the area’s sense of place;
  - optimise the site’s potential; and
  - Provide a high standard of amenity.

3.21 A visual illustration of the proposal is included below:



Figure 7 – View from entrance drive

### Heritage

3.22 Paragraph 194 of the NPPF makes it clear that applicants are required to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by the proposals, including any contribution made by their setting. In the case of the application site, it is acknowledged that the site lies in the Longhope conservation area and there are a number of listed buildings within the vicinity. The design of the dwelling has been guided by ensuring the proposal is sympathetic to the historic character of the local area.

3.23 With regard to the Longhope NDP, it is noted that policy PE1a states that within the conservation area, *"new development will be supported where it preserves or enhances its character or appearance. New development should be in harmony and respect existing buildings."*

*Buildings should be of an appropriate scale, in terms of massing and proportions, so as to ensure they are in keeping with the traditional buildings located in the Conservation Area.*

*Photovoltaic panels will be supported where they would not detract from the local street scene in the Conservation Area."*

- 3.24 The application site is set below the road and is heavily screened by the boundary wall to the northeast. In addition, the proposed landscaping strategy will further screen the site and help it to blend seamlessly into its surroundings. The proposed dwelling is sensitively designed and modest in size, making it sympathetic to the local environment. The proposal is of an appropriate scale and massing which is wholly in-keeping with its surroundings. In addition, the proposal includes the use of PV panels to the southern (rear) elevation, fixed to the standing seam of the roof; this placement will ensure that there is no effect to the street scene. It is therefore considered that the development will preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area in accordance with policy PE1a of the NDP.
- 3.25 With regard to listed buildings, these are all located to the north of the site. The nearest listed building is The Old Cottage, neighbouring the site and is visually separated by the stone boundary wall. The modest, low level design of the proposed dwelling ensures that the special character of the listed buildings within the locality are not negatively impacted by the new development.
- 3.26 On a separate matter it is also important to take into account the conservation officer's comments as part of the pre-application enquiry, as follows:

*"The application site is situated within the Longhope Conservation Area and as such the Council's Conservation Advisor was consulted to assess the likely impacts. The Conservation Advisor has provided the following comments.*

*The site is located in a part of the Conservation Area that is dominated by substantial detached houses in large plots and characterised by mature planting. The gradual infilling of these plots by new dwellings will change the more rural character of this part of the Conservation Area, and therefore has potential to cause harm to its special character.*

*However, the Conservation Advisor notes that the current views across the garden from the road towards the adjacent cottages show that these are barely visible above the current planting. The Conservation Advisor recommends that if the proposal include [sic] careful planting between the proposed house and the road, the impacts of the proposed dwelling within this view would be minimal. The 19th Century Ordnance Survey map indicate that a mix of evergreen and deciduous trees within the grounds and planting would help screen views of the associated parking and turning area. Impacts upon the Conservation Areas and the setting of the adjacent listed cottage will also be reduced, because the new access serving the dwelling will be off the existing access into the grounds of Temple House rather than directly off the road frontage.*

*There would be scope to enhance the planting in views towards the garden from the public footpath to the west but overall I consider that the site is spacious enough that although there would still be views of the new dwelling within the former walled garden this would not in itself cause harm to the special character of the Conservation Area because the building would clearly be subservient to the main house and its associated outbuildings and the grounds would still read as gardens associated with the principal building.*

*The Conservation Advisor has also stated that the glimpsed views of the new dwelling over the higher intervening wall from the adjacent grade II listed cottage would not harm its special significant.*

*Overall, the Conversation Advisor recommends that the setting of the proposed dwelling will need to be designed in the context of a carefully considered scheme of landscaping. A landscaping plan should be accompanied with any application. The Conservation Advisor further suggests that the landscaping should cover not only the immediate site, but also how the new development relates to the remaining garden area, around the former stable and coach house, and the main house."*

- 3.27 As confirmed above, the conservation officer notes that the site is positioned in such a manner that it is barely visible from the road. The careful planting proposed as part of the development helps to further screen the site, ensuring that visual impact will be minimal. Further, the conservation officer confirms that the glimpsed views of the new dwelling over the intervening wall would not be harmful to the conservation area. The landscaping section below sets out the proposed planting for the development in accordance with the conservation officer's recommendations.

### **Landscaping**

- 3.28 Policy H1e of the NDP sets out "New development within the Plan area should respect the landscape character of the locality in which it is located. The density, layout and scale of housing developments should be designed in a way that does not have an unacceptable impact on local landscape character." It is considered that the design of the proposed dwelling wholly respects the landscape character of the site, and is complemented and enhanced by the proposed landscaping scheme.
- 3.29 A comprehensive landscaping scheme (informed by the accompanying tree survey and ecological appraisal) is proposed as part of the development as illustrated by the submitted landscaping plan; it is noted that this was recommended as part of the pre-application advice.

- 3.30 Key trees are to be retained where possible; their root protection areas are as set out on the tree survey and constraints plan. A variety of additional planting is proposed as part of the development, including native trees, shrubs and wildflowers. This will improve the biodiversity of the site as well as ensuring the development integrates well with its surroundings.

### **Ecology**

- 3.31 Policy CSP.2 (criterion 3, paragraph 1) of the core strategy states "*Developments must support green infrastructure corridors that link to existing habitat features and networks. They must show that the integrity of any affected nature conservation sites is not compromised by the development proposed. Proposals that prevent or restrict network connections will not be supported.*" Criterion 2 goes on to say "*Developments will be required to make long lasting biodiversity enhancements which could include the creation of new habitats where these would be appropriate. They should support existing features (trees, ponds, hedgerows etc), provide and manage public open space and should also provide additional features for a wide variety of species and habitats in appropriate locations throughout the development. Additional features provided should be consistent with the characteristics of the surrounding area.*"
- 3.32 A preliminary ecological appraisal has been submitted in support of the application, along with a biodiversity checklist, biodiversity net gain assessment and calculations. It is noted that the pre-application response advises that the proposal will need to demonstrate an overall net gain in biodiversity in accordance with The Environment Act 2021, which makes BNG a requirement of all development. In this regard the proposal is predicted to achieve a BNG of 11.78%.
- 3.33 It is also acknowledged that the pre-application advice identifies that the site lies within an amber impact risk zone for great crested newts. The potential presence of GCN has therefore been assessed as part of the ecology survey, and it was found that the presence of GCN is unlikely due to lack of suitable habitat on-site and lack of suitable connecting habitat, as well as lack of GCN records on or near the site.
- 3.34 The accompanying ecology survey found no evidence of protected species on the site, however a number of precautionary mitigation measures are proposed in the event that any species are affected by the proposed development. The recommendations of the report will be adhered to throughout the construction phase.

### Living Conditions

- 3.35 With regard to living conditions, it is noted that the pre-application report confirms *"When designing any proposal it is vitally important to ensure that no harm will arise to the residential amenities of any neighbouring properties."*
- 3.36 In accordance with the pre-application advice, the proposal ensures there will be no overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing issues. Given the proposal sits lower than the surrounding properties and is single storey, there will be no overlooking to any neighbouring amenity space.
- 3.37 It is also understood that the council's residential design guide requires an average of 100sqm of private amenity space. The proposed amenity space measures approximately 280 square metres which far exceeds the council's requirement.

### Drainage

- 3.38 Policy CSP.2 sets out the considerations with regard to drainage:

#### 1 Water management

1. Improving water efficiency- proposals should demonstrate high levels of water efficiency. Rain water harvesting and grey water recycling systems should be incorporated unless it can be demonstrated that it is not appropriate in a specific location
2. Managing surface run off- Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) and measures to reduce or avoid water contamination and safeguard ground water supply should be incorporated into all development unless it can be demonstrated that this is not appropriate in a specific location
3. Flood risk- ensuring that risks (including changing risks due to climate change) are taken account of in new development, including improving resistance, resilience and safety of the areas concerned.

- 3.39 A drainage plan has been submitted as part of the application (ref P111 Site Drainage Strategy), which includes a basic drainage strategy for the site. A full drainage strategy will follow once planning permission has been granted. The applicant is happy to agree to a suitably worded condition to secure this.
- 3.40 The full drainage strategy will comply with the principles of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in accordance with the recommendations of the pre-application advice. All new hard landscaping will be permeable to ensure water can be sufficiently drained from the site.

- 3.41 It should be noted that the site is within an area of low flood risk, although the new dwelling will be designed to be resilient to changing risks due to climate change.

### **Access and Parking**

- 3.42 In terms of access arrangements, it is noted that paragraph 110 (b) of the NPPF requires that safe and suitable access is achieved for all users. Paragraph 111 sets out that *"Development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe."*
- 3.43 In addition, policy AM1a of the Longhope NDP sets out that *"Proposals that promote the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods or people will be supported."*
- 3.44 The accompanying site plan illustrates the proposed parking and access arrangements for the proposal. The existing vehicular access for The Temple will be utilised as part of the development, providing a safe and suitable access into the site.
- 3.45 Furthermore it is considered that the application site promotes the use of sustainable transport modes given its proximity to existing services in the village and the ability to access public transport.
- 3.46 It is noted that the pre-application feedback advises that the scheme should provide 2no. parking spaces in accordance with the recommendations of The Manual for Gloucestershire Streets (MFGS 2020). The proposal adheres to this requirement as shown on the submitted site plan.

### **Energy**

- 3.47 As previously stated, the proposal will be built close to Passivhaus standards and will include various measures to improve energy efficiency including:
- Careful placement of windows to maximise natural light;
  - Use of PV panels to maximise solar power;
  - Sourcing of local materials, suppliers and tradespeople;
  - Dwelling will be designed to meet the requirements of new Part L (2022) of the Building Regulations;
  - Where possible, environmentally friendly products are to be used;



- Low energy light fittings will be used.

3.48 Criterion 2 of policy CSP.1 of the core strategy sets out "*Proposals will be required to demonstrate how the development comprehensively utilises passive solar gain and provides cooling for buildings, gardens and communal areas at the appropriate times of the year.*" The building's orientation and the installation of large south-facing windows will help to utilise opportunities for passive solar gain. As well as this, the house will be well insulated and windows/extractors will be appropriately placed to allow natural ventilation. In addition the proposed tree planting will, in time help to provide shading for the dwelling and garden area, enabling natural cooling.

## 4 Conclusions

- 4.1 This application is for the provision of one new dwelling with associated parking and landscaping at The Sanctuary, Old Monmouth Road, Longhope.
- 4.2 This planning statement, when read in conjunction with the other material submitted in support of this application, demonstrates that the proposed development fully accords with the policy objectives of the Framework and the relevant policies of the core strategy. In addition, the proposal adheres to the recommendations of the pre-application advice.
- 4.3 The site is ideal for residential development since it is located within the settlement boundary and is well related to the existing settlement pattern. Moreover the site is within easy reach of the village amenities and other settlements can easily be accessed from the site via the local bus service.
- 4.4 It is therefore respectfully requested that the council support this application and grant planning permission without delay in accordance with paragraph 11 (c) of the NPPF.



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