

**Outline Planning Application for the Erection
of a Detached Self-Build Bungalow
Planning, Design & Access Statement**

**Land to the Rear Of ‘Spooners’, The Heath,
Woolpit**

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement is provided in support of an outline planning application for the development of a self-build, single-storey house on curtilage land to the rear of the property 'Spooners,' in Woolpit Heath. There is an existing access to the application site from The Heath which will serve the new house.
- 1.2 This application is a resubmission of planning application DC/23/03346. This application is resubmitted following the adoption of the Babergh Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Part 1 (JLP) by Mid Suffolk on 20th November 2023 which provides policy support for this proposal. The reason for the refusal given for application DC/23/03346 was that the development did not accord with Policy CS2 of the now superseded Mid Suffolk Core Strategy (2008), and it was suggested that the proposal did not accord with policy SP03 of the JLP. However, the application site is within the Woolpit Neighbourhood Plan Settlement boundary, which has been confirmed by the Planning Authority to be a relevant settlement boundary for Part 1 of the JLP, and therefore is categorised as a sustainable location for new housing development.
- 1.3 The principle of development has been confirmed by the granting of outline consent on 23rd November 2023 under application reference; DC/23/04428. This outline consent granted permission for the development of a bungalow on the land to the rear of Acorns in Woolpit Heath which is only 300 metres from the application site. This application was found to be supported by the policy SP03 of the JLP which permits housing development within a defined settlement boundary. When considering this application, the LPA confirmed that; *"The Woolpit Neighbourhood Plan was adopted into the development plan on 31st October 2022 and this site lies within its settlement boundary, as defined on the policies map. Therefore, this supports the principle of development within this settlement boundary."*
- 1.4 The JLP was adopted on the 20th November 2023. This new local development plan was confirmed on the 23rd November 2023 under outline consent DC/23/04428 to support applications for development on sites which are within an adopted neighbourhood plan settlement boundary. The application site is entirely within the Woolpit Neighbourhood Plan settlement boundary, therefore, under the JLP, this is an appropriate location for small-scale housing which seeks to meet local housing needs.
- 1.5 As with the nearby approved scheme, this proposal puts forward a plot for an

attractive single-storey dwelling, with space for a good-sized garden, car parking, and a spacious house which benefits from access onto The Heath. A bungalow is in keeping with the style and character of the surrounding houses which are also predominantly single storey. This is shown in the indicative site plan submitted with this application. The indicative site plan has been amended since the previous submission in order to provide a higher level of amenity for the existing house by providing more garden area.

1.6 The application site is approximately 0.08 ha in size, including access to the highway, and is currently occupied by existing outbuildings which are ancillary to Spooners; a bungalow fronting The Heath. Both Spooners and the new house have sufficient parking and turning space and both retain large gardens and amenity areas.

1.7 This application proposes a self-build bungalow. It has been recently confirmed at appeal APP/W3520/W/23/3316136 that the Planning Authority is significantly below its statutory self-build target. When assessing a proposal for self-build housing at appeal, the Planning Inspectorate found this failure to meet the target number of self-build homes was a significant factor when assessing proposals. This led to consent being granted for a proposal which was found to otherwise not conform with the local development plan. Given this application does conform with the local development plan in other areas, this proposal should be strongly supported as it will help contribute to addressing this shortfall.

1.8 This planning application is in outline with full details submitted of the vehicular access. This application seeks permission for the principle of a self-build bungalow on the site. The layout, scale, appearance, and landscaping of the bungalows will be decided in a later Reserved Matters application. An indicative site plan has been submitted with this outline application. This bungalow will provide a floor area of approximately 100 sqm and provide a spacious two-bedroom dwelling which is of a house size stated to have a high level of local need in the Woolpit Neighbourhood Plan.

1.9 This proposal offers:

- A housing site for a self-build bungalow within the settlement boundary of Woolpit Heath, as defined in the Neighbourhood Plan. Woolpit Heath is very well related to the settlement of Woolpit, which as a highly sustainable settlement which can provide residents with many of their day-to-day

services and facilities, and as such, this site will contribute to enhancing and maintaining the viability and vitality of Woolpit.

- The delivery of development in a similar form to the recently permitted and built developments around Woolpit Heath, which has been accepted as having minimal visual or amenity impact and would improve the visual appearance of the site. The proposed bungalows will be situated among other houses and bungalows and will complement the character of the area without harm to residential amenity or the character of the area;
- Economic benefits through the construction of a house.
- The population demographics of the district show the need for houses suitable for older people.

This statement first describes the proposed development and its surroundings, followed by a review of Planning Policy considerations, before the principle of development, and any relevant planning considerations, are examined. Conclusions are then drawn, reiterating the consistency of this proposal with principles of sustainable development.

2.0 Site and Surroundings

Site Description

- 2.1 The application site is in the village of Woolpit Heath. The site is currently part of the garden for 'Spooners,' and has various outbuildings to the rear which were built by the former owners. With the removal of these outbuildings, the site has ample space to provide a well-sized plot for a house without compromising the amenity space for the retained property.
- 2.2 The site is surrounded by existing houses to the south, east and west, permission has recently been granted for new housing on the land directly north of the site.



Figure 2.1 - Satellite Image of the Application Site

- 2.3 Woolpit Heath is situated approximately 650m to the southeast of the main village of Woolpit. Woolpit has high levels of facilities and services available to its residents and it has good transport links across the district. The site is within the settlement boundary for Woolpit as defined within the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.4 The site is very well contained, benefiting from existing screening along all the boundaries. As such, this proposal will have a low visual impact.
- 2.5 There is an existing, high-quality access provided from the site onto The Heath. The

Heath is a public highway subject to a 30mph speed limit. Visibility from the access to The Heath is good and extends more than 90 metres in both directions.

- 2.6 The site is in Flood Zone 1 with a low risk of flooding and is therefore suitable for residential use. There are no watercourses or large bodies of water nearby to the application site. The surface water flood map has also been reviewed and there is no risk of surface water flooding. As this application seeks outline consent for 1 house, and the application site is below 1 hectare, it is not necessary to undertake a Flood Risk Assessment.
- 2.7 A contamination assessment has been included with this application which does not raise any concerns regarding contamination risk. The site is existing residential land and so the previous use of the site does not suggest that contamination should be a risk.
- 2.8 There are no public rights of way which cross the application site.
- 2.9 A footpath and cycle path links Woolpit Heath to Woolpit which starts just 150 metres to the northeast of the site. Whilst this path does not extend all the way to the application site, there are grass verges from the application site to the path, and this short walk falls within a quiet 30-mph speed limit zone.
- 2.10 The site is not within a Conservation Area nor is it within the setting of any Scheduled Monuments or Listed Buildings. The nearest Listed Building is Guins and Orchard House which are approximately 75m away to the west, on the other side of the road and set behind several houses from the application site
- 2.11 The application site is not within a Special Landscape Area, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a Visually Important Open Space, or any other area of special landscape designation. The Mid Suffolk planning constraints map can be seen below. As this shows no constraints are affecting the site. The listed building mentioned earlier in this section can be seen to the southwest. The shading is indicative of the site being within the Settlement Boundary for Woolpit and is labelled as 'Settlement Boundaries (Part 1)', which is in reference to the JLP Part 1.



Figure 2.2 Mid Suffolk Constraints Map

Planning History

2.12 The planning history for the application site is as follows;

Reference	Proposal	Decision
DC/20/01571	Full Planning Application - Change of use of granny annexe to holiday let (retention of).	Granted – 10/06/2023
DC/23/02352	Full Planning Application - Erection of 1 no. replacement dwelling (following demolition of existing dwelling and detached garage/store building).	Withdrawn
DC/23/03346	Application for Outline Planning Permission (Access points to be considered, Appearance, Layout, Landscaping and Scale to be reserved) Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as	Refused – 12/10/2023

	amended) - Erection of 1No self-build bungalow (following demolition of existing buildings).	
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2.13 Application DC/20/01571 allowed use of the rear part of Spooners to be used as a holiday let. This permitted use is not operated by the current owner, and this section of the house has reverted to be ancillary to Spooners.

2.14 As the above planning history shows, there were two planning applications for a new house on the site in 2023. Firstly, a fully planning application for the demolition of the existing buildings on the site and their replacement with a dwelling was submitted under application DC/23/02352. This was withdrawn and instead, an outline application was submitted for a new dwelling to the rear of Spooners under application DC/23/03346.

2.15 The reasons for refusal given under application DC/23/03346 are summarised as follows;

2.15.1 Local Planning Policy seeks to direct development to settlement boundaries and will only support development outside of settlement boundaries in exceptional circumstances.

2.15.2 Infill policies of the JLP only allow the filling of a small undeveloped plot in an otherwise built-up highway frontage.

2.15.3 Reduction in the amenity of the existing dwelling.

2.16 These reasons for refusal will be addressed in Section 4 of this report which assesses relevant Planning Policy.

3.0 Description of the Development

3.1 This application is seeking outline planning permission for a self-build bungalow. This bungalow will be located to the rear of Spooners and will replace the existing outbuildings which are currently in this area.

Use & Amount

3.2 The use of the site for a small residential development should be acceptable. The lawful use of the site is already residential and therefore, redevelopment in the form of one bungalow should be supportable as a compatible use.

3.3 There are no surrounding uses which would be incompatible with additional residential use at this site, particularly given the residential scheme recently approved to the north and east.

Scale

3.4 The scale of the proposed scheme is similar to the surrounding houses. This is shown illustratively at the outline stage on the adjacent site.

3.5 This proposal seeks outline planning permission for a bungalow, since these are highly sought after in Mid Suffolk, and this site will adjoin existing/approved bungalows to the north, south and east.

3.6 On the adjacent site, and elsewhere nearby in Woolpit Heath, dwellings similar to this in scale were found to be acceptable.

Layout

3.7 Submitted with this application is an illustrative layout. This planning application proposes a similar layout to nearby neighbourign sites and the infill schemes which have been granted close to the site in Woolpit Heath. The proposed site layout is shown below:

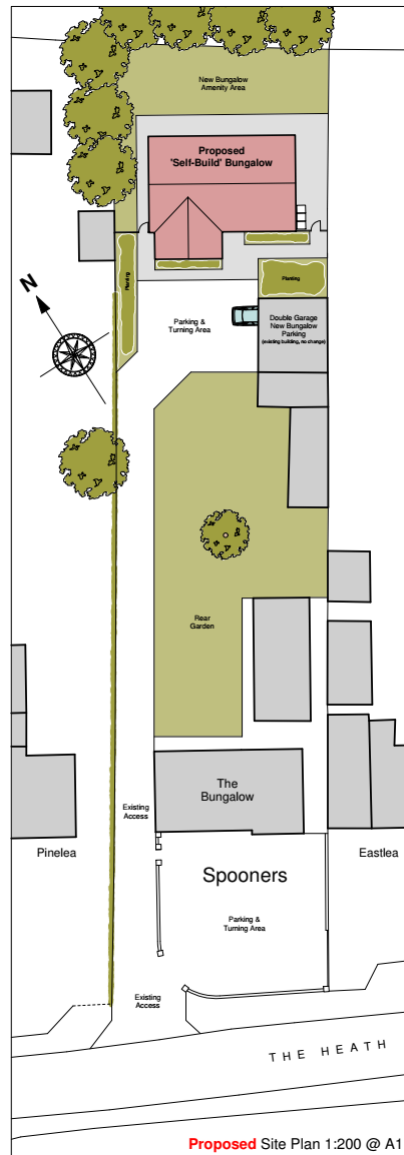


Figure 3.1 - Proposed Layout (Not to Scale)

3.8 The internal layout of the proposed dwelling will be determined at the Reserved Matters stage, but as shown in the indicative plans, the site can easily accommodate a spacious 2-bedroom bungalow. The property shown in the indicative site plan has a generous floor area of approximately 100 sqm.

Access

3.9 The existing vehicular access for Spoons onto The Heath will be utilised. This access was previously used for access to a holiday let, as well as for storing garden building supplies to the rear of the property. As such, this is a wide access which is well surfaced in concrete. The access is 4.5 metres wide for the first 5 metres from the highway as this first section is shared with Spoons, it then reduces in width to 3.5

metres which is suitable for a single access road.

- 3.10 The access has good visibility onto The Heath and there is visibility for vehicles entering the highway over 90 metres in both directions.

Renewable Energy

- 3.11 Several measures will be included in the design of the houses to provide future occupants with renewable energy and an energy-efficient home, including photovoltaic panels and rainwater harvesting.

- 3.12 The applicant would be willing to accept a condition which requires onsite renewable energy measures and can incorporate these into the final design of the house at the Reserved Matters stage.

4.0 Planning Policy Assessment

4.1 National planning policy is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (NPPF).

4.2 Local Planning Policy is contained within the Babergh Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Part 1 2023 (JLP) and the Woolpit Neighbourhood Plan 2022 (WNP).

Principle of the Development

4.3 The NPPF states in Paragraph 11 that decisions should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development and that proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan should be approved without delay.

4.4 The JLP was adopted by Mid Suffolk on 20th November 2023 and the Woolpit Neighbourhood Plan was adopted on 31st October 2022. Therefore, the Local Development Plan documents are up-to-date.

4.5 JLP Policy SP03 Part 2 directs new development within the settlement boundaries, as defined within the previous Local Plan and Core Strategy. Where a site is outside these settlement boundaries, as in this application, development is permitted where it accords with an adopted Neighbourhood Plan. The site is within the settlement boundary as defined within the policies map of the Woolpit Neighbourhood Plan. Therefore, the principle of development on this site is supported by local planning policy. This is confirmed on the Whole Plan Policies Map on Page 151 of the JLP which shows the Woolpit settlement boundary to include Woolpit Heath.

4.6 This was also recently confirmed through the grant of Planning Permission under application reference; DC/23/04428 on 23rd November 2023. This granted outline consent for a bungalow on the land to the rear of Acorns which is located within Woolpit Heath and falls within the WNP settlement boundary. It was concluded when assessing this application that the proposal; *“accords with relevant development plan policies and national planning guidance.”* This same conclusion should be drawn regarding this application.

Self-Build Proposal

4.7 JLP Policy LP08 states that the Council will *“support proposals for self-build/custom build housing or proposals that make provision of serviced dwelling plots available for sale to self-builders or custom buildings, where in accordance with all other relevant*

policies in the Plan.”

- 4.8 This application proposes a self-build plot on the site and therefore this proposal is in keeping with this policy aim.
- 4.9 Under appeal reference APP/W3520/W/23/3316136, in June 2023 an appeal was allowed for the development of 8 self-build houses off Ixworth Road in Norton. During this appeal, it was found that Mid Suffolk only had 153 permissions for self-build units compared to a register requirement of 286 units, and that therefore there was a shortage of 133 units. This shortfall may also be higher than previously identified to be due to the Council’s use of the Community Infrastructure Levy forms to reach the 153-dwelling figure, as such it is likely even lower than this. It was found in this appeal decision that the weight of failing to meet the statutory duty to provide self-building plots was **‘substantial.’** This was a material consideration when determining the appeal and was given sufficient weight to warrant a departure from the Development Plan.
- 4.10 Given this site is in accordance with other policies of the development plan, and provides self-build housing, this should be strongly supported by the Local Planning Authority.

Design and Layout

- 4.11 This proposal seeks outline permission for 1 single-storey dwelling. JLP Policy LP24 states that all new development must be of quality design and make a positive contribution to its context. Policy WLP1 of the WNP requires that new housing will be well related to the existing pattern of development and be consistent with the village character and adjacent housing, conforming positively to the local character of the area.
- 4.12 The proposal is well related to the existing pattern of development. Development at depth, as proposed in this application, has been found to be acceptable on several sites around Woolpit Heath. Under application reference: DC/18/01660 which was granted permission in July 2018, three houses were permitted to the rear of Orlanda and Juniper, The Heath. These houses are accessed by a drive between the properties fronting the main road in a very similar arrangement to those proposed in this application as shown in Figure 3.1.



Figure 4.1 - Scheme approved under DC/18/01660

- 4.13 This proposal seeks permission for a site of just over 500sqm. The houses permitted on plots 1 and 2 of application DC/18/01660 were approximately 500sqm. Under recently approved application DC/23/04428 outline consent was granted for a bungalow on a site which below 500sqm. Therefore, the proposed site is an appropriate size for a single storey house and is in keeping with recent developments in the village.
- 4.14 As shown in Figure 4.2, there is a clear pattern of development at depth in Woolpit Heath.



Figure 4.2 - Development at Depth in Woolpit Heath (Blue), (Application Site outlined in Red)

- 4.15 A single-storey dwelling is appropriate given that the site is surrounded by single-storey dwellings. The proposed development will have a plot of approximately 500sqm, not including the access, while Spooners will retain a plot of 730sqm which includes a garden of nearly 200sqm. This provides a good level of amenity for this retained property.
- 4.16 WPT3 of the WNP seeks small, 1 or 2-bedroom houses to meet the needs of the demographic of the residents of Woolpit.
- 4.17 When considering application DC/23/03346, it was suggested that the development would reduce the amenity of the existing dwelling. The indicative plans have been amended to make better use of the space on the site and to ensure that Spooners retains adequate amenity.
- 4.18 As stated earlier in this report, there is an extant permission on the site to the land to the north of the application site. A variation consent was granted under planning reference DC/21/00010 for two detached houses on this land. This is shown in Figure 4.3. This shows that the existing site was already enclosed by approved development, and this proposal will not change the character or setting of the area.



Figure 4.3 - Permission to the North of the Application site.

4.19 Given the changes put forward in this application, and the precedent set by nearby residential properties and recent consents nearby, the proposal should be acceptable.

Landscape

4.20 JLP Policy LP24 requires that all planning applications respond to the wider landscape and safeguard natural and built features of merit. As this application is in outline, the landscape proposals and design of the houses will be considered at the reserved matters stage.

4.21 The application is for a house set behind an existing property and in a well-established residential area. The proposed house is to be single storey, which will reduce any impact on the wider area and is in keeping with the character of the area.

4.22 WNP Policy WPT11 does not identify the site as an important view. Therefore, these outline proposals are in keeping with local planning policy.

Land Contamination

4.23 JLP Policy LP15 requires that development proposals must demonstrate appropriate consideration for land contamination and instability, pollution, and environmental amenity.

4.24 Submitted with this application is a Phase I contamination assessment report. This

concludes that overall, a low risk is associated with the site and no further contamination assessment should be required.

Highway Safety

- 4.25 JLP Policy LP29 states that all development is required to demonstrate safe and suitable access while maximising the opportunities for sustainable and active transport methods. Policy LP29 also states that all development should be informed by the relevant parking guidance.
- 4.26 Woolpit Heath has a footway and a cycleway linking it to the main Woolpit settlement which has various shops, services, and a primary school. The site is close to the cycle and footway which is just 150 metres away and provides a sustainable and active transport option for residents.
- 4.27 The site is served by the existing access for Spooners. This is a well-surfaced, wide access which has good visibility in both directions. As shown in Figure 4.4, the Crashmap record shows that over 24 years between 1999-2022, up to when records are available, there have been no traffic incidents on the road near to the access.

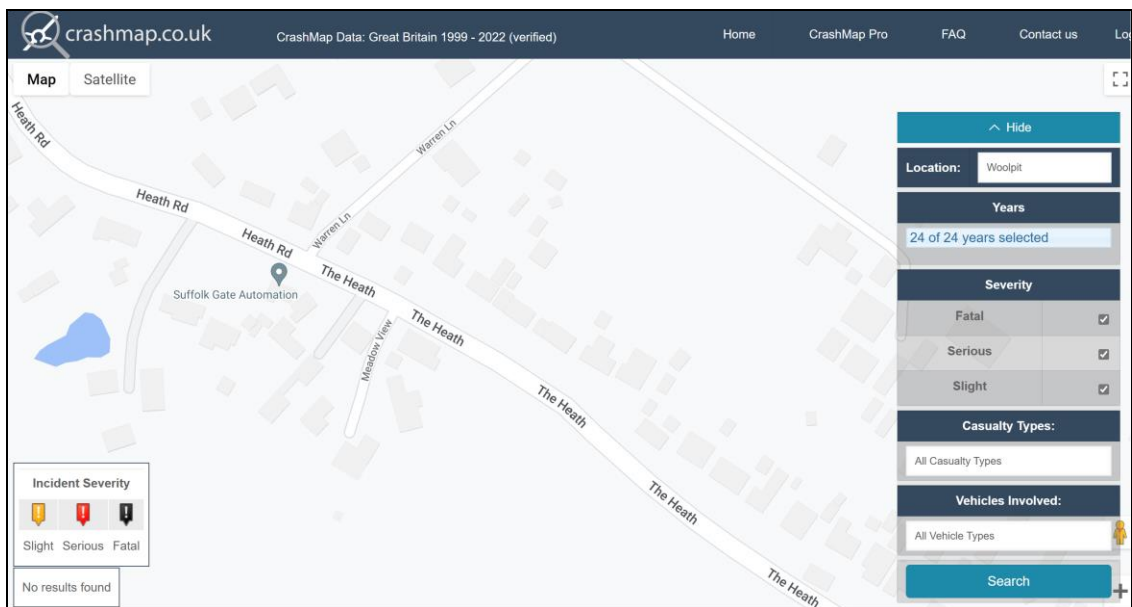


Figure 4.4 - Crashmap Record (accessed 21.12.2023)

- 4.28 The indicative layout shows three retained parking spaces for the existing property, which is sufficient for this house and the attached annexe, which is no longer used for holiday lets. Suffolk County Council Highways Parking Standards state that for a 3-bedroom house, 2-car parking spaces should be provided, and that for a 1-bedroom property, 1-space should be provided. While the annexe is not in separate use, the

indicative site plan shows this provision can be achieved with this layout.

- 4.29 The indicative layout also shows 2 car parking spaces for the new house. This is based on the Suffolk County Council Highway Parking Standards which states that for a 2-bedroom house, 2 spaces should be provided.

Residential Amenity

- 4.30 The NPPF paragraph 135 part f) states that proposals should have a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. JLP Policy LP24 repeats this requirement requiring development to protect The Health and amenity of occupiers and surrounding uses by avoiding development that is overlooking, overbearing, results in a loss of daylight, and/or unacceptable adverse impacts of development.

- 4.31 The dwelling would be located at the end of the rear curtilage. Given the location of the proposed dwelling, its single-storey nature and distances between the proposed dwelling and their nearest neighbours, it would not likely lead to significant overshadowing or overlooking impacts on neighbouring dwellings.

- 4.32 The existing access is already in this location and parking is currently provided for an annexe with a permitted use for a holiday let. The use of this access to be used instead for a house would not create a high level of traffic so the amenity of the existing properties would not be impacted.

Ecology

- 4.33 Policy LP16 of the JLP requires the protection and enhancement of local ecology. In addition, Regulation 9(3) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (Implemented 30th November 2017) provides that all "competent authorities" (public bodies) "have regard to the Habitats Directive in the exercise of its functions." It has been considered that no criminal offence under the 2017 Regulations against any European Protected Species is likely to be committed.

- 4.34 As this proposal seeks to remove existing outbuildings, an ecology appraisal has been submitted with this application. This confirms that while no bats were roosting in this building evidence of a visiting bat was found. As such a mitigation method statement is submitted which will be followed in its entirety should permission be granted.

- 4.35 Enhancement will be created in the new development installing bat boxes, and bird boxes on the site which would be acceptable to secure via condition.

Flood Risk

- 4.36 JLP Policy LP27 seeks to direct development away from the areas at the highest risk of flooding.
- 4.37 As set out earlier in this report, the site is in Flood Zone 1; an area with a low risk of flooding, and is not shown to be affected by surface water flooding on the environment agency mapping.
- 4.38 Therefore, flood risk should not be considered applicable to the proposed development.

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 This proposal is for 1 single-storey house on the land to the rear of Spooners off The Heath in the village of Woolpit Heath.
- 5.2 A very similar outline application for a 1-storey house was approved in November 2023 in Woolpit Heath under application DC/23/04428. This permission confirms that the recently adopted local plan supports this as a location for development as it is within the settlement boundary for Woolpit Heath as defined in the Woolpit Neighbourhood Plan. This permission provides a strong precedent for development on this site.
- 5.3 This site is very sustainably located (near services and facilities) and is within the settlement boundary. As such, the dwelling will be well related to existing homes, following a similar pattern of development to the wider area.
- 5.4 The Woolpit Neighbourhood Plan states that there is a need for 1 and 2-bedroom houses which would be appropriate for the local demographic. This application is proposing a single-storey property which could provide a spacious and well-appointed 2-bedroom home in a sustainable location.
- 5.5 This application also proposes self-build housing. A type of housing which has been confirmed by the local planning authority is below their supply targets in the recent planning appeal APP/W3520/W/23/3316136, and there is therefore a strong local need.
- 5.6 This statement has assessed the proposals and has demonstrated that the proposal can be supported under the adopted planning policy and the scheme will provide suitable and needed housing for the local area. The development will not harm the amenity or setting of the existing houses nearby and will lead to net benefits for biodiversity. There is also no identified land contamination which would impact future occupants. As such, there are no identified planning constraints and, since the site is within the settlement boundary, the scheme should be supported.