

Supporting Statement Addendum – Community Benefit Focus

Planning Application: Conversion of The Old Barn, Keevil (PP-14021327)

Prepared for: Keevil Parish Council / Wiltshire Council

Date: August 2025

This statement has been prepared in response to councillors' concerns raised at the July Keevil Parish Council meeting, seeking further clarification on how the proposed conversion of The Old Barn will positively contribute to Keevil as a village. This primarily addresses Core Policy 48 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, particularly its intent to support rural communities and promote sustainability.

How the Proposal may Benefit the Village of Keevil

1. Revitalising an Underused Site with a High-Quality Family Home

The proposal will transform a redundant building—formerly a B8 storage facility—into a well-designed self-build home. The result will be a visually attractive, lived-in property that replaces a vacant commercial unit with a positive and long-term residential use.

2. Attracting and Retaining a Young Family in the Village

The applicant is a first-time homeowner and prospective young family, committed to settling long-term in Keevil. This supports the demographic balance of the village, adding vitality to the community and the possibility to help sustain services such as:

- The village school,
- Local clubs and societies,
- Community events and volunteer initiatives.

This addresses the very essence of CP48's goal to support rural life.

3. Encouraging Local Economic Participation

As a self-build project, much of the work is and will be carried out by local tradespeople and suppliers. Unlike commercial or volume housebuilder schemes, this is a hands-on, community-engaged build that retains investment within the local economy.

4. Biodiversity, Landscaping, and Verge Stewardship

The scheme replaces a redundant site with a landscaped, well-maintained residential plot that enhances the rural setting. Key ecological and visual benefits include:

Installation of dedicated bat roosting features in the carport and building to ensure continuity of habitat, supporting long-term use by species like pipistrelles seen on the site, along with increased support for bird roosting and livelihood, through the installation of bird boxes and feeding stations,

Hedgerow and soft landscaping improvements, including wildflower planting along with vegetable and fruits/berries, offering pollinator-friendly planting and year-round greenery,

Constant presence of residents will ensure the immediate roadside verge is regularly maintained, improving visual amenity along the C233 and reducing overgrowth or unsightliness often associated with disused buildings.

These actions deliver a net biodiversity gain and a measurable uplift in the site's contribution to Keevil's local landscape character, with the aim not only to maintain wildlife presence, but to improve upon it.

5. A Model for Low-Carbon, Sustainable Living

The development brings meaningful environmental benefits, in line with Wiltshire's climate goals:

- Solar PV with battery storage
- Rainwater harvesting,
- Klargester biodisc waste treatment system,
- EV charging point,
- No connection to the main grid, supporting off-grid living.

The property acts as a template for responsible rural development, which can inspire others in the village and surrounding rural areas.

6. Minimal Impact, Maximal Local Value

The property is modest in scale (1-bedroom with study) and designed to blend into the rural surroundings, ensuring that its impact on the village's infrastructure and landscape is negligible—while its long-term value to the local social fabric is significant.

7. Housing Need: Addressing a Wiltshire-Wide Shortfall

Wiltshire currently has a significant shortfall in both general and self-build housing permissions, including unmet statutory duties. By progressing this application, the council and parish help address this backlog while ensuring the benefits are realised locally in Keevil.

I hope this statement has helped to explain our vision for The Old Barn and the benefits it can bring to Keevil and the surrounding area. We have listened carefully to the concerns raised and have worked hard to address them in a way that respects the character of the village and supports its future. I would be grateful if the Parish Council could view this proposal as an opportunity to turn an unused building into a lasting asset for the community.

Thank you,

Joseph Skinner