Planning Design and Access Statement
(Inclusive of Heritage Statement)

Proposal: Proposed Rural Workers Dwelling

Site: Woodhouse Farm 98, The Strand, Semington, BA14 6LL

On Behalf Of : Mr R Noad

Date: June 2023

RS Hughes Planning

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1. Introduction

1.1 This Planning Design and Access Statement has been prepared by RS Hughes Planning on behalf of Mr Robert Noad 'the applicant', in support of his submission of a Full Planning Application for a 'Rural Workers Dwelling' at Woodhouse Farm, 98 The Strand, Semington, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 6LL 'the application site'.

1.2 This Planning Design and Access Statement will provide an overview of the proposal and justification for the development having regard to the planning policy context against which it falls to be considered.

1.3 Full planning permission is sought under this application for the Erection of a Rural Workers Dwelling to meet the essential need for a worker to live at Woodhouse Farm, which is the primary holding of JS Noad and Sons, a family farm which comprises around 500 acres of land with a further 100 plus acres farmed under various farm licenses and farm business tenancy agreements to fulfil the business. A secondary holding known as Strangers Corner Farm in Semington is run in combination with Woodhouse Farm under the same agricultural holding.

1.4 The applicant Mr Robert Noad is a 4th generation farmer and took control of JS Noad and Sons in the mid 1990's. He lives at Strangers Corner Farm with his wife and young family, approximately 2 miles west of Woodhouse Farm, the latter comprising the dairy unit alongside a variety of other agricultural buildings permitted to house livestock and fodder. Mr Noad is responsible for the day to day running and management of the entire farm alongside one full time stockman, who does not live on site. There is currently only one habitable dwelling at Woodhouse Farm, which is occupied by the mother of Mr Noad, as a retired farmer (which caselaw establishes can-not be expected to vacate the dwelling) leaving no one on site to feed, milk and provide care for the animals. As a result, currently Mr Noad must travel to and from Woodhouse Farm when necessary, whilst working 90 plus hour weeks to complete the twice daily milking and other jobs, which is unsustainable. The situation also leaves the cattle unattended during the night which has implications for their welfare, particularly at calving time. This application has been proposed to address this issue, by providing a permanent dwelling on the site to accommodate a full-time herdsman.

1.5 The application is supported by an Agricultural Appraisal prepared by Cooper and Tanner (May 2023) which provides further details concerning the agricultural holding and supports the case that there is an essential need for the proposed dwelling at the yard, associated with the care of the livestock kept on the land. The financial case in support of the development has also been reviewed by Cooper and Tanner but aside general conclusions, is exempt information from this application, but can be provided to the Council's Agricultural Appraisal Consultant upon request.

2. Site and Context

2.1 The application site occupies a countryside location, midway between the villages of Semington and Seend, accessed directly off the main A361 which links the two settlements.

2.2 Woodhouse Farm comprises the main dairy yard of JS Noad and Sons and associated agricultural landholding, which surrounds the farm to all sides south of the A361. Alongside several purpose-built livestock barns, the farmyard contains various other agricultural buildings clustered mainly around the yard complex. These buildings are of varying age and condition, to include one aged listed building which has not been in use for decades and is uninhabitable. There is one existing residential dwelling on the site, dating from the 1970's and which is occupied by the applicant's

mother, a retired farmer. Thus, currently there is no accommodation at Woodhouse Farm for the applicant who farms the land or the one full time employee, who lives off site.

2.3 The siting for the new dwelling was chosen to be within sight and sound of the livestock buildings and hence is within the complex of existing buildings at the farmyard, against which it will be read, thereby limiting any resulting visual impact. In addition, the new building will be sited roughly on the footprint of an old barn, the remnants of which remain on the land, evidencing that the site has historically supported built form in this location.

2.4 The application site is not subject to any statutory landscape or ecological designations, and aside one building which is grade II listed, it is not subject to any other heritage designations.

2.5 There are no public Rights of Way (RoW) within the application site, farmyard or its immediate surroundings, the nearest RoW, a footpath KEEV9 runs through fields some 200 metres to the west and south west of the farmyard. Due to the siting of the proposed dwelling within farmyard complex, the existing agricultural buildings would obscure any longer distance visibility between the development and the route of the right of way footpath.

2.6 The site is at low risk of flooding, the Environment Agency flood zone maps recording the development site within Flood Zone 1 (lowest risk).

2.7 The location of the application site and the immediate site context is identified on the aerial photograph below. Plans showing the location of Woodhouse Farm relative to the wider area are provided within the Agricultural Appraisal Report.

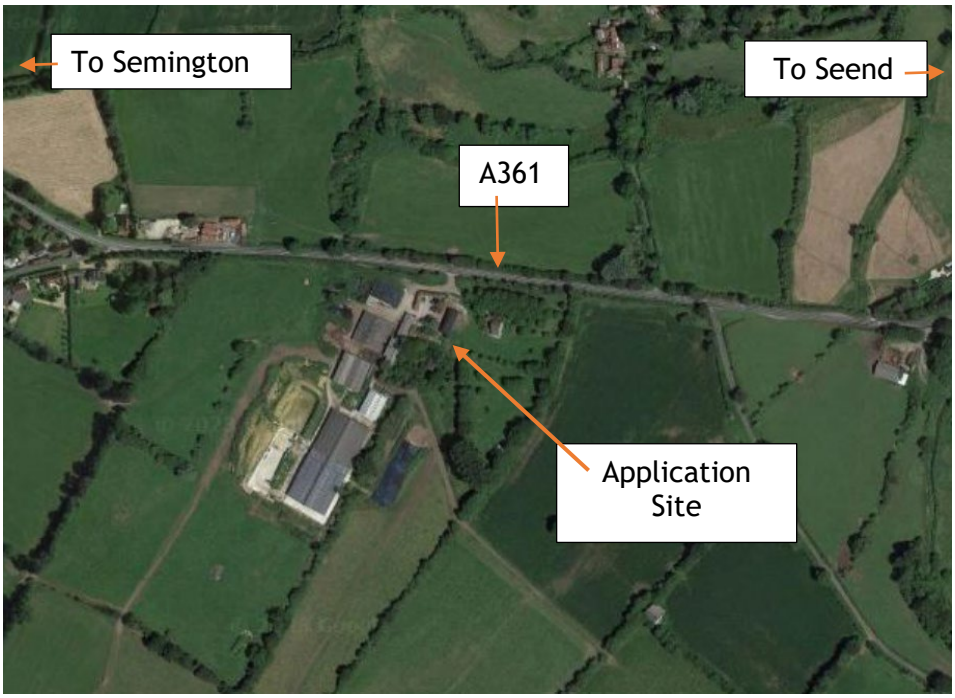

Figure 1: Aerial Illustration of Application Site Context (not to scale)

3. Planning History

3.1 Wiltshire Council's website records the following applications of relevance pertaining to the yard at Woodhouse Farm:

Application Reference Number	Development Description	Decision and date
20/03722/FUL	Proposed cow shed	Approved July 2020
W/04/01652/FUL	Apex lean-to barn to existing barn	Approved October 2014
14/02176/FUL	Erection of a cow shed	Approved April 2014
W/00/600/FUL	Steel framed agricultural building	Approved May 2000
W/98/00611/FUL	Haybarn	Approved June 1998
W/95/00835/FUL	Erection of a steel framed building for general purpose farm use	Approved April 1995

4. Policy Considerations

4.1 Relevant planning policy framework, against which this application for development falls to be assessed will now be summarised. This is in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the provisions of the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.2 The government's policies are set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), supported by the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). The revised and updated framework published in July 2021 describes how the planning system should achieve sustainable development and when the presumption of sustainable development is engaged. In particular, policy within the following paragraphs of the NPPF are considered of relevance to this proposal:

4.3 Paragraph 2 sets out that applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.4 Paragraph 11 highlights that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that for decision taking, this means approving development which accords with an up-to-date development plan without delay.

4.5 Paragraph 79 directs new rural housing to locations where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities and paragraph 80 sets out that new isolated homes in the countryside should be avoided unless there are specific circumstances, such as the essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside.

4.6 Paragraph 84(a) states that planning decisions should enable the growth and expansion of all types of businesses in rural areas, both through the conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings and at 84(b) confirms support for the development and diversification of agricultural and other land based rural businesses.

4.7 Paragraph 85 requires that policies and decisions recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent or beyond existing settlements and in locations that are not well served by public transport.

4.8 Paragraph 111 records 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.

4.9 Paragraph 126 explains that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.

4.10 Paragraph 130 requires planning policies and decisions to ensure that developments will add to the overall quality of their area, are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping and are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscaped setting.

4.11 Paragraph 194 requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage asset affected by the proposal including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets significance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of a proposal on their significance.

4.12 Paragraph 200 sets out that any harm to, or loss of significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification.

4.13 The Planning Practice Guide PPG 'Housing Needs for Different Groups' outlines at paragraph 10 ref ID: 67-010-20190722 that in applying policy set out at paragraph 80(a) of the NPPF the following considerations maybe relevant to take into account:

- Evidence of the necessity of a rural worker to live at or in close proximity to their place of work to ensure the effective operation of an agricultural, forestry or similar land based rural enterprise (for instance where farm animals or agricultural processes require on-site attention 24 hours a day and where otherwise there would be a risk to human or animal health, or from crime or to deal quickly with emergencies that could cause serious loss of crops or products).
- The degree to which there is confidence that the enterprise will remain viable for the foreseeable future,
- Whether the provision of an additional dwelling on the site is essential for the continued viability of a farming business through the farm succession process;
- Whether the need could be met through improvements to existing accommodation on the site, providing such improvements are appropriate, taking into account their scale, appearance and the local context; and
- In the case of new enterprises, whether it is appropriate to consider granting permission for a temporary dwelling for a trial period.

4.14 At local level, the policies for Wiltshire are set out within the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) (2011-2026) adopted January 2015, supplemented by a small number of retained policies of the West Wiltshire District Plan 1st Alteration adopted June 2004.

4.15 The applicable policies of the WCS, along with their salient points of relevance to the development proposal are recorded below:

4.16 **Core Policy 1 Settlement Strategy** – CP1 identifies settlements where sustainable development will take place in order to improve the lives of all those who live and work in Wiltshire. It identifies a four-tier settlement hierarchy, namely Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large and Small Villages (in descending order).

4.17 **Core Policy 2 Delivery Strategy** – CP2 seeks to deliver development within the county in a sustainable manner. CP2 records that other than in circumstances as set out within the exception policies elsewhere within the plan, development will not be permitted outside the limits of development as defined on the policies maps.

4.18 **Core Policy 15 Melksham Community Area** – CP15 identifies settlements within the Melksham Area according to the settlement hierarchy set out at CP1. The application site falls outside any settlement and therefore within countryside for planning policy considerations. CP15 sets out at paragraph 5.83 specific circumstances which applications for development within the area should address where relevant.

4.19 **Core Policy 48 Supporting Rural Life** – In locations which fall outside the limits of development of settlements or outside the built up areas of small villages, allows for dwellings needed to meet the employment needs of rural areas, stating that proposals which seek to meet the accommodation needs required to enable workers to live at or in the immediate vicinity of their place of work in the interests of agriculture, forestry or other employment essential to the countryside will be supported. The policy sets out a requirement for such applications to be supported by functional and financial evidence.

4.20 **Core Policy 57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping –** Seeks high quality design and place shaping, concerning not only the design of buildings themselves, but the layout and landscaping, in order to create attractive environments which respond positively to the locality. The policy also covers the issue of residential amenity.

4.21 **Core Policy 58 Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment –** States that development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment. Records that designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance.

4.22 **Core Policy 60 Sustainable Transport, 61 Transport and Development and 64 Demand Management –** Focus on the desire to reduce the need to travel, particularly by private car and encourage the use of sustainable transport alternatives. They aim to ensure developments adequately address matters of access, road safety and parking provision in order to ensure the continued safety of the local highway network.

4.23 **Core Policy 67 Flood Risk** – Requires housing development to be focussed toward land within Flood Zone 1 (lowest risk) and supports a sustainable approach to surface water drainage within new development, advocating the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDs).

4.24 A single retained saved policy of the West Wiltshire Local Plan 1st Alteration 2004 is considered of relevance to this application, which is policy U1a concerning foul water disposal. The policy sets out that development proposals will only be permitted where adequate foul drainage and sewage proposals have been provided.

4.25 The following adopted documents are also applicable to the application; Wiltshire Local Transport Plan (LTP3) 2011-2026, Car Parking Strategy March 2011.

4.26 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990 sets out that the requirement for local planning authorities that when considering whether to grant planning permission for a development which affects a listed building or its setting, to pay special regard to the desirability of to the preservation or enhancement of the building, setting or any features of special or historic interest which it possesses. Historic England publications 'Conservation Principles' and 'The Setting of Heritage Assets' are relevant good practice guides concerning heritage environments.

4.27 With regard to neighbourhood planning, the site falls under the parish of Keevil which does not benefit from any designated neighbourhood plan.

5. Proposed Development

5.1 This application proposes the Erection of a Rural Workers Dwelling at Woodhouse Farm, in order to provide permanent residential accommodation at the site for a new herdsman, in connection with the care of the livestock at the farm. For these reasons the proposed dwelling is sited amongst the existing farm buildings, within sight and sound of the livestock buildings.

5.2 The proposed dwelling takes the form of a simple wooden cabin, it is single storey in height and would occupy a broadly rectangular plan form, with a raised decked veranda to the north and east elevation. The footprint of the cabin is modest and would extend to 94 sqm (excluding veranda). The floorplan allows for a 2-bedroom dwelling, with a small hall, an open plan kitchen, living, dining area and two bathrooms. A copy of the proposed front elevation of the dwelling is set out at Figure 2 below.

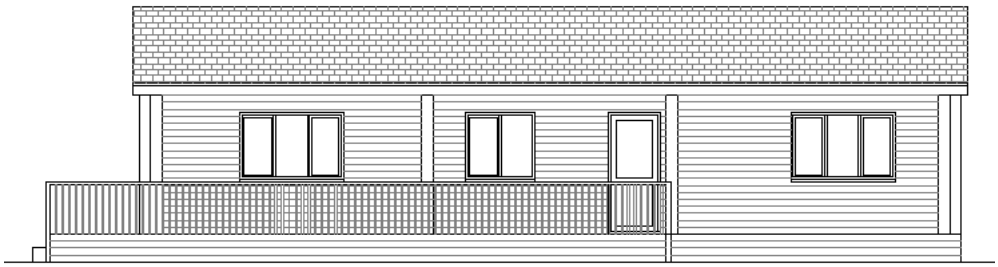

Figure 2: Proposed Front Elevation of Rural Workers Dwelling (not to scale)

5.3 The existing vehicular access point serving Woodhouse Farm from the A road to the north will be utilised to provide vehicular access to the new dwelling, with the driveway leading though between existing farm buildings to reach the application site. The dwelling will benefit from allocated parking and turning facilities immediately adjacent (northwest corner) of the building. Private amenity space is shown on the submitted plans with a grassed area to the rear (south) of the building, shown to be enclosed by post and rail fencing, the size commensurate to that of the dwelling it will serve.

5.4 The dwelling has been designed to appear as a low-key structure, with a modest footprint, low overall height and a simple fenestration pattern to reflect its purpose and function. The external material palette of cedar featheredge clad elevations, slate effect light weight roof tiles and woodgrain UPVC windows in anthracite, have been chosen to achieve a durable, high-quality development, which reflects characteristics typically found on rural buildings within the site locality.

6. Planning Assessment

6.1 The key planning issues for consideration in connection with this proposal are:

- The Principle of Development
- The Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Locality (including heritage assessment);
- Residential Amenity; and
- Highway Impacts.

The Principle of Development

6.2 The application site falls in the countryside, outside of any settlement or defined settlement boundaries and therefore in planning policy terms new residential development in this location would be required to fall under 'exception' policies in order to be policy complaint. These 'exception' policies are set out at paragraph 4.25 of the WCS and include CP48 (Supporting Rural Life), which is applicable to this proposal.

6.3 Policy CP48 (Supporting Rural Life) states that in the countryside, '*proposals for residential development will be supported where they meet the accommodation needs required to enable workers to live at or in the immediate vicinity of their place of work in the interests of agriculture or forestry or other employment essential to the countryside.'*

6.4 CP48 of the WCS accords with national policy within the NPPF which at paragraphs 80 and 84 provides support for the '*sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business within rural areas'* and specifically allows for new homes in the countryside to '*meet the essential needs of rural workers to live permanently at or near their place of work'*.

6.5 The accompanying Agricultural Appraisal by Cooper and Tanner sets out the farming practices of the business and the essential need for a dwelling on the site in more detail. By means of summary, the applicant is a 4th generation farmer who took over control of the running of the agricultural holding JS Noad and Sons in the 1990's. Since this time, he has invested heavily in the business to allow for expansion and to ensure the business remains sustainable. This expansion included a large increase in livestock capacity including investment in several new livestock buildings. The applicant now manages various livestock enterprises including:

- 130 cows
- 70 in calf heifers
- 190 small calves (0-3mths)
- 125 stores and heifers (6-12mths)
- 65 stores (12-18mths)

6.6 The applicant runs the herd of circa 130 cows and their calves which are kept and managed. In the autumn of this year another batch of heifers are due to calf which will take the total milking herd size up to approximately 190 cows. The cattle are grazed during the summer and for as much of the autumn as weather allows. Calving takes place year round in the livestock buildings, with cattle brought in to be monitored just before giving birth. The cows are kept on land immediately adjacent to the siting of the proposed new rural workers dwelling, with the intention that if any cows calf before being brought in, the occupier of the rural workers dwelling will be able to be attend to the animals quickly. The beef progeny are kept until 24+ months and then are sold, with all heifers retained and reared. To support the livestock approximately 500 acres of land is kept down to pasture and used for grazing and a further approximately 100 acres is managed to make hay and silage.

6.7 Currently, the applicant, Mr Robert Noad, manages the livestock and currently provides all labour alongside one full time employee, who lives off site. At Appendix 3, the Agricultural Appraisal has set out labour calculations which conclude that the labour requirement for the holding equates to 6.52 full time employees. Whilst the NPPF removed the requirement for such calculations, this nevertheless provides some indication of the level of need for further employees at the farm holding.

6.8 Currently the only habitable dwelling at Woodhouse Farm is occupied by the mother of the applicant, a retired farmer. This leaves no one living on site to manage the livestock. The 24 hour requirements of the livestock are detailed at section 8 of the accompanying Agricultural Appraisal Report, including matters such as calving, illness, injury and escape. All of these matters require a skilled worker with close attention to be on hand 24 hours of the day in order of the best welfare in interest of the animals and the subsequent viability of the business. Mr Noad currently travels to Woodhouse Farm to manage the livestock multiple times a day, to and from his home at Strangers Corner Farm, the secondary yard owned by the business which is over 2miles east of the application site. This is not a sustainable practice and the functional need for on-site labour will be even more acute come the autumn calving period and subsequent increase in size of the milking herd.

6.9 The essential functional on-site labour need outlined above naturally has fluctuations in intensity over the year, however, could not be regarded to be seasonal, with the welfare requirements of the large milking herd and time periods leading up to calving, during calving and post calving all and fraught with potential issues as set out within the Agricultural Appraisal Report and requiring skilled labour on site covering a large proportion of the year. The report therefore concludes that only a permanent dwelling would be capable of meeting the functional need of the holding.

6.10 As part of the Agricultural Appraisal the last three years business accounts have been inspected by Cooper and Tanner. The report concludes that the enterprise is sustainable, with a profit made for each of the past three years, even allowing for recent heavy investments in land, animals and buildings in order to secure the long-term viability of the business.

6.11 As previously stated within this report, the applicant lives at the secondary yard at Strangers Corner Farm some two miles from the application site. There are no habitable dwellings available at Woodhouse to accommodate an agricultural worker (the disused listed building is not habitable. This issue is addressed further later within this statement). As concluded within the Agricultural Appraisal Report, there are no other dwellings available in the local area which would be within sight and sound of the livestock and hence meet the functional need on the holding.

6.12 As a result the application clearly meets both the function and financial requirements to allow for support for a new Rural Workers Dwelling at Woodhouse Farm as set out at CP48 of the WCS and stipulated within paragraphs 80 and 84 of the NPPF.

6.13 Turning to other issues of acknowledged importance:

The Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Locality (including Heritage Assessment)

6.14 Section 12 of the NPPF highlights the significance of good design as a principle of sustainability, this is in accordance with policy contained within paragraph 130 of the NPPF, which requires that policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscaped setting, whilst not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.

6.15 The application site is situated within the existing farmyard of Woodhouse Farm, which forms part of the landholding farmed by JS Noad and Sons. The application site is not subject to any particular landscape designations. The siting for the Rural Workers Dwelling was chosen to be within in sight and sound of the livestock and hence is on the site of a former barn, adjacent to existing farm buildings and next to land grazed by the cattle. To the south of the proposed dwelling, beyond the proposed garden curtilage, some existing field vegetation will serve to provide a landscaped setting for the building. Being set within the existing farmyard complex, there will be limited intervisibility between the site and the wider countryside.

6.16 The proposed development has been designed to appear as a subordinate, timber clad cabin building, with a low profile. The nature, scale and use of the development will be entirely in keeping with this rural agricultural setting and the detailed design and external material palette of the building will help to ensure the dwelling will assimilate well into its surroundings.

6.17 As a result the proposal would accord with policy CP57 of the WCS and policy within chapter 12 of the NPPF, in that it proposes a high-quality development which will respect and enhance the character and appearance of the area.

Heritage Assessment

6.18 In accordance with paragraph 194 of the NPPF this statement now considers the significance of any heritage assets which stand to be affected by the scheme at a level that is proportionate to their importance.

6.19 The application site contains a single listed building, the former farmhouse to Woodhouse Farm which was listed grade II is 1988, around the time it was last in use. The list description entry records:

Farmhouse. Circa 1600. Square-panelled timber-framing with painted brick nogging, Bridgwater tiled roof with gable end brick stacks. Single-storey, 2-window. Six-panelled door in rustic porch to right of centre, 3-light casement either side. Original timber-framed full gabled dormer with 3-light casement to left, plain full gabled dormer with 3-light casement to right. C20 garage attached to left, not of special interest. Pebbledashed rear wall with C20 raised eaves, 2-light and 3-light first floor casements, C20 single-storey extension with brick stack. C19 English garden wall bond brick range attached to right of front has 2-light casements, half-hipped roof. Interior said to have blocked open fireplace, chamfered beams.

Listing NGR: ST9204059634

6.20 For reasons of upkeep and running costs, the applicant's family moved from the listed farmhouse in the 1980's into the new dwelling which was built on the site and which the applicant's mother still occupies now. The listed farmhouse has not been occupied since this time and is now uninhabitable. The scale of works and investment required to bring the building back into residential use would not be a viable proposition to provide accommodation for a herdsman and could not be funded by the agricultural holding business.

6.21 The proposed dwelling would be sited to the south east of the listed building, roughly on the site of a former agricultural barn. Thus whilst the proposed development is within the setting of the former farmhouse, it will replace built form which was previously on the site. In addition, the design of the proposed dwelling is clearly subordinate to the scale and nature of the listed building, which itself sits within the farm complex, surrounded by various other agricultural buildings of much larger scale approved by the Council in recent years. As such it is not considered that the timber cabin now proposed would have any adverse impacts on the setting of the listed building, in accordance with policy CP58 of the WCS and policy within chapter 16 of the NPPF.

Residential Amenity

6.22 Woodhouse Farm does not have any immediate neighbours which stand to be affected by this application. Adequate separation distances exist between the existing dwelling on the site and this proposed secondary unit of accommodation to ensure appropriate standards of residential amenity can be preserved.

6.23 The siting has been chosen to ensure the new rural workers dwelling is within sight and sound of the livestock, but with some separation from the buildings housing the milking operations machinery in order to ensure adequate levels of amenity for the occupier of the new dwelling. Notwithstanding this, the nature of the development proposed is such that any occupation of the new unit would be tied to a rural worker in connection with the agricultural holding and hence the siting within the farm complex is of necessity. Amenity levels would be adequate and compatible with the intended occupation of the unit. For these reasons the proposed development is in full accordance with policy CP57 of the WCS.

6.24 **Access/Parking Arrangements**

6.25 The proposed dwelling would utilise the existing access point from the A361 to the north of the site. This is an established access which is already used by a variety of agricultural vehicles and has good visibility in either direction. As such it could safely and suitably accommodate any traffic movements associated with a single additional 2-bedroom dwelling. Moreover, the proposed development will offset some vehicle movements currently made by the applicant to and from his home at Strangers Corner Farm to attend to the livestock at all times of the day and night. These movements would no longer be generated should an employee live on site at Woodhouse Farm.

6.26 The new dwelling will benefit from off street parking and turning facilities to the front (north) of the building at levels to meet the Council's adopted parking standards for a 2 bedroom unit. Ample space exists within the site for any visitor parking.

6.27 The site is located within the countryside, where it is accepted there would be a reliance on travel via private motor vehicle. Policy within the NPPF recognises that sites to meet business needs in rural areas may be located beyond existing settlements in locations which are not well served by public transport (paragraph 85). In this instance, bus stops are located on the A361

approximately 200 metres to either side of the farm access and which provide a regular service to the nearby larger towns of Devizes and Trowbridge, providing convenient and sustainable public transport options. As such occupiers of the dwelling would have access to options for transport other than by private car, an aspiration cited both within the WCS within CP60 and CP61 and encouraged within Chapter 9 'promoting sustainable transport' of the NPPF.

6.28 Paragraph 111 of the NPPF states 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'*. In view of the above, it is considered that the scheme will ensure road safety within the site vicinity and local highway network is preserved, complying with requirements of CP60, 61 and 64 of the WCS and Chapter 9 of the NPPF.

Other Issues

6.29 The application site falls within flood zone 1 (lowest risk). The new building will connect to the existing utilities at the farmyard with regards to water and electricity. Foul drainage will be diverted to a package sewage treatment plant, surface run off will be collected into water butts and recycled or directed into soakaways in the adjacent grassed curtilage area. Bin storage areas will be to the front of the dwelling, adjacent to the parking/turning facilities.

7 Conclusions

7.1 Full planning permission is sought for a Rural Workers Dwelling at Woodhouse Farm in connection with the farming enterprises of JS Noad and Son's. The applicant runs a circa 130 heard of cows and their calves which is set to increase to 190 after the calving period this autumn. An essential needs appraisal has been produced by Cooper and Tanner which confirms the essential need for a permanent year-round presence on site for the welfare of the livestock. This need is not currently met on the site and there are no existing available properties in the site vicinity which could meet this need. The appraisal sets out that the business is viable and likely to remain so and as such the functional and financial tests set out at CP48 of the WCS are satisfied.

7.2 Consequently, the proposal accords with relevant policies contained within the Development Plan and the NPPF concerning the support set out for the local rural economy and essential rural workers dwellings. Relevant detailed planning considerations have been outlined within this statement against which it has been demonstrated that the proposal accords, to include; impact on heritage assets, design, visual impacts, flooding and highway safety.

7.3 We trust the LPA will agree with the merits of this proposal and will be able to approve the application subject to a condition limiting the occupation of the dwelling to a rural worker and any dependents.