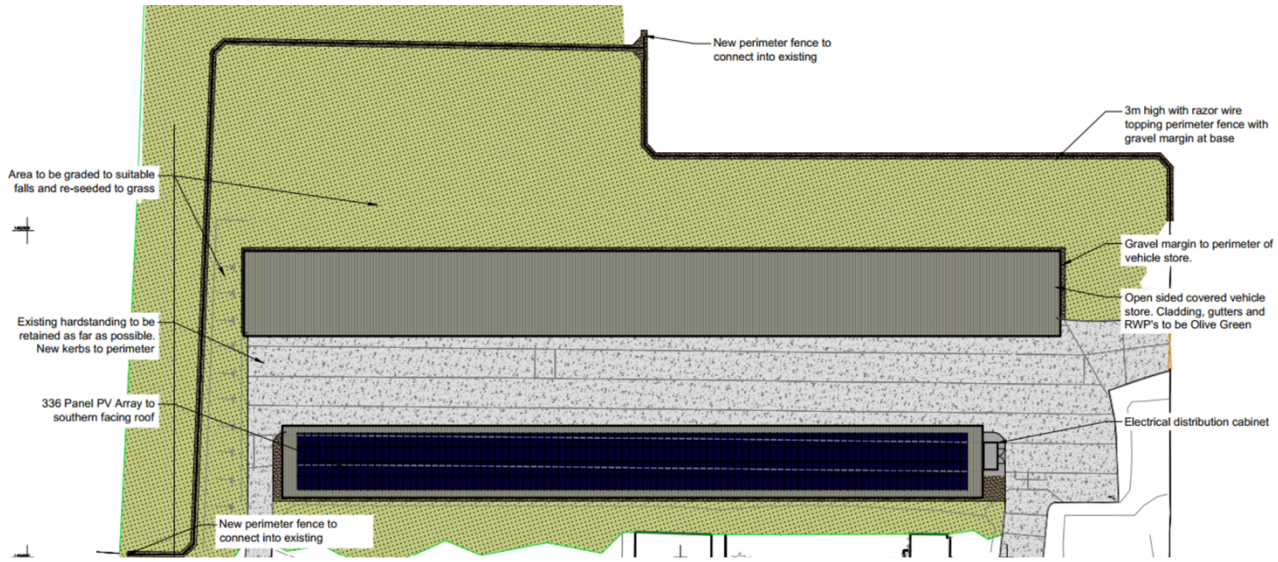
CASE OFFICER'S REPORT

Application Reference:	PL/2023/07506
Application Type:	Full planning permission
Site Inspection:	
Consultation ends:	02 January 2024
Case officer:	Verity Giles-Franklin

Site Address:	Imber Lines, Imber Road, Warminster, BA12 0BS
Proposal:	Existing storage area for MT vehicles receiving maintenance to have open sided covered shelters installed with a PV array on southern facing roof.
Recommendation:	Approve with Conditions

Proposal and Site Description: This application is seeking planning permission for the construction of two covered vehicle storage shelters, with a photovoltaic (PV) array to be installed on the roof of the southern shelter, at Imber Lines, Warminster. The proposed shelters would have lean-to style roofs, with partially open walls, with the southern store measuring 5.95m at its highest point, 9.5m in width and 106.6m in length, and the northern store measuring 5.95m in height, 11.45m in width and 124.4m in length, as taken from the submitted elevations drawings.

The proposed buildings would support vehicle repair and maintenance and provide covered storage for 52 vehicles. The new buildings would be sited on an existing area of hard standing used for the parking of military vehicles within the established barracks. The proposed shelters would be constructed from a steel frame and finished in powered coated cladding in an olive green colour for both the roofs and the part of walls to be infilled. The existing perimeter fencing to the north and west of the site would be removed and replaced, with the fence line altered. An area to the north of the proposed shelters is to be graded and re-seeded to grass, as illustrated by the below extract of the submitted proposed site plan:



The application site is located within the established Battlebury Barracks military complex in Warminster with the proposed covered sheltered being located in close proximity to existing military buildings. The application site is located within the Salisbury Plain Special Protection Area 6400m buffer zone.

Policies

National Context: National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

Local Context: The adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) 2015, namely core policies (CP): CP1 - Settlement Strategy; CP2 - Delivery Strategy; CP3 - Infrastructure Requirements; CP31 - Spatial Strategy for the Warminster Community Area; CP37 - Military Establishments; CP41 - Sustainable Construction and Low-Carbon Energy; CP50 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity; CP52 - Green Infrastructure; CP57 - Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping; CP60 - Sustainable Transport; CP61 - Transport and New Development; CP64 - Demand Management; CP67 - Flood Risk

The 'made' Warminster Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2026

Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026, adopted 2015 - including the Car Parking Strategy

Key Issues: Principle of the development; design and visual impact; impact on neighbouring amenity; highway matters; loss of trees and ecology; climate change

Relevant Planning History

There are multiple previous planning applications on the military site, however there is no recent planning history specifically on this application site.

Consultation Responses

Warminster Town Council: No objection

Wiltshire Council Arboricultural Officer: No comments received

Wiltshire Council Archaeology: No objection

Wiltshire Council Climate: Initially raised an objection, as the information originally submitted with the application did not adequately address CP41 of the adopted WCS and a proportionate Sustainable Energy Strategy was requested. A Sustainability Energy Strategy (produced by Ingleton Wood, reference 4000027) was submitted on 15 December 2023 which justified the lack of a BREEAM assessment and the Climate Team removed their objection.

Wiltshire Council Ecology: No comments received

Wiltshire Council Highways: No objection

Representations

Third-party Representations: No letters of objection received

Planning Considerations and Assessment

Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 require that the determination of planning applications must be made in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Principle of Development: This application relates to the construction of two covered vehicle storage shelters on an existing area of hardstanding within an established military barracks. Policy CP37 of the adopted WCS supports the construction of new "*development and changes of use at operational facilities that help enhance or sustain their operational capability*". The policy continues stating that "*development at operational or redundant sites should enhance the overall character of the site. All development at operational or redundant sites should mitigate any adverse impacts on local infrastructure, and not erode the character of the surrounding area. All proposals must ensure that the cultural and historical significance of the military facilities located on the site are understood and inform the scope of future development of that site*".

In light of the above, it is considered that the principle of the development is supported in this instance, as the proposal would relate to the existing military operations on the site.

Design and Visual Impact: Policy CP57 of the adopted WCS requires a "*high standard of design*" for all new developments and for developments "*to create a strong sense of place through drawing on the local context and being complementary to the locality*".

In addition to the above, the latest iteration of the Framework has a greater focus on delivering high-quality design and sets out in paragraph 131 that the "*creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve*". Paragraph 135 moreover sets out a series of six criteria to ensure development is of high quality over the lifetime of the development, being visually attractive and sympathetic to the local character and history and creating a strong sense of place.

It is appreciated that the proposed shelters would be of a generous size, however they would be single storey and would be viewed in the context of existing military buildings, as detailed by the below aerial photograph taken from Google Maps (the application site, currently an area of hardstanding, has been outlined in red in the below image):



The proposed covered vehicle storage shelters would be clad in non-reflective metal profile cladding in a matte green colour with solar panels to be mounted on the roof of the southern most building. Due to the location of the proposed buildings within the established military complex, it is not considered that the proposed development would be visible from the public realm and would be viewed in the context of the existing large military buildings.

The proposed development would be built of appropriate materials and to a suitable design that would preserve the character and appearance of the area. As such, the proposal would comply with CP57 of the adopted WCS and requirements of the Framework.

Neighbour Amenity: Policy CP57 of the adopted WCS requires in criteria vii for developments to have "*regard to the compatibility of adjoining buildings and uses, the impact on the amenities of existing occupants, and ensuring that appropriate levels of amenity are achievable within the development itself, including the consideration of privacy, overshadowing, vibration, and pollution (e.g. light intrusion, noise, smoke, fumes, effluent, waste or litter)*".

Criterion f) of paragraph 130 of the Framework meanwhile requires the creation of "*places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users*".

With due regard to the proposed height and location of the proposed shelters within the existing established barracks, it is not consdiered that the proposal would have an adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

Highways Safety: Criterion xiv of CP57 requires proposals to satisfy the requirements of CP61 (Transport and New Development). CP61 requires new developments to be "*located and designed to reduce the need to travel particularly by private car, and to encourage the use of sustainable transport alternatives*". CP61 also requires in criterion ii that proposals would be "*capable of being served by safe access to the highway network*". In addition, CP64 requires adherence to the council's adopted residential parking standards.

The proposed development would be sited within an established military complex and would be located where an existing area of hard standing currently exists which is used for the parking of vehicles. This application is seeking to provide covered storage for military vehicles to park, with this application not seeking any alterations to the existing accesses serving the site. On this basis, it is considered that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway safety and no objections have been raised by the council's highways department.

Loss of Trees and Ecology: Policy CP50 of the adopted WCS requires proposals to incorporate "*appropriate measures to avoid and reduce disturbance of sensitive wildlife species and habitats throughout the lifetime of the development*". In addition to the above, Paragraph 174d of the Framework requires planning policies and decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment through "*minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures*".

The application has been submitted with an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) (produced by Middlemarch, reference RT-MME-158905-02, dated February 2023) which confirms that 4 individual trees and the partial group of trees to the north of the site would need to be removed in order to accommodate the proposed storage buildings. The majority of the trees subject to removal are considered to be low value (category C trees) which offer limited value to the wider site. It is noted that one category B tree would be lost (a Cherry tree), which is unfortunate but due to the overriding need for the proposed development there is no option to retain this tree. The AIA confirms that the MoD have a wider strategic plan for tree planting on defence estate land, with the submitted Design and Access Statement stating in paragraph 4.5 that trees are "*being replanted on a 3:1 basis elsewhere on site*".

It is noted that the proposal relates to the construction of non-residential development within an existing military barracks, where a number of existing buildings already exist. The application has also been submitted with a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) (produced by Middlemarch, reference RT-MME-158905-03, dated March 2023) which confirms that the application site relates to an existing large level area of hardstanding used for car parking with an area of grassland and trees to the north. The survey work associated with the PEA identified the trees, grassland and scrubland on site to provide suitable foraging and commuting opportunities for bats, badger and hedgehog.

Within the list of recommendations in section 7 of the PEA it states that "*in accordance with the principles of the Environment Act 2021 the development should also secure an overall net gain for biodiversity*", however no specific details of biodiversity net gains have been provided as part of this application. As this proposal would result in the loss of some mature trees and natural habitat in order to accommodate the construction of the proposed covered vehicle shelters, a condition

requesting details of compensatory landscaping and the provision of biodiversity net gains would be imposed on any planning permission granted.

Climate Change: CP41 of the adopted WCS states that all proposals for major development should be submitted with a "*Sustainable Energy Strategy alongside the planning application outlining the low-carbon strategy for the proposal".*

The inclusion of a solar array on one of the proposed covered shelters is supported, however the original application was not submitted with an adequate level of information to demonstrate compliance to CP41. The submitted Design and Access Statement states in paragraph 4.7 that a DREAM assessment has been considered not suitable but a sustainability appraisal would be undertaken during the procurement process, to which the council's Climate Team commented was not the same as BREEAM and therefore requested the submission of a proportionate Sustainable Energy Strategy.

As such, a Sustainability Energy Strategy was submitted on 15 December 2023 which concludes that the "*scheme has been designed putting best efforts forward to minimise the energy consumption*" of the building and the Climate Team were in a position to remove their objection as the low-cardon strategy for the proposal and lack of BREEAM had been justified in the additional information.

Conclusion: Approve subject to conditions

Conditions: (4)

1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

Drawing nos: 4000027-IWD-Z0-00-DRA-A-1001 P01, Site Location Plan; 4000027-IWD-Z0-00-DR-A-1002 P01, Existing Site Plan; 4000027-IWD-Z0-00-DR-A-2002 P01, Proposed Site Plan as received on 4 September 2023, and 4000027-IWD-Z0-XX-DR-A-3000 P02, Proposed Floor and Roof Plans; 4000027-IWD-Z0-XX-DR-A-4001 P01, Proposed North Store Elevations; 4000027-IWD-Z0-XX-DR-A-4002, Proposed South Store Elevations; 4000027-IWD-Z0-XX-DR-A-5000 P02, Proposed Sections as received on 22 September 2023

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3 The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until a scheme of soft landscaping has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, which shall include details of on-site compensatory tree planting and net gains for biodiversity.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory landscaped setting for the development and in the interests of biodiversity.

4 Pursuant to Condition 3, all soft landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season following the first occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development whichever is the sooner. All shrub and tree planting shall be maintained free from weeds and shall be protected from damage by vermin and stock. Any trees or plants which, within a period of five years, die, are removed, or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory landscaped setting for the development and in the interests of biodiversity.

Informatives: (1)

1 Any alterations to the approved plans, brought about by compliance with Building Regulations or any other reason must first be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority before commencement of work.