

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
PLANNING STATEMENT

PROPOSED GLAMPING PODS
ON LAND AT HOME FARM, ROOD ASHTON,
TROWBRIDGE, WILTSHIRE, BA14 6BL



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Our Reference: LPC.5894

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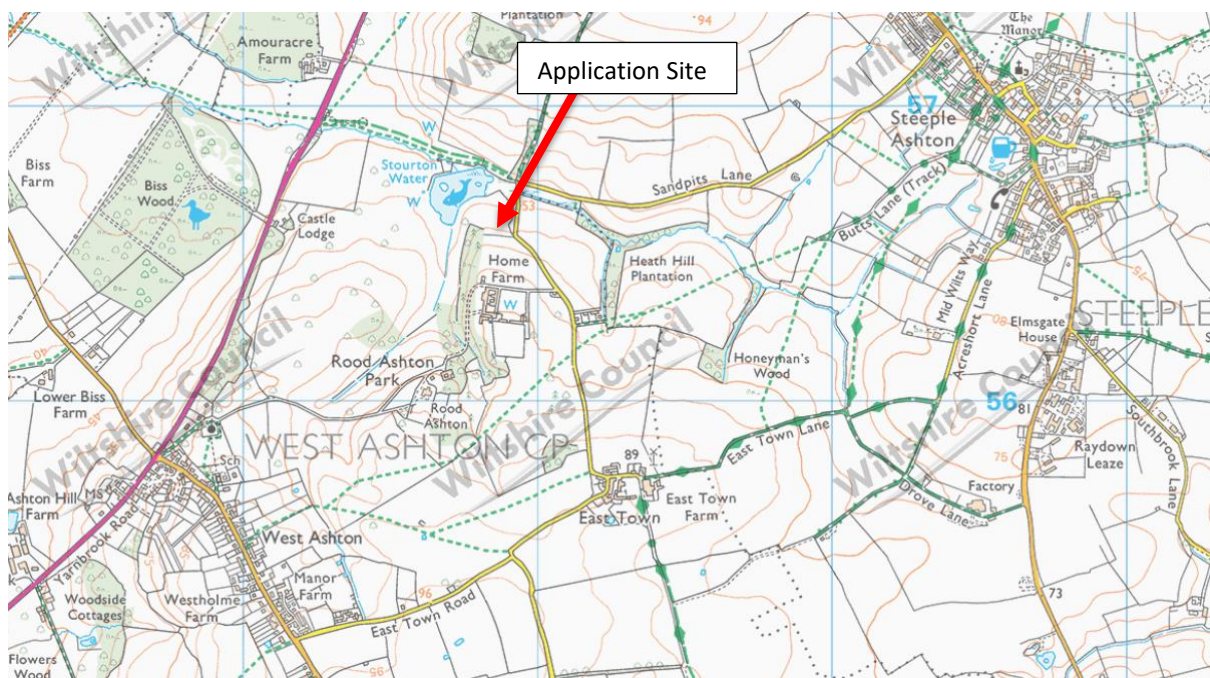
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared to support the submission of a planning application seeking full planning permission for the siting of four glamping pods on land at Home Farm, Rood Ashton, West Ashton, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 6BL.
- 1.2 This statement will provide a brief description of the site and proposed development, and will then provide an overview of the planning policy context and an assessment of the key material planning considerations, demonstrating the proposal's acceptability.

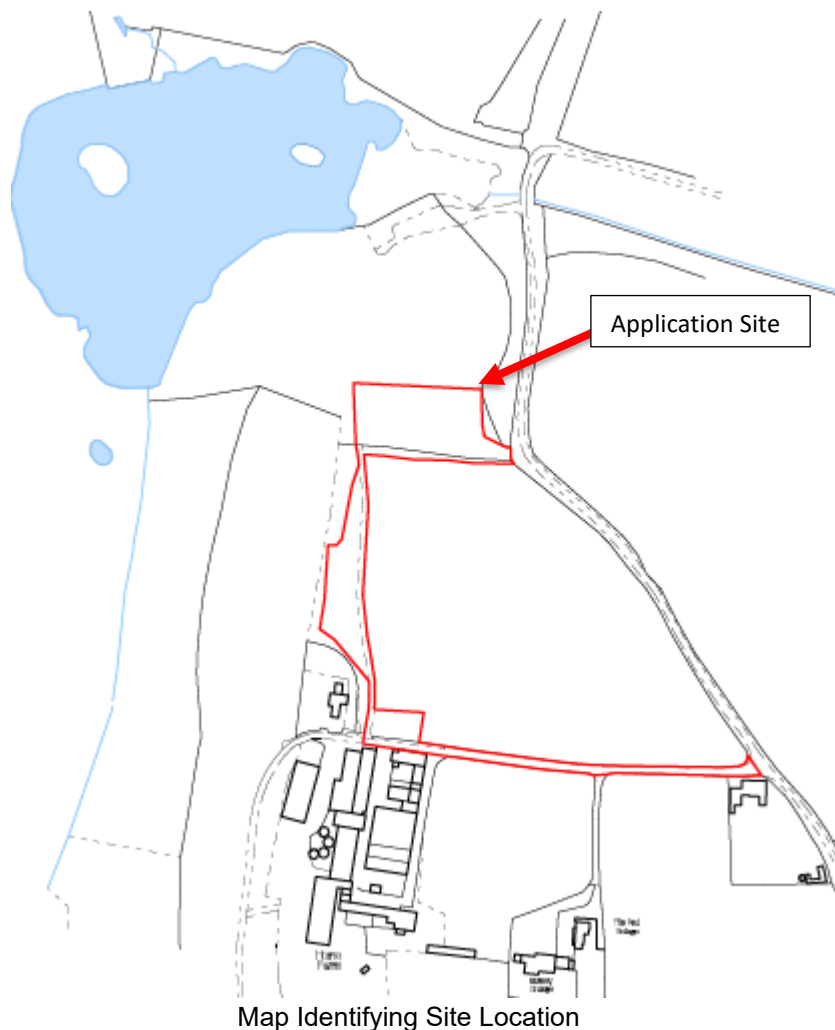
2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION & PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 The application site comprises an area of agricultural land to the north of the complex of buildings at Home Farm. The property is situated between the villages of West Ashton, which lies to the south-west, and Steeple Ashton, which lies to the north-east of the site. The site is access via East Town Road from the south-west or Sandpits Lane from the north-east as shown on the map below.



Map Identifying Site Location

- 2.2 The application site lies immediately north of the Rood Ashton Lake / Stourton Water, an 8-acre lake based on the farm of the applicant and his family which offers fishing for carp, tench and roach.

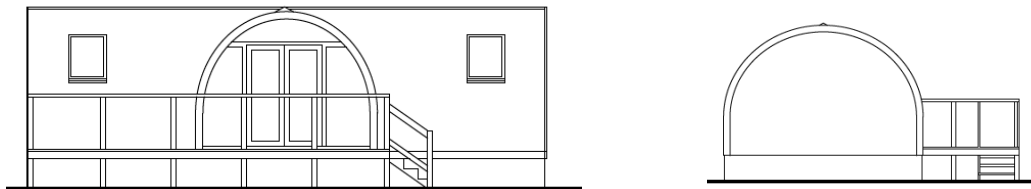


- 2.3 The application site comprises an area of agricultural land and has no planning history. There have however been a number of applications at Home Farm for agricultural developments and more recently an application to convert an agricultural building to two dwellings:

- Application reference 20/07538/PNCOU – Notification for Prior Approval under Class Q for a Proposed Change of Use and Conversion of Agricultural Building to 2 Dwellings (Use Class C3) and Associated Building Operations – Brick Built Cow Shed/Agricultural Store at Home Farm, Rood Ashton, West Ashton, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 6BL – Prior Approval Not Required 26.11.2020.

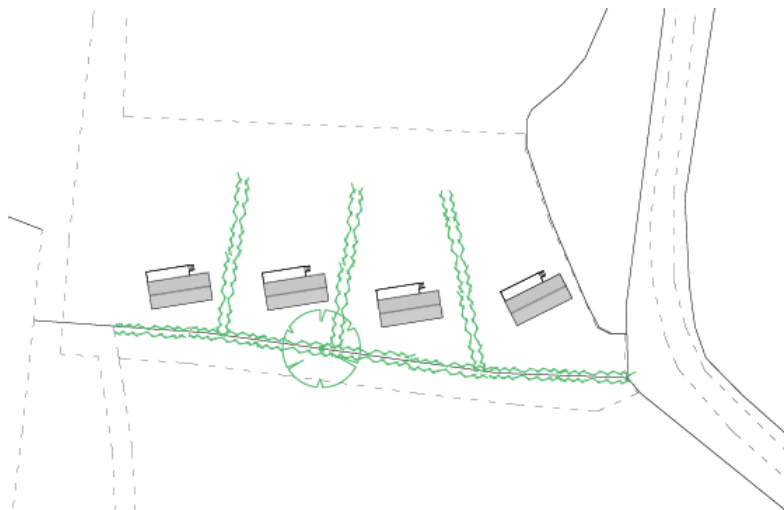
3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The application seeks full planning permission to place four glamping pods on the application site, along with the associated landscaping and access arrangements. The purpose of the development is to provide short term holiday accommodation within the countryside yet close to and well related to neighbouring settlements.
- 3.2 The site will be access via the existing highway network and established track within the application site. The pods will be constructed using a timber frame. The type and amount of development will have a low impact on the land and will be easily reversible.



Proposed Elevations

- 3.3 The pods will be orientated to overlook the lake as shown on the Proposed Site Plan, and extract of which can be seen below:-



Proposed Site Plan

4.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy

4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and associated Planning Practice Guidance, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions. The policies within the following chapters of the NPPF are relevant to the assessment of the proposed development:-

- Chapter 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Chapter 4 – Decision-making
- Chapter 6 – Building a Strong, Competitive Economy
- Chapter 9 – Promoting Sustainable Transport
- Chapter 12 – Achieving Well-designed Places
- Chapter 15 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

The Local Development Plan

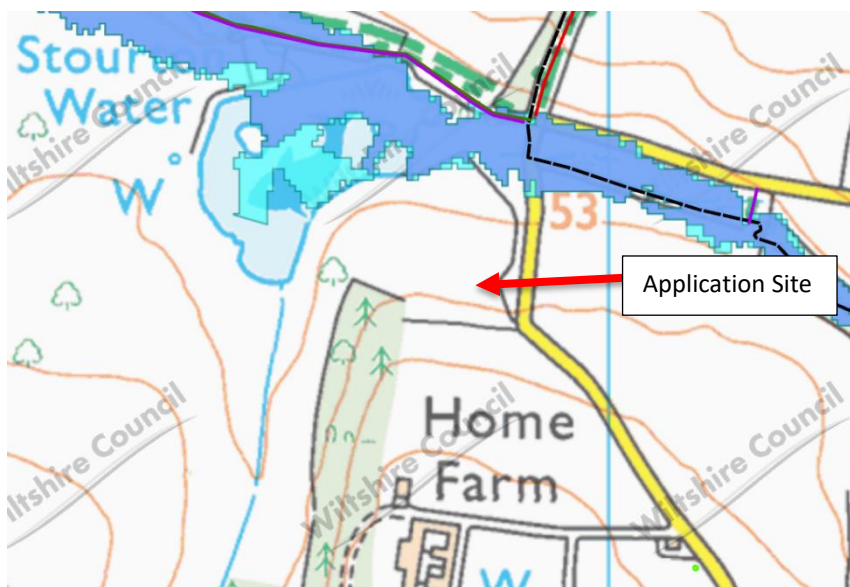
4.2 The NPPF highlights that planning law (section 70 [2] of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38 [6] of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.3 The development plan relevant to the application include the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) (adopted January 2015) (which includes saved policies from the former West Wiltshire Local Plan) and The West Ashton Neighbourhood Development Plan (WANDP) 2018 – 2026 (made June 2021). The key policies relevant to the assessment of the proposed development are considered to be:-

- **WCS** Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy
- **WCS** Core Policy 2: Delivery Strategy

- **WCS** Core Policy 29: Spatial Strategy: Trowbridge Community Area
- **WCS** Core Policy 39: Tourist Development
- **WCS** Core Policy 40: Hotels, Bed & Breakfasts, Guest Houses and Conference Facilities
- **WCS** Core Policy 41: Sustainable Construction and Low Carbon Energy
- **WCS** Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- **WCS** Core Policy 51: Landscape
- **WCS** Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design
- **WCS** Core Policy 60: Sustainable Transport
- **WCS** Core Policy 61: Transport and Development
- **WANP** Policy 3: Design
- **WANP** Policy 8: Bat Conservation

4.4 The adopted Local Plan is accompanied by the Policies Maps, which provide a spatial representation of the Local Plan policies. The site is not subject to any national or local landscape designations and falls within Flood Zone 1. The site does however fall within the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bat Special Area of Conservation (SAC) core area.



Local Plan Policies Map – WCS (source: www.wiltscouncil.maps.arcgis.com)

4.6 The following Supplementary Planning Documents are also relevant in the determination of this application:

- Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2026: Car Park Strategy
- Wiltshire Design Guide (March 2024)
- Trowbridge and Westbury Bat Mitigation Strategy SPD (February 2020 / Updated July 2025)

Emerging Planning Policy

- 4.7 The WCS was adopted in 2015 and is therefore being reviewed. The review is termed the 'Local Plan Review'. Wiltshire Council submitted the Wiltshire Local Plan to the Secretary of State for Housing Communities and Local Government for independent examination on 28 November 2024. There are no fundamental changes proposed to the Spatial Strategy of the Local Plan, however regard has been had to the new and updated draft policies as presented within Pre-Submission Draft (2020 – 2038) (Regulation 19) Wiltshire Local Plan (September 2023).
- 4.8 The WANDP is also under review and an updated draft (2026 – 2038) has been published for comment.

5.0 KEY ISSUES AND PLANNING ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 In light of the context of the site and relevant national and local planning policies the key material planning considerations are considered to be:-
- i) Principle of Development
 - ii) Impact on Highway & Pedestrian Safety
 - iii) Impact on Natural Environment
 - iv) Impact on Ecology & Biodiversity Net Gain

Principle of Development

WCS Spatial Strategy

- 5.2 The WCS includes a Spatial Strategy which sets the foundations for how ‘sustainable development’ is defined and applied within Wiltshire. It has three key elements; a Settlement Strategy (Core Policy 1), Delivery Strategy (Core Policy 2) and Infrastructure Requirements (Core Policy 3). The settlement and delivery strategies define where development will be the most sustainable across Wiltshire’s settlements.
- 5.3 Core Policy 1 ‘Settlement Strategy’ and Core Policy 2 ‘Delivery Strategy’ of the WCS outline that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development within the Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages and development should be restricted to within the Limits of Development other than in exceptional circumstances.
- 5.4 The exception policies of the WCS (as listed within paragraph 4.25) include ‘development related to tourism’ (Core Policies 39 and 40). The WCS explains that Wiltshire has a wealth of natural and heritage assets and tourism is important to its economy. Core Policy 39 ‘Tourist Development’ therefore provides broad support for new tourist development and seeks to direct new facilities to within the built-up area of settlements in line with the aforementioned Spatial Strategy of the Local Plan. However, it recognises that the countryside plays an important role to the tourist industry and therefore provides scope for new facilities within the countryside. The relevant extract from the policy is as follows:

In exceptional cases development may be supported away from the Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large and Small Villages where it can be demonstrated that all of the following criteria are met:

- i. There is evidence that the facilities are in conjunction with a particular countryside attraction.
- ii. No suitable alternative existing buildings or sites exist which are available for re-use.
- iii. The scale, design and use of the proposal is compatible with its wider landscape setting and would not detract from the character or appearance of the landscape or settlement and would not be detrimental to the amenities of residential areas.
- iv. The building is served by adequate access and infrastructure.
- v. The site has reasonable access to local services and a local employment base.

Extensions to existing facilities should be appropriate in scale to their location and help to ensure the future viability of the business, including farm diversification schemes.

Proposals for camping and touring caravan sites (including extensions) will be supported where they can be accommodated without adverse impact on the character and appearance of the landscape and meet criteria iii to v above.

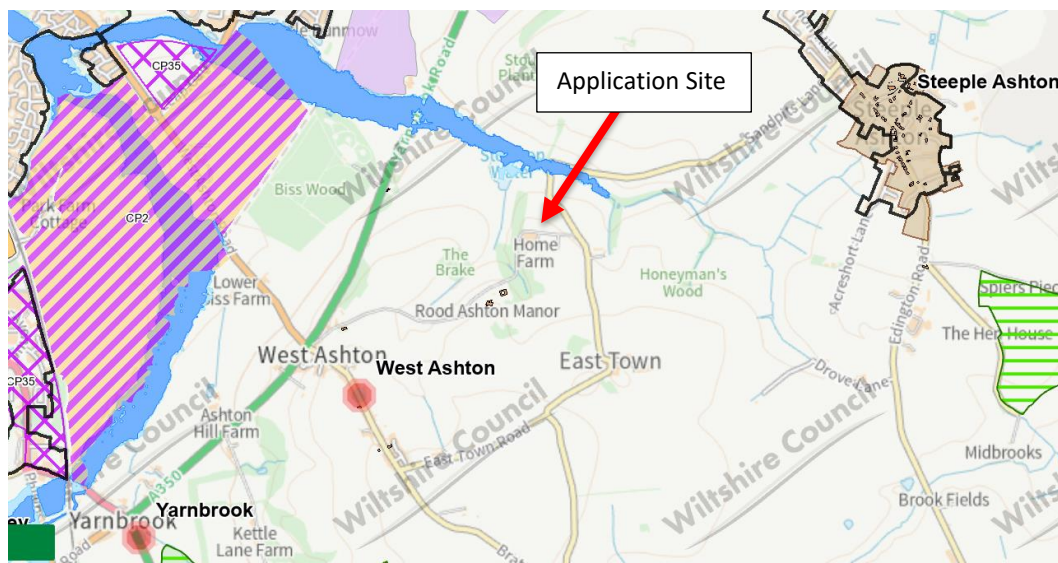
5.5 The proposed development involves the installation of four glamping pods. 'Glamping' is a form of camping involving accommodation and facilities more luxurious than those associated with traditional camping, however at its core the nature of the development is the same. Core Policy 39 provides broad support for camping and touring caravan sites provided they can be accommodated without adverse impact on the character and appearance of the landscape and meet criteria iii to v of the policy, namely:-

iii. The scale, design and use of the proposal is compatible with its wider landscape setting and would not detract from the character or appearance of the landscape or settlement and would not be detrimental to the amenities of residential areas.

iv. The building is served by adequate access and infrastructure.

v. The site has reasonable access to local services and a local employment base.

- 5.6 The application site lies within the 'countryside' but it is not within a prominent position within the landscape or a remote location. The Local Plan policies map included below shows the site is close to the 'Principal Settlement' of Trowbridge and between the villages of Steeple Ashton and West Ashton.



- 5.7 The application site is next to the existing popular fishing lake which is key to the site selection and justification for the proposed development because of its offer as an activity but also due to its contribution to the character and appearance of the countryside. The lake is already served by a suitable access and parking area, and the local highway network would also be utilised to provide access to the glamping site.
- 5.8 The purpose of the proposed development is to provide a low impact tourist accommodation within the countryside yet the site has good access to local services and facilities within the nearby villages and the market town of Trowbridge, a 'Principal Settlement'.
- 5.9 The emerging Wiltshire Local Plan is underpinned by up-to-date evidence which identifies the need for new tourist accommodation within Wiltshire. The draft Plan stated that:-

*“5.31 Luxury, boutique and high-quality hotel and visitor accommodation businesses perform strongly in Wiltshire and represent an opportunity to attract lucrative markets. There is scope for additional supply at the higher end of the offer through the upgrading and repositioning of existing stock and the opening of new establishments. However, to support projected growth in the sector, visitor accommodation studies for the county identify a lack in many types of different accommodation. **Opportunities for growth include:** budget accommodation; holiday parks and eco lodges; boutique hotels in market towns; **glamping, camping and caravan sites**; pub and farm stay accommodation; activity holidays and residential centres.*

5.32 If the county is to compete successfully and attract market segments that risk going elsewhere, it needs more of the above types of accommodation in rural settings. There is also a need to recognise that rural hotels and tourism businesses may benefit from permanent accommodation to aid the retention and attraction of staff and facilitate year-round operation.” (emphasis added).

- 5.10 In light of the above policies, the principle of the proposed development is not considered contentious and aligns with the spatial strategy and associated tourist policies of the Local Plan. Furthermore, both national and local planning policy seeks enable economic growth with the NPPF advising that “Planning policies and decisions should enable:
- a. the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, new buildings;
 - b. the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
 - c. sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; ...” (Paragraph 88).
- 5.11 The proposed development is a form of farm diversification which will provide an additional source of income alongside the continuation of the agricultural activities at the holding. It is considered that the proposed development is a form of sustainable rural tourism which respect the character of the countryside and therefore acceptable in principle. It is however recognised that all relevant site specific impacts need to be considered and addressed to ensure no adverse impact on the local environment, as discussed within the following sections.

Impact on Highway & Pedestrian Safety

- 5.12 Core Policy 60 ‘Sustainable Transport’ and Core Policy 61 ‘Transport and New Development’ of the WCS seek to ensure that new development is as sustainable as possible in terms of its location and design and is capable of being served by safe access to the highway network. The application property is accessed via East Town Road from the south-west or Sandpits Lane from the north-east as noted above and the existing private road leading from the adopted highway would be used to provide access to the site.
- 5.13 A vehicular parking area is proposed at the end of the private road and there is an existing stone track which will be utilised for guests to travel down to the glamping pods. The proposal therefore involves using the existing highway infrastructure which provide a safe and efficient route to the site.

Impact on Natural Environment

- 5.14 The NPPF advises that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve (par 131). Core Policy 57 ‘Design’ of the WCS therefore seeks to secure a high standard of design in all development proposals and Core Policy 51 ‘Landscape’ seeks to ensure no harm to landscape character. These objectives are also reflected within Policy 3 of the WANP which states that all new development should be appropriate in scale and form to ensure it respects both the rural setting of the village and its immediate local context.
- 5.15 Core Policy 51 states that proposals should be informed by and sympathetic to the distinctive character areas identified in the relevant Landscape Character Assessment(s). The WANP explains that West Ashton is located within the Trowbridge Rolling Clay Lowland Landscape Character Area; “This is a gently undulating, largely rural area of mixed arable and pasture land. Medium to large rectangular

fields are bounded by thick hedgerows with mature hedgerow trees. Combined with scattered woodland blocks (some ancient) and rich riparian vegetation along the stream lines, the hedgerows make this a semi-enclosed landscape allowing intermittent views to the steep scarp of the Chalk uplands. Settlement is sparse to the east of the area with scattered nucleated and linear villages and farmsteads”.

- 5.16 The application site is enclosed and the proposed development would not be prominent within the landscape due to the topography of the land and the boundary trees and woodland that surround the site. The photograph below, taken from the existing car park for the lake looking south towards the site, shows the enclosed nature of the site and the buildings at Home Farm are seen in the background. The proposed site has been chosen to ensure the development assimilates well within the landscape and does not appear out of place.



Photograph of Application Site



Aerial Photograph (Source: Google Earth Pro)

Impact on Ecology & Biodiversity Net Gain

- 5.17 The NPPF advises that new developments should protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity (paragraph 182) and Core Policy 50 'Biodiversity and Geodiversity of the WCS outlines that development proposals must demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation and geological value as part of the design rationale. Furthermore, Policy 8 'Bat Conservation' of the WANP outlines that new development will need to comply with guidance on survey and mitigation contained in the Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy SPD (now updated and published as the Trowbridge and Westbury Bat Mitigation Strategy) due to the NDP area falling within zones of sensitivity for those species of bats which are features of the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC.
- 5.18 The application is therefore supported by an Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (July 2025) by Herdwick Ecology. The assessment considers the site specific impact of the proposed development, and the potential impact on the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bat SAC and the Salisbury Plain SPA. The report confirms that the application site comprises modified grassland of low value and has negligible potential to support protected/notable species. It concludes by stating that "Whilst the site is located in an ecological sensitive area, it is considered that additional activity surveys can be avoided given the small scale of development and protection of offsite features. This will include avoidance and protection of the woodland/woodland edge through a sensitively

designed scheme and lighting strategy that will provide the confidence that there will be no effect on the integrity of the SAC”.

- 5.19 The Local Plan policy encourages the provision of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), however, it has now become mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). It places a requirement on the majority of developments to deliver a BNG of 10%. This means a development will result in more or better quality natural habitat than there was before development.
- 5.20 The application is therefore also supported by a Biodiversity Net Gain Metric and Biodiversity Net Gain report by Herdwick Ecology. The report confirms that the development would deliver the required 10% BNG on site; a 10.41% net gain in biodiversity through the grassland to the west of the track being enhanced to a more species rich grassland, together with the planting of 10 trees along the access track.
- 5.21 The development will fully comply with the requirements of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and will therefore have no adverse ecological impacts.

6.0 LOCAL EXAMPLE OF GLAMPING SCHEME

- 6.1 There are numerous examples of holiday let accommodation and glamping pod schemes throughout the Wiltshire Council area but one local example can be seen within the following application
- Planning Application: PL/2023/00851 - Change of Use of land for the stationing of up to 3 No glamping pods and associated elements, including solar panels, decking and hot tubs (Retrospective) at Hidden Wood Glamping, Deep Lane, Corsley, Warminster, BA12 7QG.
- 6.2 The application was granted planning permission on the 03 May 2024. The Delegated Report noted that “Core Policy 39 of the WCS allows for

camping accommodation in countryside locations as a general exception. Whilst this policy does not specifically relate to proposals for glamping sites and there are differences between camping and glamping, the use of the site for glamping would still be within the spirit of a camping-type use". It was therefore concluded that the proposed gaming scheme was "acceptable in principle meeting requirements of CP39, CP1, CP2 and CP31 of the WCS", and it was also recognised that supporting economic development especially rural businesses is afforded significant weight in the NPPF.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the siting of four glamping pods on land at Home Farm, Rood Ashton, West Ashton, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 6BL.
- 7.2 The proposed development will enable the diversification of the existing traditional agricultural activities at the holding by providing a low key and sustainable form of tourist development that will not result in harm to landscape character. The development is considered to be of a high quality design and will have no adverse impacts on the surrounding environment, protected species, or highway safety, and will enhance the biodiversity value of the site.
- 7.3 In light of the above, having considered the individual planning merits of the proposal, the development is considered to align with both national and local planning policies and therefore it is respectfully requested that full planning permission be granted.