

Our ref: DS/CrapperPGF

18th September 2025

Development Management
Wiltshire Council (North)
Monkton Park
Chippenham
Wiltshire
SN15 1ER

Willis & Co.

Chartered Town Planners
30 The Causeway
Chippenham
Wiltshire
SN15 3DB

Telephone: (01249) 444975
Email: Willisplan@aol.com

Dear Sir,

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Change of use of agricultural buildings to business use (Class E) at Park Grounds Farm, Brinkworth Road, Royal Wootton Bassett SN4 8DT.

Introduction

1. Willis & Co. are instructed by Mr Richard Crapper to prepare and submit this full planning application for the change of use of agricultural buildings to business use (Class E) at the above site. Please find enclosed in support of this application:
 - The completed planning application forms and certificates;
 - Design and Access Statement (this letter);
 - Site Location Plan, no. 113-L001;
 - Existing Floorplan Barn A, no. 133-EX01;
 - Existing Elevations Barn A, no. 133-EX02;
 - Existing Floorplan and Elevations Barn B, no. 133-EX03;
 - Existing Block Plan, no. 133-L002;
 - Proposed Block Plan, no. 108-L003;
 - Proposed Floorplan Barn A, no. 133-L010;
 - Proposed Elevations Barn A, no. 108-L030;
 - Proposed Floorplan and Elevations Barn B, no. 113-L011; and,
 - the appropriate planning application fee of £588.

Background

2. Park Grounds Farm extends some 51.8 hectares (128 acres) and is located off the south of Brinkworth Road, around 2km north west of Royal Wootton Bassett. In addition to the owned land, the applicant also farms a further 378.8 hectares (936 acres) of rented land in the locality. The site measures some 0.66 hectares (1.62 acres) is within the open countryside. It does not fall within any designated landscape areas, or near any designated heritage assets. It is located within Flood Zone 1.

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3. The cattle building and hay barn were approved October 2015 (ref. 15/05594/FUL). Although the buildings were not built exactly in accord with plans, the buildings have now become lawful due to the passage of time.
4. A planning application is required because the floor area exceeds the 500m² allowance for Class R permitted development rights on the agricultural unit.
5. The cattle building and hay barn are no longer required for agricultural purposes. The cattle are now on another part of the applicants land. The applicant would like to convert the buildings into employment space, under a flexible Class E use.
6. There is a riding arena to the west of the hay barn, which was constructed in September 2021, does not have planning permission. This area (since at least 2019) was previously hardstanding used for parking, turning and storage in relation to the agricultural business.
7. The applicant has a passion for sustainability. They are committed to; reducing waste, supporting local suppliers, and creating a space that promotes sustainability.

The Proposal

8. The 6-bay cattle building will be converted into 6 employment units, one per bay. The hay barn will be converted into a single unit. All of the 7 units will be flexible Class E uses. The units will all be supplied with electricity, from the applicants on site power station.
9. The arena will be used as a carpark, consisting of 31 parking spaces, for users of the proposed units. There will be no additional materials proposed, as this is already a hard surface area, ideal for parking.
10. The buildings will be accessed via the existing access from the B4042 Brinkworth Road. There are no changes proposed to the access, which can support 2-way traffic.

Planning History

11. The following planning applications relate to the site, the first being most relevant to this application:
 - 15/05594/FUL - Erection of a new cattle barn and fodder store - Approved with conditions - 09/10/2015.
 - 15/07373/FUL - Construction & operation of a solar farm - Approved with conditions - 10/12/2015.
 - 20/01002/FUL - Proposed shell prototype structure with grazing roof - Approved with conditions - 14/09/2020. Never implemented.

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Relevant Planning Policies

12. Under the provisions of section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. At the current time, the statutory development plan in respect of this application comprises of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Revision December 2024), the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) (adopted January 2015) and the Royal Wootton Bassett Neighbourhood Development Plan (RWBNP) (Made April 2018).

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

13. We understand that the NPPF is relevant to new proposals and that the NPPF expects local planning authorities (LPAs) to plan positively for sustainable development. The three objectives to sustainability are economic, social and environmental, these are reflected in the policies of the NPPF as well as local policies.
14. The most relevant points of Paragraph 88 states that; *Planning policies and decisions should enable:*
- a) *The sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses 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.*
15. Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states; *Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.*
16. Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that; *Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:*
- a) *will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
 - b) *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
 - c) *are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities).*

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Local Planning Policy

Wiltshire Core Strategy

17. We consider that the relevant policies in the WCS are as follows:
18. Core Policy 41 Sustainable construction - *New development, building conversions, refurbishments and extensions will be encouraged to incorporate design measures to reduce energy demand. Development will be well insulated and designed to take advantage of natural light and heat from the sun and use natural air movement for ventilation, whilst maximising cooling in the summer.*
19. Core Policy 48; Supporting Rural Life - *Proposals to convert and re-use rural buildings for employment, tourism, cultural and community uses will be supported where they satisfy the following criteria:*
- i. The building(s) is/are structurally sound and capable of conversion without major rebuilding, and with only necessary extension or modification which preserves the character of the original building.*
 - ii. The use would not detract from the character or appearance of the landscape or settlement and would not be detrimental to the amenities of residential areas.*
 - iii. The building can be served by adequate access and infrastructure.*
 - iv. The site has reasonable access to local services.*
20. Core Policy 51 - Landscape - *Development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and must not have a harmful impact upon landscape character, while any negative impacts must be mitigated as far as possible through sensitive design and landscape measures.*
21. Core Policy 57 - Ensuring high quality design and place shaping - *A high standard of design is required in all new developments, including extensions, alterations, and changes of use of existing buildings. Development is expected to create a strong sense of place through drawing on the local context and being complementary to the locality.*
22. Core Policy 61 - Transport and new development - *That consideration has been given to the needs of all transport users and, the proposal is capable of being served by safe access to the highway network.*
23. Core Policy 67 - Flood risk states that; *All new development will include measures to reduce the rate of rainwater run-off and improve rainwater infiltration to soil and ground (sustainable urban drainage) unless site or environmental conditions make these measures unsuitable.*

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Royal Wootton Bassett Neighbourhood Development Plan

24. The most relevant points in the RWBNP are as follows:
25. Policy 10: Landscape Setting - *Development should safeguard the separate identity and locally distinctive character of Royal Wootton Bassett and its unique landscape setting.*
26. Policy 12: Road safety, traffic and transport - *Development should not harm highway safety and must ensure that residual cumulative impacts of development are not severe. The promotion of walking, cycling and public transport will be supported.*

Planning Considerations

Principle of Development

27. The conversion of the existing buildings into employment units will enable the applicant to diversify his rural business and support other small local businesses, by providing a rentable space for them to use. This will contribute to the local economy.
28. The buildings are structurally sound and capable of being converted to business use. The converted buildings will remain in character of the original building and therefore, not detracting from the character and appearance of the landscape. There will be no detrimental impact to the amenities of residential areas, with the nearest dwelling (owned by the applicant) is some 175m to the north. The buildings are served by an adequate existing access to the B4042 and is close to the town of Royal Wootton Bassett.
29. The proposed development will improve the appearance of the site with the conversion of the existing buildings. There will be no extensions to the buildings and the agricultural character of them will remain. Therefore, they will remain sympathetic to the local character and the rural landscape setting.
30. Sustainable growth and expansion of rural businesses is supported in both national and local policies, especially with the use of existing buildings.

Design, Landscape, Character and Appearance

31. The conversion of the buildings are designed to reduce energy demand, by having good insulation, ensuring the buildings retain heat in the winter and helping them to stay cool in the summer. Power to the buildings will be sustainably supplied by the onsite power station.
32. The appearance of the site will be improved by the conversion of the existing buildings. The buildings will be designed to a high standard and will be complimentary to the locality, as the agricultural character of the buildings will remain. The re-use of the existing arena to a carpark will cause no harm

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to the existing landscape. The proposal as a whole will protect and not detract from the character and appearance of the landscape.

Highways

33. The proposal is capable of being served by the safe existing access onto Brinkworth Road (B4042), where there is excellent visibility splays in both directions. The residual cumulative impacts of any additional traffic that the conversion of the buildings bring, will not be severe.
34. The proposed land use, energy to waste facility at Park Grounds Farm is the landfill and recycling enterprise operated by the applicant. Planning permission for these activities has been approved under a number of permissions and subject to a Section 106 agreement, which directs HGV movements to and from the site east towards Royal Wootton Bassett.
35. Whilst we do not expect that this development will significantly increase HGV use (given the small size of the development and the 7 employment units) the applicant would have no objection to a similar legal agreement, if required.
36. We are aware of a current planning application (ref. PL/2025/06988) for a proposed Anaerobic Digestion Facility adjacent the site, which includes a Transport Statement. This states in paragraph 1.1.5; *A forecast trip generation assessment has been undertaken that illustrates the impact of the proposals on the local highway network are forecast to be negligible.*
37. Considering Park Grounds Farm as a whole, these proposed industrial units, which may be used in connection with activities being carried out at Park Grounds Farm, is not going to result in a significant increase in traffic movements.

Ecology

38. Biodiversity net gain is not applicable to this application due to the nature of the development; with the conversion of existing buildings and the re-use of a riding arena. There will be no loss of habitat with the proposal.

Flooding and Drainage

39. The site is located within Flood Zone 1. Therefore, there is less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability of flooding from rivers.
40. The site does not have any issues with surface water flooding. Rainwater is directed into the soakaways at the base of the building, as existing. Rainwater goods will be maintained over the lifetime of the building.

Conclusion

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41. The proposal will support the expansion of an existing rural business by the re-use of existing buildings and arena. The design and location of the rentable units will provide a sustainable business spaces, within easy reach of Royal Wootton Bassett, benefitting the local and wider economy.
42. There will be no adverse impact on the landscape or ecology, as the existing elements will be re-used. There will be no severe impacts on the highway network.
43. The proposal meets the three objectives of achieving sustainable development; economic, social and environmental. It is supported by and meets the requirements of both national and local policies.
44. I trust that you have all of the necessary information required to register and favourably determine this application, and I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours faithfully,



Debbie Silver