

Planning Statement

In support of

Revised Application for Prior Approval under Class Q for Change of
Use of Agricultural Building into 3 no. Dwellinghouses (Use Class C3)
with Associated Operational Development

on

Land at Burton, Mere, Warminster, Wiltshire

NOVEMBER 2025

Mr Diccon Carpendale
MA Dip (Arch Cons) MRTPI IHBC
Planning Consultant
Brimble Lea
Unit 3 Kingsmead Business Park
Shaftesbury Road
Gillingham
Dorset SP8 5FB
DC/25038

1.0 APPLICATION SITE AND PROPOSAL

- 1.1 The application site (as shown on the Location Plan edged and hatched red) comprises an existing agricultural building – erected following full planning permission granted in 2019 – and an equivalent area adjacent to it to satisfy the definition of ‘curtilage’ as set out within the General Permitted Development Order 2015 (as amended). The red line also includes the access track (adopted highway) which is to be repaired with the applicants’ entering into a S.278 Agreement with the Highway Authority.
- 1.2 The application has been revised following the refusal of the previous application – solely based on transport and highways impacts.
- 1.3 The application follows amendments made to the GPDO on 21 May 2024 which broaden the range of buildings that can be converted to dwellings under Class Q. With the building being part of an established agricultural unit on 24 July 2023, and its provision being subject to a full planning permission (not erected utilising permitted development rights) this building now benefits from the amended right for conversion into dwellinghouses.
- 1.4 Under the revised rules, any individual dwelling cannot be larger than 150m² of floor area. With the existing barn having a floor area of 413m², it lends itself readily to conversion into three units.
- 1.5 The dwellings will be single storey requiring some additional doors and window openings to be inserted in each of the barn elevations. However, their form and position has been carefully considered to retain the general ‘agricultural’ character of the building with the aim being for it to look like a barn conversion rather than a series of domestic structures.
- 1.6 Each of the dwellings is provided with its own curtilage to provide sufficient parking for two or three cars to the front (east) side and a garden area either to the rear or side (west and north sides).

- 1.7 With the barn being eligible for conversion under this process and the approach to conversion satisfying the strictures of Class Q, the main purpose of this submission is to enable the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to consider various site-specific matters and whether any further prior approval is required in relation to these. These are set out below.

2.0 MATTERS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL

Transport and Highways impacts of the development

- 2.1 The site is accessed via an adopted unclassified lane directly to the south. Where this lane meets the Burton to Mere back road (Southmead) there is excellent visibility in both directions ensuring safe access/egress onto the Class C road.
- 2.2 The previous application was refused on the basis that the transport and highways impact of the proposed development had not been satisfactorily addressed. In particular, the refusal related to the unsuitable condition of the access track and potential for there to be conflict between drivers and pedestrians.
- 2.3 Following a meeting with Chris Manns of the Highway Authority, it has been agreed that these concerns can be overcome by the applicants agreeing to fund and carry out repairs to upgrade the full extent of the adopted part of the track including repairing/upgrading the field gate access midway along the track to create a passing place/pedestrian refuge.
- 2.4 Subject to securing these improvements, the Highway Authority has confirmed it will raise no objection to this revised submission.
- 2.5 The applicants will enter into a S.278 Agreement with the Highway Authority. This agreement includes a detailed specification of the works to be undertaken to the track and enables the Highway Authority to hold money (or a bond) as a guarantee to ensure the works are completed.

- 2.6 The requirement to have such works undertaken before first occupation of any of the three dwellings can be secured through a 'Grampian' condition i.e. a condition that is imposed upon land outside the application site within third party control. In this instance, with the full extent of the track being part of the adopted highway and the works being limited to upgrading the surface, the agreement can be secured in this fashion.
- 2.7 Within the site, sufficient parking is provided for each dwelling – comprising two spaces for each of the 3-bed units.

Noise impact

- 2.8 The barn is set away from other buildings with the nearest farm being some distance to the north-west. Occupants of the new dwellings will not be subject to any adverse noise impact.

Contamination risks on the site

- 2.9 The building in question is relatively new, having been erected after full permission was granted in 2019. Use for storage of fodder, fertilizer and machinery has not resulted in any contamination.

Flooding risks on the site

- 2.10 The site is located within Flood Zone 1 – the area at least risk of fluvial (river or sea) flooding. With respect to surface water run-off/flooding, whilst a small area to the west of the site is identified as being at possible risk in an extreme event, this is outside the application site, beyond the dwellings and garden areas.
- 2.11 Wiltshire Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) shows the site being within an area of possible high risk of groundwater flooding. It should be noted the SFRA is not intended to assess this type of flood risk at a site-specific level.
- 2.12 Consulting engineers (Calibro Consulting) have produced a proportionate Flood Risk Assessment which considers local geology and topography.

- 2.13 The FRA demonstrates the building is not at risk of groundwater flooding and appropriate mitigation can be incorporated – recognising this is a conversion of an existing building rather than constructing new dwellings on a Greenfield site.

Whether the location or siting of the building makes it otherwise impractical or undesirable for the proposed change of use

- 2.14 It is accepted (by their very nature) applications seeking approval for the conversion of farm buildings under the Class Q legislation are likely to be in rural areas – often away from nearby services. In this instance, the site is a short distance to the south of the hamlet of Burton and relatively close to Mere – a local service centre.
- 2.15 With the site being situated within a tranquil location where any flood risk has been addressed and access being via adopted highway with good visibility onto the Burton to Mere road, there is no reason to consider the building is sited in an impractical or undesirable location.

Design and external appearance

- 2.16 The existing building presents a simple agricultural appearance comprising a large, rectangular ‘shed’ with timber boarded elevations above a low concrete plinth. It is served by several large doorways on the front (east) side.
- 2.17 Use is made of these doorways and additional openings introduced within the timber boarded exterior ensuring the overall agricultural character of the building is retained.
- 2.18 There is no need for the external dimensions of the building to be changed and with the building being of relatively new (2019/2020) construction, it is substantially built and capable of conversion with minimal change.
- 2.19 Legislation allows for the provision of services for the building. It already benefits from electricity and water supply. Foul drainage arrangements are achievable on site, and this is normally dealt with through the Building Regulation process.

3.0 PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 The proposed change of use and associated building operations are permitted by Class Q(b) and (c) of the GPDO 2015 (as amended). It complies with the limitations set out in Q.1, as follows:

- (a) The site was part of an established agricultural unit on 24 July 2023. Drawing 25038-4 shows the full extent of the agricultural holding. Whilst there has been some change to the parcels farmed, the agricultural holding relating to Hinckes Mill Farm remains. 97 hectares (240 acres) are farmed comprising a mixed agricultural enterprise including beef, sheep grazing and arable.
- (b) N/A.
- (c) All of the proposed dwellings are no larger than 150m².
- (d)(i) The cumulative number of dwellinghouses proposed under Class C3 is three. No other dwellings have been formed utilising this process on the holding.
- (ii) The cumulative floor space of the proposed dwellings will not exceed the 1,000m² threshold – the building (as exists) is considerably smaller than this at 413m².
- (e) The site is not occupied under an agricultural tenancy.
- (f) N/A.
- (g) No development under Class A(a) or Class B(a) of Part 6 of the GPDO has been carried out on the established agricultural unit during the ten-year period before this Class Q proposal begins.
- (h) The external dimensions of the building will not extend beyond its current dimensions.
- (i) No extensions are proposed
- (j) Building operations are limited to the installation or replacement of windows, doors, roofs or exterior walls or the provision of water, drainage, electricity, gas or other services to the extent reasonably necessary for the building to function as a dwellinghouse. No partial demolition is required.
- (k) The site is not on Article 2(3) land.

- (l) The site does not form part of (i) a Site of Special Scientific Interest; (ii) a safety hazard area; (iii) a military explosives storage area.
- (m) The site is not and does not contain a Scheduled Monument.
- (n) The building is not a listed building.
- (o) It will be seen from the submitted floor plans that every habitable room is served by natural light, and each dwelling will be capable of complying with the Nationally Described Space Standards.
- (p) The building has suitable existing access to a public highway.

4.0 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 It has been demonstrated that this barn, erected following the grant of full planning permission in 2019, benefits from the rights under Class Q of the GPDO 2015 (as amended) to be converted into several dwellinghouses.
- 4.2 The submitted documentation shows the proposal satisfies the strictures of Class Q.
- 4.3 The application as revised addresses all those matters relating to issues where prior approval may be required. In particular, the application now provides for the repair/upgrade of the access track and the creation midway along it (by re-surfacing the field gate access) of a passing space/pedestrian refuge which overcomes previous Highway objections.
- 4.4 This demonstrates that the building is well-suited to conversion and no additional information is required.
- 4.5 On this basis, approval for the proposed works should be granted within the 56-day period for determination.