



RCC TOWN PLANNING CONSULTANCY



Site: QSIL Metals UK Limited, 15 Porte Marsh Road , Calne, SN11 9BN

Proposal: Rebuilding Of Fire Damaged Building

On behalf of: QSIL Metals UK Limited

Date of Issue: December 2025



RCC TOWN PLANNING CONSULTANCY

PLANNING STATEMENT

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1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared on behalf of the applicants to support their planning application for the rebuilding of the fire damaged QSIL Metals building at Porte Marsh Road Industrial Estate in Calne.
- 1.2 QSIL Metals are a multi-national company specialising in the design and manufacture of hi-precision metal products for a wide range of customers / industries. The manufacture includes fabrication and machining of components in refractory metals/alloys such as molybdenum, tungsten, tantalum and others (<https://www.qsil-metals.com/en/>).
- 1.3 QSIL Metals currently operates from two separate premises within the Porte Marsh Road Industrial Estate in Calne, a well-established industrial estate located within the settlement framework of Calne and protected under core policy 35 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (Existing employment sites). Both sites contain production and office space, and the business currently relies on shuttling materials and finished products between the two locations as part of its operational process. Historically, the company manufactured at Harris Road, transport to Porte Marsh road for finishing/plating, then return them to Harris road for inspection, packing and despatch.
- 1.4 On the 21st June 2025, there was a significant fire at the southernmost site (15 Porte Marsh Road)¹, resulting in substantial damage to the interior and exterior of the southernmost of the two buildings on site, including some structural elements. Fire investigations concluded that the fire started accidentally due to an electrical fault affecting one of the machines. As a result of the fire, the buildings on site require varying degrees of repair and rebuild because of the level of damage. Limited operations are still continuing at the site and at the Harris Road building. Some office staff based at the Porte Road site have had to be relocated to temporary accommodation elsewhere within the industrial estate as the production process has temporarily moved into existing office space that is undamaged.
- 1.5 Planning permission is therefore sought for the repair and replacement of the fire damaged building. However, rather than reinstating the outdated structure, QSIL intends to use this as an opportunity to deliver a more efficient, modern, and sustainable facility that better meets the company's operational needs. The proposal involves the construction of a new two-storey building to replace the southern structure and rationalise existing on-site functions. In addition, the scheme will provide improved office and welfare spaces, offering a high-quality, contemporary working environment that supports the growth and long-term sustainability of the business. An additional circa 690m² of floorspace will be created.
- 1.6 This Planning Statement will provide an explanation and justification for the scheme having regard to the planning history at the site, as well as national

¹ <https://www.wiltshire999s.co.uk/firefighters-battle-blaze-calne-industrial-estate/>
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c5yg851x65do>



and local plan policy and guidance context. It should be read alongside the following documents and reports:

- Transport Statement by Cole Easdon
- Flood risk assessment and Drainage Strategy by Cole Easdon
- Biodiversity Net Gain Report by Smart Ecology
- Statutory Biodiversity Metric by Smart Ecology
- Phase 1 Assessment of Land Quality by Ground Investigation Limited
- Sustainability Statement by PKA Architects
- Waste audit by PKA Architects

2.0 SITE CONTEXT AND DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

- 2.1 This application relates to QSIL Metals UK Ltd, a renowned business designing and manufacturing hi-precision metal products. A business of this nature has operated from the site since the 1970's – originally founded in 1973 under the operating name Molypress Ltd.
- 2.2 The site is located within the built area of the Market Town of Calne on the northern side of the town, within the Porte Marsh Industrial Estate. The wider estate has a range of buildings used for office, industrial and research purposes, E(g) (formerly B1), general industrial, B2 and storage, B8.
- 2.3 There are no heritage, landscape or ecological designations and the site lies within FZ1.
- 2.4 The site lies within an area which is dominated by employment uses, to the north, east and south, though to the west lies St Edmunds Catholic Academy on Duncan Street. The school and the application site are separated by dense boundary planting.
- 2.5 The 'sister' site at Harris Road is positioned some 450m to the north.



Figure 1: Site Location Plan (Source: Google Earth)

- 2.6 Prior to the fire, the site comprises two single-storey pitched roof buildings, attached along their central elevation by a flat roofed building. These existing buildings are believed to have been constructed in the late 1970's, with alterations and additions taking place over the years to adapt the building and site operations to changing requirements and relevant legislation². Internally the building contained a factory floor, product development rooms, reception, office accommodation, storage and plant rooms, as well as staff welfare and kitchen facilities.
- 2.7 The lower 2/3 of each building is of orange brick construction and the top third is clad in blue profiled sheeting. Their 'squat' proportions and external venting/flues, along with the materials, results in a building of a functional and 'industrial / commercial' appearance. The buildings front onto the western side of Porte Marsh Road, with vehicular access to the north of these behind a gated external compound. Parking is not marked out in bays.

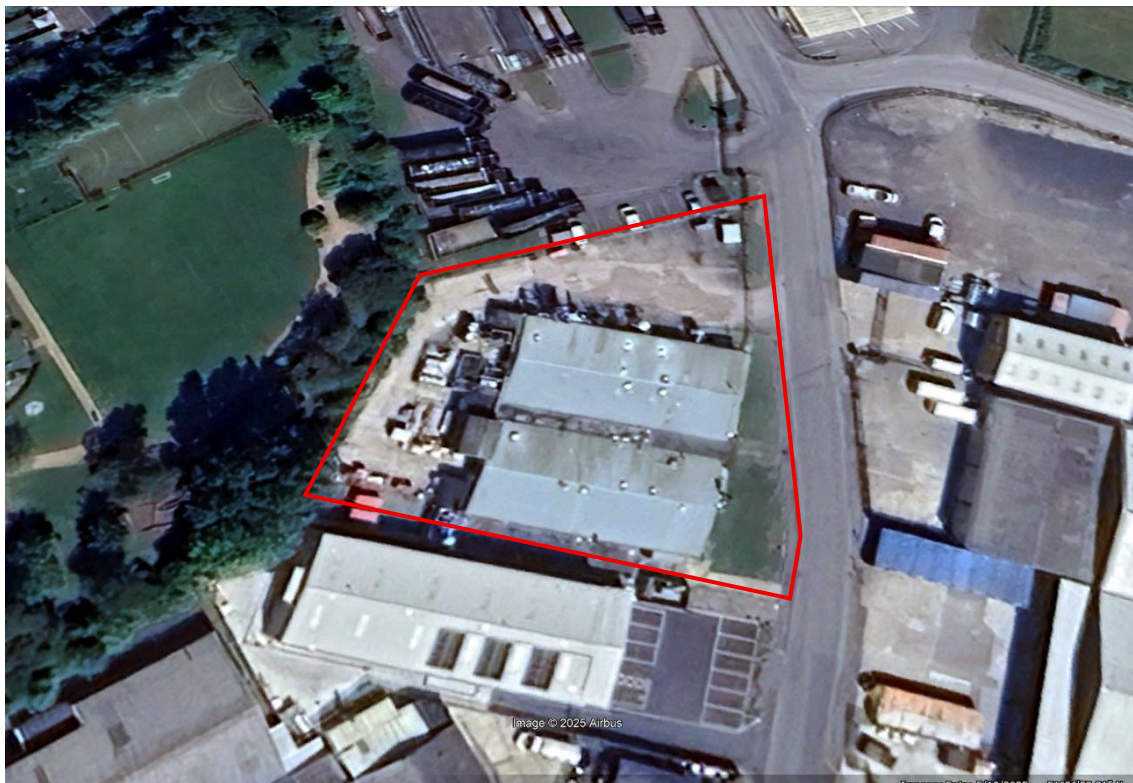


Figure 2: Aerial photograph of site dated 18/5/25 (prior to fire)

² Historic planning applications 03/02924; 00/1380; 81/1881; 81/1173 and 74/707



Figure 3: View of application site prior to the fire (Google Earth)



Figure 4: View of site at present from Porte Marsh Road



Figure 5: View of fire damaged section of building from Porte Marsh Road



Figure 5: View of fire damaged section of building

- 2.8 Planning permission is therefore required for the partial redevelopment of the fire damaged building and repair of that which is to remain. QSIL Metals is taking the opportunity to rebuild the affected section as a two-storey facility and to rationalise its operations. The proposal will enable product inspection, packaging, and despatch to take place directly at the application site, removing the need for inter-site transfers and significantly improving workflow efficiency, productivity, and sustainability across the business. The new building will also provide improved office and welfare facilities for staff, supporting a more integrated and modern working environment.
- 2.9 The proposed replacement building will accommodate approximately 18–19 staff, a modest increase from the previous level of around 13, reflecting the enhanced capacity and functionality of the site. Historically, parking within the yard has been informal, with vehicles parked on an ad hoc basis. As part of the redevelopment, clearly marked parking bays will be introduced to make more efficient use of the available space, along with a small number of additional spaces to the front of the building where Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) measures will also be delivered. The nearby Harris Road site, which provides around 23 parking spaces and is currently underused, will continue to serve as overflow parking if required. The new facilities have also been designed to encourage sustainable travel, with improved welfare and shower amenities to support staff who cycle to work.
- 2.10 An extract from the proposed plans showing the front (east) elevation is copied below:



- 2.11 The proposed building would deliver a significant visual enhancement to both the site and the wider streetscene. The submitted plans illustrate a high-quality design finished in dark grey (anthracite) cladding, closely matching the appearance of the existing self-storage facility located immediately to the east. The internal floorspace would increase from 1,105m² to 1,796m², comprising 1,168m² at ground floor level and 628m² at first floor level.
- 2.12 The building would be constructed to a full two-storey height, with a proposed ridge height of 9.05 metres. This height is driven by the operational plant requirements of the ground floor factory, and both the eaves and ridge levels have been designed to be as low as practicably possible. While the existing buildings on site are relatively low in form, two-storey buildings of comparable height and scale are already established within the surrounding industrial estate. This is a context where the functional needs of businesses commonly

influence building dimensions, and such building heights are well integrated into the existing character of the area without resulting in any visual harm.



3.0 PLANNING POLICY

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 At the current time, the Development Plan comprises the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS); Calne Community Neighbourhood Plan 2023-38 and adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (e.g. Wiltshire Design Guide).
- 3.3 Material considerations comprise the following:
- Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026 Car Parking Strategy
 - The Wiltshire Design Guide (2024)
 - National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF)
 - National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- 3.4 The relevant policies and guidance are set out in the associated tables:

WILTSHIRE CORE STRATEGY

Policy	Title
CP1	Settlement strategy
CP2	Delivery strategy
CP8	Spatial Strategy: Calne Community Area
CP50	Biodiversity and Geodiversity
CP35	Existing Employment Land
CP57	Ensuring high quality design and place shaping
CP61	Transport and new development

CALNE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2

Policy	Title
C1	High Quality, Sustainable Development in the Calne Community Plan Area
C2	Sustainable Construction and Energy
NE2	Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity
BE1	Design Principles for Local Distinctiveness
WS1	Protecting and Promoting Sustainable, Low Carbon Local Employment

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

Policy	Title
2	Achieving sustainable development
6	Building a strong, competitive economy
8	Promoting healthy and safe communities
9	Promoting sustainable transport
11	Making an effective use of land
12	Achieving well-designed places



4.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

4.1 The main planning issues to be discussed are:

- Principle of development
- Scale design and appearance
- Impact on amenities
- Impact on Highway Safety
- Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)
- Flood Risk and Drainage
- Contamination

Principle of Development

- 4.2 The proposed development is located within the defined settlement boundary of Calne, specifically within the Porte Marsh Industrial Estate. This area is designated as a Principal Employment Area within the Calne Community Area, as identified in Policy CP8 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. In accordance with Policy CP35 of the Core Strategy, proposals for development within Principal Employment Areas that support employment-related uses are encouraged and supported in principle.
- 4.3 At the neighbourhood level, Policy WS1 of the Calne Community Neighbourhood Plan confirms that the Principal Employment Area at Porte Marsh will be safeguarded for employment uses falling within Classes E, B2, and B8, subject to compliance with relevant development plan policies.
- 4.4 Furthermore, Section 6 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) emphasises that planning policies and decisions should foster the conditions necessary for businesses to invest, expand, and adapt to changing circumstances.
- 4.5 The development relates to QSIL Metals UK Ltd, a well-established business operating from two nearby premises within the Porte Marsh Industrial Estate. The proposal involves the erection of a larger, two-storey replacement building at the application site (replacing the fire damaged sections), designed to improve operational efficiency, rationalise space across the company's two locations, and provide high-quality modern facilities for staff.
- 4.6 Currently the company manufactured at Harris Road, transport to Porte Marsh road for finishing/plating, then return them to Harris Road for inspection, packing and despatch. This repeated movement between sites is inefficient and limits productivity. The proposed redevelopment will allow the company to carry out inspection, packing, and despatch operations directly from the application site, significantly improving workflow and reducing unnecessary vehicle movements.
- 4.7 The proposed building will also provide enhanced modern office accommodation on the first floor, enabling those staff currently relocated to rented offices to be brought back under one roof. The new facility will also include improved welfare provision, meeting rooms, and staff facilities, including shower facilities to support active travel choices such as cycling.



- 4.8 In light of the above policy considerations, the proposal is therefore considered acceptable in principle, aligning with both local and national planning objectives for sustainable economic development.

Design and Visual Impact

- 4.9 Planning policy at all levels promotes high-quality and inclusive design in new development. The starting point for assessing any scheme is its context. Core Policy 57 (CP57) emphasises that new developments should achieve a high standard of design, creating a strong sense of place that responds to local character and complements the surrounding area. This stance is reflected in policies C1 and BE1 of the Calne NP.
- 4.10 The Wiltshire Design Guide, formally adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document on 25 March 2024, highlights that understanding the context, history, and cultural characteristics of a site is essential. Well-grounded developments are more likely to be accepted by local communities and contribute to a positive sense of place, fostering inclusion, well-being, and community cohesion.
- 4.11 National guidance also recognises the importance of design. The NPPF (Paragraph 131) identifies high-quality design as a fundamental component of sustainable development. This redevelopment presents an opportunity to deliver a building of enhanced quality, both internally and externally, reflecting the operational needs and identity of QSIL Metals.
- 4.12 The proposed building sits within an existing industrial estate, where views are dominated by surrounding employment buildings of varied scale, massing, and appearance. The two-storey office frontage along Porte Marsh Road has been positioned to provide an active street presence, and lift the appearance of the site.
- 4.13 The building is steel-framed and designed to meet operational requirements, providing an additional 691m² of floorspace across ground and first floors. The wider site retains sufficient space for vehicle movements, a new demarcated car park, and soft landscaping, including biodiversity net gain (BNG).
- 4.14 Externally, the building will feature a combination of cladding and brick finishes, within a new glazed entrance feature to the front elevation. The use of anthracite grey cladding, matching the colour of the cladding to nearby storage units, creates a crisp and contemporary appearance appropriate for the context within an industrial estate. The 9.05m ridge height accommodates operational requirements without compromising the surrounding visual context. Within public views, the buildings would be simply read as part of the industrial estate, consistent in scale and character with the surrounding built form.
- 4.15 The material palette and elevational treatments have been carefully considered to provide visual interest and break up the elevations. The office elements incorporate glazing to enhance natural light and contrast with the cladding, adding architectural relief and visual variety across the building's elevations.



- 4.16 In summary, the proposed redevelopment delivers a high-quality, well-designed replacement building, appropriate for the character of the industrial estate in which it will be read.

Impact upon Amenities

- 4.17 There are no residential properties impacted by the proposals, the closest being those at Lockett Way which are 100m+ from the site, with intervening single and two-storey industrial units.
- 4.18 To the west lies St Edmunds Catholic Academy. The rear of the site (parking and storage area) abuts the boundary with the school playing field. This boundary benefits from mature hedging and trees, as can be seen from aerial photographs (see Figure 2 of this statement).
- 4.19 The proposed building is positioned towards the eastern aspect of the site and would cause no harm to the enjoyment of the school playing fields, being set sufficient distance away and replicating similar two-storey building heights within the immediate vicinity. The use of the site will remain as existing, so concerns regarding other forms of nuisance (e.g. noise or smell) need not be raised.
- 4.20 As such, the proposals comply with good quality design criteria set out in CP57 of the WCS and Chapter 7 of the NPPF.

Highway Safety

- 4.21 Policies CP60 and CP64 deal with the traffic impacts of development and parking standards. These policies aim to ensure developments adequately address matters of access arrangements and road safety alongside adequate parking provision.
- 4.22 Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states that:

"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".

- 4.23 As per Wiltshire Council's validation requirements, a Transport Assessment which considers the impact of the proposal is required for those proposals with a floorspace over 1000m² of floor space. The applicant therefore commissioned Cole Easdon to carry out this assessment and the resulting report should therefore be read alongside this Planning Statement.
- 4.24 The site is accessed by an existing vehicular access to the north of the building from Porte Marsh Road. It is a wide, gated vehicular crossover, suitable for industrial access. A separate pedestrian footpath is provided to the entrance of the building itself.
- 4.25 This access is of sufficient size and has sufficient visibility to deal with traffic satisfactorily. The scheme rationalises operations and activities at the site and would only result in a modest increase in staff numbers (circa 5). This will not

result in any notable increase in vehicular movements to and from the site. The Transport Statement confirms that the increase in floorspace and staff numbers will have negligible impact upon the traffic generation and the local highway network:

"As seen from Tables 5.2 and 5.3 above, with the proposed building extension it is estimated that six and four two-way additional vehicle movements will be generated in the AM and PM peak hours respectively. An increase of 50 two-way vehicle movements per 12-hour day is estimated (approximately four vehicle movements per hour).

This is a very modest uplift in vehicle movements which is unlikely to materially impact the operation of the local highway network. In reality, Qsil are not expecting any significant uplift in vehicle movements to arise due to this extension. Either way, no further analysis is deemed necessary".

- 4.26 A total of 25 car parking spaces will be available, including one DDA compliant space, which meets the maximum standards of 36 spaces. These spaces will now be demarcated where as previously parking was ad hoc across the area of hardsurfacing.
- 4.27 The site will also accommodate 8 covered cycle parking spaces. Shower facilities will be provided on site to encourage staff (vast majority are local) to cycle to work.
- 4.28 In the unlikely event that car parking is at capacity, staff will be instructed to use the QSIL sister site at Harris Road, preventing overspill onto public roads.
- 4.29 Although items will now be dispatched from this site, rather than the Harris Road site, this will not result in a significant impact. All items are very small in size so despatch is just via ordinary delivery vans - no large lorries are required. This relocation of dispatch from Harris Road to Porte Road will have a de minimis impact.
- 4.30 For the reasons outlined above, it is considered that suitable access and parking arrangements are provided by the scheme, in compliance with the requirements of CP60 and CP64 of the WCS and could certainly not be said to result in any 'severe' highway impact, the test set out within the NPPF.

Ecology and BNG

- 4.31 Policy CP50 of the WCS recognises that Wiltshire's natural environment is one of its greatest assets and requires that development proposals must demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation. The policy also advises that development should seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity.
- 4.32 Policy CP51 requires that development make a positive contribution through "the retention and enhancement of existing important landscaping and natural features, (e.g. trees, hedges, banks and watercourses)".
- 4.33 Chapter 15 of the NPPF provides further guidance on conserving and enhancing the natural environment.



- 4.34 Smart Ecology was therefore commissioned by QSIL Metals to produce a Biodiversity Net Gain Report. The report which accompanies this application sets out that the proposals will result in the loss of all existing on-site grassland, alongside the creation of 348 m² of developed land, sealed surface for new parking and Creation of 42 m² of modified grassland. It is also proposed to plant four small native trees on the site.
- 4.35 The pre-development biodiversity value of on-site habitats was calculated as 0.1080 units and the post-development value was 0.0643 units. The proposed development would therefore result in a 40.43 % decrease in habitat units and trading rules would not be satisfied. As set out in the report by Smart Ecology, the proposed development will achieve BNG by the purchase of 0.0545 off-site habitat units (or statutory biodiversity credits). The proposed development can therefore conform to the relevant ecological policies and legislation.

Contamination

- 4.36 To inform the construction process, a desk-based land quality and preliminary geotechnical risk assessment was prepared by Ground Investigation Limited (October 2025). The report concludes that the site is generally suitable for redevelopment, with manageable geotechnical and contamination risks. The primary concerns are localised contamination from past industrial use and potential variability in ground conditions. However, no major constraints to development are identified, provided that a targeted intrusive investigation is completed before construction to verify assumptions.

Flooding issues

- 4.37 A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) (including drainage strategy) has been prepared by Cole Easdon Consultants Limited (CE) in support of the proposals and they have informed the design process. Accordingly, their report has been prepared to:
- (i) assess flood risk to the development from fluvial sources;
 - (ii) assess flood risk to the development from other potential sources, including ditches, sewers, groundwater, and overland flows;
 - (iii) ensure that the proposed development will fully comply with the requirements of the Environment Agency's (EA's) policy on the safeguarding of floodplains;
 - (iv) provide a surface water drainage strategy for the proposed development; and
 - (v) provide a foul water drainage strategy for the proposed development.
- 4.38 The FRA confirms that the site is at low to very low risk of flooding from all assessed sources, including fluvial, groundwater, reservoirs, and overland flow, with only a low-moderate risk associated with surface water and public sewers. Importantly, all built development is located outside the mapped pluvial flood extent.

- 4.39 A sustainable surface-water drainage strategy has been designed in accordance with the national SuDS hierarchy. Due to ground conditions and limited space for infiltration features, an attenuation-based solution is proposed. Surface water from the development will be managed via on-site attenuation and discharged at controlled rates to the existing Wessex Water sewer network. This will result in reduced post-development runoff rates, thereby lowering existing flood risk within the area.
- 4.40 Foul water will discharge by gravity to the existing public sewer network.
- 4.41 Overall, the Flood Risk Assessment confirms that the proposed development can be delivered without increasing flood risk on or off the site
- 4.42 The full FRA and drainage strategy form part of the application submission and should therefore be read alongside this planning statement. This evidences that the proposals accord with Core Policies 56 and 67 of the WCS and Chapter 14 of the NPPF.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 It is considered that this statement, together with the plans submitted, has demonstrated that the proposed scheme demonstrates full compliance with the Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework, representing a sustainable form of economic development.
- 5.2 The application seeks to repair and replace the fire-damaged building, using this opportunity to deliver a modern, efficient, and sustainable facility that better meets QSIL's operational needs. The scheme includes the construction of a new two-storey building, rationalisation of existing on-site functions, and the provision of improved office and welfare spaces, creating approximately 690m² of additional floorspace to support the company's growth and long-term sustainability.
- 5.3 The design has been carefully considered to ensure adaptability for future business needs while maintaining compatibility with the surrounding area. It has been demonstrated that the proposals will not result in adverse impacts on residential or visual amenity, highway safety, ecology or contamination. On this basis, the scheme aligns with planning policy at all levels, and the Council is respectfully requested to approve this application.

