

9th December 2025

Our Ref: SWLC.LPC6250

Development Services – North
Wiltshire Council
Monkton Park
Chippenham
Wiltshire
SN15 1ER

Dear Sir/Madam

Town and Country Planning Act 1990
Erection of Polytunnel at Purlieus House, Stonehill, Minety, SN16 9RP

Please find enclosed a duly completed planning application regarding the erection of a multi span polytunnel, comprising 3 hooped bays, measuring 19m in width and 22m in depth. The new structure will be erected on the former horse manège, as shown in the aerial view below, and which measures 40m by 25m.



My client operates Hortico Plant Centre at Sherston and wishes to use his land at Purlieus House to provide support to his growing facilities on his main site. The land at Purlieus amounts to 8.53 acres and is already in use for some tree planting.

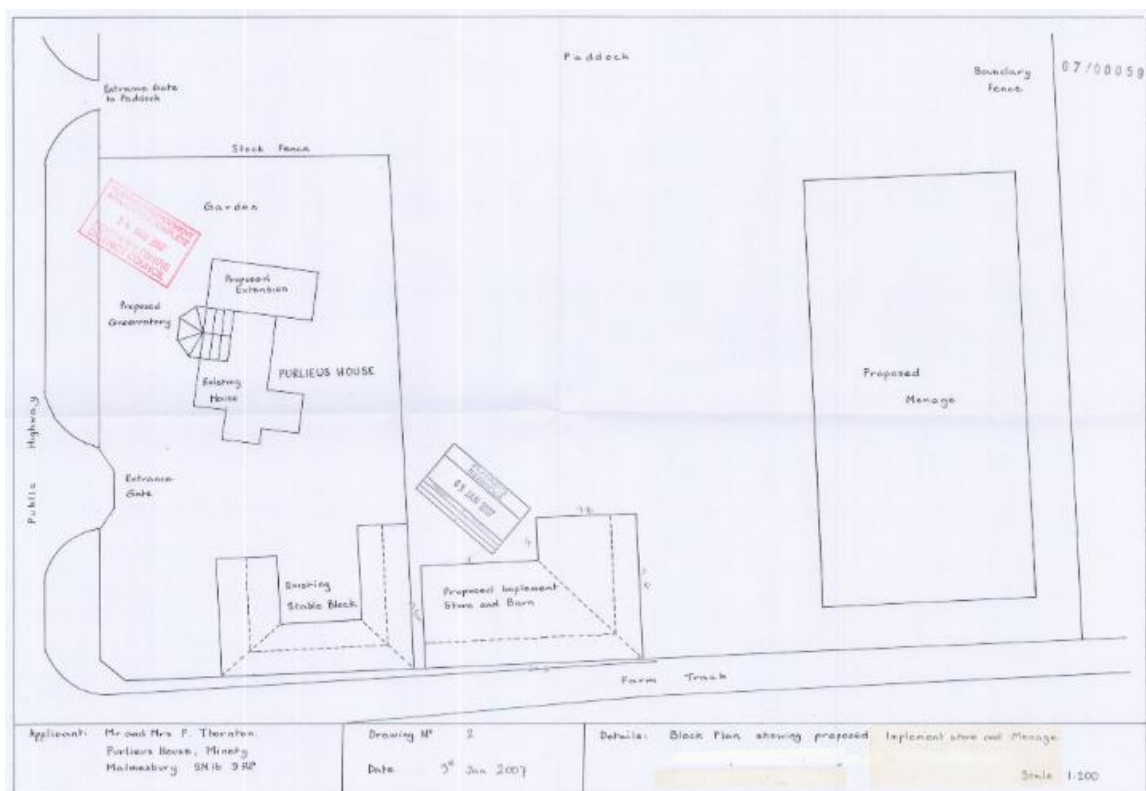
Purlieus House is an agriculturally tied dwelling which is currently being extended pursuant to application PL/2024/07241. It is a detached dwelling with an access

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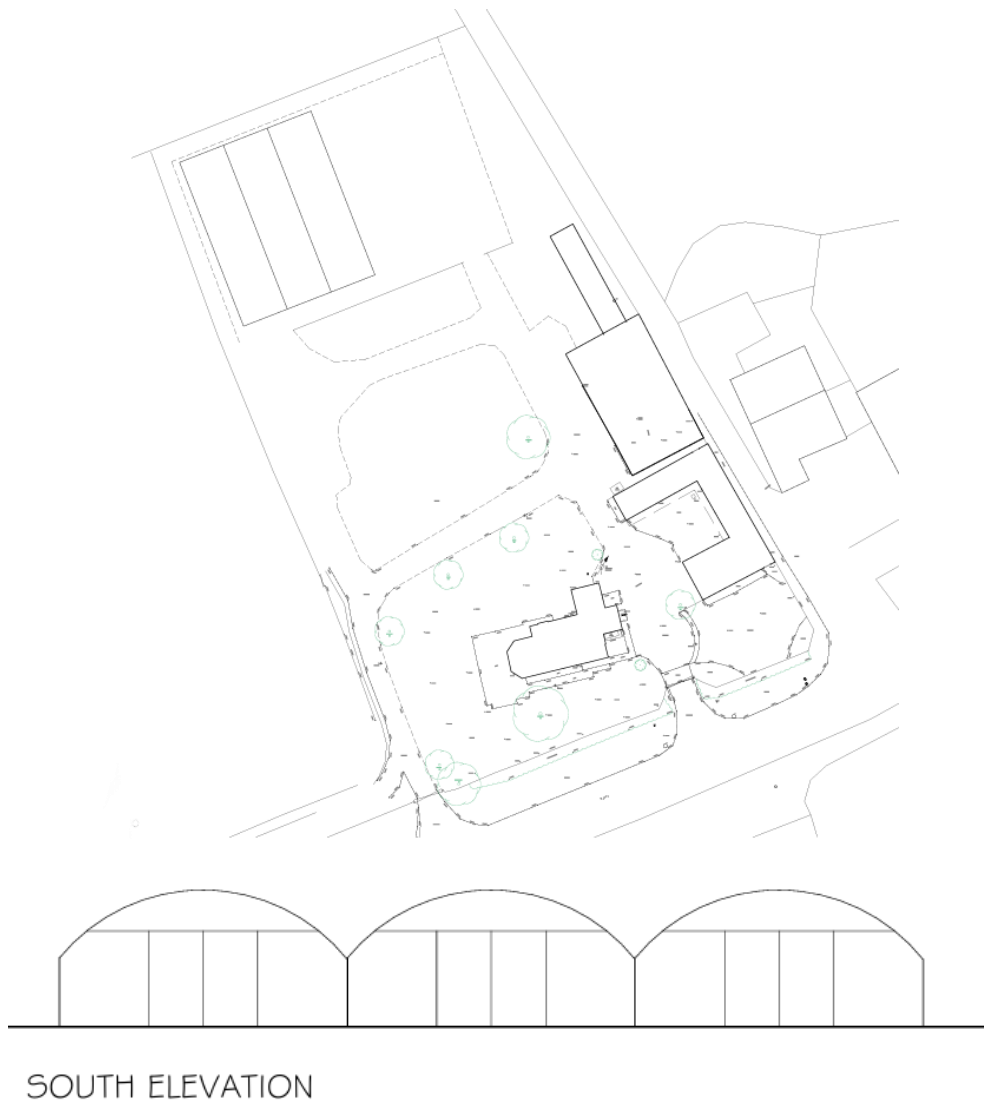
point off the B4040 to either side of the dwelling. The main access to the associated land is to the west of the house. The polytunnel will therefore be accessed other than by my clients from the main access, which is wide enough for any potential lorry visits.

The use of the land for propagation, using the new polytunnel, represents, a horticultural use, that sits full square within the land's default agricultural use. There is another building on site, in addition to the garaging and the former stables closer to the road frontage that provides the necessary general storage used in association with the land's wider management. All other structures though are not suitable for the growing of plants undercover, and the polytunnels are therefore an essential element of my client's established horticultural business, as said, based at the Hortico Plan Centre.

By application N/05/02278/COU and N/07/00059/FUL respectively, the erection of four stables, tack room, feedstore, hay store, garden store and garage were first approved, along with the change of use of land for private equestrian purposes. Subsequently, an implement store and manège were approved. The block plan approved in respect of application N/07/00059/FUL is inserted below. The enclosed application therefore leaves the house and the incidental horseshoe built grouping to the east separate from the default agricultural use of the land.



Details of the site layout proposed and the typical polytunnel construction are shown on the following page.



The key issues arising in respect of the assessment of my client's application area:

- Acceptability in principle
- Landscape and design
- Ecology
- Impact on neighbours
- Highways

Planning Policy

Under the provisions of section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA) 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 relevant statutory development plan documents in respect of this application consist of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) (adopted January

2015) and the 'saved' policies of the North Wiltshire Local Plan (NWLP) adopted June 2006.

Though the development plan is considered as a whole, those parts deemed to be particularly relevant to this application are listed below:

CP34 – Additional employment land;
 CP48 – Supporting Rural Life
 CP50 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity
 CP51 – Landscape
 CP57 – Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping
 CP60 – Sustainable Transport;
 CP61 – Transport and Development;
 CP62 – Development impacts on the transport network;
 CP64 – Demand Management;

Principle

The site in question lies within the open countryside and essentially, the operations on site would be within the TCPA definition of 'agriculture'. As indicated earlier the default use of the land is not believed to trigger any material change of use and the application relates solely to the erection of the proposed polytunnel. This is a small scale rural based development.

Paragraph 88(a) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed beautiful new buildings and Paragraph 88(b) supports the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses. The proposal allows a well-designed agricultural building to provide essential improvement for an existing agricultural business.

Similarly, WCS, Core Policy 34 identifies agriculture and land-based industries as a target sector to be promoted towards a higher-value economy and states it will support the rural way of life through the promotion of modern agricultural practices. It states proposals will be supported which support sustainable farming and food production through allowing development required to adapt to modern agricultural practices and diversification. The proposal supports an existing rural business by providing a practical means to increase production.

The broad principle of new agricultural buildings is supported by Core Policy 34 of the WCS. Criteria ii.

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CP48 supports rural life through key objectives which include protecting the countryside and maintaining its local distinctiveness. The proposal allows this to

happen through providing a modest new agricultural building which has been designed to minimise impacts on the surrounding landscape.

Design and Landscape

CP57 of the WCS sets out a number of criteria to ensure that new development meets a high standard of design. A key aim being one that runs through both the NPPF and WCS policies is the need to identify, protect and enhance local distinctiveness. The Wiltshire Design Guide (Supplementary Planning Document) (WDG) also sets out a number of key considerations to ensure that development meets the high standard of design expected by the WCS and NPPF.

CP51 broadly aims to ensure that development protects, conserves and where possible enhances landscape character and must not have a harmful impact upon it with any negative impacts mitigated as far as possible through sensitive design and landscape measures. In addition, CP57(ii) aims to ensure the retention and enhancement of existing important landscaping and natural features, to enhance biodiversity, effectively integrate the development into its setting and to mitigate against any losses that may occur.

The proposed development particularly by reason of its size and proximity to existing buildings would not result in the substantial loss of any of the key landscape character traits that the site possesses. Overall, it is not expected the proposal would cause harm to the important characteristics of the area and the scale, design and materials of the new building would result in new structure that is in keeping with the working rural landscape of the area.

Ecology

CP50 of the WCS states that all development proposals must demonstrate that appropriate measures can be implemented to avoid and reduce disturbance of sensitive wildlife species and habitats throughout the lifetime of the development.

The proposed building is situated on an area of sand school which has replaced the original grassland many years ago. Therefore, the biodiversity net gain requirement does not apply and is exempt to this application. The application will therefore have no negative impact on biodiversity and will not be left in any worse state than it was before.

Mindful of the desire to enhance the area's ecology in accordance with CP50 my client would be happy to accept a condition to add a bird box to the nearest building. It is of course no possible to attach any such features to the proposed polytunnels.

Impact on Neighbours

NPPF Paragraph 135(f) states that planning decisions should aim to create 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.

CP57 also states: vii. Having 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 (such as light intrusion, noise, smoke, fumes, effluent, waste or litter)

The location, scale and design of the polytunnel would not create a habitable space and would not cause any overlooking. It is also located at a significant distance from the neighbouring dwellings. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal does not adversely affect the residential amenities of any neighbouring properties and does not therefore conflict with the aims of Core Policy 57 is identified.

Highways

WCS Core Policies 60 and 61 aim to help reduce the need to travel by private car and encourage the use of sustainable and safe modes of transport across the county with a key criterion to ensure that developments are permitted in accessible locations. Core Policy 61 further adds that new development should be capable of being served by safe access to the highway network for all users (including safe loading/unloading facilities where these are required).

Core Policy 64 aims to promote the use of sustainable transport through a number of criteria and along with the above is consistent with the advice of the NPPF. It is though noteworthy that paragraph 116 thereof 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 would be severe.

The site is acknowledged as being located outside of a settlement boundary but, given the development is proposed to support a smallholding (agricultural) use, which is appropriate to the rural location, and is directly related to the applicant's nearby dwelling there is little to suggest the site is unsustainably located or inaccessible. There is ample space for any deliveries, and the existing access provides reasonable visibility onto a straight section of the road.

In light of the above comments, I trust you have sufficient information to confirm the enclosed is suitably sited and modest as a commensurate addition to the small holding use. However, if you have any questions to ensure your support please do not hesitate to contact me direct.

Yours faithfully



Simon Chambers
Director

Mr and Mrs Lavan
Enc.