

APPLICATION FOR FULL-PLANNING PERMISSION

CASE OFFICER REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2025/08713
APPLICATION TYPE:	Full planning permission
SITE ADDRESS:	5B, 6B & 7B, Erin Trade Centre, Bumpers Way, Chippenham, SN14 6NQ
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Change of use from Use Class E to Sui Generis Use.
RECOMMENDATION:	Approve with Conditions

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The site forms part of Bumpers Farm Industrial Estate (Erin Trade Park) (henceforth 'Bumpers Farm') which is in use for wide range of B class uses including offices, light industry, general industrial, and storage and distribution. The majority of Bumpers Farm consists of larger B2/B8 units, some of which have trade counters and the general character is one of a mixed commercial area of general industrial units of varying scales, form and uses, but all of which comprise some form of employment use. The site is situated at the eastern boundary of Bumpers Farm and forms one of a number of small / medium enterprise ('SME') type units which are of red brick construction with roller-shutter doors at their frontage. This collection of SME units is accessed directly off Bumpers Way to the west – the main access road into the estate which meets the A4 roundabout some 300m to the north. To the immediate north and west are other SME units, each of which have designated parking to their front; to the south is a large commercial building which has its own separate access further along Bumpers Way. To the immediate east the site is bound by the rear boundaries of residential dwellings which front Longstone Road, with intervening mature landscaping acting as visual screening.

Bumpers Farm is a protected employment area in the Principal Settlement of Chippenham. Chippenham benefits from a made neighbourhood development plan (NDP) and defined framework boundary, of which this site is within. At the time of writing, Bumpers Farm is the largest employment site in Chippenham – the Neighbourhood Development Plan expresses that it *predominantly accommodates small and medium sized enterprises* and the WCS lists it as an employment area which should be *retained for employment purposes within use class B1, B2 and B8 to safeguard their contribution to the Wiltshire economy*. The units comprising this application site were previously occupied by Norman E Webb Haulage but are understood to have been vacant for a period of at least six months.

The site is not in the Chippenham town centre, is not listed and is not within a National Landscape Area or Conservation Area. The site is identified by the Environment Agency as being in Flood Zone 1, at the lowest probability of flooding from rivers and sea.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks permission for a Change of Use of the existing building to a mix of uses ('sui generis') comprising a trade and counter / retail element, office space, storage space and golf simulator experience. The intended occupant is 'Cash Fore Clubs' which until this point

has occupied a unit at Fowlswick Industrial Estate, Lanhill; the re-location is stated to allow for an expansion of the business.

Revised plans were submitted during the course of determination to show cycle parking. A further consultation period was triggered by the fact that the Certificate B was incorrectly served, with Notice not having been duly served on Wiltshire Council as landowner. A Notice was thus duly served (with the requisite Notice period being accounted for through an extension of time) and the Council's Estates team were consulted on the application.

PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal / Summary
N/02/01417/FUL Construction of 18 Class B2 industrial units with associated parking, service areas and access – APPROVED 22/08/2002
14/04909/FUL Change Of Use To A Mix Of B1 Business, B2 General Industrial & B8 Storage or Distribution Uses – APPROVED – 30/10/2014
15/01330/VAR Removal of Conditions 4 & 5 of 14/04909/FUL In Relation to Hours/Days of Usage & Details of Operation – REFUSED – 08/07/2015 – APPEAL DISMISSED – 19/02/2016

The planning applications 14/04909/FUL & 15/01330/VAR are relevant in terms of confirming the lawful use of the site and buildings, this being for: 'A mix of B1, B2 and B8 Uses'.

The following applications on land within the immediate area are of general contextual relevance:

- N/03/01962/COU – Change of use to B8 with ancillary trade counter – APPROVED – 22/08/2003
- N/04/02301/COU – Change of use from B1 (business) to motocross trade/retail outlet – APPROVED – 16/09/2004.
- N/05/01520/COU – Change of use of the building for the garaging of funeral vehicles & coffin store/workshop.

In addition, it is noted that a recent appeal¹ was dismissed for a Change of Use at Unit 17 (situated in the immediate vicinity of this application site) to a bakery; the relevance of this in terms of this application proposal is considered below.

It is further noted that the same Applicant has a currently live application for a similar change of use at an alternative site within Bumpers Farm, that being considered under application ref. no. PL/2025/07607; this is also considered below.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Statutory Legislation:

Town & Country Planning Act 1990

National Planning Policy:

¹ PL/2025/02430; Appeal decision 12/01/2026 (6000642)

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- National Design Guide

Development Plan:

The development plan for Wiltshire comprises the *Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS)* (*adopted January 2015*) and any made neighbourhood plans, which remains the principal statutory planning document guiding development across the county. In line with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

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

The adopted *Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS)*, with particular regard to:

- Core Policy 1 Settlement Strategy;
- Core Policy 2 Delivery Strategy;
- Core Policy 3: Infrastructure Requirements
- Core Policy 10: Spatial Strategy for the Chippenham Community Area
- Core Policy 35: Existing Employment Land
- Core Policy 38: Retail and Leisure
- Core Policy 41: Sustainable Construction and Low-Carbon Energy
- Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping
- Core Policy 60: Sustainable Transport;
- Core Policy 61: Transport & Development;
- Core Policy 62: Development Impacts on the Transport Network;
- Core Policy 63: Transport Strategies
- Core Policy 64: Demand Management

North Wiltshire Local Plan – Saved Policies ('NWLP')

- NE18: Noise and Pollution

Draft Wiltshire Local Plan Policies

The draft Local Plan is currently going through Examination and at this stage is subject to unresolved objections. As such, the policies contained within that draft Local Plan are considered to hold only limited weight.

Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan 2023-2038: ('CNP')

- Policy T1 – Provision and Enhancement of Cycle Paths
- Policy T2 – Access to the Bus Network
- Policy T3 – Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure
- Policy T4 – Access for Disabled People and those with Reduced Mobility
- Policy T5 – Waymarking Signage on the Footpath Network
- Policy E1 – Circular Economy
- Policy E2 - Business Incubator Units

Supplementary Planning Documents and other Guidance:

- Wiltshire Design Guide (adopted April 2024)
- Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026, adopted 2015 - including the Car Parking Strategy and Cycling Strategy, adopted 2015
- Wiltshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)
 - Active travel infrastructure design standards 2022
 - Active travel parking standards and design guide 2022
- LTN1/20 – Cycle Infrastructure Design (July 2020)

ISSUES

The main issues that need to be addressed in this case include:

- Whether the development is acceptable in principle (CP 1 and 2)
- Whether the scheme would have an acceptable impact upon the reasonable living conditions of the adjoining occupants (CP 57)
- Whether the proposal would have a negative effect upon highway safety, including if there is sufficient parking for the proposed development (CP 61 and 64)
- Are there any other planning issues raised by the development?

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Chippenham Town Council: No objection.

WC Highways: No objection, confirming that vehicle and cycle parking would be within or above required standards (based on revised plans) and no real issue regarding traffic generation.

WC Economic Development: No objection, stating:

“From memory we have helped this business in the past, and I note that the units are WC’s with Estates having no objection. Whilst there is an element of retail it is a part of a larger application which aligns with our policies, and is a growing business which we would support in most situations. We would not have any objections to this application.”

WC Estates Team: No objection.

REPRESENTATIONS

In accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), the application was publicised by way of:

- Neighbour notification letters sent to adjoining and nearby properties;

These methods were used to inform interested parties and provide a period of 21 days for comments to be submitted.

Below is a summary of the representations received during the consultation period. Only material planning considerations have been taken into account in the assessment of this

application. Non-material issues, such as property values or private legal disputes, cannot be considered in the determination process.

Chippenham Cycle Network responded with no objection in principle but requested cycle stands to be installed.

ASSESSMENT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

In accordance with this statutory requirement, this application has been assessed against the relevant policies of the Development Plan, including the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) and, where applicable, any made Neighbourhood Plans. Consideration has also been given to the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as a material consideration in the assessment.

Principle of Development

Policy Context

Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy of the WCS establishes a hierarchy of settlements to guide where development should be focused. The policy prioritises growth in: Principal Settlements – of which Chippenham is one – which should be the main focus for strategic growth.

Core Policy 2: Delivery Strategy of the WCS sets out how development will be distributed and delivered across Wiltshire. The policy emphasises:

- Sustainable patterns of growth, reducing the need to travel and supporting local services.
- Development should be plan-led, aligning with the settlement strategy and supported by infrastructure.
- Windfall development (not allocated in plans) must still comply with the principles of sustainable development.
- Development outside settlement boundaries is generally not permitted, unless it meets specific policy exceptions (as set out in paragraph 4.25 of the WCS).

Together, CP1 and CP2 ensure that new development is strategically located, sustainable, and supports the character and function of Wiltshire's communities.

Assessment

Core Policy 10 (WCS) expresses that development in the Chippenham Community Area should be in accordance with the Settlement Strategy set out in CP1 and identifies which principal employment areas require development to be assessed under the requirements of Core Policy 35. The site is within the framework boundary for Chippenham and is within the principal employment area of Bumpers Farm Industrial Estate.

Core Policy 35 of the WCS requires Wiltshire's Principal Employment Areas to be retained for employment purposes within use classes B1 (replaced by use class E(g) as a result of

changes to the Use Classes Order), B2 and B8. Within the Principal Settlements proposals for redevelopment of buildings currently or last used for activities falling within those classes must demonstrate that they meet 6no. criteria, these are considered in the table below:

(i)	<i>The proposed development will generate the same number, or more permanent jobs than could be expected from the existing, or any potential employment use.</i>	The proposed use will generate 8no. FTE employees – see consideration below.
(ii)	<i>Where the proposal concerns loss of employment land of more than 0.25 ha in the Principal Settlements, Market Towns or Local Service Centres it is replaced with employment land of similar size elsewhere at that settlement.</i>	N/A
(iii)	<i>It can be shown that the loss of a small proportion of employment floorspace would facilitate the redevelopment and continuation of employment uses on a greater part of the site, providing the same number or more permanent jobs than on the original whole site.</i>	N/A
(iv)	<i>The site is not appropriate for the continuation of its present or any employment use due to a significant detriment to the environment or amenity of the area.</i>	N/A
(v)	<i>There is valid evidence that the site has no long term and strategic requirement to remain in employment use; the ability of the site to meet modern business needs must be considered, as well as its strategic value and contribution to the local and wider economy both currently and in the long term. It must be shown that the site is no longer viable for its present or any other employment use and that, in addition, it has remained unsold or un-let for a substantial period of time (at least 6 months), following genuine and sustained attempts to sell or let it on reasonable terms for employment use, taking into account prevailing market conditions.</i>	N/A (the site will remain in employment use, albeit within a sui generis Use Class)
(vi)	<i>The change of use is to facilitate the relocation of an existing business from buildings that are no longer fit for purpose to more suitable premises elsewhere within a reasonable distance to facilitate the retention of employment.</i>	See below.

Paragraph 85 of the NPPF requires planning policies and decisions to help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt, expressing how significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

Wiltshire Employment Land Review Update (prepared for Wiltshire Council, dated September 2023) provides the following (inter alia) relevant context:

- 7.1.4 To address the potential imbalance of demand and supply [...] change of use should be resisted on existing and allocated sites which continue to be suitable for employment
- 7.1.13 At Chippenham, Corsham and Melksham there are five existing and allocated sites (including Chippenham Gateway), and two of these have been identified by Wiltshire Council as being under pressure for change of use, so the supply of sites in this area is uncertain.
- 7.2.7 Maintaining the current level of supply of employment land and making some further targeted allocations is important to the economic future of Wiltshire, to support the aspiration for growth throughout the country. If a significant number of existing sites are lost to other uses, then further allocations will be needed to enable the county's continued economic growth.
- 7.2.14 There is no immediate quantitative need for the de-allocation of any employment site in Wiltshire. However, if some sites cannot be viably development during the Local Plan period, then they may distort the view of supply, and the balance of forecast demand and supply. [...]
- 7.4.5 All good quality existing employment sites should be maintained for employment use.
- 7.4.6 Change of use from employment to any other use should only be considered if there are good reasons for doing so. [...]
- 7.4.16 There is a need to maintain a supply of suitable space for small businesses, to enable to starts and growing businesses. [...] the portfolio of sites and premises should accommodate the requirements of start-ups, early stage, SMEs and large companies for office, industrial and warehouse use. Start-up and early-stage businesses will require smaller premises that are affordable, and which are let on flexible terms, so that they can move to larger premises in a timely manner as they grow. [...]

In this case, the proposal is for the re-location of an existing business which is located within the County and is seeking to expand. In line with criterion (vi) of Core Policy 35, the Council's Economic Development Officer has expressed support for the application and the Estates Team (as landowner) also raised no objection. Criterion (vi) offers clear support for the Council to support existing businesses, and that is the case in this instance. The business currently employs 4no. full-time and 3no. part-time staff, equating to a total of 5.2 FTE. The re-location to these larger premises will allow the company to expand further, enabling the 'immediate recruitment' of 2no. additional full-time employees and a further 2no. part-time staff, bringing the total number of employees to 8no., with further job growth being envisaged over the medium term.

The CNP seeks to encourage and support existing business and the Vision states that: "... It will encourage new businesses to relocate, or start up, within and around the town so that it becomes much more self-sufficient and less of a commuter town." This application aligns with this general aim and vision and does not give rise to any conflict with Policies E1 and E2.

The proposed use is considered to be materially different from the proposed use as a 'bakery', which was previously considered unacceptable for Unit 17, with an appeal recently being dismissed for that proposal (as above: PL/2025/02430; Appeal decision 12/01/2026 (6000642)). In that appeal decision, the Inspector sets out analysis regarding the likely levels

of employment and this is clearly a fundamental consideration. With this application proposal confirming some 8no. FTE employees, this is considered to be a materially different 'sui generis' use than the 'bakery' which would operate on a retail basis and not generate the same quantum of employment

Conclusion

The proposed re-location of the existing business to allow for and facilitate its expansion has general in principle support through criterion (vi) of Core Policy 35 (WCS), as well as the aims and objectives set out in the Economy section of the CNP. As such, the application is considered to be generally acceptable in principle.

Amenity

Policy Context

Core Policy 57 (Point vii) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires development to respect the amenity of existing occupants and ensure appropriate amenity levels for future residents. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly Paragraph 135, reinforces the need for development to provide a high standard of amenity for both existing and future users. These policies guide the assessment of amenity impacts, which will be considered in detail under the below headings.

Assessment

In this instance, the Change of Use of the building will not give rise to any issues of overlooking / loss of privacy / loss of light or overbearing impact. Given the close proximity of residential dwellings to the east of the site, consideration should be given to the potential for noise impact on the amenity of the occupants of those dwellings, particularly in light of historic appeal decisions relating to the site. However, in this instance and based on the nature of the occupier and their on-going activities, there is not considered to be any risk of adverse noise impact arising.

Conclusion

Based on the above, the application is not considered to conflict with Core Policy 57 (WCS) or the NPPF in terms of amenity impacts.

Highways Impacts and Parking

Policy Context

Transport implications are a key factor in assessing planning applications, especially for larger developments. Proposals must demonstrate:

- Safe and suitable access for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and those with mobility impairments.
- No severe residual impacts on the surrounding highway network.
- Promotion of sustainable travel, reducing reliance on private vehicles.
- Adequate parking and cycle provision, in line with adopted standards.
- Protection and enhancement of public rights of way and active travel routes.

Relevant policies include Core Policies 60–64 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, supported by the Wiltshire Local Transport Plan, Car Parking Strategy, and Cycling Strategy. The Local

Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and LTN 1/20 (DfT) provide further design guidance for active travel infrastructure.

Assessment

As with the other units on this area of Bumpers Farm, the application site has its own designated parking area to the front. It is noted that the application proposes the re-location of an existing business to what is generally a more sustainable site and this will clearly benefit those employees which live within Chippenham – it is hoped that at least some of these may choose more sustainable modes of commute. In this regard, the Chippenham Cycle Network Group responded to the application with a request to include cycle parking infrastructure and the plans have been amended to show the provision of this. It is noted that these are indicated as being shown on 'blue' land, but the land is in fact within the ownership of Wiltshire Council rather than the Applicant themselves. However, it is considered acceptable to Condition to the provision of this infrastructure in this instance given it is something the Council would be supportive of in principle and has control of by way of ownership.

In terms of the nature of the Change of Use of the building itself, the Highway Officer has considered this and concluded that the vehicle and cycle parking is 'within or above required standards' and that traffic generation and impact would not be of a scale as to be unacceptable given the location of the site within an established industrial estate.

Conclusion

As such, with the enhancements to the sustainable transport modes now proposed on the revised plans, the application accords with Core Policies 60, 61 and 62 (WCS), as well as the general aims and objectives of the CNP in terms of encouraging the use of more sustainable modes of transport.

Other Issues

As this application is for the Change of Use of the building only, there are no **design, character or appearance** issues arising. Similarly, the proposed Change of Use is not considered to give rise to any **ecology / biodiversity** issues, and as the site is located in flood zone 1, this proposed Change of Use does not raise any **flood risk or drainage** issues. Other than noise impact, which is considered under 'amenity' above, there are not considered to be any other **environmental considerations** or impacts arising.

In terms of the separate application made by the same Applicant for a similar Change of Use at an alternative site on Bumpers Farm and currently under determination under application ref. no. PL/2025/07607, this application is being treated on its own merits.

CIL & S106 CONTRIBUTIONS

CIL

As no new floorspace is being created, it is understood that the proposed development would not be liable for any CIL charge, as set out in the Wiltshire CIL Charging Schedule dated May 2015.

PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

At the heart of the NPPF there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development requiring local planning authorities to approve development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; and where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless (taken from paragraph 11d of the NPPF):

- The application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing development proposed; or
- any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole;

The principle of development is considered acceptable when assessed against the settlement strategy of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the emerging Local Plan, as well as the relevant considerations of Core Policy 35. The proposal is broadly compliant with relevant local and national planning policies in respect of amenity and transport and highways and the development would support the expansion of an existing business.

No material considerations have been identified that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits or indicate that permission should be refused, having regard to the assessment above and the representations received.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered acceptable in planning terms and in accordance with the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan, the National Planning Policy Framework and all other relevant material considerations and is recommended for approval accordingly.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Planning Permission be GRANTED, subject to conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
 - 363-101.revA Location Plan / Existing Elevations and Plans (received 16/12/2025)
 - 363-102 Proposed Elevations and Plans (received 31/10/2025 unless otherwise specified)

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. No part of the development shall be occupied until the cycle parking facilities shown on the approved plans have been provided in full and made available for use. The cycle parking facilities shall be retained for use in accordance with the approved details at all times thereafter.

REASON: To ensure that satisfactory facilities for the parking of cycles are provided and to encourage travel by means other than the private car.

INFORMATIVES

The applicant is requested to note that this permission does not affect any private property rights and therefore does not authorise the carrying out of any work on land outside their control. If such works are required it will be necessary for the applicant to obtain the landowners consent before such works commence.

If you intend carrying out works in the vicinity of the site boundary, you are also advised that it may be expedient to seek your own advice with regard to the requirements of the Party Wall Act 1996.

Any alterations to the approved plans, brought about by compliance with Building Regulations or any other reason must first be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority before commencement of work.