

ATLAS

PLANNING GROUP

PLANNING STATEMENT

Willow Tree Farm

Ford Lane

Ford

SP4 6DJ

January 2026

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INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Statement has been produced by Atlas Planning Group in support of an application seeking full planning permission for the erection of a stable block for agricultural purposes at Willow Tree Farm, Ford Lane, Ford, Salisbury, SP4 6DJ.
- 1.2 This Statement will assess the development proposal in the context of national and local planning policy found within the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) and the Wiltshire Design Guide (2024).

SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The application site relates to a paddock situated within an established agricultural unit of 0.56 ha. The holding is predominantly made up of grazing land and comprises several small agricultural storage buildings. Vehicle access to the site is via an established agricultural entrance off Ford Lane.
- 2.2 The applicant (Mr Small) has farmed the land since at least 2016, with the principal activity being the keeping and breeding of livestock (sheep, pigs, donkeys and poultry). The agricultural unit has a county parish holding (CPH) number of CPH45/209/0165.



Figure 1 - Extent of agricultural holding

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 The application site does not have any planning history, however, a recent planning permission on the wider holding has some direct relevance to the current application:

FULL PLANNING PERMISSION - PL/2025/07239

- 3.2 In October 2025, an application was submitted to Wiltshire Council seeking full planning permission for operational works in association with the change of use of an agricultural building to an Aparthotel under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class R of the General Permitted Development Order (2015) (as amended).
- 3.3 Planning permission was granted in November 2025, and the Applicant has confirmed that the existing storage barn will be converted to an aparthotel to facilitate farm diversification.

THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a stable block to serve Willow Tree Farm.
- 4.2 The description of development is as follows:

“Erection of stable block with associated works”

- 4.3 The proposed stable would be an ‘L’ shaped building located within the north west corner of the paddock. An area of parking and turning is proposed within the site and the established agricultural access off Ford Lane will be used in association with the proposed development. Internally, the building will accommodate two stable blocks, a tack room, feed room and machinery room. The external façade will feature horizontal timber cladding and red brick under slate roof tiles.



Figure 2 - Proposed site plan

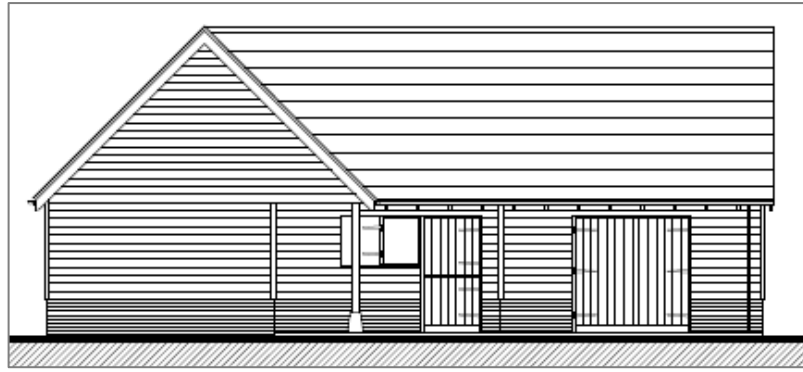


Figure 3 - Proposed north elevation

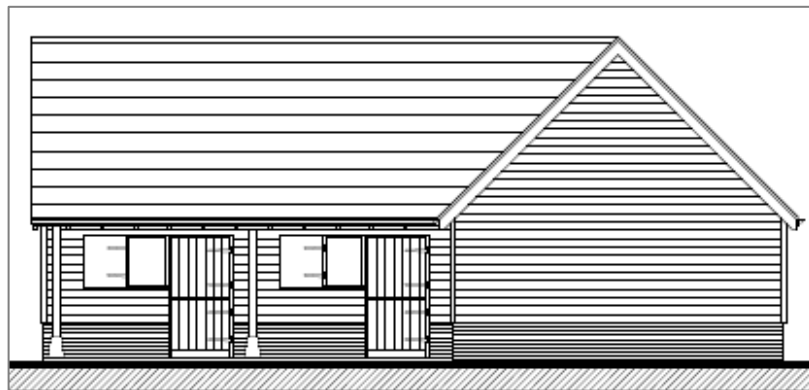


Figure 4 - Proposed west elevation

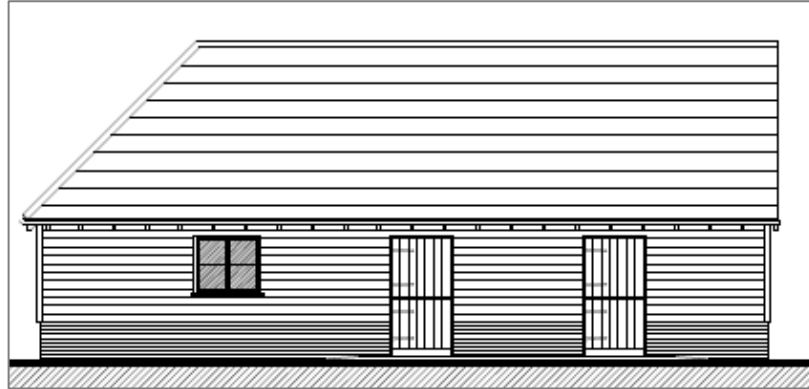


Figure 5 - Proposed east elevation

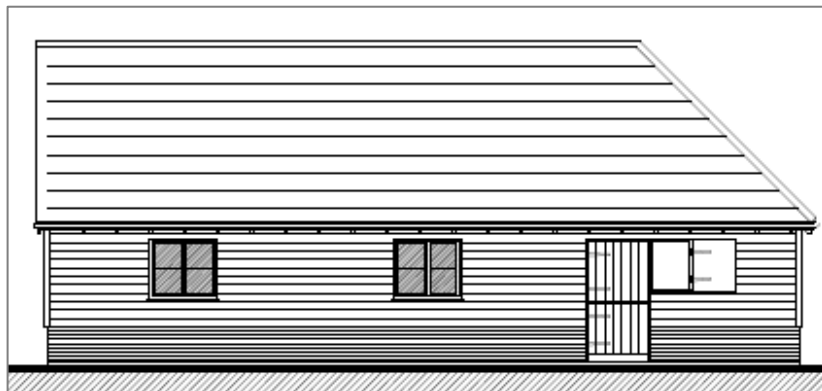


Figure 6 - Proposed south elevation

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 Wiltshire Council's Core Strategy (2015) is the Council's primary Development Plan Document and the starting point for determining planning decisions within the county. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) provides a national tier of policy and decision-making guidance for the planning system and forms a material consideration for all planning decisions.
- 5.3 The policies and guidance contained within the statutory DPD and all other relevant material considerations have been reviewed to ensure the current proposal is an appropriate form of development for the application site.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

- 5.4 The Settlement and Delivery Strategies of the Core Strategy are designed to ensure new development fulfils the fundamental principles of sustainability, as advocated in the NPPF.
- 5.5 Core Policy 1 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy sets out the 'Settlement Strategy', and identifies four tiers of settlements - Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres, and Large and Small Villages. Only the Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages have settlement boundaries.
- 5.6 Core Policy 2 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy sets out the 'Delivery Strategy'. It identifies the scale of growth appropriate within each settlement tier, stating that within the limits of development, as defined on the policies map, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development at the Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages.
- 5.7 Willow Tree Farm lies outside of any defined settlement boundary. Core Policy 2 outlines that development will not be permitted outside the limits of development, unless it meets the exemption policies detailed in paragraph 4.25 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) or would be classified as infill development within then built area.
- 5.8 The proposals seek the erection of a stable block within the open countryside. Although the current application does not meet any of the exemption policies details in Paragraph 5.24 of the Core Strategy, agricultural development is supported by Core Policy 34 and Core Policy 48 supports rural life.

5.9 Core Policy 34 states that Outside the Principal Settlements, Market Towns and Local Service Centres, developments that:

- ii. Support sustainable farming and food production through allowing development required to adapt to modern agricultural practices and diversification; or*
- iii. Are for new and existing rural based businesses within or adjacent to Large and Small Villages; or*
- iv. Are considered essential to the wider strategic interest of the economic development of Wiltshire, as determined by the Council*

Will be supported where they:

- v. Meet sustainable development objectives as set out in policies of this Core Strategy, and*
- vi. Are consistent in scale with their location, do not adversely affect nearby buildings and the surrounding area or detract from residential amenity; and*
- vii. Are supported by evidence that they are required to benefit the local economic and social needs; and*
- viii. Would not undermine the delivery of strategic employment allocations; and*
- ix. Are supported by adequate infrastructure*

5.10 As aforementioned, the applicant (Mr Small) has farmed the land since at least 2016, with the principal activity being the keeping and breeding of livestock (sheep, pigs, donkeys and poultry).

5.11 Given the existing storage building on the holding will be converted to a Use Class C1 Aparthotel (Application reference: PL/2025/07239) to facilitate farm diversification, it is considered essential that the new stable block is erected so that the Applicant can make much better and productive use of their holding.

5.12 Paragraph 88 of the NPPF supports a prosperous rural economy by enabling growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas through well-designed new buildings and the development of agricultural businesses.

- 5.13 NPPF Paragraph 89 also states that planning decisions should recognise that buildings for agricultural purposes *“may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport)”*.
- 5.14 For the reasons above, the proposed stable block is in accordance with Core Policy 34 and 48 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, and the overarching principle of national policy with regard to supporting a prosperous rural economy.
- 5.15 The principle of development should therefore be considered acceptable.

DESIGN AND IMPACT ON CHARACTER OF THE AREA

- 5.16 Core Policy 51 requires development to protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and must not result in any harmful impact. It also requires proposals to demonstrate that landscape character is conserved and where possible enhanced through sensitive design, landscape mitigation and enhancement measures.
- 5.17 Core Policy 57 requires a high standard of design for all new developments. Amongst other criteria, new developments must show that they enhance local distinctiveness; respond positively to the existing townscape; be sympathetic to and conserve historic buildings; and have regard to the impact on amenities of existing occupiers.
- 5.18 The materials proposed for the external façade have been sensitively considered and will comprise horizontal softwood cladding, red brick and slate roof tiles. The stable block would be of a form appropriate for its rural setting and constructed from materials which reflect the appearance of the various stable blocks along Ford Lane and Roman Road.



Figure 7 - Existing stable on Roman Road



Figure 8 - Existing stable on Ford Lane

5.19 Although open views of the site are achievable when passing along Ford Lane, the chosen materiality and design of the stable block will ensure that the proposal would not look out of place for the rural setting.

5.20 On this basis, it is considered that the development accords with Core Strategy Policies 51 and 57.

HIGHWAYS

5.21 Willow Tree Farm is served by three established entry points off Ford Lane. An existing agricultural access will continue to be used in association with the new stable block. Ford Lane is an unclassified road with a 60-mph speed limit.

5.22 Although the visibility splay is slightly less than the derived sight stopping distance when egressing the site to the north west, given the rural and narrow nature of the lane, and by virtue of the fact that any driver is expected to travel with due care and attention for their environment, it is likely that car speeds would be far below 60mph.

5.23 As aforementioned, the existing site is in agricultural use. Since the existing storage building will be converted to a use Class C1 aparthotel, and the proposals relate to a new stable block, the number of agricultural vehicle movements will be comparable to the existing situation. The development would therefore not have a severe detrimental impact on the operation and safety of the local highway network.

5.24 After all, NPPF Paragraph 116 states that *“Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residential cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, **would be severe**, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios”*.

5.25 For these reasons, the proposal should be considered acceptable in highways terms.



Figure 9 - Established agricultural access looking south east (red dot)



Figure 10 - Established agricultural access looking north west (red dot)

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

- 5.26 Core Strategy Policy 57 of the WCS 'Ensuring High Quality Design & Space Shaping' requires developments to ensure the impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties is acceptable.
- 5.27 In terms of neighbouring amenities, Roosters is the nearest residential property situated more than 500 metres north west of the site. This separation distance is sufficient to ensure that there would be negligible risk of harm on nearby residents.
- 5.28 In terms of noise, the holding is already maintained by farm vehicles so noise from the farming activities in this location would already be reasonably expected. The current application would not result in an intensification of the use of the holding and any farm vehicles will be in operation during daytime periods only. As such, vehicle movements associated with the stable block would not give rise to unwanted noise and disturbance on the nearest noise sensitive receptors.
- 5.29 In any case, Willow Tree Farm is located in a rural area, and it is not uncommon for farming activity to take place close to residential properties in villages and rural locations. There is nothing unusual about the siting of the proposed stable block.
- 5.30 Therefore, the proposal accords with Core Policy 57.

FLOOD RISK

- 5.31 The application site lies within Flood Zone 1. However, the south west boundary of the site is situated within a climate change allowance flood zone. The application site is already in agricultural use, and buildings used for agriculture fall within the 'less vulnerable' classification in Annex 3 of the NPPF.
- 5.32 In terms of residual flood risk, given the size of the holding, separation from residential properties and limited footprint of the proposed development, the proposed stable block would be unlikely to increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.
- 5.33 As such, the application should be considered acceptable with regard to flood risk.

ECOLOGY

- 5.34 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF requires decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Core Strategy Policy 50 'Biodiversity and Geodiversity' requires proposals to demonstrate

how they protect features of nature conservation and geological value as part of the design rationale. The policy also requires all proposals to incorporate appropriate mitigation measures to avoid and reduce disturbance of sensitive wildlife species and habitats. All development should seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity.

- 5.35 This application is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal produced by Pro Vision (January 2026). The survey undertaken on-site found the paddock to comprise short sward grassland in poor condition due to the current management of the site. Overall, the site has been assessed as holding limited potential for protected species.
- 5.36 As set out at NPPF Para 193, opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated into part of the design. Importantly, swallow nest cups will be installed on the ridge beam of the stable, and the scheme will result in a 11.26% net gain in habitat units. This should be considered a significant benefit of the proposals.
- 5.37 As such, ecology on site would be enhanced and the proposed stable block will not result in any harm on protected species, meaning the development is in full accordance with Core Policy 50 and the wider objectives of the NPPF to conserve and enhance the natural environment.

PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a stable block for agricultural purposes at Willow Tree Farm, Ford Lane, Salisbury, SP4 6DJ.
- 6.2 Whilst the site lies outside of any defined settlement boundary, the site is in agricultural use and the proposals seek to erect a new stable block to serve the agricultural holding.
- 6.3 Given the existing storage building will be converted to a Use Class C1 Aparthotel (Application reference: PL/2025/07239) to facilitate farm diversification, it is considered essential that the new stable block is erected so that the Applicant can make much better and productive use of their holding. The principle of development should therefore be considered acceptable.
- 6.4 Indeed, open views of the site are achievable when passing along Ford Lane. However, the proposed development would be of a form appropriate for its rural setting and constructed from materials which reflect the appearance of the various stable blocks along Ford Lane and Roman Road.
- 6.5 For these reasons, we respectfully ask that Wiltshire Council approve this application without delay.