

PLANNING/HERITAGE/DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT



**February
2026**

Field shelter at Court House, Aldbourne, Wiltshire, SN8 2EJ

Replacement of the existing field shelter/former stable and formation of an access track using existing field access

Prepared by: Sasha Berezina BA(Hons) MA MRTPI IHBC



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION.....	3
2.	THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	5
3.	POLICY AND LEGISLATION	8
	<i>The Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS), 2015.....</i>	<i>8</i>
	<i>Aldbourn Neighbourhood Development Plan 2021 – 2036.....</i>	<i>10</i>
	<i>The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</i>	<i>10</i>
	<i>Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990</i>	<i>13</i>
	<i>Supplementary Guidance</i>	<i>13</i>
4.	OPERATIONAL NEED.....	15
5.	HERITAGE ASSETS.....	17
6.	NATIONAL LANDSCAPE.....	21
7.	HIGHWAYS.....	23
8.	RESIDENTIAL AMENITY	24
9.	BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN	24
10.	PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION.....	25

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Context Planning Ltd have been instructed to prepare this planning application for the replacement of an existing rural outbuilding at The Court House, Aldbourne, together with the creation of a track following an established field access route.
- 1.2. The application site forms part of a wide parcel of residential, agricultural and equestrian land owned by The Court House and is located to the north of its principal domestic garden areas (Fig. 1).

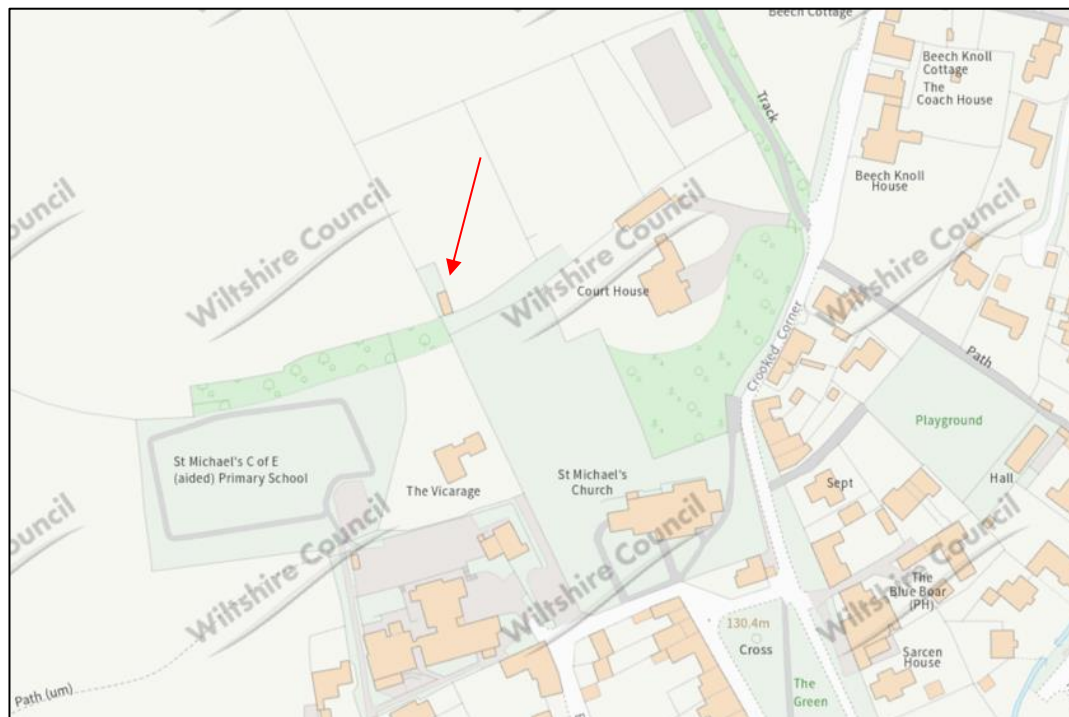


Fig.1 – Location of the application site

- 1.3. The site sits just outside the Aldbourne Conservation Area and there are several listed buildings nearby, namely The Court House (Grade II), The Carriage House and Stables (Grade II), and Church of St Michael (Grade

l). It is also located within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, a designation that washes over Aldbourne and surrounding areas. Bridleway (ALDB29) skirts the eastern edge of the fields and the existing access to the fields is via this track.

- 1.4.** The fields to the north and north-east of the house and associated outbuildings serve multiple purposes, and are in regular use. The larger fields are used for occasional equine livery, and grazing for sheep (for which purposes the property is EPC holding registered). At the north-west corner of the holding is a moveable shepherd's hut. The smaller subdivided parcels immediately to the north of The Court House are used for lawn tennis and other incidental domestic uses. The parcel to the south-west is used for land management of the fields and of the extensive garden to The Court House.
- 1.5.** The structure and compound in the south-west corner of the fields were likely built in the 1980s for stabling, storage, and sheep penning. The building is a simple wooden design under mono-pitch corrugated sheet roof with an area of hardstanding to the front and a fenced compound/composting to the side.
- 1.6.** The field shelter/former stable is currently in mixed use as storage for hay, straw and animal feeds and provisions, light machinery storage (e.g. harrows, tractors and trailers), and ferret caging. The area immediately outside provides a working area for vehicles to be kept and maintained, log processing, garden composting, drying timber, manure processing and servicing machinery.



Fig. 2 – Existing application site (winter view)

2. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1. The proposal seeks planning permission for:

- the replacement of the existing field shelter with a purpose-designed oak-framed service building and yard; and
- the formation of a surfaced access track, utilising an established field access.

2.2. The replacement building is designed on a larger footprint (Fig.3) to continue accommodating agricultural, equestrian and land management uses. Its form, scale and detailing are based on local barn and stable typologies with particular inspiration taken from the historic Aldbourne Racing Stables (Hightown Stables) which once formed a prominent livery in

Aldbourne. Materials include oak framing, traditional brick and flint, timber boarding, and a clay plain tile roof, all of which reflect local rural building traditions.

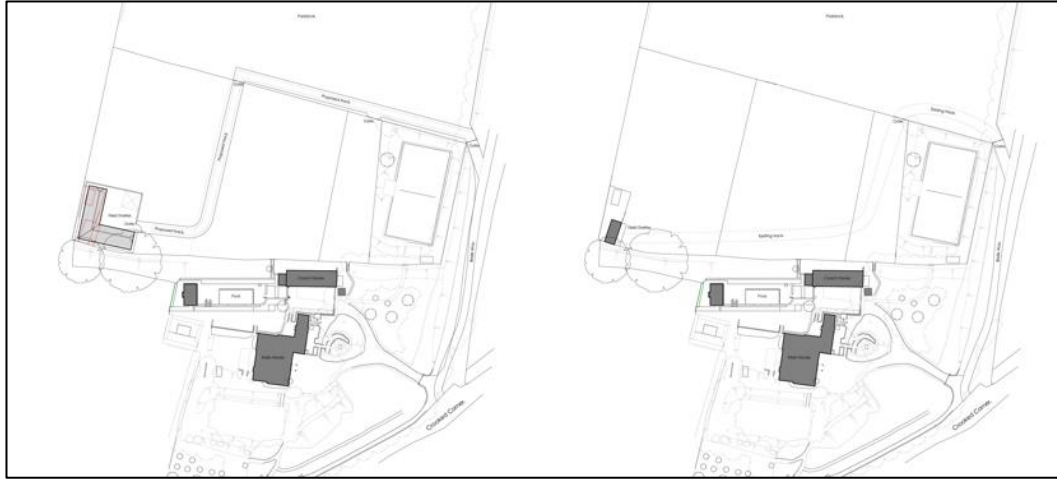


Fig. 3 – Proposed and Existing site plan

- 2.3.** The planned track will improve the current field access route and will be located along the northern and western edges of the paddocks, replacing an informal muddy path that would run diagonally across them. The track will be raised by approx. 100mm to 150mm above current ground level, and grassed over the EDP bound scalping sub-base and aggregate binding material.
- 2.4.** There is no relevant planning history associated directly with the application site itself. However, The Court House was recently granted planning permission and listed building consent for works to the main house and the provision of an outdoor swimming pool and pavilion within the garden.
- 2.5.** Construction of the pool is currently underway, and the paddocks immediately to the north of its location are being used as a temporary construction compound accessed via a temporary track. Part of this track is proposed to be retained and grassed over, as described above, in order to

provide a more formalised access to the service yard and replacement field shelter.

- 2.6.** The planned service building aims to solve existing land management issues while offering an architectural style better suited to this heritage-sensitive location. It is designed to provide sufficient, well-organised accommodation for agricultural, equestrian and estate management uses associated with the surrounding fields. The building will consolidate storage and servicing functions that are currently dispersed across the site and, in particular, relieve pressure on the historic listed stables and associated buildings, allowing them to function in a manner more consistent with their heritage significance and lawful incidental residential use.



Fig. 4 – Proposed replacement building

- 2.7.** In design terms, the proposed building draws explicitly on local barn and stable typologies, with a simple, legible form and a clear hierarchy between enclosed and open bays. The use of traditional materials ensures that the building reads as a functional structure in local vernacular, appropriate to its landscape and heritage context.

3. POLICY AND LEGISLATION

- 3.1.** Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides that, in dealing with proposals for planning permission, regard must be had to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 provides that if regard is to be had to the development plan for any determination then that determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material.
- 3.2.** Wiltshire Council formally adopted the Wiltshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document in January 2015 which has a number of relevant policies to this proposal. The Aldbourne Neighbourhood Development Plan (made March 2023) forms part of the statutory Development Plan and carries full weight. The statutory duties set out within Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and national policy in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) are also relevant and referenced accordingly.

The Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS), 2015

- 3.3.** Core Policy 34 (Additional employment land) aims to support the rural way of life through the promotion of modern agricultural practices, appropriate diversification of the rural economy. It overtly supports sustainable farming and food production through allowing development required to adapt to modern agricultural practices and diversification.
- 3.4.** Core Policy 48 (Supporting Rural Life) seeks to protect the countryside and maintain its local distinctiveness.

-
- 3.5.** Core Policy 51 (Landscape) seeks to protect, conserve and enhance Wiltshire's distinctive landscape character. It states that development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and must not have a harmful impact upon landscape character, while any negative impacts must be mitigated as far as possible through sensitive design and landscape measures.
- 3.6.** Core Policy 57 (Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping) relates to design and advises that new development should be sympathetic to the historic and natural environment. It should enhance local distinctiveness and relate positively to its setting. Green infrastructure should be safeguarded and development should make an efficient use of land. Development should have regard to its impact on adjoining uses and buildings ensuring an appropriate level of amenity. Buildings should take account of diversity and adaptability, considering how buildings and space will be used in the immediate and long-term future.
- 3.7.** Core Policy CP58 (Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment) advises that development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment. Designated heritage assets and their setting will be conserved, conserved, and where appropriate enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance.
- 3.8.** Policy CP61 (Transport and new development) requires transport assessment to demonstrate that consideration has been given to the needs of all transport users, where relevant; that the scheme can be served by safe access to highway network; and that fit for purpose and safe loading/unloading facilities can be provided where these are required as part of the normal functioning of the development. CP64 (Demand management) states that the provision of parking associated with new private non-residential development will be limited to maximum parking
-

standards.

Aldbourn Neighbourhood Development Plan 2021 – 2036

- 3.9.** Policy 8 (High Quality Design) requires development to be locally distinctive, respond positively to its surroundings and accord with the Aldbourn Parish Community Character and Design Statement.
- 3.10.** Policy 9 (Design in the Conservation Area and its Setting) requires development affecting the Conservation Area or its setting to preserve or enhance its character and appearance.
- 3.11.** Policy 10 (Overall Heritage) requires development to conserve listed buildings, their settings, and the wider historic environment, and to avoid harm to key views and landmarks.
- 3.12.** Policy 15 (Landscape) gives great weight to conserving and enhancing the North Wessex Downs National Landscape and requires proposals to demonstrate regard to the objectives of the relevant Management Plan.
- 3.13.** Policy 16 (Views) requires assessment of impacts on identified key views.
- 3.14.** Policy 20 (Footpaths, Bridleways and Cycleways) requires development adjacent to Public Rights of Way to respect their function and setting.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 3.15.** The NPPF guides at paragraph 38 that *‘Local Planning Authorities (LPA) should approach decision-making on proposed development in a positive and creative way...and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental*

conditions of the area. Decision makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible’.

- 3.16.** Paragraph 10 advises ‘*so that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development’.*

 - 3.17.** Paragraph 11 outlines how the presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking is engaged. For decision taking this means ‘*approving development proposals which accord with an up-to-date Development Plan without delay’.*

 - 3.18.** Section 12 of the NPPF in paragraph 131 recognises that “*The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities*”. Paragraph 135 guides that planning decisions should ensure that developments will ‘*function well and add to the overall quality of the area*’; ‘*are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping*’.

 - 3.19.** Paragraph 189 emphasises the great weight attributed to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Landscapes and expects that the scale and extent of development should be limited and sensitively designed and located.

 - 3.20.** In respect of transport, paragraph 115 advises that it should be ensured that ‘*safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users*’.
-

Paragraph 116 advises 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 would be severe’*.

- 3.21. Paragraph 135 guides that planning decisions should ensure that developments will *‘function well and add to the overall quality of the area’*; *‘are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping’*.
- 3.22. Section 16 deals with one of the key overarching environmental objectives of planning system to conserve and enhance the historic environment.
- 3.23. Paragraph 210 advises Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) that they should take account of *‘the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation’*. Paragraph 212 advises that *‘when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation’*.
- 3.24. Enhancing or better revealing the significance of a heritage asset is a desirable development outcome in respect of heritage. It is consistent with key policy and guidance, including the NPPF paragraphs 210 and 219. In determining an application, any level of harm to a heritage asset should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals, as per paragraph 215 of the NPPF.
- 3.25. Paragraph 219 states that *“Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or*

better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.”

- 3.26.** Paragraph 220 clarifies that not all elements of a Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance and that relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area as a whole should be taken into consideration.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 3.27.** The Council has a statutory requirement under Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 in considering whether to grant planning consent for any works to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
- 3.28.** There is a duty placed on the Council under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the preservation or enhancement of the character of the surrounding conservation area.

Supplementary Guidance

- 3.29.** Aldbourne Conservation Area Statement (June 2003) identifies and records special qualities of the village that make up its architectural and historic character. This document provides a basis for local plan policies and development control decisions as well as for the formulation of proposals for the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of the area.

-
- 3.30.** Core Policy 51 requires proposals to take into account the objectives, policies and actions set out in the supplementary planning document, The Statutory Management Plan for The North Wessex Downs National Landscape Management Plan for 2025-30. The Management Plan is a material consideration in preparation of Local Plan policies and decision-making.
- 3.31.** Policy HE9 in relation to additions/alterations to the build heritage seeks to secure the high standards of design and materials.
- 3.32.** Policy LAN4 seeks to ensure the conservation and enhancement of the landscape character, tranquillity and special qualities of the AONB and its setting, particularly those sensitive to change.
- 3.33.** Policy PT15 requires new development to complement the special qualities of the AONB and take full account of the area's setting and context through the consideration of appropriate Landscape Character Assessments and sensitivity and design studies. Policy PT25 is looking to ensure that the replacement of existing permanent buildings in the AONB and its setting are supported where the replacement building is not materially larger and is in the same use as the one it replaces.
- 3.34.** Historic England Good Practice Advice on Planning Note 3 'The Setting of Heritage Assets' (published 22 December 2017) sets out guidance on managing change within the settings of heritage assets and gives general advice on understanding setting, and how it may contribute to the significance of heritage assets and allow that significance to be appreciated, as well as advice on how views contribute to setting.
-

4. OPERATIONAL NEED

- 4.1.** The current field shelter/stable is in poor condition, offers little protection from the weather, and inefficiently uses space. As a largely dilapidated structure within the setting of several heritage assets, it negatively affects visual amenity within the setting of the nearby Conservation Area and listed buildings, does not meet modern agricultural or equestrian needs, and cannot store necessary equipment, making replacement necessary.
- 4.2.** The lack of space is causing dependence on the historic listed Carriage House and Stables to store land management equipment, machinery, and materials. Although these buildings can legally be used for incidental storage, doing so limits their proper ancillary function and puts strain on historic structures not built for modern land management needs. As a result, this setup is neither effective nor sustainable for day-to-day operation of the estate. The proposed consolidated building would be able to accommodate all these various servicing/operational functions for the estate, away from the historic core of the Court House.
- 4.3.** In addition, the movement of machinery and equipment between the principal domestic curtilage and the surrounding fields is inherently disruptive. Access to the domestic curtilage is taken via a separate route, past two sets of historic gates and along cobbled areas by the listed stables (Fig.5). Frequent movements of agricultural machinery and service vehicles through this constrained access point presents an ongoing risk of incremental harm. The current arrangement places avoidable strain on sensitive historic fabric and features that were not designed to accommodate regular modern vehicular movements.



Fig.5 –Grade II listed Stables currently providing supplementary storage and parking

- 4.4.** Repeated transfers between the fields and curtilage cause unnecessary vehicle movement on Crooked Corner lane, along the bridleway and the Court House entrance. This setup is impractical and increases pressure on both the historic access point and highway safety of the lane and the bridleway. Provision of a dedicated and consolidated facility would reduce the number of movements in and out of the fields.

- 4.5.** The proposed track would reuse the existing access, simply providing a more defined and durable route between the field shelter and the wider landholding. It will replace an informal and seasonally muddy path that currently runs diagonally across the fields. The track is designed using permeable materials and will be grassed over to retain a rural appearance and avoid urbanising the landscape. Its alignment respects the established field pattern and avoids unnecessary intrusion into open pasture.

5. HERITAGE ASSETS

- 5.1.** The application site is just outside, but close to, a significant historic area in the Aldbourne Conservation Area, centred on the Grade I listed Church of St Michael, the village green, and a number of key historic buildings (Fig.5). The Church stands as a prominent visual and historical landmark above the green and surrounded by village buildings with rural landscape beyond. Its churchyard, bordered by historic boundaries and mature trees, lies in the rear. To the east, on higher ground, is The Court House with its associated Carriage House and Stables, a Grade II listed 16th-century building with later additions. Together, they form a coherent high-status historic group that reflects ecclesiastical, agrarian, civic and residential heritage of the village.
- 5.2.** The replacement shelter will lie just beyond the northern edge of this historic village group, on arable glebe land once held by the Vicar of Aldbourne and later The Court House. The rising topography and mature boundary planting will continue to provide clear visual containment and separation between the village and the more rural, agricultural hinterland beyond (Fig.5).



Fig.5 – Conservation Area core in relation to the application site as viewed from Castle Street (View 4 as identified within Aldbourne NDP, Policy 16)

- 5.3.** Within the churchyard of the Church of St Michael (Fig.6), northerly views are defined by mature trees, hedges, and boundary plantings that establish a continuous green edge, effectively separating the consecrated area from the adjacent open agricultural land. The combination of rising topography and vegetation limits external visibility, so that structures in nearby fields are mostly obscured or rarely visible as low key features against a predominantly verdant background.



Fig.6 – Application site as viewed from the churchyard (July 2025)

- 5.4.** In this context, the apex of the traditionally shaped clay pantile roof would be set further into the site when compared to the existing flat roof and, at most, would only be glimpsed above the hedge line as a modest vernacular feature. The building will also be gently graded into the slope of the land, further reducing its prominence and limiting any visual impact. The incorporation of a cat-slide roof is a deliberate design decision, allowing for a lower ridge height while retaining full operational functionality. This reduces the building's overall massing and visual presence in all directions,

and in particular in views from the churchyard.

- 5.5.** Turning to views from the north, there is no public vantage into the Conservation Area from the surrounding fields. The field shelter will remain in a recessive position, situated within a gentle dip in the landscape. The structure will be perceived as a discreet and subordinate agricultural building, complementing the broader pastoral setting and roofscape beyond. The adjoining Church and The Court House will remain as defining elements in these views. (Fig.6).



Fig.7 – Application site as existing. The gravelled areas currently form part of a temporary builders' compound associated with the ongoing construction of the swimming pool within the grounds of The Court House.

- 5.6.** The detailed design of the proposed replacement field shelter draws inspiration from Aldbourne's rich architectural heritage. Historically, the village has been closely linked to equestrian activities, especially through the former Aldbourne Racing Stables (Hightown Stables, Fig. 8). The new structure pays homage to these local building traditions by incorporating a long, low profile, clipped gables, modest eaves, and open-fronted bays that maintain a rural character. Materials such as oak framing, brick and flint

walls, timber cladding, and a clay tile roof have been selected to echo those commonly used in Aldbourne and the historic outbuildings near The Court House.



Fig. 8 – 1930s (?) photo of Hightown Stables (Source: Aldbourne Heritage Centre website)

5.7. This approach ensures the development reads as a functional rural service building, consistent with the long-established agricultural and equestrian use of the land, and is therefore far more appropriate to the sensitive heritage and National Landscape setting than a standard modern agricultural structure. In doing so, the proposal preserves the character of the Conservation Area, the setting of the nearby listed buildings and the special landscape qualities of the National Landscape while reinforcing the historic relationship between the village core and its rural hinterland.

5.8. The surrounding landscape setting of the development would not be

harmful or noticeably impacted due to the modest scale of the proposed changes. Overall, there will be no significant change in terms of the visual appearance of the site within the NL. The proposal will retain the key views and open rural agricultural character of the locality.

- 5.9.** The proposal would therefore comply with the requirements of policies CP51 and CP57 that seek to secure development that takes account of the characteristics of the site whilst making efficient use of the land. The proposals would also be consistent with the aims of the AONB Management Plan for the reasons outlined.

6. NATIONAL LANDSCAPE

- 6.1.** The application site lies within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape (formerly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty), where the statutory purpose of designation is to conserve and enhance natural beauty. The North Wessex Downs National Landscape Management Plan provides the strategic framework for managing change within the designation and emphasises the importance of conserving landscape character, historic features, rural land uses and settlement edges.
- 6.2.** The Management Plan recognises that working agriculture, land management and equestrian uses are integral to the character and ongoing viability of the National Landscape, and that sensitively designed development can be acceptable where it supports these uses and respects local distinctiveness. It encourages proposals that are modest in scale, closely related to existing land use patterns, and which employ traditional forms, materials and siting to integrate successfully into the landscape.

-
- 6.3.** The proposed replacement field shelter and associated track respond directly to these objectives. The development is limited in scale, functionally related to the existing agricultural and equestrian use of the land, and carefully sited within the existing landform and field structure. The use of traditional rural building forms and materials, together with a grassed, permeable access track, ensures that the proposal sits comfortably within the landscape and avoids urbanising effects.
- 6.4.** The scheme includes a comprehensive planting strategy for the wider landscape and field areas, which seeks to reinforce local character, strengthen landscape structure and deliver ecological enhancement. New tree planting is focused on predominantly native or close-to-native species, including field maple, oak, wild cherry and beech, allowing the landscape to transition naturally from the formal garden setting into the surrounding countryside.
- 6.5.** Boundary treatments will be reinforced through the introduction of a mixed native hedgerow, incorporating species such as hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, field maple and holly, to provide year-round structure, screening and wildlife value. Areas of the field will be managed as species-rich grassland meadow, with mown paths to allow access while increasing botanical diversity over time.
- 6.6.** As such, the proposal conserves the landscape character of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape and accords with the relevant aims and principles of the Management Plan, while enabling the continued sustainable management of the landholding. The proposal would therefore comply with the requirements of policies CP51 and CP57 that seek to secure development that takes account of the characteristics of the site whilst making efficient use of the land.
-

7. HIGHWAYS

- 7.1.** The proposal does not introduce a new access onto the public highway network. The proposed track will reuse the existing access taken from the adjoining bridleway, which already serves the paddocks and associated landholding.
- 7.2.** The proposal will not result in any material increase in traffic movements beyond those already associated with the lawful agricultural and equestrian use of the land. Vehicle movements will remain low in frequency and limited to land management, equestrian and estate-related activity.
- 7.3.** Due to the restricted width of the existing access to The Court House, it is more difficult for vehicles larger than private cars to enter the property. Consequently, larger vehicles required for land management either manoeuvre in and out of historic gateway or must park in the road, despite the reasonable turning areas within the fields. This can cause congestion and potentially promotes hazardous parking.
- 7.4.** There will be no change at the junction of the farm track with the adopted highway. The proposal will not result in any material increase in traffic movements beyond those already associated with the lawful agricultural and equestrian use of the land.
- 7.5.** On the contrary, by formalising the internal access arrangement, the development will reduce the need for repeated vehicle movements through the principal domestic curtilage and historic access points associated with The Court House. This will improve safety and reduce potential conflict between vehicles, pedestrians and equestrian users of the bridleway.

-
- 7.6.** The proposal therefore would be in line with the requirements of policy CP61 by providing access that is fit for purpose and safe facilities as part of the normal functioning of the site.

8. RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

- 8.1.** The development will not result in any harm in terms of the residential amenities of the nearby properties. The building and the compound are in current use and are located approx. 52m from the nearest residential property (Vicarage).
- 8.2.** The proposed replacement building will not have any harmful impacts in terms of overlooking or overbearing. The new structure will follow the line of the existing dense vegetation in the south west corner of the field. The building will continue to be used for estate management purposes, with no material intensification of activity and no increase in noise, odour or dust beyond existing levels.
- 8.3.** Overall, it is considered that good levels of amenity will be secured for the surrounding residential uses. The development therefore is in accordance with the requirements of the Core Strategy policy CP57 and the NPPF.

9. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

- 9.1.** A UKHab 2.0 habitat survey and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment have been undertaken for the site by Daniel Ahern Ecology Ltd (Ref: 5681.2, January 2026) . The survey identified the site as comprising buildings, areas of artificial unvegetated surface, and modified grassland of generally

moderate ecological value. No habitats of high distinctiveness were recorded, and no invasive non-native species were identified.

- 9.2.** The proposals have been assessed using the statutory biodiversity metric and include both on-site habitat enhancement and additional planting within the wider landholding. Measures include enhancement of areas of modified grassland to improve their condition from ‘moderate’ to ‘good’ through the creation of a more varied sward structure and the introduction of additional grass and wildflower species. In addition, the proposals include the planting of native trees within the adjacent fields.
- 9.3.** The submitted metric demonstrates that the development would achieve a net gain of approximately 10.91% in biodiversity units on-site, with all trading rules satisfied and no requirement for off-site compensation or biodiversity credits. The proposal therefore accords with the requirements of the Environment Act 2021, national policy on Biodiversity Net Gain, and relevant policies of the Development Plan.

10. PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

- 10.1.** The Court House and its grounds form an integral part of the village, and the long-term conservation and enhancement of these heritage assets are closely aligned with the owner’s aspirations for the site. The proposals are designed to manage the estate in a manner that is both operationally effective and sensitive to its historic and landscape context.
- 10.2.** As custodians of the buildings and land, the applicants are seeking to invest in appropriate repair and improvement works while enabling the safe, efficient and sustainable management of the wider landholding associated

with The Court House. The replacement field shelter and rationalised access arrangements are essential to achieving this objective and to reducing pressure on sensitive historic fabric.

- 10.3.** The proposed development will deliver tangible planning benefits through improved functionality, clearer circulation, and safer movement of vehicles and equipment, while avoiding unnecessary use of the principal domestic curtilage and historic access points. These changes will enhance the legibility and quality of the working parts of the estate, without harm to residential amenity, heritage significance or landscape character.
- 10.4.** Importantly, the proposal is a high quality design sited to respect the setting of the listed buildings, the Aldbourne Conservation Area and the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. The development is modest in scale, well detailed, rooted in local vernacular, and ultimately will result in visual enhancement replacing a makeshift dilapidated structure.

The proposal will clearly deliver improvements that would be in accordance with the statutory duties under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Development Plan, including Wiltshire Core Strategy Policies CP34, CP48, CP51, CP57, CP58, and CP61, as well as the Aldbourne Neighbourhood Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. There are no material considerations that indicate permission should be withheld. The Council are therefore respectfully urged to approve this application which is compliant with the terms of the development plan and national planning guidance.