

PLANNING STATEMENT

IN RELATION TO

A PRIOR NOTIFICATION APPLICATION

**FOR AN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT –
PROPOSED LIVESTOCK & MACHINERY TRACK**

AT:

**OAKWOOD FARM, UPPER MINETY, MALMESBURY,
WILTSHIRE, SN16 9PY**

APPLICANT: C J & K J GALLOP

PREPARED BY:

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1. The applicant farms approximately 350 acres (141.64 hectares) of land, with the main farmstead being Oakwood Farm, Upper Minety. C J & K J Gallop is an established family run dairy farming enterprise with livestock numbers fluctuating around 200 dairy cows and 300 young stock. The land is mostly down to pasture, with some arable cropping to support the feed rations for the herd, comprising whole crop wheat.
2. Oakwood Farm is accessed via a private entrance leading from Crossing Lane with a number of tracks branching from the main farmyard to separate field parcels. The proposal is for the installation of a hardcore track within one of the applicant's field parcels for machinery and livestock access, to join an existing track. This will allow ease of access but also prevent water pollution and has the support of the local Catchment Sensitive Farming Officer to prove this.
3. C J & K J Gallop have received an agreement offer (agreement number 2192978) under the Countryside Stewardship Capital Grant Scheme, operated by the Rural Payments Agency, for the proposed hardcore track.
4. Michael Borchart, the Catchment Sensitive Farming Officer confirmed that the land is within a medium and high priority water area and Drinking Water Safeguard Zone, with the pollutant pressures being surface water pesticide and phosphate issues. Therefore, the proposed track will protect the nearby watercourses by preventing the creation of compacted soil tracks which can channel run-off from the field into the stream. The proposal will instead, create a solid but permeable base for rainwater to percolate.
5. The gradient of the land and soil type contributes towards overland flow and during wet winter months will retain water and become waterlogged. This is furthered by the nature of the farming enterprise, as the dairy cattle are frequently moving between field parcels which can cause physical damage to the land via poaching. This makes access for farm vehicles very challenging, an issue which has become more prevalent over time due to the large scale and weight of modern agricultural machinery.

6. It is therefore proposed to construct a hardcore track over the existing livestock route. The proposed track is to run through field parcel SU0092 8122, which is greater than 1 hectare in area. Please note, a separate site or block plan has not been produced as this is not specified under Wiltshire Council's validation requirement checklist for prior approval, and the location plan clearly shows all details of the proposal. The track constructed will be used directly in conjunction with the farming business and is therefore reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture, as per Part 6, Class A of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.
7. The level of traffic to and from the farm will not increase as a result of the proposed access, as the access is located internally within the farm, and does not link to any public highways. There are no public rights of way which would be affected.
8. The new section of track will measure 160m in length and up to 4m wide to provide sufficient width for modern agricultural machinery and cattle numbers. The materials used will be a crushed concrete base, topped with a finer crushed material to withstand the size and weight of modern agricultural machinery, designed for the purposes of agriculture, as per Part 6, Class A of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.
9. As mentioned previously, during wet periods, particularly in the winter, without the addition of the hardcore track surface, the location occasionally used as an access will become wet, rutted and poached. Livestock walking through poached, waterlogged fields could lead to welfare and health issues. Therefore, the proposed track is reasonably necessary for the purpose of agriculture, especially as it will contribute towards reducing water pollution in the local area, reducing compaction and erosion problems and improving animal welfare.