

APPLICATION FOR FULL-PLANNING PERMISSION CASE OFFICER REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2025/08677
APPLICATION TYPE:	Full planning permission
SITE ADDRESS:	Salterton Down Buildings, High Post, Salisbury, SP4 6BG
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Part retrospective full application for change of use of an agricultural building and yard to storage (use class B8) and creation of an associated car park and soft landscaping.
RECOMMENDATION:	Approve with Conditions

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The application site is located at High Post, with a private direct access from the A345. The highway runs to the east of the site, with the application site, and all bordering agricultural land under the same ownership. The site comprises a large yard, and other agricultural barns and outbuildings, and is bordered by agricultural fields to the east, south and west, however the application relates solely to the barn and associated curtilage to the south west of the site, identified by the red line boundary on the submitted block and location plans. The site is within the Special Landscape Area.

PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks part retrospective, full planning permission for the change of use of part of an existing barn and a yard to B8 storage, and the creation of an associated car park to service the new storage facilities. The application is partly retrospective as areas of the yard are already being used for storage purposes. The proposal seeks to regularise the usage of the yard for storage and use the agricultural building for storage purposes associated with the broader site. A car park is also proposed. Part of the application site was previously granted consent (Prior Approval Part 3 Class R, for the conversion of the agricultural building to a flexible commercial use (PL/2025/04881).

PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal / Summary
PL/2025/04671 - Full planning permission Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 23/7/2025 – Retrospective change of use of an agricultural building to light industrial/storage (use class E)(200sqm)
PL/2025/04880 - Full planning permission Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 4/8/2025 – Retrospective change of use of an agricultural building to storage (Use Class B8)
PL/2025/04881 - Prior approval Part 3 Class R: Agricultural buildings to a flexible commercial use Decision - Prior Approval Granted with Conditions Date: 17/9/2025 – It is proposed for the agricultural building to change use to B8 storage under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class R of the General Permitted Development Order 2015 (as amended).
S/1998/1177 - Full planning permission Decision - Approved Date: 10/8/1998 – PROPOSED SILAGE PIT - UNCOVERED

RELEVANT LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Statutory Legislation:

National Planning Policy:

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

Development Plan:

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

- Core Policy 1 Settlement Strategy;
- Core Policy 2 Delivery Strategy;
- Core Policy 4: Spatial Strategy: Amesbury Community Area
- Core Policy 34 Additional Employment Land
- Core Policy 35 Existing Employment Land
- Core Policy 48 Supporting Rural Life
- Core Policy 50 Biodiversity and Geodiversity;
- Core Policy 51 Landscape
- Core Policy 57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping;
- Core Policy 58 Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment;
- Core Policy 60 Sustainable Transport;
- Core Policy 61 Transport & Development;
- Core Policy 64 Demand Management
- Core Policy 60 Protection of the River Avon SAC

Salisbury District Local Plan 'saved' Policies

C6 Special Landscape Area

C21 Farm Diversification

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

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 constitutes high quality design (CP 57)
- Whether the scheme would have an acceptable impact upon the reasonable living conditions of the adjoining occupants (CP 57)
- Whether the scheme would preserve or enhance the historic environment (CP 58)
- Whether the scheme would have an acceptable landscape impact (CP 51)
- 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)

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

WC Highways: No objection, subject to conditions. Comment stated below:

'I note the proposals seek the change of use of part of the existing agricultural barn and an outside area, both of which are to be used for storage uses. I am also aware of the planning history of the site, with the recent PL/2025/ 04881 granted Prior Notification consent for the same area of building. If this latest submission were to be granted consent, only one of this or the former permission could be implemented.'

The site is accessed from the A345 and the previous submission secured improvements to this access, both in terms of visibility and access width/geometry and these latest proposals also include these same improvements, which are considered essential.

This latest submission is likely to generate additional traffic when compared to the extant permission, but subject to the access improvements being implemented prior to the use commencing, I do not view this as an issue.

Therefore, I recommend that no Highway objection is raised, subject to the following conditions and informative being attached to any consent granted...'

Suggested comments and informatives have been included on this permission

WC Conservation: Comment, stated below:

'The application red line excludes the large new building that has generated the enforcement case. I have no comments on the proposals in this application.'

WC Ecology: No Objection, subject to conditions. Comment stated below:

'River Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Hampshire Catchment

This development falls within the catchment of the River Avon SAC and has potential to cause adverse effects alone or in combination with other developments through discharge of phosphorus in wastewater. A test of likely significance has been carried out by the relevant Competent Authority (Wiltshire Council) as required by Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). This concluded that since there is no proposal to create additional overnight accommodation, there would be no overall mechanism for adverse effect. The HRA has concluded that the application is not likely to have significant impacts on the SAC and subsequently the application is screened out of Appropriate Assessment.

Protected species

The habitats to be affected appear to comprise a small area of hedgerow, scrub, cropland and hardstanding. It is not clear whether any clearance works have been undertaken, or will be undertaken.

The adults, young, eggs and nests of all species of birds are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) while they are breeding. Please be advised that works should not take place that will harm nesting birds (such as vegetation clearance or building demolition) from March to August inclusive. The applicant is advised to check any structure or vegetation capable of supporting breeding birds and delay removing or altering such features until after young birds have fledged.

Given the scope of the proposal, the risk posed to other protected wildlife, such as reptiles, great crested newts and bats, is considered to be minimal. In line with the NPPF and CP50, applications that do not fall into the category where Biodiversity Net Gain is required must

still ensure that no net loss of functional habitat for the benefit of wildlife in the local area will occur as a result of the proposed development. In addition, gains for biodiversity, relevant to local habitats and wildlife populations, should form part of the proposed development. Therefore, it is recommended that biodiversity enhancements (e.g., bat or bird box, or wildlife-friendly plantings within the proposed soft landscaping) are secured via a planning condition.

One bat box and one bird box have been marked on an Ecological Enhancement Plan. The cover letter states that these will comprise a crevice-type woodcrete bat box, at least 3m from the ground and away from any light source. A bird box will be added to the western elevation of the existing barn away from machinery to reduce potential disturbance. Ideally, details of the design and specifications of each feature would be submitted, but, in this case, considering the scale of the proposal and details of the types of bat and bird boxes already provided, it is considered that sufficient information has been submitted. The enhancements are welcomed, and compliance with the Ecological Enhancement Plan and cover letter should be secured via a condition.

Biodiversity Net Gain

From 12 February 2024 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) became mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). The applicant is seeking to apply the BNG exemption for retrospective planning permission made under section 73A. However, this application is only part-retrospective. As per the site plans and aerial imagery, an area of ~645m² (0.6ha), containing scrub and other vegetation, is proposed for soft landscaping. It is also not clear which areas of the yard are already used for storage (i.e., to which areas the retrospective permission would apply), and it appears that some habitat loss (of arable land and hedgerow) is proposed to accommodate this. Further clarification is needed regarding the type and extent of habitats to be impacted by the non-retrospective aspect of the plans.

Please see Biodiversity net gain - GOV.UK for full details about BNG as well as its exemptions.

The revised redline boundary now excludes areas of habitat (with a biodiversity value >0) to be impacted “non-retrospectively”. Therefore, based on the information available the biodiversity gain planning condition is not considered to apply to this application as (1) the planning application relates to development to which section 73A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (planning permission for development already carried out) applies, and (2) the development meets the following criteria and is therefore below the de minimis threshold, meaning the development:

- does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and*
- impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (as defined in the statutory metric).*

Note to case officer: you should be satisfied that the proposals meet the above criteria and act accordingly. Further information will be required from the applicant prior to determination in the event the application is considered to be subject to mandatory biodiversity net gain.’

REPRESENTATIONS

One Objection received, stated below:

'Access single road on to unrestricted A345 Major road. This is farm buildings being converted into mini industrial estate in the middle of the countryside. There is no benefit to the parish.'

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

It is highlighted that the retrospective nature of this application is concerning to the Local Planning Authority (LPA). Notwithstanding this, retrospective applications do require to be assessed fairly and based on the merits of the case.

The barn that forms the application site is part of the applicants wider holding. The application seeks part retrospective full permission for the change of use of an agricultural building and yard to storage (use class B8) and creation of an associated car park and soft landscaping. There is agricultural use of some buildings at Salterton Down Buildings, however the site is currently undergoing some alterations, with other applications recently approved for change of use (Use Class E), and Prior Approval Class R.

Paragraph 84(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 new buildings" and Paragraph 84(b) supports the "development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses". The proposal allows both of the above to happen, through a change of use to allow diversification of an established agricultural business.

Core Policy 48 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to support rural life within communities outside of the limits of development in Principle Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages, and outside the existing built areas of Small Villages. CP48 supports the conversion and reuse of rural buildings, where the building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without major rebuilding, and with only necessary extension or modification which preserves the character of the original building, the use would not detract from the character or appearance of the landscape or settlement and would not be detrimental to the amenities of residential areas, the building can be served by adequate access and infrastructure, and the site has reasonable access to local services. The building that forms this application has not been altered externally, and benefits from adequate access and infrastructure.

Policy C21, saved from the SDLP, states that proposals for diversifying employment opportunities and traditional farming activities will be permitted provided that access is suitable at all times of the year, the proposal will not prejudice the viability of nearby village shops, the proposal does not result in inappropriate levels of traffic generation, there is no adverse impact of the activity or any building associated with the activity on either the landscape, the local built environment or nature conservation interests. C6 of the SDLP is also relevant, as the site lies within the Special Landscape Area. Within the Special Landscape Area, proposals will be considered having particular regard to the high quality of the landscape, and where proposals which would not have an adverse effect on the quality of the landscape are acceptable, they will be considered in line with the siting and scale of development to be sympathetic with the landscape, and high standards of landscaping and design, using materials which are appropriate to the locality and reflect the character of the area.

The extant Class R consent provides a legitimate fallback position, should permission be refused. This provides a material consideration when assessing an application on the same site. The application considered here seeks full planning permission for the same section of the barn, however proposes a different external area. This application also includes areas of hardstanding adjacent to the barn, and within the broader site curtilage, for which a retrospective change of use is being sought. It has been established that the retrospective aspects of this scheme ensure that the applicant would not be able to implement both the Class R consent, and the current scheme, once permission is granted for the part retrospective development.

For the above reasons, it is concluded that there is no objection to the principle of the development. Consideration of all material planning issues and site-specific constraints will be discussed in the following sections of this report.

Design and Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

Core Policy 57 of the WCS (Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping) seeks to ensure that all new development is of high design quality, reflecting local context, character, and distinctiveness. The change of use has not included any external alterations to the barn, therefore the development is not considered of detrimental impact on the character or appearance of the area. The barn has remained as existing externally, with a site visit conducted to view the building. Given the retrospective nature of the application, it has been possible to ascertain that the proposed change of use is not of impact on the appearance of the area. The site is set within a significant agricultural site, with barns, agricultural buildings, and agricultural land, surrounding the barn. This barn is of a large scale, and given the external agricultural appearance, the change of use is not considered of harm to the landscape setting.

The barn is not proposed to be enlarged in any way as part of this application. CP51 of the WCS states that development should protect, conserve, and where possible enhance landscape character, with any negative impacts mitigated as far as possible through sensitive design and landscape measures. The barn as existing, does not have a negative impact on the agricultural setting of the site, and this has not been changed, which ensures there is no impact on the Special Landscape Area, in line with C6 of the SDLP. The change

of use has not altered the scale or design of the barn and is therefore considered in compliance with the relevant policy. The areas of hardstanding also included in this application will remain as such, however their use will change to accommodate the storage business operating on site. This is not considered of harm to the character or appearance of the area, and the site is in an isolated location, with distance provided to the nearest highway and public footpath due to the fields surrounding the site.

Impact on Heritage Assets

From the point of view of the historic environment the main statutory tests are set out within the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 66 (Planning Permission) requires that special regard be given to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess. Section 72(1) of the Act requires the Council to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of designated Conservation Areas.

The NPPF outlines government policy for planning. Chapter 16 of the NPPF 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' sets out the Government's high-level policies concerning heritage and sustainable development. In particular:

The Council's Core Strategy Policy CP58 'Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment' requires that designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner appropriate to their significance and encourages proposals which improve the condition of heritage assets at risk.

The Council's Core Strategy CP 57: Ensuring high quality design requires a high quality of design in all new developments. The policy requires applicants to "demonstrate how the proposal will make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire through (amongst other things) responding to the value of the natural and historic environment and being sympathetic to and conserving historic buildings and landscapes. Development is required to respond positively to the existing in terms of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, building line, plot size, elevational design, materials, streetscape and rooflines to effectively integrate the building into its setting.

The site is set within an area of heritage significance, viewed in the setting of Old Sarum, a scheduled hillfort, of Grade I listed status, and close to the Netton Conservation Area. The Conservation consultee responded to the application, noting that they have no comments on the proposals in this application. The proposals seek to change the use of an existing agricultural building, and existing hardstanding. This is, therefore, considered of no measurable harm on the surrounding heritage assets or setting of the listed features and Conservation Area nearby.

Amenity

Point vii of Core Policy 57 - Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that developments do not adversely affect neighbouring properties. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly Paragraph 135(f),

stresses that planning decisions should ensure developments provide a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

The application site does not have any adjacent neighbouring dwellings, with the ownership area extending significantly in all directions around the application site. All agricultural land that borders the site is under the same ownership. The change of use is not of significant impact on the adjacent agricultural buildings, one of which now also operates as an alternative use, other than agricultural, and as such is not considered of harm to neighbour amenity. The application seeks retrospective consent, and as such it has been possible for the Officer to visit the site while partial operation under B8 use is occurring. Diversification of rural businesses is supported in line with relevant policy, and the change of use is not considered of further impact on amenity than the existing use.

Highways Impacts and Parking

The existing vehicular access remains unchanged under this proposal, with access via the existing private driveway which leads from the A345 to Salterton Down Buildings. There is no requirement to amend the existing access situation. The highways consultee responded to the application with no objection, subject to conditions, noting that the site is accessed from the A345 and the previous submission secured improvements to this access, both in terms of visibility and access width/geometry and these latest proposals also include these same improvements, which are considered essential. They stated that this application, the latest submission on site, is likely to generate additional traffic when compared to the extant permission, but subject to the access improvements being implemented prior to the use commencing, this is not considered of concern. It was, therefore, concluded that no highway objection is raised, subject to conditions. The suggested conditions have been included on this consent.

One objection was received during the consultation process, raising concerns regarding the access, and creation of a 'mini industrial estate' in the countryside. It has been confirmed by the highways consultee that the access is not of concern, with improvements being implemented prior to commencement of the development which has been conditioned on this permission. The response noted that there is no benefit to the parish, however this is not a material planning consideration. The application has been considered in line with policy in principle, and with sufficient and acceptable access arrangements that would not warrant refusal of planning consent.

Ecology and Biodiversity

The ecological impact of development is a key planning consideration, especially for larger schemes. Proposals must assess and address potential effects on protected species, priority habitats, ecological networks, and green and blue infrastructure

Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires development to avoid harm to ecological assets, deliver measurable Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), in line with the Environment Act 2021, support habitat restoration and connectivity, and integrate biodiversity into site design.

This development falls within the catchment of the River Avon SAC. A test of likely significance has been carried out by the relevant Competent Authority which concluded that

since there is no proposal to create additional overnight accommodation, there would be no overall mechanism for adverse effect. The HRA has concluded that the application is not likely to have significant impacts on the SAC and subsequently the application is screened out of Appropriate Assessment.

The habitats to be affected appear to comprise a small area of hedgerow, scrub, cropland and hardstanding. Additional information has been provided for the application in response to ecology concerns, and one bat box and one bird box have been marked on an Ecological Enhancement Plan. Considering the scale of the proposal and details of the types of bat and bird boxes already provided, it is considered that sufficient information has been submitted. The enhancements are welcomed, and compliance with the Ecological Enhancement Plan and cover letter are secured via condition.

Biodiversity Net Gain

The applicant is seeking to apply the BNG exemption for retrospective planning permission made under section 73A. A revised redline boundary plan was provided, which excludes areas of habitat (with a biodiversity value >0) to be impacted “non-retrospectively”. Therefore, based on the information available the biodiversity gain planning condition is not considered to apply to this application as (1) the planning application relates to development to which section 73A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (planning permission for development already carried out) applies, and (2) the development meets the following criteria and is therefore below the de minimis threshold, meaning the development does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (as defined in the statutory metric).

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 relevant planning policy.

The proposal is compliant with relevant local and national planning policies in respect of design, scale, residential amenity, heritage, landscape, highway safety, ecology and biodiversity, subject to the recommended conditions and any necessary mitigation measures.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered acceptable in planning terms and in accordance with the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the National Planning Policy Framework, and all other relevant material considerations.

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 approved is subject to the following approved plans:

Proposed Site Plan Rev 2 Date Received 17/12/2026

Large Scale Ownership Plan Date Received 31/10/2025

Access Plans and Tracking:

Proposed Site Access Ref: 250678 - 101 Date Received: 31/10/2025

Proposed Site Access Visibility Splays Ref: 250678 – 011 Date Received: 31/10/2025

Swept Path Analysis FTA Design Articulated Vehicle Ref: 250678 – TR001 Date Received 31/10/2025

Location Plan Date Received: 31/10/2025

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

2. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting or amending that Order with or without modification), the site area identified in red on the approved location plan shall be used solely for purposes within Class B8 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended by The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020 (or in any provisions equivalent to that class in any statutory instrument revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification).

REASON: The proposed use is acceptable, but the Local Planning Authority wish to consider any future proposal for a change of use not within Class B8.

3. No part of the development hereby permitted shall be first brought into use until the access works & car parking spaces have been completed in accordance with the details shown on the approved plans. The areas shall always be maintained for those purposes thereafter

REASON: In the interests of highway safety.

4. The development hereby permitted shall not be first brought into use until the first 20m of the access, measured from the edge of the carriageway, has been consolidated and surfaced (not loose stone or gravel). The access shall be maintained as such thereafter.

REASON: In the interests of highway safety

5. Notwithstanding the submitted details, the proposed development shall not be occupied until means/works have been implemented to avoid private water from entering the highway.

REASON: To ensure that the highway is not inundated with private water.

6. No part of the development shall be first brought into use until the visibility splays shown on the approved plans have been provided with no obstruction to visibility at or above a height of 900mm above the nearside carriageway level. The visibility splays shall always be maintained free of obstruction thereafter.

REASON: In the interests of highway safety

7. The development will be carried out in strict accordance with the following documents:

- Ecological Enhancement Plan, LDS, LDS/19956
- Resubmission cover letter, Atlas Planning Group, December 2025

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and for the protection, mitigation and enhancement of biodiversity.

INFORMATIVE:

The application involves an extension to the existing/creation of a new vehicle access/dropped kerb. The consent hereby granted shall not be construed as authority to carry out works on the highway. The applicant is advised that a licence will be required from Wiltshire's Highway Authority before any works are carried out on any footway, footpath, carriageway, verge or other land forming part of the highway. Please contact our Vehicle Crossing Team on vehicleaccess@wiltshire.gov.uk and/or 01225 713352 or visit their website at <http://wiltshire.gov.uk/highways-streets> to make an application.