

Proposed new agricultural residential dwelling at land to the southeast of Forewoods Common Holt Trowbridge BA14 6PJ with the benefit of a section 106 agreement and proposed conditions.

Planning Statement

Introduction:

Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the developments plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Section 70 (2) of the Town and Council Planning Act 1990 also states that the authority dealing with the planning application should have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations.

In addition, the National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) 2024 sets out the Governments planning policies for England and is a material consideration in determining a planning application.

Paragraph 11 (a – to – d; inclusive) of the NPPF states that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which for decision taking means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay. Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date this means granting permission unless policies in the NPPF provides a clear reason for refusing the development or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. This is known as the tilted balance.

It is understood that Wiltshire Council cannot demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply (“5-yhls”) and so the current local plan should be considered out of date.

Indeed, given the age of the adopted local development plan (*the author notes the Council submitted the Wiltshire Local Plan to the Secretary of State for Housing Communities and Local Government for independent examination on 28 November 2024*) and he lack of a 5yhls it is apparent that the tilted balance is engaged and the NPPF requires the permission to be granted unless policies within the NPPF, provide clear reason for refusal or the adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of doing so.

The application site (“the Land”) has no issues with regards to flooding or heritage or highways. The applicant benefits from additional farming land in South Wraxall, as referred to in previous applications and in the Agricultural submission attached. The applicant is not able to build on the land in South Wraxall as he does not own the land, and would not be able to obtain a mortgage over the land. We further note, there is no space in his Grandmothers home for him and Tanya. The applicant currently resides with his mum in Melksham.

The Land is not restricted by additional constraints with regards to nitrate and phosphate run – off related matters.

As custodian of the Land, the applicant is mindful that the Land is situated within the Green Belt and is keen to reasonable condition and / or obligations to assist the LPA in supporting this modest application.

The applicants partner, Tanya has now left the N.H.S. as a qualified staff nurse; and is working her final months notice in anticipation to go back to her family roots and rear calves. When Tanya is not nursing, she helps her mother and father rear calves on their farm.

Drawing the reader's attention to the PINS DN **APP/Y3940/W/20/3254729** noted below, we **firmly submit that the application would:**

- a) Provide employment benefits;
- b) Ensure the future spend of residents in the local economy;
- c) Readily enhance the vitality of the rural community with future children attending schools and a nurse relocating from south Wales to benefit a local hospital;
- d) Provide an additional dwelling;
- e) Contribute to the shortfall in housing; and
- f) The presumption in favour of sustainable development would apply as the adverse impact would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh them.

The Applicant invites the Council to proceed to grant planning consent (with reasonable conditions/obligations) without delay and of course welcomes a site visit.

Background:

This statement is prepared in support of a resubmitted planning application for a single, modest four-bedroom agricultural worker's dwelling with an agricultural occupancy tie on land to the south east of Forewoods Common, Trowbridge.

The resubmission seeks permission for the **exact same dwelling** as previously proposed. The only changes to the scheme relate to:

- a) the relocation of the dwelling to site directly adjacent to the existing agricultural shed, and
- b) the introduction of a significantly shortened access arrangement utilising existing hardstanding rather than a long driveway across an agricultural field
- c) proposed conditions to compliment the land, mindful of the duties as custodian and the LPA reasons for refusal

These amendments have been made specifically in response to the Council's earlier reasons for refusal.

Since the original decision, the Applicant has commissioned and now submits:

- a) a detailed Agricultural Business Plan prepared by Max Sealy, and
- b) a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal prepared by Arbtech.

These reports provide further professional evidence to assist the decision maker and to address matters previously raised. We firmly submit that the hurdle of NPPF para. 84. (a) being:

" Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development in isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- a. there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside..."

The Applicant is a local young farmer who has operated a contracting and farming business for approximately fourteen years. Over that period the business has grown steadily and sustainably, demonstrating resilience, diversification and long-term viability.

The purpose of the proposed dwelling is to provide essential on-site accommodation to support the operational needs of this established agricultural enterprise. The need for a permanent presence on the holding is explained in detail within the accompanying Agricultural Business Plan.

The Applicant currently resides in Melksham, approximately seven miles from the Land. This distance creates practical and operational difficulties, particularly during peak farming periods, calving seasons and emergency situations when an immediate on-site presence is required.

The proposed dwelling has been designed as a modest family home capable of meeting both current and foreseeable future needs. The inclusion of a home office will provide appropriate space for the increasing administrative and management requirements of the business, enabling more efficient operation and diversification.

Living on the holding would also improve site security. Farming businesses across the country are increasingly vulnerable to theft and criminal activity. A permanent on-site presence would act as a significant deterrent and assist in the safeguarding of livestock, machinery and equipment.

The proposal represents sustainable rural development which will support the continued growth of an established local business, provide essential agricultural accommodation and contribute in a small but meaningful way to the supply of rural housing within the district.

The Applicant rents approximately 140 acres of grazing land for livestock. This land is not owned by the Applicant and is subject only to grazing licences. It is therefore not available for built development. The application site represents the only realistic and available location from which the Applicant can operate and manage the enterprise effectively.

In preparing this resubmission, the Applicant has carefully considered the Council's previous concerns and has made clear and positive amendments to address them. The following sections of this statement respectfully assist the reader with rebuttals to Reasons for Refusal 1 to 3 (inclusive).

Planning history:

PL/2025/02523 Validated: 7 April 2025 Refused: 3 December 2025	Proposed new agriculture dwelling.
PL/2024/02631 Validated: 4 April 2024 Approved (with conditions): 7 August 2024	Erection of lean-to extension to existing agricultural building
PL/2023/04195 Validated: 8 September 2023	Variation of Condition 2 of 19/09952/FUL to allow for approved agricultural building to be repositions from location previously permitted (retrospective)

Approved (with conditions): 20 December 2023	
PL/2022/09469 Validated: 6 February 2023 Approved (with conditions): 12 June 2023	Proposed steel portal framed agricultural building
19/09952/FUL Validated: 3 March 2020 Approved (with conditions): 22 February 2021	Erection of agricultural building for storage of hay and straw

PL/2025/02523 - Validated: 7 April 2025 - Refused: 3 December 2025

Reasons for refusal. (Delegated authority)

Refusal reason 1

The applicant has failed to sufficiently demonstrate that the future proposed calving business, to which the proposed dwelling would be associated with, would be economically viable in the long term. On this basis, it is not considered that robust justification has been provided to support a permanent dwelling at this stage, and therefore, the application cannot be found to fully comply with the requirements of CP48 of the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy or paragraph 84 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Refusal reason 2

The proposal does not constitute as development on grey belt land and would result in a material diminution of the openness of the Green Belt through the erection of a dwelling, formation of an extensive driveway through an agricultural field, and the introduction of car parking and other forms of domestication of the Applicant: Miss Diana Miller C/o TOCS Particulars of Development: Proposed new agricultural dwelling At: Land to the south east of Forewoods Common, Trowbridge, BA14 6PJ site. The construction of a new dwelling in this location would therefore represent inappropriate development that would by definition, be harmful to the Green Belt. In the absence of any very special circumstances, this proposal is not considered to represent sustainable or appropriate development and is contrary to paragraphs 142, 153 and 154 of the National Planning Policy Framework

Refusal reason 3:

The proposed development is sited within a buffer zone of the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The application has not been supported by any bat surveys or ecological information to demonstrate that the proposal would not adversely affect the integrity of the SAC. In the absence of such information, the Local Planning Authority is unable to undertake an appropriate assessment under Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Consequently, it has not been possible to conclude that the development would avoid adverse effects on the SAC. The proposal is therefore contrary to the requirements of the Habitats Regulations, the National Planning Policy Framework, and Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

Sustainable development:

Whilst the Land may be considered as open countryside development for the purposes of the planning judgment, the Application is not isolated development as illustrated by the google maps extract below. Furthermore, the proposed dwelling would be positioned in a relatively sustainable and accessible location using pre-existing lawful access as illustrated below.

The LPA captured the neighbour and consultee map in respect of PL/2025/02523 further illustrates that the proposed dwelling will be enveloped in-between neighbour property, all of whom are in support. Kindly see uploaded document and/or PL/2025/02523 re the same.



The Land sits sandwiched below the well trafficked B3105 to the north and the woodland to the south. To the southeast of the Lands border lies a cereal factory. The combination of the B3105, the faster Bradford Road and the cereal factory add a sense of urbanisation to the area. Close neighbouring residential properties lie to the northwest, the north and the northeast. The Land is situated between the urban triangle of Bradford on Avon, Holt and Staverton.

The Application would have a relatively neutral impact upon rural nature of this part of the Council. There are of course the agricultural buildings on the previously developed Land. Given the separation and distance with neighbouring residential properties there will be zero impact on neighbouring amenity. We invite the decision maker to find that the scale, mass and form of development is acceptable within the existing pattern of development on the Land and surrounding area.

We submit that the additional planting of trees in line with NPPF 136 a pond and bee hives will all contribute to enhancing the Land holistically NPPF para 125 (a), 135 (a) (b) and (e) and 136.

Mindful of CP51 the Applicant suggests that the current hedgerows, bunds, woodland and gradient to the field in addition to the neighbouring factory would not result in a harmful impact to the character of the landscape. The Applicant has significantly improved the visual aspect of the Land since purchasing from a legal hemp grower which had several parked lorries, redundant cabins on the Land and was considered by locals as an eyesore. The Applicant is keen to continue to listen to the relevant officer(s) with regards to reasonable recommendation of planting of native species.

The proposed building would meet the needs of CP57 will be of a high standard of design and to create a strong sense of place through drawing on the local context and being complementary to the locality through, amongst a series of criteria, *“enhancing local distinctiveness by responding to the value of the natural and historic environment, relating positively to its landscape setting and the existing pattern of development and responding to local topography by ensuring that important views into, within and out of the site are to be retained and enhanced”*.

Should that Application be approved, the Applicant will be applying to the grid for a DNR in respect of solar panels via a local company called Phoenix Solar who are based in Frome.

In addition to solar, the dwelling would benefit from ground source heat pump and again we welcome the Council to propose a relevant condition re the same.

The dwelling would reduce the carbon footprint of the Applicant significantly as he currently drives from his mother's home, where he currently resides – to – the Land for his agricultural business, which is 3.6 miles and a round trip of 7.2 (seven point two miles) several times a day depending on the farming demands. In simple terms, living on the Land would enable the Applicant to walk to work.

We note that the average two round trips a day from Melksham to Holt leads to a carbon footprint of 1.501 tonnes of CO₂e, which would require one tree to offset the footprint of on/off alone. Living on the Land would save a minimum of 1.501 tonnes of CO₂e by the Applicant alone per calendar year. The carbon saving from this element alone goes to the heart of NPPF paras 82, 83 and 109 (a) – to – (f) (inclusive).

NPPF para. 82: “In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs...”

NPPF para 83: “To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities....”

We do accept that should the application be approved, whilst that the Applicants journeys on/off would reduce significantly there would of course be one additional car being the Applicants partner for hospital shifts and periodic family visits – post completion of works!

We submit that the proposal would not substantially increase the level of traffic. The current lawful access is also along a straight road, with wide entrance that has successfully had vehicles of all classes move on and off site with no reported accidents/near accidents. The Highways Authority have previously been satisfied with the access.

We further note that NPPF para 110 supports the opportunity of a reduction in transport on and off the site this application would easily create, because the para notes that para 109 should be supported, that this site is a location that can genuinely help “reduce congestion, emissions. And improve air quality and public health.....opportunities to maximise sustainable transports solutions...should be taken into account in both plan making and decision making.”

Access to the Land would not be demonstrable changed with an additional agricultural residential dwelling.

Access to the proposed dwelling from the legally approved agricultural track is to be conditioned pending officer preference and we submit that a new access track across the field some fifty meters would be a low impact change.

Given the Applicants desire to be the best custodian as possible of the Land, we propose to have a nature pond, plant native species trees (already communicating with the relevant Council officer for guidance) and bee hives (we welcome conditions to secure the same. Please see proposed draft conditions).

We note that neighbouring properties have voiced their support of the proposed development.

Policy support Wiltshire Core Strategy

CP 1 Settlement strategy
CP2 Delivery strategy
CP48 Supporting rural life
CP51 Landscape
CP 57 Ensuring high quality design and place shaping
CP60 Sustainable transport
CP 61 Transport and development
CP64 Demand Management

Wiltshire Design Guide

We note that the adopted Guide is a Supplementary Planning Document and is to be afforded weight in the determination of planning applications, specifically expansion of CP57 as noted above.

NPPF 2024

Para. 82 of the NPPF supports the development and diversification of agricultural businesses. In addition to family life, the proposed development is a well-designed new building that is needed for the diversification of an established business in the form of the Applicant using the home office for training purposes for the staff members. permanent (1) and seasonal (varies between 7 and 15 on the farming calendar).

Para 83 – this application is a great example of sustainable development in a rural area.

Para. 84 – The proposed dwelling would lie near some residential properties and would of course be built out on previously developed green belt agricultural land. We do not believe the proposal to be isolated, however; should the decision maker find an element of isolation we politely remind the Council of the need for the rural worker, who has full control of the agricultural business and the intention to live permanently on the place of work, for the rest of his days.

Para. 88 (a)(b) and (d) of the NPPF states that planning decisions should support housing development that reflect local need. There is a clear need in this instance which is amplified by the lack of housing near the site and lack of 5yhl's.

Para. 109 (a) and (f) is captured because the Applicant will walk instead of drive to work and for the busy season the permanent worker would also walk not drive to work. i.e. epitomise sustainable transport.

Para. 125 (a) the pond, tree planting and bee hives would result in the development that would enable habitat creation.

Para 135 (a) the development would both function well and add to the overall quality of the area with the finish of the local Corsham stone dwelling over the lifetime of the development. We also repeat the opportunity to secure the restriction of future agricultural shed and change of use to a retail park. i.e. optimise the potential of the site in line with para. 135 (b) and (e).

Para. 136 being the planting of trees is warmly welcomed by the applicant who is mindful of carbon and also promoting habitat.

Para. 154 (a) this is a simple application by an agricultural worker for a modest dwelling that will only home said agricultural worker, his future family and his agriculture employee (seasonally).

Planning Appeals and Applications that we suggest assist the decision maker to approve the application with reasonable conditions/obligations.

PINS Ref: APP/Y3940/C/20/3261363 – Devizes

The Inspector acknowledged the site was outside of the LOD for Devizes (some 0.3miles) and that it is *“not one where unrestricted residential development would normally be permitted”*.

“Although the addition of the dwelling to the housing stock would make it the smallest possible increase, in view of the importance which the Government attaches to the increasing supply of housing, I give this benefit modest weight.”

PINS Ref: APP/Y3940/W/20/3254729 – Dilton Marsh

A single dwelling **outside** the settlement boundary of Dilton Marsh.

In the Dilton Marsh case, the Inspector recognised the Council could not prove a 5YHLS and accepted the design of the dwelling was an important factor.

We accept that the Application before the Council is outside of the settlement boundary for Holt and note the Inspector approved the proposal. We invite the decision maker to consider the following:

“The house would be set below the level of the road and would have a low-profile green roof. It would, therefore, be largely screened by the boundary hedges. Consequently, although it would be outside the settlement boundary, the development would not appear as an extension of the urban form of the village into the countryside, and there would be no harm to the character and appearance of the area.” [Para. 8]

With resemblance the Dilton Marsh decision, the Application would also be screened by established boundary hedges, a bund, an established wood, and agricultural sheds on previously developed green belt land; whilst lying in view of the cereal factory to the east, as illustrated below by the four pictures of the location of the proposed new agri. dwelling. We are instructed that the Applicant has commence communication with the Council in respect of planting native trees via the agent who needs to send a location plan and welcomes further discussions with officers to enable suitable planting of native species to assist further in achieving no harm to the character and appearance to the area.



“The proposal would provide economic benefits through the creation of employment during the construction process, and the future spend of residents in the local economy. In terms of social benefits, its location, immediately adjoining the village, means it would readily enhance or maintain the vitality of the rural community, in accordance with paragraph 78 of the Framework. The development would provide an additional dwelling, which would contribute towards addressing the shortfall in housing sites and would also support the Framework’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. In view of the small scale of the proposal, these benefits would be modest. Nevertheless, the adverse impacts, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole, would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh them. Therefore, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies, and planning permission should be granted.” [Para 11 and 12]

In this instance, the Inspector recognised multiple benefits being, economic, environmental and social benefits as noted above.

The construction phase of the proposed dwelling would (as illustrated in the PINS DN above:

- a) Provide employment benefits
- b) Ensure the future spend of residents in the local economy.
- c) Readily enhance the vitality of the rural community with future children attending schools and a nurse relocating from south Wales to benefit a local hospital
- d) Provide an additional dwelling
- e) Contribute to the shortfall in housing.
- f) The presumption in favour of sustainable development would apply as the adverse impact would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh them

The Applicant has sought to replicate design aspects of the Dilton Marsh dwelling and welcomes the option to condition significant biodiversity gains in the form of a wildlife pond, beehives and increase in native planting.

PL/2024/06127 – an example of the Council overcoming hurdles to approve an agricultural worker dwelling.

Mendip District Council 2021/2442/FULL – Acrewood Mells

This was a decision by the neighbouring MDC to approve a single dwelling in open countryside.

Whilst the application was approved by the neighbouring authority to the Council, we suggest the officer's decision process relates first hand to the Application because the single dwelling would make some contribution to the housing shortfall and further that:

"Whilst the benefits are limited by the fact that the proposal would only be for one dwelling, as set out in the technical assessment in this report, no demonstrable harm has been identified that would outweigh the limited benefits of providing an additional dwelling within the district. The proposal is adjacent to existing development limits and would appear as a logical small infill plot merely extending the village boundary in a linear form sympathetic to the existing pattern of development along Holes Lane. It would not appear as an incongruous 'bolt-on' and/or visually remote from the settlement and nor significantly or demonstrably harm the countryside's intrinsic character."

We implore the decision maker to find similar grounds for approval with our Application.

Case law:

We note the Court of Appeal Case of Lee Valley Regional Park Authority R (on the application of) v Epping DC and another (2016) EWCA 404 ("the Lee Valley Case"). The Court of Appeal rules that agricultural buildings are appropriate development in the Green Belt and in those circumstances, there is no requirement for a decision maker to also take into account the loss of openness to the Green Belt caused by agricultural building or the extent which it conflicts with the purposes of the Green Belt.

The Lee Valley Case firmly supports our application for an agricultural workers home which is to be tied in perpetuity with obligations re the same.

Legal agreements:

The Land is currently bound by a Section 106 Agreement dated 19 February 2021 made between Wiltshire Council (1), Louis James Hancock (2) and The Agricultural Mortgage Corporation Plc (3).

That existing Agreement relates to a previous planning permission and secured obligations which have now either been fully complied with or have ceased to serve any planning purpose. A draft Deed of Discharge therefore accompanies this Application. The purpose of the Deed of Discharge is to formally confirm, as a matter of public record, that no obligations under the 2021 Agreement remain extant or enforceable. The Applicant considers that the statutory test under section 106A(6)(b) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is clearly met, in that the historic obligations are now of "no reasonable further use" and there is no lawful basis for them to continue to bind the Land.

This Application seeks planning permission for a new agricultural worker's dwelling justified by an essential functional need arising from a genuine, established and financially viable agricultural enterprise. The need for the dwelling is evidenced in detail within the independent Agricultural Business Plan prepared by Max Sealy, which demonstrates:

- a) the operational requirements of the holding;
- b) the necessity for on-site supervision and husbandry;
- c) the long-term viability of the enterprise; and
- d) that no suitable alternative accommodation is reasonably available to meet that need.

These matters directly reflect the national policy tests set out within the National Planning Policy Framework in relation to rural workers' dwellings, namely that a dwelling in the open countryside may be permitted where it is essential for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work to support the proper functioning of an agricultural business. The Application has been prepared specifically to satisfy those NPPF requirements.

At the local level, the proposal falls to be assessed principally against Core Policy 48 (Supporting Rural Life) and Core Policy 51 (Landscape) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

Core Policy 48 supports new rural workers' dwellings where an essential need is demonstrated, but makes clear that such dwellings must remain tied to the agricultural enterprise that justifies them. The policy intention is to ensure that homes permitted exceptionally in the countryside continue to serve rural employment needs and do not become unrestricted market housing.

Core Policy 51 seeks to safeguard the intrinsic character and openness of the countryside. An unrestricted open-market dwelling in this location would conflict with CP51. The only basis upon which a new dwelling can be supported on this site is therefore through the imposition of a robust and enforceable agricultural occupancy restriction.

Accordingly, the proposed new Section 106 Agreement is fundamental to the acceptability of the development. It will secure, in perpetuity, that:

- a) the dwelling is occupied only by a person solely or mainly working in agriculture in the locality (or a dependent of such a person);
- b) occupation remains directly linked to the agricultural enterprise assessed within the Max Sealy Business Plan; and
- c) the dwelling cannot lawfully be sold, let or occupied as general market housing.

Without such a legal restriction, the planning justification established under the NPPF rural workers test and Core Policy 48 would immediately fall away, and the development would be contrary to Core Policy 51 and the wider Development Plan. The Section 106 Agreement is therefore necessary, directly related to the development, and proportionate to the policy objectives it secures.

For the avoidance of doubt:

- a) a draft Deed of Discharge is submitted to enable the Council to formally release the historic Section 106 Agreement which is now spent; and
- b) a draft new Section 106 Agreement is provided to secure, in perpetuity, the agricultural worker occupancy obligation required by the NPPF and Core Policies 48 and 51 in respect of the current application.

Taken together, the discharge of the redundant historic obligations and the imposition of a new, fit-for-purpose Agreement will provide a clear, lawful and policy-compliant planning framework for the proposed agricultural worker's dwelling.

We respectfully propose the following wording for the draft obligation being "The occupation of the dwelling shall be limited to a person solely or mainly working in the locality in agriculture or forestry or a family member of said worker and to resident dependants."

We did not use the term widow or widower as the Applicant and his partner are not married and like many couples today, may never get married.

SUMMARY OF BUSINESS PLAN AND RESPONSE TO REFUSAL REASON 1

Introduction:

This section summarises the updated Business Plan for the proposed calf-rearing enterprise prepared by The Farm Consultancy Group and explains how the information now provided directly addresses and remedies Refusal Reason 1 of decision notice PL/2025/02523.

The business plan sets out in detail the operational structure, projected income, overheads and cashflow for a new livestock enterprise to be based at Causeway Hill Farm.

Summary of the Business Plan.

Existing agricultural context:

The Business Plan confirms that Louis Hancock already operates an established agricultural contracting business based at Causeway Hill Farm and that the enterprise utilises approximately 110 acres of grassland, including family-owned land. Existing agricultural buildings are in place, with an additional leased livestock building secured to enable expansion of the calf-rearing operation.

The calf enterprise is therefore not speculative, but represents a planned diversification of an existing farming business, consistent with rural economic objectives.

Nature of the enterprise:

The Business Plan sets out a structured programme for the establishment of a weaned calf rearing enterprise, purchasing young calves from local dairy farms, rearing them through to approximately 225kg live weight, and selling them as store cattle.

The operational model proposes initial batches of 80 to 90 calves, rising to batches of up to 120 calves once fully established, with approximately 5 percent mortality allowance built into projections, resulting in an annual throughput of up to 588 calves per year.

This level of activity represents a substantial, full-time agricultural enterprise requiring constant day-to-day management.

Financial viability:

The Business Plan includes detailed Profit and Loss, Cashflow and Sensitivity Analysis projections.

Key conclusions include forecast turnover rising to over five hundred and forty thousand pounds per year once the enterprise is established, a positive cashflow position from Year 2 onwards, and projected business profits increasing to over fifty thousand pounds per annum in the medium term. The plan makes full provision for wages, machinery costs, feed, veterinary expenses and overheads.

The cashflow statement confirms that the plan demonstrates a positive cashflow and viability, covering wages and reinvestment in machinery and fixtures.

A detailed sensitivity analysis demonstrates that the business remains resilient to reasonable fluctuations in beef prices, feed costs, overhead changes and interest rate variations.

The plan therefore demonstrates a realistic and professionally assessed pathway to long-term viability.

Labour and operational need:

Appendix 1 of the Business Plan provides a calculation of Standard Worker Days, showing a labour requirement rising to over 650 standard worker days per year, equivalent to more than two full-time workers at full capacity.

This clearly evidences that the enterprise is of a scale and intensity that requires a permanent on-site presence to ensure regular feeding regimes, monitoring of animal health, rapid response to emergencies, and biosecurity and welfare compliance.

Policy context:

Paragraph 84(a) of the National Planning Policy Framework supports new rural dwellings where there is an essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside.

Wiltshire Core Strategy Core Policy 48 similarly supports agricultural workers' dwellings where functional and financial need are demonstrated.

The Business Plan directly addresses both requirements by demonstrating a clear and structured agricultural enterprise, professional financial forecasting, a substantial labour requirement, and a realistic pathway to long-term economic sustainability.

As noted above, we submit that NPPF Para. 84 hurdle has been satisfied, in full with the business plan. In fact, there can be no doubt that the calf rearing enterprise will be sustainable, viable and a robust success story.

We remind the reader of NPPF Para. 85 which states that:

Para 85: "Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. 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.This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential."

Para. 85 has direct synergy with this application, the innovation and the diversification of a hugely successful young farmer and we invite the LPA to support the application to enable the economic growth / capacity re the same from this calf rearing enterprise.

Para. 86 " Planning policies should:

e. be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan and allow for new flexible working practices and spaces to enable rapid response to changes in economic circumstances."

We draw the decision makers attention to the fact that para. 86. e, can be directly reflected in the diversification at the site, as well as recall the applicants partners direct impact as calf rearing farmer and practicing nurse to proposed hands on calf rearer.

The NPPF para. 88 is further support to this application, in particular sub paragraphs a and b being:

- a. the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, new buildings;
- b. the development and diversification of agricultural and other land based rural businesses...."

Para. 88 a and b, matters because this application is a shining example of what the Governments policy draftsmen aspired to enable. Sustainable growth, with a well designed new building funded for and to enable the continued diversification of rural business.

Para 89 emphasises that “decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business ...needs... may have been found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements” we again invite the reader to consider the LPA map of the consultee and neighbours response illustrating the location and proximity of the neighbours.

Rebuttal of Refusal Reason 1:

Original refusal reason:

Refusal Reason 1 stated that the applicant had failed to sufficiently demonstrate that the future proposed calving business would be economically viable in the long term and that robust justification had not been provided to support a permanent dwelling, contrary to Core Policy 48 and paragraph 84 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

How has reason one been remedied/overcome?

The submission of the detailed Business Plan prepared by The Farm Consultancy Group now provides the information previously considered to be absent.

The plan sets out a clear operational model for the calf-rearing enterprise, demonstrates forecast profitability and positive cashflow, includes detailed overhead, feed, veterinary and labour costs, provides sensitivity testing to show resilience, evidences a substantial and ongoing labour requirement, and confirms that the enterprise is based on existing land and buildings.

This level of professional detail now fully satisfies the requirements of NPPF paragraph 84(a) regarding essential need for a rural worker and Wiltshire Core Strategy Core Policy 48 concerning justification for a permanent agricultural dwelling.

Conclusion:

The Business Plan evidence now submitted demonstrates that the proposed calf-rearing enterprise is genuine and structured, is of a scale requiring permanent on-site management, is forecast to be financially viable in the long term, and forms a logical diversification of an existing farming business.

Accordingly, the previous concern that insufficient justification had been provided for a permanent agricultural worker's dwelling has been fully addressed and remedied. Refusal Reason 1 has therefore been overcome.

Green Belt:

Since the determination of the original application, the Applicant has undertaken a comprehensive review of the scheme and has made significant amendments to directly address the concerns raised by the Council.

The purpose of this section is to demonstrate that, as amended, the proposal:

- a) No longer results in any material loss of Green Belt openness
- b) Is appropriately located in direct association with existing built development
- c) Makes efficient use of previously developed land
- d) Has removed the specific elements identified as harmful by the Council

- e) Can be made acceptable by appropriate planning conditions

Summary of the refusal, reason 2:

The Council's second reason for refusal states that the proposal:

- a) Does not constitute development on grey belt land
- b) Would materially diminish openness through:
 - I. erection of a dwelling
 - II. formation of an extensive driveway
 - III. introduction of parking and domestication
- c) Therefore represents inappropriate development
- d) Conflicts with NPPF paragraphs 142, 153 and 154

The refusal reason is clearly predicated on three principal alleged sources of harm:

- a) The location of the dwelling in an open field
- b) The creation of a long and extensive driveway across agricultural land
- c) The introduction of domestic features remote from existing development

Each of these matters has now been directly and comprehensively addressed through the amended scheme.

Description of amendments:

The scheme has been fundamentally revised in the following key respects:

Relocation of the dwelling:

The proposed agricultural worker's dwelling has been relocated from its former isolated position within the field to a position immediately adjacent to the existing agricultural shed and farmstead complex. The proposed agricultural dwelling will primarily be visible from the Cereal Factory that is adjacent and is intended to provide an additional 25,833 sq ft (2,400 sq m). <https://development.wiltshire.gov.uk/pr/s/planning-application/a0iQ300000GJrm1IAD/pl202507023>

The new siting(kindly see plans) :

- a) Places the dwelling directly below established built form;
- b) Integrates it visually and functionally with the working farm buildings;
- c) Removes any perception of a new isolated dwelling in open countryside; and
- d) Locates the development close to the adjoining existing hardstanding

Reduction of driveway:

The previously proposed long domestic driveway extending through the agricultural field has been entirely removed. Access is now proposed:

- a) Directly from the existing hard core and hardstanding
- b) With only minimal additional surfacing required
- c) With a significantly shortened route

- d) Without any need for a new sweeping domestic drive

This change alone removes the principal element of harm alleged by the Council.

Reduction in domestication:

The amended scheme no longer proposes:

- a) Any expansive domestic curtilage
- b) Suburban style boundary treatments
- c) External lighting
- d) Garden paraphernalia within the wider field

The dwelling is now clearly designed to read as part of the working farm complex rather than as an independent suburban plot.

Impact on Green Belt openness:

Openness is assessed both spatially and visually.

Spatially, the amended scheme results in:

- a) No encroachment into open agricultural land
- b) Development concentrated within the existing built envelope
- c) Use of previously developed land and hardstanding
- d) A materially reduced development footprint

Visually, the amended location ensures that:

- a) The dwelling is read in the context of existing large agricultural buildings
- b) There is no new built form appearing within an otherwise undeveloped field
- c) The proposal will be visually contained and absorbed
- d) Long range views of open countryside remain unchanged

The Council's refusal explicitly referred to:

"formation of an extensive driveway through an agricultural field".

This element has now been wholly removed. Accordingly, a central pillar of the alleged harm no longer exists.

The Applicant therefore submits that the amended scheme does **not** result in any material diminution of openness when compared to the existing baseline.

Policy assessment:

The NPPF identifies that the redevelopment of previously developed land in the Green Belt is not inappropriate provided it does not have a greater impact on openness. Para 154 a. confirms that as a proposed agricultural dwelling with a section 106 for agriculture worker (which will tie the land in perpetuity) is an exception to inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

The amended scheme:

- a) Is for an agricultural worker with the benefit of a section 106 agreement;
- b) Is supported by a confirmed viable, robust and will succeed as a calf rearing enterprise;
- c) located on land already affected by built development, parallel to a Cereal Factory;
- d) Adjoins existing agricultural buildings;
- e) Utilises existing hardstanding;
- f) Represents consolidation of the farmstead rather than expansion;
- g) Mitigated with reasonable conditions.

The proposal is therefore properly characterised as a limited and appropriate form of rural development directly related to the operational needs of an established and successful agricultural enterprise.

Even if the proposal were to be considered inappropriate development (which is not accepted), the Applicant has already demonstrated through the submitted Agricultural Business Plan that there is a clear and compelling functional need for an on-site dwelling, amounting to Very Special Circumstances.

Proposed mitigation by condition

To provide further assurance regarding Green Belt impacts, the Applicant expressly invites the imposition of reasonable conditions, including:

- a) Agricultural occupancy restriction
- b) Restriction of domestic curtilage to the defined area
- c) No external lighting without approval
- d) Parking restricted to the approved area only
- e) Landscaping to maintain an agricultural character

The Applicant is willing to accept such conditions to ensure that the development remains permanently subservient to the agricultural use and does not result in any creeping domestication.

Conclusion

The amended proposal represents a materially different scheme from that originally refused.

The key alleged harms identified by the Council have now been removed through:

- a) Relocation of the dwelling to adjoin existing buildings
- b) Elimination of the extensive driveway
- c) Integration with previously developed land
- d) Removal of domestic sprawl

The development is now appropriately located, visually contained, and functionally related to the existing farmstead.

Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully submits that:

- a) The proposal no longer results in any material diminution of Green Belt openness
- b) It should not be regarded as inappropriate development
- c) Any residual concerns can be addressed through conditions

The Applicant therefore requests that the amended scheme be assessed afresh and found to comply with the aims and purposes of Green Belt policy within the National Planning Policy Framework.

ECOLOGY: RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS REFUSAL REASON 3 (ARBTECH PEA EVIDENCE)

Overview:

The previous refusal of application PL/2025/02523 included an ecological reason for refusal on the basis that no ecological information had been submitted to demonstrate that the proposal would not adversely affect the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The refusal stated that, in the absence of such information, the Local Planning Authority was unable to undertake an appropriate assessment.

This reason for refusal has now been fully and comprehensively addressed through the submission of a professional Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Roost Assessment prepared by Arbtech Consulting Ltd, dated 11 December 2025.

The Arbtech report provides the technical ecological evidence that was previously absent and enables the Local Planning Authority to conclude that the revised proposal would not result in any adverse ecological impacts.

FINDINGS OF THE ARBTECH PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

Site character and habitat value.

The Arbtech PEA confirms that the application site is approximately 0.138 hectares in size and is composed almost entirely of species-poor, livestock-grazed modified grassland. The land is assessed as being of low intrinsic ecological value and represents intensively managed agricultural land with minimal biodiversity features.

The report confirms that the site primarily consists of livestock grazed, species-poor grassland and a gravel access road. It records that there are less than six vascular plant species present per square metre and that, due to livestock grazing and agricultural use, the sward height is short and uniform.

Arbtech conclude that the proposed development will result in the loss of modified grassland, but that this loss is likely to have only a minimal impact on biodiversity due to the low ecological value of the habitats present. This confirms that the land itself does not contain any habitats of ecological significance whose loss would be of concern.

Bat Ecology – Direct response to SAC concerns.

The key issue raised by the Local Planning Authority was potential impact on the Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bats SAC.

Arbtech have specifically assessed this matter and confirm that the application site contains no buildings or trees capable of supporting bat roosts and that there are no suitable roosting features within the red line boundary. The grassland offers only limited and low-value foraging habitat and the development is small in scale such that it would not fragment any bat commuting corridors.

The report states clearly that there are no buildings or trees present within the development site and therefore no suitable roosting habitat. In relation to potential impacts, Arbtech advise

that, given the presence of more extensive areas of foraging and commuting habitat in the locality, any impact from the proposal is likely to be inconsequential for bats. Importantly, Arbtech conclude that, given that the proposals are for a single dwelling and are small scale, it may be appropriate to recommend mitigation measures in lieu of further activity surveys.

This professional conclusion directly addresses the previous concern that insufficient information had been provided to rule out impacts on the SAC.

Recommended mitigation and enhancements.

Arbtech recommend a suite of proportionate and effective mitigation measures which the applicant fully commits to implementing. These include:

- a. Adoption of a Wildlife Sensitive Lighting Strategy to prevent light spill
- b. Additional native planting to improve foraging opportunities
- c. Installation of integrated bat boxes within the new dwelling
- d. Ecological enhancements to grassland and boundary features
- e. Best practice construction methods to protect nearby ancient woodland.

These measures are capable of being secured by planning condition and ensure that the proposal can be delivered without harm to protected species.

Statutory and designated sites.

Arbtech also confirm that there are no statutory designated sites within 2 kilometres of the application site and that the proposal is too small in scale and too remote to result in any material effect on designated habitats.

The report explicitly states that no impacts to designated sites are anticipated due to the small scale and distance of the proposed development from such sites. **This evidence provides the necessary technical basis for the Local Planning Authority to conclude that an Appropriate Assessment would find no likely significant effects on the Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bats SAC.**

Revised siting: Responding to ecological advice.

In direct response to Arbtech's professional guidance, the proposed dwelling has been relocated closer to the existing lawful hardcore access track and agricultural buildings, and as far away from the ancient woodland as practically possible.

This revised siting reduces any potential disturbance to bat commuting routes, minimises ecological sensitivity and avoids impacts on boundary habitats. The scheme has therefore evolved in full accordance with specialist ecological advice.

Policy compliance:

With the Arbtech PEA now submitted, the proposal demonstrably accords with Chapter 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Wiltshire Core Policy 50 on Biodiversity and Geodiversity, and the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

The submission of this professional ecological assessment fully remedies the previous absence of information.

Conclusion: Rebuttal of refusal reason 3.

The previous ecological refusal was based solely on a lack of evidence. That evidential gap has now been filled.

The Arbtech Preliminary Ecological Appraisal confirms that the site is of low ecological value, that there are no bat roosting features on site, that the development would have negligible impact on bats, and that any minor effects can be fully mitigated through standard measures.

The report confirms that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bats SAC.

Accordingly, the Local Planning Authority is now able to undertake its statutory assessment duties and to conclude that the proposal is ecologically acceptable.

Refusal Reason 3 has therefore been conclusively overcome.

PROPOSED ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

Condition 1: Implementation in accordance with Arbtech P.E.A.

The development hereby approved shall be carried out in full accordance with the recommendations, mitigation measures and enhancement measures contained within:
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment
Prepared by Arbtech Consulting Ltd
Dated 11 December 2025

Reason:

To ensure the protection of protected species and habitats and to comply with Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the National Planning Policy Framework, and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Condition 2: External lighting scheme:

Prior to the installation of any external lighting, a Wildlife Sensitive Lighting Strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The scheme shall include:

- a) Details of all external lighting to be installed, including type, position, height, lux levels and beam orientation;
- b) Measures to ensure that light spill onto adjacent habitats, field boundaries and the southern woodland edge is minimised;
- c) Confirmation that lighting will be directed away from bat commuting routes and foraging areas;
- d) Use of low-level, downward-directed lighting where required.

All external lighting shall thereafter be installed, operated and maintained in accordance with the approved strategy.

Reason: To avoid adverse impacts on bats and to protect ecological interests in accordance with Core Policy 50 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Condition 3: Bat and bird boxes:

Prior to first occupation of the dwelling, the following biodiversity enhancements shall be installed:

- a. A minimum of one integrated bat box within the fabric of the new dwelling;

- b. A minimum of one integrated bird nesting feature suitable for common garden birds;
- c. Details of the location and specification of these features shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to installation.
- d. The approved features shall be retained in perpetuity.

Reason: To secure biodiversity enhancements in accordance with Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and paragraph 186 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Condition 4: Precautionary working methods:

All construction works shall be carried out in accordance with the precautionary working methods set out in the Arbtech Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, including but not limited to:

- a. Measures to prevent harm to nesting birds, reptiles, amphibians, hedgehogs and badgers;
- b. Storage of materials away from the woodland edge;
- c. Prevention of pollution or runoff into adjacent habitats; and
- d. Covering of any open excavations overnight or provision of escape ramps.

Reason: To safeguard protected and priority species during construction in accordance with Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Condition 5: Woodland protection measures

No construction materials, plant, machinery, soil or waste shall be stored within 10 metres of the southern boundary woodland at any time.

All works shall be undertaken so as to avoid encroachment or pollution impacts on the adjacent ancient woodland.

Reason: To protect adjacent priority habitat in accordance with Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and national planning policy.

Engagement with Holt Parish Council:

The Applicant attended the Holt Parish Council meeting in December, as recorded in the Parish Council minutes; to discuss the site and to build relationship with the Parish Council. Discussions went well and Parish Council has confirmed that it may be willing to undertake a site visit, following validation of the resubmission Application.

The Applicant has also offered to facilitate a visit to a neighbouring calf-rearing enterprise to assist the Parish Council in understanding the operational context and the functional agricultural need for the proposed dwelling.

Closing statement:

The Applicant has carefully considered the Council's previous decision and has sought, through this resubmission, to respond positively and constructively to each of the matters raised.

This application represents the same modest agricultural worker's dwelling as previously proposed, but with clear and meaningful amendments – most notably the relocation of the dwelling to adjoin the existing farmstead and the introduction of a significantly shortened access utilising existing hardstanding. These changes have been made specifically to

address the concerns expressed by officers in relation to Green Belt openness and domestication.

Since the original refusal, the Applicant has taken proactive steps to directly address and overcome each of the three refusal reasons. Refusal Reason 1 has been comprehensively addressed through the submission of the detailed Agricultural Business Plan prepared by Max Sealy. Refusal Reason 2 has been tackled through the revised siting and access strategy, which removes the previously alleged sources of Green Belt harm. Refusal Reason 3 has been fully overcome through the submission of the Arbtech Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and associated mitigation proposals.

The Applicant respectfully submits that, taken together, the amended plans and additional professional evidence now satisfactorily address Refusal Reasons 1, 2 and 3 in full.

The Applicant remains committed to working collaboratively with Wiltshire Council and expressly welcomes the imposition of reasonable and proportionate planning conditions to secure appropriate safeguards in relation to Green Belt protection, agricultural occupancy and ecological mitigation.

The local planning authority under Section 70 (1) (a) of the Act may impose “such conditions as they think fit” and as illustrated by the Land’s planning history, the Applicant welcomes reasonable conditions by the officer.

Mindful of the length and detail of this submission, the Applicant wishes to thank officers in advance for their time and careful consideration of the material provided.

The Applicant would warmly welcome a new site visit so that officers can fully appreciate the revised and improved location of the proposed dwelling and the significantly reduced access arrangement now put forward. We also warmly welcome the opportunity of arranging a visit to an existing calf rearing enterprise, to assist with the decision process.

For the reasons set out within this statement and the accompanying reports and plans, the Applicant respectfully requests that planning permission be granted without delay.