

APPLICATION FOR FULL-PLANNING PERMISSION

CASE OFFICER REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2025/09029
APPLICATION TYPE:	Full planning permission
SITE ADDRESS:	Mill Farm, Blacklands, Calne, SN11 8PR
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Erection of American barn and associated works
RECOMMENDATION:	Approve with Conditions

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The application site relates to a parcel of land within Mill Farm, a diverse agricultural holding of approximately 100 acres (40 hectares) located on the outskirts of Calne.

The majority of the land is grassland, primarily used for hay production, livestock and equestrian grazing and according to the submitted Planning Statement, has been established since 1930s.

The site is accessed via an existing private access from a C-classified road to the west known as Labour in Vain Hill South C50 to Blackland, Blackland.

The site is within Flood Zone 1, and at low risk of surface water and groundwater flooding, it is however within the 20 metre buffer of a watercourse.

The site is approximately 385 metres to the west of the designated North Wessex Downs National Landscape (formerly the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty).

The site is not within any ecological or heritage designations.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks planning permission for the erection of an equestrian building in the form of an 'American barn' for stabling and equestrian storage in order for the aforementioned to be relocated closer to the existing outdoor equestrian arena and lunge ring at Mill Farm.

The proposed barn would measure approximately 14 m and 32 m with m to the ridge. It would consist of 10 horse-stalls, associated wash-bay, tack-room and on-site parking.

PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal / Summary
N/91/02145/FUL – Full planning permission Decision – Approve with Conditions Date: 21/11/1991 – Erection of 5 no stables
N/92/01137/FUL – Full planning permission Decision – Approve with Conditions Date: 10/08/1992 – Construction of Outdoor Horse Riding Arena

15/04912/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 7/7/2015 – General Purpose Farm Building to Replace Existing Structure.
15/08805/LBC - Listed building consent Decision - Approved Date: 29/1/2016 – Repointing of House and Attached Mill
PL/2024/07609 – Prior notification: Building Decision – Prior Approval not required Date: 21/1/2025 - Agricultural storage building of standard agricultural construction

RELEVANT LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

National Planning Policy:

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

Development Plan:

The development plan for Wiltshire comprises the *Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS)* (adopted January 2015) and any made neighbourhood plans, which remains the principal statutory planning document guiding development across the county. In line with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Though the development plan is considered as a whole, those parts deemed to be particularly relevant to this application are listed below:

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

- Core Policy 1 Settlement Strategy;
- Core Policy 2 Delivery Strategy;
- Core Policy 8 Spatial Strategy Calne Community Area
- Core Policy 34 Additional Employment Land
- Core Policy 50 Biodiversity and Geodiversity;
- Core Policy 51 Landscape
- Core Policy 57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping;
- Core Policy 60 Sustainable Transport;
- Core Policy 61 Transport & Development;
- Core Policy 67 Flood Risk;

Emerging Wiltshire Local Plan

While adopted policies remain the primary basis for decision-making, emerging policies may provide useful context and should be considered where relevant. In this case, there are no emerging policies contradicting the material weight, therefore, the assessment will rely solely on the adopted development plan and any other relevant national guidance.

Calne and Calne Without Neighbourhood Plan (CCNP 2):

- Policy WS2 – Supporting Local Agriculture and 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 and protects, enhances landscape character (CP 51 & 57)
- Whether the scheme would have an acceptable impact upon the reasonable living conditions of the adjoining occupants (CP 57)
- 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)
- Whether the site can be adequately drained without increasing flood risk elsewhere (CP 67)
- Whether there would be any harmful impacts upon protected species or priority habitats (CP 50)

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

WC Drainage: No objection subject to conditions

- No details on how surface water will be managed;
- Condition requiring details of a surface water drainage strategy

Cherhill Parish Council: No objection subject to conditions

- Require EV Charging
- Ensure Biodiversity Management
- Ensure all external lighting follows design guidance

Highway: No objection

REPRESENTATIONS

In accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), the application was publicised by way of:

- Neighbour notification letters sent to adjoining and nearby properties;
- A site notice displayed near the site.

These methods were used to inform interested parties and provide a period of 21 days for comments to be submitted.

No comments have been received from the public consultation at the time of writing.

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

Policy Context

Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy of the WCS establishes a hierarchy of settlements to guide where development should be focused. The policy prioritises growth in:

- Principal Settlements (e.g., Salisbury, Chippenham, Trowbridge) – main focus for strategic growth.
- Market Towns – support local services and employment; suitable for sustainable development.
- Local Service Centres – smaller towns and villages with a range of services; limited development supported.
- Large and Small Villages – development should be limited and respond to local needs.
- Outside the defined settlements – development is strictly controlled and generally not supported unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Core Policy 2: Delivery Strategy of the WCS sets out how development will be distributed and delivered across Wiltshire. The policy emphasises:

- Sustainable patterns of growth, reducing the need to travel and supporting local services.
- Development should be plan-led, aligning with the settlement strategy and supported by infrastructure.
- Windfall development (not allocated in plans) must still comply with the principles of sustainable development.
- Development outside settlement boundaries is generally not permitted, unless it meets specific policy exceptions (as set out in paragraph 4.25 of the WCS).

Together, CP1 and CP2 ensure that new development is strategically located, sustainable, and supports the character and function of Wiltshire's communities.

Policy WS2 of the CCNP2 encourages development that sustains existing rural enterprises.

Paragraph 88 of the NPPF supports the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses.

Assessment

The site is located outside of any defined settlement limits and proposes the erection of a new building which does not explicitly conform with the requirements of exception policies set out within the Wiltshire Core Strategy. However, the site is within an agricultural holding which has an equestrian use that has existed for a significant amount of time. There is no planning history to clearly establish the extent of the equestrian use of the land for planning purposes. However, a review of the planning history has identified a previous planning permission for 5 stables under N/91/02145/FUL and separately for an outdoor horse arena under N/92/01137/FUL. It is clear that the existing agricultural business has been extensively diversified over the years by the provision of the equestrian business, a holiday accommodation, and beauty salon. With a request for clarification, the Applicant has confirmed ownership and operation of the equestrian yard since 2013 in association with the wider agricultural business.

The submitted Planning Statement sets out a justification for the proposed building, explaining that the location of the existing livery stables have become unsuitable due to their close proximity to the existing residential dwelling, holiday accommodation and beauty salon. This arrangement has resulted in adverse impacts – specifically noise and the attraction of flies – which have negatively affected residential amenity and resulted in operational conflicts with the wider diversified agricultural enterprise. The Statement further clarifies that the relocation of the stables to the new barn would not only mitigate these incompatibilities, but would also improve the efficiency of the existing equestrian business by the siting of the new barn being closer to the grazing land and the outdoor arena, as well as upgrading from the outdated condition of the existing stable building to continue retaining existing customers and attracting new clients with higher quality facilities.

The promotion of agriculture and rural businesses is one of the sustainable development objectives of paragraph 88 of the NPPF, the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the Neighbourhood Plan in supporting the development and diversification of rural businesses. In this context, the proposed relocation of the stabling facilities constitutes a proportionate and justified intervention that allows the equestrian business to operate without generating unacceptable impacts on neighbouring uses. It also contributes to a more coherent and functional layout of the enterprise, improving overall efficiency and ensuring the continued viability of rural economic activity on the site. Accordingly, the proposal is consistent with the principles embodied in the development plan. The proposed building would respond positively to the operational requirements and enhance the effectiveness of the existing equestrian business.

Conclusion

The proposal is considered acceptable in principle and in accordance with Policy WS2 of the CCNP2, Core Policy 34 of the WCS, and paragraph 88 of the NPPF.

Design and Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

Policy Context

Core Policy 51 of the WCS requires development to

- protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character
- must not have a harmful impact upon landscape character

- any negative impacts must be mitigated as far as possible through sensitive design and landscape measure

Core Policy 57 of the WCS requires high-quality design that:

- Enhances local character.
- Responds to the natural, historic, and built environment.
- Retains important features (e.g., trees, hedges).
- Supports sustainable construction and compatibility with surrounding uses.
- Creates safe, legible, and accessible spaces.

Section 12 of the NPPF emphasises design that is:

- Visually attractive.
- Functionally effective.
- Contributes to the quality of the built environment.

Assessment

The proposed barn would be sited away from the site entrance, located approximately 100 metres to the east, and further screened by hedgerows in between. This location is within a parcel of land which comprises an outdoor equestrian arena and grazing area, surrounded by established trees and hedgerows. Whilst the proposed building would be positioned further away from the cluster of buildings associated with the agricultural farm to the west, the scale, form and overall design of the building is considered in keeping with the rural setting and therefore is not considered to bring upon harm to the rural character and appearance of the countryside.

Although the proposal does not include any external lighting, the site is located within an open rural landscape and is visually exposed to views from the east, forming part of the setting of the designated National Landscape. In such a sensitive context, any external lighting would have the potential to introduce visual intrusion to the National Landscape and adversely affect the character and tranquillity of the surrounding countryside. It is therefore reasonable for the LPA to retain control over any future external lighting through the imposition of a planning condition.

Conclusion

The proposal is in accordance with Core Policy 51 & 57 of the WCS.

Amenity

Policy Context

Core Policy 57 (Point vii) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires development to respect the amenity of existing occupants and ensure appropriate amenity levels for future residents.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly Paragraph 135, reinforces the need for development to provide a high standard of amenity for both existing and future users.

Assessment

The building would be positioned and contained within an eastern parcel of grazing land and outdoor equestrian arena within the agricultural holding, well away from neighbouring

dwelling, with the closest residential property being within the applicant's ownership. Given the distance and the scale of the proposed use, it is not considered to result in overlooking, loss of light, noise disturbance or any undue sense of enclosure.

Conclusion

The proposal is considered in accordance with Core Policy 57 (viii) of the WCS and relevant provisions of the NPPF.

Highways Impacts and Parking

Policy Context

Transport implications are a key factor in assessing planning applications, especially for larger developments. Proposals must demonstrate:

- Safe and suitable access for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and those with mobility impairments.
- No severe residual impacts on the surrounding highway network.
- Promotion of sustainable travel, reducing reliance on private vehicles.
- Adequate parking and cycle provision, in line with adopted standards.
- Protection and enhancement of public rights of way and active travel routes.

Relevant policies include Core Policies 60–64 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, supported by the Wiltshire Local Transport Plan, Car Parking Strategy, and Cycling Strategy.

Assessment

The proposal does not include the creation of new access points or alteration of the existing access, parking and turning arrangements. However, the submitted details do not clearly demonstrate how car parking for the new barn would be provided, nor does it specify the intended use of the existing stables, raising the possibility of increased parking demand on-site.

Following a request for clarification, the Applicant confirmed in writing that the existing car park serving the existing stables would instead accommodate the new barn, and that the new barn is intended to replace the stabling capacity of the existing building. It is noted that there would be a reduction in the overall number of stables. As such, there would be sufficient car parking spaces in the existing car park for the new barn.

Given that the proposed barn would function as the primary equestrian facility for stabling and storage, replacing the existing stables, it is considered that the development would not give rise to any adverse impact on highway safety or the local road network.

Conclusion

The proposal is in accordance with Core Policies 60 and 62 of the WCS and the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

Ecology and Biodiversity

Policy Context

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
- 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.
- Integrate biodiversity into site design.

The Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy (2022–2030) promotes nature recovery, ecosystem services, and habitat connectivity through development.

Unless exempt, National policy requires a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) for major developments, demonstrated via:

- Biodiversity Metric calculations
- Ecological assessments (e.g. PEAs, Phase 1 surveys, protected species surveys)

Assessment

Based on the information available, this application is considered to be subject to the mandatory BNG requirements as it does not fall within the exemptions set out in the BNG guidance.

The information has been provided and demonstrates a total biodiversity net change of 13.26% in the form of grassland management and scrub creation. In any case, a mandatory BNG informative will be attached to a planning permission.

Given the nature of the proposal, it is not considered that there would be unacceptable harm to the local biodiversity.

Conclusion

The proposal is subject to BNG requirements and is in accordance with Core Policy 50 of the WCS. The deemed BNG condition is capable of being discharged.

Flood Risk and Drainage

Policy Context

Core Policy 67 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and NPPF paragraphs 170–182 require:

- Avoidance of increased flood risk.
- Use of appropriate mitigation measures.
- Application of the sequential and exception tests for developments in Flood Zones 2 or 3.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are required for all major developments and must:

- Manage runoff near its source.

- Improve water quality.
- Support biodiversity and amenity.
- Be integrated into the site layout and green infrastructure.

Assessment

The application site lies within 20 metres of a watercourse.

The Council's Drainage Engineer has assessed the proposal and has noted that no information regarding the management of surface water for the new development has been submitted. It has however been noted that details of surface water drainage strategy can be secured via a pre-commencement condition.

Conclusion

The proposal is in accordance with Core Policy 67 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy subject to the recommended condition.

Other Issues

The Parish Council has recommended conditions regarding the requirement for EV Charging, Biodiversity Management and limitation of external lighting.

The proposal does not include the creation of car parking or alterations to car parking arrangements. It is therefore not considered that EV Charging is required in this case.

In accordance with the statutory BNG requirements, the applicant would be required to submit details via a 'mandatory BNG discharge of condition' application prior to commencement of works. Therefore, an additional condition is not required.

The proposal does not include the installation of external lighting, as such, the planning permission granted in this case does not include consent for the installation of external lighting on-site. An informative has been included.

Pre-commencement Condition Agreement

This recommendation includes pre-commencement planning condition(s) relating to drainage and flood risk. In accordance with Section 100ZA of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Town and Country Planning (Pre-commencement Conditions) Regulations 2018, the Local Planning Authority formally notified the applicant/agent of the proposed condition(s) and sought their agreement. Written confirmation of agreement was received from the applicant's agent on 14 January 2026.

CONCLUSION

The principle of development is considered acceptable when assessed against the settlement strategy of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the terms of support for supporting the rural economy.

The proposal is compliant with relevant local and national planning policies in respect of its principle, design impacts on character and appearance, impacts on residential amenity,

highway safety, flood risk and drainage and ecology and biodiversity, subject to the recommended conditions and any necessary mitigation measures. No material considerations have been identified that would outweigh these benefits or indicate that permission should be refused, having regard to the assessment above and the representations received.

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.

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 permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

Application Form and Certificate; received 13 November 2025

Location Plan; 2152 – LO-001 – A; received 13 November 2025

Proposed Design (proposed elevations, floor plans, site plan); 2152 – PL-001 – A; received 13 November 2025

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

3. No development shall commence on site until a detailed surface water drainage strategy associated with the development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The strategy shall demonstrate shall include:
 - Evidence that the surface water disposal hierarchy has been applied and that all other options have been fully explored and discounted where appropriate;
 - A drainage plan showing the proposed strategy, including pipe sizes, gradients, invert levels, and manhole details;
 - Where infiltration is proposed, the design shall be informed by infiltration testing undertaken in accordance with BRE 365, together with results of seasonal groundwater monitoring;
 - Where discharge to a watercourse or sewer is proposed, pre- and post-development discharge rates shall be provided in accordance with Wiltshire Council's betterment policy for greenfield sites;
 - Where discharge to a drainage system not owned by the applicant is proposed, written evidence of consent for any outfalls to that system shall be provided;
 - Pre- and post-development exceedance routing demonstrating that flood risk will not be increased elsewhere;

- Details of the long-term maintenance and management arrangements for all drainage features.

The development shall not be first brought into use until the approved surface water drainage has been constructed in accordance with the approved scheme. Thereafter, the surface water drainage shall be maintained in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: The site lies within 20 metres of a watercourse and the application contained insufficient information to enable this matter to be considered prior to granting planning permission and the matter is required to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority before development commences in order that the development is undertaken in an acceptable manner, to ensure that the development can be adequately drained.

4. If within a period of 10 years from the date of this permission, the equestrian use of the building hereby permitted permanently ceases, the building and resulting demolition materials shall be removed and the site shall, within a period of three months from the date of the substantial demolition of the said building, be restored to its condition before the development took place or to such other condition as may be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure that the agricultural buildings are removed on cessation of their equestrian purposes, in the interests of protecting the rural character of the area.

5. The development hereby permitted shall only be used for the private stabling of horses and/or for livery purposes, the storage of associated equipment and feed and the land and building shall at no time be used for any commercial purpose in connection with leisure rides or events.

REASON: In the interests of highways safety.

6. No external lighting shall be operated or installed on site until plans showing the type of light appliance, the height and position of fitting, illumination levels and light spillage in accordance with the appropriate Environmental Zone standards set out by the Institute of Lighting Engineers in their publication "Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP) Guidance Note 1 (GN01/21)", have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved lighting shall be installed and shall be maintained in accordance with the approved details and no additional external lighting shall be installed.

REASON: In the interests of the amenities of the area and to minimise unnecessary light spillage above and outside the development site.

INFORMATIVE NOTES

Biodiversity Net Gain required

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition “(the biodiversity gain condition”) that development may not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Wiltshire Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. For further information on exempt developments please refer to:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments>

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply.

Irreplaceable habitat

If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans.

The Biodiversity Gain Plan must include, in addition to information about steps taken or to be taken to minimise any adverse effect of the development on the habitat, information on arrangements for compensation for any impact the development has on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat.

The planning authority can only approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if satisfied that the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat is minimised and appropriate arrangements have been made for the purpose of compensating for any impact which do not include the use of biodiversity credits.

Building Regulations

Any alterations to the approved plans, brought about by compliance with Building Regulations or any other reason must first be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority before commencement of work.