

11 March 2026
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Ref: MOOT 3001

Planning Department
Wiltshire Council
County Hall
Bythesea Rd
Trowbridge
BA14 8JN

Dear Sir/Madam

APPLICATION FOR PRIOR APPROVAL PERSUANT TO THE GPDO FOR THE CHANGE OF USE FROM CLASS E TO RESIDENTIAL AT BLOCK C AND D, AVONSIDE BUSINESS PARK, MELKSHAM

On behalf of our client, Moonraker (Melksham) Ltd, we are pleased to submit an application for prior approval for the proposed change of use of units on the first floor, second floor and third floor within Block C and Block D from Class E (Commercial) to Class C3 (Residential) on land at Avonside Enterprise Park, Melksham, SN12 8AD.

The application proposal is described as follows:

“Prior approval for the proposed change of use from Class E (commercial) to Class C3 (residential)”

In addition to this covering letter, the application has been submitted via planning portal (ref. 14237748) and comprises electronic copies of the documents.

Document / Plan	Author	Document Reference
Completed Application Forms and Certificates	Turley	N/A
CIL Form	Turley	Dated November 2025
Internal Daylight & Sunlight Report	David Patman Redler	S02/E03/2025/05/27
Noise Report for Planning	Ion Acoustics	A2327 R01
Flood Risk Appraisal	Vectos	227166/FRA/NB
Desk Study	TEC	2504006.001.01

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Turley is the trading name of Turley Associates Limited, a company (No. 2235387) registered in England & Wales. Registered office: 6 Atherton Street, Manchester, M3 3GS.

Document / Plan	Author	Document Reference
Design Note Part 1	BGY Architects	November 2025
Design Note Part 2	BGY Architects	November 2025
Design Note Part 3	BGY Architects	November 2025
Transport Statement and Tracking	Connect Consultants	TS/1
Proposed Site Plan	BGY Architects	1275_PL_GA-00, Rev P1
BLOCKS A-G Existing Elevation 06	BGY Architects	1275_EE-06, Rev P1
BLOCKS A-G Existing Elevation 08	BGY Architects	1275_EE-08, Rev P1
BLOCKS A-G Existing Elevation 09	BGY Architects	1275_EE-09, Rev P1
BLOCKS A-G Existing Section AA	BGY Architects	1275_PL_ES-AA, Rev P1
BLOCKS A-G Existing Ground CC	BGY Architects	1275_PL_ES-CC, Rev P1
BLOCKS A-G Existing Ground DD	BGY Architects	1275_PL_ES-DD, Rev P1
BLOCKS A-G Existing Ground EE	BGY Architects	1275_ES-05, Rev P1
BLOCKS A-G Existing Ground FF	BGY Architects	1275_ES-06, Rev P1
BLOCKS A-G Existing First Floor Plan	BGY Architects	1275_PL_EX-01 (A-G), Rev P1
BLOCKS A-G Existing Second Floor Plan	BGY Architects	1275_PL_EX-02 (A-G), Rev P1
BLOCKS A-G Existing Third Floor Plan	BGY Architects	1275_EX-03 (A-G), Rev P1
BLOCKS A-G Existing Roof Plan	BGY Architects	1275_EX-RF (A-G), Rev P1
BLOCKS A-G Existing Ground Floor Plan	BGY Architects	1275_PL_EX-00 (A-G), Rev P1
BLOCKS A-G Proposed Ground Floor Plan	BGY Architects	1275_PL_GA-00 (A-G), Rev P1
BLOCKS A-G Proposed First Floor Plan	BGY Architects	1275_PL_GA-01 (A-G), Rev P2
BLOCKS A-G Proposed Second Floor Plan	BGY Architects	1275_PL_GA-02 (A-G), Rev P2
BLOCKS A-G Proposed Third Floor Plan	BGY Architects	1275_PL_GA-03 (A-G), Rev P2
BLOCKS A-G Roof Plan	BGY Architects	1275_PL_GA-RF (A-G), Rev P1
BLOCKS A-G Proposed Section AA	BGY Architects	1275_PL_GS-AA, Rev P1
BLOCKS A-G Proposed Section CC	BGY Architects	1275_PL_GS-CC, Rev P1
BLOCKS A-G Proposed Section DD	BGY Architects	1275_PL_GS-DD, Rev P1
BLOCKS A-G Proposed Section EE	BGY Architects	1275_PL_GS-EE, Rev P1
BLOCKS A-G Proposed Section FF	BGY Architects	1275_PL_GS-FF, Rev P1
BLOCKS A-G Proposed Elevation 06	BGY Architects	1275_PL_GE-06, Rev P1
BLOCKS A-G Proposed Elevation 08	BGY Architects	1275_PL_GE-08, Rev P1
BLOCKS A-G Proposed Elevation 09	BGY Architects	1275_PL_GE-09, Rev P1

Document / Plan	Author	Document Reference
Site Location Plan PD for Residential	BGY Architects	1275_PL_S-004, Rev P1
Unite Type – 1B2P Permitted Development	BGY Architects	1275_PL_UT-01, Rev P1
Unite Type – 2B3P and 2B/4P Permitted Development	BGY Architects	1275_PL_UT-02, Rev P1
Unite Type – M4(3) Permitted Development	BGY Architects	1275_PL_UT-M4(3)

The requisite application fee of £4,250.00 (+ £85.00 Service Charge) has been paid online via Planning Portal.

APPLICATION CONTEXT

Moonraker completed the phased acquisition of Avonside Enterprise Park ('Avonside') in August 2022 (having purchased the first two buildings in July 2019). It has brought the estate into single ownership. Moonraker has worked with occupiers, undergone significant marketing and invested in improving the buildings and spaces on site. This has included re-decoration of external buildings facades, improved maintenance and alterations to commercial spaces to best suit existing and prospective new tenant occupiers at the site.

The investment made by Moonraker to date include:

- The redecoration of external facades to improve the appearance of the estate as a cohesive and attractive destination in Melksham.
- The refurbishment of a circa 3,000 sq ft space on the second floor of Block A to accommodate a cyber security business as a new occupier on the estate.
- The refurbishment of a circa 3,000 sq ft space on the first floor of Block A to secure occupation by a financial services business.
- Refurbishment of building 3 – 6,000 sq ft

Avonside has a diverse range of active commercial and employment generating uses. These fall largely into Use Class E as defined in The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020. They also include some falling into a class of their own (sui generis). The range of uses continues to evolve at the site, including in response to the investment by Moonraker. The active uses are predominantly focused on the ground floor level of the estate. The careful curation and investment by the owner to date has ensued a range of complementary, public facing independent businesses (falling into Use Class E) that adds diversity and amenity to the this edge-of-centre site. Doubles – Coffee shop and pizza restaurant, Milk Town Brewery and tap room, Ten Hides Distillery and Mini Movers play café are notable success stories.

Moonraker has consulted with its occupiers, agents in the market and Melksham Town Council in the years since August 2022. It participated in the preparation of the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan. Feedback received during this consultation has reflected positively on the estate and its:

- Prominent edge-of-centre location of the site.
- Status as an important mixed-use destination in Melksham.
- Heritage significance of local importance associated with the buildings and stack fronting Bath Road.
- Contribution to the overall vitality and viability of the town centre and wider settlement.

The feedback highlighted the opportunity to build positively on this contribution through continued investment in the buildings and spaces at the estate. Stakeholders wanted to see the retention of the focus on commercial and employment generating uses at the heart of the estate. This focus should be complemented by a continued diversification in the mix of uses, particularly on upper floors. Residential uses that introduce greater activity at the

site and improved footfall throughout the day in this edge-of-centre location between the town centre and railway station was actively supported.

A combination of this feedback and experience of the market in seeking (and successfully attracting) to attract new occupiers to the estate in recent years has informed the Moonraker vision for Avonside. The opportunity for the significant planned investment is balanced with pragmatism in the face of the market conditions. This balance has resulted in the plan for a phased implementation of the planned investment to deliver the vision in the coming years. Sequential investment on a priority basis will best build on the successful investments in improving the estate to date.

The proposal and this sequential approach to investment will underpin the commercial and employment generating core of the estate. It will improve existing ground floor commercial spaces to better suit the needs of existing occupiers and maximise the prospects of attracting new entrants into the estate, and the town. The focus here is improved spaces, interaction with the external spaces and a high quality hard and soft landscaping scheme that will transform the attractiveness of the estate and its contribution to this important edge-of-centre destination.

The reality is that large areas of the upper floors of the estate are longstanding vacancy. It has not been viable to bring these spaces back into active occupation despite active marketing and investment by Moonraker since August 2022. These vacant upper floor spaces will continue to decline without a step change in investment and approach. In turn, this will undermine ongoing investment and planned activity across the wider estate. Ultimately, this position will limit the scope for investment and regeneration of the estate.

The vacant upper floor areas offer the opportunity for the major enhancement and regeneration of the estate without any loss in its core commercial and employment generating function. They are the opportunity for a step change in investment to deliver a greater diversification in the mixed-use site. The planned introduction of residential uses on upper floors will deliver this step change in a direction welcomed in the local feedback received to date and towards greater activity and footfall at the site and into the town centre throughout the day.

The phase of planned investment to introduce a mix of high-quality residential accommodation on upper floors will complement the is core commercial and employment generating function. Parking provision will be rationalised to service the new mixed-use operation of the site. Obsolete buildings will be demolished and external elevations upgraded as part of a carefully considered design focus including new hard and soft landscaping to positively transform the appearance of the site.

The phased and pragmatic approach will regenerate Avonside in a resilient, carefully considered, and comprehensive manner. It will build on the enhancements already delivered in continuing the progress towards re-establishing Avonside as a landmark location for Melksham, its town centre and the local community. Avonside will become a hugely improved mixed use asset with a significantly enhanced public realm at an established and prominent destination in the heart of Melksham. The regenerated estate will make fantastic contribution to the town.

The proposals to achieve this phased regeneration are the subject of the following planning application being submitted for determination by Wiltshire Council:

- Planning application 1 – Change of use from sui generis to residential (Use Class C3).
- Planning application 2 – Prior approval for change of use from Class E to residential (Use Class C3).
- Planning application 3 – Full planning application for external alterations, including hard and soft landscaping works.
- Planning application 4 – Prior notification of demolition for proposed selective demolition on site.
- Advertisement consent application – new signage for the ground floor commercial units.

The applications should be read and considered together. This Design Note presents a detailed analysis of the

proposed design, including in response to the constraints and opportunities of the site and its surrounding context.

SITE CONTEXT

The site is located immediately south of New Broughton Road (A3102), within the town of Melksham, Wiltshire, and falls under the administrative area of Wiltshire Council. The wider Avonside site covers approximately 1.07 hectares, with Block D occupying an area of 0.04 hectares and Block C occupying an area of 0.04 hectares.

The land is entirely brownfield and is surrounded by a mix of uses. To the north lies a Lidl supermarket, while the northeast is bordered by residential properties and industrial units, including facilities formerly operated by the Cooper Tire and Rubber Company. To the south, the site is bounded by the River Avon.

Vehicular access is available directly from New Broughton Road (A3102), and the site benefits from pedestrian footpaths that support active travel, including a cycleway/path (surfaced) on Bath Road. Melksham railway station is located approximately 0.4 miles away roughly a ten-minute walk, and offers direct services to Chippenham, with onward connections to London Paddington. Additional public transport options are available from the Avonside Enterprise Park bus stop, which is served by routes 14, 15, 68, 68A, and 69. These bus routes provide access to nearby towns including Chippenham, Bath, Trowbridge, and Corsham. The range of destinations accessible via public transport offers strong connectivity for traveling to other towns and cities for work, education, and other purposes.

According to the Environment Agency's long-term flood risk maps, the site is at medium to high risk of flooding from rivers. Almost the entire site is at very low risk of surface water flooding, and there is no significant flood risk from groundwater.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) it is permitted to change the use of a building, which was used as Class E to C3 dwellinghouses, subject to compliance with certain criteria (see Appraisal section of this report).

The information submitted with the application shows that the internal Class E units will be converted into 17 apartments over the three floors, accessed from the existing building entrance on the ground floor with a staircase access to the upper floor apartments. There will be a mix of 15 one-bedroom apartments and 2 two-bedroom apartments. The plans show space for bin storage and covered cycle storage is provided externally.

The units this application pertains to are set out in the table below.

Building	Unit	Net Area (Sqm)
Main Building	G9, G10, G11, G12, G16, G19, F5, F11, F4 A-C	1277
Main Building	S2	70
Main Building	S14	135
Main Building	G15	43

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) it is permitted to change the use of a building, which was used as Class E to C3 dwellinghouses, subject to compliance with certain criteria.

Development is not permitted by Class MA:

- *Unless the use of the building fell within one or more of the classes specified in sub-paragraph (2) for a continuous period of at least 2 years prior to the date of the application for prior approval;*
- *If land covered by, or within the curtilage of, the building—*
 - *(i) is or forms part of a site of special scientific interest;*
 - *(ii) is or forms part of a listed building or land within its curtilage;*
 - *(iii) is or forms part of a scheduled monument or land within its curtilage;*
 - *(iv) is or forms part of a safety hazard area; or*
 - *(v) is or forms part of a military explosives storage area;*
- *If the building is within—*
 - *an area of outstanding natural beauty;*
 - *an area specified by the Secretary of State for the purposes of section 41(3) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981;*
 - *the Broads;*
 - *a National Park; or*
 - *a World Heritage Site;*
- *If the site is occupied under an agricultural tenancy, unless the express consent of both the landlord and the tenant has been obtained; or*
- *Before 1 August 2022, if—*
 - *the proposed development is of a description falling within Class O of this Part as that Class had effect immediately before 1st August 2021; and*
 - *the development would not have been permitted under Class O immediately before 1st August 2021 by virtue of the operation of a direction under article 4(1) of this Order which has not since been cancelled in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 3.*

Before beginning development under Class MA, the developer must apply to the LPA for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required when having regard to:

- *Transport impacts of the development, including safe access*
- *Contamination risks associated with the building*
- *Flooding risks related to the building*
- *Noise impact from commercial premises on the intended occupiers of the development*
- *In conservation areas and the development involves a change of the whole or part of the ground floor, the impact of that change of use on the character or sustainability of the conservation area;*
- *The provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms*
- *Impact on residents from introducing housing in areas designated for heavy industry, waste management, or distribution*

- Where the development involves the loss of services provided by a registered nursery of a health centre, the impact on the local provision of the type of service lost.
- Fire safety impacts, where applicable

APPLICATION APPRAISAL

The units this application pertain to have been in continuous use as Class E for at least two years. Indeed, the tenant survey data was collected in August 2022. It confirms the latest uses within the Site. A summary is provided below.

Building	Unit	Net Area (Sq Ft)	Current Use	Details of Use
Main Building	G9, G10, G11, G12, G16, G19, F5, F11, F4 A-C	13754	E(d)	Currently is let by airsoft service known as 'Lock & Lock, previously used for retail, let by a business known as the 'Lighting Superstore', selling and installing interior and exterior lights.
Main Building	S2	754	E(d) - (Vacant)	Unit is currently vacant. It was previously used as a martial arts studio. Planning permission for this was granted in August 2000 under W/00/01111/FUL. The permitted use of this unit fell within Use Class E. This permitted use does not cease, despite the fact they are vacant
Main Building	S14	1458	Vacant	Unit is currently vacant.
Main Building	G15	468	E(c)(iii) (Vacant)	Unit is currently vacant. The previous use included Services and Retail (known as 'Wiltshire Stair Lifts') The permitted use of this unit fell within Use Class E. This permitted use does not cease, despite the fact they are vacant

The application is not land that is or forms part of a SSSI, Listed Building, Scheduled Monument, Safety Hazard Area, Military Explosives Storage Area, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Broads, National Park or World Heritage Site. The site is not occupied under an agricultural tenancy.

As such, it is considered development will be permitted subject to the prior approval assessment of Transport, Contamination, Flood Risk, Noise, Daylight and Sunlight. This assessment is provided below.

TRANSPORT

This application is accompanied by a Transport Statement prepared by Connect Consultants.

The report confirms:

- The Site is in central Melksham and is surrounded by the town centre pedestrian network that provides access to a range of services/facilities within walking distance.
- The area local to the Site is conducive to cycling, with a wide range of services and amenities within cycling distance, and there are good opportunities for residents to make their journeys by bike.
- The bus stops local to the Site are served by frequent bus services, which provide access to / from a variety

of destinations.

- Melksham rail station is also within walking distance of the Site; some longer journeys to/from the proposed development can be made by train.
- The Site also has a prominent location relative to the local highway network, and the recent local collision records indicate that there is no existing road safety problem in the vicinity of the Site.
- Overall, the site has a good level of accessibility by all relevant transport modes.

The existing vehicular accesses to the Site will be rationalised to just two access points, creating a one-way route through the Site; entering through the eastern access and exiting through the western access. The existing vehicle access in the eastern corner of the Site will become a non-car access for pedestrians and cycles only. Pedestrian movements are accommodated within the internal site layout.

The proposed residential car parking is in accordance with the adopted local standards. Cycle parking for the residents will be provided within secure covered cycle stores conveniently located for the residential units, accommodating at least one space per bedroom. Swept path analysis shows that the access arrangements and layout of the proposed development are suitable for the largest vehicles that are expected to use the Site.

The industry-standard TRICS database has been used to identify the average vehicle trip rates for both the fallback position based on the existing uses and proposed development.

The TRICS data shows that the proposed prior approval would result in a reduction in the number of peak-hour vehicle trips associated with the Site. Even ignoring the fallback position, the proposed residential flats are shown to generate an average of 5-6 vehicle movements in the weekday peak hours, which is a negligible number of additional vehicle movements.

The proposal is therefore considered acceptable from a transport perspective.

CONTAMINATION

This application is accompanied by a Desk Study prepared by TEC. The development will require minimal groundwork. In summary, the report concludes:

- **Geo-Technical:** Should significant re-configuration and/or new buildings/structures be proposed, given the anticipated ground conditions and site history, a geotechnical intrusive investigation would be recommended to investigate the depth of made ground and natural ground profile on site to ascertain foundation design parameters and concrete design parameters for the proposed development and to ascertain and engineering conditions or constraints associated with the site. Furthermore, given that the site is located on the flood plain of the River Avon, groundwater monitoring may be required at the site.
- **Geo-Environmental:** Given the proposed change of end use in some parts of the site (from commercial to higher sensitivity residential) proposed as part of the development works, additional assessment may be required to fully investigate any potential Significant Pollutant Linkages identified, to fully define the geoenvironmental issues associated with the site in relation to the proposed development. This phase of assessment would involve refinement of the site conceptual model developed as part of the preliminary risk assessment based on the findings of an exploratory intrusive investigation.
- **UXO:** The Stage 1 Preliminary UXO Risk Assessment concludes that based upon available information, at this stage a Stage 2 Detailed Risk Assessment is not considered necessary prior to any site investigation works commencing. A UXO Safety Briefing to all personnel conducting groundworks would be considered prudent.

FLOOD RISK

The application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Appraisal prepared by Vectos.

The appraisal assesses potential flooding from all relevant sources, including the sea, rivers, surface water, groundwater, and reservoirs. It concludes that the River Avon is the only significant source of flood risk to the site. Based on Environment Agency data, the lowest-lying external areas in the west of the site are likely to flood in events with a return period of between 1 in 20 and 1 in 50 years, while the eastern external areas are likely to flood in events with a return period of between 1 in 50 and 1 in 75 years. Internal flooding is only expected in more extreme events, with a return period of between 1 in 100 and 1 in 200 years.

The appraisal confirms that the site can be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere. Appropriate mitigation and design measures will be incorporated to manage residual risk.

The proposal is therefore considered acceptable from a flood risk perspective.

NOISE

The application is accompanied by a noise report prepared by Ion Acoustics.

The report confirms that external noise levels at the façade of Block D fall within the high-risk category as defined by the Professional Practice Guidance on Planning and Noise (ProPG). However, it is important to note that existing residential properties on both sides of the road are subject to similar noise levels. This demonstrates that the location remains suitable for residential development, and appropriate mitigation measures will be put in place for the proposal.

In line with ProPG recommendations for high-risk sites, a comprehensive acoustic assessment and design process will be undertaken to ensure acceptable internal noise environments.

The majority of noise levels affecting Block D is sufficiently low to allow for natural ventilation through open windows while still complying with the AVOG (Acoustics, Ventilation and Overheating Guidance) limits, assuming a standard 13dB attenuation for an open window.

Additionally, noise measurements from the adjacent commercial units were not found to be particularly high and are considered compatible with residential use above.

It is therefore considered the proposal is acceptable from a noise perspective.

SUNLIGHT & DAYLIGHT

The application is accompanied by an Internal Daylight and Sunlight Report prepared by DPR.

The report evaluates daylight and sunlight provision to all habitable rooms within the wider proposals, applying the methodologies set out in the BRE Guide (2022 edition). The assessment confirms that all 46 habitable rooms (100%) meet the recommended daylight criteria, ensuring that every dwelling will benefit from good levels of natural light.

With regard to sunlight, 31 of the 46 dwellings (67%) comply with the BRE guidelines, each containing at least one habitable room capable of receiving a minimum of 1.5 hours of sunlight on 21 March. It is noted that the BRE guidance is advisory rather than prescriptive, and its numerical targets should be applied with flexibility. As acknowledged in the NPPF, greater flexibility is appropriate in urban locations such as this, where the delivery of new homes in a town centre context is a key planning objective.

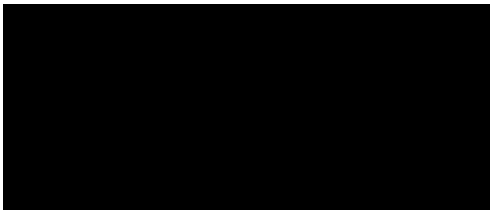
The proposal is therefore considered acceptable from a daylight and sunlight perspective.

CONCLUSION

This application seeks prior approval for the conversion of specific Use Class E units at Avonside Enterprise Park within Blocks C and D to deliver residential units under Class MA of Schedule 2, Part 3 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

I trust that you have everything you require to validate and determine this application, though please do not hesitate to make contact if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely



Owen Francis
Director, Head of Planning Wales

