

5th March 2026

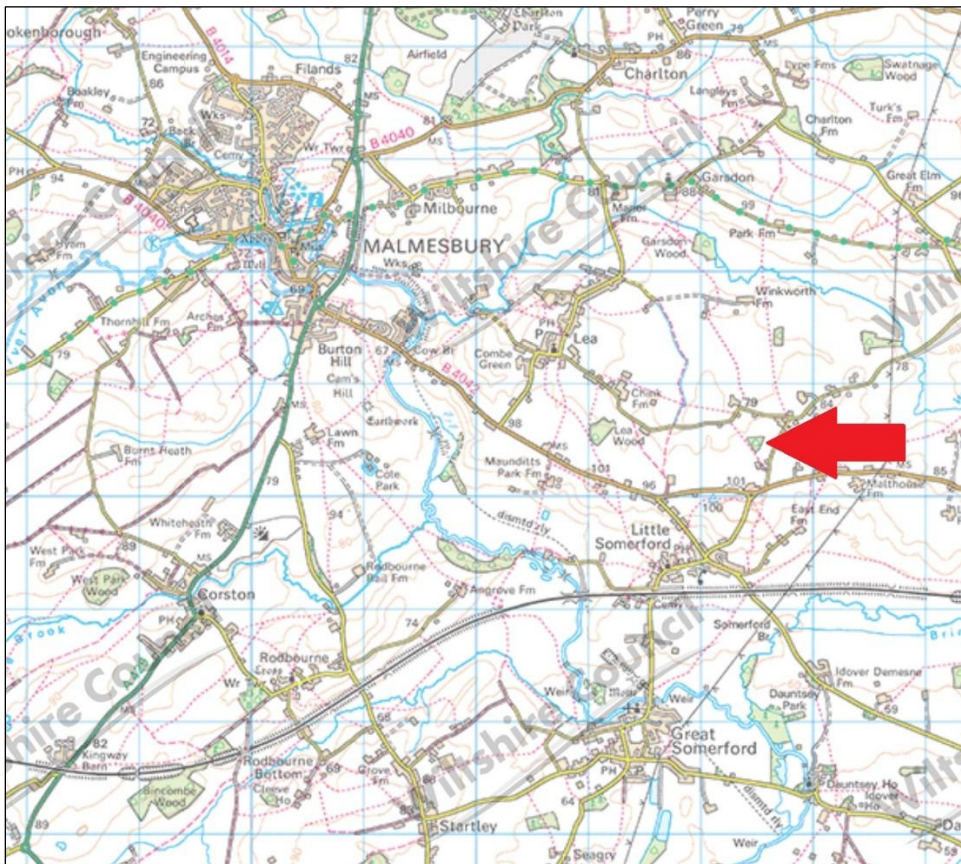
Our Ref: SWLC.LPC5870

Development Services – North
Wiltshire Council
Monkton Park
Chippenham
Wiltshire
SN15 1ER

Dear Sir/Madam,

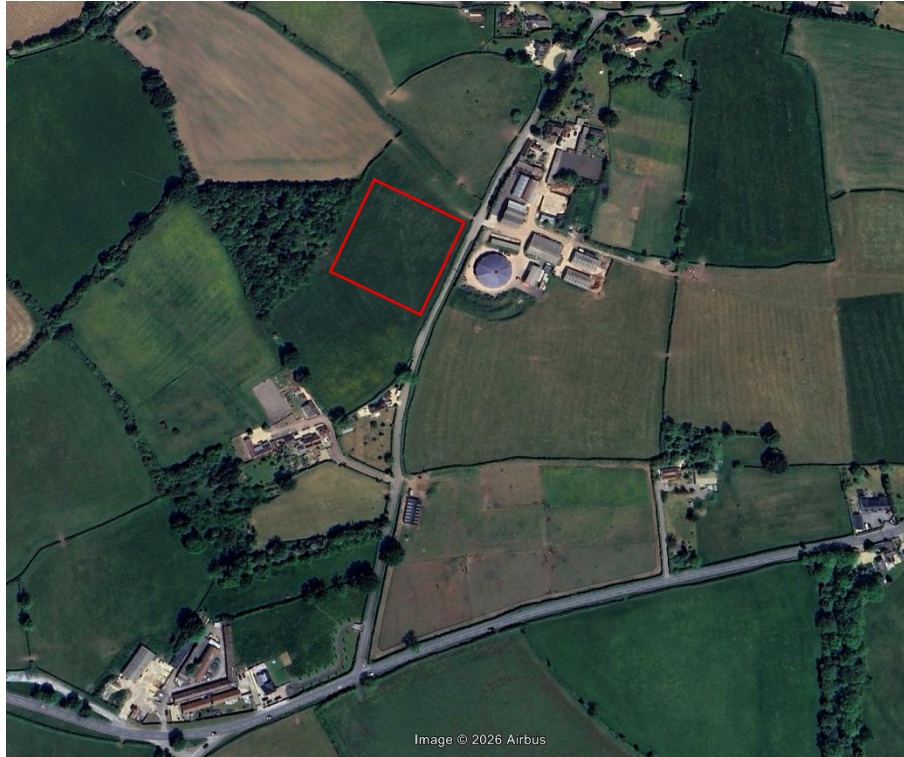
Town and Country Planning Act 1990
Change of use of land from agriculture to a secure dog walking area with
associated works – At: Street Farm, Cleverton, Chippenham, Wiltshire

Please find enclosed a duly completed application for the change of use of land from agricultural to a dog walking area at Land at Street Farm, Cleverton, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN15 5BS. Street Farm lies a short distance to the south of the hamlet of Cleverton within the open countryside. It lies to the northeast of the villages of Great and Little Somerford. The site also lies to the southeast of the village of Lea and the Market Town of Malmesbury.



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The Application Site comprises a rectangular parcel of agricultural land situated opposite the main farm complex. It comprises pasture containing no trees or other vegetation. In planning terms, the site lies in the open countryside and is not within a Conservation Area or National Landscape. There are no Listed Buildings nearby.



Access to the field is achieved from the lane by an existing field gate.



G Maidment & Sons is a family partnership that started over 80 years ago by David Maidment's Grandfather. The holding constitutes about 110 acres of land as a combination of permanent pasture/grass. The business has changed over the past 10 years from running a suckler herd to finishing cattle. The application represents part of the business's evolution into areas of farm diversification to maintain economically viable.

Relevant Planning Policy Context

This application seeks planning permission for the change of use of land from agricultural to a dog walking area. This will provide a safe and convenient space for dog walkers and will be bordered by fencing. An area of reinforced grass in the northeast corner will be laid for parking. As mentioned, vehicular access will be achieved from the lane to the east by an existing field gate. There is a track leading from the gate along the edge of the field and this will be resurfaced with hardcore.

The planning assessment to be made, pursuant to Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 relates to the Wiltshire Core Strategy, addressed by the following key policies:

CP1 Settlement Strategy sets out how and where different types of development should be distributed across Wiltshire's settlements to support sustainable patterns of growth.

CP2 Delivery Strategy explains how the spatial strategy for housing, employment and other land uses will be delivered over the plan period, including broad locations for growth and mechanisms for implementation.

CP34 Additional Employment Land sets out how additional employment land (typically uses in the B-class use categories such as B1 business, B2 general industry and B8 storage and distribution) will be supported in appropriate locations. The policy supports employment development within the Principal Settlements, Market Towns and Local Service Centres in locations that align with the strategy and role of those places. Outside those defined settlements, CP34 also supports proposals that will retain or expand existing businesses, support sustainable farming and food production including diversification, and provide for new or existing rural-based businesses adjacent to villages, provided that they meet sustainable development objectives, do not adversely affect their surroundings, are of an appropriate scale, are supported by evidence of local economic and social need, and will not undermine strategic employment allocations in the plan

CP57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping sets out expectations for design quality, requiring that development contributes positively to local character, identity, and sense of place.

CP51 Landscape provides the strategic approach to protecting and enhancing the character and quality of Wiltshire's landscape in the planning process. It sets out how development proposals should consider landscape character and beauty and includes criteria for assessing landscape impact in order to conserve and, where appropriate, improve the county's distinctive landscape character and qualities. The Core Strategy lists CP51 under the environmental protection and natural environment policies, establishing that landscape considerations are a key part of how development should be planned and managed across Wiltshire.

CP61 Transport and New Development requires that transport considerations are integrated into new development, including assessments of impacts and provision for sustainable transport options in line with a defined hierarchy of transport users.

CP64 Demand Management aims to manage travel demand, particularly car use, through measures such as parking standards, transport planning, and integration with sustainable transport objectives.

Additionally, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024) is also a relevant policy document and is a material planning consideration for all planning applications.

Main Planning Assessment

Having outlined the relevant planning policy context against which this application should be assessed, it is now necessary to identify the main issues for determination. These are considered to be as follows: -

- i. Principle of development
- ii. Impact on highway safety
- iii. Impact on neighbouring amenity
- iv. Impact on visual amenity of the open countryside

i. Principle of the development

The Core Strategy does not have a policy that directly relates to this proposal. However, the adopted Core Strategy at its very heart seeks to promote and deliver sustainable forms of development which extends to supporting existing businesses. It is considered that this type of facility is most appropriately located outside of an urban area, and in this case, the site lies within the open countryside for the purposes of the development plan, wherein it would be considered as a rural business.

Paragraph 6.71 of the Core Strategy states;

"Rural facilities and services are those that benefit the local community such as meeting places. There is a need to encourage the development of rural services and facilities in Wiltshire to ensure that settlements, particularly those named in this strategy, can still meet some of the day-to-day needs of the people who live in them."

Therefore, there is space within the meaning of paragraph 6.71 for dog walking facilities to be included as a rural facility and service.

The only policy that could be applied to a new rural facility or service such as this would be Core Policy 34, which states that: -

"Outside the Principal Settlements, Market Towns and Local Service Centres, developments will be supported that:

- i. are adjacent to these settlements and seek to retain or expand businesses currently located within or adjacent to the settlements; or*
- ii. support sustainable farming and food production through allowing development required to adapt to modern agricultural practices and diversification; or*

iii. are for new and existing rural based businesses within or adjacent to Large and Small Villages”.

Whilst the site cannot be said to be adjacent to any of the Principal Settlements, it does support an existing farming enterprise through diversification to enable it to remain profitable and viable. Furthermore, Street Farm is a location where Planning Permission has previously been granted for expansion and extension of an existing farming operation. Furthermore, whilst in the open countryside, it does lie adjacent to Large and Small Villages and a Market Town. Whilst there is no clear definition of the term “adjacent” in the Core Strategy, the site lies within 0.3km of Cleverton, 1.1km from Little Somerford, 2.7km from Great Somerford, 2.7km from Lea and 4.8km from Malmesbury. It is therefore considered reasonable to conclude that the site is within a reasonable distance of a range of Large and Small Village and the Market Town of Malmesbury.

Additionally, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) explicitly supports farm diversification. It states that planning policies and decisions should enable the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses. The framework emphasizes that any proposals must be sensitive to the surrounding countryside and take into account environmental protections, particularly the preservation of the best and most versatile agricultural land. Where significant development on agricultural land is necessary, preference should be given to poorer-quality land rather than the highest-grade farmland. Paragraph 88 specifically highlights the importance of supporting the sustainable growth and expansion of rural businesses, including allowing conversions of existing buildings and new construction where it is well-designed. Paragraph 89 acknowledges that sites to meet rural business needs may need to be located adjacent to, or beyond, settlements. In such cases, proposals must be designed carefully to avoid unacceptable impacts on the local area and should maximize opportunities for sustainable access by walking, cycling, or public transport.

In summary regarding the principle of this development, the proposed dog walking facility at this site aligns with both local and national planning policy by promoting sustainable rural business diversification. It supports an existing farming enterprise, contributes to the local rural economy, and is located within a reasonable distance of surrounding villages and the Market Town of Malmesbury, consistent with the intentions of Core Policy 34. Furthermore, the proposal reflects the principles set out in the NPPF by enabling the sustainable growth of a rural business. Therefore, given these factors, the development represents a legitimate and appropriate rural facility, providing both economic and community benefits, and can be supported as a positive and sustainable addition to the area.

ii. Impact on highway safety

There is an existing access onto the lane via a field gate which will be utilised as part of this application. An area of parking will also be created in the north east corner of the site which will be reinforced grass/grasscrete.

It is also considered that the usage of the site will be suitably managed so that dog walking sessions will be time limited and there will be a 10-minute buffer between

client leaving and new clients arriving so that vehicle movements can be suitable managed so the number of vehicles on site at any one time is minimised. A condition to this effect could also be attached to the Planning Permission in the event this is considered necessary. On this basis, there are not considered to be any highway safety issues arising from this application.

iii. Impact on neighbouring amenity

Core Policy 57 states that development should have regard to the compatibility of adjoining uses, and of the impact on the amenities of existing occupants and ensuring that appropriate levels of amenity are achievable within the development itself. Section 12 of the NPPF also states that planning decisions should create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

The site's location is significantly removed from any nearby residential property (160 metres to the nearest farmhouse Street Farm) which means that there would be no loss of residential amenity either in terms of noise or overlooking. The intention is to provide a safe and secure place for dog walking in a controlled and safe environment, where numbers of clients is controlled through a booking system. As a result, the behaviour of the dogs will be under control and closely monitored and therefore excessive barking and aggression from dogs will be avoided. Additionally, it is envisaged that opening hours will be relatively standard (e.g. 0800 to 1700 Monday to Friday and some limited hours at weekends).

iv. Impact on visual amenity of the open countryside

Core Policy 51 states that development should protect, conserve and where possible, enhance the landscape character. Section 15 of the NPPF expects decisions to ensure the protection and enhancement of valued landscapes.

It is possible that the site may be visible from the public footpaths LECL14 and LECL15, shown below. However, there will be very limited new built form and although it is proposed to erect new fencing, long range views will remain fairly open, due to the nature and design of the fencing. Similar to deer fencing used for domestic and commercial deer control, the fencing consists of timber posts holding galvanized wire to securely contain the dogs. Furthermore, the parking area has been kept to a minimum and there will be no artificial lighting.



In summary, the proposed development does not result in an unacceptable level of harm and remains considerate to the surrounding landscape. On this basis it is considered that the proposals comply with Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy Development Plan and are considered acceptable.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is considered that the proposed change of use represents an appropriate and sustainable form of rural diversification that aligns with both the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework. The proposal will support the continued viability of an established agricultural business, contribute positively to the local rural economy, and provide a valued recreational facility for the surrounding communities. Furthermore, the development has been carefully designed to ensure that there will be no unacceptable impacts in respect of highway safety, neighbouring amenity, or the character and appearance of the open countryside.

I look forward to your Council's early approval, however, if there are any questions arising so as to assist that decision, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Simon Chambers
Director

Enc.

Cc: Mr D Maidment