



PLANNING DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Application:	Erection of livestock building, agricultural storage building and associated works
Property:	Lower Dunge Farm, Bratton Road, West Ashton.
Client:	TAC Page & Partners
Date:	November 2025
Agent:	Chris Cary MRICS FAAV Associate Partner - Rural Surveyor & Planner



1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Woolley & Wallis have been instructed by TAC Page & Partners to submit an application for a new agricultural livestock building and associated storage building at Lower Dunge Farm, West Ashton.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to identify and detail on planning considerations in respect to the application above.
- 1.3 Accompanying Documentation:
 - a) Proposed Location Plan
 - b) Proposed Block Plan
 - c) Proposed Livestock Building Elevations & Floorplan
 - d) Proposed Agricultural Storage Building Elevations & Floorplan
 - e) Whole Farm Plan
 - f) Farm Nutrient Calculations
 - g) Preliminary Landscape Assessment – WH Landscape.
 - h) Landscape & Visual Appraisal – WH Landscape
 - i) Proposed Landscaping plan.
 - j) Ecology Survey & BNG Metric inc. Plan – Ethos Environmental
 - k) Surface water drainage strategy.

2.0 PROPOSED SITE INFORMATION

- 2.1 Having reviewed the proposed application site, the following have been noted and considered.
- 2.2 According to gov.uk flood risk map, the site does not lie with a River or Sea flood Risk Area nor within a Surface Water Flood Risk Area.
- 2.3 There are no Rights of Way crossing the proposed development site area. The closest Right of Way is public footpath WT/WASH/11 lies 287m away, towards the Southwestern boundary.
- 2.4 There are two listed buildings in the vicinity of the proposed site. Lower Dunge Farmhouse sits approximately 812m to the West and is within the applicant's ownership. The second listed building is Dunge Farmhouse, which sits approximately 944m to the West.

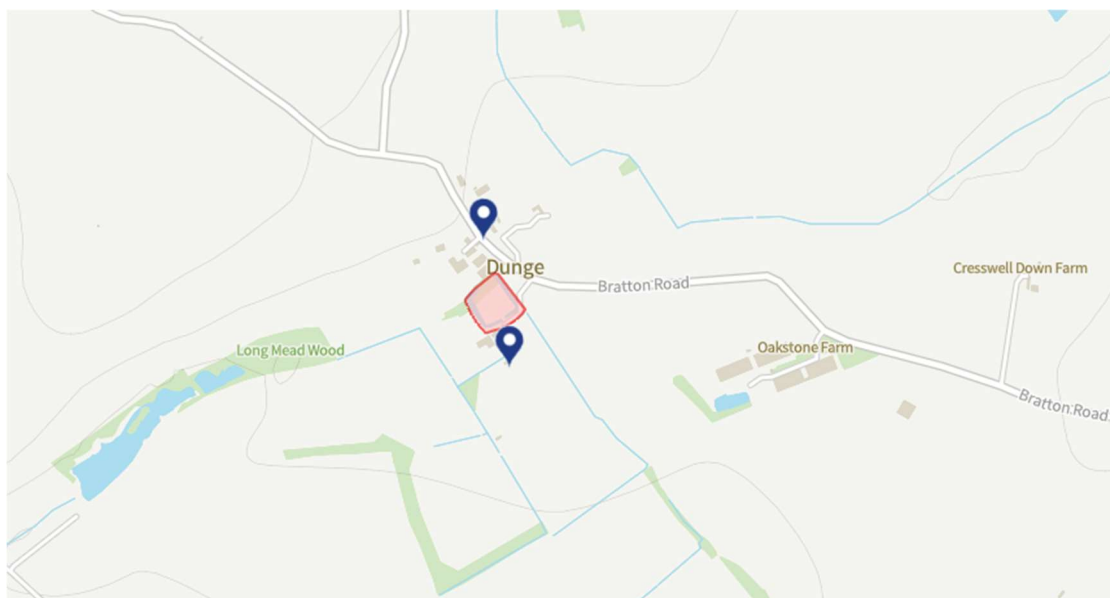


Image 1 – Listed Building Locations

- 2.5 WH Landscape have considered the landscape designations in the area.
- "There are no designated areas of nature conservation value within the site, and very few within the surrounding area although the site lies within the SSSI Impact Risk Zone (established to assess likely impacts on SSSIs/SACs/SPAs & Ramsar sites) for a number of SSSIs, including Picket and Clanger Woods SSSI, Steeple Ashton SSSI and Bratton Downs SSSI. Salisbury Plain, beyond the study area to the south, includes Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC)".*
- 2.6 Ethos Environmental have considered local habitats and environmental designations in the area. A walkover survey of the land was undertaken which focused on present habitats and potential for protected species.
- The report notes that the whole development area is *"arable habitat exclusively"*. *"The site falls within the yellow zone within the Trowbridge and Westbury Mitigation Strategy (TWMS)".*

3.0 PROPOSAL & APPLICATION REASONING

- 3.1 In early 2025, the applicants took the decision to take the land back in hand and farm it themselves. They are starting a livestock rearing enterprise and as such, require buildings to service it, with the only buildings upon the whole holding at the time being a small range of historic buildings at the main farmstead which are adjacent to the farmhouse. These buildings have been in equestrian use for many years now and approximately 5 acres of surrounding farmland has been occupied in conjunction with the use

Scale / Construction

- 3.2 Significant consideration has been given to the design and layout of the proposed scheme, including the siting and relationship of the buildings to one another. The arrangement ensures that all areas with the potential for dirty water generation are fully covered and contained within the built form, thereby improving operational efficiency and ensuring robust environmental management across the site.
- 3.4 The livestock building provides actual livestock housing area of 100' x 124' with a total overall building footprint of 151' x 124' to incorporate an additional covered cattle handling area within the same structure. This integrated design allows all cattle operations to take place under cover, removing the need for any external handling areas and enhancing animal welfare, operational efficiency, and environmental protection.
- 3.5 The proposed storage building will house a Farmyard Manure (FYM) store and three silage clamps to service the livestock enterprise. The FYM store will measure 100' x 40'.
- 3.6 The storage building will accommodate a Farmyard Manure (FYM) store and three silage clamps to support the livestock enterprise. The FYM store will measure 100 feet by 40 feet. The silage clamps will measure 100 feet by 96 feet.
- 3.7 Both buildings will be of standard agricultural construction, being of steel portal frame construction. The design and construction of the muck store will comply with modern-day regulations.
- 3.8 The new building will be in keeping with the existing grain store onsite. The grain store will be used for machinery storage and storage of straights and blends.

Agricultural Justification

- 3.9 The livestock rearing operation and associated buildings are reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture.
- 3.10 In summary, the enterprise involves the purchase of young calves to be reared on the holding up to store or finished weight over approximately 20 months. The cattle will be fed on fodder produced within the holding, supplemented by concentrates as required.
- 3.11 Covered livestock housing is an essential animal welfare requirement, while the provision of covered manure stores and silage clamps aligns with the Farming Rules for Water (2018, as amended), which promote improved management of slurry and runoff to protect water quality.

- 3.12 The farming operations have recently been brought back in-hand, and as part of this process the applicants have reviewed their overall nutrient balance. Their agricultural adviser has utilised the PLANET Nutrient Management System to model nutrient outputs and ensure full compliance following development, based on a gradual increase in livestock numbers up to 150 head of cattle.
- 3.13 The results of the nutrient management assessment confirm that the enterprise comfortably complies with the Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ) Livestock Manure Nitrogen Farm Limit. At a herd size of 150 cattle, the predicted manure loading equates to approximately 4,950 kg N/year, well within the permitted farm limit of 22,950 kg N/year. We include the following documents 'Farmgate Nutrient Balance 150 Head' & 'Livestock Manure N Loading 150 Head'.

Drainage

- 3.14 All roof water will be captured by gutters to ensure that all clean water is kept clean. A number of water collection tanks will be installed to provide drinking water to the cattle.
- 3.15 A full surface water drainage strategy has been created by Aegaea and accompanies this application.
- 3.16 The livestock will be housed in a deep litter system preventing the creation of slurry.

4.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Section 38(6) states that:
- "If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose 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".*
- 4.2 At the current time the statutory development plan in respect of this application consists of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) (Adopted January 2015); the 'saved' policies of the North Wiltshire Local Plan (NWLP) 2011 (adopted June 2006) & the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan (WHSAP) (adopted February 2020). The WCS Strategy is relevant in this case.
- 4.3 Wiltshire Council are currently undertaking their Local Plan Review. Yet to be adopted therefore little weight given.
- 4.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 as amended in Feb 2025 is the current national level policy document. This has been considered. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF requires proposals that accord with the Development Plan to be approved without delay.

5.0 PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1 Core Policy 1 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy sets out the 'Settlement Strategy' for the county and identifies tiers of settlement – Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres, and Large and Small Villages. Only the Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages have defined limits of development/settlement boundaries.
- 5.2 Core Policy 2 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy sets out the 'Delivery Strategy'. It identifies the scale of growth appropriate within each settlement tier, stating that within the limits of development, as defined on the policies map, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development at the Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages.
- 5.3 Core Policy 29 provides the community area-based policy in this instance. This is silent on agricultural development.
- 5.4 The application site does not lie within any settlement and as such is located in the 'open countryside' for the purposes of the WCS. Residential development would need to rely on one of the exception policies as detailed within *Para 4.25 of Policy 2*. In case, 'Additional employment land' being CP34 & 'Supporting Rural Life' being CP48.
- 5.5 Agriculture is defined in Section 336 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as:

"agriculture" includes horticulture, fruit growing, seed growing, dairy farming, the breeding and keeping of livestock (including any creature kept for the production of food, wool, skins or fur, or for the purpose of its use in the farming of land), the use of land as grazing land, meadow land, osier land, market gardens and nursery grounds, and the use of land for woodlands where that use is ancillary to the farming of land for other agricultural purposes, and "agricultural" shall be construed accordingly;

- 5.6 The buildings are being erected for the purposes of housing cattle and associated storage. The development is considered to meet the above definition.
- 5.7 Core Policy 34 is the WCS's dedicated policy that deals with additional employment land. This policy states the following:

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; or
- iv. are considered essential to the wider strategic interest of the economic development of Wiltshire, as determined by the council.

Where they:

- a. meet sustainable development objectives as set out in the policies of this Core Strategy and
- b. are consistent in scale with their location, do not adversely affect nearby buildings and the surrounding area or detract from residential amenity and

- c. are supported by evidence that they are required to benefit the local economic and social needs and
 - d. would not undermine the delivery of strategic employment allocations and
 - e. are supported by adequate infrastructure.
- 5.8 The development is in line with i. and complies with a. thought to e. above and is therefore compliant with CP34.
- 5.9 Even though CP48 does not specifically cover the erection of new agricultural buildings, it generally covers supporting rural life and looks to protect the countryside and maintain its local distinctiveness.

6.0 IMPACT ON NEIGHBOURING AMENITY

- 6.1 The proposed development is located within an established agricultural setting and is positioned between existing farm buildings. The nearest neighbouring use is a poultry farm situated immediately to the north, which includes a non-protected farmhouse (AOC) associated with that enterprise.
- 6.2 There are no residential or other sensitive receptors in the immediate vicinity that would be affected by the proposed extended agricultural use. The new barns will not introduce any new sources of significant noise, light, or disturbance beyond the normal operation of a working farm. Lighting will be restricted to inside of the buildings and there will be no external lighting. The vehicular activity will remain consistent with existing agricultural operations on the site.
- 6.3 Accordingly, it is considered that the proposals will have no adverse impact on neighbouring amenity, and the development is fully compliant with Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, which seeks to ensure that new development does not result in harm to the amenities of existing occupants or neighbouring uses. The proposal also aligns with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requirement to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future users.

7.0 IMPACT ON HIGHWAYS

- 7.1 The existing farmyard is serviced by an existing modern agricultural access onto the Bratton Road, a council maintained highway. The access is laid to a consolidated surface, specifically concrete, the gates are recessed and has a splayed entrance providing good visibility in both directions.
- 7.2 The proposed development will present a minor intensification of existing traffic movements at the yard. The existing yard provides more than sufficient room for turning and manoeuvring as well as sufficient parking.
- 7.3 No changes are proposed to the existing access.
- 7.4 It is considered that the proposed development would not result in any unacceptable impact on highway safety to justify a refusal on highway grounds (Para 116 NPPF).

8.0 IMPACT ON ECOLOGY

- 8.1 The development site comprises intensively farmed arable land that holds limited ecological value. The proposed works are located more than 15 metres from the nearest hedgerow and as such is compliant with the TWMS.
- 8.2 Ethos Environmental Planning has completed the required Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) metric. To ensure compliance, the proposals include the planting of **new trees and some hedgerow management** creating over a 10% net gain. Consequently, no bat surveys are required.

9.0 IMPACT ON LANDSCAPE

- 9.1 WH Landscape Consultancy (Mr Robin Lines) were instructed to undertake a Landscape & Visual Appraisal (LVA) which shall be submitted once fully drafted. In the interim a Preliminary Landscape Statement has been drafted and accompanies the application.
- 9.2 The assessment found that the site lies on former arable land adjacent to existing agricultural buildings and close to an established poultry farm. The proposals will consolidate the existing built form within a low-lying and visually contained landscape.
- 9.3 A proposed landscaping scheme accompanies this application.
- 9.4 Due to existing hedgerows, flat topography, and limited public viewpoints, visual effects are considered minor and acceptable. The development will not affect any designated heritage assets or protected landscapes and is therefore compliant with Core Policy 51 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and Section 15 of the NPPF, conserving the character and appearance of the local landscape.

10.0 CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The proposed development seeks permission for the erection of a livestock building and associated storage building on land at Lower Dunge Farm.
- 10.2 The proposal incorporates covered handling and storage areas, ensuring that all potential dirty water sources are contained within the buildings. This represents a clear environmental and operational improvement, fully compliant with the Farming Rules for Water and modern agricultural best practice.
- 10.3 Comprehensive supporting assessments confirm that the development will not give rise to any unacceptable impacts upon landscape, ecology, neighbouring amenity, or highway safety. The site has been found to hold limited ecological value, achieves a Biodiversity Net Gain of over 10%, and benefits from a high level of natural screening within the wider landscape. The proposed landscaping scheme ensure that the development will have a negligible effect on the landscape.
- 10.4 The proposal accords with the Wiltshire Core Strategy, in particular Core Policies 34, 51, 57, and the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024, as amended 2025), which together support sustainable rural development and the continued viability of agricultural enterprises.

- 10.5 In summary, the development represents a well-designed, environmentally responsible, and policy compliant agricultural proposal that will support the long-term sustainability of Lower Dunge Farm and the wider rural economy.