



LP PLANNING
CHARTERED PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANT



PLANNING STATEMENT

Project: Retrospective change of use and conversion of part of Hut 3
from car storage (B8) to car valeting (Sui Generis)

Address: Hut 3, Moonrakers Farm, Gastard, Corsham, SN13 9QN

Applicant Classic Car Safe LLP

Date: April 2026

LP Planning, 31 Market Place, Chippenham, SN15 3HZ

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 LP Planning Consultants have been instructed by Classic Care Safe LLP (the Applicant) to prepare and submit this Planning Statement in support of a full planning application seeking the retrospective change of use and conversion from car storage (B8) to car valeting (sui Generis) at Hut 3, Moonrakers Farm, Corsham.
- 1.2 The proposed development is not “major” within the terms of Article 2 of the Town and Country Planning [Development Management Procedure (England) Order 2015] nor does it lie within a conservation area or world heritage site, nevertheless this statement sets out in full the planning issues in support of the application.

2. Description of Site and Context

- 2.1 Moonrakers Farm is located to the north-east of the village of Gastard, which itself is found approximately 1.5 miles to the south-east of the town of Corsham, and approximately 4 miles south-west of the larger town of Chippenham.
- 2.2 Formerly part of a larger agricultural holding (a poultry farm) the site now has a commercial storage use within several existing linear sheds (shown below).

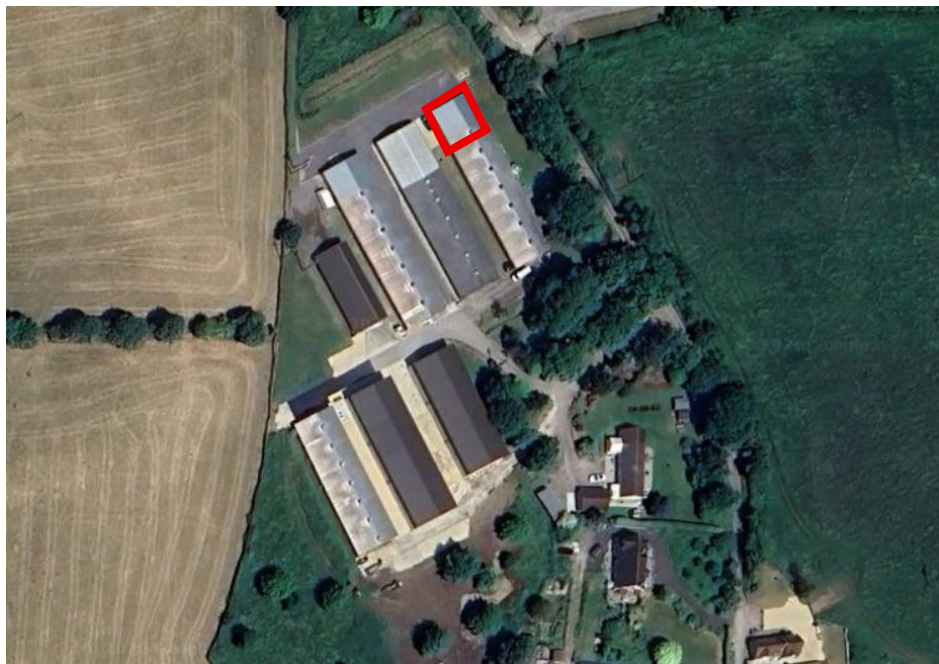


Figure 1: Site Location

- 2.3 The specific area subject of this planning application is limited to one section of Hut 3, highlighted in red on Figure 1 above, with the red line on the location plan also incorporating parking space and access to the site from the public highway. The building is comprised of blockwork, timber cladding under a shallow pitched roof that is covered with metal sheeting.
- 2.4 The site area amounts to 0.12 hectares.
- 2.5 Access is achieved from Gastard Lane to the south which serves several other properties.
- 2.6 Surroundings, aside from the several other commercial buildings are generally rural open countryside with residential properties to the south.

2.7 The site is not subject to any special landscape, heritage or ecological designations. Notably, the site does not fall within a designated Green Belt or National Landscape. It is not within a Conservation Area and there are no Listed Buildings or Tree Preservation Orders within the site or its immediate setting.

2.1 The Environment Agency Flood Map confirms the site falls within Flood Zone 1 (lowest risk of flooding).

2.2 The nearest public rights of way are shown in blue below.

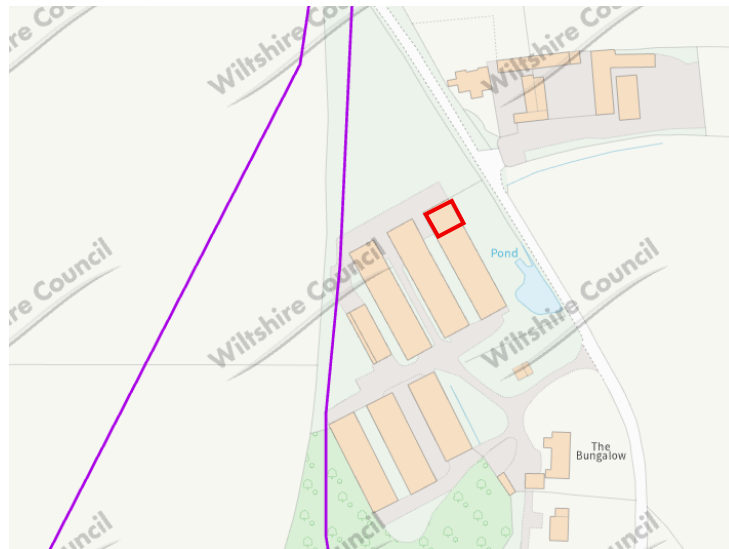


Figure 2: Public Right of Way map

3. Planning History

3.1 The table below summarises the planning history available on Wiltshire Council's website:

Application No.	Description	Decision
PL/2023/03023	Prior approval for the installation of Photovoltaic (PV) Solar Panels to the roof of buildings at Moonraker Farm	Approved
18/12103/FUL	Extension to x 3 storage sheds and replacement of x 2 storage sheds in association with existing self-storage business.	Approved
14/04904/CLE	Certificate of lawfulness for use of former agricultural buildings for commercial storage	Approved

3.2 Elsewhere at Moonrakers Farm an application ([PL/2025/09723](#)) was very recently approved for the retrospective change of use of part of Hut 1 to a car repair business. The Officer Report confirmed that both highways and public protection raised no objection (along with the Town Council). This application is referred to further below at paragraph 7.7 regarding the principle of development.

4. Background

- 4.1 As mentioned above, Moonrakers Farm was originally a poultry farm, but the site now has a lawful commercial storage use which has been in operation in excess of 20 years.
- 4.2 Bath Bespoke Detailing were established in 2020 and have occupied part of Hut 3 as a tenant since 2024. They occupied the space in good faith, and they or their landlord (the applicant) did not think planning permission would be required for the change of use from car storage to car valeting. As such, this application is submitted to regularise matters and ensure they can continue operating their business.
- 4.3 Bath Bespoke Detailing is a sole trader, owned and operated by Mr James Dowding. The business offers car cleaning/valeting services for prestige classic cars and cars of high value. They have been operating from the unit since 2024 but also operate a mobile service where they travel to the customer's location, the unit is therefore not always in use and depends on the needs of each client.
- 4.4 Mr Dowding is the only member of staff and due to the extreme level of care and detail that must be taken when valeting high value cars, on average he only works on 1 car each week.
- 4.5 Three cars are currently stored in the unit, with space for one car to be worked on at a time.
- 4.6 Approval of the application will allow the successful business operation to continue and contribute to the economy whilst providing a service to the community. Many of Mr Dowding's customers utilise the car storage facility at Moonrakers Farm so for some customers there are no traffic movements associated with the business.

5. Description of Development

- 4.7 The description of development is as follows:

“Change of use and conversion of part of Hut 3 from car storage (B8) to car valeting (Sui Generis) (Retrospective)”.

- 4.8 The proposals involve no external alterations, and the application is limited to seeking retrospective consent for the change of use only.
- 4.9 Opening hours are Monday- Saturday strictly by appointment only but Mr Dowding generally works between 7am-6pm depending on the day.
- 4.10 There are two parking spaces shown on the proposed block plan, one of which is for Mr Dowding's own van, with a customer space also available. As appointments are all booked in advance and there is no 'walk-in' service for the public, this is considered a suitable arrangement and has been working successfully since 2024.

6 Planning Policies

6.1 Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the provisions of the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

6.2 The Development Plan in this case comprises the Wiltshire Core Strategy 2011-2026 (January 2015) (the WCS). The following policies are relevant to this application:

Policy CP1: Settlement Strategy

Policy CP2: Delivery Strategy

Policy CP34: Additional Employment Land

Policy CP35: Existing Employment Land

Policy CP57: High Quality Design and Place Shaping

Policies CP60 - 64: Relating to sustainable transport and traffic

6.3 The Development Plan also comprises saved policies of the former North Wiltshire Local Plan (2011) which have been ‘saved’.

6.4 The Corsham Neighbourhood Plan (2019) is also relevant and forms part of the Development Plan.

6.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) is a significant material consideration in the determination of the application, and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) also provides relevant advice. In particular, it promotes sustainable development and seeks to make effective use of land and buildings.

6.6 The relevance of the above policies are set out in the detailed planning assessment below.

7 Planning Assessment

7.1 When assessing the proposed development against the relevant planning policies, the key issues in this case are as follows:

- The principle of the change of use;
- The impact upon the character and appearance of the area;
- Drainage;
- Residential amenity; and
- Highways (access and parking).

Principle of Development

7.2 The site is located in a rural position outside of any settlement boundaries defined by the Wiltshire Core Strategy. In planning terms, the site is therefore within the open countryside. However, the site has an established lawful business use for car storage.

7.3 The area of Hut 3 changing use is limited to 106sq.m. Given the site has an existing employment use, together with the fact the proposal is small scale but still employment

generating would mean there is no significant or substantial change that would result in the use being unacceptable.

- 7.4 Core Strategy Policy 34 is concerned with additional employment land across the County, however as the site already has an employment use it is not considered necessary to demonstrate compliance with the various criteria. Notwithstanding this, the minor change of use is consistent in scale with its location and would not adversely affect any nearby buildings, and nor it would detract from residential amenity of the nearest occupiers.
- 7.5 In addition, Core Strategy Policy 48 ‘Supporting Rural Life’ provides support for reusing rural buildings for employment, tourism, cultural and community uses.
- 7.6 The Corsham Neighbourhood Plan includes Policy BE1 which is supportive of employment related development proposals which are sustainably located so as to strengthen and support the growth of Corsham’s economy will be supported, particularly where the provision of new jobs for local people or business start-up units and/or growth in the innovation, education and knowledge sectors are being proposed and the inward investment for the local business has been demonstrated.
- 7.7 When considering recent application PL/2025/09723 the Officer said, *“the site lies just outside of Gastard (a small village) and involves an existing site in employment use. It is therefore considered that the change proposed within the existing site is sustainably located and acceptable in principle”*.
- 7.8 At a national level, the NPPF (paragraphs 88-89) says that planning policies and decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through the conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, new buildings. Para 89 also states that planning decisions should, *“recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport.”*
- 7.9 Paragraph 85 of the NPPF states, *“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”*.
- 7.10 Overall, the site has an existing employment use and granting of this planning application would allow for a local small business to continue trading, creating a positive economic benefit for the local area and clearly aligning with the objectives of the NPPF in terms of promoting economic activity in existing buildings and encouraging investment and growth.

Impact upon the Character of the Area

- 7.11 The planning system promotes high quality development through good inclusive design and layout. The application includes no external alterations and as such there are no works that could be considered to visually impact the wider area.
- 7.12 The character of the site and immediate surroundings at Moonraker Farm is commercial (featuring cars in particular) and the recent photograph below demonstrates the site is well managed and tidy.



Figure 3: Hut 3 shown on the left

- 7.13 As per the recent approval at Hut 1, this application seeks the change of use of the inside of the unit only with external areas used for parking. There will be no car related paraphernalia placed outside which could detract from the appearance of the site. Overall, the proposal is small scale and will not lead to any unacceptable impact on the character of the area.

Residential Amenity

- 7.14 Core Policy 57 sets out the general principles for the design of development, including impacts on neighbours:

“vii. Having regard to the compatibility of adjoining buildings and uses, the impact on the amenities of existing occupants, and ensuring that appropriate levels of amenity are achievable within the development itself, including the consideration of privacy, overshadowing, vibration and pollution”.

- 7.15 The nearest residential neighbours to the building are approximately 70m to the north-east on the opposite side of the road, there are no physical changes proposed and the small-scale car valeting use does not give rise to any significant level of adverse impacts (noise and disturbance) that would be capable of warranting refusal of this application.

- 7.16 Overall, there is no reason why this small valeting business cannot continue to operate successfully without harm to residential amenity.

Highways Considerations

- 7.17 National planning policy dictates that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or if the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 7.18 Parking needs are limited to one space for the owner's van and another for customers. As mentioned, the business offers a mobile service as well, so not all business is undertaken on site. It very much depends on the bookings. Typically, there is one customer per week so movements from customers to and from the site will be extremely limited.
- 7.19 Highway impacts are negligible and not capable of forming a reason for refusal of this application.

Flood Risk & Drainage

- 7.20 Paragraph 167 of the NPPF requires LPA's to ensure that a planning application would not increase flood risk elsewhere. The site is within Flood Zone 1 where there is a low risk of flooding from river and/or sea sources. The site is also at low risk of flooding from surface water.
- 7.21 Regarding surface water, the Applicant proposes to install a Poly Drain which will flow into an underground tank which will be capable of storing up to 500litres of surface water. This tank will be installed on the grass close to the unit (underneath an existing picnic bench), which is also in the ownership of the applicant. More details can be supplied via condition if necessary.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 7.22 The application is exempt from biodiversity net gain requirements as the proposal is for the change of use and conversion of the existing building (and is also retrospective).

8. Conclusions

- 8.1 The application seeks permission for the change of use of part of an existing building with an established business use, allowing it to be lawfully occupied by a car valeting business. The small-scale business is owned and solely operated by the owner and the area changing use is relatively small, 106sq.m.
- 8.2 Paragraph 85 of the NPPF is concerned with building a strong, competitive economy. It set out 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"**.
- 8.3 This Planning Statement has demonstrated how the proposed development complies with all relevant planning policies and permission should be granted without delay.