

APPEAL STATEMENT

Site: Outmarsh Farm, Outmarsh, Semington, Wiltshire, BA14 6JX

Application Reference: PL/2025/08409

Planning Portal Reference: PP-14383877

Proposal: Retrospective siting of a static caravan for temporary agricultural accommodation (3 years)

1. INTRODUCTION

This appeal relates to the retrospective siting of a static caravan at Outmarsh Farm to provide temporary on-site accommodation in direct support of an active and developing agricultural enterprise. The proposal seeks temporary permission for a period of three years to allow the continued establishment and growth of the holding, after which the need for on-site accommodation will be formally reviewed.

2. SITE AND EXISTING USE

Outmarsh Farm is an established agricultural holding located in Semington, Wiltshire. The land is actively used for sheep and goat husbandry, poultry (egg production), beekeeping, and orchard cultivation. These activities form part of a progressively expanding agricultural enterprise, with investment already made in livestock, infrastructure, and land management. The site remains entirely in agricultural use, with no loss of habitat, change in land levels, or urbanising impact arising from the development.

3. DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

The development consists of a single static caravan, positioned discreetly within the holding and used solely for temporary residential accommodation linked to agricultural operations. The caravan has been in place since October 2024. It is low impact, reversible, and visually contained within the site, and does not introduce permanent built form or alter the character of the land. The proposal is explicitly temporary, limited to a three-year period.

4. FUNCTIONAL NEED FOR ON-SITE ACCOMMODATION

The agricultural enterprise requires a continuous on-site presence to operate effectively and safely. Livestock require daily and often round-the-clock supervision, particularly during lambing and kidding periods, adverse weather conditions, and illness or injury. Immediate intervention is frequently necessary. The site has also experienced incidents of theft and trespass, making on-site presence important for security. Daily operations such as feeding, welfare checks, egg collection, and hive monitoring are time-sensitive. Without a continuous on-site presence, the enterprise cannot operate to acceptable welfare, security, or management standards. The caravan is therefore essential, not optional.

5. ACCESS CONSTRAINTS AND SITE RELATIONSHIP

Although a farmhouse exists nearby, it does not provide a practical alternative for managing the holding. The main agricultural land is physically separated from the farmhouse, with restricted access due to fencing and a steep embankment, and no usable vehicular access between the two. The farmhouse is occupied by the landowner, who operates a separate full-time business. The agricultural enterprise is managed separately and cannot reasonably rely on the farmhouse as its operational base. Travel between the farmhouse and the site takes approximately 10–15 minutes, which is incompatible with emergency response and time-critical agricultural operations.

6. AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISE AND VIABILITY

The holding is formally registered with DEFRA, the Rural Payments Agency (RPA), and holds a County Parish Holding (CPH) number, confirming it is a legitimate agricultural operation. Current operations include 15 sheep, 2 goats, 20 laying hens, 3 beehives, and a developing orchard. The business plan demonstrates clear progression, with projected income increasing from approximately [REDACTED] in Year 1 to [REDACTED] by Year 3. The enterprise is in a development phase with a clear trajectory toward financial sustainability, and temporary on-site accommodation is necessary to enable this growth.

7. VISUAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The development has minimal visual impact. It is located approximately 90 metres from the highway and screened by existing vegetation, with additional planting underway. The caravan is finished in neutral tones, subordinate to the agricultural setting, and fully removable. There is no unacceptable landscape harm, no loss of biodiversity, and no permanent alteration to the site.

8. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

The proposal aligns with the National Planning Policy Framework, which supports sustainable rural development and the growth of agricultural enterprises, including temporary rural worker accommodation where justified. It also aligns with the Wiltshire Core Strategy, including Core Policy 34 (rural employment) and Core Policy 48 (functional need for rural accommodation).

9. TEMPORARY AND PROPORTIONATE NATURE OF DEVELOPMENT

This is a time-limited proposal of three years, allowing the enterprise to establish and demonstrate viability. It avoids permanent development in the countryside and enables reassessment at an appropriate stage. This is a proportionate and policy-compliant approach.

10. CONCLUSION

The proposal supports a genuine agricultural enterprise, meets a clear functional need, has minimal environmental and visual impact, is temporary and reversible, and aligns with planning policy. The appeal should therefore be allowed and temporary planning permission granted for three years.