

APPLICATION FOR FULL-PLANNING PERMISSION CASE OFFICER REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2025/08588
APPLICATION TYPE:	Full planning permission
SITE ADDRESS:	Land adjacent to 5 New Road, Purton, Swindon, SN5 4HF
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Change of Use of land from equestrian to residential curtilage (re-submission of PL/2025/04801), hardstanding partially retrospective
RECOMMENDATION:	That Planning Permission is GRANTED subject to conditions.

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The application site relates to a large, broadly rectangular parcel of land, approximately 0.14 ha, adjacent and to the east to No.5 New Road, Purton. The site includes a vehicular access off New Road to the south. Aside from the vehicular access, the site is set back from the public highway, with neighbouring grassland in between. The site stretches to around 48 metres east of the established residential plot of No. 5.

The application site is within the vicinity of a 'sensitive view' identified within the made Purton Neighbourhood Plan.

The site has historically been formally recognised by the LPA as agricultural land, however, the applicant in the previous application under reference PL/2025/04801 and in this application continues to assert that the site has been long established as equestrian use dating back to approximately 1955, prior to its unauthorised conversion to domestic ancillary use, which is the subject of this application.

Within the case officer's report for application reference PL/2025/04801 the reports sets out that there is no substantive dispute regarding the site's historic equestrian use prior to the unauthorised change of use.

PROPOSAL

This is a full planning application seeking planning permission for the retrospective change of use from equestrian use of the land adjacent to No5 New Road, Purton, to domestic ancillary use as an extended private domestic garden. This includes the use of the site to park the applicant's vehicles and the erection of 1.2-metre-high post and wire fencing on the eastern boundary of the site.

Following concerns raised by Officers regarding the visual impact, amended plans have been received which confirms an allocated car parking area to be used in association with the dwelling at No. 5. Part of the allocated car parking area is already occupied with hardstanding, and the proposal does not include any additional hardstanding proposed.

PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal / Summary
PL/2025/04801 - Full planning permission Decision - Refused Date: 18/9/2025 – Change of use from equestrian to C3 domestic ancillary use
N/03/01959/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Refused Date: 27/8/2003 – ERECTION OF FENCE - 2M HIGH (RETROSPECTIVE)

RELEVANT LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

National Planning Policy:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- National Design Guide

Development Plan:

The development plan for Wiltshire comprises the *Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS)* (adopted January 2015) and any made neighbourhood plans, which remains the principal statutory planning document guiding development across the county. In line with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Though the development plan is considered as a whole, those parts deemed to be particularly relevant to this application are listed below:

The adopted *Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS)*, with particular regard to:

- Core Policy 1 Settlement Strategy;
- Core Policy 2 Delivery Strategy;
- Core Policy 19 Spatial Strategy Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Area
- Core Policy 50 Biodiversity and Geodiversity;
- Core Policy 51 Landscape
- Core Policy 57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping;
- Core Policy 62 Development Impacts on the Transport Network;

Emerging Wiltshire Local Plan

While adopted policies remain the primary basis for decision-making, emerging policies may provide useful context and should be considered where relevant. In this case, there are no emerging policies contradicting the material weight, therefore, the assessment will rely solely on the adopted development plan and any other relevant national guidance.

Purton made Neighbourhood Plan (PNP):

- Purton Policy 4 (Ecological Enhancement)
- Purton Policy 5 (To protect key local landscapes)
- Purton Policy 6 (Settlement Identity)

Supplementary Planning Documents and other Guidance:

- Wiltshire Design Guide (adopted April 2024)
- Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026, adopted 2015 - including the Car Parking Strategy and Cycling Strategy, adopted 2015

ISSUES

The main issues that need to be addressed in this case include:

- Whether the development is acceptable in principle (CP 1, 2 and 19)
- Whether the scheme constitutes high quality design (CP 57)
- Whether the scheme would have an acceptable impact upon the reasonable living conditions of the adjoining occupants (CP 57)
- Whether the scheme would have an acceptable landscape impact (CP 51)
- Whether the proposal would have a negative effect upon highway safety, including if there is sufficient parking for the proposed development (CP 61 and 64)
- Whether there would be any harmful impacts upon protected species or priority habitats (CP 50)

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

The following is a summary of consultation responses. Comments in full are published online.

Purton Parish Council: No objection

WC Highways: No objection

Network Rail (Western): Comments

- Comments relate to potential for future urbanisation of land, and general advice for future applications.

REPRESENTATIONS

In accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), the application was publicised by way of:

- Neighbour notification letters sent to adjoining and nearby properties;
- A site notice displayed near the site.

These methods were used to inform interested parties and provide a period of 21 days for comments to be submitted.

No third party comments have been received.

ASSESSMENT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes 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."

In accordance with this statutory requirement, this application has been assessed against the relevant policies of the Development Plan, including the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) and, where applicable, any made Neighbourhood Plans. Consideration has also been given to the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as a material consideration in the assessment.

Principle of Development

Policy Context

Wiltshire Core Strategy Policies CP1 (Settlement Strategy) and CP2 (Delivery Strategy) set out the spatial strategy for sustainable development across Wiltshire. Core Policy 19 sets out that development in the Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Area should be in accordance with the Settlement Strategy set out in Core Policy 1. Those policies direct new development towards sustainable locations.

Assessment

The site lies detached and outside the settlement boundary of Purton, a Large Village that is within the Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Area. As such, the site is considered to be within the open countryside, where there is a general presumption against new development unless it falls within the specified exception policies outlined in paragraph 4.25 of the WCS.

The proposed extension of existing residential plots is not one of these specific exceptions. However, the proposal does not introduce a new use or planning unit, nor significantly increase the intensity of use in the countryside.

Conclusion

An extension of an existing residential unit in this case is a form of development capable of support in principle, provided it does not conflict with the overarching policy of countryside restraint and other relevant policies in the development plan.

Design and Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

Policy Context

Core Policy 57 of the WCS requires high-quality design that:

- Enhances local character.
- Responds to the natural, historic, and built environment.
- Retains important features (e.g., trees, hedges).
- Supports sustainable construction and compatibility with surrounding uses.
- Creates safe, legible, and accessible spaces.

Section 12 of the NPPF emphasises design that is:

- Visually attractive.
- Functionally effective.
- Contributes to the quality of the built environment.

The Wiltshire Design Guide encourages sensitivity to local character, materials, and architectural styles and supports modern living standards while maintaining aesthetic and functional quality.

Assessment

The site has equestrian uses to the north and east and it is acknowledged that the adjoining land comprises a variety of paraphernalia associated with the said equestrian land use.

The equestrian use of the land is characteristic of the rural setting. The proposed change of use to include domestic curtilage would introduce an element of domestication to the site and result in some degree of domestic paraphernalia at the scale and position proposed. The Applicant states that there is no intention to increase domestic paraphernalia beyond what is necessary for the functioning of the dwelling, part of the area highlighted within the submitted Proposed Block Plan is intended to accommodate domestic off-street car parking.

It is recognised that the proposal, in its current form and scale, including the provision of car parking, would introduce a minor urbanising influence on this parcel of land when compared with the previously established equestrian use. However, the location of the designated parking area—positioned closer to the dwelling and partially screened by existing trees along the southern boundary—is considered to limit the extent of visual impact. This arrangement would also prevent the wider site from being used indiscriminately for domestic car parking, thereby reducing the overall visual effect on the rural character.

There is a concern for the potential for the spread of domestic paraphernalia over time, however, any further visual harm can be managed sufficiently through the imposition of conditions removing Permitted Development (PD) Rights, thereby preventing the erection of domestic structures or installations via PD rights which could intensify the urbanisation of the site. This approach is considered reasonable and proportionate to ensure that the rural character and setting are preserved at an acceptable level.

The submitted Planning Statement suggests that the proposal is a proportionate side garden extension to the property at No.5, New Road, Purton. Having reviewed the prevailing pattern of development in the surrounding area, this assertion is not supported. The resulting curtilage would be noticeably larger than the typical plot sizes in the locality, which are generally similar to, or smaller than, the existing curtilage of the host dwelling. As such, the proposal does not fully reflect the established pattern of development.

Nonetheless, given the proposal's siting immediately adjacent to the existing plot, the allocated car parking area and the ability to control future visual impacts through the removal of permitted development rights, the degree of harm arising from the enlarged curtilage is not considered to reach a level that would justify refusal. On balance, the proposal is capable of being accommodated without resulting in unacceptable harm to the rural character or wider landscape.

Conclusion

The proposal is in accordance with Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

Amenity

Policy Context

Core Policy 57 (Point vii) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires development to respect the amenity of existing occupants and ensure appropriate amenity levels for future residents.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly Paragraph 135, reinforces the need for development to provide a high standard of amenity for both existing and future users.

These policies guide the assessment of amenity impacts, which will be considered in detail under the below headings.

Overlooking / loss of privacy

Given no physical development is proposed, it is not considered that there would be any overlooking impact on the neighbouring amenities.

Loss of light / overshadowing

Given no physical development is proposed, it is not considered that there would be any overshadowing impact on the neighbouring amenities.

Overbearing Impact / Overall sense of enclosure

Given no physical development is proposed, it is not considered that there would be any overbearing impact on the neighbouring amenities.

Noise

The proposal, involving the parking of the large vehicles, would introduce vehicular activity into the site, which is not considered well-screened and in proximity to private rear gardens and the residential properties surrounding the site. However, it is considered that the noise and disruption resulting from the use of the land as a residential garden and parking of the vehicles within is currently limited and therefore the adverse impacts on the enjoyment of the outdoor amenity spaces by current and future neighbouring occupiers are considered limited in this case.

Highways Impacts and Parking

Policy Context

Transport implications are a key factor in assessing planning applications, especially for larger developments. Proposals must demonstrate:

- Safe and suitable access for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and those with mobility impairments.
- No severe residual impacts on the surrounding highway network.
- Promotion of sustainable travel, reducing reliance on private vehicles.
- Adequate parking and cycle provision, in line with adopted standards.
- Protection and enhancement of public rights of way and active travel routes.

Relevant policies include Core Policies 60–64 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, supported by the Wiltshire Local Transport Plan, Car Parking Strategy, and Cycling Strategy.

Assessment

The highway authority has been consulted and raises no objections to the proposal, noting that there are no proposals to alter the existing access and that it is not considered that the change of use of the land would result in any significant or severe impact on the public highway.

Conclusion

The proposal is in accordance with Core Policy 62 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

Ecology and Biodiversity

Policy Context

The ecological impact of development is a key planning consideration, especially for larger schemes. Proposals must assess and address potential effects on:

- Protected species
- Priority habitats
- Ecological networks
- Green and blue infrastructure

Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires development to:

- Avoid harm to ecological assets.
- Deliver measurable Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), in line with the Environment Act 2021.
- Support habitat restoration and connectivity.
- Integrate biodiversity into site design.

The Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy (2022–2030) promotes nature recovery, ecosystem services, and habitat connectivity through development.

Unless exempt, National policy requires a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) for major developments, demonstrated via:

- Biodiversity Metric calculations
- Ecological assessments (e.g. PEAs, Phase 1 surveys, protected species surveys)

Assessment

Given the small scale of the proposed hardstanding and the part-retrospective nature of the proposal, it is considered that the application falls within the exemptions from the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements. Nevertheless, as required by the regulations, any approval must include an Informative reminding the applicants of the biodiversity net gain requirements.

Given the nature of the proposal it is not considered to result in unacceptable harm to the biodiversity on-site.

Conclusion

The proposal is in accordance with Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

Landscape and Visual Impact

Policy Context

Core Policy 51 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires development to:

- Protect, conserve, and enhance landscape character and quality.
- Respect local distinctiveness, key views, and visual receptors.
- Give particular weight to impacts on National Landscapes (formerly AONBs) and locally valued landscapes.

The Wiltshire Design Guide SPD (2024) promotes a context-led approach, encouraging integration with natural features and settlement patterns while avoiding visual intrusion.

The Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy (2022–2030) supports landscape protection through green infrastructure, habitat connectivity, and nature-based solutions.

Paragraph 135 and 187 of the NPPF emphasises the need to protect and enhance valued landscapes, particularly those with scenic, historic, or ecological significance. Planning decisions should:

- Recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.
- Safeguard key views, local distinctiveness, and landscape settings.
- Ensure development is well-integrated into its surroundings and avoids visual intrusion, especially in sensitive or designated areas.

Landscape impact must be considered alongside biodiversity, heritage, and green infrastructure objectives, with mitigation measures encouraged where harm cannot be avoided.

Purton Policy 5 of the PNP identifies locally important and sensitive views within the local area taken from the public footpath network and seeks to maintain the quality of these distinctive public views.

Assessment

The application site lies within the Limestone Ridge within the Thames Valley Lowland, identified under the Landscape Character Assessment. Although this landscape area is noted to be in a state of degradation, these views on and surrounding the site are protected by Purton Policy 5 of the PNP. The application site is situated within the context of these views.

The site has a relatively flat topography, with trees along the eastern and southern boundaries, stock fencing to the north, and the western boundary adjoining the property of 5, Purton Road. The wider adjacent field to the north is enclosed by a well-maintained hedgerow. Together, these two fields form a pocket of openness within the existing pattern of development and contribute to preventing the appearance of urbanisation of the area. The application site is therefore considered to make a positive contribution to the local landscape, and with its scale and openness, it is susceptible to significant adverse impacts arising from inappropriate development.

At the proposed scale and form, there would be an inevitable urbanising effect on the countryside. However, the area already forming a hard standing is small-scale and has natural

screening. The additional area proposed for the parking of additional vehicles would be retained as grass, with no further hardstanding proposed. Any domestic vehicles would be confined to the drive, and this area and all parking would be for the occupants of the dwelling house, which would be secured by condition. There is no further harm deemed to result from their further changes.

The Applicant has proposed post and wire fencing along the eastern boundary which is considered to provide a clear separation of the proposed use of the land for an extension to the domestic curtilage from the adjacent equestrian land.

Further to the above, the aforementioned removal of PD rights would ensure that the visual harm arising from the domestic use of the land would be limited.

Conclusion

The proposal is in accordance with Core Policy 51 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, Purton Policy 5 of the PNP and the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion of the above matters, it is concluded that the proposed development, on the whole, would be acceptable in planning terms. The identified harms are considered to be appropriately mitigated through planning conditions or other controls. The proposal is in accordance with the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the National Planning Policy Framework, and all other relevant material considerations. With circumstances being insufficient to warrant otherwise, the application is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Planning Permission be GRANTED, subject to conditions.

CONDITIONS:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

Proposed Block Plan; dated November 2025 Rev B – Parking Area and hardstanding defined; received 6 May 2026

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. The area identified for parking on the approved plans (Proposed Block Plan, dated November 2025 Rev B), excluding the approved hardstanding, shall be retained as grass and shall not be surfaced or consolidated. Parking shall be limited to that contained within the area marked on the approved plans and shall be used only for purposes ancillary to the occupation and enjoyment of

the dwellinghouse known as 5 New Road, Purton, unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area, prevent the incremental spread of hardstanding, and ensure the use remains incidental to the residential use of the site.

4. The post and wire fencing along the eastern boundary, as shown on the approved plans, shall be erected within 3 months of the date of this permission and thereafter retained as described for the lifetime of the development, unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure a clear and permanent demarcation between the residential curtilage and the adjacent equestrian land, in the interests of visual amenity and proper planning.

5. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (No.3) (England) Order 2020 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting or amending that Order with or without modification), no garages, sheds, greenhouses and other ancillary domestic outbuildings shall be erected anywhere on the site on the approved plans.

REASON: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area.

INFORMATIVE NOTES:

Building Regulations

Any alterations to the approved plans, brought about by compliance with Building Regulations or any other reason must first be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority before commencement of work.

Biodiversity Net Gain not required

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition (biodiversity gain condition) that development may not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan, if one is required in respect of this permission would be Wiltshire Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. For further information on exempt developments please refer to:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments>

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because one or more of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements is considered to apply.