

2nd June 2026

Our Ref: SWLC.LPC6383

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



For the attention of Ms I Gatier

Dear Isabel

Town and Country Planning Act 1990
Re: Change of use of land and buildings from agricultural to Sui Generis
mixed use for recreation, education and community purposes, with
associated works including the erection of a yurt, composting toilets and
parking on land adjacent to Coomb Cottage, Moor Lane, Charlton,
Malmesbury, SN16 9DR (Application Reference: PL/2026/02231)

I have been instructed to review the above application and have the following concerns to raise. Indeed, it is understood that the use of the land has already begun so the application is, in part, made retrospectively. This is useful as it has provided firsthand experience of the site user's lack of consideration for local residents and particularly the ad hoc parking practices that have been executed to date. It is inevitable that those attending a class will all arrive and leave at the same time, potentially crossing over with the next group.

The application of course seeks to intensify activities but going forward the site's responsible management appears to be potentially entirely divorced from the landowners. As a starting point therefore, I would respectfully suggest that the red lined application site would be helpfully expanded to show the resulting new planning unit is directly related to the owner's property. In order to ensure the provision of hands on, and appropriate on-site management, and as a minimum to provide a point of contact etc, any permission should be conditionally restricted in its operation to the occupiers of Coomb Cottage. Indeed, without such limitations this property could be as adversely impacted as other locals if it, or the business were to be sold separately in the future.

The application development's externalities, as a potentially wide-ranging events venue, could result in unrestricted unneighbourly disturbance, particularly if operated with a new commercial ethos, and by operators with no local investment.

Having said this though I have fundamental reservations about the site's intended intensification in principle.

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The supporting Planning Statement notes the requirement of WCS policies CP60, 61 and 64, but there is no assessment of the actual car dependency in this rural location, which I understand has already been exhibited by the current on site classes, and gatherings. It is not tenable to suggest users will not drive to the site, and cycling is not realistic. The Planning Statement compounds the lack of assessment based on the nature of the current uses by rather flippantly suggesting the applicant will provide a dedicated minibus. No details are provided to ensure this green travel option can be conditionally delivered and controlled, nor is it clear whether the purchase and operation of such a transport option, as a significant financial liability, has been factored into the businesses' viability. I am aware of several sports clubs that have had to abandon the use of team minibuses, primarily because of the costs of insurance etc.

The application includes insufficient information too regarding the use of the buildings. Indeed, from my own experience I was surprised that there are no plan details of the buildings to be reused, showing clearly what is proposed, or the new toilet. The Yurt is of course a use of land, but it is unclear if it will be placed on a permanent base, and could in fact fall to be considered as a building within the scope of the *R Save Woolley Valley Action Group Ltd v Bath and North East Somerset Council (2012)* case. It would be reasonable to expect full scale plans therefore regarding all the structures relied upon as part of this application.

I acknowledge that a parking plan has been provided but it lacks realistic tracking information to show it can deliver the required off road spaces, and as said earlier, fails to provide comfort that the existing poor parking practices will not simply continue, potentially blocking emergency vehicles and farm traffic.

For instance, to exit space No 9 a vehicle is facing away from the required direction of travel and there is insufficient space to allow a U turn to be executed. The same is true of spaces 6 – 9. Additionally, the tracking information that has been provided demonstrates that space 3 for instance cannot be used without hitting any vehicle in space 4, presumably the same is true for spaces 1 -3 therefore relative to the adjacent space.

Other highway related shortcomings to the intensification of use, over and above the site's poor sustainable location in principle and the unsatisfactory accommodation of on-site parking, is the actual safety of the road junction. I would of course expect your highways colleague to comment on this in more detail but as the visibility looks almost certainly to be substandard, I would have expected a measured survey to have been included and a suitable explanation why this is not harmful to the intensified use possible.

The lack of detail in the round appears to demonstrate that the land use implications of the application have not been fully considered. There is insufficient information about the hours of operation, the maximum number of visitors that could attend the site at any one time, staff facilities and parking and the scope of the actual events that a Sui Generis recreational use envisages. Will there be amplified music? The questions are numerous, and it leaves the impression that the planning statement has been deliberately ambiguous to avoid the detailed scrutiny required.

Overall, the application must be assessed with caution, and if the remote location and physical restrictions identified do not undermined the commercial use of the land, I would advocate the need for strong and precisely detailed conditions that provide clear parameters of use and neighbourly controls.

Yours sincerely



Simon Chambers
Director