

APPLICATION FOR FULL-PLANNING PERMISSION CASE OFFICER REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2026/01646
APPLICATION TYPE:	Full planning permission
SITE ADDRESS:	Paxton Business Centre, Whittle Road, Salisbury
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Three year temporary change of use of Unit 6 from Use Class B8 to Class F1 (a) to accommodate an Alternative Provision educational facility.
RECOMMENDATION:	Approve with Conditions

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The application site is located on the eastern side of Salisbury, within the Churchfields Industrial Estate, and comprises a single unit within a larger two storey industrial building that consists of 10 units. The unit benefits from direct vehicular access from Whittle Road.



PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks a temporary permission of 3 years for the existing B8 use to F1 (a) to allow for Step Education, which is an Alternative Provision education provider that provides mentoring through skills. The supporting statement describes the provision as *'offering a structured, supportive environment for young people aged 11–18 who benefit from a more practical, relationship-centred approach to learning. The programme blends hands-on trade-based skill development with personalised academic mentoring, ensuring that each student receives targeted support that builds confidence, resilience and future-readiness'*.

PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal / Summary
S/1999/2079 - Full planning permission Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 9/2/2000 – CONSTRUCTION OF 11 UNITS (B2) WITH PARKING SERVICE AREA

RELEVANT LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Statutory Legislation:

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 3 Infrastructure Requirements;
- Core Policy 20 Spatial Strategy for the Salisbury Community Area
- Core Policy 34 Additional Employment Land
- Core Policy 35 Existing Employment Land
- Core Policy 57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping;
- Core Policy 61 Transport & Development;
- Core Policy 62 Development Impacts on the Transport Network;
- Core Policy 63 Transport Strategies
- Core Policy 64 Demand Management

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 and 2)
- 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 proposal would have a negative effect upon highway safety, including if there is sufficient parking for the proposed development (CP 61 and 64)

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

WC Highways: Following additional parking layout confirmation raises no objection, subject to a condition relating to cycle store provision.

WC Public Protection: No objection

Parish/Town Council: No comment

REPRESENTATIONS

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

Below is a summary of the representations received during the consultation period. Only material planning considerations have been taken into account in the assessment of this application. Non-material issues, such as property values or private legal disputes, cannot be considered in the determination process.

One letter was received supporting the principle of the proposal but did raise concerns regarding parking.

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

Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy of the WCS establishes a hierarchy of settlements to guide where development should be focused. The policy prioritises growth in:

- Principal Settlements (e.g., Salisbury, Chippenham, Trowbridge) – main focus for strategic growth.
- Market Towns – support local services and employment; suitable for sustainable development.
- Local Service Centres – smaller towns and villages with a range of services; limited development supported.
- Large and Small Villages – development should be limited and respond to local needs.

- Outside the defined settlements – development is strictly controlled and generally not supported unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Core Policy 2: Delivery Strategy of the WCS sets out how development will be distributed and delivered across Wiltshire. The policy emphasises:

- Sustainable patterns of growth, reducing the need to travel and supporting local services.
- Development should be plan-led, aligning with the settlement strategy and supported by infrastructure.
- Windfall development (not allocated in plans) must still comply with the principles of sustainable development.
- Development outside settlement boundaries is generally not permitted, unless it meets specific policy exceptions (as set out in paragraph 4.25 of the WCS).

Together, CP1 and CP2 ensure that new development is strategically located, sustainable, and supports the character and function of Wiltshire's communities.

The site lies within the designated Churchfields Industrial Estates and falls within the defined settlement boundary of Salisbury, which is a Principal Settlement for the County and there is therefore a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Core Policy 35 states that Principal Employment Areas should be “retained for employment purposes within use classes B1, B2 and B8 to safeguard their contribution to the Wiltshire economy and the role and function of individual towns”.

The application site is located within a principal employment area where B use classes should be maintained, and the current proposal would result in a temporary loss of such a use. However, from the information supporting the application, the proposed provision appears to provide a service which is lacking within the area and would be providing a vital educational facility which would benefit 11-18 year olds within the community.

Filter by type	Filter by area	Filter alphabetically	From	To
Mentoring - incl through skills/sport	South Wiltshire	AFC Totton Development Programme	aged 11	aged 16
Mentoring - incl through skills/sport	Countywide	Genna Rose Beauty Academy	aged 13	aged 16
Mentoring - incl through skills/sport	Countywide	Grassroots Golf	aged 9	aged 18
Mentoring - incl through skills/sport	Countywide	Player Ready	aged 7	aged 21
Mentoring - incl through skills/sport	South Wiltshire	Rise 61	aged 11	aged 18
Mentoring - incl through skills/sport	Countywide	SAS Mentoring	aged 5	aged 16
Mentoring - incl through skills/sport	Countywide	The Platform Project	aged 11	aged 24

Figure 4 – Table of Alternative Provision facilities operating under the mentoring through skills category

In addition, a level of employment would also still be prevalent through the expected 9 staff members.

The proposal is for a temporary change of use to accommodate an alternative educational facility which is a positive contribution to the area which would be supporting local needs, whilst not altering the external appearance of the building.

Additionally, if approved, once the temporary permission ceases the building would revert to the B8 use. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in principle, subject to other material considerations as set out below.

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.

The proposal does not include any external alterations to the existing building and therefore the proposal is not considered to alter the existing situation on site and would not result in any adverse impacts upon the overall character and appearance of the area.

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.

Due to the location of the unit and the existing uses within the industrial estate, the proposal is not considered to pose any detrimental effects to any residential amenities.

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. The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and LTN 1/20 (DfT) provide further design guidance for active travel infrastructure.

The concern raised by a third-party regarding parking provision has been noted and the Councils Highways Officer was consulted on the proposal who provided the following comments:

It is understood that the applicant is an alternative education provider that provides practical trade-based skills development and academic mentoring for 11-18 year olds.

The Planning Statement advises that the proposed facility would employ 8 full-time staff and 1 part-time staff. No details have been provided of existing staffing levels at the site. It would also potentially accommodate 15-30 students at any one time. Operating 08:00-17:00.

Sustainability

The site is located within the settlement framework of Salisbury with good pedestrian facilities to access the nearby bus and rail services. The site is therefore considered to be sustainably located in transport terms, offering alternative modes of travel for staff and students.

Access and Parking:

Access and Parking The application form advises that there are 6 existing car parking spaces for the site, which will remain for the proposed use. These spaces are advised in the Planning Statement as allocated to the Unit in the rear parking area, and the additional plan submitted now identifies those spaces, together with those allocated for the adjacent units. The Planning Statement has assessed the level of available parking against the current parking standards and concludes that the 6 available spaces for the Unit meet the current standards.

F1: Learning & Non-Res Institutions	Education	
F1 (a)	Staff	2 per 3 staff
	Visitors	1 per 7 staff
	Pupils	1 per 10 2nd yr 6th formers
	College Students	1 per 4 students
	Parents- Pre-school and infants	1 per 12 pupils
	Parents - Primary	1 per 20 pupils + designated drop off arrangements
	Parents - Secondary	1 per 30 pupils + designated drop off arrangements
	Higher & Further Education	Staff: 1 per 2 staff + 1 per 15 students

Given the nature of the facility and the sustainable travel options available for staff in particular, I would accept that the provision of 6 car parking spaces is sufficient for the proposed use.

Summary and Recommendations:

The proposed change of use of the B8 unit to an educational facility is considered acceptable, and the associated parking provision available for the unit is considered appropriate for the use. It is therefore recommended that no highway objection is raised subject to the following condition being attached to any permission granted.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Planning Permission be GRANTED, subject to conditions

1. The use hereby approved shall ensure for the benefit of the applicant (Step (Wiltshire) Limited) only. The Class F1 (a) Educational Facility use hereby permitted shall cease, and the building use shall revert to the former Class B8 (storage and distribution) use, on or before 17th June 2029.

REASON: A use for which permission can be justified only on the basis of a special temporary need. The Use Classes referred to in this condition are as specified in the Town and Country (Planning) (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended 2020).

2. Location plan received 24/03/26
9911/1/101 Elevations received 20/03/26
9911/1/100 Site floor plan, parking and cycle store plan received 17/06/26
3. The Cycle store provisions as shown on plan number 9911/1/100 received 17/06/26 shall be implemented prior to first use of the building for the educational facility and shall be retained for the lifetime of the approval.

REASON: To facilitate and encourage sustainable travel.

INFORMATIVE: The applicant is requested to note that this permission does not affect any private property rights and therefore does not authorise the carrying out of any work on land outside their control. If such works are required it will be necessary for the applicant to obtain the landowners consent before such works commence.

If you intend carrying out works in the vicinity of the site boundary, you are also advised that it may be expedient to seek your own advice with regard to the requirements of the Party Wall Act 1996.