

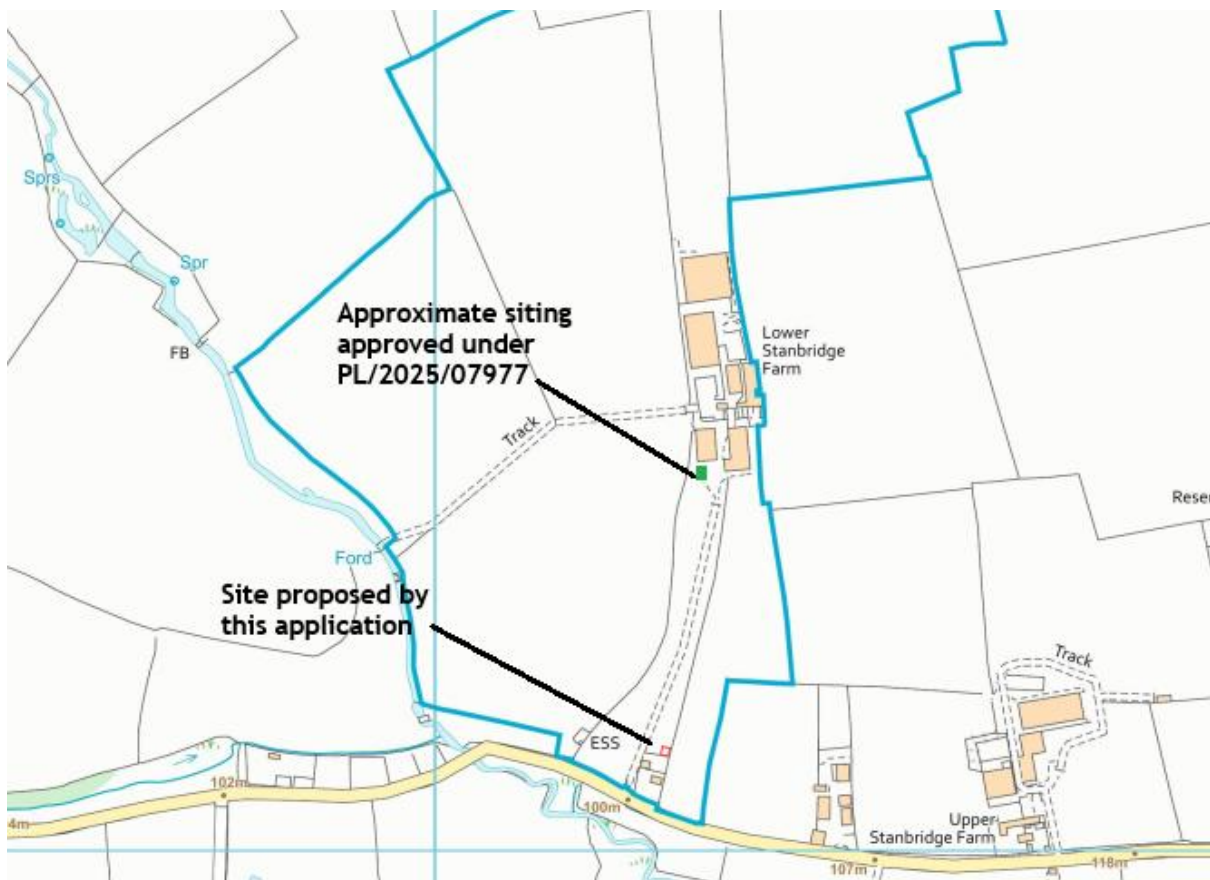
APPLICATION FOR FULL PLANNING PERMISSION CASE OFFICER REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2026/02874
APPLICATION TYPE:	Full planning permission
SITE ADDRESS:	Lower Stanbridge Farm, Sherston, Malmesbury, SN16 0QB
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Provision of temporary on-site residential accommodation for an agricultural worker.
RECOMMENDATION:	Approve

PROPOSAL

The application seeks planning permission to provide temporary on-site residential accommodation for an agricultural worker at Lower Stanbridge Farm.

This submission follows the recent grant of planning permission under ref. PL/2025/07977 for a similar form of temporary accommodation on the holding in the location shown on the plan below:



The current application proposes an alternative siting of that accommodation within the farmstead. The proposed location is positioned closer to the existing farmhouse and site access, as shown on the plan above. It would be about 260m south of the approved siting.

Below: extract of submitted block plan showing site of proposal:



The accommodation itself is not materially altered from that previously approved, described as a mobile home/log cabin form of development intended to meet a temporary need for an agricultural worker associated with the established farming enterprise. In particular, the accommodation is stated as being required to support the applicant in reducing his workload commensurate to his age and to the meet the demands of the business and continued animal welfare.

The statement submitted with the previously approved application for the provision of temporary on-site residential accommodation for an agricultural worker (PL/2025/07977) advised that the application site as a whole is a Council rented operation, for the lifetime of the applicant. "C Thompson and Son" is an established dairy and beef enterprise of circa 184 acres, with approximately 405 head of cattle on site at any one time. The agricultural statement outlines this as:

- The dairy cows – approximately 200 on site at any one time, form part of milking herd.
- Replacement Heifers – 35 head, which eventually will be introduced into the milking herd.

- Calves – approximately 100 head, which are either introduced into the milking herd or raised for beef production.
- Beef youngstock – approximately 70 head with are raised on the farm as store cattle and at over 12 months of age are sold.

The applicant currently employs one farm worker and much of the land occupied by the applicant is pasture, which is utilised for fodder production and grazing. Approximately 4 hectares of maize is grown on the arable land to feed the cattle. Milk production is currently contracted by Cadburys.

The supporting information indicates that the revised siting is sought to improve functional relationships with the existing farmhouse, including ease of access, proximity for day-to-day farm management, and the practical provision of services.

In all other respects, the application is advanced on the basis of the same agricultural justification previously considered by the Council under ref. PL/2025/07977

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The site is Lower Stanbridge Farm, located on the north side of the road about half a mile west of Sherston. Whilst the farm's agricultural buildings are set some 300m back from the road, the farmhouse itself is only about 20m set back from it. The site of the proposed temporary dwelling is indicated with blue on the aerial photograph below:



The following Google Street View image shows the farmhouse from the highway. The agricultural buildings can just be seen in the distance:



The following Google Street View image shows the farmhouse viewed from the highway to the east.:



The following Google Street View image shows the farmhouse viewed from the highway to the west.:



Lower Stanbridge Farm is within the Cotswolds National Landscape. Other than this there are no ecological, historical or landscape designations, and there are no listed buildings in the vicinity.

The site is in Flood Zone 1 on the Environment Agency's mapping system, with no particular risk of flooding from surface water identified.

PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal / Summary
13/02574/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 5/11/2013 – Expansion of Existing Open Silage Clamps & The Provision of a Roof
N/98/01690/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Unknown Date: 25/9/1998 – ERECTION OF CATTLE HANDLING COMPLEX TO COMPRISE OF COLLECTING YARD AND MILKING PARLOUR CATTLE HANDLING COMPLEX
13/02572/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 5/11/2013 – The Erection of a General Purpose Agricultural Storage Building
13/02573/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 5/11/2013 – Erection of a Cattle Yard
N/98/01688/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Unknown Date: 28/9/1998 – ERECTION OF AGRICULTURAL BUILDING AGRICULTURAL BUILDING
N/98/01689/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Unknown Date: 25/9/1998 – ERECTION OF COVERED SILAGE CLAMP COVERED SILAGE CLAMP
PL/2025/05474 - Prior notification: Building Decision - Approve Date: 19/8/2025 – An above ground, circular covered slurry store for the storage of cattle slurry to facilitate compliance with the SSAFO Regulations and the Nitrate Vulnerable Zone Regulations.
PL/2025/07977 - Full planning permission Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 17/4/2026 – Change of use of land for provision of temporary on-site residential accommodation for agricultural worker.

RELEVANT 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 3 Infrastructure Requirements;
- Core Policy 13 Spatial Strategy Malmesbury Community Area
- Core Policy 48 Supporting Rural Life
- Core Policy 50 Biodiversity and Geodiversity;
- Core Policy 51 Landscape
- Core Policy 61 Transport & Development;
- Core Policy 64 Demand Management

Sherston Neighbourhood Plan

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:

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- 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 scheme would preserve or enhance the historic environment (CP 58)
- 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)
- Are there any other planning issues raised by the development?

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

WC Highways: No objection:

"I refer to the above planning application dated 05/05/2026 seeking permission for the change of use of land for provision of temporary on-site residential accommodation for agricultural worker.

A previous application for the same quantum of development was conditionally approved in a different location, this application is for the same quantum, but the location has been altered to be further south within the farmland.

The site is located with existing access from Sopworth Road a C classified section of public highway subject to a speed limit of 60mph. There are no proposals to alter the existing access with the public highway.

The temporary on-site residential accommodation would comprise of a mobile home. Again, no bedroom quantum has been disclosed, but vehicle parking has been indicated as 2 parking spaces. It is therefore considered that this would cater for up to 3 bedrooms and that the site is located such that the wider farm area would be able to absorb any further parking requirements and not result in overspill.

The proposals would result in trips generated for domestic purposes as expected with residential development with the exception of travel to work as the accommodation is proposed for agricultural workers.

The proposals would not result in any materially significant increase in vehicle movements and other than the reliance on the private motor vehicle as the main mode of transport there would be no other reason to recommend refusal. Therefore, regarding highways it would be recommended that no objection be raised."

Sherston Parish Council: No objection subject to conditions

"No objection subject to the imposition of conditions ensuring that only one temporary dwelling is provided and to require the carrying out of additional landscaping to help minimise any potential adverse impact on the Cotswold National Landscape. In addition it is considered that the proposed caravan should be timber clad or at the very least dark coloured so as to minimise its potential impact on the Cotswolds National Landscape."

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 representations had been received at the time of writing.

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) and Core Policy 2 (Delivery Strategy) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seek to direct residential development to defined settlements, with development in the open countryside being strictly controlled. Outside defined limits, new residential development is only supported where it meets one of the recognised exceptions.

One such exception is set out within Core Policy 48 (Supporting Rural Life), which allows for essential rural worker accommodation where it can be demonstrated that there is a functional and financial need for a worker to live at or near their place of work.

This is supported by paragraph 84(a) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which states that isolated homes in the countryside should be avoided unless there is an essential need for a rural worker to live at or near their place of work.

The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) further advises that such proposals should be supported by evidence demonstrating:

- a functional need for a worker to be present on the holding;
- the financial viability of the enterprise; and
- that the need cannot be met by existing accommodation.

Assessment

The application site lies in the open countryside, where new residential development would ordinarily be resisted under Core Policies 1 and 2 unless an exception applies.

The current proposal seeks permission for temporary agricultural worker accommodation associated with an established dairy and beef enterprise at Lower Stanbridge Farm. The principle of such development must therefore be assessed against the requirements of Core Policy 48 and paragraph 84(a) of the NPPF.

In this instance, the applicant has not re-submitted the full functional and financial evidence that accompanied application ref. PL/2025/07977. However, that application—relating to the same holding, applicant, and form of temporary accommodation—was determined very recently, with planning permission granted on 17 April 2026. As part of the assessment of that

earlier scheme, the Council considered detailed agricultural justification, including independent advice from a suitably qualified agricultural consultant, which concluded that the essential need and financial viability tests were satisfied. There is no evidence before the Local Planning Authority to indicate that the circumstances of the agricultural enterprise have materially changed in the short period since that decision was issued. In this context, it is reasonable to afford substantial weight to the conclusions reached in that recent assessment when considering the principle of development in this case.

The current application is nevertheless assessed on its own merits. The proposal does not seek to alter the scale, nature or justification of the accommodation previously approved, but rather proposes an alternative siting within the same planning unit. The underlying case for essential need and functional requirement therefore remains unchanged.

Having regard to the above, it is accepted that an essential need exists for an agricultural worker to be present on the site, and that the enterprise is viable. Given the particular circumstances of the holding, including the tenure arrangements and the nature of the identified need, it is reasonable that this requirement continues to be met through a temporary form of accommodation.

Conclusion

The proposal falls within the exception provided by Core Policy 48 and paragraph 84(a) of the NPPF. The principle of temporary agricultural worker accommodation on this holding is therefore accepted, subject to consideration of the detailed impacts of the revised siting.

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 proposal will see the delivery of a temporary structure on site, in the form of a log cabin which falls within the definition of a mobile home at s.29 of the Caravan Site Act 1968.

In this instance the proposal is of a reasonable proportion and does not suggest that the wider area of the site is being overwhelmed or dominated by the proposal in terms of scale.

In terms of design the proposal is a typical of an example of an ancillary agricultural temporary dwelling. It is considered that the proposal is acceptable in terms of design. Whilst the structure would be nearer the road than previously approved it would remain tucked behind the farmhouse, alongside the eastern boundary. Views of it would be visible from the highway to the east and west, but existing hedging would provide a degree of screening.

Having regard to the above, the proposal complies with the design principles set out in Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and Appendix D of the Wiltshire Design Guide.

It is noted that the parish council wish to see more detail on the materials, however the building would be sited behind the existing dwelling and at a lower point of the farm than previously approved. A condition was not considered necessary on the previous application. Given this and that the proposal is for temporary development then no further details are necessary via condition. An informative can be attached, as with the previous approval.

Conclusion

Overall, the proposed temporary structure is modest in scale and of a form that is typical within an agricultural context. Whilst the siting differs from that previously approved, it remains closely related to the existing farmhouse and would be read in the context of the wider farmstead. The proposal would not result in unacceptable harm to the character or appearance of the area or the wider Cotswolds National Landscape. The development is therefore considered to comply 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 occupiers.

Assessment and Conclusion

The proposed development has been assessed in terms of its potential impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties, with particular regard to loss of light, overshadowing, loss of privacy, and overbearing effects.

Due to the location of the proposal, it is not considered that the temporary dwelling would result in an unacceptable impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers in terms of overlooking, loss of light, or overbearing impact. The proposal would also provide an acceptable standard of amenity for its future occupants.

The development therefore accords with Core Policy 57 (point vii) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the relevant provisions of the NPPF in respect of safeguarding residential amenity.

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 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly Paragraph 115 and 116, requires that development proposals do not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety and that safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users.

Assessment and Conclusion

The Council's Highways Officer has raised no objection to the proposal. It is noted that the development utilises the existing access from Sopworth Road and does not propose any alteration to the access arrangements. The proposed level of parking (two spaces) is considered sufficient to serve the scale of accommodation indicated, and the wider farmholding is capable of accommodating any additional parking demand without resulting in overspill onto the public highway.

The proposal would give rise to typical domestic vehicle movements associated with a single unit of residential accommodation. However, as the accommodation is intended for an agricultural worker on-site, journeys to a place of work would not arise. The Highways Officer advises that the development would not result in a material increase in vehicle movements or give rise to any highway safety concerns.

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposed development would not result in any unacceptable impact on highway safety and that adequate parking and access arrangements are provided. The proposal therefore accords with Core Policies 57 (xiv), 61 and 64 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the NPPF, and the Wiltshire Local Transport Plan.

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 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.

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.

Paragraph 189 of the NPPF requires that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.

Under Section 245 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, LPAs and other relevant authorities must now “seek to further” the statutory purposes of National Landscapes (formerly Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty), replacing the previous duty to merely “have regard to” them.

This is an active duty, requiring authorities to take reasonable and proportionate steps to support the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty, special qualities, and key characteristics of these designated areas when exercising any function that affects them.

Assessment

The application site lies within the Cotswolds National Landscape, where great weight must be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty.

The proposal relates to the siting of a modest, temporary structure in the form of a log cabin/mobile home associated with the existing agricultural use of the site. Whilst the structure would be located closer to the farmhouse than the previously approved siting, it would remain closely related to the existing built form and read as part of the established farmstead.

The proposed development would be partially screened by existing boundary vegetation and the farmhouse itself, with views from the public highway limited and filtered. The structure is of a scale and form typically associated with agricultural holdings and would not appear incongruous in this context.

Furthermore, the development is temporary in nature and would not give rise to permanent change within the landscape.

Conclusion

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposal would conserve the character and appearance of the Cotswolds National Landscape and would not result in unacceptable harm to its special qualities. The development therefore complies with Core Policy 51 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the relevant provisions of the NPPF, and the statutory duty to seek to further the purposes of National Landscapes.

PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The application site lies within the open countryside where new residential development is ordinarily restricted. However, an essential need for temporary agricultural worker accommodation at Lower Stanbridge Farm has been accepted through the recent grant of planning permission under ref. PL/2025/07977. The current proposal does not seek to alter the underlying justification for such accommodation, but rather to provide an alternative siting within the same planning unit.

In principle, the provision of temporary accommodation to support the agricultural enterprise is supported by Core Policy 48 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and paragraph 84(a) of the NPPF. The evidence previously considered by the Council, including independent agricultural advice, remains relevant and carries substantial weight given the short period of time that has passed since that decision.

In assessing the revised siting, it is considered that the proposal would not result in unacceptable harm in respect of design, residential amenity, highway safety, or landscape impact, including within the Cotswolds National Landscape.

Sherston Parish Council has raised no objection to the proposal, subject to conditions to ensure that only one temporary dwelling is provided and to secure appropriate external finishes and landscaping to minimise visual impact. These matters are addressed through the imposition of conditions and an informative as discussed above.

The proposal is also consistent with the aims of the Sherston Neighbourhood Plan, which seeks to ensure that development respects the character of the area and the quality of the Cotswolds National Landscape.

It is noted that planning permission has recently been granted under ref. PL/2025/07977 for a similar form of temporary agricultural worker accommodation on the holding, but in a different location. The current application is not made under Section 73 of the Act and therefore does not amend that permission. As such, both permissions could, in theory, be implemented concurrently, resulting in the siting of more than one unit of temporary residential accommodation within the planning unit.

The Local Planning Authority has considered this matter carefully. The provision of more than one unit of accommodation on the holding is not supported by the available evidence of need and would conflict with the restrictive policy approach to residential development in the open countryside. Whilst the revocation of the earlier permission would provide a definitive mechanism to prevent this outcome, such action would be disproportionate in this instance given the temporary nature of both permissions.

Instead, a condition is imposed on this permission to ensure that no more than one unit of temporary agricultural worker accommodation is stationed, occupied or used within the holding at any time. This is considered to represent a reasonable and pragmatic approach to controlling the development.

The temporary nature of the development, with the permission limited to the same expiry date as the earlier approval, together with conditions controlling occupancy and preventing the provision of more than one unit on the holding, further limits any potential impacts and ensures that the development remains proportionate to the identified need.

Taking all matters into account, the proposal is considered to accord with the relevant policies of the development plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. There are no material considerations which indicate that permission should be withheld.

Accordingly, the application is recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATION: That Planning Permission be GRANTED, subject to 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).

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

Location Plan received 5 May 2026

Large Location Plan LPC6214 received 5 May 2026

Plans LPC6214-PR 02 received 5 May 2026

Covering Letter LPC6214-WCN-01052026 received 5 May 2026

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

3. The occupation of the temporary residential accommodation hereby permitted shall be limited to a person solely or mainly working, or last working, in the locality in agriculture or forestry, or a widow or widower of such a person, and to any resident dependants.

REASON: The site is in an area where residential development for purposes other than the essential needs of agriculture or forestry is not normally permitted, and this permission is granted having regard to the essential need for such accommodation in this location.

4. The use of the temporary residential accommodation hereby permitted shall cease, and any caravan, together with any ancillary works or structures, shall be removed and the land restored to its former condition on or before 17 April 2031.

REASON: Permission would not normally be granted, but regard has been had to the particular circumstances of the applicant and the essential functional needs of the agricultural enterprise in granting a planning permission of limited duration.

5. No more than one unit of temporary residential accommodation for an agricultural worker shall be stationed, occupied or used at Lower Stanbridge Farm (as identified by the blue lined area on the map inset within the submitted covering letter) at any time.

REASON: To ensure that the permission does not result in more than one unit of temporary agricultural worker accommodation within the site, having regard to the justification for such accommodation in the open countryside and in the interests of proper planning.

INFORMATIVE:

The applicant is advised that planning permission ref. PL/2025/07977 remains extant. This permission allows for an alternative siting of temporary accommodation on the holding; however, only one unit of such accommodation may be stationed on the holding at any one time in accordance with condition 5 of this permission.

INFORMATIVE:

The applicant is advised to have regard to the comments of Sherston Parish Council, who suggest that the temporary building should be timber clad or finished in a dark colour to minimise its visual impact within the Cotswolds National Landscape.