
Planning Design and Access Statement

Applicant: Mr M Dhupar

Date: July 2026

Site: Birchanger Farm, Bratton, Westbury BA13 4TA

Proposal: Retrospective change of use of equestrian manège to land for the open storage of vehicles (ClassB8); and proposed landscape mitigation works.



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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 PlanningSphere act for Mr M Dhupar who is the freehold owner of the application site at Birchanger Farm, Bratton, Westbury.
- 1.2 We are instructed to submit a full planning application relating to: a retrospective change of use of the equestrian manège to open storage of vehicles (Class B8); and proposed landscape mitigation works.
- 1.3 The application proposals are submitted in response to an enforcement enquiry regarding an unauthorised change of use of land from agriculture to a mixed use of agriculture and the storage of commercial vehicles on land adjacent to Birchanger Farm (LPA Ref. ENF/2026/00270). The occupier of the application site is the Rygor Group:

<https://rygorgroup.co.uk/>
- 1.4 Following dialogue with the Council's Planning Enforcement Team, the application proposals comprise a regularisation planning application with a landscape mitigation proposal which has been informed by a topographical survey and specialist landscape advice.
- 1.5 The enclosed application submission comprises the following information:
 - Planning application fee (NB. excluding Planning Portal Admin Fee £91.00): £610.00
 - Application Form: PlanningSphere
 - Site Location Plan: GLA
 - Application Drawing Pack (2 No. Drawings): GLA
 - Topographical Survey: Clifton Surveys
 - Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment: GLA
 - Planning Design and Access Statement: PlanningSphere

2.0 Planning Context

(i) Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The application site extends to 0.46ha (4,656m²) and forms part of the Birchanger Farm rural homestead, near Bratton in Wiltshire. It is directly accessed from Bratton Road (B3098) which is the main road linking Bratton to the Westbury, which is 5km to the west of the Bratton village.



Fig 1. Extract from Site Location Plan: application site boundary 0.46. The land outlined in blue is owned by the applicant.

- 2.2 Birchanger Farm is situated on the lower slopes beneath (north of) the Salisbury Plain scarp and is bound by Bratton Road (B3098) to the south. The site benefits from existing visual containment from mixed native hedgerows which cross and bound the wider land ownership area and from a line of conifer trees that from a tall dense hedge screening views from the road to the south. Adjacent groups of mature trees also act to visually screen and contain the site in local and wider views.
- 2.3 The rural landholding includes a detached farmhouse, ancillary buildings, outdoor storage areas, manège, and paddocks. The application site comprises the well-defined equestrian manège in the south west of the landholding which has been used to store commercial vehicles. The manège is laid to hardstanding and is bound on all sides by earth banks densely covered by vegetation and grasses.
- 2.4 Vehicle storage that was being undertaken by the Rygor Group on the lower paddock ceased in April 2026 and therefore this area of land is excluded from the application site.

- 2.5 The landscape and topographical context of the site is explained in full in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment include the relationship of the site with the Bratton Hill Fort Scheduled Ancient Monument and Westbury White Horse.

(ii) Existing Lawful Use and Planning History

- 2.6 The site which forms part of an agricultural homestead has permission for equestrian uses comprising a manège, stable block and associated vehicle access (LPA Ref. W/11/02049/FUL).
- 2.7 The recorded planning history, as available on the Council's public access system, is set out in the table below:

Reference	Description	Decision
W/11/02049/FUL	Construction of 12 stables, equestrian arena and vehicle access	Approve with Conditions 22/01/2013
W/11/02048/FUL	Erection of Conservatory and First Floor extension	Approve with Conditions 26/10/2011
W/05/01405/FUL	Erection of conservatory and first floor extension, installation of plain tiling to first floor walls/render to ground floor walls	Approve with Conditions 25/01/2006
W/05/00458/FUL	Erection of 12 stables and construction of equestrian arena	Approve with Conditions 12/04/2005
W/05/00039/FUL	12 stables and construction of equestrian arena	Withdrawn
W/97/09027/AGD	Steel building for farm machinery	Approved 29/10/1997
W/95/00512/FUL	Conversion of redundant farm buildings to two holiday units	Approve with Conditions 18/07/1995
W/90/00099/FUL	Change of use to guest house/bed and breakfast accommodation together with first floor extension and ground floor alterations	Approve with Conditions 27/02/1990
W/80/00413/HIS	Extension to provide kitchen and utility and enlarged dining room with two bedrooms and two bathrooms over	Approve with Conditions 13/05/1980
W/77/00171/HIS	O/L Proposed dwelling (To replace existing farmhouse which will be demolished)	Refused 10/08/1977
Reference	Description	Decision
23/00957/FULLN	Proposed change of use from agricultural to mixed-use comprising: storage and distribution (Class B8); and a vehicle repair workshop (sui generis) (retrospective)	Withdrawn 20.06.2023
19/02594/FULLN	Erection of agricultural storage building	Permitted 08.01.2020

Table 1: Planning History

(iii) Enforcement Enquiry (ENF/2026/00270)

- 2.8 Pursuant to a written enforcement enquiry from Wiltshire Council dated 24th March 2026

regarding the alleged unauthorised change of use of land from agriculture to a mixed use of agriculture and the storage of commercial vehicles, the applicant has decided to submit a retrospective full planning application for the open storage of commercial vehicles on the equestrian manège area together with a landscape mitigation scheme so that the matter can be considered on its planning merits and be permanently regularised. It has been agreed with the Council that the previous unauthorised use of the lower paddock for open storage of commercial vehicles will permanently cease. The Rygor Group ceased the use of the lower paddock for storage in April 2026.

(iv) The Current Application

- 2.9 The enclosed regularisation planning application addresses the proposed change of use with input from specialist topographical and landscape assessments, proposing a robust landscape mitigation scheme to address site screening.



Figure 2: Extract of Existing Site Plan illustrating location of existing manège area proposed for open storage use.

3.0 Design and Access Statement

(i) Scope of DAS

3.1 This section of the PDAS has been prepared having regard to the Design Council best practice guide 'Design and Access Statements: How to write, read and use them'. As such it explains the evolution and design thinking that has developed the application proposals into the submission scheme.

3.2 National Planning Practice Guidance advises that:

"...a Design and Access Statement is a concise report accompanying certain applications for planning permission and applications for listed building consent. They provide a framework for applicants to explain how the proposed development is a suitable response to the site and its setting and demonstrate that it can be adequately accessed by prospective users".

3.3 The NPG goes on to state that:

"...the level of detail in a Design and Access Statement should be proportionate to the complexity of the application but should not be long".

(ii) Proposed Use

3.4 The proposed use is part regularisation and part proposed new landscape scheme. Full planning permission is sought for the proposed change of use of the existing manège area located in the southwest of the landholding to the open storage of vehicles (Class B8). It is proposed to implement a landscape mitigation scheme (see extract below) to facilitate the regularisation works.

(v) Access and Parking

3.5 The existing access permitted as part of the planning consent for the equestrian manège and stable block (LPA Ref. W/11/02049/FUL) includes a delivery, turning and parking area and links directly to the B3028 Bratton Road making it highly suitable for the proposed storage of commercial vehicles. No changes are therefore proposed to the existing access or existing parking provision on the site.

(vi) Landscape and Biodiversity Strategy

3.6 The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment confirms that the application site, as existing, is already partially screened from public viewpoints outside of the site. Additional native planting is proposed to bolster the existing vegetation as indicated on the Proposed Landscape Mitigation Plan which has been informed by Zone of Theoretical Visibility analysis based on representative viewpoints from publicly accessible locations. The proposed planting strategy will also secure ecological enhancements and biodiversity net gain alongside visual screening benefits.

3.7 In summary, the following landscape framework is proposed to help mitigate identified impacts of the proposed development:

- A: Manège: the proposed storage of commercial vehicles would be strictly limited to within the manège, which is a clearly defined space in which storage can be reliably contained.

- B: New hedgerow: a new mixed native hedgerow surrounding the existing manège would be introduced to form a visual screen. This would assist in reinforcing the containment and limitation of vehicle storage to this area. The hedgerow would be planted at the upper edge of the existing earth banks.
- C: New tree planting: to supplement the new hedgerow, the planting of several medium to large scale clear stem native trees would assist in screening or filtering views from the north and west. This would reiterate locally characteristic field boundaries.
- D: Western hedgerow: the existing western hedgerow would be managed at an increased height. It would be allowed to grow taller and maintained at a greater height, from approximately 3m at present to approximately 5m.
- E: General storage: general storage and stockpiling of agricultural vehicles, equipment and construction materials would be rationalised and consolidated into well-organised area. This area already hosts the barn and external storage.



Figure 3: extract from LVIA: Landscape Framework Diagram

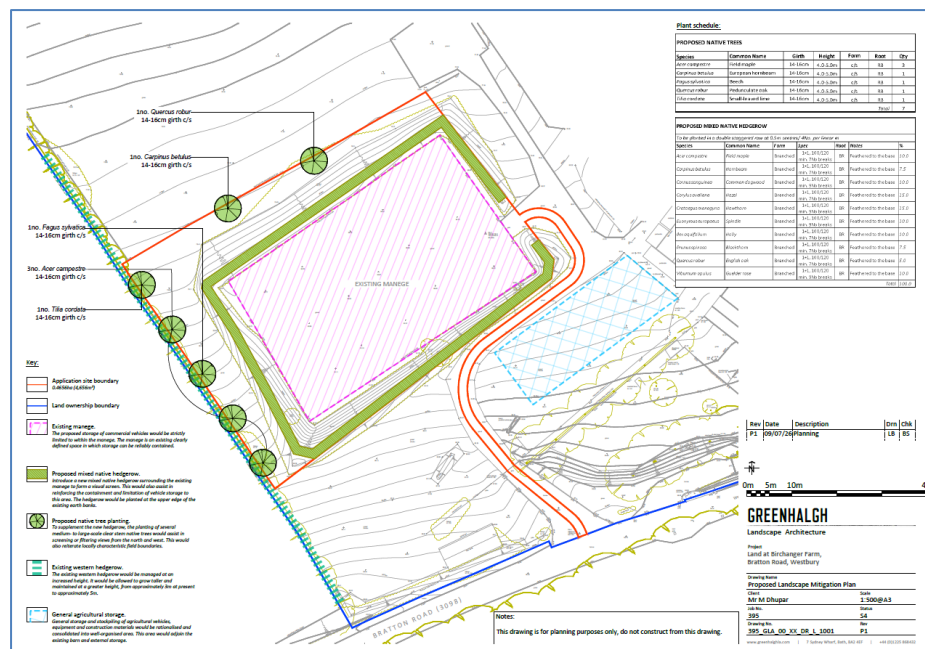


Figure 4: Extract from Proposed Landscape Plan

- 3.8 Refer to the enclosed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and the Proposed Landscape Mitigation Plan and Planting Schedule for full details.

(vii) Drainage and Flooding

- 3.9 The site is located within Flood Zone 1 as indicated on the Environment Agency Flood Maps for Planning and therefore flood risk is not a constraint to any proposals on the site. The existing manège element of the site is a flat rectangular plot, artificially levelled when it was formed as an enclosed area for training horses and riders. The site is permeable and no additional drainage infrastructure is required.

4.0 Planning Policy Context

(i) Development plan

- 4.1 Section 38 (6) of the Town and Country Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicated otherwise.
- 4.2 The statutory development plan comprises: Wiltshire Core Strategy (adopted 2015); the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocation Plan (2020); and the The Bratton Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan (July 2025). The WHSAP does not contain any policies relevant to this application so is not considered further.

(ii) Wiltshire Core Strategy

- 4.3 Bratton is designated as a 'Large Village' where some development is acceptable to meet housing needs and to improve employment opportunities, services and facilities. The application site lies in open countryside outside of the settlement lies with Flood Zone 1 on the Environment Agency 's Flood Map for Planning.
- 4.4 The application site is located within the Salisbury Plan SPA Mitigation Zone and a Special Landscape Area, which is a non-statutory designation.
- 4.5 There are no listed buildings proximate to the site and nor is the site located within a conservation area designation. However, the site lies c.375m from the northern ridge of the Bratton Camp Iron Age Hillfort (HE List Entry: 1013399).
- 4.6 Relevant Core Strategy policies include:
- CP1: Settlement Strategy
 - CP2: Delivery Strategy
 - CP3: Infrastructure Requirements
 - CP32: Spatial Strategy for the Westbury Community Area
 - CP34: Additional Employment Land
 - CP50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
 - CP51: Landscape
 - CP52: Green Infrastructure
 - CP57: Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping
 - CP58: Ensuring Conservation of the Historic Environment
 - CP61: Transport and Development
 - CP67: Flood Risk

- 4.7 Policy CP34: Additional Employment Land, aims to support the rural way of life through the promotion of modern agricultural practices and appropriate diversification of the rural economy.

(iii) Bratton Neighbourhood Development Plan 2025-2038:

- 4.8 Relevant Neighbourhood Plan policies include:
- Policy BNP1: Habitat Protection and Enhancement

- Policy BNP2: Design Quality and Character of Place
- Policy BNP5: Bratton's Landscape and Locally Valued Key Views
- Policy BNP14: Local Employment and Commercial Services
- Policy BNP16: Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland

(iii) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

4.9 National planning policy is set out in the NPPF (last updated in February 2025)¹. Relevant sections of the NPPF include:

- 2: Achieving sustainable development: 7-10, 11-14
- 4: Decision making: 39, 48, 60
- 6: Building a strong competitive economy: 85, 87, 88, 89
- 9: Promoting Sustainable Transport: 115, 116
- 11: Making effective use of land: 124, 125
- 12: Achieving well-designed places: 131, 135
- 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change: 170, 181
- 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment: 187, 192, 193, 194
- 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment: 202, 212, 215
- Annex 1: Implementation: 231-233

4.10 Paragraph 39 is concerned with decision-taking. This states:

Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

4.11 Paragraph 88 relates to support for creating a prosperous rural economy:

Planning policies and decisions should enable:

- a. the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;*
- b. the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses...*

4.12 Paragraph 116 sets out the position in relation to assessing the transport elements of a proposal:

Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.

(iv) National Planning Practice Guidance

4.13 National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) was first published in March 2014 and provides a web-based source of supporting guidance to supplement policies in the NPPF.

¹ A new NPPF is anticipated for publication during Q3 2026. In the event that the new NPPF includes revised policies that are applicable to the proposal the applicant reserves the right to provide an updated Planning Statement.

(v) Proposed Wiltshire Local Plan

- 4.14 A Regulation 19 iteration of the Wiltshire Local Plan Review (ELP) was submitted to the Secretary of State for Housing Communities and Local Government for examination on 28th November 2024. Following fundamental concerns raised by planning inspectors in respect of the spatial strategy, plan period and insufficient consideration of reasonable alternatives, the Council issued a Notice of Withdrawal of ELP pursuant to Section 22 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2024 on 22nd May 2026. Accordingly, no weight can be ascribed to the development management policies and allocations contained within the now withdrawn ELP.
- 4.15 Preliminary work has commenced on new Wiltshire Local Plan. Wiltshire Council's Cabinet meeting of 25th June 2026 approved the commencement of the Wiltshire Local Plan in accordance with regulations introduced under the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 which came into force on 25th March 2026. The new local plan regulations mandate a faster 30-month digital-first plan-making system, which according to the timetable included at Appendix 2 of the Cabinet Report suggests that the 30-month plan-making timeframe will commence on 30th October 2026 (Regulation 21(3)) with adoption (Regulation 39) anticipated in April 2029.

5.0 Planning Assessment

- 5.1 Section 38 (6) of the Town and Country Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicated otherwise.

(i) Principle of development

- 5.2 The application proposals, as outlined in Section 3.0 above, are part retrospective in that there is an existing commercial vehicle storage use on the site and part proposed in terms of new landscaping mitigation works. In submitting this application, the applicant is seeking to regularise the situation on the ground to ensure that optimal use is made of the site for economic reasons as part of a farm diversification proposal.
- 5.3 The change of use of the site from equestrian to a mixed-use comprising vehicle storage and equestrian is not out of keeping with the diverse character of uses found in the locality. The importance of supporting the rural economy is a key focus of the NPPF in achieving sustainable development. The NPPF highlights the importance of creating a prosperous rural economy through '*...the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas...*' and the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses...' Farm diversification is becoming essential for many landowners looking to maintain profitability and adapt to rapidly changing agricultural land management and operational pressures.
- 5.4 There is policy support for the proposals in Core Strategy Policy CP34: Additional Employment Land, which aims to support the rural way of life through the promotion of modern agricultural practices and appropriate diversification of the rural economy.
- 5.5 Relevant local plan policies have been reviewed and there are no technical constraints that would prevent the proposals which are of a scale appropriate to their location and farm diversification use.
- 5.6 The proximity of the site to the B3098 road with Westbury being 5km away, combined with its existing access, makes it an ideal site for the proposed storage use in functional terms. The site is surrounded by agricultural land on all sides and is not proximate to any existing residential dwellings, which adds further weight to its suitability for the proposed storage use.
- 5.7 It is also of relevance that there is a shortage in availability of suitable alternative sites for open storage. The tenant, Rygor, was unable to find any alternative available sites in the Westbury Community Area despite an extensive site search. The site forms an important component of its Rygor Auto operation which is locally based at the West Wilts Trading Estate in Westbury.
- 5.8 The site benefits from visual containment from mixed native hedgerows which cross and bound the wider land ownership area. Towards the southern edge, a line of conifer trees form a tall dense hedge screening views from the Bratton Road (B3098). Adjacent groups of mature trees also contribute to a visual screen in local and wider views.
- 5.9 Noting that Birchanger Farm sits on the lower slopes beneath (north of) the Salisbury Plain scarp and accepting that the white vehicles, where visible in the landscape are visually incongruous, a landscape mitigation scheme is proposed to further bolster the visual screening of the site from the south, from the frontward edge of the plain on the PRoW and

publicly accessible Bratton Camp hillfort and to the west of the Westbury White Horse. The proposed landscape mitigation will enable limited storage of vehicles within the existing manège to be better visually integrated. Vehicle storage in the adjacent lower paddock will permanently cease, in order to remedy the outstanding enforcement matters.

5.10 In conclusion, the proposed well-considered and carefully implemented visual mitigation measures in the form of screen planting and management of existing boundaries would ensure that the storage of commercial vehicles within the confines of the existing manège would better integrate the proposed development into key sensitive views, whilst also assimilating it into its immediate and wider landscape settings.

5.11 On this basis, the principle of development is considered to be acceptable.

(ii) Transport considerations

5.12 The vans stored at the application site are stored on behalf of STAIC Motors (Maxus UK) and are not moving in and out regularly like the Mercedes Benz vans do at other Rygor storage location in the UK, including the site at West Wilts Trading Estate. There are a specific number of vans agreed between Rygor and Maxus UK, and held on a static storage deal. A single van is only taken out if that van is tasked to be moved to a specific dealership by Maxus UK – hence the volume of moving traffic ranges between 0-6 movements per week which would be broadly equivalent to the use of the site as manege.

5.13 The existing access which was permitted as part of the equestrian development proposal is both suitable and safe for the retrospective vehicle storage use proposed. There is adequate visibility in both directions for drivers accessing the site from the B3098 and existing the farmstead. The existing access arrangements also include suitable delivery, parking and turning space on site. Traffic flows will be low, as noted above.

5.14 On this basis, the transport proposals are considered to be compliant with Policy CP61 of the Core Strategy and para 115 of the NPPF.

(ii) Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)

5.15 The application site, which lies in open countryside, is located within the Salisbury Plan SPA Mitigation Zone and a local Special Landscape Area non-statutory designation.

5.16 The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the methodology for photography and fieldwork and the appraisal process derived from current industry guidance and published best practice as published by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, Natural England and the Landscape Institute.

5.17 The LVIA has determined that well-considered and carefully implemented visual mitigation measures in the form of screen planting and management of existing boundaries would ensure that the storage of commercial vehicles within the confines of the existing manège would better integrate the proposed development into key sensitive views, whilst also assimilating it into its immediate and wider landscape settings.

5.18 On this basis, the proposals are in compliance with Policy CP51 of the Local Plan.

(iii) Ecology

- 5.19 The change of use proposal is exempt from BNG requirements as it is retrospective and has not resulted in any loss of vegetation or priority habitat. Notwithstanding, the recommended landscape mitigation measures will enhance significant area of habitat on the site strengthening local ecological connectivity and will deliver a biodiversity net gain.
- 5.20 On this basis, the proposal is in accordance with relevant national and local planning policies in relation to nature conservation and relevant wildlife legislation and it is considered to be compliant with Policy CP50 of the Local Plan.

(iii) Drainage

- 5.21 The site is located within Flood Zone 1 on the Environment Agency Flood Maps for Planning and so flooding is not a constraint to development. The permeable surface water drainage strategy in place for the equestrian manège will remain as existing.
- 5.22 On this basis, the proposal is considered to be compliant with Policy CP67 of the Local Plan.

(v) Farm diversification and the consequences of refusal

- 5.23 The approval of the application proposal will contribute positively to the diversification of the application site agricultural holding as well as supporting the importance of the rural economy, as set out in Section 6.0 of the NPPF. This represents a significant material consideration that weighs in favour of the application proposals.
- 5.24 In contrast, were the application to be refused, this would have a negative economic impact in terms of the loss of functional storage facilities on the site, and revenue for reinvestment in the farmstead. This represents a material consideration that weighs in favour of supporting the application proposal.

6.0 Planning Balance and Conclusions

- 6.1 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Planning law requires retrospective applications to be considered on the same basis as proposed applications.
- 6.2 The application proposal has been assessed against all applicable development plan policies. The application proposal is considered to be acceptable in respect of the principle of development in relation to development plan policy and the NPPF, which provide explicit support for the rural economy. The application proposal will contribute to farm diversification and also fulfils a vital storage function for the occupier, Rygor Auto. The proposed landscape mitigation scheme will enable visual betterment in the immediate area and improved visual containment and screening in the context of local and wider views.
- 6.3 The proposed landscape mitigation will create a new screened buffer to the farmstead, mitigating visual impact upon the wider landscape noting the surrounding Special Landscape Area and Salisbury Plain SPA mitigation zone.
- 6.4 The proposal is also considered to be compliant in respect the various technical matters including: transport, landscape, ecology, and drainage.
- 6.5 In accordance with the Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF, the Council is respectfully requested to grant planning permission.