

APPLICATION FOR FULL-PLANNING PERMISSION

CASE OFFICER REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2026/03226
APPLICATION TYPE:	Full planning permission
SITE ADDRESS:	Great Cotmarsh Farm, Cotmarsh, Broad Town, Swindon, SN4 7RA
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Erection of a garage.
RECOMMENDATION:	Approve with Conditions

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The application site lies in countryside north of the main village core of Broad Town, and east of the intermittent ribbon of development leading away from the village. It is part of a farm complex and comprises land occupied by a barn with a corrugated roof, with timber and concrete walls.

A short distance to the west is the grade II listed Great Cotmarsh Farmhouse, and the access to the site passes close to this dwelling. The edge of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, an area of outstanding natural beauty, is located around 1 kilometre to the south east. The site is relatively unconstrained, being in flood zone 1, where there is not known to be a heightened risk of flooding, and not affected by any ecological designations.

A Public Right of Way (PRoW), Bridleway BTOW22 runs on a north-south axis to the west of the Great Cotmarsh farmstead; the site is not readily viewed from either the public right of way or from the stretch of highway from which the farm is accessed.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a detached garage/car port building within the approved residential curtilage of the dwelling created under permissions PL/2025/02694 and PL/2025/05829. The building is proposed to provide ancillary domestic storage together with covered parking for a single vehicle in association with the lawful residential use of the site.

The proposed structure measures approximately 5.8 metres in width and 3.9 metres in depth, with an eaves height of 2.2 metres and a maximum height of 3.1 metres. The building comprises an enclosed storage area and an open-sided car port. A projecting canopy extends approximately 1 metre beyond the roofline, providing additional weather protection. The enclosed storage area includes a pedestrian access door on the front elevation and a small window on the rear elevation, while the car port element remains open on two sides. The building is to be sited on an existing area of hardstanding currently used for residential parking.

External materials will comprise slate grey Marley weatherboard cladding above a red brick plinth to match the dwellinghouse, together with a black Kingspan roof.

PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal / Summary
PL/2025/02694 - Prior approval Part 3 Class Q: Agricultural buildings to dwellinghouses Decision - Prior Approval Granted Date: 9/5/2025 – Proposed change of use of agricultural building to 1 dwelling house (class c3) and associated operational development.
PL/2025/05829 - Full planning permission Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 28/10/2025 – Revised scheme - Residential conversion of agricultural building and associated works, further to Class Q consent (PL/2025/02694)

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 19 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 58 Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment
- Core Policy 60 Sustainable Transport;
- Core Policy 61 Transport & Development;

Draft Wiltshire Local Plan Policies

At Full Council on 19 May, the elected members of Wiltshire Council agreed to withdraw the emerging WLP. It will now be subject to a legal process to finalise its withdrawal - which is

likely to happen in July or August (2026). The said Plan has no material weight for the purposes of the application.

Neighbourhood Plan:

None.

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 scheme would preserve or enhance the historic environment (CP 58)
- 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 views of consultees are material considerations in the determination of the application. However, the decision-maker must exercise their own planning judgement. Where consultees raise concerns or recommend conditions, these have been considered and are addressed within the assessment section of this report.

WC Highways: No objection.

Broad Town Parish Council: No objection.

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;

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

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.

No comments were 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.

The assessment below considers each of the main issues identified above. Each topic is assessed in turn with reference to the relevant policy context, the evidence submitted, consultee responses, and all other material considerations, before a conclusion is reached.

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.

Assessment

The application site lies within the open countryside, outside any defined settlement boundary, within the Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Area where Broad Town is identified as a Small Village under Core Policy 19 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. Whilst Core Policy 2 seeks to strictly control new development in the countryside outside defined settlement boundaries, the proposal does not seek to establish a new residential use or intensify the approved use of the site. Rather, it proposes a domestic outbuilding ancillary to the dwelling previously approved under permissions PL/2025/02694 and PL/2025/05829.

The principle of a dwelling on the site has already been established through the extant planning permissions and the proposed garage is directly associated with that lawful residential use. Domestic outbuildings providing parking and storage are typical ancillary features of residential properties and are generally regarded as incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse.

The proposed garage would be located within the approved residential curtilage and would utilise existing access and hardstanding areas. The development would not result in the creation of a separate planning unit, additional accommodation, or any material increase in the intensity of use of the site. Consequently, the proposal is considered to represent an ancillary form of development that supports the established residential use rather than constituting new isolated development in the countryside.

As such, the proposal is not considered to conflict with the spatial objectives of Core Policies 2 and 19, which seek to manage development in the countryside and safeguard the character of rural settlements. Given that the proposal comprises an ancillary domestic outbuilding serving an established lawful dwelling and would not extend or intensify the approved residential use of the site, the principle of development is considered acceptable. Subject to compliance with the other relevant policies of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, including those relating to landscape, design, heritage, residential amenity, highways and ecology, the principle of development can be accepted.

Conclusion

The proposal relates to a modest ancillary garage serving an approved dwelling and does not introduce a new or independent use of the site. As such, the principle of development is considered acceptable, and no objection is raised with regard to Core Policies 1, 2 and 19 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the objectives of the NPPF.

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.
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Core Policy 51 requires development to conserve the character and quality of the surrounding landscape and ensure that its siting, scale and appearance do not have an unacceptable impact on the rural character of the area.

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.

Building for a Healthy Life Framework promotes healthy, inclusive, and sustainable places. The document encourages:

- Walkability.
- Access to green space.
- Active design principles for well-being.

Assessment

The proposed garage/car port would be sited on an existing area of hardstanding within the approved residential curtilage. Measuring approximately 5.8m in width and 3.9m in depth, it would remain clearly subservient to the dwelling.

The building adopts a simple design comprising an enclosed storage area and an open-sided car port. External materials, including slate grey weatherboard cladding, a red brick plinth and a black roof finish, reflect those approved for the dwelling and would provide a cohesive appearance across the site.

Although the North Wessex Downs National Landscape lies approximately 1 kilometre to the south-east of the site access, the proposal would be located within a part of the former farmyard that now forms part of the established residential curtilage. The development would not extend built form into the open countryside and, by virtue of its scale, design, siting and relationship with the existing residential development, would be consistent with the character of the area. As such, the proposal would not adversely affect the setting or special qualities of the National Landscape

Conclusion

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the scale, siting, design and appearance of the proposed garage would preserve the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area. The development is therefore considered to accord with Core Policies 51

and 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the design objectives of Section 12 of the NPPF, and the guidance contained within the Wiltshire Design Guide.

Impact on Heritage Assets

Policy Context

Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special regard to be given to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their settings, and any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local planning authorities to conserve and enhance the historic environment. In particular, Paragraph 212 requires great weight to be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, irrespective of the level of harm.

Core Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that designated and non-designated heritage assets, and their settings, are conserved and where appropriate enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance.

Assessment

The application site lies approximately 50 metres from the Grade II listed Great Cotmarsh Farmhouse. The garage would be positioned within an established group of buildings associated with the former farmstead and would be viewed in the context of the recently approved residential conversion and surrounding agricultural structures. Owing to its limited scale, simple design and use of materials that reflect those approved for the dwelling, the building would not appear as an intrusive feature within the setting of the listed building.

Given the separation distance, siting and the ancillary nature of the proposal, it is considered that the development would preserve the significance and setting of Great Cotmarsh Farmhouse. No harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset has been identified.

Conclusion

The proposed development would preserve the setting and significance of the Grade II listed Great Cotmarsh Farmhouse and would therefore satisfy the duties of Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The proposal is considered to accord with Core Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the heritage objectives of Chapter 16 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. Each of the below matters has been assessed having regard to the specific site context and layout of the proposal.

Overlooking / loss of privacy

The proposal comprises a domestic garage/car port and does not contain any habitable accommodation. Other than a small window serving the storage area, no openings are proposed that would facilitate views towards neighbouring properties. Given the nature of the building and its relationship to surrounding development, no unacceptable overlooking or loss of privacy would arise.

Loss of light / overshadowing

The proposed structure is modest in scale, with a maximum height of approximately 3.1 metres. Given its limited size and separation from neighbouring properties, the development would not result in any significant loss of light or unacceptable overshadowing.

Overbearing Impact / Overall sense of enclosure

Due to its modest scale, ancillary function and siting within the residential curtilage, the proposal would not appear overbearing when viewed from neighbouring land or buildings. The development would not create an unacceptable sense of enclosure.

Conclusion

Having regard to the above, the proposal would not result in any unacceptable impacts on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. The development therefore accords with Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

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.

Proposals must also ensure safe access for refuse collection vehicles and comply with the Wiltshire Council Waste Storage and Collection SPD (2017).

Where necessary, Transport Assessments or Statements should be submitted to evaluate impacts and identify mitigation. Planning conditions or legal agreements may be used to

secure off-site improvements, travel plans, or contributions to sustainable transport infrastructure.

Assessment

In assessing this aspect of the proposal, regard has been had to the site context, the details of the proposed development, the relevant development plan policies, and all other material considerations. The key considerations are set out below.

No alterations to the existing access arrangements are proposed and the development would not generate additional traffic beyond that associated with the lawful residential use of the property.

The garage would provide covered parking and storage within the residential curtilage and would be located on an existing area of hardstanding currently used for parking. As such, the proposal would not prejudice the safe movement of vehicles within the site and would retain adequate parking provision.

Wiltshire Council Highways Development Management have been consulted and raise no objection to the proposal.

Conclusion

Having regard to the scale and nature of the proposal, it is considered that the development would not result in any adverse highway safety impacts. The proposal therefore accords with the aims of Core Policies 60 and 61 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

The proposal relates to the erection of a building on an existing area of hardstanding. The development would not result in the loss of any priority habitat, trees, hedgerows or other features of ecological value. Given the limited scale of the proposal and its location on previously developed hardstanding, the development is not considered likely to have any adverse impacts on protected species, ecological networks or biodiversity interests.

The proposal benefits from the de minimis exemption from the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain requirement as the development impacts less than 25 square metres of habitat.

Conclusion

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposal would not result in any unacceptable ecological impacts and complies with the objectives of Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. The development is also exempt from the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements.

Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

In reaching this decision, due regard has been had to the Public Sector Equality Duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. This requires the Local Planning Authority to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Local Planning Authority is satisfied that the proposal would not result in any unlawful discrimination and that any impacts on protected groups have been appropriately considered as part of this assessment.

CONCLUSION

The principle of the development is considered acceptable and no objections are raised in respect of design, residential amenity, highway safety, ecology or biodiversity.

Having considered the development against the provisions of the Development Plan as a whole, together with all other material considerations, the proposal is considered to accord with the relevant policies of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework. Accordingly, the application is recommended for approval, subject to the conditions set out below.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Planning Permission be GRANTED, subject to conditions:

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.

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

Location Plan; DWG No. 2513_001; Received 20 May 2026
Existing and Proposed Block Plans; DWG No. 2513_002; Received 20 May 2026
Proposed Garage Plans and Elevations; DWG No. 2513_003; Received 20 May 2026
Proposed Site/Roof Plans; DWG No. 2513_004; Received 20 May 2026
Proposed Contextual Elevations; DWG No. 2513_005; Received 20 May 2026
Planning Design & Access Statement; Received 20 May 2026
Application Form; Received 20 May 2026

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

The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match in material, colour and texture those used in the existing building unless otherwise stated on the approved plans.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.