

Ref: ST0129

15 September 2026

Planning Department Wiltshire Council
County Hall
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
Wiltshire
BA14 8JN

STAT Planning Ltd
Edwinstowe House
High Street
Edwinstowe
Nottinghamshire
NG21 9PR

Tel: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE INSTALLATION OF A NEW PUMPING STATION, LONGLEAT CENTER PARCS, WARMINSTER, BA12 7PU

PLANNING PORTAL REFERENCE: PP-15179271

Introduction

I write on behalf of the applicant, Center Parcs, who are seeking full planning permission for the installation of a new pumping station at Longleat Center Parcs, Warminster, BA12 7PU.

This letter outlines the context within which the application is made and provides a brief assessment of the main planning considerations, together with a reasoned justification of the merits of the scheme when assessed against relevant local and national planning policy.

This letter concludes the proposal would represent an opportunity for both social and economic benefits to the Parc and the Center Parcs ethos. The proposal would accord with the provision of the Development Plan, so far as they are relevant.

This application comprises of:

- Application form
- Covering letter
- Drainage Layout
- Site Location Plan
- Proposed Site Plan
- Proposed Elevations & Sections
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
- Construction Environmental Management Plan
- Biodiversity Enhancement Plan
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment



Longleat Forest Center Parcs

Center Parcs is committed to continually enhancing the quality and diversity of its guest experience, with innovation and excellence at the heart of its operations. This dedication extends to its activities, ensuring high-quality and a diverse range of activities are available to all of their guests. In order to support this, Center Parcs are proposing to deliver a New Pumping Station at the Longleat Village.

Center Parcs Longleat Forest is one of the earliest UK Center Parcs villages, opening in 1994. It is located in woodland in Wiltshire, near Longleat House and Longleat Safari Park. Since the village was constructed 250,000 indigenous trees have been planted to create a woodland environment rich in species diversity. Alongside the many original mature trees retained on the site, one of the standout natural features is the presence of magnificent Giant Redwoods, which provides a dramatic focal point within the forest.

The woodland that has been established now provides a haven for a wide range of wildlife, in particular birds. The village has reached the threshold to become a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for woodland birds, reflecting its ecological value and biodiversity.

All the lakes and streams within the village were purpose-built during construction. Through careful environmental management, these water features have developed into a thriving ecosystem that attracts a diverse collection of wildlife.

The Site and Proposal

Center Parcs are seeking full planning permission for the installation of a new pumping station located within the south of the Parc as illustrated in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Location Plan

The site is located within the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and falls within the Greensand Hills Landscape Character Area, specifically the F5 Longleat Green Sands classification. The site is in Flood Zone 1, so is at the lowest risk of flooding and is not susceptible to surface water.



The development comprises the construction of a new below-ground pumping station including a precast concrete wet wall and inlet manhole, together with associated valve chambers, rising mains and ancillary infrastructure. The new wet wall is designed to accommodate incoming foul flows via a gravity connection, before transferring flows via a new rising main connection into the wider network. The site will be secured by a 2.4 metre timber fence around the perimeter as illustrated in figure 2.

In addition to the core pumping infrastructure, the proposals include the provision of overflow storage capacity in the form of two large underground tanks, allowing for storm resilience and operational contingency. Flow monitoring is to be incorporated at key points within the system to quantify both gravity and pumped flows and ensure effective operation.

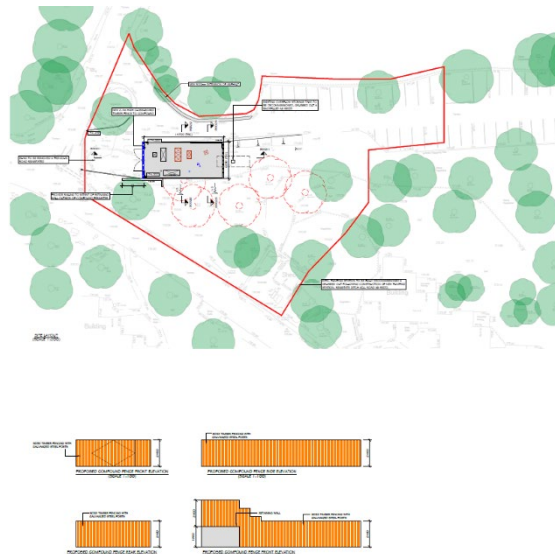


Figure 2: Proposed Site Plan and Elevations

As part of the works, the existing pumping station and associated infrastructure will be fully decommissioned and removed following the commissioning of the new facility. The site will then be reinstated including localised regrading and reinstatement of adjacent features where required.

Above ground elements are minimal and include a secure compound enclosed by a timber fence, along with a kiosk/control equipment area. Power is proposed to be taken from the existing electrical infrastructure, minimising the need for additional off-site works.

The proposed development has been designed to integrate with the existing topography and drainage network, ensuring a robust, maintainable, and policy compliant solution in accordance with current standards, including Building Regulations Part H and Sewers for Adoption.

Overall, the proposed new pumping station representing a proportionate and carefully considered addition to important infrastructure within the Parc to ensure everyday operations of the popular holiday destination, while remaining sensitive to the woodland setting, landscape character and ecological value of the site.



Planning Policy

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In addition, government policy, principally the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') August 2026.

The Statutory Development Plan against which this application is to be determined includes the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) and Sustainability Appraisal (Incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment) Adoption Statement (2015).

Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015)

CP1 – Settlement Strategy

The Settlement Strategy identifies the settlements where sustainable development will take place to improve the lives of all those who live and work in Wiltshire.

CP2 – Delivery Strategy

The Delivery Strategy recognises that, in some settlements, new jobs have not necessarily been delivered alongside new homes. It therefore seeks to strengthen communities, by allowing appropriate growth to provide for the most sustainable pattern of development within Wiltshire. Within the limits of development, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development at the Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages.

CP39 – Tourist Development

Tourism development will be supported where it is directly related to a countryside attraction, where no suitable alternative sites are available, and where the scale and design respect the surrounding landscape. Development must also provide adequate access and infrastructure and offer reasonable access to local services and employment. Extensions to existing tourism facilities should be proportionate in scale and help support their long-term viability.

CP41 – Sustainable Construction and Low-Carbon Energy

This policy identifies how sustainable construction and low-carbon energy will be integral to all new development in Wiltshire. In doing so, this policy sets the framework for meeting a number of national and local priorities that seek to achieve sustainable development and conserve natural resources. This policy will help to reduce Wiltshire's contribution to climate change through improved design and construction methods.

CP50 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Development proposals must demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation and geological value as part of the design rationale. All development should seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity. Sustainable development will avoid direct and indirect impacts upon local sites through sensitive site location and layout, and by maintaining sufficient buffers and ecological connectivity with the wider environment.



CP51 – Landscape

Development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and must not have a harmful impact upon landscape character, while any negative impacts must be mitigated as far as possible through sensitive design and landscape measures.

CP57 – Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping

A high standard of design is required in all new developments, including extensions, alterations, and changes of use of existing buildings. Development is expected to create a strong sense of place through drawing on the local context and being complementary to the locality.

CP64 – Demand Management

Demand management measures will be promoted where appropriate to reduce reliance on the car and to encourage the use of sustainable transport alternatives.

Saved Policies for the West Wiltshire District Local Plan (1st Alteration)

U1a – Foul Water Disposal

Development will only be permitted where adequate foul drainage, sewerage and sewage treatment facilities are available or where suitable arrangements are made for their provision. In sewerred areas new development will be expected to connect to mains drainage. New sewers will be expected to be constructed to a standard adoptable by Wessex Water.

U2 – Surface Water Disposal

Development will only be permitted where adequate surface water disposal systems are available or where suitable arrangements are made for their provision. Proposals must demonstrate that the use Sustainable Drainage Systems have been incorporated where appropriate. Where inappropriate, surface water drainage systems, separate from all foul drainage systems, will be required.

National Planning Policy Framework

National policy is defined by the relevant paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026) and National Planning Practice Guidance ('NPPG')

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides overarching guidelines for the planning system, and the purpose of planning is to help to achieve sustainable development.

Policy DM3 requires local planning authorities, when considering development proposals, to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner, seeking solutions to problems arising from initial proposals where necessary to enable a timely decision. This includes considering whether otherwise unacceptable proposals could be made acceptable through planning conditions or obligations and not refusing applications which should clearly be approved having regard to the development plan, the Framework and other material considerations.

Chapter 7 of the NPPF sets out how the government wishes to build a strong and effective economy. In relation to the rural economy, Policy E4 (Rural business development) provides that the sustainable growth of businesses in rural areas should be supported, including through:



c) Facilities to support rural leisure and tourism, and measures to retain and expand accessible local shops and services.

Chapter 16 of the NPPF (Promoting healthy communities, Policies HC1–HC8) sets out how the planning system should achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social interaction, are safe and accessible, and enable and support healthy lives — including through the protection of existing recreational land and facilities (HC7) and Local Green Space (HC8).

Chapter 14 of the NPPF (Achieving well-designed places, Policies DP1–DP4) sets out the importance of creating high-quality, beautiful and sustainable places that reflect local aspirations and each area's defining characteristics. Landscaping, green infrastructure and tree planting, which make an important contribution to character, are addressed through Policy DP3.

Chapter 19 of the NPPF (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment, Policies N1–N6) sets out how the planning system should conserve and enhance the natural environment and secure net gains for biodiversity, through plan-making (Policy N1) and decision-making (Policy N2), the latter requiring proposals to minimise harm to biodiversity, strengthen ecological networks and incorporate features for priority or threatened species. Recognition of the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside is now reflected in the Chapter 4 objective on development outside settlements and in Policy N2(1)(a), which refers to landscape character and the natural beauty of the countryside.

Planning Assessment

This section assesses the proposed installation of a new pumping station at Longleat Forest Centre Parks against the relevant local and national planning policy framework.

Principle of Development

The proposed pumping station is located outside of the defined settlement boundaries and is therefore assessed against Core Policy 39, which supports development in the countryside where specific criteria are met in exceptional circumstances.

In this instance the proposal satisfies the requirements of CP39 as set out below:

- i) **Relationship to a countryside attraction** – the proposed infrastructure directly supports the operation of ongoing functionality of the Longleat Forest holiday village, which is a well-established countryside leisure destination. The pumping station is essential infrastructure required to serve this attraction, enabling the safe and efficient management of foul water arising from the site. As such, the development is clearly in conjunction with a specific countryside attraction.
- ii) **Lack of suitable alternative sites and buildings** – the nature of foul drainage infrastructure necessitates a location that is hydraulically and operationally linked to the existing network. The proposed siting within the south of the site reflects engineering requirements, including gravity flow connections and integration with existing drainage assets. There are no suitable alternative buildings or sites available for reuse that would meet these technical constraints, and therefore the proposal must be located as shown.
- iii) **Scale, design and landscape compatibility** – the pumping station has been designed with minimal above-ground presence, with the majority of the infrastructure located below ground. Visible elements are limited to a modest compound, control equipment and



ancillary plant, all of which that the development integrates with the surrounding landscape and does not detract from its character. Furthermore, given its location within an operational service area, there are no adverse impacts on residential amenity.

- iv) **Access and infrastructure** – the site benefits from existing access arrangements and is well-related to the established internal road network serving the wider development. The proposal also utilises existing utility connections, including power supply and drainage infrastructure, ensuring that the development is appropriately served without the need for extensive new off-site works.
- v) **Access to services and employment base** – the pumping station serves an existing, operational leisure destination which provides employment and visitor services. The proposal therefore supports and sustains an established economic use in the countryside, rather than introducing isolated or unrelated development.

Design

The site lies within the Cranbourne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB and the Greensands Hills Landscape Character Area (F5 Longleat Greensand Hills). The proposed development has been designed with careful consideration of this sensitive landscape context, ensuring that the character and qualities of the site are preserved while accommodating the introduction of the new pumping station.

The scale and the form of development are acceptable, as shown in the drawings, they are not overbearing on the trees. The pumping station will be mainly below-ground, with above-ground elements being minimal, respecting the character of the surrounding area. The visual impact of the proposed development will be largely contained within the Center Parcs complex, with no views of the site from the PROW that follows the public road to the northwest of the site. Considering the maturity of the trees which surround the site any views will be limited to glimpses.

Impact on Amenity

The proposal will not be noisy and would not have an adverse impact upon neighbouring amenity due to the location of the proposed building away from other nearby holiday chalets. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the relevant criteria of CP57.

Biodiversity, Trees and Green Infrastructure

Chapter 19 of the NPPF seek to protect and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure. The proposals have been carefully designed to minimise impacts on the surrounding woodland, with the development working around the natural characteristics of the environment.

The accompanying AIA confirms that ten coast redwood trees are to be removed, three of which are programmed for removal as part of routine thinning in accordance with the site felling license and the remaining seven are required for remove to facilitate the proposals. Tree removal will be appropriately mitigated through additional tree planting around the site. The location of the pumping station is justified within the report and the arboriculturalist concludes that this location minimises tree removal compared to potential other locations in close proximity to the old station.



The PEA Report confirms that the impacts of the proposed works are minimal on protected species given that the mitigation measures are followed. Mitigation for the loss of trees should be considered alongside measures for common amphibians, badgers, bats and invasive species.

The proposed works are exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain, with the site area being below 0.2ha and Morph Ecology confirming that there is no on-site priority habitat within the application boundary.

The application is also supported by a Construction Environmental Management Plan and Biodiversity Enhancement Plan to secure the details upfront rather than post determination through an approval of conditions application.

Sustainable Development

The NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, Policy DM3 of the NPPF encourages a positive and proactive approach to decision-making, seeking developments that improve economic, social and environmental conditions. CP41 of the local plan also emphasises the importance of how sustainable construction will be integral to all new development in Wiltshire.

The proposals align with these policies, delivering clear sustainable benefits through supporting a key tourism and employment destination and enhancing the guest's activity experience. Environmental impacts have been carefully considered and mitigated, and the development remains modest, well-designed and appropriate to its setting.

Conclusion

The proposal demonstrates that the installation of a new pumping station is compliant with national and local planning policy.

The proposed development represents an appropriate and sustainable development to the Village. The development is integral to the overall operations of Longleat Center Parcs.

For the reasons set out, the overall planning balance weighs in favour of the application and should be supported by the local planning authority and, therefore, we request that planning permission is granted without delay.

Yours Faithfully



Jessica Hird MRTPI
Associate Town Planner