

**APPLICATION FOR FULL-PLANNING PERMISSION (MINOR
DEVELOPMENT)
CASE OFFICER REPORT**

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2026/02600
APPLICATION TYPE:	Full planning permission
SITE ADDRESS:	Haresbrook Farm, Greenway, Tockenham, Swindon, SN4 7PW
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	(1) The permanent retention of existing hardstanding at the site entrance (retrospective); (2) The construction of a hard standing extension from (1) to the recently permitted agricultural building (Ref PL/2026/01193); (3) A replacement market gardening potting tool shed and wash station; (4) A replacement polytunnel.
RECOMMENDATION:	Approve with Conditions

1 SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The land at Haresbrook Farm extends to some 2.51 hectares (6.19 acres). It is situated on the south side of Greenway, a country lane, and to the south eastern part of the parish of Tockenham.

Earlier this year the Applicant and his wife took on the occupation of additional adjoining land located on the north side of Greenway known as the “Field of Dreams” through two matching deeds of farm business tenancy each for a fixed term continuing until 28th September 2032. The north part amounts to 1.05 hectares and 2.60 acres and the south part, 2.61 hectares and 6.46 acres.



Plan showing extent of whole unit for information, the application relates to the southern field, highlighted in green.

The site is located within a fairly flat landscape albeit the field is set down from the road which is elevated from the surrounding fields. Whilst the application is not wholly retrospective, there were at point of submission, numerous unauthorised structures onsite and works requiring planning permission including the creation of an access track. The retention of the access track comprises part of this application however it is understood that at this point the majority of unauthorised structures have been removed following the construction of an agricultural building ref PL/2026/01193 (prior notification).

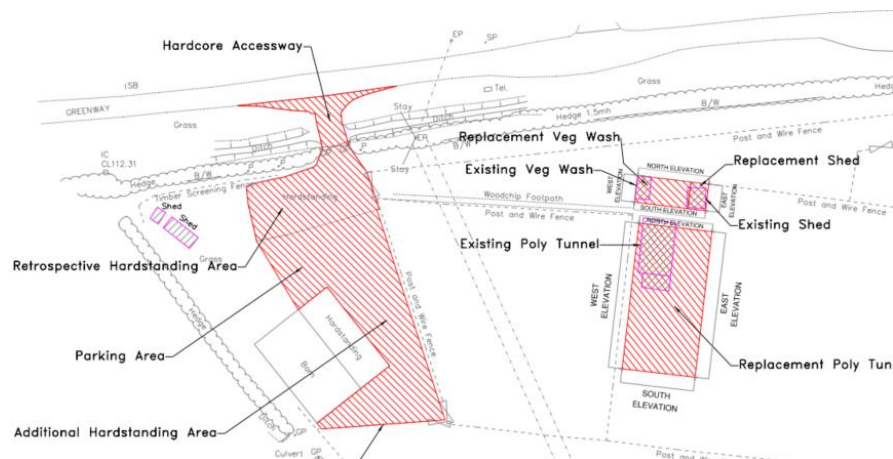
The application site is subject to the following planning policy constraints:

- *Grade 3 Agricultural Land*
- *Flood Zone 1*
- *Public Right of Way TOCK8 approximately 25m to the north-east of the site*

2 PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks planning permission for the following elements;

- The permanent retention of existing hardstanding at the site entrance (retrospective)
- The construction of a hard standing extension
- A replacement market gardening potting tool shed and wash station
- A replacement polytunnel



3 PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal / Summary

PL/2026/01193 - Prior notification: Building Decision - Prior Approval Not Required Date: 23/3/2026 – A three bay open fronted portal framed agricultural building

4 RELEVANT LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

4.1.1 Statutory Legislation:

4.1.2 National Planning Policy:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

4.1.3 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: Spatial Strategy for the Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Area (CP19)
- Core Policy 34 Additional Employment Land
- Core Policy 35 Existing Employment Land
- Core Policy 48 Supporting Rural Life
- Core Policy 50 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Core Policy 51: Landscape
- Core Policy 57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping;
- Core Policy 61 Transport & Development;
- Core Policy 62 Development Impacts on the Transport Network;
- Core Policy 64 Demand Management

4.1.4 Draft Wiltshire Local Plan

At Full Council on 19 May 2026, the elected members of Wiltshire Council agreed to withdraw the emerging Wiltshire Local Plan. The said Plan has no material weight for the purposes of the application.

In accordance with Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026, on 30th June 2026 Wiltshire Council published a notice of intention to prepare a new local plan for Wiltshire. The next stage is a Scoping Consultation which commences on 2nd September 2026. This plan is at a very early stage and currently carries no weight for decision making.

4.1.5 Neighbourhood Plan:

Tockenham Neighbourhood Plan – Made May 2021

- Policy 1: New and Existing Employment
- Policy 2: Farm and Equestrian Diversification
- Policy 6: Settlement Identity
- Policy 7: Special Areas and Views

4.1.6 Supplementary Planning Documents and other Guidance:

- Wiltshire Design Guide (adopted April 2024)
- National Design Guide

5 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 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)
- Whether there would be any harmful impacts upon protected species or priority habitats (CP 50)
- Whether the proposal results in the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land (NPPF Policy N2)

6 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 subject to conditions

WC Ecology: Further information regarding baseline assessment for BNG required

Tockenham Parish Council: No objection

Full comments are available on the planning file.

The consultee responses have been carefully considered. Whilst significant weight is afforded to specialist technical advice, the decision remains a matter for the Local Planning Authority and the officer assessment below reaches an independent planning judgement on the issues raised.

7 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.

Each material planning issue raised is addressed within the assessment below.

7.1.1 Letters of Objection

Total letters of objection received:0

7.1.2 Letters of Support

Total letters of support received:4

- Positive to see a local venture producing food responsibly
- Support market gardening for the community
- Visually unobtrusive
- No light or noise pollution
- Need for local food production
- Respects animals and ecology

8 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 NPPF (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.

8.1 Principle of Development

8.1.1 Policy Context

Core Policies 1 and 2 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy establish the overarching spatial strategy for Wiltshire and provide the primary Development Plan framework for determining whether development is appropriately located. Together, these policies seek to direct growth towards the most sustainable locations whilst protecting the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. The strategy prioritises development within Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and larger villages, whilst development in the countryside will only be supported where it accords with specific development plan policies or where material considerations indicate otherwise.

The NPPF also contains national policies relating to the location of development. Policies S3-S5 distinguish between development within settlements and development in the countryside, support sustainable patterns of growth, and require decisions to have regard to the role and function of settlements, accessibility to services and facilities, and other site-specific considerations.

The principle of development should be assessed having regard to the Development Plan as a whole, the NPPF and all other material considerations. The weight afforded to individual policies will depend upon the nature, scale and location of the development proposed.

8.1.2 Planning History

As noted above PL/2026/01193 - Prior notification: for a three bay open fronted portal framed agricultural building which was determined as Prior Approval Not Required 23/3/2026

At that point there were numerous unauthorised structures throughout the site including a polytunnel, sheds, washing structures, metal pole structures which have been removed in accordance with discussions with the Councils' Enforcement Team





8.1.3 Assessment

The application site is within Tockenham Parish and therefore Core Policy 1, 2 and 19 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) are relevant for setting out a spatial strategy for the location and distribution of development in the area. The parish of Tockenham contains no settlements defined under CP19. Accordingly, the site is outside of the limits of development defined by CP1 and in open countryside, where development is strictly controlled.

CP2 states that, other than in circumstances as permitted by other policies within the development plan, as set out in paragraph 4.25, development will not be permitted outside defined limits of development. Policy 2 of the Tockenham Neighbourhood Plan supports new employment uses to diversity and support the continued use of a farm or equestrian business subject to criteria.

The building is being erected in association with a market gardening enterprise which includes the raising of chickens, sheep and goats in addition to the growing of vegetables which are offered for sale. Agriculture is defined in Section 336 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as:

“agriculture” includes horticulture, fruit growing, seed growing, dairy farming, the breeding and keeping of livestock (including any creature kept for the production of food, wool, skins or fur, or for the purpose of its use in the farming of land), the use of land as grazing land, meadow land, osier land, market gardens and nursery grounds,

and the use of land for woodlands where that use is ancillary to the farming of land for other agricultural purposes, and “agricultural” shall be construed accordingly;

The proposed poly tunnel and potting shed and vegetable wash are considered to meet the standards set out in the above definition.

Core Policy 34 is the WCS’s dedicated policy that deals with additional employment land. This policy states the following:

Outside the Principal Settlements, Market Towns and Local Service Centres, developments will be supported that:

- i. are adjacent to these settlements and seek to retain or expand businesses currently located within or adjacent to the settlements; or*
- ii. support sustainable farming and food production through allowing development required to adapt to modern agricultural practices and diversification; or*
- iii. are for new and existing rural based businesses within or adjacent to Large and Small Villages; or*
- iv. are considered essential to the wider strategic interest of the economic development of Wiltshire, as determined by the council.*

Where they:

- a) meet sustainable development objectives as set out in the policies of this Core Strategy and*
- b) are consistent in scale with their location, do not adversely affect nearby buildings and the surrounding area or detract from residential amenity and*
- c) are supported by evidence that they are required to benefit the local economic and social needs and*
- d) would not undermine the delivery of strategic employment allocations and*
- e) are supported by adequate infrastructure.*

Point ii of this policy is particularly relevant as the proposed structures would be used for the purposes of farming and food production, to grow vegetables and other associated activities. Furthermore, there is an adjacent barn onsite benefitting from agricultural permitted development which the hard-standing will be in association with.

The promotion of agriculture and land-based industries is something the Core Strategy is seeking to achieve to move towards a higher value economy (as stated in Core Policy 34). The promotion of agriculture in general is one of the sustainable development objectives of the plan. In terms of principle, the proposal can therefore be supported under Core Policy 34 of the WCS. The proposal must nevertheless be assessed against all other relevant Development Plan policies, national policy and material considerations.

8.2 Design and Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

8.2.1 Policy Context

Core Policy 51 and 57 of the WCS seek to ensure all new development, including a change of use, responds positively to the character and appearance of Wiltshire's built environment and natural landscapes. Among other things, this means requiring a high standard of design by ensuring a positive response to the features of the site itself and its landscape or townscape setting.

Policies DP1-DP4 of the NPPF seek to ensure that development is well-designed, visually attractive, sustainable and responsive to its surroundings. Development should contribute positively to local character, create high quality places and support healthy and inclusive communities.

Policy 6 of the TNP seeks to ensure new development is sensitive to the defining rural characteristics of the area, having regard to the North Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment (NWLCA), and that they demonstrably maintain its character, natural environment and landscape setting. For similar aims, Policy 7 of the TNP identifies area of land and features that contribute to the sense of place, character and community of the area and seeks to ensure development does not compromise their essential character.

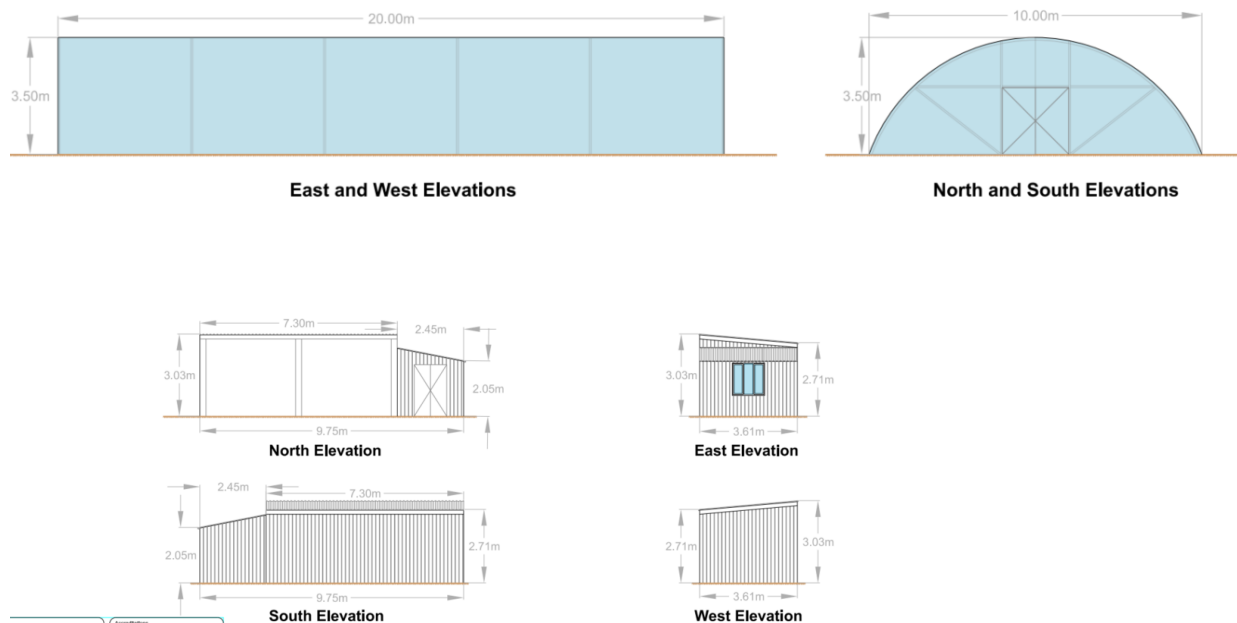
The Wiltshire Design Guide provides further guidance on achieving high quality, context-led design and should be taken into account where relevant.

8.2.2 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.

The site is an irregular shaped parcel of land located southeast of the hamlet of Tockenham. It lies within the Character Area 13 (Lyneham Hills) of the NWLCA, the main characteristics of which include its prominent scarp slope to north, occasional nucleated settlements and scattered rural dwellings, intact hedgerow systems, and expansive panoramas across lower lying land. The very northern edge of the field is within a special area and view protected by Policy 7 of the TNP, where it aims to protect the rural scenic views toward Clyffe Hanging (to the east) from unsympathetic development.

The proposed polytunnel would be used for agricultural purposes, the growing of vegetables which would be appropriate use within this rural location and within the confines of the application site. The polytunnel would be of a simple design which would reflect its function. The building would be 20m in length, 3.5m high and 10m wide, constructed of steel arches with cross braces covered in polythene sheeting. Positioned to the east of the site, the building would be adjacent to the other proposed structure, the potting shed and wash facilities. The potting shed is shown as being of simple timber construction with an overall width of approximately 9.75m by 3.05m with a mono-pitch roof. The main section is to be open fronted with the lean -to smaller section enclosed with double doors and a window to the end elevation.



The buildings are to be screened from the road by a hedge and fencing. They are positioned outside of the section of the field within a special area and view protected by Policy 7 of the TNP. The proposed hardstanding is considered reasonable in connection with the scale of the enterprise.

Whilst the buildings, and in particular the polytunnel are of no particular visual merit, they are not anomalous of horticultural or market garden enterprises and as such, are considered acceptable in connection with their agricultural uses. It is further noted that they are replacing the plethora of unauthorised structures onsite, with lower levels of visual impact. A condition is recommended however to ensure that should the structures no longer be necessary for the purposes of agriculture, that they are removed from the site in the interests of visual amenity.

8.2.3 Conclusion

It is acknowledged that the proposed development would have some visual impact on the countryside, however this would be mitigated by the chosen position of the structures being partially screened by existing vegetation. As such, the visual impact is considered limited in the context of the use of the structures in connection with an agricultural venture.

The proposal is in accordance with Core Policies 51 and 57 of the WCS and the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

8.3 Amenity

8.3.1 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.

Policy P3 of the NPPF requires development to be appropriate for its location, taking account of its likely effects on health, living conditions and the environment. In particular, Policy

P3(2)(b) requires development to avoid giving rise to unacceptable impacts on the living conditions of neighbouring residents and occupiers. In assessing amenity impacts, regard should be had to matters including daylight and sunlight, outlook, privacy, overbearing impacts and other effects on residential amenity.

8.3.2 Assessment

The closest residential dwelling lies opposite the site, approximately 40m to the north. The proposed development will not result in any overlooking or overshadowing. Any noise associated with the development will be that consistent with the sites location in the countryside, an agricultural smallholding. As such it is not considered that there would be any unacceptable impacts, including noise, on the private amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

The assessment is based on the stated use of the site. Should circumstances change and example members of the public visit for retail sales, then this may result in an intensification of use that impacts on amenity. A condition is therefore recommended to ensure the satisfactory levels of amenity are preserved.

8.3.3 Conclusion

The proposal is in accordance with point vii of Core Policy 57 of the WCS and the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

8.4 Highways Impacts and Parking

8.4.1 Policy Context

Policies TR3-TR8 of the NPPF seek to ensure that development is supported by safe, suitable and sustainable transport arrangements. Development should provide appropriate access, promote sustainable travel choices where possible and avoid unacceptable impacts on highway safety and the operation of the transport network.

Core Policies 60-64 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy require development to provide safe access, promote sustainable transport, minimise transport impacts and provide appropriate parking arrangements.

Where relevant, regard should also be had to the Wiltshire Local Transport Plan, the Council's parking standards and any applicable Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs).

8.4.2 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 Council's Highways Officer has been consulted and confirm that they raise no objection to the retention of the hardstanding but wish to have the access assessed to ensure that it has been constructed to the appropriate standard. That would entail a retrospective licence

agreement with Wiltshire Council as LHA. The extension of the hardstanding and the erection of the shed and poly tunnel raises no highway concern.

An informative is recommended to be added to any decision advising of the need to gain a license agreement from Wiltshire Councils as the LHA

There are no proposals within the application to indicate that the use of the site would be intensified for example through members of the public visiting the site for retail sales. The safety of the access has been assessed on the basis that it is for agricultural use however therefore a condition would be required to restrict sales to the public from site in the interests of highways safety.

8.4.3 Conclusion

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposal accords with Core Policies 60-64 of the WCS and Policies TR3-TR8 of the NPPF

8.5 Ecology and Biodiversity

8.5.1 Policy Context

Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires development to protect and, where appropriate, enhance biodiversity and geodiversity interests.

Policy N2 of the NPPF seeks to conserve and enhance biodiversity, support nature recovery, protect habitats and species, and strengthen ecological networks.

Where relevant, proposals should assess impacts upon protected species, habitats, ecological networks and green and blue infrastructure and demonstrate that any adverse impacts can be appropriately avoided, mitigated or compensated for.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is mandatory for most development and proposals should demonstrate compliance with the statutory requirements unless an exemption applies.

8.5.2 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.

A preliminary Ecological Survey Report was commissioned which found that the site had moderate potential for amphibians (in their terrestrial phase). It had low potential for reptiles and moderate potential for terrestrial mammals, including the European badger. It also had moderate foraging and commuting potential for bats and high bird breeding potential along the maturing trees and hedgerow. As a result, no further survey was considered necessary. The Councils' Ecologist raised no objection to the proposal however it is considered necessary to apply a condition to ensure that works are undertaken in accordance with the submitted report.

In respect of BNG the initially submitted redline plan for the BNG did not correlate with the redline for the planning application which resulted in the baseline measurements being incorrect.

A revised BNG assessment and metric was submitted using which demonstrate a 13.35% net increase in BNG dated 14.07.26. At point of producing this report, no further comments have been received from the Ecologist. Provision of the final BNG strategy is secured via the deemed condition requiring submission of a Biodiversity Gain Plan. The LPA at this stage need only be satisfied that adequate information is available to ensure that an appropriate baseline, upon which to assess the future Gain Plan. The LPA is satisfied in this respect.

8.5.3 Conclusion

Having regard to the above, it is considered that subject to conditions relating to BNG and that works be undertaken in accordance with the approved documents, that the proposal accords with CP50 of the WCS and Policy N2 of the NPPF

9 PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

The proposal is considered to have acceptable impacts in respect of matters of acknowledged importance to the public interest, subject to such necessary conditions as would meet the relevant tests. It is not found to conflict with the statutory requirements or the provisions of the development plan, and the other material considerations do not indicate that a decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. The proposal should therefore be supported.

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following 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:

BNG Assessment - Wessex Ecology dated 14.07.26

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Survey- Wessex Ecology Updated 13.07.26
Received 23.07.26

Location Plan 60270-3 Rev A
Block Plan 60270-1 Rev B
Received 13.05.26

Design and Access Statement
Proposed Accessway, Polytunnel, Vegetable Wash and Storage Shed – Elevations 60270-2
Received 21.04.26

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

There shall be no retail sales of any kind to visiting members of the public from the site.

REASON: The site is in the open countryside where the Local Planning Authority will not normally permit retailing in the interests of the rural character of the area and in the interests of encouraging a sustainable form of development.

If within a period of 10 years from the date of this permission, the agricultural use of the building hereby permitted permanently ceases, the building/structure and resulting demolition materials shall be removed and the site shall, within a period of three months from the date of the substantial demolition of the said building/structure, be restored to its condition before the development took place or to such other condition as may be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure that the agricultural buildings/structures are removed on cessation of their agricultural purposes, in the interests of protecting the rural character of the area.

Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting or amending that Order with or without modification), the site shall be used solely for agriculture.

REASON: In order to ensure no inappropriate uses are introduced in this rural location.

INFORMATIVES

Any alterations to the approved plans, brought about by compliance with Building Regulations or any other reason must first be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority before commencement of work. The applicant is requested to note that this permission does not affect any private property rights and therefore does not authorise the carrying out of any work on land outside their control. If such works are required it will be necessary for the applicant to obtain the landowners consent before such works commence.

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

Please note that Council offices do not have the facility to receive material samples. Please deliver material samples to site and inform the Planning Officer where they are to be found.

The application involves an extension to the existing/creation of a new vehicle access/dropped kerb. The consent hereby granted shall not be construed as authority to carry out works on the highway. The applicant is advised that a licence will be required from Wiltshire's Highway Authority before any works are carried out on any footway, footpath, carriageway, verge or other land forming part of the highway. Please contact our Vehicle Crossing Team on vehicleaccess@wiltshire.gov.uk and/or 01225 713352 or visit their website at <http://wiltshire.gov.uk/highways-streets> to make an application.

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition “(the biodiversity gain condition)” that development may not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Wiltshire Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. For further information on exempt developments please refer to:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments>

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply.

Irreplaceable habitat

If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans.

The Biodiversity Gain Plan must include, in addition to information about steps taken or to be taken to minimise any adverse effect of the development on the habitat, information on arrangements for compensation for any impact the development has on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat.

The planning authority can only approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if satisfied that the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat is minimised and appropriate arrangements have been made for the purpose of compensating for any impact which do not include the use of biodiversity credits.