

PLANNING STATEMENT

In support of

Erection of a building amounting to 7,448 m² GIA (Use Class B2) with associated facilities, access with security, parking, hard and soft landscaping, drainage and associated works

-on-

**Land north of Chaldicott Barns, Chaldicotts Farm
Semley
Shaftesbury
SP7 9AW**

Chaldicott Barns Northern Expansion

On behalf of

Chaldicotts Limited

September 2026

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This planning statement supports a full application for planning permission for the erection of a building amounting to 7,448 m² GIA (Use Class B2) with associated facilities, access with security, parking, hard and soft landscaping, drainage and associated works, on land at the northern end of the Chaldicott Barns business estate, Chaldicotts Farm, Semley. The scheme is referred to as the Chaldicott Barns Northern Expansion.
- 1.2 The building is for an existing occupier of the estate: an engineering and technology business working in the defence and security sector. The business has outgrown the buildings it occupies at Chaldicott Barns. The proposal allows it to bring its operations together and expand on the estate where it already works.
- 1.3 The application is accompanied by the following documents:
- Design and Access Statement and application drawings (1624 series) – Anthony Charles Southey, Chartered Architect
 - Schedule of Materials and Specification (rev. 24 September 2026) – Anthony Charles Southey, Chartered Architect
 - Transport Assessment (020.01075/TA/3) and Framework Travel Plan (020.01075/TP/3) – Paul Basham Associates
 - Environmental Noise Assessment (BS 4142), Desktop Study and Vibration Assessment (23588-1, -2 and -3 R2) – noise.co.uk
 - Ecological Impact Assessment (v4, 25 September 2026) – Ethos Environmental Planning
 - Biodiversity Net Gain Summary Report (25 September 2026) and Statutory Metric (V3, 24 September 2026) – Ethos Environmental Planning
 - External Lighting Strategy (Rev 2.0) – The Lighting Bee
 - Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement (Rev C) – NB Tree Management

- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy (020.51075/FRADS/1) – Paul Basham Associates
- BREEAM NC v7 Pre-Assessment (v3) – Sol Environment
- Energy Statement (Rev 4) – Sol Environment and
- Landscape Appraisal (942-1 R3) and Landscape Design Statement (942-2 R5, 22 September 2026) – The Landscape Service

1.4 The site lies at the northern end of Chaldicott Barns. Existing estate buildings and yards lie to the south, west and north, and woodland, including Broad Hay Copse, lies to the east.

1.5 The land levels slope naturally from south-west to north-east, with a fall of about 6m over the length of the site. Consequently, whilst the proposed building is large (in terms of footprint), it can be constructed on site with the eaves and ridge being lower than those of the adjacent commercial units – none of which are visible from any public highway or right of way.

1.6 This planning statement provides a description of the proposed development and then considers the current Planning Policy position which is relevant to the determination of the application. It then considers the main site-specific issues with reference to the comprehensive suite of supporting reports.

2.0 THE PROPOSAL

2.1 The proposal is a single building on one level, built for general industrial (B2) use, with a mezzanine for offices and staff welfare. It provides 7,448 m² of floorspace (GIA): 6,815 m² at ground floor and 633 m² at mezzanine. The offices, research and development space, storage and staff facilities support the engineering and technology work carried out in the building. They are ancillary to the B2 use and are not separate uses. The Design and Access Statement and materials schedule (prepared by the Architect) provides comprehensive detail on the building design.

- 2.2 The site occupies an area where a plantation of Ash trees with dieback had to be removed (with the necessary licence being granted). With the land dropping away to the north, it is proposed to reduce levels at the south end to create a level site. The building is split into several elements, with a link corridor between the production/office areas and other parts of the wider building. In terms of layout, it comprises a main structure running north-south positioned just beyond the existing unit 14 on the existing Chaldicott Barns site. The building is made up of four connected blocks – production, testing, research and development, and storage
- 2.3 The walls are to be clad in insulated panels laid in 6 m wide blocks of Camouflage, Khaki Green and Olive Green on the west, east and south elevations, with Merlin Grey to the north elevation, matching the most recent buildings on the estate. The roof is to be Khaki Green insulated panels at a 5° pitch. Photovoltaic panels with an anti-glare film will be built into the roof. For security reasons the building has no windows. This also keeps light spill from inside the building at night to a minimum. The external materials are taken from the Schedule of Materials and Specification (rev. 24 September 2026) and summarised at Appendix A.
- 2.4 The main building will be bounded by a security fence in matt green (RAL 6005), with controlled gates, vehicle barriers and a small security kiosk at the entrance. The kiosk is clad in black fibre-cement with a sedum roof. Staff and visitor parking is outside the fence.,
- 2.5 Access is from the existing estate entrance and internal road. 128 car parking spaces are provided, including 6 accessible spaces, 22 spaces with electric vehicle charging (and 17 more with the cabling in place for future charging) and 9 spaces reserved for car sharers. There are 18 covered cycle spaces, 4 with e-bike charging.
- 2.6 The building is designed for two 8-hour shifts at opening, with about 160 staff, rising to three shifts and up to 240 staff at full operation. Work at night is limited to assembly. Testing takes place only in the daytime.

- 2.7 The submitted drawings show, how in terms of its design and external appearance, the building uses the same (simple/commercial) design language as has already been used on the most recent buildings to the rear of this site.
- 2.8 The group elevations (drawing 1624-907d) show the building sitting lower than the buildings around it.
- 2.9 The Landscape Appraisal referred to below demonstrates that this area is entirely hidden from public view by virtue of the well-established and extensive plantations of woodland that bound the site to the north-east and west.

3.0 SITE AND ITS HISTORY

- 3.1 Chaldicotts Farm commercial complex originated as a dairy farm run by the current owner. Just over 20 years ago, the decision was made to cease dairy farming and convert several traditional and modern farm buildings to business use as what is now known as Chaldicott Barns.
- 3.2 The business estate has grown northwards since then. Units 9 and 14 were permitted in 2015, two further industrial units were approved in November 2021 (PL/2021/07659), and a retail and café use at the front of the site has been approved to expand – which is presently due to be completed shortly. The estate extends to about 64 acres. Around 9 acres are developed, and around 50 acres are planted woodland, woodland walks and open space. It is home to 16 businesses employing an estimated 137 to 185 people.
- 3.3 The intended occupier already works from the estate, operating from about 2,800 m² (30,000 sq ft) of floorspace. They have been operating from the estate for more than 10yrs.
- 3.4 The application site was a block of planted broadleaved woodland, planted over 20 years ago, that was badly affected by ash dieback. The Forestry Commission granted

a felling licence (018/3048/2024) on 19 November 2024 covering 1.91 ha, and its EIA screening (EIA-2024-0587) confirmed that no further consent was needed. The replacement planting required by the licence was carried out first, on land to the south, at not less than 1,100 stems per hectare with ten years' aftercare. The trees were felled in April 2026.

- 3.5 The felling was carried out under licence because of tree disease. The Arboricultural Impact Assessment records that "no tree has been removed in connection with the development now proposed". Even so, the biodiversity net gain assessment has assessed the application sites baseline as a woodland habitat as it was before felling had occurred so its loss is counted in the appropriate way

4.0 PLANNING POLICY

The Development Plan

- 4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the application to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan is the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS), adopted in January 2015, together with the policies of the Salisbury District Local Plan that it saves, including Policy E19. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published on 17 August 2026, and the Cranborne Chase National Landscape Management Plan 2025–2030 are material considerations.
- 4.2 The Wiltshire Local Plan 2020–2038 was submitted for examination on 28 November 2024. Following the Inspectors' letter of 27 February 2026, which raised concerns about the plan's spatial strategy and evidence to support the emerging plan, the Council withdrew the plan on 19 May 2026 and has begun work on a new one. The withdrawn plan carries no weight. It is referred to at paragraph 4.10 only for what it shows about the Council's recent intentions for rural employment.

4.3 Core Policy 1 sets out the settlement hierarchy. The site is in the Mere Community Area, where Core Policy 17 identifies Semley/Semley Station as a Small Village.

4.4 In a recent appeal decision Appeal Ref: 6002151 (allowing a dwelling at Sem Hill), the Planning Inspector agreed that, with there being no defined settlement boundaries, consideration of where might be considered to be a reasonably sustainable location (by virtue of its recognition within the settlement hierarchy) should not be limited to the central part of the village of Semley alone. Core Policy 2 (Delivery Strategy) advises *At the Small Villages development will be limited to infill within the existing built area. Proposals for development at the Small Villages will be supported where they seek to meet housing needs of settlements or provide employment, services and facilities provided that development:*

- i) Respects the existing character and form of the settlement;*
- ii) Does not elongate the village or impose development in the sensitive landscape areas; and*
- iii) Does not consolidate an existing sporadic loose-knit areas (sic) of development related to the settlement.*

The relevance of this appeal decision is further highlighted at paragraph 4.11 below

4.5 Core Policy 34 (Additional Employment Land) confirms – *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. 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.*

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

- 4.7 In addition to CP34, the main development management policies are:

CP48 (Supporting Rural Life)

CP50 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity)

CP51 (Landscape)

CP57 (Ensuring High-Quality Design and Place Shaping)

CP60-63 (inclusive) (Transport Policies)

CP41 (Sustainable Construction and Low Carbon Energy)

CP52 (Green Infrastructure)

CP67 (Flood Risk)

- 4.8 Core Policy 41 requires non-residential development to achieve the relevant BREEAM 'Very Good' standard, rising to 'Excellent' from 2019. The proposal's response is set out in section 7.

- 4.9 Saved Policy E19 of the Salisbury District Local Plan remains part of the development plan and advises: *Proposals to redevelop or enlarge existing employment sites in the countryside will be permitted where the proposed development would take place within the existing boundaries of the site. Proposals involving land outside established boundaries will be considered if:*

- (i) *The proposal would result in improved local employment opportunities;*
- (ii) *The proposal will improve the operation or efficiency of the enterprise;*

- (iii) *There is no suitable alternative building in the immediate locality;*
- (iv) *There is no adverse impact on the character of the surrounding landscape or biodiversity;*
- (v) *There is no unacceptable increase in vehicular traffic or additional reliance on the private car; and*
- (vi) *The environment of any nearby dwellings will not be adversely affected.*

Wiltshire Local Plan 2020–2038 (withdrawn)

- 4.10 Although the withdrawn plan carries no weight, it shows the direction the Council intended to take. Its employment policy (Policy 64), which would have replaced Core Policy 34, supported new employment development in Use Classes B2, B8 and E(g) outside settlements where it would diversify and support an existing rural-based business. The Council's Employment Land Review (2023), part of the plan's evidence base, identified advanced manufacturing and engineering as a priority sector and recorded the significance of the defence sector in south Wiltshire.

National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026)

- 4.11 The recently revised NPPF continues to confirm, that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three over-arching objectives in providing for homes, commercial development, facilities and infrastructure which society needs. These objectives are inter-dependent and mutually supportive comprising an economic objective, a social objective and an environmental objective. National decision-making Policy S3 reiterates the presumption in favour of sustainable development. National decision-making Policy S4 relates to the principle of development within settlements being supported. Whilst the LPA may consider Chaldicotts Farm to be sited outside a settlement, reference to the appeal decision above (see para 4.4) confirmed with Semley Station/Semley being a Small Village but without any defined settlement boundary, the location of development could still be considered to be within the settlement beyond areas comprising the central part of

the village of Semley alone. As such, it is a moot point whether this development should be assessed as being within (or without) a settlement.

- 4.12 Policy S5 lists the forms of development that should be approved outside settlements unless the benefits would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects. They include, at S5(1)(a), development for “national defence and security”, and, at S5(1)(b), development for rural businesses and services, including tourism, where a location outside settlements is shown to be necessary.
- 4.13 It includes a suite of new decision-making policies, including DM1: Preparing Development Proposals which encourages pre-application engagement proportionate to the nature of the proposal and those likely to be affected. Relevant officers from the LPA are aware of this proposal and there has also been local consultation involving the elected councillor and parish council. The Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership has been directly involved in discussions about the principle of the development and its design. Various revisions have been made considering their input. There are no nearby residents who are affected.
- 4.14 Chapter 7 of the NPPF deals with building a strong economy. Policy E2 gives substantial weight to the economic benefits of proposals that allow businesses to invest, expand and adapt. Policy E4 supports the sustainable growth of businesses in rural areas, including through well-designed new buildings. The policy confirms development proposals to meet business needs in rural areas may need to be located outside settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances: (a) development proposals should take opportunities, where they exist, to use previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing development; and (b) the siting and design of development should be appropriate having regard to the character of its surroundings
- 4.15 Whilst the NPPF continues to recognise the importance of protected landscapes. Policy N4 addresses Protected Landscapes directly. It gives substantial weight to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of National Landscapes. Major

development in these areas should be refused other than in exceptional circumstances and where it is in the public interest. Whether a proposal is major development is a matter for the decision-maker, having regard to its nature, scale and setting and whether it could have a significant adverse effect on the purposes of designation. Where major development is permitted, its effects on the area's special qualities, including tranquillity and dark skies, should be mitigated. Section 6 deals with Policy N4.

4.16 Policy CC2 gives substantial weight to the benefits of drawing energy from renewable and low-carbon sources, including heat pumps and solar panels.

4.17 Policy P6 (Land and operations for defence and public safety) states that “substantial weight should be attached to the importance of sites, activities, facilities and infrastructure required to maintain and enhance defence capability” when considering “proposals for such development (whether through modernisation, intensification, redevelopment or expansion for operational and related purposes)”. The policy turns on defence capability, not on who owns or operates the site, and so applies to private defence industry facilities as well as to the Ministry of Defence estate.

4.18 Other national decision-making policies relevant to the proposal include:

- DP3 (Key principles for well-designed places);
- TR3 (Locating development in sustainable locations);
- TR6 (Assessing transport impacts);
- N1 and N2 (Biodiversity net gain); and
- F-series policies on flood risk and sustainable drainage.

Cranborne Chase National Landscape Management Plan 2025–2030

- 4.19 The Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership Plan 2025–2030 (the Management Plan), prepared by the Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership (the CCNL Partnership), is a material consideration. Its policies most relevant here are: PT1 (development should seek to further the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty and be compatible with the Plan); PT4 (a landscape-led approach that avoids or minimises adverse effects, seeks opportunities to enhance, and delivers substantially more beneficial than adverse effects); PT7 (biodiversity net gain of up to 20%); PT10 (support for local employment that conserves and enhances the National Landscape); and PT11 (transport, freight and tranquillity). Policies DNS1 and DNS2 (dark night skies), CL1 (climate change) and WA1 and WA2 (water) also apply.
- 4.20 The Plan recognises that a thriving rural economy is part of what sustains the National Landscape. Section 6 sets out how the proposal responds to these policies.

5.0 PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

Location

- 5.1 Chaldicotts Farm lies outside any defined settlement boundary as defined by the policy maps, between the two parts of the Small Village of Semley/Semley Station – please refer again to paragraphs 4.4 and 4.11. For the purposes of the NPPF the proposal is therefore assessed under Policy S5 as development outside a settlement. It is not an isolated site. It is an established business estate with 16 businesses, its own electricity substation and sewage treatment plant, and a route of about 950 m to the A350 to the west.
- 5.2 The proposal is for an existing defence and security business to expand on the estate where it already operates. It falls within S5(1)(a), as development for national defence and security, for which no locational need has to be shown. It also falls within S5(1)(b),

which asks that a location outside settlements be shown to be necessary. That need arises here because:

- the business already works from two buildings at Chaldicott Barns, and the new building lets it bring its operations together rather than split them between sites;
- its work needs a secure, controlled site with a single managed access, separation from public roads and footpaths, and room for a security perimeter, which this estate, in one ownership, can provide;
- the estate already has the power supply, drainage and access the building needs;
- a site within an industrial estate on the edge of a larger settlement (even if available) would be unsuitable for this B2 business; and
- the skilled workforce the business has built up lives within reach of the site.

5.3 The applicant is not aware of any existing building in the area that offers floorspace of this size together with the secure perimeter the occupier needs. The alternative to expanding here is not a smaller building on the estate, but the loss of that growth to another area.

Wiltshire Core Strategy

5.4 Core Policy 34 supports, outside the main settlements, development for new and existing rural-based businesses within or adjacent to Large and Small Villages (criterion iii), and development considered essential to the wider strategic interest of the economic development of Wiltshire (criterion iv). The proposal is for an existing rural-based business on an established estate between the two parts of the Small Village of Semley/Semley Station, which has no settlement boundary against which “adjacent” can be measured (paragraphs 4.3, 4.4 and 4.11 above). It meets the purpose of criterion iii. Given the sector, the investment and the number of skilled jobs, Officers are also invited to find criterion iv met. To the extent that there is any conflict with the

locational wording of the policy, it carries reduced weight for the reasons given in the Cricklade appeal (paragraph 5.6).

- 5.5 Taking the further requirements of Core Policy 34 in turn: (a) the proposal meets the sustainable development objectives of the Core Strategy, as section 7 shows; (b) it is consistent in scale with an established estate of this size, sits below the height of the buildings around it and does not affect residential amenity; (c) it is supported by evidence of economic and social benefit (paragraphs 5.11 and 5.12); (d) it does not undermine any strategic employment allocation, because it meets the needs of an existing occupier in place; and (e) it is served by adequate infrastructure.
- 5.6 In a recent appeal in Wiltshire (SW Group Logistics, Chelworth Industrial Estate, Cricklade, APP/Y3940/W/25/3373619, 27 March 2026), the Inspector found Core Policy 34 to be out of date and unduly restrictive in limiting additional employment land to sites adjacent to settlements. The Inspector allowed the expansion of an existing business beyond a defined employment area, observing that “the only ‘harm’ the Council identified was offence to the words and diagrams which make up the locational policies in question”, and a full award of costs was made against the Council. That site was not in a protected landscape, but the Inspector’s findings on Core Policy 34 were not specific to the site.
- 5.7 Saved Policy E19 allows existing employment sites in the countryside to expand beyond their established boundaries where six criteria are met. The proposal meets each of them: (i) it improves local employment opportunities; (ii) it improves the operation and efficiency of an existing enterprise by bringing it into one building; (iii) there is no suitable alternative building in the immediate locality (paragraph 5.3 above); (iv) the Landscape Appraisal and Ecological Impact Assessment find no significant adverse effect on landscape character or biodiversity, and the scheme delivers a biodiversity net gain; (v) the Transport Assessment finds no severe effect on the highway network, and the Travel Plan and shuttle reduce reliance on the private car; and (vi) the nearest dwelling is about 400m away, and the noise assessment shows no adverse effect on it by day or night.

Appeal decision at Littledown, Shaftesbury

- 5.8 A recent appeal close to this site bears on how these policies should be applied. At land east of the A350, Littledown, Shaftesbury (PL/2023/05387; appeal APP/Y3940/W/24/3342759, allowed 18 December 2024), the Council's planning committee refused, against its officers' recommendation, the conversion of a rural building to B2/B8 employment use on the edge of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape. Because the proposal was a conversion, the Inspector treated Policy CP48 as the central policy, and held that the development plan must be read as a whole. The Inspector found that "there is no requirement in Policy CP48 that there must be a demonstrable need for the proposed employment floorspace".
- 5.9 On landscape, the Inspector found that the character of the immediate area was influenced by the nearby town, road and business parks, and that the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the National Landscape. In the costs decision, the Inspector found that the committee had behaved unreasonably by failing to read the development plan as a whole, but made no award because landscape matters are "highly subjective".
- 5.10 This proposal is a new building, not a conversion, and the two cases differ in that respect. The relevant points are the Inspector's approach: that the plan is read as a whole when considering rural employment, and that landscape effect is judged against the actual character of the location. Here, that location is an established business estate rather than open countryside.

Economic and social benefits

- 5.11 The proposal keeps an established employer in Wiltshire and allows it to grow. The building is designed for a workforce of about 160 at opening, rising to about 240 at full operation, in skilled engineering and technical roles, supported by substantial private investment.

- 5.12 This is in line with the direction the Council was taking in the withdrawn Local Plan (paragraph 4.10), and with NPPF Policies E2 and E4, which give substantial weight to businesses investing, expanding and adapting, and support well-designed new buildings for rural businesses.

Relationship to existing development

- 5.13 The site is not previously developed land: it was woodland until 2026 and cleared due to a devastating infection of Ash Dieback. Policy E4 asks for previously developed land or sites physically well related to existing development. The site adjoins the existing buildings of the estate, shares its access and services, and lies within its woodland setting. It is, therefore, physically well related to existing development.

The nature of the occupier's work

- 5.14 The occupier works in the defence and security sector. Some people object to development connected with defence on moral or ethical grounds, and the applicant respects those views. Planning decisions, however, deal with the use and development of land. The planning system does not control what products are made or who they are supplied to. Those matters are regulated by Government, including through export licensing under the Export Control Act 2002.
- 5.15 This has been confirmed on appeal. At Home Farm Business Centre, Brighton (APP/Q1445/W/24/3355883, 24 July 2025), where objections were raised to a building used by a defence manufacturer, the Inspector found that “the outputs from the manufacturing process, namely military hardware is not a planning matter”, and allowed the appeal. National policy points the same way. Policy P6 attaches substantial weight to facilities required to maintain and enhance defence capability, including their expansion, and Policy S5(1)(a) includes development for national

defence and security among the forms of development to be approved outside settlements. Neither policy distinguishes between public and private defence projects.

- 5.16 The permission sought is for general industrial use (B2). The matters properly before the Council are the effects of that use on landscape, amenity, ecology, traffic and safety, and these are addressed in sections 6 and 7. No hazardous substances consent is required, and no energetic materials will be stored on site. The fuel tank, to be used during the test process, is bunded and designed to Blue Book and DSEAR requirements.

6.0 THE NATIONAL LANDSCAPE AND MAJOR DEVELOPMENT

- 6.1 The site is within the Cranborne Chase National Landscape (CCNL), which is also an International Dark Sky Reserve. NPPF Policy N4 and the CCNL Management Plan both apply.

Whether the proposal is major development under Policy N4

- 6.2 The application is “major” in the procedural sense because it exceeds 1,000 m² of floorspace. Whether it is major development under Policy N4 is a separate question, decided as a matter of judgement on the nature, scale and setting of the proposal and whether it could have a significant adverse effect on the purposes of a designation. The distinction was applied at Yelverton Business Park in the Tamar Valley AONB (APP/Q1153/W/17/3180732 and 3180733, 29 June 2018). There, two schemes for new business units, for established companies wishing to expand or consolidate on a single site, together exceeded the procedural threshold, but were found not to be major development in policy terms. The Inspector noted that the Framework “does not define what constitutes major development and thus it [is] for the decision-maker to judge on the facts of the case”.
- 6.3 The applicant considers that the proposal is not major development for the purposes of Policy N4, for these reasons:

- Nature: it extends an established business estate, for an occupier already on the estate. It is not a new employment site in open countryside.
- Scale: the building has a large footprint but is low in its setting. The Landscape Appraisal records that its ridge is no higher than the eaves of the nearest buildings and 3.5 m lower than the highest building on the estate, and its floor level is 2.68 m below that of the closest building to the south and west. In earnest the proposed buildings are in an entirely visually enclosed area.
- Setting: the site is bounded by existing estate buildings and yards and by woodland. The Landscape Appraisal finds no significant adverse effect on landscape character or visual amenity, and a negligible effect on the view from Tokes Lane, the nearest public viewpoint.
- Special qualities: the lighting meets the Dark Sky Reserve criteria, the nearest dwelling is about 400 m away with predicted noise levels below background, and night-time work is limited to assembly.

6.4 The CCNL Partnership has questioned the size of the building. Its floor area follows from the need to bring production, testing, research and storage into one secure building. It has not been sized speculatively. The design responds to that size by setting the building into the slope, keeping it below the height of its neighbours and finishing it in muted greens that break up the long elevations and sit with the surrounding woodland, with Merlin Grey to the north elevation to match the existing buildings.

If the Council considers the proposal to be major development

6.5 If the Council takes a different view, the proposal still meets the tests of exceptional circumstances and public interest in Policy N4. Those tests look at the need for the development, the cost of and scope for meeting it elsewhere, and its effects and how far they can be moderated:

- Need, including national considerations, and the effect on the local economy: the building meets the need of an established defence and security business to expand. It supports national defence capability, to which Policy P6 attaches

substantial weight, and between about 160 and 240 skilled jobs, in a rural area (paragraphs 5.11 and 5.12).

- The cost of, and scope for, developing outside the National Landscape or meeting the need another way: the occupier's operations, workforce and infrastructure are at Chaldicott Barns. Meeting the need elsewhere would mean splitting the business between sites or moving its growth out of the area, with the loss of local and regionally important jobs and investment.
- Effects on the environment, landscape and recreation, and how far they can be moderated: the landscape and visual effects are not significant; there is no loss of public access or recreation; the ecological effects are mitigated and the scheme delivers a biodiversity net gain of 20.66%; and the effects on tranquillity and dark skies are addressed below.

Tranquillity and dark skies

6.6 Tranquillity and dark skies are special qualities of the Cranborne Chase, and the CCNL Partnership has asked how the shift pattern will affect them. The proposal addresses this as follows:

- testing takes place only in the daytime, and night-time work is limited to assembly inside a windowless building;
- shift changes generate up to 80 vehicle trips in an hour, of which the majority are expected to use the A350 to the west rather than the lanes through Semley, and staff will be encouraged to use that route;
- a staff shuttle to Tisbury and Gillingham stations and Shaftesbury, car sharing and the other Travel Plan measures reduce car trips;
- goods vehicle trips average about five a day and take place outside peak hours; and
- there is no security lighting (infrared CCTV is used instead), all mains-powered external lights have zero upward light, warm or amber colour temperatures and motion or photocell control, and the eastern car park is unlit.

- 6.7 The CCNL Partnership's response of 2 September 2026 confirmed that the lighting proposals were acceptable to its Dark Skies officer, subject to implementation as specified.

The Management Plan

- 6.8 PT1 and PT10: the proposal keeps and grows an established employer within the National Landscape, draws on local skills and supports the wider estate and its 16 existing businesses.
- 6.9 PT4: the design avoids and minimises landscape effects through its levels, height, elevation and roof colouring, lighting and the retention of the surrounding woodland. It also adds enhancement: native hedgerow and tree planting, new broadleaved woodland on 2.82 ha of the applicant's land to the south, and an unlit corridor for wildlife along the north, east and south-east boundaries.
- 6.10 PT7: the scheme delivers a biodiversity net gain of 20.66%, above the statutory 10% and in line with the Plan's aim of up to 20%.
- 6.11 CL1 and renewable energy: a 300 kWp photovoltaic array is built into the roof in matt panels with an anti-glare film, with no ground-mounted array. Heating and cooling are by air source heat pumps, with no combustion plant for space heating. The Energy Statement predicts a 67% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions against Building Regulations Part L 2021.
- 6.12 PT11: the Travel Plan, the staff shuttle, car sharing, electric car and bike charging and the routing of staff and goods vehicles to the A350 address transport, freight and tranquillity.
- 6.13 WA1: surface water is attenuated on site and released at the greenfield rate, with permeable paving to the parking areas.

- 6.14 Taken together, the proposal conserves the landscape and scenic beauty of this part of Cranborne Chase. Its new woodland planting and biodiversity gain go beyond avoiding harm and contribute to the purposes of the National Landscape.

7.0 MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

Landscape and Visual Impact

- 7.1 The Landscape Appraisal (The Landscape Service, 942-1 R3, 11 September 2026) assesses the site within the Vale of Wardour landscape character area and considers views from within the estate, from the estate entrance and from Tokes Lane. It concludes that the proposal “would not create a significant adverse impact on landscape character and visual amenity”. The effect on the view from Tokes Lane, about 190m away and the nearest public viewpoint, is assessed as negligible. The site cannot be seen from either of the three southerly the estate entrances and is only partially visible (presently and without the planting proposed by the Landscape Design Statement) from the 4th eastern access.
- 7.2 A Landscape Design Statement by The Landscape Service (942-2 R5, 22 September 2026) accompanies the application. It provides native hedgerow and tree planting around the building, and parking areas, including to the south east of the building to preserve the view of the Veteran Tree (T1) (beyond the redline boundary) from the south, and along the boundary with the adjoining dog-training area. The woodland, hedgerows and tree belts around the site are retained and do not form part of this application.

Site Levels and Design

- 7.3 Ground levels fall from 126.43 m to 120.52 m AOD, about 6 m, from south-west to north-east. The building is set at a single floor level of 124.000 m AOD, with the higher ground at the south end reduced and retaining walls of up to 2.8 m. The eaves are at 7.715 m and the roof has a shallow 5° pitch. The ridge is below the eaves of the

buildings adjacent and will be by virtue be the lowest building within the wider business estate.

Lighting

- 7.4 The External Lighting Strategy (The Lighting Bee, Rev 2.0, 18 September 2026) treats the site as environmental zone E1, because it lies in the periphery of the Dark Sky Reserve. Lighting is limited to what is needed for safe access and loading. Building-mounted lights are 2700K, bollards are amber at 1750K, and all mains-powered fittings have zero upward light. Wall and loading bay lights are controlled by motion sensors and switch off after one minute. There is no security lighting, and the eastern car park is unlit. The Ecological Impact Assessment records modelled light levels below 0.2 lux at the hedgerows, woodland edge and veteran oak beyond the redline to the south east of the site.

Noise and Vibration

- 7.5 The acoustic consultant, noise.co.uk, has carried out an environmental noise assessment to BS 4142 (23588-1 R2), a desktop study of the test rooms (23588-2 R2) and a vibration assessment to BS 6472 (23588-3 R2), dated 24 September 2026. The nearest dwelling, Tokes Farm, is about 400m from the site. Existing background sound levels were typically 33 dB LA90 by day and 29 dB LA90 at night.
- 7.6 With the sound power of each façade and the roof limited to 85 dB(A), the predicted level at Tokes Farm is 26 dB(A), 7 dB below the daytime background. The test room study predicts levels at residential receptors of 23.3 dB(A) or less, 10 to 13 dB below background, which it describes as a “negligible external noise impact”. Vibration from the test cells is well below the BS 6472 thresholds by day and night.
- 7.7 At night only assembly takes place, which generates much less noise than testing, and noise.co.uk has confirmed that night-time assembly meets the same criteria.

Ecology

- 7.8 The Ecological Impact Assessment (Ethos Environmental Planning, v4, 25 September 2026) is based on a habitat survey, static bat detectors deployed from May 2026 (results to the end of August reported, with September and October to follow) and bat activity surveys. The site itself is now bare ground following the felling. Gutch Common SSSI is about 1.9 km away, and the site is outside the consultation zone for the Chilmark Quarries Special Area of Conservation.
- 7.9 Eleven bat species were recorded, mostly common and soprano pipistrelle, commuting mainly along the eastern hedgerow. The key mitigation is an unlit corridor along the north, east and south-east boundaries, together with the windowless building and the lighting controls described above. Thirty swift boxes will be fixed to the building, and barn owl and bat boxes will be provided on the wider estate. The assessment concludes that, with this mitigation, “no significant adverse ecological effects are predicted”.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 7.10 Because the woodland was felled after January 2020, the biodiversity metric uses the habitat as it was before any felling took place as the baseline: 7.34 habitat units of broadleaved woodland and grassland. New broadleaved woodland will be created on 2.82 ha of arable land in the applicant’s ownership to the south and opposite the wider business estate, south of the already planted woodland as required by the Local Nature Recovery Strategy pursuant to the felling licence. Together with planting on site, the Statutory Metric (V3) and BNG Summary Report record a net gain of 20.66% in habitat units (1.52 units), with the trading rules satisfied.
- 7.11 The off-site habitat will be managed and monitored for 30 years under a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan, secured through a section 106 planning obligation.

Trees

- 7.12 The Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement (NB Tree Management, Rev C, 22 September 2026) surveyed 18 trees, 9 groups and 9 hedges. No trees need to be removed and no pruning is required. A veteran oak outside the red line is protected by a suitable root protection area. Where the access passes close to a group of pollarded willows on the western boundary, it will be built on a no-dig cellular system under arboricultural supervision.
- 7.13 Trees will be protected by fencing during construction, and twenty one heavy-standard trees will be planted.

Transport

- 7.14 The Transport Assessment (Paul Basham Associates, 020.01075/TA/3, 22 September 2026) is based on the shift pattern. Shift changes generate up to 80 one-way vehicle trips in an hour, in the periods 07:00–09:00, 15:00–17:00 and 23:00–01:00. The majority of trips will use the A350, which is about 950m to the west, increasing morning peak traffic at the A350 junction by about 7%, with no increase in the 17:00–18:00 evening network peak.
- 7.15 Goods deliveries are expected to be about 36 vehicle trips a week, mostly vans, an average of about five a day, outside peak hours. The five-year accident record shows no accidents at the site access or in Semley, and three at the A350 junction, one of them serious. The Assessment concludes that the traffic generated from the new building “would not have a severe adverse impact on the operation of the local highway network”.
- 7.16 The Council’s maximum parking standard for the floorspace is 111 spaces. 128 are proposed, because at each shift change the outgoing and incoming shifts are on site together. Without the extra spaces, cars would park on the estate roads. Nine spaces are reserved for car sharers, and the Travel Plan aims to reduce car use over time.

Travel Plan

7.17 The Framework Travel Plan (020.01075/TP/3) sets a target to reduce the proportion of staff driving alone from 76% to 71% within five years. Its main objectives are to:

- Reduce single occupancy private vehicle trips and their subsequent impact on the local road network;
- Maximise the opportunities for travel by alternative means;
- Promote the benefits of cycling including the existing and proposed onsite cycle facilities;
- Encourage shuttle service uptake;
- Promote car sharing for employees; and
- Ensure safe and easy access for all site users

7.18 A Travel Plan Coordinator will be appointed before occupation, and staff travel surveys will be carried out in years 1, 3 and 5 with the results reported to the Council. The shuttle, to Tisbury and Gillingham stations and Shaftesbury, subsidised by the occupier and run according to demand and shift times

Drainage and Flood Risk

7.19 The Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy (Paul Basham Associates, 020.51075/FRADS/1, 18 September 2026) confirms that the site is entirely in Flood Zone 1 and that the use is classed as less vulnerable.

The ground is clay, so surface water cannot soak away. It will be held in an attenuation basin, underground storage and permeable paving, and released through a flow

control to the ditch via a new attenuation basin, on the northern boundary at 18.6 litres per second, the existing greenfield rate. The system has been tested for a 1 in 100 year storm plus 45% for climate change without flooding.

- 7.20 There is no public sewer. Foul drainage will be pumped to the estate's existing treatment plant which is considered to have ample capacity to accommodate the demand created from the new building.

Energy and BREEAM

- 7.21 The Energy Statement (Sol Environment, Rev 4, 22 September 2026) sets out a 300 kWp photovoltaic array built into the roof, air source heat pumps and mechanical ventilation with heat recovery. It predicts a 67% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions against Part L 2021, with the photovoltaics meeting about 70% of the building's modelled energy use, excluding process loads.
- 7.22 The applicant and design team are committed to achieving a minimum BREEAM 'Very Good' rating. The BREEAM Pre-Assessment (Sol Environment, v3, 22 September 2026) predicts a score of 68.21%, within the 'Very Good' band of 55% to 70%. All of the BREEAM 'Excellent' minimum standards are also targeted, and the pre-assessment identifies a potential score of 83.04%, to be reviewed once the technical design is complete.
- 7.23 Core Policy 41 seeks 'Excellent' from 2019 onwards. The pre-assessment explains that, "due to the sensitive and secure operational requirements of the development", a higher rating is not feasible. The security requirements rule out windows, which limits daylight credits, and the rural location limits the transport credits. The shortfall against Core Policy 41 therefore arises from the building's security requirements, and it is outweighed by the energy performance described above.

8.0 PRE-APPLICATION ENGAGEMENT

8.1 The applicant has engaged with the Council, the Parish Council, the CCNL Partnership, occupiers and residential neighbours before submitting the application:

- Sedgehill and Semley Parish Council: briefing note on 3 July 2026, site visit, and presentation at the Parish Council meeting on 6 July 2026 and a further site visit on 8th September 2026;
- Wiltshire Council: meeting and site visit with the Leader of the Council on 3 July 2026, and with senior planning and economic development officers on 20 July 2026;
- CCNL Partnership: briefing note and plans on 28 August 2026, followed by the lighting strategy; written response on 2 September 2026; site visit took place on 8th September 2026;
- the local Member of Parliament and the ward councillor: meeting on 28 August 2026; and
- adjoining businesses and residents: individual meetings between June and August 2026.

8.2 The Parish Council raised noise, lighting, ecology and highway effects. Separate noise, lighting, ecology and landscape assessments were commissioned in response, and the highway evidence was presented at the meeting. Adjoining businesses and residents raised noise, which the noise assessments address.

8.3 The CCNL Partnership raised the size of the building, site levels, landscaping, tranquillity, the presentation of the drawings, materials and biodiversity net gain. In response, the biodiversity net gain commitment was raised from 10% to 20%, the lighting strategy was confirmed as acceptable, a Landscape Design Statement was commissioned, the drawings were revised, and the size of the building and its effect on tranquillity are explained in sections 5 and 6. A site meeting has been offered.

9.0 PLANNING OBLIGATIONS AND CONDITIONS

- 9.1 The applicant will enter into a section 106 obligation to secure the off-site biodiversity net gain and its 30-year management and monitoring.
- 9.2 The applicant will also accept conditions covering: testing in the daytime only; façade sound power limits; the lighting scheme; the Travel Plan; tree protection; the Landscape Design Statement and its management; the drainage scheme and its maintenance; and a final BREEAM certificate confirming a minimum 'Very Good' rating.

10.0 PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The proposal is a single building for general industrial (B2) use, of 7,448 m², on an established business estate at Chaldicotts Farm. It allows an existing engineering and technology occupier in the defence and security sector to bring its operations together and expand where it already works.
- 10.2 The site is on an established business estate, served by its own infrastructure and a short distance from the A350. A location outside a settlement is necessary for this business, and the proposal accords with Policies S5(1)(a) and S5(1)(b) of the NPPF, Core Policy 34 and saved Policy E19. The appeal decisions at Littledown and Cricklade support this approach to rural employment in Wiltshire.
- 10.3 The proposal is not major development in the National Landscape for the purposes of Policy N4. If the Council considers that it is, the need for it, the limited scope for meeting it elsewhere and its limited effects, which are mitigated, amount to exceptional circumstances in the public interest.
- 10.4 The supporting reports show no significant adverse effect on landscape character or visual amenity, no adverse effect on the nearest dwelling from noise or vibration, no

severe effect on the highway network, no increase in flood risk, and no significant adverse ecological effect. The scheme delivers a biodiversity net gain of 20.66%.

- 10.5 The building has a large footprint but sits below the height of the buildings around it, set into the slope among existing buildings and retained woodland. Tranquillity and dark skies are protected by daytime-only testing, dark-sky compliant lighting, vehicle routing to the A350 and the Travel Plan.
- 10.6 It will support between about 160 and 240 skilled jobs, and private investment in the rural economy of south-west Wiltshire.
- 10.7 The economic benefits and the contribution to defence capability each carry substantial weight under the NPPF (Policies E2 and P6). The environmental benefits add to them. The proposal accords with the development plan read as a whole and with the national decision-making policies, and the Council is asked to fully support the proposal and grant planning permission.

APPENDIX A – SCHEDULE OF EXTERNAL MATERIALS

Summarised from the Schedule of Materials and Specification (Anthony Charles Southey, Chartered Architect, rev. 24 September 2026), which accompanies the application.

Element	Specification
Walls	Insulated panels (80 mm Kingspan QuadCore KS1000 RW) laid in 6 m wide blocks of Camouflage, Khaki Green and Olive Green on the west, east and south elevations, and Merlin Grey on the north elevation. No windows, for security reasons.
Roof	Insulated panels (115 mm Kingspan QuadCore KS1000 RW) in Khaki Green at a 5° pitch, with integrated solar photovoltaic panels in matt black with an anti-glare film.
Height and levels	Steel portal frame with eaves at 7.715 m. Maximum ridge below the highest ridge of existing Unit 9. Single finished floor level of 124.000 m AOD, 2.68 m below the floor level of existing Unit 14 (drawing 1624-907d).
Rainwater goods	Insulated parapet gutters draining to internal downpipes.
Doors	Triple-glazed entrance doors; steel fire escape doors; insulated acoustic folding and roller shutter doors to the loading areas.
Security fence and gates	3 m triple-point palisade fence in matt green (RAL 6005), to LPS 1175 SR2–SR3. 7.2 m gates on one-way inward and outward routes, with retractable vehicle barriers and pedestrian gates at the security kiosk.
Security kiosk	Steel frame or prefabricated gatehouse, clad in black fibre-cement, with an extensive sedum green roof and aluminium double-glazed windows.
Hard surfaces	Parking bays, access roads, cycle parking and turning areas in permeable tarmac or block pavements, with precast or timber sleeper kerbs. 2 m sand and gravel surround to the building.
Retaining walls	Interlocking concrete blocks with flat copings, with the option of a stone-effect patterned face. Crash barriers alongside goods vehicle routes and guard rails to pedestrian routes.
Landscaping and amenity	Native species planting and hedges around the car parking, the amenity space and the adjoining dog-training area. Amenity area with bench, smoking shelter and fitness trail.
Drainage	Attenuation pond with throttled outfall to the existing ditches; permeable hard surfaces; foul drainage via a new pumping station to the existing estate treatment plant.
Energy and services	Air source heat pumps; mechanical ventilation with heat recovery; roof photovoltaics with battery storage and export; electric vehicle charging to 22 spaces and 4 bicycle charging points.
External lighting	To the lighting consultant's dark-sky design, low energy and controlled by motion sensors.
Sustainability	FSC-sourced timber throughout; recycled content optimised; insulation with low global warming potential blowing agents; low-VOC internal finishes (BREEAM Hea 04).