

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

PLANNING STATEMENT

**PROPOSED WORKSHOP BUILDING &
ASSOCIATED YARD**

**AT BEVAN TRANSPORT LIMITED HAULAGE
YARD, DOWNFIELD FARM, THE PRY, PURTON,
SWINDON, SN5 4JP**



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Our Reference: LPC.6064

September 2026

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Appendices

Appendix A: Pre-application Enquiry ENQ/2025/00735

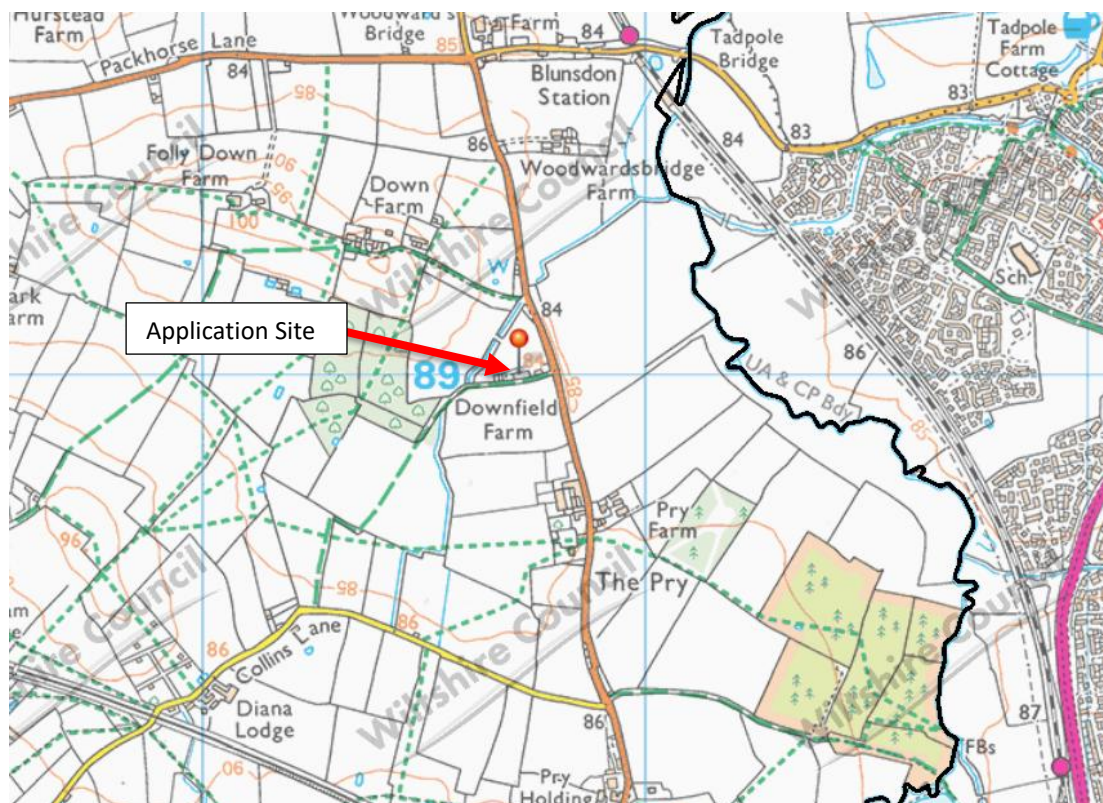
Appendix B: Statement by Mr Paul Bevan of Bevan Transport Limited

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared to support the submission of a planning application seeking full planning permission for the proposed improvement of facilities at Bevan Transport Limited Haulage Yard, Downfield Farm, The Pry, Purton, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN5 4JP
- 1.2 The planning application follows a pre-application enquiry which sought the view of the Local Planning Authority (LPA) on the principle of the proposed development. The LPA advises the proposed development is in broad accordance with the economic development policy of the Local Plan, however further information in relation to the need for the development and full details would be required as part of an application to enable a full assessment.
- 1.3 Accordingly, this application presents drawings, information and technical reports to address the feedback. This statement will provide an overview by describing the location of the site, will set out what is proposed by the planning application, and will then provide an overview of the planning policy context and an assessment of the key material planning considerations, demonstrating the proposal's acceptability. The statement will also set out the implications of the newly published National Planning Policy Framework which provides strong support for the proposed development.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

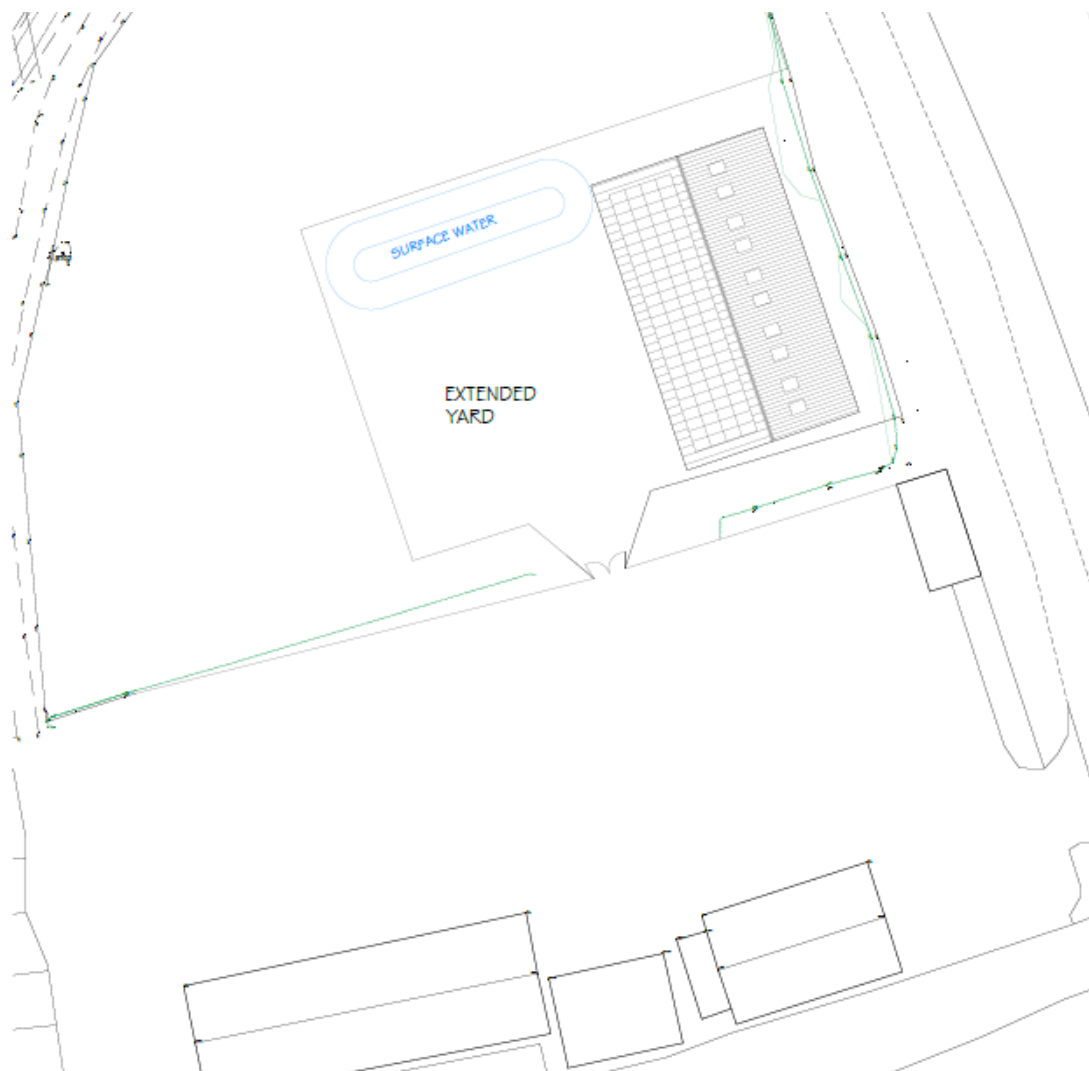
- 2.1 The application site relates to land adjoining the existing Bevan Transport Limited yard at Downfield Farm, The Pry, Purton, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN5 4JP, as identified on the Location Plan below.



- 2.2 Bevan Transport Limited is a family run business that was established in the 1950s and commenced using Downfield Farm as a base for the road haulage business in 1975. The lorries used for the haulage business are hired out to move goods for private clients and the business is part of the specialist lifting sector of the transport industry. The business employs 20 people locally and has done so for a significant period of time.
- 2.3 In terms of the planning history of the site, the most recent and relevant planning application is 03/03158/FUL which sought to regularise the use of the land as a haulage yard. The application was granted full planning permission on the 09 August 2004. The business continues to successfully operate from the site, however in order to improve the operation and efficiency of the business the existing facilities on site need expanding and updating.

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The proposed development involves improving the current facilities by erecting a new warehouse building to accommodate a garage to service, repair and store equipment, a permanent office, in place of the current portacabins, and extending the yard area. The desire is to erect a building approx. 100ft by 60ft (30m x 18m). There is no intention to increase the number of lorries operating from the yard, however the ability to repair and maintain vehicles on-site within a purpose built garage, and the associated increase to the size of the current yard, would alleviate current challenges to the business and generally improve the health and safety of the site.



Proposed Site Plan

- 3.2 There is currently a huge cost associated with servicing vehicles off-site (over treble the cost of being able to service and repair within an on-site facility) and as can be seen within the photographs below the current staff workspace, training and welfare spaces are inadequate for modern day standards.



- 3.3 The planning application is supported by the following documents and existing and proposed plans:-

- Document. Planning Application Form
- Document. Community Infrastructure Levy Form
- Document. Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy (2026) by MTD Consulting
- Document. Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (2026) by Cotswold Environmental
- Drawing Title. Location Plan
- Drawing Ref. LPC.6064 EX01. Title. Existing Site Plan
- Drawing Ref. LPC.6064 PR01A. Title. Proposed Site Plan
- Drawing Ref. LPC.6064 PR02. Title. Proposed (Floor) Plans
- Drawing Ref. LPC.6064 PR03. Title. Proposed Elevations

4.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 4.2 The Government published a new NPPF on the 17 August 2026, following the pre-application advice provided by the LPA on the 13 March 2026. The wholly restructured NPPF sets out new clear and rules-based national policies for both plan-making and for making decisions on development proposal and how these are expected to be applied.
- 4.3 The Government explains that the new decision-making policies in the NPPF, which have been separated from those relating to plan-making, will:
 - a. make development management more certain, consistent and streamlined
 - b. standardise policies that apply across the whole of England
 - c. reduce duplication and avoid unjustified local deviation from national policy in local plans
- 4.4 The NPPF continues to highlight that planning law (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. However, the national decision-making policies in the NPPF are a material consideration of “**critical importance**” for plan making and for decision taking (Paragraphs 1 - 3).
- 4.5 Some of the national decision-making policies now indicate how much weight “the government would expect a particular consideration to be given, including cases where it is appropriate to give substantial weight to certain

benefits, and the limited circumstances in which it is expected that permission would be refused” (Paragraph 7).

- 4.6 The former presumption in favour of sustainable development (the “tilted balance”) now has a different weighting more in favour of development. The former stated that planning permission should be granted unless “any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits” (Paragraph 11.d.ii of the 2024 NPPF), whereas the new NPPF says development should be approved “unless the benefits of doing so would be **substantially outweighed** by any adverse effects”. The new presumption is much more tilted in favour of sustainable development. The Government has described the new presumption as a “default yes” policy, and there needs to adverse effects to substantially outweigh the benefits.
- 4.7 The Government explained that to ensure that the decision-making policies in the NPPF have an immediate impact, they come into effect from the day of its publication. There are no transitional periods or arrangements (other than for plan-making), the Implementation section of new NPPF at Annex A clearly states that development plan policies (or parts of those policies) which are materially inconsistent with national decision-making policies in NPPF should be given **very limited weight**.
- 4.8 The policies within the following chapters of the NPPF are relevant to the assessment of the proposed development:-
- Chapter 4 – Achieving Sustainable Development
 - Chapter 7 – Building a Strong, Effective Economy
 - Chapter 15 – Promoting Sustainable Transport
 - Chapter 8 – Managing Flood Risk and Coastal Change
 - Chapter 19 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Local Planning Policy

- 4.9 The development plan relevant to the application include the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) (adopted January 2015), including saved policies from the former North Wiltshire Local Plan, and represents the Council's

primary strategic planning document. The site lies within the area of the Modified Purton Neighbourhood Plan (PNP) (2025 to 2040) (made June 2026) Area. The key policies relevant to the assessment of the proposed development are considered to be:-

- **WCS** Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy
- **WCS** Core Policy 2: Delivery Strategy
- **WCS** Core Policy 19: Spatial Strategy: Royal Wootton Bassett Community Area
- **WCS** Core Policy 34: Additional Employment Land
- **WCS** Core Policy 35: Existing Employment Land
- **WCS** Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- **WCS** Core Policy 51: Landscape
- **WCS** Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design
- **WCS** Core Policy 60: Sustainable Transport)
- **WCS** Core Policy 61: Transport and Development
- **WCS** Core Policy 65: Movement of Goods
- **WCS** Core Policy 67: Flood Risk

- **PMP Policy PUR2:** Local Employment
- **PMP Policy PUR8:** Flooding
- **PMP Policy PUR9:** Design Principles

4.10 The adopted Local Plan is accompanied by the Policies Maps, which provides a spatial representation of the Local Plan policies. The application property lies within the ‘countryside’ but on the western flank of the B4553 south of Cricklade and north-west of Swindon. The site lies between a Public Right of Way, bridleway reference PURT66, which lies to the south of the site, and Flood Zone 2, to the north of the site, as shown on the map below. The site itself has no landscape or ecological designation and no ‘planning constraints’.



Local Plan Policies Map - WCS

4.11 The following Supplementary Planning Documents are also relevant in the determination of this application:

- Wiltshire Council Design Guide (2024)
- Wiltshire Council Local Transport Plan 4 2025 -2038

Emerging Planning Policy

4.12 The WCS was adopted in 2015 and is therefore now out-of-date. Its review resulted in the production of the draft Wiltshire Local Plan (WLP) which was submitted to the Secretary of State for Housing Communities and Local Government for independent examination on 28 November 2024. There were no fundamental changes proposed to the Spatial Strategy of the Local Plan, as presented within Pre-Submission Draft (2020 – 2038) (Regulation 19) Wiltshire Local Plan (September 2023), however the draft plan pre-dated the now superseded NPPF published on 12 December 2024.

4.13 The draft WLP was submitted to the Secretary of State for Housing Communities and Local Government for independent examination on 28 November 2024. However, following some initial hearing sessions the Planning Inspectorate raised significant concerns with the soundness of the draft WLP and subsequently wrote to the Council on the 27 February

2026 advising that the Council should either (i) withdraw the Local Plan from examination or (ii) request that the Inspectors draft a final report (which would recommend non-adoption). The Council has subsequently withdrawn the draft Local Plan from the Examination process.

- 4.14 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026 introduced the new Local Plan system which came into effect in March 2026 and the Council, as an authority with a housing need figure that has substantially increased, published its timeline for the preparation of the new plan on the 30 June 2026. There is now a 30-month prescribed timescale with the Council's timeline targeting 30 April 2029 for the plan to be considered for adoption. The Council will not therefore have an up-to-date strategy or Local Plan to address and plan for its housing and employment land needs for years to come.
- 4.15 The NPPF clearly advises that Local Plan policies which are materially inconsistent with national decision-making policies in the NPPF should be given very limited weight. As such, the status of the Local Plan is a key material planning consideration, and the now critical importance of the NPPF as a material planning consideration will in certain circumstances overrule the primacy of the Local Plan, the significance of which is explained within section 5 below.

5.0 KEY ISSUES AND PLANNING ASSESSMENT

5.1 In light of the context of the site and relevant national and local planning policies the key material planning considerations are considered to be:-

- i) Principle of Development
- ii) Design & Impact on Landscape Character
- iii) Impact on Highway Safety
- iv) Impact on Ecology
- v) Impact on Local Environment (surface water, noise, pollution)

Principle of Development

2026 National Planning Policy Framework

National Economic Decision Making Policies

5.2 The NPPF explains that the objective of the policies within Chapter 7 'Building a Strong, Effective Economy' is "to enable businesses to invest, expand and adapt in a way that reflects the opportunities, challenges and characteristics of different areas, and supports long-term economic growth both locally and nationally".

5.3 National decision-making policy E2 'Meeting the need for business land and premises' of the NPPF advises that to support business growth, **substantial weight** should be given to the economic benefits of proposals for commercial development which allow businesses to invest, expand and/or adapt (Policy E2.1.a.). The purpose of the proposed development is to enable Bevan Transport to invest and adapt the existing business which directly aligns with these national policy objectives and aspirations.

5.4 It must however be recognised that the site lies within the 'countryside' for planning policy purposes therefore national decision-making policy E4 'rural business development' of the NPPF comes into play. The policy recognises that "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”. The policy therefore advises that 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.*

5.5 The application site is physically well-related to the exiting built-development at the premises, the purpose being to expand and improve the current facilities on site forming a natural extension, and the siting and design of the building is appropriate for the context of the site as outlined below.

5.6 The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in principle under economic national decision making policies E2 and E4, and the new national presumption in favour of sustainable development.

National Sustainable Development Decision Making Policies

5.7 The 2026 NPPF introduces a permanent presumption in favour of sustainable development, replacing the previous “tilted balance” approach under paragraph 11 of the 2024 NPPF as noted above. The presumption is now clearly structured within Chapter 4 ‘Achieving Sustainable Development (within policies S3 – S6). There is no qualifying criteria or threshold; Policy S3 ‘Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development’ clearly states that “Decisions on development proposals should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable”.

5.8 Policy S3 goes on to state that Policy S4 ‘Principle of Development Within Settlements’ should be applied when considering development proposals within settlements, and Policy S5 ‘Principle of Development Outside Settlements’ applied for development proposals outside settlements. These

policies are of **critical importance** to the development the subject of this application.

- 5.9 Policy S5.1 outlines the developments that are acceptable in principle outside settlements. The types of developments are listed within points ‘a’ – ‘j’. Policy S5.1.b allows “Development for rural businesses and services, including tourism, where a location outside settlements is shown to be necessary”. The policy advises that these types of development should be approved “unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects”.
- 5.10 It was noted above that Policy E2 specifies that substantial positive weight should be given to the economic benefits of proposals for commercial development. There are no adverse effects associated with the proposed development, as set out below, and therefore it is clear that the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within Policy S3, applies to the proposed development and it is acceptable in principle under Policy S5.1.b.
- 5.11 Policy S5 (2) however outlines that in applying the policy, “the circumstances in which the benefits of approving development proposals are likely to be substantially outweighed by adverse effects include, but are not restricted to, situations where the development proposal would fail to comply with one of the national decision-making policies which state that development proposals should be refused in specific circumstances”.
- 5.12 The new NPPF now limits the situations or policies which require developments to be refused in specific circumstances. There are 15 specific circumstance, rather than generic policies, which include the following:
- 1) **Town Centres:** failure to satisfy the retail sequential test (TC3[4])
 - 2) **Transport:** development that has a severe impact on the transport network (TR6[4])
 - 3) **Hot Food Takeaways:** proposal for hot food takeaways in certain locations (HC5[1])
 - 4) **Density:** proposals that do not make efficient use of land (L3[4])

- 5) **Green Belt:** Inappropriate development in the Green Belt (GB6[2])
 - 6) **Design:** development of a poor design (DP3[3])
 - 7) **Protected Landscapes:** proposal for major development within protected landscapes other than in exceptional circumstance (N4[2])
 - 8) **International Biodiversity Sites:** developments that result in significant harm to a habitat site (fails the appropriate assessment) (N6[1a])
 - 9) **Irreplaceable Habitats:** (loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (N6[2])
 - 10) **Designated Heritage Assets:** developments that would cause harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, unless the harm justified / outweighed by public benefits (HE6[5])
 - 11) **Peat Extraction:** proposals for the extraction of peat at new or extended sites (M5[1])
 - 12) **Coal, Oil, Gas:** proposals for coal working, onshore oil and gas extraction unless justified (M5[2])
 - 13) **Flood Risk** (river/sea): development is incompatible with the risk from river or sea flooding (F6[1a])
 - 14) **Flood Safety:** development at risk of flooding in certain circumstance (F7[2])
 - 15) **Coastal Change:** development within a Coastal Change Management Area unless justified (F9[1/3])
- 5.13 None of the national decision-making policies indicate that permission should be refused for the development the subject of this PiP application. There are therefore no adverse effects which need to be considered against the benefits of the proposal, which should be given substantial weight. Policy S5 (2) is satisfied and the development remains acceptable in principle.
- 5.14 Parts (3), (4), and (5) of Policy S5 are not relevant to the current proposal. Part (3) relates to 'isolated homes', Part (4) relates to developments that do not fall within any of the Policy S5 (2) categories, and Part (5) relates land within the Green Belt or designated as Local Green Space.

- 5.15 In summary, the proposed development the subject of this application fully complies with Policy S5 (1) to (5), Policy E2 and Policy E4 of the NPPF and is therefore acceptable in principle.
- 5.16 It was noted above that the **critical importance** of the NPPF as a material planning consideration will in certain circumstances overrule the primacy of the Local Plan. The NPPF clearly advises that Local Plan policies which are materially inconsistent with national decision-making policies in the NPPF should be given very limited weight. This applies in Wiltshire because its Settlement Strategy (Core Policies 1 – 3), and many criteria based exception policies, are materially inconsistent with national decision-making policies (Policies S3 – S5, E2 and E4 being relevant to this current proposal as outlined above). It is clear that preference has to be given, or the starting point, is the new NPPF in this instance and then only very limited weight is given to the relevant out-of-date / materially inconsistent policies of the Local Plan. The relevant policies of the Local Plan are however considered below in line with the feedback provided as part of the pre-application process.

Local Planning Policies

- 5.17 The WCS includes a Spatial Strategy which sets the foundations for how ‘sustainable development’ is defined and applied within Wiltshire. It is however informed and structured in line with the original 2012 NPPF whereas current decisions should be informed and made in accordance with the 2026 NPPF. However, as an overview, the Spatial Strategy has three key elements; a Settlement Strategy, Delivery Strategy and Infrastructure Requirements. The settlement and delivery strategies define where development will be the most sustainable across Wiltshire’s settlements.
- 5.18 Core Policy 1 ‘Settlement Strategy’ and Core Policy 2 ‘Delivery Strategy’ of the WCS outline that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development within the Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages and development should be restricted to within the Limits of Development other than in exceptional

circumstances, as set out within the relevant core policies contained within the plan, i.e. the ‘exception policies’.

5.19 The WCS ‘exception policies’ that permit new development within the countryside, in line with the delivery strategy outlined in Core Policy 2, are listed within paragraph 4.25 and includes Core Policy 34 ‘Additional Employment Land’. The policy provides support for the retention or expansion of existing businesses and scope for new employment facilities to come forward outside the settlement identified within the Spatial Strategy of the Plan, subject to the following criteria being met:

- 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.

5.20 The employment objective and policies of the Local Plan are key to the assessment of the proposed development. The WCS advises that “Achieving the strategic objective to deliver a thriving economy which provides a range of job opportunities in Wiltshire depends on retaining the availability of and enhancing existing employment sites” (Paragraph 6.14). Core Policy 35 ‘Existing Employment Sites’ is however focused on the retention of Principal Employment Areas identified within the Plan, however the supporting text does state “It will also be important to retain existing employment uses outside the Principal Employment Areas to maintain diversity and choice of sites for employers and allow for local business expansion” (Paragraph 6.16).

- 5.21 The proposed development is designed to improve the efficiency and quality of the Bevan Transport business in order secure its long term future on the site thus aligning with the economic strategic objective of the Local Plan. The draft Wiltshire Local Plan did also propose an update to the current aforementioned policies in order to strengthen the support for economic growth and local businesses.
- 5.22 The pre-application feedback from the Council provides an initial assessment of the proposed development against the criteria within Core Policy 34, based on the information available at the pre-application stage. The assessment is reproduced here:

The application site is situated outside of defined settlement boundary and designated employment areas; however, the site has an established B8 (Storage and Distribution) use under previous planning permission and is within the same ownership as the adjacent site for commercial haulage use operated by Bevan Transport Ltd. Furthermore, the site is in a reasonable distance from sustainable settlements such as Swindon to the east, and it is in close proximity to a network of Public Rights of Way routes which provides a footpath connection to Purton, a Large Village within the same Community Area. The B4553 is a national speed limit road with no cycle lanes or footpath, however, there is sufficient width for cars to overtake safely should users walk along the road. The closest shops are at least 1.5 miles to the west in Purton, which is equivalent to a 4-minute drive or a 10-minute cycle. Given the site is of B8 use and the proposal seeks to further support the existing business, it is considered that there is reasonable access to services and that the proposal is considered to comply with criterion (a) of CP34.

Whilst a block plan and some details of approximate dimensions of the proposed building has been submitted, no elevation or flood plans have been provided as part of this pre-application enquiry. In the absence of detailed plans, the Local Planning Authority is unable to provide a detailed assessment on the proposal's impact on the character and appearance of the local area. Nevertheless, the overall footprint as indicated would be larger than the existing buildings on the adjacent site, however, it's scale is not considered so excessive that it would not be capable of being designed to be sensitive to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

The closest residential dwelling is approximately 155 metres to the north. The submitted Planning Statement states that there is no intention to increase the number of lorries operating from the yard and further clarifies that the proposal does not seek to intensify the use of the established employment site but rather to improve the existing facilities for overall efficiency of the business.

The proposal has indicated through the submitted details that the existing building and facilities on the adjacent site operated by Bevan Transport Ltd are no longer suitable for modern day standards and require expanding and updating to accommodate the needs of the current business. No evidence has been provided to demonstrate the need. It is possible that the proposal would provide a benefit to the local economy by the improving upon the existing site, the retention of the business and retaining its employees in the local area. However, no evidence has been provided to demonstrate the need as required by criterion (c) of CP34.

In consideration of the submitted details noting that the proposed building and additional space would effectively support the continuation of the existing business, and given the nature of the proposal, it is not considered that the proposed building would undermine the delivery of strategic employment allocations. As such, the proposal would be considered to meet criterion (d) of CP34.

- 5.23 The pre-application feedback confirms that the development is considered to be acceptable in principle, but in order to fully comply with the criteria of Core Policy 34 it was advised that further evidence was needed in relation to point ‘c’, namely that the development is “required to benefit the local economic and social needs”.
- 5.24 The application is therefore supported by a statement from the applicant and owner of Bevan Transport Limited which explains the purpose and need for the proposed development, which can be seen at Appendix B. Mr Bevan explains that since approximately 2018 the business has outsourced its vehicle maintenance requirements due to inadequate buildings that does not take the size of the modern day vehicle (the photograph below shows the inadequacy of the existing building in terms of its scale). The outsourcing puts extreme financial pressure on the business and is not a sustainable business model. The new building will allow everything in line with modern day standards and within the control of the business, create employment, and reduce the number of vehicular movements to and from the site.

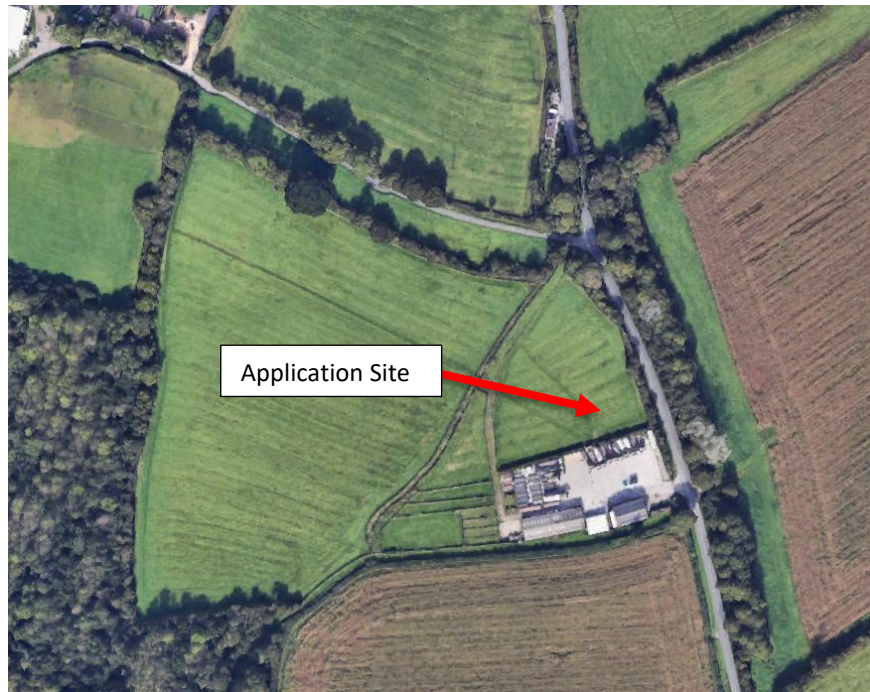


- 5.25 In light of the information presented within the application about the need for the proposed development, and the assessment below in relation to the scale and design of the proposed building, the proposal is considered to comply with Core Policy 34 of the NPPF. It is however worth reiterating that the new national decision making policies provide in principle support as outlined above.

Design & Impact on Landscape Character

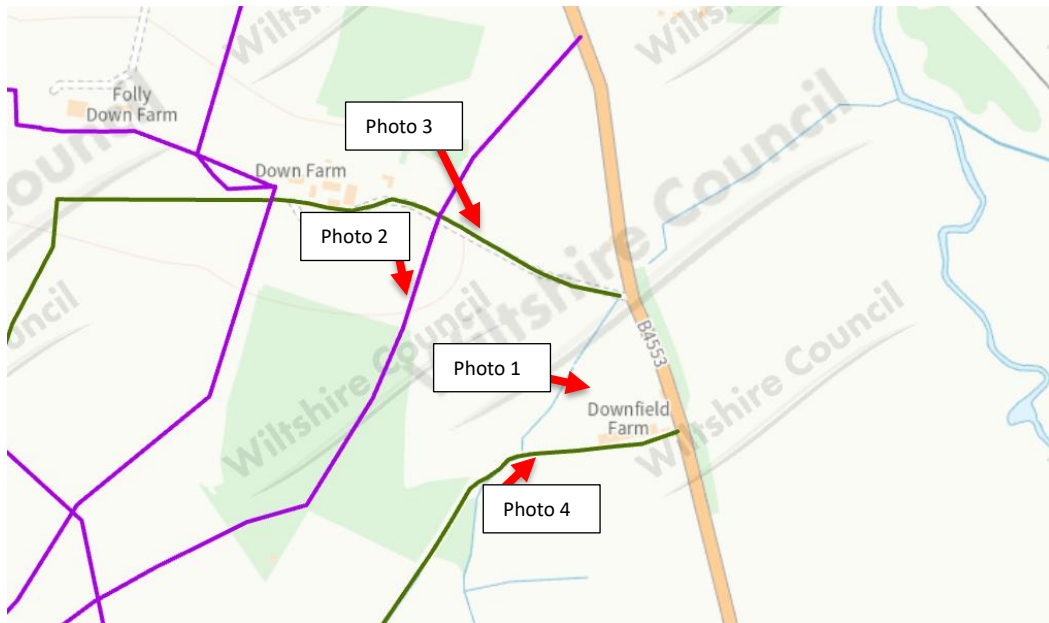
- 5.26 Policy N2 'Improving the natural environment' of the NPPF requires development proposals to consider the environmental qualities of land proposed for development, including habitats, landscape character and the natural beauty of the countryside, and identify opportunities for those qualities to be conserved or enhanced. These objectives are reinforced within Core Policy 51 'Landscape' of the WCS which seeks to ensure new developments do 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.
- 5.27 The site does not lie within a 'Protected Landscape' however careful consideration has been given to the siting and orientation of the proposed building. The aerial photograph shows that the site and land within the

applicant's ownership is surrounded by mature landscaping which means there will be limited views of the proposed building. The building will be sited parallel with the main road (B4553) but set back from the boundary trees. The trees will screen the building and close range views from within the applicant's land will result in the building being seen against the backdrop of the trees and existing buildings at the Bevan Transport site.



Aerial Photograph (source: Google earth Pro)

- 5.27 There are Public Rights of Way (PROW) near the site as shown on the map below. Bridleway PURT31B lies to the north, Bridleway PURT66 lies to the south, and Footpath PURT35 to the west. The visibility of the proposed development has been considered from these PROW but due to the topography of the land and the mature landscaping there are no direct views. There would be only glimpsed views through dense hedgerows and trees.



Pubic Rights of Way Map (source: Wiltshire Planning Explorer)

- 5.28 The photographs included below are taken from the PROW and within private land within the applicant's ownership, as shown on the map above, to demonstrate the limited opportunities there will be to view the proposed building.



Photo 2 – from Footpath PURT35 (no views of application site)



Photo 3 – from Bridleway PURT31B (no views of application site)



Photo 4 – from Bridleway PURT66 (site partly visible behind existing yard and hedgerow)



- 5.29 The proposed development will change the character and appearance of the application site from its undeveloped agricultural use and appearance to that of a commercial development, however it will be a small corner of the larger field and will not appear out of place within the context of the established Bevan Transport depot. The site is on level ground and is well contained within the landscape as shown in the aerial photograph below. The proposal will form a natural extension of the facility without harm to wider landscape character.



Aerial Photograph – south looking north (Source: Google Earth 09.09.23)



Aerial Photograph – west looking east (Source: Google Earth 09.09.23)

- 5.30 The proposed building is of a scale and design to serve its use and purpose, but as shown above, it will be sympathetically sited and will not be barely visible from the public realm. The only available viewpoint will be along Bridleway PERT66 from the south, however it will only be from a minor section of the PROW and the development will be seen amongst the established development at the depot therefore there will be no harm

to visual amenity. The proposed development is considered to comply with the objectives of Core Policy 51 of the WCS. Furthermore, the proposal does not involve the removal of any trees or hedgerows and new planting could be introduced and secured via condition if considered necessary by the Council's Landscape Officer.

Impact on Highway Safety

- 5.31 Core Policy 60 'Sustainable Transport' and Core Policy 61 'Transport and New Development' of the WCS seek to ensure that new development is as sustainable as possible in terms of its location and design and is capable of being served by safe access to the highway network. The existing employment site is however already well established and the proposed development does not propose to increase the number of vehicular movements to or from the site or the number of lorries stored at the site. The number of movements should reduce with the ability to service lorries on-site. There will be no changes to the existing access arrangements. The pre-application feedback acknowledged these points and noted that the "Highway Authority has been consulted and has noted no objections would be anticipated at a formal planning application on the basis of the above".

Impact on Ecology & Biodiversity

- 5.32 The site is not within an 'areas of particular importance for biodiversity and geodiversity' as defined by Policy N6 of the NPPF, however Policy N2 does require proposals to Consider the environmental qualities of land proposed for development, including habitats, and minimise any adverse impacts on biodiversity. Core 50 'Biodiversity and Geodiversity of the Local Plan outlines that development proposals must demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation and geological value as part of the design rationale. There is an expectation that such features shall be retained, buffered, and managed favourably in order to maintain their ecological value, connectivity and functionality in the long-term.

- 5.33 The application site is not covered by any local, national or European nature conservation designation. The site is limited to part of an agricultural field and does not contain any priority habitat. The application is however supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) by Cotswold Environmental. The PEA was undertaken early in the design process to inform the siting and scale of the proposed development. It covers the entire agricultural field and boundary hedgerows for completeness and considers potential Biodiversity Net Gain requirements.
- 5.34 The application site is now limited to a corner of the field and will be accessed via the exiting agricultural gateway to ensure the retention of the hedgerow (Priority Habitat) along the southern boundary of the site. Cotswold Environmental advised that a 5m buffer strip should be included and therefore the application site is set 5m away from the edge of the hedgerows to the south of the site and along the east boundary. The proposed building will have no windows to the rear so no potential for light spillage on the adjacent hedgerow / trees. As such, subject to safe and considerate construction techniques the proposed development will have no adverse ecological impacts. A Construction Management Plan could be secured via condition to ensure there is no harm to the local environment and neighbour amenity (which is discussed further below). Furthermore, the site is no more than 0.2ha therefore the proposal will be exempt from the statutory BNG requirements.
- 5.35 The development will fully comply with the requirements of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and will therefore have no adverse ecological impacts.

Impact on Local Environment

Sustainable Construction

- 5.36 The Council has a Climate Strategy which seeks to reduce emissions and work towards making Wiltshire carbon neutral. The current 'Sustainable Construction and Low-Carbon Energy' policy (Core Policy 41) of the WCS

however only encourages new development to incorporate design measures to reduce energy demand, and retrofitting measures to improve the energy performance of existing buildings.

- 5.37 The proposed development involves the construction of a workshop building which is designed for its purpose, however it will be finished with materials to be in-keeping with existing buildings at the depot and will include photovoltaic panels as shown on the drawings to maximise its sustainability and contribute towards the sustainability of the business as a whole.

Flood Risk and Surface Water

- 5.38 The majority of the site lies within Flood Zone 1 and is not therefore at risk from flooding but Core Policy 67 'Flood Risk' of the WCS seeks to ensure that all new development include measures to reduce the rate of rainwater run-off and improve rainwater infiltration to soil and ground (sustainable urban drainage) unless site or environmental conditions make these measures unsuitable. The periphery of the site is within Flood Zone 2 and Core policy 67 advises the sequential test in line with the requirements of national policy and established best practice will need to be addressed.
- 5.39 The application is therefore supported by a Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy by MTD Consulting which reviews all sources of flood risk and the sequential location of the site, assess applicability of the development proposals against flood risk, and determines the pre and post development conditions for surface water runoff. The report advises that the site is shown to be at risk of surface water flooding only therefore the sequential test is not applicable where suitable design and mitigation measures are implemented in accordance with NPPF Policy F5 & F7. The report also provides details of the proposed surface water scheme. The overall conclusions of the report is that the development would be appropriately safe for its lifetime taking account of the flood risk vulnerability of the site and its users, in line with the requirements of Core Policy 67 of the Local Plan.

Neighbour Amenities

- 5.40 In terms of the impact on neighbour amenities, Core Policy 57 of the WCS seeks to ensure that new developments have regard to the compatibility of adjoining buildings and uses, and consider the impact on the amenities of existing occupants, and ensure that appropriate levels of amenity are achievable within the development itself, including the consideration of privacy, overshadowing, vibration, and pollution (e.g. light intrusion, noise, smoke, fumes, effluent, waste or litter).
- 5.41 The application site is within the 'countryside' and has no nearby neighbours. It is adjacent to the busy B4553 with the nearest neighbouring residential property (1 The Pry, SN5 4JP) 150m north along the road. The proposed building will be used to service and repair lorries and has no potential to unacceptably impact the amenities of the residents of the neighbouring property. The building will however be insulated within and the external yard will be used for manoeuvring and parking only. It is recognised that the pre-application feedback suggested a noise impact assessment be carried out, however in light of the context of the site and proposed use it is not considered to be necessary or justified. The hours of use and noise to be emitted from the building can be managed via conditions if considered necessary and the applicant would be happy to discuss further during the application stage and alleviate any concerns that the Council's Public Protection team may have.

Neighbouring Uses

- 5.42 The property to the immediate south approx.. 230m away, Pry Farm, was granted planning permission in 2003 for a range of commercial and storage and business uses in line with the following planning application:
- Planning Application PL/2023/03931: Change of use of former agricultural buildings to provide two warehouses (Use Class B8), one of which to include a ground-floor ancillary reception and trade counter, with upper-floor office space (E(g)(i)); two business start-up units (Use Class E(g)(i));

repositioned access; and associated car and cycle parking, drainage works and landscaping – Approved 08 / 12 / 2023



Approved Site Plan

- 5.43 The Delegated Report concluded by stating that “The proposals would be appropriate to the site and surroundings. Accordingly, the development complies with the provisions of the Development Plan and relevant material considerations”.

6.0 CONCLUSION & PLANNING BALANCE

- 6.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the proposed improvement of facilities at Bevan Transport Limited Haulage Yard, Downfield Farm, The Pry, Purton, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN5 4JP.
- 6.2 The site lies within the ‘countryside’ for planning policy purposes, but involves the natural extension of the existing haulage yard and construction of a workshop building which are required to improve the efficiency and sustainability of the business. The proposed development will not result in an increase in vehicular movements and can be accommodated without harm to landscape character or visual amenity.
- 6.3 The Government’s publication of the new NPPF on the 17 August 2026 has had a significant impact on the assessment of planning applications. The NPPF introduces a new presumption in favour of sustainable development (Policy S3) and introduces “default yes” policies for certain types of developments within and outside settlements (Policies S4 & S5). The new NPPF strengthens the presumption in favour of sustainable development with more weight in favour of development. However, the development the subject of this full application is acceptable in principle under new national decision making Policy S51.b, alongside national economic decision-making Policies E2 and E4.
- 6.4 The new national decision-making policies have primacy over the out-of-date Local Plan in this case due to the critical importance that should be afforded to the new NPPF and the “very limited weight” that should be afforded to the Spatial Strategy of the Local Plan because it is materially inconsistent with national decision-making policies. The new NPPF policies on achieving sustainable development indicate that the proposed development is acceptable in principle. However, the information provided within this statement does demonstrate compliance with Core Policy 34 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy in line with the pre-application feedback received.

- 6.5 The NPPF advises that such applications should be approved, unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects. There are no adverse effects associated with the proposal but there are significant benefits. The NPPF advises that substantial weight should be given to the economic benefits of proposals for commercial development which allow businesses to invest, expand and/or adapt (Policy E2.1.a.).
- 6.6 The very purpose of the proposed development is to enable Bevan Transport Limited to invest and adapt its business for the benefit of the environment and local economy. The proposal will improve the overall efficiency and sustainability of the business which has been successfully operating from the property since 1975.
- 6.7 In light of the above, having considered the individual planning merits of the proposal, it is considered that the material considerations indicate that permission should be granted. It is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission be granted.