

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

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2026/05053
APPLICATION TYPE:	Full planning permission
SITE ADDRESS:	Salisbury Cathedral Works Yard, The Close, Salisbury
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Demolition of existing sheds, a container and portacabin and their replacement with three sheds for use by Cathedral glaziers (rack for storing stone retained)
RECOMMENDATION:	Approve with Conditions

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The site comprises the existing Cathedral Works Yard, which lies alongside the western wall of the Cathedral works yard. For many years the site has been an integral part of the works yard and the area to which the application relates is currently home to three sheds, a container, a storage area for stone and an old portacabin. All are or have been used for storage associated with the works yard for many years and, with the exception of the storage rack, are old and in need of replacement.



The buildings are not attached to the wall and sit on concrete hardstanding that makes up this part of the works yard. None of the buildings are listed, but they are within the setting of the Cathedral. The existing buildings are essentially the same height as the boundary wall around the works yard. As shown below, just the very top of the portacabin and the storage container are visible from the other side of the wall, along the Broad Walk.



The site is subject to the following key constraints and designations:

- Conservation Area and adjacent to Grade I listed building
- River Avon Hampshire catchment SAC and SPA
- Flood Zone 3a and high groundwater flood risk
- Within Salisbury settlement boundary

PROPOSAL

The applicant is seeking to demolish / remove the three existing sheds, the storage container and portacabin and replace them with three new sheds for the purposes of providing workspace for the repair of the Jesse Window. The work sheds are proposed to be simple softwood timber buildings with glazed doors and windows and felt roofs. The buildings would sit on the existing concrete floor of the works yard, so not require any new footings or otherwise create disturbance to archaeology or the roots of trees the other side of the works yard boundary wall.

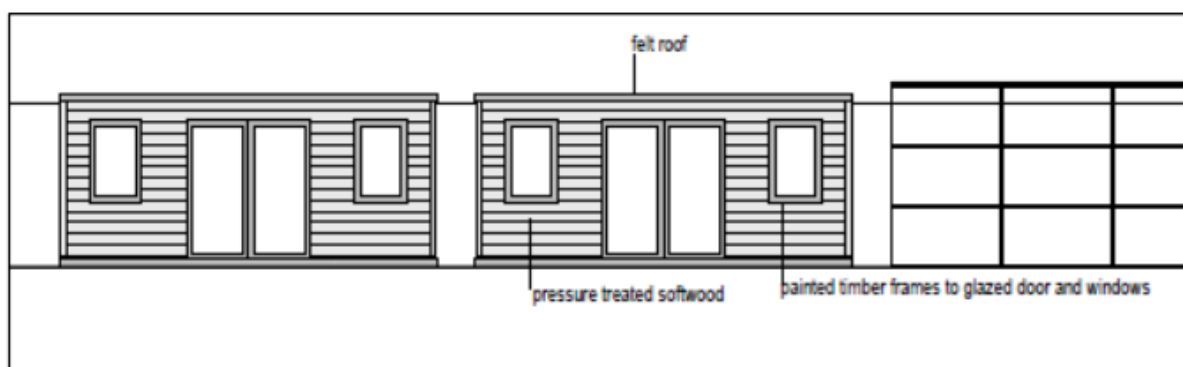


Figure 1: Proposed sheds to provide workspace for the repair of the Jesse Window

The floor area of the buildings to be removed is essentially the same as that proposed. The floor area of the existing buildings is 61.6sqm with the replacement buildings being 59.9sqm. This illustrates that the amount of built development within the works yard would effectively

be unchanged as a result of this development taking place. The layout would also not change significantly from the existing arrangement. The scale of development is also similar to the buildings to be replaced. No new hard or soft landscaping is proposed.

PLANNING HISTORY – None relevant

RELEVANT LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

- **Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.**
- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2026**
- **Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)**

Development Plan:

The development plan for Wiltshire comprises the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) (adopted January 2015) and any made neighbourhood plans, which remains the principal statutory planning document guiding development across the county. In line with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Though the development plan is considered as a whole, those parts deemed to be particularly relevant to this application are listed below:

Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS):

Core Policy 1: (Settlement Strategy)

Core Policy 2: (Delivery Strategy)

Core Policy 20: Spatial Strategy for the Salisbury Community Area

Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Core Policy 57: Ensuring high Quality Design and Place Shaping

Core Policy 58: Conservation

Core Policy 69: Protection of the River Avon catchment

Draft Wiltshire Local Plan

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

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

Neighbourhood Plan: Salisbury NDP 2020-2038 Made March 2025

Supplementary Planning Documents and other Guidance:

- Wiltshire Design Guide (adopted April 2024)
- National Design Guide
- Salisbury Cathedral Masterplan 'An Exceptional Place'

Other Relevant Policies and Documents

- Salisbury Community Area Framework Jan 2020 - Section 8 Cathedral Close
- A Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Wiltshire: Wiltshire's Natural Environment Plan 2022-2030
- Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. EC Habitats Directive when as prescribed by Regulation 3(4) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) Circular 06/2005

MAIN PLANNING ISSUES

1. Principle for development
2. Design and impact on the character of the area. Impact on the Conservation Area and settings of designated heritage assets.
3. Ecology, BNG and trees
4. Neighbouring amenities
5. Flood Risk and Drainage

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

The views of consultees are material considerations in the determination of the application. However, the decision-maker must exercise their own planning judgement. Where consultees raise concerns or recommend conditions, these have been considered and are addressed within the assessment section of this report. Whilst significant weight is afforded to specialist technical advice, the decision remains a matter for the Local Planning Authority and the officer assessment below reaches an independent planning judgement on the issues raised.

Archaeology: No objection

Conservation – No objection

Historic England – no comment

Salisbury City Council – none received

REPRESENTATIONS - None received

In accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), the application was publicised by way of neighbour notification letters sent to adjoining and nearby properties and a site notice displayed near the site and an advert in the local press. These methods were used to inform interested parties and provide a period of 21 days for comments to be submitted.

No representations were received during the consultation period. Only material planning considerations have been taken into account in the assessment of this application. Non-material issues, such as property values or private legal disputes, cannot be considered in the determination process.

ASSESSMENT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

In accordance with this statutory requirement, this application has been assessed against the relevant policies of the Development Plan, including the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) and, where applicable, any made Neighbourhood Plans. Consideration has also been given to the policies of the NPPF as a material consideration in the assessment.

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

1.1 Principle of Development

i) Policy Context

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

The NPPF also contains national policies relating to the location of development. Policies S3-S5 distinguish between development within settlements and development in the countryside, support sustainable patterns of growth, and require decisions to have regard to the role and function of settlements, accessibility to services and facilities, and other site-specific considerations. The principle of development should be assessed having regard to the Development Plan as a whole, the NPPF and all other material considerations. The weight afforded to individual policies will depend upon the nature, scale and location of the development proposed.

The site lies within the settlement boundary for the Principal Settlement of Salisbury and is therefore sustainably located within an existing works yard. The area has a longstanding use for the purposes of maintaining the Cathedral. It is home to buildings used by masons, glaziers and for storage of materials and equipment relating to their work. The use of the buildings as proposed for the repair of the Jesse Window sits within this existing planning use of the works yard and should thus be considered acceptable in principle under CP2 and CP20.

ii) Neighbourhood Plan

The site is located within the made NDP area and the SCAF area.

Section 8 of the SCAF focuses on the Cathedral Close and has the following design objective:

Sympathetic use of land and buildings in a way that protects and enhances the special qualities of the Cathedral area

Section 3 of the NDP includes a section on the Cathedral Close and its Liberty. It identifies the importance of trees within the Close. Policy 7 states that all development proposals should *Protect and enhance the biodiversity, ecology and landscape setting of The Close* and *Avoid harm to the special character and distinctiveness of The Close as a place of national archaeological and architectural significance.*

Accordingly, neighbourhood plan considerations attract some weight in the assessment of the principle of development.

Principle Conclusion

The proposal is within the principal settlement of Salisbury and is sustainably located adjacent to the Cathedral in the existing works yard and is acceptable in principle. The proposal must nevertheless be assessed against all other relevant Development Plan policies, national policy and material considerations. This is considered further within the planning balance section of this report.

1.2 Design and impact on the character of the area. Impact on the Conservation Area and settings of designated heritage assets.

Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires development to achieve a high standard of design that responds positively to local character, context and distinctiveness. Core Policy 51 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to protect, conserve and enhance landscape character and quality and requires development to respond appropriately to its landscape setting.

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

The Wiltshire Design Guide provides further guidance on achieving high quality, context-led design and should be taken into account where relevant. It promotes a context-led approach that integrates development with landscape features and local character.

From the point of view of the historic environment, the main statutory duties are set out within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 66(1) requires special regard to be given to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their settings and any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess. Section 72(1) requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.

Core Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings.

Policies HE4-HE10 of the NPPF recognise heritage assets as an irreplaceable resource and require proposals affecting heritage assets to be assessed having regard to their significance and the contribution made by their setting.

The site is within a highly sensitive area in terms of heritage assets and their designations. However, the scale, design, siting and massing of the development is not expected to change significantly from the existing arrangement. The sheds as proposed are designed to be functional workspaces appropriate to their proposed use. As with other structures within the works yard, they are not designed to be permanent structures within the setting of the Cathedral, but rather temporary buildings for a specific purpose. However, the new sheds as proposed will improve on the current appearance of the site. The Conservation officer commented:

The proposal is of course within the immediate setting of the grade I listed cathedral, and arguably its curtilage, but is nevertheless well screened from public view by a variety of historic boundaries. The LPA is required to pay special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings by section 66 of the PLBCA Act 1990, and all works to buildings within the curtilage of a listed building require planning permission. The NPPF emphasises the exceptional significance of grade I listed buildings. The proposal is for the replacement of three tatty modern sheds, a portacabin and shipping container with three new timber clad sheds. The new sheds/workshops would present a tidier elevation to the yard and be less visible than the existing by not rising (very slightly) above the west wall. The sheds would also enable the continuation of exceptional conservation work on this historic site. I have no concerns whatsoever.

There is no proposed disturbance to the existing hardstanding and the archaeologist concluded:

Having read through the Design and Access Statement that has been included among the supporting documentation attached to the above application on the planning portal, it is clear that the replacement of the old sheds, the container and the portacabin with the new sheds will not require any ground disturbance. I would therefore not wish to raise any archaeological issues in this instance. I did note that the Design and Access Statement mentioned a Heritage Statement that was to be included with the supporting documentation. Although this has no bearing on archaeological issues, I would advise that this document is attached to the application for use by the Conservation Officer.

In conclusion, the removal of the existing buildings on the site and replacement with new structures are likely to result in a visual improvement to the site and existing boundary trees would not be affected, given that there is no requirement for excavations. Therefore, the development would not harm the significance and setting of the Conservation Area or the setting of the Cathedral and other designated heritage assets. Having regard to the above, it is considered that the development would comply with CP58, CP57 and CP51 of the WCS and the NPPF.

1.3 Amenity

Core Policy 57 (Point vii) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires development to respect the amenity of existing occupants and ensure appropriate amenity levels for future residents.

Existing dwellings are sufficiently separated from the development and site not to be materially impacted by the development in amenity terms.

Appropriate levels of amenity are achievable as part of the scheme in accordance with CP57 and the NPPF.

1.4 Ecology and Biodiversity

Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires development to protect and, where appropriate, enhance biodiversity and geodiversity interests. Policy N2 of the NPPF seeks to conserve and enhance biodiversity, support nature recovery, protect habitats and species, and strengthen ecological networks.

Where relevant, proposals should assess impacts upon protected species, habitats, ecological networks and green and blue infrastructure and demonstrate that any adverse impacts can be appropriately avoided, mitigated or compensated for. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is mandatory for most development and proposals should demonstrate compliance with the statutory requirements unless an exemption applies. Development that would result in significant biodiversity harm which cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated or compensated for should be refused.

The site contains storage sheds which are sat on a concrete base. There are no plants, soil or other biodiversity on the application site and thus it is not possible to provide a 10% net gain from a zero starting point. It is considered that this site should be considered *de minimis* in respect of BNG and is exempt from the requirement to provide a net gain.

The development falls within the catchment of the River Avon SAC and has potential to cause adverse effects alone or in combination with other developments through discharge of phosphorus in wastewater. Appropriate Assessment (AA) must be carried out by the relevant Competent Authority (the LPA) to determine the potential significant effects, and the suitability of any measures proposed to avoid or mitigate those effects. A test of likely significance has been conducted by the relevant Competent Authority (Wiltshire Council). This assessment determined that, due to the nature of the development with no net increase in dwellings and the lack of any increase in water supply, drainage installation within this development, there will be no mechanism for effect on the River Avon SAC. The Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) has concluded that the application is not likely to have significant impacts on the River Avon SAC and the proposal is screened out of Appropriate Assessment.

In summary, the proposals satisfy the requirements for CP50, CP69, and the NPPF. There would be no anticipated adverse impact arising from the development on protected species and their habitats. No objection is raised.

1.5 Trees and Arboricultural Impact

Core Policy 51 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to protect and enhance landscape character, including important trees and woodland features.

Policy N2 of the NPPF requires decision-makers to consider the environmental qualities of land proposed for development and to conserve and enhance existing natural features of visual, historic or nature conservation value, including established trees and hedgerows where possible. The policy also seeks to ensure that landscaping and natural features are used to help integrate development into its surroundings.

The application site lies adjacent to existing trees covered by Conservation Area status.

Consideration has been given to:

- The impact of the development on existing trees;
- Whether any trees are subject to Tree Preservation Orders;
- The adequacy of any submitted arboricultural information;
- The retention, protection and replacement of trees.

The proposed buildings would sit on the existing concrete floor of the works yard, and so do not require any new footings which could disturb the existing root protection areas for trees on the other side of the works yard boundary wall. It is concluded that the proposal would not result in unacceptable harm to trees of amenity value and there is no mechanism for harm.

1.6 Flood Risk and Drainage

Core Policy 67 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that development is appropriately located and designed to avoid increasing flood risk on-site or elsewhere. Sustainable drainage measures should be incorporated where appropriate. Policies F4-F8 of the NPPF require flood risk to be taken into account in planning decisions and seek to ensure that development is safe for its lifetime, does not increase flood risk elsewhere and incorporates appropriate drainage measures.

The site is within Flood Zone 3a, in an area at high risk from groundwater flooding. A Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted. It concludes that there will be no increase in the flood risk vulnerability classification of the site or intensification of its use, and therefore no increase in flood risk above the baseline condition, from any source. Flood risk from all sources is therefore considered to be low. There is no increase in hardstanding and impermeable areas post development, therefore the existing drainage arrangement will be maintained and SuDS are not required. No objection is raised under CP67 and the provisions of the NPPF on this ground as there is no anticipated increase in the risk of flooding elsewhere arising from the replacement of the sheds.

2 Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

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

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

3 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended), the local planning authority has considered whether the proposed development constitutes EIA development.

No formal screening opinion was requested or issued. However, the local planning authority has considered the scale and nature of the proposed development based on the information submitted by the applicant as part of the application process and is satisfied that it does not constitute EIA development under the 2017 Regulations.

4 PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework is a material consideration in planning decisions. Planning decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development under NPPF policy S3 and this means approving development proposals that accord with both an up-to-date development plan and the decision-making policies in the Framework, without delay.

The application seeks to demolish a group of existing sheds and containers within an existing works yard, covered with existing hardstanding. The site is within a sensitive heritage setting. There are no identified harms to the settings and significance of designated heritage assets, protected trees or amenity. The development would not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. The site is sustainably located adjacent to the Cathedral which it serves, within the settlement boundary. Any adverse impacts of granting permission would not be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects as required by the NPPF in these circumstances. Therefore, officers consider that overall, the planning balance weighs in favour of the development and planning permission should be granted subject to the conditions recommended by consultees.

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

That Planning Permission be GRANTED, subject to the following conditions

The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

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

Location Plan ref 1207 JWS E01 A

Proposed Elevations ref 1207 JWS P03 A

Proposed Site Plan ref 1207 JWS P02 A

Design and Access Statement July 2026

Flood Risk Assessment July 2026

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

The materials to be used in the construction of the work sheds hereby permitted shall be in accordance with those stated in application form and submitted documents.

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

INFORMATIVES:

Protected Species

The applicant should note that under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) it is an offence to disturb or harm any protected species including for example, breeding birds and reptiles. The protection offered to some species such as bats, extends beyond the individual animals to the places they use for shelter or resting. Please note that this consent does not override the statutory protection afforded to any such species. In the event that your proposals could potentially affect a protected species you should seek the advice of a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist and consider the need for a licence from Natural England prior to commencing works. Please see Natural England's website for further information on protected species.

Biodiversity Net Gain

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

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

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

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one **which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan** before development is begun because the statutory exemptions are considered to apply.