Our ref: DS/Reed

1st August 2023

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Development Management
Wiltshire Council (North),
Monkton Park,
Chippenham,
Wiltshire,
SN15 3DB.

Dear Sir,

Town and Country Planning Act 1990
Construction of an agricultural building and a stable block at Braydon Brook Farm, Eastcourt, Malmesbury SN16 9HP.

Introduction

1. We are instructed by Mr J Reed of Reed Property Limited, to prepare and submit this full planning application for the construction of an agricultural building and a stable block at the above site. Please find enclosed in support of this application:

   - The completed planning application forms and certificates;
   - the Planning, Design and Access Statement (this letter);
   - the Site Location Plan, numbered CHS 011 - L2001;
   - the Proposed Block Plan, numbered CHS 011 - L2005;
   - the Storage Barn Elevations, numbered CHS 011 - L2006;
   - the Storage Barn Plan, numbered CHS 011 - L2007;
   - the Stable Plan and Elevations, numbered CHS 011 - L2008;
   - the Land Ownership Plan;
   - the Agricultural Justification Statement by Butler Sherbourne; and,
   - the appropriate application fee of £924.

Background

2. The proposed buildings sit within a site area of 0.27 hectares (0.68 acres). The argricultural land extends 208 hectares (514 acres) and includes pasture and woodland, which comprises the Eastcourt Estate.

3. The site is located to the north east of Malmesbury, on the north of Flisteridge Road, between Flistridge Wood to the east and Eastcourt village to the north west.

4. The applicant is committed to improve the biodiversity and environmental sustainability of the land surrounding the site and has already put in place many improvements, which include planting a new woodland and the

installation of wildlife boxes. Further details can be found on the Agricultural Justification Statement, submitted herewith.

5. The proposed agricultural building is necessary for storage of machinery and equipment used for the maintenance of the land. Third party contractors are currently being used, who bring their own machinery and equipment with them. The applicant intends to manage the land through his business Reed Property Limited and therefore a place to store machinery and equipment is necessary.

6. The proposed stable block will allow Reed Property Limited the opportunity to keep, graze and exercise horses on the land. At present, the applicants horses are stabled at Eastcourt House. It makes sense that the horses are stabled at the proposed site to graze on the surrounding land.

Planning History

7. A planning application for the erection of agricultural buildings was submitted in November 2021 (ref. PL/2021/10473) and approved with conditions on 11th May 2022. The agricultural buildings are currently under construction and for the purposes of this application they will be known as the "current buildings".

Description of Development

8. The proposed buildings will be positioned to the south of the current agricultural buildings, with the stable block following the east line of the current buildings and the stable block positioned opposite the current buildings. This will create a courtyard that will be enclosed by a 2m wall. The yard will be accessed via gates to the south, onto the existing driveway that leads onto Flisteridge Road.

9. The proposed buildings will be built on the site where buildings previously sat, which was known as Lower Braydon Brook Farm. The materials will be in keeping with the current buildings, consisting of; coursed natural stone for the walls, slate tiled roofs, painted hardwood windows and powder coated steel roller doors.

10. The proposed agricultural building's gross internal area (GIA) measures 22.5m x 7.7m = 173.3m^2 and consists of 5 bays. The height of the building measures 4.5m to the eaves and 8.4m to the highest point (ridge).

11. The GIA of the proposed stable block measures 18.1m x 5.1m = 9233m^2 and consists of 5 stables. The height of the building measures 2.5m to the eaves and 4.6m to the highest point (ridge).

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12. The current buildings are used for the production of honey, as well as, welfare of employees and contractors. As stated above, the proposed agricultural building will be used to store and maintain agricultural machinery and vehicles. The stable block will allow horses to be kept, as well as graze and exercise on the extensive land within the applicant's ownership.

13. Surface water will drain into the existing drainage ditch to the south of the site, which runs into Braydon Brook to the west.

Relevant Planning Policies

14. We consider that the relevant policies are are contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) (NPPF) and the Wiltshire Core Strategy (adopted January 2015).

National Planning Policy

15. The NPPF promotes sustainable development. Paragraph 7 states; ***The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.***

16. Paragraph 11 states that; ***Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.*** It suggests that planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts would be so significant as to outweigh the benefits of the development. This paragraph requires a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It is considered that the proposed development accords with this paragraph.

17. The NPPF supports a prosperous rural economy and states, in Paragraph 84, that policies and decisions should enable:
    a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
    b) The development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses.

18. The proposed buildings will enable sustainable land management of the land in the applicant's ownership. The buildings are well designed and materials match those of the existing agricultural buildings. The addition of the stable block will also allow for horses to graze on the land, a further addition to maintaining the land in a sustainable way.

19. Paragraph 110 relates to transport and states that a safe suitable access can be achieved for all users. The existing access is safe and suitable for the vehicles that will be accessing and egressing the site. The impact of the development on the highway will not be unacceptable or severe. Furthermore, the vehicles will be entering the highway on fewer occasions than that currently as a great deal of the land to be managed will be accessed directly from the site, reducing the need to enter the highway.

20. Paragraph 167 relates to flooding, ensuring flood risk is not increased elsewhere. The proposed development is located within flood zone 2. We consider that, the development is in the open countryside and not within the vicinity of any other buildings that could be harmed by the proposal. It will be noted that these buildings are considered to be low risk, so far as flood risk is concerned.

21. Paragraph 174 states that (inter alia), ***decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local economy by:***
    b)recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.

22. The development as a whole will ensure that the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside will continue to be maintained and enhanced, albeit, in a more sustainable manor.

23. Paragraph 179 seeks to ***protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity***. The 94 hectares of woodland at Braydon Brook Farm will continue to be protected and enhanced, safeguarding wildlife corridors, protecting habitats and encouraging new wildlife by the addition of wildlife boxes.

Local Plan Policy

24. The Wiltshire Core Strategy Core Policies that are relevant to this proposal are as follows:

25. Core Policy 50 Biodiversity and Geodiversity, many biodiversity enhancements have already been put in place on the applicants land, as discussed above and in the Justification Statement. Biodiversity enhancements will remain an ongoing part of the applicants intentions for his land.

26. The proposal relates positively to the landscape setting and has been designed with consideration to the existing landscape, positioning the buildings close to those existing and retaining as many trees as possible. Those that cannot be retained will be compensated for by additional tree planting surrounding the site, enhancing the landscape character. The design

of the proposed buildings will be in keeping with the neighbouring buildings and the materials used will match those existing. Therefore, complying with Core Policy 51 Landscape, Core Policy 57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping and Core Policy58 Ensuring Conservation of the Historic Environment.

27. Core Policy 60 Sustainable Transport, having the ability to keep agricultural machinery on site will reduce the need to bring in contractors with their own machinery onto the site, some travelling great distances. The on-site vehicles will mainly be used to carry out work on the land within the applicant's ownership. Therefore, reducing the wider impact on the highways.

28. Core Policy 67 Flood Risk, the site is located within Flood Zone 2. We consider that, as the site is within the open countryside and there are no other buildings (apart from those on the site, in the ownership of the applicant) in the immediate area that would be harmed by any additional surface water as a result of the proposed buildings.

Planning Considerations

Principle

29. The application site is located in the open countryside, with the proposed buildings sitting alongside existing agricultural buildings. The materials will match those existing, helping to reduce any visual impact. The scale of the buildings are commensurate to the needs of the land management business.

30. Paragraph 84 of the NPPF supports the growth of rural businesses with well designed new buildings. It also supports the development and diversification of rural businesses. It is the intention of the applicant to have the ability to store and maintain vehicles and machinery essential to the requirements of the land, in order to be more sustainable, reducing the need for external contractors and their equipment.

31. Furthermore, the stable block will enable the applicant to keep and graze horses on the land, as there are currently no facilities for this. Diversification of the agricultural business is supported by paragraph 84 of the NPPF.

32. The principle of development meets the requirements of the relevant policies and is considered acceptable.

Landscape and Biodiversity

33. The proposed development has been designed in consideration with the existing landscape with the positioning of the buildings close to the existing, creating a traditional courtyard of buildings. The aim is to retain as many trees as possible, and those that cannot be retained will be compensated for

by additional tree planting surrounding the site, enhancing the landscape character.

34. In addition to this, biodiversity is a key focus of the applicant with the management of the land owned by Reed Property Limited. Biodiversity enhancements have already been put in place with the protection of habitats, wildlife corridors and the installation of bat and bird boxes around the land. This will be an ongoing consideration for the ongoing management of the land.

35. The landscape and biodiversity considerations comply with paragraphs 174 and 179 of the NPPF and Core Policies 50, 51, 57 and 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

Access

36. Vehicular access to the building will be achieved from the existing access from Flisteridge Road, which will remain unaltered as part of this application. This is an established safe point of access to the highway with a clear visibility splays for vehicles accessing and egressing the site. The proposed agricultural building and stable block will reduce the highways impact on the wider area by ensuring that on-site management can be used, rather than depending on third party contractors.

37. The access and highways considerations comply with paragraph 110 of the NPPF and CP60 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

Flooding and Drainage

38. As mentioned above, the site is located within flood zone 2 and in the open countryside. As it is not in the vicinity of other buildings that can be harmed from the proposal, we consider the development of these low risk buildings to be acceptable in this location. Surface water will drain into Braydon Brook, as with the existing buildings on site.

39. Furthermore, the case officer stated in their report on the previous application on-site (PL/2021/10473) that, ***the proposed agricultural buildings were not a form of development that is significant at-risk receptor in drainage terms. In addition, there is no immediate structures or buildings on site that would be harmed by the proposal.*** We consider that as this proposal is located on the same site and all within the ownership of the applicant, they should be regarded in the same way.

Concluding Summary

40. The proposed agricultural building and stable block have been designed in keeping with the existing buildings, with the inclusion of wildlife boxes and trees that will enhance the character and biodiversity of the area.

41. The proposed agricultural building is commensurate to the needs of the applicant's farming and forestry business and will allow the land to be managed in-house, enabling the business to be more sustainable. Furthermore, reducing the impact on highways which will have a positive environmental impact.

42. The proposed agricultural building has been justified and is reasonably necessary in order to sustainably maintain the agricultural and forestry business. It will positively impact the rural economy and the natural environment.

43. The proposal complies with the relevant national and local policies and guidance.

We trust that you have all of the necessary information that you require to validate and determine this application. If the officer does require further information or clarification on any element of the proposal, we invite a discussion during the determination process.

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]

Marc Willis BTP MRTPI FBIAC