CASE OFFICER'S REPORT

Application Reference:	PL/2023/08407
Application Type:	Full planning permission
Site Inspection:	
Consultation ends:	10 November 2023
Case officer:	Clare Wood

Site Address:	Great Thornham Lodge, Trowbridge Road, Seend, Melksham, Wilts. SN12 6PN
Proposal:	Proposed general-purpose agricultural building for hay, feed and machinery storage
Recommendation:	Approve with Conditions

POLICIES:

National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (NPPF)

Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS):

- Core Policy 34 Additional Employment Land
- Core Policy 51 Landscape
- Core Policy 57 Ensuring High-Quality Design and Place-Shaping

ISSUES:

- Principle of development
- Design and amenity.
- Ecology

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

None.

REPRESENTATIONS:

Seend Parish Council: No objection provided it is approved with a condition that screening to the north is provided so its less visible from the road.

Third Party Representations: No comments received.

ASSESSMENT:

The Application Site

The application site is positioned to the southwest of the village of Seend and is positioned well within the boundary of a large working farm. The main farmstead, with farmhouse, is well isolated with several fields between itself and its nearest neighbour. Access to the farm is down a very long private road off Trowbridge Road to the north. The site of the proposed agricultural barn is along this private road close to another farmhouse within the farm boundary, but still a considerable distance from any other properties.

Proposal

The application is seeking planning permission for the erection of an agricultural barn. The proposed barn would measure 12.2m in width, 18.2m in length with a maximum ridge height of 5.3m. The barn would be constructed using a steel portal frame, tanalised timber boarding on the walls, and grey fibre roof cement sheets with rooflights to the roof. The proposed barn would be positioned approximately 15m from the boundary of the nearby farmhouse, and approximately 8 metres from the adjacent private road. There is already an access gap in the hedge line and no proposed changes will be required to the landscape or highway.

Principle of Development

The erection of this agricultural barn would support the existing farming business at Great Thornham Farm. This is consistent with supporting rural business as outlined in CP 34 (Additional Employment Land) which highlights that development should be supported that supports sustainable farming and food production through allowing development required to adapt to modern agricultural practises and diversification. As a result, the principle of development is considered to be acceptable provided that the proposal is carried out in accordance with Core Policies 51 and 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

Design and Amenity

Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires new development proposals to respect the local context in terms of building layout, form, height, mass, scale, plot size and elevation design to effectively integrate proposals into their setting. Proposals also need to be compatible with adjoining buildings and uses and protect the amenities of existing occupants. The proposed structure will be 12.2 metres in width, 18.2 metres in length and 5.3 metres in height and will be finished in timber cladding beneath a cement roof. It will appear characteristic of a rural agricultural building and similar to other buildings of this nature. The size of the proposed barn is modest in agricultural terms and will not dwarf the nearby dwelling. The proposed barn is therefore considered acceptable in terms of its size, design and scale.

The barn is positioned set well within the boundary of the farm and at a considerable distance from the closest public road and vantage point. There is to be no changes to the existing landscaping or highways, and it is considered that the proposed barn will not detract from the existing landscape appearance. The proposal is therefore considered compliant with Core Policy 51 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. Seend Parish Council have advised that they wish to see a condition for screening to the north of the barn to minimise its visibility from the main road. Due to the considerable distance between the barn and the road in question, alongside the fact that it is expected to see barns within the countryside, and the proposed materials for this proposed barn are sympathetic with agricultural

design, it is considered that screening at this location is not necessary as the impact upon the landscape is acceptable.

In terms of neighbouring amenity, the closest neighbour is part of the farmstead and positioned approximately 15 metres from the proposed barn. This is considered acceptable in terms of protecting current levels of amenity. It is common for a farmhouse to be positioned at this distance from agricultural buildings. There are no other neighbouring dwellings for a considerable distance.

Ecology

There are no ecological issues that would be affected by this proposal. This is not a protected area for bats, but nevertheless the development needs to be in accordance with the relevant protected species legislation. An informative should be included on the decision to highlight this.

SUMMARY:

In light of the above, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its principle, scale, and design. There will be no harm to the appearance of the area, levels of amenity or the surrounding landscape. The proposal is therefore considered compliant with the aforementioned policies.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve with conditions.

Conditions: (4)

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

- Application Form received by the Local Planning Authority on the 29th September 2023
- Location Plan received by the Local Planning Authority on the 29th September 2023
- Planning Statement received by the Local Planning Authority on the 29th September 2023
- Design and Access Statement received by the Local Planning Authority on the 29th September 2023
- Proposed Elevations received by the Local Planning Authority on the 29th September 2023
- Site Plan received by the Local Planning Authority on the 12th October 2023
- Proposed Floor Pan received by the Local Planning Authority on the 12th October 2023

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

2 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.

3 The proposed building hereby permitted shall not b used for any purposes other than for agricultural purposes.

REASON: In the interests of amenity.

4 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)(England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting or amending that Order with or without modification), the site shall not be used for any purposes within class Q (agricultural buildings to dwellinghouses) or any provisions equivalent to that class in any statutory instrument revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification.

REASON: The Local Planning Authority wish to consider any future proposal having regard to the circumstances of the case.

Informatives: (1)

5 Please note that this consent does not override the statutory protection afforded to any protected species. All British bat species are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended), which implements the EC Directive 92/43/EEC in the United Kingdom, and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This protection extends to individuals of the species and their roost features, whether occupied or not. If bats are discovered, all works should stop immediately and a licensed bat worker should be contacted for advice on any special precautions before continuing (including the need for a derogation licence from Natural England).

Please also be advised that works should not take place that will harm nesting birds from March to August inclusive. All British birds (while nesting, building nests and sitting on eggs), their nests and eggs (with certain limited exceptions) are protected by law under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. If birds are nesting on/in or within the vicinity of the proposed development, work should be undertaken outside the breeding season for birds to ensure their protection, i.e. works should only be undertaken between August and February. Further advice on the above can be sought from the Council

Ecologists.

Barn Owls are included in Schedule 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981. Within Part 1, Section 21 (1) the penalty for an offence involving a Barn Owl, it's nest, or egg, includes a fine of up to £5,000, or up to six months imprisonment, or both, per bird, nest or egg.