CASE OFFICER'S REPORT

Application Reference:	PL/2023/10343
Application Type:	Prior notification: Building
Site Inspection:	
Consultation ends:	28 November 2023
Case officer:	Stefan Galyas

Site Address:	Studley Grange Garden Centre, Hay Lane, Wroughton, Wilts, SN4 9QT
Proposal:	Proposed glasshouse and polytunnels
Recommendation:	Prior Approval Not Required

Site Description and Proposal

The proposal seeks to erect a glasshouse and polytunnels to the west of the existing garden centre. The agricultural land extends for approximately 5.5 hectares.

The greenhouse would be 24.5m in length, 16.5m in width and would be 4.3m in height. The polytunnels would be each 8m wide, 35m in length and 3.7m high. The greenhouse would have a floor area of approximately 384m2 and the polytunnels would have a floor area of 560m2. The proposed structures would be sited on land previously used for growing adjacent to the garden centre. Similarly, the proposed structures would be used for growing purposes.

The Application

The application is for prior notification for the erection of an agricultural building under Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

Policy Considerations

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A.

Assessment

Class A permits the carrying out on agricultural land comprising of an agricultural unit of 5 hectares or more of any excavation or engineering operation which is reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within that unit. The land subject of this proposal and the immediately adjoining fields measure at approximately 5.5ha.

The conditions to Class A include that such development comprising the erection of a building for the purposes of agriculture or any excavation, or engineering operation are permitted by Class A subject to meeting all the criteria and as to whether the prior approval for the siting, design and external appearance is required. To allow the local authority to consider this, the applicant must provide a written description of the proposed development and materials to be used as well as a site plan.

Within both the submitted application form and the supporting statement, it is stated that the application relates to agricultural land of 9 hectares. However, the applicant confirmed through correspondence and a revised block plan that the agricultural plot was approximately 5.5ha and that the previously quoted 9ha was incorrect.

The proposal has been reviewed based on the information submitted with this application as to whether it looks to meet the criteria under Class A, however, it should be noted that whether the application meets the criteria for permitted development is an issue primarily for the applicant. Only proposals that meet all the qualifying criteria can be developed under this class of the GDPO.

The proposal accords with **Class A (a).**

The development is not on a separate parcel of land forming part of the unit which is less than 1 hectare and is therefore not contrary to **A.1(a).**

The agricultural unit has not benefitted from development under Class Q or S of Part 3 (change of use) of the Schedule and is therefore not contrary to **A.1(b).**

The development does not consist of or include the erection, extension or alteration of a dwelling and is therefore not contrary to **A.1(c).**

It is stated that the structure will be designed for the purpose of agriculture and horticulture and will therefore not be contrary to **A.1(d).**

There has been no other structure, works, plant machinery, ponds or tanks within the same unit which have been provided within the preceding 2 years. The works therefore fall below the cumulative criteria of 1000m2 under **A.1(e)(i).**

The previously approved application at Studley Grange Garden Centre under application PL/2021/09776 related to the retail buildings within the garden centre.

The height of the structure does exceed 3m but is not within 3km of the perimeter of an aerodrome and is therefore not contrary to **A.1(f).**

The height of the works does not exceed 12m and is therefore not contrary to **A.1(g).**

The proposed greenhouse would measure at 4.3m in height and the polytunnels would be 3.7m high.

No part of the development would be within 25m of the metalled part of a trunk or classified road and is therefore not contrary to **A.1(h).**

The proposal is not for the purposes of livestock accommodation or for the storage of slurry or sewage. The proposal is therefore not contrary to **A.1(i).**

The proposal does not involve an excavation or engineering operation on or over article 2(4) land in connection with fish farming and is therefore not contrary to **A.1(j)**.

The proposal is not for the storing of fuel or waste from a biomass boiler or anaerobic digestion system and is therefore not contrary to **A.1(k).**

Design, External Appearance and Siting

The Local Planning Authority also has to assess whether its prior approval is required as to the design, external appearance and siting of the proposed works and whether the works are considered reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within that unit.

Upon consideration of the submitted details, it is noted that the siting, design, scale and materials of the proposed building are commonly associated with garden centres and agricultural and horticultural buildings within the encapsulating landscape. The building is positioned so that there would be no unacceptable or significant adverse impact on residential amenities or the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

On the basis of the above, it is considered that the development does not conflict with the criteria as set out within Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) and its location, scale, design materials and agricultural functionality are acceptable and no further assessment of these details is required.

Recommendation

Prior approval is not required.