CASE OFFICER'S REPORT

Application Reference:	PL/2023/08957
Application Type:	Full Planning Permission
Site Address:	Manor Farm, Grittleton, SN14 6AN
Proposal:	Erection of ancillary domestic outbuilding and reopening of window in Barn B1.
Recommendation:	Approve with Conditions

SITE DESCRIPTION & PROPOSAL

The application relates to Manor Farm, located towards the western end of the small village of Grittleton. The site is accessed from The Street and is adjacent to the junction with Alderton Road. The farm building complex consists of a significant three storey farmhouse in the southwestern corner (Grade II Listed) and a range of agricultural buildings, with the majority to the east of the farmhouse being stone built with traditional materials for their roofs. The farmhouse was listed in 1988 and the associated outbuildings within the site are curtilage listed as a result. The entire site is located within the Cotswold National Landscape (formerly AONB). The site is in Flood Zone 1 and is identified as being at low risk of surface or ground water flooding. There are no ecological designations affecting the site.

Planning permission was granted on 1st April 2019 for the conversion of the existing agricultural buildings (including B1) at Manor Farm to form 8 no. dwellings along with the erection of 6 no. new dwellings with associated access, engineering and landscape works (18/07128/FUL refers). Listed Building Consent was also granted for the same conversion works (18/07246/LBC refers). The approved scheme was later varied by applications 21/01331/VAR & 21/01258/LBC. Redevelopment of the wider site is well underway and nearing completion. A number of properties are now occupied.

This application seeks planning permission for the erection of an ancillary outbuilding (car port) to serve Manor Farm and for the reopening of a window in the eastern gable elevation of Barn 1. The opening is required in connection with planned bat mitigation within the roof void of this barn. A separate application for Listed Building Consent has been submitted and is considered separately (PL/2023/09456 refers).

The bat mitigation scheme for the wider development is secured through condition 16 of 21/01331/VAR. This condition required the mitigation features to be installed and retained in accordance with the approved details unless agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The DAS explains that the approved mitigation scheme had to be revised following a routine bat license inspection and further survey work in 2022. The application proposal reflects the recommendations of the applicant’s Ecology Team and has been agreed with Natural England through modification to the existing license. Therefore, this application seeks approval of the proposed alternative mitigation details.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

21/01331/VAR Variation of condition 2 for application 18/07128/FUL "Conversion of existing agricultural buildings to form 8 No dwellings and erection of 6 No new dwellings with associated access, engineering and landscaping works" APPROVED

21/01258/LBC Revising Application 18/07246/LBC - Converting the existing Agricultural Buildings to form 7No Dwellings APPROVED

18/07128/FUL Conversion of existing agricultural buildings to form 8 No dwellings and erection of 6 No new dwellings with associated access, engineering and landscaping works. APPROVED

18/07246/LBC Conversion of existing agricultural buildings to form 8 No dwellings and erection of 6 No new dwellings with associated access, engineering and landscaping works. APPROVED

16/10196/FUL-Conversion of existing agricultural buildings to form 8 dwellings; Erection of 4 new build dwellings; Associated Access, Engineering & Landscaping Works REFUSED

16/10552/LBC- Conversion of existing agricultural buildings to form 8 dwellings; Erection of 4 new build dwellings; Associated Access, Engineering & Landscaping Works REFUSED

16/10205/FUL- Division of existing farmhouse to create two separate dwellings APPROVED

16/10551/LBC- Division of existing farmhouse to create two separate dwellings APPROVED

16/10204/FUL- Erection of New Farmstead Comprising Agricultural Storage and Livestock Buildings together with a Farmhouse. Associated Access, Engineering and Landscaping Works APPROVED

MAIN ISSUES

- Principle of Development
- Scale, Design and Visual Impact – including to Cotswold National Landscape
- Heritage Impacts
- Residential Amenity
- Access and Parking
- Drainage and Flood Risk
- Ecology

PLANNING POLICY

Wiltshire Core Strategy Jan 2015 (WCS):

Core Policy 50 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Core Policy 51 Landscape
Core Policy 57 Ensuring high quality design and place shaping
Core Policy 58 Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment
Core Policy 64 Demand Management
Core Policy 67 Flood Risk

National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (NPPF):

Chapter 2 Achieving sustainable development

Chapter 12 Achieving well-designed and beautiful places
Chapter 14 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
Chapter 15 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
Chapter 16 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Cotswold National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025

CONSULTATIONS

Grittleton Parish Council: No objection

Conservation: No Objection

Ecology: No objection subject to conditions relating to bat mitigation and external lighting.

REPRESENTATIONS

The application was advertised by site notice, neighbour consultation and press advertisement.

No responses have been received.

ASSESSMENT

Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 require that the determination of planning applications must be made in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a key material planning consideration. Local planning authorities should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of conditions or planning obligations.

Principle of Development

Decisions on planning applications are made in accordance with the policies contained in the Wiltshire Core Strategy and government guidance. The site is located in Grittleton which is defined within the Chippenham Community Area Spatial Strategy (Core Policy 10) as a Small Village with no boundary.

The wider site benefits from planning permission for redevelopment involving the conversion of existing agricultural buildings and erection of six new dwellings with associated access, engineering and landscaping works. This development is well underway and nearing completion with a number of the units already occupied.

The DAS explains that the proposed car port would serve a dual purpose; it would provide the adequate compensation roost to support the wider mitigation scheme as revised, whilst providing a usable ancillary outbuilding for the owner of Manor Farm. The opening to B1 is also required in connection with planned bat mitigation comprising of a larger roof void for an in-situ mating roost. Within the context of the surrounding contemporary residential development and the existing residential use of Manor Farm, the proposal for an ancillary outbuilding and alterations to the existing barn are considered to be acceptable in principle.

Scale, Design and Visual Impact – including to Cotswold National Landscape

WCS Core Policy 57 requires development to respond positively to the existing townscape and landscape features in terms of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, elevational design, materials amongst other things. Core Policy 57 of the WCS seeks to support small infill type developments which respect the character and appearance of the surroundings. Sections 12 of the NPPF expects a good standard of design.

The site is located within the Cotswold National Landscape (CNL formerly AONB) where Core Policy 51 is relevant as it aims to protect the beauty and tranquility of the landscape. Section 15 of the NPPF explains that decisions should ensure development protects and enhances valued landscapes and that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Key aims of the Cotswold National Landscape Management Plan are to conserve and enhance visual amenity, key characteristics and local distinctiveness of the National Landscape.

The proposed car port is single storey in scale and constructed with a timber frame off a concrete base. The elevations are to be clad in waney edge larch cladding and the roof covering is shown as reclaimed clay double roman tiles. Galvanised steel guttering is proposed. The floor area is approximately 6.3m x 6m. Height to eaves is approximately 2.2m, height to ridge is approximately 5.3m.

The simple gable design is appropriate in this case, being in keeping with the range of roof forms in the immediate vicinity and being fairly typical of rural outbuilding. The design approach incorporates high quality natural materials and is considered to be sensitive to the historic setting. Accordingly, the new building would integrate effectively, maintaining the character and grouping of the farmyard setting.

The alteration to the barn to create the bat access will not alter the character of the barn to any notable degree. The wider development features a number of purpose built mitigation features incorporated into the residential scheme. In this context the new opening will not appear out of place.

The site is bordered on the north, south and east by existing dwellings and the wider development scheme. The proposed car port is single storey scale and constructed in sympathetic natural materials which will weather over time and integrate effectively. The proposals would not lead to any built development encroaching into open countryside and any change to the outward character of the site would be limited. Accordingly, any impact on wider landscape views and character of the surrounding CNL is considered to be neutral.

On consideration of the above, the scale, design and visual impacts of the development are considered to be acceptable. The proposal would integrate sufficiently within the immediate surroundings and wider landscape meeting the requirements of WCS CP51, 57 and 58 and the relevant sections of the NPPF.

Heritage Impacts

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a statutory duty on decision makers in considering whether to grant consent for works that affect a listed building or its setting to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for works which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses

Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Core Policy 58 states that development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment. Designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved and where appropriate enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance including buildings and structures of special architectural or historic interest. The NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.

The proposal site is within the Conservation Area, with the stone farm buildings being curtilage listed and within the setting of the Grade II Listed Manor Farmhouse. The adjacent properties known as Masons and Weighbridge are also Grade II Listed. It is considered that the significance of the curtilage listed farm buildings largely arises from their layout and grouping within the historic farmyard setting.

The proposed alteration to the window opening would have a modest impact on the character of the barn and involves the removal of infill material in an area of wall which has previously been disturbed. The proposal does not significantly alter the character of the barn itself of its contribution historic setting of the wider farmyard.

As set out above, the proposed car port is single storey scale and constructed in sympathetic natural materials which will weather over time and integrate effectively. It mimics the simple gabled form of the surrounding buildings. It is considered that the new building would integrate effectively, maintaining the grouping of the farmyard setting and will not detract from significant views of the listed buildings. For the same reasons, the building would not appear prominent or discordant in views from within the conservation area. The character and appearance of this part of the conservation area would be preserved.

On consideration of the above it is concluded that the development would not harm the character and appearance of the conservation area or the significance of the curtilage listed buildings or other nearby heritage assets. The proposal is considered to comply with CP58 and the NPPF Section 16 in this respect.

Residential Amenity

Core Policy 57 also states that development should have regard to the compatibility of adjoining buildings and uses, the impact on the amenities of existing occupants and ensuring that appropriate levels of amenity are achievable within the development itself. Section 12 of the NPPF also states that planning decisions should create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

The proposed car port is single storey in scale and set sufficiently distant from nearby neighbours to ensure there are no unacceptable impacts in relation to overlooking, overbearing impact or overshadowing. The proposal does not introduce any change of use or an intensification of the existing use that would give rise to any unacceptable levels of activity that may cause disturbance to neighbours.

The alteration to the barn involves reopening a former window however it would not serve any habitable space in the proposed dwelling. It is intended to provide a fly in access route into the roof void for bats as part of the mitigation proposals for the wider site.

The proposed development is unlikely to lead to any unacceptable impact on the residential amenities of existing and future occupiers. The proposal is considered to comply with Core Policy 57 or the NPPF in this respect.

Access & Parking

Core Policy 61 Transport and New Development, inter alia, aims to ensure that the proposal is capable of being served by safe access to the highway network. Core Policy 64 Demand Management, inter alia, aims to ensure that adequate parking is provided.

The access arrangements are unchanged. The internal layout of parking spaces for the new development and Manor Farmhouse remains as previously approved. Although the building is referred to as a car port, The property will not rely on it for parking – there remains a gravel parking area adjacent to the new building which provides space for several vehicles. In terms of ensuring safe access and adequate parking the proposal is considered compliant with the requirements set out in CP61 and 64.

Drainage and Flood Risk

In accordance with Core Policy 67 in relation to Flood Risk, all new development will 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. Section 14 of the NPPF expects that when determining any planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere.

The site is within Flood Zone 1 and according to Council records is at low risk of groundwater and surface water flooding. The application relates to the erection of a modest ancillary outbuilding and alterations to an existing building. For a development of this nature and scale it is appropriate for the drainage arrangements to be dealt with via the building regulations regime. It is therefore not considered necessary to require further information as part of this planning application.

The proposals do not give rise to concerns in relation to flood risk on or off site and the proposal is considered to comply with the requirements of CP67 and the NPPF in this respect.

Ecology

Core Policy 50 of the WCS Development proposals must demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation and geological value as part of the design rationale. Section 15 of the NPPF requires that the planning authority ensures protection of important habitats and species in relation to development and seeks enhancement for the benefit of biodiversity through the planning system.

During the applications relating to the redevelopment of the wider site the Ecologist was satisfied that the details provided were sufficient to allow the bat mitigation and enhancement proposals to become an enforceable part of any planning permission granted. This application is made on the basis that there needs to be an amendment to these previously approved proposals as a result of routine bat license inspection and further survey work in 2022. The application proposal reflects the recommendations of the applicant's Ecology Team and has been agreed with Natural England through modification to the existing license.

The Wiltshire Council Ecology team are satisfied with the alternative proposal and raise no objection subject

to conditions to secure the amended mitigation scheme. It is considered that these proposals will support the protected species in the long term ensuring and improved scenario for biodiversity in line with the previously approved scheme.

The scheme should secure long-term habitat features for the protected species on site throughout the lifetime of the development. Subject to the mitigation and enhancement features being secured by condition, the scheme would comply with the requirements of WCS Core Policy 50 and Section 15 of the NPPF.

CONCLUSION

The proposal is considered to be acceptable in principle and design. The development would not harm the character and appearance of the conservation area and there would be no harm to the significance of the curtilage listed building or other nearby heritage assets. The scenic qualities and character of the wider Cotswold National Landscape would be unharmed. There would be no impact upon highways safety and the ecological impacts are considered to be acceptable subject to conditions. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Core Policies 50, 51, 57, 58, 61 & 64 of the WCS, saved policies of the NWLP as well as sections 12, 13 & 15 & 16 of the NPPF.

Manor Farmhouse is a grade II listed building which, along with the curtilage listed barns, are desirable to preserve together with their setting and any other features of interest which may exist. The development and alterations proposed will preserve the setting of the principally listed building and will maintain the character of the curtilage listed barn, in accordance with S.16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

RECOMMENDATION

That Planning Permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions;

See Decision