DELEGATED REPORT

Application Reference:	PL/2023/09349
Application Type:	Planning Permission
Site Address:	Elm Farm, Foxham, Chippenham, Wilts, SN15 4NQ
Proposal:	Erection of muck store, replacement of redundant agricultural building with a new agricultural storage building and associated works.
Recommendation:	Planning Permission be GRANTED

PROPOSAL AND SITE

The application seeks permission for the erection of muck store, replacement of redundant agricultural building with a new agricultural storage building at Elm Farm Foxham.

The existing muck from the applicants cattle is stored outside before being applied to the arable land. The proposed muck store will measure 13.72m by 15.24m (209m2) with a ridge height of 7.23m. The lower section of walls are to be concrete panels with tin cladding over the roof is to be of cement fibre.

An existing dilapidated agricultural building is to be replaced with a hay/straw store measuring 18.29m by 12.19m (223m2) with a height to ridge of 6.58m. The building will be constructed of a steel portal frame with a fibre cement sheet roof, open sided to allow for ease of access for storage.

Approximately 28m to the south of the proposed replacement buildings lies the grade II listed Elm Farmhouse. BREM13 bridleway crosses the front of the site in a north-west – south-east orientation. The site is located outside of any designated settlement and for the purposes of the local plan is considered to be in the open countryside. The site is not subject to other ecological, archaeological or landscape policy designations.

The application form confirms the proposed new floorspace to be 432m2. This is below the indicative threshold of 500m2 set out for intensive livestock installations in schedule 2.1(c) to the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. The development is not schedule 1 development and the application site is not considered to be environmentally sensitive. For the above reasons, the proposal is not considered to require environmental impact assessment.

LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

Wiltshire Core Strategy 2015
Core Policy 51 - Landscape
Core Policy 57 - Ensuring high quality design and place shaping
Core Policy 58 - Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment

Bremhill Parish Neighbourhood Plan (BPNP) 2018
NP 1 – General Development Policy 1

ISSUES

The main issues in the consideration of this application are:

- Principle
- Impact on the character and appearance of the area

- Impact on the living conditions of adjacent occupiers
- Impact on heritage assets

CONSULTATION

Bremhill Parish Council – No objection.

Council Public Protection team – No objection.

REPRESENTATIONS

None 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. At the current time the statutory development plan in respect of this application consists of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) (Adopted January 2015); and the 'saved' policies of the North Wiltshire Local Plan (NWLP) 2011 (adopted June 2006).

Principle of development

Under the provisions of section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and the provisions of the NPPF i.e. para 2, applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The relevant development plan document in respect of this application consists of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) (Adopted January 2015).

The application seeks permission for two agricultural buildings, one as a covered muck store and the other for hay/straw. The farming business consists of 230acres of mixed pasture and arable land. The holding supports a herd of cattle and a flock of sheep. NP 1 Policy 1 of the BPNP and Section 3 of the NPPF supports the sustainable growth, expansion and diversification of existing farming businesses within the countryside. Consequently, the proposal is acceptable in principle subject to compliance with other relevant policies.

Impact on the character and appearance of the area

The application site is situated within the open countryside. Core Policy 51 states development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and must not have a harmful impact upon landscape character and any negative impacts must be mitigated through sensible design and landscape measures. Core Policy 57 requires a high standard of design in all new developments and that development respond positively to the existing landscape. NP1 Policy 1 of the BPNP states that proposals for development in the countryside will only be permitted where development would have an acceptable effect on the rural character of the landscape of the area (and be for agricultural purposes).

The proposed buildings are sizeable in scale however are typical in appearance of modern agricultural buildings and the proposed hay store replaces an existing building (albeit of smaller scale) and is within an existing complex of farm buildings. The proposed muck store, although slightly further away from existing buildings is still well related to the farm buildings and it is considered that the appearance and

siting are appropriate for the locality. The proposals would not compromise the rural character of the area and are appropriate in design terms and as such are considered to accord with CP51 and CP57 of the WCS and NP1 of the Bremhill Parish Neighbourhood Plan.

Impact on neighbour amenity

Core Policy 57 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 submission suggests that at present the clean water that falls onto the heap turns into dirty water which represents a risk to groundwater quality, nutrient loss leading to pollution and leaching. The application goes on to confirm that the new covered muck store will provide safer storage, prevent the mixing of clean and foul water, and will meet environment agency requirements.

The nearest residential properties not related to Elm Farm itself are Foxham Farmhouse and Charnwood, some distance to the northwest (approximately 130m from the proposed hay barn and 235m from the muck store). Existing muck from when the cattle are housed inside over the winter is currently stored outside.

The proposed haybarn is to replace an existing farm building and be used for the storage of hay / straw. Given the location of this building within the existing farm network it is not considered that it's erection will result in additional noise or disturbance beyond that of the existing farming operation. In respect of the muck store this will cover the existing open muck heap reducing run off from the muck thus reducing the smell. Public Protection have not objected to the proposal.20

The proposals are therefore not considered to result in a loss of amenity to local residents given the intervening distances and existing buildings onsite. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with CP57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

Impact on heritage assets

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides powers for the designation, protection and enhancement of conservation areas and the preservation of listed buildings. The Act requires that special regard should be given to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting (s. 16 and 66) as well as giving special attention to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area (s.72).

The NPPF outlines government policy, including its policy in respect of the historic environment. Section 16 of the NPPF 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' sets out the Government's high-level policies concerning heritage and sustainable development. Paragraphs 201-3 of the NPPF require a balanced approach with any harm which would be caused being weighed against the potential public benefits which might be achieved.

Core Policy 57 requires, amongst other things, that new development must be sympathetic to and conserve historic buildings. Core Policy 58 requires that development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment.

The significance of the grade II listed building as a heritage asset is derived from its architectural appearance and date of construction.

The proposed hay barn is the building most closely related to the farmhouse, approximately 28m away within an existing complex of farm buildings and will be of a similar height, largely screened by an existing

building. The proposed muck store will be sited approximately 110m from the heritage asset and as such is not considered to impact on the setting of the listed building.

It is considered that no harm will be caused to the setting of the listed buildings. It is thus considered that the proposal is in compliance with policies CP57 and CP58 of the WCS and policy in the NPPF together with sections 66(1) & 72(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

CONCLUSION

Additional agricultural buildings at an existing working farm is acceptable in principle. Whilst they are fairly substantial buildings, the hay store is to be sited close to existing buildings at the farm and will have an agricultural appearance. Whilst further away from the existing complex of farm buildings, the proposed muck store is also of a typical appearance and will not appear incongruous nor harmful to the landscape. The proposal is not considered to be harmful to the amenity of nearby properties or the setting of the listed farmhouse. With no other material considerations indicating otherwise, the application is recommended for approval in accordance with Policies CP51, CP57 and CP58 of the WCS, Policy NP 1 Policy 1 of the BPNP and the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION: That Planning Permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

See decision notice.