

Our Ref: ST/230327/P2

17 April 2025

Development Services Central Area
Wiltshire Council
County Hall
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
Wiltshire
BA14 8JN



BY PLANNING PORTAL

Dear Sirs,

Town & Country Planning Act 1990

Proposal: Formation of dirty water tank. Infilling of existing slurry reservoir and erection of new barn (part retrospective).

At: Sharcott Pennings Farm, Wilcot Road, Pewsey SN9 5NL

PP-13946596

Fowler Architecture & Planning Ltd have been instructed by The Lady Rothschild (1997) Discretionary Settlement to submit a Full Planning Application to Wiltshire Council for the above development at Sharcott Pennings Farm. The application has been submitted via the Planning Portal and comprises:

- Completed application form and certificates;
- Planning application fee of £21,587.00;
- Drawing No.230327-01: Location plan;
- Drawing No.230327-02: Existing Site Plan;
- Drawing No.230327-03B: Proposed Site Plan;
- Drawing No.230327-04A: Proposed Plans;
- Drawing No.230327-05: Proposed Elevations;
- Drawing No.MFspfarmTOPO: Topographical Survey;
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment by WH Landscape Consultancy;
- Sustainable Drainage Statement by AAH Consultants;
- Nutrient Neutrality Assessment and Mitigation Strategy by RMA Environmental; and
- CIL Form 1: Additional Information.

1. Site and surroundings

The application site ('The Site') is located to the south of Wilcot Road in the Vale of Pewsey. Sharcott Pennings Farm is located approximately 1 mile north west of the village of Pewsey and 5.8 miles south of Marlborough. The Applicant's freehold ownership at Sharcott Pennings Farm extends to approximately 61 ha (150 acres). The applicant has an overall estate of some 809 ha (2,000 acres) of "in hand" land in the locality. In addition to the in-hand land, a further 324 ha (800 acres) of third-party land is contract farmed.

The site comprises an area of 6700m² forming part of the overall agricultural holding known as Sharcott Pennings Farm (61 hectares) and is located to the south of the site to the rear of the farm. The farm comprises a number of buildings used to rear cattle.

Adjacent to the site to the north is the Wilcot to Pewsey road with countryside beyond. To the east is a Public Right of Way bridleway (ref: PEWS15) with the Angela Yates Memorial playing fields beyond. To the south and the west is open farmland. The site and its surroundings lie within open countryside and the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

2. Proposed Development

The proposal is for the formation of a new dirty water tank, the infilling of the existing slurry reservoir and the erection of a new livestock building. The permission for the new dirty water tank is retrospective, as works have already commenced on site following discussions between the applicant and the Environment Agency (5 December 2022). The new dirty water tank is located to the south-east of the site and will contain the dirty yard drainage and effluent before it is pumped up to the new digestate lagoon that was approved under PL/2021/05781 (once constructed).

Additionally, it is proposed to infill the existing slurry reservoir and erect a new agricultural livestock building. The new building will be located to the south of the site, upon the former slurry reservoir. The proposed building measures 78m by 37m, with a GIA of 2,899sqm.

The dairy enterprise at Sharcott Pennings Farm is expanding, and the formation of a new dirty water tank and livestock building would greatly support the farmstead and deliver further economic benefits.

This application is a resubmission of withdrawn application **PL/2023/03879** (discussed below). The dimensions of the proposed barn have been amended to ensure the proposed barn does not impact upon the existing power lines that run through the eastern part of the site. The length of the barn has been reduced, but the width increased, to accommodate the power lines.

3. Planning History

The most relevant planning applications are:

19/04896/FUL 'Erection of livestock building' – Approved 10.09.2019

PL/2021/05781 'Formation of a digestate lagoon (approximately 9,700m³ capacity) and pipeline to Sharcott Pennings Farm with associated landscaping' – Approved 07.04.2022

PL/2023/03879 'Formation of slurry reservoir. Infilling of existing slurry reservoir and erection of new barn (part retrospective)' – Withdrawn due to requirement for further information.

During the course of application **PL/2023/03879**, the following consultation responses were received:

- Archaeology – no objections;
- Environment Agency – no objections;
- Ecology – objection due to lack of nutrient neutrality calculations submitted;
- Drainage – objection due to lack of drainage strategy submitted;
- Parish Council – no objection;
- Highways – no objection; and
- Landscape – no objection.

To address the objections from the drainage and ecology teams, this current application has been submitted with the required surface water drainage scheme, and nutrient neutrality calculations.

4. Planning Policy

Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) states that in dealing with an application for planning permission the LPA shall have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application; any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application; and any other material considerations. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that, if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

For the purpose of this application, the development plan includes the **Wiltshire Core Strategy** (CS) adopted in January 2015 covering the period 2006-2026, and retained saved policies (not deleted by the adoption of the CS) of the **Kennet Local Plan 2011** (LP) adopted June 2004.

The Government's policies are within the **National Planning Policy Framework** (the Framework) revised December 2024, describing how the planning system should achieve sustainable development and when the presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides further interpretation of the policies of the Framework.

There are no supplementary planning guidance and documents published by the LPA which are relevant to the proposed development.

5. Planning Assessment

The principle of agricultural related development has been established on the site by reason of the previous planning applications. The further expansion of a land based enterprise in

the countryside is expressly supported by CS Policy 34 which states *‘outside Principle Settlements, Market Towns and Local Service Centres, developments will be supported that: ii) support sustainable farming and food production through allowing development required to adapt to modern agricultural practices and diversification’; and paragraph 8a) of the Framework which states ‘an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure’.*

The proposed development is designed to meet the modern functional requirements for the herd. The proposed development would have a siting, design and massing that would respect the character and visual amenity of the surroundings in accordance with CS Policy 57 which states *‘a high standard of design is required in all new developments’*. The proposed dirty water tank is proposed to replace the existing slurry reservoir on the site, and will be connected to the digestate lagoon approved under PL/2021/05781 in order to support the working of the farmyard.

The site is not located within an area identified at risk of flooding. Drainage for the extension of the agricultural enterprise can be met by connecting to the existing infrastructure at the farmstead.

Following the withdrawal of planning application **PL/2023/03879**, a surface water drainage strategy has been prepared by AAH Consultants to support the application. To summarise:

- The site is located entirely in Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at very low risk of fluvial flooding;
- The Site soils are of a sandy nature and are generally supportive of the sustainable disposal of surface water by means of shallow and widespread infiltration. An existing infiltration pond is present on the site and serves to manage the disposal; of runoff generated from roofs and the northern entrance and yard area;
- The existing pond is sufficient to accommodate the existing drainage requirements and those from the proposed development;
- The proposed surface water drainage system has been simulated against individual and consecutive design storm events and the results demonstrate no flooding within any storm scenario;
- Overflow and exceedance routes illustrate that, in the event of a blockage on the drainage system or a storm in excess of the design parameters, water will mitigate away from the site into the adjacent field within the applicant’s land ownership. Exceedance flows would spread and infiltrate to ground and would not affect buildings or other infrastructure; and
- The report demonstrates that surface water from the site and the development can be sustainably managed without increasing flood risk.

In addition, during the course of application **PL/2023/03879**, the Council asked for additional information in regards to nutrient neutrality. A Nutrient Neutrality Assessment &

Mitigation Strategy has been prepared by RMA Environmental to support this planning application. The report outlines the following:

- The current herd comprises 760 dairy cows, 439 heifers and 82 calves, i.e. a total of 1,281 animals.
- As a result of construction of the new livestock barn, the size of the herd has the potential to increase to 1,678 animals.
- A Natural England Research Report entitled 'Grazing Livestock in the Lowlands' states that *"the average stocking rate on a lowland dairy farm is 2 livestock units (two dairy cows) per hectare. This stocking rate would present manure disposal problems in a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone. Permissible rates for manure application will be raised in autumn 2009, to allow an equivalent of approximately 2.5 cows per hectare"* (NERR030).
- Although the adult animals do not go out to graze, their slurry is spread across the 1,200 ha of fields which make up the farm holding (and potentially on the 200 ha of additional land discussed above).
- The equivalent current and future stocking rates for Sharcott Pennings Farm are as follows:
 - Current: 1,268 cows on 1,200 ha = 1.06 cows/ha (53% of average stocking rate); and
 - Future: 1,678 cows on 1,200 ha = 1.40 cows/ha (70% of average stocking rate).
- As the stocking rates are significantly below the average of 2.0 dairy cows per hectare set out in NERR030 (both now and in the future), it is concluded that the proposed development would not give rise to an exceedance of the average stocking rate and therefore the phosphate losses from the farm as a result of slurry application would remain well below the average.
- Given that the proposed development does not constitute a land use change (i.e. dairy to dairy) and would not result in the equivalent stocking rate exceeding the average set out in NERR030, then it is concluded that the proposal is phosphate neutral and no nutrient mitigation is required.

The site is well contained, with various agricultural buildings and boundary vegetation, meaning that there is no intervisibility within the site. The proposed works comprised in this application will be contained to the south of the site – which is fully screened from any public view. This was confirmed by the Council's landscape officer during the course of withdrawn application PL/2023/03879, and subsequently provided no objections.

It is considered that the proposed barn will have no adverse impact on the space occupied within the plot boundary or the local rural character of the landscape, and will be a benefit to the day-to-day use of the enterprise.

The proposed materials for the new barn have been chosen in order to be sympathetic to the existing barn, and to maintain consistency with the existing barns and livestock buildings on the site.

The application site is large enough to accommodate the proposed works, allowing continued use of the overall site for the current agricultural business. The development would not affect any neighbours through overlooking, loss of privacy or overbearing nature.

6. Conclusion

The proposal for the new dirty water tank and new barn at Sharcott Pennings Farm would support the growth and expansion of an existing farmstead, delivering economic benefits to the rural economy. The proposed development would have a siting, design and massing which will respect the character and visual amenity of the site's surroundings; respond appropriately to the site's characteristics; preserve the character and appearance of the area; not adversely affect local highway safety; and not detrimentally affect protected species of wildlife.

As a result, the proposed development would accord with the development plan and it achieves sustainable development in accordance with the Framework.

I trust that the enclosed information is sufficient for this application to be registered at the earliest opportunity. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any additional information.

Yours faithfully,

Stella Turner MSc

Associate

FOWLER ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING

Encs

cc: Clients