

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

DEMOLITION OF AGRICULTURAL BUILDING THAT HAS EXTANT PERMISSION TO BE CONVERTED INTO LIGHT INDUSTRY, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AND/OR STORAGE OR DISTRIBUTION USE AND ERECTION OF A REPLACEMENT BUILDING OF IDENTICALLY SIZED FOOTPRINT AT LITTLE ACRE FARM, STOCK LANE, ALDBOURNE TO BE USED FOR THE PERMITTED USE

PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT



Prepared by

**Andrew Miles DipTP
LPC (Trull) Ltd**

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LPC (TRULL) LTD
TRULL, TETBURY
GLOS, GL8 8SQ
Tel: 01285 841433
www.lpctrull.com

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application seeks permission for the demolition of a former agricultural building that, together with a much larger building to the south, was granted permission by decision reference PL/2022/01532 to be used for light industrial and/or storage purposes. The insertion of roller shutter doors into its east elevation formed part of the same decision. Since then, the building has been inspected for potential business use, but no company or individual has been forthcoming to occupy it. This has been due to several factors; the reasons having been given being that the appearance of the building and lack of insulation requires improvement and that the arrangement in construction of the building is not suitable for its subdivision into smaller units. Accordingly, rather than leave this building to fall into disrepair, the applicants have decided to adopt the same procedure that was permitted in March 2009 regarding the building to the southeast, of applying to demolish the building and replace it with one of the same footprint but constructed of materials that will harmonise with those on the remainder of the development (permission E/09/0098/FUL refers).
- 1.2 Part of the larger building to the south has been let for long term storage purposes and so the 2022 permission for the building is extant. Accordingly, there can be no issue that the use of this amount of floorspace for the proposed use is acceptable in land use planning terms. The main issue in this case, therefore, will be whether the proposed appearance of the building conserves the North Wessex Downs National Landscape in which the site is located.
- 1.3 This planning, design and access statement will, therefore, set out the relevant planning history of the application site and any other decisions in the near vicinity before addressing the planning policy context at national and local levels. The application site and its context will then be described before the case in support of the application is amplified. The issues that are normally addressed within a design and access statement will then be set out before concluding with the opinion that the proposal will be development will Development Plan compliant in that it will conserve the landscape in the designated National Landscape, will not cause demonstrable harm to any

interests of acknowledged importance and that there are no sustainable reasons to override the primacy of the Development Plan.

2.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 As mentioned in the previous section, the most important decision relating to the application building was planning permission reference PL/2022/01532, dated 16th June 2022, for the change of use of buildings to light industrial and/or storage and distribution use. This was conditioned to use falling within Classes B8, E (g)(ii) and E (g)(iii) of the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order, i.e. storage or distribution; research and development and light industrial use. Conditions were also imposed regarding the hours of operation of any plant or machinery and the hours of loading, unloading and manoeuvring of goods, for residential amenity reasons. In addition, external lighting was precluded without first obtaining permission.
- 2.2 A pre-commencement condition was subsequently discharged and part of the larger building to the south of this application site was let for long term storage use.
- 2.3 A further application of relevance concerns the building located approximately 15m to the southeast. Planning permission was granted in March 2009 for the demolition of an agricultural building and erection of a replacement building of identically sized footprint to be used for B1 and/or B8 uses. This building was approximately 2m taller than the one it replaces and is larger than the one that is the subject of this application.

3.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Development Plan that applications should be determined in accordance with is the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the Aldbourne Neighbourhood Plan. The delivery strategy of the former (Core Policy 2) says that employment land will be delivered in a sustainable pattern with the re-use of previously developed land to deliver regeneration opportunities as a way of limiting the need for greenfield sites.
- 3.2 Core Policy 34 refers to additional employment land and says that development will be supported outside settlements where they offer new and existing rural based businesses within or adjacent to large and small villages.

Paragraph 6.18 refers to economic regeneration and says that the Core Strategy supports regeneration opportunities and aims to maximise the re-use of previously developed land and economic development on it will be supported.

- 3.3 Core Policy 48 supports rural life and says that appropriate development in rural areas will be supported to help maintain the vitality and viability of small settlements and the countryside. However, it does not refer to the type of development proposed in this application.
- 3.4 Core Policy 51 concerns landscape and says that proposals for development within the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, now National Landscapes, shall demonstrate that they have taken account of the objectives, policies and action set out in the relevant management plans.
- 3.5 Core Policy 57 states that a high standard to design is required in all new developments. This proposal seeks to provide a building that will harmonise with the appearance of the majority of structures within the complex thereby making a positive contribution to the appearance of the site, its context and the wider area. There will be no adverse impact upon nearby trees or vegetation and consequently, this proposal will have a positive impact upon visual amenity.
- 3.6 Core Policies 61 and 62 concern transport in new development as well as impacts on the transport network. As this proposal will not generate any additional development to that already permitted, there will be no highway impacts that have not already been considered.
- 3.7 The Aldbourne Neighbourhood Plan contains a section on employment (5.8) with the objective being to retain and enhance local employment and commercial services. Policy 23 concerns new employment and says that this will be supported in principle, subject to assessments on residential amenity impact, transport and parking provision, biodiversity and the environment. It adds that the design of any new employment development should demonstrate accordance with the Aldbourne Parish Community Character and Design Statement. However, this does not appear to address proposals similar to the one that is the subject of this application.

- 3.8 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 contains a section entitled '**Building a strong, competitive economy.**' It says that planning decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt, with significant weight to be placed on the need to support economic growth (para 85). It adds that planning decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors such as storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales (small in this instance) and in suitably accessible locations that allow for the efficient and reliable handling of goods. It says (in paragraph 88) under the heading of '**Supporting a prosperous rural economy**' that planning decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through the conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new ones. This is exactly what is proposed in this complex. Paragraph 89 of the NPPF accepts that sites for business proposals in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements.
- 3.9 Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Landscapes, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The proposed demolition of the existing building, which is not an attractive structure, will lead to an enhancement to the National Landscape.

4.0 LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION SITE

- 4.1 The site is located approximately 750m southwest of Aldbourne, on the southern side of Stock Lane. The building that it is proposed to demolish and replace to the south of the entrance to the former Little Acre Farm Complex, north of the main building there and northwest of one that was demolished and replaced subsequent to a permission granted in 2009 for use of business and/or storage use.
- 4.2 The building that it is proposed to replace is some 6m north of a much larger building, and is a twin gabled structure, with three bays, and is open on its east side. It has a concrete block plinth below corrugated cement fibre sheeting walls and roof. It is surrounded by hardsurfacing forming part of the access, servicing and circulation area with established trees to its northwest

screening the building from Stock Lane. Photographs of the rebuilding that this application seeks to replace are on the front cover and below. To the northeast, is a building close to the road frontage which means that the application building is only visible from a short distance of Stock Lane, alongside the vehicular access.





- 4.3 As mentioned in the introduction, the application site formed part of a larger area that was permitted to be used for light industrial, research and development and/or storage and distribution use in 2022. However, a small part of the floor space was used for such purposes, for longer term storage, and so the permission is extant.

5.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1 This application proposes the demolition of the existing building that is located approximately 20m to the south of the existing vehicular access from Stock Lane and its replacement with one of the same footprint. It will be 126mm (5") higher at eaves level than the existing building and 671mm (2ft 2") taller at ridge level. Instead of having a valley roof, the ridgeline will run at right angles to the existing building to minimise the height of the ridge and to allow for the possibility of solar panels, should the occupants wish to locate them on the roof of the south elevation.
- 5.2 Instead of fibre cement sheeting above concrete blockwork, the walls will be faced with insulated composite cladding, juniper green in colour, with a dual pitched similarly insulated and anthracite in colour, to match the existing buildings to the south and southeast.

- 5.3 There will be one roller shutter door on the east elevation (instead of three on the extant permission) and one at the western end of the north elevation in order to give vehicular access to the two parts of the building. There will be pedestrian access doors adjoining the roller shutter doors.
- 5.4 Two car parking spaces will be provided at the eastern end of the building, on each side of the roller shutter door, with two proposed at the western end, thereby retaining most of the grassed area alongside the building. The number of spaces proposed will be one more than that permitted by the 2022 permission but should there be a need for further spaces, they could easily be accommodated on the grassed area to the west or on the wide concrete area to the west of the building.
- 5.5 So far as the use is concerned, the flexible use that was permitted in 2022 is also sought for this building, although from enquiries that have been made, it is more likely that the building would be used for longer term storage, provided that permission is granted for the replacement building.

6.0 PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS WITH ALDBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

- 6.1 The Aldbourne Neighbourhood Plan, part of the Development Plan, states that pre-application contact with the Parish Council is welcomed. Accordingly, contact was made which resulted in a meeting with members of the Parish Council on 21 July 2026, when this proposal was discussed.
- 6.2 The members present considered that the proposed replacement building would represent a significant improvement in appearance and would only be seen from the road at the access point to the complex. Although it would be slightly higher at eaves and ridge level, the Councillors thought that the use of materials replicated on the other buildings would enhance the appearance and the complex.
- 6.3 Concern was raised about the proposed distribution use contained in the definition of B8 Use, to which I responded that although the proposed occupier was not known, it would not be a company like Amazon which generated a great deal of vehicular movements. Rather, and the evidence of the partial use of the building to the south confirms, it is more likely to be a

longer term storage use that would take place within the application building. I also referred to the Highway Officer's comments on the change of use permission, to the effect that 22 vehicle movements per hour was considered to be not worthy of an objection [Source: Officer report on application PL/2022/01532]. Based on the floor area of this building (243m², compared to 1941m² of the 2022 application), the maximum amount of traffic that is likely to be generated would be three vehicles per hour, although I consider that this number is unlikely to be generated.

- 6.4 The Chair of the Parish Council thought it unlikely that there would be objection from the Parish Council and appreciated the pre-application discussion of the proposal.

7.0 THE CASE IN FAVOUR OF GRANTING PERMISSION

- 7.1 With planning permission extant for the proposed uses of this building, the main issue in this case must be whether the appearance of the replacement building will be harmful to the visual amenities of the area, designated as being part of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape.
- 7.2 Although concern was made at the meeting with representatives of the Parish Council about the potential increase in traffic on Marlborough Road, the Highway's Development Control Officer stated on the previous application that granted permission for the change of use of 1941m² to that now proposed, stated that the access is suitable for the types of vehicles associated with the proposed use as it was not likely that it would lead to a significant level and considered that an additional 22 vehicles per hour was not **'worthy of an objection'**. The Public Protection Officer also raised no objections on residential amenity grounds provided restrictions were imposed on the hours for plant and machinery to operate and for loading, unloading and manoeuvring to take place, with a condition imposed regarding external lighting. The applicants anticipate that similar conditions will be imposed for this proposal, if permission is forthcoming.
- 7.3 Planning legislation states that applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. There are no policies within the Wiltshire Core Strategy

that specifically refer to replacement employment buildings, although the Aldbourne Neighbourhood Plan is supportive of the principle of local employment, subject to an assessment of the impact of the proposals on residential amenity, the transport network, parking provision, biodiversity and the environment. The impact of the proposal on residential amenity was addressed in the application that was the subject of the change of use and with the proposed replacement building to be better insulated, the impact upon residential amenities would be less than the extant permission. Similarly, the transport network and parking provision was previously addressed and considered to be acceptable, as was the impact on the environment. With regard to biodiversity, the site has been inspected by an ecologist, and a report is submitted to accompany this application and concludes that the site is not assessed to represent a significant resource. Accordingly, the issues within Policy 23 of the Aldbourne NDP have been addressed and the matter of design will be commented upon in the following section of this statement.

- 7.4 National policy, as contained within the NPPF, states that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity. It adds that planning policies should be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the Plan. It adds, when referring to ‘**Supporting a prosperous rural economy**’ that the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, new ones should be enabled. The same guidance also says that sites may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements and in locations that are not well served by public transport. Accordingly, there is national support for development of the type proposed, especially when the planning history is also a material consideration in the decision-making process.
- 7.5 With regard to the visual impact of the proposed building, it will be slightly higher than the existing building that is to be replaced and its ridgeline will run in the opposite direction. However, the screening from Stock Lane provided in times of full leaf that is provided by the trees along the frontage restrict the views that are available of the building and, even in the winter

months, the impact will be softened. When combined with the materials of construction, which will harmonise with the appearance of the remainder of the complex, it will mean that the landscape will be conserved and enhanced, in accordance with the requirement contained within the NPPF. As the representative of the PC stated at the pre-application meeting, the building is only apparent from outside the site at the access point to the complex with the existing building that is to be replaced screened by the trees and a building from the rest of the road.

- 7.6 Accordingly, it is considered that the proposal, which is likely to generate a maximum of three vehicle movements per hour and probably significantly less, will comply with the relevant development plan policies and is supported by other relevant material considerations such as the planning history of the site.

8.0 DESIGN CONCEPTS

- 8.1 The design of the replacement building will be slightly different to the building that exists, with the intention being to provide a structure that will harmonise with the appearance of nearby buildings that have already been upgraded, providing clearer spans, insulated walls and roofing. I shall now turn to the subject matters usually contained within a Design and Access Statement.

Use

- 8.2 The last use of the building was agricultural, but it benefits from an extant planning permission to be used for light industry, research and development and/or storage and distribution (PL/2022/01532). Accordingly, there is planning permission for flexible use of the building and as the same footprint is proposed by this application, there will be no change to the use that has been permitted. This use was conditioned by the Council (Condition 3, to falling within Class B8, Class E Part (g)(ii) and Class E Part (g)(iii) of the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order.

Amount

- 8.3 This application proposes the erection of a replacement building with exactly the same ground floor area as the existing building, 243m².

Scale

- 8.4 The building will measure 17.704m x 13.75m and the eaves will be 4.876m above ground level with the ridge 6.741m high.

Layout

- 8.5 The building will be on the same footprint as the existing structure and will have its access via a roller shutter door on the central eastern gable end and another on its north elevation, at the western end of the building. The building and its circulation area around it will mean that there will be no impact upon the trees to the northeast, fronting Stock Lane or the belt of trees beyond the western boundary, that runs south eastwards.

Appearance

- 8.6 The design approach follows that of the existing buildings to the south and southeast in that there will be vertical profiled cladding, juniper green in colour running from floor to eaves height. The roof will be faced with composite panels, farmscape anthracite in colour. The roller shutter doors will match the colour of the walling.

Landscaping

- 8.7 There is currently a belt of trees along the Stock Lane frontage to the southwest of the existing access that are outside the boundary of the application site, and these trees have become established and will not be affected by the proposed rebuilding. Similarly, the tree belt that runs south eastwards to the west of the application site will not be affected by the proposal. Due to this vegetation, the building will not be prominent in the landscape and will only be seen in times of leaf from Stock Lane, through the access point to the former farm complex. The view in winter will be filtered by the branches of the trees.

Access

- 8.8 Vehicular access to the proposed replacement building will be via the existing access onto Stock Lane. This access was considered previously to be satisfactory for the amount of floorspace proposed and there is no reason to dispute that this would not apply as part of this application. This is an

established access to the business use of the site and there can be no issue with its use to serve this application building.

- 8.9 With regard to car parking, the application proposes two parking spaces, on either side of the roller shutter door in the east elevation of the proposed building with a further two spaces at the western end, alongside the northern elevation of the proposed building. This is one space more than what was proposed in the extant permission. Should the uses generate a need for further parking, there is ample space within the application site for this to take place, the most logical location being the concrete circulation road to the west of the building, which is over 10m wide and could easily accommodate several cars at the southwestern edge of the application site.