

Date of Meeting	31st January 2019
Application Number	18/08874/FUL
Site Address	Hawthorn Farm, The Street, Marden SN10 3RQ
Proposal	Demolition of existing buildings in mixed use and construction of single detached family dwelling.
Applicants	Mr & Mrs J & B Purves
Town/Parish Council	MARDEN
Electoral Division	Pewsey Vale – Councillor Oatway
Grid Ref	408709 157873
Type of application	Full Planning
Case Officer	Nick Clark

Reason for the application being considered by Committee

The application is being reported to the planning committee for consideration at the request of Councillor Oatway, to consider matters of scale, visual impact and the relationship to adjoining properties and to consider the ‘removal of unsightly buildings, which will never be replaced as agricultural buildings, considerable local support including parish council, recent stated case of dwelling built within the village under similar circumstances’

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to assess the merits of the proposal against the policies of the development plan and other material considerations and to consider the recommendation that the application be refused.

2. Report Summary

Hawthorn Farm is located outside any recognised Limits of Development and outside the built area of the village, where it is surrounded by farmland but opposite the Marden Conservation Area and the grade II listed Grange Farmhouse and Old Vicarage, and prominent in views of the grade I listed All Saints Church on approaching the village from the south. The former Hawthorn Farmhouse lies c. 100m to the north east and the Marden Conservation Area Statement notes that the ‘farm buildings stand detached in the meadow to the south’ where they are separated from the former farmhouse by the meadow.

Due to the standalone position of the site, outside recognised Limits of Development and outside the built area of the village, the proposal for a dwelling in this location does not meet the definition of ‘infill’ development in small villages and would thus be contrary to the Spatial Vision of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. Furthermore, the scale and visual

impact of a large stand-alone 10.16m high dwelling with a footprint of 267m², would be prominent within the street scene (particularly in winter) and the scale and mock-Georgian form would be at odds with the prevailing pattern and scale of development within the village. The design also fails to reference to the historic form of the farmstead, and it would compete with the historic hierarchy of buildings within the village, to the detriment of the setting of the conservation area. This would be contrary both to the advice of the Conservation Area Statement and the Wiltshire Farmsteads Guidance, and contrary to Core Policy 57 and Core Policy 58.

Whilst the existing former farm buildings could be considered by some to be unsightly, redundant and neglected, rural buildings and farmyards feature regularly within the countryside and are wholly consistent with the rural character and agricultural setting of the village. In any event, the buildings are relatively low-level and their demolition cannot justify the scale of the dwelling proposed.

The applicants have been offered the opportunity to redesign the proposals but have declined to do so.

The report thus concludes that the development would be contrary to the development plan and harmful to the character of the village, the setting of the conservation area and nearby listed buildings.

The NPPF advises that development resulting in harm to heritage assets cannot be approved unless the harm is outweighed by public benefits. With no such public benefits identified, the report recommends refusal of the application.

3. Site Description

A farmstead at Hawthorn Farm has existed since at least the 19th century. The existing farm buildings however are relatively modern; appearing to date from the mid 20th century, and most recently used as part of Grange Farm rather than Hawthorn Farm. The collection of buildings are relatively low-level, with heights of 3.45m, 3.75m, 3.95m, 4.5m, 4.7m and 5.43m and the site is surrounded by farmland to the north, south and east, with The Street and Marden Conservation Area to the west.



The application suggests that the new building would be of benefit as it would replace unsightly buildings. This is not accepted, however. Under-used and neglected rural buildings and farmyards feature regularly within the countryside and the site contributes to the rural character and agricultural setting of the conservation area and wider village.



The buildings appear unsuited to modern agricultural use, which appears to have ceased around 1996, whereafter there were a number of consents for alternative uses of the buildings and farmyard site, which have persisted at a low level of use.

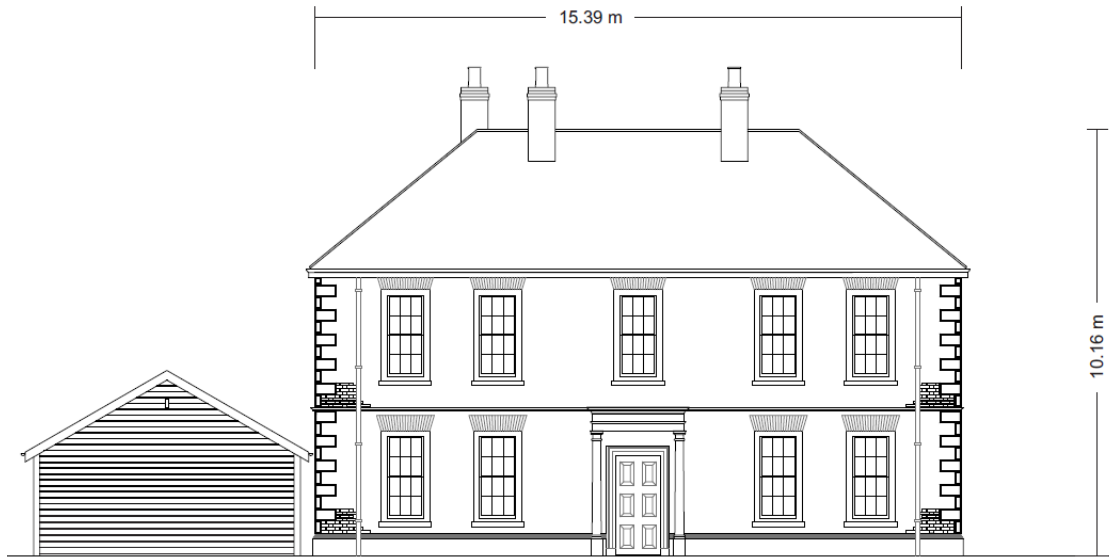
In terms of neighbouring properties, the village hall lies c. 60m to the south west; being separated from the site by farmland. The former Hawthorn Farmhouse lies c. 100m to the north east, also separated from the site by farmland as well as a track to the sewage works.

Planning History

K/15216	CHANGE OF USE TO PURPOSE WITHIN CLASS B1 OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (USE CLASSES) ORDER 1987	Refused
K/18815	CHANGE OF USE FROM AGRICULTURAL TO STORAGE OF FURNITURE AND HOUSEHOLD GOODS	Approved
K/32669	Change of use of existing farm buildings to B1 and B8 industrial use	Approved
K/46975	Use redundant farm buildings for storage (under cover) of building materials.	Approved

4. The Proposal

The application proposes demolition of the existing buildings. It is then proposed to erect a mock-Georgian 2-storey 4-bedroom brick and slate dwelling with stone detailing. Its height would be a height of 10.16m and footprint 267m², with a gross internal floor area of 443m² (excluding additional loft floor space).

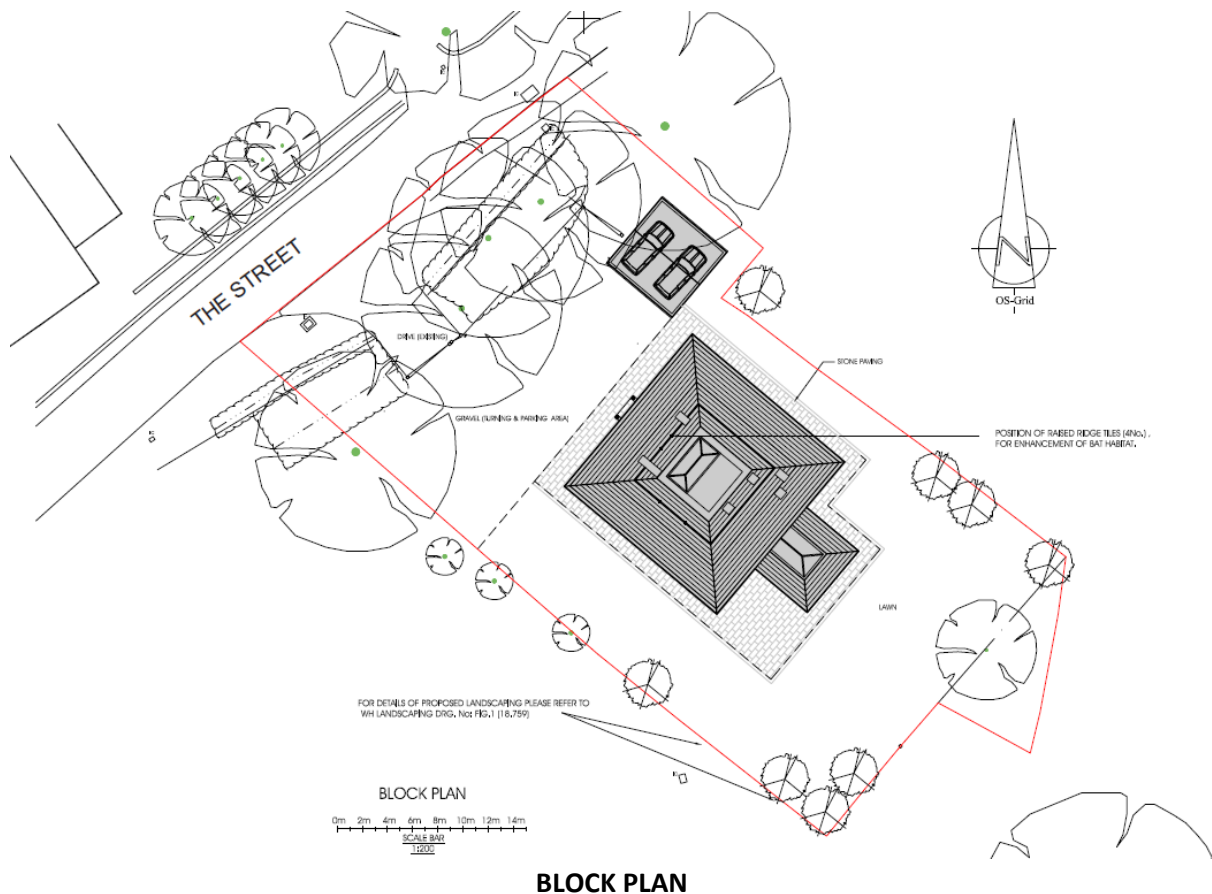


FRONT ELEVATION



SIDE ELEVATION

A 2-bay car port would be located to the front/ side of the dwelling, and the curtilage of the dwelling would be extended beyond the area of the existing farmyard by c. 200m².



Access from The Street would remain as existing.

Existing trees and hedges around the site are to be retained and additional planting is proposed.

5. Local Planning Policy

The development plan so far as is relevant comprises the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015).

The following policies of the Wiltshire Core Strategy are of particular relevance to the proposal:

- | | |
|------|--|
| CP57 | Ensuring high quality design and place shaping |
| CP58 | Historic environment |

Government policy for 'conserving and enhancing the historic environment' is set out in section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework and needs to be read together with other policies of the Framework.

6. Summary of consultation responses

Marden Parish Council:	Support: “Having received views from a number of the electorate and having carefully studied the documentation provided and visited the proposed site the Marden Parish Council is supportive of the application for the following reasons. <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The site is effectively within the built area of the village given the proximity of other residential properties and the fact that it currently has farm buildings erected thereon.2. The farm buildings themselves are unattractive and the demolition and replacement with a sympathetically designed residence with appropriate quality materials would enhance the village and benefit the community.3. The footprint of the proposed development is almost entirely within the footprint of the existing farm buildings and hard standings.4. A minority of those who have offered opinions to the Parish Council expressed concerns at the scale of the proposed house, particularly the height, which they argue will adversely impact the overall view of that part of the village. Having reflected on those concerns the Parish Council nevertheless supports the application for the reasons stated”.
WC Conservation Officer:	Objection due to the impact of the development on the setting of the Marden Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings.
CPRE:	Objection: disproportionate scale and impact on the rural character and landscape, and views of the church.
WC Highways Officer:	No objection
Wessex Water:	No objection
Other:	5 letters of objection received; generally supporting the principle of redevelopment of the site, but objecting to the scale and impact of the proposed house. 10 letters of support received – generally supporting the development as an improvement upon the existing buildings. (some of the above include comments from two occupants of the same house)

7. Publicity

Direct consultation was carried out with nearby neighbours and statutory consultees. Indirect consultation was carried out by way of a site notice posted to the front of the site on 3rd October 2018.

8. Planning Considerations

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.

Sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provide in respect of listed buildings, that the Council must '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 requires that the Council must pay special attention in the exercise of planning functions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 requires that the local planning authority must 'have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty'.

Principle of development

Core Policy 1 and Core Policy 2 set a hierarchy of settlements within Wiltshire, under which Marden is designated as a small village. The Spatial Vision of the Core Strategy directs new housing to be developed in the larger settlements (which excludes small villages) unless for excepted purposes such as agricultural worker dwellings, none of which apply in this case.

A further exception is for 'infill' development in the 'built area' of small villages. The stand-apart position of the farmyard does not comply with this exception. Furthermore it does not meet the Council's definition of infill development, which is "the filling of a small gap within the village that is only large enough for not more than a few dwellings; generally only one dwelling".

The development would thus be contrary to Core Policy 1, Core Policy 2 and Core Policy 18 (Pewsey Community Area Strategy) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, and thus unacceptable in principle.

Impact on the setting of the Marden Conservation Area and the village

Core Policy 57 requires a high quality of design in new development that draws on the local context and which is complementary to the locality, and which must be able to demonstrate, amongst other things, that it enhances local distinctiveness through responding to the historic environment and existing pattern of development, and which effectively integrates the development into its setting in terms of built form, height, mass, scale, elevational design, and rooflines.

Core Policy 58 requires development to protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment. The setting of designated heritage assets must be conserved and enhanced where appropriate.

Marden is an essentially linear village in which the Conservation Officer notes a clear hierarchy of building types from the formal Manor and Grange and larger farmhouses to humble vernacular cottages and converted farm buildings. This hierarchy has generally been respected in 20th century development within the conservation area and the village is not characterised by Georgian architecture.

Whilst the farm is adjacent to the Conservation Area, it is referred to in the Conservation Area Statement and is clearly part of the setting of the conservation area and the wider village. The Conservation Area Statement advises that there is no typical design with which a new building should confirm, but that any new dwelling should be no more than two storeys, with a steep pitched roof and a chimney and should be of a scale and span not to exceed about 6.0 m.

Whilst the dwelling would be 2 storeys, the pitched roof would be flat-topped and the span of the building would be 15.25m rather than the recommended 6m. The overall scale is thus substantial and does not reflect the modest scale of development anticipated by the Conservation Area Statement. As noted by the Conservation Officer, together with its non-traditional Georgian styling, this would disrupt the visual and physical hierarchy of buildings within the village, and particularly those closest to the site, such as the opposite grade 2 Grange Farmhouse and the Old Vicarage. The building would also be prominent in views towards the village, and disturb views of the All Saints Church, on the approach to the village along the public footpath from the east.



VIEW FROM MARDEN FOOTPATH 3

The Conservation Officer also raises objection in terms of the historic use of the site as a farmstead, and the requirement under the Wiltshire Farmsteads Guidance for redevelopment proposals to reflect the historic use and layout of the site.

The Officer thus concludes that 'the pastiche Georgian dwelling is highly inappropriate in style, size, proportions and character for the redevelopment of an historic farmyard site and the proposals do not show any consideration for the character of this site and its relationship with this rural village and the hierarchy of buildings within it'.

It is thus concluded that the development would be contrary to Core Policy 57 and Core Policy 58.

Whilst existing and additional trees and hedging are proposed, there is no mechanism to secure their retention beyond the short term. It is also a well-established principle that planting should be used to enhance a development and that it cannot be used to make otherwise unacceptable development acceptable.

The Conservation Officer is nonetheless satisfied that a design that both respects the hierarchy of buildings within the village and the historic form and character of the farmstead could be achieved, but this would require a revised design approach.

Access and parking

The Highway Officer raises no concerns in respect of the proposed access and parking arrangements.

Residential amenities

The development would not impact on neighbouring amenities.

Ecology

The application is supported by an ecological assessment which found multiple bat roosts in the buildings proposed for demolition, including a maternity roost of brown long-eared bats.

The report makes mitigation recommendations are appropriate and have been incorporated into the proposals. These could be secured by way of planning condition.

Other material considerations

Due to the recent non-agricultural use of the site, it now falls within the definition of 'previously developed land' under the revised National Planning Policy Framework. The NPPF supports the principle of making good use of suitable previously developed land, but this does not support otherwise unsustainable development.

Noting also, however, the unsuitability of the buildings for other uses and that they have no realistic long term prospects and are likely to fall into further decline, as well as the relatively central position of the site within the village (albeit that the location is poorly served by local services and facilities), it is concluded on balance that the principle of proportionate redevelopment of the site in-line with the Conservation Officer comments,

whilst contrary to the development plan, could be capable of support in this instance. The applicants have declined the offer to submit a revised design.

9. Conclusion (The Planning Balance)

The principle of development of a new dwelling in this location would be contrary to the development plan. Furthermore the excessive scale and Georgian design would be inappropriate in style, size, proportions and character for the redevelopment of an historic farmyard site and the proposals do not show any consideration for the character of this site and its relationship with this rural village and the hierarchy of buildings within it, and views towards All Saints Church.

As such, both in principle and in practice, the development would be contrary to the development plan. With no circumstances sufficient to warrant otherwise, the application is recommended for refusal for the reason set out below.

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission is **REFUSED** for the following reasons:

1. The development of a dwelling on the site, outside recognised Limits of Development, would be contrary to Core Policy 1, Core Policy 2 and Core Policy 18 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.
2. The position, height, mass and scale of the proposed dwelling and its Georgian design would contrast with the agricultural character of the village, this historic agricultural use of the site and the prevailing scale and style of buildings, and would undermine the established hierarchy of buildings within the village, resulting in harm to the setting of the village and Marden Conservation Area and the setting of the opposite grade 2 listed Old Vicarage and The Grange, and harm to the setting of the nearby grade 1 listed All Saints Church in views approaching from the public footpath approaching the village from the east.

As such the development fails to draw on the local context to demonstrate a high quality of design and fails to protect the historic environment, contrary to Core Policy 57 and Core Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.