

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> September 2020
<b>Application Number</b>	20/03194/LBC & 20/04069/FUL
<b>Site Address</b>	Barn at Southcott Manor, Southcott Road, Pewsey SN9 5JF
<b>Proposal</b>	Retention of glazed doors to 2 original cart door openings
<b>Applicant</b>	Mr & Mrs R. Middleton
<b>Town/Parish Council</b>	Pewsey
<b>Electoral Division</b>	Councillor Jerry Kunkler – Pewsey
<b>Grid Ref</b>	SU 16976 59439
<b>Type of application</b>	Listed Building Consent and Full Planning
<b>Case Officer</b>	Pippa Card

### Reason for the application being considered by Committee

In accordance with the Council's 'Scheme of Delegation Specific to Planning', the LBC application has been brought to committee at the request of Councillor Jerry Kunkler at the request of Pewsey Parish Council. The counterpart FUL is also being presented to the Committee for continuity purposes.

### 1. Purpose of Report

To assess the merits of the proposal against the policies of the development plan and other material considerations and to consider the recommendation to grant listed building consent and planning permission.

The key issue for consideration is the impact of the retention of the glazed doors on the special interest of the grade II listed building and its setting.

### 2. Site Description & Planning History

The application site lies within the grounds of Southcott Manor and the rural hamlet of Southcott, which itself is located to the south of the village of Pewsey. It can be accessed along the narrow country lane that starts as Ball Road within the village and then runs from Kings Corner in a southerly loop to Southcott and Green Drove, on the south-west edge of Pewsey, until it joins the Everleigh and Salisbury Roads.

The site consists of a grade II listed timber framed thatched barn, the sole surviving historic barn that was originally part of a complex of barns, the rest of which were gradually lost throughout the later 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The barn sits within a large garden plot that forms the curtilage to the grade II listed Southcott Manor, which can be accessed via two entrances, one to the north, the other to the south of the site. The settlement lies within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The wider site is given to lawned gardens, fields and a large apple orchard and is well treed

on its roadside boundaries, which retains a high level of privacy making the barn itself difficult to see from the public realm and can only be fully appreciated from within the site.



*Site Location Plan*

Related planning history is as follows:

- K/17595 – change of use from storage to production of organic cider and apple juice. Approved 01/07/1991.
- E/2011/1657/LBC – insertion of steel flitch plate to repair broken purlin. Approved 25/01/2012.
- 14/07361/LBC – replacement of the thatched roof. Approved 24/09/2014.

### **3. The Proposal**

The application seeks listed building consent and full planning permission for the retention of two sets of glazed doors, installed in the barn's cart openings on the south and north elevations in August 2017.

The glazed doors were installed without the benefit of listed building consent or planning permission in 2017 and the Council was made aware of the unauthorised works via an Enforcement complaint received on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2020. The applicants are now seeking to rectify the situation by submitting the two applications to gain permission for the works to the grade II listed barn.

The Agent has addressed comments received as a result of the consultation exercises, stating the following:

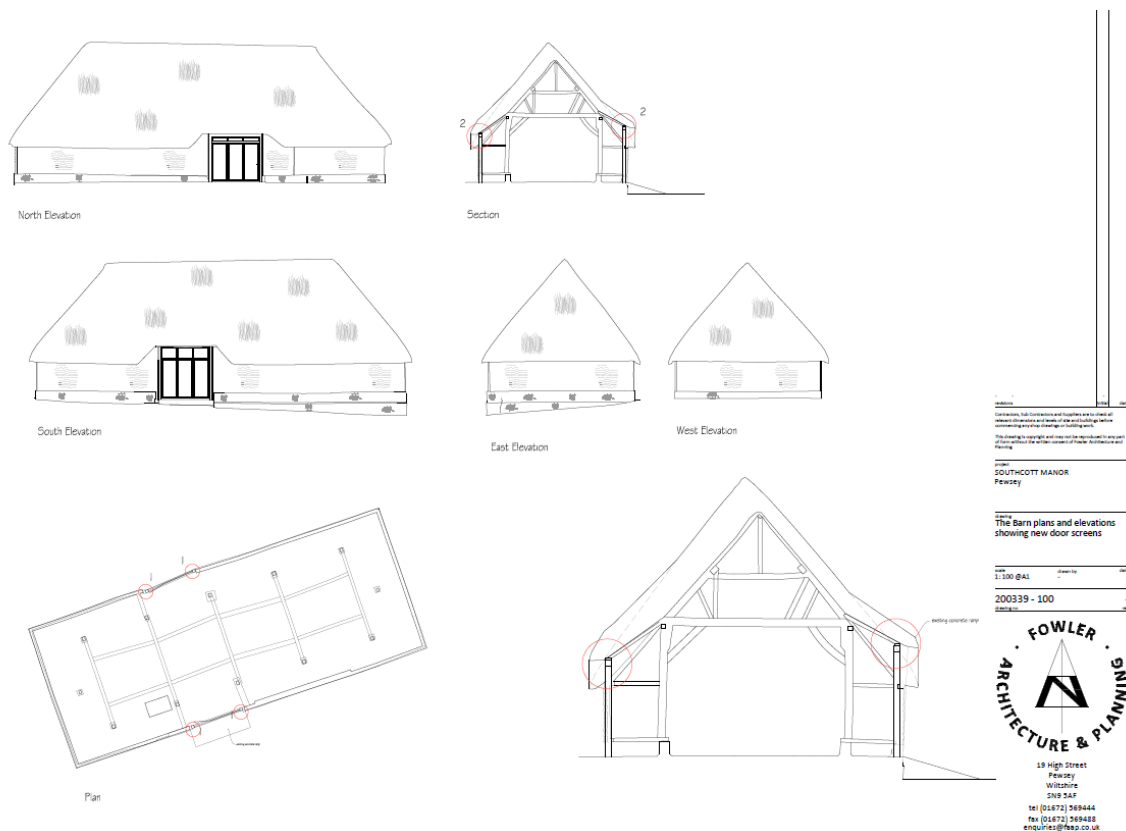
#### Use of the Building

- These current applications are not proposing to change the use of the subject building.
- The proposed development is the installation of two glazed screens.
- The Applicants have confirmed that the barn continues to be used for the apple

harvest, and storage of agricultural machinery.

### Barn Owls

- The Applicants have never seen barn owls in the barn since they purchased Southcott Manor in 2010.
- The previous owners, Mr. and Mrs. Pitman, informed the Applicants that they had been there in 1998 (circa), but once the owl boxes had been installed in the barn they left and had not been seen since.
- The Applicants have confirmed that prior to the re-thatching of the barn in 2013 (circa), they liaised with both Natural England and Constable Miles in the Rural Crime Team to confirm that there was no evidence of nesting barn owls.
- Indeed, they took photographs of the inside of the boxes and the floor, confirming there was no evidence of owls. They also sought advice from an ecologist who also confirmed the same.
- Natural England felt that there was no reason (from an ecological point of view) why the Applicants could not continue to repair the thatch, which was leaking and causing further damage to the purlins.



*Proposed Site & Elevation Plans*

## 4. Planning Policy

- **Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990** – Sections 16 & 66 – the requirement 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.

- The **National Planning Policy Framework (2019)** outlines government policy, including the historic environment (Section 16) and in particular paragraphs 192 & 193.
- The adopted **Wiltshire Core Strategy**, with particular regard to:
  - Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping;
  - Core Policy 58: Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment
- The **North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2019 – 2024**.
- The **Pewsey Neighbourhood Plan**.

#### **Additional guidance:**

- National Planning Policy Guidance provides guidance on making changes to Heritage Assets.
- Historic England’s *Advice Note 2 – Making Changes to Heritage Assets* is also relevant guidance for applying the policies within the NPPF.
- Historic England’s “Conservation Principles” provides policy and guidance for the “sustainable management of the historic environment”. Additional guidance is also contained within the following publication:
  - *Historic Environment Good Practice Planning Advice Note 2 – Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment*
- Historic England’s *Adapting Traditional Farmbuildings – Best Practice Guidelines for Adaptive Reuse* (2017).

## **5. Consultations**

**Wiltshire Council Ecology Team** – Discussions have taken place with the Ecology Team, who commented that it is unfortunate that the works have already been undertaken and therefore the potential to allow for the protection of species has been lost, and the damage has already been done. The applicants could install owl nesting boxes in the vicinity as a mitigating factor to outweigh the harm done, however there is no policy or legislative reason that allows for these to be installed via condition. The Officer has suggested that two informatives are added to the decision notice and these are listed below.

**Pewsey Parish Council** – Objection to the proposals:

1. The installed glazed screens are considered completely inappropriate for the c.17<sup>th</sup> century barn: they destroy the visual aspect of the building. No reason has been given for these changed, other than the protection of the listed building from the elements.
2. Concerns that the applicants have committed an offence under the listed building regulations by undertaking radical changes to the building without the necessary permissions in place.
3. The original purpose of the barn’s doors was to allow for access for horse drawn vehicles and ventilation of the building. Blocking these doorways is out of keeping and inappropriate for the building.

4. The environmental effect on the building has not been addressed – there is evidence of nesting barn owls within the building.
5. The application is not for the change of use to the building, which is understood to be required, as the understanding is that the building is in agricultural use due to the storage of apple crates within it.
6. The Manor House is listed (as is the Barn) and it could reasonably be considered that any development to the barn would adversely affect the Manor House – which would be undesirable and contra-policy.
7. The Pewsey Village Design Statement *'is clear that Listed buildings should be respected, to quote: "Very few buildings are listed (in Pewsey) which makes a strong conservation policy all the more important. Restoration and adaption of old buildings need to be sympathetic to their character"*. This application is anything but sympathetic to this very ancient building and its original use<sup>7</sup>.
8. The Pewsey Neighbourhood Plan in paragraph 5.3 states that *"Listed and non-listed buildings and features that contribute positively and significantly to the character of the village will be preserved and enhanced"* It is our contention that the barn complies with both these characteristics without the recent addition of glass screens<sup>7</sup>.

## 6. Publicity

The applications have been publicised via a site notice and adverts within the local press. As a result, 4 letters of objection were received, on the following grounds (summarised in no particular order):

- The barn has had a change of use, tantamount to a barn conversion.
- The addition of doors reinforces the fact the barn has been converted.
- Concerns that entertainment events with a bar and music and additional traffic/parking anticipated, are to be held here as a commercial venture.
- The barn has already had commercial events within it (a web address was provided in one letter – this was looked into but only a '404 page not found' message was displayed).
- The loss of the barn as a barn owl nesting site.
- Southcott is serviced by a single-track road and was never intended to be a destination to attract attendees of social events such as dances and weddings. The resultant traffic and noise is not in keeping with the classification of the area as ANOB.
- A retrospective application for installing doors on an agricultural building which should clearly be an application for the change of use to a commercial unit is clearly incorrect.
- Southcott Manor appears to be changing into a holiday destination and events location.
- The proposal does not conserve the building and is detrimental to ecology and biodiversity.
- The proposal is not sympathetic to the surrounding built environment nor to the building itself.
- The proposal does not conserve this Heritage Asset, it seeks to fundamentally change it and its purpose.
- The proposal results in substantial harm to the designated heritage asset.
- The addition of doors renders the barn unusable for an agricultural use.

Upon receipt of additional supporting information (Ecology Assessment and Heritage Statement) on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020, re-consultations were sent to the authors of the original representations received, including the Parish Council.

## 7. Planning Considerations

The applications seek listed building consent and full planning permission to retain the two sets of glazed doors, which were installed in the building without the benefit of consent. The applications have been submitted on the back of an Enforcement complaint and the intention is for the situation to be rectified.

The main consideration is the impact that doors have on the special interest of the listed building i.e. are the changes harmful to the significance of the designated heritage asset?

The special interest of the grade II listed barn lies in its simple vernacular construction of timber framing with a combed wheat reed thatched roof. The elevations are timber clad with traditional weatherboarding and it is a good surviving example of a late 17<sup>th</sup>/early 18<sup>th</sup> century threshing barn. The heritage statement provided dates the building to the 18<sup>th</sup> century rather than the 17<sup>th</sup> century, although the age is not contested. The observations that it has been altered, extended and changed throughout this time are sound. Originally the building would have had two sets of paired timber threshing doors fixed to these openings, so that they could be closed to protect the crop stored within from the elements. These doors have been lost over time and although the list description notes that there are cart doors in the second bays, there is no evidence that they were in situ at the time of listing (30<sup>th</sup> October 1987) or that they have been removed since listing. It is known by officers from visits carried out since 2010 that the barn did not have doors then.

The approach to provide a means of enclosing structures such as this barn is quite a frequent proposal when the building has become redundant for its original use. The change of use from storage to one for activities relating to the production of cider was approved in 1991 and the current owners have realised a need to provide a secure building for the storage and protection of the product and associated equipment within the building. Adaptive reuse of any redundant farm building can safeguard the building from deterioration by providing it with a long-term use, particularly so when in a secure ownership and it has an active use that protects the building for the foreseeable future.

In terms of the building's character, it would originally have had solid timber doors. The glazed doors have enclosed the barn to the elements rather than blocking them up: the doors are in sections and can be fully opened due to them being fitted into runners enabling them to be fully opened for access, as required. The glazed doors also preserve the view through the building that was possible prior to the changes. Historic England's guidance on adapting traditional farm buildings supports the approach of providing large format glazed openings that help retain a more industrial character for the building as opposed to multi-panes that are more domestic in character. The approach taken here is considered to be in line with guidelines that are applicable on a national level and relevant at a more local level.

The NPPF requires the proposals to be assessed on the level of harm caused to the significance of the designated heritage asset (paragraph 193). Substantial harm is usually reserved for the total loss or destruction of a designated heritage asset or development within its setting: this is therefore not relevant here, as the building is being retained and there is no development within its setting. Although the addition of the glazed doors is an alteration to the building, the impact on the building is that relating to the visual and aesthetic qualities of the vernacular building, as no intervention or loss of historic fabric has been required in order to implement the changes.

Due to the use of large format glazing set within metal frames, the screens/doors are sleek and minimal in appearance. The vertical divisions of the separate panes echo the verticality of the timber supporting posts within the aisled barn and Historic England guidance notes, when treating cart door openings, that *'new entrance screens which are slightly recessed*

*with a simple vertical emphasis can be effective*, which has been the approach here. As a result, the doors have minimal visual impact on the building and the view through the building has been retained and the changes are not considered to cause harm to the building and its character.

The concerns of the community in relation to the ecological impact of the changes to the building are noted. The Ecological Assessment (EA) provided with the application does confirm that there is evidence of birds entering the building through small gaps within the elevations and that fresh bat droppings have also been witnessed, providing evidence that the building is still being used by some species. Both the Council's Ecologist and the EA statement have suggested that additional bat and bird nesting boxes could be provided within the riparian property boundary to mitigate any harm done to alleviate any concerns raised on this matter. Informatives have been suggested by the Council's Ecology Team to be included on a positive decision.

With regard to the comments relating to the lack of an application for the change of use, this has not been applied for, as the use of the building for production of organic cider and apple juice was approved in 1991. The Agent and Applicants have confirmed that the use continues to be for the apple harvest and associated agricultural equipment. Comments have been received regarding the current use not being in accordance with the planning permission approved in 1991, however no evidence to support these claims has been provided. The layout of the building has not changed, and is not proposed to be changed.

## **8. Planning Balance & Conclusion**

The applications seek listed building consent and planning permission to retain the installed glazed doors to the grade II listed barn. The policies of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, in particular Core Policy 57 'Ensuring High Quality Design & Place Shaping' and Core Policy 58 'Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment', all seek to secure a high quality of design and to protect the historic environment. NPPF paragraphs 192 and 193 are also relevant as they relate to the Council's duty to conserve the listed building and assess the proposals against any potential harm to the building's significance.

The scheme is considered to accord with the aims of these policies. The retention of the glazed doors will not harm the significance of the designated heritage asset, its setting or the special qualities of the North Wessex Downs AONB. The barn is only fully appreciated from within the grounds of Southcott Manor and therefore is not a prominent feature within this rural part of Southcott.

In conclusion, it is considered that the scheme does not have a harmful impact on the listed barn's historic fabric and overall character as a traditional farm building, as the large format glazed doors allow views through the building as were possible prior to their installation. The barn would originally have had solid timber doors on these openings to protect the crop from the elements and allowing this building to be secured from potential loss of valuable agricultural equipment ensures a more viable long-term use for the building, which is in its best interests for future preservation. The strong strength of feeling against the proposal by the local community is recognised, however it is considered that there are no valid grounds to refuse listed building consent or planning permission for the proposal. It is therefore recommended that listed building consent and planning permission be granted.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That listed building consent and planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

**20/03194/LBC**

No time limit is required as the works have already been carried out. Therefore the following are recommended:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
  - Design & Access Statement
  - Drawing no. 200339-01 – Location Plan
  - Drawing no. 3669-001 Rev B – General Arrangement Plan

Dated as received 14<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

- Drawing no. 200339-101 – Barn elevations and floor plan showing original openings
- Drawing no. 200339-100 – Barn elevations and floor plans showing new screen doors
- Drawing no. 200339-1 – Door Jamb Detail
- Drawing no. 200339-1A – Opening Jamb Detail
- Drawing no. 200339-2 – Door Head Detail
- Drawing no. 200339-2A – Opening Head Detail
- Heritage Statement by Forum Heritage Services
- Inspection Survey for Bat Roost and Bird Nesting Potential by All Ecology
- Schedule of works

Dated as received 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020.

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

2. INFORMATIVE TO APPLICANT

The applicant should note that the approval of this application does not include the change of use to the building.

3. INFORMATIVE TO APPLICANT

The applicant should note that under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and the Habitats Regulations (2010) it is an offence to disturb or harm any protected species including roosting bats. The protection extends beyond the individual animals to the places they use for shelter or resting. Please note that this consent does not override the statutory protection afforded to any such species. In the event that your proposals could potentially affect a protected species you should seek the advice of a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist and consider the need for a licence from Natural England prior to commencing works. Please see Natural England's website for further information on protected species.

4. INFORMATIVE TO APPLICANT

General enhancement where impacts low: Although no evidence of bats and birds was found during the survey of the existing buildings, the proposed development offers an opportunity to incorporate features for bats and birds as part of the construction of the replacement dwelling, annex and garage, as a biodiversity enhancement in accordance with paragraph 175 of the National Planning Policy Framework. As an enhancement, roosting opportunities can be incorporated into buildings at very little cost, such as integral bat bricks (e.g. <http://www.ibstock.com/sustainability-ecozone.asp>), bat tubes (e.g. [http://www.nhbs.com/2fr\\_schwegler\\_bat\\_tube\\_tefno\\_162812.html](http://www.nhbs.com/2fr_schwegler_bat_tube_tefno_162812.html)) or Habitat (<http://www.habibat.co.uk/>), which will not interfere with the living space of the



building and require no maintenance. Other products are available from alternative suppliers. The Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) website provides a product list that may be useful to the applicant / agent ([http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/new\\_build.html](http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/new_build.html)). Similar products are also available for nesting birds.

### **20/04069/FUL**

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  - Drawing no. 200339-01 – Location Plan
  - Drawing no. 3669-001 Rev B – General Arrangement Plan

The above dated as received 11<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

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- Drawing no. 200339-100 – Barn elevations and floor plans showing new screen doors
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- Drawing no. 200339-1A – Opening Jamb Detail
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