

REPORT FOR EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE**Report No.**

Date of Meeting	11 th July 2024
Application Number	PL/2024/03269
Site Address	Land to the rear of 7 The Stocks, Seend, Wiltshire, SN12 6PL
Proposal	Erection of 1 self-build dwelling (outline application relating to access)
Applicant	Mr Adam Gordon and Mrs Helen Robinson-Gordon
Town/Parish Council	Seend Parish Council
Ward	Devizes Rural West ED (Cllr Tamara Reay)
Type of application	Outline planning permission: Some matters reserved
Case Officer	Lucy Rutter-Dowd

Reason for the application being considered by Committee:

This application has been 'called-in' by Cllr Reay for the following reason:

- Housing need

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

The key issues for consideration are:

- Principle of development
- Landscape and visual impact CP 51 & 57
- Impact on neighbour amenity CP 57
- Highways impact CP 61
- Environmental and ecological impacts CP 50
- Drainage

3. Site Description

The site lies to the rear of 7 The Stocks, which was previously two dwellings that have since been combined into one. The host dwelling is built of a mixture of red brick and stone with double Roman clay tiles and stone tiles to the roofs. The property sits parallel to the highway, with vehicular access taken from either side of the dwelling; however, it is predominantly the access to the west that is used. The property benefits from off-street parking and large rear gardens. Also within ownership is an area of paddock which is situated immediately behind the host gardens – this is the subject of the application.

The site is neighbored to the east by a detached, two storey residential property which also benefits from large rear gardens that form the eastern boundary of the site. Boundary treatments are a mixture of post and rail fencing, hedgerow, and close boarded fencing. To the west and south lies undeveloped open countryside. The highway lies to the north. The property lies at the the southern end of Seend Cleeve, which is designated as a Small Village in the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS). The general pattern of development in the area comprises single depth development fronting the highway. Rolling countryside falls away from the site to the south.

The site lies within 2km of a core bat roost. There are no other notable constraints within the site.



Figure 1: Site Location



Figure 2: View towards the south from within the application site



Figure 3: View towards the west from within the application site



Figure 4: View towards the host dwelling and neighbouring property to the north



Figure 5: View of access and host dwelling from the adjacent highway

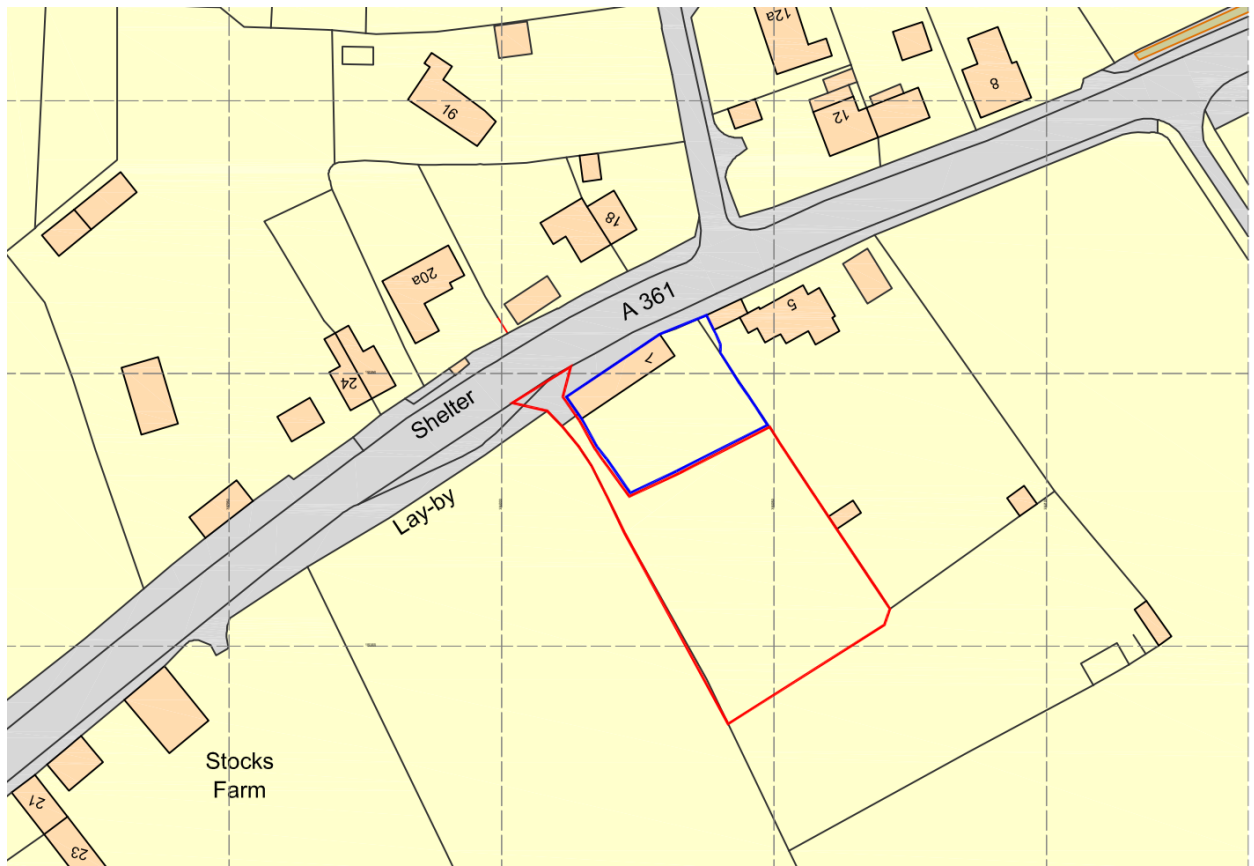


Figure 6: Submitted Site Location Plan

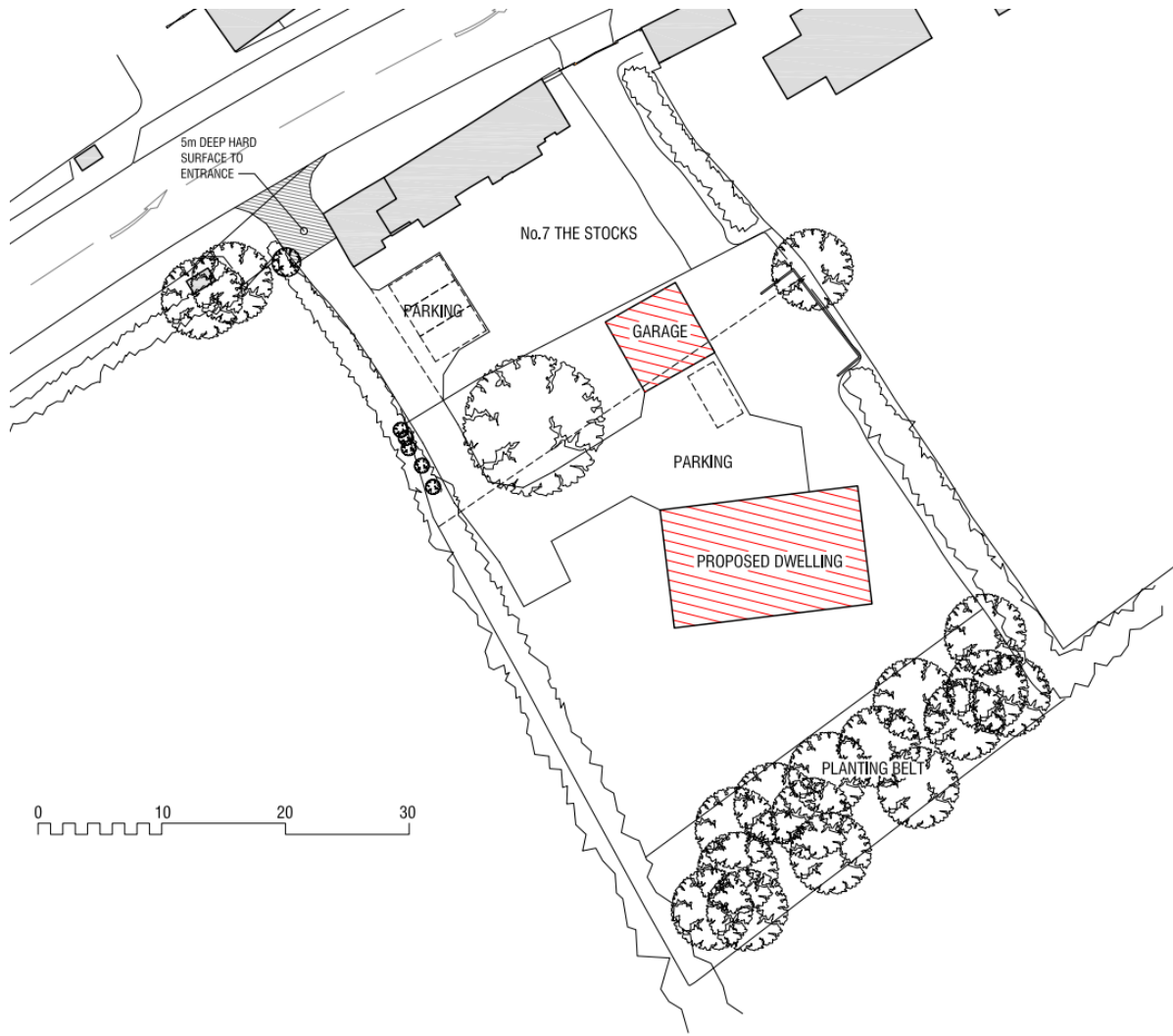


Figure 7: Proposed Block Plan

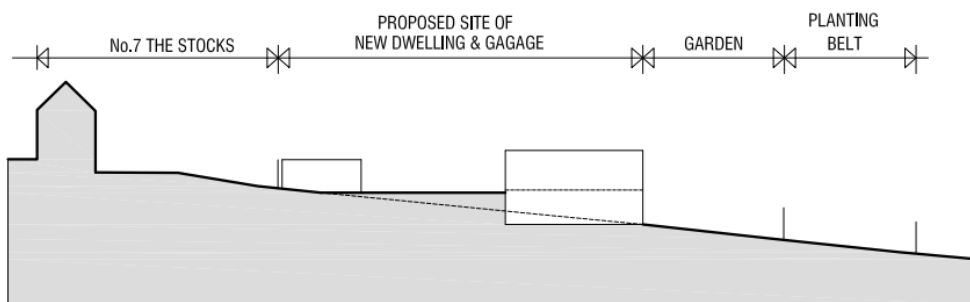


Figure 8: Proposed Site Section

4. Planning History

There is no relevant planning history relating to the application site itself, but planning history relating to the host dwelling to the north is listed below as follows:

K/75/0206 - New vehicular access – Approved - 11/07/1975

PL/2021/05040 - Retrospective replacement of existing timber vehicular and metal pedestrian gates with new timber vehicular gate and boundary fencing – Approved with conditions - 13/09/2021

PL/2021/10743 - Proposed 2-storey rear extension – Approved with conditions - 23/12/2021

5. The Proposal

The proposal seeks outline planning permission, with all matters reserved except for access, for the erection of one self-build dwelling house. The submitted details show a detached dwelling with associated parking area, gardens and detached garage building.

The application seeks to establish the principle of residential development and means of access only. All other matters including height, scale, massing, footprint, design, materials, drainage, foul sewage, and boundary treatments are reserved matters which would be considered under a subsequent application.

Access would be formed from the existing vehicular access as illustrated in Figure 5, bypassing the parking area and gardens of no.7, leading south into the application site.

The planning statement indicates that the proposed building would be a four-bedroom dwelling. Whilst height is not being fully considered at this stage, the site section (illustrated in Figure 8) shows a two-storey building set into the landscape, which would necessitate significant excavation and levelling works.

The applicants own and reside at no.7 The Stocks and are on the self-build register. As no available plots have come forward in the village, they propose to utilise the existing paddock to erect their self-build dwelling.

6. Planning Policy

National Context:

National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF)

Planning Practice Guidance (guidance on the policies contained within the NPPF)

Local Context:

Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS):

- Core Policy 1 – Settlement Strategy
- Core Policy 2 – Delivery Strategy
- Core Policy 15 - Spatial Strategy for the Melksham Community Area
- Core Policy 50 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Core Policy 51 – Landscape
- Core Policy 57 - Ensuring high quality design and place shaping
- Core Policy 60 - Sustainable Transport
- Core Policy 61 - Transport and Development

There are no saved policies of the Kennet Local plan that are relevant to the proposed development.

Seend Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2020 – 2030 – (Made: May 2021):

SP1: Locally Distinctive, High-Quality Design
SP4: Landscape and Local Key Views
SP11 Sustainable Development in Seend Parish
SP12: Custom and Self-build Housing
SP13: Climate Change and Sustainable Design
SP14: Impact of Development on Highways and Traffic

Seend Parish Neighbourhood Plan - Site Assessment Report – January 2020.

Design guidance:

- The Wiltshire Design Guide (adopted April 2024);
- National Design Guide (2021);
- East Wiltshire (former Kennett District) Landscape Character Assessment.

7. Consultations

Ecology – No objection subject to conditions. Full comments are included within the relevant section of the assessment below.

Drainage – No objection subject to conditions. Full comments are included within the relevant section of the assessment below.

Highways – Attention is drawn to the principal conflict with the settlement strategy, no further objections are raised subject to conditions. Full comments are included within the relevant section of the assessment below.

Seend Parish Council – Support.

8. Publicity

The application has been advertised by way of writing directly to adjoining landowners and relevant consultees. Seven nearby properties were consulted on the proposals.

One lengthy letter of objection has been received from the immediate neighbour to the west. The full comments can be read on the Councils website, however the key points made are bullet-pointed and summarised below for ease of reference.

Objections:

- The proposed development would conflict with relevant chapters of the NPPF, namely 'Rural Housing' and highlights that paragraph 84 would not be relevant in this instance.
- The site is in an isolated location within the open countryside.
- The site falls outside of any settlement boundaries as defined within the development plan.
- The site is not well serviced by public transport as there is one bus service which runs once an hour and ceases in the early evening and does not operate on a Sunday.
- The footpath which runs towards the village of Seend is unsafe in that it is in parts narrow, overgrown, in some parts an unmade surface, unlit and unsuitable for the elderly, infirm, or people pushing wheelchairs or pushchairs. (Photographic evidence provided in full comments).

- Whilst the nearby village of Seend is a designated larger village offering some facilities and amenities, it is not easily accessible from the site as such the site should not be considered as accessible or sustainable.
- The proposal is contrary to CP 1 & 2 of the WCS as it falls outside of any defined limits of development and none of the exception policies apply.
- SP12 of the Seend Neighbourhood Plan states that *"In principle, support will be given to proposals for custom or self-build projects in locations where new residential development is acceptable."* The proposal would however be required to meet all other standards within this plan and the WCS which it does not.
- The submission draws attention to an appeal site for up to 26 self-build dwellings on land to the east of Waitrose, A429, Malmesbury. The appeal and the current proposal are not comparable.
- The inspector concluded in the above appeal that there is a considerable shortfall in the delivery of self-build units however the number is unknown. The delivery of 26 self-build units was considered to be sufficient public benefit to outweigh the harm. The current proposal seeks only one self-build unit for private purpose. In addition, the Malmesbury site, whilst outside any limits of development, is closely related to a higher order settlement and would have been much more sustainable and within walking distance of a significant number of facilities, amenities, and employment opportunities.
- The proposals would have a detrimental impact on the character of the surrounding landscape and would conflict with CP 51 of the WCS, SP1 of the NHP and paragraph 180 of the NPPF.
- The proposed 'back land' development is uncharacteristic of the area and causes conflict with CP 57.
- The 'cut and fill' required to accommodate the dwelling into the slope of the land would not protect or conserve the landscape character.
- The proposed building would be a prominent feature on the landscape when viewed from the south, any planting proposed to screen this would need to be significant and mature.
- The proposed parking and turning area would have a negative impact on neighbour amenity being positioned so closely to the host dwelling and its associated amenity space.
- Whilst the design and layout would be considered at reserved matters stage, the indicative site plan demonstrates a large dwelling which would be orientated towards the neighbouring property which would potentially cause overlooking and loss of privacy.

9. Planning Considerations

Principle of development

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.

Core Policy 1 of the WCS, the Settlement Strategy, identifies the settlements where sustainable development will take place. Starting with Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres, through to Large and Small Villages.

Core Policy 2 of the WCS states that *"Within the limits of development, as defined on the policies map, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development at the Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages... At the Small Villages development will be limited to infill within the existing built area."* The application site is most closely related to Seend Cleeve, which is defined as a small village within the WCS, although the NHP does not define the site or 'The Stocks' as forming part of this settlement. The host dwelling forms one of the most southern forms of development in this area with open countryside spanning to the south.

Seend Village, which is defined as a large village within the WCS, is positioned approximately 0.7 miles to the east and is accessed only via a national speed limit road which has remnants of a footpath/pavement alongside it. The application site falls well outside of any defined limits of development and as such is considered to lie within an area of open countryside. Whilst Seend Cleeve is a small village where infill development may be considered acceptable, the proposal cannot be defined as such as it is backland development, neighboured to the west and south by open countryside, and would result in an elongation of the village. In any event, and as previously mentioned, The Stocks does not form part of the village, as illustrated in figure 3 of the NHP.

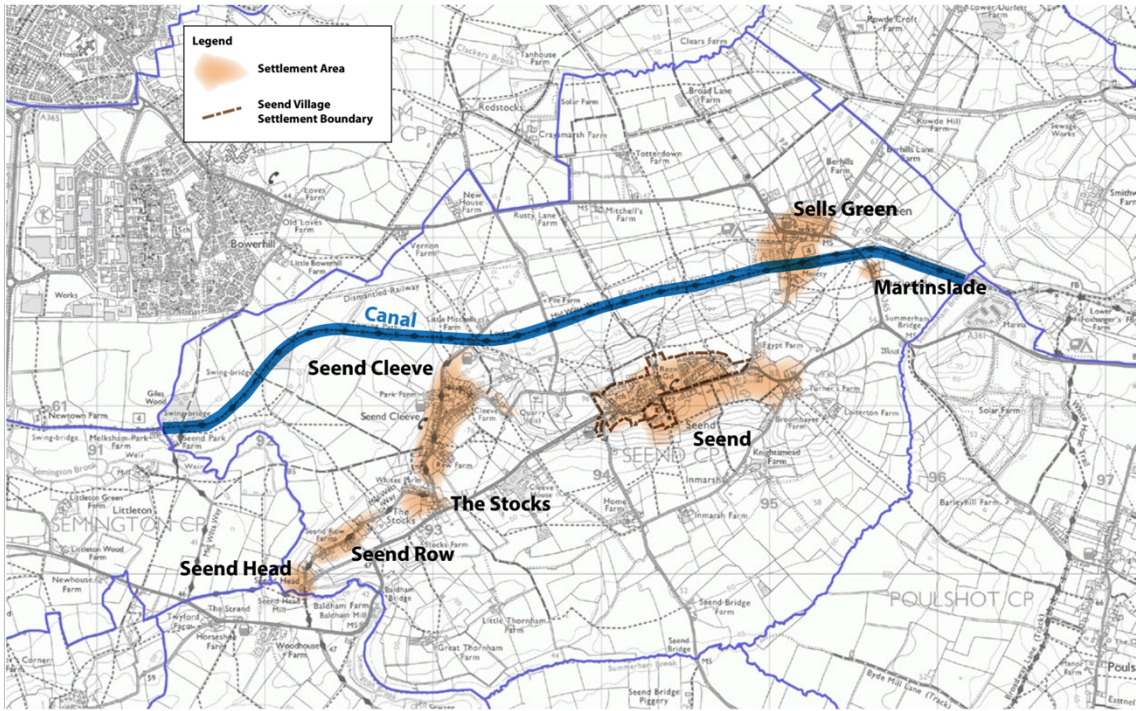


Figure 9: Settlement areas as illustrated in Figure 3 of the NHP.

There are no exception policies (as stipulated under paragraph 4.25 of the WCS) which would be relevant in this instance. As such, the proposal does not accord with CP 1&2 of the WCS.

The Seend Parish Neighbourhood Plan addresses sustainable development under policy SP11 and states that *“Proposals for improved local employment opportunities, housing developments for up to and including 9 units, and / or new services and facilities that contribute to the continued and sustainable growth of the Parish will be supported in principle provided that development:*

- i. accords with the limits of development provisions of Wiltshire Core Strategy Core Policy 2;*
- ii. is to be delivered as a rural exception site in line with Neighbourhood Plan policy SP10 and Wiltshire Core Policy 44; or,*
- iii. is a re-use of brownfield land within the rest of the Parish area.*
- iv. is not located in the open spaces and large gardens identified in the Seend Conservation Area Strategy which would detract from the distinct open grain of Seend Village.”*

As previously stated, the proposal does not accord with CP 2 of the WCS; as such, there is conflict with point i of SP11 in the NHP. The site is not a designated rural exception site, brownfield land nor is it situated within Seend Village Row, therefore points ii-iv are not relevant in this instance. It is noted that the application has been called in due to ‘Housing Need’ within the neighbour plan area however, as demonstrated within the Seend Parish Neighborhood Plan Site Assessment Report, site allocations for housing have already been identified, therefore development should be focused within the site allocations or where they otherwise meet the criteria as outlined in CP 2 of the WCS.

SP12 of the NHP addresses custom and self-build housing so is also relevant in considering the principle of development. It states that, *"In principle, support will be given to proposals for custom or self-build projects in locations where new residential development is acceptable."* As established by CP 1 & 2 of the WCS and SP11 of the NHP, the proposed site is not considered to be an appropriate location. The explanatory text for this policy outlines that aspects of location, content, scale, and design will be required to meet all other standards in both the NHP and WCS for which conflict regarding location has already been identified.

The NPPF is also a material consideration in determining planning applications, however it is stated under paragraph 12 *"The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted."*

In light of the conflict found with CP 1 & 2 of the WCS, SP 11 & 12 of the NHP and the NPPF, the proposal for a detached residential property outside of any defined limits of development within an area of open countryside is considered to be unacceptable in principle.

The outline application seeks consideration of the principle of development and access only, however the Local Planning Authority (LPA) must be reasonably sure that all aspects of the proposal would be acceptable and achievable if planning permission were to be granted, therefore notwithstanding the above stance on the principle of development, the remainder of the report which seek to consider other aspects of the scheme and will conclude with the planning balance and recommended decision.

Landscape and visual impact CP 51 & 57

CP51 of the WCS requires that *"Development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and must not have a harmful impact upon landscape character, while any negative impacts must be mitigated as far as possible through sensitive design and landscape measures."*

The submitted details depict a two storey, large, detached dwelling house, which would be built into the gradient of the land and would require a significant amount of 'carving out' to accommodate its footprint on a level ground. The proposed property would be built on what is otherwise an area of undeveloped area of open pasture and would become a prominent feature in the area, especially when viewed from the south. Whilst it is respected that there is no immediate PROW to the south of the site, this would not negate the building's physical presence, with views of the developed land capable of being glimpsed from the highway to the north.

The change of use of this parcel of land to domestic use, the sculpting of the land required to accommodate the buildings and the erection of a large, detached dwelling and associated outbuilding would result in harm to the landscape character of the area, along with the loss of arable land in an area of open countryside. The proposal would also not conserve, nor enhance the character of the area. It is noted that the indicative site plan includes a planting belt along the southern boundary; this would need to be left to mature for a significant amount of time to eventually screen the development from view. Whilst it would offer some screening, it would not justify the change of use of this field to domestic use.

Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy states that *"A high standard of design is required in all new developments, including extensions, alterations, and changes of use of existing buildings. Development is expected to create a strong sense of place through drawing on the local context and being complementary to the locality."* Proposals should seek to enhance local distinctiveness and have regard to existing townscapes, patterns of development and the historic environment and landscape setting.

There is a clear pattern of development in the immediate area. Dwellings are situated close to the highway edge with rear gardens spanning behind followed by open countryside. The developed land to the north which forms Seend Cleeve continues to see single depth plots fronting the highway. The proposal would comprise 'backland' development which is uncharacteristic of the area and goes against the general pattern of development, historic settlement boundaries and landscape setting.

The proposal is considered to cause harm to the landscape setting and would have a negative visual impact due to it going against the pattern of development and character of the area. As such, the proposals do not comply with CP 51 and 57 of the WCS.

Impact on neighbour amenity

The application site is neighboured to the east by no. 5 The Stocks, a detached, two storey dwelling with substantial gardens to the rear. The proposed dwelling would be positioned approximately 30m from the neighbouring dwelling. The Wiltshire Design Guide advises that properties should retain a 20m separation distance, which the indicative site layout accords with. It is therefore considered unlikely that there would be any significant harm caused in terms of loss of privacy or overlooking. It is however noted by the case officer and highlighted by the neighbour, that the proposed dwelling would be angled towards the neighbouring property, presumably to ensure the rear elevation is fully south facing to guarantee solar gains and benefits. However, the elevational design of the proposed building is a matter that is left to be considered at reserved matters stage. As such, any aspects involving sustainable construction or low carbon energy are matters that cannot be formally considered at this stage.

The proposed building would also be positioned over 30m from the host dwelling which again would ensure there would be no significant loss of privacy, although it seems possible that some overlooking of the neighbouring gardens may be possible. In addition, the siting of a garage building on the northern boundary would result in overshadowing of the host dwelling's gardens to the north.

The neighbour has highlighted that noise nuisance would adversely affect the occupiers of the host dwelling due to the proposed access and parking arrangement. The access would be shared, and a parking area proposed for the host dwelling would act as a buffer between the driveway and host building and its gardens. Any impact caused in this regard is not considered to be significant.

Highways impact CP 61

The following comments were received from the highway officer:

"I have considered the information provided and wish to make the following comments.

The location is one which will be heavily if not wholly reliant on the use of a private vehicle. As such I will defer to your opinion as to whether there should be an objection on it being contrary to policies promoting a sustainable pattern of development.

I am minded that though not fully standard the existing access is acceptable to accommodate the vehicle movements with a single additional dwelling. The current access will need to be improved as shown and surfaced in a consolidated material. Due to the nature of the adjacent highway and the restriction of the site boundary, there is a requirement for a construction management statement.

Therefore, in summary, I am minded to raise no highway objection subject to conditions."

The highway officer highlights the unsustainable location of the development, which is one which carries significant weight in the planning balance. CP 61 of the WCS states that “*New development should be located and designed to reduce the need to travel particularly by private car, and to encourage the use of sustainable transport alternatives.*” The highway officer draws attention to the fact the occupants would be heavily reliant on use of a private vehicle. There are bus stops in close proximity to the application site, however these only offer a rather sporadic service which does not run all day or even every day of the week. There are not enough facilities or amenities within the immediate area to ensure occupants would not be reliant on the use of the private car, and as highlighted in the neighbour objection letter, pathways leading to the nearest facilities are unsuitable for the elderly, impaired or those using a pushchair or wheelchair.

The highway officer has suggested conditions to secure the parking, turning area and EV charging point prior to occupation, that a consolidated material is used adjacent to the highway and that a construction management statement be provided prior to commencement of development should planning permission be granted contrary to the officer’s recommendation. The applicant has agreed to these conditions.

Environmental and ecological impacts

The following comments have been received from the council’s ecologist:

“Thank you for consulting me on the above application. I have reviewed the submitted documents against OS maps, aerial photographs of the site and surrounding area, together with GIS layers of statutory and non-statutory designated sites and existing records of protected species.

Comprehensive ecological survey of the site has been undertaken by Herdwick Ecology (Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, 7 The Stocks, Seend, Melksham, SN10 6PL. March 2024). I agree with the findings of the report.

The application site does not lie within or immediately adjacent to any statutory or non-statutory designated sites for conservation. However, the site lies within a core sustenance zone for Lesser Horseshoe Bats, as detailed in the following paragraphs.

Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bats Special Area for Conservation (SAC)

The site lies within a core sustenance zone for Lesser Horseshoe bats associated with the Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bats SAC and therefore may have potential to result in significant adverse impact on the special features of that site. Appropriate Assessment (AA) under Section 63 of the Habitats Regulations must be carried out by the relevant Competent Authority (the LPA) to determine the potential significant effects and the suitability of any measures proposed to avoid or mitigate those effects.

*A test of likely significance has been carried out by the relevant Competent Authority (Wiltshire Council) as required by Regulation 63 Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. This concluded that as no mature or well-established vegetation is proposed for removal within the site and that no additional external lighting is proposed, given the scale and nature of the development there is no mechanism for adverse effect. The proposal includes planting of a tree belt to the southern edge of the site which would enhance the site for bats generally by providing additional foraging and contributing to primary habitat connectivity within the local area. **The HRA has concluded that the application is not likely to have significant impacts on the SAC and Appropriate Assessment is not required.***

A lighting condition should be applied to any permission given this application, as detailed below. Any domestic lighting, e.g. at doorways or pathways, should be low level bollard style or wall mounted and pointed downward to avoid light spill onto areas of vegetation likely to be used by wildlife, particularly Annex II bat species.

Biodiversity Net Gain

The application meets the exemption criteria for self-build and custom build applications, therefore no BNG is required for this site. The Preliminary Ecological Assessment Report states at section 5.6 that there is a separate Biodiversity Net Gain Report, however this is not found within the document bundle on the planning portal and therefore has not been reviewed. The same paragraph in the above report gives recommendations for the installation of bat and bird boxes, reptile refugia and habitat boxes which, together with the additional planting would enhance the site for biodiversity. In order to make this an enforceable part of the planning permission and therefore meet the requirements of Wiltshire Core Policy 50 and NPPF, these enhancements must appear on the site plan. However, I am happy that this can be secured by condition.”

Subject to the conditions suggested above being imposed in the eventuality that planning permission is granted, there are no remaining concerns from an ecological perspective.

Drainage

The following comments have been received from the Drainage department:

“The LLFA has no objections to this outline proposal subject to a sustainable surface water drainage strategy being provided at reserved matters stage.

The applicant should note that in all instances the preference should be to utilise blue-green SuDS which provide multifaceted benefits to the site (in terms of water quantity, quality, amenity and biodiversity).

Any proposals should be designed in accordance with the Non-statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems and the latest SuDS Manual (C753).”

10. Conclusion

PLANNING BALANCE

Principle of development: In light of the conflict found with CP 1 & 2 of the WCS, SP 11 & 12 of the NHP and the NPPF, the proposal for a detached residential property outside of any defined limits of development within an area of open countryside is considered to be unacceptable in principle. Wiltshire Council’s housing supply is currently secure; therefore, the development plan is considered to be up to date, and full weight is therefore given to this conflict.

Landscape and visual impact: The proposal would cause harm to the landscape setting and would have a negative visual impact due to going against the pattern of development and character of the area; as such, the proposals do not comply with CP 51 and 57 of the WCS. Significant weight is given to this conflict.

Impact on neighbour amenity: Any impact caused to neighbour amenity in this instance is considered to be relatively insignificant and could be ‘designed out’ at reserved matters stage. As such, neutral weight is afforded to this issue.

Highway Impacts: The highway officer has drawn attention to the unsustainable location of the proposed dwelling, but accepts that subject to conditions, the use of the site, and intensification of the access raise no objection on highways grounds. As such, the conflict caused here attracts modest weight.

Environmental and ecological impacts: The ecologist has raised no significant concerns with the proposal subject to conditions, from an ecological perspective, whilst an area of open grassland would be lost, this is offset by the provision of biodiversity enhancements that could be created within the scheme, as such, neutral weight is afforded to this issue.

Drainage: No concerns have been raised that could not be dealt with at the reserved matters stage, as such neutral weight is afforded to this issue.

Self-Build: The scheme would result in the provision of 1 self-build dwelling for the applicant to occupy. The Council has accepted recently that demand for self-build plots is advancing at a faster rate than is being met by current supply (APP/Y3940/W/23/3317252 Land to the East of Waitrose, A429, Malmesbury) and that in light of this, the appeal was allowed. Therefore, it would be logical to assume this development (which is also contrary to CP 1 and 2) should be considered in the same light.

However, this application is for a single dwelling, whereas the recent appeal decision (dated 5th March 2024) was for up to 26 dwellings in a location that the inspector considered to be reasonably sustainable (i.e. occupants could access services and facilities by a genuine choice of transport modes other than simply relying upon the private car). The same cannot be said for this site and therefore, although a benefit of the scheme, the wholly unsustainable nature of the site location and the fact that it is just one dwelling means that only limited to moderate weight can be given to this point.

In conclusion, the lack of identified harm against technical policies of the WCS is not a benefit of the development but would be a neutral aspect of it. The lack of technical objections and the conformity with policies within the development plan are therefore neutral points on the balance. The neutral points in this instance relate to impacts on ecology, neighbour amenity and drainage.

The overall proposal is afforded moderate weight in terms of the self-build aspect of the scheme; however, this is outweighed by the significant harm caused due to the impacts on the landscape setting and character and appearance of the area, along with the harm caused by the unsustainable location of the proposed dwelling.

It is considered that the adverse impacts of the proposed development (the conflict with CP 1, 2, 51, and 57 of the WCS of the development plan) would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits (notably the self-build nature of the scheme), when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole. As such, the application should be refused.

RECOMMENDATION:

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

1: Core Policy 1 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy sets out the 'Settlement Strategy' for the County, and in doing so identifies four tiers of settlement - Principal Settlement, Market Town, Local Service Centre, and Large and Small Village. Within the Settlement Strategy, the application site is not afforded a designation and is therefore considered to be in open countryside.

Core Policy 2 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy sets out the 'Delivery Strategy'. It identifies the scale of growth appropriate within each settlement tier. The policy states that, within the limits of development of those settlements, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development; but outside the defined limits – that is, in the countryside – other than in circumstances as permitted by other policies of the Plan, development will not be permitted, and that the limits of development may only be altered through identification of sites for development through subsequent Site Allocations Development Plan Documents and Neighbourhood Plans.

Core Policy 15 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy sets out the 'Spatial Strategy' for the Melksham Community Area in which the site lies. It states that development in the Melksham Community Area should be in accordance with the Settlement Strategy set out in Core Policy 1.

The proposal is for the change of use of the land to domestic use, with the erection of one 'self-build' dwelling and associated ancillary structure, the siting of which would be in the open countryside. Under Core policies 1, 2 and 15, this does not comply with the Settlement and Delivery Strategies as a matter of principle. The Strategies are designed to ensure new developments satisfy the fundamental principles of sustainability, and so it follows that where a proposal such as this fails to comply with them then it will be unsustainable in this overarching context. The application site is not identified for development in a Site Allocations Development Plan Document, and it is not allocated in a Neighbourhood Plan document.

Additionally, Core Policy 60 and 61 seek to locate new development in accessible locations reducing the need to travel, particularly by private car. By reason of the site's location in the open countryside, the proposal would also be in conflict with these policies as sustainable travel options are limited and reliance will be on the private car to meet most day-to-day needs.

Furthermore, there are no material considerations or exceptional circumstances, including those set out in other policies of the Plan, which override the core policy's position. The proposal is therefore contrary to Core Policies 1, 2 and 15 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, and paragraphs 2, 7-15 and 47 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) since it comprises unsustainable development.

2: The proposed development would be built in a field that forms part of the open landscape character of the area and would form an unnatural extension to the existing development in that area. Development of this field would erode the rural landscape setting by introducing a domestic use and built form on this undeveloped edge, which in turn would harm its character and visual amenity. Therefore, it would conflict with the aims of Core Policy 51 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy 2015 to conserve or enhance the landscape settings of settlements and to maintain the separate identity of them and the transition between man-made and natural landscapes at the urban fringe. Furthermore, it would conflict with paragraph 180 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.

The development would result in 'backland' development, which is uncharacteristic of the area and would result in harm to the landscape setting. The proposed location of the development would conflict with Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy 2015 which seeks to enhance local distinctiveness by responding to the value of the natural and historic environment including landscape setting, to be sympathetic to and conserve historic buildings and historic landscapes and to take account of the characteristics of the site and the local context to deliver appropriate development which relates well to its immediate setting.