

REPORT FOR SOUTHERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	19TH December 2024
Application Number	PL/2024/03228
Site Address	The Homestead, Sutton Hill, Sutton Mandeville, Salisbury, SP3 5ND
Proposal	Erection of agricultural building, soft landscaping and associated works
Applicant	Ms. E. Lodge
Town/Parish Council	Sutton Mandeville
Electoral Division	Fovant & Chalke Valley ED – Cllr N. Najjar
Type of application	Full
Case Officer	Mrs. Becky Jones

REASON FOR THE APPLICATION BEING CONSIDERED BY COMMITTEE

The application is before the Planning Committee at the request of the Local Division Member for the following reason(s) –

- High levels of concern from local parish council and neighbours
- Visual impact upon the surrounding area
- Design – bulk, height, general appearance

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to assess the merits of the proposed development against the policies of the development plan and other material considerations. Having considered these, the report recommends that planning permission be APPROVED and subject to planning conditions.

2. MAIN ISSUES

1. Principle of development and need for the building
2. Scale, design and impact on the National Landscape, settings of heritage assets, rights of way
3. Impact on neighbouring amenity
4. Ecology, protected species and Biodiversity Net Gain
5. Highway safety

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is approximately 400sqm in area and located about 60m north east of an existing dwelling called 'The Homestead'. Homestead comprises an agricultural holding laid to grassland extending approximately 2.6 hectares. The site consists of a two-storey

detached house with additional detached outbuildings including a barn and stables. The site is within the small village of Sutton Mandeville which is designated as a Small Village in the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) and accessed via Sutton Hill. Sutton Mandeville is located within the Cranborne Chase National Landscape (AONB). The site is not within a Conservation Area, there are no Tree Preservation Orders affecting the site, there are no listed structures on site. Footpath SMAN13 Public Right of Way runs north/south through the field, east of the main house. SMAN 3 runs north/south in the field to the east of the site. The total approximate area of the land outlined in blue below is 2.6 hectares.

Application site in red and extent of agricultural holding in blue (c2.6ha)

Looking north east towards the site and boundary with Sutton Hill



Nearby, Townsend is Grade II listed and lies to the west, Bonds is Grade II lies to the east, The Old Rectory Grade II lies to the east. Church Farmhouse Grade II lies opposite to the northeast. The Church of All Saints grade II* lies to the northeast with 4 designated associated monuments to the south side of the church.

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

14/02330/FUL Single rear and two storey side extensions Approved

PL/2021/08926 Change Menage to tennis court Approved

PL/2023/00647 Demolition of existing two storey extension and erection of single storey extension. Barn and stable conversion and installation of new swimming pool and land for mounted solar array Approved

PL/2024/03227 – undetermined partner application for new ground mounted solar array and associated works

5. PROPOSAL

This application proposes the erection of an agricultural building with an internal area of 39.3sqm. The agricultural building would measure about 5.9m x 7.9m and would have an eaves height of about 2.1m and a ridge height of 3.8m. Given the small size of the holding and the status of the site within the National Landscape (AONB) the agricultural building proposed would not constitute permitted development. The location for the building would be on the north eastern corner of the existing field, adjacent to Sutton Hill and to the east of the dwelling house and its associated buildings.

No hardstanding or access track is proposed and the proposed agricultural building would be powered by electricity from the main house.

6. CONSULTATIONS

AONB Office – comments and advice

Conservation – no objection

Ecology – no objection subject to conditions

Natural England – no objections subject to conditions to secure mitigation. Appropriate Assessment agreed.

Highways – No objection to revised scheme for access via existing residential curtilage

Rights of Way – no objection subject to informative to ensure path remains open at all times

Parish Council: Objection

At a public meeting held at The Stalls cafe, Manor Farm on Monday 13th May 2024, Sutton Mandeville Parish Council voted to object to this proposal for the following reasons:

- 1. The proposed site for the structure is not appropriate because it is at least 70m from the house and other buildings and requires the loss of pasture. Also, the plan shows an area of hard standing greater than the structure itself which could become a car parking area. The proposed new access from the road, with its requirement for extensive splays, would damage the street scene and detrimentally alter the character of the natural landscape. Application PL/2023/00647 included the conversion of a traditional barn near the house to provide accommodation and a swimming pool which result in restricted access to existing out buildings. These approved plans have given rise to the current need for further development of land at The Homestead. The extent of these new proposals, along with PL/2024/03227 at the same address, represent excessive development of this historic site within clear view of SMAN 3, SMAN 13 and neighbouring houses.*
- 2. The Planning Statement says that the proposed structure would be of a scale, form and appearance commonly seen and expected within this farmed landscape, yet the drawing shows a T&G building resembling a large garden shed which is out of place in the corner of an agricultural field. Further, the Statement cites 17/02615/FUL which granted permission for an agricultural building at a neighbouring property for machinery storage. That permission has lapsed and agricultural activity there remains restricted to one expedient annual forage cut, which in hindsight may not justify a building seving a one hectare field. Were permission granted for the current proposal at The Homestead, further similar applications in the area may arise forming a new pattern of development with precedent.*
- 3. There is no mention of previous agricultural activity on the land adjacent to The Homestead, nor is there a DEFRA holding number. The Parish Council is not convinced of the need for an agricultural structure where little or no farming takes place. The pasture covers approximately one hectare of land, and although it is by definition agricultural land, there is limited scope for farming activities. Until recent consented developments there was already adequate provision for storage on the property.*
- 4. PL/2022/03875, relating to Land Adjacent to The Stables (approximately 100m from The Homestead) claimed that a small parcel of pasture was not viable for agricultural purposes and this was presented as justification for a proposed a new dwelling house. PL/2022/03875 was rejected on appeal. The issue here is appropriate and necessary development, and the conservation of agricultural land for the purposes of agriculture, at least in principle, and the protection of the landscape within the ANOB.*

On 1st July Sutton Mandeville Parish Council held a second public meeting to consider the revised plans for the proposed erection of a timber building and new access. Two residents voiced clear objections which had been detailed in a submitted comment, and another resident questioned the feasibility of the revised proposal for an access, which would require major earthworks and cause a significant change to the character of the narrow country

lane.. SMPC welcomes the subsequent withdrawal of the access proposal as it lacked topographic detail, and would have contributed detrimentally to rain water run off due to the area of necessary graded slope. SMPC would like to see new drawings as there are inconsistencies with those available, and ambiguity about the proposed area of hard standing around the building and access to it from within the domestic curtilage. It is also noted that the proposed location of the building conflicts with the existing approval for a solar array under PL/2023/00647. In light of the parish council's objection to PL/2024/03227 for an array in the field to the south, it must object to this proposal for a timber building.

7. REPRESENTATIONS

The application was publicised by letters posted to near neighbours and a site notice.

Objections summary – 3 households represented

- Severe impact on neighbouring properties – too close to houses. Spoil views and outlook from house and gardens.
- Storage for machinery already exists, size is not commensurate with holding – too large
- Inappropriate materials. Change of use is inappropriate in the AONB
- Siting is harmful to the established character of the village - small clusters of dwelling with pasture and woodland
- Create precedent
- Harm to settings of listed buildings and amenities of occupiers
- Harm from proposed access – note this has been removed from the scheme and access would be via the existing residential curtilage
- Hardstanding for vehicles means loss of agricultural land
- Contrary to AONB policy, highly visible from 2 rights of way
- Tree planting in the northeast corner of the landholding is merely vegetation and temporary, inadequate screening from existing planting and contours of the land, Visible in winter.
- Real purpose is for domestic storage – other buildings have been converted
- Don't object to idea of a small storage building
- Object to new pedestrian gate – note this has been removed from the scheme.
- Revised location of the new building is better than the first, less obtrusive and happy no new entrance, but would prefer it to be located amongst other existing buildings and close to Homestead

8. PLANNING POLICY

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 S66

National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and PPG

Wiltshire Core Strategy

Core Policy 2 Delivery Strategy

Core Policy 34 Additional Employment Land - farming in part (ii)

Core Policy 48 Supporting Rural Life

Core Policy 50 Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Core Policy 52 Green Infrastructure

Core Policy 51 Landscape

Core Policy 57 Ensuring high quality design and place shaping

Core Policy 58 Conservation of the Historic Environment

Other:

Cranborne Chase Partnership Plan (2019 – 2024) and Good Practice Note 8 – New Agricultural Buildings

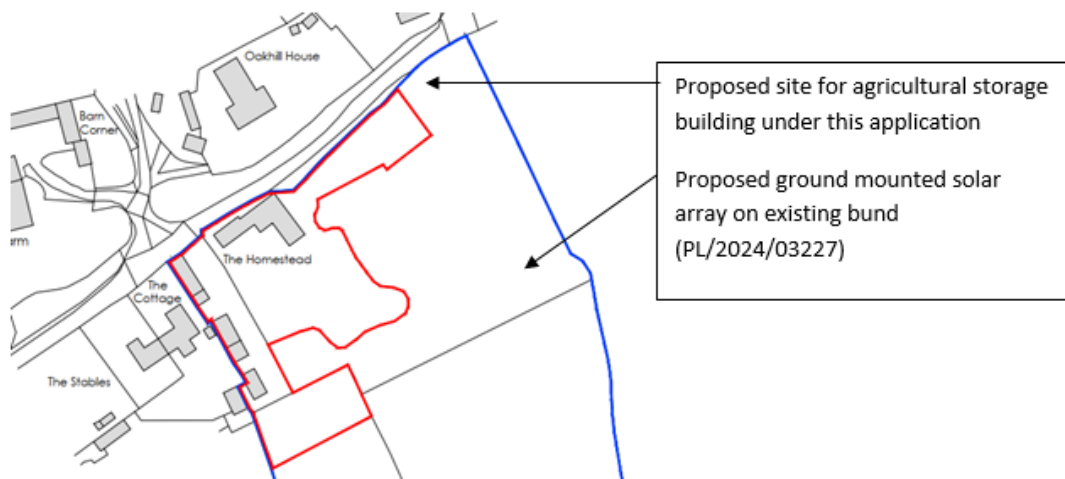
Neighbourhood Plan - undesignated

9. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 Background

The applicant has previously received planning consent to create a solar array between the proposed site for the agricultural storage building and the house:

Approved red line and site plans for PL/2023/00647:



There is an accompanying application PL/2024/03227 for a ground mounted solar array to be sited on the existing bund behind a landscape screen and this application is also being presented to committee for determination.

The estimated area of the existing holding outlined in blue is 2.6 hectares.

9.2 Principle and need

Planning permission is required for the development. The application must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. (Section 70(2) of the Town and Country planning Act and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compensation Act 2004). The NPPF 2023 confirms in para 11 that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable. For decision making, that means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.

The site lies within the National Landscape (AONB) in the Chilmark Quarries bat SAC. These are protected sites under para 11 footnote 7 of the NPPF and therefore, the presumption in favour of sustainable development would not automatically apply to development where harm is identified to these designations.

Agricultural Use?

Development in the countryside is normally strictly controlled. Several third parties have questioned the use of the site for agricultural purposes. In noting from the site history that no formal change of use of the land has taken place, its use is considered to continue to be agricultural. Agriculture is defined in the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 as:

“agriculture” includes horticulture, fruit growing, seed growing, dairy farming, the breeding and keeping of livestock (including any creature kept for the production of food, wool, skins or fur, or for the purpose of its use in the farming of land), the use of land as grazing land, meadow land, osier land, market gardens and nursery grounds, and the use of land for woodlands where that use is ancillary to the farming of land for other agricultural purposes, and “agricultural” shall be construed accordingly;

Therefore, whilst its active use for grazing or other livestock purposes may not be apparent, the site remains in agricultural use until such time as a lawful and material change of use takes place.

Need and choice of location for the storage building

In order for the remaining agricultural unit to function and be maintained, the applicants consider that there is a need for an agricultural building for the storage of tools and machinery. The proposal would only serve the small holding. The applicant has stated:

The proposed agricultural storage building is essential to support the operational needs. It will be used for the storage of equipment, machinery, and materials necessary for agricultural activities, ensuring efficient farm management and productivity. As this facility will facilitate proper organisation and quick access to tools and materials.

The chosen location ensures that it can serve its intended purpose without causing disruption to the existing building group. This location ensures that the storage building is directly associated with the existing on-site activities, enhancing operational efficiency and functionality. Locating the building in this position helps minimise its visual impact on the

main dwelling and surrounding properties, as it is adequately screened from the public highway, and is situated in a less prominent area of the site. this location allows for effective movement and storage of agricultural equipment while avoiding congestion around the existing structures. While we acknowledge the suggestion of potentially moving the building closer to the existing group, doing so may not be feasible due to the following reasons:

- The proximity of existing buildings limits available space for the storage building, which could hinder operational efficiency.
- Moving the building may complicate operations for agricultural machinery in terms of access and manoeuvrability
- The existing public right of way running through the site could present potential safety and security issues. This buffer zone allows agricultural activities to be conducted safely and reduces the risks of accidents or conflicts between farm operations and public access. Having the building too close to the PROW may present security concerns, such as unauthorised individuals being able to access the area and potentially breaking in to steal equipment.

In summary, the proposed location for the agricultural storage building has been carefully considered to balance operation efficiency, safety, and minimal visual impact. We believe this arrangement is the most effective way to support the operational needs while addressing potential safety and security concerns.

Policy Principles

Core Policy 34 of the WCS supports development in the countryside for agricultural purposes:

Outside the Principal Settlements, Market Towns and Local Service Centres, developments will be supported that:

- ii. support sustainable farming and food production through allowing development required to adapt to modern agricultural practices and diversification; or*

Where they:

- a. meet sustainable development objectives as set out in the policies of this Core Strategy and*

There is no sustainability objection to the scheme, it is required to meet the needs of a small holding in the countryside

- b. are consistent in scale with their location, do not adversely affect nearby buildings and the surrounding area or detract from residential amenity and*

This matter is considered in detail in this report

- c. are supported by evidence that they are required to benefit the local economic and social needs and*

The site is not a commercially productive holding, but can be used on a domestic scale. The applicant has set out their need for the building which is small in scale and appropriate for the management of the 2.6ha holding.

- d. would not undermine the delivery of strategic employment allocations and*

Not applicable

e. are supported by adequate infrastructure.

The site would be served via the existing residential access, and through the farmyard. Any internal gates can be adjusted to suit the needs of the vehicles.

Therefore, the development of a storage building for agricultural purposes on this small holding is considered to be acceptable in principle, subject to the detailed criteria above and other material considerations as set out in the NPPF and WCS policies, subject to the detailed landscape and heritage considerations set out below.

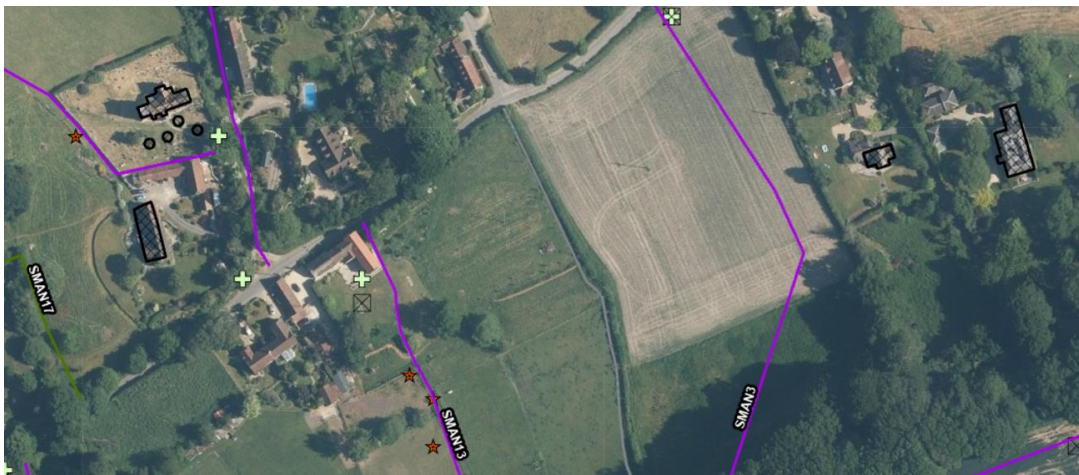
9.3 Scale, design and impact on the National Landscape, settings of heritage assets, rights of way and neighbouring amenity

The site is located near to and is visible from several listed buildings which form part of the small village of Sutton Mandeville. S66 of the 1990 Act make provision to ensure that LPAs have **special regard** to the setting of listed buildings when considering development that may affect them. The NPPF Section 15 sets out the considerations for conserving and enhancing the historic environment. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, **great weight** should be given to the asset's conservation. CP58 states that designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance.

The site (and the small village of Sutton Mandeville) is located within the countryside of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape (AONB) and great weight must be attached to the importance of landscape conservation and enhancement in this area (NPPF para 182). CP51 sets out the criteria for landscape conservation within the AONB and seeks to ensure that development proposals have taken account of the objectives, policies and actions set out in the relevant Management Plans for these areas. CP57 sets out general design criteria for new development.

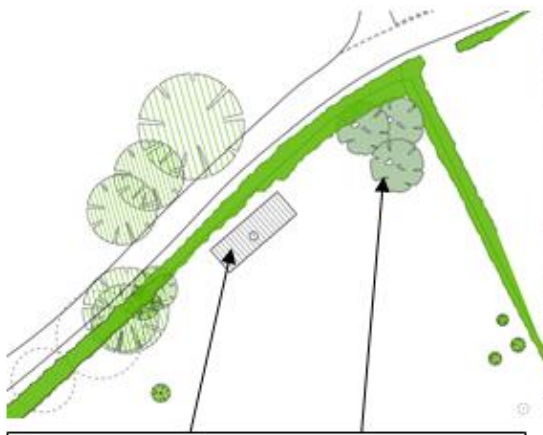
The site located has been amended to ensure that the building would be located behind the cover of the existing trees and vegetation lining Sutton Hill. The site is positioned between two rights of way, and close to several listed buildings.

Rights of way (purple) and listed buildings (hatched)

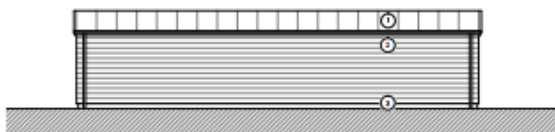


The development would be visible from the rights of way that traverse the site and is likely to be visible from upper floors and gardens of nearby dwellings, particularly in winter time. The strong concerns expressed by several households in the vicinity of the site and the Parish Council have been noted, and appropriate consultees including the NL Partnership, rights of way and the conservation officer have been asked to consider the scheme.

Scale, design and landscape Impact



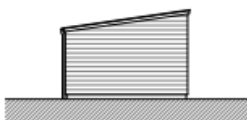
Proposed building and new tree planting



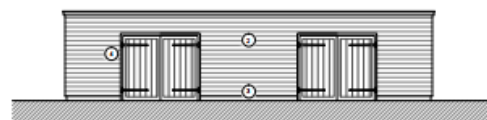
3 PROPOSED NORTH WEST ELEVATION
P100 scale 1:100



4 PROPOSED NORTH EAST ELEVATION
P100 scale 1:100



5 PROPOSED SOUTH WEST ELEVATION
P100 scale 1:100



6 PROPOSED SOUTH EAST ELEVATION
P100 scale 1:100

KEY	
1	Standing seam roof
2	Horizontal timber cladding
3	Brick plinth
4	Timber barn double doors
5	Timber casement window



The Cranborne Chase Partnership **Good Practice Note 8 – New Agricultural Buildings** notes that the Partnership:

“is aware that the increased mechanisation and the size of machinery used in farming means that a significant number of more traditional buildings are inappropriate or inadequate for modern use. The AONB Management Plan notes, however, that development proposals need to be of an appropriate form, scale, and materials as well as being in an appropriate location to integrate with the character of the nationally important landscapes of this AONB. New buildings should integrate with the landscape character of the AONB and the locality.”

Integration is frequently achieved through attention to the scale of a proposal. It is, nevertheless, important to consider the location of the proposed development so that best use is made of landform and existing landscape features to help integration. Matt colours, using darker colours for the roofs, the sides and the doors, is encouraged in the Practice Note. It also states:

New agricultural buildings should not only be appropriately located and sized, but also to have dark roofs and side cladding that extends down the side of the building, preferably to ground level and at least to one metre of the ground. Access doors and roller shutters should also be of a matt and coloured finish.

Where buildings are proposed in the setting of a Listed Building or Conservation Area traditional designs and materials are likely to be more appropriate than modern ones. In any of these situations advice should be sought from the Local Planning Authority’s Conservation Officer.

The single storey building, being sited close to the existing tree and vegetation belt along Sutton Hill (and measuring approximately 5.9m x 7.9m, with an eaves height of about 2.1m and a ridge height of 3.8m) is considered to be small scale, it can be conditioned to secure use for agricultural purposes, and is in proximity to the existing built area of a small village. The National Landscape Partnership has not objected to the revised scheme and their comments have been considered:

The site appears exposed to view from the road that comes from the north east. I see that three trees are proposed on that side of the building. However, unless they are planted as substantial specimens they will not provide the extent of screening shown on the architect’s plan. If a permission is contemplated, it would be appropriate to require, by condition, that the three trees are container grown standards. Multi-stem specimens would have a wider spread. Columnar varieties would not be appropriate.

Therefore, it can be reasonably concluded that subject to appropriately worded conditions, the scheme is not expected to have an adverse impact on the character of the National Landscape. No objection is raised to the modest storage building, which would be constructed from acceptable materials subject to a condition, is sited close to existing tree screening and includes provision of further new tree planting to screen it from the north east approach to Sutton Hill. The Dark Night Skies Reserve can be protected by a suitable condition to control new external artificial light – see ecology section.

In conclusion, and subject to suitable conditions, the proposal is considered to comply with CP51, CP57 and the NPPF and would not harm the character and appearance of the National Landscape.

Heritage Impact

The conservation officer undertook a site visit to look at The Homestead and the potential impact of the scheme on the settings of nearby listed buildings and other heritage assets. She concluded:

The Homestead - The significance of the building lies largely with its historic fabric and architecture - its form, layout and architectural expression/detailing and use of high-quality design materials which have significant aesthetic and architectural interest and which contribute to the character of the area. Homestead provides a significant contribution to the street scene due to its architectural form, materials, design and likely history.

Homestead lies to the south side of the main road running parallel to the road with an historic thatched building at its core and a larger L shaped extension to the east. There is a detached stone and tile building to the west side which lies gable end on to the road and all form an attractive group within the village. To the south, the land slopes, but then rises up to a belt of trees known as Townsend Copse. The fields to the east side of the Homestead are bounded by hedgerows.

The proposal is to erect an agricultural building in the northeast corner of the site, formerly with a new access which has now been removed. This will ensure the hedgerow is maintained along the main road and there will be no hard standing. Presumably vehicular access will be from the main entrance or there is a side pedestrian access to the east side of The Homestead.

The building will be constructed of timber cladding on brick plinth with slate roof and will be 39.3 sqm. There is no objection in principle if there is proven need for the building, but the location is questioned as it is detached from the building group. The Church of All Saints and Church farmhouse is well concealed by trees and hedgerows and though Bonds can be seen in the distance it is not considered it impacts on setting.

The applicant then responded to the points above regarding the location, they stated:

Location of the building: the chosen location ensures that it can serve its intended purpose without causing disruption to the existing building group. This location ensures that the storage building is directly associated with the existing on-site activities, enhancing operational efficiency and functionality. Locating the building in this position helps minimise its visual impact on the main dwelling and surrounding properties, as it is adequately screened from the public highway, and is situated in a less prominent area of the site. this location allows for effective movement and storage of agricultural equipment while avoiding congestion around the existing structures.

While we acknowledge the suggestion of potentially moving the building closer to the existing group, doing so may not be feasible due to the following reasons:

- The proximity of existing buildings limits available space for the storage building, which could hinder operational efficiency.*
- Moving the building may complicate operations for agricultural machinery in terms of access and manoeuvrability*
- The existing public right of way running through the site could present potential safety and security issues. This buffer zone allows agricultural activities to be conducted safely and reduces the risks of accidents or conflicts between farm operations and public access. Having the building too close to the PROW may present security concerns, such as unauthorised individuals being able to access the area and potentially breaking in to steal equipment.*

In conclusion, the conservation officer has examined the potential impacts of the development on heritage assets and confirmed:

The NPPF confirms that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). It makes clear that any harm to a designated heritage asset requires clear and convincing justification.

*There is no objection to the proposal and the case officer can decide on the location of the building. It is recommended a materials condition is agreed to include roof with both slates and ridge tiles and method of fixing and colour of timber cladding. The impact of the proposals on heritage assets will be **neutral** and the requirements of current conservation legislation, policy or guidance are considered to be met and there is therefore no objection to the approval of the application*

Therefore, subject to suitable materials being agreed by condition to ensure conservation of the landscape character of the NL and the settings of heritage assets including Homestead, there is no objection under CP58.

Rights of Way Impact

The proposed building is located approximately 40 metres to the north east of public footpath SMAN13. The Rights of way confirmed that there is no objection to the proposal subject to the path remaining open and available at all times.

9.4 Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

Neighbours have strongly objected to the proposal on several grounds including the impact on their amenity and loss of outlook.

Core Policy 57 is not phrased in such a way as to *prevent* development which affects neighbouring properties, but it does require development to have regard to such matters. Similarly, the test of the NPPF is that the existing occupiers would still have a high standard of amenity and not that their existing amenity is not affected at all. Residential amenity refers to the quality of residential areas and the value to local residents and is affected by significant changes to the environment including privacy, outlook, daylighting and sunlight inside the house, living areas and within private garden spaces (which should be regarded as extensions to the living space of a house). It is an inherent part of the decision-making process for the LPA to assess the effects that a proposal will have on individuals and weigh these against the wider public interest in determining whether development should be allowed to proceed.

Therefore, whilst this agricultural storage building may be visible from neighbouring dwellings, their gardens and the rights of way, this is not an automatic reason for refusal on amenity grounds. The building is single storey, modest in height, acceptable in appearance and would be screened by existing vegetation and new tree planting. The building would not impinge on light levels, cause any overlooking or generate undue noise or disturbance. Therefore, it can reasonably be concluded that appropriate levels of amenity are considered achievable in compliance with CP57.

9.5 Ecology, protected species and Biodiversity Net Gain

The proposal will result in the loss of a small area of modified grassland. CP50 sets out the criteria for biodiversity and development. The ecologist has considered the proposals and concluded that there is no objections to the scheme, subject to conditions. The application site sits within the Chilmark Quarries bat SAC. The application therefore has potential to result in significant adverse impacts either alone or in combination with other projects within the statutorily designated sites. As required by the Habitats Regulations an Appropriate Assessment has been completed by the LPA. The assessment has reached a favourable conclusion, assuming the recommended conditions below are included in any permissions

granted. Due to the nature and location of the proposal on existing disturbed ground and the lighting plan proposed, it is considered there will be no mechanism for effect in terms of impacts upon bats. The AA was sent to Natural England and approved by them, subject to the mitigation being secured by condition.

No evidence of protected species were identified during the surveys, however the site has potential to support reptiles and breeding birds. Bats may also use the adjacent hedgerow as a foraging and commuting route. No records for dormice exist in close proximity to the habitat and the hedgerow was assessed as having low potential to support dormice. Earlier proposals included the removal of a section of hedgerow for access, this proposal has been altered and no hedgerow is proposed to be removed which is welcomed. However, the hedgerow is functionally linked to suitable dormouse habitat and therefore should be protected during the adjacent works. A condition would be imposed to ensure that there is no additional vegetation removal.

This application was submitted prior to Small Sites Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) becoming mandatory. However, Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires all development to demonstrate no net loss of biodiversity. The NPPF also encourages applications to deliver measurable net gains. No demonstration of ways to deliver no net loss have been included within the application. However, the inclusion of enhancement measures for example bird and bat boxes can be secured by condition.

Natural England has endorsed the Appropriate Assessment and its recommendations. Further comments from NE are reflected in the proposed conditions and in conclusion, no objection is raised under CP50.

9.6 Highway Safety

It is proposed that the building may be accessed by vehicles across the applicant's land, via the existing farmyard and access from Sutton Hill.



The highways officer has queried the width of the existing gate, but raises no objection to the proposed agricultural building, in compliance with CP57.

10. CONCLUSION – the ‘planning balance’

The application seeks to provide a single storey agricultural storage building to serve the needs of the small holding of about 2.6ha. The site is positioned adjacent to Sutton Hill, behind an existing screen of trees and vegetation and further tree planting is proposed. The building would be accessed via an existing gateway serving the main house. The site is

positioned between two rights of way, near to existing homes and listed buildings, within the National Landscape and Chilmark Quarries bat SAC.

Great weight must be given to landscape conservation in the National Landscape. The proposal generally meets the objectives of the NL Management Plan and good practice note 8 and no objection is raised by the NL Partnership, provided a robust condition to secure adequate new tree planting for screening (north east field corner) is imposed. Great weight must also be applied to the conservation of the settings of heritage assets and in this case, the conservation officer considers that the impact on the settings of listed buildings is neutral and raises no objection.

There are no identified harms that are likely to arise from the development in terms of neighbouring amenity, impacts on the existing rights of way, or to protected species. Some very modest weight may be attached to these considerations.

The development presents the opportunity to control lighting levels on the site and to reinforce native planting to the benefit of bat species within the Chilmark Quarries SAC. Biodiversity enhancement may also be achieved by condition and these considerations may all be afforded moderate weight in favour of the scheme.

In conclusion, provided appropriate conditions are imposed to restrict any future use of the building and secure appropriate, dark matt materials, the scheme is unlikely to have any negative effects on the National Landscape or the settings of heritage assets. Given that consultees consider that the scheme can be made acceptable with suitable conditions and mitigation, the NPPF indicates that the scheme should be approved and the planning balance weighs in favour of the development.

RECOMMENDATION

That the application be GRANTED planning permission subject to the following conditions –

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

Site Location (red line) Plan ref 23/782/E001 Rev C Dated Nov 2023

Existing site plan ref 23/782/E003 Rev D Dated Nov 2023

Proposed Site Plan (no access onto Sutton Hill) ref 782 P003 Rev G dated Nov 2023

Proposed Agricultural Storage Building Elevations, Floor Plan and Roof Plan ref 782 P100 Rev A dated Nov 2023

Note from agent received 10/9/24 confirming no hardstanding and source for services.

Preliminary Ecological Assessment by Ecosupport dated 27th March 2024

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

3. No site clearance and no removal of any trees or shrubs shall take place until full details of a Wildlife Protection and Enhancement Scheme have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The details shall include:

- i) Measures that will be taken to avoid harm to wildlife, including timing of works to avoid nesting birds and reptiles, and pre-commencement checks for protected species including badger.
- ii) Quantification of biodiversity net gain provision including a plan showing the location(s) and type(s) of feature(s) to enhance the site for biodiversity (such as swift or bat boxes or designing lighting to encourage wildlife).
- iii) Measures to control lighting during construction
- iv) Measures to ensure no negative impacts on the quality of any water courses or bodies
- v) Measures to control dust during construction

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed WPES

REASON: To avoid adverse impacts on biodiversity and to secure biodiversity enhancements.

4. Notwithstanding the approved plans and materials schedule, the agricultural storage building hereby approved shall not commence above slab level until the exact details and samples of the materials to be used for the external walls and roofs have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Materials shall be matt in finish and dark in colour. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and maintained in that condition thereafter.

REASON: The application contained insufficient information to enable this matter to be considered prior to granting planning permission and the matter is required to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority before development above slab level commences in order that the development is undertaken in an acceptable manner, in the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the National Landscape.

5. The existing trees and hedges shown on the Existing Site Plan ref 23/782/E003 Rev D shall be retained and protected with an enclosure/fencing during any excavation works and during the erection of the agricultural storage building. The hedgerow/ tree root protection areas (RPAs) shall be included and buffered accordingly.

The development, including the additional tree planting scheme for the north east corner of the site, shall be carried out in strict accordance with a tree planting schedule to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before development commences on the agricultural storage building the above slab level and in accordance with the following documents:

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. March 2024. EcoSupport;
- Proposed Site Plan 23/782/P003 Rev G. November 2023.

Any new trees shall be planted as standards, and of a multi stem variety to be agreed.

Reason: To avoid direct damage to hedgerow, shrubs and trees, through the compaction and disturbance of root protection zones which could cause deterioration of individual trees or shrubs. To protect potential habitat for bats. To ensure that the new trees can adequately screen the development. For the protection, mitigation and enhancement of biodiversity and the character of the National Landscape.

6. All soft landscaping and tree planting comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season following the first occupation of the building(s) or the completion of the development whichever is the sooner; All shrubs, trees and hedge planting shall be maintained free from weeds and shall be protected from damage by vermin and stock. Any trees or plants which, within a period of ten years, die, are removed, or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory landscaped setting for the development and the protection of existing important landscape features.

7. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) or any Order revoking or re-enacting or amending that Order with or without modification), the building hereby permitted shall only be used for agricultural purposes associated with the holding known as The Homestead and for no other uses.

REASON: To safeguard the amenities and character of the area.

8. No new artificial external light fixture or fitting will be installed within the application site or on the building until details of existing and proposed new lighting have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. The submitted details will demonstrate how the proposed lighting will impact on bat habitat compared to the existing situation. The plans will be in accordance with the appropriate Environmental Zone standard (E0 for the National Landscape) as set out by the Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP) Guidance Notes on the Avoidance of Obtrusive Light (GN 01/2021) and Guidance note GN08/23 "Bats and artificial lighting at night", issued by the Bat Conservation Trust and Institution of Lighting Professionals.

REASON: To avoid illumination of habitat used by bats and to protect the International Dark Skies Reserve in the National Landscape. To protect the character of the area in the interest of the settings of heritage assets.

Informatives:

Rights of Way

Please be advised that nothing in this permission shall authorise the diversion, obstruction, or stopping up of any right of way that crosses the site.

Nesting Birds

The adults, young, eggs and nests of all species of birds are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) while they are breeding.

Please be advised that works should not take place that will harm nesting birds from March to August inclusive. All British birds, their nests and eggs are protected under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 while birds are nesting, building nests and sitting on eggs. The applicant is advised to check any structure or vegetation capable of supporting breeding birds and delay removing or altering such features until after young birds have fledged. Damage to extensive areas that could contain nests/breeding birds should be undertaken outside the breeding season. This season is usually taken to be the period between 1st March and 31st August but some species are known to breed outside these limits.

Lighting

The habitat within the proposed development site and the surrounding area is suitable for roosting, foraging and commuting bats. An increase in artificial lux levels can deter bats which could result in roost abandonment and/or the severance of key foraging areas. This will likely result in a significant negative impact upon the health of bat populations across the region. Artificial light at night can have a substantial adverse effect on biodiversity. Any new lighting should be for the purposes for safe access and security and be in accordance with the appropriate Environmental Zone standards set out by the Institute of Lighting Engineers in their publication GN01:2021, 'Guidance for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light' (ILP, 2021), and Guidance note GN08/23 "Bats and artificial lighting at night", issued by the Bat Conservation Trust and Institution of Lighting Professionals.

Reptiles

There is a residual risk that reptiles could occur on the application site. These species are legally protected and planning permission does not provide a defence against prosecution. In order to minimise the risk of these species occurring on the site, the developer is advised to clear vegetation during the winter, remove all waste arising from such clearance and maintain vegetation as short as possible in line with the recommendations made in (insert details of ecological report). If these species are found during the works, the applicant is advised to stop work and follow advice from an independent ecologist or the Council Landscape and Design Team (ecologyconsultations@wiltshire.gov.uk) Energy Efficiency

Biodiversity

The applicant's attention is drawn to the advice and website links in the comments received from Natural England dated 4/11/24