

APPLICATION NO.	P18/S0296/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION
REGISTERED	26.1.2018
PARISH	LEWKNOR
WARD MEMBER(S)	Caroline Newton
APPLICANT	Mr Paul Merrick
SITE	Beech Grove Farm, Thame Road, Postcombe, OX9 7DW
PROPOSAL	Formation of a track to a modern agricultural building and hardstanding
OFFICER	Edward Church

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This application is referred to the Planning Committee as the Officer's recommendation differs with the recommendation made by Lewknor Parish Council. Officers recommend this application for approval.

1.2 Beechgrove Farm is an agricultural unit in the Parish of Lewknor. The application site, which forms part of this agricultural unit, is located close to the junction of the A40 and B4012, shown on the OS extract **attached** in Appendix A. The site does not reside within any designated land where planning restrictions apply.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

2.1 This application seeks planning permission for the laying of a hardstanding track on the site, serving the recently erected agricultural building.

2.2 A copy of the application plans are **attached** in Appendix B. All documentation associated with this application can be accessed on our website, www.southoxon.gov.uk.

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 **Lewknor Parish Council** – Object; not an approved access, junction is dangerous
Highways Liaison Officer (Oxfordshire County Council) – No strong views

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 [P17/S0012/AG](#) - Other Outcome (16/03/2017)
 Erection of a steel portal framed building to store grain and equipment.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (SOCS) Policies:

- CS1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- CSEN1 - Landscape protection
- CSQ3 - Design
- CSS1 - The Overall Strategy

5.2 South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (SOLP 2011) policies:

- A1 - Agricultural development
- D1 - Principles of good design
- G2 - Protect district from adverse development

5.3 South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016 (SODG 2016)

5.4 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5.5 National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The main considerations when making a determination on this application are:

- Whether there is an agricultural need for the proposed track;
- Whether the proposed track would impact the visual amenity of the site or surrounding landscape.

6.2 **Agricultural Need**

Recently an agricultural building has been erected on site, approved under the permitted development agricultural prior notification process associated with P17/S0012/AG. In support of this previous agricultural prior notification process, the applicant submitted evidence, to the satisfaction of the local planning authority, demonstrating that the building was reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture on the unit.

6.3 This current proposal seeks full planning permission for the laying of a track and area of hardstanding to serve the recently erected building. It is considered that the track is reasonably necessary to facilitate easier vehicular access to the site in relation to the established agricultural use of the site. Having a track on site will also likely reduce the likelihood of significant amounts of mud being brought onto the nearby junction by vehicles exiting the site. Officers consider that the proposed track is in accordance with Policy A1 of the SOLP.

6.4 **Visual Amenity**

The application site is an arable field situated between the A40 and the B4012 highways, approximately 400 metres north-west of Postcombe. The M40 motorway is 180 metres to the south-west of the site. As such, the site is considered to reside in an area dominated by road infrastructure and arable agriculture. The site is not within a Conservation Area or an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

6.5 The proposed track would be sited near to the south-western boundary of the site, following the A40. Due to the presence of a mature hedgerow along this boundary, views of the track would be mostly restricted. The larger area of hardstanding, to the north-east of the recently erected agricultural building, would be set away from both the A40 and B4012.

6.6 Officers consider that the proposed track, subject to a condition requiring the submission of details relating to the material and constructed methods used for the proposed track being agreed prior to commencement, would not have a material adverse impact on the character or appearance of the site or surrounding landscape – in accordance with Policies A1, D1 and G2 of the SOLP, in addition to Policies CSQ3 and CSEN1 of the SOCS.

6.7 **Other Matters**

Concerns have been raised by Lewknor Parish Council that the access point to the site, near to the junction of the A40 and B4012, may be dangerous and not approved. The Highways Liaison Officer has not objected to this application. The local planning authority has no record of an access to the site being approved in that location, but

aerial photo records show an access has been in that position since at least 1999; but likely earlier.

6.8 As the existing access has been in situ for over 4 years, it is therefore considered lawful under sections 171B(1) and 191(2)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, and is immune from any enforcement action.

6.9 Seeing as the application is only seeking planning permission for the track and area of hardstanding, and not a new access, utilising the existing lawful access, and that the proposed track is unlikely to result in a significant intensification of the agricultural use of the site, this is not considered to a justified reason to refuse planning permission.

6.10 **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

The proposed development is not liable to pay any CIL.

6.11 **National Planning Policy Framework Statement**

In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the NPPF the Council takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals. The application was acceptable in its submitted format and the Planning Service worked with the applicant/agent in a positive manner by dealing with the application in a prompt and timely way.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

7.1 The application proposal is in accordance with relevant development plan policies and national planning policy, as it is considered that, subject to conditions, the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the site and surrounding landscape, and has a reasonable agricultural use.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

8.1 **To grant planning permission.**

1. **Commencement three years – full planning permission.**
2. **Approved plans.**
3. **Submission of details.**

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