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| <b>APPLICATION NO.</b>  | <a href="#">P23/S3949/FUL</a>  |
| <b>APPLICATION TYPE</b> | FULL APPLICATION   |
| <b>REGISTERED</b>       | 20.11.2023   |
| <b>PARISH</b>           | WATLINGTON   |
| <b>WARD MEMBER(S)</b>   | Freddie van Mierlo   |
| <b>APPLICANT</b>        | K Earle  |
| <b>SITE</b>             | Glendale Barn Glendale Farm Northend   |
| <b>PROPOSAL</b>         | Conversion of part of building adjoining existing dwelling to provide additional living space, and related works, including change of metal cladding to timber, altered fenestration and re-arrangement of external parking. |
| <b>OFFICER</b>          | Tom Wyatt  |

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**1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PROPOSAL**

- 1.1 This application is referred to Planning Committee as the officer's recommendation of approval conflicts with the views of Watlington Parish Council.
- 1.2 The application site, which is shown on the map **attached** as Appendix A, is located within the countryside forming part of the Chilterns National Landscape (CNL) between the settlements of Northend to the east and Christmas Common to the west. The site comprises a modern agricultural building serving the adjoining holding. The northern part of the building has been in residential use for several years, and a certificate of lawful use in respect of this was granted in July 2023 under application P23/S1631/LDE.
- 1.3 This application seeks planning permission for an expansion of the existing dwelling into two additional bays of the adjoining section of the barn to create a three bedroom dwelling set over two floors but remaining within the envelope of the existing building. Vehicular access and parking provision would remain as currently exists.
- 1.4 The proposed plans are **attached** as Appendix B. All associated documents and consultation responses can be viewed on the council's website, [www.southoxon.gov.uk](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk).

**2.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

- 2.1 Watlington Parish Council – Objects. The site lies in the countryside beyond Northend, and it remains suitable for agricultural use.

Drainage Officer -- No objections.

**3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 3.1 [P23/S1631/LDE](#) - Approved (28/07/2023)  
Dwellinghouse.

4.0 **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

4.1 The proposal is not of a scale or type to require an Environmental Statement.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 **Development Plan Policies**

South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 (SOLP) Policies:

DES1 - Delivering High Quality Development

DES2 – Local Character

DES5 - Outdoor Amenity Space

DES8 - Promoting Sustainable Design

ENV1 - Landscape and Countryside

ENV2 - Biodiversity - Designated sites, Priority Habitats & Species

ENV3 - Biodiversity

ENV11 - Pollution - Impact from existing and/ or Previous Land uses on new Development and the Natural Environment (Potential receptors of Pollution)

ENV12 - Pollution - Potential Sources of Pollution

H1 - Delivering New Homes

H20 - Extensions to Dwellings

STRAT1 - The Overall Strategy

TRANS5 - Consideration of Development Proposals

5.2 Watlington Neighbourhood Plan (WNP) Policies:

P1 – Protect and Enhance the Character of Watlington and the Historic Setting of the Town

P2 – Transport

P3 – Conserve and Enhance the Natural Environment

5.3 **Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents and other relevant guidance**

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Joint Design Guide 2022 (JDG)

Chilterns AONB Management Plan

5.4 **National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance**

5.5 **Other Relevant Legislation**

Human Rights Act 1998

The provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 have been taken into account in the processing of the application and the preparation of this report.

Equality Act 2010

In determining this planning application the Council has regard to its equalities obligations including its obligations under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 **The relevant planning considerations are the following:**

- **Principle of development**
- **Impact on the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area**
- **Residential amenity**
- **Access and parking**
- **Other material considerations**

**Principle of development**

6.2 Policy H1 of the SOLP seeks to restrict new housing in locations not allocated within the Development Plan, which includes the wider countryside. One exception to this is where the residential development would bring redundant or disused buildings into use and it would enhance its immediate surroundings. However, a dwelling already exists on the site as confirmed through application P23/S1631/LDE, and the proposed development would not introduce a new dwelling in this relatively remote location but would expand the size of the existing dwelling from a one bedroom to a three bedroom dwelling over two floors. As such, whilst the proposal involves the conversion of more of the existing farm building the development does not relate to the creation of a new dwelling but rather the creation of additional floor space for the existing dwelling. In light of this Policy H20 of the SOLP is relevant as it relates to extensions to existing dwellings and is generally permissive subject to sufficient parking and amenity space being provided and the development having regard to guidance within the design guide (JDG). In light of Policy H20, but also H1 in as far as it relates to the conversion of rural buildings, I consider that the principle of the development is acceptable.

**Impact on the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area**

6.3 The existing modern barn has a simple agricultural form and appearance. It is of no architectural merit but is congruous with its rural surroundings. The existing dwelling only occupies the northernmost part of the building and externally the presence of the dwelling is not obviously apparent due to the external facing materials comprising mainly of timber cladding and painted concrete blockwork and so retaining the appearance of the barn. The proposals would continue the timber clad finish across all elevations of the dwelling and new window openings would be limited in number and size such that the glazing to wall ratio would remain low allowing the external barn type materials to dominate the appearance of the building. In addition, many of the windows would be concealed behind timber fins to retain the timber clad effect across the potentially more exposed rear and side elevations. The number of rooflights would remain the same as existing. Officers are satisfied that the design and external appearance of the extended dwelling would be in keeping with the form and character of the existing barn and would comply with Policy DES1 of the SOLP.

- 6.4 The existing building is relatively modest in scale and height (5.5m) and does not have a significant visual presence beyond the boundaries of the site. The barn, particularly its northern part, is well screened from the adjacent public highway by existing boundary vegetation and the presence of the expanded dwelling in terms of the building would not be readily apparent in views from the road. The surrounding land is within the applicant's ownership and the only other public views towards the building of any note would be from short sections of public rights of way to the west and south east, which are more than 200m distant. In such views the sympathetic external alterations proposed would largely retain the impression of an agricultural building in context with its rural surroundings.
- 6.5 The proposal has the potential to give rise to some additional light pollution in this area of dark skies. Policy ENV11 of the SOLP seeks to limit the impact of artificial light on the natural environment, amongst other receptors and Policy DP8 of the Chilterns AONB Management Plan relates to keeping skies dark at night through ensuring that all new lighting is the minimum required. Part of Policy DP2 states, 'Traditional Chilterns vernacular buildings have small windows. Modern designs with large areas of glazing should be avoided so that buildings do not appear as boxes of light in the countryside at night, and glinting glazing in the daytime.' In this context the proposed windows are mainly small or are covered by timber fins. In my view these measures, along with controls over external lighting, are sufficient to limit light spill from the building. It should also be noted that there are several other dwellings within 200-300m of the site and so the presence of some lighting would not be incongruous in the surrounding area.
- 6.6 Paragraph 182 of the NPPF states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (*now National Landscapes*) which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. This requirement is echoed through Policy ENV1 of the SOLP. In my view the presence of the existing dwelling along with the sympathetic design and form of the expanded dwelling and the lack of visual prominence of the development means that there would be no demonstrable impact on the landscape and scenic beauty of this part of the Chilterns National Landscape.

### **Residential amenity**

- 6.7 Policy ENV11 of the SOLP seeks to ensure that development proposals are appropriate to their location and designed to ensure that the occupiers of a new development will not be subject to individual and/or cumulative adverse effects of pollution. The barn is now used for low key storage having previously been used for housing cattle. Cattle are no longer farmed at the site, and agricultural activities in the remaining part of the barn would be very low key mainly comprising of the storage of hay and machinery. I do not consider that the occupiers of the expanded dwelling would be subject to any significant noise or other disturbance from the agricultural use of the remaining part of the barn. It should also be noted that this relationship already exists with the existing dwelling.

- 6.8 The garden area of the expanded dwelling would be provided by an existing area of grass on its northern side away from any farm operations. Its size and position are sufficient to serve the extended dwelling in line with Policy DES5 of the SOLP.

**Access and parking**

- 6.9 The access to the site would remain as currently exists along with the parking area to the front of the building. The expanded dwelling is likely to generate a modest number of additional vehicle trips but not to the detriment of the local highway network. In this regard the proposal would accord with Policy TRANS5 of the SOLP, and Paragraph 115 of the NPPF, which states, ‘Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.’

**Other Material Considerations**

- 6.10 The existing building is open side and of modern construction with negligible potential to host roosting bats. A Protected Species Survey Report has been submitted with the application and this confirms the absence of bats, nesting birds and other protected species from the building. As such there are no ecological constraints to the proposal. There are no trees or other important landscape features affected by the proposal, and there are no drainage or flood risk issues.

**Community Infrastructure Levy**

- 6.11 The proposal is CIL liable due to the increase in floor space proposed.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 Officers consider that the proposal complies with the relevant Development Plan policies and national planning guidance. Officers are satisfied that the extension of the existing dwelling into part of the adjoining barn is acceptable in principle and that the visual and landscape impact of the development would not be harmful to the landscape qualities of the Chilterns National Landscape.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

**That Planning Permission is granted subject to the following conditions:**

**1: The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.**

**Reason: By virtue of Sections 91 to 95 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.**

**2 : That the development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the details shown on the following approved plans, G BARN I, II, III, IV, V, and VI, except as controlled or modified by conditions of this permission.**

**Reason: To secure the proper planning of the area in accordance with Development Plan policies.**

**3 : The exterior of the development hereby permitted shall only be constructed in the materials specified on the plans/supporting documents hereby approved or in materials which shall previously have been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.**

**Reason: In the interests of the visual appearance of the development in accordance with Policies DES1, DES2, and ENV1 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035.**

**4 : Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting that Order), the enlargement, improvement or other alteration of any dwellinghouse as described in Schedule 2, Part 1, Class A of the Order shall not be undertaken without obtaining planning permission from the Local Planning Authority.**

**Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area in accordance with Policies DES1, DES2 and ENV1 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035.**

**5 : No external lighting shall be installed on the site other than in accordance with details, which have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall include location of the external lights and product specification.**

**Reason: To protect the appearance of the area, the environment and wildlife, from light pollution in accordance with Policies ENV1, ENV2, ENV3 and ENV12 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035.**