

Ward Axminster

Reference 21/1058/FUL

Applicant Mr & Mrs J Bostock

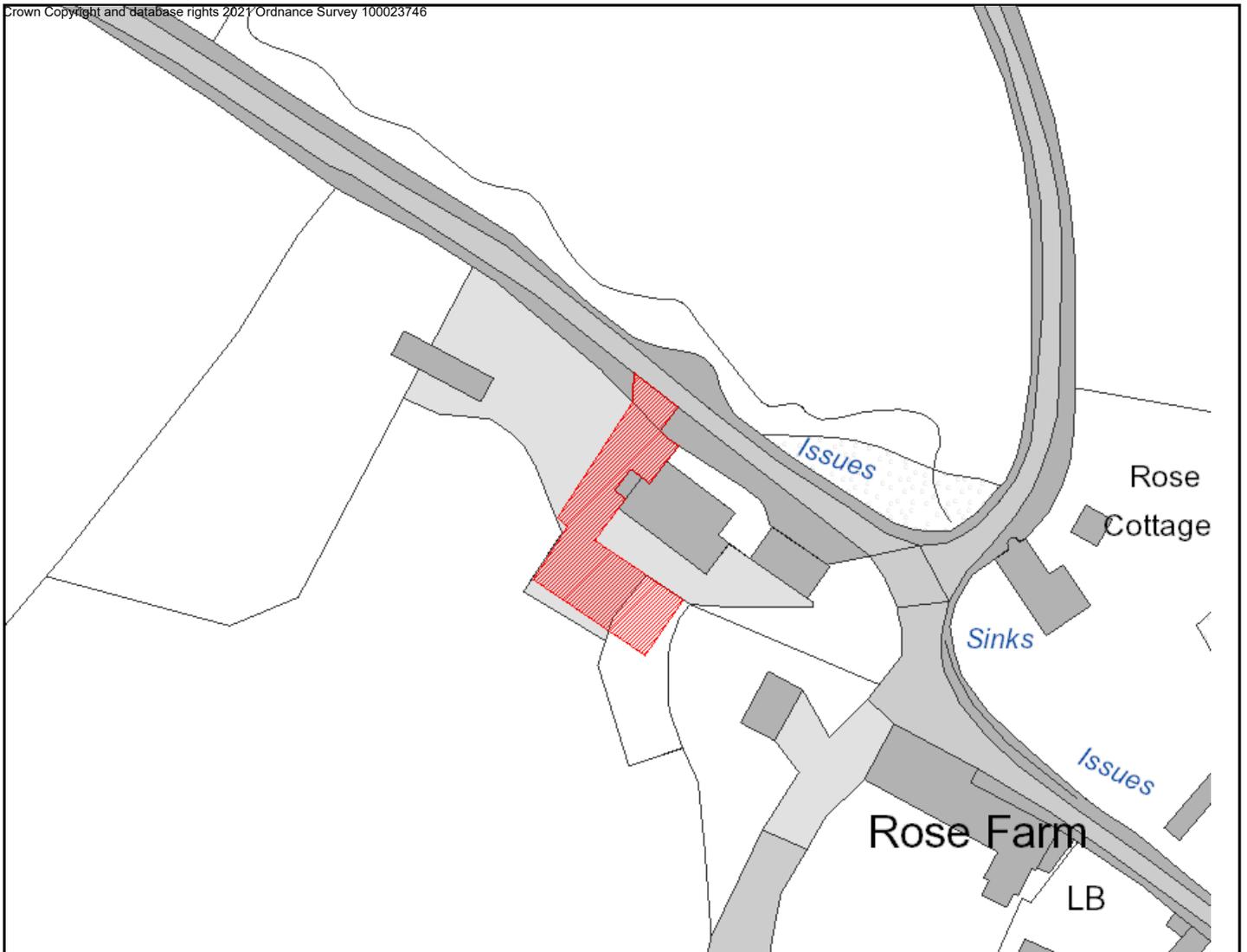
Location Rose Farm Wyke Axminster EX13 8TN

Proposal Erection of open fronted general storage barn.



RECOMMENDATION: Refusal

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		Committee Date: 4th August 2021
Axminster (Axminster)	21/1058/FUL	Target Date: 17.06.2021
Applicant:	Mr & Mrs J Bostock	
Location:	Rose Farm Wyke	
Proposal:	Erection of open fronted general storage barn.	

RECOMMENDATION: Refusal

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The application is to be considered at the Planning Committee as the officer recommendation is contrary to the view of two Ward Members.

The proposal is for a large open fronted barn building for a mixed agricultural and equestrian use, namely the storage of vehicles, equipment and haylage. It follows the refusal of a similar proposal in January this year by Committee, referenced 20/1633/FUL. The scale, design and external materials of the barn have been revised for this application.

The site is in the countryside within the hamlet of Wyke and is outside of any AONB area. It is located near a public highway, a short distance to the west/northwest of two Grade II listed buildings, Rose Farm and Rose Cottage (both of which are dwellings). Despite partial screening by vegetation, a fence and outbuildings, existing buildings and equipment within the site are partially visible in both close and distant views from public viewpoints.

The scale of the proposed barn building relates to the size and quantity of equipment and material to be stored within it. The applicant's land holding is modest in scale. No reference is made to any commercial agricultural enterprise currently taking place on the land, though the land produces haylage for use in the stables at the site and sheep grazing is being considered for the future. It is unclear how all the items of the equipment proposed to be stored within the application building relate to typical regular agricultural activity on the land or the existing equestrian use. No increase in stable capacity is referred to in the application and it is unclear why an existing building described as a hay barn cannot to be used to store haylage. On the basis of the information submitted it is therefore not considered that an agricultural/equestrian need exists for a storage building at this site, at the scale proposed.

The Conservation Officer advises that the barn would harm the rural setting of the two listed buildings, which contributes to their significance, noting that this has been diminished over time by changes on the land in the vicinity of the application site. Local Plan Policy EN9 requires harm to be weighed against the public benefits of a proposal, however in this case no public benefits have been identified which would outweigh the identified harm.

Axminster Town Council and a Ward Member object to the proposal on the basis of lack of justification, impact on listed buildings and concerns about flood risk. Other objectors raise similar concerns. Representations of support claim that the proposed barn would support the viability of agricultural and equestrian activity at the site and the provision of related community benefits, that its visual impact would be minimal and that the application would contribute to crime prevention, traffic reduction and keeping the site tidy. Two Ward Members support the proposal indicating that the design has been improved such that it is acceptable.

Given the visibility of the proposed building, its scale, the harmful impact on the setting of the adjacent listed buildings, the lack of justification for it in relation to the existing equine and agricultural use and the absence of significant public benefit outweighing that harm the recommendation is that the application be refused.

CONSULTATIONS

Local Consultations

Parish/Town Council

12/5/21

AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL REMAINS OPPOSED TO THIS APPLICATION. COUNCILLORS FELT THAT THAT THEIR ISSUES OF CONCERN HAVE NOT BEEN ADDRESSED BY THE CHANGES MADE.

Further comments:

Axminster Town Council's views in relation to this application remain unchanged.

Axminster - Cllr Andrew Moulding

25/4/21

I recommended approval of the previous application, which was refused.

I believe that the applicant has amended the plan to reflect the views and advice given by the planning committee when the application was approved.

I therefore recommend approval of this application.

Further comments:

I confirm my support for this application and recommend approval

Further comments:

I maintain my support for this application.

I believe the applicants and their agent have listened carefully to the recommendations made by members of the planning committee when the previous application was refused.

In this respect, the building has been reduced in height (as far as is feasible), the design has been improved and the materials used for the cladding and roof have been changed in line with the advice received.

I cannot agree that there is not a genuine agricultural and equestrian need for the storage building, which has been changed in designation from the formerly submitted "agricultural barn".

Surely, we should support the applicants in attempting to tidy up this site in the countryside, which currently appears an eyesore.

Axminster - Cllr Ian Hall

27/4/21

I recommend approval.

The new plans look far more agreeable.

Further comments:

I maintain my previous comments.....

I recommend approval.

The new plans look far more agreeable.

Axminster - Cllr Sarah Jackson

14/5/21

Following a review of the new application, and the January planning committee meeting recording which refused the previous application for an agricultural building, I have visited the site to understand how this new application relates to the area and the 2 neighbouring listed buildings. My intention was to view the site from the public highway, but upon arrival, I was met by the applicant who invited me to also observe the site from within the landholding boundaries, which was helpful. Further conversation with the applicant has clarified the applicant's justification for this building and my subsequent thoughts are as follows.

Firstly, I sympathise entirely with the applicants need for somewhere to store 2 large vehicles (a tractor and 4m high JCB, currently situated at Rose Cottage) which are used for ditch clearing and the management of haylage on-site, although I would note that these might normally be associated with a larger farming operation, rather than the recreational/competitive equine activity that currently occupies this site. Nonetheless, these are very expensive pieces of equipment and I understand entirely the applicant's motivations for wanting a building in which to store them out of the elements.

However, when objectively comparing these new plans to the previous plans considered by the committee, it is worth highlighting that the new heritage statement incorrectly refers to a substantial drop in height from over 6m to 5m - this is misleading. The refused plan actually considered by the committee in January featured a roof height of 5.2m. The new proposed height is 5m and therefore, sees a drop of just 200mm. This is detailed in the combined plan drawings in this current application. Subsequently it cannot be considered that this application delivers a significant reduction in height by any stretch of the imagination. I am not sure if this has been recognised by my colleague Cllr Hall who at the last committee meeting stressed that a height of 5.2m was "far, far too high" but now appears to support the application.

Further to this, the new application details an increased building length. The main highway next to Rose Cottage (to the North East) is elevated and it appears to me, that whilst the ground slopes away, the ridgeline of the proposed building would appear just a fraction lower than that of grade 2 listed Rose Farm (adjacent to the South East) from this same vantagepoint. - in real terms, this means this new application would result in a greater visual impact from the road than the previous application. On a positive note, however, I acknowledge that the applicant has made efforts to change the building materials in an attempt to make it more in keeping with surrounding buildings. That is to be commended.

I am also minded of Mr Rose's comments at the previous planning committee where he stressed that there was no planning policy to support the erection of a general-purpose storage building in open countryside, and thus material planning considerations would apply. These would particularly relate to the harm caused to the character of the listed buildings nearby and whether this was offset by any public benefit, rather than simply benefit to the applicant.

Given the previous decision of the committee to refuse the application based on scale and visual impact, and the continued concerns of the conservation officer, I cannot see how this new application can be perceived as an improvement on the previous one with regards to the character of the local area. From talking to the applicant, it is clear that any harm is not countered by public benefit as the proposed development is evidently for private benefit only. However, might I suggest a compromise? If the applicant were to submit revised plans that saw the height reduced to just over 4m (the required height to accommodate the JCB) - which, following further consideration of the plans I do believe could be achieved with a mono-pitched roof - this substantial drop in height would make it far less visible from the road and perhaps the harm to the character of the listed buildings reduced enough to mitigate any significant harm to the character of the area. I would however stress that the footprint of this building is substantial when considered against the surrounding buildings and I could not support any further increases in this regard. Infact, I would certainly welcome a reduction in footprint. It would also be worth the applicant considering repositioning the building elsewhere on the landholding so that it sits further away from the 2 listed buildings, although I recognise this could come at a loss of paddock space, and indeed there may be other physical limitations that would prevent such an approach - e.g. waterways.

As it currently stands, I cannot support the current proposal but would welcome a revision that does tackle the concerns raised by the committee previously.

Further comments:

After consideration of the latest revised plans, and taking on board the comments from the agent, and having seen the vehicles myself first-hand, I regret that I still believe that this proposed building would be too high (particularly given the increased length). However, my previous comments (and suggestion) still apply. A mono-pitched barn with a maximum height of just over 4 metres would still allow the plant and equipment (and haylage) to be stored but would dramatically reduce the visual impact of the proposed building from the highway. I note the reference to "public benefit" in the agent's correspondence, but do not feel that this is a material planning consideration as the works would be required regardless of whether the new barn is constructed, and could be undertaken with "hired-in" plant if necessary; ownership of specific equipment does not, and should not influence planning determinations in isolation.

I must add that I am not opposed to a barn in this location per se but simply am concerned about the size and scale of the proposed building in relation to the buildings that already exist nearby. The activity on site is not agricultural but rather recreational-equestrian, linked to the residential nature of the buildings adjacent and should therefore demonstrate appropriate scale for these activities. In summary, the proposals are for a convenience barn, not a commercial barn, and I can only therefore respectfully suggest that the agent/applicant consider the height and design once more to reflect these concerns.

Technical Consultations

Conservation

13/5/21

CONSULTATION REPLY TO PLANNING EAST TEAM
PLANNING APPLICATION AFFECTING LISTED BUILDING

ADDRESS: Rose Farm, Wyke, Axminster

GRADE: II APPLICATION NO: 21/1058/FUL

PROPOSAL: Erection of open fronted general storage barn.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF HISTORIC CHARACTER/ ARCHITECTURAL MERIT:

There are two listed buildings in the immediate vicinity of the proposal. Together they form a small informal group at the junction of Wyke Lane and Abbey Gate Lane. The surrounding land is countryside with a number of farms, some listed eg Wyke Farm, in the nearby locality. There is a concentration of mature hedgerow and trees around this grouping and forming field boundaries.

Rose Farm is listed Grade II
Rose Cottage is listed Grade II

Their significance is derived from their age (dating from C17 & C18), vernacular character and appearance and their rural setting and the use of traditional materials.

HOW WILL PROPOSED ALTERATIONS AFFECT HISTORIC CHARACTER OF BUILDING AND ITS SETTING:

The application under 20/1633/FUL was recently refused. This application seeks to address the previous concerns raised relating to the harm to the setting of the listed buildings.

The agricultural barn has been reduced in height with a maximum of 5m sloping down to 3.4 at the rear. The roof is now to be Juniper Green boxed steel sheeting and feather edged timber boarding to the sides. However, the overall length is slightly longer, at 18.3m and the depth only marginally reduced when the overhang is included. The structure is intended to provide undercover storage for the applicant's machinery, haylage and bedding.

The structure is to be located in the same position as previously, behind a very domestic close boarded fence adjacent to the lane which currently screens a collection of timber sheds, loose boxes, stabling and farm machinery stored in the open and served off an existing access onto Abbey Gate Lane. The proposed building is to be added to this group.

As noted in the previous comments (extract): Looking at the historic photographs from 1947 to the present day, it appears that there have always been some structures on this area of land. In addition, the historic OS map dating from 1951 confirms this. However, the number of buildings and extent of the landuse as stabling, sheds, loose boxes, machinery etc appears to have grown considerably. Such incremental change can often result in a detrimental impact on the surrounding land and this case the setting of the listed buildings. The rural green agricultural setting noted on historic maps has been continually eroded to the extent where it has severely diminished this setting. The introduction of this large agricultural barn will further erode the character and appearance of the area and will have an impact on the setting of both properties. In particular views from the east from Wyke Lane coming towards Rose Farm, where the structure will be prominent in the landscape and when approaching from the north past Rose Cottage which frames the lane (Wyke Lane) with the mature trees opposite and opens out into the junction of the two lanes.

It is appreciated that the changes to the overall design and materials of the barn have gone some way to reducing the impact of the barn on the setting of the listed buildings. However, this is still a large structure, which has only been marginally reduced in height and is longer than previously submitted. The changes seem to be insufficient to warrant support and to overcome the reason for refusal relating to the heritage assets. It is still considered that the barn will result in some harm to the setting of the listed buildings.

PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATION - PROPOSAL

UNACCEPTABLE

DATE: 13/05/21

INITIALS: KBH

Further comments:

ADDRESS: Rose Farm, Wyke, Axminster

GRADE: II APPLICATION NO: 21/1058/FUL

Amended plans received 24th May 2021:

It is appreciated that the ridge has again been reduced in height (by 300mm).

However, this is still a large structure, which has only been marginally reduced in height and is longer than previously submitted. The changes seem to be insufficient to warrant support and to overcome the reason for refusal relating to the heritage assets. It is still considered that the barn will result in some harm to the setting of the listed buildings.

In accordance with the NPPF para 193. 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). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

In this instance it is considered that the proposed large rectangular barn is likely to result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage assets. However, this does not equate to a less than substantial objection. Great weight must be given to an asset's conservation. This should therefore be weighed against any public benefits or other benefits that outweigh this harm.

Landscape Officer

8/07/21

I have visited the above site and reviewed the submitted details.

The proposed scheme is likely to have some landscape impact on tranquilly and the surrounding open landscape character as well as localised visual impact in views from the site entrance and from the public highway to the northwest and southeast. The proposals make no provision for mitigation planting, enhancement of landscape character or increased biodiversity value required under local plan strategy 3 and 7.

I understand the Conservation officer has raised concerns regarding impact on the setting of adjacent listed buildings.

If there is a justified need for the building then I would suggest a smaller structure with suitable mitigation planting, possibly extending to the replacement of the existing close board fence to the roadside boundary to the southeast with a suitable native mix hedge on a low bank or set behind a low chert stone wall which would be more in keeping with local landscape character and enhance the setting of the nearby listed buildings.

Environmental Health

5/5/21

I have considered the application 21/1058/FUL and do not anticipate any environmental health concerns.

Other Representations

4 received, 2 in support and 2 objecting. Points raised which are relevant to planning and the development proposal are summarised below:

Support

- The building will not be highly visible and materials have been addressed;
- The proposal would not generate additional traffic but reduce it, as there would no longer be a need to keep bringing feed/equipment in;
- The size of the building has been addressed;
- A building for storage would help with keeping the yard tidy;
- Storage out of sight helps address rural crime;
- The applicant maintains hedgerows in the local area in addition to his own land;
- Storage of equipment under cover is necessary to prolong its lifespan ;
- Haylage needs to be stored to enable its longevity.

Object

- There is no Local Plan policy support for a general purpose building in the countryside;
- The need for the building is questioned given the nature of the holding;
- Two of the shaded buildings on the site layout plan are not described;
- Despite revision, the building is too large, visually intrusive and overbearing;
- The building is inappropriate will be visible in the vicinity of two listed cottages;
- Site will be more visually exposed in future due to ash die back;
- Concern regarding surface water run off/soakaway capacity;
- Roadside parking/unloading;
- Hazardous substances may be stored in the building.

PLANNING HISTORY

The most relevant planning history is included within the table below:

Reference	Description	Decision	Date
85/P0399	Change Of Use To Mini Skip Hire Depot.	Approve	16/4/1985
91/P1072	Scrap Metal Sorting Area & Mini Skip Storage	Approve	27/9/1991
92/P1512	Renewal Of Temporary Planning Permission For Mini Skip Business	Approve	16/10/1992
94/P1626	Renewal Of Temporary Planning Permission For Mini-Skip Business	Approve	19/10/1994

03/P2527	Conversion Of Attached Barn For Residential Use (Listed building consent)	Approve	10/11/2003
03/P2528	Conversion Of Attached Barn For Residential Use	Approve	10/11/2003
06/2984/FUL	Erection of three stables and feed room	Approve	18/12/2006
08/1228/FUL	Conversion of adjoining barn into additional accommodation	Approve	23/6/2008
08/1230/LBC	Conversion of adjoining barn into additional accommodation	Approve	23/6/2008
20/1633/FUL	Erection of agricultural barn	Refuse	10/1/21

It has not been possible to identify a planning permission for each existing outbuilding or extension at the site e.g.

- A rectangular building to the west of the application site which the Local Planning Authority's historic aerial photographs suggest was erected between 2014 and 2017. In correspondence, the applicant indicates that this is a field shelter in equestrian use, that it is not a fixed structure and that it has no permanent base. Aerial photographs indicate it being present in the same position in 2017 and 2020 suggesting permanence, rather than this being a mobile structure which is moved from place to place. As such it is considered to be a building in planning terms. Planning permission would normally be required for such a building, however as it appears to have been in place for more than 4 years it is now likely to be immune from enforcement action being taken, due to the passage of time, and thus lawful.
- Extensions to the north and west of the stable/feed-room permitted by permission 06/2984/FUL. The Local Planning Authority's historic aerial photographs suggest that the northern extension was erected between 2005/6 and 2010 and that the western extension was erected between 2010 and 2017. In correspondence, the applicant indicates that the western extension is used as a feed room and that it is not fixed and that the northern extension is a haybarn which is similarly not fixed (both structures presumably being used in relation to the adjacent equestrian use). Historic aerial photographs suggest the permanence of the extensions in their positions (rather than their being mobile structures which are moved from place to place). As such they are considered to be buildings in planning terms, for which planning permission would normally be required. However, as the extensions appear to have been in place for more than 4 years they would now be likely to be immune from enforcement action being taken, due to the passage of time, and thus lawful.

Application 20/1633/FUL (listed above) was for a similar development to that proposed in this application and was refused for the following reasons:

The proposed agricultural building, due to its large scale and location, would fail to preserve or enhance the rural setting of the adjacent listed dwellings. In the absence of sufficient evidence to demonstrate a genuine agricultural need for the proposed building, including evidence that no other suitable building(s) on the holding could meet all or part of any genuine agricultural need, it is considered that there is no public benefit that outweighs the identified harm and that the harm is therefore unjustified. The proposal therefore conflicts with the requirements of policies D1 (Design and Local Distinctiveness), D7 (Agricultural Buildings and Development), EN9 (Development Affecting a Designated Heritage Asset) of the Adopted New East Devon Local Plan 2013-2031, National Planning Practice Guidance and the National Planning Policy Framework.

POLICIES

Adopted East Devon Local Plan 2013-2031 Policies (LP)

TC2 (Accessibility of New Development)

TC7 (Adequacy of Road Network and Site Access)

Strategy 7 (Development in the Countryside)

Strategy 46 (Landscape Conservation and Enhancement and AONBs)

D7 (Agricultural Buildings and Development)

D1 (Design and Local Distinctiveness)

EN8 (Significance of Heritage Assets and their setting)

EN9 (Development Affecting a Designated Heritage Asset)

RC4 (Recreation Facilities in the Countryside and on the Coast)

There is no draft neighbourhood plan available for Axminster

Government Planning Documents

NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework 2019)

National Planning Practice Guidance

Site Location and Description

The site lies to the south of the town of Axminster on the western side of the hamlet of Wyke Green, which is located in the countryside, outside of the East Devon AONB. The development site is a partly levelled area to the southwest of an existing stable and outbuilding, within an existing yard which has some hard surfacing. Another stable lies a short distance away to the northwest and further outbuildings lie to the east of the site, close to the dwelling known as Rose Farm (the applicant's dwelling).

Rose Farm and another nearby dwelling, Rose Cottage, are both grade II listed and lie a short distance away to the east/southeast. Both listed dwellings are located near the junction of Wyke Lane and Abbey Gate Lane. The surrounding land is countryside and there a number of farms in the locality, with listed buildings being present at some of them e.g. Wyke Farm.

The development site is located near the bottom of a shallow valley and is on the edge of (but outside of) flood zones 2 and 3.

Proposal

The proposed barn is as per the details on the application form, submitted plans and supporting details. It is a revised proposal to that which was considered and refused under 20/1633/FUL. The building subject to this application has a slightly different design and different external materials to that previously proposed and a slightly lower height. The building would be open fronted with an asymmetric duo pitched roof, externally finished in juniper green box steel sheeting. The opening would face approximately north and the eaves at the rear of the building would be lower than those at the front opening. The sides and rear of the building would be externally clad in feather edged timber boarding.

Supporting information indicates that the proposed building is for general storage, though it goes on to refer to it having a dual function. From the details following the reference to a dual function this is interpreted to be a mixed agricultural and equestrian use. The agricultural machinery and trailers to be stored include: 2 no. tractors, a JCB digger, a mule utility vehicle, a hedge cutter, a grass harrow and topper, a chipper, crop sprayer, roller and trailer. The proposed building is also to be used to store haylage produced on the land holding which is used at the stables at the site. It is stated that the equipment and machinery to be stored is already stored/parked at the site, with some storage taking place within existing buildings, which are proposed to be used instead for vehicle storage ancillary to Rose Cottage, which that dwelling currently lacks. It is also stated that the applicants run a 23 acre holding and that the addition of further land is being considered.

ANALYSIS

The main issues arising from the application include the principle, impact on the character and appearance of the area and heritage assets, flooding and drainage, and access, parking and highway safety.

Principle

The building is for a mixed agricultural and equestrian use and it is therefore considered against the requirements of LP Policies D7 and RC4.

Policy D7 states "New agricultural buildings and/or buildings intended for intensive agricultural activities that could give rise to adverse amenity, landscape, environmental or other impacts will be permitted where there is a genuine agricultural need for the development". It goes on to list specific criteria which must also be met, including that

it must be established that there are no other suitable buildings on the holding or in the vicinity which could meet the reasonable need.

Policy RC4 states that planning permission will be granted for outdoor recreation facilities in the countryside and on the coast provided that the nature of the activities undertaken or the space requirements of the proposal require a countryside or coastal location and a number of other numbered criteria are met. For indoor facilities that policy states that use should be made of existing buildings and that any new buildings or extensions should be limited in scale and in close proximity to existing groups of buildings or an existing settlement. It also states that where it is proposed to extend or intensify an existing use the cumulative effect of the use will be considered in the interests of the character of the area.

It is noted that the applicant runs a 23 acre holding and a plan illustrating that holding has been provided. Whilst the surrounding land appears to be agricultural pasture no information is provided within the application to describe any agricultural enterprise currently taking place on that land other than production of haylage, though sheep grazing is stated as being considered for the future.

It is accepted that even where agricultural land is not being used to raise a crop or livestock its lawful use may nevertheless be agricultural in planning terms and that maintenance may be required on it, which may involve the use of various items of equipment. It is also accepted that there is an existing equestrian use at the site which may reasonably require the storage of haylage and equipment within a building and that the policy RC4 supports new buildings for recreational facilities in the countryside, in principle.

However, the acceptability of the proposed barn for a mixed agricultural and agricultural use depends, in part, upon it being reasonably necessary and proportionate in scale, relative to the size of the landholding, the existing agricultural and equestrian activity taking place on the applicant's land and the existing storage available. Given the relatively small scale of the applicant's landholding, the small scale nature of the equine use there together with the limited information provided regarding agricultural activities undertaken on the land it is difficult to understand why two tractors and a utility vehicle are required in relation to the existing land use.

A ward member similarly questions whether the equipment to be stored reasonably relates to the existing agricultural operations and recreational equine activity at the site. The scale of the building proposed relates to the size and type of equipment and materials proposed to be stored within it and given the requirements of LP Policy D7 and RC4 it is therefore considered that the need for that storage needs to be justified.

The desirability of storing expensive equipment and haylage under cover to protect it is understood and accepted. It is also understood that all the equipment to be stored within the proposed barn is currently stored at the site, however it is not considered that existing storage of equipment on land necessarily equates to a reasonable need to use all of that equipment on that land or the need to erect a building on that land in which to store it.

From the details of the various items of equipment to be stored, which were submitted for the previous application (in a document named 'Implements photos') it is noted that many of the smaller items clearly relate to the management of land. However, the tallest piece of equipment to be stored is a JCB digger (described as being 3.2m high) and whilst it is accepted that a need to use that equipment for agricultural/land management purposes may arise on occasion (noting that the application refers to its use for ditch clearance and for future tree planting), it is not considered that this is an item which is typically and regularly used in relation to agricultural activity, particularly on a small scale landholding.

Given the small area of the applicant's landholding and the scale and nature of the activity taking place on the land, it is not clear that the storage of the JCB digger on the holding it is essential in relation to the land use. Supporting information indicates that some of the items of equipment proposed to be stored in the new barn are currently stored in smaller buildings (which lie closer to the Rose Farm dwelling), and that freeing up space within those buildings would provide space for use for domestic garaging, which is currently lacking. The need for domestic garage space is understood and the provision of alternative storage to enable this to be provided within existing buildings is considered to be reasonable, however due to the applicant's intention to store equipment currently stored within the small scale existing buildings in addition to larger scale equipment currently stored outside together with haylage, the proposed barn is significantly larger than the existing buildings.

With regard to haylage it is noted (from additional information supplied by the applicant) that an existing extension to the north of the stable building (referred to under the planning history above) currently functions as 'a haybarn' and as there is no reference in the application to any intention to increase the stable capacity at the site, it is unclear why additional undercover storage for haylage is needed. Taking all the above points into account, on the basis of the information submitted it is considered that there are other buildings on the holding which could meet at least some of the stated need for undercover storage and that there is not a genuine residual agricultural and equine need for a storage building at the scale proposed.

Character and appearance of the area and heritage interests

The area in and around the hamlet of Wyke has a rural agricultural character and contains few dwellings or other buildings. Whilst the application site and its immediate surroundings (including existing buildings) are partly screened from public views by a roadside hedge, fence and existing outbuildings (one of which flanks the public highway) the upper parts of outbuildings, machinery and paraphernalia within the site are visible from public highways, both at close range (above the hedge and through the access opening) and in approach views from different directions. Despite being slightly reduced in height compared to the building proposed in application 20/1633/FUL, it is considered that the upper part of the proposed building would nevertheless be visible from public viewpoints.

The two listed buildings in the immediate vicinity of the site abut the public highway. These two buildings form a small informal group at the junction of Wyke Lane and Abbey Gate Lane and there is a concentration of mature hedgerow and trees around this grouping and forming field boundaries. Despite the vegetation present, the listed

buildings are clearly visible from the highway both at close range and in approach views from different directions, and from some viewpoints one or other of the listed buildings is viewed in the context of the application site.

The erection of a building of the scale proposed at this site will visibly increase the quantum of built development within the countryside. If the building were considered to be acceptable in principle (which it is not in this case) then were it not for the proximity of the listed buildings, its visual impact would be considered acceptable, given that the site is not in the AONB, that the building would have a simple agricultural appearance, that it would be located close to existing buildings (and would be read as part of an existing group) and that it would be partly screened from view. Given the site's proximity to 2 listed buildings, however, special regard must be had to the impact of the proposal on them, including their setting. The significance of the listed buildings is considered to be derived from their age, vernacular character, appearance, use of traditional materials and their rural setting. An examination of the evolution of the site using historic aerial photographs and maps indicates that the number of buildings and extent of land use for stabling, loose boxes, storage of machinery/paraphernalia has grown considerably over time. Noting this, the conservation officer considers that the setting of the listed buildings has been severely diminished by the incremental erosion of their rural green agricultural setting.

The agent and supporters of the application point out that a new storage building would visually enhance the site through allowing equipment currently stored in the open to be stored under cover. In the case that all the equipment currently stored outside which is proposed to be stored inside the new barn were genuinely ancillary to the existing land use, this point might be considered to weigh in favour of the proposal, however for the reasons given under 'principle' above, it is not considered that this has been demonstrated in the application.

Notwithstanding that the proposed building would be partially screened it would be visible from public viewpoints, particularly during the winter months when tree and hedge vegetation is thinner. It would be noticeably larger than the existing buildings to the west of the Rose Farm dwelling, both in terms of its height and footprint and it would represent a significant addition to the quantum of built development there. Drawing from the advice of the conservation officer it is considered that the proposed building, as amended during the course of the application, would further erode the character and appearance of the surrounding area so as to impact on the setting of the listed buildings, amounting to some harm to their significance, albeit that harm would be less than substantial.

In accordance with LP Policy EN9 where a development would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset the harm must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Whilst the agent contests that the impact on heritage assets is harmful such that there is any need to balance harm against public benefits he argues that even if this were required, the proposal provides public benefits, in that the applicant uses equipment, which is proposed to be stored in the barn, to assist with the management of neighbour's land in the area. It is acknowledged that this is likely to be beneficial for neighbouring landowners however it is considered that where such management is essential or beneficial it would be likely to be carried out anyway, even if not by the applicant, as other contractors

could be engaged. It is therefore not considered that the management work on surrounding land represents a significant public benefit in this case. The proposed storage barn is associated with small scale agricultural and equine activity which are not considered to offer significant public benefits either.

The landscape officer indicates that a development proposing a smaller scale building in conjunction with landscape and biodiversity enhancement (in particular mitigation planting and the replacement of the domestic style wooden fence with alternative boundary treatment) would be more in keeping with the area. This advice and the scope for enhancement is noted, however this is not the development proposed.

Given that the proposed storage building is not considered to relate to a significant public benefit the harm to the significance of the heritage assets is not outweighed in this case and therefore the requirements of LP Policy EN9 are not met.

Flooding and Drainage

The site abuts, but is not within, flood zones 2 and 3. In response to an objector's concern regarding surface water drainage it is considered that there is adequate space within the site to ensure that clean roof run off water can be drained within the site. In the case that permission is granted a condition could be imposed to require details of the collection and drainage of surface water from the building.

Access, Parking and Highway Safety

The proposal is for a building for mixed agricultural/equestrian use and given that the land holding can already be used for agricultural purposes and that there are already a stable and field shelters at the site (with planning permission or otherwise lawful) it is not considered that the erection of a building of the scale proposed would significantly increase vehicle movements in and out of the site or that it would increase traffic on the local highway network.

Other issues

As the barn is proposed to be used for storage in relation to agriculture and equine use it is considered unlikely that it would have any undue impacts in relation to impact on residential amenity or nuisance. The nature of the site where the proposed building would be erected is such that the erection of the building would be unlikely to have an impact on biodiversity. An objector raises concerns with regard to the storage of hazardous substances however legislation other than planning controls such storage and therefore this is not a matter which could be controlled through planning, in the case that permission were to be granted.

Conclusion

On the basis of the information submitted it is not considered that there is a genuine agricultural and equestrian need for the proposed storage barn and it is therefore not considered to be acceptable in principle. Despite its scale and design being revised compared to the building which was recently refused permission it is considered that the proposed building would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of two

listed buildings which is not outweighed by public benefits, such that on balance, the proposal is not considered to represent sustainable development.

RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE for the following reasons:

1. The proposed building, intended for a mixed agricultural and equine use, due to its large scale and location, would fail to preserve or enhance the rural setting of the adjacent listed dwellings and would harm their significance. In the absence of sufficient evidence to demonstrate a genuine mixed agricultural and equine need for the proposed building, including evidence that no other suitable building(s) on the holding could meet all or part of any genuine need, and in the absence of evidence of public benefit which outweighs the identified harm, the harm is unjustified. The proposal therefore conflicts with the requirements of policies D1 (Design and Local Distinctiveness), D7 (Agricultural Buildings and Development), RC4 (Recreation Facilities in the Countryside and on the Coast), EN9 (Development Affecting a Designated Heritage Asset) of the Adopted New East Devon Local Plan 2013-2031, National Planning Practice Guidance and the National Planning Policy Framework.

NOTE FOR APPLICANT

Informative:

In accordance with the aims of Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 East Devon District Council seeks to work positively with applicants to try and ensure that all relevant planning concerns have been appropriately resolved; however, in this case the development is considered to be fundamentally unacceptable such that the Council's concerns could not be overcome through negotiation.

Informative: Confirmation - No CIL Liability

This Informative confirms that this development is not liable to a CIL charge.

Any queries regarding CIL, please telephone 01395 571585 or email cil@eastdevon.gov.uk.

Plans relating to this application:

921.2.a	Proposed Combined Plans	18.05.21
921.3.b	Proposed Combined Plans	18.05.21

List of Background Papers

Application file, consultations and policy documents referred to in the report.

