

Item No	Application No. and Parish	8/13 Week Date	Proposal, Location and Applicant
(3)	10/00817/FUL Wokefield.	23 rd June 2010	Demolition of existing house; erection of replacement 5 bedroom house; re-organising landscape to provide formal route to new house via existing access from road. Oakfield Stables also known as Herron Lodge, New Road, Mortimer, Reading RG7 3AP. Mr G Cox.

Recommendation Summary: **The Head of Planning and Countryside be authorised to APPROVE Planning Permission subject to conditions.**

Ward Member(s): Cllr Keith Lock and Cllr Mollie Lock.

Reason for Committee determination: Called to Committee by Cllr Keith Lock.
Reason – concern over scale of building in relation to Council policy.

Committee Site Visit: 1st September 2010.

Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Jake Brown
Job Title:	Planning Officer
Tel No:	(01635) 519 111
E-mail Address:	JPBrown@westberks.gov.uk

1. Site History

14816 – Conversion of stables - Application approved 10th October 1967.

2. Publicity of Application

Site notice expired 4th June 2010.

Neighbour Notification expired 1st June 2010.

Amended Plans Neighbour Notification expired 10th August 2010.

3. Consultations and Representations

- Parish Council:** No objections.
(Amended Plans – No response received)
- Tree Officer:** No objections subject to conditions.

No objections.
- Highways Officer:** Amended Plans – No objections.
- Design and Conservation Officer:** No objection in principle but further attention to detail necessary.

Amended Plans – These significantly address the previous concerns suggest conditions.
- Public Protection:** No response received.
- Defence Estates:** No objections.
- Letters of objection:** 1 letter of objection received citing:
- Replacement dwelling would be visually intrusive in the landscape detrimental to the open character of the area.
 - Dwelling disproportionate in size to the original
 - Scale mass and bulk of dwelling would have a greater visual impact
 - Introduction of a building prejudicial to the pattern of development in the locality.
 - Development would detract from the inherent character of the area.
 - Proposal does not complement the other buildings and features in the locality nor is it sympathetic in scale layout and siting of adjoining buildings.

- No landscaping details provided.
- Suburbanizing effect on countryside.
- No details of tree protection provided.

Further representations from the same persons were received following the removal of the proposed stable block from the scheme. The representations consider the proposal to remain contrary to policy and advice in Supplementary Planning Guidance.

4. Policy Considerations

Planning Policy Statement 1 “Delivering Sustainable Development” (PPS1)
 Planning Policy Statement 7 “Sustainable Development in Rural Areas” (PPS7)

Policies OVS.1, OVS.2, ENV.1, ENV.18, ENV.23 and TRANS1 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 Saved Policies 2007 (WBDLP).

Supplementary Planning Document “Quality Design” (adopted June 2006)
 Supplementary Planning Guidance SPG 04/3 “Replacement Dwellings and Extensions in the Countryside”

5. Description of Development

- 5.1 The application is for the demolition of the existing dwelling and the erection of a replacement 5 bedroom dwelling. The application also seeks to alter the driveway from the existing access. The application originally included the erection of a stable block which has since been removed from the scheme. Furthermore the application has been amended to remove the proposed dormer windows within the roof and reduce the ridge height as well as lowering the ground level that the proposed dwelling would be sited on.
- 5.2 The application site is a large sized plot with an existing part single storey and part two storey dwelling.

6. Consideration of the Proposal

The main issues to consider are:

The principle of the development

The impact on the character of the area

The impact on neighbouring amenity in terms of:

- sunlight
- daylight
- overlooking / privacy
- noise and disturbance
- overbearing

6.4 Highway Matters

6.5 Other matters

6.1 Principle of Development

- 6.1.1 The site lies outside of any defined settlement boundary and is therefore within the open countryside. As the site lies within the open countryside, it is necessary to consider the proposal against the requirements of Policy ENV18 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 – 2006 Saved Policies 2007 (WBDLP). In addition, and in specific in relation to the replacement of Oakfield Stables, Policy ENV23 details a number of criteria against which this proposal must also accord.
- 6.1.2 In respect of Policy ENV18, the proposed dwelling is considered to accord with criteria (c) as it falls within permissible housing in the countryside and maintains the environment as discussed later in the report.
- 6.1.3 In respect of Policy ENV23, criteria (a) it is considered that the existing dwelling is long established. In respect of criteria (b) this Policy states that the proposed dwelling should not be disproportionate in size to dwelling being replaced. Descriptive advice regarding disproportional increase is set out within Supplementary Planning Guidance: Replacement Dwellings and Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside. The proposed dwelling would increase the floor area by approximately 15.7% upon the existing dwelling and the volume by approximately 24.6%. The footprint of the dwelling would be reduced by approximately 13%. Please note, in respect of the percentage increase in floor area the second floor has not been included in the calculations as this is designated as loft space in the amended plans that were submitted showing a reduced ridge height as well as removing the dormer windows in the roof. The use of the second floor as loft space is considered appropriate given that only two small openings are proposed to serve two of the spaces in the second floor.
- 6.1.4 In respect of criteria (b), section 3.3 of the Supplementary Planning Guidance: Replacement Dwellings and Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside states:
- ‘Policy ENV.23 is not prescriptive in setting precise limits on what is or is not disproportionate, as each proposal needs to be considered individually in terms of its actual impact on the site and the surrounding rural environment. A new dwelling should not have a materially larger impact than the dwelling it replaces and this impact will be assessed on a number of factors. The percentage increase in volume or floor area is a useful indicator of what may be disproportionate, but it is only one matter to be taken into account. Other factors which are likely to be key determinants are indicated in the supporting text to Policy ENV.23 and include:-
- (i) the overall size, scale and massing of the replacement dwelling compared to the original; and
 - (ii) the site characteristics and visual prominence of the existing and proposed replacement dwellings. Visual prominence / intrusion may be reduced or increased by design factors; and
 - (iii) the impact on and relationship to adjoining buildings and uses in rural areas; and
 - (iv) whether on balance the proposed development maintains/enhances or detracts from the inherent character and nature of the site and the surrounding rural

environment (this is a judgement which can only be made on the merits or otherwise of each case).'

- 6.1.5 Taking into account the factors detailed above the floor area of the new dwelling would increase by approximately 15.7% and the volume, which is considered to be a more accurate reflection of the size and massing of a building, would increase by 24.6%. In addition the demolition of an existing greenhouse, shed and store, whilst not included within the above calculations, would further reduce the spread of built form within the application site. The increase in height upon the existing dwelling, as demonstrated in drawing number 5449/PL09C would be approximately 0.2 metres. It is considered that the proposed increase in floor area, volume and therefore massing, accords with the guidance regarding the percentage increase detailed in section 3.3.1 of the Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- 6.1.6 The site is largely screened from the public realm by mature woodland. The proposed dwelling would be located further within the site (81.5 metres from the edge of New Road at the closest point) than the existing dwelling at present which is located some 26 metres from the edge of New Road, at the closest point. Such an increase in distance when viewed from the road would increase the openness of the site and overcome any concerns regarding the minimal increase in the height of the dwelling. Furthermore the existing dwelling restricts views from the road to the countryside beyond due to the expanse of roof form that stretches across almost the entire view, whereas the proposed dwelling, whilst slightly higher, would be more compact, as the width of the built form at first floor level would be reduced from approximately 20.7 metres to 17.4 metres when viewed from the road, thus introducing more views of the countryside beyond. This is clearly demonstrated in figure 11 of the 'Architectural Design and Access Statement' submitted. As such the visual prominence is considered to be reduced by design factors.
- 6.1.7 The proposed dwelling would also reduce any impact on the neighbouring dwelling, Oakfield House, given the increase in distance between this property and the proposed dwelling from approximately 12 metres to approximately 65 metres. In respect of the letter of representation received the existing building is not subservient to the immediately adjacent neighbouring property, Oakfield House, as demonstrated in drawing number 5449/PL02. Whilst the original building on this site was a stable block it has been altered significantly since that use was in operation. Moreover the existing dwelling would not be read as an ancillary building to surrounding dwellings when viewed from the public realm.
- 6.1.8 Lastly in respect of the factors for consideration the proposed dwelling is not considered to harm the inherent character and nature of the site and the surrounding rural environment for the reasons discussed below.

6.2 The impact on the character of the area

- 6.2.1 The character of the area is rural with wooded areas to the south and east of the application site and open fields to the north and west. Nearby dwellings include Oakfield House, immediately adjacent to the site, which is a two storey red brick cottage style dwelling. To the south stood West Lodge, a recently demolished two storey white rendered dwelling at the western entrance to Wokefield Park. Within Wokefield Park there are a number of buildings most notable of which is Wokefield

Mansion House – a large 18th century mansion. North-east of the application site is Oakfield Park, a large 3 storey red brick dwelling as shown in Figures 6,7, 8 and 9 of the 'Architectural Design and Access Statement' submitted.

- 6.2.2 As previously discussed the proposed dwelling would open up views through the site from the public realm of the New Road. Whilst the parts of the dwelling that would be seen from the road would be different to that which exists at present the proposed dwelling would maintain the characteristics of nearby built forms in particular Oakfield Park, as well as having similar features to that of nearby Wokefield Mansion House. Furthermore it is proposed to construct the dwelling with red brick, another feature that is prominent within the surrounding area in particular the adjoining neighbouring properties of Oakfield House and Oakfield Park.
- 6.2.3 The existing dwelling has a large footprint and is of no significant architectural merit. The proposed replacement dwelling would reduce the spread of built form and is considered to maintain the inherent rural character of the area whilst introducing a dwelling of architectural merit that is sympathetic to the character of the area.
- 6.2.4 Therefore the application is considered to accord with Policies ENV.18 and ENV.23 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 – 2006 Saved Policies 2007 as well as Supplementary Planning Guidance: Replacement Dwellings and Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside.

6.3 The impact on the neighbouring amenity

- 6.3.1 The proposed replacement dwelling would be located approximately 65 metres from the neighbouring dwelling, Oakfield House. Given the distance from the proposed dwelling to the adjacent property and any other neighbouring dwellings the proposal is not considered to introduce any harmful impact in terms of loss of light, loss of privacy or overbearing impact.

6.4 Highways Matters

- 6.4.1 The proposal does not alter the existing access onto New Road. The internal driveway within the application site would be altered, however, sufficient off-road parking and turning would be available for the replacement dwelling. As such the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on highway safety.

6.5 Other Matters

6.5.1 Tree Matters

A tree survey and arboricultural impact assessment has been submitted with the application detailing the impact of the development on the trees. The Tree Officer has assessed the application in respect of the impact on the trees within the application site. The Tree Officer has noted that the information submitted clearly identifies the impact to the trees and what levels of precautions are required to protect the trees to be retained. The report is very well constructed and follows a clear and constructive approach to the retention and protection of trees, down to site monitoring. Furthermore the landscaping within the application site could be

improved through the attachment of a landscaping condition should the application be approved. As such no objections have been raised subject to the attachment of conditions should the application be approved.

7. Conclusion

7.1. The proposal is considered acceptable in respect of its impacts on the character of the area, neighbouring properties and highway safety. The design, scale and form of the dwelling would be sympathetic with the character of the area. The application is therefore recommended for conditional approval.

8. Full Recommendation

8.1 The Head of Planning and Countryside be authorised to APPROVE planning permission subject to the following conditions and informatives.

8.2 Conditions

Time limit

1. The development shall be started within three years from the date of this permission and implemented strictly in accordance with the approved plans.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to review the desirability of the development against Policy OVS2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006 Saved Policies 2007 should it not be started within a reasonable time.

Approved Plans

2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out strictly in accordance with drawing title numbers 5449/PL07A, 5449/PL06A, 5449/PL09C and 5449/PL10B received on 26th July 2010, drawing title number 5449/PL03 Rev A received on 7th June 2010 unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority on an application made for that purpose.

Reason: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the submitted details assessed against National, Regional and Local Planning Policy.

Samples of materials

3. No development shall commence until samples of the materials to be used in the proposed development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This condition shall apply irrespective of any indications as to the details that may have been submitted with the application, and shall include the submission of samples of any external finishes including bricks and stone, tiles and any other roof finishes to be used. Thereafter the materials used in the development shall be in accordance with the approved samples.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policy OVS2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 – 2006 Saved Policies 2007.

Arboricultural Watching Brief

4. No development, site works or demolition shall commence until the applicant has secured the implementation of an arboricultural watching brief in accordance with a written scheme of site monitoring, which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, to supervise the recommendation provided in the tree report produced by Challice Consulting Ltd (ref: CC/581 AR919 dated 2nd June 2010) received on 3rd June 2010.

Reason: To ensure the protection of trees identified for retention at the site in accordance with the objectives of West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006 Policy OVS 2.

Tree protection

5. No development shall commence (including any preparatory works) until the protective fencing detailed in drawing title numbers TPP-CC/581 AR919 received on 3rd June 2010 and as identified in the tree report CC/581 AR919 dated 2nd June 2010 has been erected. At least 2 working days notice shall be given to the Local Planning Authority that it has been erected. It shall be maintained and retained for the full duration of works or until such time as agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. No activities, storage of materials or machinery, parking of vehicles or fires whatsoever shall take place within the protected areas without the prior written agreement of the Local Planning Authority.

Note: The protective fencing should be as specified at Chapter 9 and detailed in figure 2 of B.S.5837:2005.

Reason: To ensure the enhancement of the development by the retention of existing trees and natural features during the construction phase in accordance with Policy OVS2 of West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 – 2006 Saved Policies 2007.

Landscaping

6. No development or other operations shall commence on site until a detailed scheme of landscaping for the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include schedules of plants noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities, an implementation programme and details of written specifications including cultivation and other operations involving tree, shrub and grass establishment. The scheme shall ensure;
 - a) Completion of the approved landscape scheme within the first planting season following completion of development.
 - b) Any trees shrubs or plants that die or become seriously damaged within five years of this development shall be replaced in the following year by plants of the same size and species.

Reason: To ensure the implementation of a satisfactory scheme of landscaping in accordance with the objectives of Policies OVS2 and OVS 3 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 – 2006 Saved Policies 2007.

Fencing and enclosures

7. No development or other operations shall commence on site until a scheme of fencing and other means of enclosure to be erected on the site is submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and no buildings shall be occupied before the fencing and other means of enclosure have been erected to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: The fencing and other means of enclosure are essential elements in the detailed design of this development and the application is not accompanied by sufficient details to enable the Local Planning Authority to give proper consideration to these matters in accordance with Policy OVS2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 – 2006 Saved Policies 2007.

Hard surfacing

8. No development shall commence on site until a scheme for the means of treatment of the hard surfaced areas of the site is submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No building shall be occupied before the hard surfaced areas have been constructed in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity, in accordance with Policy OVS.2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006 Saved Policies 2007.

Parking

9. No development shall commence on site until the vehicle parking and turning space has been provided in accordance with drawing title number 5449/PL03 Rev A received on 7th June 2010. The parking and turning space shall thereafter be kept available for parking (of private motor cars and/or light goods vehicles) at all times.

Reason: To ensure the development is provided with adequate parking facilities in order to reduce the likelihood of roadside parking which would be a danger to other road users in accordance with Policy TRANS 1 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 Saved Policies 2007.

Demolition of existing outbuildings

10. No development of the dwelling hereby approved shall commence until the shed, greenhouse and store, shown on drawing title number 5449/PL03 Rev A received on 7th June 2010, have been demolished.

Reason: To prevent the over-development of the site and harm to the character of the area in accordance with Policy OVS2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006 Saved Policies 2007.

No additions or extensions

11. Irrespective of the provisions of the current Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any subsequent revision), no additions or extensions to the dwelling shall be built or ancillary buildings or structures erected within the curtilage, unless permission in writing has been granted by the Local Planning Authority on an application made for the purpose.

Reason: To prevent the over-development of the site and to safeguard the amenities of neighbouring properties in accordance with Policy OVS2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006 Saved Policies 2007.

8.3 Informatives

1. The attention of the applicant is drawn to the Highways Act 1980, which enables the Highway Authority to recover expenses due to extraordinary traffic.
2. The attention of the applicant is drawn to the Berkshire Act, 1986, Part II, Clause 9, which enables the Highway Authority to recover the costs of repairing damage to the footway, cycleway or grass verge, arising during building operations.
3. The decision to grant planning permission has been taken because the development is in accordance with the development plan and would have no significant impact on the character and appearance of the area or the residential amenities of the occupants of the adjacent dwellings. This informative is only intended as a summary of the reason for the grant of planning permission. For further details on the decision please see the application report which is available from the Planning Service or the Council website.
4. All bats are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (WCA) and the Conservation (Natural Habitat, &c.) Regulations 1994. Should you find bats during development, all work must stop until advice has been sought from Natural England. Their local contact number is 0118 9581222.