

	16/01603FULMAJ
Item (1)	Land North Of Winterbourne Farm Winterbourne
Title of Report:	PAC Farms Ltd Replacement of redundant barns with a single dwelling, redevelopment of an existing barn to provide garaging, associated landscaping, provision of a community parking area and additional wider landscaping and biodiversity enhancements to an AONB
Report to be considered by:	District Planning Committee
Date of Meeting:	28 th September 2016.
Forward Plan Ref:	N/A

To view the plans and drawings relating to this application click the following link:
<http://planning.westberks.gov.uk/rpp/index.asp?caseref=16/01603/FULMAJ>

Purpose of Report: **For the District Planning Committee to determine the application in question.**

Recommended Action: **The Western Area Planning Committee, at the meeting on 31st August 2016, RESOLVED** to approve the application, subject to conditions. The application, if approved, would comprise a departure from current Development Plan Policy in the Core Strategy 2006 to 2026, West Berkshire District Local Plan Saved Policies 2007 and the emerging West Berkshire Housing Allocations Development Plan Document 2015.

Reason for decision to be taken: The application, if approved, would comprise a departure from current Development Plan Policy in the Core Strategy 2006 to 2026 - ADPP1, ADPP5 and CS1 Policies HSG1 and ENV20 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 Saved Policies 2007 as well as Policy C1 of the emerging Housing Site Allocations DPD.

Key background documentation: Western Area Planning Committee on 31st August 2016. Agenda Report and minutes, plus update sheet. Application file 16/01603/FULMAJ.

Key aims.

Focus development within established settlement boundaries.
Protecting the environment and rural areas
Achieve sustainability in Council planning decisions.

The proposals contained in this report have to be considered in order to help to achieve the above Council Strategy as set out in the 2013 to 2018 document.

Portfolio Member Details	
Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Hilary Cole
E-mail Address:	Hilary.Cole@westberks.gov.uk
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	To be advised.

Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Sharon Brentnall
Job Title:	Temporary Planning Officer
Tel. No.:	01635519111
E-mail Address:	Sharon.brentnall@westberks.gov.uk

Implications

Policy: Core Strategy Policies – ADDP1, ADPP5, CS 1, CS 4, CS 5, CS 13, CS 14, CS 15, CS 16, CS 17, CS 18, CS 19

Financial: N/A

Personnel: N/A

Legal/Procurement: N/A

Property: N/A

Risk Management: N/A

Equalities Impact Assessment: N/A

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Western Area Planning Committee on 31st August 2016, considered an agenda report for the demolition of redundant agricultural barns, erection of a dwelling with garage and paddock area, extensive wider landscape and ecological enhancements to the surrounding area and change of use of an area of land for use as an informal car park for the local community.

1.2 The site is located outside of any defined settlement boundary and within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The village of Winterbourne does not have a settlement boundary as defined by Policy HSG1 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 Saved Policies 2007. As such the application site falls within the open countryside as identified within Policy ADPP1 of the Core Strategy where 'only appropriate limited development in the countryside will be allowed, focussed on the addressing identified needs and maintaining a strong rural economy'. Policy C1 of the Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD), (November 2015) also identifies settlements where there will be a presumption in favour of development and redevelopment within the settlement boundaries. Winterbourne is again not identified as a settlement where such proposals would be

considered. The DPD goes on to state that exceptions to this are limited to rural exception housing schemes, conversion of redundant buildings, housing to accommodate rural workers and extension to or replacement of existing residential units. This proposal however does not meet any of these specific criteria. The support text to Policy C1 does allow for limited infill in settlements in the countryside with no defined settlement boundary, subject to:

- i. it being within a closely knit cluster of 10 or more existing dwellings adjacent to, or fronting an existing highway; and
- ii. The scale of development consists of infilling a small undeveloped plot commensurate with the scale and character of existing dwellings within an otherwise built up frontage; and
- iii. It does not extend the existing frontage; and
- iv. The plot size and spacing between dwellings is similar to adjacent properties and respects the rural character and street scene of the locality.

On this basis, whilst the application site is adjacent to a group of 10 or more dwellings, it cannot be considered as a closely knit cluster. Winterbourne Farm is itself not reflective of the main pattern of development within Winterbourne. The farmhouse is set on a standalone, substantial site and clearly defines the end of the pattern of residential development. The site cannot be classified as an 'infill' plot as it is not a small undeveloped plot between existing properties. It would be larger than any other plot within the settlement and would extend the existing frontage, all of which would be contrary to policy.

- 1.3 Therefore it is considered that approval of this application could potentially set an undesirable future precedent for numerous similar application sites within the District which could be difficult to resist.
- 1.4 The proposed dwelling would result in a new dwelling in the countryside in an unsustainable location that would not minimise the need for travel by car and would not be accessible by an alternative means of transport. Furthermore the proposal would not be well related to the existing settlement pattern and is not considered to fall within any of the special circumstances for isolated new homes in the countryside, particularly as the design is not considered to be of exceptional quality or innovative nature of the design as detailed in paragraph 55 of the NPPF. Therefore the principle of the development of a new dwelling and detached garage is not considered acceptable and runs contrary to Policies ADPP1, ADPP5 and CS1 of the Core Strategy and Policy ENV20 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 Saved Policies 2007 as well as the NPPF.
- 1.5 The proposed dwelling, detached garage and public car parking would result in a detrimental impact on the landscape and scenic beauty of the rural character and appearance of the AONB. Although the existing barns which are visible in the wider landscape are to be removed, the roof form of the replacement dwelling will be substantial and whilst sited further toward the road, it will remain highly visible in this sensitive AONB landscape, thus negating any benefit derived from the removal of the barns. Furthermore, the detached siting of the proposed dwelling and garage set well back from the road does not follow the existing pattern of development and will be seen in isolation from the remainder of the village (with the exception of Winterbourne Farm), which has a close knit pattern with substantially smaller curtilages. It is not considered to be infill plot as it will extend Winterbourne further northwards and create a curtilage, more in depth than any other plot within the village. This substantial residential curtilage with the strong formal domesticated boundary treatment of the brick wall proposed along

the public right of way, and associated domestic paraphernalia within the residential curtilage, is considered to significantly harden and domesticate in appearance the existing transition between the built form of Winterbourne Village and the countryside. The parking of vehicles in this highly visible location outside of the settlement pattern of Winterbourne is also considered to contribute to the detrimental impact on the rural character and appearance of the AONB. Together these elements as a whole are not considered to provide any beneficial impact on the rural character and appearance of the AONB. Therefore the application is considered to be contrary to Policies ADPP5, CS14 and CS19 of the Core Strategy and Policy ENV20 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 Saved Policies 2007 as well as the NPPF.

1.6 The application contains a significant amount of wider landscaping proposals, which could clearly improve the character and appearance of the site and the AONB if implemented. It should be noted that the AONB Officer confirmed that support as detailed for the application was on the basis of the inclusion of these wider landscape proposals. It is however critical to note that these improvements cannot be secured by means of conditions or a legal obligation. To secure the landscaping proposals the works would need to meet the tests set out in the NPPG. These state the condition or legal obligation must be necessary, relevant to planning and the application itself, enforceable, reasonable and precise. In this instance, the only landscaping which is considered to meet these tests is the planting immediately surrounding the site. Therefore given these tests, if at any point in the future an application was submitted to vary or remove such a condition/obligation the Council are likely to find it difficult to continue to require the works to be undertaken. Whilst the works could be implemented without the need for planning permission, any recommendation for approval would be on the basis of boundary planting and that alongside the bridleway only. The remaining landscaping and environmental enhancements therefore cannot be considered as forming part of this application.

1.7 Members at the Western Area Planning Committee considered that the existing degraded condition of the site has an adverse effect on the village and wider AONB landscape. The proposal and in particular the removal of the barns and restoration of the site represent a public benefit in terms of environmental improvements which would outweigh the harm and justify the departure from national and local planning policy. Officers determined that the issues involved should be considered by the District Planning Committee due to the conflict with planning policy that would undermine the development plan and the forthcoming Housing Allocations DPD. The detailed reasons are set out more fully in the report attached at Appendix 1.

2 CONCLUSION

2.1 The Western Area Planning Committee evaluated the planning policy advice provided in the Committee Report and concluded that the public benefits of the proposal, namely the removal of the barns which are considered to be an eyesore in the sensitive AONB landscape and replacement with a dwelling and detached garage, along with community car parking area, outweigh the departure from national and local planning policy.

3 RECOMMENDATION

3.1 That the District Planning Committee **REFUSE** planning permission for the reasons set out in paragraph 8.2 of the report to the Western Area Planning Committee on 31st August 2016.

APPENDICES

- 1 WAP Committee Report of 31st August 2016
- 2 Update paper of 31st August 2016
- 3 Minutes of meeting held on 31st August 2016

DC