

Item No	Application No. and Parish	8/13 week date	Proposal, Location and Applicant
(3)	17/01889/OUTD Burghfield Parish	4 th September 2017.	<p>Outline planning permission for the redevelopment and change of use of the site to residential (C3) to provide a single storey detached dwellinghouse with rooms in the roof space. Matters to be considered: Access and Layout.</p> <p>Land Adjacent to Larch House Sulhamstead Reading RG7 4BB</p> <p>Malcolm Hatton</p>

To view the plans and drawings relating to this application click the following link:
<http://planning.westberks.gov.uk/rpp/index.asp?caseref=17/01889/OUTD>

Recommendation Summary: to **DELEGATE** to the Head of Planning & Countryside to **REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION** for the reasons given below (Section 9.1).

Ward Members: Councillor Carol Jackson-Doerge
Councillor Ian Morrin

Reason for Committee Determination: Called in by Ward Member

Committee Site Visit: 28 June 2017

Contact Officer Details

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1. Relevant Site History

97/50920/FUL	Conversion of barns for small business use. Refused 20.10.1997. Appeal dismissed 28.08.1998
01/00860/FUL	Retrospective application for C.O.U/conversion of Larch House, Swallows Cottage and the Long Barn for B1 use. C.O.U of agricultural buildings to parking area. C.O.U of part of paddock to provide car parking. Approved 29 January 2002.
10/03037/FULD	Redevelopment and change of use of existing sheds into new studio accommodation (business use) with new attached three bedroomed dwelling. Refused 28.04.2011
16/03603/OUTD	Outline planning permission for the redevelopment and change of use of site to residential (C3) to provide single storey detached dwellinghouse with rooms in roof space. Matters to be considered: Access and Layout. Withdrawn 31.03.2017
17/01042/OUTD	Outline planning permission for the redevelopment and change of use of site to residential (C3) to provide single storey detached dwellinghouse with rooms in roof space. Matters to be considered: Access and Layout. Invalid 03.07.2017

2. Publicity of Application

Site Notice Expired:	3 rd August 2017
Neighbour Notification Expired:	2 nd August 2017

3. Consultations and Representations

3.1 Consultations

Burghfield Parish Council No objections,

Archaeology I have reviewed the application using the approach set down in the National Planning Policy Framework and have checked the proposed development against the information we currently hold regarding the heritage assets and historic land uses in this area. The site historically formed a second yard for the former Hosehill Farm, perhaps for stock but the evidence suggests that there will be no major impact on any features of archaeological significance. The existing shelter sheds have also been considered and do not warrant full historic building recording. I do not believe that any archaeological assessment or programme of investigation and recording will be necessary in relation to the current proposal.

Conservation Conservation Officers made the following comments on the previous application, and there has not been a material change

which alters these comments. The nearest heritage asset is the Grade II listed as Hose Hill Farm, and, potentially the (curtilage) buildings comprising Larch House to the north of it. However the fact that the application site now appears to be a separate curtilage to either of the aforementioned, and separated from the listed farm house by intervening buildings and boundary walls, any proposals for the application site will not impact directly or on the setting of the listed building, nor materially on the (potentially curtilage) Larch House buildings. No objections are raised to the current application from a purely building conservation perspective.

Environment Agency No objection, subject to a condition requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the submitted Flood Risk Assessment and suitable flood mitigation measures, and to ensure that a void remains open for the lifetime of the development.

Highways The Transport Statement has demonstrated trips from the existing paddock are comparable with the proposed residential use. However, according to the application form only two parking spaces are proposed, a minimum of three driveway spaces are required, as is storage for two cycles. Recommend approval subject to conditions with regard to the submission of a construction method statement, and the provision of vehicle parking and cycle storage.

Tree Officer The application has been fully supported in the Arboricultural report, with details on tree protection provided, further details on services and hard surfaces will be required and details on Arboricultural supervision will be required to oversee some parts of the development. I have no objection to the application subject to planning conditions being attached to any formal consent.

Natural England No comments to make on this application

Waste Management The location provides easy access to the public highway at Hose Hill and therefore application raises no concerns with regard to the storage and collection of refuse and recycling.

3.2 Representations

Total: 6 Object: 0 Support: 6

The material planning considerations raised in the support of the application are as follows:

- The barns are in urgent need of repair, the proposal will be an improvement to the area
- Conversion to residential use will help stop opportunists snooping and breaking into outbuildings

- The new house is in keeping with the surroundings and will not encroach on the paddock.
- Will reduce fly tipping
- There will not be an impact on the wildlife
- It will not have an adverse impact on anyone or the surrounding area
- I have known the site since 1970, when it was a farm, since that time all other buildings have been converted with care and consideration within the original footprint, the buildings in this application are within the original working area of the farm, not the arable area, it is no longer a farm. In the light of the previous conversions, this development seems logical.

4 Planning Policy

- 4.1 The statutory development plan comprises the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 and those saved policies within the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 (Saved Policies 2007) (WBDLP) and the Housing Sites Allocations DPD (2006-2026).
- 4.2 The policies within the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026) attract full weight. The following policies are relevant to this application:
- ADPP1: Spatial Strategy;
 - ADPP6: The East Kennet Valley
 - CS1: Delivering New Homes and Retaining the Housing Stock;
 - CS4: Housing Type and Mix;
 - CS 13: Transport;
 - CS 14: Design Principles;
 - CS 16: Flooding;
 - CS17: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
 - CS 18: Green Infrastructure;
 - CS 19: Historic Environment and Landscape Character.
- 4.3 The policies of the West Berkshire District Local Plan (1991-2006) Saved Policies 2007 attract due weight in accordance with their degree of consistency with the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework. The following saved policies are relevant to this application:
- OVS5: Environmental Nuisance and Pollution Control
- 4.4 The policies within the Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) attract full weight. The following policies are relevant to this application:
- C1: Location of New Housing in the Countryside;
 - C3: Design of Housing in the Countryside
 - P1: Residential Parking for New Development
- 4.5 In addition, the following locally adopted West Berkshire Council policy documents are relevant to this application:

- Supplementary Planning Document, Quality Design (June 2006) – Part 2 Residential Development;
- The Burghfield Village Design Statement (2011)

5. Description of Development

5.1 The site is within the area known as Hose Hill, which is outside of any defined settlement boundary, and within a rural location. It consists of a group of timber sheds. One of the timber sheds is open on one side, and a larger timber barn/shed with a metal barrelled roof, which is also partially open-sided and has a smaller shed attached to it. These buildings are arranged in an L-shape, with a hardstanding in front of the buildings. A post and rail fence separates the collection of buildings and hardstanding from the paddock which is also included within the application site. The site is bounded by mature trees and hedges to the east and north of the site. The site covers an area of 0.24 hectares. The access to the site is controlled by traffic lights, and also provides access to Larch House, and a group of dwellings, which were converted from redundant farm buildings, grouped around Larch House, these form part of the grade II listed Hose Hill Farm. Planning permission has previously been granted to use the shed for car parking, as well as a small part of the paddock, in association with business use of the former farm buildings at Larch House. That business use has ceased, and the creation of spaces within the paddock was never implemented. The application site is separated from the groups of dwellings by brick walls, fences and domestic hedges. The groups of dwellings around Larch House are situated within open countryside, outside of any defined settlement boundaries.

5.2 The application is in outline, with access and layout to be considered at this stage. It is proposing the demolition of the buildings, and a change of use of the site, to residential, to provide a single storey detached dwelling, with rooms in the roof space. The dwelling would be sited on the area of hardstanding, and the domestic curtilage would extend into the existing paddock area. The existing buildings have a footprint of 179 square metres, and the proposed dwelling has a footprint of 278 square metres. Indicative drawings have been submitted to indicate what a dwelling on the site could look like; these are being considered for illustrative purposes only.

6. Community Infrastructure Levy

6.1 The proposed works are likely to be liable for CIL, however this would be established at the reserved matters stage, when the proposed Gross Internal Area is known.

7. Consideration of the proposal

The main issues raised by the proposal are:

- The principle of development
- Design and Impact on the Surrounding Countryside;
- Highway Safety
- Ecology
- Flooding
- Impact on Heritage Assets
- Sustainability

7.1. The principle of development

- 7.1.1 The application site is situated in the open countryside beyond any defined settlement boundary, where Policy ADPP1 says that only appropriate limited development will be allowed, which is focussed on addressing identified needs and maintaining a strong economy. Within the East Kennet Valley, Policy ADPP6 focuses housing development in the rural service centre of Burghfield Common and Mortimer, with more modest development within the service village of Woolhampton. Policy C1 of the recently adopted Housing Sites Allocation DPD (HSADPD) states that there will be a presumption against new residential development outside of the settlement boundaries. It sets out exceptions to this policy which are rural exception housing schemes; conversion of redundant buildings, housing to accommodate rural workers extension to or replacement of existing residential units, and limited infill in settlements in the countryside with no defined settlement boundaries.
- 7.1.2. The proposed development does not form a type of development which is included within the list of permitted exceptions, within policy C1. The proposal involves the redevelopment of the site, rather than the conversion of the existing buildings, and whilst it is near to a group of dwellings in the former Hosehill Farm, it does not meet the criteria for infilling provided by Policy C1, as it is not within a cluster of 10 or more dwellings facing the highways, and is not an infilling plot. Furthermore the NPPF in paragraph 55 states that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the viability of rural communities, and says that isolated new homes in the countryside should be avoided unless there are special circumstances which include housing for rural workers, the optimal viable use of a heritage asset, the re-use of a redundant or disused buildings or the exceptional quality or innovative design of the dwelling. The application proposes the redevelopment of the site, as the proposed buildings are not suitable for, and are not proposed to be converted, and the proposed redevelopment does not fall into one of the excepted categories for rural housing in national policy or within the development plan is therefore contrary in principle to Policy C1 of the HSADPD. According to paragraph 12 of the NPPF, proposed development that conflicts with an up-to-date Local Plan should be refused unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

7.2 Design and Impact on the Surrounding Countryside

- 7.2.1 Policy CS14 says that development should demonstrate a high quality and sustainable design which respects and enhances the character and appearance of the area, and that good design relates not only to the appearance of the development, but the way it functions. Policy CS19 (amongst other things) says that to ensure that the diversity and local distinctiveness of the landscape character of the district is conserved and enhanced, particular regard will be had, to the sensitivity of the area to change, and ensuring that new development is appropriate in terms of location, scale and design in the context of the existing settlement form, pattern and character. Policy C3 says that the design of new housing must have regard to the impact collectively and individually on the landscape character of the area and its sensitivity to change.

- 7.2.2 The application is in outline, with access and layout to be considered at this stage. The application is proposing the demolition of the existing buildings, with a floor space of 170sq metres, and the replacement with a new dwelling of 280 sq metres. It is proposed to site the dwelling on the existing area which is occupied by one of the barns and the hardstanding. The remaining hardstanding and barn area will form a courtyard, which will be enclosed to the north and west by the dwelling. The remainder of the site to the north and west of the dwelling is proposed to be the residential curtilage of the site. That area is referred to as a paddock area. It is not developed land, and whilst enclosed to the west by a bund and deciduous trees to the north, the site is rural in character and contributes to the rural character of the local the open countryside. Whilst the site is close to the residential dwellings at Larch House and Hosehill Farm, the site is clearly separate to that group of dwellings. Whilst it shares the access point onto the road, there is a clear delineation between the buildings and surrounding countryside formed by the brick boundary wall, and the bund. The dwellings within the Hosehill Farm, are converted agricultural buildings, and are read within the wider countryside context as a group of former agricultural buildings, and the history of the function of those buildings can be clearly seen. The application site is clearly separated from that group of dwellings. Whilst it is screened during the summer months, the erection of a dwelling, which the illustrative plans indicate, utilises the roof space to accommodate a second storey, and to potentially build a house of lower height than a conventional house with two storeys and roof. The proposed dwelling does not relate well to the existing settlement pattern, which is characterised in this area by farmhouses and associated agricultural buildings closely grouped together, in one curtilage, with surrounding fields. The proposed dwelling will be detached from the complex of dwelling at Hose Hill Farm.
- 7.2.3 The supporting information say that this is an appropriate design within the location. Whilst the footprint of the house is contained within the existing hardstanding, it will be more prominent in the site than the existing buildings, as there are sheds which nestle against the tree and hedge boundary. The agent has indicated that it is not possible to use the existing buildings as their position for redevelopment or conversion due to the impact that the construction would have on the trees along the boundary. This highlights the sensitivity of the location, and whilst the materials may be appropriate, the creation of a substantial curtilage and garden of approximately 1,742 sq metres, with associated domestic paraphernalia will change the nature and the character of the surrounding countryside, which is currently characterised by open fields, and lakes formed from former gravel pits. The inclusion of existing non-residential land as domestic curtilage can have a considerable visual impact on the local character of the rural area and wider landscape due to the urbanising effect of the change of use due to the different character to that of residential gardens. The construction of a dwelling on this site which is currently occupied by very low level inconspicuous buildings which are lower in height than the adjacent complex of farm buildings, will be more obtrusive in the countryside, and will lead to additional domestication of the surrounding countryside, which will be contrary to the rural character of the area, and will be contrary to policies C3, CS14 and CS19 and the Quality Design SPD, which seek to protect and enhance the quality of the rural landscape.
- 7.2.4 An appeal was dismissed in June 2017 at High Elms Aldworth Road, Compton (planning application reference 16/00624/FULD). That application proposed the redevelopment of buildings constructed with metal sheeting and timber, with informal

storage and parking within the site, and some keeping of poultry on the site, and it was proposed to replace the buildings with a dwelling as in the instance. It was concluded that the appeal should be dismissed as it was contrary to policy C1. Whilst the proposed dwelling had been designed to take account of the surrounding features, land levels and existing buildings, it would still be harmful to the AONB and surrounding countryside, due to the increasing domestication of the scene, and the formalised gravel driveway. Whilst each application should be considered on its own merits, the principles used in the determination of that appeal apply in this case, and the increasing domestication of the countryside and visual intrusion that would result will be harmful to the rural scene, and detrimental to the rural character and appearance of the area.

7.2.5. The proposed dwelling would be sited in such a way and distance from the neighbouring properties, that it would not have an adverse impact on the amenities of adjoining occupiers. The position of the access is such that the proposals would be acceptable in terms of waste management and refuse collections. The Tree Officer has indicated that whilst some low quality trees would be lost, these are of little merit, within the landscape, and their loss can be mitigated through appropriate landscaping, together with adequate protection for the retained trees.

7.3 Highway Safety

7.3.1 Policy CS13 refers to development that requires a transport impact, and policy P1 sets out the requirement for parking provision for residential dwellings. The proposed access to the site will utilise the existing access from Hose Hill using the traffic light controlled junction. Whilst the number of trips proposed is comparable to the existing use, the plans do not make clear adequate parking spaces, to meet the requirement of a minimum of three parking spaces, and a cycle store for two cycles. The site is situated 1.3 miles from the nearest public transport at Theale station which is a 26- 27 minute walk, along roads without pavements, it is not considered to be close to public transport, with heavy reliance upon the private car, and so the site is not in a sustainable location, and is sited away from any existing settlements, with no realistic alternative to the private car for most journeys, and to access essential services in Theale and Burghfield Common. The proposed development is therefore contrary to Policy CS13 as it will not reduce the need to travel, nor will it improve travel choice and facilitate sustainable travel. The site does not have good access to key services and facilities.

7.3.2 There are no objections to the proposed access, and it is considered that sufficient off-road parking could be provided, which accords with policy P1 and for adequate cycle storage to be provided. These can be secured through the imposition of suitably worded conditions.

7.4 Ecology

7.4.1 Policy CS17 requires the biodiversity assets across West Berkshire to be conserved and enhanced. The site is in close proximity to The Hose Hill Lake Nature Reserve and is within a Biodiversity Opportunity Area. The application was submitted with an Ecological Impact Assessment which concluded that the habitats present are of low ecological value, and there is some scope for providing bird boxes to provide biodiversity enhancements. These can be secured by condition.

7.5 Flooding

7.5.1. The site is partially within Flood Zone 3, and Policy CS16 requires a flood risk assessment to be submitted with the application. The application was submitted with a Flood Risk Assessment, and the Environment Agency has indicated that if the development is carried in accordance with the FRA and the mitigation measures indicated then the proposal will not result in an unacceptable risk to the environment. These measures can be secured by condition.

7.6 Impact on Heritage Assets

7.6.1 The nearest heritage asset to the site is the grade II listed Hose Hill Farm, and potentially the curtilage buildings to the north of it. The NPPF and CS19 advises that the setting and significance of any heritage asset should be considered in the determination of planning applications. However, the site is separated from the listed farm house by intervening buildings and boundary walls and so the proposed development is not considered to impact directly on the listed buildings or their setting. The site is not considered to impact on any features of archaeological significance. The proposed development is not considered to be harmful to any heritage assets.

7.7 Sustainability

7.7.1 The NPPF identifies three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. The policies of the NPPF, taken as a whole, constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system. The proposed development, has only limited public economic benefits, which are largely limited to the construction process. The social aspects of this proposal are limited to the addition of one new dwelling, which is not significant in the supply of housing within the district to be a benefit which outweighs the demonstrative harm of the development. The third element of sustainable development is the environmental role, contributing to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment. The development will have an intrusive and detrimental impact on the rural environment as it will be harmful to the character and appearance of the dwelling, leading to sporadic residential development which does not blend well with the existing surroundings. The scale of the development proposed does not outweigh the minimal economic benefits. In addition, the site is not within close proximity to public transport links, with the nearest available public transport being Theale Station, 2.1 km away which is accessed along country roads, which do not have pavements, and are not conducive to pedestrian use. Whilst there is some potential for cycling, the occupants of the new dwelling would be heavily reliant on the private car for access to local services, and employment, which is not a prudent use of natural resources, and the site is not in a sustainable location, and as indicated that the proposal would lead to an intrusive form of development which is not supported by development plan policies, and will result in an intrusive form of development which will harm the character and appearance of the rural area, and does not constitute a sustainable form of development.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1. Having regard to the relevant development plan policy considerations and the other material considerations referred to above it is considered that the proposed development is unacceptable and should be refused for the reasons set out below:

9. Recommendation

Subject to no objections being raised by the tree officer to **DELEGATE** to the Head of Development & Planning to **REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION** for the reasons set out in Section 9.1.

9.1 Reasons

1. Outline planning permission is sought for the redevelopment and change of use of the site to residential use to provide a single storey detached dwellinghouse on land adjacent to Larch House, Sulhamstead. The site is situated within open countryside outside of any defined settlement boundary. According to Core Strategy Policy CS1, new homes will be primarily developed on land within settlement boundaries and allocated sites, in accordance with the settlement hierarchy outlined in the Spatial Strategy and Area Delivery Plan Policies (Policies ADPP1 and ADPP6). According to Policy ADPP1, only appropriate limited development will be allowed in the open countryside. According to Policy ADPP6, development in the open countryside of the East Kennet Valley will be strictly controlled. Policy C1 of the House Site Allocations DPD (2006-2026) provides a presumption against new residential development outside the settlement boundaries, with a few prescribed exceptions.

The application site is located outside of any defined settlement boundary, and does not fall within any of the specified exceptions to the presumption against new residential development. Moreover, the site is in a remote, unsustainable location that would not facilitate sustainable travel to key services and facilities. The application is therefore contrary to the NPPF, Policies ADPP1, ADPP6, CS1 and CS13 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026), and Policy C1 of the House Site Allocations DPD (2006-2026).

2. Core Strategy Policies CS14 and CS19 seek to ensure that new development demonstrates high quality and sustainable design that respects and enhances the character and appearance of the area, and should be appropriate in terms of location, scale, and design in the context of the existing settlement form, pattern and character. According to Policy C3 of the Housing Site Allocations DPD, the design of new housing in the countryside must have regard to the impact individually and collectively on the landscape character and its sensitivity to change.

The existing buildings are low key, utilitarian in character and inconspicuous. The proposed building represents a significant increase in built form on the site; it has a greater footprint, floor space, number of storeys, and height than the existing buildings. According to the illustrative elevations, despite a simple form, the building would have a residential character. The conversion of the existing paddock to create a substantial residential curtilage would also have an urbanising effect on the character and appearance of the area.

Overall, the replacement of the existing low key utilitarian buildings with a substantial residential dwelling and associated residential curtilage would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the area. As such, the proposed development is contrary to the NPPF, Policies CS14 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026), Policy C3 of the Housing Site Allocations DPD (2006-2026), and the West Berkshire Quality Design SPD.

Informative

1. In attempting to determine the application in a way that can foster the delivery of sustainable development, the local planning authority has approached this decision in a positive way having regard to Development Plan policies and available guidance to try to secure high quality appropriate development. In this application whilst there has been a need to balance conflicting considerations, the local planning authority has also been unable to find an acceptable solution to the problems with the development so that the development can be said to improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.