

**EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE
ON 2ND MAY 2018**

UPDATE REPORT

Item No: (1) **Application No:** 17/03290/OUTMAJ **Page No.** 17-76

Site: Land at The Old Farmhouse, Newbury Road, Hermitage

Planning Officer Presenting: Bob Dray

Member Presenting: N/A

Parish Representative speaking: Councillor Ruth Cottingham

Adjacent Parish Representative speaking: Councillor Mike Belcher

Objector(s) speaking: N/A

Supporter(s) speaking: N/A

Applicant/Agent speaking: Mr Nick Roberts/ Mr Lance Flannigan

Ward Member(s): Councillor Quentin Webb
Councillor Graham Pask

1. Additional consultation responses

1.1 Hermitage Parish Council: No objection. Hermitage Parish Council would like comments noted that it welcomes pedestrian and cycle access from the site to Marlston Road and improved vehicular access off Newbury Road, it is pleased to see sole access to the site from Newbury Road. HPC would refer to its letters for the requirement of a holistic traffic plan, the most recent dated 2nd March 2018. As Holy Trinity Church does not have a carpark Lipscomb Close is used instead. A route from Marlston Road to this site would become additional parking as well as a rat run. The council would like to point out that it has previously written to the planning department about taking on new open spaces in the village. It has cared for playgrounds for many years and is developing experience in looking after the local wildlife site at Furze Hill.

1.2 Officer response: Additional commentary of assessing the cumulative transport impacts has been provided in Section 5.

- 1.3 Education and Archaeological Officers have also reiterated their earlier comments.
- 1.4 No further representations have been received since the publication of the Agenda Report.

2. Application site, settlement boundary, allocation developable area

- 2.1 During the committee site visit a request was made that a plan be provided to compare the settlement boundary, allocation plan, and the extent of development proposed. Accordingly, the Annex after this item contains Figures 1-5.
- 2.2 Figures 1 and 2 demonstrate that the extent of the “developable area” defined by Policy HSA25 is the same as the settlement boundary, and that the “landscape buffer” extends beyond the settlement boundary. This is replicated in other housing allocation policies where the landscape buffers are also excluded from the settlement boundary.
- 2.3 Figures 3 and 4 are taken from the application submission, and Figure 5 has been created by the planning officer to provide a comparison. According to Figure 5, a small proportion of the southern road (proposed within the developable area of the Parameter Plan) goes beyond the policy-defined developable area and settlement boundary, slightly into the policy-defined landscape buffer.
- 2.4 According to the HSA DPD Glossary:
- “The following would not normally be included [within the landscape buffer] to avoid urbanisation of the buffer but may be acceptable in some locations if specified in the DPD of LSA/LCA or agreed through a more detailed LVIA: [amongst others]*
- *Road access to the adjoining housing allocation provided it is in keeping with the character of the receiving landscape.*
- ...Where buffers lie on the outer edge of a site next to open countryside they are shown outside of the proposed settlement boundary and are considered to be part of the open countryside not the development area....”*
- 2.5 For the reasons detailed in paragraph 6.1.7 of the Agenda Report, it is considered that on this specific site the precise line of the settlement boundary can be taken with a small degree of flexibility, primarily because it is a “notional” line through a field with no current physical delineation. In any event, the above plans indicate that the extent of any potential encroachment beyond the policy-defined settlement boundary and developable area is very small (a few metres) in the context of the site.
- 2.6 Based on the illustrative layout, pulling back the developable area by a few metres would adversely impact on the relationships between proposed dwellings. As such, this small additional depth allows for an improved layout, which in turn facilitates the other benefits referred to in the Agenda Report (four additional affordable dwellings, improved connections with surroundings, high quality open space). As such, it is considered that this very limited degree of encroachment is justified by the associated benefits.
- 2.7 The northern boundary of the allocated site does not follow any physical features within the illustrative layout. However, 12 whole plots are proposed within the land allocated by Policy HSA25. The density of development is 22 dwellings per hectares,

which is comparable to the average 20 dwellings per hectare applied to housing allocations in the AONB. Accordingly, the quantum and density of development is considered to be consistent with the housing allocation.

3. Ground levels

- 3.1 As was witnessed during the committee site visit, although the site is generally level, the area of land to the south of the existing farmyard buildings is at a lower level than land to the north and south. There is a retaining wall up to the pub garden. The submitted Design and Access Statement states the following:

"The site is generally level for the area of proposed development except for Plots 11-12 where it will fall approximately 1.0 metre across these plots, generally it is not intended to change the existing site levels."

- 3.2 Following the site visit, the applicant's agent has confirmed the following:

"As with any development on a site with level differences, cut and fill will be undertaken to "level up" the site. This will involve an initial cut and fill assessment exercise to establish whether the amount of cut and fill involved within the site is in balance, or whether it will be necessary to import or export material to achieve the required ground and finished floor levels. As you will appreciate, we do not yet know what these levels will be and this will be established at reserved matters stage, taking account of such matters as flood risk, mobility access etc. This is standard practice."

- 3.3 It is therefore anticipated that the detailed design at reserved matters stage would largely follow the existing contours of the land, but there is potential for some changes to levels. It is therefore appropriate to apply an additional condition for the prior approval of existing and proposed ground levels, and for finished floor levels. Such a condition would be in the interests of ensuring that the development does not result in any incongruous landforms, and to ensure an acceptable relationship between dwellings and adjacent uses.
- 3.4 Given the potential for significant spoil arising from any changes to ground levels that do result at reserved matters stage, it is also considered appropriate to apply a condition for the prior approval of measures for dealing with spoil, primarily to avoid any incongruous landforms resulting from spoil being deposited on the land.

4. Assessment of cumulative transport impacts

- 4.1 Section 6.4 of the Agenda Report considers the traffic and trip distribution implications of the proposed development. Paragraphs 6.4.9 to 6.4.10 explain how the potential cumulative transport impacts have been taken into account. The traffic modelling has included 15 dwellings for the allocated site HER001, not the 37 for which planning permission was refused, and this has been justified in the Agenda Report.
- 4.2 The Planning Practice Guidance on Transport Assessments and Statements (Paragraph: 014 Reference ID: 42-014-20140306, 06.03.2014) states the following:

*"It is important to give appropriate consideration to the cumulative impacts arising from other committed development (ie **development that is***

consented or allocated where there is a reasonable degree of certainty will proceed within the next 3 years). At the decision-taking stage this may require the developer to carry out an assessment of the impact of those adopted Local Plan allocations which have the potential to impact on the same sections of transport network as well as other relevant local sites benefitting from as yet unimplemented planning approval.”

- 4.3 The assessment of cumulative transport impacts that has been undertaken is consistent with this advice.

5. Updated recommendation

- 5.1 The recommendation remains as set out in Section 7 of the Agenda Report, but with the addition of the following conditions:

35. Ground levels and finished floor levels

No development shall take place until details of existing and proposed ground levels, and finished floor levels of the buildings, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory relationship between the proposed development and the adjacent land. These details are required before development commenced because insufficient information accompanies the application, and the agreed details will affect early construction activities. This condition is applied in accordance with the NPPF, Policies ADPP5, CS14 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026), and the Quality Design SPD (June 2006).

36. Spoil

No development shall take place until details of how all spoil arising from the development will be used and/or disposed have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall:

- (a) Show where any spoil to remain on the site will be deposited;
- (b) Show the resultant ground levels for spoil deposited on the site (compared to existing ground levels);
- (c) Include measures to remove all spoil from the site (that is not to be deposited);
- (d) Include timescales for the depositing/removal of spoil.

All spoil arising from the development shall be used and/or disposed of in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure appropriate disposal of spoil from the development and to ensure that ground levels are not raised in order to protect the character and amenity of the area. These details are required before development commenced because insufficient information accompanies the application, and the agreed details will affect early construction activities. This condition is applied in accordance with the NPPF, Policies ADPP5, CS14 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026), and the Quality Design SPD (June 2006).

Annex to 17/03290/OUTMAJ

Figure 1: Settlement boundary (taken from the Council's GIS):

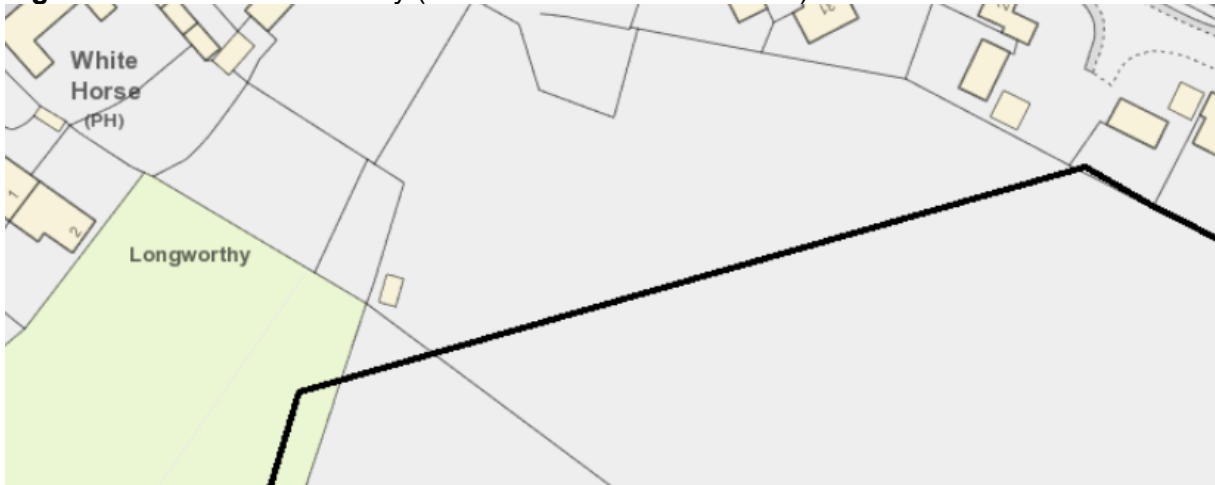


Figure 2: Policy HSA25 Map from the HSA DPD:



Figure 3: Submitted Parameter Plan:



Figure 4: Submitted Indicative Site Layout:



Figure 5: Settlement Boundary and Parameter Plan Comparison (black line to indicate settlement boundary added by planning officer to Parameter Plan):

