

Item No.	Application No. and Parish	Statutory Target Date	Proposal, Location, Applicant
(3)	20/01083/FUL Inkpen Parish Council	06/07/2020	Replacement dwelling  Quill Cottage, Craven Road, Inkpen, Hungerford, RG17 9DX  Mr and Mrs Jones
<sup>1</sup> Extension of time agreed with applicant until 29/07/2020			

The application can be viewed on the Council's website at the following link:  
<http://planning.westberks.gov.uk/rpp/index.asp?caseref=20/01083/FUL>

**Recommendation Summary:** To delegate to the Head of Development and Planning to REFUSE planning permission.

**Ward Member(s):** Councillor C Rowles  
Councillor J Cole and  
Councillor D Bennyworth

**Reason for Committee Determination:** Clarification required with regard to the correct interpretation of policy C7 of the Housing Site Allocations DPD

**Committee Site Visit:** Owing to social distancing restrictions, the option of a committee site visit is not available. Instead, a collection of photographs is available to view at the above link.

#### Contact Officer Details

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The determination of the applicant was deferred by Members at the WAPC 21<sup>st</sup> July 2020. Following the discussions of the WAPC, amendments and updates have been added to the original committee report, these are in bold.**
- 1.2 This application seeks planning permission for a replacement dwelling.
- 1.3 The current dwelling on site consists of a single storey bungalow and a detached single garage also of a single storey. The dwelling and garage are set approximately 10.3m back from Craven Road. The dwelling is known as Quill Cottage, it has a large rear residential curtilage that extends well beyond the red line of the submitted location plan.
- 1.4 The design of the current dwelling on site, whilst it is not of any particular architectural merit, it is appropriate for its location within the open countryside and North Wessex Downs AONB. The dwelling is low key and un-obtrusive, it does not significantly detract from the character of the surrounding area.
- 1.5 The north-west elevation of the existing property, fronting Craven Road, consists of a 1m post and rail fence, hedging, a single track gravel drive and open grass (lawn) amenity space. The existing elevational materials include brown/red brick, brown roof tiles and white window frames.
- 1.6 The overall design, scale and appearance of the current dwelling on site, is one which is suitable for its rural location, it does not impose itself within the AONB or wider landscape, the site is relatively open which makes a positive contribution to the open countryside in which the site is located.
- 1.7 Based on the submitted floor plans and publically available information from sources such as Rightmove, the existing dwelling offers a satisfactory level of residential accommodation. The existing dwelling includes four bedrooms, an en-suite bathroom, a study, a family bathroom, kitchen, lobby, hallway, utility room and a study/dining room. The internal elements of the dwelling appear to be of a relatively good standard. The areas of the separate rooms of the dwelling are as follows:

Room	Area (sq.m)
Kitchen	26sq.m
Lounge	20sq.m
Study/Dining Room	11sq.m
Lobby	5sq.m
Utility Room	4sq.m
Hallway	20sq.m
Bedroom 1 (including en-suite)	21sq.m
Bedroom 2	14sq.m
Bedroom 3	12sq.m
Bedroom 4	7sq.m

Family Bathroom	5sq.m
External Garage	20sq.m
<b>Total</b>	<b>165sq.m</b>

- 1.8 The applicant/agent has submitted that the GIA of the existing dwelling is 145sq.m, the applicant/agent has not submitted the measurement of each room as the Case Officer has done above. From the information submitted by the applicant/agent, it would appear that their measurements do not include the existing garage, should the garage be deducted from the Case Officers calculations, the same GIA of 145sq.m is reached.
- 1.9 Whilst West Berkshire Council has not adopted the Governments Technical Space Standards for new dwellings, these standards do provide helpful guidance on what are acceptable GIA (gross internal space). The Technical Space Standards require a single storey, four bedroom dwelling (for five people) to provide a minimum internal space of 90sq.m with 3sq.m storage space. The existing dwelling and garage on site provides 165sq.m. The average GIA of a four bedroom detached dwelling in the UK is 147sq.m<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.10 To the south-east of the site is a public right of way, reference INKP/16/1, against which the side elevation of the existing dwelling abuts.
- 1.11 The proposal scheme is for a substantial two storey dwelling, with a full roof and two dormer windows on each side elevation and one to the front. The replacement dwelling also includes a flat roof single storey element to the rear. The proposed dwelling includes a chimney stack on the rear of the roof which is visible from the street scene.
- 1.12 A significant amount of all four elevations are glazed, along with a roof light to the rear and two roof lights on the south-east elevation, the remaining elevational treatment consists of flint boarded by red brick, the roof is proposed to be of clay tile and the windows framed by a light grey material.
- 1.13 Whilst the submitted plans only show a first and second floor, the inclusion of roof lights and the height of the proposed scheme, it would be possible for internal alterations to take place and a third floor included (maximum room height of 1.6m), this would not require planning permission.
- 1.14 A single storey detached timber shed is included as part of the scheme and is located in the south corner of the site fronting Craven Road, and the public right of way.
- 1.15 The proposed front elevation includes a prominent 1.8m solid flint and brick wall (**this measurement has not been submitted by the agent it is therefore understood that there are no challenges to it**), which extends from the front elevation of the proposed dwelling and would be visible from the public domain. The boundary treatment directly adjacent to Craven Road includes a post and rail fence, hedging and close board timber gate. The front external amenity space (lawn) is shown as a car parking area (hard standing).

## 2. Planning History

- 2.1 The table below outlines the relevant planning history of the application site.

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<sup>1</sup> David Wilson Homes: <https://www.dwh.co.uk/advice-and-inspiration/average-house-sizes-uk/>

Application	Proposal	Decision / Date
05/01344/HOUSE	<a href="#">Proposed alteration and extension to existing bungalow.</a>	Approved 03/07/2005
95/46272/CERTP	<a href="#">Certificate of lawfulness for an existing use of land as garden area.</a>	Approved 14/03/1995
20/00048/FUL	<a href="#">Replacement dwelling with attached double garage and annex above.</a>	Withdrawn 06/03/2020

- 2.2 Recent application 20/0028/FUL was for a larger replacement dwelling on the site and was withdrawn following a discussion between the agent and case officer. The reduction between the previously withdrawn proposal scheme and the proposal currently before Members is not a material planning consideration and should not be given any weight in the planning balance.

### 3. Procedural Matters

- 3.1 Given the nature and scale of this development, it is not considered to fall within the description of any development listed in Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. As such, EIA screening is not required.
- 3.2 A site notice was displayed on 26.05.2020 at the front of the site, the deadline for representations expired on 16.06.2020.
- 3.3 At the WAPC of 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2020, where this application was first considered and then deferred, Members queried the level of engagement between the case officer and agent. During the course of the application there has only been limited contact and correspondence with the agent and applicant but the case officer responded those contacts that were received and advised of her concerns and likely recommendation prior to the meeting of the WAPC. Further limited contact has occurred since the committee meeting as described later in this report.**
- 3.4 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a levy charged on most new development to pay for new infrastructure required as a result of the development. CIL will be charged on residential (C3 and C4) and retail (A1 - A5) development at a rate per square metre (based on Gross Internal Area) on new development of more than 100 square metres of net floorspace (including extensions) or when a new dwelling is created (even if it is less than 100 square metres).
- 3.5 Since the Members call-in form was submitted there have been two highly relevant appeal decisions issued by the Planning Inspectorate which clearly and helpfully interpret policy C7 of the Housing Site Allocations DPD, these appeal decisions are material considerations:
- Appeal 3244084, determined 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020 – Appendix A
  - Appeal 3243683, determined 18<sup>th</sup> June 2020 – Appendix B

## 4. Consultation

### *Statutory and non-statutory consultation*

- 4.1 The table below summarises the consultation responses received during the consideration of the application. The full responses may be viewed with the application documents on the Council's website, using the link at the start of this report.

<b>Inkpen Parish Council:</b>	<b>Object</b>  a) Inkpen village has a scattered development in the NWD AONB area with open countryside and no settlement boundary - the openness is a material feature for consideration as well as location and landscape impact. b) The planning application, although reduced by removal of the front attached garage, still proposes a much larger development in scale and mass that overpowers the site and cannot be justified due to its proximity to the footpath and enjoyment of walkers and ramblers who enjoy the openness and tranquillity of the countryside. The development would have significant visibility on the landscape as walkers' approach or exit the footpath. c) The replacement building is disproportionate to the current dwelling, which nestles nicely within the countryside and its setting in the wider landscape. d) The reference to the size of the plot is irrelevant to be included for consideration as any encroachment on the paddock land for extended residential garden could not be supported due to the protection of valuable countryside - and represents a green wedge which stretches behind the dwellings along Craven Rd. Councillors requested that the curtilage should be enforced with no intrusion into paddock/agricultural land - supporting a decision of refusal made recently in Inkpen. e) Reference to Hunters Way is irrelevant as the planning officer at the time rightly recommended refusal of the development in the AONB joined by the residents and the Parish Council but overturned in committee.
<b>WBC Highways:</b>	<b>No objections</b>  Adequate car parking and cycle storage is proposed.  The plans must specify that the proposed electric vehicle charging point will be a minimum of 7 kw. At this stage a pre-commencement condition is requested for this.  This application provides an opportunity to improve highway safety. It is request a bonded surfacing is provided for the first 3 metres into the access measured from the edge of the carriageway to reduce the likelihood of loose material migrating onto the carriageway, which is a potential skid hazard.
<b>Public Rights of Way</b>	<b>No objections</b>
<b>Drainage Officer</b>	<b>Standing advice</b>
<b>Natural England</b>	<b>No comments to make</b>

<b>Ecology</b>	<b>No objections, subject to planning conditions</b>
<b>Rambling Society</b>	<b>No comments received</b>
<b>Tree Officer</b>	<b>No comments received</b>
<b>Thames Water</b>	<b>No comments received</b>
<b>Environment Agency</b>	<b>No comments received</b>

### ***Public representations***

- 4.2 A representation has been received from one contributor who supports the proposal.
- 4.3 The full response may be viewed with the application documents on the Council's website, using the link at the start of this report. In summary, the following issues/points have been raised:
- The design is of a high quality and an improvement to the existing
  - Largely screened from adjacent footpath
  - Disagree with Inkpen Parish Council's recommendation

## **5. Planning Policy**

- 5.1 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The following policies of the statutory development plan are relevant to the consideration of this application.
- Policies ADPP1, ADPP5, CS1, CS4, CS5, CS13, CS14, CS17, CS18 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 (WBCS).
  - Policies C1, C3, C7 and P1 of the Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document 2006-2026 (HSA DPD).
  - Policies OVS5 and OVS6 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 (Saved Policies 2007).
- 5.2 The following material considerations are relevant to the consideration of this application:
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
  - Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
  - North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan 2014-19
  - WBC Quality Design SPD (2006)
  - Inkpen Village Design Statement

## **6. Appraisal**

- 6.1 The main issues for consideration in this application are:

- Principle of Development
- Design, Character and Appearance
- Ecology

### ***Principle of development***

- 6.2 In determining the principle of residential development, the relevant local plan policies are ADPP1, ADPP5 and CS1 of the Core Strategy and policies C1 and C7 of the Housing Site Allocations DPD.
- 6.3 The site is located outside of a defined settlement boundary, as such it is located within the open countryside in accordance with policy ADPP1. It also lies within the North Wessex Downs AONB in which both policy ADPP5 and the NPPF require that development should take account of this national designation by conserving and enhancing the local distinctiveness, sense of place and setting of the AONB.
- 6.4 Under policy CS1 new homes will be located in accordance with the settlement hierarchy outlined in the Spatial Strategy and Area Delivery Plan Policies.
- 6.5 The policies of the Local Plan are to be read together, in connection with policy ADPP1, policy C1 of the Housing Site Allocation DPD details the circumstances under which residential development outside of a defined settlement boundary may be acceptable, this includes the replacement of existing dwellings.
- 6.6 The replacement of existing dwellings in the open countryside must comply with policy C7, which states that replacement dwellings will be permitted providing that:
- The existing dwelling is not subject to a condition limiting the period of use as a dwelling; and
  - The replacement dwelling is proportionate in size and scale to the existing dwelling, uses appropriate materials and does not have an adverse impact on:
    1. The character and local distinctiveness of the rural area
    2. Individual heritage assets and their settings
    3. Its setting within the wider landscape; and
  - There is no extension of the existing curtilage, unless required to provide parking or amenity space to be consistent with dwellings in the immediate vicinity; and
  - Where the existing dwelling forms part of an agricultural, equestrian, or other commercial rural enterprise and is an essential part of that enterprise, the replacement dwelling must continue to perform the same function. An occupancy condition may be applied; and
  - The impact on any protected species is assessed and measures proposed to mitigate such impacts.
- 6.7 The existing dwelling on site is of a permanent structure and is not subject to a condition limiting the period of use of the building as a dwelling.
- 6.8 The proposed dwelling is not proportionate to the existing dwelling on site. A comparable table showing the differences between the existing and proposed is provided below. It is important to note that the measurements of the existing dwelling are based on what is visible from the public domain, the current bungalow is staggered rather than flush as the proposed dwelling is, this is to assess the size in terms of visual impact:

	Existing	Proposed	Difference	Percentage Increase
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<b>Height</b>	4.9m	7.6m	+ 2.7m	55.1%
<b>Footprint</b>	176sq.m	194sq.m	+ 18sq.m	10.2%
<b>GIA<sup>2</sup></b>	145sq.m	304sq.m	+ 145sq.m	109.7%
<b>Length</b>	14.7m	15.3m	+ 0.6m	4.1%
<b>Width</b>	7.9m	13.6m	+ 5.7m	72.2%

**6.9** Following the deferral of the application at WAPC, the agent has submitted a collection of plans which include measurements. The amended plans show the existing dwelling as a different size to the plans that were originally submitted and considered by the case officer and Members. A number of the plans use a “sketchy line” effect, this creates a number of lines on the plan, the sketchy nature of the submitted plans also make the exact measurement of the ground level unclear. Some of the amended plans submitted by the agent now show definite lines which can be more accurately measured from. Within the planning system it is a requirement for the applicant/agent to submit accurate plans and factually correct supporting information. Officers have accepted the amended plans as part of the current application.

**6.10** This table shows the measurements submitted by the applicant/agent post WAPC 21<sup>st</sup> July 2020:

	<b>Existing</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
<b>Height</b>	5.1m	7.6m
<b>Footprint</b>	164sq.m	181sq.m
<b>GIA<sup>2</sup></b>	147sq.m	286sq.m
<b>Length</b>	13.4m	15.2m
<b>Width</b>	7.4m	15.2m

**6.11** The Case Officers original GIA measurement for the existing dwelling contained a typo and should read 166sq.m. The difference in the Case Officers’ measurements and the applicant/agents’ measurement for the proposed footprint and GIA and footprint appears to be the result of the inclusion/exclusion of the proposed shed, approximately 14sq.m (based on the Case Officer’s measurement, this measurement has not been provided by the applicant/agent).

**6.12** For complete clarification and the avoidance of doubt the agreed measurements based on the latest set of plans are provided below. These measurements do not include any sheds or garages. On plans which include “sketchy lines” the measurement is taken from the outer line. The length of the existing dwelling is taken as the element which is visible from the road, it does not include the extension (dining room) which does not visually form part of the street scene. For measurements where there is a marginal difference of under 1%, the case officer

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<sup>2</sup> GIA excludes detached garage



is content to use the measurements provided by the agent as this is not a material difference and will not affect the overall conclusion reached, level of conflict with policy or the recommendation.

	Existing	Proposed	Difference	Percentage Increase
<b>Height</b>	5.1m	7.6m <sup>7</sup>	+ 2.5m	49%
<b>Footprint</b>	164sq.m	181sq.m	+ 17sq.m	10%
<b>GIA<sup>2</sup></b>	147sq.m	286sq.m	+ 139sq.m	95%
<b>Length</b>	13.4m	15.2m	+ 1.8m	13%
<b>Width</b>	7.4m	15.2m	+ 7.8m	245%

- 6.13 The approximate cubic capacity of the existing and proposed dwellings has also been calculated as follows: existing 808m<sup>3</sup>, proposed 1,132.7m<sup>3</sup>. The proposed dwelling will result in an increase of approximately 33% of the existing cubic capacity.
- 6.14 Whilst guidelines on acceptable levels of percentage increases do not form part of the current policy, they are an essential tool in helping to gauge whether the proposed dwelling is proportionate to the existing dwelling in terms of size and scale.
- 6.15 In officers' view a two storey dwelling in replacement of a single storey bungalow with a 55% increase in height and a 109% increase in GIA cannot be considered as proportionate.
- 6.16 Policy C7 criteria ii also requires the proposal scheme to use appropriate materials which do not have an adverse impact on the character and local distinctiveness of the rural area, and the site's setting within the wider landscape. The proposal scheme includes a significant level of glazing, the external render uses a large amount of flint and light grey window frames and rain water guttering. There are no other dwellings in the immediate area which include a comparable high level of glazing. The use of flint does not form part of the local street scene or the character of the area, although it is noted that it is used in dispersed areas of the parish of Inkpen. Light grey window frames and rain water pipes would also be alien within the narrow and wider setting.
- 6.17 The supporting text of policy C7, paragraph 4.57, states: "There is evidence within the AONB of small rural properties being purchased, then demolished and replaced with substantial new houses that are alien to the local context and the special qualities and natural beauty of the landscape of the AONB. Such development neither enhances nor conserves the character of the AONB and will be resisted." This paragraph is directly applicable to the proposal scheme. Paragraph 4.58 of policy C7 goes on; "If a replacement dwelling is disproportionate it will not be acceptable. The key components of proportionality are the scale, massing, height and layout of a development."
- 6.18 Due to the proposed increase in scale and bulk, along with the proposed materials which do not relate to the surrounding character and appearance of the area, officers conclude that the proposed replacement dwelling clearly fails to satisfy criteria ii of policy C7.
- 6.19 The current application does not include an extension to the current residential curtilage. The residential curtilage was extended into the neighbouring paddock in 1995 under Certificate of Lawfulness reference 95/46272/CERTP.

- 6.20 The existing dwelling on site does not part of an agricultural, equestrian, or other commercial rural enterprise.
- 6.21 Matters relating to ecology are discussed later in this report.
- 6.22 A brief summary of the appeals under appendix A and B is provided below as this may be of assistance to Members when considering matters relating to the principle of development and interpreting policy C7:

Appeal Reference	Paragraph Number	Quote
3243683	10	The substantial additional floor area and volume that would result from the proposed development, relative to those of the existing dwelling to be replaced, and notwithstanding the proposed reduced ground level, could not reasonably be said to be proportionate in the terms of Policy C7. More importantly in this case is the impact of the proposed dwelling on the landscape of the AONB, where great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty of the area.
3243683	12	I have been referred to the design approach and changes made to the scheme during the course of the appeal application. I note that within the area that there are a variety of house designs and a substantial number of detached properties. I find that the design of the proposed replacement dwelling would not be alien to these. However, this does not alter my view that the size of the proposed development would be disproportionate to the existing dwelling on site.
3244084	17	I note the comments in relation to the size and positioning of the proposed replacement dwelling when compared with other dwellings in the area, and that this lends support to the proposal. I am however not convinced by these submissions. In my view, the wording of Policy C7 is clear that the assessment of whether a proposal is proportionate relates to the existing dwelling on the site and not those around it. The impact of the proposal upon the character and local distinctiveness needs to be considered, relative to the impact of the existing property.

- 6.23 The principle of the development for the proposal scheme is contrary to policies ADPP1, ADPP5 and CS1 the Core Strategy and policies C1 and C7 of the Housing Site Allocations DPD.

### ***Character and appearance***

- 6.24 Core Strategy Policy CS14 states that new development must demonstrate a high quality and sustainable design that respects and enhances the character and appearance of the area, and makes a positive contribution to the quality of life in West

Berkshire. It further states that design and layout must be informed by the wider context, having regard not just to the immediate area, but to the wider locality.

- 6.25 Core Strategy Policy CS19, outlines that in order to ensure that the diversity and local distinctiveness of the landscape character of the District is conserved and enhanced, the natural, cultural, and functional components of its character will be considered as a whole. In adopting this holistic approach, particular regard has been given to the sensitivity of the area to change and ensuring that the new development is appropriate in terms of location, scale and design in the context of the existing settlement form, pattern and character.
- 6.26 Policy C3 of the Housing Site Allocations DPD is relevant when assessing the design of the proposal scheme. In accordance with policy C3, the acceptability of the replacement dwelling must be assessed against its impact on the landscape character of the area and its sensitivity to change. New dwellings in the countryside should be designed having regard to the character of the area and that of the existing built form in the locality.
- 6.27 Part 2 of the Council's Quality Design SPD provides detailed design guidance on residential development. It offers guidance on how to preserve residential character by emphasising that respecting the physical massing of an existing residential area is a critical part of protecting residential character.
- 6.28 Paragraph 17 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019) states that in relation to design, Councils should always seek to secure high quality design which respects and enhances the character and appearance of the area. The NPPF is clear that good design is indivisible from good planning and attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. In accordance with the NPPF great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to conserving and enhancing the natural environment.
- 6.29 The application site is within a relatively prominent and open location in the AONB and open countryside, and is visible from the public domain including the adjoining public right of way. The existing dwelling and structures on site are of a far less obtrusive scale, bulk and massing than that proposed.
- 6.30 **The impact of the proposed development on the nearby public rights of way was queried by Members during the previous WAPC. Whilst some Members of the Committee were of the view that the proposed dwelling would not be overly visible from the public right of way (INKP/16/1), as is the case with the existing bungalow, it is important to note that the existing bungalow is substantially lower than the proposed two storey dwelling which will extend well above the existing screening on the boundaries. It is also the case that most of the existing trees and hedges on the site boundaries will lose their leaves during the autumn and winter months, as such provide much less screening. These trees and hedges are not subject to a TPO and could be cut back or removed at any time by the current or future occupiers. The reliance on none protected trees and hedges as a form of screening is not advised, as there is no mechanism that can ensure they remain in perpetuity.**
- 6.31 **Public right of way INKP/15/1 exits on to Craven Road directly in front of the proposal site. Owing to the overall size, scale and bulk of the proposed dwelling will be highly visible when walking towards Craven Road along the public right of way.**
- 6.32 The current site is visually open, by way of the low impact bungalow, staggered building lines and soft landscaping to the front. The proposal scheme includes a two storey dwelling of a considerable mass, scale and bulk. It is noted that the middle section of

the front elevation is very slightly set back within the building by 40cm, the impact of this on breaking up the bulk of the proposed dwelling is minimal. The proposed dwelling is over dominating within its plot. The negative visual impact of the dwelling is further exacerbated by the inclusion of a 1.8m flint wall with brick detailing. The wall further reduces the openness of the site which results in additional harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area, namely the open countryside and North Wessex Downs AONB.

- 6.33 With the exception of the dwelling known as Alderbrook, which is a 1.5 storey dwelling approximately 80m from the proposed dwelling, the use of dormer windows does not form part of the street scene. The proposal scheme includes a total of five dormer windows, one of which is on the front elevation facing Craven Road and two on the south- east elevation overlooking the adjacent public right of way. The Quality Design SPD Part 2 states that the use of dormers may be acceptable as long as the positioning of windows is not out of place with the prevailing pattern of fenestration. The use of dormer windows in this location does not form part of the street scene or respect the character and appearance of the area.
- 6.34 During the WAPC 21<sup>st</sup> July 2020, it was queried by Members whether there was more than just a single dwelling which includes dormer windows in the vicinity of the site. The area assessed by the case officer when viewing other dwellings with dormer windows is the immediate area surrounding the proposed dwelling, which covers the houses which the proposed development scheme will be read in conjunction with when viewed the street scene. These dwellings include the stretch of from Quill Cottage to Honeysuckle Cottage on both sides of the road.**
- 6.35 The front and rear elevations of the proposal scheme include a large level of glazing. The front elevation faces the Craven Road and rear elevation is adjacent to rural paddocks. Due to the high level of glazing the proposal scheme will result in light spillage into the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Both the Councils Quality Design SPD Part 5 and the North Wessex Downs Management Plan (2004) aim to protect the dark skies of the AONB. There are no street lights along Craven Road, as such the light spillage of the proposed dwelling will impact the dark skies.
- 6.36 The proposed materials are alien within the street scene. The front and rear elevational treatment of the proposal scheme includes a significant level of the material 'flint'. This material is not associated within the street scene and wider area. Similarly, the use of light grey drain pipes and window fittings does not form part of the wider street scene.
- 6.37 At the previous WAPC (21/06/2020), a Member and the applicant indicated that the applicant would be willing to amend the scheme, changing the proposed materials and boundary treatment. Post Committee this was put to the applicant/agent who has stated that they are unwilling to amend these elements of the proposal scheme prior to determination:**

***"We believe that the materials as proposed are appropriate to the street scene, to the village of Inkpen and to the wider rural West Berkshire location. As per my previous statement for committee, they are exactly what is identified in the Inkpen Village Design Statement as being appropriate. We have not been provided with any indication that alternative materials would be viewed more positively. I don't think changing materials is appropriate at this stage. However final approval of materials is a standard condition that is normally applied to approvals for new/replacement dwellings so if the materials are an issue, then it would be reasonable to point out to committee members that a change of material could be dealt with by condition."* (email from applicant 26/08/2020)**

- 6.38** Whilst it is possible to condition the materials of a dwelling via a planning consent, given the prominent and highly sensitive nature of the development, this is not the most appropriate mechanism to determine the proposed materials, particularly if substantial changes are proposed. The final design should be submitted as an entirety to allow Members make a fully informed decision on the final appearance of the proposal scheme.
- 6.39** The applicant/agent is also of the view that the overall landscaping boundary treatment could be controlled via condition, should Members vote to approve the scheme, the approved plans would including the 1.8m flint wall, the wall could therefore be lawfully constructed. Again, due to the prominent and highly sensitive location, it is extremely preferable for the development to be assessed and determined as whole particularly with regard to significant factors such as materials and landscaping. Should the application be approved, the 1.8m wall could be lawfully constructed.
- 6.40** It is also noted that the applicants' written submission for the WAPC 21<sup>st</sup> July 2020, included the suggestion that the 1.8m wall could be removed from the proposed development if the applicant was approved, and that this could be done via a planning condition. The Case Officer provided the applicant/agent with the opportunity to amend the plans after the previous Committee, this offer was not taken up by the applicant/agent and no amended plans have been received.
- 6.41** The proposal scheme includes the demolition of the existing single garage which is set back from the main dwelling. The proposed new shed is located to the front of the dwelling at the corner of the public right of way and Craven Road. The placement of outbuildings/sheds/garages forward of the principle elevation of a dwelling does not form part of the street scene and is incongruous in its setting.
- 6.42** The proposed dwelling is not considered as a high quality design which has been formulated to make a positive contribution to the open countryside and AONB. The proposal has not taken into consideration the character and appearance of the surrounding area, rather it appears to have been designed independently of its setting. The proposed dwelling does not relate to the character and appearance, or surrounding dwellings and will result in harmful visual impact on the open countryside and North Wessex Downs AONB.

## **7. Ecology**

- 7.1** To the north-east of the site, approximately 57m away is an expansive Biodiversity Opportunity Area. Approximately 180m to the north is the Local Wildlife Site Craven Road Field, and approximately 253m to the south is another Local Wildlife Site known as Hayes Well Field.
- 7.2** An Ecology report has been submitted with the current application. The report identifies the presence of bats within the existing dwelling and nesting birds in the ivy growing up the dwelling. The Council's Ecologist has been consulted as part of the application process has raised no objections to the application subject to relevant planning conditions which include mitigation schemes.

## **8. Planning Balance and Conclusion**

- 8.1** The principle of the proposed development is not acceptable and is contrary to policies ADPP1, ADPP5 and CS1 of West Berkshire Councils Core Strategy and policies C1 and C7 of the Housing Site Allocation DPD.

- 8.2 Due to the significant conflict of the proposed development with the requirements of policy C7 of the Housing Site Allocation DPD, officers believe the grant of planning permission would undermine and cause significant harm to the achieving the aims of the Local Development Plan. The proposed development is contrary to the policies of the Local Plan, which must be the starting point for decision making in respect of planning applications.**
- 8.3 By virtue of the overall design, including scale; mass, layout, height and materials, the proposal scheme does not make a positive contribution to the street scene. The proposed dwelling would appear incongruous within in its rural setting. The design of the proposal scheme would significantly detract from the character and setting of the open countryside and result in visual harm to the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

## **9. Full Recommendation**

- 9.1 To delegate to the Head of Development and Planning to REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION for the reasons listed below.

## **Refusal Reasons**

1.	<p><b>Principle of Development</b></p> <p>The proposal is considered to be unacceptable in principle. The site is within open countryside in the North Wessex Downs AONB. The replacement dwelling is disproportionate in size, scale, mass and bulk to the existing dwelling and will have an adverse and harmful impact on the setting, character and appearance of the site within the wider landscape including the open countryside and North Wessex Downs AONB.</p> <p>The proposal is contrary to development plan policies ADPP1 and ADPP5, of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026) and policies CS1 and CS7 of the Housing Site Allocations DPD and the National Planning Policy Framework (2019).</p>
2.	<p><b>Design and Impact on the Open Countryside an North Wessex Downs AONB</b></p> <p>By the nature of the proposed dwellings scale, mass and bulk the development would result in a harmful impact on the openness and rural character of the street scene, open countryside and North Wessex Downs AONB. The use of flint material, light grey window casement and drain pipes, and inclusion of dormer windows do not form part of the design of the street scene. The proposed dwelling includes a significant level of glazing in an area which benefits from dark skies. The soft landscaping to the front of the site, facing Craven Road will be lost and replaced with hardstanding and a timber shed forward of the principle elevation. For the reasons listed the proposed development would not result in a replacement dwelling of high quality design which respects the rural character and appearance of the open countryside, North Wessex Downs AONB and street scene. It would result in a much larger, higher and prominent built form on the site, of inappropriately suburban design, which would have a significantly detrimental visual impact on the character and appearance of the local area and the surrounding AONB. Due to the extensive areas of glazing proposed there would also an unacceptable negative impact on the dark skies within this part of the AONB.</p> <p>The proposal is contrary to development plan policies ADPP5, CS14 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026) and policies CS3 and CS7 of the Housing allocations DPD, West Berkshire Councils Quality Design SPD Part 5 and the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (2019).</p>

## **Informatives**

1.	<p><b>Proactive</b></p> <p>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</p>
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	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.
2.	<p>CIL</p> <p>The development hereby approved results in a requirement to make payments to the Council as part of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) procedure. A Liability Notice setting out further details, and including the amount of CIL payable will be sent out separately from this Decision Notice. You are advised to read the Liability Notice and ensure that a Commencement Notice is submitted to the authority prior to the commencement of the development. Failure to submit the Commencement Notice will result in the loss of any exemptions claimed, and the loss of any right to pay by instalments, and additional costs to you in the form of surcharges. For further details see the website at <a href="http://www.westberks.gov.uk/cil">www.westberks.gov.uk/cil</a></p>