

Item No	Application No. and Parish	8/13 Week Date	Proposal, Location and Applicant
(2)	11/01085/FUL Stanford Dingley Parish Council.	15 th July 2011	Construction of a replacement dwelling and replacement detached garage (largely following the footprint of the existing property). Little Shambles, Stanford Dingley, Reading, Berkshire, RG7 6JS Mr. M Byrne.

Recommendation Summary: **The Head of Planning and Countryside be authorised to REFUSE planning permission.**

Ward Member(s): Cllr. Quentin Webb
Cllr. Graham Pask

Reason for Committee determination: Called in by Cllr Webb due to public views.

Committee Site Visit: 07/09/2011

Contact Officer Details	
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1. Site History

101741	Revised access	Refused 11/12/74
103648	New Access drive serving the bungalow already on land	Approved 12/11/75
116052	Dormer windows, sun lounge, infill porch and loose boxes.	Approved 26/11/81
116620	Detached double garage	Approved 3/3/82
122786	Alterations and extensions to bungalow	Approved 2/1/85
137235	Conservatory	Approved 18/7/90

2. Publicity of Application

Site Notice expired 3rd August 2011

3. Consultations and Representations

Parish Council:	<p>Support the application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A 'striking' new design to replace an uninspiring bungalow from the late 1970's.• Increased ridge height of approx 70% will result in greater visual impact.• Guest bedroom window overlooks neighbouring Bugeildy, and we understand that the owners of Bugeildy will request the re-positioning of this window.• Position of the new garage is now shown on the elevation drawings. Although it is broadly sited on the existing garage's footprint, the Parish Design Statement advocates that garages should not be in front of the building line of the main house.• There is inadequate description and specification of materials proposed for the new build.
Public Rights of Way:	<p>Two nearby public footpaths (Footpath 20 and Footpath 18 which is directly opposite the property) should not be adversely affected by the proposals and I therefore raise no objections.</p>
Environment Agency:	<p>The application is deemed to have a low environmental risk.</p>
Highways:	<p>No alterations to the access are proposed. All other highway aspects are acceptable. No highway objections.</p>
Ramblers Association:	<p>No response received.</p>

Public Protection:

The site is bordered by residential properties, in particular 11 plots within Casey Court which is situated immediately to the north of the application site. In order to help protect the amenities of the surrounding residents during the demolition and construction phases, it is advised that an hours of work restriction is attached onto any planning permission granted. The applicant is also advised to apply for consent under section 61 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974. Doing so will provide a means to agree on maximum noise levels and procedures for minimising noise levels with the LPA during the demolition and re-build.

Thames Water:

WASTE: Surface Water Drainage - With regard to surface water drainage it is the responsibility of a developer to make proper provision for drainage to ground, water courses or a suitable sewer. In respect of surface water it is recommended that the applicant should ensure that storm flows are attenuated or regulated into the receiving public network through on or off site storage. When it is proposed to connect to a combined public sewer, the site drainage should be separate and combined at the final manhole nearest the boundary. Connections are not permitted for the removal of ground water. Where the developer proposes to discharge to a public sewer, prior approval from Thames Water Developer Services will be required. They can be contacted on 0845 850 2777. Reason - to ensure that the surface water discharge from the site shall not be detrimental to the existing sewerage system.

Thames Water would advise that with regard to sewerage infrastructure we would not have any objection to the above planning application.

WATER: On the basis of information provided, Thames Water would advise that with regard to water infrastructure we would not have any objection to the above planning application.

Tree Officer:

The plans provided have identified the trees at a site as indicative circles, but provided no further information in the form of a tree survey or arboricultural impact assessment; therefore the impact to the tree was determined during my site visit. The site contains a significant number of trees of various species, age and size. The changes to the site propose the removal of 5 trees to facilitate the construction of the new house and the proposed garage; all of the trees for removal are small ornamentals with limited landscape value that would otherwise warrant being retained. The remaining trees at the site can be retained and protected in accordance with BS5837:2005 Trees in Relation to Construction, with the details being subject to a tree protection condition. The plans

also indicate some additional planting around the edge of the new garage and corner of the new building, this could be in the form of a hedge or trees or both, to provide additional screening for the front and side of the property. The hedge could either be Beech or Hornbeam, or a native hedge with some evergreen plants like holly and yew to provide additional winter cover. Again, the landscaping details can be covered by a condition.

I have no objections to the application; the proposed removal of 5 ornamental trees is acceptable and can be mitigated with new landscaping. The trees to be retained can be protected throughout the development.

Correspondence:

One letter received from a neighbouring property suggesting that the impact on their property would be lessened if the existing 'guest bedroom' window in the south elevation could be moved to the west elevation. They consider that this would also improve the appearance of the new dwelling.

A further letter received from another neighbour stating that they have no objections to the proposal.

4. Policy Considerations

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (PPS1)

Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (PPS7)

South East Plan: The Regional Spatial Strategy for South East England 2006-2026 May 2009: policies CC6, CC7, C3 and C6.

West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 (Saved Policies 2007): policies OVS2, OVS3, ENV1, ENV18 and ENV23.

Supplementary Planning Document: Quality Design - West Berkshire, Part 2 'Residential Development'.

West Berkshire Council Supplementary Planning Guidance: Replacement Dwellings and Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside. July 1004

5. Description of Development

5.1 Little Shambles is a detached bungalow, set within a group of houses located to the south of Stanford Dingley village. The property is set well back from the road, with a substantial garden to the east and the dwelling has benefited from a number of extensions, including a large addition to the rear, two conservatories and a detached double garage.

5.2 This application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the existing dwelling and erection of a replacement dwelling. The proposal is for a five bedroom, part two storey, part single storey property with a detached double garage.

- 5.3 The new dwelling would have a similar footprint size to that of the existing property and set in a similar position. However, much of the living accommodation, including a kitchen/breakfast room, snug, dining room, utility room, living room and two bedrooms with ensuite bathrooms would be located within the two storey element of the dwelling which, at its highest point, stands at almost 10 metres. The remaining accommodation, including three further bedrooms, a bathroom, gym, library and home office, would be located within the single storey part of the building. This would stand at the same height as the existing bungalow at Little Shambles with a ridge height of 5.7 metres. A detached double garage would be located in a similar position to the existing garage but would be slightly larger in order to sufficiently accommodate two modern cars.
- 5.4 The design of the proposal is relatively modern, with large areas of glazing and a mix of timber cladding at first floor level and a rendered finish on the ground floor. The new garage would be located to the west of the dwelling and a balcony would run along the eastern elevation of the two storey element of the building and allows access from the first floor living space into the garden. Vehicular access to the site would remain as existing.
- 5.5 A previous application at the property granted permission for large, flat roofed dormer windows to be inserted in the roof slope to allow for the use of the existing roof space as living accommodation. This was never implemented and all living accommodation at the current property is provided over one floor.
- 5.6 The application site is located outside of any defined settlement boundary but in a ribbon of development located close to Stanford Dingley and within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). To the north of the site lies Casey Court, a development of eleven small bungalows and to the west and south there are detached properties of various sizes located within good sized plots. Public footpath 18 is directly opposite Little Shambles and Footpath 20 is nearby.

6. Consideration of the Proposal

The main issues to consider are:

- 6.1 The principle of development;
- 6.2 Design and the impact on the character of the area;
- 6.3 The impact on neighbours' amenity;
- 6.4 The impact on highway safety and parking,
- 6.5 The impact on public rights of way;
- 6.6 The impact on trees;
- 6.7 The impact on local services and infrastructure.

6.1 Principle of Development

- 6.1.1 The application site lies outside of any defined settlement boundary and policy ENV23 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 Saved Policies 2007 (WBDLP) is the key policy for establishing the principle of development. It states that the replacement of existing dwellings in the countryside will be permitted subject to certain criteria.

- 6.1.2 Criterion (a) is that the existing dwelling is long established and is not the result of a temporary or series of temporary permissions. It is considered that the existing dwelling meets this criterion.
- 6.1.3 Criterion (b) is that the proposed dwelling is not disproportionate in size to the dwelling being replaced; that it is not excessive in scale or massing and thereby physically and visually intrusive. Policy ENV23 is not prescriptive in setting precise limits on what is or is not disproportionate but the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on replacement dwellings in the countryside (SPG 04/3) provides further guidance in this respect.
- 6.1.4 The SPG states that the percentage increase in volume or floorspace is a useful indicator of what may be considered disproportionate and looks at the 'original' dwelling (the dwelling as it was originally built) and therefore, existing extensions cannot be included in any percentage increase calculations.
- 6.1.5 The case officer researched the history of the property and it would appear highly likely that the 'original' dwelling includes only the front section of the bungalow, which comprises of the porch, sitting room, kitchen/breakfast and utility room, dining room, boiler room and bedroom 2. The rear section of the property which houses the remaining bedrooms and bathrooms is considered to be a later addition, along with the two conservatories and detached garage.
- 6.1.6 According to the above, and with measurements taken by the Case Officer from the application plans, this proposal would represent around a 140% increase in the volume of the original building and 150% increase in the floorspace size of the original dwelling.
- 6.1.7 The SPG advises that any proposal for a replacement dwelling which more than doubles the original dwelling would normally be regarded as disproportionate as it would be more visually dominant than the original and have a materially greater impact upon the countryside, contrary to the aims of national and planning policy.
- 6.1.8 It is considered that the original dwelling at Little Shambles was a modest sized family home, and with the exception of Casey Court, provided less living accommodation than many properties within this ribbon of development. However, following the significant extensions previously approved, it is considered that this property now represents a good sized dwelling, well in line with modern living standards. This proposal seeks to increase the volume and floorspace of the already enlarged dwelling and it is considered that this would be too significant an overall size increase.
- 6.1.9 Furthermore, the bungalows at Casey Court are modest sized dwellings and the other surrounding detached dwellings, though primarily two storey, remain smaller than the dwelling proposed under this application. It cannot therefore be considered that this property should be more than doubled in size in order to conform to size standards set by nearby dwellings.
- 6.1.10 Further information for this application was submitted by the agent via email on the 1st September 2011. In support of this proposal, volume calculations of previously approved applications have been included. The 1981 application ref. 116052 at the property has been partially implemented and therefore, the dormer windows

approved as part of this could be constructed. This would amount to an additional 38 cubic metres of volume at the property which would result in a volume increase of 3.8% on the present dwelling.

- 6.1.11 The proposed scheme represents an increase of 8.4% volume of the present dwelling. When taking all previously approved (but not necessarily built) additions and extensions to the property into account, this proposal would represent a 4.8% increase in volume. When taken individually, it is agreed that a 4.8% increase could be considered 'de minimus'. However, we must bear in mind that this is yet a further increase to an already significantly enlarged building and the overall volume increase on the original building remains at 140%.
- 6.1.12 An extract from West Berkshire Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance: Replacement Dwellings and Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside has been quoted in support. It states that *'where any previous extension is long established and clearly well-related to the original dwelling and its surroundings, a proposal for a modest further extension or replacement may be considered acceptable (even if the size guidelines are exceeded), where it would not have a harmful visual or otherwise detrimental effect on the character of the countryside.'* Though the rear extension may have been constructed soon after the original dwelling, it cannot be considered to be 'original'. Further to this, the rear extension is one of a number of additions to the original bungalow and therefore, it is considered that the above should not be taken into account in this case.
- 6.1.13 Though the additional information has been taken into account, it is not considered to provide sufficient justification to allow the increased volume proposed. It is therefore considered that, on balance, this proposal is unacceptable in terms of its scale, mass and bulk.
- 6.1.14 Though modern, the general form, architectural details and materials are consistent with other buildings in rural West Berkshire and is considered to be of a high standard of design that integrates well within the ribbon of development and is therefore in line with criteria (c) and (d) of policy ENV23.
- 6.1.15 Criterion (e) seeks landscaping which retains or improves the rural nature of the locality. The site benefits from mature landscaping which would help to soften the impact of any new development on the site and the 'Proposed Site Plan' shows much of the existing landscaping to be retained. Appropriate landscaping could be secured by way of a condition.
- 6.1.16 Though this proposal accords with many of the criterion within policy ENV23, it is considered that it would be contrary to criterion (b) in that the significant increase in the size proposed would be disproportionate in size to the dwelling being replaced.

6.2 Design and Impact on the Character of the Area

- 6.2.1 The existing property on site is a large, sprawling bungalow which is considered to have no significant architectural value and does not respect the rural character of the area. However, its modest height means that it is unobtrusive within the street scene. In contrast the proposed new dwelling is far more in keeping with the character of the area although the new design is relatively modern. Furthermore,

suitable materials are proposed for use which would help to reduce the impact of the structure within this rural setting.

- 6.2.2 However, the new dwelling would have a greater impact on the street scene and the rural and AONB location of the site due to the increased height proposed. Though the hipped roof design of the two storey structure reduces the impact to some extent, this proposal would stand at a maximum height of almost 10 metres, significantly higher than the existing building on site which has a ridge height of 5.7M. The land rises from the road and the application site sits at a higher ground level. Therefore, though the view is partially obscured by mature trees to the front of the site, the dwelling appears as a prominent feature both within its site and within the street scene. This further exacerbates the difference in height between the current bungalow and the new part two storey, part single storey dwelling proposed.
- 6.2.3 Though set within an established ribbon of development, the site is still very much within a rural location and is also in the North Wessex Downs AONB. Notwithstanding that this new proposal involves an improved design and more suitable materials, the matter still stands that this proposal would significantly increase the height of the building on the site and the overall size of this property, both in terms of floorspace and volume. Therefore, it is considered that, even when taking the previously approved extensions into consideration, this proposal would result in a detrimental impact upon the countryside and AONB location of the dwelling due to the significantly increased prominence of the new two storey house, particularly when viewed from the highway to the west.

6.3 Impact on Neighbours' Amenity

- 6.3.1 The nearest neighbouring properties to the new structure are nos. 9, 10 and 11 Casey Close, to the north of Little Shambles. The new dwelling remains over 5 metres from the boundary between the properties and, though Little Shambles sits at a higher ground level than Casey Close, the two storey element of the structure is set almost 15 metres away. It is therefore considered that this proposal would have minimal further impact on Casey Close than the existing bungalow and would have no adverse impact on the residential amenities of these properties.
- 6.3.2 A letter was received from a neighbour at no. 1 Casey Court which stated that they would like to raise no objection to the works proposed.
- 6.3.3 The occupants of the neighbouring property to the south, Bugeildy, raised concern in relation to the guest bedroom window proposed at first floor level on the southern elevation of the new dwelling. It was felt that this window would overlook their property and that the impact could be reduced by moving the opening to the western elevation. The officer view is that the 20 metres distance between the proposed dwelling and the southern boundary of the site, and the over 40 metres distance between the new dwelling and the dwelling at Bugeildy would prevent any significant overlooking.
- 6.3.4 However, the applicants would like to minimise any impact on their neighbours and have moved the primary window for the guest bedroom from the southern elevation of the new dwelling to the western elevation. A new high level window on the southern elevation provides extra light to this room but would not provide outlook

towards Bugeildy. This proposal is therefore considered to have an acceptable impact on the neighbouring property to the south.

- 6.3.5 As the application site is bordered by residential properties, the Council's Public Protection team have recommended that a condition be included to restrict the hours of work for all contractors at the site for the duration of the works. This would help to protect the amenities of the residents during the demolition and construction phases in terms of noise pollution.

6.4 Impact on Highways Safety and Parking

- 6.4.1 This application involves no alterations to the existing access to the dwelling and a large parking area would remain to the front of the dwelling. Furthermore, a new garage is proposed which would provide sufficient space for two vehicles to park.
- 6.4.2 The Council's Highways team were consulted and raised no objections.

6.5 Impact on Public Rights of Way

- 6.5.1 The Council's Rights of Way team were consulted as there are two public footpaths nearby, one of which lies opposite the site. It is considered that the footpaths should not be adversely affected by the proposals and therefore the Rights of Way Officer has raised no objections.

6.6 Impact on Trees

- 6.6.1 There are a number of large, mature trees at the application site and this proposal involves the removal of five trees. The trees at this site provide important landscaping and screening, which softens the impact of the dwelling on the surrounding area. The Council's Tree Officer was therefore consulted.
- 6.6.2 No objections have been raised to the removal of five trees from the site as they are considered to be ornamental and the loss could be mitigated with appropriate landscaping, which could be secured by way of a condition.
- 6.6.3 Further to this, a tree protection condition would ensure that there would be no damage to the trees at the site as a result of these works, ensuring that they could be retained.

6.7 Impact on Local Services and Infrastructure

- 6.7.1 The application is for a one for one replacement dwelling and as such, the Council would not seek developer contributions.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 The proposal seeks to increase the volume of the original dwelling by 140% and the floorspace size of the dwelling by 150% and an increase in height at its highest point of 4.3M approximately. The proposal therefore results in a disproportionate increase in the size of the dwelling and by reason of its scale, mass and height, is considered to have an adverse visual impact on the rural character of the area.

- 7.2 In addition to this, the proposal, due to the significant increase in the size, is considered not to compliment or conserve the designation of the site as part of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 7.3 Planning permission cannot be justified as the proposal is directly in conflict with part (b) of ENV23 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 Saved Policies 2007. The positive elements of this application including the improved design and materials, the acceptable impact on neighbouring amenity and the provision of adequate access and parking are not, on balance, considered to outweigh the demonstrable harm of the size and height increase.

8 Full Recommendation

That the Head of Planning and Countryside be authorised to **REFUSE** planning permission for the following reasons:-

1. The application site lies outside of any settlement boundary, as defined by the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 Saved Policies 2007. The proposed dwelling will result in an approximate increase of 150% in floor area and 140% in volume upon the existing dwelling. With regard to the guidance given in the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance 04/3 'Replacement Dwellings and Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside' the proposed scheme would result in a dwelling that is disproportionate in size to the dwelling being replaced therefore harming the character of the area. Accordingly the proposal is contrary to policy ENV23 of the West Berkshire District Plan 1991-2006 Saved Policies 2007.
2. The proposed development is unacceptable in terms of its scale, bulk and height, resulting in a harmful impact on the rural character of the area and on the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Therefore the application is contrary to Policy ENV1 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 Saved Policies 2007 and Supplementary Planning Document 'Quality Design'.