

Agenda Item 92.

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| Development Management Ref No | No weeks on day of committee | Parish | Ward | Listed by: |
| 163115 | 12/8 | Arborfield | Arborfield | Cllr Gary Cowan |

Applicant Mr & Mrs M Yardley
Location The Firs, Parkcorner Lane, Carters Hill, **Postcode** RG2 9JJ
Arborfield
Proposal Householder application for the proposed replacement of existing roof lights with dormer window extensions and the erection of a raised terrace to the south- west corner of the building at first floor level
Type Householder
PS Category 21
Officer Rosie Rogers

FOR CONSIDERATION BY Planning Committee on Wednesday 1 February 2017
REPORT PREPARED BY Head of Development Management and Regulatory Services

SUMMARY

The application site is situated on the north side of Parkcorner Lane in a countryside location. The site comprises a detached stable/garage block with first floor ancillary residential accommodation over, sited adjacent to the main dwelling known as The Firs which together are located on a good sized plot, fronting onto Carters Hill, an unadopted road with extensive views of open countryside on all sides of the site.

The detached stable/garage block was approved in 2003 with storage accommodation at first floor level. The first floor accommodation was subsequently converted in 2004 to form ancillary residential accommodation and a number of roof lights inserted in the roof. The applicant's son has been using this annex accommodation ancillary to the main house since 2004, although the applicant has informally advised that he now wishes to use this accommodation for his elderly mother.

A Certificate of Lawful Existing Use was granted on 16 August 2016 under planning reference 161368 for the use of the first floor as residential annex accommodation over the detached garage/stable block as ancillary to the main house known as "The Firs".

The current application seeks to make further changes to the external appearance of the building with the replacement of some of the existing rooflights with dormer extensions and the creation of a first floor terrace. The use will remain as ancillary accommodation to the main dwelling.

The application has been listed by Cllr Cowan in the event that the recommendation is for refusal on the grounds that "it complies with policy as its ancillary accommodation in the countryside, that is acceptable in character terms and not out of place in its rural setting."

PLANNING STATUS

- Countryside
- Contaminated Land Consultation Zone

- Landfill Gas Consultation Zone
- Thames Basin Heaths SPA – within 7km zone

RECOMMENDATION

The application is recommended for refusal for the following reason:

1. The proposed replacement of the existing roof lights with dormer window extensions and the erection of a raised terrace to the south-west corner of the building at first floor level would result in an inappropriate increase in the scale, form and mass of the original building which would have an urbanising effect on the appearance of this ancillary building causing significant harm to the visual amenity of the countryside character of the area including the wider views of the surrounding countryside contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework, policies CP1, CP3 and CP11 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy and the Supplementary Planning Document - Wokingham Borough Design Guide - Section 8.

Informatives

1. This decision is in respect of the drawings and plans numbered 3063/01, 3063/02 and 3063/100C received by the Local Planning Authority on 9 November 2016 and the revised plan, plan no. 3063/200A received by the local planning authority on 18 January 2017.
2. The Council engages with all applicants in a positive and proactive way through specific pre-application enquiries and the detailed advice available on the Council's website. On this particular application, no pre-application advice was sought before the application was submitted. As the proposal was clearly contrary to the provisions of the Development Plan, it was considered that further discussions would be unnecessary and costly for all parties.

PLANNING HISTORY

F/2003/9831 – Erection of new garage and stable block. Demolition of existing building – 18.09.03 – Approval
 161368 – Certificate of Lawful Existing Use granted for use of first floor residential annex accommodation over the detached garage/stable block as ancillary accommodation to the use of the main dwelling house – 16.08.16 – Approval

SUMMARY INFORMATION

For Residential

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|-----------------------------|---|
| Existing units | 1 |
| Proposed units | 1 |
| Number of bedrooms per unit | 1 |
| Existing parking spaces | 2 |
| Proposed parking spaces | 2 |

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

WBC Biodiversity Officer: No objection, subject to an informative
 WBC Building Control: No comments received

REPRESENTATIONS

Arborfield Parish Council: No objection

Local Members: The application has been listed by Cllr Gary Cowan if the recommendation is for refusal

Neighbours: No comments received

APPLICANTS POINTS

Planning policy gives support for extensions to residential buildings in the countryside subject to them being subordinate to the host dwelling and appropriate in terms of design and scale.

The proposed dormers are considered to be appropriate in terms of scale in relation to the existing building and would maintain the appearance of an agricultural building in the countryside.

There is no impact on neighbouring amenity in terms of loss of light and overlooking due to the isolated nature of site and existing hedge screening.

The proposal would not affect any existing boundary treatments or trees over the site.

PLANNING POLICY

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|---|-------------|--|
| National Policy | NPPF | National Planning Policy Framework |
| Adopted Core Strategy DPD 2010 | CP1 | Sustainable Development |
| | CP3 | General Principles for Development |
| | CP6 | Managing Travel Demand |
| | CP7 | Biodiversity |
| Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014 | CC01 | Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development |
| | CC02 | Development Limits |
| | CC03 | Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping |
| | TB21 | Landscape Character |
| Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) | BDG | Borough Design Guide – Section 8 |

PLANNING ISSUES

Principle of Development

1. The site is located within the countryside outside any defined settlement area; therefore the principle of development is only acceptable subject to an assessment of the impact of the proposal on the countryside and rural character of the area and the amenity of the neighbouring occupiers.

2. The National Planning Policy Framework recognises that there are a set of core land-use planning principles. In particular principle No. 5 states that it should “take account of the different roles and character of different areas.....recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.....” and supporting thriving rural communities within it. In particular, it seeks to encourage development that respects the character of a locality. In this instance, the character is predominantly rural, with isolated dwellings on large plots surrounded by open fields and development must respect this and not compromise

these qualities.

Impact on the Character of the Area

3. Policy CP3 of the adopted Wokingham Borough Core Strategy states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that “are of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area....”

4. Policy CP11- Proposals outside Development Limits (including Countryside) of the adopted Wokingham Borough Core Strategy states that:

“In order to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment, proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted except where:

2) It does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings...

And 4) In the case of residential extensions, does not result in appropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building...”

5. Section 8.5.4 of the revised Borough Design Guide relating to extensions and additions in the countryside states that “extensions may be permissible provided that the scale, form and footprint does not have an unacceptable impact upon the countryside.

6. The application site is situated on the north side of Parkcorner Lane in a countryside location. The site comprises a detached garage/stable block with first floor ancillary residential accommodation over, sited adjacent to the main dwelling known as The Firs which together are located on a good sized plot, fronting onto Carters Hill, an unadopted road with extensive views of open countryside on all sides of the site. The front of the site is enclosed by electric wooden gates and mature hedge screening. To the rear of the site is an open paddock area, also in the ownership of the applicant, with a mature conifer hedge, which acts as a windbreak, screening the rear of the detached garage/stable block from this open paddock area.

7. The area is characterised by isolated dwellings on good sized plots with large stretches of open countryside in between. The area has a distinctive rural character.

8. The proposal is for the replacement of some of the existing rooflights in the first floor of the detached garage/stable block with 6 x no pitched roof dormers and 1 x no flat roof dormer to increase the floorspace to the bedroom, bathroom, kitchen and main living room. The existing volume of the building is 505m³ whilst the proposed volume is 568m³, an increase of 12.5% above the volume of the existing building.

9. The proposed dormers are shown to be set in from the eaves but positioned marginally below the main ridge height. They are considered to be overly bulky and would appear as dominant features within the roofslope and out of keeping with the style of the existing building given its countryside location. Moreover, they would give the converted stable/garage block a “top-heavy” appearance which would draw attention to the building in this countryside setting. It is therefore considered that the increase in scale, form, and mass of the roofspace significantly changes the existing

character and external appearance of the building away from that of a subservient detached outbuilding to a building with a more dominant and urbanised appearance causing harm to the visual amenity of the area and the openness of the surrounding countryside.

10. The proposal also includes the provision of an enclosed raised terrace area to the south western corner of the building at a height of 2.2m above ground level and a depth of 5.5m. This would extend the footprint of the building to the north of the site, away from the existing building and towards the open countryside. It is considered that this additional element would result in a further inappropriate increase in the scale, form and mass of the building and this in turn would have a further urbanising effect on the site, causing additional harm to the openness of the surrounding countryside whilst detracting from the subservient nature of the building. (Officer note: The applicant has informally advised that this terraced area is required to provide an area of private rear amenity space for his elderly mother. Although this is a valid request, the main house has a secluded private rear amenity area with a raised deck area and summerhouse and which is within easy reach of the annexe accommodation.)

11. It is accepted that the substantial existing hedge screening to the rear of the site limits the views of the dormer extensions from the rear. However, the two front dormers would be visible over the electric gates at the front of the site in public locations along Carters Hill and would detract from the countryside character of the area. Moreover, the existence of the landscape screening is not considered sufficient to outweigh the harm that would result from the proposed changes to the external appearance of the building.

Impact on Neighbours

12. The nearest neighbouring properties are Park Farm Stables situated to the south of the site and Tudor House, to the west of the site on the corner of Julkes Lane. These properties are situated some 95.0m and 110.0m away respectively and as such the proposed external changes to the building will have no significant impact in terms of a loss of light or loss of privacy as a result of direct overlooking.

Highway Issues

13. The proposal will not result in any additional habitable rooms. The proposal makes no change to the existing access or the existing number of parking spaces which is in accordance with the Council's parking standards in respect of the main dwelling and the annex accommodation. As such there is no impact on highway safety.

Impact on a Protected Species – Bats:

14. The proposal will involve changes to the existing roof of the building. The site is located in an area with suitable bat foraging habitat. However, given that it is a modern building which has been well maintained and the proposals are limited in potential for disturbance/roost destruction, it is considered that an appropriate informative only is attached to any approval in this instance.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

15. Wokingham Borough Council adopted CIL on 6 April 2015. The proposed development will result in an increase in new build floorspace of less than 100 sqms

gross internal area and therefore is not liable for CIL.

CONCLUSION

The proposed changes to the external appearance of the detached garage/stable block would result in an inappropriate increase in the scale, form and mass of the original building which would have an urbanising effect on the appearance of this ancillary building causing significant harm to the visual amenity of the countryside character of the area including the wider views of the surrounding countryside and therefore is recommended for refusal.

CONTACT DETAILS

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