

Application Number	Expiry Date	Parish	Ward
193356	20/05/2020	Swallowfield	Swallowfield;

Applicant	Woodridge Developments
Site Address	Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield, RG7 1PY
Proposal	Full application for the erection of 5 No detached dwellings, one with separate garage and four dwellings with internal garages. Associated landscaping works including one balancing pond. 2 No accesses with entrance gates and 1.2m post and rail fencing.
Type	Full
PS Category	6
Officer	Senjuti Manna
Reason for determination by committee	Major application (area > 1 hectares)

FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Planning Committee on Wednesday, 13 May 2020
REPORT PREPARED BY	Assistant Director – Place

SUMMARY
<p>The application proposes the erection of five detached dwellings on the site with two access roads, associated landscaping and an ecological enhancement area. One of the detached properties would be 6 bedroom with detached garage and would benefit from a separate access. The second access will be shared between other 4 houses, one of which would be 5 bedroom dwelling with inbuilt garage. Remaining 3 dwellings would have 4 bedrooms and integral garages. Whilst there are no buildings on the land, parts of the site are previously developed (brownfield) and were historically used as a garden centre.</p> <p>This application follows an extant planning permission (ref: 173726) for the erection of five dwellings on the site – one detached and two pairs of semi-detached houses and another scheme same as the current application (ref: 182370) that was dismissed on appeal due to lack of legal agreement to secure planning obligations only. Both the current scheme and the dismissed scheme defers from the extant permission in that they propose 5 detached houses and 2 separate accesses resulting in additional footprint and hardstanding. The principle of residential development has therefore been established and the assessment falls upon what impact the additional footprint and hardstanding would have in relation to the extant planning permission.</p> <p>As set out, the proposed development does not seek to increase the number of dwellings from the approved planning permission. Whilst the proposal represents additional footprint and hardstanding, the inspector for the previous application (ref: 182370) has concluded that these would not have any additional detrimental impact on the character of the area including Countryside. There will be large areas of landscaping and an ecological enhancement area on the site and this remains unchanged from the extant permission. The proposed dwellings would have ample indoor and outdoor space, providing a satisfactory living environment for the future occupiers. Local residents have expressed support for the application and the proposed development would have a satisfactory impact on the amenity of the neighbouring occupiers.</p>

There are no objections to the proposal with regard to highway safety; parking; trees; drainage & flooding; ecology and archaeology. The development is considered acceptable in all other aspects subject to the recommended conditions and a legal agreement securing a commuted sum for affordable housing (£214,938.56); an index linked Strategic Access and Management Monitoring payment to offset the impact on the Thames Basins Heaths Special Protection Area and an Ecological Enhancement Management Plan. The application is accordingly recommend for approval for the reasons set out in this report.

PLANNING STATUS

- Countryside location
- Green Route Enhancement Area
- Burghfield AWE Zone C (5 km)
- Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area – 5 and 7km
- Flood zone 1

RECOMMENDATION

That the committee authorise the GRANT OF PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following:

- **A legal agreement securing a commuted sum of £214,938.56 in lieu of 2 affordable units; an index linked Strategic Access and Management Monitoring to offset the impact on the Thames Basins Heaths Special Protection Area and an Ecological Enhancement Management Plan.**
- **Subject to the following recommended Conditions and informative:**

Conditions:

1. Time limit

The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In pursuance of s.91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by s.51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. Approved plans

This permission is respect of the submitted application plans and drawings numbered ref: 2396-15A; 2396-16A; 2396-28; 2396-29; 2396-30; 2396-31, 2396-32B, 2396-33B, EIP21607-11B, EIP21607-12B, Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement (ref.: EIP21607aia-ams), Soft Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan (ref.: EIP21607man), Soft Landscape Specification (ref.: EIP21607spec) and Design and Access Statement (ref.: PHE/2396) received by the local Planning Authority on 18 December 2019. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

3. Material samples/details

Before the development hereby permitted is commenced, samples and details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building/s shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the so-approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the building is satisfactory. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3.

4. Tree protection details

- a) No development or other operation shall commence on site until the tree protection measures, as detailed in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement (ref: EIP21607aia-ams, hereafter the Approved Scheme) are implemented in complete accordance with the Approved Scheme. The tree protection measures must be retained for the entire duration of the development (including, unless otherwise provided by the Approved Scheme) demolition, all site preparation work, tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery.
- b) No development (including any tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery) shall commence until the local planning authority has been provided (by way of a written notice) with a period of no less than 7 working days to inspect the implementation of the measures identified in the Approved Scheme on-site.
- c) No excavations for services, storage of materials or machinery, parking of vehicles, deposit or excavation of soil or rubble, lighting of fires or disposal of liquids shall take place within an area designated as being fenced off or otherwise protected in the Approved Scheme.
- d) The fencing or other works which are part of the Approved Scheme shall not be moved or removed, temporarily or otherwise, until all works including external works have been completed and all equipment, machinery and surplus materials removed from the site, unless the prior approval of the local planning authority has first been sought and obtained.

Reason: To secure the protection throughout the time that the development is being carried out of trees shrubs or hedges growing within or adjacent to the site which are of amenity value to the area, and to allow for verification by the local planning authority that the necessary measures are in place before development and other works commence. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21.

5. Visibility splays

Prior to the commencement of the development there shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, details of the proposed vehicular access to include visibility splays. The access shall be formed as so-approved and the visibility splays shall be cleared of any obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height prior to the occupation of the development. The access shall be retained in accordance with the approved details and used for no other purpose and the land within the visibility splays shall be maintained clear of any visual obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height at all times.

Reason: *In the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.*

6. Swept path details

Prior to the commencement of the development there shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, details of a swept path analysis demonstrating vehicles can manoeuvre safely on site and enter and leave the site in both directions. No building shall be occupied until the access roads have been constructed in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: *In the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.*

7. Dropped kerb

No development shall take place until details of dropped kerbs and tactile paving to the front of the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details thereby agreed shall be fully implemented prior to the first occupation of the dwellings.

Reason: *in the interest of pedestrian safety and to encourage walking and sustainable modes of transport. Relevant policy: Core strategy policies CP3 and CP6.*

8. Construction method statement

No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Statement shall provide for:

- the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors,
- loading and unloading of plant and materials,
- storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development,
- the erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate,
- wheel washing facilities,
- measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction,
- a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works.

- no deliveries outside the permitted working hours
- Best practice for use of machinery on site e.g. no idling of engines when equipment not in use etc.

Reason: *In the interests of highway safety & convenience and neighbour amenities. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.*

9. Drainage details

No development shall take place, for any phase of the development, until full details of the drainage system for that phase of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The details shall include:

- BRE 365 test results demonstrating that infiltration is not achievable, as attenuation is being proposed.
- Calculations demonstrating that there will be no flooding of pipes for events up to and including the 1 in 100 year flood event with a 40% allowance for climate change.
- A demonstration of the capacity of the receiving ditch on Basingstoke Road and maintenance of this ditch, given that Basingstoke Road already experiences surface water flooding.
- Groundwater data to confirm seasonal high groundwater levels for the area.
- A drainage strategy plan, with pipe invert levels, indicating the location and sizing of SuDS features, with the base of any SuDS features located at least 1m above the seasonal high water table level.

Reason: *This is to prevent increased flood risk from surface water run-off. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 10 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10.*

10. Archaeology

No development shall take place within the application area until the applicant, their agents or successors in title have secured and implemented a programme of archaeological field evaluation in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The results of the evaluation will inform the preparation of a subsequent mitigation strategy which will be submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the development. The mitigation strategy will provide for:

- A programme of site investigation and recording, or alternative appropriate mitigation, within the area of archaeological interest. Development will not commence within the area of archaeological interest until the site investigation has been satisfactorily completed.
- A programme of post investigation assessment, analysis, publication, dissemination and archiving. This part of the condition shall not be discharged until these elements of the programme have been fulfilled in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI or unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that any archaeological remains within the site are adequately investigated and recorded or preserved in situ in the interest of protecting the archaeological heritage of the borough. Relevant policy: National Planning Policy Framework Section 16 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment) and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB25.

11. Ecological enhancement area

No development shall take place until details of the area to be enhanced (including details of the planting mix and ongoing maintenance) as well as locations of enhancement for birds, bats and reptiles and amphibians have been submitted to the local planning authority and approved in writing. The ecological enhancement area will be developed as per the approved plan and permanently so-retained and used for no other purpose.

Reason: To ensure provision is made to allow satisfactory development and maintenance of the natural environment and biodiversity within the application site. Relevant policy: Core strategy policy CP3 and MDD Local Plan policy TB23.

12. Access surfacing

No building shall be occupied until the vehicular access has been surfaced with a permeable and bonded material across the entire width of the access for a distance of 10 metres measured from the carriageway edge.

Reason: To avoid spillage of loose material onto the highway, in the interests of road safety. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP6.

13. Cycle parking

No building shall be occupied until secure and covered parking for cycles has been provided in accordance with the approved drawing(s)/details. The cycle parking/ storage shall be permanently so-retained for the parking of bicycles and used for no other purpose.

Reason: In order to ensure that secure weather-proof bicycle parking facilities are provided so as to encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 4 (Sustainable Transport) and Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 & CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07

14. Parking spaces

No part of any building(s) hereby permitted shall be occupied or used until vehicle parking and turning space has been provided in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The vehicle parking and turning space so-approved shall be retained in accordance with the approved details and the parking space remain available for the parking of vehicles at all times and the turning space shall not be used for any purpose other than vehicle turning.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

15. Landscaping

Landscape for the proposed development including hard and soft landscape shall be provided in accordance with approved details [drawings numbered EIP21607-11B, EIP21607-12B, Soft Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan (ref.: EIP21607man), and Soft Landscape Specification (ref.: EIP21607spec)]. Planting shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the building(s). Any trees or plants which, within a period of 5 years from the date of the planting (or within a period of 5 years of the occupation of the buildings in the case of retained trees and shrubs) die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species or otherwise as approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: *To ensure adequate planting in the interests of visual amenity. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21 (and TB06 for garden development).*

16. Retention of existing trees

No trees, shrubs or hedges within the site which are shown as being retained on the approved plans shall be felled, uprooted wilfully damaged or destroyed, cut back in any way or removed without previous written consent of the local planning authority; any trees, shrubs or hedges removed without consent or dying or being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within 5 years from the completion of the development hereby permitted shall be replaced with trees, shrubs or hedge plants of similar size and species unless the local planning authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: *To ensure adequate planting in the interests of visual amenity. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21.*

17. Hours of construction

No work relating to the development hereby approved, including works of demolition or preparation prior to building operations, shall take place other than between the hours of 08:00 and 18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 to 13:00 Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Bank or National Holidays.

Reason: *To protect the occupiers of neighbouring properties from noise and disturbance outside the permitted hours during the construction period. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC06.*

18. Obscure glazing & 1.7m opening height

The first floor side windows in the development hereby permitted shall be fitted with obscured glass and shall be permanently so-retained. The window shall be non-opening unless the parts of the window which can be opened are more than 1.7 metres above the finished floor level of the room in which the window is installed and shall be permanently so-retained.

Reason: *To safeguard the residential amenities of neighbouring properties. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3.*

19. Restriction of permitted development rights - domestic

Notwithstanding the provisions of Classes A, B, C, D, E, F and G of Part 1 of the Second Schedule the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no buildings, enlargement or alterations permitted shall be carried out without the express permission in writing of the local planning authority.

Reason: *To safeguard the character of the area and prevent overdevelopment of Countryside location. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 and CP11, and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB21.*

Informatives:

1. This permission should be read in conjunction with the legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act dated ___ April 2020, the obligations in which relate to this development.
2. The applicant is reminded that this approval is granted subject to conditions which must be complied with prior to the development starting on site. Commencement of the development without complying with the pre-commencement requirements may be outside the terms of this permission and liable to enforcement action. The information required should be formally submitted to the Council for consideration with the relevant fee. Once the details have been approved in writing the development should be carried out only in accordance with those details. If this is not clear please contact the case officer to discuss.
3. The Head of Highways at the Council Offices, Shute End, Wokingham [0118 9746000] should be contacted for the approval of the access construction details before any work is carried out within the highway (including verges and footways). This planning permission does NOT authorise the construction of such an access or works.
4. Adequate precautions shall be taken during the construction period to prevent the deposit of mud and similar debris on adjacent highways. For further information contact the Highway Authority on tel.: 0118 9746000.
5. Any works/ events carried out by or on behalf of the developer affecting either a public highway or a prospectively maintainable highway (as defined under s.87 New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA)), shall be co-ordinated and licensed as required under NRSWA and the Traffic Management Act 2004 in order to minimise disruption to both pedestrian and vehicular users of the highway. Any such works or events, and particularly those involving the connection of any utility to the site must be co-ordinated by the developer in liaison with the Borough's Street Works team (0118 974 6302). This must take place at least three months in advance of the intended works to ensure effective co-ordination with other works so as to minimise disruption.
6. The applicant is advised to consider the rubbish and recycling information on the Council's website: <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/rubbish-andrecycling/collections/information-for-developers/>.

7. The development hereby permitted is liable to pay the Community Infrastructure Levy. This is a matter for the developer. The Liability Notice issued by Wokingham Borough Council will state the current chargeable amount. Anyone can formally assume liability to pay, but if no one does so then liability will rest with the landowner. There are certain legal requirements that must be complied with. For instance, whoever will pay the levy must submit an Assumption of Liability form and a Commencement Notice to Wokingham Borough Council prior to commencement of development. For more information see - <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/developers/cil/cil-processes/>.
8. Should any bats or evidence of bats be found prior to or during the development, all works must stop immediately and an ecological consultant or the Council's ecologist contacted for further advice before works can proceed. All contractors working on site should be made aware of the advice and provided with the contact details of a relevant ecological consultant.
9. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.

PLANNING HISTORY

Application Number	Proposal	Decision & Date
182370	Full planning permission for the erection of 5no. dwellings with garages and a balancing pond <i>(Officer's note: The current application is similar to this application in terms of proposed plans).</i>	Non-determination application; Appeal dismissed on lack of legal agreement grounds: 29.11.2019
173726	Full application for the proposed erection of 5no dwellings with detached garages, a balancing pond and an ecological enhancement area.	Approved: 24.07.2019
O/2014/1944	Proposed erection of 3 dwellings with garages and a balancing pond (means of access to be considered)	Approved: 31.10.2016
F/2007/2197	Proposed change of use of land from Garden Centre to Builders Merchant with demolition of existing sales building and erection of new building for builders merchants	Refused: 17.10.2007 Appeal Dismissed: 06.04.2009.
F/2005/6160	Change from garden centre to builders yard	Refused: 02.06.2006
VAR/2004/1391	Proposed variation of conditions 12 & 16 of consent 40500 to allow a substitute of layout plan	Approved: 22.04.2004
VAR/2003/9521	Proposed variation to condition 11 of consent 40500 to amend the schedule of goods sold and areas within the garden centre sales	Approved: 12.08.2003

	building to include the sale of conservatories & garden buildings	
F/2003/9191	Proposed erection of replacement workshop and store building. Demolition of existing building	Withdrawn
F/2003/0044	Proposed erection of replacement workshop and store building plus demolition of existing building	Approved: 22.10.2003
CLE/2002/7744	Application for certificate of lawful existing use of land as garden centre	Approved: 12.02.2003
F/2002/6245	Proposed redevelopment of garden centre, reuse of buildings, access improvement, road, parking and landscaping	Refused: 12.06.2002
F/1999/69285	Proposed erection of 3 detached dwellings 2 garages and associated works	Refused: 04.05.1999 Appeal Dismissed: 29.09.1999.
F/1998/68734	Proposed erection of 6 detached dwellings and garages demolition of redundant building	Refused: 09.02.1999 Appeal Dismissed: 29.09.1999.
V/1997/66449	Proposed Relaxation Of Conditions 1 And 3 on Consent 40500 For Extension Of Time For Commencement Of development for further 5 years (condition 1) & removal of condition 3 relating to removal of building	Approved: 25.02.1998
F/1996/63285	Proposed Erection Of 25 Detached Dwellings	Refused: 11.04.1996 Appeal Dismissed: 04.03.1997
40500	Redevelopment of garden centre including the construction of garden centre sales building	Approved
37103	Redevelopment of existing garden centre	Approved: 13.03.1991

SUMMARY INFORMATION	
For Residential	
Site Area	2.31 ha
Existing units	0 (5 approved under 173726)
Proposed units	5
Existing density – dwellings/hectare	0
Proposed density - dwellings/hectare	2 dwellings per hectare
Number of affordable units proposed	0 (commuted sum of £214,938.56 in lieu of 2 affordable units)
Previous land use	Garden centre (sui generis) / Nil use (there is an extant permission for residential development yet to be implemented).
Proposed Public Open Space	N/A
Existing parking spaces	N/A
Proposed parking spaces	12

CONSULTATION RESPONSES	
Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust	No comments received
Crime Prevention Design Officer	No comments received
National Grid	No comments received
Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue	No comments received
Southern Gas Networks	No objections
SEE Power Distribution	No objections
Thames Water	No comments received
NHS Wokingham Clinical Commissioning Group	No comments received
Natural England	No objection subject to planning obligations secured by legal agreement.
Berkshire Archaeology	No objections subject to condition
WBC Biodiversity	No objection subject to ecological management plan and TBH SPA contribution secured by legal agreement.
WBC Affordable Housing	No objection subjected to commuted sum secured by legal agreement.
WBC Drainage	No objections subject to condition
WBC Environmental Health	No objections subject to condition
WBC Highways	No objections subject to condition
WBC Tree & Landscape	No objections subject to condition
WBC Cleaner & Greener (Waste Services)	No objections subject to condition
WBC Public Rights of Way	No comment

REPRESENTATIONS
<p>Town/Parish Council: No comments received</p> <p>Local Members: No comments received</p> <p>Neighbours: 3 letters received supporting the application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well researched and well-designed scheme. • The site is becoming an eyesore. • Design is in-keeping with the character of the area.

APPLICANTS POINTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal will make affective use of a previously developed site. • The planning merits of this revised submission were considered to be acceptable by an earlier appeal Inspector for application ref.182370. • The plans were all considered acceptable by the appeal Inspector. This was in relation to character and appearance, location of development (i.e. the principle of housing within the countryside) and the proposed access arrangements. • The main principles established under the earlier permission and agreed under the appeal scheme such as the balancing pond feature and ecological enhancement area are all maintained as part of the proposal. The number of dwellings remains unchanged. • The applicant agrees to a S106 to allow for affordable housing and SANGS contributions.

PLANNING POLICY		
National Policy	NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
	NPPG	National Planning Practice Guidance
Adopted Core Strategy DPD 2010	CP1	Sustainable Development
	CP2	Inclusive Communities
	CP3	General Principles for Development
	CP5	Housing mix, density and affordability
	CP6	Managing Travel Demand
	CP7	Biodiversity
	CP8	Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area
	CP9	Scale and Location of Development Proposals
	CP11	Proposals outside development limits (including countryside)
Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014	CC01	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
	CC02	Development Limits
	CC03	Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping
	CC06	Noise
	CC07	Parking
	CC09	Development and Flood Risk (from all sources)
	CC10	Sustainable Drainage
	TB04	Development in vicinity of AWE
	TB05	Housing Mix
	TB06	Development of private residential gardens
	TB07	Internal Space standards
	TB21	Landscape Character
	TB23	Biodiversity and Development
	TB25	Archaeology
Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)	BDG	Borough Design Guide – Section 4 & 8.
		Swallowfield Village Design Statement
		DCLG – National Internal Space Standards
		Berkshire (including South Bucks) Strategic Housing Market Assessment Feb 2016
		Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule Feb 2015

PLANNING ISSUES
<p>Description of Development:</p> <p>1. Full application for the proposed erection of 5 detached dwellings comprising of one 6 bedroom dwelling with detached garage (plot 1), one 5 bedroom dwelling with internal garage (plot 5) and three 4 bedroom dwellings with internal garages (plots 2,</p>

3 and 4). These dwellings will be served by two access roads from Basingstoke Road – one for plot 1 and other for the remaining dwellings. Both accesses will have entrance gates and will be sited within the existing commercial bell-mouth with 1.2m post and rail fencing along the front boundary. Plot 1 will be separated from the group of other 4 houses by 1.2m high closed board fencing. The proposal also includes associated landscaping works with a balancing pond and 1.1 hectare of ecological enhancement area.

2. The proposed scheme has not been changed from the previous application (ref: 182370) that was dismissed on appeal for lack of a legal agreement only.

Principle of Development:

3. The National Planning Policy Framework has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan. The Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (MDD) Policy CC01 states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
4. Policy CC02 of the MDD Local Plan sets out the development limits for each settlement as defined on the policies map. Policy CP9 sets out that development proposals located within development limits will be acceptable in principle, having regard to the service provisions associated with the major, modest and limited categories. The site is outside of any settlement limits and is within the countryside between Riseley and Swallowfield, which are both defined as limited development locations.
5. Whilst the site is within the countryside and the proposal does not fall within any of the exceptions listed in the Core Strategy policy CP11, there is an extant planning permission for the erection of 5 dwellings (ref: 173726) on the land, which is a material consideration for the current scheme. At the time of this approval it was considered that the residential development would have a preferable impact on the character and appearance of the area compared to the previous garden centre use. This extant permission followed an outline permission (ref: O/2014/194, now out of time) for 3 detached dwellings on this land. As such, the principle of residential development on this site has already been established by the previous outline scheme for 3 dwellings as well as the extant planning permission that allowed erection of 5 houses. The current scheme does not propose to increase the total number of dwellings and as such, the proposal is considered acceptable in principle.
6. The consideration of the application therefore mainly falls against the fall-back position of the extant planning permission for 5 dwellings – one detached and 2 pairs of semi-detached houses with a single access road on the site and the proposal before the committee has been considered in this context.

Character of the Area:

7. The site is in Wokingham District Landscape Character Area I2 – ‘Risely Farmed Clay Lowland’. The Landscape Character Assessment sets out that the Landscape is of overall moderate quality and in moderate condition. The site is an open field and whilst part of the site was previously developed, there is currently no built form on it

and it has the appearance of a Greenfield. The immediate surrounding area is characterised by scattered detached dwellings of varying types and plot sizes.

8. The proposal includes erection of 5 large executive style detached dwellings on 1.2ha land that will be served by 2 access roads. As set above, the extant permission of 5 dwellings with single access was on balance considered acceptable because it was deemed to have a preferable impact on the character and appearance of the area. The current scheme differs from the extant scheme in terms of types and sizes of houses and an additional access, resulting in overall increase in built form on the site. Table below provides a comparative analysis of building footprint and hardstanding between the outline permission, extant permission and the current scheme.

Application no.	Building footprint	Driveway hardstanding	Total coverage	% of site coverage
O/2014/1944	834 m ²	1362 m ²	2196 m ²	18.3%
173726	810 m ²	1385 m ²	2195 m ²	18.3%
193356	907 m ²	1535 m ²	2442 m ²	20.35%

9. As can be seen from the above table, the proposal would result in 2% increase in site coverage. Since the proposal is a low density development (2 dwellings per hectare), a 2% increase in plot coverage is not considered to have any significant additional harm to the character of the area including surrounding countryside.
10. The dwellings are proposed to be sited more than 100m from the Basingstoke Road street frontage. Because of the great set-in distance, the scheme will not be readily visible from public realm and the impact of additional built-form on the overall landscape would be limited in comparison to the extant permission.
11. The immediate neighbours along Basingstoke Road include residential properties named Uplands, Mayfield House, Oak Cottage and Lancambria which are all detached properties of varying designs and sizes sited on varying plot dimensions. Moreover, there is no consistent building line available within the immediate neighbourhood. As such, the proposed siting of the buildings will not detract from the general linear nature of the frontage development to Basingstoke Road. There is an existing wooded backdrop to the site and this will be maintained through the ecological enhancement area. The wooded backdrop would also provide a spacious setting for the dwelling reflecting the open rural character of the area.
12. The additional access to serve plot 1 alone would be acceptable since both accesses will be sited within the existing commercial bell-mouth from Basingstoke Road. Most of the neighbouring dwellings are served by individual accesses, often positioned close together. Because of these reasons, it is not consider that the proposed additional access will result in a significant harmful effect over and above the permitted situation.
13. Whilst the proposal would increase the built form within the countryside, the effect on the landscape and character of the area will not be significant compared to the extant permission and the quality of the environment will be maintained. The proposed design of the dwellings will be in keeping with other dwellings of the area. To ensure high quality development, condition 3 is recommended to confirm the materials to be used for the construction of external surfaces of the development.

14. The management plan for the ecological enhancement area will be secured using s106 legal agreement and this will be maintained as part of the scheme (condition 11). The proposal will not result in any loss of wooded backdrop and further landscape enhancement is proposed through landscape management plan which is acceptable. Overall, it is considered that the proposal will have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area and the countryside compared to the extant permission.

Residential Amenities:

15. The proposed buildings will be positioned between 6 – 10 metres from the boundaries of the existing properties and this far exceeds the minimum separation distances set out in the Borough Design Guide SPD of 2 metres. Furthermore, the boundaries are defined by trees and planting that will further screen the development from neighbouring houses.

16. A minimum of 4m separation will be maintained between individual houses (plots 2 - 5) which is acceptable. Plot 1 will be separated from the rest of the development by a 1.2m closed board fencing and will have a separation distance of 12m from plot 2. These separation distances are acceptable and no mutual overlooking impact is expected from the proposal. However, in order to minimise any further overlooking, condition 18 is recommended to ensuring first floor side windows are obscurely glazed and top hung. Condition 19 is recommended to remove all domestic PD rights including insertion of additional windows at first floor level and above without first applying for planning permission.

17. It is considered that the proposed development will have an acceptable impact on the amenity of the neighbouring occupiers with respect to overlooking, overshadowing and overbearing impact.

Access and Movement:

18. The proposed development is for the erection of five dwelling with 2 separate accesses – one for plot 1 and the other to be shared by remaining 4 dwellings. The existing access to the site was built as part of a previous garden centre application which has never been fully implemented. However, the access was designed to accommodate a significantly greater amount of traffic than the proposed residential scheme. Whilst the proposal seeks to introduce an additional access within the existing bell-mouth, it is not considered to have any detrimental impact on highway safety since the bell-mouth is already established. It is considered that there is satisfactory space for vehicles to manoeuvre on site and leave in a forward gear subject to condition 6. Acceptable visibility splay will be secured using condition 5.

19. Twelve car parking spaces have been indicated on the submitted plans and opportunities for informal parking will be also be available on the hard surfaced areas. However, since no formal parking plan is submitted with the current application these details are secured using condition 14. Similarly, details regarding cycle storage are secured by condition 13.

20. With regard to the sustainability of the location, the site is approximately a 1.14km walk to the post office; public house and medical centre along The Street in Swallowfield. There is a primary school (Lambs Lane) approximately 2 km from the

site and there is a footpath along Basingstoke Road that links the site to school. A community centre is also located on the opposite side of Swallowfield.

21. Riseley is located to the south of the site. The proposed houses will be approximately 1.18 km walk to the centre where a pub and Community Hall are located. A footpath along Basingstoke Road links the site to Riseley.
22. A bus stop is located along Basingstoke Road and is currently used by two services (no. 7 and 145). The 145 operates one service per week on a Tuesday. The number 7 runs an hourly services from approximately 7am – 7pm Monday – Saturday and 4 services on Sundays. This service runs between Fleet and Reading.
23. The current scheme does not include any additional dwelling from the extant permission and will not result in additional number of occupants. Whilst the site is not a highly sustainable location there are bus services and footpaths in the area which make the houses accessible to local services and facilities. On balance it is not considered that the limited sustainability of the location would warrant a refusal reason on this basis, particularly given that a similar application has been previously approved.

Flooding and Drainage:

24. The application site is in Flood Zone 1 where the risk of flooding from rivers is low and as such all forms of development, including 'more vulnerable' uses, are acceptable. A balancing pond and generous area of porous soft handspring have been designed into the scheme. The Council's Drainage Engineer has considered the application and raised no objection to the proposed development. The proposal will have an acceptable impact with regard to drainage and flooding subject to the recommended condition 9 to further secure drainage details.

Landscape and Trees:

25. Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that 'maintain or enhance the ability of the site to support fauna and flora including protected species'. Policy CC03 of the MDD Local Plan states that development proposals should demonstrate how they have considered and achieve to 'protect and retain existing trees, hedges and other landscape features'.
26. The trees close to the entrance are being retained and these contribute to the character of the area and the Green Route Enhancement Area. Some category U trees located further into the site are being removed but no objection is raised to this as they cannot realistically be retained as living specimens. Detailed landscape scheme is proposed which is acceptable. Condition 15 is recommended to secure appropriate landscaping in accordance with approved plans. Conditions 4 and 16 are recommended to secure protection and retention of existing trees.
27. The development will incorporate significant areas of soft landscaping and an ecological enhancement area to the west. Overall it is not considered that the uplift in development from the extant permission would diminish opportunities for soft landscaping or detrimentally impact the Green Route Enhancement Area along Basingstoke Road. The proposal will have a comparable impact to the extant residential permission with regard to landscape and trees.

Environmental Health:

28. According to historical mapping there is no contamination on or near to the site. Therefore no objection is raised with regard to contamination. However, due to the close proximity of the neighbouring residential properties, the Environmental Health Officer has recommended conditions limiting working hours and controlling of noise and dust emission. Accordingly, condition 17 is included to restrict hours of construction and condition 8 is recommended to secure construction methods statement including details of measures to control noise and dust.

Amenity Space for future occupiers:

29. Plots 2 – 5 will have rear gardens at least 20 metres deep and plot 1 will have a rear garden approximately 35 metres deep. This will comply with the minimum garden depth of 11 metres set out in the Borough Design Guide SPD. The proposed development will provide a suitable level of private amenity space.

Internal Space Standards:

30. The proposed development comprises of 3 no 4 bedroom detached properties; 1 no 5 bedroom detached dwelling and 1 no 6 bedroom detached dwelling. The Nationally Described Space Standard recommends a minimum floor area of 97 sq m for a 4 bedroom property; 110 sq m for a 5 bedroom house and 123 sq m for a 6 bedroom house. The proposed dwellings will significantly exceed the national minimum requirements. The 4 bedroom houses will have floor areas between 170 sqm and 220 sq m, the 5 bedroom house approximately 265 sq. m and the 6 bedroom property 510 sq m. The proposed dwellings will therefore provide an acceptable standard of accommodation for the future occupiers.

Ecology:

31. Policy CP7 of the Core Strategy states that development proposals that may harm habitats or species of principle importance or features of the landscape that are of major importance for wild flora and fauna (including wildlife and river corridors), will only be permitted if it has been clearly demonstrated that the need for the proposal outweighs the need to safeguard the nature conservation importance; that no alternative sites that would result in less or no harm is available which will meet the need.

32. The application site comprises a grassland field over previously developed areas. Whilst overgrown, a large amount of scalping have been laid on the site which will be removed. The previously approved application (ref: 173726) for the erection of 5 dwellings included a legal agreement securing the retention of open space to the west which would be managed for wildlife enhancements. The current scheme also retains the area to the west as open space and the applicant has agreed for a legal agreement to secure its management similar to the extant permission. As such subject to the legal agreement, there is no objection to the current proposal on ecology grounds.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), Special Protection Area (SPA) & Affordable Housing:

33. As the proposal is for new residential floor space, it would be a CIL liable development. CIL is charged at a rate of £365 per square metre. If the development is approved, a CIL liability notice would be issued.
34. The site is within 5km of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area. Policy NRM6 of the South East plan requires that proposals mitigate their impact upon the TBHSPA. Avoidance payment towards SANG is classed as infrastructure and therefore is included within the CIL payment. SPA-wide Strategic Access and Management Monitoring (SAMM) is not considered to fall within the definition of infrastructure and therefore is continued to be secured through legal agreements. The application is recommended for approval subject to a legal agreement securing an index linked payment for SAMM contributions.
35. The application site is over 0.16 ha in area and policy CP5 of the Core Strategy requires the proposal to contribute towards affordable housing. The site is outside of the development limits and therefore a minimum contribution of 40% is required, equating to 2 equivalent affordable units. The Affordable Housing Team has advised that an offsite commuted sum would be acceptable and this has been calculated as £214,938.56.
36. The applicant has agreed to pay the full commuted sum and this approval is subject to the applicant entering into a legal agreement.

Archaeology:

37. The site is within an area of archaeological potential. Berkshire Archaeology have advised the following:

‘Numerous find spots ranging in date from the Bronze through to Post-Medieval are recorded on the Historic Environment Records within the area. Just over 500m to the west prehistoric worked flint, a Roman finds scatter and medieval pottery sherds have been found. Prehistoric worked flint and undated pottery sherds have been found 300m to the north of the site and there linear cropmarks located c600m to the south west of the site. To the east of the site finds dating to the Bronze Age through to the medieval period are recorded. In addition to this evidence there are two areas identified within the Wokingham Borough Council Plan as being Areas of High Archaeological Potential. One is 200m to the north and the other a little over 400m to the north east.’

38. There is a potential that archaeological remains may survive within this site and an archaeological evaluation will be required to be carried out: condition 10 is therefore recommended.

Atomic Weapons Establishment:

39. The site is within a 5km zone of the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) at Burghfield. Policy TB04 of the MDD Local Plan states that Development will only be permitted where the applicant demonstrates that the increase in the number of people living, working, shopping and/or visiting the proposal (including at different times of the day) can be safely accommodated having regard to the needs of “Blue light” services and the emergency off-site plan for the Atomic Weapons

Establishment site at Burghfield. The proposal fall significantly below the level of 500 new residents set out in the policy that would require additional consultation and consideration.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010)

40. In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application and there would be no significant adverse impacts upon protected groups as a result of the development.

CONCLUSION

41. The application follows an extant planning permission (ref: 173726) for the erection of five dwellings on the site. The principle of residential development has therefore been established and the assessment falls upon what impact the additional built form would have on character of the area including surrounding countryside in comparison to the extant planning permission.

42. The proposed development does not seek to increase the total number of dwelling. It is now proposed to erect 5 detached dwellings with 2 accesses resulting in 2% increase in built up area compared to the extant permission. Whilst this represents an increase in quantum of development, it is considered acceptable since the density of the proposed development would be low. The inspector of the previously dismissed appeal for the same scheme (ref: 182370) did not raise any objection to the additional built up area since the plot is large and development will be set back from the street frontage. There will be large areas of landscaping and an ecological enhancement area on the site and this remains unchanged from the extant permission. The proposed dwellings will have ample indoor and outdoor space and will provide a satisfactory living environment for the future occupiers. Local residents have expressed support for the application and the proposed development would have a satisfactory impact on the amenity of the neighbouring occupiers.

43. There are no objections to the proposal with regard to highway safety; sustainable location; parking; trees; drainage & flooding; ecology and archaeology. The development is acceptable in all other aspects subject to conditions and a legal agreement securing a commuted sum for affordable housing; a SAMM avoidance payment to offset the impact on the Thames Basins Heaths Special Protection Area and an Ecological Enhancement Management Plan. The application is accordingly recommend for approval.

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