

APPLICATION NO.	P13/V1711/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION
REGISTERED	9.8.2013
PARISH	WEST HANNEY
WARD MEMBER(S)	Matthew Barber
APPLICANT	Mr & Mrs G Young
SITE	Botney Meadows Farm West Hanney Wantage, OX12 0DN
PROPOSAL	Demolition of existing dwelling, stables and agricultural buildings. Erection a replacement Dwelling (revised scheme to P13/V0176/FUL)
AMENDMENTS	None
GRID REFERENCE	439536/193176
OFFICER	Mark Doodes

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The site is in open countryside of the Lowland Vale (Policy NE9), approximately 2.5km west of West Hanney, along Hyde Road. There are no neighbouring dwellings nearby. The site appears to be a disused farm comprising a single detached bungalow located within a large plot with a collection of disused agricultural huts, stables and sheds in the environs. The site is surrounded by flat open arable fields with low hedgerows, soft verges and narrow country roads.

1.2 The site is well screened on the elevation closest to the road, with a mid height post and rail fence running along the only entrance track. The site is accessed by a single track lane, off-set from the nearby sharp bend. The extended four bedroom home proposed to be demolished presently appears to be in a reasonable state of repair.

1.3 Aside from the Lowland Vale designation, the site has no other special designation.

1.4 The site location plan can be found **attached** at appendix 1.

2.0 PROPOSAL

2.1 The proposals are two fold. Firstly, the demolition of the existing 137m² four bedroom bungalow and the surrounding barns, stables and other buildings. Secondly, the erection of a 490m² (total floor area) four bed modern styled flat-roofed dwelling arranged over two floors. This represents an increase in floor area of around 357%.

2.2 The new dwelling has a broadly star shape to it, with the main central section being two storey in height. Various landscaping works are proposed. The new dwelling has been designed to yield a high degree of energy efficiency from the fabric and other building choices.

2.3 The plans can be found **attached** at appendix 2.

3.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

3.1 Drainage Engineer (Vale of White Horse District Council) - No objection subject to conditions.

Environment Agency – No response at time of report.

Highways Liaison Officer (Oxfordshire County Council) - No objection subject to conditions.

Environmental Health – No objections

Countryside Officer(South Oxfordshire & Vale of White Horse) - No strong views

Neighbour Approve (4) – Supporting letters mainly covered the loss of the agricultural sheds (which do not require planning permission to be removed) , no issues raised regarding the scale of the works or the principle of development.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 [P13/V0176/FUL](#) - Refused (14/05/2013) - *Application presently at appeal*
Demolition of existing dwelling, stables and outbuildings & erection of a replacement dwelling.

[P83/V1785](#) - Approved (15/06/1983)

Conversion of existing barn into dwelling as a replacement for the previous bungalow on the site.

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

5.1 Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 policies;

GS6 - Redevelopment of buildings outside settlements

H13 - Development Elsewhere

DC1 - Design

DC13 - Flood Risk and Water Run-off

DC14 - Flood Risk and Water Run-off

DC5 - Access

DC6 - Landscaping

DC9 - The Impact of Development on Neighbouring Uses

NPPF – National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 *Planning policy considerations*

The prime concern is whether the scale of increase, the design and appearance are acceptable. A secondary concern is the extent to which the application addresses the shortcomings of the previously refused scheme, currently at appeal.

6.2 Replacement dwellings are covered in Policy GS6 section (iv) of the local plan, stating that proposals must be “...on a one-for-one basis, subject to...up to 50% [increase] of the volume of the original dwelling...”.

6.3 The table below sets out the scheme set against policy and the previously refused scheme.

	Floor area (increase)	% volume increase	Volume
Existing home	137 m ²	-	650m ³

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Application at appeal	568 (414%)	410%	2665 m3
Current application	490 (357%)	240%	2040 m3
Policy Complaint	205 m2	150%	975m3

6.4 The table clearly shows that the application represents a dwelling which is circa two and a half times the size of the original bungalow, even including the modern extensions / garages added in more recent decades. The proposal is around five times the size of *increased* floor area that policy allows. The volume increase appears less due to the removal of a pitched roof bungalow and the replacement of a flat roofed largely single storey unit.

6.5 For the purposes of the above calculation, the stables, barns, sheds and other outbuildings have not been included in volume calculations, as is accepted practice. The decision to uphold policy GS6 has been reinforced by an appeal decision on a comparable site (application P05/V1556).

6.6 No exception is made for *agricultural requirement* at the site, as is existing dwelling is not part of a farm. No other exception is requested nor applied under this policy.

Whilst it is accepted that the site is not within the Green Belt and therefore some discretion can be applied for borderline applications, this application is not a borderline one, it is informed by sheer scale.

6.7 Therefore based on the above assessment, the application is not considered to comply with policy GS6 of the local plan..

6.8 *Design considerations and energy efficiency*

The application will create a very large dwelling, in a highly modern style with a flat roof. It will measure, at its highest point, around circa 7m, but the bulk of the building is single storey. The scheme contains many “extension like” elements, with no discernable prime elevation. Officers do not wish Councillors to be drawn into a discussion of the relative merits of a modernist, traditional or otherwise styled architectural debate, the key issue is the principle of a development and the extent to which this home could be considered a *replacement* dwelling, as described by the agent. Paragraph 55 of the NPPF allows consideration for “*truly outstanding or innovative*” design and designs that are “*sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area*”. Officers are of the view that the home lacks any truly innovative or exceptional design features, to afford such discretion.

6.9 Due to the strong objections (stemming from planning policy) of officers, the application has not been referred to the architects panel, as such concerns remain secondary. Nonetheless, the design is highly modern and could be considered to lack any local traditional features, however its merit as a modern, bold design is also noted and remains a somewhat a matter of interpretation and opinion. It is the officers view that the design is somewhat undermined by the sheer scale of the home, which measures approx 38m wide across.

6.10 On balance, the application is not considered to comply with policy DC1 of the local plan and the NPPF at para 55 and 56.

6.11 The applicant has placed weight on the high energy efficiency ratings of the building proposed. In this instance, and noting the conclusions outlined in section 6.1, these have been given little weight. The environmental merits of the scheme are recognised as being to a very high standard, but these efforts are somewhat undermined by the remote location of dwelling. In terms of the sustainability of the location, it is accepted that a home exists on the site which pre-dates the planning system and therefore policies that apply to residential extensions must be considered, over and above the principle of development of a home per se.

6.12 *Flooding and Drainage*

The application is within the flood zone, however no comments have been received by Environment Agency. Based on the feedback from the Vales drainage engineers, it is likely that such matters could be controlled by conditions. However, given the recommendation is to refuse the application on firm policy grounds, there is little merit in exploring such matters to their conclusions. In the absence of formal responses from the relevant parties, no conclusions are therefore reached regarding this application in respect of policies DC13 and DC14 of the local plan.

6.13 *Highways and Landscaping*

No concerns are raised on highways matters, therefore the application is considered to comply with policy DC5 of the local plan. No concerns regarding the landscaping proposed are raised, therefore the application is considered to comply with policy DC6 of the local plan.

6.14 *Parish and local residents views*

The parish council have not objected to this application. Several letters of support have been received, which lend support to the elements of the works that do not require planning permission such as the removal of the dilapidated modern barns. Councillors should also note that agricultural barns similar to those to the north of the site, do not require permission to be erected or to be removed.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

7.1 The application fails to address the issues of the previously refused scheme, which is presently being considered by the Planning Inspectorate.

Policy GS6 seeks to ensure that replacement dwellings are not more than 50% larger than the ones they replace. At circa 240%, this application is not considered to be compliant with policy GS6 of the local plan and the NPPF which seeks to retain the character of the countryside by protecting it from excessive development.

7.2 By virtue of the proposed volume increase the overall design is considered to be sprawling and disjointed by officers, although this remains a secondary concern over issues raised in 6.1. Due to its scale and lack of design flair the scheme is not considered to comply with policy DC1. Officers see no element of the proposals that would appear “truly innovative” and “locally sensitive” to afford discretion under para. 55 of the NPPF. Concerns remain about the introduction of a very large dwelling in this location, as such the application is not considered to comply with policy DC1 of the local plan.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

Refusal of Planning Permission for the following reasons.

1 : Policy GS6 refusal – dwelling more than 50% larger than the one it replaces.

2 : Policy DC1 – Concerns regarding the sprawling nature of the new dwelling.

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Author: Mark Doodes
Contact Number: 01235-540519
Email: mark.doodes@southandvale.gov.uk