

APPLICATION NO.	P13/V1859/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION
REGISTERED	22.10.2013
PARISH	PUSEY
WARD MEMBER(S)	Anthony Hayward
APPLICANT	Mr Matthew Green
SITE	Pusey Lodge Farm Pusey Faringdon Oxfordshire, SN7 8QD
PROPOSAL	Replacement Barn
AMENDMENTS	None
GRID REFERENCE	437332/196559
OFFICER	Mark Doodes

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Pusey Lodge Farm is a remote hamlet of buildings centred around a former farm that was granted permission around a decade ago, under policies which support the reuse of vernacular farm buildings. Consequently, the group of buildings consists mainly of former agricultural buildings recently converted to residential use with the exception of the barn in question. Just south of the site is Cherbury Camp, a marsh fort, which is a scheduled ancient monument.
- 1.2 The group of buildings is in an isolated location in open countryside at the end of a long narrow track, 1.25 miles from the A420, 1.1m from Pusey and about 4 miles from both Stanford in the Vale and Kingston Bagpuize. The site location plan is **attached** at appendix 1.
- 1.3 This application is being brought to committee because Pusey Parish supports the application and the officer recommendation is to refuse permission.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The barn to be demolished is of modern (not traditional) construction. Permission is not required for these works. The new building is located adjacent the walled garden to the listed farmhouse. The farmhouse is a grade II listed building currently used as two separate dwellings, although an application to reinstate these two units as one was recently granted.
- 2.2 The applicant seeks full planning permission to erect a detached two storey 237m² (footprint) barn constructed of what is assumed to be locally sourced stone and a slate roof. Although not provided, the overall size of the storage is around 355m² or 3800 square feet including the storage accommodation to the first floor that is proposed. The entire internal space is open plan.
- 2.3 The new storage facility will measure approx 9m to ridge and will be roughly 22m deep by 13m wide. For ease of reference to its scale, the volume of *ancillary* domestic storage sought for the Farmhouse is at least equal to the farm house itself, based on crude officer approximations from this and previous applications.
- 2.4 A copy of the application plans is **attached** in appendix 2.

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 Highways Liaison Officer (Oxfordshire County Council) - No strong views

Pusey Parish Meeting – Support. (No local plan policies referred to.)

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 [P13/V0556/FUL](#) - Withdrawn (23/05/2013)

Erection of replacement dwelling, demolition of existing modern barn and reversion of existing sub-divided farmhouse to single dwelling"

[P13/V0504/LDE](#) - Approved (22/05/2013)

Certificate of lawfulness for existing use of barn for a mixed use, half used for domestic storage and half for commercial storage.

[P12/V2495/LB](#) - Approved (15/03/2013)

Internal alterations to listed building and demolition of the existing barn which is a curtilage building.

[P12/V2494/FUL](#) - Other Outcome (01/03/2013)

Demolition of existing barn and erection of new dwelling, revert sub-divided farmhouse back into a single dwelling.

[P05/V6583/LB](#) - Approved (25/08/2005)

Conversion of farm buildings to 3 dwellings. Removal of modern buildings and associated hardware. (Re-Submission)

[P05/V0969](#) - Approved (25/08/2005)

Conversion of farm buildings to 3 dwellings. Removal of modern buildings and associated hardware. (Re-Submission)

[P04/V0336/LB](#) - Approved (07/06/2004)

Restoration and conversion of 4 farm buildings to form 3 dwellings. Removal of modern agricultural building and associated apparatus.

[P04/V0335](#) - Approved (07/06/2004)

Restoration and conversion of 4 farm buildings to form 3 dwellings. Removal of modern agricultural building and associated apparatus.

[P01/V0338/LB](#) - Approved (08/08/2002)

Restoration and conversion of farm buildings to three dwellings.

[P01/V0337](#) - Approved (08/08/2002)

Restoration and conversion of farm buildings to three dwellings.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 policies;

H13 - Development elsewhere

GS2 – Development in the countryside

GS6 - Redevelopment of buildings outside settlements

H13 - Extension to dwelling

DC1 - Design

DC13 - Flood risk and water run-off

DC14 - Flood risk and water run-off
DC5 - Access
DC6 - Landscaping
DC7 - Waste collection and recycling
DC9 - Impact of development on neighbouring uses
HE4 - Development within the setting of a listed building

NPPF – Paragraphs 4 and 14, relating to the principles of sustainable development.

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 This application is a test of the definition of sustainable development, therefore officers considered it prudent to refer to the National Planning Policy Framework as a starting point.

Paragraph 4: that development should be economically, socially and environmentally sustainable.

Officer comment – See section 6

Paragraph 28: Planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. To promote a strong rural economy, local and neighbourhood plans should:

Officer comment – See section 6

Paragraph 55: To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. For example, where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby. Local planning authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances such as:

- the essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside; or
- the exceptional quality or innovative nature of the design of the dwelling. Such a design should:
 - be truly outstanding or innovative, helping to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas;
 - significantly enhance its immediate setting; and
 - be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.

Officer comment – No such rural exception as above is proposed or evident in this application.

6.2 The key issue here is the principle of development. The application seeks permission for a structure officers consider to be tantamount to a further large new detached home in an isolated rural location. This is reinforced by the inclusion of secure cycle storage, “On-plot” recycling facilities and a commitment to sustainability credentials during the “occupation” phases of the development (quotations from D&A statement). The demolition works do not require planning permission and therefore the planning gain of the improved setting for the Listed farmhouse is discounted. The nearest settlement is Pusey which is itself a very small settlement with few facilities, about 1.1 miles away.

The site, therefore, is in open countryside. Local plan policies GS2, GS6 and H13, therefore apply, and gives great weight to resisting new development in such open countryside locations. In addition, with the lack of an agricultural need for the proposed dwelling, the proposal is considered to be contrary to paragraph 55 of the NPPF.

In terms of scale, a modern barn conversion style home measures approximately 2-3 times the size of modern 4 bedroom home in the nearby Pye homes development in Kingston Bagpuize. In this instance, the structure proposed is very large, and as such it is considered that it will not “...widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities...” in the area. Therefore, the application is not considered to comply with paragraphs 50 and 55 of the NPPF which state “Local planning authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances such as...” . The above is a clear message from government that very substantial homes in open countryside, isolated from the social, retail, employment, medical and leisure facilities that support a modern lifestyle are not sustainable development.

Paragraph 55 of the NPPF also refers to the special circumstances where residential development may be acceptable in the countryside. Again, it is considered that the proposed development does not fall within any of the categories mentioned i.e. it is not for a rural worker, would not provide or enable a viable use for a heritage asset/building, does not involve the use of redundant buildings, and does not involve exceptional design quality, however much emphasis is placed by the applicant (in their design and access statement) on the “green” attributes of the proposed dwelling such as solar power, rainwater recycling etc. The carbon footprint caused by a highly car dependent lifestyle has not been accounted for and so little weight can be afforded to these proposed “green” measures, however well intended they are.

The NPPF at paragraph 28 states the circumstances where rural housing growth should be encouraged. It is considered that the proposed dwelling does not fall within any of the categories mentioned, i.e. supporting a rural enterprise, forming part of a programme of agricultural diversification, assisting rural tourism or helping to develop/retain rural services/facilities. Therefore, the proposal is not compliant with the NPPF and accordingly, it is considered that the National Planning Policy Framework does not provide a justification for this new dwelling in the countryside.

It is argued that the new structure is intended for ancillary domestic storage purposes, and follows on from the granting of a certificate of lawfulness for such a purpose last year. However, the replacement barn proposed is highly domestic in nature and to the casual observer will be indistinguishable from a new home. Due to the remote nature of the site, the prospect of internal walls being erected along with showers and kitchens facilities etc would be extremely difficult to detect and control and therefore the use of conditions is not considered to be appropriate to control “use creep” in this location.

For this additional reason it is considered that the application conflicts with policy GS1.

6.3 It is noted that the ancillary storage to the farmhouse proposed is larger than the farmhouse itself, although this matter would in no way lead officers to conclude that a smaller (similarly styled) structure would be acceptable.

6.4 **Design**

The proposed dwelling/structure would have a 72% smaller footprint and bulk than the existing modern barn it would replace and it is considered that the proposed design reflects traditional local character, although this is undermined to some degree by scale. The removal of the agricultural barn can proceed irrespective of the outcome of

this application. Setting aside the sustainability issues, and focussing on the design and appearance, the proposal is considered to be acceptable and complies local plan policy DC1. Parking, drainage, arboricultural works, landscaping and other matters are all considered to be acceptable and, therefore, the proposal is considered to comply with policies DC5, DC6, DC7, DC9, DC13 and DC14.

6.5 Impact on setting of listed building

It is considered that the demolition of the existing barn and the replacement with a smaller, less bulky dwelling of a vernacular design would enhance the setting of the listed farmhouse and, therefore, the proposal is considered to comply with local plan policy HE4.

6.6 Impact on wider landscape

Whilst it is considered the replacement of the existing barn by the proposed unit would afford some enhancement of the wider landscape, this could be reduced over time by domestic paraphernalia and other enclosures and perhaps outbuildings. However, this could be controlled to some extent by the use of conditions. It is considered, therefore, that the impact on the wider landscape would be acceptable and so the proposal complies with local plan policy NE7.

6.7 Housing Supply

The application would make a negligible impact on the five year land supply. Such a contribution, even if it were larger, however, cannot outweigh the sustainability concerns explained above and as supported by local plan policies GS1 and the NPPF. A similar scheme for four new large units outside Denchworth was dismissed at appeal, on similar sustainability grounds.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 The application fails to address the concerns expressed in previous applications, surrounding the unsustainable location of the site as not suitable for a scheme which is considered to be ostensibly a new dwelling. The only merit in the scheme is the removal of the last remaining agricultural barn which is adjacent to a Listed Building, however it is noted that this work can be undertaken without consent and that such structures in an agricultural setting are not incongruous.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

That committee refuse planning permission as the development is contrary to;

1. National Planning Policy Framework including paragraphs 6, 55,
2. and Vale of White Horse local plan policies
3. GS1 – Development should be concentrated in existing settlements.
4. GS2 – No exceptional circumstances demonstrated to GS1 for reuse of agricultural buildings, worker buildings, infilling etc.
5. GS6 – Replacement buildings must be essential for a redevelopment, existing buildings to be replaced must not have been constructed for agriculture.
6. H13. General housing policy refusal – not infilling, settlement too small to be sustainable, not related to a rural enterprise

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