

APPLICATION NO.	P16/V0192/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION
REGISTERED	26.1.2016
PARISH	BLEWBURY
WARD MEMBER(S)	Janet Shelley Reg Waite
APPLICANT	Seville Developments Ltd
SITE	Westbrook Farm Westbrook Street Blewbury Didcot, OX11 9QB
PROPOSAL	Demolition of existing farm buildings and construction of 4no. dwellings (as amended by the agents email dated 26 May 2016 and amended plan numbers 15110-PP0010-E, 15110-PE0010-D, 15110-PP1030-B, 15110-PE1010-C, 15110-PP2030-C, 15110-PE2010-D, 15110-PP3030-D, 15110-PE3010-E, 15110-PP4030-D, 15110-PE4010-E, 15110-PP1050-A, 15110-PP0110-E and 15110-PE0110-D which shows a redesign to the proposed layout and design of the proposed dwellings).
AMENDMENTS	As above
GRID REFERENCE	452781/185906
OFFICER	Sarah Green

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This is an application for the demolition of existing farm buildings and the erection of four new dwellings. It is referred to planning committee due to parish and local objections.

1.1 The site is located on the western side of Blewbury and is accessed off Westbrook Street. A location plan is **attached** at Appendix 1. At the entrance to the site is Westbrook Farm Bungalow which is not included within the application. There is a variety of mainly modern farm buildings on the site. To the east of the site are residential properties, some of which are recent dwellings built behind the properties along Westbrook Street. The north boundary has a line of trees along it and a public footpath. The west boundary is open to the adjoining fields. A public footpath along runs adjacent to the access road to the farm.

1.2 The site is within the North Wessex Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) but not in the conservation area.

1.3 A proposal for four new dwellings on the same site was granted permission 20 May 2015 under reference P15/V0193/FUL.

2.0 PROPOSAL

2.1 The proposal would demolish all the existing farm buildings and erect four new dwellings as in the permitted scheme, but with a slightly different design and layout.

2.2 One house is designed to appear as a 'farmhouse' and the other three as 'converted barns' with a contemporary interpretation. The farm house is positioned to the entrance to the site, with the 'barns' located around a courtyard. They would utilise the existing

access to the site. Extracts of the plans are **attached** at Appendix 2.

3.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

Below is a summary of the responses received to the application. A full copy of all the comments made can be viewed online at www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk.

3.1	Blewbury Parish Council	Objection Contrary to local plan and emerging neighbourhood plan. Design of plot 1 is out of character. Prominent position. Previous application more visually acceptable.
	Sustainable Blewbury	Objection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and scale of plot 1 • Big and bulky design • Visible from A417 and footpaths • Out of scale • Blewbury does not need big houses
	Neighbour Object (9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design • Out of scale • Overdevelopment • Out of character • Do not need huge luxury houses • Welcome some of the amendments, concerned plot 3 is closer to the boundary
	Drainage Engineer (Vale of White Horse District Council)	No objection, subject to condition
	Countryside Officer(South Oxfordshire & Vale of White Horse)	No objection, subject to condition
	Highways Liaison Officer (Oxfordshire County Council)	No objection, subject to condition

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 [P15/V0193/FUL](#) - Approved (25/06/2015)

Demolition of existing farm buildings and construction of 4no. dwellings.(as amended by drawings accompanying email from agent dated 20 May 2015 showing changes related to roof material covering for plot 4)

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

5.1 **Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011**

This is the development plan for this area. The following policies relevant to this application were 'saved' by direction on 1 July 2009.

DC1 - Design

DC5 - Access

DC6 - Landscaping

DC9 - The Impact of Development on Neighbouring Uses

H11 - Development in the Larger Villages

NE6 - The North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

5.2 **Emerging Local Plan 2031 – Part 1**

This is not currently adopted policy. Whilst the local plan has been through examination the full Inspector's report has not been received and objections to it remain unresolved. The emerging local plan policies therefore carry limited weight for decision making.

The relevant policies would be:-

Core Policy 1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development

Core Policy 3 Settlement hierarchy

Core Policy 4 Meeting our housing needs

Core Policy 15 Spatial strategy for South East Vale sub-area

Core Policy 37 Design and local distinctiveness

Core Policy 44 Landscape

Core Policy 46 Conservation and improvement of biodiversity

5.3 **Supplementary Planning Guidance**

- Design Guide – March 2015

5.4 **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – March 2012**

Paragraph 216 of the NPPF allows for weight to be given to relevant policies in emerging plans, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise, and only subject to the stage of preparation of the plan, the extent of unresolved objections and the degree of consistency of the relevant emerging policies with the NPPF.

Paragraph 49 states *"Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites"*.

Paragraph 55 states *"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."*

5.5 **Planning Practice Guidance 2014 (PPG)**

5.6 **Neighbourhood Plan**

The draft Blewbury Neighbourhood Plan is currently out for consultation at the time of writing. Therefore, in line with paragraph 216 of the NPPF, limited weight can be given to the document.

5.7 **Environmental Impact**

The site is within the AONB. However this proposal does not exceed 150 dwellings and the site area is under 5ha. Consequently the proposal is beneath the thresholds set in Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2015. This proposal is not EIA development.

5.8 **Other Relevant Legislation**

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010
- Localism Act (including New Homes Bonus)
- Human Rights Act
- Equality Act 2010

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The main planning considerations are the following

6.2 **Principle**

A previous application for the demolition of the agricultural buildings and the erection of 4 dwellings on the site was permitted last year. Therefore the principle of redeveloping this site for housing has already been established.

6.3 **Design and layout**

The permitted scheme positioned a farmhouse style dwelling at the entrance to the site, with two semi-detached dwellings in the style of a large barn and then a further dwelling, also in the style of a barn. New hedgerow planting was proposed along the west boundary to demark the site from the fields beyond.

6.4 This proposal has used similar principles to the permitted scheme in aiming to reflect a layout of a collection of agricultural barns. It proposes a 'farmhouse' at the entrance with a collection of 'converted barns' in a courtyard approach. The architectural style is slightly different to that of the permitted scheme. This proposal takes a more contemporary interpretation of the traditional forms, which is not considered harmful in itself. The proposed materials would include red facing brick and timber boarding, clay roof tiles and stone fenestration details.

6.5 The dwellings are relatively large, however they follow simple built forms and there is variation in ridge heights. There is enough space around the dwellings to provide adequate amenity spaces and to ensure that the development does not appear cramped. Overall Officers consider that the design and layout is acceptable.

6.6 **Wide landscape and AONB**

The site sits on the edge of the village and is visible from the west. The permitted scheme has already established that new buildings on this site and a new hedgerow along the western boundary is acceptable.

6.7 The design of the buildings is slightly different and plot 4 is closer to the western boundary than in the previous scheme. The buildings would be visible in views from the west, as in the permitted scheme, and they would reflect a farmyard setting, similar to the permitted scheme. It is considered that the landscape character of the AONB will not be harmed by this proposal. The new landscaped boundary will also enhance this part of the countryside as well as soften the views of the buildings.

6.8 **Highways**

The highway officer did not object to the permitted scheme and he does not object to this proposal, which is for the same number of houses. In coming to his conclusion he had regard to the existing use of the access for farm traffic and the safety of the access onto Westbrook Street. This proposal would not give rise to severe impact to highway safety and therefore would accord with the NPPF and local plan policy DC5.

6.9 **Amenity**

Neighbouring dwellings take access from the same access road as the proposal and there are a number of recent dwellings that have been built as backland development behind properties on Westbrook Street and which now border the site.

6.10 Plot 3 would be the closest to the eastern boundary and the permitted new dwelling to the rear of Westbury. The two storey side elevation to this plot would be 7.4m in width, but would have a hipped roof, taking the highest part of the ridge away from the neighbouring property. There would be two small obscure glazed windows at first floor. A single storey projection containing the garage would extend a further 11.4m but be

further off the boundary. There would be over 17m between the side of plot 3 and the rear of this new property and over 23m to the rear of Bhotani. Given the distance, the change in ridge heights and the boundary vegetation in between the plots, Officers consider that the proposal would not be overbearing on these properties and would not overlook them.

6.11 Ecology

The countryside officer has commented that the site has been subject to bat surveys and general habitat and protected species surveys in 2014. No bat roosts were found and the majority of the buildings on site do not provide suitable roosting sites for bats. The surveys did find nesting sites for various bird species notable swallows in the existing building and he therefore recommends a condition requiring bird nesting boxes to be provided on site.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 The principle of residential development on the site has already been established by the previous permission. This proposal would not give rise to harm to the character of the surrounding area and would preserve the landscape setting of the AONB.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 **To grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:**

1. **Commencement three years - full planning permission.**
2. **Approved plans.**
3. **Details of materials to be submitted.**
4. **Details of surface and foul water drainage to be submitted.**
5. **Landscaping scheme to be submitted.**
6. **Landscaping scheme to be implemented.**
7. **Details of bird nesting boxes to be submitted.**
8. **Visibility splays to be provided.**
9. **Access, parking, turning to be provided.**
10. **Details of slab levels to be submitted.**
11. **Contamination investigation.**

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