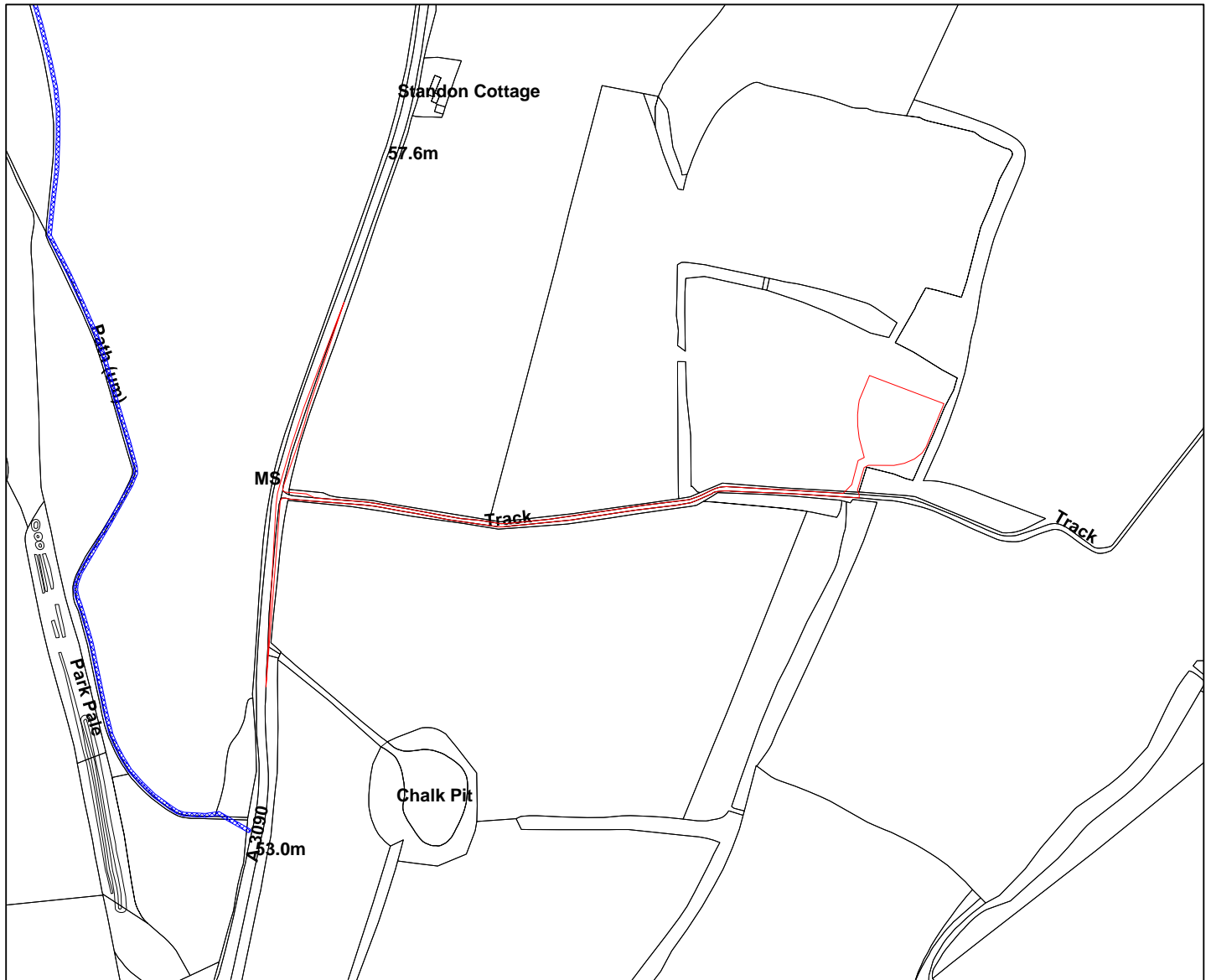


Butchers Plantation, Main Road, Hursley



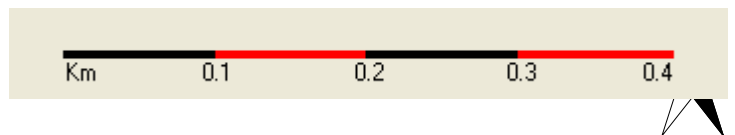
Winchester
City Council

10/01990/FUL



Legend

Scale:



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Organisation	Winchester City Council
Department	Development Services
Comments	
Date	06 April 2011
SLA Number	00018301

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE AGENDA 21 April 2011

Item No: 5
Case No: 10/01990/FUL / W21885
Proposal Description: Erection of principal farm house, garaging/implement store and associated works
Address: Land South Of Butchers Plantation Main Road Hursley
Hampshire
Parish: Hursley
Applicants Name: Mr And Mrs N B Russell
Case Officer: Mr Neil Mackintosh
Date Valid: 30 July 2010
Site Factors: Countryside
Civil Aviation
Recommendation: Application Refused

General Comments

This application is reported to Committee at the request of Councillor Bell, whose request is appended in full to this report. Hursley Parish Council has expressed its wish, verbally, that the matter should be referred to Committee but, at the time of writing, no formal request has been received.

This application is closely associated with the previous item on this agenda, i.e. the proposal to erect an agricultural worker's dwelling at Grovelands Copse and the previously permitted application for the erection of cattle buildings at the same site.

In order to avoid unnecessary repetition it is proposed to refer to parts of the previous agenda item, where necessary.

Site Description

The applicant's holding comprises some 547 hectares of arable and pasture land. It is, in the main, attractive chalk downland within the Landscape Character Area defined in the Winchester District Local Plan as Hursley Scarplands.

The site that the applicant has chosen for the erection of a principal farmhouse is on high ground to the east of the A3090, Winchester to Romsey road. Access is via an existing track off this road that climbs the adjacent bare hillside before entering an area subdivided by hedges and woodland belts. Here the land flattens out at approximately 100m above sea level and 50m above the village of Hursley. There are long-distance views to the west, across other parts of the former Hursley Estate.

Proposal

This proposal is for a principal farmhouse (375sq.m) with attached offices/utility (116sq.m) and guest accommodation (84sq.m), with a detached garage/implements barn (215 sq.m). In total 790 sq.m of building.

Although the submitted drawings show only two bedrooms in the main farmhouse these each measure in excess of 50 sq.m, including en-suite and dressing rooms. The attached 'annexe' incorporating offices and customer accommodation is 168 sq.m in itself.

Relevant Planning History

None, but see also;

10/01989/FUL – Erection of 2 no. cattle sheds, cattle yard, access track and associated works – Land At Grovelands Copse, Farley Mount Road, Hursley - permitted March 2011

10/01550/FUL - Erection of three bedroom agricultural worker's dwelling and hay barn/bull pen, access track and associated works - Land At Grovelands Copse, Farley Mount Road, Hursley – pending consideration, see previous item.

Consultations

Engineers: Drainage:

No objection but refer to Environment Agency as non-mains drainage is proposed

Engineers: Highways:

It is proposed to use the existing access but to carry out certain improvements. The proposals, including the sight lines, are acceptable, subject to conditions.

Landscape:

Do not disagree with the applicant's assertion that the site is unobtrusive and that *"visual impact will be very limited with viewpoints restricted to areas immediately adjacent"*
A condition should be imposed to ensure that no tree, hedgerow or copse is removed and that the basic landscape structure is retained.

Also, concerned that the sight line improvement will mean the cutting back of hedges, which will have some impact upon the landscape.

County Land Agent:

Notes that this proposal is for a principal farm house to provide living accommodation for the applicants themselves, with provision for customer and office accommodation.

"At present the only existing dwelling, at Port Lane, is immediately adjacent to the grain store and fulfils functional requirement there"

"Wherever the new farm buildings complex is to be located will also require one or more dwellings to be in close proximity in order to ensure that the functional need to provide husbandry, welfare, supervision and security of livestock is fulfilled"

"This dwelling is not close to or in the sight of the existing arable centre at Port Lane, Down Farm, or the sight of the proposed beef buildings complex"

"I do have some concerns that if these developments were permitted then it would enable agricultural dwellings to be provided which would be significantly larger than that of normal agricultural housing stock. This may lead, at some time in the future, to an application to remove any existing agricultural occupancy tie, on the grounds that the house is too large for an agricultural worker and/or manager. The proposed locations for the dwellings could also enable alienation from the rest of the farm at some time in the future".

Environment Agency:

No reply

Representations:

Hursley Parish Council

"Supports this application so long as an agricultural occupancy condition is imposed"

If further information is received, including a formal request for this matter to be dealt with at Committee, an update will be published.

No other letters of representation have been received

Relevant Planning Policy:

South East Plan 2009:

None

Winchester District Local Plan Review

CE19, CE20, RT4, T1, T4

National Planning Policy Guidance/Statements:

PPS 1 Delivering Sustainable Development

PPS 7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

PPG 13 Transport

PPG 17 Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Winchester District Landscape Character Assessment

Other Planning guidance

Guide to the Open Space Funding System

Manual for Streets

Planning Considerations

The main consideration is whether it is essential to provide the type and size of on-site accommodation that is proposed in order to service the proposed agricultural enterprise.

In addition, impacts upon highway safety and the landscape must be considered.

Principle of development

Rather than repeat advice and information concerning the principle of allowing an agricultural dwelling, Members are referred to the 'Principle of development' section of the previous item on this agenda (10/01550/FUL)

In this case, the size of the proposed farmhouse is far in excess of that recommended in national and local guidance. The dwelling would have a gross floor area of 575 sq.m, as opposed to the normal maximum of 150 sq.m ie.383% larger.

The applicant maintains that *"A new principal farmhouse is required to support the many functions of the farm. The proposed dwelling will provide the necessary accommodation for a Farm Manager, Secondary Stockman and Cattle Dealer (roles to be undertaken by the applicants). The dwelling will include the necessary accommodation for farm meetings, completing paper work and accommodating livestock customers"*

The County Land Agent states that he has no doubt as to the genuine intentions of the applicants to re-locate their business from Somerset. However, he goes on to say that *"it is the needs of the enterprise concerned and not the personal preferences or circumstances of any of the individuals involved which is for consideration"*.

He goes on to say *"This dwelling is not close to or in the sight of the existing arable centre at Port Lane, Down Farm, or the sight of the proposed beef buildings complex"*

He adds that *"Applications for a new permanent dwelling should only be allowed to support existing agricultural activities on well established agricultural units. There should*

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be a clearly established existing functional need and, bearing in mind the nature and scale of the enterprises carried out at present, I consider that the existing permanent dwelling at Port Lane is sufficient for these purposes". It is proposed that this house, currently occupied by the owner's son, would be lived in by the manager of the arable enterprise and the son would be the stockman, subject to an agricultural worker's dwelling being permitted at Grovelands. (See previous item).

Although the applicant's holding comprises approximately 547 ha (1353 acres) it is, at present, only arable and pasture land. The proposed beef cattle business is not taking place on the holding. Even if it were, the siting of the farmhouse is not within sight and sound of the proposed cattle buildings and the scale of the proposed dwelling is not considered necessary for the functional requirements of the holding. As it stands, there is no requirement for the applicants to live on the land or for customers to be accommodated in the same unit. There are dwellings available for rent in the area and hotel/guest house accommodation where visiting cattle dealers could stay.

It is concluded that there is, at present, no functional requirement for a new principal farmhouse on the holding and that, even if there were, the proposed dwelling is much larger than would normally be permitted to accommodate the farm manager and not well placed in relation to the close supervision of livestock welfare. To allow this application would not only be contrary to national and local policy but would also set a precedent for the determination of future applications for agricultural worker's dwellings in the area, making it more difficult to restrict such development to the adopted criteria for such dwellings.

Design/layout

The proposed farmhouse and outbuilding have been carefully designed to fit in with the rural vernacular. The main part of the building would take on the appearance of a large, brick and flint barn conversion with a single storey link to a wood-clad, two-storey outbuilding. The detached garage/implement barn, to the rear, would use similar materials.

Impact on character of area

The proposed siting is on a plateau high above the village of Hursley. Whereas the buildings would not be seen from the village they would be seen, in long-distance views from the West. However, they are likely to be unobtrusive in the public realm, provided that existing trees, hedgerow and copses are retained.

The provision of the proposed sight lines at the junction of the existing access track with the A3090 will involve the cutting back of hedges, but this is not considered to be a reason for refusal.

Public Open Space

Policy RT4 of the Winchester District Local Plan requires that *"Where public recreational space and facilities are deficient, residential development that accords with other relevant policies of this Plan will only be permitted where appropriate amounts of space and facilities are provided for children's play, sports grounds and general use"*

Hursley Parish is currently deficient in both

In the case of a single house, such as this, a contribution to the Council's Public Open Space Funding System is usually appropriate. However, if the application is to be refused, the lack of adequate provision needs to be an additional reason for refusal, in

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order that an appropriate contribution can be secured in the event of a subsequent, successful appeal.

Recommendation

Application Refused, subject to the following conditions:

Reasons

1. Development as proposed is contrary to Policy CE20 of the Winchester District Local Plan Review and the guidance set out in PPS7 'Sustainable Development in Rural Areas' in that;

a) the farming activity, and therefore functional need, for the proposed principal farmhouse has not been established on the land and

b) notwithstanding (a) the proposed dwelling is considered to be larger than reasonably necessary for the functional requirements of the proposed agricultural enterprise and its proposed siting is not well related to the supervisory needs of the proposed livestock operation.

As such, permission would represent the provision of a house in the countryside for which there is no special justification and set an undesirable precedent in respect of future applications for agricultural worker's dwellings, making it difficult for the Council to refuse other, similar applications. Furthermore the size of the dwelling may make it difficult to refuse a future application to remove an agricultural occupancy condition because the house is too large for an agricultural worker or manager's needs and their ability to sustain.

2. The proposal is contrary to Policy RT4 of the Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006 in that it fails to make adequate provision for public recreational open space to the required standard, and would therefore be detrimental to the amenities of the area.

Informative:

The Local Planning Authority has taken account of the following development plan policies and proposals:-

South East Plan: None

Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006: CE10, CE13, CE19, CE20, RT4, T1, T4