

JPPC ref: AJG/4857

Buckinghamshire Council (Aylesbury Vale Area)
Planning Services

Planning Portal Ref: 10410507

10 February 2022

Dear Sirs

PLANNING STATEMENT

Re: Proposed demolition of existing dwellinghouse and integral double garage and erection of a replacement dwellinghouse and integral garage.

At: Panshill Holding, Panshill, Boarstall, Bucks, OX5 2RG.

For: Mr O Maxfield

Introduction

Please find attached a full planning application in respect of the proposed development, comprising the following:

- This covering Planning statement prepared by JPPC;
- Design and Sustainability statement prepared by Demarcation;
- Bat Report prepared by 4 Acre Ecology Ltd;
- GCN Licence transfer information;
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement prepared by All Arboriculture;
- Ecology and Trees Checklist;
- Application form;
- CIL PAAIR form;
- Location plan at 1:2500 scale – drawing 18-001/M/001;
- Topographical survey at 1:200 scale – drawing 30100;
- Existing elevations at 1:100 scale – drawing 18-001/S/001;
- Existing floor plans at 1:100 scale – drawing 18-001/S/002;
- Proposed site plan at 1:200 scale – drawing 18-001/P/025;
- Proposed elevations and floor plans at 1:100 scale – drawing 18-001/P/011; and
- Proposed 3-D massing and comparative photomontage (not to scale) – drawing 18-001/P/020

The Site and Relevant Planning History

The application property is located in a rural location to the south-east of the village of Murcott but within the parish of Boarstall. The property is set well back from the highway and extremely well-screened by existing mature woodland and other planting.

The property is not located within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Conservation Area or Green Belt location and, in turn, is not in an area that is liable to flooding having regard to EA mapping data.

The John Phillips Planning Consultancy

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The site is identified in the Council's Landscape Character Assessment as falling within the Panshill Vale Character Area. This is an area characterised by flat or gently sloping ground with a mixed agricultural landscape where approximately 10% of the area is covered by woodland. It is noted in the LCA that the rural character of the area is affected by the M40, pylon lines and, in places, industrial sheds.

An aerial photograph showing the location of the site is attached below for ease of reference.

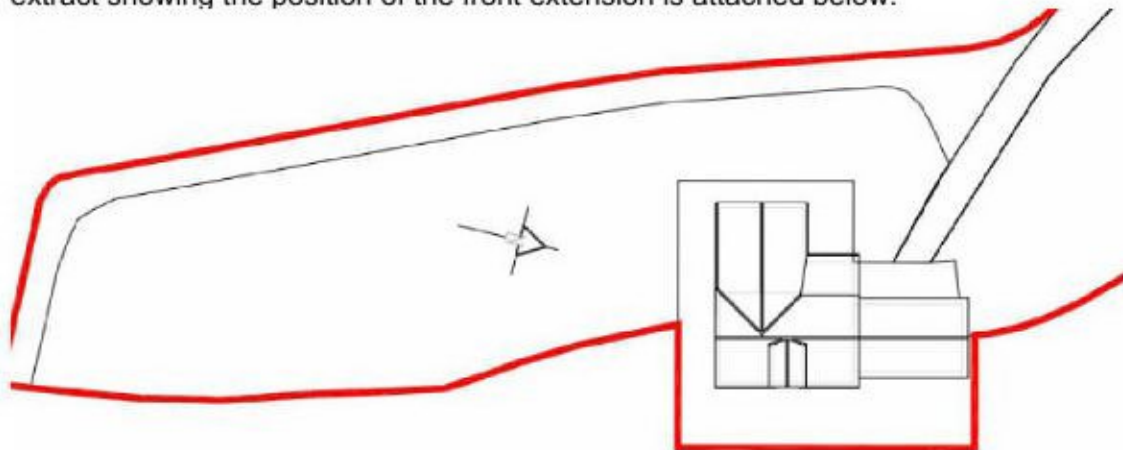


The Site

In May 2016 a CLEUD was issued in respect of the main building and confirmed its lawful use as a single dwellinghouse and, additionally, confirmed the extent of the dwelling's residential curtilage area (application **14/02332/ACL** refers).

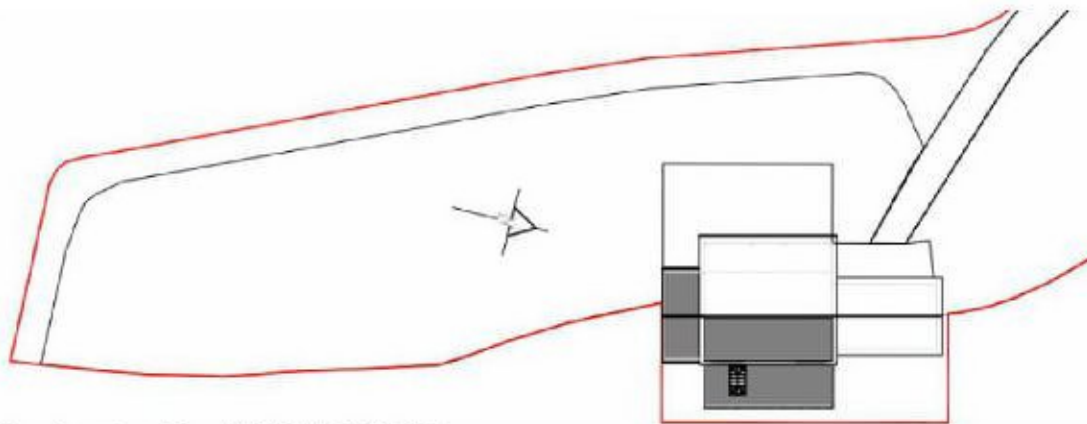
Subsequently, planning permission was granted in November 2017 for the retention of a single storey garage extension located on the northern side of the dwellinghouse (application **17/02326/APP** refers).

Planning permission was granted in September 2019 for the erection of a single storey extension to the front elevation under application **19/00772/APP**. A snipped site plan extract showing the position of the front extension is attached below.



Site plan extract for 19/00772/APPP

Thereafter a CLOPUD application was granted on 13th January 2020 under application **19/04021/ACL** for the erection of a single storey side extension, a single storey rear extension and a rear dormer extension. A snipped site plan extract showing the position and size of the side, rear and roof extensions is attached below.



Site plan extract for 19/04021/ACL/APP

Whilst the extensions permitted by applications 19/00772/APP and 19/04021/ACL have not, as yet, been implemented they allow for the floor area and volume of the existing dwellinghouse and garage to be increased from 193.3 sq. m and 727.6 cu. m to 295.3 sq. m and 1121 cu. m respectively. The ability to enlarge the existing dwellinghouse by 53-54% in both floor area and volume is therefore an obvious 'fallback' frame of reference against which the current application for a replacement dwelling should reasonably be assessed.

The Proposal

The application seeks planning permission in respect of the proposed demolition of the existing dwelling and the erection of a new dwelling of contemporary design and form by way of replacement in a position to the west of the existing, albeit with some degree of overlap.

In this location – which is open grassland at present - the house would continue to be extremely well-screened by existing mature trees and other planting, all of which would be retained.

The proposed house would have a total floor area of 315 sq. m but a total volume of 1088 cu. m and therefore it would not be materially larger than would result from the permitted extensions to the existing dwellinghouse. Although the proposed dwelling would provide a greater amount of first floor accommodation than would result from the implementation of the fallback extension proposals, it is relevant to note that the overall height of the new dwelling would not materially increase relative to the existing.

As described more fully in the Design and Sustainability statement prepared by Demarcation, the proposed dwelling would have an elegant and attractive contemporary design and form and, unlike the existing, it would be extremely well-insulated and highly efficient in its energy and water use. The proposal development, therefore, would result in substantial design and environmental improvements relative to the retention of the existing dwellinghouse.

As noted above, the proposed replacement dwelling would have two storeys of accommodation but given its proposed contemporary flat-roofed form it would have a maximum height of around 6m.

With reference to the height of the proposed building, it is also relevant to note that new Prior Approval PD rights have been introduced that, potentially, would allow the existing dwelling to be extended upwards by at least a further storey. These Prior Approval PD rights - as bestowed by Schedule 2, Part 1, Class AA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) - would, therefore, potentially allow for the existing dwelling to be increased in height by a further 3-3.5m.

The applicant has not, to date, sought to submit a Class AA Prior Approval application as he is committed to pursuing the current proposal. This is on the basis he justifiably believes the proposal would have greater benefits both visually, environmentally and in terms of the quality of the accommodation. However, a Class AA upwards extension would provide the applicant with an increase in the amount of available upper floor accommodation and, as such, reasonably comprises a further 'fallback' development opportunity.

Relevant National Guidance and Development Plan Policies

National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning objectives for England and identifies that the primary purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and, as such, it is clearly stated that at the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

In turn, the NPPF identifies that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives which need to be pursued in combination. These objectives are identified as an economic objective, a social objective and an environmental objective (NPPF paras 7-10 refer).

In this context, the economic benefits of the scheme will evidently relate principally to the trades that will be engaged during the construction phase of the project (suppliers, contractors etc). The social benefits will relate to the provision of a new home that will create a far better living environment for the applicant. Finally, the environmental benefits that would derive from the proposal would clearly relate to the enhanced design quality of the dwellinghouse as well as the proposed energy/water efficiency improvements that are intrinsic to the proposal.

At section 5 '*Delivering a sufficient supply of homes*', the NPPF identifies that planning policies and decisions should generally avoid the development of 'isolated homes' in the countryside (NPPF para 80 refers). However, in this particular instance, the proposed new dwelling would replace an existing lawful dwellinghouse.

At section 12 '*Achieving well-designed places*', the NPPF identifies that '*the creation of high-quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve*' and, as such, states that '*good design is a key aspect of sustainable development*' (NPPF, para 126 refers).

At paragraph 130, it is stated that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments, inter alia:

- will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping; and

- are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.

At paragraph 134 it is stated that development that is not well designed should be refused but, conversely, significant weight should be given to *'outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help to raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings'*.

In design terms, the proposed dwelling – unlike the existing - would have an extremely attractive contemporary form and would utilise appropriately 'natural' materials. It would, in short, result in a clear and substantial enhancement in architectural quality terms.

At section 14 'Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change', the NPPF identifies that the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future and that new development should be planned in ways that can reduce greenhouse gas emissions such as through its location, orientation and design (NPPF, paras 153-154 refer).

In this context, the submitted Design and Sustainability statement provides an analysis of the sustainability shortcomings of the existing dwelling and identifies that limited viable opportunities exist to retrofit energy or water efficiency measures/technologies.

The new building, conversely, would be constructed to an exacting standard of energy and water efficiency and utilise a range of new technologies that would result in clear and unequivocal benefits relative to the sustainability credentials of the existing house.

Section 15 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment' states that policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes;
- Recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside; and
- Minimising impacts and proposing net gains for biodiversity (NPPF, para 174 refers).

In this regard, the land surrounding the application site is heavily wooded and there would be no diminution in the amount of tree cover resulting from this application. The opportunity also exists to add new planting should this be considered necessary or desirable in landscape enhancement terms.

Furthermore, in biodiversity terms it is evident that the provision of a sedum roof will at least compensate for the loss of existing grassland and that any additional landscaping will bring about a tangible enhancement from biodiversity/habitat creation perspective relative to the existing situation.

In short, therefore, the NPPF is supportive of a sustainable development such as this which would be extremely well-designed, highly energy and water efficient and would bring about significant enhancements from a range of environmental perspectives.

Development Plan Policies

The Development Plan for the area comprises the recently adopted Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP).

The VALP policies of greatest relevance in this instance are considered to be policies S1, BE2, BE3, NE1, NE4 and, in particular, H4.

Policy S1, in accordance with the NPPF, promotes the pursuit of sustainable development in all its guises (i.e. reduction in carbon emissions, reduction in water usage, the promotion of recycling, the prevention of pollution etc) and states that planning permission will only be granted for proposals that seek to deliver high quality, sustainably designed and constructed developments which are both energy and water efficient.

In this context, it has already been mentioned that the existing dwelling has very poor floor, wall and roof insulation and, therefore, is extremely inefficient in its use of energy and, accordingly, has a very low EPC rating. Additionally, the existing dwelling contains no sustainable/renewable energy technologies and has no specific limitations on potable water usage generally.

In contrast, it is proposed that the replacement dwelling would be insulated to an exacting standard and incorporate a range of renewable energy technologies.

It is considered, therefore, that the proposed redevelopment proposal would significantly enhance the sustainability credentials of the property and, thereby, accord with the requirements of the NPPF and VALP policy S1.

VALP policies BE2 and BE3 identify a number of general principles and, inter alia, jointly require that all new build proposals:

- Are of an appropriate scale, mass, layout, built form, height and materials having regard to the character to the area;
- Are of a high quality of design and do not result in harm to the amenities of adjoining occupiers;
- Have no detrimental impact upon important ecological, heritage, landscape, geological features or water courses;
- Maintain or enhance the ability of the site to support flora or fauna; and
- Contribute to a sense of place in the buildings and spaces themselves and in the way they integrate with their surroundings (especially existing dwellings) including the use of appropriate landscaping.

VALP policies NE1 and NE4 seek to ensure that new development does not harm the landscape quality of the area and, in turn, seeks to achieve a biodiversity net gain.

VALP policy H4 relates specifically to replacement dwellings and, as such, is reproduced in full below:

The replacement of dwellings in the countryside on a one-for-one basis will normally be supported provided that the replacement dwelling is not significantly greater in size than the one it replaces, does not cause significant harm to the site or its surroundings and accords with the design principles set out in policy BE2.

In the context of the VALP policies cited above, it is considered that although the proposed dwelling would be larger than that which currently exists, it would not be larger in volumetric terms than the existing dwelling could become if the extensions already approved by applications 19/00772/APP and 19/04021/ACL were implemented (setting aside what additional floor area and volume could also be created if new Class AA PD rights were utilised).

The new dwelling would still be a modest height and, in any event, like the existing dwelling, it would be extremely well-screened from public vantage points by existing trees and other planting.

In design terms, the proposed replacement dwelling would have an elegantly contemporary form and appearance which would add significant design quality and interest to the site relative to the existing dwellinghouse.

Furthermore, although the replacement building would not be in the same position as the existing, it would still be contained within the lawful curtilage area and could not, by any reasonable measure, be assessed to result in a harmful incursion into the open countryside given the contained nature of the land.

Overall, therefore, it is considered that the proposal to replace the existing dwelling would improve the character and appearance of the site and its surroundings and further the objectives of sustainable development in accordance with the fundamental objectives of relevant VALP policies

Conclusion

It is hoped that in light of the information contained within this statement that Officers will agree that the proposed development would result in significant design and environmental benefits and will therefore be happy to recommend that planning permission is granted subject to any conditions that are considered to be necessary or reasonable.

In the first instance I look forward to receiving the application acknowledgement letter in the near future.

Yours faithfully



Adrian Gould Dip TP MRTPI

Principal

Director of Adrian Gould MRTPI Ltd, a Partner of JPPC

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