



**ERECTION OF
DWELLINGHOUSE WITH BASEMENT
FOLLOWING DEMOLITION OF
EXISTING OUTBUILDINGS**

**SCOTTS FARM
SCOTTS GROVE ROAD
CHOBHAM
SURREY GU24 8DP**

DESIGN, ACCESS AND PLANNING STATEMENT

AUGUST 2023

1.00 INTRODUCTION

- 1.01 This Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the erection of a new dwellinghouse with a subterranean basement following demolition of existing outbuildings at Scotts Farm, Scotts Grove Road, Chobham, Surrey GU24 8DP. The application is submitted on behalf of Mr R Brown.
- 1.02 This application follows the granting of planning permission ref. 22/0863/FFU for the erection of a new dwelling house granted on 26 June 2023. The applicants wish to add a fully underground basement to provide additional accommodation to meet the family needs. The size, scale and appearance of the proposed dwelling viewed above ground is identical to the approved scheme (except for two small lightwells). These revised proposals would not have any additional material impact on the openness of the Green Belt compared to the approved scheme.
- 1.03 Accordingly, it is considered that the revised proposals are appropriate development which accords with local plan policies and national policy on redevelopment of PDL in the Green Belt for the same reasons that planning permission ref. 22/0863/FFU was granted.
- 1.04 This Statement demonstrates how the proposals continue to accord with relevant local plan policies and other material considerations including national planning policy. Specifically, it describes how the proposals are appropriate development in the Green Belt and as such accord with national Green Belt policy. It should be read in conjunction with the following application drawings and reports:

Application Drawings prepared by Ascot Design

- 22-J4007-100B – Location Plan (1:1250@A1)
- 22-J4007-101 – Block Plan (1:500@A1)
- 22-J4007-102C – Site Plan (1:200@A1)
- 22-J4007-103A – Proposed Floor Plans (1:100@A1)
- 22-J4007-104 – Proposed Elevations (1:100@A1)
- 22-J4007-105 – Site Sections (1:200@A1)

- 22-J4007-106 – Gates (1:100@A4)
- 22-J4007-107 – Existing Barn H3 (1:100@A1)
- 22-J4007-108 – Existing Stables H4 (1:100@A1)
- 22-J4007-109 – Existing Barn H5 (1:100@A1)
- 22-J4007-109-2 – Existing Stables H6 (1:100@A1)
- 22-J4007-110 – Elevations Comparison
- 22-J4007-111 – Hard Surfacing Comparison (1:500@A1)

Reports

Planning Statement prepared by Paul Dickinson & Associates, Town Planning Consultants, August 2023

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Bat Assessment prepared by Arbtech, August 2022

Bat Emergence and Re-entry Surveys prepared by Arbtech, August 2022

Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment SFC23/80 prepared by Thames Valley Archaeological Services, May 2023

Statement on Parking Provision prepared by Paul Dickinson & Associates, Town Planning Consultants, August 2023

Telecoms Supplementary Information

2.00 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 2.01 The site (about 0.95 ha) comprises part of a residential property known as Scotts Farm which is situated on the south side of Scotts Grove Road midway between Castle Green to the east and West End to the west. The main house was reconstructed in 2009 under planning permission SU/08/0185 following fire damage to the previous house.
- 2.02 We understand the agricultural use of the application site ceased more than 50 years ago. The paddocks and associated outbuildings have been used for equestrian purposes since at least the 1970s. This was confirmed by the granting of a lawful development certificate SU/08/0815 dated 2 December 2008. The two main stable blocks were approved in 2008 and 2009.

(SU/08/1028 and SU/09/0709). There is an older storage building (constructed before 1999) situated near the northern boundary of the application site and a hay barn to the south of the main stable blocks.

- 2.03 The application seeks permission to construct a single dwellinghouse with a basement following demolition of the 2 no. main stable blocks, the storage building and the southern barn. The new dwelling would be served via the existing site access and driveway from Scotts Grove Road in the same way as the existing buildings are accessed.

3.00 NATIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.01 National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) maintains a pro-growth agenda for the planning system. At its heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which means that proposals which accord with an up-to-date development plan should be approved without delay. NPPF paragraph 11 states that where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless policies that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing the proposals, or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the Framework as a whole.
- 3.02 National policy relevant to the appeal includes:
- **To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay (para. 60);**

- **Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built-out relatively quickly (para. 69);**

- **Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments: (a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area; (b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping, (c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change, such as increased densities; (d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place; (e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development; and (f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible (para. 130);**

Surrey Heath Core Strategy & Development Management Policies 2011-2028
adopted February 2012

3.03 Relevant policies include:

CP1 – Spatial strategy

CP2 – Sustainable development and design

CP12 – Infrastructure delivery and implementation

CP14 – Biodiversity and nature conservation

DM9 – Design principles

DM10 – Development and flood risk

DM11 – Traffic management and highway safety

4.00 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Green Belt policy - redevelopment of previously developed land

4.01 The site lies within the Green Belt. NPPF para. 137 states that the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt

policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence.

4.02 NPPF para. 149 states that the construction of new buildings is inappropriate in the Green Belt. Paragraphs 149 and 150 set out categories of appropriate development in the Green Belt. One exception at para. 149(g) is the limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of 'previously development land' (brownfield land) (PDL), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it than the existing development. The Core Strategy pre-dates current national Green Belt policy and therefore does not contain an equivalent policy dealing with PDL in the Green Belt.

4.03 The proposal is considered to comprise the redevelopment of PDL which accords with national Green Belt policy for the following reasons:

- (1) The application site has been used for equestrian purposes, most recently associated with and ancillary to the residential use of the residential dwellinghouse at Scotts Farm. The site comprises 2 large stable blocks, a storage building and a hay barn together with drives, hardstanding area, a manege and paddocks. The site has not been used for agricultural purposes for more than 50 years as confirmed by the lawful development certificate granted in December 2008. The application site is therefore considered to comprise PDL as defined by NPPF Annex 2: Glossary and consequently redevelopment of the site would be appropriate development under NPPF para. 149(g) provided there is no greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt or the purposes of including the land within the Green Belt. The land is occupied by buildings which are of permanent and substantial construction. They are not agricultural buildings and therefore are not excluded from the definition of PDL. The Court of Appeal in *Dartford Borough Council v The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government & Ors [2017] EWCA Civ 141 (14 March 2017)* has determined that development that is within the curtilage of land that was

occupied by a permanent structure (e.g. private residential garden) and is not in the built-up area should be classed as PDL.

- (2) The proposals would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development. This is demonstrated by the following comparisons of existing and proposed building footprint, building volume, hardstanding areas and overall developed areas of areas above ground level:

| | Existing | Proposed | Change |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| Building Footprint | 567m² | 537m² | -5% |
| Building Volume | 2483m³ | 2466m³ | -1% |
| Built/Hardstanding Areas | 2857m² | 955m² | -67% |

- (3) The proposal would therefore result in some reductions in both building footprint and volume of around 5% and 1% respectively. Moreover, there would also be significant reductions and removal by about two-thirds or 67% (over 1,900m²) of hardstanding areas including drives, concrete stable yards and storage areas and the manege).
- (4) The addition of a basement in these proposals would increase the floor area but as the basement is wholly underground with no additional accommodation above ground (except for two small lightwells which are flush with the surface) the basement would have no actual impact on the appearance of the proposed dwelling or the openness and visual amenity of the Green Belt.
- (5) The proposed dwelling would provide a more concentrated form of development particularly compared to the spread of the existing buildings being replaced. This together with the removal of hardstanding and greening up of the site, as shown on the comparison drawings 110 and 111, are considered benefits in terms of improved openness of the site which weighs in favour of the proposals.

- (6) The new dwelling has been designed to look like a series of interlinked smaller buildings with varying roof heights and designs. The ridge and eaves heights of the storage building H3 being replaced are 4.8m and 3.3m respectively. The main stable blocks have maximum ridge heights of 5.9m and 4.75m and eaves heights of between 2.9m and 2m. The proposed new dwelling would have eaves heights typically about 2.5 metres within the range of eaves heights for the existing buildings. The main ridge height to the proposed dwelling is about 4.75m with two slightly higher gable elements of between 5.2-5.8m and 6.0-6.5m (this latter is therefore slightly higher than the storage building) to add to interest and variation in the elevations and roof scape. Any slight increase in height to these sections compared to the existing buildings is more than outweighed by the overall reductions in building footprint and volume and the substantial benefits of the more concentrated development and overall greening of the site, and the resultant design of the proposed dwelling which provides interest and articulation to the roof form and elevations.
- (7) In conclusion, the proposal would result in an overall reduction in the amount and spread of buildings on the site and would include additional benefits of a more concentrated and articulated building form. Therefore it would not have any greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development and would comply with national policy. The additional of a wholly underground basement with no additional above ground buildings or structures would not result in any additional impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
- (8) The proposal would not result in any additional actual visual harm to the Green Belt compared to the spread of the existing four buildings. The substantial hedging to the boundaries of the site effectively screen the new dwelling such that there would be no additional visual harm resulting from the development. The site is set back a considerable distance (around 120 metres) from Scotts Grove Road and as such the

proposal would not be visible from public viewpoints. There are no public rights of way through the site.

- (9) The proposal accords with Government policy (NPPF para. 119) to make effective use of land and to make as much use as possible of PDL or 'brownfield' land in meeting the need for homes and other uses provided this would not conflict with other policies in the Framework.
- (10) The proposal accords with Government policy (NPPF para. 120) which promotes and supports the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained.
- (11) The proposal accords with Government policy which supports housing development that reflects local needs in rural areas (NPPF para. 78) and promotes sustainable development in rural areas where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities (NPPF para. 79).
- (12) The scale, design and materials of the proposed dwelling would be appropriate to its Green Belt setting.
- (13) The proposal would not result in a material intensification in the level of activity on the site compared to the lawful equestrian use. Based on the TRICS database, the likely movements associated with a single dwellinghouse are likely to be between 5-6 daily two-way movements compared to around 10 daily two-way movements associated with an equestrian use based on the existing floor areas. The proposal is therefore likely to slightly reduce the amount of people on site and vehicle movements that could be associated with the uses which further weighs in favour of the proposals.
- (14) The proposal would not conflict with Green Belt purposes as it involves the redevelopment of PDL that would not have any greater harm on the openness of the Green Belt. Given the site location the proposals would not result in unrestricted sprawl of a large built-up area or neighbouring towns merging into one another.

- 4.04 I conclude that the proposal to demolish the existing buildings and replace them with a well-designed and articulated dwelling (including an underground basement) which offers reductions in footprint and volume would constitute the redevelopment of PDL which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt or conflict with Green Belt purposes compared to the existing development, and therefore is appropriate development in the Green Belt which accords with national policy.

Other considerations

- 4.05 Character of the surrounding area: The design of the proposed house is a modern interpretation of a barn. The proposed materials include natural timber finishes and stone detailing to reflect the rural character of the area and the use of some contemporary materials such as dark coated zinc and glass for added interest. The glazed links will give the impression of a series of linked smaller buildings. Given the size of the application site and boundary vegetation the separation distances to each boundary are considered sufficient to avoid the creation of a cramped appearance. The proposed development would not lead to an overdominant or incongruous addition to the rural character of the surrounding area, in compliance with the design requirements of Policy DM9 of the CSDMP and the Residential Design Guide SPD.
- 4.06 Amenity: Policy DM9 states that development will be acceptable where it respects the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties and uses. It is necessary to take into account matters such as overlooking, overshadowing, loss of light and an overbearing or unneighbourly built form. Principle 8.1 of the Residential Design Guide SPD states that new residential development should be provided with a reasonable degree of privacy to habitable rooms and sensitive outdoor amenity spaces.
- 4.07 The proposal would provide very generous separation distances to neighbouring residential properties of Scotts Farm 30 metres to the west, Scotts Grove House 90 metres to the north and Grove Farm House 100 metres to the east. As a single storey dwelling it would not result in any unacceptable overlooking or loss of privacy. The proposal would provide generous private

amenity space and have good sized living areas with good access to light. The hardstanding comparison drawing 111 shows there would be a net enhancement with the removal of some hardstanding areas and the provision of new soft landscaped areas. Further landscaping details can be secured by a condition. This would enhance the site compared to the existing situation and would result in visual improvement which weighs in favour of the proposals. It is therefore considered that the proposal complies with the amenity requirements of Policy DM9 of the CSDMP and the Residential Design Guide SPD.

- 4.08 Highways and access: Policy DM11 (Traffic management and highway safety) states that development which would adversely impact the safe and efficient flow of traffic movement on the highway network will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that measures to reduce and mitigate such impacts to acceptable levels can be implemented. The proposal will use the existing access onto Scotts Grove Road. As indicated above, the proposal would not result in any material increase in traffic movements associated with the site compared to the lawful equestrian use.
- 4.09 Parking: The Council's adopted parking standards require 3 spaces per 4+ bedroom unit. The proposed dwelling has 4 bedrooms. The proposed layout shows parking for at least 7 cars. There is ample space to provide storage for cycles to comply with the Council's standards and this can be secured by a planning condition. Accordingly the proposed development would not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users, in compliance with Policy DM11.
- 4.10 Trees: A Tree Constraints Plan (TCP) prepared by GHA Trees is submitted with the application. The proposed dwelling is positioned broadly on the footprint of the two main stable blocks and in an area where there are no existing trees. There is ample room to ensure that the siting of the proposed house is away from existing trees along the site boundaries. Other than the removal of a small olive tree (which makes no contribution to the wider setting) no trees will be directly or indirectly affected or will need to be removed as a result of the proposals. There is sufficient space between the house and

boundary trees to ensure good natural light and amenity. The proposals would not have any impacts or result in the loss of any trees and would therefore comply with policy DM9(iv). An arboricultural method statement dealing with the removal of existing hardstanding areas and proposed parking areas close to trees can be secured by a planning condition.

- 4.11 Ecology: A preliminary roost assessment identified that the two main stable blocks (B1 and B2) have low value for roosting bats. The other two buildings have no potential for bat roosts. A single bat emergence and re-entry survey was therefore recommended in accordance with the good practice guidelines. A Bat Emergence and Re-entry Surveys report prepared by Arbtech Consulting Ltd is submitted with the application. No emergences were identified in the buildings and therefore it is concluded there are no bat roosts on the site. However, a precautionary working method is proposed to include scheduling of demolition works during the winter months, pre-commencement inspection and mitigation/enhancement measures to comprise a minimum of 3 no. bat boxes to provide additional roosting habitat for bats.
- 4.12 The absence of any harm to protected species and the proposed measures will result in enhancement to increase the nature conservation value of the site in the long term in accordance with Government guidance as set out on the NPPF.
- 4.13 Thames Basin Heaths SPA: The application site lies within the 400m to 5km 'zone of influence' from the boundary to the Thames Basin Heaths SPA. The adopted Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Avoidance Strategy SPD 2012 states that new residential development within this zone is required to either provide SANG on site (for larger proposals) or for smaller proposals such as this one, to make a financial contribution towards SANG provided there is sufficient SANG available. The site lies within the catchment area of Chobham Meadows SANG and it is understood that there is capacity available. Additionally, Policy CP14B requires that new residential development should contribute toward SANG (Strategic Access Management and Monitoring) measures which requires a separate financial payment. The applicant confirms he is willing to make this payment via a S106 undertaking or a Deed of

Variation to the S106 undertaking already completed for the previous permission ref. 22/0863/FFU.

- 4.14 Flood risk: The Environment Agency Flood Map shows the site lies within flood zone 1 (low probability 1 in 1000 (0.1%) of river flooding). The proposed development is a 'more vulnerable' use which is acceptable in flood zone 1. The proposal would not result in any increased flood risk on the site or elsewhere.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.01 The proposed development is a new dwelling with a fully subterranean basement. The application follows the granting of planning permission ref. 22/0863/FFU for the erection of a new dwelling house granted on 26 June 2023. This application adds the subterranean basement. The size, scale and appearance of the proposed building above ground is identical to the approved scheme (except for two small lightwells). Therefore revised proposals would have no additional impact on the openness of the Green Belt compared to the approved scheme.
- 5.02 The proposed dwelling would provide a more concentrated form of development particularly compared to the spread of the existing 4 buildings to be replaced. As a result of the compact form of development and reductions in the amount of buildings and hardstanding areas the proposal would not have any greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt. There would also be a significant reduction and removal of built and hardstanding areas (roads, driveways, concrete hardstanding and yard areas and a manege area) by some 67% or two-thirds (more than 1,900m² of hardstanding areas would be removed).
- 5.03 The proposals offer additional benefits including a reduction in traffic movements associated with the site, sustainable construction benefits and biodiversity enhancements which weigh in favour of the proposals. The proposals would be acceptable in terms of impact on trees, flood risk, neighbouring amenity, highway and access considerations.

- 5.04 The development offers the following benefits relating to the three overarching objectives and the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out at NPPF para. 8 and these weigh in favour of the proposals:

Economic objective – Provides an additional dwellinghouse on a site which is immediately available for development to support economic growth. The proposals offer benefits to the local rural communities and their economy including creation of jobs and supply chain investment associated with the construction stage and increased demand for local goods and services over the long-term occupation of the dwelling.

Social objective – Makes a modest contribution to the supply of housing required to meet local needs. Contributes to the Government's policy to boost significantly the supply of housing and meeting objectively assessed housing need.

Environmental objective – Provides development without harm to the natural, built or historic environment and specifically without harm to the openness of the Green Belt or conflicting with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.

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28 August 2023