



LASSETER DOWNIE PLANNING

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Prepared for: Ms G.Goldsbrough

Site Location: Alderbrook House, Union Lane, Kingsclere, RG20 4SS

Proposal: Erection of 3no bedroom dwellinghouse and garage on garden land

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Lasseter Downie has been instructed by Ms G.Goldsbrough, the owner/occupier of the site to prepare a Planning Statement to accompany a full planning application at Alderbrook House, Kingsclere for the erection of a 3no bedroom dwellinghouse and garage on garden land.

2. Site and Surroundings

- 2.1. The application site is located just outside and to the north of Kingsclere, east of Union Lane. The site is located within close proximity to several local amenities including shops, medical facilities, restaurants, pubs, church, and a school, as well as a village hall and other community/leisure services.
- 2.2. Alderbrook House is accessed through a track off Union Lane that also provides access to Nutkins Farm. A barn immediately north of Nutkins Farmhouse has been classified as a Grade II listed Building.
- 2.3. A small stream runs in a north south direction along the eastern boundary of the site, accompanied by a dense corridor of riparian vegetation connecting to a series of mature copses further afield. The western boundary is delineated by a hedgerow tree, beyond which is open countryside. The North Wessex Downs sits circa 1km to the south. There are no other statutory designations on or in close proximity to the site.
- 2.4. A public footpath (131 53a/1) runs in between Nutkins Farm and Alderbrook House in a north south direction.
- 2.5. The development site consists of a residential garden, being laid to grass and within the residential curtilage of Alderbrook House, consisting therefore of previously developed land (PDL) – see discussion below.

3. Planning History

- 3.1. On 10th May 2011 permission was granted for the installation of air source heat pump unit (retrospective), Ref. No: BDB/73937.

4. Proposed Development

- 4.1. The proposal is to erect a two storey dwelling positioned to the west of Alderbrook House, within its residential garden. Vehicular and pedestrian access will be provided by utilising existing garden access from a track off Union Lane .

- 4.2 The building is designed in a traditional farmhouse style, with a clay tile roof and red brick walls, as is consistent to the area. A wooden pitched roof porch is included to the front. To the side is a single storey lean-to extension. The rear incorporates a gable end projection. This architectural form is designed to give the impression of an organic building that has evolved through time.
- 4.3 The dwelling will be as environmentally friendly as possible utilising air source heating, solar panels on the roof amongst other initiatives in recognition of the climate emergency.

5 Design and Access

- 5.1 The scale and design of the house is in keeping with the character the local vernacular and is reminiscent of a traditional farmhouse, incorporating both gable and hipped roofs and a chimney. A front porch is used to provide protected access, reduce the scale of the building and incorporate traditional features.
- 5.2 The palette of materials is influenced by the local vernacular, which is primarily red brick and plain clay tiles used for the roofs. Traditional painted timber casement windows, metal rainwater goods will be used.
- 5.3 Access and parking are located to the front and eastern side of the house, while the garden will be located to the north, separated from Alderbrook House by a hedge for privacy, which also serves to reduce the domestic appearance. New planting in the form of a wild meadow is included to enhance biodiversity.
- 5.4 The house will be constructed to exceed current building regulation requirements in terms of thermal insulation, energy and water use.
- 5.5 The dwelling will have level access to the ground floor to ensure step-free access for all inhabitants and visitors. Access to the site is via an existing track, with parking being provided for at least three cars. The garage will provide further space for garden machinery and space for bin and bicycle storage.

6 Local Planning Policy and material considerations

- 6.1 The application site is outside a defined Settlement Policy Boundary, so for planning policy purposes, the site is in open countryside.
- 6.2 There is a general presumption against housing in the countryside, and the Council's housing strategy is set out in policies SS1 and SS6 of the Local Plan.
- 6.3 SS1 directs development primarily to defined settlements, whilst SS6 sets out exceptions that enable housing to be provided in the countryside in certain circumstances, including the redevelopment of brownfield sites and the re-use of permanent buildings.

- 6.4 The application site does satisfy the criteria of policy SS6a, in so much as follows:
- The site is previously developed land and:
 - It is not isolated
 - The site is not of high environmental value
 - The proposed use and scale is appropriate to the site's context.
- 6.5 The site is currently used as residential garden land and outside a settlement boundary and so we believe the land is therefore classified as previously developed land 'PDL' (Dartford Borough Council v The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government & Ors [2017] EWCA Civ 141 (14 March 2017), triggering the first provision of Local Policy SS6a.
- 6.6 In relation to the subsequent provisions of Local Policy SS6a, when considering the Local Plan, isolation is defined as 'in the context of new residential development in the countryside where is a significant separation between the proposed development and the nearest settlement'. In this case, the site is adjacent to and within walking distance from Kingsclere, as well as being adjacent to several existing residential properties and other built form. On consideration of the above, it is considered that the development would not result in an isolated form of development in light of the 'Braintree Case'. Therefore, we argue that this site is therefore not isolated by Local Plan definition and meets the second provision of Local Policy SS6.
- 6.7 Before we consider the other provisions, a material consideration is the fact that the Council is unable to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites. The Inspector agreed with the appellant's submission at a recent inquiry (for appeal at Land West of Andover Road, Highclere (APP/H1705/W/21/3287471) that the Council only has 3.26 years of housing land supply, which represents a considerable shortfall.
- 6.8 As the Council cannot demonstrate a 5-year (+5%) supply of deliverable sites for housing, its strategy and policies for housing delivery must be considered 'out of date' and only capable of being given limited weight in the planning balance.
- 6.9 That means not only that limited weight can be given to the key policies SS1 and SS6, but also the location outside a SPB is much less significant in the planning balance.
- 6.10 In such circumstances, one must turn to the NPPF which contains a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which has three objectives: economic, social and environmental. These are set out in paragraph 8, as follows:
- 'a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth';
- 6.11 The Council's HLS position means that it cannot satisfy this requirement, but the approval of applications such as this will make a contribution to the Council's housing needs as

confirmed in the in the recent above applications. The development will provide local economic benefits in both the demolition and construction phase. Occupiers of the property will make a contribution to local services in the surrounding villages, particularly Kingsclere and help support these facilities in accordance with NPPF paragraph 78.

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being;

6.12 The development will help to meet housing need and provide one high quality, lifetime family dwelling in a sustainable location in a well-designed and safe built environment.

c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

6.13 The development would make efficient use of previously developed land. The dwelling would be built to the highest standards of energy efficiency so as to move towards a low-carbon economy, and the development of the site will offer opportunities for biodiversity enhancements with hedge/tree planting, provision for bats, birds and other fauna.

6.14 The development would meet the three objectives, so it is appropriate to consider the instruction in paragraph 11 d) of the NPPF, which states:

‘where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

6.15 In terms of landscape/visual impact, the wider area slopes gently towards the stream that runs along the site’s eastern boundary forming a localised vale. Views from the east, including from the public right of way, are well screened by the drop in levels combined with the riparian corridor present and the woodland areas further afield. Views from the west are more exposed, however given the existing topography and pattern of hedgerows and trees, these are mostly restricted to transient, low value views from Union Lane. These residual views can be mitigated through reinforcement planting along the existing hedgerow running along the site’s edges.

- 6.16 Furthermore, views of the site from the west will be gained against a backdrop of existing buildings, and therefore the addition of a dwelling of a traditional design and proportional scale will not lead to a detrimental change in the visual character of the area. The proposed palette of materials will further mitigate any residual impact. with red brick, timber cladding and plain tiles present in nearby residential properties.
- 6.17 The Landscape Character Assessment (2021) identifies the area as displaying *generally low intervisibility through the area, with views contained by frequent hedgerows and woodland blocks. The more open farmland and woodland areas have slightly longer views, and there are some distinctive views south towards the scarp, such as from Union Lane to the north of Kingsclere, but still generally contained within the woodland framework.* These long-distance views towards the AONB to the south are gained approximately 550m to the north of the site and will not be affected by the proposed development, which sits well below the hedgerow and tree line in the horizon.
- 6.18 From a landscape character point of view, the site is located within the Kingsclere Northern Setting and Edge Character Area, characterised by a landscape that *is more subdued and gently undulating, with numerous small streams, forming a less definable setting with no distinct landform to contain views of the settlement. Fields are larger than to the north-east and predominantly arable. The setting boundary is mainly defined by hedgerows (some tree-lined) which, due to the fairly flat nature of the landscape, is effective in containing views.*
- 6.19 Key characteristics include:
- *Few key landmarks visible in the settlement from surrounding landscape.*
 - *South-north flowing stream flows through the settlement, with tree-lined banks.*
 - *Central focal point of church, war memorial and market area, set within a conservation area.*
 - *Good building groups, especially in North Street, the mill, and around the church.*
 - *Use of traditional materials, including timber frame, brick, flint, plain tile hanging and plain clay tiles.*
 - *Attractive streetscape with vista to the downland scarp.*
 - *Set within a varied landscape, enclosed to the north, open to the south.*
 - *Strong visual influence of east-west running scarp face to the south.*
 - *Park House Stables and associated gallops and horse pasture dominant land use between the scarp and southern edge of settlement.*
 - *Predominantly soft, well-integrated edge to the settlement.*
- 6.20 A new, small-scale dwelling of a rural-inspired design would not be out of character within the context of an enclosed landscape and this proposed form, together with the proposed landscape mitigation, would not be out of character within a *predominantly soft, well-integrated edge to the settlement.*
- 6.21 Extensive landscaping is proposed, which would provide a coherent integration of the proposal within the surrounding rural landscape, and biodiversity enhancements would be secured. Whilst there would be a change to the appearance of the site, it is considered that

this would be very localised and that the proposal would greatly add to the surrounding rural aspect and give rise to no material harm.

- 6.22 The development will also not have a detrimental impact upon Nutkins barn listed building to the south due to the intervening distance and reduced intervisibility.
- 6.23 The proposed development will meet the LPA's requirements for on-site car and cycle parking. Bins will be stored in the garage and wheeled to the roadside on collection day. The proposed would have its own (existing) access to Union Lane, where visibility is excellent from both directions.
- 6.24 The proposed dwelling would be sited to the west of the existing property and there will be a significant gap between the side elevations of the proposed dwelling and the existing dwelling. This relationship is considered to be acceptable and will not cause any significant undue loss of amenity to the nearby residents that would warrant refusal of the application.
- 6.25 It is therefore necessary to move on to paragraph 11 d) ii) to consider whether there would be any harm and whether the degree of harm would be such that it would 'significantly and demonstrably' outweigh the contribution that one new family home would bring to the overall housing need.
- 6.26 When considering the impact in the planning balance, it is worth mentioning the Blackstocks Lane Appeal (APP/H1705/W/21/3275067) where the Inspector finds that 'The proposal would deliver a family-sized dwelling for the Borough's housing stock, in line with the key aim of the Framework to boost the supply of housing. Given the Council's housing land supply shortfall, this would be a demonstrable social benefit of the proposal warranting significant weight, even in the modest overall scale of the development' for one dwelling.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 The proposal is to erect a new dwelling within residential garden land associated with Alderbrook House.
- 7.2 The site is visually well contained from the east. Views from the west are slightly more open but low value and can be well screened via mitigation planting. Views towards the AONB's scarp will not be affected. A localised change in landscape character would occur but no significant landscape elements will be lost and given the existing residential development around the site this change in character is likely to be small in nature, giving rise to no material harm.
- 7.3 The site consists of previously developed land and is compliant with Policy SS6 – New Housing in the Countryside Development. Furthermore, given the LPA's 5-year Housing Land supply position, policies relating to housing delivery in the Borough's adopted Local Plan are currently considered to be out of date. The proposals would enhance the surrounding setting so there would not be a 'clear reason for refusal' under NPPF paragraph 11 d i). In relation to 11 d ii), we are firmly of the opinion that there would be no harm, let alone a degree of harm of such magnitude that it would 'significantly and demonstrably' outweigh

the benefit of the house and the enhancement of the site. As such the presumption in favour of sustainable development should apply.

- 7.4 There is an existing access to Union Lane which is suitable and the application site is close to existing residential properties, shops and services, thus not being isolated.
- 7.5 These future occupants would help to contribute to the local economy and to the continued viability of local services in Kingsclere.
- 7.6 Finally, regarding the environmental objective of this development, the proposal could reasonably be expected to demonstrate a degree of inherent sustainability through compliance with Council supported energy efficiency and Building Regulations standards as well as representing a biodiversity gain and an improvement to landscape quality.
- 7.7 Given the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the advice in the NPPF, planning permission should be granted without delay.

Lasseter Downie Planning
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