

CASE OFFICER'S (MBB) REPORT ON APPLICATION NUMBER 13/01084/FULD



**Site: Stables Adjacent To Curridge House
Curridge Road
Curridge
Thatcham**

CONSULTATIONS

Parish Council - object on policy grounds, visual impact , and poor structure of existing building.
Highways - no objections - conditional planning permission.
Waste Services - no objections.
AONB Management Office - object in principle to the application. It will suburbanise a rural area outside any defined settlement boundary as noted in the Local Plan.
Public Protection - conditional permission re. contaminated land.
Thames Water - no objections.
Waste Management - no objections and no 106 contribution.

Developer Contributions:-

Adult Social Care - £718,
Public Open Space - £1921,
Libraries - £266,
Education - £3182,
Highways - £3,000.

4 letters of objection received - Contrary to policy, would suburbanise the area, would set a precedent, increased traffic would be harmful, loss of stabling in an area of high demand for such uses, building could not be converted, but rather would be a redevelopment.

COMMENT

Planning application number 01/00523 for a similar application was rejected by the LPA in July 2001. This was on the basis of it being contrary to established policy to protect the countryside from inappropriate housing and impact upon the character of the AONB.

The application site comprises a freestanding stable located to the south west of Curridge House. The land is greenfield, lying outside any defined settlement boundary as identified in policy HSG1 in the saved District Local Plan 1991 to 2006. It is 0.5 ha in extent and lies to the north of Curridge Road. It also lies in the North Wessex Downs AONB area.

The applicant is proposing to convert the stables into a 3 bed bungalow and improve the driveway access in addition. The existing paddocks around the stables, being within the red line, would become the domestic curtilage of the new dwelling.

Policy ADPP5 in the West Berkshire Core Strategy notes that only in certain specified circumstances will new housing be permitted in the AONB. This will be [inter alia] on brown field sites and within identified settlement boundaries only unless specifically allocated through the Local Plan process.

This application site is greenfield [see the definitions in the Annex to the NPPF 2012] and lies outside any settlement boundary in the AONB. Although an existing building, it has only been permitted in the past given that it is for equine stabling i.e. a use suitable to the rural area. The building itself is also in poor repair and if the application were to be permitted it is acknowledged that a substantial rebuild, if not total redevelopment may well be necessary to meet modern building regulations, not least Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 as required by policy CS15 in the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006 - 2026.

Policy ADPP5 seeks to retain the special landscape character of the AONB. It is the Council officers' view that if this application were to be permitted, the character and nature of the site would change dramatically, becoming residential, with all the associated domestic paraphernalia attached to such a use, particularly in such a large curtilage. This would harm not only the local street scene but also the wider AONB to its overall detriment. This would accordingly be contrary to well-established policy and so the application is considered to be unacceptable on this basis.

In addition the application would have a detrimental impact upon the District's Green Infrastructure so would be also contrary to policy CS18 in the Core Strategy.

Policy CS19 is also pertinent since there would be a harmful impact upon the local rural area.

It is acknowledged however that the scheme would not comprise an overdevelopment of the site, nor would it impact any neighbours in terms of amenity. Parking and access is also acceptable.

Finally, in the absence of any completed Unilateral Undertaking under s106 of the Act, an additional reason for refusal corresponds to the lack of any developer contributions as required under the 2013 SPD [SPG4/04 as amended] for Developer Contributions.

CONCLUSION - Refusal.

Copy for
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