
**STANFORD END FARMHOUSE, BARGE LANE, SWALLOWFIELD
BERKSHIRE RG7 1SY**

**Proposed single storey extension and new sewage treatment plant following demolition of the existing attached outbuildings, barns and existing conservatory, insertion of 1 no. first storey window, other changes to fenestration and comprehensive refurbishment of existing dwellinghouse:
Planning Policy Statement**

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1.00 Introduction

1.01 This Statement is submitted in support of Applications for Planning Permission for a replacement single storey extension following demolition of existing attached outbuildings, and a new sewage treatment plant, and Listed Building Consent for the previously described demolition and extension, and the comprehensive refurbishment of the dwellinghouse. These Applications are submitted following the previous withdrawal of similarly described proposals in February 2023 (223583 and 223584) and a subsequent Pre-Application Enquiry (231250) and the advice provided by the Planning Officer dated 27 July 2023 and email of 16 October 2023. The previous proposals were withdrawn due, in the main, to concerns raised by the Built Heritage Officer who concluded that the scheme proposed at that time would have had an unacceptable impact upon the significance of the Listed Farmhouse. The Pre-Application scheme sought to address those concerns. The Pre-Application Response is considered in section 4.00 below.

1.02 This Statement will identify the policy framework, set out other material considerations and demonstrate that the proposed design and detail is now in accordance with the policies of the approved development plan insofar as they are relevant and also supported by central government advice.

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1.03 This Statement should be read in conjunction with Edgingtons Architects drawings and Design & Access Statement, Historic Buildings Consultants Ltd Heritage Statement, E. B. McEvedy Historic Building Consultants Condition Survey, Arbtech Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Bat Roost Assessment, Archibald Shaw Drainage Strategy and RAB Consultants Flood Risk Assessment.

1.04 The site and its surroundings are described in the Design & Access Statement, Heritage Statement and Building Condition Survey. There is no relevant Planning History other than as described in paragraph 1.01 above. Heritage considerations are set out fully in the Heritage Statement.

2.00 Identifying the Policy Framework

2.01 S38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the approved development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case the relevant plan is the Wokingham Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Jan 2010) which sets out the key elements of the vision for development up to March 2026, and the Managing Development Delivery Plan (Feb 2014).

2.02 The proposed development has been informed by, and assessed against the relevant policies of the Wokingham Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery Plan which are set out in Appendices 1 and 2 and considered below.

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2.03 CP1-Sustainable Development: This sets out general principles for delivering sustainable development. Insofar as this policy is of relevance to a proposal for the alteration and extension of a single dwelling it is considered that:

1, & 10. The quality of the environment will be enhanced by the replacement of the various outbuildings with a well-designed, sympathetic extension;

2, 3 & 4 No pollutants will be emitted and there will be no effect on water quality. Surface water drainage will remain as existing. Foul drainage will be dealt with by means of a new sewage treatment plant to replace the existing septic tank.

5, 6 & 12 Recycling will be provided for via the usual local authority service. The design of facilities will incorporate methods to reduce water consumption. Energy efficiency measures are an intrinsic element of the design of the new-build.

7, 8 & 11 n/a.

9. The overall footprint of built development will be reduced.

2.04 CP3- General Principles for Development: Insofar as this policy is of relevance to a proposal for the alteration and extension of a single dwelling, the Design & Access Statement and submitted drawings clearly demonstrate how the proposal has responded to the requirement for sympathetic, high quality, functional and accessible design. The Ecological Assessment demonstrates how biodiversity and protected species will be enhanced.

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- 2.05 CP7-Biodiversity:** The Ecological Assessment demonstrates that there will be no harm to any locally nationally or internationally designated sites of importance for nature conservation. Mitigation measures will be put in place to ensure there are no harmful impacts on protected species.
- 2.06 CP8-Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area:** Whilst the site is within the 5km zone of influence around the TBH SPA, no increase in the number of dwellings is proposed and there is therefore no requirement for an appropriate assessment.
- 2.07 CP11-Proposals outside Development Limits (including countryside):** It is only criterion 4), residential extensions that is of relevance to this Planning Application. In this case there is no inappropriate increase in scale, form or footprint, in that the proposed single storey extension replaces existing single storey attached outbuildings, and the resultant built footprint is reduced.
- 2.08 CC01-Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development:** This essentially repeats CP1 and reflects the NPPF (see below).
- 2.09 TB24-Designated Heritage Assets (Listed Buildings, Historic Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Conservation Areas):** The Heritage Statement confirms that the proposal will conserve and significantly enhance the heritage asset by means of the thorough-going refurbishment of the listed building. The replacement sensitively designed extension will cause no harm to the building itself or its setting, and could be considered to represent an enhancement of the character and appearance of the listed building, and its setting. As paragraph 3.119 of the Managing Development Delivery Plan says *“Keeping historic buildings in good repair, and, where possible in their existing use, is the key to their preservation.”* The proposed development will ensure that the Farm House is put into good repair,

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and kept in its existing use. The repair of the listed building can be seen as a major public benefit.

2.10 TB26-Buildings of Traditional Local Character and Areas of Special Character:

The Local Plan Policies Map identifies Stanford End Farm House and its environs as being an Area of Special Character. The house forms an interesting group with the nearby historic barns. As set out at 2.09 above the proposal will conserve and significantly enhance the heritage asset and its setting.

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3.00 Other Material Considerations

3.01 Central government advice is a material consideration. This is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was further amended in December 2023.

3.02 The NPPF sets out the government's planning policies and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Sustainable development is that which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Paragraph 11 explains that "*Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.*

... For decision taking this means:

c) approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; ..."

3.03 In determining planning applications local planning authorities are required to "*approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.*" (Para. 38).

3.04 High quality design is of the utmost importance (paras. 131 – 37). The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of proposals for development.

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3.05 In respect of development that may affect heritage assets, paras. 195 - 214 are referred to and discussed in the Heritage Report.

3.06 Other material considerations include supplementary documents and statements that do not form part of the development plan but complement it. Regard has also been paid to the Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (May 2012), the Swallowfield Village Design Statement (though this relates more to the village itself rather than outlying rural properties such as that at Stanford End) and the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (May 2010) and its Companion Document (though these have more relevance to new buildings rather than refurbishing and extending Listed Buildings)

4.00 The Pre-Application Response

4.01 With regard to the withdrawn scheme it had been considered that although the built footprint remained largely the same, the increase in height and bulk of the proposed single-storey extension would be inappropriate. The pre-application, and current proposal has significantly reduced the height and bulk and the Planning Officer has concluded that “...*the ridge height of the glazed link and the extension in general has been notably reduced and despite being large, is not considered to be an inappropriate addition*” and “... *the proposal would not result in excessive encroachment into the countryside as it would result in a more concentrated form of development, reducing the expansion of built form into the countryside. The introduction of a terrace in the rear garden does not alter this conclusion as it would be positioned with the envelope of existing structures.*” The cubic content figures for the withdrawn scheme were:

Existing: 2731m³ : Proposed: 2967m³. The Proposed figure is now 2745m³.

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- 4.02** The Planning Officer queried where the residential land associated with the farmhouse ends and where the agricultural use begins. Aerial photographs, recent and from 2010 have been provided. The mown areas to the south and west of the house, enclosed by the outbuildings indicate the residential curtilage. The 2010 photo shows a swimming pool and adjacent large outbuilding. The Planning Officer advised *"I am content based off the images provided that the lawned area is likely to be in conjunction with the dwelling and in residential use."* The Applicant, Wellington Estates has provided a Statement explaining that Stanford End Farm has been let on an agricultural tenancy to the same family for approximately 60 years. The family farmed the land and lived in the house throughout that period until 2022 when the tenancy of the house was surrendered. The current farm tenant (third generation) has advised that throughout that time (60 years) the use of the outbuildings attached to the house has fluctuated between vacancy, domestic storage use, agricultural use or other storage use associated with a landscaping business. The Wellington Estates annotated plan shows the most recent (prior to 2022) prevalent longstanding uses within these buildings. In an email dated 16 October 2023 the Planning Officer commented that on his site visit, some of the buildings were occupied and were not just used for storage; the farmhouse has been vacant since 2022 and the domestic storage use of the outbuildings will also have ceased at that time.
- 4.03** The Built Heritage Officer (BHO) acknowledged that the pre-application scheme design amendments were very welcomed as addressing the vast majority of the original heritage objections. The BHO suggested a flat metal sheet roof for the link between the listed farmhouse and the replacement extension and this has now been incorporated.

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- 4.04** The BHO asked that the significance of the side structures should be addressed, and this evaluation is now included in the Heritage Report. The BHO concluded *"In summary, subject to it being adequately demonstrated that the removal of the existing historic side structure does not harm what is at the heart of significance about Stanford End Farmhouse, the amended alteration to it and the design for an extension to it from a heritage stance is otherwise something that would be likely to be supported subject to further details with the formal applications."*
- 4.05** The Tree and Landscape Officer has asked for clarification how the proposed drainage solution will take account of existing boundary vegetation, and this is now provided. The Planning Officer has confirmed that the submission of landscaping details can be required by an appropriately worded condition.
- 4.06** The Flood Officer has asked for a Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy, and these are now provided.
- 4.07** In summary, the Planning Officer concluded that the pre-application submission represented a drastic improvement upon the previously withdrawn scheme. The additional detail requested through the pre-application process has now been incorporated into this revised submission.

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5.00 Conclusions

- In terms of the relevant development plan policies, the proposed development is considered to be a sustainable form of development, and as such complies with policies CP1 and CC01. In terms of design, this well-conceived proposal has been sympathetically designed and as such is in accordance with policies CP3 and CP11. Biodiversity matters have been fully considered and appropriate Mitigation measures will be put in place to offset any harm to protected species. The development is in accordance with policy CP7. Policies TB24 and TB26 concerns matters of heritage and areas of special character. These aspects have been carefully considered in the formulation of the proposals for the future of Stanford End Farm House, in terms of both Applications, for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent. The proposals are in accordance with these policies.
- The proposal is in accordance with the requirements of the Listed Buildings Act, government advice as set out in the NPPF and the relevant local policies. Although it might be considered that some limited harm might be caused to the listed building, any such harm would be greatly outweighed by the public benefit of repairing and improving Stanford End Farm House and thereby ensuring its long-term future.
- The proposed development is in accordance with the relevant policies of the development plan and relevant central government advice and should be granted Planning Permission without delay.

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Appendix 1

Relevant policies of the Wokingham Core Strategy (adopted Jan 2010)

CP1 – Sustainable development

Planning permission will be granted for development proposals that: 1) Maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment;

2) Minimise the emission of pollutants into the wider environment;

3) Limit any adverse effects on water quality (including ground water);

4) Ensure the provision of adequate drainage;

5) Minimise the consumption and use of resources and provide for recycling;

6) Incorporate facilities for recycling of water and waste to help reduce per capita water consumption;

7) Avoid areas of best and most versatile agricultural land;

8) Avoid areas where pollution (including noise) may impact upon the amenity of future occupiers;

9) Avoid increasing (and where possible reduce) risks of or from all forms of flooding (including from groundwater);

10) Provide attractive, functional, accessible, safe, secure and adaptable schemes;

11) Demonstrate how they support opportunities for reducing the need to travel, particularly by private car in line with CP6; and

12) Contribute towards the goal of reaching zero-carbon developments⁴¹ as soon as possible by:

a) Including appropriate on-site renewable energy features; and

b) Minimising energy and water consumption by measures including the use of appropriate layout and orientation, building form, design and construction, and design to take account of microclimate so as to minimise carbon dioxide emissions through giving careful consideration to how all aspects of development form.

CP3 - General Principles for development

Planning permission will be granted for proposals that:

a) Are of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to

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the area together with a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life;

- b) Provide a functional, accessible, safe, secure and adaptable scheme;
- c) Have no detrimental impact upon important ecological, heritage, landscape (including river valleys) or geological features or water courses.
- d) Maintain or enhance the ability of the site to support fauna and flora including protected species;
- e) Use the full potential of the site and contribute to the support for suitable complementary facilities and uses;
- f) 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;
- g) Provide for a framework of open space in secure community use achieving at least 4.65 ha/1,000 population provision together with recreational/sporting facilities in addition to private amenity space;
- h) Contribute towards the provision of an appropriate sustainable network of community facilities;
- i) Do not lead to a net loss of dwellings and other residential accommodation or land; and
- j) Do not lead to a loss of community or recreational facilities/land or infrastructure unless suitable alternative provision is available.

Development proposals will be required to demonstrate how they have responded to the above criteria through the submission of Design and Access Statements, clear and informative plans, elevations and streetscenes and where required Masterplans, Development Briefs, Concept Statements and Design Codes.

CP7 - Biodiversity

Sites designated as of importance for nature conservation at an international or national level will be conserved and enhanced and inappropriate development will be resisted. The degree of protection given will be appropriate to the status of the site in terms of its international or national importance.

Development:

- A) Which may harm county designated sites (Local Wildlife Sites in Berkshire), whether directly or indirectly, or

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B) Which may harm habitats or, species of principle importance in England for nature conservation, veteran trees or features of the landscape that are of major importance for wild flora and fauna (including wildlife and river corridors), whether directly or indirectly, or

C) That compromises the implementation of the national, regional, county and local biodiversity action plans will be only permitted if it has been clearly demonstrated that the need for the proposal outweighs the need to safeguard the nature conservation importance, that no alternative site that would result in less or no harm is available which will meet the need, and:

i) Mitigation measures can be put in place to prevent damaging impacts; or

ii) Appropriate compensation measures to offset the scale and kind of losses are provided.

CP11 - Proposals outside Development Limits (including countryside)

In order to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment, proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted except where:

1) It contributes to diverse and sustainable rural enterprises within the borough, or in the case of other countryside based enterprises and activities, it contributes and/or promotes recreation in, and enjoyment of, the countryside; and

2) It does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings; and

3) It is contained within suitably located buildings which are appropriate for conversion, or in the case of replacement buildings would bring about environmental improvement; or

4) In the case of residential extensions, does not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building;

5) In the case of replacement dwellings the proposal must:

i) Bring about environmental improvements; or

ii) Not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building.

6) Essential community facilities cannot be accommodated within development limits or through the re-use/replacement of an existing building;

7) Affordable housing on rural exception sites in line with CP9.

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Appendix 2

Relevant policies of the Wokingham Managing Development Delivery Plan (adopted Feb 2014)

Policy TB24: Designated Heritage Assets (Listed Buildings, Historic Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Conservation Areas)

1. Historic Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Monuments and Conservation Areas are shown on the Policies Map.
2. The Borough Council will conserve and seek *the enhancement of* designated heritage assets in the Borough and their settings by:
 - a. Requiring works to or affecting heritage assets or their setting to demonstrate that the proposals would at least conserve and, where possible enhance the important character and special architectural or historic interest of the building, Conservation Area, monument or park and garden including its setting and views.
 - b. Supporting development proposals or other initiatives that will conserve and, where possible, enhance the local character, setting, management and historic significance of designated heritage assets, with particular support for initiatives that would improve any assets that are recognised as being in poor condition or at risk.
3. Proposals for building works shall retain or incorporate existing features or details of historic or architectural significance or design quality into the scheme.

Policy TB26: Buildings of Traditional Local Character and Areas of Special Character

1. Areas of Special Character are shown on the Policies Map.
2. Planning permission will only be granted for proposals to or affecting Buildings of Traditional Local Character and Areas of Special Character where they demonstrate that they retain and enhance the traditional, historical, local and special character of the building or area and its setting.
3. Proposals that involve the demolition of a Building of Traditional Local Character will require strong justification.