



Planning Design and Access Statement

Client:

Mr R Reed Jnr

Fairlands

Church Road Farley Hill, RG7 1TU

The realignment of existing gravel track with creation of new access off existing drive and change of use of land to provide access to approved holiday caravan park

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is produced to support a planning application for the *'the realignment of existing gravel track with creation of new access off existing drive and change of use of land to provide access to approved holiday caravan park'* at Fairlands, Church Road, Farley Hill, RG7 1TU.
- 1.2 This planning statement will cover the background to the application and provide the necessary information to enable its determination by officers at the Council. It will consider the proposal in light of relevant planning policies and other material considerations. The conclusion reached is that key material considerations and the wider objectives of National and Local planning policy support the grant of permission.
- 1.3 In addition to this planning statement, the application is accompanied by the appropriate planning application forms and ownership certificate, duly signed and completed, and a site location plan and proposed site plan.
- 1.4 The relevant application fee will be submitted by the applicant separately.

2. Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The site comprises a parcel of land associated with the wider site of Fairlands, situated to the south of Church Road in Farley Hill. Access to the site is taken from Church Road.
- 2.2 The site is located within Flood Zone 1 which carries the lowest risk of fluvial flooding. The site does not contain any listed buildings and there do not appear to be any ecological designations.

3. Planning History

- 3.1 There is an extensive planning history for the wider site of Fairlands, the applications outlined below are considered to be most relevant to this planning application.
- 3.2 Application Ref: 231960 – Full application for the proposed change of use of land from agricultural to holiday park with the siting of 8No static caravans, 1No office cabin, 1No washing block and 4No bin stores (part- retrospective). Granted 11 November 2023
- 3.3 Application Ref: 191395 – Full planning application for the proposed erection of new stables and outdoor menage. Refused 29 January 2020
- 3.4 Application Ref: F/2011/2602 – Proposed change of the use of land for the stationing of caravans for residential purposes for 4 no. gypsy pitches together with the formation of additional hard standing and utility/ dayrooms ancillary to that use and removal of two disused stable blocks. Temporary permission granted by Appeal (APP/X0360/A/13/2195054) on 08/10/2014 for four pitches on a four-year temporary basis.

- 3.5 Application Ref: F/2010/2809 – Proposed change of use and engineering works to provide hard standing for 8 caravans. Retention and relocation of amenity building. Refused 04/02/2011
- 3.6 Application Ref: F/2009/0273 – Application for the change of use of land from Agricultural to Touring Caravan Park (Retrospective). Application withdrawn 22/04/2009
- 3.7 A pre-application request was submitted to the Council with a written response received on 26 September 2024. It was confirmed by the Planning Officer that the proposed development, in which there is limited physical alterations, is likely to be acceptable. In line with previous information contained within this letter, a change of use is likely to be required to formalise the use of the access track in conjunction with the holiday caravan park. This has been incorporated into the description of development.

4. Development Proposals

- 4.1 Regarding the requirements of NPPG Paragraph: 029 Reference ID: 14-029-20140306 in respect of Design and Access Statements, the proposal is described as follows:
- 4.2 **Use and Amount:** The proposal is for the realignment of the existing gravel track with creation of a new access off the existing drive to provide access to the approved holiday caravan park.
- 4.3 **Layout and Scale:** The access will be taken from the existing drive that leads to the main dwelling of Fairlands. The new access will be in proportion to the scale of the site.
- 4.4 **Landscaping:** The existing leylandii hedge around the border of the holiday park will remain as is. New trees will be planted along the new gravel track.

- 4.5 The submission of further details can be controlled via condition at the discretion of the Local Planning Authority
- 4.6 **Appearance:** No built development is proposed as part of the application. The realignment of the track will be laid with gravel as per the existing situation.
- 4.7 **Access & Parking:** The proposal is for the realignment of the existing gravel track with creation of a new access off the existing drive to provide access to the approved holiday caravan park. No changes will be made to the car parking arrangements on the wider site.

5. Policy Assessment

- 5.1 **National Guidance:** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a relevant material consideration to the application.
- 5.2 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 38 of the NPPF states that *"Local planning authorities should approach decision on proposed development in a positive and creative way"* and *"at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible"*. Paragraph 123 of the NPPF comments that planning should *"make effective use of land"* in *"meeting the need for homes and other uses, whilst safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions"*.

- 5.3 Paragraph 60 confirms the Government's objective to boost the supply of housing, and paragraph 8 identifies the three objectives of sustainable development, as economic, environmental and social.
- 5.4 The National Design Guide builds on the above, and clarifies that *"well-designed neighbourhoods need to include an integrated mix of tenures and housing types that reflect local housing need and market demand. They are designed to be inclusive and to meet the changing needs of people of different ages and abilities. New development reinforces existing places by enhancing local transport, facilities and community services, and maximising their potential use"* (para 109).
- 5.5 **Principle of Development:** Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.6 Wokingham Borough Council's Development Plan which is relevant to the proposal includes the following:
- Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2010)
 - Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (2014)
- 5.7 Core Strategy Policy CP11 states that proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted, this is subject to a number of exceptions, however. One of the exceptions are where it does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings.
- 5.8 The proposed development is simply surface level development, with the creation of a new access onto the existing private circular hardstanding track. The proposal would not constitute excessive encroachment into the countryside, as it remains fully within the extent of the Fairlands site. The only expansion of development would

be the new access, and that is not considered excessive when regarded within this context.

- 5.9 It was confirmed within the written pre-application response that the physical alterations associated with the proposal are limited to the part removal of a brick wall and the realignment of an existing gravel track. As neither of these changes would substantially alter the countryside setting, it was confirmed that no objection is raised on CP11 grounds.
- 5.10 It is therefore considered that the principle of development is acceptable.
- 5.11 **Heritage:** The site does not sit within a Conservation Area, the site itself does not contain a Listed Building however the land adjacent to the site is an open sloping site and provides the setting for a Grade II* Listed Building, Hall's Farm Kennels.
- 5.12 The Listed building at the base of the hill has high aesthetic value within the rural setting. The local area has a strong rural character with a sense of remoteness and a traditional vernacular nature. Field boundaries of traditional fencing, hedgerows and mature trees contribute heavily to this setting. The rural nature of the setting is a large contributor to the value of place for the heritage asset.
- 5.13 The agricultural building collection however at the top of the hill including the site in question is of a low quality and is heavily screened by vegetation. It is of no known historical significance, and it makes little or no contribution to the setting.
- 5.14 There are no proposed changes to the Listed Building or its curtilage. The proposed location for the access and the realignment of the track is heavily screened from all approaches and is very low key in nature. There is no loss of historic fabric. The proposals are considered to

have little or no impact upon the heritage setting and therefore there is no heritage harm from the proposals. It is therefore considered appropriate in this regard.

- 5.15 The proposal is in lines with policy TB26 of the MDD Local Plan.
- 5.16 **Highways and Parking:** As the caravan site has an approved holiday use, the preference is to avoid traffic movements past the two dwellings at Fairlands. The proposed new access will bring visitors to the caravan site in advance of reaching the existing gated entrance further up the private drive. The access that is therefore proposed helps to avoid any conflict on the driveway, especially on the bend that currently takes the traffic into the caravan site.
- 5.17 There is no change in the actual volume of traffic movements that are approved on site, the proposals only seek to split the traffic between residential and for the caravan site on the private drive.
- 5.18 It is not considered that the proposed development will have an unacceptable impact on highway safety, there will be an improvement on the existing situation as the proposals seek to avoid conflict on the existing private driveway.
- 5.19 It was confirmed through the pre-application response that the proposal would have no impact on the public highway and the Planning Officer confirmed that the revised arrangement would provide a more direct route for visitors to the approved caravan park, avoiding the residential use on the wider site.
- 5.20 It is therefore considered that it is acceptable in this regard.
- 5.21 **Residential Amenity:** Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy seeks to protect neighbouring residential amenities. The proposed development will actually represent an improvement on the existing situation. The area directly to the south of the red line boundary has

an approved use for a holiday park with 8 static caravans. Due to this new use, it is more beneficial to avoid the traffic movements past the two dwellings of Fairlands and the replacement dwelling located south of the site (granted planning permission in November 2022).

- 5.22 **Trees and landscaping:** Several trees are present on site. The proposals seek to retain as many existing trees as possible however it is likely that a number will need to be removed to accommodate the proposed development.
- 5.23 The Planning Officer confirmed as part of the pre-application response that the removal of a few small trees to facilitate the new access from the existing driveway would be required and *“the site plan illustrates both existing and proposed planting, which would appropriately mitigate the loss of the small number of trees”*. This is therefore deemed acceptable.
- 5.24 The mature leylandii hedge that is situated across the northern boundary of the holiday caravan park site provides containment to the caravans within the overall site of Fairlands and also restricts views into the site from the surrounding area. The Officer Report for the application which permitted the caravans (231960) noted the hedges importance, stating ‘This visual screening would limit the impact of the proposal on the wider landscape character of the area’. The existing gap in the hedge will remain the same width as present, in order to retain the existing level of screening and no changes will be made to the hedge.
- 5.25 **Character and Appearance of the Area:** MDD Policy TB21 (Landscape Character) states that proposals must demonstrate that they have addressed landscape quality, strategy and sensitivity and accounted for any key issues. Fairlands falls within the Wokingham District Landscape Character Area L2 ‘Farley Hill Wooded Sand and

Gravel Hills’, therefore proposals must employ measures to maintain these rural features.

- 5.26 There are extremely limited views to the new access that is proposed, due to the location of it on the private drive that is mostly hidden from view from Church Road.
- 5.27 The change of use of land will have no bearing on the surrounding landscape, due to the location and extent of the proposals. Should additional planting be desired, this can be secured via landscape planning condition.
- 5.28 **Drainage:** The site is located within Flood Zone 1 which carries the lowest risk of fluvial flooding. The site area is less than 1 hectare in size and so it is not considered a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment is required to be submitted.
- 5.29 Any further details can be secured by way of planning condition if required.
- 5.30 **Ecology:** Policy CP3 states that development proposals will be granted where they have no detrimental impact upon ecology and CP7 states that the degree of protection afforded to biodiversity designations will be appropriate to their status.
- 5.31 There are no known ecological designations on site. Due to the existing use and the nature of the existing site, it is of very low habitat quality. Measures to improve biodiversity can be conditioned as part of any approval if deemed necessary.
- 5.32 In regards to biodiversity net gain, the development is subject to the de minimis exemption as it does not impact a priority habitat and impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat.

- 5.33 **CIL:** The CIL Charging Schedule was adopted on 19 February 2015. The site falls within the 'rest of the Borough' designation. As no floorspace is proposed as part of the development, no CIL charge will be payable. The relevant CIL forms have been submitted.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 This statement has demonstrated that the proposed development is acceptable in principle and makes an efficient use of land.
- 6.2 Material planning considerations have been carefully considered and analysed, as evidenced in section 5 of this statement.
- 6.3 It is considered that the proposed scheme complies with relevant Development Plan Policies and is further supported by National Guidance. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.

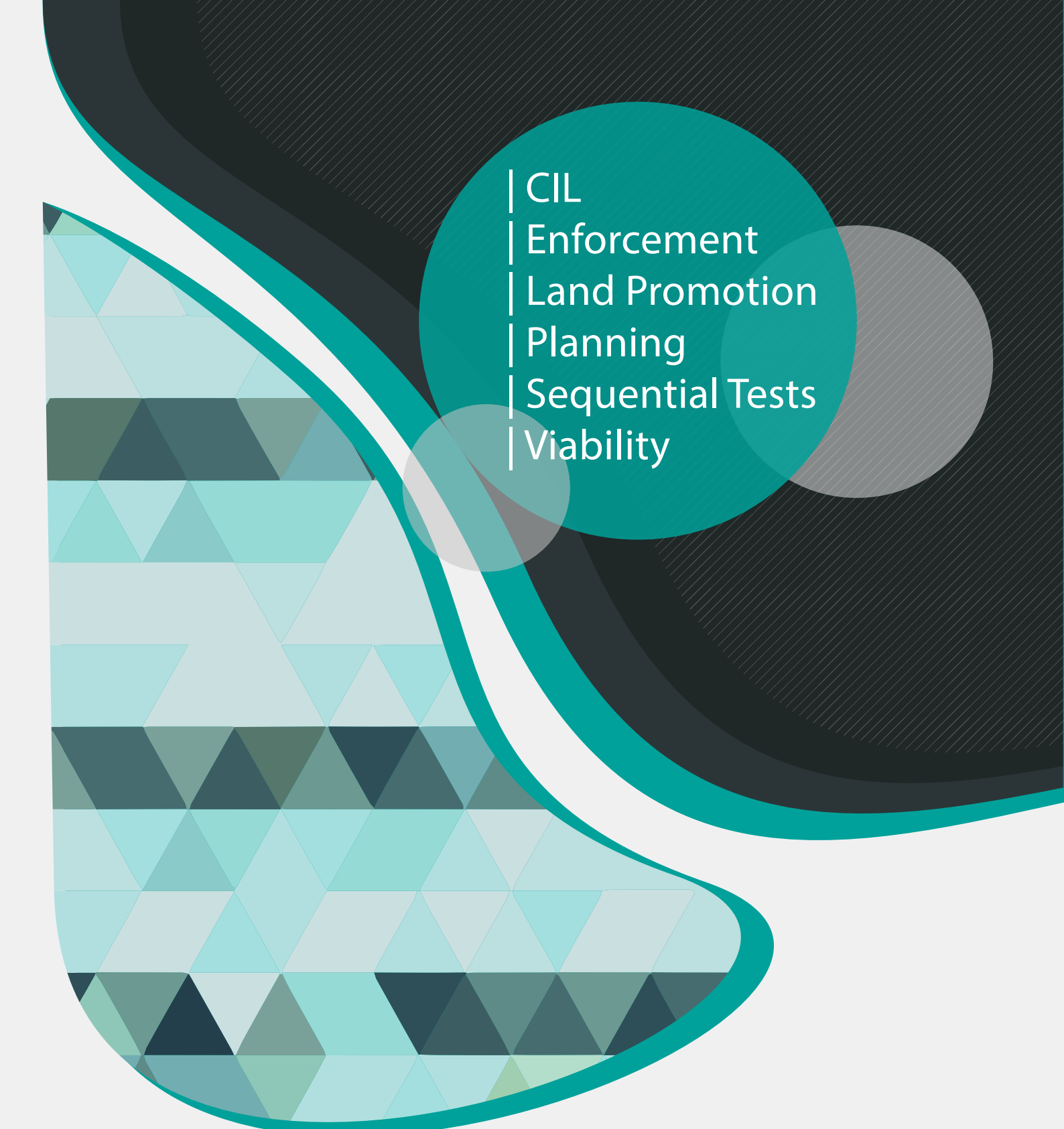


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