

ET Planning

Client:

Mary & Breda Doherty

**Land Opposite junction of Forest
Road with Foxley Lane, Binfield,
Bracknell**

**Full Planning Application – Erection of stable
block, consisting of no.3 stable stalls with
associated hardstanding driveway**

Emily Temple BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

Justice Schwerdtner BSc Graduate Planner

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APPENDIX 1: APP/R0335/W/24/3339683 Decision

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is produced to support a planning application for the erection of a stable block, consisting of no.3 stable stalls with associated hardstanding driveway at Land Opposite junction of Forest Road with Foxley Lane, Binfield, Bracknell.
- 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, plans prepared by Becker Design and Partners, a Arboricultural Impact Assessment by GHA Trees and Ecology reports prepared by ACP.
- 1.4 The relevant application fee will be submitted by the applicant separately.

2. Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The site is located to the South-West of Binfield, and comprises of approximately 0.4Ha hectares of pastureland, enclosed by mature boundary vegetation and trees.
- 2.2 Existing access to the application site is taken from Forest Road, as shown on the location plan. The site lies within the countryside designation, outside settlement boundaries and is not located within the green belt.
- 2.3 The surrounding area is generally rural in character, with open countryside to the west and the small province of Binfield to the East.

3. Planning History

- 3.1 No current history on this site.

4. Development Proposals

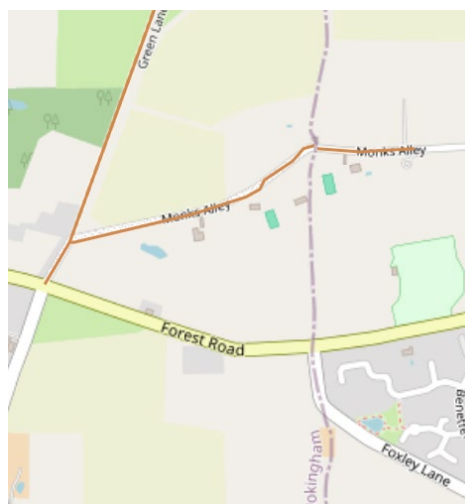
- 4.1 Regarding the requirements of NPPG Paragraph: 029 Reference ID: 14-029-20140306 in respect of Design and Access Statements, the proposal is described as follows:
- 4.2 **Use and Amount:** The proposed use is for the erection of a stable block consisting of no.3 stalls, including a timber stable building, and associated hardstanding driveway. The proposed stables will be used for private equestrian leisure only, and not for commercial purposes.
- 4.3 **Layout and Scale:** The proposed stables will be located in the Southern portion of the site, closest to the carriageway and existing access gates for ease. This positioning utilizes existing access infrastructure, reduces driveway length and retains open pasture to the north used for grazing.

- 4.4 The proposed stable block is single storey in built form and is designed to subtly reflect the countryside character, being modest in footprint. The scale is proportionate to the holding and is appropriate for the private keeping of horses.
- 4.5 **Landscaping:** Existing trees and landscaping are to be retained and protected where possible through the construction process. Two category C trees are proposed for removal, consisting of trees of low arboricultural value and their removal will not materially affect the wider landscape character, nor will their removal impose any significant constraints on the layout. Ecology reports accompany this submission and are further detailed in Section 5 of this statement, including new planting in the northern pasture.
- 4.6 **Appearance:** The site would retain its existing character as an area of green land used predominantly for grazing, with the proposed stable being single storey and rural in character, comprised of timber cladding and a simple pitched roof, typical of rural equestrian buildings. The single storey appearance of the stable block results in a modest built form that is not easily visible when travelling along Forest Road due to the vegetation screening along the boundary of the site.
- 4.7 **Access & Parking:** Access to the stables will be provided by the existing gated access from Forest Road. The driveway will be constructed in hoggin to maintain a rural appearance. The need for parking at this site is minimal, however should it be needed, there is ample space on the proposed courtyard for associated vehicles.

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 39 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 124 of the NPPF comments that planning should “promote an 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 8 identifies the three objectives of sustainable development, as economic, environmental and social.
- 5.4 Paragraph 131 identifies that “Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities”, whilst paragraph 139 states that significant weight should be given to “outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.”
- 5.5 Paragraph 88 of the NPPF enables the sustainable growth of rural tourism and leisure developments which respects the character of the countryside.

- 5.6 **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.
- 5.7 All planning applications should be dealt with in accordance with the relevant development plan policies unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is a material planning consideration in all planning applications. In this instance, the relevant development plan documents include:
- Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework: Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2010)
- 5.8 The proposed development is appropriate to a Countryside location being a private equestrian development encouraging outdoor sport and recreation. Whilst the application is not a commercial enterprise, it complies with the intentions of Policy CP11 - Proposals outside Development Limits (including countryside) from the local development plan, which seeks to support leisure developments which support the enjoyment of the countryside.
- 5.9 Local Plan **Policy CP6 - Managing Travel Demand** outlines that new schemes will be permitted with the provision of sustainable transport, as well as the improvement of existing infrastructure



networks. In accordance with this policy, the What a Walk website (<https://www.whatawalk.com/map/>) reveals BOATs (Byways) contiguous to the site, allowing horse riders to ride along these suburban open countryside roads.

- 5.10 **Green Belt:** The site is not located within the Green Belt.
- 5.11 **Character and Appearance of the Area:** Local Plan **CP1 – Sustainable Development** highlights the importance for development to maintain and enhance the borough's landscape, ecology and environment, ensuring proposals respect the existing pattern of development and character of the area. As the application site lies outside of development limits within the countryside, the surrounding area is predominantly characterised by open paddocks and mature boundary vegetation. Therefore, the proposal must seek to compliment this rural, spacious character.
- 5.12 The site comprises of approximately 0.4 hectares of land enclosed by established trees and hedgerows, contributing positively to the landscape structure. The proposal has been designed to respond sensitively to this context, with the proposal fundamentally being a low-storey structure with associated hardstanding, with the external appearance of the stables being clad with timber allowing the development of the stable to conform with the rural nature of the site and surrounding area and gives a renewed sense of purpose to the field. The timber clad design matches the exterior to the existing stable block at the site, thus resulting in a minimal visual change to the character of the area.
- 5.13 The proposal will be the most suitable given the nature of the surrounding area and will allow the site to maintain its rural setting and appearance.

- 5.14 Additionally, the associated hardstanding area has been designed to be of a small scale, to ensure the safeguarding of the rural character of the countryside. The site will retain the majority of green land and vegetation as a result of this proposal.
- 5.15 The proposal is considered to be of high-quality design that will maintain the architectural merit of the local area whilst being a scale and density that is in keeping with the existing rural character of the area. This will align with policy CP3 – General Principles for Development, stating that planning permission will be granted if proposals are of an appropriate scale, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area, having no detrimental impact on the ecological or landscape features.
- 5.16 **Residential Amenity:** The proposed stable block is single storey in order to minimise its built form. The site itself benefits from an abundance of open green space, suitable for the keeping of horses. The colour of the external structure of the development will be muted and comprise of less, bright colours in order to fit into the rural landscape. This can be conditionally controlled as required.
- 5.17 Additionally, the modest single storey-built form and siting ensure the development does not amount to an ‘imposing’ form over neighbours. The proposed stables and associated hardstanding are of a scale and size that would not adversely impact neighbouring dwellings above that which is already present at the site with respect to loss of light, overshadowing or overlooking and is therefore considered to be policy compliant
- 5.18 **Trees and Landscaping:** An Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been undertaken, identifying:
- 13 category A trees

- 3 Category B trees
- 10 Category C trees

- 5.19 No trees are subject to Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), and the site is not located within a Conservation Area.
- 5.20 The proposed stable block and associated hardstanding has been carefully designed to avoid harm to significant trees, with the proposed building lying outside retained Root Protection Areas (RPAs). A limited number of small category C trees are proposed for removal to facilitate the development. These consist of trees of low arboricultural value and their removal will not materially affect the wider landscape character of the site.
- 5.21 The development will initiate protective fencing and tree protection measures in accordance with the Arboricultural Impact Assessment to safeguard retained trees during construction.
- 5.22 The removal of trees has been accounted for and is further required to be replaced with the planting of additional trees to satisfy statutory trading rules and confirms that appropriate compensatory planting can be delivered within the blue line boundary.
- 5.23 **Transport and Parking:** Access to the stables will be awarded via the existing gated access from Forest Road. On site parking is available within the new courtyard proposed, including parts of the proposed driveway. Noting the private nature of the equestrian proposals, traffic movements are considered to be modest, and not materially different to that of the existing open grazing use.
- 5.24 The proposed hardstanding allows for vehicles to enter the site, and safely turn around, without the need to reverse out onto the road which is beneficial for highways safety. The proposal will also ensure that there will be enough space to tow a small horsebox.

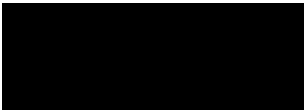
- 5.25 The proposals will not generate a material increase in vehicle movements when compared to the existing use of the site for keeping horses. It is unlikely the movements associated with the proposed stable will be perceptible to other road users. The site can be conditionally controlled not to be for commercial livery purposes.
- 5.26 **Drainage and SuDS:** The site falls within Flood Zone 1 and is not considered to be at risk of flooding. It is considered that flood risk should not limit the proposed development and that any required details can be secured by planning condition. Surfacing materials will be permeable.
- 5.27 **Waste:** Storage for horse waste will be provided on site and will be removed using private collection.
- 5.28 **Sustainability and Energy:** By way of contributing to the reduction in carbon, the proposal would also achieve current building construction standards with added sustainability measures through;
- A. Use of locally sourced, recycled materials and labour where practicable;
 - B. Recycling of waste construction materials where practicable;
 - C. Permeable driveway/parking spaces to avoid increase in surface water runoff;
- 5.29 The proposal is therefore considered to comply with sustainability objectives in this respect.
- 5.30 **Ecology:** A preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has been undertaken to assess the ecological value of the site and the potential impacts of the proposed development.

- 5.31 The site comprises improved grassland pasture enclosed by mature trees and hedgerows, providing habitat value particularly for nesting birds and foraging bats.
- 5.32 The PEA confirms that there are no statutory designated ecological sites within 1km of the application site. The grassland within the site is of relatively low ecological value, typical of managed pasture.
- 5.33 The site lies within a NatureSpace Great Crested Newt (GCN) Risk Zone, with ponds located within 500 metres of the site.
- 5.34 The PEA sets out appropriate Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) to ensure compliance with wildlife legislation.
- 5.35 Subject to implementation of these measures, the development will not result in harm to protected species.
- 5.36 The PEA also recommends clearance of vegetation to occur outside of the bird nesting season (March–August inclusive) unless checked by a suitably qualified ecologist.
- 5.37 The proposed development retains the majority of trees and hedgerows and therefore maintains existing ecological corridors.
- 5.38 **BNG:** Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires development to deliver a minimum +10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), secured for a period of at least 30 years.
- 5.39 A detailed Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment has been prepared by ACP Consultants Ltd and accompanies this application. The assessment has been undertaken using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric and confirms:
 - On-site baseline habitat units: 3.31
 - On-site post-development habitat units: 3.02
 - Overall net change: –0.29 habitat units (–8.89%)

- 5.40 The development results in a shortfall of 0.63 area-based habitat units, including a requirement for 0.20 individual tree units to satisfy the statutory +10% uplift.
- 5.41 The BNG Assessment provides clear recommendations to achieve compliance, including:
- Planting of a minimum of 16 small native trees of moderate condition within the blue line boundary.
 - Creation of approximately 0.07ha of other neutral grassland of good condition, managed appropriately for at least 30 years.
- 5.42 Implementation of these measures will generate an overall biodiversity net gain of approximately +10.63%, exceeding statutory requirement.
- 5.43 This is proposed to be secured by planting in the 'blue land' north pasture. Alternatively, the report identifies the option to secure the required 0.63 units via off-site biodiversity units from an approved habitat bank, to be secured by conservation covenant.
- 5.44 Should planning permission be granted, a Biodiversity Gain Plan (BGP) will be submitted and approved prior to commencement, as required by Schedule 7A.
- 5.45 Where habitat creation is undertaken within the blue line boundary, a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) will be prepared and secured to ensure management and monitoring for a minimum period of 30 years.

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 and the supporting plans and documents. It is considered the proposed stable block and associated hardstanding would not cause any adverse effect on the character of the area or the amenity of neighbouring residents.
- 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.

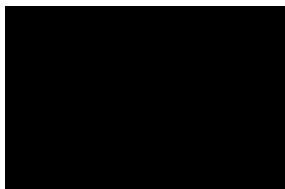


Emily Temple BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

Executive Director & Founder | ET Planning

Head Office: 200 Dukes Ride Crowthorne RG45 6DS

emily.temple@etplanning.co.uk 01344 508048



Justice Schwerdtner

Graduate Planner | ET Planning

Head Office: 200 Dukes Ride Crowthorne RG45 6DS

Justice.Schwerdtner@etplanning.co.uk | 01344 508048

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Contact

Address

200 Dukes Ride RG45 6DS

Phone

01344 508048

Web & Mail

Email: office@etplanning.co.uk
ET Planning Ltd | 10646740

Web: www.etplanning.co.uk