



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Statement by Local Planning Authority

Appellant:	Mr Justin Rogers
Site:	Dukes Field Cottage, Norton Road, Riseley, Reading, RG7 1SH
Local Planning Authority Reference:	242189
Planning Inspectorate Reference:	APP/XX0360/W/25/3365016

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This statement of case relates to the refusal to grant planning permission by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) for the proposed erection of 1 no. detached dwelling with associated parking and landscaping following the demolition of the existing dwelling.
- 1.2. This statement of case only focuses on the small section of the wider application site that falls under Wokingham Borough Council's jurisdiction.
- 1.3. The Full Planning Application subject to the current appeal was received on 27th August 2024. Planning permission was then refused on the 28th November 2024 on the following grounds:
 - *The proposed development would result in the loss of trees and vegetation on the green verge along the site's northern boundary that would adversely harm the visual amenity and character of the street scene which currently provides an important green buffer marking the boundary between the borough boundaries. The proposal is therefore contrary to Core Strategy policies CP1 & CP3 and MDD Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21 and Section 12 of the NPPF.*
 - *The proposal fails to demonstrate that existing trees on site (T14, T15, T6 and T7 as defined within the submitted Arboricultural Survey and Impact Assessment) would not be adversely impacted on by the development footprint contrary to Policy CC03 of the MDD Local Plan and BS5837:2012.*
- 1.4. The Officer's delegated report for application 242189 adequately sets out the case for refusing the development subject of this appeal. This statement responds to the Appellant's Statement and the further information submitted as part of the appeal. It is not the intention of this statement to reiterate the contents of the delegated report, and this statement should be read in conjunction with the delegated report forwarded to the Inspectorate.
- 1.5. Below is a list of appendices relevant to this appeal:

- Appendix 1 – WBC’s comments on Hart’s application 24/01723/FUL
- Appendix 2 – Recommended Conditions

2. PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
222844	Consultation from Hart District Council for the following proposal of the erection of three 4 bedroom dwellings with associated access, landscaping and hardstanding at Land To The East Of Dukes Field Cottage, Norton Road, Riseley, Reading.	Replied 11/10/2022

3. THE SITE

- 3.1. Old School House is a single storey detached building located within a 0.05ha rectangular piece of land located to the south of Portway, which is a 1980s cul-de-sac at the southern edge of the small settlement of Riseley. The site is part of the residential garden of the property Dukes Field Cottage which lies to the west. The rest of the site features a ditch and a small section of woodland, and currently the site does not benefit from any access from Portway.
- 3.2. The jurisdictional boundary of Wokingham Borough with Hart District runs through the application site and subsequently only the proposed access for the application site falls within the jurisdiction of Wokingham Borough Council.
- 3.3. It should be noted that only the proposed access to the application site is located within Wokingham Borough. Therefore, this statement of case is only focused on the access.

4. THE COUNCIL'S CASE

- 4.1. The following comments are made in response to the grounds for appeal and related documents submitted by the Appellant to date and should be read in conjunction with the officer's report. The reasons for refusal will be discussed and there will be a response to the Appellant's comments.
- 4.2. 'Main Issue 6' within Section 5 (Case for the Appellant) of the submitted Appellant's Statement of Case responds to the two reasons for refusal. The Appellant's statement states that the tree survey and retention and loss and protection plans have been updated to include adjusted RPAs for T6, T7, T14 and T15. The report submitted as part of the appeal concludes that the extent of roots towards the cul-de-sac will be limited and RPAs have been adjusted accordingly also allowing for the foundations of Old School House. The appellant therefore deems that the impact on trees is limited and justified.

Reason for Refusal 2 – Adverse Impacts on Existing Trees

- 4.3. The second reason for refusal of application 242189 is centred around the proposal's failure to demonstrate that the existing trees on site would not be adversely impacted by the development's footprint.
- 4.4. Following the submission of the documents listed below as part of this appeal, the Council's Landscape and Trees Officer was reconsulted.
- Landscape Statement on behalf of the Appellant, LPA Ref: 24/01723/FUL.
 - Arboricultural Survey and Impact Assessment, Dukes Field Cottage – School House Application, October 2024.
 - Landscape Proposals, LAS 143, 13 RevA, 13/22/2024
 - Appellant's Statement of Case, May 2025
- 4.5. The Council's Landscape and Trees Officer has reviewed the documents listed above and they note that the submitted Arboricultural Survey reassesses the root protection area (RPA) of the impacted trees, and they find that the relocation of the RPA is reasonable. The RPA calculations that

result from the redrawing mean that less than the maximum 20% of root incursion can be achieved and this would accord with BS5837:2012.

- 4.6. Therefore, it has been demonstrated that the documents listed above address the second reason for refusal.

Reason for Refusal 1 – Impacts on Character Resulting from Loss of Trees

- 4.7. The first reason for refusal is centred around the harm to the visual amenity and character of the street scene. The trees and vegetation on the green verge along the site's northern boundary provide an important green buffer that marks the boundary between borough boundaries.
- 4.8. Policy CC03 of the Council's Managing Development Delivery Document (Local Plan) (MDD) states that proposals should demonstrate how they *"protect and retain existing trees, hedges and other landscape features."* Policy TB21 of the MDD states that *"proposals shall retain or enhance the condition, character and features that contribute to the landscape."*
- 4.9. The documents listed above in paragraph 4.4 demonstrate that the existing trees on site would not be adversely impacted by the proposal. Therefore, it has been demonstrated that the proposal would comply with Policy CC03 of the MDD.
- 4.10. With regards to Policy TB21 of the MDD only minor clearance works would be required to create the access, and the majority of the hedgerow along this southern section of Portway would remain. Additionally, some marginal planting is proposed along the northern site boundary, and whilst it is within land owned by Hart District Council, this planting would contribute to and enhance the appearance of the section of the site within Wokingham Borough Council's land. Therefore, the proposal demonstrates that it complies with Policy TB21 of the MDD.
- 4.11. Through the submission of further information at the appeal stage it has been demonstrated that the proposed development would not be contrary to the development plan as it shows compliance with the policies outlined within the first reason for refusal.

- 4.12. It should be noted that the assessment on character in the paragraphs above solely relates to the access and the site within Wokingham Borough Council's land. This is not an assessment of the proposed new dwelling being considered by Hart under appeal APP/N1730/W/25/3365016.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1. Through the submission of further information by the Appellant within this appeal, it has been demonstrated that there would be no adverse impact on the existing trees on site. Additionally, with planting proposed on the site's northern boundary, it has now been adequately demonstrated that the proposal would comply with Core Strategy Policies CP1 & CP3 and MDD Local Plan Policies CC03 and TB21 and Section 12 of the NPPF.
- 5.2. Wokingham Borough Council are therefore satisfied that the two reasons for refusal on application 242189 have been adequately addressed.
- 5.3. The Council would like to point out that had this information been provided at the application stage, it would have saved much time and cost.
- 5.4. Should the inspector be minded to allow the appeal, a list of recommended conditions are listed within Appendix 2.