PUBLIC INQUIRY APPEAL

CASE OFFICER: AO

APPLICATION NUMBER: 6245

APPELLANT: World of Gardens

SITE: Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield, Shinfield

APPEAL REF: APP/X0360/A/02/1093470

START DATE: 02/07/02

DATE OF INQUIRY:

Progress Record	Date Actioned	Initials
Appeal Logged:	03/07/02	
Entered on Access:	11/07/02	DG
Notification Letters Due:	**16/07/02**	
Notification Letters Sent:		
Questionnaire Due:	**16/07/02**	
Questionnaire Sent:		
Rule 6 Due: (Pre-Inquiry statement)	**13/08/02**	
Checked by Team Leader:		
Checked by Legal:		
Rule 6 Sent:		
Proofs Due:		
Checked by Team Leader:		
Proofs Sent:		
Comments Due:	03/09/02	
Comments Sent:		
Decision Letter circulated:		
Decision entered on Access:		

[redacted]

195

DO

The Planning Inspectorate

3/03 Kite Wing
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Temple Quay
Bristol BS1 6PN
http://www.planning-inspectorate.gov.uk

Direct Line 0117-3726079
Switchboard 0117-3728000
Fax No 0117-3728624
GTN 1371-6079

PLANNING DEPARTMENT 5869-7
17 JUL 2002
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Ms D Gumbrell (Planning Department)
Wokingham District Council
Po Box 157
Wokingham
Berkshire
RG41 1BN

Your Ref: F/2002/6245

Our Ref: APP/X0360/A/02/1093470

Date: 16 July 2002

Dear Madam

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
APPEAL BY WORLD OF GARDENS
SITE AT BALCOMBE NURSERIES, BASINGSTOKE ROAD, SWALLOWFIELD, READING

I am writing to tell you that the appeal, reference number APP/X0360/A/02/1093470 has been withdrawn and the file is closed.

Yours faithfully

Mrs M Pocock

208B

Gregory Gray Associates

CHARTERED TOWN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
'Redcliffe', 17 Dinorben Close, Fleet, Hants GU52 7SL
Telephone: 01252 624004 Fax: 01252 684160
E-mail : info@ggassociates.co.uk

WITH COMPLIMENTS

PLANNING SERVICES	HPT 58628
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DC DG	ENF
APP	
CS	
15 JUL 2002	
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	FILE

G.W.R. Gray MSc. Dip. TP MRTPI ACI.Arb • C.J. Gray • S.M. Leedale MSc. Dip. TP BEd. (Hons) MRTPI

Gregory Gray Associates

CHARTERED TOWN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
'Redcliffe', 17 Dinorben Close, Fleet, Hants, GU52 7SL.
Telephone: 01252 624004 Fax: 01252 684160
E-Mail: info@ggassociates.co.uk

Mrs M. Pocock,
3/03 Kite Wing,
Temple Quay House,
2 The Square,
Temple Quay,
Bristol, BS1 6PN

11th July 2002

Our Ref: BAL/02/291
Your Ref: APP/X0360/A/02/1093470

Dear Madam,

APPEAL BY WORLD OF GARDENS,
BALCOMBE NURSERIES, BASINGSTOKE ROAD, SWALLOWFIELD, READING.

I should be grateful if you would now treat this appeal as having been withdrawn.

Yours faithfully,

Gregory Gray

Enc.

c.c. Client
Wokingham District Council, FAO Mrs A Odell

The Planning Inspectorate

6/7.

3/03 Kite Wing
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Temple Quay
Bristol BS1 6PN
http://www.planning-inspectorate.gov.uk

Direct Line 0117-3726079
Switchboard 0117-3728000
Fax No 0117-3728624
GTN 1371-6079

PLANNING SERVICES | HD 58208
POL | TLS
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APP
CS
03 JUL 2002
COPIES TO | ACK | FILE:

Ms D Gumbrell (Planning Department)
Wokingham District Council
Po Box 157
Wokingham
Berkshire
RG41 1BN

Your Ref: F/2002/6245

Our Ref: APP/X0360/A/02/1093470

Date: 2 July 2002

Angela (H)

Dear Madam

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
APPEAL BY WORLD OF GARDENS
SITE AT BALCOMBE NURSERIES, BASINGSTOKE ROAD, SWALLOWFIELD, READING

I have received an appeal form and accompanying documents for this site. I am the case officer. If you have any questions please contact me. Apart from the questionnaire, please always send **2 copies** of all further correspondence, giving the full appeal reference number which is shown at the top of this letter.

I have checked the papers and confirm that the appeal is valid. If it appears at a later stage, following further information, that this may not be the case, I will write to you again.

The appellant has asked for an inquiry, which we are arranging. The date of this letter is the starting date for this appeal.

You must **submit** the following documents within this timetable:

Within 2 weeks from the starting date -

You must notify any statutory parties and any other interested persons who made representations to you about the application, that the appeal has been made. You should tell them that:-

i) any comments they made at application stage will be sent to me and if they want to make any additional comments, wherever possible, they must submit 3 copies within **6 weeks of the starting date.** If representations are submitted after the deadline, they will not normally be seen by the Inspector and they will be returned.
ii) they can get a copy of our booklet 'Guide to taking part in planning appeals' free of charge from you, and
iii) if they want to receive a copy of the appeal decision they must write to me asking for one.

You must submit a copy of a completed appeal questionnaire and supporting documents, including relevant development plan policies to the appellant and me.

Within 6 weeks from the starting date -

You and the appellant must submit 2 copies of any statement to me. I will send a copy of your statement to the appellant and send you a copy of their statement. You and the appellant must send a copy of your statements to any statutory parties.

I will send you and the appellant a copy of any comments submitted by interested parties.

Within 9 weeks from the starting date -

You and the appellant must submit 2 copies of any final comments on each other's statement and on any comments on any representations from interested parties to me. Your final comments must not be submitted in place of, or to add to, your 6 week statement and no new evidence is allowed. I will forward the appellant's final comments to you at the appropriate time.

No later than 4 weeks before the inquiry -

You and the appellant must submit 2 copies of your proofs of evidence (and summary, where appropriate) to me. The appellant must also submit a copy of the statement of common ground.

You **must keep to the timetable** set out above and ensure that your representations are submitted within the deadlines. If not, your representations will not normally be seen by the Inspector and they will be returned to you. As I have given details of the timetable, I will not send you reminders.

Withdrawing the appeal

If you hear that the appeal is to be withdrawn, please telephone me immediately. If I receive written confirmation of this from the appellant, I will write to you.

Further information about the terms we use in this letter and appeal procedures is on the attached sheet.

Yours faithfully

pp Mrs Margaret Pocock

301(BPR)

Questionnaire

The appeal questionnaire must be sent complete with copies of all necessary documents referred to in it. It is particularly essential to us that details of all relevant development plan policies are included with the questionnaire at this early stage.

Statement of case

In your statement of case you will need to give full details of the case you will put forward at the inquiry. You must include and list any documents, including maps and plans, to which you intend to refer or use in evidence. Please also include a list of any conditions or limitations you would agree to, if the appeal were to be allowed.

Statement of common ground

In the statement of common ground you should list all agreed matters. You and the appellant are expected to meet in advance of the inquiry, to agree the statement of common ground. This should include basic facts such as the site description, area, planning history, relevant planning policies, and as many other matters relating to the appeal as possible. A guide to the Statement of Common Ground is in Annex 3(ii) of DETR Circular 05/2000. A model form is enclosed and is also available on our website.

Proofs of evidence

A 'proof of evidence' is a written statement that you, the appellant or witness wants the Inspector to take into account at the inquiry. If the proof is more than 1500 words long, you must also send me 2 copies of a written summary which should not be more than 10% of the length of the proof. The summary should reflect the contents of the proof and should not include new evidence. Where a summary is provided only that will be read at the inquiry. If proofs and summaries are not received together and on time, the inquiry may be postponed.

Statutory parties

'Statutory parties' are owners or tenants of the appeal site who made comments within the time limit on the application or appeal. You must give details of any statutory parties at application stage in reply to question 15e of the questionnaire. I will tell you about any statutory parties at appeal stage, before your statement of case is due.

Late Representations

Comments or representations received after any of the time limits will normally be disregarded and we will send them back. Late representations will only be considered in extraordinary circumstances.

Inquiry opening statements

Both main parties may give opening statements before presenting formal evidence. Normally the LPA will go first. They should be no longer than 5-15 minutes maximum.

Costs

Costs can be awarded in inquiry cases. If an inquiry is subsequently adjourned because of the submission of late evidence, there is the possibility of a successful claim for costs. DOE Circular 8/93 gives more advice.

Planning obligations - Section 106 agreements

A planning obligation, often referred to as a 'section 106 agreement', is either a legal agreement made between the LPA and a person 'interested in the land', or a legally binding undertaking signed unilaterally by a person 'interested in the land'.

If you intend to rely on an obligation, a final draft must be submitted:-

i. by the opening of an inquiry, which is scheduled to last more than one day

or

ii. 10 working days before the date of a one day inquiry.

Obligations should be completed by the close of an inquiry. An Inspector will not normally delay the issue of a decision to wait for the completion of an obligation.

STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

APPEAL REFERENCE:	DATE OF INQUIRY:	

SITE ADDRESS AND DESCRIPTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT:

APPELLANT

LPA

This statement addresses the following areas of common ground:

1. Description of the site (including agreed dimensions)
2. Description of the area
3. Planning history of site
4. Development plan (including relevant policies) & any draft development plan (including stage reached and weight to be attached).
5. Relevance of any supplementary planning guidance published by LPA.
6. Others: *[eg where applicable, agreed traffic (and/or other) data and circumstances]*

It will be helpful also to identify matters which are the subject of specific disagreement.

Enter text of common grounds
(Please sign the boxes at the end)

Please turn over

Signed on behalf of Appellant	Signed on behalf of LPA
.....Date.....	.....Date.....
Position.....	Position.....

Please continue on separate sheet(s) if necessary (sign at end)

Gregory Gray Associates

CHARTERED TOWN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

'Redcliffe', 17 Dinorben Close, Fleet, Hants, GU52 7SL.

Telephone: 01252 624004 Fax: 01252 684160

E-Mail: info@ggassociates.co.uk

APP 57753

21 JUN 2002

COPIES TO

ACK:

FILE:

District Planning Officer,
Wokingham District Council,
P.O. Box 157,
Shute End,
Wokingham,
Berks, RG40 1WR.

21st June 2002

Our Ref: BAL/02/291
Your Ref: AO/F/2002/6245

Dear Sir,

BALCOMBE NURSERY, BASINGSTOKE ROAD, SWALLOWFIELD.

I enclose copy notice of appeal in respect of the above.

Yours faithfully,

Gregory Gray

Enc.
c.c.

Gregory Gray Associates

CHARTERED TOWN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

'Redcliffe', 17 Dinorben Close, Fleet, Hants, GU52 7SL.

Telephone: 01252 624004 Fax: 01252 684160

E-Mail: info@ggassociates.co.uk

Planning Inspectorate,
Appeals Registry,
Temple Quay House,
2 The Square,
Temple Quay,
Bristol BS1 6PN.

21st June 2002

Our Ref: BAL/02/291

Dear Sir/Madam,

APPEAL BY THE WORLD OF GARDENS, BALCOMBE NURSERIES, BASINGSTOKE ROAD, SWALLOWFIELD, BERKS.

I enclose on behalf of my Client, notice of an appeal in respect of the above.

During the course of consideration of the planning application, amended drawings and additional information were submitted to the authority and the correspondence relating to this is attached. For ease I set out below the corresponding amendment/addition and the relevant letter:

1. Amended Article 7 Certificate (attached to letter 8.5.02.)
2. Amended Drawing 199/P/01a (attached to letter 10.5.02.)
3. Tree survey Drawing 01119 and covering letter (attached to letter 27.5.02.)
4. Amended Drawing 19/P/02b (attached to letter 5.6.02.)

I await acknowledgement of the appeal in due course.

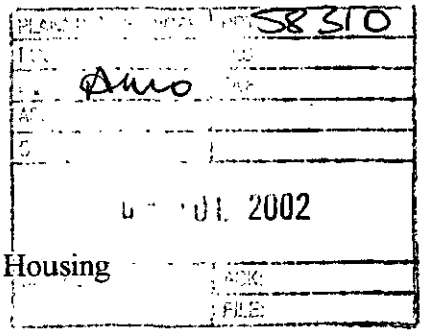
Yours faithfully,

Gregory Gray

Enc.

c.c. Client
Wokingham District Council

Oak Cottage
Swallowfield
Berkshire, RG7 1PY, UK
Tel: - +44 118 988 3220
Fax: - +44 118 988 2211
E-Mail: - oakcot@netcomuk.co.uk



FAO: - Ms Leanne Parlour
Environmental Protection and Housing
Wokingham District Council
PO Box 155
Shute End
Wokingham
Berkshire, RG40 1WW

Sunday, 07 July, 2002
Our Reference:- L20020707A

Dear Ms Parlour,

Environmental Pollution from the Proposed Redevelopment of
Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield by "World of Gardens"
Planning Application F/2002/6245

Thank you for responding to my letter dated 4th July 2002 and for your visit to the Balcombe Nurseries site on Friday 5th July 2002.

It is with great disappointment that the contractor working at Balcombe Nurseries has failed to take note of your visit and continues to clear this site, burn the large quantities of grubbed tress, foliage and rubbish over the weekend. Since the work began on Monday 1st July the residents of adjoining properties have now been subjected to 6½ days of continual smoke and fallout pollution from this site. We are now unable to use our garden, unable to open the windows of the house and unable to dry our clothes. This has resulted in the cessation of normal domestic chores, enjoyment of clean air in the gardens and a normally peaceful environment.

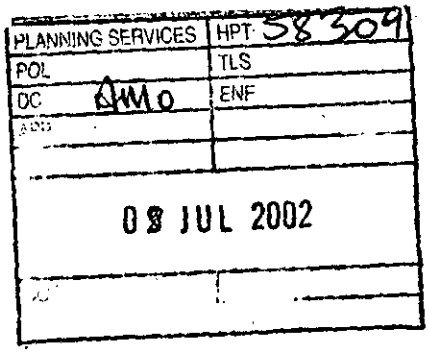
We again write to complain under Wokingham District Council's Air and Noise Pollution guidelines as posted on the Wokingham.gov.uk WEB page.

The situation with this contractor clearing the Balcombe Nurseries site has now got 'out-of-hand'. It is clear that the contractor has taken advantage of the weekend to burn as much debris as they can before start of business Monday. It is also clear that the contractor had no intention of observing your instructions and we look forward to your immediate and appropriate action to curb the unsociable activities of the on-site contractor and return the local environment to an acceptable standard.

Yours sincerely,

Robin J. Allison

Copy: - Mrs Odell - Planning Control - WDC
Head of Department - Planning Control - WDC
Chairman - Swallowfield Parish Council



Oak Cottage
Swallowfield
Berkshire, RG7 1PY, UK
Tel: - +44 118 988 3220
Fax: - +44 118 988 2211
E-Mail: - oakcot@netcomuk.co.uk

FAO: - Ms Leanne Parlour
Environmental Protection and Housing
Wokingham District Council
PO Box 155
Shute End
Wokingham
Berkshire, RG40 1WW

Sunday, 07 July, 2002
Our Reference:- L20020707C

Dear Ms Parlour,

Environmental Pollution from the Proposed Redevelopment of Balcombe Nurseries Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield by "World of Gardens"

I am most alarmed to find that after your visit on Friday to the above site, the fires and work have continued over the weekend at a worrying pace. It was most kind of you to visit so quickly and efficiently. I have now not been able to place any washing outside since last Wednesday 3 July, let alone walk around the garden! I attempted to do so yesterday and found that I have again had to re-wash all the items that were put out. Today there were at least two separate fires and the wind was blowing to such an extent, that the whole garden was covered in debris, i.e. pieces of grey burnt paper and other matter. On several occasions during the morning, I was unable to see the latter half of my garden. The cars were covered in the debris, no windows were open and on entering the garden, debris was blown into my eyes.

My husband and I left the house today at 12:30pm as it was too distressing to stay at home. We returned at 3:30pm to find that the smoke from the fires was still visible and debris still being blown across the property. We passed the site before entering our property and could see the two fires smoking quite considerably. The weather had brightened up on our return and I would have liked to have opened the windows but this was not possible. It was still quite windy.

I am concerned that the Owner has ignored your visit and request and has allowed his contractor to carry on regardless and at a weekend. I am sure the contractor could have called his employer on a mobile phone when you visited the site. It appears that they may have been trying to get two extra days work done before they were made to cease completely. I myself walked around to the site at 11:15am this morning and approached the gate, suddenly I was unable to see the other side of the gate, only vast amounts of billowing smoke. At no time has the owner or contractor attempted to let us know that he was carrying out this unsociable work.

The most worrying feature of this work is that the fires are left <u>unattended overnight</u> still smouldering and at the weekend have been left unattended in windy conditions from the early part of the afternoons. We have a large Grade II listed barn and a shed at the top of our property and wooden fencing and if they had caught alight, it would have been very serious indeed. When I looked over the fence on Friday morning there had been two smaller fires not far from the fence and paper had definitely been burnt, as there were several piles of paper and other office material that had not been burnt.

+44-118-988-2211

These events are a deliberate infringement of our civil liberties. I am unable to use my garden on the only sunny day this weekend. The wildlife on the site and indeed on our property has also been disturbed.

I would like to be reassured that Wokingham District Council will keep a careful watch on this site as it appears that the Owner/Contractor has little regard for the neighbouring resident's safety or well being.

Yours sincerely,

Janet E. Allison
Copy: - Mrs Odell - Planning Control - WDC
Head of Department - Planning Control - WDC
Chairman - Swallowfield Parish Council

The Planning Inspectorate

PLANNING APPEAL FORM

For official use only
Date received
21 JUN 2002

Please send each appeal on a separate form

Your appeal and essential supporting documents must reach the Inspectorate within 6 months of the date shown on t Local Planning Authority's decision notice (or, for 'failure' appeals, within 6 months of the date by which they should ha decided the application).

Before completing this form, please read our booklet 'Making your planning appeal' which was sent to you with this form

WARNING: If any of the 'Essential supporting documents' listed in Section J are n received by us within the 6 month period, the appeal will not be accepted.

A. APPELLANT DETAILS

The name of the person(s) making the appeal must be the same as on the planning application form.

Name World of Gardens,

Address c/o Agent

Your reference

Daytime phone no

Fax no

Postcode

E-mail address

B. AGENT DETAILS (if any)

Name Gregory Gray Associates

Address 'Redcliffe,'
17, Dinorben Close,
Fleet, Hants, GU52 7SL

Your reference BAL/02/291

Daytime phone no 01252 624004

Fax no 01252 684160

Postcode

E-mail address

C. LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY (LPA) DETAILS

Name of the LPA Wokingham District Council

LPA's application reference no F/2002/6245

Date of the planning application 25/3/02

Date of LPA's decision notice (if issued) 12/6/02

D. APPEAL SITE ADDRESS

Address Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield, Berks.

Postcode

National grid reference

(Please see the key on an Ordnance Survey map for instructions; this should be 2 letters and 6 numbers, eg TQ 298407)

G. GROUNDS OF APPEAL (continued)

H. CHOICE OF PROCEDURE

Appeals dealt with by written representations are usually decided more quickly than by the hearing or inquiry methods. It is important that you read our booklet 'Making your planning appeal' about the various procedures used to determine planning appeals.

*Please tick **one** box only* ✔

1. WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS ☐

Can the whole site be seen from a road or other public land and there is no need for the Inspector to enter the site (eg to take measurements or to enter a building)? If yes, please tick the box. If so, we will arrange an unaccompanied site visit. ☐

2. HEARING ☐

Although you may prefer a hearing, we will decide whether a hearing is suitable for your appeal after consulting the LPA.

3. INQUIRY ☑

Please give reasons why you think an inquiry is necessary.

In order to test the Council's case and evidence in cross-examination.

J. ESSENTIAL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The documents listed in 1–6 below, must be sent with your appeal form; 7–10 must also be sent if appropriate. If we do not receive all your appeal documents by the end of the 6 month appeal period, we will not deal with it. Please tick the boxes to show which documents you are enclosing.

1. A copy of the original **planning application** sent to the LPA. ☑
2. A copy of the **site ownership certificate and ownership details** submitted to the LPA at application stage (this is usually part of the LPA's planning application form). ☑
3. A copy of the **LPA's decision notice** (if issued). ☑
4. A **plan showing the site outlined in red**, including two roads clearly named (preferably on a copy of a 1:10,000 Ordnance Survey map). ☑
5. Copies of **plans, drawings and documents** sent to the LPA as part of the application. ☑
6. Any **additional plans, drawings and documents** sent to the LPA but which did not form part of the original application (eg drawings for illustrative purposes). ☑

Copies of the following must also be sent, if appropriate:

7. **Additional plans or drawings** relating to the application but not previously seen by the LPA. Please number them clearly and list the numbers here: ☐

   _____

   _____

8. Any relevant **correspondence** with the LPA. ☑
9. If the appeal is against the LPA's refusal or failure to grant permission for 'details' imposed on a grant of outline permission, please enclose:
   (a) the relevant outline application; ☐
   (b) all plans sent at outline application stage; ☐
   (c) the original outline planning permission; ☐
10. A copy of any Environmental Statement plus certificates and notices relating to publicity (if one was sent with the application, or required by the LPA). ☐
11. If you have sent other appeals for this or nearby sites to us and these have not been decided, please give details and our reference numbers. ☐

    _____

    _____

K. PLEASE SIGN BELOW

(Unsigned forms will be returned. Signed forms must be received by us within the 6 month time limit)

1. I confirm that I have sent a copy of this appeal form and documents to the LPA – ***N.B.*** *if you do not, your appeal will not normally be accepted.*
2. I confirm that section J has been fully completed.
3. I will send 2 copies of any further documents relating to this appeal to the Inspectorate.

Signed Gregory Gray Associates (on behalf of) World of Gardens

Name (in capitals) Gregory Gray Associates Date 21/6/02

Grounds of Appeal

1. This appeal is made against the refusal by Wokingham District Council to grant permission for the proposed development of the garden centre, reuse of buildings, access improvements, road, parking and landscaping at Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield, Berks.

2. Planning permission was refused for one reason only - in effect the design and appearance of the proposed main building and its consequent effect on the character and appearance of the area.

3. The site benefits from a planning permission for redevelopment of the garden centre granted in June 1993 and renewed in February 1998. The permission is extant and a material planning consideration in the context of this appeal. The main difference between the two is that the main building will have a different external appearance and design compared to that approved. It will be noted that in all other respects i.e. overall floor area, height, width and location on the site, the building is exactly the same as that already approved.

4. The appeal site is not located in an area where it is necessary to have special or particular regard to a specific design theme or vernacular as may be required in a conservation area or adjacent to a listed building. This said, policies in the adopted and emerging Local Plans support garden centre development and encourage good design. The appeal scheme fulfils these criteria.

5. It will be shown that the single reason for refusal in this case is entirely subjective and not based upon a rational judgement of the individual merits of the proposal. The appeal scheme represents a significant investment in a high quality design and appearance of building that will positively contribute to the character of the area and will be an improvement on the permitted glasshouse scheme.

6. The authority has not produced any cogent or substantial reason why this design has been rejected nor any reason why this matter, by itself, is sufficient to withhold the grant of permission for a development which is otherwise acceptable.

7. Garden centre buildings take many forms, depending on a wide range of criteria. There is no overwhelming requirement that they be glasshouses. Nor is there any requirement for a glasshouse design in this location. The authority is misguided in rejecting the proposal for this reason.

8. On the Informative attached to the decision notice, the applicant has checked the site boundaries and is satisfied they are correct.

9. In the absence therefore of any sound or clear cut reasons to withhold permission in this case it will be respectfully requested that the appeal be allowed and permission granted.

6. Is the appeal site within an approved Green Belt or AONB? Please specify which	~~YES~~ / NO
7. Is there a known surface or underground mineral interest at or within 400 metres of the appeal site which is likely to be a material consideration in determining the appeal? (If YES, please attach details.)	~~YES~~ / NO
8. a. Are there any other appeals or matters relating to the same site or area still being considered by us or the Secretary of State? If YES, please attach details and, where necessary, give our reference numbers.	~~YES~~ / NO
b. Would the development require the stopping up or diverting of a public right of way? If YES, please provide an extract from the Definitive Map and Statement for the area, and any other details.	~~YES~~ / NO
9. Is the site within a Conservation Area? If YES, please attach a plan of the Conservation Area. (If NO, go to Q11.)	~~YES~~ / NO
10. Does the appeal relate to an application for conservation area consent?	YES / NO
11.a. Does the proposed development involve the demolition, alteration or extension of a Grade I / II* / II listed building?	~~YES~~ / NO Grade I / II* / II
b. Would the proposed development affect the setting of a listed building? If the answer to question 11a or b is YES, please attach a copy of the relevant listing description from the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. (If NO, go to Q13.)	~~YES~~ / NO
12. Has a grant been made under Sections 3A or 4 of the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953?	YES / NO
13.a. Would the proposals affect an Ancient Monument (whether scheduled or not)?	~~YES~~ / NO
b. If YES, was English Heritage consulted? Please attach a copy of any comments.	YES / NO
14.a. Is the appeal site in or adjacent to or likely to affect an SSSI? If YES, please attach the comments of English Nature.	~~YES~~ / NO
b. Are any protected species likely to be affected by the proposals? If YES, please give details.	~~YES~~ / NO

15. Copies of the following documents must, if appropriate, be enclosed with this questionnaire:		
a Is the development in Schedule 1 or column one of Schedule 2 of the Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment)(England & Wales) Regulations 1999? If YES, please indicate which Schedule.	~~YES~~ / NO	Sch1 Sch 2 col 1
b. Is the development within a 'sensitive area' as defined by regulation 2 of the Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment)(England & Wales) Regulations 1999?	YES / NO	
c. Has a screening opinion been placed on Part 1 of the planning register? If YES, please send a copy to us.	~~YES~~ / NO	
d. Any comments or directions received from the Secretary of State, other Government Departments or statutory agencies / undertakers whether or not as a result of consultations under the GDPO;		
e. Any representations received as a result of an Article 7 (or Regulation 6) notice;		
f. A copy of any notice published under Article 8 of the GDPO 1995; and/or Section 73 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990; and/or Regulation 5 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990;		
g. Any representations received as a result of a notice published under Article 8 and/or Section 73 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (or Regulation 5);		
h. Details of any other applications or matters you are currently considering relating to the same site;		
i. **For all appeals, including those against non determination, you must provide details of all relevant development plan policies.** ***Each extract must include the front page, the title and date of approval or adoption. Where plans & policies have not been approved or adopted, please give the stage or status of the plan.***		
j. Any supplementary planning guidance, together with its status, that you consider necessary.		
k. Any other relevant information or correspondence you consider we should be aware of.		

Number of Documents Enclosed	N/A
3	
	✓
	✓
	✓
	✓
3	
	✓
	✓

16. a. What is the date you told those you notified about the appeal that we must receive any further comments by?	13/08/02	
b. Copies of the following documents must, if appropriate, be enclosed with this questionnaire.	Number of Documents Enclosed	N/A
i) representations received from interested parties about the original application	21	
ii) the planning officer's report to committee	1	
iii) any relevant committee minute	1	
17. FOR APPEALS DEALT WITH BY WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS ONLY		
Do you intend to send another statement about this appeal? If NO, please send the following information:-	YES / NO	
a. In non-determination cases:		
i) what the decision notice would have said;		
ii) how the relevant development plan policies relate to the issues of this appeal.		
b. In all cases:		
i) the relevant planning history;		
ii) any supplementary reasons for the decision on the application;		
iii) matters which you want our Inspector to note at the site visit.		
18. THE MAYOR OF LONDON CASES ONLY		
a. Was it necessary to notify the Mayor of London about the application? If YES, please attach a copy of that notification.	YES / NO	
b. Did the Mayor of London issue a direction to refuse planning permission If YES, please attach a copy of that direction.	YES / NO	

I confirm that a copy of this appeal questionnaire and any enclosures have been sent today to the appellant or agent.

Signature: _____ on behalf of WOKINGHAM UNITARY ~~Council~~

Date sent to us and the appellant DMR Ref: F1200216245

Please tell us of any changes to the information you have given on this form.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

PLANNING, LISTED BUILDING CONSENT OR CONSERVATION AREA CONSENT

APPEAL REF: APP X/0360/A/02/1093470 **GRID REF:**

APPEAL BY: World of Grass

SITE: Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Rd, Swallowfield

You must ensure that a copy of a completed questionnaire, together with any enclosures, is received by us and the appellant, within 2 weeks from the 'starting date' given in our letter. **You must include details of the statutory development plan, even if you intend to rely more heavily on some other emerging plan.** Please send our copy to the case officer. Their address is shown on our letter.

If notification or consultation under an Act, Order or Departmental Circular would have been necessary before granting permission and has not yet taken place, please inform the appropriate bodies of the appeal now and ask for any comments to be sent direct to us within 6 weeks of the 'starting date'.

1.	Do you agree to the written representations procedure?		~~YES~~ / NO
OR	Do you wish to be heard by an Inspector at:	a. a local inquiry?	YES / ~~NO~~
		or b. a hearing?	~~YES~~ / NO
2.	If the written procedure is agreed, could the Inspector make an unaccompanied site visit?		YES / NO
	(It is our policy that Inspectors make an unaccompanied site visit whenever practicable e.g. the site can be seen clearly from a road or other public land. You must only indicate the need for an accompanied visit when it is necessary to enter the site e.g. to view or measure dimensions from within it.)		
3.	Does the appeal relate to an application for approval of reserved matters?		~~YES~~ / NO
4.	Was an Article 7 (Regulation 6 for listed building or conservation area consent) certificate submitted with the application?		YES / ~~NO / N/A~~
5.	Was it necessary to advertise the proposals under Article 8 of the GDPO 1995 and/or Section 73 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990?		~~YES~~ / NO

WOKINGHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

APPEAL BY: World of Gardens
SITE: Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield, Shinfield
APPLICATION NO.: 6245
PROPOSAL: Proposed redevelopment of garden centre, reuse of buildings, access improvement, road, parking & landscaping

LIST OF PERSONS CIRCULATED WITH NOTICE OF APPEAL

District Councillor(s) for Swallowfield

Mrs D Beatty

Clerk(s) of Parish / Town Councils of Shinfield

Mrs C Adams, Penton Cottage, The Street, Swallowfield RG7 1QX

Environment Agency, Swift House, Frimley Business Park, Frimley, Camberley GU16 7SQ
fao Paul Busing Ref: SU76SW/22/1

Environmental Services Department, Engineering Services, Wokingham District Council,
PO Box 157, Council Offices, Shute End, WOKINGHAM, Berkshire, RG40 1WR

Policy & Plans, WDC
fao Mrs E Gibbons

Environmental Health, WDC
fao John Mullaney

Highways Drainage, WDC
fao Roger Johnson

Environmental Design, WDC

HIGHWAYS CONSULTATION SHEET

From: Angela Odell **Date:** 09 April 2002

Application Number: F/2002/6245

Proposal: Proposed redevelopment of garden centre, reuse of buildings, access improvement, road, parking and landscaping.

Parish: SWALLOWFIELD PARISH

Site Address:
Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield, Reading.

Applicant:
World Of Gardens C/O Gregory Grey Associates.

Your observations are required in respect of this application within 7 days of the above date.

✓ below as applicable;

1) ☐ Recommend refusal for the reason(s) stated below;
2) ☐ Recommend approval but with condition(s) & reason(s) stated below;
3) ☐ Recommend approval with no condition(s) or reason(s).

Comment

Highways request a revised plan that addresses the following points:

1. The footway extended around the radius of the junction (south side only).
2. Demonstrate that an articulated lorry can turn within the site.

The highway authority recommend conditional approval subject to the above points being addressed. Conditions as per previous application plus the following additional:

No other development of the site shall commence until detailed plan of the proposed access improvements (including any footway provision) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall not be brought into use until the access has been improved in accordance with these details.

NO7.

ADAM COGGINS 30/05/02

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Our Ref : SP/2002/005588-1/1
Your Ref : Angela Odell/F/2002/6245

56102

Date : 01 May 2002

District Planning Officer
Wokingham District Council
Council Offices
PO Box 157 Shute End
Wokingham
Berkshire
RG40 1WR

FAO: Angela Odell

Dear Madam

REDEVELOPMENT OF GARDEN CENTRE, ACCESS IMPROVEMENT AND PARKING + LANDSCAPING

BALCOMBE NURSERIES BASINGSTOKE ROAD SWALLOWFIELD READING

Thank you for your letter dated 9 April 2002, received on 11 April 2002. Please quote the following reference in any correspondence: SU76SW/22/1. The Environment Agency has the following comments:

The Environment Agency has no objection, in principle, to the proposed development provided that the following conditions are imposed on any planning permission granted:

PLANNING CONDITIONS:

CONDITION: Surface water source control measures shall be carried out in accordance with details which shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before development commences.
REASON: To prevent the increased risk of flooding and to improve water quality.

(Note: The Environment Agency asks to be consulted on any details submitted in compliance with this condition).

PLANNING INFORMATIVES

The following planning informatives should be attached to any planning permission granted:

Environment Agency
Swift House, Frimley Business Park, Camberley, Surrey, GU16 7SQ, Tel no:01276 454300, Fax no:01276 454301

Under the terms of the Water Resources Act 1991, the prior written consent of the Environment Agency is currently required for any discharge of sewage or trade effluent onto or into ground and for surface runoff into groundwater. Such consent may be withheld. If there is an existing discharge consent the applicant should ensure that any increase in volume is permitted under the present conditions.
Contact Ian Doyle on 01276 454 365 for further details.

ADVICE

Land Drainage

There are alternatives to conventional storage for the control of surface water run-off that are favoured by the Environment Agency. These techniques not only cater for flood peak attenuation, but may also improve water quality and enhance the environment. Such systems include permeable pavements, grassed swales, infiltration trenches, ponds and wetlands. The developer is advised to discuss with the Agency how these techniques might be applied at this site.

In order to manage the disposal of surface water in a more sustainable manner, taking into account flood risk and other environmental factors, the Environment Agency will recommend that restrictions are imposed on the discharge of surface water from the site. Particular care must be exercised where there is an increase in the impermeable area. The developer will be required to accommodate excess water and control its release into local watercourses, whether directly or by means of the local surface water sewerage system.

Our general criteria is:

- The limiting discharge should be equivalent to the runoff from a 1 in 1 year storm of the existing undeveloped land. This would be between 2 and 7 l/sec per hectare, depending on site geology and slope;

- Storage should be provided to protect from a 1 in 100 year storm.

If the surface water from this site is to drain to soakaways. It would be acceptable only if all surface water runoff from all impermeable surfaces (including roofs and driveways/roads) is disposed of through soakaways. Should soakaways not prove feasible for this site then the Environment Agency would require that excess water be accommodated on site and its release be controlled.

Watercourses

We are not aware of any watercourses on the site, but should there be any, we advise that:
(1) they should not be culverted; and
(2) a buffer zone is left on either side of any watercourse, and
(3) culverted watercourses should not be built over, but should ideally be opened up and made a feature of the site.

In any case, you should note that culverting of a watercourse requires the prior written

approval of the local authority under the terms of the Public Health Act 1936, and the prior written consent of the Environment Agency under the terms of the Land Drainage Act 1991/Water Resources Act 1991. The Agency seeks to avoid culverting, and its consent for such works will normally be withheld.

Environment Protection

Surface water from hard surfaced areas should discharge via deep seal trapped gullies incorporating a minimum water seal of 85mm or similar.

Surface water from the carpark area should be passed through a suitable type of oil/ grit separator, the design of which shall be to the satisfaction of the Environment Agency.

Roof water downpipes should be connected to the drainage system either directly, or by means of back inlet gullies provided with sealing plates instead of open gratings.

Clean roof water should not pass through the oil separator. Where soakaways are used it should preferably not discharge to soakaways used to drain road and vehicle parking areas.

All sewage or trade effluent should be discharged to the foul sewer if available subject to the approval of Thames Water Utilities or its sewerage agent.

The site is not situated within a currently designated public water supply groundwater source protection zone. In this case, shallow soakaways would be acceptable for the disposal of clean surface and roof water provided they are not constructed so that they penetrate the water table, or in any event exceed 3 metres in depth below existing ground level.

WATERCONSERVATION

Non-household use

Water is one of our most precious natural resources, and the Environment Agency is keen to ensure it is used wisely:

* Approximately a third of non-household water use come through wash hand basin taps. The installation of low volume taps such as push-top, spray or infra-red taps can result in company cost savings in both water and energy use.
* About 20% of non-household water use is for urinal flushing. As much as half of this can be saved by installing flush controls, such as infra-red sensors or electromagnetic door switches. Water use can be cut out entirely by installing waterless urinals.

We enclose fact sheets explaining how water may be used more efficiently on this site.

Domestic Appliances

If domestic appliances are to be provided in the new property, the applicant is asked to consider installing water and energy efficient models. Most products such as washing machines and dishwashers are now advertised with energy and water use information. We enclose advice in a fact sheet on domestic appliances.

Maintaining lawns, gardens and other planted areas need not require vast amounts of watering. A few simple measures can be taken to reduce the amount of water required. On this site the Environment Agency would encourage the applicant to consider the following:

* grass should not be mown too often or too short this only encourages shallow roots, which are more likely to dry out
* use of mulches or ground cover plants to retain soil moisture
* provision of shade for those plants that require more water
* watering, when necessary, in the early morning or evening to reduce evaporation losses.

Grey & Rain Water Recycling
Rainwater and grey water recycling is becoming increasingly popular. It can reduce household water use by up to 30%. A number of systems are available which collect, treat and store rain- or grey water for WC flushing or garden/outside watering.

The Environment Agency would be happy to provide further information on these ideas, and be happy to discuss the use of these techniques at the application site. Please contact us.

Water Saving in Commercial Premises
Reducing the amount of water used in industrial processes can often be simple and cheap and have a short payback period. As a rule of thumb, reductions of 20% in water and effluent bills are usually achievable at little or no extra cost. Information can be obtained from the Agency and from the Environmental Technology Best Practice Programme (free helpline tel: 0800 585794.)

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

Wildlife Enhancement
Opportunities should be provided for wildlife habitat enhancement through enlargement and/ or appropriate management of existing habitats and through creation of new habitats.

Bird nesting and roosting sites should be built into the development through the incorporation of ledges, crevices and boxes, where possible. The incorporation of bat roosts into the design of buildings should also be considered.

Planting should comprise of native species only. Use of locally native species in landscaping plans is essential in order to benefit local wildlife and to help maintain the region's natural balance of flora. It will also help to prevent the spread of invasive, alien species within the region.

Wildlife Protection
The proposal involves the demolition of buildings which might potentially offer bat roosting opportunities. Buildings to be demolished should be inspected for bats prior to work starting, with English Nature being contacted if any bats are found.

Natural Drainage
The development should incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) utilising surface water for landscape irrigation and water features. This should include making use of permeable surfaces and other similar measures to reduce the risk of non-point source pollution or excessive surface water run-off. This might include the use of gravel surfaces in paths, parking spaces and driveways.

DECISION NOTICE

Please forward a copy of the decision notice to this office quoting our reference. A copy of this letter has been sent to the agent. If you have any further queries, please contact me, quoting the reference at the beginning of this letter.

Yours faithfully

PAUL BUSING
Planning Liaison Officer
Direct dial: 01276 454326
Direct fax: 01276 454352
Email: paul.busing@environment-agency.gov.uk

CC: Gregory Gray Associates

HIGHWAYS CONSULTATION SHEET

From: Angela Odell **Date:** 09 April 2002

Application Number: F/2002/6245

Proposal: Proposed redevelopment of garden centre, reuse of buildings, access improvement, road, parking and landscaping.

Parish: SWALLOWFIELD PARISH

Site Address:
Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield, Reading.

Applicant:
World Of Gardens C/O Gregory Grey Associates.

Your observations are required in respect of this application within 7 days of the above date.

✓ below as applicable;

1) ☐ Recommend refusal for the reason(s) **stated below;**
2) ☐ Recommend approval but with condition(s) & reason(s) **stated below;**
3) ☐ Recommend approval with **no** condition(s) or reason(s).

Comment

Highways request a revised plan that addresses the following points:

1. The footway extended around the radius of the junction (south side only).
2. Demonstrate that an articulated lorry can turn within the site.

Signed: _____ **Print name:** AC 25/04/02

POLICY AND PLANS CONSULTATION

Date: 24/4/02

Case Officer: Mrs Angela Odell

Application: F/2002/6245 Redevelopment of garden centre, re-use of buildings, access improvement, road, parking and landscaping

Location: Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield, Reading

Applicant: World of Gardens c/o Gregory Grey Associates

Background
Existing permission for garden centre, greenhouses and temporary reuse of existing buildings on site of former nursery. As a result of variations in conditions and the exclusion of the glasshouses from the floorspace calculations for the permitted scheme it should be noted that the existing permission involves an extension in floorspace over the original situation when the site was in horticultural production. Site in countryside, outside a settlement that the Inspector is not identified for growth. (category B settlement). The land is designated as a green gap or wedge

The Key Local Plan Policies against which development should be assessed are WOS3, WCC1, WCC2 and WRE6. You should consider both what is in the Deposit Draft version of the WDLP and the recommendations of the Inspector and assess the scheme against both. There is a balance to be struck between rural regeneration and the impact on the countryside in all these sorts of application.

WRE6
You will have to consider whether the retail development would have any effect on local shopping provision in the villages because of the range and type of goods proposed to be sold. (There was a recent decision on a garden centre reported in Planning, where the Inspector was of the view that there would be no impact, you should research this to see if there are any similarities, in case you are considering a refusal.) You should consider whether you should restrict the type of goods sold with a positive and negative condition. This approach is supported by PPG6 in respect of other forms of out of town shopping. (an e.g. that could be adapted is on the appeal decision for Emmbrook Retail Park, Wokingham). You should certainly restrict the amount of retail floorspace within the building and probably the amount of space used as external display.

With visual impact you will have to consider what originally existed, what has been approved already and compare the new scheme with that. My feeling is that the application proposal is somewhat different from the earlier permitted scheme. The greenhouses originally proposed were light structures, such as you may expect to see as part of any horticultural enterprise. These buildings are more substantial and urban. I am not aware of substantial amounts of planting to improve the environment. The external display space and parking areas should also be considered for their location and consequent visual impact.

You will also need to consider impact on neighbours and any traffic generation and road safety impacts.

With regard to gap, consider if development of this site would have the effect of bringing the built up areas of Riseley and Swallowfield physically closer together or make either settlement visually more apparent when looking from one settlement to the other. Does it urbanise the intervening space when tg through the gap giving the perception of continuous development or is this merely infill of a small gap in an otherwise built up frontage allowed under WCC1. The Inspector recommends that the gap should stand until reviewed for the next plan.

The application should be referred to the SAI panel as required by policy WOS4.

Recommendation
No objection in principle as redevelopment of an existing site in countryside, provided the new scheme is not significantly larger than the original scheme or existing redevelopment permission. The suitability of the scheme will depend on satisfactory control of the proposed retail operation, the effect of the built development on the countryside and the green gap, the amenity of neighbours and whether there are any highway issues that cannot be overcome.

24/4/02

NB for LPI Inspectors comments see pages 5-196 and 5.197 of his report. He has ~~recommended~~ this site for housing

WOKINGHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND HOUSING

MEMORANDUM

To: Angela Odell
Development Control

Your Ref: F/2002/6245

From: John Mullaney
Environmental Health

My Ref: 854

Date: 22/04/02

PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT OF GARDEN CENTRE

BALCOMBE NURSERIES, BASINGSTOKE RD, SWALLOWFIELD

These proposals have been evaluated and I have the following comments:

I have no environmental health objections to this proposal with the imposition of the following conditions:-

(i) No sound reproduction or amplification equipment (including public address systems, loudspeakers, etc.) which is audible at the site boundary shall be installed or operated on the site without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

(ii) Deliveries by commercial vehicles shall only be made to or from the site between 8am hours and 7pm hours Monday to Friday/Saturday and at no time on Sundays or bank or other public holidays without the prior agreement in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

(iii) Works related to the construction of the development hereby granted, including works of demolition or preparation prior to building operations, shall not take place other than between the hours of 8am and 7pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 1.30pm Saturdays and at no time on Sundays, Bank or National Holidays.

(iv) All plant, machinery and equipment (including fans, ducting and external openings) to be used by reason of the granting of this permission shall be so installed, maintained and operated so as to prevent the transmission of noise and vibration into any premises either attached to, or in the vicinity of the premises to which the application refers.

John Mullaney

J R MULLANEY
SENIOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION & HOUSING

SWALLOWFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

PARISH COUNCIL OFFICE
SWALLOWFIELD STREET, SWALLOWFIELD
READING, BERKS, RG7 1QX
Tel: 0118 988 5929 Fax: 0118 988 6443
email: clerk@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk

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26 APR 2002

24 April 2002

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FAXED AND POSTED

Planning Dept.,
P.O. Box 157,
Wokingham District Council,
Shute End,
Wokingham,
Berks. RG40 1WR

Dear Sirs,

Application Number: F/2002/6245
Location: Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield Parish
Proposal: Proposed redevelopment of garden centre, reuse of buildings, access improvement, road, parking and landscaping
Case Officer: Angela Odell

There appears to be some discrepancy between the extant planning permission and this application with regard to the floor area of the proposed new development. The Parish Council assumes that the site layout that shows the new building to be approximately the same floor area as the glass house permitted in 97/66449/V to be correct, as if this is not the case then presumably this application will be rejected as not being valid due to providing misleading information.

In addition the Parish Council notes that the category for the application is A1 Shops, to which the applicant has added Garden Centre. The Parish Council therefore assumes that if Planning permission is granted, then the permission will be solely for a garden centre together with associated shops/workshops. Thus if in the future the garden centre closed down, and the new owner wished to convert the buildings into shops of a different nature, then planning permission for change of use would be required.

The Parish Council considers that the proposed conservatory will be visually more acceptable than the glass house which currently could be constructed in accordance with planning permission 97/66449/V. Consequently the Parish Council has no objection to the design of the proposed structure.

However the Parish Council is concerned, as it has been for all applications on this site, as to the increase of traffic that the garden centre will generate. The Basingstoke Road is heavily used with traffic travelling at a fast pace. The Parish Council is concerned that the substantial amount of traffic entering and leaving the site will therefore present a traffic hazard, which in turn will increase the chances of traffic accidents.

Contd.

If the application is granted planning approval then the Parish Council requests that conditions and/or alterations to the application are imposed as to:-

1. The hours that the centre is permitted to be open. The Parish Council considers that adjoining residential properties should not be subject to noise disruption after 6.30 p.m.
2. That deliveries etc. to the centre should not be allowed before 7.30 a.m. Monday to Friday, 9.00 a.m. on Saturday, and no deliveries on Sundays.
3. That, as this site is outside an identified settlement, lighting at night, including security lighting, is minimised.
4. That all boundary planting, particularly adjacent to neighbouring properties is of a substantial height and width, in order to minimise noise and visual intrusion.
5. That the rear boundary be close boarded fencing 2 metres high in order to prevent easy access from the garden centre to the rear of Brandywell and other properties.
6. That on all side boundaries where 2 metre high close boarded fencing, or similar, does not currently exist, then, if the adjacent owners require it, such fencing to be provided.

Yours faithfully,

C Adams

Mrs. C. Adams, Clerk

Oak Cottage
Swallowfield
Berkshire, RG7 1PY, UK
Tel: - +44 118 988 3220
Fax: - +44 118 988 2211
E-Mail: - oakcot@netcomuk.co.uk

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FAO: - Mrs. A. Odell
Head of Development Control
Wokingham District Council
PO Box 157
Shute End
Wokingham
Berkshire, RG40 1WJ

Monday, 10 June, 2002
Our Reference:- L20020610A

Dear Mrs Odell,

Planning Application F/2002/6245
Proposed Redevelopment of
Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield
by "World of Gardens"

Thank you for your letter dated 29th May 2002 advising us of revised/additional plans submitted to support planning application F/2002/6245.

We have taken opportunity to review revised/additional plans held at Woodley Library and require further clarification on the following: -

We are not sure why only a few trees on adjacent properties have been identified on the revised plans. There are certainly more mature trees that could be affected by this development.

1) The mature English Elms, Willow, Chestnut and Sycamore Trees (cir.1900) which form the boundary/property line between Oak Cottage and the proposed Garden Nursery Centre, and between Queen Anne's Meade and the proposed Garden Nursery Centre is not identified on the revised plans.

2) The adjacent mature Willow Tree (cir. 1930) forms part of the boundary fence to the proposed Garden Nursery Centre is not identified on the revised plans.

3) The adjacent mature Weeping Willow Tree (cir. 1977) also forms part of the boundary fence to the proposed Garden Nursery Centre is not identified on the revised plans.

4) The adjacent mature May Tree (cir. 1920) also forms part of the boundary fence to the proposed Garden Nursery Centre is not identified on the revised plans.

5) The mature Weeping Willow Tree (cir.1933-34) identified on the plans, located in the south-westerly corner of the Property Line with Oak Cottage is actually located in the garden of Oak Cottage.

Does this mean that the developers plan to remove or modify any of the mature trees on-site or on adjacent properties? We certainly object to the removal or modification to any mature trees on the site or adjacent properties.

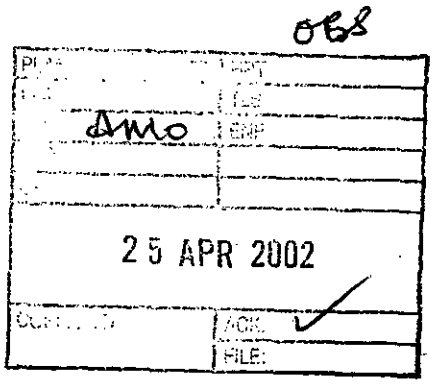
It should also be noted that the building (identified as exiting sales building) adjacent to the westerly boundary to Oak Cottage was constructed in 1984 after the removal a wooden office block. The replacement structure was built of concrete block under a flat felt roof. In the process of building the replacement building the footings were moved closer to the boundary of Oak Cottage. This left a separation of 0.3metre between the wall of the building and the garden fence of Oak Cottage. An objection was raised at the time with the then planning officer at Wokingham District Council. Wokingham District Council took no action. At the time no planning application for the new structure was made as it was declared as a farm building. This structure has gone through 3 changes of use; farm building to machinery storage to office block to sales showroom. At each time no change of use was applied for through Wokingham District Council.

Objection to the construction of the new building could not be made, as there was no prior knowledge of this redevelopment. Also, at the time of the redevelopment the wooden structure was removed and the replacement with a concrete block structure whilst the residents of Oak Cottage were on vacation.

Yours sincerely,

Robin J. Allison
Copy: - Chairman - Swallowfield Parish Council

Date: 24 April 2002
Our ref:CP/Thompson/T0194005
Your ref:ANGELA ODELL F/2002.6245



CHARLES PLATEL
AND PARTNERS
SOLICITORS

Guildgate House
Shute End
Wokingham
Berkshire RG40 1BJ
Tel: (0118) 9784866
Fax: (0118) 9774291
DX: 33510 WOKINGHAM

e-mail address:
mail@charlesplatel.co.uk
Service by e-mail not accepted
website address:
www.charlesplatel.co.uk

Environmental Services Department
Planning Services
Wokingham District Council
DX 33506
WOKINGHAM

Dear Sirs

Application No: F/2002/6245
Site Address: Balcombe Nurseries Basingstoke Road Swallowfield Reading
Proposal: Proposed redevelopment of garden centre, reuse of buildings, access improvement, road, parking and landscaping

We act on behalf of Mr and Mrs P Thompson of Balcombe Lodge, Spring Lane, Swallowfield, Reading, Berkshire RG7 1SU whose property immediately adjoins the application site to the north.

On looking at the application we are instructed to record the following objections made on behalf of our clients.

1. The site layout plan submitted with the planning application is incorrect in that the northern boundary encroaches onto our clients' property by nearly 2 metres.

   The effect of this is to disguise the proximity of the development to our clients' boundary.

2. Our clients would prefer to see the area designated as "outside display plant, shrubs and trees etc" and "fencing, hard landscaping, display and storage" reduced in size and located further away from their boundary.

   It is not clear from the planning application of the exact use that these areas will be put to or the degree of access afforded by the

Directors: CHARLES PLATEL MARC LAZARUS BA (HONS) MCIARB MICHELLE MACHIN-JEFFERIES LL.B (HONS)
Assistant Solicitor: ZOE COOKE LL.B (HONS)

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public and therefore we are unable to determine to what extent i will impact on our clients' enjoyment of their property but in any event it is likely to be considerable.

3. The proposals seem to our clients to be an over development by some considerable degree. It appears that most of the area of land is subject to some form of development or other and is clearly excessive having regard to the present use and location of the site. The development looks more like an industrial site than a garden centre and our Clients suspect that this application is a stalking horse designed to procure more intensive development in the future, if this application proves to be successful.

4. Given the amount of parking which takes up nearly a fifth of the site excluding the parking required by staff and the amount of deliveries that will be required, the increase in traffic to the Basingstoke Road would be considerable. We would suggest that no consideration should be given to this application without the benefit of a specialist traffic impact report.

5. We note that the application also refers to "existing sales building refurbished for concessions". Our clients are concerned that these can consist of a hotch potch of various activities and they would wish to ensure that there was some control over what these would be.

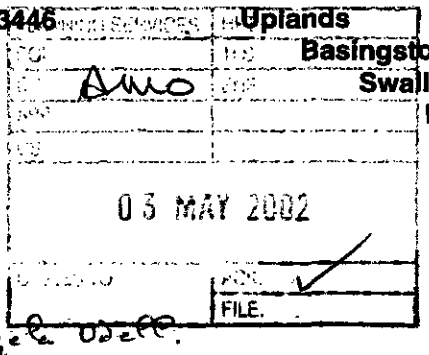
Yours faithfully CP&P

CHARLES PLATEL & PARTNERS

068

Tel: 0118 988 3446

Uplands
Basingstoke Road
Swallowfield
Reading
Berkshire
RG7 1PY



PLANNING SERVICES
AMO
03 MAY 2002
FILE.

3rd May 2002

Dear Angela Odell.

re Application No: F/2002/6245
Belcombe Nurseries
Swallowfield

reproposal
Proposed redevelopment of garden centre

This would not be objected to by myself or my husband.

It seems to be a large "barn" development which is requested in place of the glass house. From the plan it is extremely difficult to establish the size of the proposed building. there being a lack of measurements and apparently it is not to scale. This is surprising and more suitable for outline planning.

There is no distance marked between our boundary

GARTH PEARCE
MAYFIELD HOUSE
SWALLOWFIELD
BERKSHIRE RG7 1PY
ENGLAND

TELEPHONE: (0118) 988 2622/988 4347
FAX: (0118) 988 3568

OBJ

PLANNING SERVICES	HPT
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CS	
29 APR 2002	
COPIES TO	ACK: ✓
	FILE:

To: Angela Odell.
From: Garth Pearce.
April 26th, 2002.
Re: Proposals from "World of Gardens" at Balcombe nurseries, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield.
Application: F/2002/6245.

Dear Mrs Odell,

I feel a sense of unease on this application (see enclosed letter) and object to the plans on the following grounds:

Most important: To treat the application as the Trojan horse it clearly is.

1. The proposals are far too vague and non-specific.
2. It is not necessary to change the glass building, already agreed. This solid building will block off sun and light to the surroundings.
3. The measurements of 35 metres by 36 metres of the main building (measurements not on plans, but obtained from Gregory Grey) is larger than the original garden centre building in the plan. It seems to take in both the former plans for water garden display and plant displays. (Because of the lack of detail, it is difficult to interpret).
4. There is an agreed 15 metre "buffer zone" in the original proposals, which are supposed to stretch from the corner of our boundary to any new construction, whether car park or building.
5. Agreed parking areas were supposed to be screened by bushes. The car park in this is square and open.
6. The position of the building has changed, to be aligned in full view of the rear of our house.
7. The planning application makes no mention of the true owner. "World of Gardens" does not own the site.
8. I know it was not listed as an issue ten years ago, but the traffic along this road has increased to danger levels. It is a high-speed, derestricted stretch, which makes a nonsense of traffic calming measures and speed cameras which are spreading in other far less dangerous areas. There are regular accidents, but no deaths or serious injuries in the last three years. Planners should be aware that it is just one tragic crash away from being a major issue.

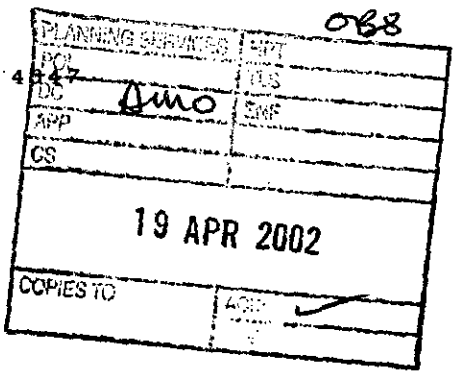
And, just a small point, the plan of our house pre-dates 1986. The old house, in this shape, was demolished.

Yours sincerely,

Garth Pearce.

GARTH PEARCE
MAYFIELD HOUSE
SWALLOWFIELD
BERKSHIRE RG7 1PY
ENGLAND

TELEPHONE: (0118) 988 2622/988 4447
FAX: (0118) 988 3568



Angela Odell, Development Control Officer,
Wokingham Environmental Services Department,
Planning Services,
P. O. Box 157,
Shute End,
Wokingham.
Berkshire RG40 1WR.

April 17th, 2002.

Dear Mrs Odell,

Application No: F/2002/6245.
Site address: Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield, Berkshire RG7 1PY.

I am baffled by this application.

The land is owned by Contour Electronics of Hook, which exchanged contracts on the site with Taylor Woodrow during the week starting December 17th, 2001. The price was £455,000.

The reason I can be so specific is that I had been in regular contact with David Morris, the strategic land planner, about the possibility of the neighbours purchasing the site for £100,000 as extended gardens - thus removing all future threat of building. When that seemed to be too small an offer, we also talked about purchasing a "buffer zone" which would protect our properties from possible future development. Neither of these came to fruition.

Mr Morris told me that Contour had said they wanted to expand their company and move it to the Balcombe/Mowrite site. They would also be seeking permission for business use for further buildings, which I believe is known as B1.

"World of Gardens" does not exist as a company. Mr Gregory Grey, of Gregory Grey Associates, which has submitted the plans on behalf of "the owner" told me on Monday, April 15th that he did not know exactly who owned the site. He had been approached, he said, by a group of "former garden centre managers" to submit the application.

When I contacted Mr Nick Foster, managing director of Contour Electronics, on Wednesday, April 17th, he confirmed that Contour still owned the site. He said that business park plans were suspended, because "World of Gardens" had "come on to the scene" and he is dealing with "individuals, not a company. I obviously can not give names."

/Contd...

To: Angela Odell.
From: Garth Pearce.

The mystery remains of why or how "World of Gardens" could possibly discover that Contour owned the land - and want to develop it so quickly.

Much is made in the application as to why a glass building should be changed to a new type of construction, which measures 36 metres by 35 metres, (although measurements are not, for some reason, in the plan) and is 4.8 metres high. The measurements seem bigger than those agreed originally. And a mainly glass building, I am told, would be suitable for any garden centre.

I fear - indeed, anticipate - a change of use could be made, once permission is given for this building, either during work or after completion.

This site has been available for development as a garden centre for nine years. There have been no takers. Even during the long advertisement process last year, no firm offers were made.

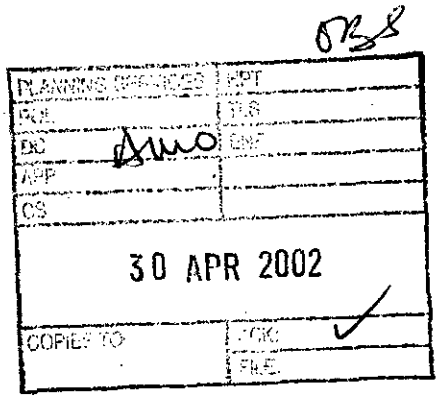
Contour buy it for the considerable sum of £455,000 and, suddenly, in 12 weeks, we have plans for a garden centre, ready and waiting, from a company or partnership with no previous trading record.

Why do I hear alarm bells ringing?

Yours sincerely,

Garth Pearce.

Oak Cottage
Swallowfield
Berkshire, RG7 1PY, UK
Tel: - +44 118 988 3220
Fax: - +44 118 988 2211
E-Mail: - oakcot@netcomuk.co.uk



FAO: - Mrs. A. Odell
Head of Development Control
Wokingham District Council
PO Box 157
Shute End
Wokingham
Berkshire, RG40 1WJ

Saturday, 27 April, 2002
Our Reference:- L20020427A

Dear Mrs Odell,

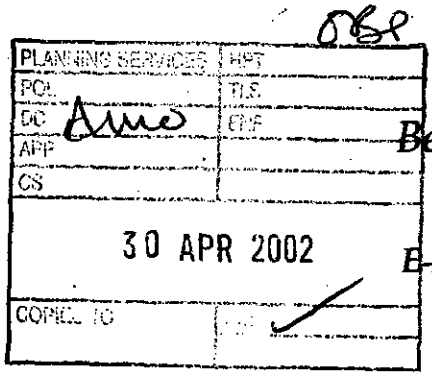
Planning Application 27MAR2002/6245
Proposed Redevelopment of
Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield
by "World of Gardens"

I refer to the recent planning application for the proposed redevelopment of Garden Nursery, on the plot adjoining our house, Oak Cottage Basingstoke Road Swallowfield and wish to raise the following objections.

Since the closure of Balcombe Nursery, the number of incidents of burglaries, prowlers and casual visitors looking for the Nursery has dropped significantly and I feel more secure in my home. My concern is that this redevelopment will result in an increase of prowlers, casual visitors and burglaries because my house will be mistaken as part of "World of Gardens". Indeed this happened frequently, when Balcombe Nursery was trading and the public would knock on the front door in or out of trading hours, enquiring about the Nursery. Vehicles parked in front of the Nursery at night and on several occasions the police were called, as incidents occurred in my garden, i.e. prowlers under the windows of the back of the house. The Police at that time went to the "wrong" Oak Cottage, and it was an hour before anyone arrived. In retrospect this seems efficient. At a recent attempted burglary, it was reported to the Police the same day and they did not come until the following afternoon, leaving our property insecure. Will there be Security Guards providing a 24-hour patrol on this redevelopment?

I object also to any loss of privacy that may occur from the public looking into our property and traffic turning into our drive.

Oak Cottage
Swallowfield
Berkshire, RG7 1PY, UK
Tel: - +44 118 988 3220
Fax: - +44 118 988 2211
E-Mail: - oakcot@netcomuk.co.uk



FAO: - Mrs. A. Odell
Head of Development Control
Wokingham District Council
PO Box 157
Shute End
Wokingham
Berkshire, RG40 1WJ

Friday, 26 April, 2002
Our Reference:- L20020426A

Dear Mrs Odell,

Planning Application 27MAR2002/6245
Proposed Redevelopment of
Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield
by "World of Gardens"

Thank you very much for informing us of the proposed redevelopment of the above site as a Garden Nursery, with related Concession Sales units.

Whereas we welcome the development of this derelict site in keeping with its surroundings we must raise the following concerns with the local planning authority. After difficulties obtaining copies of the planning applications from Woodley Library we submit our objections as follows.

1) The plans that accompanied the planning applications did not have any measurements or dimensions included. As a result of this it is difficult to identify where the new building will be situated and its size in relationship to the site. It is our understanding that a planning application must dimension the size of any permanent structure.

2) It is our understanding that current planning for this site is for a "Garden Nursery". This planning application is for a Garden Centre with Concession Sales. From the information available from Woodley Library there was no change of use for this site application. Has a change of use application been made for this site?

3) It is not clear from the plans what is meant by "Concession Sales". This could mean anything from food and vegetables to computers and accessories. We feel that there is very little information within this planning application to indicate the true intention of this redevelopment.

4) We note that the proposed development has NOT taken into account a suitable "Guard Zone" between the adjoining property boundary and the parking area.

5) The planning application has been made on behalf of an organisation called "World of Gardens". However, according to Companies House this company was dissolved in July 2001. As of 21st April 2002, no new application for "World of Gardens" had been made to Companies House.

6) It has been noted from the plans that access to/from the B3349 to the site has been improved. However with the development of 4 local Business Parks and the dramatic increase in commuter traffic we, as residents are concerned that we will neither be able to access or exit our houses safely on to the B3349. Already, as mentioned in other letters with Wokingham District Council Highways Department we experience great difficulty accessing the B3349 from our property.

7) Today the dramatic increase in traffic using the B3349 is causing sleep pattern deficiency to the residents. Late night HGV traffic (12:00am-04:00am) and early morning traffic (04:30am-09:00am) is very noisy and disruptive to resident rest and sleep. Coupled with the morning (07:00am-10:00am) and evening (04:00pm-07:00pm) Commuter traffic has resulted in all windows facing the B3349 being kept closed in the summer months to reduce noise and pollution in the houses. We see this development only adding to the current misery of the residents.

In addition I wish to remind WDC Planning Office that a number of inappropriately designed Rural Business Parks have sprung up in the area to the detriment of the villages. Certainly in all cases planning was granted "in good faith" however the resulting structures have turned our historic villages into nothing more than shantytowns. We trust that WDC Planning Department's vigilance will prevail to protect Swallowfield from this plunder.

With continued cuts to Thames Valley Police Force in this area we are very concerned about the security of our property which boundaries this site. Since the closure of Balcombe Nursery the number of prowlers and hawkers using our property as access to the Garden Centre has dropped and Burglaries reduced.

How does this planning application fit into WDC's overall Rural Community Development policy? Or, perhaps the developers will only stop when the whole of Southern England has been covered with houses, concrete and tarmac. I guess eventually to enjoy a truly Rural environment and the beauty of the countryside we will be forced to live in another country. Does WDC have a policy on Green Site development within their District? What ever happened to 'quality of life'?

What are WDC's plans for traffic relief on this over congested stretch of the B3349 between Riseley and Three Mile Cross? This stretch of road is especially busy in the morning and evening where speeding motorists and truck drivers use the B3349 to avoid the congestion on the Swallowfield by-pass. What plans have WDC made for the additional 90 cars joining the B3349 during the day, 7 days a week, from this development. And the additional commercial and HGV vehicles that must collect and deliver during the day.

As a result of the notes set out above we wish to REGISTER OUR REJECTION to this development due to lack of appropriate dimensions & measurements and the lack of an open statement of use contained within planning applications 27MAR2002/6245. I also hope that WDC will continue to adhere to their fight to maintain the GREEN Rural environment and keep the few remaining villages in their District AS Villages and maintain the rural demarcation so that we do not become an extension of Reading.

...so have a major concern after the recent medium size developments in Swallowfield as to how the ...evelopers plan to protect the residents surrounding this development from excessive noise, property damage, pollution and trespass from the contractors.

Finally, Balcombe Nursery's failed because of its close proximity to other more established and successful Garden Centre and Nurseries in the area. I have grave concern as to what will happen to this development when "World of Gardens" fail? Will is become yet another Rural Business Park, number 8 in this parish?

I would appreciate your acknowledgement of safe receipt of this letter to my home in the UK at: - Oak Cottage, Swallowfield, Berkshire, RG7 1PY.

Yours sincerely,

R. Allison

Copy: - Chairman - Swallowfield Parish Council

OBS

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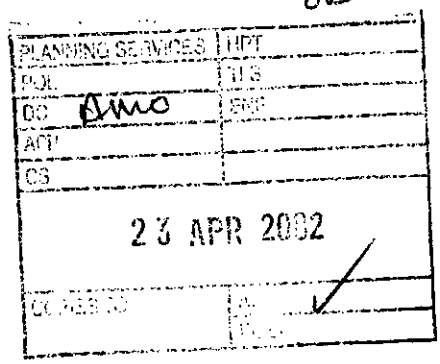
23 APR 2002

COMMS CO	



BRANDYWELL
SPRING LANE
SWALLOWFIELD
RG7 - 1ST
24-4-02.

REF.
ANGELA ODELL.
F 2002/6245.

Dear Mr Odell.

My husband and myself have seen the plans for the re-developement of the Balcombe Nursery Site in Basingstoke Road. "Aplication Number F/2002/6245." The only worry we have concernes leaving the existing Buffer Strip as it is with only a low chain link fence along the boundrey. Something more robust is needed to ensure both privacy for us and security for the new Garden Centre.

Mr Danby Bulldozed a lot of the hedging along our Boundry, which has not yet re-generated, leaving large gaps in the wild bramble hedge.

With the almost non-existant hedging and only a low chain link fence as a boundry vandles will have easy access and the deer will use the Garden Centre as their very own Dimpy Bar. Deer can and do jump 6ft open fences because they can see if its safe to do so. Only solid fencing can keep them out.

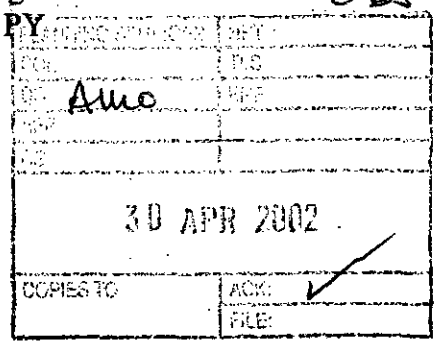
If any-one from Country Gardens would like to come and assess the security problem from this side of the boundry I would be pleased to show them around.

Yours sincerely

P. Silman (Mrs)

1 Berkeley Villas
Basingstoke Road
Swallowfield
Reading
RG7 1PY

OKB



ATTN: Development Control Committee
Planning Services
Working District Council

Copy to: Swallowfield Parish Council

Comments to Application Number F/2002/6245

We have no objection to the proposed plans for the redevelopment of the Balcombe Nurseries Garden Centre.

Our house is situated along Basingstoke Road 4 properties to the North of the entrance to Balcombe Nursery.

Our main concern is for Traffic Safety. We believe that it will be necessary to reduce the speed limit along Basingstoke Road between Swallowfield and Riseley to 40mph. As it is a heavily used road already, a commercial nursery will increase the volume of traffic. As there is limited visibility (approx 120m) both to the left and right of the proposed entrance, we believe that 60mph will be too dangerous for traffic entering and leaving the nursery and also for the residents surrounding the proposed site.

Also as the only footpath along that section of Basingstoke Road is on the opposite side of the road, we feel a Pedestrian Crossing would be beneficial to both the Garden Centre and the Local Community.

Please consider our comments when accepting the proposal for the redevelopment as we do feel strongly about these two issues.

Yours faithfully,

Peter Connolly ***Tessa Connolly***

Owners of 1 Berkeley Villas, Basingstoke Road

(1)

OBE

PLANNING SERVICES	HPT
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03 MAY 2002

COPIES TO

Willow Tree Cottage,
Park Lane,
Riseley. RG7 1RH.
2nd May 2002.

Re. Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Rd
Application no: S/2002/6245.

Dear Mrs. Odell,

I would be grateful if you would consider the following comments in relation to the above application.

1. Development of the site should be no greater & for no other purpose than that allowed under the previous permission.

2. In view of the site's position in a separate of settlements area, the design of the building should be as low key as possible & specifically designed to blend in with its rural setting.

3. Light pollution from the site should be avoided.

4. Signposting, if necessary at all, should be kept to the bare minimum & as discrete as possible.

5. Entrance to the site, including road layout + markings should, again, be as low key as possible to avoid

0688

PLANNING SERVICES	HPT
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03 MAY 2002

COPIES TO	ACK: ✓
	FILE:

Moorside
Part Lane
Riseley
Reading
Berks
RG7 1RU

3rd May 2002

Ms. Angela O'Dell
Planning Officer
Wokingham District Council
Shute End
Wokingham
Berks

Dear Ms O'Dell

6245

Balcombe Nurseries Development, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield

With regard to the above Application, I would like to make some comments which I hope will be taken into account before further permission for development of this site is granted.

We realise that some development will take place on this site, since it was a nursery for many years. The problem with a change from glasshouse already granted to log-cabin building requested lies in the ambiguity of the message given. Although there are three thriving nurseries in the district already, its possible that another could draw some custom, and we would prefer building in this particular site to be uncompromisingly for plant of a biological nature. The log-cabin style shown while maybe tasteful could rapidly be altered to accommodate plant of a commercial nature. And such a development would require monitoring by the local population, and frankly, we are retired, attempting to maintain a rural existence, and beginning to feel even further under siege from developers. As our previous experience shows, developers get permission for seemingly innocuous changes, which lead by gentle degrees to massive disruption of the life-styles of the village population. If the building is glasshouse, set well back from the road, and honestly nursery-garden centre, this helps us maintain an acceptable relationship with commerce rather than the stressful nature being imposed on this population at present.

Also, as the Riseley VDS has shown, villagers experience real problems as the result of development. Again, this proposed development intends to cater for about a hundred people at any one time, including staff and customers. What arrangements have been

PLANNING
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CS
15 APR 2...
COPIES

To:
Drainage
Fao Roger Johnson

From: Angela Odell

Date: 09 April 2002

Application Number: F/2002/6245

Proposal: Proposed redevelopment of garden centre, reuse of buildings, access improvement, road, parking and landscaping..

Site Address:
Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield, Reading.

Applicant:
World Of Gardens C/O Gregory Grey Associates.

Your observations are required in respect of this application within **7 days** of the above date.

Drainage. HD | Drainage.
Swallowfield
20020266.
11 APR 2002
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Please can you advise me how much more hard standing there is on this proposal compared with the existing situation

Thanks Roger.

Details of surface water balancing works together with details of the stage of the development at which the works will be

TO: DEVELOPMENT CONTROL FROM: Environmental Design

Angela Odell DATE: 25th April 2002

Location:	Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield, Reading
Proposal:	Proposed redevelopment of garden centre, reuse of buildings, access improvement road, parking and landscaping
Application Number:	F/2002/6245

In response to your consultation dated 9th April 2002 for the above application, the tree and landscape comments are as follows:

The existing site contains a number of existing mature trees which will be affected by the development proposals. Although these trees have been located on the survey drawing (931/98/01) no information has been produced to indicate the quality of these landscape features or, which are to be retained.

Before I can comment further the applicant should be required to produce for approval a full and detailed tree survey in accordance with BS 5837 : 1991 - Trees in Relation to Construction. This should also clearly show the development proposal in relation to the existing trees, which are to be either removed or retained and tree protection measures to ensure the successful retention of retained trees.

There is considerable scope for comprehensive soft and hard landscape scheme and the applicant should be required to produce for approval detailed designs for both. All new planting should be produced on a separate drawing and clearly show: the full names of proposed planting, sizes at times of planting, densities and plant numbers for each bed and in total.



ROBERT PETROW
Consultant Landscape Architect

Please see Part I for plans.

To:
Transportation Group
Rachael Cameron

From: Angela Odell

Date: 30 April 2002

Application Number: F/2002/6245

Proposal: Proposed redevelopment of garden centre, reuse of buildings, access improvement, road, parking and landscaping..

Site Address:
Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield, Reading.

Applicant:
World Of Gardens C/O Gregory Grey Associates.

Your observations are required in respect of this application within **7 days** of the above date.

No comments

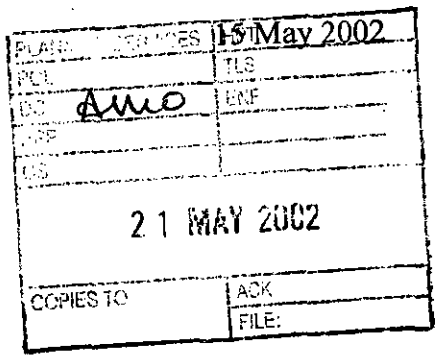
JOH
7/5/2

From
John Inman
Transport

SWALLOWFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

PARISH COUNCIL OFFICE
SWALLOWFIELD STREET, SWALLOWFIELD
READING, BERKS, RG7 1QX
Tel: 0118 988 5929 Fax: 0118 988 6443
email: clerk@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk

15 May 2002



FAXED AND POSTED

Planning Dept.,
P.O. Box 157,
Wokingham District Council,
Shute End,
Wokingham,
Berks. RG40 1WR

Dear Sirs,

Application Number: F/2002/6245
Location: Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield Parish
Proposal: Proposed redevelopment of garden centre, reuse of buildings, access improvement, road, parking and landscaping
Case Officer: Angela Odell

The Parish Council's response on the above application dated 24th April 2002 included the Parish Council's expressed concern over the access to the site from the B3349 Basingstoke Road in that the B3349 is a heavily used road with fast moving traffic, and therefore an access generating a large amount of vehicular movement will increase the risk of traffic accidents.

The Parish Council wishes to regretfully inform the Planning and Highways Departments that its concerns over the dangers of the Basingstoke Road have been proved in the worst possible manner, in that there was a fatal accident at Goddards Farm on the Basingstoke Road on Saturday May11th 2002. Goddards Farm is close to the entrance of Balcombe Nurseries.

Yours faithfully,

C Adams

Mrs. C. Adams, Clerk

TO: **DEVELOPMENT CONTROL**
Angela Odell

FROM: Environmental Design

DATE: 12th June 2001

Location: Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield.

Proposal: Proposed redevelopment of garden centre, reuse of buildings, access improvement, road parking and landscaping.

Application Number: F/2002/6245

In response to your consultation dated 29th May 2002 for the above application, the arboricultural comments are as follows:

The proposals are acceptable in relation to the best trees on the site and I have no objection to planning permission being granted.

Neil E

Neil Etherington
Senior Arboriculturist

6240

SWALLOWFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

PARISH COUNCIL OFFICE
SWALLOWFIELD STREET, SWALLOWFIELD
READING, BERKS, RG7 1QX
Tel: 0118 988 5929 Fax: 0118 988 6443
email: clerk@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk

PLANNING SERVICES | HPT
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APP
CS
18 JUN 2002
COPIES TO | ACK
FILE

12th June 2002

FAXED AND POSTED

Planning Dept.,
P.O. Box 157,
Wokingham District Council,
Shute End,
Wokingham,
Berks. RG40 1WR

Dear Sirs,

Application F/2002/6245 - Proposed redevelopment of garden centre, reuse of buildings, access improvement, road, parking and landscaping
New plans showing tree survey

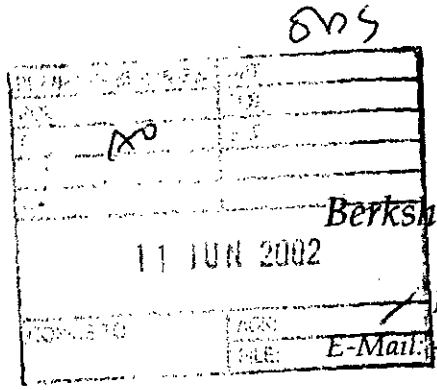
The Parish Council has evidence that the area is a valuable habitat for wildlife and therefore, if the application is approved, would ask you to ensure that conditions are included in order that the minimum amount of disruption to wildlife is caused. This especially refers to wild birds which are present in the surrounding hedges and thicket.

Yours faithfully,

C Adams

Mrs. C. Adams, Clerk

+44-118-988-2211



Oak Cottage
Swallowfield
Berkshire, RG7 1PY, UK
Tel: - +44 118 988 3220
Fax: - +44 118 988 2211
E-Mail: - oakcot@netcomuk.co.uk

FAO: - Mrs. A. Odell
Head of Development Control
Wokingham District Council
PO Box 157
Shute End
Wokingham
Berkshire, RG40 1WJ

Monday, 10 June, 2002
Our Reference:- L20020610A

Dear Mrs Odell,

Planning Application F/2002/6245
Proposed Redevelopment of
Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield
by "World of Gardens"

Thank you for your letter dated 29th May 2002 advising us of revised/additional plans submitted to support planning application F/2002/6245.

We have taken opportunity to review revised/additional plans held at Woodley Library and require further clarification on the following: -

We are not sure why only a few trees on adjacent properties have been identified on the revised plans. There are certainly more mature trees that could be affected by this development.

1) The mature English Elms, Willow, Chestnut and Sycamore Trees (cir.1900) which form the boundary/property line between Oak Cottage and the proposed Garden Nursery Centre, and between Queen Anne's Meade and the proposed Garden Nursery Centre is not identified on the revised plans.

2) The adjacent mature Willow Tree (cir. 1930) forms part of the boundary fence to the proposed Garden Nursery Centre is not identified on the revised plans.

3) The adjacent mature Weeping Willow Tree (cir. 1977) also forms part of the boundary fence to the proposed Garden Nursery Centre is not identified on the revised plans.

4) The adjacent mature May Tree (cir. 1920) also forms part of the boundary fence to the proposed Garden Nursery Centre is not identified on the revised plans.

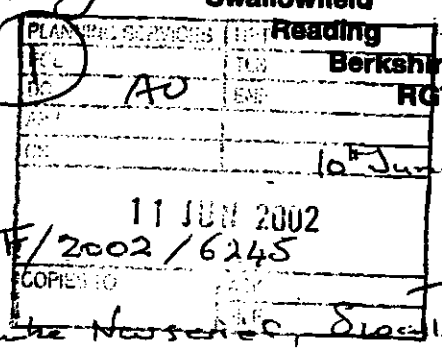
5) The mature Weeping Willow Tree (cir.1933-34) identified on the plans, located in the south-westerly corner of the Property Line with Oak Cottage is actually located in the garden of Oak Cottage.

Tel: 0118 988 3446

Uplands
Basingstoke Road
Swallowfield
Reading
Berkshire
RG7 1PY

SDS

from Dr D.M and Z.M Fraser



PLANNING SERVICES
AO
11 JUN 2002
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10th June 2002

Dear Mr Odell,

Ref. F/2002/6245

Site Balcombe Nurseries, Swallowfield -

As the owners of Uplands, I would like to draw the attention of the Planning Department to the change in the type of structure which is proposed in this application.

If the intention is to reopen this site as a garden centre, there would be no need to change from the type of building for which there is present planning permission.

This large completely different chalet type construction more suited to a business park is not so suitable (despite the arguments in

Tel: 0118 988 3446

Uplands
Basingstoke Road
Swallowfield
Reading
Berkshire
RG7 1PY

(additional Comment. (2)

Dear Mr Odell,

10th June 2002.

Ref. F/2002/6265

Site. Balcombe Nurseries, Swallowfield.
re Traffic problems on B3349 at this site
Since Commenting upon this application,
I expect that you are aware of a fatal
accident between Uplands and Goddards Farm
as a result of a speeding motor cyclist
colliding with a large milk tanker across
the B3345 which was reversing into
the farm entrance at Goddards Farm.

This is the second fatal traffic accident I
have attended outside our property, albeit the







WOKINGHAM UNITARY

Aiming for Excellence

MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 3RD JULY 2002

AT

7.00 PM

AGENDA

Civic Offices
Shute End
Wokingham
Berkshire

Jane Earl
Chief Executive

a) a financial contribution of £3,000 towards libraries provision;

b) a financial contribution of £4,285 towards off-site existing local leisure facilities;

c) a financial contribution of £17,143 towards local highways improvement and sustainable transport initiatives.

2) That subject to the registration and execution of the Agreement referred to in 1) above Application No: 2002/5603 be approved subject to the conditions set out on Agenda pages 587 to 591 with the following additional condition;

Condition No: 22

The proposed details of the dwelling unit on plot 11, submitted in compliance with Condition No: 1 shall have a ridge height no greater than 6m from the existing ground level and shall have no windows or other openings within the roof slope.

Reason

To safeguard the open character and appearance of the adjacent open area.

28. APPLICATION NO: 2002/6245, PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT OF GARDEN CENTRE RE-USE OF BUILDINGS, ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS ROAD, PARKING AND LANDSCAPING, BALCOMBE NURSERIES BASINGSTOKE ROAD SWALLOWFIELD, FOR: WORLD OF GARDENS

The Committee considered a report about this application set out on Agenda pages 595 to 621.

Officers informed the Committee that since the dispatch of the Agenda additional letters of comment had been received from Swallowfield Parish Council raising issues relating to wildlife and a local resident raising issues relating to land ownership and effect of the proposal on nearby trees. Officers also commented that an additional informative was proposed relating to land ownership issues.

Mr. Pierce a local resident attended the meeting and spoke in opposition to the proposal.

Mr. Grey representing the applicant attended the meeting and spoke in favour of the proposal.

In discussing the proposal Members expressed concern regarding highways aspects of the proposal and that the proposal if approved would undermine Council policies.

RESOLVED: That Application No: 2002/6245 be refused on the grounds set out on Agenda page 600 with the addition of the following informative;

Informative No: 2

The applicants are advised to verify that they own all the land within the boundary of the application site.

29. APPLICATION NO: 2002/6319, OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR THE PROPOSED ERECTION OF 11 DETACHED DWELLINGS WITH ASSOCIATED GARAGES AND PARKING. DEMOLITION OF EXISTING DWELLING, CAISTER SANDHURST ROAD FINCHAMPSTEAD, FOR: BECKBRIDGE LTD

The Committee considered a report about this application set out on Agenda pages 622 to 632.

RESOLVED: That Application No: 2002/6319 be refused on the grounds set out on Agenda pages 628 to 629.

30. APPLICATION NO: 2002/6285, ERECTION OF REPLACEMENT DWELLING WITH GARAGE AND

Development Control Ref No:	Received	Parish
F/2002/6245	14.12.01	Swallowfield

Applicant: World of Gardens
Location: Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield
Proposal: Proposed redevelopment of garden centre, re-use of buildings, access improvement, road, parking and landscaping

REPORT PREPARED FOR: DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

REPORT PREPARED BY: Head of Planning and Transportation & Angela Odell

SUMMARY:

1. Planning History – On this 2.67 ha. site are two existing single storey buildings (the ex Mowrite showroom and workshops). The rest of the site is open land with grass, trees, shrubs and brambles and some partly overgrown hardstandings. Previously, a garden centre with garden machinery repairs and sales operated at the site.

   Application No. 40500 was granted permission on 22.6.93 for redevelopment of the existing garden centre comprising a 1,014 sq.m. glasshouse sales building, retention of the existing Mowrite workshop building (with demolition of 130.5m^2 of the northern end), car parking and outside display areas. Conditions included landscaping, retention and protection of trees, fencing, occupation of retained workshop and showroom by Mowrite only, goods sold to be limited to those specified and exclusion of food for human consumption, open display and sales areas to be used only as specified, no loud speakers, etc., hours of construction, machinery and deliveries limited but not hours of opening for garden centre sales.

   The application No. 97/66449/V was granted permission on 25.2.98 to allow another 5 years for time of commencement and retention of the existing Mowrite sales building.

   Three applications for residential development have been refused permission and subsequent appeals dismissed. Application No. 96/63285/F for 25 detached dwellings was refused permission on 11.4.96. Application No. 98/68734/F for 6 detached houses was refused permission on 9.2.99 and application No. 99/69285/F for 3 detached houses was refused permission on 4.5.99. The appeal decision letter for the latter two applications is attached. The Inspector considered that the extant permission for the garden centre was unlikely to be implemented.

2. Proposal – is to erect a 1,410 sq.m. main sales building and retain and refurbish the existing 698 sq.m. ex-Mowrite sales and workshop buildings. The main sales building would be constructed of timber cladding, brick, tiles and glazing and be 4.8

metres high, with maximum dimensions of 35m x 36m. Display areas for plants, hard landscaping and fencing, and conservatories and car parking are also proposed. Landscaping is proposed around the boundaries of the site.

The applicants' consultants have submitted a planning and design statement supporting the proposal, explaining that the outside display areas have been reduced, with no display areas for swimming pools, sheds, caravans, tents or camping. There would also now be no mower shop, cycle parking is now proposed and a pedestrian entrance connecting to the footpath. They have also explained that the 'concessions' would comprise those normally found on a garden centre, e.g. lawn mowers, aquatics, cut flowers, pet foods and goods. Regarding the design of the proposed building, they have explained that as this is similar to two garden centre buildings elsewhere, it should be considered acceptable.

The applicants' consultants have also explained that the applicants are former garden centre managers who have formed an association to develop their own garden centres and that Balcombe Nursery is their first project. They do not currently own the site.

Revised plans now show the ownership boundary with Balcombe Lodge correctly.

RECOMMENDATION: REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION

Background Papers

Held by: Planning Reception
Division: Development Control
Dept: Environmental Services

Contact No: 0118 974 6428/ 6429
E Mail: development.control@wokingham.gov.uk

NB: All reports seek to identify environmental, community safety and equal opportunities implications. Consultation with residents and organisations which has or is about to take place, will also be reported.

BACKGROUND

3. Consultations -
   - ***Swallowfield Parish Council*** : Comments attached.
   - ***6 letters of objections from 4 addresses*** on the following grounds:
     - overdevelopment
     - not necessary to change previously proposed glass building. Solid building now proposed will block off sun and light to surroundings. Looks more like an industrial site than a garden centre. Suspect the application is a 'stalking horse' designed to procure more intensive development in the future, with increased traffic and disturbance. The application makes no mention of the true owner – World of gardens does not exist.

previous permission is still extant, the proposal should be assessed on the differences between the proposed application and extant permission, unless circumstances have materially changed.

Policy WRE6 covers development at existing garden centres outside settlement boundaries, and states that redevelopment or extension of them may be acceptable subject to a list of criteria. Criterion A requires that the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the viability of nearby village shops. There is a village shop in Swallowfield nearly 1½ km. away, but none in Riseley. Condition No. 11 of the extant permission limited the types of goods sold to those shown on the approved drawing, and specifically excludes sales of food for human consumption. Providing a similar condition is re-imposed, it is considered that the proposal would be unlikely to have a significant adverse impact on the viability of the village shop in Swallowfield.

Criterion B requires that the proposal would not lead to an intensification of activity at the site. The amount of floorspace proposed would be 130.5m^2 greater (due to retention of the northern end of the Mowrite workshop), an increase of 8%. However, the amount of outside display areas is slightly reduced. Therefore it is considered that overall the proposal would not lead to a significant intensification compared with the extant consent.

Criterion C requires that the proposal has no greater visual impact on the character of the countryside due to its siting, scale, bulk, form, massing, materials or site coverage of buildings, car parks, display areas or associated road improvements than the existing development. The proposed new 1,014m^2 building would be 4.8 metres high and constructed of timber cladding, brick, tiles and glazing. It would be a substantial additional new building in the countryside for a commercial type of use. Whilst the siting, floorspace and height of the permitted glasshouse sales building are similar, it is considered that the permitted glasshouse is the type of structure associated with a horticultural enterprise that could be expected to be found in the countryside and would be lightweight in its structure and appearance. The proposed building, however, would have a solid and more permanent character and would have the appearance of a building that could be for a variety of uses, not just horticultural or garden centre use.

It is therefore considered that the building would have an unacceptably greater impact on the character and appearance of the countryside. It would have an urbanising effect and would consolidate and intensify existing building development in the 'gap', compared with the permitted glasshouse building. It is considered that the rest of the proposed development, i.e. retention and refurbishment of the ex-Mowrite buildings and outside display and parking areas, would have a similar impact to that of the extant permission.

Criterion D requires that the proposal does not cause detriment to adjoining land uses and occupiers on amenity or environmental policy grounds. There are several residential properties adjacent and near the site. The proposed garden centre would have a significant effect in terms of disturbance. However, compared with implementation of the extant permission, little difference in effect could be expected, providing the conditions recommended by the Environmental Health Officer were imposed. (The proposed main car parking area would be

between settlements. For all other relevant issues, the comparative effects between the proposed development and extant permission are considered acceptable.

6. **Recommendation** – REFUSE planning permission for the following reason:

1. Due to the proposed design, materials and form of construction, the proposed main sales building would have an unacceptably urbanising and detrimental impact on the character and appearance of this predominantly rural area and on the gap between settlements. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan Policies C2 and C6, Loddon Area Local Plan Policies LTV2, LC1 and LC22 and to Wokingham District Local Plan Policies WCC1, WCC2 and WRE6.

Informative

1. You are advised, in compliance with *The Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2000*, that the following policies and/or proposals in the development plan are relevant to this decision:

Berkshire Structure Plan Policies C2, LD3, LD5, OS1 and EN3.
Loddon Area Local Plan Policies LTV2, LC1, LC22, LBE2, LT5, LPS2 and LPS3.
Deposit Draft Wokingham District Local Plan Policies WOS2, WOS3, WCC1, WCC2, WBE1, WRE6, WT7 and WIC16.

SWALLOWFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

PARISH COUNCIL OFFICE
SWALLOWFIELD STREET, SWALLOWFIELD
READING, BERKS, RG7 1QX
Tel: 0118 988 5929 Fax: 0118 988 6443
email: clerk@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk

PLANNING SERVICES | RPT
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DC | ENF
APP |
CS |
26 APR 2002
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FILE

24 April 2002

FAXED AND POSTED

Planning Dept.,
P.O. Box 157,
Wokingham District Council,
Shute End,
Wokingham,
Berks. RG40 1WR

Dear Sirs,

Application Number: F/2002/6245
Location: Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield Parish
Proposal: Proposed redevelopment of garden centre, reuse of buildings, access improvement, road, parking and landscaping
Case Officer: Angela Odell

There appears to be some discrepancy between the extant planning permission and this application with regard to the floor area of the proposed new development. The Parish Council assumes that the site layout that shows the new building to be approximately the same floor area as the glass house permitted in 97/66449/V to be correct, as if this is not the case then presumably this application will be rejected as not being valid due to providing misleading information.

In addition the Parish Council notes that the category for the application is A1 Shops, to which the applicant has added Garden Centre. The Parish Council therefore assumes that if Planning permission is granted, then the permission will be solely for a garden centre together with associated shops/workshops. Thus if in the future the garden centre closed down, and the new owner wished to convert the buildings into shops of a different nature, then planning permission for change of use would be required.

The Parish Council considers that the proposed conservatory will be visually more acceptable than the glass house which currently could be constructed in accordance with planning permission 97/66449/V. Consequently the Parish Council has no objection to the design of the proposed structure.

However the Parish Council is concerned, as it has been for all applications on this site, as to the increase of traffic that the garden centre will generate. The Basingstoke Road is heavily used with traffic travelling at a fast pace. The Parish Council is concerned that the substantial amount of traffic entering and leaving the site will therefore present a traffic hazard, which in turn will increase the chances of traffic accidents.

Contd.

If the application is granted planning approval then the Parish Council requests that conditions and/or alterations to the application are imposed as to:-

1. The hours that the centre is permitted to be open. The Parish Council considers that adjoining residential properties should not be subject to noise disruption after 6.30 p.m.
2. That deliveries etc. to the centre should not be allowed before 7.30 a.m. Monday to Friday, 9.00 a.m. on Saturday, and no deliveries on Sundays.
3. That, as this site is outside an identified settlement, lighting at night, including security lighting, is minimised.
4. That all boundary planting, particularly adjacent to neighbouring properties is of a substantial height and width, in order to minimise noise and visual intrusion.
5. That the rear boundary be close boarded fencing 2 metres high in order to prevent easy access from the garden centre to the rear of Brandywell and other properties.
6. That on all side boundaries where 2 metre high close boarded fencing, or similar, does not currently exist, then, if the adjacent owners require it, such fencing to be provided.

Yours faithfully,

C Adams

Mrs. C. Adams, Clerk

SWALLOWFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

PARISH COUNCIL OFFICE
SWALLOWFIELD STREET, SWALLOWFIELD
READING, BERKS, RG7 1QX
Tel: 0118 988 5929 Fax: 0118 988 6443
email: clerk@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk

15 May 2002

FAXED AND POSTED

Planning Dept.,
P.O. Box 157,
Wokingham District Council,
Shute End,
Wokingham,
Berks. RG40 1WR

PLANNING SERVICES	HPT
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DC	ENF
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CS	
15 MAY 2002	
COPIED TO	

Dear Sirs,

Application Number: F/2002/6245
Location: Balcombe Nurseries, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield Parish
Proposal: Proposed redevelopment of garden centre, reuse of buildings, access improvement, road, parking and landscaping
Case Officer: Angela Odell

The Parish Council's response on the above application dated 24th April 2002 included the Parish Council's expressed concern over the access to the site from the B3349 Basingstoke Road in that the B3349 is a heavily used road with fast moving traffic, and therefore an access generating a large amount of vehicular movement will increase the risk of traffic accidents.

The Parish Council wishes to regretfully inform the Planning and Highways Departments that its concerns over the dangers of the Basingstoke Road have been proved in the worst possible manner, in that there was a fatal accident at Goddards Farm on the Basingstoke Road on Saturday May11th 2002. Goddards Farm is close to the entrance of Balcombe Nurseries.

Yours faithfully,

C Adams

Mrs. C. Adams, Clerk

SWALLOWFIELD P C

The Planning Inspectorate
Tollgate House,
Houlton Street
Bristol BS2 9DJ
☎ 0117 987 8927

Appeal Decision

inquiry opened on 28 July 1999

by M A Hillyer BSc MSc CEng MICE FCIWEM
an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions

29 SEP 1999

Appeal A: T/APP/X0360/A/99/1019155/P5

Appeal B: T/APP/X0360/A/99/1022290/P5

- The appeals are made under Section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against refusals to grant planning permission.
- The appeals are brought by Bryant Country Homes Ltd against Wokingham District Council.
- The site is located at Balcombe Nursery, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield.
- The Appeal A application (ref: 98/68734/F, dated 10 November 1998), was refused on 9 February 1999.
- The Appeal B application (ref: 99/69285/F, dated 11 March 1999), was refused on 4 May 1999.
- The Appeal A development proposed is the erection of 6 No detached houses & garaging with demolition of derelict/redundant buildings.
- The Appeal B development proposed is the erection of 3 No detached dwellings, 2 No garages and associated works.

Decisions: Appeal A – The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal B – The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matters

1. The Inquiry sat on 28 & 29 July 1999 and the site inspection was undertaken on 28 July 1999.

2. It was confirmed at the Inquiry that the associated works referred to in the description of the proposed development in Appeal B are the same as the demolition works referred to in Appeal A.

3. The site boundaries are identical in each appeal.

The main issues

4. From the evidence given at the Inquiry, my reading of the written representations and inspection of the site and its surroundings, I consider that there are three main issues in these appeals. The first is the effect of the proposed developments on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, having particular regard to policy and the "fallback" situation. The second issue is the effect on sustainability, with particular regard to transport, and the third is the effect on the availability of different types of accommodation in the District.

The planning context

5. The development plan for the area consists of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1995 (SP) and the Loddon Area Local Plan 1995 (LP). There is an emerging plan, the Wokingham District Local Plan (ELP), which is the subject of a current public inquiry. I shall give policies in the ELP the weight suggested in paragraph 48 of Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 1 – *General Policies and Principles.*

6. SP Policy C2 states that development outside settlements will only be permitted where it is required for agriculture, for the redevelopment of existing buildings, or for other essentially rural development. These principles are also set out in Policies LP LTV2 and ELP WCC1; the first of these includes as an exception development wholly appropriate to a rural area, and the ELP Policy includes development appropriate to the countryside which cannot be accommodated within a settlement. Policy C6 of the SP says that development will not be permitted where it would threaten open areas of special significance known as "green wedges" and "gaps", and defined as areas where there is a risk of coalescence of settlements or increased urbanisation, or loss of extensive open space. These principles are echoed in LP Policy LC1 and ELP Policy WCC2. SP Policy LD3 explains that development will only be permitted if it does not give rise to serious harm to the character and appearance of a area, or neighbouring amenities.

7. The planning strategy for development to be sustainable and to result in an overall improvement to the quality of life is set out in SP Policy OS1. This policy includes the objectives of protecting the character of the landscape and environment, and steering development to areas which minimise the need for travel and which can be well served by public transport. These aims are also behind the objectives of ELP Policy WOS1. SP Policy H4 states that new residential development should be close to employment services with good access, particularly to public transport.

8. SP Policy H9 states that favourable consideration will be given to residential proposals which add to the range of dwelling densities, types and sizes, with emphasis being given to smaller dwellings. LP Policy LH8 says that developments should incorporate a reasonable mix of house sizes on sites over 0.4 hectares. ELP Policy WH6 relates to housing development which is considered acceptable to the Council, and defines small dwellings as those with one, two or three bedrooms.

Consideration

Issue 1

9. With regard to the first issue, the site is a disused plant nursery and garden centre to the west of the Basingstoke road, set on land which rises gradually across the site, towards the west. There are single storey buildings in the northern corners of the site and some areas of hardstanding, but it is extensive and for the most part open and overgrown. Boundaries are marked by mature tree groups, dense in places, together with close-boarded fencing. There is an extant planning permission for a new garden centre on the site.

10. The site is adjoined at its eastern end by residential properties which are part of sporadic development fronting onto the Basingstoke road. The settlements of Swallowfield and Riseley are approximately equidistant from the site, to the north-east and south respectively. The site is in the countryside, with long open views to the east, in a defined "green wedge" or "gap" which serves to separate Swallowfield and Riseley.

11. The proposed developments would introduce a residential use to the site. The houses and associated buildings the subjects of both appeals would be set back from the Basingstoke road and would be screened to some extent by plantings, but they would be more in evidence from the road than the existing site buildings.

12. The existing houses in the immediate vicinity vary in size and style. The proposed houses would be set away from existing dwellings. They would not be out of keeping in terms of design and materials, but the cul-de-sac nature of the new layouts would contrast unfavourably with the road frontage settings of existing houses and would serve to extend residential activities into the countryside. The dwellings would be substantial five-bedroomed houses. The large frontage and rear garden areas would serve to retain some of the existing openness of the site, but the residential nature of these areas would be evident from garden structures and domestic accoutrements. The extent of this domestic aura would be reduced in the Appeal B proposal but it would still be evident from public viewpoints. Both proposed developments would have an urbanising effect at odds with the character of the site and much of its surroundings, threatening the "green wedge" or "gap" area and damaging to the countryside.

13. Much of the evidence examined at the Inquiry involved comparison of the extant planning permission for a garden centre and the two proposed developments. It is necessary for me to form a view on the impact of a garden centre and the likelihood of it being developed, in order to ascribe a weight to this "fallback" position.

14. The garden centre permission was granted in 1993 and extended by relaxation of a time limit in 1998. From Plans O & P of Mr Bailey's evidence it appears that the proposal would have sales buildings, car parking and open display areas, but no planted growing areas. This would lead to a more intensive use of the site during certain daytime periods than would the proposed residential developments, in terms of outdoor equipment, vehicle and pedestrian movement, activity and noise. The nature of the activity, that is retail sales rather than nursery growing, is one that could be sited in an urban or rural location, and examples of both types were described at the Inquiry.

15. The garden centre structures, principally the sales centre, would be of less bulk, lower, and in my view more rural in nature than the proposed dwellings. There would be a significantly greater proportion of hardstanding in the garden centre alternative, but this would be used for parking and moveable displays, and would not have a great effect on openness. In this respect I agree with the findings of the Inspector who determined Appeal T/APP/H0330/A/96/265991/P4 relating to a proposal for 25 houses on the site, although the relative obtrusion of the respective house developments would be proportional to the respective housing densities.

16. The garden centre would operate on a site which has supported a similar, but less intensive, activity in the past. In comparing the appearance and usage of the alternatives I consider that the garden centre would be marginally more in keeping with the area than either of the two appeal proposals before me. At the Inquiry the Appellant suggested that the garden centre planning permission flouted development plan policies, but that is not a matter before me in these appeals.

17. The site has been largely unused for four or five years. There is little evidence that it has been marketed as a garden centre. The letter to the Appellant dated 9 July 1999 from an established garden centre operator states that the area is well served by a number of large and well established garden centres. There is no evidence of any other inquiries regarding

redevelopment of the site as a garden centre. It is possible that this may occur during the life of the planning permission, but on the balance of evidence I consider that it is unlikely.

18. The proposals have been likened to "brownfield" redevelopment which Consultation Draft Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 3 – *Housing* suggests is to be preferred to "greenfield" development. However the thrust of this draft is towards urban redevelopment, and it is not a government policy document. PPG 7 – *The Countryside – Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development* states that the countryside should be protected for its own sake. The proposals are not for an essentially rural type of development, nor are they for the redevelopment of buildings.

19. Drawing together my findings on this issue I consider that the proposed developments the subjects of Appeals A & B would not constitute exceptions to countryside policy and would be harmful to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. They would be marginally more harmful than the permitted "fallback" development which however is unlikely to take place. The proposed developments would conflict with SP Policies C2, C6 and LD3, LP Policies LTV2 and LC1, and ELP Policies WCC1 and WCC2.

Issue 2

20. Turning to the issue of sustainability, there are two public bus services routed along the Basingstoke road, including a weekday hourly service to Reading scheduled to take 20-25 minutes. Limited shopping, schooling and other services are available in Swallowfield and Riseley, each just under 1km from the site. The proposed houses would have two or three car garages. There would therefore be a choice of means of travel to service facilities. Paragraph 3.2 of PPG 13 – *Transport* suggests that this is a requirement of housing development, although the same paragraph recommends that sporadic housing in the open countryside should be avoided.

21. I consider that the bus service would be adequate to cater for the proposed developments given the route and catchment area, and that access to services would be good. The site could be well served by public transport. The developments would not minimise the need to travel, but this is in my view a harsh requirement of SP Policy OS1, only to be met by dwellings adjacent to shops, schools and workplaces. I have no evidence on the availability of employment services in the area.

22. The question of what mode of transport the new residents would be likely to use was examined at the Inquiry. It appears from local evidence, and from my site observations, that the traffic on the Basingstoke road is fast, and sufficient to deter many people from regularly walking or cycling the distance from the site to Swallowfield or Riseley for services, although those options would exist. The convenience of car travel from the site is likely to be a significant factor, and the proposals would not encourage the use of public transport. However development plan and national policy does not evaluate proposed development on the likelihood of particular transport modes being used, but on the availability of realistic options. Such options would exist for the proposed developments.

23. The previous appeal decision on the site found that a development of 25 houses would be adequately served by public transport and have relatively convenient access to services and I agree with these findings in the context of the two Appeal proposals. The developments would result in an increase in car movements in the immediate locality, as the Inspector found in the Sun Lane appeal (Reference T/APP/X0360/A/97/288963/P7). That proposal was for a potential 20 houses within a village, and I do not consider that the number of

journeys which would be generated by a 3 or 6 house development at the site represents a significant increment in car travel in the wider area.

24. The implications of the "fallback" position, examined in consideration of the first main issue, are also relevant in the context of transport. For garden centres of the "fallback" type the Appellant demonstrated that daily trips of between 20 and 40 times those generated by the proposals would be likely. This would lead to a significant increase in car useage in the vicinity of the site, greater than exists at present or that would occur with the two housing proposals. I have no evidence on whether this would be new traffic or trips diverted from other garden centres, and my view is that there would be a small increase in the overall number of car journeys. For the reasons set out in paragraph 17 above I consider it unlikely that the new garden centre development will take place.

25. I conclude on this issue that the proposed developments would not comply fully with SP Policy OS1, with ELP Policy WOS1 or with the recommendations of PPG 13 but they would meet the aims of SP Policy H4. The effects of the proposals would be limited because of the small size of the developments, and they would not be significantly harmful to the sustainability principle. The "fallback" development would be more harmful but it is unlikely to take place.

Issue 3

26. With regard to the issue of housing sizes, the proposals are not acceptable to the Council and so ELP Policy WH6 is not relevant. The thrust of development plan policy is towards a variety of units on sites, with particular provision of the smaller type of units expected to be in demand now and in the future. There are no policies suggesting that single size developments will be refused planning permission. Paragraph 6 of PPG 3 states that functional requirements are a matter for the marketing judgement of developers. There is no evidence that small units could not form part of the development and the Council has said that the demand for small units is high in the District, but I consider that the effect of a 3 or 6 house development on total housing stock numbers would be insignificant, whether those houses be small or large.

27. I conclude on this issue that the proposed developments would not comply with the preferences of LP Policy LH8 or with the aims of SP Policy H9, but the effects would be limited because of the small size of the proposals, and the developments would not be significantly harmful to the availability of different types of accommodation in the District.

Conclusions

28. Drawing together my findings in these appeals I conclude that:

Appeal A: the harm which would result from the proposed development in the context of the second and third main issues would not be sufficient reason, on its own, to refuse planning permission, but it would exacerbate the harm caused to the character and appearance of the area, and

Appeal B: the harm which would result from the proposed development in the context of the second and third main issues would not be sufficient reason, on its own, to refuse planning permission, but it would exacerbate the harm caused to the character and appearance of the area.

The Council suggested a number of conditions to be used should planning permission be granted. The Appellant signalled his acceptance of these conditions, but imposition of any or all of them would not enable planning permission to be granted.

29. I have taken into account all other matters raised in evidence at the Inquiry and in the written representations, including housing land availability, the strategic proposals for housing in the area, and the existence of unilateral undertakings for the provision of affordable housing, recreational facilities, a footway and open space, but none of these matters is sufficient to override the considerations which have led to my decisions.

30. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeals should not succeed and I shall exercise the powers transferred to me accordingly.

Michael A. Hilliker.

APPEARANCES

FOR THE APPELLANT:

Mr S Choong	Solicitor, of Eversheds, 115 Colmore Row, Birmingham, B3 3AL, instructed by Bryant Homes Limited
He called	Mr J F Bailey BA (Hons) MRTPI, Development, Land & Planning Consultants Ltd, Ritz Plaza House, 10 Denton Road, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 2DX
	Mr D J Brodie BSc CEng MICE MIHT, Peter Brett Associates, 16 Westcote Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG30 2DE

FOR THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:

Mr R Warren	of Counsel, instructed by Wokingham District Council
He called	Mrs Angela Odell BA MPhil MRTPI , Planning Officer

FOR THE PARISH COUNCIL:

Mr E Dawson	Solicitor, instructed by Swallowfield Parish Council, Penton Cottage, Swallowfield Street, Swallowfield, Reading, Berkshire, RG7 1QX
He called	Mr M Bowker, Parish Councillor
	Dr Z Fraser, Local Resident

INTERESTED PERSONS:

Mr G Pearce	Local Resident
Mrs A Fewtrell	Local Resident

DOCUMENTS

Document	1	List of persons present at the inquiry – 28 July 1999
Document	2	List of persons present at the inquiry – 29 July 1999
Document	3	Copy of Notice of Inquiry, and list of persons notified
Document	4	Appendices to Mr Bailey's proof of evidence
Document	5	Appendices to Mrs Odell's proof of evidence
Document	6	Supplemental statement to Mr Brodie's proof of evidence, submitted by Mr Choongh
Document	7	Mr Bowker's proof of evidence, submitted by Mr Dawson
Document	8	Dr Fraser's proof of evidence, submitted by Mr Dawson
Document	9	Copy of Section 106 Undertaking for the 6 dwelling proposal (Appeal A), submitted by Mr Choongh
Document	10	Copy of Section 106 Undertaking for the 3 dwelling proposal (Appeal B), submitted by Mr Choongh
Document	11	Copy of Dr Fraser's letter to the Council, dated 7 July 1998, submitted by Mr Warren

SITE LAYOUT 1:1000

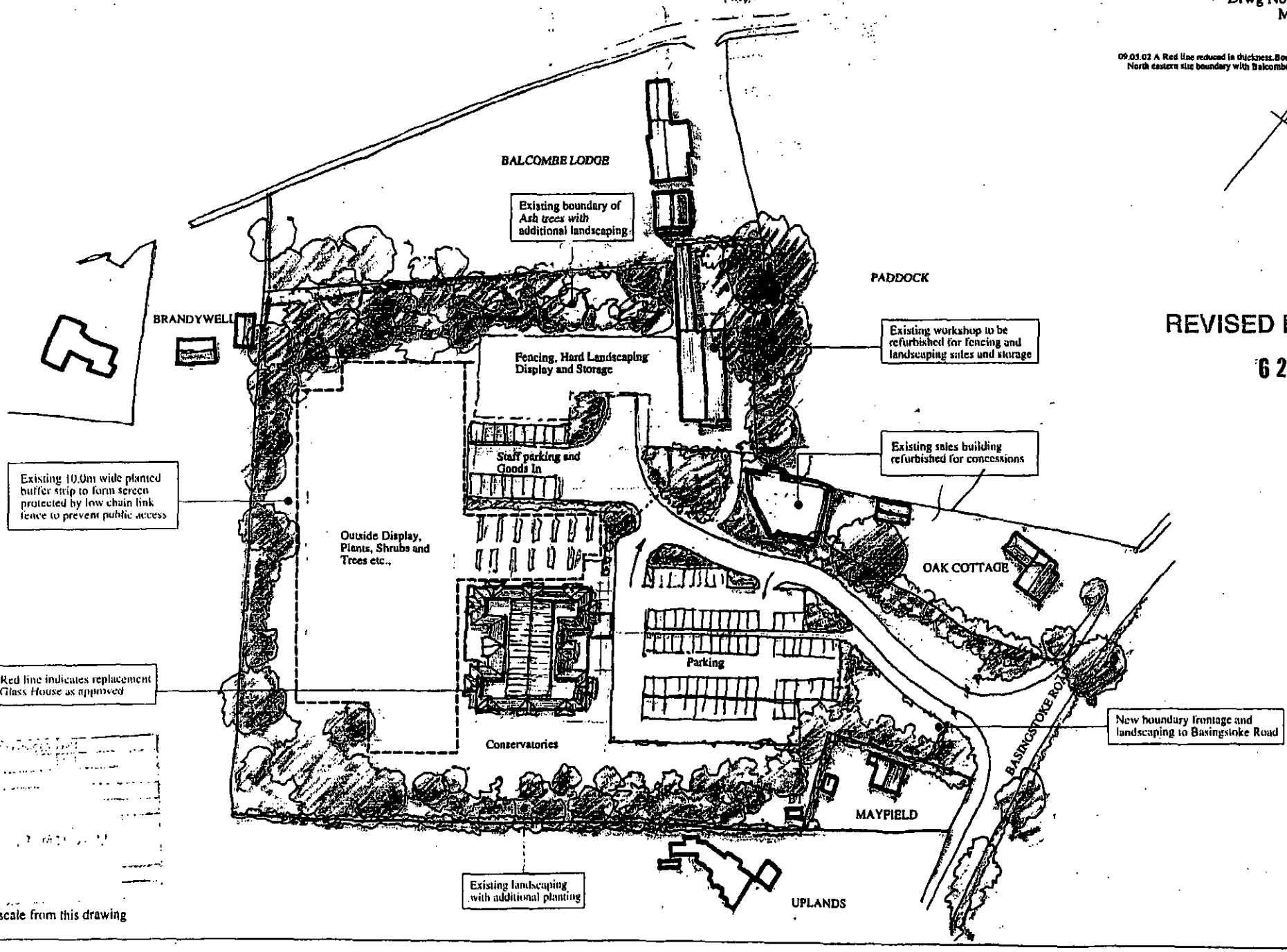
Drwg No 199/P/02a
March 2002

09.05.02 A Red line reduced in thickness. Boundary confirmed. North eastern site boundary with Balcombe Lodge amended.

REVISED PLAN

6245

612



Do not scale from this drawing

Gregory Gray Associates
CHARTERED TOWN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

"WORLD OF GARDENS"

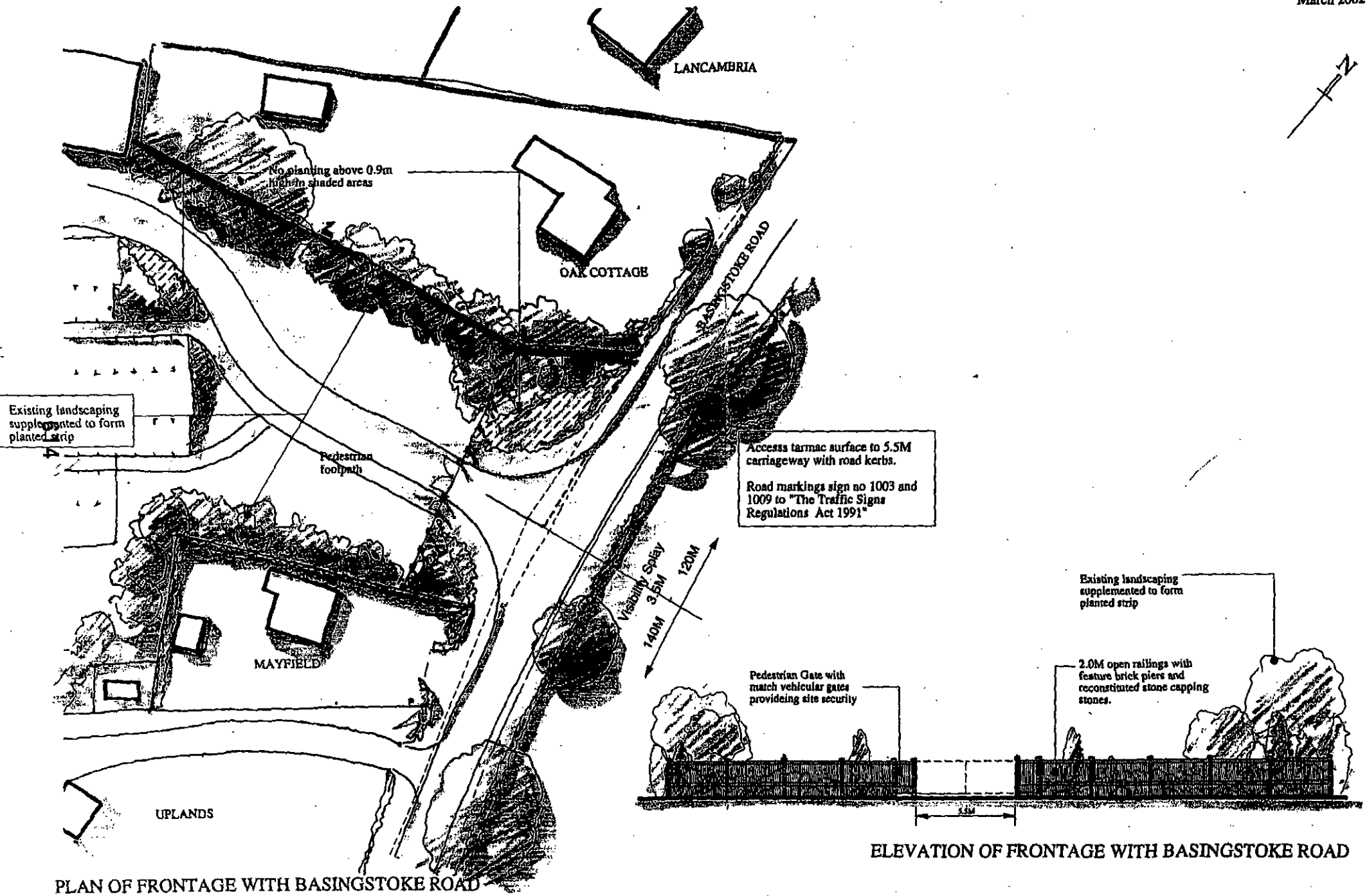
BASINGSTOKE ROAD

OPUS Architecture and Design
Mayfield Lower Sandhurst Road
Finchampstead
Berkshire RG40 3TH

SITE ENTRANCE 1:200 AND 1:500

27 MAR 2002 0245

Drwg No 199/P/07
March 2002



PLAN OF FRONTAGE WITH BASINGSTOKE ROAD

ELEVATION OF FRONTAGE WITH BASINGSTOKE ROAD

Gregory Gray Associates
CHARTERED TOWN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

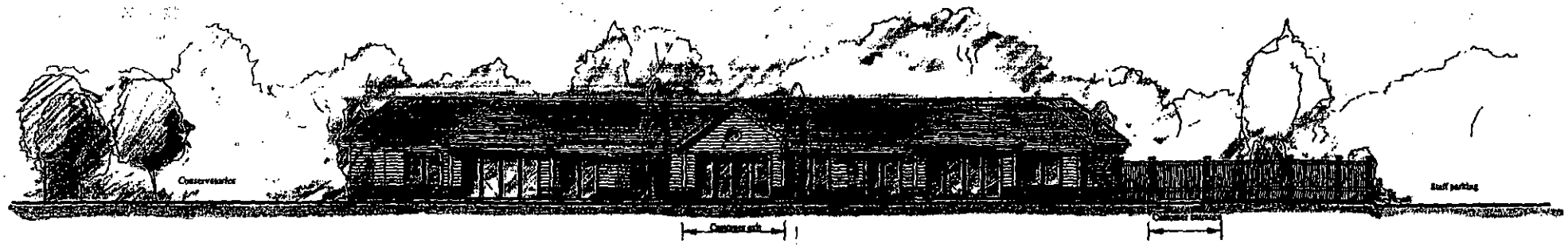
"WORLD OF GARDENS"

BASINGSTOKE ROAD

OPUS Architecture and Design
Mayfield Lower Sandhurst Road
Finchampstead
Berkshire RG40 3TH

ELEVATIONS 1:200

Drwg No 199/P/04
27 March 2002 6245

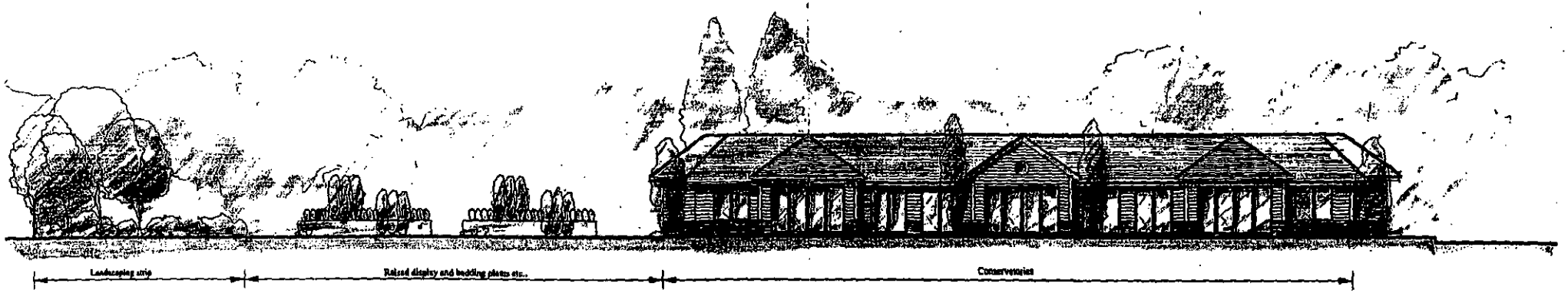


ROOF
Perimeter mono-pitch with red/brown plain tiles with powder coated aluminium guttering and downpipes.
Stained timber soffit.

FRONT/ NORTH EAST ELEVATION



REAR/ SOUTH WEST ELEVATION



SIDE/ SOUTH EAST ELEVATION

616

Gregory Gray Associates
CHARTERED TOWN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

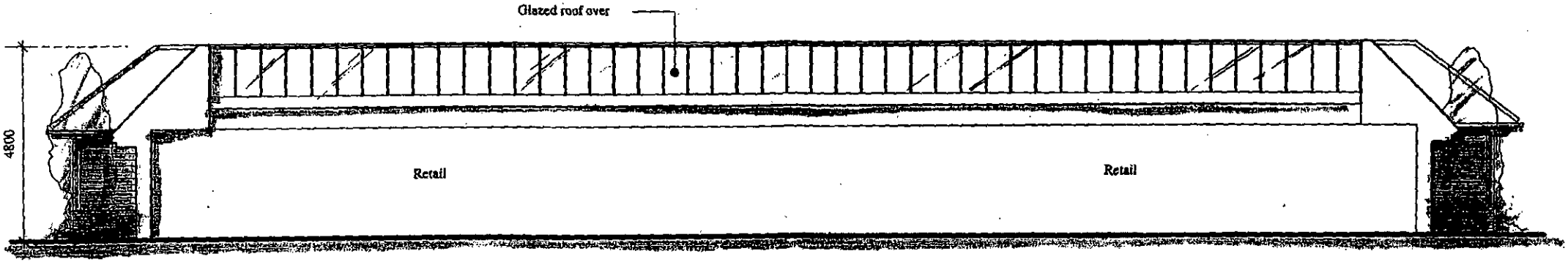
"WORLD OF GARDENS"
BASINGSTOKE ROAD

OPUS Architecture and Design
Mayfield Lower Sandoral Road
Finchampstead
Berkshire RG40 3TH

SECTIONS AA AND BB

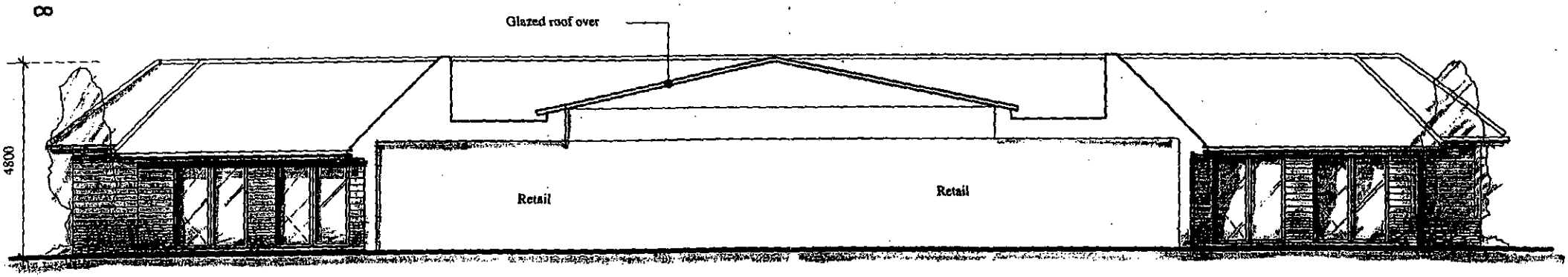
27. MAR 2002 Dwg No 6194/06
March 2002

ROOF
Perimeter mono-pitch with red/brown plain tiles with powder coated aluminium guttering and downpipes.
Stained timber soffit.



SECTION AA

618



SECTIONBB

TYPICAL EXTERNAL WALL

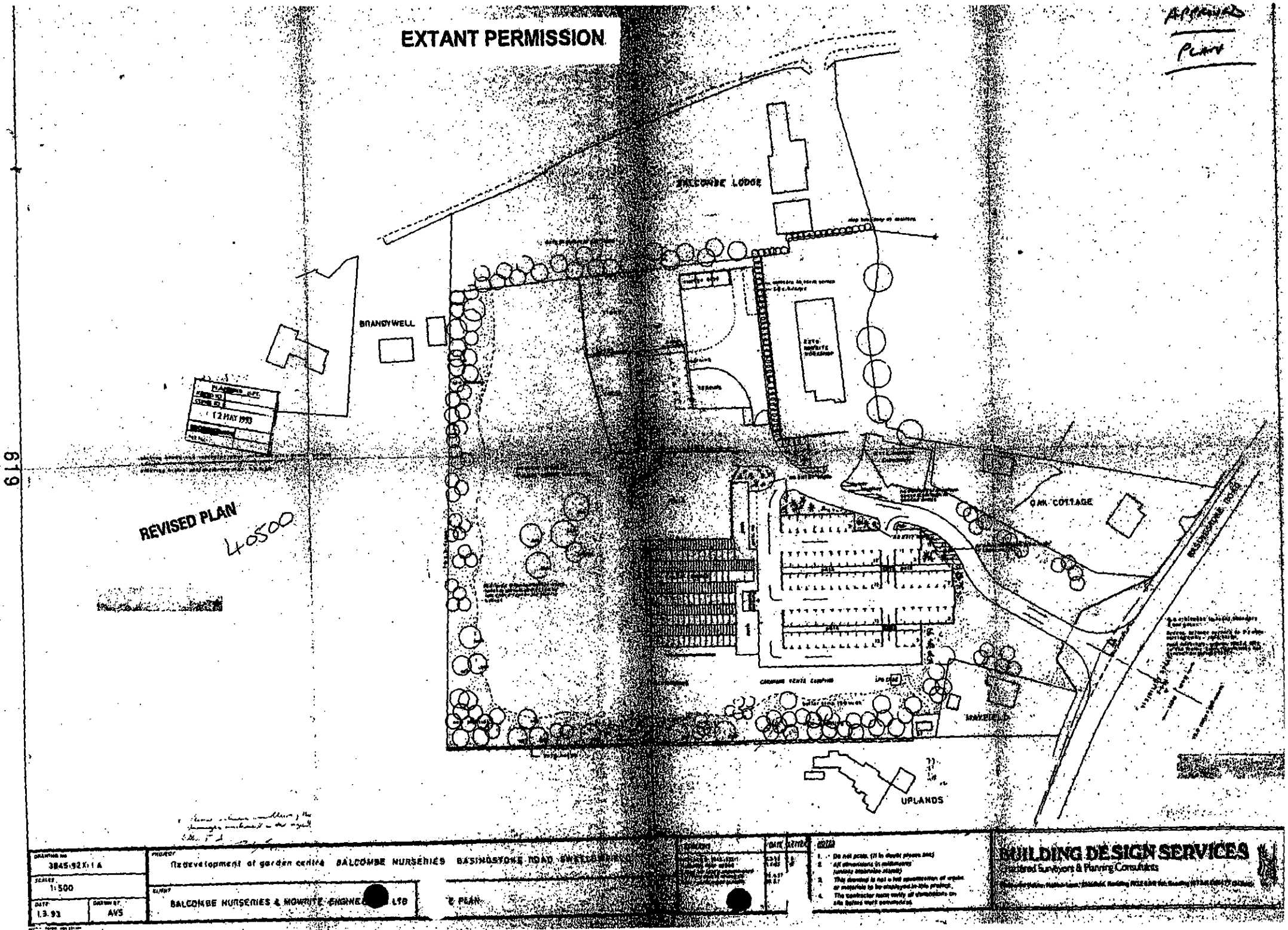
Red/brown clay facing brickwork and feature plinth with natural oak stained feather edged timber cladding.

Powder coated aluminium windows and display areas

Gregory Gray Associates
CHARTERED TOWN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

"WORLD OF GARDENS"
BASINGSTOKE ROAD

OPUS Architecture and Design
Mayfield Lower Sandhurst Road
Finchampstead
Berkshire RG40 3TH


EXTANT PERMISSION
APPROVED PLAN
BALCOMBE LODGE
BRANDYWELL
OAK COTTAGE
MAYFIELD
UPLANDS
REVISED PLAN
40500
12 MAY 1993
DRAWING No
3845.92X.1A
SCALE
1:500
DATE
1.3.93
DRAWN BY
AVS
PROJECT
Redevelopment of garden centre BALCOMBE NURSERIES BASINGSTOKE ROAD SWALLOWFIELD
CLIENT
BALCOMBE NURSERIES & MOWRITE ENGINE LTD
E PLAN
NOTES
1. Do not scale. (If in doubt please ask)
2. All dimensions in millimetres (unless otherwise stated)
3. This drawing is not a full specification of works or materials to be employed in this project.
4. The contractor must verify all dimensions on site before work commences.
BUILDING DESIGN SERVICES
Chartered Surveyors & Planning Consultants

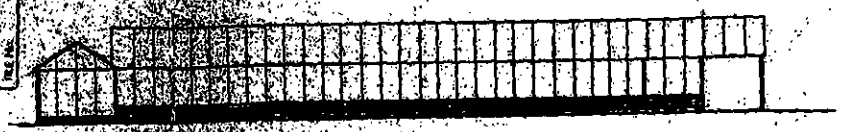
619

EXTANT PERMISSION

PLAN.



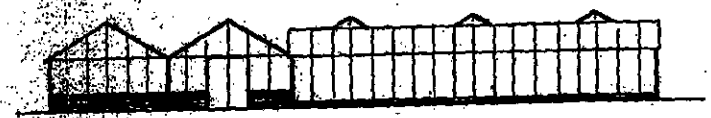
front elevation



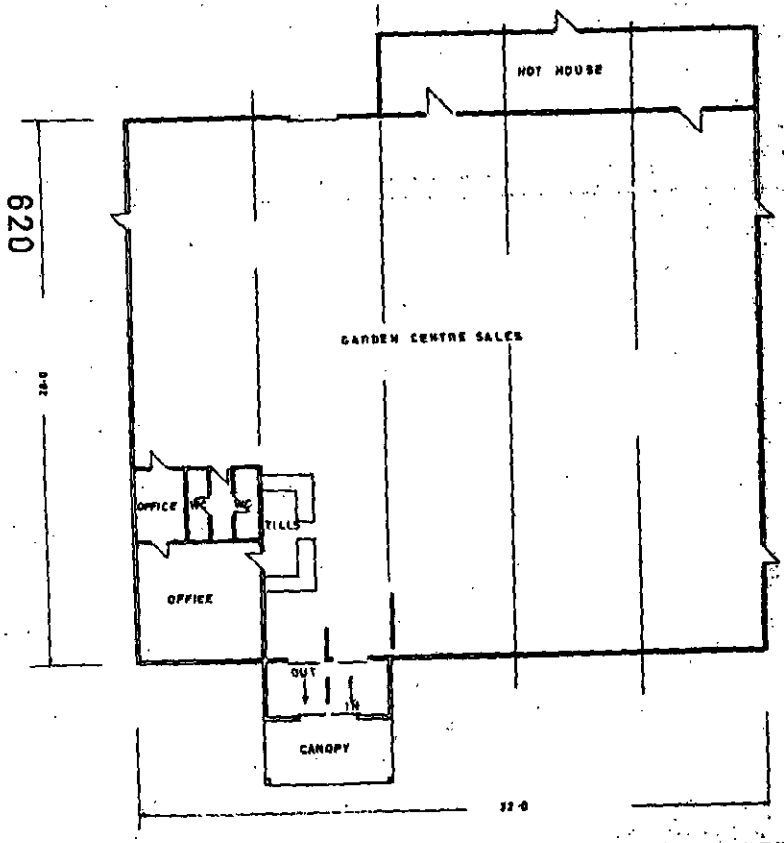
side elevation



side elevation



rear elevation



620

BUILDING MATERIALS
ROOF - glazed aluminium frame
WALLS - glazed aluminium frame on brickwork plinth

MAIN BUILDING SALES
indoor plants and associated products
plant feeds fertilisers composts insecticides etc
seeds bulbs flowers
tools machinery
pet foods and goods
aquatic fish pond accessories
coffee snack bar
general farm and garden products

REVISED PLAN

4 0500

DRAWING No 3845:92X:2A	PROJECT Redevelopment of garden centre BALCOMBE NURSERIES BASINGSTOKE ROAD SWALLOWFIELD		
SCALE 1:200	CLIENT BALCOMBE NURSERIES & MOWRITE ENGINEERING LTD	TITLE GARDEN CENTRE MAIN BUILDING	
DATE 1.3.93	DRAWN BY AVS		

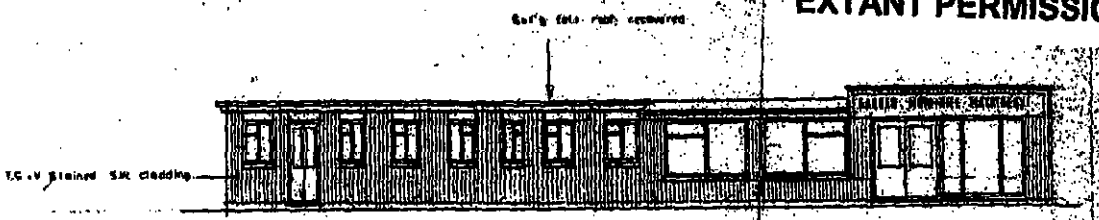
REVISION	DATE	LETTER
REPLACES 3845:92X:1	1.3.93	A

NOTES
1. Constructional dimensions should not be scaled from this drawing. (If in doubt please ask)
2. All dimensions in millimetres (unless otherwise noted)
3. This drawing is not a full specification of works or materials to be employed in this project
4. The contractor must verify all dimensions on site before work commences.

BUILDING DESIGN SERVICES
Chartered Surveyors & Planning Consultants
Windward House, Hollow Lane, Chinfield, Reading RG8 5AB Tel Reading (0734) 336077 (3 Lines)

EXTANT PERMISSION

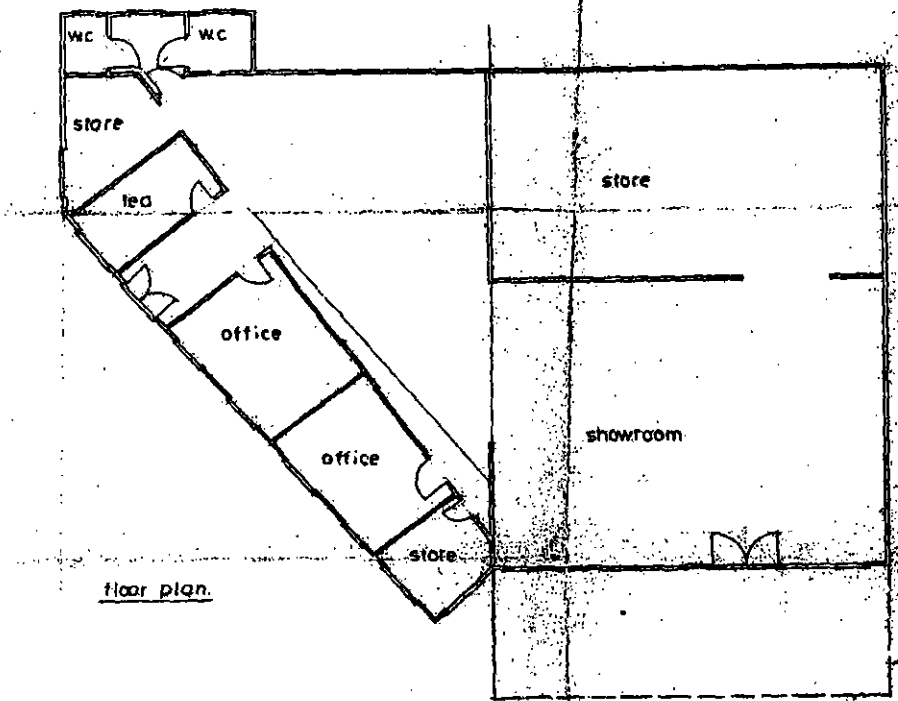
APPROVED PLAN



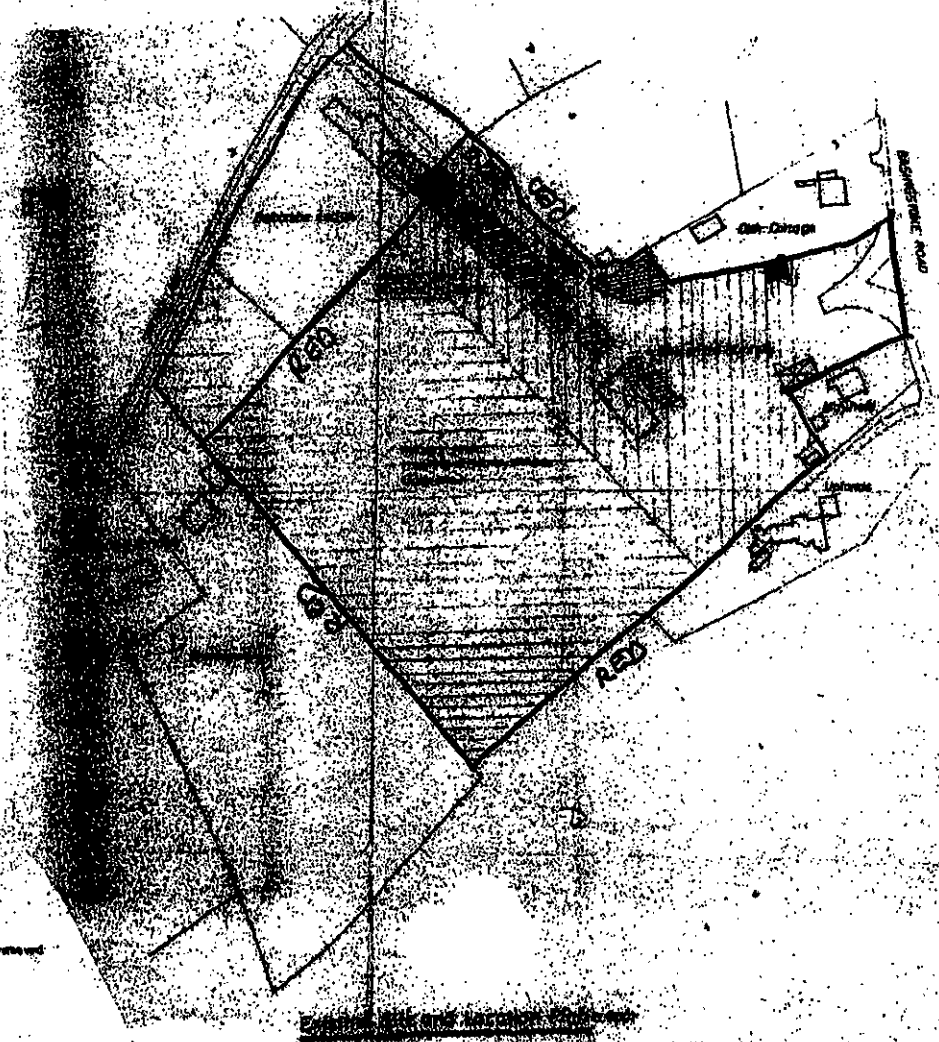
front elevation



side elevation



floor plan



621

24 DEC 1992

3845/92X/3

1:100

Redevelopment of garden centre BALCOMBE NURSERIES BASINGSTOKE ROAD SWALLOWFIELD READING

BALCOMBE NURSERIES &

BUILDING DESIGN SERVICES
Chartered Surveyors & Planning Consultants

REVISED 6245

Form 2

Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order

CERTIFICATE UNDER ARTICLE 7

This Certificate relates to proposed development at (a) .....

Balcombe Nursery, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield, Berks.

* COMPLETE BOTH SECTIONS 1 and 2 - delete as applicable.

I certify that:

SECTION 1

~~**Certificate A**~~

*1. On the day 21 days before the date of the accompanying application nobody, except the applicant, was the owner (b) of any part of the land to which the application relates.

OR

Certificate B

1. I have/The applicant has given the requisite notice to everyone else who, on the day 21 days before the date of the accompanying application*, was an owner (b) of any part of the land to which the application* relates, as listed below.

Owner's name (b)	Address at which notice was served	Date on which notice was served
N. J. Foster,	c/o Town Gate, 38, London Street, Basingstoke, Hants.	8/5/02
	" AND "	
L. A. Saunders,		8/5/02

SECTION 2

Agricultural Holdings Certificate

*2. None of the land to which the application relates is, or is part of, an agricultural holding.

OR

2. I have/The applicant has given the requisite notice to every person other than ~~my/him/her~~* self who, on the day 21 days before the date of the application, was a tenant of an agricultural holding on all or part of the land to which the application relates, as follows:

Agricultural tenant's name (c)	Address at which notice was served	Date on which notice was served

Signed .....

*On behalf of World of Gardens

Date 8/5/02

(a) please give the application site address.

(b) "owner" means a person having a freehold interest or a leasehold interest the unexpired term of which is not less than 7 years. Unless you are the **sole freehold owner** of all the land included in the application, you should complete Certificate B and serve notice on all other owners.

If you do not know the name and address of the owners of the land, please consult the local Planning Office for further advice.

(c) If you are the sole agricultural tenant enter "not applicable".

It is an offence to knowingly or recklessly complete a false or misleading Article 7 Certificate.



Wokingham District Local Plan
Deposit Draft

With Proposed Amendments Highlighted

February 2000

- **Proposed Amendments April 1999**
- **Additional Proposed Amendments September 1999**
- **Proposed Transport Amendments February 2000**

1.9 For the purposes of this plan the identified settlements are:

ARBORFIELD CROSS	SHINFIELD
BARKHAM HILL	SINDLESHAM
CHARVIL	SPENCERS WOOD
EARLEY/SONNING/WOODLEY	SWALLOWFIELD
FINCHAMPSTEAD	THREE MILE CROSS
FINCHAMPSTEAD NORTH	TWYFORD
HURST	WARGRAVE
PINEWOOD	WINNERSH
RISELEY	WOKINGHAM.

1.10 Areas of sporadic development exist within the plan area which involve very few properties and/or are dominated by areas of undeveloped rural land either between, or to the rear and in front of properties causing them to be characterised by a loose settlement pattern, or to form a narrow strip of development in what is a distinctly rural area. These areas of development have not been included within the identified settlements.

POLICY WOS2: GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

SUBJECT TO THE DETAILED PROVISIONS OF OTHER POLICIES CONTAINED IN THIS PLAN, DEVELOPMENT WILL BE ALLOWED WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE IDENTIFIED SETTLEMENTS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP AND LISTED IN THE TEXT.

OUTSIDE THESE SETTLEMENTS DEVELOPMENT WILL ONLY BE ALLOWED IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND WILL BE STRICTLY CONTROLLED THROUGH THE APPLICATION OF THE DETAILED POLICIES AND PROVISIONS OF THIS PLAN AND STRUCTURE PLAN POLICIES C2 (DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE BUILT UP AREAS AND SETTLEMENTS) AND C4 (CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE GREEN BELT).

Implementation: Through the development control process.

Monitoring: Planning applications determined.

1.11 The most attractive and successful urban environments are those where all the component parts (e.g. buildings, trees, roads, spaces, people, traffic) have been satisfactorily accommodated to create interesting, lively and pleasant places. In order to maintain and enhance the character of the built environment, the appropriateness of the use of existing buildings and the design of new buildings or extensions to existing buildings, are very important.

1.12 The Council is particularly concerned to promote a high standard of design in new buildings, to ensure that new buildings are responsive to their location and to their potential occupants' and/or users' needs. New development needs to be appropriate in terms of function, siting, scale, form, massing, materials, colour and texture in its relationship with adjoining buildings and sites. Accordingly, new development will be expected to make an acceptable and positive contribution to the built environment. In addition new development should be appropriately located so as to reduce the need to travel and to encourage alternative modes of transport to the car.

1.12A LANDSCAPING SCHEMES SHOULD BE COMPRISED PREDOMINANTLY, IF NOT WHOLLY, OF LOCALLY NATIVE SPECIES. **(PA 1/5)**

IS CONSERVED WHILST PROVIDING APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENTS WHICH MEET LOCAL NEEDS

B) GIVE PRIORITY WITHIN a) TO MEETING THE DISTRICT'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL NEEDS, INCLUDING THE PROVISION OF LOW-COST HOUSING AND A WIDER RANGE OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

C) CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE PATTERN OF TOWN AND PARISH COMMUNITIES BY RETAINING AND EMPHASISING THE BALANCE BETWEEN TOWNS AND VILLAGES, COUNTRYSIDE AND SETTLEMENTS, OPEN RIVER VALLEYS AND ENCLOSED WOODLANDS

D) TO PROVIDE FOR EMPLOYMENT, HOUSING, SHOPPING AND SERVICES IN PLACES THAT MINIMISE THE NEED FOR TRAVEL BY PRIVATE CAR

E) THAT NEW DEVELOPMENT MAKES A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHARACTER, ENVIRONMENT, LANDSCAPE, HERITAGE WITHIN THE PLAN AREA

F) ~~TO CONSERVE NATURAL RESOURCES TO MINIMISE POLLUTION~~ **(PA 1/3)**

F1) TO CONSERVE NATURAL RESOURCES **(PA 1/3)**

F2) TO MINIMISE POLLUTION ***(PA 1/3)***

G) TO SEEK IMPROVEMENTS TO INFRASTRUCTURE, SERVICES AND AMENITIES.

H) TO ENCOURAGE AND SUSTAIN BALANCED RURAL COMMUNITIES **(PA 1/1)**

I) TO DEVELOP BROWNFIELD SITES IN PREFERENCE TO GREENFIELD SITES **(PA 1/2)**

Implementation: Through the development control process.

Monitoring: Planning applications determined.

Limiting the Spread of Development

1.6 The Council recognises the need to maintain an acceptable level of environmental quality and considers that the maintenance of a clear distinction between built-up areas and the countryside is fundamental to achieving this aim. Such an approach helps to ensure that individual settlements retain their identity and that the open and rural character of land outside the boundaries of identified settlements is retained. Accordingly it is intended to limit development outside identified settlements to that which is appropriate to the countryside ~~or has special reason to locate there~~ *OR FOR WHICH A RURAL LOCATION IS ESSENTIAL.* **(PA 1/4)** Although these uses are acceptable in principle, they must also be acceptable in practice.

1.7 In order to be consistent in the treatment of settlements having common characteristics, it has been necessary to draw up a definition of the classification of settlements as used in the policies and proposals contained in this plan and as shown on the proposals map.

1.8 An 'identified' settlement or built-up area must possess all the following characteristics:

(i) a sizeable amount of development in a compact form (if development is dominated by, or interspersed with, areas of land that are characteristically rural or open, it will not come within this criterion)

(ii) possess a range of basic services, such as a primary school, shop and community facilities, providing a forum for social contact

(iii) be physically and socially cohesive.

POLICY WOS3: DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PRINCIPLES

THE COUNCIL WILL REQUIRE ALL DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS THAT AR ACCEPTABLE IN PRINCIPLE WHEN ASSESSED AGAINST OTHER POLICIES OF THIS PLA TO:

A) BE APPROPRIATE IN SCALE OF ACTIVITY AND CHARACTER TO THE AREA IN WHIC THEY ARE LOCATED AND BE INTEGRATED INTO THEIR LOCAL CONTEXT WITHOU DETRIMENT TO THE AMENITIES OF ADJOINING LAND USES AND OCCUPIERS

B) ~~RETAIN~~ *HAVE NO SIGNIFICANT DETRIMENTAL IMPACT UPON* (PA 1/6) IMPORTAN MAN-MADE, LANDSCAPE AND NATURE CONSERVATION FEATURES AND PROVID FOR FURTHER LANDSCAPE TREATMENT WHERE RELEVANT TO THE TYPE O DEVELOPMENT AND/OR THE PROTECTION OF LOCAL VISUAL AMENITY

C) BE BOTH LOCATED AND DESIGNED SO AS TO REDUCE THE NEED TO TRAVEL AN ENCOURAGE THE USE OF WALKING, CYCLING AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT A ALTERNATIVES TO THE CAR

D) HAVE NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON ROAD SAFETY OR CAUSE HIGHWAY, TRAFFI GENERATION OR TRAFFIC RELATED ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

E) PROVIDE BUILDINGS, FACILITIES AND SPACES THAT ARE CAPABLE OF USE BY PEOPLE WHO HAVE MOBILITY OR SENSORY IMPAIRMENT

F) BE OF HIGH QUALITY OF DESIGN THAT RESPECTS THE LOCAL CONTEXT BY VIRTUE OF SITING, LAYOUT, MASSING, MATERIALS, COLOUR AND TEXTURE.

Implementation: Through the development control process.

Monitoring: Planning applications determined.

Services, Amenities and Infrastructure

1.13 It is a principle of good planning that new development should provide the necessary infrastructure, including services and amenities, needed to support the development. This is a material consideration in considering planning applications (as set out in Circular 1/97, *Planning Obligations*). An explicit assessment must be made of infrastructure requirements arising from the development and how these should be met. Such provision is a key element in the quality of life or new and existing residents. Supplementary planning guidance has been produced setting out the implementation of Policy WOS4 below.

POLICY WOS4: SERVICE, AMENITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT

WHERE DEVELOPMENT IS ACCEPTABLE IN PRINCIPLE, UNDER THE POLICIES OF THIS PLAN, DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WILL BE EXPECTED TO HAVE

Cont.

THE COUNTRYSIDE

Development in the Countryside

2.21 It is important to note the distinction between the 'countryside' and 'rural areas'. These are quite separate in technical terms. 'Countryside' is all land beyond identified settlement boundaries. Note that the countryside within the Metropolitan Green Belt is subject to specific Green Belt policies that form part of a separate chapter in this plan. The 'rural areas' definition is set out in the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 - 2006, para. 5.5 where it is defined as:

"...those places which lie beyond towns (and adjoining built-up areas) with populations of 10,000 or more. This definition accords with that used by the Rural Development Commission...Using this approach the following settlements fall outside the remit of Policy C1: Reading Urban Area (Woodley and Earley); Wokingham/Winnersh"

2.22 Using just the 'rural areas' definition would mean that much of the plan area is rural and includes settlements such as Finchampstead North and Twyford. Therefore the 'countryside' definition is considered more appropriate and will apply in this plan.

2.23 The guiding principle in the countryside is that development should both benefit economic activity and maintain or enhance the environment. Rural areas can accommodate some forms of development without detriment, if the type, form and design are sensitive to the location. New development should be carefully located having regard to existing settlement patterns and to historic, wildlife and landscape resources. *CERTAIN CATEGORIES OF DEVELOPMENT, E.G. AGRICULTURE AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS, ARE CLASSED AS PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE GENERAL DEVELOPMENT ORDER 1995 AND PRIOR NOTIFICATION TO THE COUNCIL OF THE EXERCISE OF THESE RIGHTS IS REQUIRED.* (PA 2/7) Development in the open countryside, away from existing settlements or areas allocated for development in this local plan will be strictly controlled. Some categories of development that may be appropriate, are set out in Policy WCC1 below.

2.23A INFILL DEVELOPMENT IS DEFINED AS ONE OR TWO DWELLINGS IN A SMALL GAP IN AN OTHERWISE BUILT-UP FRONTAGE. FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY SMALL IS DEFINED AS NO LARGER THAN NECESSARY TO ACCOMMODATE TWO HOUSES HAVING REGARD TO THE WIDTHS OF THE EXISTING RESIDENTIAL FRONTAGES IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY. THE NEW DWELLING(S) SHOULD HAVE A SIMILAR ROAD FRONTAGE AND SIMILAR CURTILAGE TO ADJOINING DWELLINGS. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE DEVELOPMENT DOES NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA AND IN PARTICULAR NOT LEAD TO ANY URBANISATION OF THE AREA. SUCH DEVELOPMENT SHOULD PROVIDE ADEQUATE GARDEN OR AMENITY OPEN SPACE FOR THE PRIVATE ENJOYMENT OF RESIDENTS APPROPRIATE TO THE CHARACTER AND GENERAL LAYOUT OF THE AREA. THE PROTECTION OF TREES IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY WBE11 WILL BE ANOTHER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION. [A1]

2.23B THE DEVELOPMENT WILL BE SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF POLICY WCC4 ON NEW BUILDINGS OUTSIDE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES. WHERE APPLICABLE, PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT WILL BE CONSIDERED AGAINST POLICY WCC2 AND POLICIES WLL2 TO WLL8 OF THIS PLAN AND THE RELEVANT POLICIES OF THE STRUCTURE PLAN. [A1]

POLICY WCC1: DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE (OUTSIDE THE METROPOLITAN GREEN BELT)

DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES DEFINED IN THIS PLAN (AND NOT WITHIN THE METROPOLITAN GREEN BELT) WILL ONLY BE ALLOWED IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND WILL BE STRICTLY CONTROLLED THROUGH THE APPLICATION OF DETAILED POLICIES AND PROVISIONS OF THIS PLAN.

DEVELOPMENT WILL ONLY BE ACCEPTABLE IN PRINCIPLE WHERE THE PROPOSAL FALLS WITHIN AT LEAST ONE OF THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES:

A) DEVELOPMENT FOR AGRICULTURE/FORESTRY

B) OUTDOOR SPORT/COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION

C) LOCAL COMMUNITY FACILITIES WHICH CANNOT BE LOCATED ELSEWHERE

D) RE-USE AND ADAPTATION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS

E) DIVERSIFICATION OF AN ESTABLISHED AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS WHERE IT COMPLIES WITH POLICY WRE1

Cont.

F) REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

G) OTHER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATE TO THE COUNTRYSIDE WHICH CANNOT BE ACCOMMODATED WITHIN A SETTLEMENT

~~*H)SENSITIVE INFILLING OF SMALL GAPS WITHIN SMALL GROUPS OF HOUSES AND MINOR EXTENSIONS TO GROUPS OUTSIDE DESIGNATED GREEN GAPS (POLICY WCC 2) FOR RESIDENTIAL USE WILL BE ACCEPTABLE SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF POLICY WH1A*~~ **(PA 2/8)**

H) SENSITIVE INFILLING OF ONE OR TWO DWELLINGS IN A SMALL GAP IN AN OTHERWISE BUILT-UP FRONTAGE WHERE THE DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA. **[A1]**

WHERE DEVELOPMENT IS ACCEPTABLE IN PRINCIPLE, IT WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IF IT IS APPROPRIATE IN SCALE, FORM, MATERIALS, DESIGN, CHARACTER, TO ITS LOCATION IN THE COUNTRYSIDE AND BE CONSISTENT WITH OTHER POLICIES IN THIS PLAN (SUCH AS *THOSE RELATING TO GREEN GAPS, LANDSCAPE AND* **[A1]** NATURE CONSERVATION) AND ANY SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE.

THE CLOSING OF GAPS OR THE ENCLOSURE OF OPEN AREAS THAT ARE IMPORTANT COMPONENTS IN THE CHARACTER OF AN AREA WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

Implementation: The development control process.

Monitoring: Planning applications determined within each category.

Separation of Settlements by Green Gaps and Wedges

2.24 As a result of the density of development and the variety of settlements that characterise the plan area, it is essential that the separate identity of these settlements is maintained by keeping real 'green wedges' and 'gaps' between them. Policy C6 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 - 2006 states that the 'green wedges' and 'gaps' will be defined in local plans. The areas in question are set out on the proposals map supporting this plan. Some of these gaps are more vulnerable than others and any built development could undermine their importance. Where specific landscape features such as trees or hedgerows may be compromised measures for positive landscape management will be sought, where possible.

2.25 For the avoidance of doubt, 'green wedges' are areas of open space penetrating, partly enclosed by, or separating identified settlements. ~~*EXISTING PERMITTED USES WILL CONTINUE IN THESE AREAS BUT INTENSIFICATION OF THESE USES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED, IN ORDER TO PRESERVE THE EXISTING OPEN CHARACTER OF THE LAND.*~~ **(PA 2/9)** *EXISTING PERMITTED USES WILL CONTINUE IN THESE AREAS, BUT INTENSIFICATION OF THESE USES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED WHERE THE EXISTING OPEN AND UNDEVELOPED CHARACTER OF THE LAND IS ADVERSELY AFFECTED.* **[A2]** 'Gaps' comprise open land which provides physical or visual separation between distinct identified settlements.

2.26 The areas included in the green wedges and gaps policy have been identified previously in the adopted local plans as areas important to the separation of settlements. These are retained except where specific proposals require a change, e.g. the new settlement identified at Grazeley, south of the M4.

2.27 The green wedges and gaps can also be important because of the character and sense of place that they can contribute to the settlements. In the adopted local plans the separation of, and setting of, settlements

issues were kept distinct in policy terms. This could lead to confusion arising from a multiplicity of designations on areas shown on the current proposals map. As a result this has been reviewed and a need to simplify the proposals map recognised.

2.28 The green wedges and gaps designation is now shown on those areas that had either a dual settings and separation of settlements function, or the separation of settlements designation only, in the adopted local plans. Where an area was only important to the setting of settlements, these areas will remain subject to a separate policy found in the Landscape section of this chapter (Policy WLL6).

2.29 Major development in the wider tracts of open countryside could create further development pressures leading to the coalescence of settlements. The open land between Wokingham and Crowthorne to the east of the Reading/Guildford railway line is subject to particular pressures and is therefore identified in the Structure Plan supporting text (para. 5.28) to Policy C6. The Council will continue to protect the wider tracts of open countryside between other settlements, such as between Wokingham, Hurst and Twyford *AND THE LODDON VALLEY BETWEEN ABORFIELD CROSS AND SHINFIELD.* **(PA 2/10)**

POLICY WCC2: GREEN GAPS AND WEDGES (OUTSIDE THE METROPOLITAN GREEN BELT)

IN SEEKING TO MAINTAIN A CLEAR SEPARATION OF SETTLEMENTS WITHIN THE PLAN AREA, DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT BE PERMITTED IN THE GREEN GAPS AND WEDGES THAT WOULD AFFECT OR DETRACT FROM THEIR OPEN OR COUNTRYSIDE APPEARANCE AND CHARACTER. THESE AREAS ARE OF SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE BECAUSE THEY ARE ESSENTIAL TO THE MAINTENANCE OF A PHYSICAL AND VISUAL SEPARATION BETWEEN DISTINCT SETTLEMENTS AND THE COUNTRYSIDE SETTING THEY PROVIDE FOR THEM.

EXISTING SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY FEATURES SUCH AS WOODLANDS, COPSES AND HEDGEROWS SHOULD BE RETAINED AND, WHERE POSSIBLE, ENHANCED. POSITIVE MANAGEMENT OF LANDSCAPE FEATURES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE SEPARATION OF SETTLEMENTS WILL BE ENCOURAGED.

ANY DEVELOPMENT ADJOINING AREAS IMPORTANT TO THE SEPARATION OF SETTLEMENTS MUST NOT UNDERMINE THOSE BOUNDARY FEATURES IMPORTANT TO THE LANDSCAPE.

THE GREEN GAPS AND WEDGES ARE IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP.

Implementation: The development control process, encouragement and advice to landowners.

Monitoring: Impact of planning consents and number of positive management actions achieved.

Central Berkshire Forest

2.30 This Council has been developing the principles of landscape enhancement on the edges of the built-up areas through its Community Woodland programme in the Loddon Valley. The Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 - 2006 includes a proposal for a 'new forest' in the central part of Berkshire. *THIS WILL INVOLVE INCREASED TREE COVER AND SHOULD ALSO INCLUDE A RICH VARIETY OF OTHER USES SUCH AS FARMLAND, HEATH AND MEADOWS. THE FOREST SHOULD AFFORD OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECREATION, WILDLIFE AND THE DIVERSIFICATION OF FARMING ACTIVITIES.* **[A3]**

2.31 A study has been undertaken of how and where the Community Woodland concept can be expanded into other areas where there would be a positive benefit from an increase in tree cover and thereby contribute to the concept of the new forest. The study has established a search area, outside the Metropolitan Green Belt, which includes:

a) the Earley sectors of the Community Woodland
b) the critical gaps between Woodley, Earley and Winnersh
c) the mineral degraded landscapes of the middle Loddon Valley
d) the Lower Loddon, between the A4 and the Thames
e) weak settlement edges and areas important to the setting and separation of settlements
f) the A329(M) and M4 corridors.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

National Policy

4.5 Advice on design at the national level is limited. There is no Planning Policy Guidance Note purely on design considerations. Paras 13 - 20 and Annex A (paras A1 - A7) of PPG1 refer specifically to the issue of design. Paras 4 - 7 of Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 (PPG 3) *Housing* look at good design in the context of housing development.

4.6 Comprehensive guidance on heritage issues is given in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG 15) *Planning and the Historic Environment*. Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (PPG 16) *Archaeology and Planning* gives advice on archaeology and planning.

Strategic Policy

4.7 The *Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 - 2006* acknowledges that the quality of the County's environment relates to its character, identifiable 'sense of place', and people's living conditions. The plan recognises that these depend partly on care for the built environment, but that also of importance are the maintenance and improvement of interests that have a bearing on the County's character, the limitation and control of specific threats to pleasant living conditions, and the conservation of natural resources.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

4.8 The environmental policies in this plan are augmented by additional guidance in the form of Planning Guidelines, Development Briefs, Design Guides, and Conservation Area Studies. This additional guidance includes detailed advice that is not appropriate for inclusion in the plan. The policies of the plan take precedence over the supplementary planning guidance, and provide the main thrust for environmental policy in the plan area.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

4.9 Proposed development should be considered in the context of the surrounding area. This will allow vernacular style and any good features to be interpreted in the new development, helping to contribute to its sense of place.

POLICY WBE1: DEVELOPMENT IN ITS LOCAL CONTEXT

THE COUNCIL WILL REQUIRE GOOD CONTEMPORARY DESIGN THROUGHOUT THE PLAN AREA, WHICH RESPECTS ITS LOCAL CONTEXT. WHEN CONSIDERING ANY APPLICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT THE COUNCIL WILL HAVE REGARD TO THE FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS:

a) ITS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

b) ITS VISUAL IMPACT

c) ACCESSIBILITY

Cont.

d) LANDFORM AND ANY NATURAL FEATURES, INCLUDING LANDSCAPE TREATMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS

e) THE LOCAL TOWNSCAPE

f) THE LAYOUT, FORM, SCALE, MASSING, AND MATERIALS OF DEVELOPMENT

g) SAFETY AND SECURITY

h) THE PRIVACY AND AMENITY OF THE EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

i) SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DESIGN GUIDANCE ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL.

Implementation: Use of design guidance in the development control process.

Monitoring: Consider quality of development on the ground, including through design awards.

4.10 Not all of the plan area is of the same visual quality. Some parts of it could benefit from environmental improvement, and in some circumstances, this may be achievable through redevelopment opportunities.

POLICY WBE2: IMPROVING ON THE LOCAL CONTEXT

IN AREAS WHERE THE EXISTING ENVIRONMENT DOES NOT EXHIBIT ESPECIALLY PRONOUNCED OR HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL STYLES, ANY PROPOSALS FOR INFILL DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE USED AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE ADDED VISUAL INTEREST AND RAISE THE AREA'S ARCHITECTURAL QUALITY.

Implementation: Through the development control process.

Monitoring: Check quality of development on the ground.

4.11 Because of their extent, large developments are likely to have a greater impact on the environment than smaller scale ones. It is therefore particularly important to ensure a high quality of development within such proposals. Large development areas are probably best considered in terms of a series or pattern of smaller areas, each with its own layout and form of development, and hence its own distinctive character. This should lead to the avoidance of extensive areas of characterless development that bear no relationship to features on the ground.

POLICY WBE3: CHARACTER OF LARGE SCALE DEVELOPMENT

ANY PROPOSALS FOR LARGE SCALE DEVELOPMENT SHOULD PROVIDE A CLEAR AND COHERENT LAYOUT THAT CREATES AREAS OF IDENTIFIABLE CHARACTER WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT. WHERE DEVELOPMENT IS TO BE CARRIED OUT IN PHASES, THE COUNCIL WILL REQUIRE THE SUBMISSION OF A INDICATIVE LAYOUT FOR THE ENTIRE SITE PRIOR TO THE APPROVAL OF ANY

Cont.

Garden, Craft, Antique and other Retail Centres in Rural Locations

7.71 Garden centre retailing has grown considerably within the District. Buisnesses favour sites for this type of shopping on major roads in rural locations due to large display space requirements, historical association with nursery grounds, prominence and the attractiveness of the setting. Over the years the intensity and scale of such uses have significantly increased. The impact of this trend is to increase visual intrusion on the countryside, to bring increased activity levels to rural areas and to attract car-borne trade from a wide catchment area.

7.72 One response to diversification of the rural economy has been the establishment of craft and antique centres. These have a preference for pleasant surroundings and are attracted to traditional farm or other buildings in countryside locations. They seek cheap accommodation and derive benefit from association with garden centres or other places of interest. They frequently have a high retailing component as well as a need for workshop space. Display areas are generally contained within buildings.

7.73 The policy below deals with redevelopment and extensions of such enterprises. Generally these retail outlets will have in excess of 500 metres of display and sales space. Proposals for new garden, craft and antique centres are covered by general shopping policies WSH1, WSH2 and WSH3. Proposals for such development within the Green Belt will also be assessed against Policy WGB10.

7.74 When applying this policy the Council will expect any necessary applications under the advertisement regulations to be submitted concurrently with any planning application.

POLICY WRE6: DEVELOPMENT AT EXISTING GARDEN, CRAFT AND OTHER RETAIL CENTRES OUTSIDE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES IN AREAS OUTSIDE THE METROPOLITAN GREEN BELT

REDEVELOPMENT OF, OR EXTENSION TO EXISTING GARDEN, CRAFT, ANTIQUE OR OTHER RETAIL CENTRES OUTSIDE SETTLEMENTS IDENTIFIED IN THIS PLAN WILL BE ACCEPTABLE WHERE THE PROPOSAL:

A) DOES NOT HAVE AN ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE VIABILITY OF NEARBY VILLAGE SHOPS

B) DOES NOT LEAD TO AN INTENSIFICATION OF ACTIVITY AT THE SITE

C) THE PROPOSAL HAS NO GREATER VISUAL IMPACT ON THE CHARACTER OF THE COUNTRYSIDE, BY REASON OF THE SITING, SCALE, BUILT FORM, MASSING, MATERIALS OR SITE COVERAGE OF BUILDINGS, CAR PARKS, DISPLAY AREAS OR ROAD IMPROVEMENT WORKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSAL, THAN THE EXISTING DEVELOPMENT

D) DOES NOT CAUSE DETRIMENT TO ADJOINING LAND USES AND OCCUPIERS, ON AMENITY, ENVIRONMENTAL, OR HISTORICAL ENVIRONMENT POLICY GROUNDS

E) DOES NOT LEAD TO OBJECTIONS UNDER POLICY WT4 (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF TRAFFIC) OR OTHER TRANSPORT POLICIES OF THIS PLAN

Cont.

F) DOES NOT HAVE AN ADVERSE IMPACT ON HIGH QUALITY AGRICULTURAL LAND AS SET OUT IN POLICY WLL1

G) DOES NOT HAVE AN ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE WILDLIFE VALUE OF THE SITE OR ITS SURROUNDINGS OR UPON SITES OF REGIONAL GEOLOGICAL OR GEOMORPHOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE.

Implementation: Through negotiation with site owners and through the development control process in consultation with MAFF, English Nature and the Council's conservation officer.

Monitoring: Annual commercial monitoring and regular inspection by planning enforcement officers.

10.37 As well as cars, it is essential that proper provision is made for cycles, motorcycles and lorries. Cyc parking facilities should be well related to cycle tracks. The provision of such facilities will preve obstruction of footways and assist security. Such facilities should be provided in connection with retail, business, leisure and educational development.

POLICY WT6: PARKING PROVISION

IN THE CENTRES OF WOKINGHAM, WOODLEY, EARLEY AND TWYFORD ON-ST PARKING WILL BE LIMITED TO THAT REQUIRED FOR OPERATIONAL NEED ELSEWHERE THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK THE PROVISION IN APPROPRIATE LOCATION WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT FOR CAR, CYCLE, MOTORCYCLE AND LORRY PARKING ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S ADOPTED STANDARDS.

~~WITHIN CAR PARKS AND OTHER SUITABLE PUBLIC AREAS PROVISION WILL BE MAI FOR COVERED, WELL LIT AND SECURE CYCLE PARKING.~~

THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK THE PROVISION OF COVERED, WELL LIT AND SECURE CYCL PARKING WITHIN CAR PARKS AND IN OTHER LOCATIONS WHERE IT IS LIKELY TO B NEEDED SUCH AS SHOPPING CENTRES, RAILWAY STATIONS, SCHOOLS, LIBRARIE DOCTORS' SURGERIES, COUNTRY PARKS AND LEISURE FACILITIES. CYCLE STANDS FO INDIVIDUAL OR PAIRS OF CYCLES WILL BE SITED WHERE LARGER CYCLE PARKS ARE NO APPROPRIATE. **(PA 10/4)**

THE COUNCIL WILL REVIEW THE NUMBER AND LOCATION OF DISABLED PARKIN SPACES AND SEEK TO MEET ANY SHORTFALL IN AVAILABILITY OR LOCATIONA CONSIDERATIONS, AND INCREASE PROVISION WHERE APPROPRIATE.

WHERE APPROPRIATE, IN ORDER TO PROMOTE ROAD SAFETY, ON-STREET PARKIN WILL BE RESTRICTED.

Implementation: Through development control and the annual capital programme of transport investment and environmental improvement *AND THE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN PROGRAMME.*

Monitoring: ~~Through surveys of need including problems caused by vehicles parked on street, restricting access particularly by the emergency services, and problems of cycle parking on the pavement and obstruction.~~ *THROUGH THE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN PROCESS.* {T/1

Safety

10.38 The Council considers it important to meet the government's targets in relation to safety and th reduction in accidents. Measures to improve safety will have a high priority, particularly in the vicini of schools. In recent years many improvements for road safety reasons have been implemented.

10.39 For safety and for environmental reasons a number of traffic calming schemes have been implemente in the District. Traffic calming measures aimed at reducing the speed and penetration of traffi particularly in residential areas, combined with environmental improvements can improve road safe and make the streets a more pleasant place in which to be. There is, however, concern about the detail some of the traffic calming schemes that have been implemented. Speed humps have been opposed b the emergency services who consider that they increase response times; they are a problem for patien in ambulances. The bus operators have also opposed speed humps for reasons of passenger comfort an safety. Concern has been expressed about the effect of traffic calming measures on roads that are use as an alternative to avoid such measures, particularly road humps, and the lack of alternative approache to traffic calming. Offset parking areas, for example can reduce the speed of traffic. Other approache include footway widening, width restrictions and variation in surface treatments. Traffic calmin schemes, however modest, do incur a cost. In view of this, and the fact that schemes can arou opposition, they will only be undertaken where clearly justified.

10.40 Although there has been opposition to traffic calming, the issue of excessive speed is a matter of great public concern, although generally resolution of the problem is outside the scope of land-use planning. Speed is a major influence on the severity of accidents.

POLICY WT7: ROAD SAFETY

THE COUNCIL WILL TAKE APPROPRIATE MEASURES TO PROMOTE ROAD SAFETY FOR ALL ROAD USERS INCLUDING:

a) MONITORING OF ACCIDENT STATISTICS TO IDENTIFY BLACKSPOTS

b) GIVING HIGH PRIORITY TO IMPROVEMENTS THAT WILL REDUCE ACCIDENTS INCLUDING THOSE INVOLVING PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS

c) ENSURING THAT ALL RELEVANT INVESTMENT CONFORMS TO BEST PRACTICE IN RESPECT OF ROAD SAFETY

d) EXAMINING THE ROAD SAFETY IMPLICATIONS OF ALL PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT, AND

e) THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TRAFFIC CALMING SCHEMES WHERE JUSTIFIED.

Implementation: Through the annual capital programme of transport investment and environmental improvement *AND THE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN PROGRAMME..*

Monitoring: Through road safety and accident monitoring and the Road Safety Plan *AS PART OF THE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN PROCESS.* **{T/12}**

Street Lighting

10.41 The provision of street lighting is an important aid to safety at night and promotes security and a feeling of well being. It is, however, an extremely sensitive issue in rural areas. There can be strong opposition to the introduction of street lighting into presently unlit rural areas. In considering whether to introduce street lighting it is important to consult the local community and its representatives.

10.42 Any lighting scheme must be well designed taking into account the character of the location. This is particularly necessary in areas of environmental quality and conservation areas. In a number of places street lighting is not continuous leading to problems for motorists arising from the alternation of lit and unlit areas.

POLICY WT8: STREET LIGHTING

THE PROVISION OF STREET LIGHTING IN PRESENTLY UNLIT AREAS WILL BE SOUGHT WHERE JUSTIFIED FOR SAFETY AND SECURITY REASONS HAVING REGARD TO:

a) THE VOLUME OF PEDESTRIAN AND VEHICULAR FLOWS

b) THE EFFECT ON THE CHARACTER OF THE LOCATION, PARTICULARLY IN RURAL AREAS

Cont.

Surface Water Run-Off

11.34 Unless carefully sited and designed, new development can increase run-off by the addition of impermeable surfaces such as roofs and paved areas. This can result in increased risk of flooding downstream and damage to the water environment. Where possible the Council will encourage permeable surfaces, in parking areas for example.

Flood Plains

11.35 The Environment Agency has statutory responsibilities for water resources, pollution control, flood defence, fisheries, recreation, conservation and navigation. New development can cause flooding, pollution and erosion of areas located downstream. Accordingly development will be restricted in areas liable to flood and in locations that would result in an increased flood risk in areas downstream. In preparing flood compensation schemes consideration should be given to the primary use of the land. Flood compensation schemes will not be acceptable within residential curtilages unless it can be demonstrated that the main use as a garden would not be affected.

POLICY WIC16: DEVELOPMENT IN FLOOD PLAINS

IN AREAS LIABLE TO FLOOD DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE COUNCIL, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY THAT, BY ITSELF, OR CUMULATIVELY WITH OTHER DEVELOPMENT, IT WILL NOT:

a) IMPEDE THE FLOW OF FLOOD WATER; OR

b) REDUCE THE CAPACITY OF THE FLOOD PLAIN TO STORE WATER; OR

c) INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE OR PROPERTIES AT RISK FROM FLOODING.

Implementation: Through development control process and in consultation with the Environment Agency.

Monitoring: Planning applications determined within flood areas.

POLICY WIC17: SURFACE WATER RUN-OFF LIABLE TO CAUSE FLOODING

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NOT BE GRANTED FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT OR REDEVELOPMENT OF EXISTING URBAN AREAS IF SUCH DEVELOPMENT WOULD RESULT IN AN INCREASED FLOOD RISK IN AREAS DOWNSTREAM DUE TO ADDITIONAL SURFACE WATER RUN-OFF. WHERE DEVELOPMENT IS PERMITTED THAT IS LIKELY TO INCREASE THE RISK OF FLOODING, IT MUST INCLUDE APPROPRIATE ATTENUATION MEASURES DEFINED BY THE COUNCIL IN CONSULTATION WITH THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY.

Implementation: Through development control process and in consultation with the Environment Agency.

Monitoring: Planning applications determined.

LODDON AREA LOCAL PLAN

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plan, a village is not synonymous with an identified settlement, the latter being used to define an area where particular planning policies are appropriate. There will therefore be cases where parts of villages have been excluded from the identified settlement, for example, small groups of development on the far side of a road that marks the boundary of the main built up area of the village. In order to be consistent in the treatment of settlements of similar size, function and character, it has been necessary to draw up a definition for settlements warranting identification on the Proposals Map.

1.1.05 An 'identified' settlement or built-up area must possess all the following characteristics:-

(i) a sizeable amount of development in a compact form. (If development is interspersed with areas of land which are characteristically rural or open, this will not come within this criterion);

(ii) possess a range of basic services, such as a school, shop and community facilities, providing a forum for social contact;

(iii) be physically and socially cohesive.

On this basis the following policy is put forward.

❖ LTV1 'IDENTIFIED SETTLEMENTS'

WITHIN THE IDENTIFIED SETTLEMENTS AS LISTED BELOW AND AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, DEVELOPMENT WILL NORMALLY BE ALLOWED, SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF OTHER POLICIES CONTAINED IN THIS PLAN. THE 'IDENTIFIED' SETTLEMENTS ARE:-

ARBORFIELD CROSS
BARKHAM HILL
CHARVIL
EARLEY/SONNING/WOODLEY
HURST
RISELEY
SHINFIELD
SINDLESHAM
SPENCERS WOOD
SWALLOWFIELD
THREE MILE CROSS
TWYFORD
WARGRAVE
WINNERSH

LIMITING THE SPREAD OF DEVELOPMENT

1.1.06 The District Council recognises the need to maintain an acceptable level of environmental quality and considers that the maintenance of a clear distinction between built-up areas and the countryside is fundamental to achieving this aim. Such an approach helps to ensure that individual settlements retain their identity and that the open and rural character of land outside the boundaries of identified settlements is retained. Accordingly it is intended to limit development outside identified settlements to that which is appropriate to the countryside or has a special reason to locate there. Although these uses are acceptable in principle, they must also be acceptable in practice. This is particularly important in the case of small scale housing and employment development on the edge of settlements which is dealt with in more detail in policies LH1 and LE2.



❖ LTV2 DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AREAS

ALL LAND OUTSIDE THE IDENTIFIED SETTLEMENTS, AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP IS CONSIDERED TO BE RURAL AREA WITHIN WHICH DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT NORMALLY BE ALLOWED. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE

REPLACEMENT STRUCTURE PLAN EXCEPTIONS MAY BE MADE FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES WHICH ARE NOT SPECIFICALLY DEALT WITH BY OTHER POLICIES IN THIS LOCAL PLAN:

(A) DEVELOPMENT FOR HOUSING PURPOSES OF SITES NOT EXCEEDING 0.4 HECTARE ON THE EDGE OF SETTLEMENTS IN THE FORM OF ROUNDING OFF OR REDEVELOPMENT;

(B) DEVELOPMENT FOR EMPLOYMENT USES NOT EXCEEDING 300 SQUARE METRES OF FLOORSPACE ON THE EDGE OF SETTLEMENTS IN THE FORM OF ROUNDING OFF OR REDEVELOPMENT;

(C) DEVELOPMENT ESSENTIAL TO THE USE OF LAND FOR AGRICULTURE OR FORESTRY;

(D) MINERAL EXTRACTION;

(E) PLANT FOR RECEIVING IMPORTED AGGREGATES, OR FOR THE PROCESSING OR DISTRIBUTION OF AGGREGATES;

(F) THE DISPOSAL OF WASTE BY CONTROLLED TIPPING WITHIN EXISTING OR FORMER MINERAL WORKINGS OR ON OTHER DESPOILED LAND;

(G) PUBLIC UTILITIES THAT CANNOT BE LOCATED ELSEWHERE;

(H) ANY OTHER PURPOSE WHOLLY APPROPRIATE TO A RURAL AREA.

THE ACCEPTABILITY OF ALL PROPOSALS WILL ALSO BE JUDGED AGAINST THE PROVISIONS OF THE OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES CONTAINED IN THIS PLAN. FOR THE AVOIDANCE OF DOUBT THE AREAS OF SPORADIC DEVELOPMENT IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAPS ARE INCLUDED WITHIN THE RURAL AREAS.

NEW SETTLEMENTS IN RURAL AREAS

1.1.07 The scale of housing and other developments envisaged in the Replacement Structure Plan for Berkshire is not such as to recognise or justify consideration of a new settlement separate from existing settlements. There are therefore no proposals of this nature in the plan. Any such development would seriously undermine the county and regional strategy and would seriously detract from the essential role of the countryside areas in providing a foil to the built-up areas and maintaining substantial tracts of countryside in an increasingly urbanised area.

❖ LTV3 NEW SETTLEMENTS IN RURAL AREAS

THE CREATION OF NEW SETTLEMENTS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED WITHIN THE DEFINED RURAL AREAS, AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP.

DEFINITION OF BOUNDARIES

1.1.08 The preparation of this Local Plan has provided an opportunity to formally recognise the boundaries of settlements that have never previously been 'identified' and to review those boundaries of settlements that have previously been recognised in earlier village or local plans. In certain cases development has occurred, or, a commitment exists beyond the existing boundary, whilst in other cases the latter does not always delineate land which is in a truly urban as opposed to rural use.

1.1.09 The perimeter of each 'identified' settlement has been surveyed and clear boundaries identified. These follow natural features, fencelines or other plot boundaries. An exception concerns properties with extensive curtilages where property boundaries are not necessarily appropriate. In such circumstances, it has been necessary to make a judgement about the point at

There have often been competing claims for the use of land, besides agriculture, in this part of Berkshire in the past, and they will be strengthened by the reduced role of agricultural production. The plan has a central role to play in achieving a rational balance between those claims.

1.3.06 Many of the policies are protective of the countryside and restrict new built development in accordance with the overall policy LTV1 of this Plan and Policy EN1 of the Replacement Structure Plan. The policies also seek to enhance the countryside in those areas where a land-use plan is able to do so.

EXPANSION OF EXISTING SETTLEMENTS

1.3.07 Some of the Housing and Employment policies allow for limited development of sites outside the identified settlements shown on the Proposals Map. It is important that where these are otherwise acceptable they should not prejudice the maintenance of the rural areas and the countryside in general terms. In addition to the general restriction of development in rural areas embodied in policy LTV2 there are, therefore, policies which apply to land on or close to the boundaries of the identified settlements and to land between settlements. The aims of these policies are:

a) to maintain, and where possible reinforce, a clear distinction between built-up areas and rural areas,

b) to ensure that new development either within or on the boundaries of built-up areas does not detract from the surrounding countryside,

c) to ensure that a physical and visual separation is maintained between distinct settlements.

1.3.08 The policies are based upon and complementary to Policies EN4, EN5 and EN6 of the Replacement Structure Plan and do not seek to repeat them. Particular consideration will be given to Policy EN4 which deals with the need to prevent development impinging unsatisfactorily on the surrounding countryside regardless of whether or not it is within one of the special categories outlined below.

1.3.09 Where there are distinct settlements, development on their boundaries or between them could, either visually or physically, damage their individual identities. Policy LC1 identifies the areas which are essential to the maintenance of physical and visual separation and makes it clear that development will not be permitted which would detract from that essential function. In some cases this will not include all of the intervening land between settlements but there may be other policies in the plan, in addition to LTV2, which make development equally unacceptable. In some areas the gap which already exists between settlements falls below that ideally required to maintain physical and visual separation. It is particularly important that what remains is fully protected and, where possible, made more effective.

1.3.10 In considering what areas should be included in Policy LC1, only gaps between identified settlements or between identified settlements and areas of sporadic development have been identified. At the smaller scale, development between areas of sporadic development would be equally unacceptable and on the larger scale, major developments in the wider tracts of open countryside between settlements could create new pressures for coalescence and be objectionable on that basis. The criteria used to identify the areas notated under policy LC1 are contained in Local Plan Working Paper Two which is available separately from this plan.

❖ LC1 SEPARATION OF SETTLEMENTS

IN SEEKING TO MAINTAIN A CLEAR SEPARATION OF SETTLEMENTS WITHIN THE PLAN AREA, DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT BE PERMITTED IN THE AREAS DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAPS WHICH WOULD EITHER DETRACT FROM THE UNDEVELOPED APPEARANCE OR INTENSIFY EXISTING SPORADIC DEVELOPMENT. THESE

AREAS ARE OF SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE BECAUSE THEY ARE ESSENTIAL TO THE MAINTENANCE OF A PHYSICAL AND VISUAL SEPARATION BETWEEN DISTINCT SETTLEMENTS. WHERE THE VISUAL OR PHYSICAL SEPARATION BETWEEN SETTLEMENTS IS NOT FULLY EFFECTIVE AT THE PRESENT TIME THE DISTRICT COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ENHANCE VISUAL SEPARATION BY THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF TREE PLANTING OR OTHER APPROPRIATE MEANS.

1.3.11 In addition to protecting land because of its significance in separating settlements from each other it is proposed that areas of importance because of their character and appearance in relationship to adjoining built-up areas should also be protected. These areas of land are either an important part of the landscape setting of the settlement concerned, such as an open area or sloping land around it, or are areas of land which have an intimate relationship with the settlement and which are thus important to the retention of its character and setting. Examples are enclosed fields and paddocks which are an inherent part of the character of some of the settlements in the plan area.

❖ *LC2 SETTING OF SETTLEMENTS*

DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT BE PERMITTED WHICH WOULD DETRACT FROM THE OPEN OR RURAL APPEARANCE OF THE AREAS OF LAND DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAPS WHICH ARE OF SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE IN MAINTAINING THE LANDSCAPE SETTING OR THE INDIVIDUAL CHARACTER OF THE SETTLEMENTS.

AREAS OF SPECIAL LANDSCAPE IMPORTANCE

1.3.12 The landscape character of the local plan area is influenced by the rivers and streams which flow northwards to the Thames. In the northern part of the plan area, near the confluence of the rivers Thames and Loddon is a valley bottom landscape in which the town of Woodley and village of Sonning to the west and villages of Twyford and Wargrave to the east occupy slightly elevated positions. The River Loddon flows from the south joined by the Blackwater north of Swallowfield, through a wide open valley landscape, wholly agricultural in the south, but increasingly gravel and water dominated in the north. The slopes which flank the valley and wooded hill tops which form their crests are prominent in views from within the valley and across it.



1.3.13 A plan-wide landscape survey has identified two tracts of countryside within the plan area, at Farley Hill and Bearwood, as being of special importance in landscape terms. Both are wooded, hilltop areas which feature in views from large parts of the plan area. The criteria used to identify these areas and the alternative boundaries considered are contained in Local Plan Working Paper Three which is available separately from this plan. The following policies are intended to:

a) protect the areas of special landscape importance from development which would detract from their rural character and special landscape qualities;

b) enhance their rural character and landscape qualities by encouraging appropriate management;

c) protect them from development on land around them which would adversely affect their character and setting.

1.3.14 The areas identified represent the 'Other Areas of Special Landscape Importance' within the plan area referred to in Policy EN9 of the Replacement Structure Plan for Berkshire.

B) CONTRIBUTE TO THE CREATION OF A SAFE AND ATTRACTIVE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH TO LIVE AND WORK;

(C) RETAIN IMPORTANT NATURAL, MAN-MADE OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES OF THE SITE COMPATIBLE WITH GOOD DESIGN.

❖ LBE2 INAPPROPRIATE DESIGN

PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT THAT IS INAPPROPRIATE IN TERMS OF ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH ADJOINING SITES AND BUILDINGS, OR WHICH WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT THE CHARACTER OF AN AREA, BY VIRTUE OF ITS ING, SCALE, FORM, MASSING, MATERIALS, COLOUR OR TEXTURE, WILL NOT NORMALLY BE PERMITTED.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT

1.4.04 Within the built environment it is important not only to safeguard those buildings, undeveloped areas and special features which contribute to the character and attractive qualities of the area but also to seek opportunities to enhance the quality of the built environment.

4.05 Often the more attractive and successful an environments have evolved organically over a period of many years and incorporate a variety of architectural styles. In more recent years development in some parts of the District has taken place more comprehensively with little variety in design. In other areas particularly since the war and up to the early 1970's some development has been inserted into an existing area to the detriment of the older urban fabric.

1.4.06 In some areas, district and local shopping centres in particular, where large scale redevelopment has taken place, the opportunity may arise for comprehensive refurbishment since a large part of the urban fabric will tend to age and decay simultaneously. In other areas environmental enhancement of the urban fabric surrounding the buildings may be sufficient to rejuvenate the area as a whole.

❖ LBE3 REFURBISHMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT

ENCOURAGEMENT WILL BE GIVEN TO THE REFURBISHMENT OR PARTIAL REDEVELOPMENT OF AREAS OR INDIVIDUAL SCHEMES WHERE A SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT WILL RESULT TO THE BENEFIT OF THE COMMUNITY.

❖ LBE4 ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT SCHEMES

ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT SCHEMES WILL BE ENCOURAGED WITHIN THE PLAN AREA AS OPPORTUNITIES ARISE AND WILL INCLUDE THE AREAS AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP AND AS SET OUT IN PART TWO OF THE PLAN.

SUNLIGHT, DAYLIGHT AND NOISE

1.4.07 Daylight penetration into new buildings, and existing buildings affected by new development, is an important amenity consideration as is sunlight penetration of spaces outside windows. In this respect it should always be the intention to maximise penetration of new development and minimise the impact of new development on old as far as is possible. The orientation of rooms, gardens and both public and private spaces is therefore critical since together the two aspects can provide warmth, comfort and pleasant living and working conditions. They can also have some impact on energy consumption by reducing the dependence on artificial lighting and heating. Further guidance on this matter can be found in the District Council's Development Control Guidelines.

❖ LBE5 SUNLIGHT AND DAYLIGHT

IN CONSIDERING PROPOSALS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT, REDEVELOPMENT AND REFURBISHMENT THE DISTRICT COUNCIL WILL

REQUIRED AS A RESULT OF NEW DEVELOPMENTS, SUBJECT TO THERE BEING NO SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECT. ELSEWHERE IN THE PLAN AREA THE DISTRICT COUNCIL WILL SUPPORT ROAD AND JUNCTION IMPROVEMENTS WHERE CONSIDERED NECESSARY, AND WHERE LOCALISED OR RESULTANT ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS WILL NOT OCCUR.

THE FOLLOWING MAY BE SUBJECT TO IMPROVEMENT WORKS:

A329/FOREST ROAD: Junction improvement
BETCHWORTH ROAD/WILDERNESS ROAD, EARLEY: Junction improvement
LODDON BRIDGE ROAD/CROCKHAMWELL ROAD, WOODLEY: Junction improvement
LODDON BRIDGE ROAD/HEADLEY ROAD: Modification to roundabout
A329 WOKINGHAM ROAD/WILDERNESS ROAD: Junction improvement
SONNING LANE/A4 BATH ROAD: Junction improvement
WINNERSH CROSSROADS: Improvement
ARBORFIELD CROSS: Junction improvements with A327
BUTTS HILL ROAD BRIDGE OVER RAILWAY: Provision of footbridge
B3349 BARKHAM BRIDGE: New bridge with road realignment
ELM ROAD, EARLEY: Realignment
ELM ROAD/PEPPER LANE: Roundabout improvement
A327 GREENSWARD LANE: Improved alignment.

❖ LT5 ROAD SAFETY

THE DISTRICT COUNCIL WILL URGE THE HIGHWAY AUTHORITY TO TAKE APPROPRIATE MEASURES TO PROMOTE ROAD SAFETY FOR ALL ROAD USERS INCLUDING :

A) MONITORING OF ACCIDENT STATISTICS TO IDENTIFY BLACKSPOTS;

B) GIVING HIGH PRIORITY TO HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS THAT WILL REDUCE ACCIDENTS;

C) ENSURING THAT ALL HIGHWAY INVESTMENT CONFORMS TO BEST PRACTICE IN RESPECT OF ROAD SAFETY;

D) EXAMINING THE ROAD SAFETY IMPLICATIONS OF ALL PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT.

CAR AND MOTORCYCLE PARKING

1.8.10 The increase in the number of cars in the area through growth and high car ownership rates has lead to an increase in demand for parking spaces in shopping centres in the area placing existing facilities under pressure. The District Council recognises the need for car parking in order to maintain the viability of some centres. However new public car parking has environmental implications and may not be acceptable in some more sensitive areas particularly if it is decked.



❖ LT6 PARKING PROVISION

THE DISTRICT COUNCIL WILL SEEK THE PROVISION OF APPROPRIATELY LOCATED PARKING FACILITIES AND CAR PARKING IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE DISTRICT COUNCIL'S ADOPTED STANDARDS, TO BE PROVIDED EITHER IN CONJUNCTION WITH NEW DEVELOPMENT OR BY OBTAINING AN APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF COMMUTED PAYMENT WHERE THERE IS AN INTENTION TO PROVIDE, OR AN IDENTIFIED NEED FOR, PUBLIC PROVISION.

Note 1: The sum required per parking space by way of a commuted payment will be regularly reviewed.

provision of services appropriate to the development to be linked with it. This will involve, in appropriate cases, the provision of land for built and open space facilities at no cost to the appropriate service authority and/or contributions in full or in part to the construction of new facilities or the extension or enlargement of existing facilities.

❖ LPS1 PHASING OF SERVICES IN NEW DEVELOPMENTS

WHERE DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS ACCEPTABLE IN PRINCIPLE UNDER THE POLICIES OF THIS PLAN GIVES RISE TO THE NEED FOR THE PROVISION OF NEW PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY SERVICES, PERMISSION WILL NOT BE GIVEN UNTIL THE DISTRICT PLANNING AUTHORITY IS SATISFIED, BY SEEKING A LEGAL AGREEMENT WHERE NECESSARY, THAT AN APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF INFRASTRUCTURE, SERVICES AND AMENITIES REQUIRED AS A CONSEQUENCE OF AND DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE DEVELOPMENT IS CAPABLE OF BEING AND WILL BE PROVIDED AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS.

UTILITIES

1.9.06 There is a need to ensure the economic planned provision of water, electricity, gas and telephone services in the area to meet the overall demands for future development. It is not anticipated that the provision of these services will pose significant difficulties within the plan area, unless there are significant changes in the characteristics of supply and demand. The plan's proposals seek to keep new development either within or immediately adjoining the main built-up areas of the settlements where these services are available. Further consideration will need to be given to the provision of these services at the stage of detailed proposals. The views of the providing bodies will be sought on development proposals as appropriate.

FOUL AND SURFACE WATER SEWERAGE

1.9.07 The District Council, as agent for Thames Water, is responsible for foul and surface water sewerage. For all new connections for domestic purposes, the developer will be required to pay a flat rate infrastructure charge as a contribution towards the cost of providing additional capacity in the general sewerage system, including treatment, as a consequence of his development. The developer will also be required to meet the cost of requisitioning any new sewers necessary to convey foul and surface water from the development into the existing sewerage system together with a connection charge for each premises connected. It will be necessary to ensure that sufficient time is allowed for the completion of infrastructure provision prior to occupation at all phases of development. Thames Water is consulted by the District Council on relevant planning applications so that it has the opportunity to satisfy itself that adequate sewerage and treatment facilities are or can be made available to serve the proposed development.

FLOODING AND THE WATER ENVIRONMENT

1.9.08 The National Rivers Authority (NRA), established by the Water Act 1989, seeks to maintain and where practicable, to restore the natural washlands of rivers and to reduce the danger of flooding. The NRA also advises on (and has limited powers for) the control of development in flood risk areas to ensure that satisfactory safeguards are provided for the limited development which can be allowed within the floodplain. Works in, under, over and adjacent to, watercourses are also of concern, needing to be properly evaluated to receive any necessary statutory consents due to the sensitivity of watercourses to drainage works.

1.9.09 New development in this area can cause flooding, pollution and erosion of areas located downstream, outside the District.

Conscious of this effect, the District Council will seek the views of the NRA Thames Region and those of adjacent Boroughs for any proposals in its area which appear likely to have significant adverse surface water run-off consequences prior to the granting of planning permission. This will allow appropriate measures as defined by the Council to be taken to alleviate any increased risk of flooding downstream from the development. Accordingly development will be restricted in areas liable to flood and in locations which would result in an increased flood risk in areas downstream.



❖ LPS2 RESTRICTION OF DEVELOPMENT IN FLOOD AREAS

DEVELOPMENT ON AREAS SUBJECT TO FLOOD RISK WILL BE RESTRICTED TO THOSE USES WHICH WILL NOT BE SERIOUSLY AFFECTED BY OCCASIONAL INUNDATION, AND WHICH WILL NOT SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE THE CAPACITY OF THE AVAILABLE WASHLAND AND WILL NOT IMPEDE THE FLOW OF FLOOD WATER.

❖ LPS3 NEW DEVELOPMENT IN FLOOD AREAS

IN AREAS LIABLE TO FLOOD THERE WILL BE A PRESUMPTION AGAINST:

(A) NEW DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING THE EXTENSION OF EXISTING PROPERTIES, WITH GROUND COVERED AREAS GREATER THAN 100 SQUARE METRES; AND

(B) THE RAISING OF THE LEVEL OF LAND,

WHERE THIS WOULD BE LIKELY TO:

(A) MATERIALLY IMPEDE THE FLOW OF FLOOD WATER;

(B) INCREASE THE RISK OF FLOODING ELSEWHERE; OR

(C) INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE OR PROPERTIES AT RISK,

UNLESS SCHEMES FOR FLOOD RELIEF AND/OR COMPENSATION HAVE BEEN AGREED BY THE NATIONAL RIVERS AUTHORITY, THAMES REGION, AND THE DISTRICT COUNCIL.

❖ LPS4 SURFACE WATER RUN-OFF LIABLE TO CAUSE FLOODING

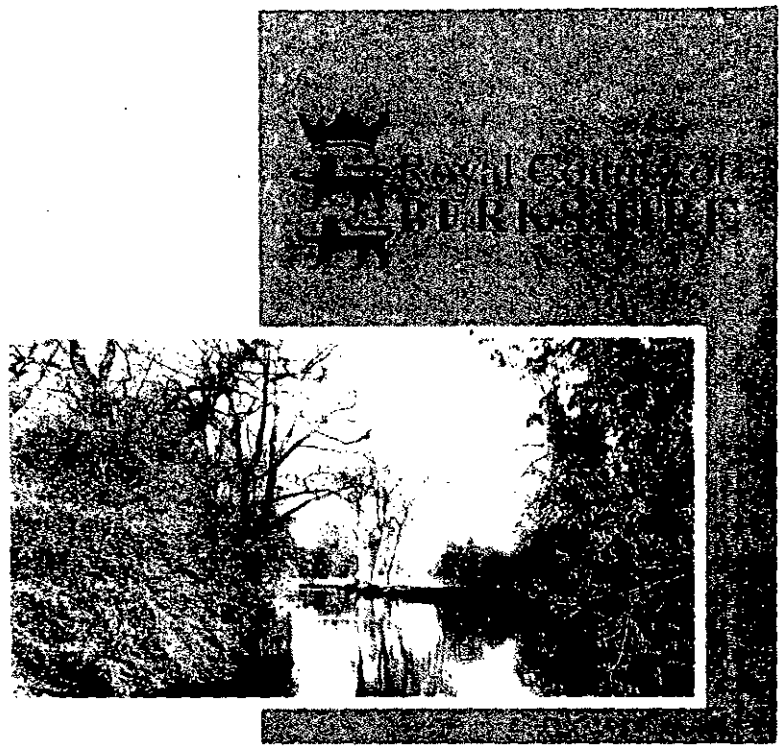
PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NOT NORMALLY BE GRANTED FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT OR REDEVELOPMENT OF EXISTING URBAN AREAS IF SUCH DEVELOPMENT WOULD RESULT IN AN INCREASED FLOOD RISK IN AREAS DOWNSTREAM DUE TO ADDITIONAL SURFACE WATER RUN-OFF. WHERE DEVELOPMENT IS PERMITTED WHICH IS LIKELY TO INCREASE THE RISK OF FLOODING, IT MUST INCLUDE APPROPRIATE ATTENUATION MEASURES DEFINED BY THE COUNCIL IN CONSULTATION WITH THE NRA.

❖ LPS5 WORKS AFFECTING WATERCOURSES

THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ENSURE THAT ALL WORKS IN, UNDER, OVER AND ADJACENT TO, WATERCOURSES RECEIVE ANY NECESSARY STATUTORY CONSENTS AND ARE APPROPRIATELY DESIGNED AND IMPLEMENTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH REGULATIONS.

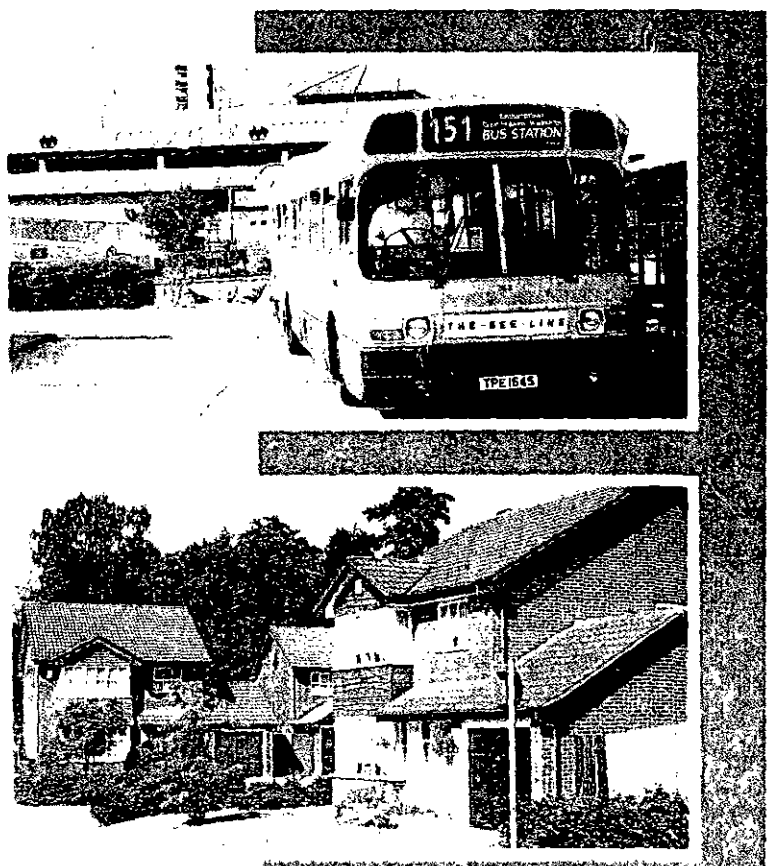
PUBLIC RUBBISH DUMP

1.9.10 The need for a public rubbish site in the central part of Wokingham District has been established for some years. Existing facilities are



BERKSHIRE STRUCTURE PLAN 1991-2006

Incorporating Alterations adopted in August 1997



LIMITING THE SPREAD OF DEVELOPMENT

Controlling Development in the Countryside

5.8 The protection of the countryside is a fundamental concern and it is necessary to limit development within it to that which is both appropriate (in type and form) and sensitive to its location.

Development Outside Built-Up Areas and Settlements

Policy C2 **Development outside built-up areas and settlement boundaries defined in local plans (and not within the Metropolitan Green Belt - see Policy C4) will be strictly controlled, and permitted only :**

(i) where it is required for agriculture or forestry; or

(ii) for the re-use, adaptation or redevelopment of existing buildings, particularly to assist the diversification of the rural economy and to maintain or enhance the rural environment; or

(iii) other development for which a rural location is essential;

provided it is both appropriate in scale, form, impact, character and siting to its location in the countryside and is acceptable in terms of other policies in the Structure Plan.

5.9 Building in the open countryside away from existing settlements or from areas allocated for development in local plans will be strictly controlled in line with advice in PPG7, 'The Countryside and the Rural Economy'. Even where development may be acceptable in principle in the countryside the acceptability of a particular proposal will depend on its suitability for the proposed site; on the impact of any related activity; and on the adequacy of any measures to integrate the proposal into the surroundings. More detailed criteria relating to the control of development in the countryside will be included in local plans. With regard to redevelopment, such criteria may for example require that proposals should have no greater impact (in terms of bulk of buildings or site coverage) than the existing development and should secure environmental improvements.

5.10 Proposals for essential utilities will be considered under sub-section (iii) of Policy C2. Essential utilities include development and facilities, where these cannot be sited within settlements, for transport and related services, including park and ride and motorway service areas; for the distribution of gas, oil and electricity; for sewage disposal; for water supply and flood alleviation; and for telecommunications.

5.11 Where necessary to meet provisions made in the Structure Plan, settlement boundaries may be defined in local plans to allow for appropriate forms of development on sites on the edge of built-up areas.

Countryside

Green Wedges and Gaps

Policy C6 **The setting and separate identity of settlements and communities will be conserved and protected. Development will not be permitted where it would threaten important open areas which are of special significance as "green wedges" or "gaps" because they provide physical or visual separation of settlements or communities which are close together. "Green wedges" and "gaps" will be identified in local plans where there is a risk of:**

(i) coalescence, loss of community identity or increased urbanised character;

(ii) loss of access to open countryside or extensive open space with their associated environmental benefits.

5.30 The boundaries to "green wedges" and "gaps" will be defined in local plans and will relate to those areas which it is considered are essential to the separation of settlements and communities. "Green wedges" are areas of open space penetrating, partly enclosed by, or separating built-up areas or communities and "gaps" comprise open land which provides physical or visual separation of distinct settlements or communities. Although the size and character of "green wedges" and "gaps" will vary, they have a similar function. The existing land uses within these areas may range from agricultural to informal or formal recreation uses or uses like allotments, utilities or institutions. In order to protect the existing open character of the land it is important that development is not intensified so that the distinct communities maintain their identity and sense of separation.

5.31 Examples of such areas identified in the Replacement Structure Plan for Berkshire include land between :

Newbury, Thatcham and Cold Ash

Purley and Pangbourne

Theale and Tilehurst

Reading and settlements to the south of the M4 and land separating these settlements from one another

Sonning and Earley

Wokingham, Winnersh and Sindlesham

Wokingham and Finchampstead North

Wokingham and Crowthorne

Crowthorne and Bracknell

Sandhurst and Crowthorne

Sandhurst and Yateley

Countryside

5.26 The following policy is particularly concerned with the effect of development which is located on the edge of a settlement (but within its defined boundary) upon the adjacent countryside. Policy C2 deals with the nature of development that may be permitted in the countryside, and Policy EN1 with the effect of development on the environment within built-up areas.

Maintenance of the Rural Character of the Countryside Adjoining Built-Up Areas

Policy C5 **Development should not visually intrude into the adjoining countryside or prejudice the maintenance of the rural character of adjacent land. Proposals for development within settlements as defined in local plans, but on the edge of a built-up area should preserve and, where possible, enhance existing landscape features which help to define, soften or screen the edge of the built up area.**

5.27 Development in settlements should be well related to the landscape and to features like hedgerows, trees and floodplains. It should be integrated with them by new tree planting. Although the intention of Policy C5 is to reduce the visibility of buildings in and from the countryside, some buildings (such as some farms and churches) are part of the character of the landscape, and more detailed local planning policies may provide for views of these to be maintained.

Settlement Separation

5.28 Development can encroach into areas of open land which are of importance for a number of reasons, including their contribution to :

- the character of the area;
- separating settlements and maintaining their distinct identity;
- providing a "green lung";
- breaking up continuous areas of development;
- providing a desirable contrast between built areas and the countryside;
- keeping open "green corridors" of land within and between built up areas and providing access into the countryside.

5.29 There is therefore a need to afford these kinds of land especially rigorous protection from development which would threaten their role as important open land. This is in addition to the provisions of Policies C2 and C4. Proposals which might be acceptable in countryside away from settlements may not be acceptable in these sensitive locations.