

Planning Statement

Application Ref: 253129

Site: Oaklands Farm, Forges Lane, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG27 0RB

Applicant: Mr Duncan Walley

1. Introduction

This statement has been prepared in response to the Local Planning Authority's request for further information relating to the increase in built volume arising from the proposed development, due to the site's location within designated countryside.

The statement sets out:

- The existing and proposed built volumes on site
- The impact of demolition and consolidation of buildings
- A comparison with a realistic fallback position under Permitted Development
- A justification for the proposal having regard to planning policy, site context and design quality

2. Existing Site and Built Form

The site is currently developed with an original single-storey bungalow and a collection of ancillary buildings, including garages, car ports, outbuildings and a mobile home. These structures are dispersed across the plot and vary in quality, permanence, and appearance, resulting in a fragmented and visually untidy site layout.

The original permission was dated 1973 (Appendix A) and historical mapping (Appendix B) indicates that the dwelling was constructed between 1975 and 1978, predating the later ancillary structures on the site. This confirms that the dwelling falls within the timeframe for Class AA permitted development rights.

Existing Buildings – Floorspace and Volume

Description	Footprint (m ²)	Volume (m ³)
Main Dwelling	200.00	737
Garage (Building A)	77.80	222
Mobile Home (Building B)	40.00	93
Outbuilding (Building C)	65.45	157
Car Port (Building D)	32.30	106
TOTAL	415.55	1,315

3. Proposed Development

The proposal seeks to rationalise and improve the existing site by demolishing Buildings A, B and C in their entirety, remodelling Building D, and extending and reconfiguring the principal dwelling to create a cohesive family home.

The development includes:

- A full-width single-storey rear extension

- Removal of the existing roof and creation of an additional storey
- A redesigned roof form
- A new detached garage and games room
- Alterations to the existing car port

Proposed Built Form – Floorspace and Volume

Description	Footprint (m ²)	Volume (m ³)
Main Dwelling	345.00	1875
New Garage/Games	130.65	553
Outbuilding (Building D)	42.90	143
TOTAL	518.55	2,571

This results in an overall increase of approximately 1,256 m³ compared to the existing built volume on site.

Proposed footprints:

1. Main dwelling: 345 m²
2. Garage/games: 130.65 m²
3. Car port extension: 42.9 m²

4. Permitted Development Fallback Position

No application has been made for a Lawful Development Certificate in respect of permitted development rights at the site. However, a realistic fallback position remains a material consideration, as demonstrated by the submitted plans (Appendix C & drawing 013).

Pursuing the fallback would involve significant time and resources for the applicant and the LPA, without delivering a better planning outcome for all. We understand LPA resources are limited and therefore decided against submitting these and creating additional workload. If absolutely necessary then the applicant can formally submit these on request.

The following additional volumes could reasonably be achieved under permitted development:

Description	Additional Footprint (m ²)	Additional Volume (m ³)
8m single storey rear extension (Larger Home Extension)	175.00	675.60
Single storey side extension (1/2 original width)	89.22	339.00
Class AA upward extension	0.00	428.25
TOTAL	264.22	1,442.85

When combined with the existing built footprint (415.55 m²) and volume (1,315 m³), the PD fallback would result in:

- Total footprint: 679.77 m²
- Total volume: 2,757.85 m³

This represents a larger urban coverage and more sprawling site layout compared to the proposed scheme, which has a smaller, tidier footprint of 518.55 m²

5. Design Quality and Site Efficiency

The proposal delivers clear planning benefits over both the existing situation and the PD fallback:

- The overall number of buildings on site is reduced, simplifying the site layout.
- Development is consolidated into a more compact footprint (518.55 m² vs PD 679.77 m²), reducing urban coverage.
- Poor-quality and temporary structures are removed.
- The proposed scheme is more efficient in footprint and volume, avoiding the dispersed, piecemeal form that would result from PD.
- In addition to footprint and volume advantages, the proposed building presents a significantly reduced perceived massing compared to a Class AA extension. The Class AA fallback would result in a full two-storey dwelling with shallow pitched roof and continuous full-height walls, appearing as a dominant two-storey block. By contrast, the proposed development incorporates steeper pitched roofs, dormers, and half-height external walls, giving the building the character of a chalet-style bungalow. This approach visually reduces massing and integrates more sympathetically with the surrounding countryside.

Together, these factors demonstrate that the proposed development delivers a more coherent, compact, and visually appropriate design, both in terms of footprint and vertical scale.

6. Planning Policy and Very Special Circumstances

Although the proposal results in an increase in built volume, the following considerations justify the development:

1. A comparable or greater volume could be achieved under PD without planning control.
2. The proposal removes existing buildings that detract from the character of the site.
3. The development results in a more compact and orderly form within the countryside.
4. Architectural coherence and quality are significantly improved over both the existing and PD fallback scenarios.
5. Incremental and piecemeal expansion is avoided.

These factors collectively constitute very special circumstances which outweigh any harm from the increase in volume.

7. Conclusion

The proposal represents a balanced, considered, and design-led approach to the evolution of the site. When assessed against both the existing built form and the realistic PD fallback, the development:

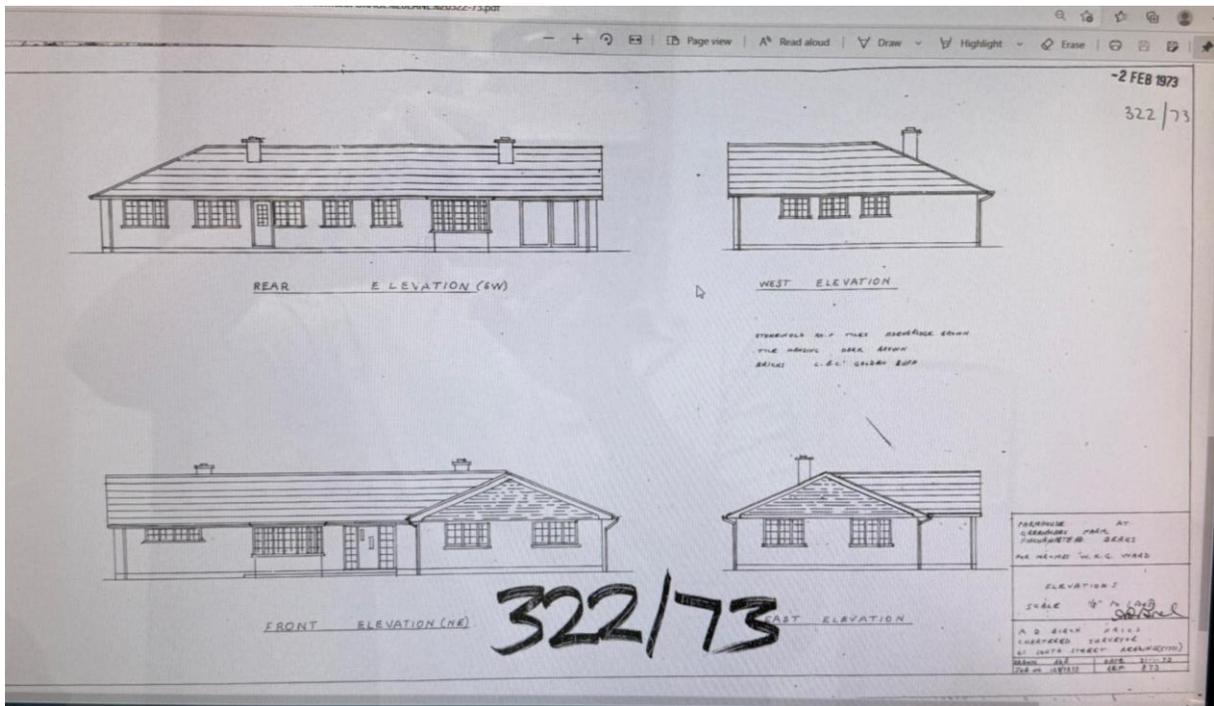
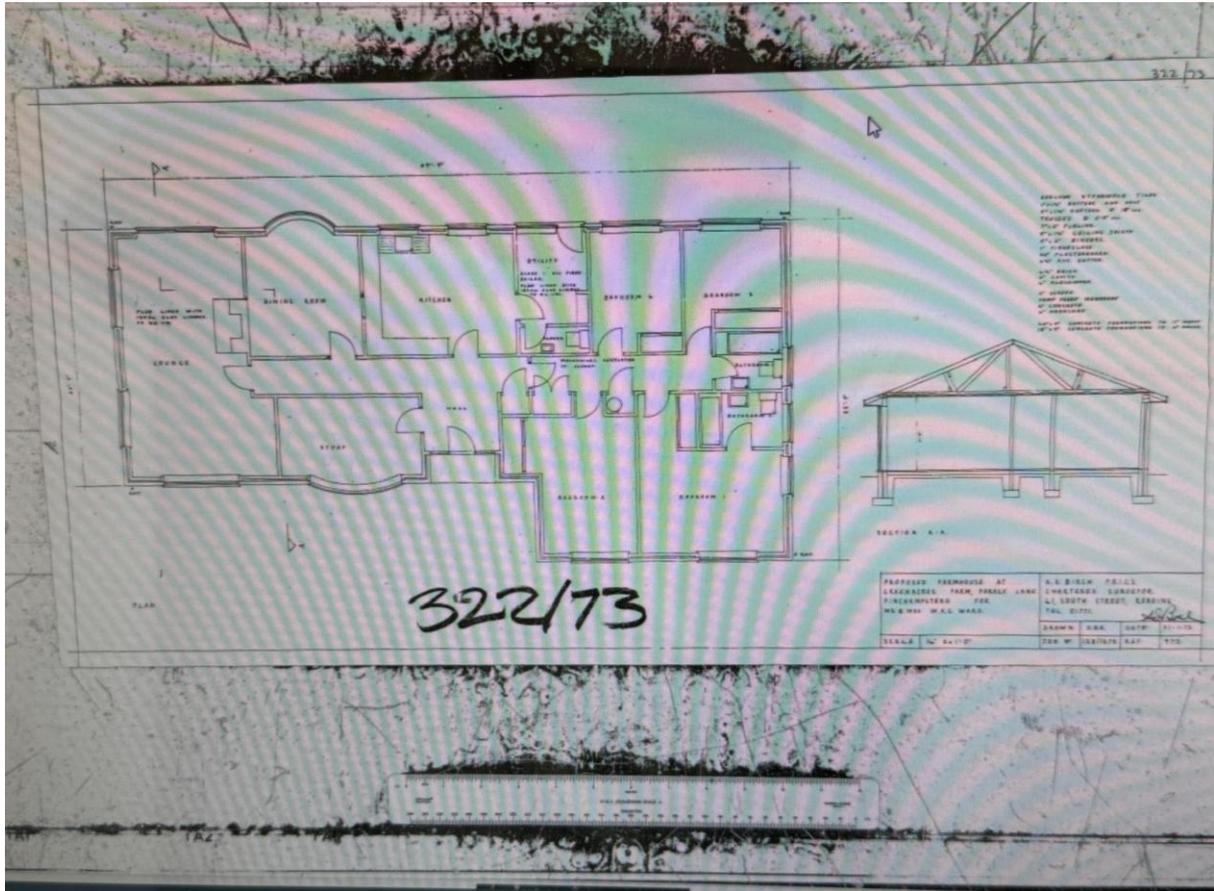
- Delivers a more compact, rational, and visually coherent site

- Provides a higher quality dwelling and ancillary space
- Avoids the larger urban coverage and dominant two-storey appearance that would result from a Class AA extension
- Is proportionate in both footprint and volume

The application is therefore considered acceptable in principle and should be supported accordingly.

APPENDIX A

Original Approval inc plans and decision letter.



NOTICE OF CONSENT.

BERKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Town and Country Planning Act, 1971

WOKINGHAM RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL OFFICES

SHUTE END,

WOKINGHAM, BERKS.

To Mr. & Mrs. W.K.G. Ward,
c/o Mr. A.D. Birch, FRICS.,
41 South Street,
READING,
Berks.

Application No. 322/73

Proposal Erection of a farm house at Greenacres Farm, Forage Lane,
Finchampstead, Berks.

The Rural District Council of Wokingham, acting as Agents for the Berkshire County Council under the above Act, hereby PERMIT the above development to be carried out in accordance with the accompanying plans submitted by you and approved by the Council on the 19th day of April, 1973 subject to compliance with the conditions specified hereunder:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced within five years from the date of this permission.
2. The occupation of the dwelling shall be limited to a person employed, or last employed, locally in agriculture as defined by Section 290 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1971, or in forestry, or a dependant of such a person residing with him (but including a widow or widower of such a person).
3. The access crossover shall be constructed in accordance with form 'C' attached.
4. This permission relates to the revised design only.
5. The external elevations shall be faced with a red or red/brown brick to the Council's satisfaction.

The reasons for the Council's decision to grant permission for the development subject to compliance with the conditions herebefore specified are:

1. This condition is deemed to be attached by virtue of Section 41 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1971.
2. The development is justified only on agricultural grounds.
3. In the interests of road safety.
4. For the avoidance of doubt.
5. In the interests of visual amenity.

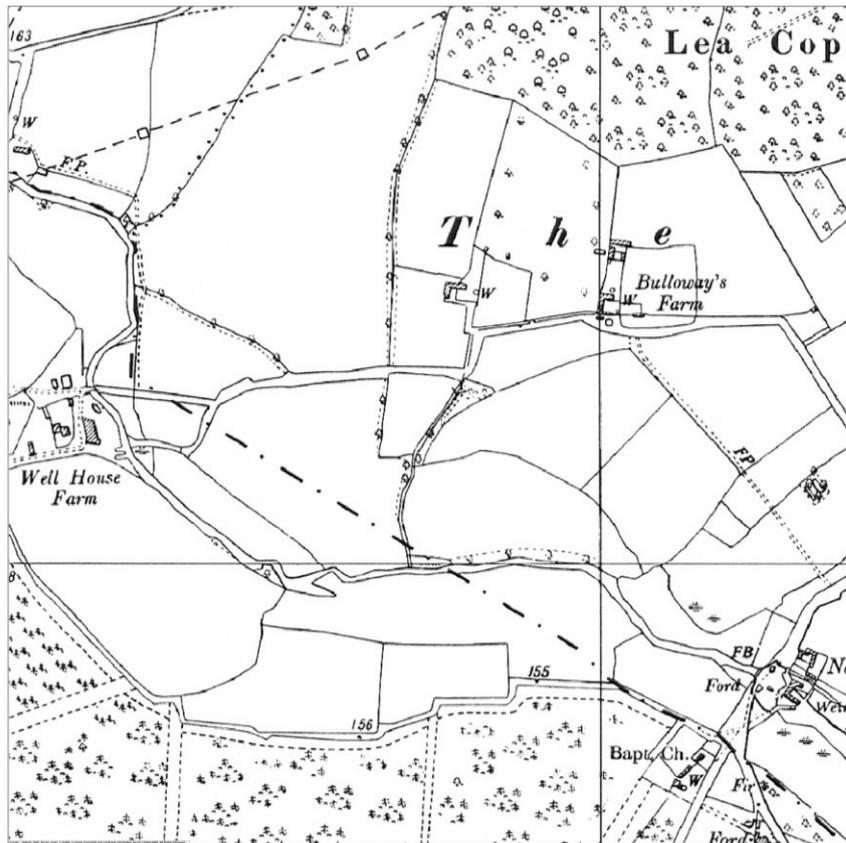
Except as aforesaid any permission granted is subject to the provisions of the Council's bye-laws and general statutory provisions in force in the District.

Date 26 APR 1973

N.B.—A statement of the applicant's rights is set out on the reverse of this notice.

APPENDIX B

Historic Map dated 1975 showing no dwelling before 1948.



Landmark
Information Group

Landmark Historical Map
County:
Published Date(s): 1975
Originally plotted at: 1:10,000

APPENDIX C

Outline of Permitted development scheme and prior notifications.

Scaled drawings submitted as separate document as well.

