



Planning

Planning Statement

Client:

Mr Stephen Hazell

Hall Farm House

Lower Sandhurst Road, Finchampstead, RG40 3TH

*Formation of gates and fencing to front boundary
and site access*

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APPENDIX 1: Long Meadow Farm Appeal Decision

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is produced to support a planning application for the retrospective erection/installation of access gates at the front boundary of the dwelling at Hall Farm House, Lower Sandhurst Road, RG40 3TH.
- 1.2 This planning statement will cover the background to the application and provide the necessary information to enable its determination by officers at the Council. It will consider the proposal in light of relevant planning policies and other material considerations. The conclusion reached is that key material considerations and the wider objectives of National and Local planning policy support the grant of permission.
- 1.3 In addition to this planning statement, the application is accompanied by the appropriate planning application forms and ownership certificate, duly signed and completed, and the following documents:
- 1:2500 Site Location Plan
 - 1:500 Block Plan
 - 1:50 Proposed Elevation Plan
 - 1:50 Site Plan
- 1.4 The relevant application fee will be submitted by the applicant separately.

2. Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The site is located in a rural area, characterised by its agricultural heritage and the associated residential dwellings.
- 2.2 Crowthorne Train Station is located 1.6 KM to northeast with the settlement of Yateley being located c.1.88 KM to the southeast.
- 2.3 The application site forms the residential property of Hall Farm House, comprising a single dwelling with associated curtilage forming private garden. To the north of the application site lie undeveloped fields under historic agricultural use.
- 2.4 The proposed access point would be taken from Lower Sandhurst Road, set in amongst a series of existing access points to residential, agricultural, and equestrian land. The site is not located within the Green Belt, nor is it located within an AONB.

3. Planning History

- 3.1 There is an extensive planning history associated to the Hall Farm property. These demonstrate the current residential use as well as the wider surroundings.
- 3.2 080466 – Proposed erection of a single storey extension, plus side/front dormer extensions – Granted 04/04/08 [Hall Farm House]
- 3.3 100728 – Proposed erection of replacement building to use as stabling, plus demolition of existing barn and stables – Granted 14/05/10 [Neighbouring buildings to east].
- 3.4 Application reference 220605 for the formation of an access to serve an existing agricultural use. Refused on 13 May 2022 [Hall Farm and land to rear].
- 3.5 Application reference 221706 for the formation of an access to serve an existing agricultural use. Refused on 12 July 2022 [Hall Farm and land to rear].
- 3.6 Application reference 222706 for the Full application for the creation of an access point and driveway on to Lower Sandhurst Road. Approved 07 December 2022.

4. Development Proposals

- 4.1 The National Design Guide (2019) identifies that “well-designed homes and buildings are functional, accessible and sustainable. They provide internal environments and associated external spaces that support the health and well-being of their users and all who experience them. They meet the needs of a diverse range of users, taking into account factors such as the ageing population and cultural differences. They are adequate in size, fit for purpose and are adaptable to the changing needs of their occupants over time” (para 120-121).
- 4.2 Regarding the requirements of NPPG Paragraph: 029 Reference ID: 14-029-20140306 in respect of Design and Access Statements, the proposal is described as follows:
- 4.3 **Use and Amount:** The use is the erection of an automated entrance gate to the front boundary of the property alongside the existing timber close board fence.
- 4.4 The applicants are both retired and have health issues. Accordingly, they seek to separate their access to provide a clean and uninterrupted access driveway up to Hall Farm House as a self-contained and controlled access point for the main house without the need to navigate the uneven path and distance to the house, or be reliant upon the equestrian unit access to the east which forms a separate planning unit.
- 4.5 **Scale Height & Mass:** The scale of the proposed electronic gate system and associated fencing is modest in height, scale and mass. The timber fencing and composite gate panels will be 2m in height. The gates will provide a safe vehicular access point to the site and will measure 4m in width.

- 4.6 **Appearance:** The access gates and fence are modest in visual form and give a secure nature to the dwelling. The access gates slides back towards the tarmac driveway when operating, as opposed to protruding towards the highway, for highway safety reasons and to not impact on visibility splays.
- 4.7 **Access & Parking:** Access to the site is via the private driveway on the Northern side of Lower Sandhurst Road. The gates will not impinge on this access with 6 metres space provided between the gates and the highway edge.

5. Policy Assessment

- 5.1 **National Guidance:** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a relevant material consideration to the application.
- 5.2 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 38 of the NPPF states that “Local planning authorities should approach decision on proposed development in a positive and creative way” and “at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible”. Paragraph 123 of the NPPF comments that planning should “make effective use of land” in “meeting the need for homes and other uses, whilst safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions”.
- 5.3 Paragraph 60 confirms the Government’s objective to boost the supply of housing, and paragraph 8 identifies the three objectives of sustainable development, as economic, environmental and social.
- 5.4 Paragraph 131 identifies that “Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities”, whilst paragraph 139 states that significant weight should be given to “outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.”
- 5.5 The National Design Guide builds on the above, and clarifies that “well-designed neighbourhoods need to include an integrated mix of tenures and housing types that reflect local housing need and market

demand. They are designed to be inclusive and to meet the changing needs of people of different ages and abilities. New development reinforces existing places by enhancing local transport, facilities and community services, and maximising their potential use” (para 109).

- 5.6 **Principle of Development:** Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material planning consideration in all planning applications. In this instance, the relevant development plan documents include:
- Adopted Core Strategy (2010) (CS)
 - Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (2016) (MDD)
- 5.8 CS Policy CP1 relates to sustainable development requirements, setting out that planning permission will be granted for development that, inter alia, avoids any adverse impacts on drainage or flooding, and provides functional, accessible, and adaptable schemes.
- 5.9 CS Policy CP11: Proposals outside development limits (including countryside) states that in order to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment, proposals outside of the development limits will not usually be permitted except for in a number of circumstances.
- 5.10 One such circumstance within Policy CP11 is the provision that the development should not result in excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from original buildings. The development is for access gates sited within the curtilage of an existing residential property. Accordingly, the development is a proportionate and suitable development in respect of this residential

use, typical not only of the surroundings but of ancillary development to residential dwellings in the countryside.

- 5.11 Of relevance to the correct application of Policy CP11 is appeal decision reference APP/X0360/W/21/3288075 (Appendix 1). While the development subject to that appeal was the change of use of land from agricultural to residential garden, which is not relevant to this proposal, of note here is paragraph 9 of the appeal decision. This sets out that the list of acceptable development provided in CP11 is neither intended to be an exhaustive list, nor does it mean development which does not accord with the list be automatically refused. Of fundamental importance is that countryside policy does not, and should not, seek a blanket ban on development, and that development which broadly align with objectives of preserving the separate identity of settlements and maintaining the quality of the environment is the key policy test.
- 5.12 The erection of access gates does not in any way interrupt the separate identity of settlements and would maintain the quality of the environment and the countryside setting not only as an ancillary development to an established residential property and its curtilage, set in amongst a cluster of other buildings, but also with the provision of appropriate landscape mitigation, as presented further below in the statement. It is noted that access gates of 1 metre height fronting a highway are permitted development (notwithstanding the imposition of any restrictive planning conditions), thereby further establishing an acceptable principle.
- 5.13 As such, the principle of development is considered acceptable in accordance with both local and national policies, subject to considerations such as the impact of the proposal on the character of the area, and highway safety, etc.

- 5.14 **Character and Appearance of the Area:** CS Policy CP3 states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that, inter alia, are of appropriate scale, layout, materials, and character to the area, provide a functional, accessible, and adaptable scheme, and utilise the potential of the site. As explained below the development achieves these policy requirements.
- 5.15 The Council's Borough Design Guide (2012) highlights that development in the countryside is generally characterised by 'small clusters of dwellings' and 'groups of farm buildings'. This is true for the site and its surroundings – as it is located amidst a cluster of surrounding properties and buildings, predominately to the north and west, and within residential, agricultural, and equestrian uses. Consequently, while the site is influenced by its wider rural surroundings, there is a notable degree of residential and other built development in the immediate vicinity.
- 5.16 This built development includes a large volume of private access points along Lower Sandhurst Road and particularly clustered within this specific location. In this regard the development seamlessly integrate with the established pattern of development, when viewed from the main public vantage point of the road.
- 5.17 The siting of the access gates is at the southwestern corner of the site, which whilst is of course the siting of the access point, serves in any case avoid the loss of planting immediately fronting the main dwelling, in view of the countryside setting.
- 5.18 Both the fencing and gates are constructed from materials that give an aesthetically pleasant view from the streetscene. The gates are of a similar size and scale to the entrance gates as The Stables, situated opposite the application site.

- 5.19 Turning to the wider streetscene of Lower Sandhurst Road, the majority of properties are served by access gates, and to the west in particular many of these serving residential properties are close-boarded in design. Distinctive examples of these are found at the properties of Broomfields and Sandhurst House, for example.
- 5.20 In addition, of these neighbouring examples, there is a range of material and external colour palettes apparent, ranging from more traditional timber styles to modern rendering and brickwork (often combining different styles on individual gates and associated fencing), and the use of grey colouring. This therefore bears close similarity to the gates subject to this application, which are of a dark grey colour connecting to traditional timber fencing.
- 5.21 It is therefore considered that the development does not result in an adverse impact on the character of the area, including its rural setting, nor would the proposal constitute any urbanising impact given its nature, scale, and the degree of established built character already in existence in the immediate surroundings.
- 5.22 **Residential Amenity:** CS Policy CP3: General Principles for development point a ensures developments will be of a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life.
- 5.23 The access gates with associated fencing have been situated as to not have a significant impact on the neighbouring dwellings. The main dwellinghouse benefits from being situated on a sizeable plot where the proposal is of a size and scale with ample separation distances to neighbouring dwellings that it will not adversely impact the neighbouring properties with respect to loss of light, overshadowing or overbearing impacts. By the nature of development, it does not result in overlooking impacts and comply with policy CP3.

- 5.24 **Trees and Landscaping:** MDD Policy CC03 seeks to demonstrate how proposals would, inter alia, protect and retain existing trees and other landscaping features. MDD Policy TB21 sets out how proposals must demonstrate how they have addressed the requirements of the Council's Landscape Character Assessment.
- 5.25 The site lies within the B2: Blackwater River Valley study area of the Council's Landscape Character Assessment (LCA). This study area defines the main physical influence on the landscape as the presence of the River Blackwater. The study area establishes that the undeveloped character of the valley is defined particularly by the floodplain, which is located further south of the application site.
- 5.26 The removal of planting to accommodate the access onto Lower Sandhurst Road has already taken place, along with the approved access itself. Accordingly, the development subject to this application is not considered to have a materially harmful impact on the landscape character of the area.
- 5.27 Furthermore, additional soft landscaping has been planted to the flank elevations of the associated fencing, and will within two years provide complete screening to the fencing, providing a natural appearance. These have been planted to National Trust specifications, and correspond not only with the separate permission for the access point itself as well as providing integration with the wider streetscene planting. With the latter, the verdant character of the streetscene which is characterised by varied planting on both sides of the carriageway, would be preserved.
- 5.28 MDD Policy CC03 requires the retention of existing planting of value to the character of the area, and not to re-provide planting removed historically. The site benefits from a large rear garden providing ample green space at the site. Furthermore, the existing trees on the

site will be retained and protected throughout the development. Additional soft landscaping may be controlled by way of condition if required.

- 5.29 **Transport and Parking:** The point of access to the site as previously approved is not altered as a result of this development. A separation space of 6 metres is provided between the highway edge and the access gates, to allow for vehicles to wait entirely off the highway for the gates to open, and thus prevent any congestion on the public highway. This 6 metre space meets the Council's standards.
- 5.30 Paragraph 115 sets out the test that a determining authority should apply when determining the suitability of a planning application in terms of transport and highways stating that; 'Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.'
- 5.31 The pedestrian visibility achieved is not affected by the associated fence. The fence is in a location that was once occupied by vegetation in the same position and while a different material, the principle of the visibility achievements are the same.
- 5.32 Furthermore, the gates do not result in an encroachment onto the 6 metre access frontage as they open inwards towards the private driveway. As a result, the development does not detrimentally affect the flow of vehicle movements on a lightly trafficked residential road therefore the proposal is compliant with the Development Plan.
- 5.33 **Drainage and SuDS:** The site is located within Flood Zone 1 – the lowest risk of flooding and is of small scale and as such, a flood risk assessment is unlikely to be required.

- 5.34 **Contamination:** The site is not known to be contaminated and is considered unlikely to be so. If concerns are raised during the course of any future planning application, these can be dealt with via condition.
- 5.35 **Archaeology:** The site is not known to be in an area of archaeological potential. If concerns are raised during the course of any future planning application, these can be dealt with via condition.
- 5.36 **Ecology:** The residential use of the property and siting of the proposal on garden curtilage, as well as the wider agricultural and equestrian land, means that the site is unlikely to be of any significant ecological value. As such, the development is considered acceptable in this regard. No demolition works are proposed.
- 5.37 **Community Infrastructure Levy:** As the proposal does not involve the creation of any internal floor space, the proposal is not CIL liable. The relevant forms have been submitted in support of this application.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 This statement has demonstrated that the proposed development is acceptable in principle and makes an efficient use of land.
- 6.2 Material planning considerations have been carefully considered and analysed, as evidenced in section 5 of this statement and the supporting plans and documents. It is considered the proposed development would provide a suitable and necessary vehicular access to the residential property, which currently does not benefit from one, to the benefit of both the immediate needs of the property's occupants as well as future-proofing the viability of the dwelling. This would be achieved without adverse implications to the immediate character of the area or to the wider landscape character setting.
- 6.3 It is considered that the proposed scheme complies with relevant Development Plan Policies and is further supported by National Guidance. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.

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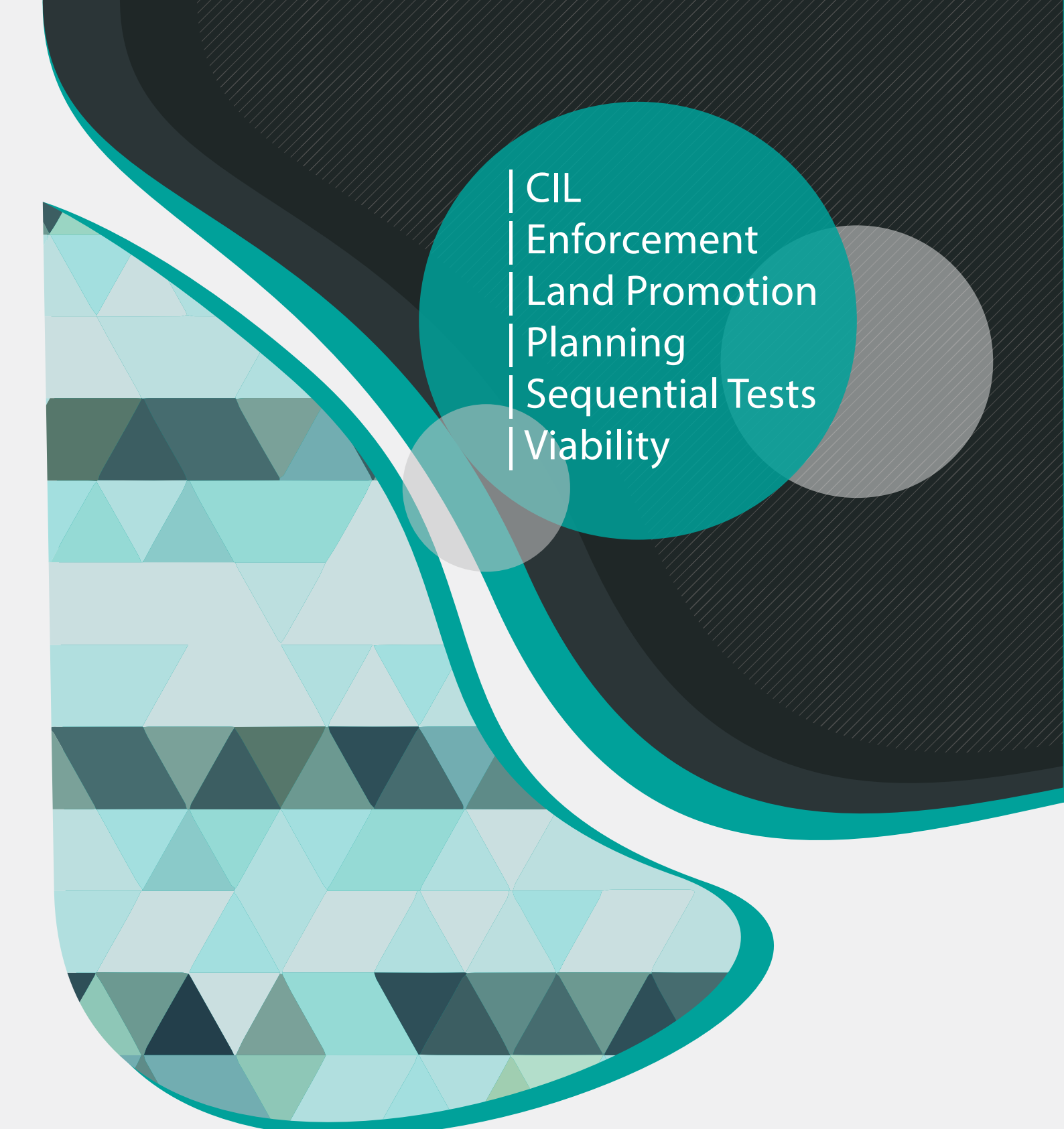
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