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The application seeks planning permission for the erection of 6no. stables and barn, tie-up shelter, muck heap and laying of hard standing by access into field and increase in height of entrance gate (part-retrospective).

The proposed 6no. stables and barn would comprise a single building which would have maximum dimensions of 11.2 metres in depth by 14.8 metres in width. It would have an eaves height of 2.5 metres and a maximum ridge height of 3 metres. The stables would be located adjacent to the western boundary of the site. 3no. stables have already been constructed on the site and the applicant stopped when she was advised that planning permission was required.

The proposed tie-up would measure 7 metres in width by 3.5 metres in depth and would have a maximum height of 2.5 metres. It would be located adjacent to the western boundary of the site.

A muck-heap is proposed to the northern part of the site and would measure around 5 metres in width and depth and would have a maximum height of 1.6 metres. The muck-heap would be contained on three sides by timber sleepers/slats.

A new area of hard surfacing would be proposed within the site. The hard surfacing would be formed by the laying of road planings. The existing gate has also had timber slats attached to it to increase its height and as it would exceed 1 metre adjacent to the highway it is included in the application.

CONSULTATIONS

County Highway Authority: Having assessed the application on safety, capacity and policy grounds recommends a condition be imposed on any permission granted (condition 5).

WBC Environmental Health Officer: No objection to the application however there is little detail provided for the muck heap arrangements which if not properly managed could lead to odour and fly problems. Waste management should be controlled by condition to protect the amenity of nearby residents (condition 6).

REPRESENTATIONS

0 letters of representation have been received.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019)

Woking Core Strategy (2012)

CS1 - A spatial strategy for Woking Borough

CS6 – Green Belt

CS18 - Transport and accessibility

CS21 - Design

CS24 - Woking's landscape and townscape

Development Management Policies DPD (DM Policies DPD) (2016)

DM2 - Trees and Landscaping

DM3 – Facilities for outdoor sport and recreation

DM13 – Buildings in and adjacent to the Green Belt.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's)

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Design (2015)
Parking Standards (2018)
Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight (2008)

PLANNING ISSUES

Impact on Green Belt

1. The proposal site is located in the Green Belt and as such Policy CS6 of the Woking Core Strategy, Policy DM13 of the DM Policies DPD and Section 9 of the NPPF apply. These policies seek to preserve the openness of the Green Belt; the essential characteristics of the Green Belt are its openness and permanence. The erection of new buildings in the Green Belt is inappropriate development unless it complies with one of the exceptions listed in Paragraph 145 of the NPPF. Exceptions to this include:

b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments, as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.
2. Policy DM3 of the DM Policies DPD also relates to outdoor sport and recreation facilities including equestrian facilities. The supporting text for Policy DM3 notes that “*the policy provides for appropriately scaled outdoor sport and recreation development whilst respecting the purposes of the Green Belt*” (para 3.24).
3. The proposal is for the erection of a detached building comprising 6no. stables and barn. A barn element is also proposed to keep hay, feed and other items dry. The British Horse Society standard for keeping horses advises that stables should have a minimum size of 3.6m x 3.6m with each horse having 1-1.5 acres for grazing. The wider land holding (including land within the applicant’s control) extends to some 3.6 hectares (9 acres) and the applicant currently has 8 horses. The number of horses on the site would appear appropriate to the size of the land holding and the size of the proposed stables also comply with the British Horse Society guidance. Murray’s Lane is also a bridleway.
4. The stables and barn would comprise a single building with external dimensions of 14.8 metres in width by 11.2 metres in depth with a maximum height of 3 metres at the apex of the building. It is clear from the aerial photographs of the site that up until September 2018 there were a variety of structures on the land close to the access into the site. These buildings and structures have all now been removed from the site but it is clear from the aerial photographs that they formed a long complex of structures in the northern part of the site. The proposed stables would be small in size, be faced in timber and would form a commonplace feature found in the rural landscape. The stables would be well sited in the field and would be viewed against the backdrop of mature trees located beyond the western boundary of the site. The tie-up would be a small open fronted enclosure which would have three timber sides and would be used to tie up the horses to wash. The flooring of the tie-up would utilise matting placed on the ground. This structure would also be small in size and as with the stables/barn would be viewed against the backdrop of the mature trees outside the site. In addition the proposed hard surfacing would be surface level and would comprise road planings.
5. The applicant has advised that the site is to be used for personal use and not any commercial equestrian enterprise. On this basis and given the limited number of stables proposed it is not considered that the proposal would result in a level of activity at the site that would be out of character with this rural site.

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6. Having regard to the above factors it is considered that the proposed development would preserve the openness of the Green Belt and would not conflict with its purposes. The proposal is therefore considered to constitute appropriate facilities for outdoor recreation in the Green Belt and would comply with Policy CS6 of the Woking Core Strategy, Policies DM3 and DM13 of the DM Policies DPD and the NPPF.

Visual Impact:

7. Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) requires development proposals to *'respect and make a positive contribution to the street scene and the character of the area in which they are situated....'* and Policy CS24 seeks to maintain the landscape character of the area. Policy DM3 requires facilities for outdoor recreation to be appropriately scaled, not to result in an adverse visual impact and to be satisfactorily integrated with existing buildings where present.
8. The proposed stable block and hay barn would comprise one building and would be located on the western side of the application site. Beyond the western boundary of the site is a dense belt of mature trees and the northern boundary is also formed by dense vegetation. Views into the site are therefore limited from the public domain. The stables/barn would have the appearance of a small rural building which would be faced in timber and would appear as a conventional addition to this rural site. Although additional hard surfacing would be created adjacent to the vehicular access, this would be formed by road planings laid on top of the existing surface and would not therefore appear intrusive. The existing steel tubular field gate has had a number of timber slats/panels added to its frontage to better secure the site. The gate appears as an enclosed timber gate within an otherwise mature roadside hedge. Whilst the timber panels are utilitarian in their appearance, given their material and as they form part of an otherwise fully enclosed roadside hedgerow boundary of a greater height, it is not considered that they have a detrimental impact on the appearance of this part of Murray's Lane and Rectory Lane.
9. It is considered that the proposed stables/barn building would be well located within the site, leaving the remainder of the site for pasture/grazing for horses. Overall the proposals would not therefore be detrimental to the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policies CS21 and CS24 of the Core Strategy, Policy DM3 of the DM Policies DPD and the NPPF.

Impact on Neighbours:

10. Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy advises that proposals for new development should achieve a satisfactory relationship to adjoining properties, avoiding significant harmful impact in terms of loss of privacy, daylight or sunlight, or an overbearing effect due to bulk, proximity or outlook. Policy DM3 of the DM Policies DPD also requires recreational facilities to have an acceptable amenity impact.
11. The nearest neighbouring dwellings are those located to the north of Murray's Lane. The proposed stable block would be located around 25 metres from the boundary with Murray's Lane which is formed by mature vegetation and around 33 metres from the garden boundary of the closest dwelling to the north of Murray's Lane. The stable block would have a maximum height of around 3 metres. Given these separation distances, the small number of stables proposed and that no commercial use of the stables is proposed (and is recommended to be controlled by condition 3) the proposal is not considered to result in any adverse impact to the amenities of nearby neighbouring occupiers. The dwelling to the south of the application site is located around in excess of 130 metres from the stables. Condition 6 would limit the maximum height of the muck-heap and would require its removal from the site at regular intervals, particularly during the winter months to avoid

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any adverse impacts to neighbouring amenity. The Council's Environmental Health Officer has not raised any objection to the application subject to a condition relating to the muck-heap.

12. Overall the proposal is considered to have an acceptable impact on the amenities of neighbours in terms of loss of light, overlooking, overbearing and other amenity impacts and accords with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy, Policy DM3 of the DM Policies DPD, SPD Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight and the NPPF.

Impact on Trees

13. There are some mature trees located adjacent to the access into the site and there are also mature trees outside the application site but adjacent to the western boundary of the site. A number of trees in the centre of the wider land holding are protected by a Tree Preservation Order.
14. The proposed stables and barn building would be located adjacent to the western boundary of the site, where trees are located beyond the site boundary. The applicant has advised that the flooring of the barn would be formed utilising a no-dig construction and ground screws which would support a timber floor slightly raised above the existing ground level. As such it is not considered that the proposed stable/barn building would be detrimental to the trees located outside the site. The application also seeks to lay road planings to create an area of hard surfacing within the site. The area of hard surfacing has been revised to move the surface away from the mature tree nearest the vehicular access into the site. As the road planings would be laid on top of the existing ground, the proposed hard surfacing is not considered be detrimental to the trees within the site. The proposed tie-up would have a matting surface which would be placed on top of the existing ground and similarly would have a no-dig construction. A condition (condition 7) is included in the recommendation to ensure that the proposals are implemented in accordance with the no-dig construction methods stated.
15. The Council's Arboricultural Officer has informally advised that he is satisfied with the proposals. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policy CS21 of the Core Strategy, Policy DM2 of the DM Policies DPD and the NPPF.

Transportation Impacts

16. There is an existing vehicular access into the site adjacent to the junction of Murray's Lane with Rectory Lane. An area of hard surfacing is proposed adjacent to the entrance into the site. There would be sufficient space within the site for the vehicles to enter, turn and leave the site in a forward gear (condition 5). Furthermore as the proposal is for stables for personal recreational use it is considered that the likely level of traffic generated by the proposal would be low. On this basis it is not considered that the proposed development would be prejudicial to highway safety or result in inconvenience to users of the highway. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policy CS18 of the Core Strategy and the NPPF.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):

17. As the proposal relates to a non-residential and non-retail use and as such the CIL rates for such uses is £0.

CONCLUSION

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18. Considering the points discussed above, the proposal is considered an acceptable form of development in the Green Belt which would have an acceptable impact on the amenities of neighbours, on the character of the area, on trees and in transportation terms. The proposal therefore accords with Policies CS1, CS6, CS18, CS21 and CS24 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Policies DM2, DM3 and DM13 of the DM Policies DPD (2016), SPD Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight (2008) and the NPPF and is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Planning file PLAN/2019/0907

RECOMMENDATION

PERMIT subject to the following conditions:

1. The development for which permission is hereby granted must be commenced not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: To accord with the provisions of Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans listed below:

Proposed site plan received 19.11.19

Proposed stable block (plans and elevations) received 09.10.19

Proposed muck heap and tie up (plans and elevations) received 09.10.19

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. The use of the stables hereby approved shall be for private recreational purposes/use only and the stables shall not be subdivided into or used as separate livery, used independently of the land or as a commercial livery or any other equestrian business.

Reason: In order to secure a satisfactory form of development in the Green Belt in accordance with Policy CS6 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and Policy DM13 of the DM Policies DPD 2016.

4. The external walls of the stables/barn hereby approved shall be either left in their natural timber colour or shall be painted or stained a dark green, dark brown or black colour or any other colour as may be first approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to comply with Policies CS6, CS21 and CS24 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and the NPPF.

5. The hard standing hereby approved shall not be laid out other than in accordance with the approved plans for vehicles to be parked and for vehicles to turn so that they may enter and leave the site in forward gear. Once provided the parking and turning areas shall be retained and maintained for their designated purposes.

Reason: To ensure the development does not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users and to comply with Policy CS18 of the Woking Core Strategy and the NPPF.

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6. The muck-heap waste shall only be stored in the position indicated on the approved site plan, shall not exceed 1.6 metres in height and shall be removed from the site at least monthly between October to April (providing at all times the maximum height is not exceeded) in accordance with the application details received on 18.11.19, unless otherwise first approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of nearby residents and to minimise the visual impact of muck-heap build up and to comply with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy and the NPPF.

7. The development hereby permitted shall not be implemented except in accordance with following details:
 - The barn (measuring 3.6m by 10.8m GIFA) part of the stables/barn building shall be constructed utilising a no-dig construction, comprising of ground screws with a raised timber flooring in accordance with the details provided by the applicant by email dated 18.11.19.
 - The flooring of the tie-up hereby approved shall be constructed utilising a no-dig construction which shall comprise matting which shall be placed over the existing ground surface.
 - The hard surface hereby approved shall only be provided utilising a no-dig construction comprising the use of road planings which shall be laid over the existing ground surface; all unless otherwise first approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the retention and protection of trees on the site in the interests of the amenities of the locality and the appearance of the development and to comply with Policy DM2 of the DM Policies DPD and the NPPF.

Informatives

1. The Council confirms that in assessing this planning application it has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive way, in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.
2. You are advised that Council officers may undertake inspections without prior warning to check compliance with approved plans and to establish that all planning conditions are being complied with in full. Inspections may be undertaken both during and after construction.
3. The applicants attention is specifically drawn to the conditions above marked ++. These condition(s) require the submission of details, information, drawings, etc. to the Local Planning Authority PRIOR TO THE RELEVANT TRIGGER POINT. Failure to observe these requirements will result in a contravention of the terms of the permission and the Local Planning Authority may serve Breach of Condition Notices to secure compliance. You are advised that sufficient time needs to be given when submitting details in response to conditions, to allow the Authority to consider the details and discharge the condition. A period of between five and eight weeks should be allowed for.
4. The applicant is advised that, under the Control of Pollution Act 1974, site works which will be audible at the site boundaries are restricted to the following hours:-
 - 08.00 – 18.00 Monday to Friday
 - 08.00 – 13.00 Saturday

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and not at all on Sundays and Bank/Public Holidays.