

Application Number	PA/2023/2108
Location	Land Between Primrose Cottage & 1 Buffalo Cottages, Bethersden Road, Smarden , Ashford, TN27 8QX
Parish Council	Smarden
Ward	Weald North
Application Description	Erection of two detached two-storey dwellings with new vehicular access from Bethersden Road, associated parking area, and landscaping.
Applicant	Mr and Mrs Hoyle
Site Area	0.24 ha

Introduction

1. This application is reported to the Planning Committee because it has been called in by the ward member, Cllr Kayleigh Brunger-Randall.

Site and Surroundings

2. The application site is located to the east of Bethersden Road in the parish of Smarden. Falling some 860m outside of the built-up confines of the village of Smarden, the site is in the countryside and the Haffenden Quarter Farmlands Landscape Character Area.
3. The site is a roughly rectangular-shaped field with planted boundaries. There is an existing field access off Bethersden Road which is fenced off and overgrown. To the north is a detached dwelling, known as Primrose Cottage, and to the south, is 1 Buffalo Cottages, a semi-detached dwelling. The extensive rear gardens of 1 and 2 Featherstone Cottages wrap around the rear of the site.
4. There are two Oak trees in the southern corner of the site adjacent to the boundary with 1 Buffalo Cottages. These are subject to a TPO, No 9 of 2019.

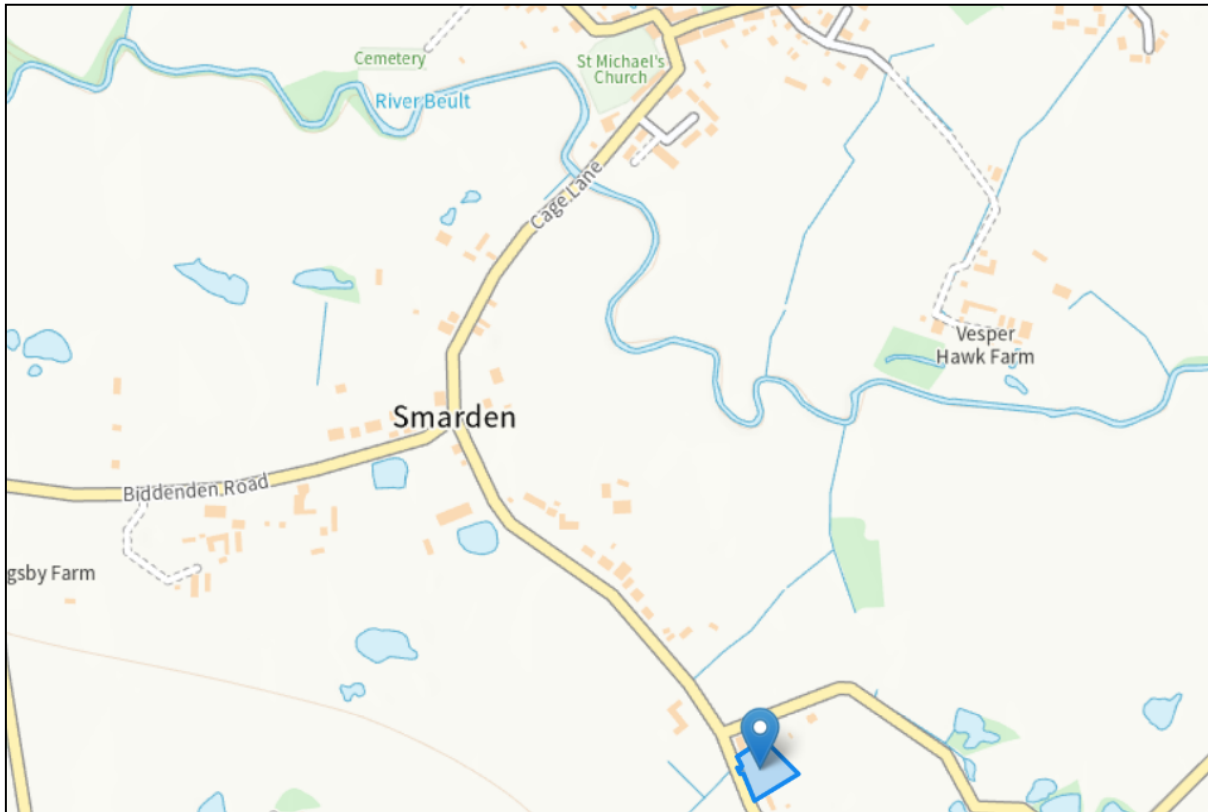


Figure 1: Site location

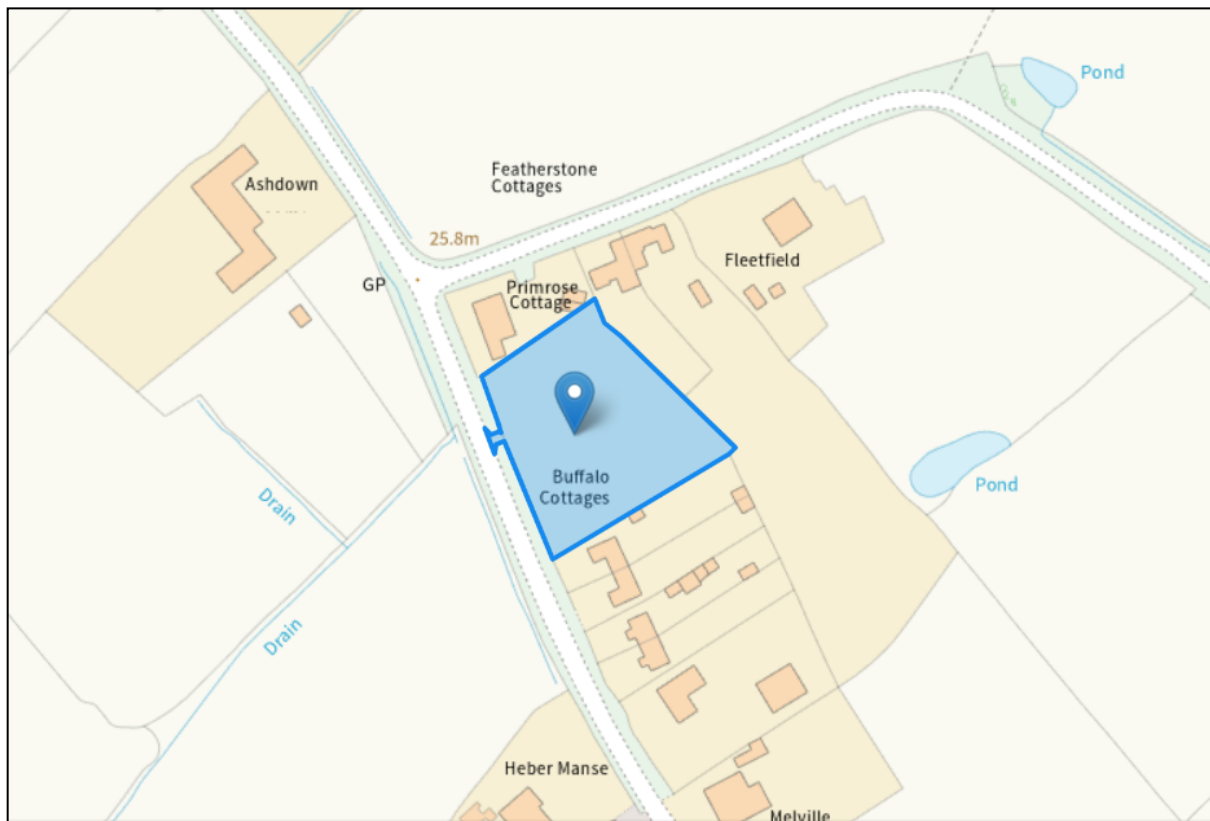


Figure 2: Site location (homed in)



Figure 3: Aerial photograph

Figure 4: Photo of protected Oak tree (right of photo) with 1 Buffalo Cottages to right of photo



Proposal

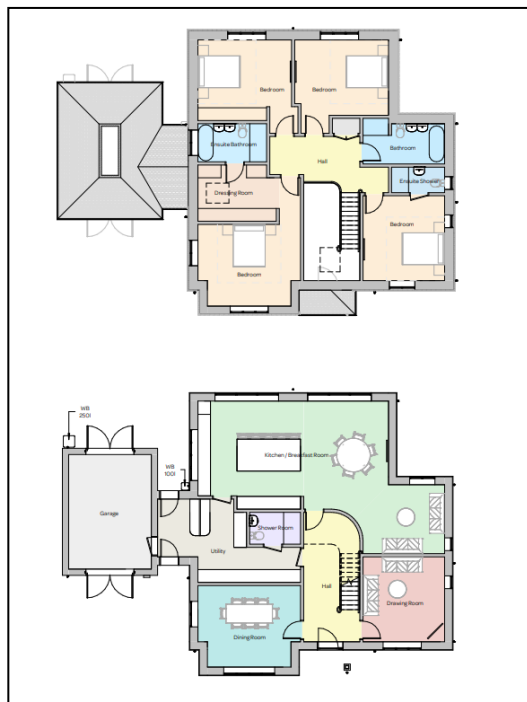
5. This application is for the erection of 2 detached dwellings with new vehicular access off Bethersden Road. It is explained in the Design and Access Statement that the applicants are existing residents who have a vested interest in the village and have been looking for an opportunity to self-build.
6. The dwellings would be large, detached units with garages to the side, orientated so they front Bethersden Road and enclose good-sized private gardens to the rear. Plot 1, to the north adjoining Primrose Cottage, would sit more forward on the plot than plot 2, which has been set back to move it further from the protected Oak trees. A significant amount of the hedgerow with Bethersden would be removed to create the new vehicular access and visibility splays.
7. The dwellings would be of a traditional form and design. A varied palette of materials is proposed including clay tile hanging, brickwork and timber cladding with clay tiles to the roof. It is proposed that each unit would have triple-glazed aluminium windows/doors and PVs would be provided on rear south-facing roof slopes.
8. Each dwelling would be provided with a garden office/shed with 'bio-diverse' roof. Two new ponds are proposed one at the end of each garden. Each unit would be provided with 1 electric vehicle charging point and a water butt.



Figure 5: Proposed block plan



Figure 6: Plot 1 – elevations and floor plans



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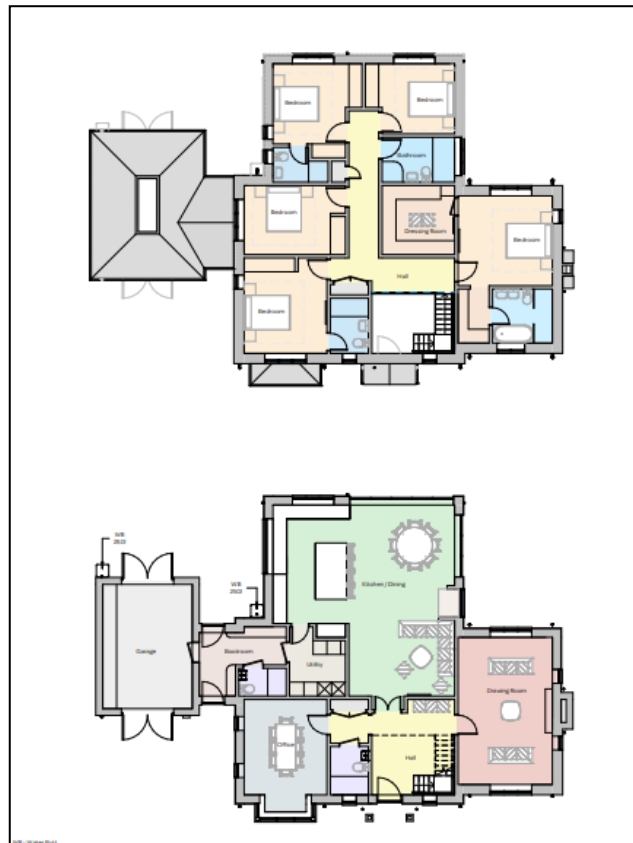


Figure 7: Plot 2 Elevations and floor plans

Planning History

The following is relevant relating to the application; -

88/00058/AS – outline application for three detached dwellings together with double garage – REFUSE

Consultations

Ward Member(s): Cllr Kayleigh Brunger-Randall has not commented on the application but has asked for it to be called in to Planning Committee.

Smarden Parish Council: No objection.

KCC Highways and Transportation: Following the submission of amended plans that show suitable visibility splays no objections are raised.

KCC Ecological Advice Service: Sufficient ecological information has been submitted. No objection subject to conditions.

KCC Archaeology: No objection subject to a condition to secure further archaeological investigation.

ABC Environmental Protection Team: No objection subject to conditions.

Shenley Farms (Aviation) Ltd: Whilst not wishing to inhibit the development, the attention of the planning committee and the applicant is drawn to the fact that the proposed development is very close to the Aerodrome and within the area covered by the safeguarding map. Certain noises connected with the aviation activity will be apparent.

Neighbours: A total of 27 representations have been received; 25 in support of the proposal and 2 raising objections.

Support comments:

- Beautifully designed, energy-efficient homes with eco-friendly specifications for both house and garden.
- The provision of 2 homes is in keeping with the surrounding area.
- Another developer would seek to provide many more homes on the site which would not be in keeping.
- The homes would be for a local family, allowing the family to stay in the village continuing to support local facilities.

Objections:

- The height, scale, and massing of the houses are entirely out of keeping with Primrose Cottage.
- Too close to the boundary with Primrose Cottage.
- Loss of privacy in garden of Primrose Cottage

- Urbanisation of countryside.
- The proposal will cause noise and light pollution to adjoining residents;
- Adverse impact on existing wildlife.
- Clearance of the site of vegetation has resulted in greater surface water run-off to surrounding gardens which would be exacerbated by this development.

Planning Policy

9. The Development Plan for Ashford Borough comprises; -
- (i) the Ashford Local Plan 2030 (adopted February 2019),
 - (ii) the Chilmington Green AAP (adopted July 2013),
 - (iii) the Wye Neighbourhood Plan (adopted March 2016),
 - (iv) the Pluckley Neighbourhood Plan (adopted April 2017),
 - (v) the Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan (adopted December 2019),
 - (vi) the Boughton Aluph & Eastwell Neighbourhood Plan (adopted October 2021)
 - (vii) the Egerton Neighbourhood Plan (adopted March 2022)
 - (viii) the Charing Neighbourhood Plan (adopted July 2023)
 - (ix) the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2016) & the Kent Minerals and Waste Early Partial Review (2020).
10. Although not yet part of the Development Plan, the following emerging Neighbourhood Plans are a material consideration:
- (i) Tenterden Neighbourhood Plan currently at Examination.
 - (ii) Pluckley Neighbourhood Plan Review currently at Examination.
 - (iii) Aldington & Bonnington Neighbourhood Plan currently at Regulation 16 stage in the plan making process.
11. The relevant policies from the Development Plan relating to this application are as follows:-
- SP1 – Strategic Objectives
- SP2 – The Strategic Approach to Housing Delivery
- SP6 – Promoting High Quality Design
- HOU5 – Residential windfall development in the countryside
- HOU12 – Residential space standards Internal
- HOU15 – Private external open space

TRA3a – Parking standards for residential development

TRA5 – Planning for pedestrians

TRA6 – Provision for cycling

ENV1 – Biodiversity

ENV3a – Landscape character and design

ENV4 – Light pollution and promoting dark skies

ENV5 – Protecting important rural features

ENV15 - Archaeology

ENV9 – Sustainable drainage

12. The following are also material considerations to the determination of this application.

- (i) Ashford Borough Council Climate Change Guidance for Development Management

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

Landscape Character Assessment SPD 2011

Residential Space and Layout SPD 2011(now external space only)

Residential Parking and Design SPD 2010

Sustainable Drainage SPD 2010

Dark Skies SPD 2014

Village Design Statements

Smarden Village Design Statement

Informal Design Guidance

Informal Design Guidance Note 1 (2014): Residential layouts & wheeled bins

Informal Design Guidance Note 2 (2014): Screening containers at home

Informal Design Guidance Note 3 (2014): Moving wheeled-bins through covered parking facilities to the collection point

Government Advice

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023

13. Members should note that the determination must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. A significant material consideration is the NPPF. The NPPF states that less weight should be given to the policies above if they are in conflict with the NPPF. The following sections of the NPPF are relevant to this application: -

Para 83. To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.

Para 84. Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside.

14. Technical housing standards – nationally described space standards

Assessment

15. The main issues for consideration are:

- Principle of Development
- Design, Character and Appearance
- Residential Amenity and Standards
- Parking Provision and Highway Safety
- Impact on Trees and Hedgerows
- Ecology
- Archaeology
- Five year housing land supply

Principle of development

16. This proposal falls to be assessed against Policy HOU5 which applies to windfall housing sites outside the built settlement confines. It is a permissive policy and seeks to grant development outside the built confines but in a sustainable location with no significant ecological or landscape impacts. The policy aligns with the aim of the NPPF to 'avoid isolated development in the countryside'. It is therefore considered to be broadly consistent with the Framework.
17. An extract from the Ashford Local Plan 2030 showing Policy HOU5 is provided below:

Policy HOU5 - Residential Windfall Development in the Countryside

Proposals for residential development adjoining or close to the existing built up confines of the following settlements will be acceptable:

Ashford, Aldington, Appledore, Bethersden, Biddenden, Brabourne Lees/Smeeth, Challock, Charing, Chilham, Egerton, Great Chart, Hamstreet, High Halden, Hothfield, Kingsnorth*, Mersham, Pluckley, Rolvenden, Shadoxhurst, Smarden, Tenterden (including St Michaels), Wittersham, Woodchurch and Wye.

**Existing Kingsnorth village*

Providing that each of the following criteria is met:

- a) **The scale of development proposed is proportionate to the size of the settlement and the level, type and quality of day to day service provision currently available and commensurate with the ability of those services to absorb the level of development in combination with any planned allocations in this Local Plan and committed development in liaison with service providers;**
- b) **The site is within easy walking distance of basic day to day services in the nearest settlement, and/or has access to sustainable methods of transport to access a range of services;**
- c) **The development is able to be safely accessed from the local road network and the traffic generated can be accommodated on the local and wider road network without adversely affecting the character of the surrounding area;**
- d) **The development is located where it is possible to maximise the use of public transport, cycling and walking to access services;**
- e) **The development must conserve and enhance the natural environment and preserve or enhance any heritage assets in the locality; and,**
- f) **The development (and any associated infrastructure) is of a high quality design and meets the following requirements:-**
 - i) **it sits sympathetically within the wider landscape,**
 - ii) **it preserves or enhances the setting of the nearest settlement,**
 - iii) **it includes an appropriately sized and designed landscape buffer to the open countryside,**

Continued...

- iv) it is consistent with local character and built form, including scale, bulk and the materials used,
- v) it does not adversely impact on the neighbouring uses or a good standard of amenity for nearby residents,
- vi) it would conserve biodiversity interests on the site and / or adjoining area and not adversely affect the integrity of international and national protected sites in line with Policy ENV1.

Residential development elsewhere in the countryside will only be permitted if the proposal is for at least one of the following:-

- Accommodation to cater for an essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;
- Development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;
- It is the re-use of redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting;
- A dwelling that is of exceptional quality or innovative design* which should be truly outstanding and innovative, reflect the highest standards of architecture, significantly enhance its immediate setting and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area;
- A replacement dwelling, in line with policy HOU7 of this Local Plan;

Where a proposal is located within or in the setting of an AONB, it will also need to demonstrate that it is justifiable within the context of their national level of protection and conserves and enhances their natural beauty.

**These proposals will be required to be referred to the Ashford Design Panel and applications will be expected to respond to the advice provided.*

Policy HOU10 will also be applied to relevant garden land applications.

18. The nearest settlement to the application site is Smarden, which has limited facilities and services. The centre of the village is at a distance of approximately 1000m from the site.
19. The site abuts Bethersden Road, a single-track lane without any footpaths or streetlights. Some 520m from the site, Bethersden Road connects with Cage Lane, a wider lane with a substandard footpath to one side. Shortly after The Thatched House, the footway disappears and is replaced by an even narrower footpath on the other side of Cage Lane. As the road narrows at the bridge at the entrance to the village there is no footpath at all.
20. Therefore, by virtue of the lack of convenience of walking and cycling routes and significant travel distances, the occupants of the dwellings would be

heavily reliant on the private car for their day-to-day facilities and services. In conclusion, the proposed dwellings would not lie in a sustainable location and would not meet any of the exceptions listed within the policy HOU5.

21. As a site that is not located in a sustainable location, the second part of Policy HOU5 comes into play. This is more restrictive, only allowing development if it meets one of a defined number of criteria. These are:
- Accommodation to cater for an essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;
 - Development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets.
 - It is the re-use of redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting;
 - A dwelling that is of exceptional quality or innovative design* which should be truly outstanding and innovative, reflect the highest standards of architecture, significantly enhance its immediate setting and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area;
 - A replacement dwelling, in line with Policy HOU7 of this Local Plan.
22. It has not been demonstrated how the proposal meets any of the criteria listed above and justifies an exception to Policy HOU5 and paragraph 84 of the NPPF. It should be noted that there is no exception in this policy for local connections to the area or self-build.
23. The development is therefore unacceptable in principle.

Design, Character and Appearance

24. Policy SP6 requires development to be of a high-quality design. Policy HOU5 as it relates to design and layout requires new development to be of a high-quality design that i) sits sympathetically within the wider landscape, ii) preserves or enhances the setting of the nearest settlement, iii) includes an appropriately sized and designed landscape buffer to the open countryside, iv) is consistent with local character and built form, including scale, bulk and the materials used. Policy ENV3a requires new development proposals to have particular regard to landscape characteristics.
25. Whilst the site is not in a sustainable location (as described in the section above), it is not isolated in as much as there are existing dwellings on either side of the site and sporadic elsewhere along Bethersden Road. Primrose Cottage to the north of the site is a small C20th bungalow, built of brick with a

concrete tile roof. It is situated on a large corner plot with trees/hedgerows to boundaries. The existing development to the south of the application site comprises a mix of 1950s semi-detached properties and other more recent developments in brick/tile hanging and render. Despite this development, the character of this part of Bethersden Road remains distinctly rural assisted by the application site itself that presents a green boundary onto the lane. The development of the site would therefore have a domesticating effect on the character of this part of Bethersden Road. This would be exacerbated by the need to remove a significant part of the roadside hedgerow to create the new vehicular access and provide the necessary visibility splays. I therefore consider the development to have an unacceptable adverse impact on this rural character and is an additional reason for refusal.

26. However, notwithstanding the above objection I do not object to the design of the units in their own right, albeit this is not the right location. The form, design and detailing of the buildings are not unattractive, using an appropriate materials palette for a rural location such as this. In this respect, I agree with many of the comments that have been made by third parties.

Residential Amenity and Standards

27. The site shares boundaries with Primrose Cottage to the north and 1 Buffalow Cottage to the south. It is considered that given the size of the site and its relationship with neighbouring properties, the proposed two dwellings could be provided on the site without causing unacceptable residential amenity harm to the neighbours.

Parking Provision and Highway Safety

28. KCC originally raised concerns about visibility at the new access off Bethersden Road. Following the submission of amended plans, KCC is now satisfied that suitable visibility splays can be provided out of the site access and that adequate parking and turning are provided on-site.
29. The site is considered to fall within a rural location. Policy TRA3(a) would apply in this instance. The policy requires the provision of 3 off-street parking spaces per dwelling. The plans show adequate parking for the parking of cars. No objections are raised on highway safety grounds.

Trees and Hedgerows

30. In the southern corner of the site, there are two Oak trees – 20m and 17m in height; both are protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPO).
31. To help create a more acceptable relationship, the developer has set back unit 2 on the plot so that it is further back from the protected trees. However,

there would still be an incursion of the dwelling into the root protection area (RPA) of T1 which is not considered justified given the generous size of the plots. Added to this, it is also considered that the road may be an RPA constraint in that it is likely that the surface roots have favoured colonisation away from the road. There is therefore a likelihood that more of the footprint of the dwelling is within the RPA if this is the case. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would be harmful to the protected Oak T1 by virtue of this incursion.

32. In addition, officers have concerns that the protected trees (T1 and T2) due to their position and height (20m and 17m respectively) will cause significant shading to Plot 2. This will lead to pressure from future occupiers to seek a reduction in the size and/or crown spread to the detriment of the protected trees and the visual amenity of the locality. It is also noted that the crown spreads as plotted in the arboricultural report, do not seem to accord with the photographed extent on the ground.
33. In view of the above, I consider that the proposed development would be harmful to the protected Oak tree (T1) due to incursion of Unit 2 into the RPA of this tree and that the over-shading of Plot 2 by both trees (T1 and T2) would result in an unacceptable relationship calling for their reduction. Furthermore, the loss of hedgerow adjoining Bethersden Road to create the new vehicular access/visibility splays would be harmful to the rural character of this part of the lane.

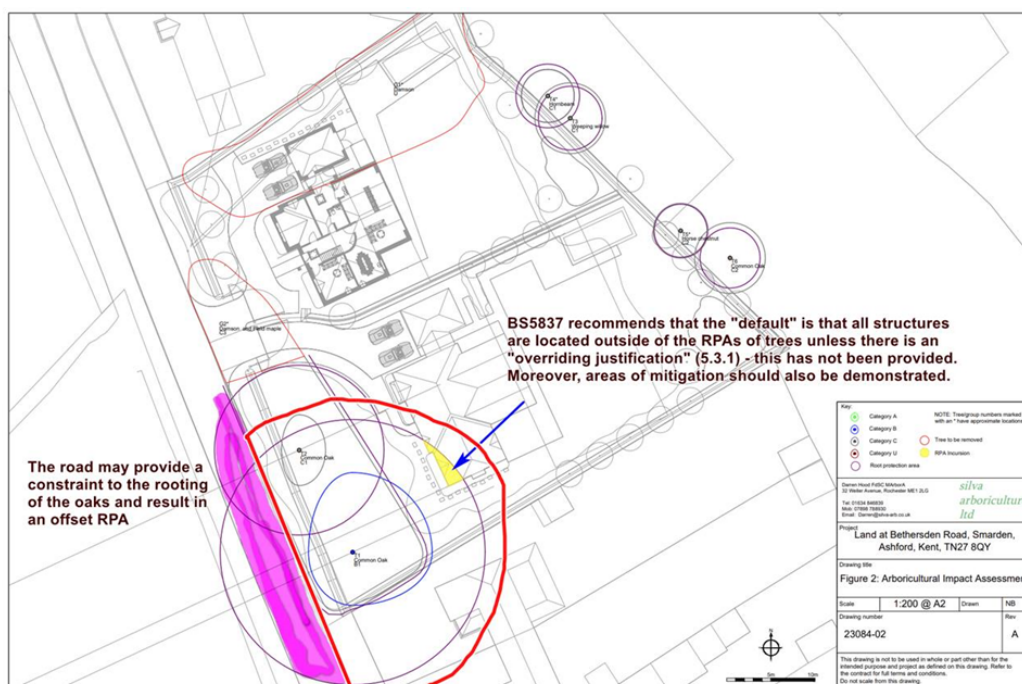


Figure 8: Incursion into RPA

Ecology

34. The EU Habitats Directive 1992, requires that the precautionary principle is applied to all new projects, to ensure that they produce no adverse impacts on European Sites. Regard has been had to Natural England's Standing Advice which suggests that in rural areas, the likely presence of bats, breeding birds, badgers, reptiles, and great crested newts could be expected. The application site is in a rural location. The site is surrounded by mature trees/hedges. The surrounding area contains established trees and hedgerows which could provide habitat for protected species.
35. KCC Ecological Advice Service has commented on the application. It is satisfied that due to the habitats on site comprising of predominantly young scrub and tall ruderal vegetation, which are of low ecological value, then sufficient information has been provided to help them assess this application favourably subject to a number of conditions being secured as set out below.

Great Crested Newts (GCN)

36. The applicants have submitted a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) Report with their application that shows that whilst there are no ponds on the site, the land is within an area of Kent where there is a high concentration of ponds, with approximately 11 ponds within a 250-meter radius of the site. As there is suitable terrestrial habitat on site, there is potential that GCN could be present within the site.
37. The applicant has submitted an Impact Assessment and Conservation Payment Certificate confirming that the proposal has been accepted on the District Level Licensing (DLL) scheme and therefore it is accepted that no further surveys or a detailed mitigation strategy is required as part of this application. A pre-start condition is recommended should planning permission be granted to ensure that the payment has been made to Natural England and the license issued.

Precautionary Measures

38. *Reptiles* - It is considered unlikely that species of reptiles are using the site due to the site mostly consisting of scrub and general lack of connectivity to other areas of suitable habitat. However, as there is a small area of suitable open vegetation that is suitable for reptiles, precautionary mitigation measures have been provided (PEA, Section 5.6). KCC are satisfied that these measures are appropriate to ensure that there will be no detrimental impact to reptiles if they are present.
39. *Breeding birds* - It is possible that breeding birds may be using the vegetation on site. KCC advise that the precautionary measures set out in the PEA

(section 5.7) are included in a construction and environmental management (CEMP) and secured via a condition should planning permission be granted.

Lighting

40. KCC has commented that if bats are present foraging/commuting within the area, then there is a risk that any lighting may have a negative impact. To mitigate any potential impact on bats, it is recommended that an appropriate condition is attached to any planning permission to secure a sensitive lighting design.

Landscaping & Ecological Enhancements

41. A landscape scheme has been submitted with this proposal that includes voluntary ecological enhancements contained in 'Wild Zones' for wildflowers and ponds, Garden Office/ Shed with a bio-diverse roof plus mixed species native hedge and new tree planting. KCC has commented that these are suitable habitats and will likely contribute to a measurable net gain on-site. Due to the large size of the proposed gardens, I am satisfied that there are suitable landscaping and biodiversity opportunities on site.
42. An establishment and management of the planting and creation of the ponds on site has not been included in a plan. It is advised that this needs to be added to the enhancement plan and can be secured as part of a condition. KCC is satisfied that the plans also provide suitable biodiversity enhancements. This can be secured by condition should the planning application be approved. It should be noted that this application is not subject to the mandatory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) as the application was submitted prior to 2nd April.

Archaeology

43. The County Archaeologist has commented that the proposed development lies south of Buffalo, a C19th or earlier small holding identifiable on the 1st Ed OS map. Remains associated with agrarian activity and occupation of Buffalo may survive on site. In view of the archaeological potential, it is recommended that a condition is imposed on any planning permission to secure further archaeological field evaluation and investigation prior to the commencement of any development.

Five year housing land supply

44. At this time the Council cannot currently demonstrate a 5-year supply of housing land. The Council's last published supply position was the Five Year Housing Land Supply Update July 2021 ('5YHLSU') covering the period 2021 - 2026 which states that the Council are able to demonstrate a housing land

supply position of 4.54 years. However, in a decision on an appeal in Tenterden dated March 2022 (the 'Wates' appeal reference Page 14 of 17 PA/2023/1374 APP/E2205/W/21/3284479), the Inspector suggested that the Council is only able to demonstrate a 5YHLS position of 3.5 years. The Council therefore accept that the figure of 3.5 years is relevant, and therefore material to the determination of planning applications and appeals. The Council's housing land supply position of between 3.5 years and 4.54 years has been upheld in several more recent appeal decisions.

45. As the Council is unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, paragraph 11 (d) of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (NPPF) is engaged. This states that for decision taking, planning permission should be granted where the relevant policies can be considered out of date unless: "any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole." Whilst the development has benefits in terms of providing two new homes which the applicant has suggested are for families with a local connection and the associated socio-economic benefits both during and after construction this would bring, as set out within this committee report, the proposal would constitute unsustainable development due to demonstrable harm it would cause to the character of the surrounding countryside and the unacceptable degree of separation from Smarden for day to day services.
45. Whilst the site is not isolated in terms of being a dwelling located on its own, the site is nonetheless considered to be isolated and unsustainably located in terms of access and distance to settlements listed in HOU5 and associated local facilities and services. The proposal therefore fails to be sustainable development as set out in the NPPF. I consider that the local plan policies most relevant to this proposal are consistent with the aim of the NPPF to create sustainable well designed places which are sympathetic to the local character, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting. Therefore, I consider that the policies of the local plan, including those policies listed within this committee report should be given full weight in the determination of the application.

Human Rights Issues

46. I have taken into account the human rights issues relevant to this application. In my view, the "Assessment" section above and the Recommendation below represent an appropriate balance between the interests and rights of the applicant (to enjoy their land subject only to reasonable and proportionate controls by a public authority) and the interests and rights of those potentially affected by the proposal (to respect for private life and the home and peaceful enjoyment of their properties).

Working with the applicant

47. In accordance with paragraphs 38 of the NPPF, Ashford Borough Council (ABC) takes a positive and creative approach to development proposals focused on solutions. ABC works with applicants/agents in a positive and creative manner as explained in the note to the applicant included in the recommendation below.

Conclusion

48. The proposal is not supported in principle when considering the strategic policies of the local plan and the wider aspirations of the National Planning Policy Framework. The proposal would constitute unsustainable development because of the location within a rural area. It would also have a domesticating effect on the rural character of this part of Bethersden Road, exacerbated by the removal of a significant section of roadside hedge that would be harmful to the rural character of this part of the lane. Although the proposal would lead to additional housing supply in the Borough, this limited planning benefit does not constitute a material consideration that is sufficient to outweigh the significant and demonstrable harm that would arise in this instance. I have weighed the scale of the Boroughs housing supply deficit in the balance in reaching this conclusion.
49. Furthermore, the proposed development would have a negative impact on two protected trees. Therefore, notwithstanding the local support for this application largely as it has been suggested by the applicant the units would be for local families this does not take away from the harm it would cause. Therefore, for the reasons identified above, I consider that the development is contrary to local and national planning policies and recommend it is refused.

Recommendation

Refuse

on the following grounds:

1. The proposed development, if permitted, would result in the creation of two dwelling houses in a remote rural location outside of any defined urban or village confines, for which no overriding justification has been provided to override normal restraint policies. The proposal would constitute unsustainable unjustified residential development in this rural location, resulting in additional vehicle movements and the need to travel by private car contrary to policies SP1, SP2 and HOU5 of the Ashford Local Plan (2030) and paragraphs 83 and 84 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).

2. The proposed development would introduce an overtly domestic form of development to a rural location, removing much of the roadside hedgerow to create the new vehicular access and necessary visibility splays. This would significantly and demonstrably harm the rural character and appearance of this part of Bethersden Road and the wider landscape contrary to policy ENV3a of the Ashford Local Plan (2030) and the Landscape Character SPD, 2011.
3. The proposed development would have an unacceptable impact on the protected Oak tree T1 without justification being provided for the incursion of the dwelling into its root protection area (RPA). Furthermore, given the proximity of the development to high protected trees, the development as proposed would result in calls for the reduction of these trees.

Note to Applicant

1. Working with the Applicant

In accordance with paragraphs 38 of the NPPF Ashford Borough Council (ABC) takes a positive and creative approach to development proposals focused on solutions. ABC works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by;

- offering a pre-application advice service,
- as appropriate updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application
- where possible suggesting solutions to secure a successful outcome,
- informing applicants/agents of any likely recommendation of refusal prior to a decision and,
- by adhering to the requirements of the Development Management Customer Charter.

In this instance,

the applicant/agent was updated of any issues after the initial site visit,

the applicant/agent was informed how the development did not accord with the development plan, and that no material considerations are apparent to outweigh these matters,

The application was considered by the Planning Committee where the applicant/agent had the opportunity to speak to the committee and promote the application.

Background Papers

All papers referred to in this report are currently published on the Ashford Borough Council website (www.ashford.gov.uk). Those papers relating specifically to this application may be found on the [View applications on line](#) pages under planning application reference //AS)

Contact Officer: Katy Magnall
Email: katy.magnall@ashford.gov.uk
Telephone: (01233) 330259