

4/00171/19/FUL	DEMOLITION OF EXISTING EQUESTRIAN FACILITIES AND CONSTRUCTION OF ONE FOUR-BEDROOM DWELLING, ONE THREE-BEDROOM HOLIDAY LET, ONE WORKSHOP/BARN/CARPORT BUILDING, WITH ASSOCIATED SOFT LANDSCAPING, HARDSTANDING, AND FENCING.
Site Address	1 WOODEND COTTAGES, LITTLE WOODEND, MARKYATE, ST ALBANS, AL3 8AX
Applicant	Mr & Mrs Andrews, 1 Woodend Cottages
Case Officer	Shane O'Donnell
Referral to Committee	Objection by Parish Council

1. Recommendation

1.1 That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the conditions which are recommended at the end of this report.

2. Summary

2.1 The proposal is for redevelopment of the existing site to provide an additional residential unit and holiday let replacing the existing equestrian outbuildings. The proposed outbuildings would provide car parking and facilities both the dwellings and the holiday let. The proposal is considered acceptable in principle as the site is considered to represent previously developed land in the Rural Area. Furthermore, the proposed development would represent a visual improvement of the site and the wider countryside which lies within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and an improvement to the setting of a listed building beyond existing conditions. The impact on transport and ecological matters has been adequately addressed through the application submission.

3. Site Description

3.1 The site is located at the end of a lane off Puddephat's Lane and contains part of the Grade II listed Wood End Cottage which has been subdivided into a pair of semi-detached dwellings No. 1 and No. 2 Wood End Cottage. The site also contains a collection of outbuildings and containers to the north west of No. 1 Wood End Cottage and has been put forward has previously operated as a stable yard/livery. The site is within the Rural Area and the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The site slopes significantly from south to north. A public footpath runs from east to west to the south of the site.

4. Proposal

4.1 The proposal is for demolition of existing outbuildings and construction of one four-bedroom dwelling, one three-bedroom holiday let, one workshop/barn/carport building, with associated soft landscaping, hardstanding, and fencing. The associated semi-detached No. 1 Wood End cottage would be retained on site.

4.2 The proposed four bedroom dwelling would be a barn shaped two storey building sited on the northern boundary of the application site with a private outdoor amenity space to front and side of the building. The proposed holiday let would be a single storey building on the eastern boundary of the application site with a small outdoor amenity spaces to the front of the building.

4.3 The proposed workshop/barn/car port single storey building is sited along the western boundary of the site and contains 2 parking spaces for the holiday let, a work shop and open barn for the retained dwelling No. 1 Wood End Cottage.

4.4 The area to the north of the No. 1 Wood End would be become part of No. 1's curtilage. Additional fencing would be a mixture of picket fencing and post and rail fencing.

5. Relevant Planning History

None Relevant.

6. Policies

6.1 National Policy Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)

6.2 Adopted Core Strategy

NP1, CS1, CS7, CS8, CS10, CS11, CS12, CS14, CS17, CS18, CS24.
CS25, CS27, C29, CS35.

6.3 Saved Policies of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan (DBLP)

18, 19, 21, 34, 37, 55, 57, 58, 62, 76, 79. 80, 90, 91. 92. 93, 95, 97, 99,
108, 109 119.

Saved Appendices:

Appendix 3 - Layout and Design of Residential Areas
Appendix 5 - Parking Provision

6.4 Supplementary Planning Guidance / Documents

Environmental Guidelines (May 2004)
Chilterns Buildings Design Guide (Feb 2013)

7. Constraints

- Rural Area
- Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Former Land Use
- CIL Zone 1

8. Representations

Consultation responses

8.1 These are reproduced in full at Appendix 1

Neighbour notification/site notice responses

8.2 These are reproduced in full at Appendix 2

9. Considerations

Main issues

9.1 The main issues to consider are:

- Policy and Principle of the Development;
- Impact on the Listed Building
- Impact on the Character of the Area and AONB
- Impact upon Neighbouring Properties;
- Access and Impact on Highway Safety/Parking/Services
- Amenity Provision
- Ecology/Trees/Landscaping
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Policy and Principle

9.2 The proposed application site would be located in the rural area and would redevelop an area of previously developed land and buildings associated with an equestrian use.

According to Policy CS7 within the Rural Area, the following uses are acceptable: Small-scale development will be permitted: i.e. (v) the redevelopment of previously developed sites provided that:

- i. it has no significant impact on the character and appearance of the countryside; and
- ii. it supports the rural economy and maintenance of the wider countryside.

9.2.1 Currently, the existing site contains a collection of buildings associated with an equestrian use but do not have a clear planning record. From viewing aerial imagery, while the buildings and paraphernalia along the

northern boundary of the site appear to have a more recently history which is currently under investigation by the Council's Enforcement Team, the larger collection of 3 buildings forming a L-shaped layout on the southern boundary and associated hardstanding have been present for a significant period of time and are considered lawful. The existing site is therefore considered previously developed land.

9.2.2 In terms of parts (ii) of Policy CS7, the proposed development would include a single storey holiday let. According to Policy CS14 of Dacorum's Core Strategy "Development that supports the knowledge-based economy, the transition to a low carbon economy, the rural economy and sustainable tourism, will be particularly encouraged". Furthermore, paragraph 26.11 of Dacorum's Core Strategy says "The potential for 'sustainable tourism' in the Chilterns is recognised and appropriate schemes that support this will be supported". The site would be located close to walking trails and with easy access to wider views of the landscape therefore provided that the built form is acceptable, it is considered that the proposed holiday let would support tourism in the area.

9.2.3. The proposal would create an additional residential unit in a rural area. However, in terms of paragraph 79 of the National Planning Policy Framework, it is considered that the proposed dwelling would not represent the creation of an isolated home in the countryside given that the proposed residential dwelling would replace an existing livery use of site and associated trip generation and would be within the footprint of the previously development land utilising existing transport infrastructure and sited within the established settlement area of two other dwellings No.1 and No. 2 Woodend Cottage.

9.2.4 In terms of parts (i) of Policy CS7, the impact of the proposed buildings and layout on the surrounding area and the AONB will be assessed below and should they be considered acceptable in terms of this impact and the impact on the listed building, ecology and transport assessed below then the proposed development is considered acceptable in principle.

Impact on the Listed Building

9.3 Woodend Cottage is a Grade II listed cottage dating from the 17th Century and subdivided in the 19th Century into two houses to house farm workers and historic relationship with the listed Hill Farm. The proposed development would not alter the built form of the listed building but would alter the surrounding context and curtilage.

9.3.1 In assessing the impact on the listed building, the proposal is assessed in accordance with paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework which states that: "Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use"

9.3.1 Currently, there lies a collection of 3 buildings in an L-shape close to the north edge of the Listed Cottage i.e. No. 1. These buildings that are proposed to be removed form a poor relationship with the cottage and do not take the form of ancillary farm buildings in terms of design or layout.

9.3.2 Therefore the removal of these curtilage buildings is considered to be a planning gain in terms of the impact on the setting of the listed building .The proposed layout taking the form of the courtyard is more in keeping with the history and narrative of the listed building and is more reflective of typical farmstead hierarchy. It is noted that the proposed new dwelling is a large two storey building however the proposed two storey dwelling would be sited at a lower level to the listed cottage and the form of this building mimics the form of large barn and therefore is considered an appropriate building form within the curtilage of the listed cottage.

9.3.3 Through negotiation with the applicant the siting and nature of the proposed boundary treatment has been reduced and altered in design to better preserve the openness of the site and to enhance the setting of the listed building. No objections are raised by the Council's Conservation Officer to revised proposals. Given the revised layout, design, and boundary treatment, it is considered that the proposed alterations represent not only less than substantial harm to the significance of the Grade II* listed building but a planning gain in terms of improving the setting of the listed building.

Impact on Landscape and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

9.4 The site is also located within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. In terms of local policy, Core Policy CS24 states that: "Development will have regard to the policies and actions set out in the Chilterns Conservation Board's Management Plan and support the principles set out within the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and associated technical notes."

Core Policy CS25 of Dacorum's Core Strategy states that:

"All development will help conserve and enhance Dacorum's natural and historic landscape. Proposals will be assessed for their impact on landscape features to ensure that they conserve or improve the prevailing landscape quality, character and condition and take full account of the Dacorum Landscape Character Assessment, Historic Landscape Characterisation and advice contained within the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record."

9.4.1 According the Chilterns Design Guide issues to consider when designing any new development include:

- The materials used and design details of traditional buildings
- The scale and form of the proposed building in relation to the site and neighbouring buildings

- Existing and proposed landscaping, including boundary treatment, access roads and driveways
- Ensuring new buildings add to the sense of place and local character and belong to the Chilterns, rather than lead to intrusive 'anywhere' development

9.4.2 The proposed roofs of the development will be composed of natural slate tiles and handmade clay roof tiles. The external walls of the proposed building would be covered in black tarred weather boarding. The proposed replacement buildings would be laid out in a courtyard and their design would mimic typical farm buildings and would create a built relationship with the listed building that would be familiar within the Chilterns and recognisable from long distance views and would also not appear harmful from views along the public footpath to the south. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would adhere to the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and would therefore not harm to the character and appearance of the area or the scenic beauty of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Impact upon Neighbouring Properties

9.5 Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy states that on each site, development should avoid visual intrusion, loss of sunlight and daylight, loss of privacy and disturbance to the surrounding properties.

9.51 Saved Appendix 3 of the DBLP states that there should be sufficient space around residential buildings to avoid a cramped layout and maintain residential character, to ensure privacy and to enable movement around the building for maintenance and other purposes. The minimum distances of 23 m between the main rear wall of a dwelling and the main wall (front or rear) of another should be met to ensure privacy.

9.52 The properties which have the potential to be affected by the development is the attached dwelling No. 2 Little Woodend and what will be retained as an independent dwelling at No.1 Little Woodend.

9.53 Other than the alterations to the boundary treatment of No. 1 Little Woodend, the built form of No.1 would remain unaltered and the existing building of No. 1 would be sited between the proposed development and No. 2 Little Woodend.

9.54. The proposed development would include a holiday let with a ground floor front window that faces towards the rear gardens of No. 1 and No 2. But given the ground floor nature of this window it is unlikely to result in any overlooking of neighbouring amenities. A condition attached to the approval will also seek through appropriate boundary treatment to ensure an adequate degree of privacy can be preserved between the amenity space of the proposed holiday let and the garden of No. 1 Woodend Cottage. The proposed development would include a two storey dwelling with first floor windows sited to the north of the site. In terms of No. 2 Woodend, the first floor windows of the proposed dwelling would be sited at an oblique angle to the rear amenity space of No. 2 with the built form of No. 1 partially

screening the rear garden of No. 2. In terms of the impact on No. 1, the proposed first floor windows would also be sited at an oblique angle to No. 1 at a distance of 22 metres from the first floor side elevation of No. 1. Given the relative sitings of the buildings, the distance of separation, the lower level at which the proposed two storey dwelling is sited, it is considered that the proposed development would not result in any overlooking of neighbouring amenities.

9.55. In terms of other impacts of the additional residential unit and holiday let on No. 1 and No.2 Little Woodend, the amenity space of the proposed holiday let would be sited along the side boundary of No.1 garden and is therefore not considered a problematic siting. The impact of the increased parking and traffic on the site will be assessed below however it is considered that the proposed site has adequate capacity for the parking needs of the new residential dwelling and holiday letting with the open courtyard layout allowing for overflow parking when required. It is therefore not considered that the operations of this new dwelling and holiday let would have detrimental impact on living conditions of No.1 or No. 2 Woodend Cottage.

9.56. Other residential dwellings are considered too far away from the proposed development to be adversely affected.

9.57 It is therefore considered that the proposals comply with the requirements of Policy CS12 in respect of impact upon neighbouring properties.

Access and Impact on Highway Safety/Parking/Services

9.6 Policy CS9 of the Core Strategy states that the traffic generated from new development must be compatible with the location, design and capacity of the current and future operation of the road hierarchy, taking into account any planned improvements and cumulative effects of incremental developments.

9.61 Policy CS12 states that on each site, development should provide a safe and satisfactory means of access for all users and provide sufficient parking and sufficient space for servicing.

9.62 The development is to be accessed via a track off Puddephat's Lane. The County Highway Authority have assessed the impact of vehicles from the proposed development accessing Puddephat's Lane and have raised no objection.

9.63 Saved Appendix 3 of the DBLP states that the needs of statutory undertakers, emergency services and essential delivery and disposal vehicles should be taken into account, and the emergency services and local authority should be consulted regarding acceptable distances from vehicle to reception point.

9.64 With regards to providing access to service vehicles, the Highway

Authority has not raised any objection to the proposals and as such, it is considered that no issues are envisaged in this respect.

9.65. With regards parking provision on site, Saved Appendix 5 of the DBLP states that for properties of 4 or more bedrooms, a maximum of 3 spaces should be provided for each property. The proposal comprises one 4 bedroom property and a 3 bedroom holiday let. The proposed development would provide a garage and an undercroft for the proposed dwelling created 2 to 3 covered parking spaces with additional parking available on the forecourt in front of the proposed dwelling. The proposed holiday would have access to a two bay car hold. It is therefore considered that the proposed design provides adequate parking for additional residents and visitors.

9.66 It is therefore considered that, on balance, the proposed level of parking is acceptable.

Amenity Provision

9.7 Saved Appendix 3 of the DBLP states that all residential development is required to provide private open space for use by residents whether the development be houses or flats. Private gardens should normally be positioned to the rear of the dwelling and have an average minimum depth of 11.5 m. ideally a range of garden sizes should be provided to cater for different family compositions, ages and interests. Generally all gardens should be of a width, shape and size to ensure the space is functional and compatible with the surrounding area.

9.71 The proposed two storey dwelling would have a designated amenity space to the front and side of the dwelling. While it is acknowledged that this space does not qualify as private amenity space given its siting it must be assessed in terms of the surrounding context. The site is located at the end of a track with no through road surrounded by open fields hence the need for a private amenity space is reduced. The courtyard that is formed with associated holiday let represent a semi-private space and the proposed boundary treatment condition can ensure a satisfactory relationship between new dwelling/holiday let and No. 1 Woodend Cottage. Therefore, the provision of the amenity space for future occupiers of the proposed dwelling would appear adequate in this case. The holiday let would also have provision for private outdoor amenity space for occupiers.

9.72 It is therefore considered that sufficient amenity space is provided.

Ecology/Trees/Landscaping

9.8 The applicant has submitted an Ecological Report (including a preliminary bat roost assessment) has been reviewed by the County's Ecology Team. No evidence of bats roosting were found within the buildings proposed to be demolished. No Objections are therefore raised by the County Ecology Team. This assessment is confined to the ecological implications within the designated application site.

9.81 Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy states that on each site, development should retain important trees or replace them with suitable species if their loss is justified and plant trees and shrubs to help assimilate development and softly screen settlement edges.

9.82 The site does not contain trees cover by Tree Preservation Orders and the majority of the existing site is covered by hard standing however there are a collection of trees along the northern boundary of the site. It is considered that the recommended condition ensuring submission of a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan will help improve the final appearance and landscaping of the proposed development.

Developer Contributions

9.9 Policy CS35 requires all developments to make appropriate contributions towards infrastructure required to support the development. These contributions will normally extend only to the payment of CIL where applicable. The Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was adopted in February 2015 and came into force on the 1st July 2015. this application would create an additional residential unit and does appear CIL liable.

Other Matters

Removal of Permitted Development Rights

9.10 The NPPG states that conditions restricting the future use of permitted development rights or changes of use will rarely pass the test of necessity and should only be used in exceptional circumstances. On this basis, it is not considered that the implementation of permitted development rights would result in impacts so severe as to warrant their blanket removal.

10. Conclusions

10.1 Planning permission is sought for demolition of existing outbuildings and construction of one four-bedroom dwelling, one three-bedroom holiday let, one workshop/barn/carport building, with associated soft landscaping, hardstanding, and fencing.

10.2 Currently on site, there lies a collection of outbuildings that given their form and siting, this collection of buildings detract from the setting of the listed building. It is considered that the proposed design, reflective of typical farmstead hierarchy, would improve the setting of the listed building and would also respect the sites setting within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The proposed buildings and uses would not be detrimental to neighbouring amenities and the proposal would provide adequate parking and amenity space.

10.3 The proposed development would redevelop an existing site provide

additional housing and supporting tourism in the Chilterns. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

11. RECOMMENDATION – That planning permission be **GRANTED** for the reasons referred to above and subject to the following conditions:

Conditions

No	Condition
1	<p>The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.</p> <p><u>Reason:</u> To comply with the requirements of Section 91 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 (1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.</p>
2	<p>Prior to development above ground level, samples of the all materials including roofing, weatherboarding and bricks, rainwater goods (black painted metal), windows, glazing and doors, and any paving materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved materials shall be used in the implementation of the development. Please do not send materials to the council offices. Materials should be kept on site and arrangements made with the planning officer for inspection.</p> <p><u>Reason:</u> To safeguard the character and appearance of the Listed Building and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in accordance with Core Policies 24 and 27 of Dacorum's Core Strategy.</p>
3	<p>Prior to the occupation of proposed development details of the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority: details of the proposed means of enclosure within and around the site whether by means of walls, fences or hedges/trees. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.</p> <p><u>Reason:</u> To safeguard the character and appearance of the Listed Building and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in accordance with Core Policies 24 and 27 of Dacorum's Core Strategy.</p>
5	<p>The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans/documents:</p> <p>ATK/19/RA/001/TP9 ATK/10/RA/001/TP2B ATK/ 10/RA/001/TP3B ATK/ 10/RA/001/TP4B ATK/19/RA/001/TP6A ATK/19/RA/001/TP7A ATK/19/RA/001/TP8A ATK/ 10/RA/001/TP5 ATK/10/RA/001/TP2 DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT</p>

Supporting Statement

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

Article 35

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. The Council acted proactively through application stage and the pre-application stage with the applicant to resolve issues with the scheme. The Council has therefore acted in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Informatives

1. Obstruction of public highway land: It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website: <http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.
2. Road Deposits: It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit mud or other debris on the public highway, and section 149 of the same Act gives the Highway Authority powers to remove such material at the expense of the party responsible. Therefore, best practical means shall be taken at all times to ensure that all vehicles leaving the site during construction of the development are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. Further information is available via the website <http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047
3. Storage of materials: The applicant is advised that the storage of materials associated with the construction of this development should be provided within the site on land which is not public highway, and the use of such areas must not interfere with the public highway. If this is not possible, authorisation should be sought from the Highway Authority before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/business-and-developer-information.aspx>.

Consultation responses

Flamstead Parish Council: Objection

Change of use of existing equestrian facilities to incorporate construction of one three bed holiday let in existing stable yard together with four bed dwelling in a converted barn style, replacement of existing workshop with matching construction to provide new workshop and open fronted barn/store, new heritage orchard, three new wildlife ponds and enhancements to existing habitat and additional tree planting – 1 Woodend Cottages, Little Woodend, Markyate.

The issues raised were that it was felt this application represented inappropriate development in a rural area. The intended extra dwellings would block the view across the valley. Something more sympathetic would be appropriate. There was no statement of the square footage. There is Government pressure to provide housing but it was felt that this application did not meet with the spirit of this. The area was also at present very untidy and messy. 6 objections to this application. The council to endorse the over development issue with the site.

Highway Authority

Notice is given under article 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 that the Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority does not wish to restrict the grant of permission.

INFORMATIVE NOTES

1. Obstruction of public highway land: It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website:

<http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

2. Road Deposits: It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit mud or other debris on the public highway, and section 149 of the same Act gives the Highway Authority powers to remove such material at the expense of the party responsible. Therefore, best practical means shall be taken at all times to ensure that all vehicles leaving the site during construction of the development are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. Further information is available via the website

<http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047

3. Storage of materials: The applicant is advised that the storage of materials associated with the construction of this development should be provided within the site on land which is not public highway, and the use of such areas must not interfere with the public highway. If this is not possible, authorisation should be sought from the Highway Authority before construction works commence. Further information is available via

the website <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/business-and-developer-information.aspx>.

COMMENTS

This application is for: Change of use of existing equestrian facilities to incorporate the construction of one three bed holiday let in existing stable yard together with a four bed dwelling in a converted barn style, replacement of existing workshop with matching construction to provide new workshop and open fronted barn/store new heritage orchard, three new wildlife ponds and enhancements to existing habitat and additional tree planting

PARKING AND ACCESS

Access will be via the existing 340m long driveway from Puddephat's Lane, which is an unnumbered "C" classified local access road with a speed limit of 60mph.

No new or altered vxo is proposed and no works are required in the highway.

There have been no accidents involving personal injury in the vicinity of the site in the last five years.

PARKING

There is adequate parking provision on site and space for vehicles to turn to enter and leave the site in forward gear.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Waste collection will be as per the existing collection service for this address

CONCLUSION

HCC as highway authority considers that the proposals would not have a severe residual impact upon highway safety or capacity.

Countryside Access Officer:

The proposed development will markedly increase traffic along the access drive which serves as Flamstead public footpath 45, and is therefore a public highway. Whilst safety of members of the public has to be the primary concern (particularly through any construction phase) the enjoyment of using a hitherto very quiet, peaceful path will undoubtedly be affected by this proposal.

County Ecology Officer:

Application: DEMOLITION OF EXISTING EQUESTRIAN FACILITIES AND CONSTRUCTION OF ONE FOUR-BEDROOM DWELLING, ONE THREE-BEDROOM HOLIDAY LET, ONE WORKSHOP/BARN/CARPORT BUILDING, WITH ASSOCIATED SOFT LANDSCAPING, HARDSTANDING, AND FENCING.

Address: 1 WOODEND COTTAGES, LITTLE WOODEND, MARKYATE,

ST ALBANS, AL3 8AX

Application No: 4/00171/19/FUL

Thank you for consulting Hertfordshire Ecology on the above application. My comments are as follows:

1. No existing ecological information is available for this site within the HERC database, although the nearby Priors Spring is recorded as ancient woodland.
2. The bat Preliminary Roost Assessment found no evidence of bats roosting in any of the buildings affected by the proposals. Their construction and condition do not suggest a high likelihood of bats although given their location and proposed demolition the PRA was necessary. No further surveys are considered necessary, unless any works do not take place within the next 12 months. A number of ecological enhancements are outlined within the report.
3. I note a report has been undertaken by FWAG which outlines a number of ecologically beneficial proposals for the adjacent land, referred to by the applicant and in the DAS. However this does not form part of this application. Consequently, the LPA currently cannot consider these to represent any biodiversity net gain associated with the development, as it has no detailed knowledge of what these are and as these are not formal proposals, no means of ensuring they will be delivered. This is unfortunate as in this respect, these cannot currently contribute to the net gains expected as a result of the development.
4. The application site itself has little or no existing ecological interest, although it would appear that a thick boundary hedge or screen of trees along the SW and NW boundary has been removed (present on 2016 APs, not on Fig.19 of bat report) – these may have been *Leylandii*? In any event, the development proposals in themselves would provide very limited net biodiversity gain – provision of bat boxes etc. can be achieved at any time without any form of development proposal.
5. However, I support the suggested enhancements, which include a wildflower meadow, wildlife ponds, new orchard, tree and hedgerow planting and would, together, should provide significant net gain locally although of course I have not seen any details.
6. I do not consider there to be any ecological constraints associated with the proposals and can advise the LPA can determine the application accordingly.
7. However, if the LPA wishes to secure net gain associated with the proposals, I advise that if approved, the details of the FWAG report or at least significant elements of it (such as the wildflower grassland or the orchard) are submitted in the form of a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) as a Condition of Approval. This would provide details of the proposals themselves and their management which should

then be implemented in order to secure the net biodiversity gain sought by Government. Hertfordshire Ecology can provide further advice on these aspects if required

Council's Conservation Officer: *final comments (It should noted that the layout and design of the proposal was significantly altered from the original through engagement with council officers)_*

Generally speaking, I think this has now reached a satisfactory state. Presumably a condition will reserve the topmost open barn to 1 Woodend.

There is still no heritage statement attached to the application.

Conditions should detail approval of all materials including roofing, weatherboarding and bricks, rainwater goods (black painted metal), windows, glazing and doors, and any paving materials

The main barn must be in hand-made clay tiles (application form says all slate) as shown on drawings

The application form also states simply that 'existing post and rail fence to remain' but additional boundary fencing is required and the present fencing requires upgrading.

Appendix 1

Consultation responses

Neighbour 1

████████████████████ – Objection

My name is ████████████████████

I live with my partner Dr Harriet Wyles together with our two young sons at 2 Woodend Cottages, Little Woodend, Markyate, AL3 8AX which is next door to this proposed development.

We have lived here since purchasing our property in March 2015. We moved in three weeks prior to the applicants moving in next door.

We are lucky enough to live in one of the two Grade 2 listed semi-detached cottages here- beautifully situated in an unchanged rural setting, both a third of a mile from the highway and once part of the Beechwood Park estate, formerly the property of Sebright family.

Woodend Cottages date back to the late 17th century and were one dwelling to begin with and later converted to two dwellings in the 19th century.

The estate was fragmented in the early 20th century and the cottages were

purchases together with Puddephats and Hill Farm in 1926 by Lady Katherine Farrar, later Lyell.

Hill Farm and Woodend Cottages were later sold to Nicholas and Susanna Lyell in 1975. Traditionally, both cottages have been estate worker cottages.

These cottages and their local dynamic, vistas and views have undergone virtually no substantial change in the past three centuries. Hill Farm (Grade 2*) and Little Woodend (Grade 2) have sat opposite each other, across the fields for over 250 years without any hard development whatsoever, save for some wooden single-storey stables and outbuildings connected with the necessary shelter and security of livestock and farm machinery.

An unusual claim in the 21st century and one that must be given due regard and respect. We object to this proposal for the following reasons;

National Planning Policy Framework 2018. Paragraph 79.. Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply; a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside. b) the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets; c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting; d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential dwelling; or e) the design is of exceptional quality, in that it: -is truly outstanding or innovative, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and – would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area. We cannot see how the proposals meet these criteria.

Core Strategy, Dacorum Borough Council. Policy CS24.. which states that the special qualities of the Chilterns AONB will be conserved- which the proposals would not.

Local Plan, Dacorum Borough Council. Policy 97.. Strategic Objectives- 'to protect and enhance Dacorum's distinctive character, open spaces, biological and geological diversity and historic environment..' We refer to Policy 97: Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which notes that every effort will be made to discourage development or operations that would adversely affect the beauty of the area and which will be the case in respect of this application. In addition, Policy 110: Agriculture and Reuse of Building, notes that in the countryside and outside selected small villages, permission will be given for a rural building to be converted and/or reused for industrial, commercial, recreational or tourism purposes provided a number of criteria are satisfied, one of which is that the building must be of permanent and substantial construction and capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction. We cannot see how the proposals meet this policy.

'Farm.' We note the applicants have commissioned a 'Farm Conservation Report' by FWAG East Consultancy Ltd which refers to the applicant's demise as 'a farm.' The applicant's property, much like ours, is in fact a semi-detached cottage with a disproportionately large amount of land. Whilst their land is 14 acres (5 hectares) the definition of a 'farm' is 'an area of land and its buildings used for growing crops and rearing animals.' The applicants land does neither. And historically, the land in question has only ever been in equine leisure use. This inference might be misleading to those not acquainted with the property concerned.

'Equestrian Facilities.' The planning proposal refers to and makes much of; 'change of use of existing equestrian facilities to incorporate the construction of one three-bed holiday let in existing stable yard with a four-bed dwelling in a converted barn style..' The 'equestrian facilities' referred to comprise three pre-fabricated wooden stable blocks together containing around ten loose boxes in all (none of which had original planning permission and all on concrete bases) together with two lorry bodies, three containers and two pre-fabricated wooden paddock buildings on skids. These latter six items are all 'chattels.' The 'stable yard' did not exist prior to 1991. (There is photographic evidence to support this) There is no horse-walker or manege and the nature of the stables is such that none of the 'buildings' could be re-used in anyway for the proposed development. Further- the applicants inherited equestrian 'business' (three or four horses in DIY livery & now ceased) was such that it was not 'equal too or greater than the agricultural minimum wage' and as such, was not a 'business' but a hobby. Please see Policy 24 of the Dacorum Borough Council Local Plan (adopted 2004) which refers to agricultural and forestry workers dwellings. Such dwellings can be permitted if, amongst a number of criteria, there is an existing functional need (Criterion a) and that the enterprise has been clearly demonstrated as viable and sustainable (Criterion c) The decision maker, whether the local planning authority or an Inspector on appeal, would normally take viability to be demonstrated by a profit of at least equivalent to the minimum agricultural wage. We would also question exactly how the existing facilities would 'incorporate' the proposed construction work when none of the existing buildings could be converted or re-used?

Visual Impact. The proposed development (which in our view is a massive over-development) will be seen from Puddephats Lane, from the access lane, from our garden and from our land. It will fundamentally change the view and dynamic for the historic Chilterns Way footpath that runs down the access track from Puddephats Lane and on, through our land, to Yew tree Wood and Flamstead. It will totally dominate the current listed property (see proposed plans) and be incongruous with the local landscape notwithstanding the suggestion it would 'resemble a Chiltern farmyard?' There is no farmyard here- there never has been.

Privacy & Noise. By virtue of the situation at Little Woodend, it is, by definition, very private. We moved here for 'quiet enjoyment' of the place for

us and our growing family and this planning proposal threatens to remove this privacy permanently. This proposal would strip us of the peace and quiet we currently enjoy and subject us to undue noise and activity from these commercial ventures. There are just two dwellings here at the moment and we all accept ambient noise pursuant to two families living their lives down here. But to be asked to accept another permanent dwelling with one and possibly two further holiday lets, with all the associated noise and extra traffic up and down the access lane is a real threat to us and one we hope the council will be very aware of. We are particularly concerned with families 'holidaying' down here with the advent of noise and the possible security compromise that may lead to with a constant through-put of 'holiday makers' staying, doubtless with children and/or dogs. We note the applicants make mention in their additional information of allowing their two paddocks right next to our house and garden to be used in conjunction with the one/two possible holiday lets. This will impact on us directly in both adverse noise and impinge on our privacy.

Access and road safety. The access track to Little Woodend exits on to Puddephats Lane near a blind bend some 50 yards away. We have to be very careful in pulling out onto the metalled highway particularly with traffic coming from the left and heading towards Markyate and would have grave concerns about yet more traffic pulling in and out of the access lane. The increased traffic on the access lane will also adversely affect the Chiltern Way footpath users having to dodge the extra traffic load on the footpath that runs down the access lane. I hope the traffic-flow implications of a possible third permanent dwelling here with the further two possible holiday lets would be duly considered by the Highways Department.

Environment & Wildlife. We note the applicants have gone to great lengths to stress the benefit of their various wildlife schemes for the benefit of local environment and wildlife. This is all very laudable but no more than any self-respecting land owner should do- and surely not to be used as some sort of 'planning gain.' We ourselves have 9 acres and have laid 12 chain of hedgerow in the Southern England style, planted 90 yards of new mixed hedgerow, planted trees, put up nest boxes etc. All good countryside stewardship. (For the avoidance of doubt- we also produce meat and wool from our pedigree flock of Black Welsh Mountain sheep from our land.)

In summary- we don't like being put in the position of having to object to this application. Unfortunately, the applicants have not discussed this with us in any way. No plans were put through the door and no email from them was received. The first we knew was the letter from the Dacorum Planning Officer.

This is certainly nothing personal- our objections are on the merits of the application itself, irrespective of who was making the application- but no one would want to be subjected to all this commercial activity in such an isolated and unchanged place.

Had the applicants been seeking planning permission to extend their listed

I hope this helps in stopping this planning application

Neighbour 3

██████████: Objection

The access Road to these cottages is a public footpath. This footpath is part of The Chiltern Way long distance footpath which is a well used long distance route. This development is likely to more than double the amount of traffic on this quite narrow unsurfaced track. There is not too much room for pedestrians to avoid the traffic. I imagine also that it is quite likely the extra traffic will require the lane to be tarmacadamed which would greatly increase the speed of the traffic and hence danger to walkers.

It also seems to be an excessively large development in the AONB, especially as at the moment there are hardly any agricultural dwellings of a permanent nature on the site.

John Rowe, Dacorum Footpath Secretary West Herts Ramblers.

Neighbour 4

██████████: Objection

This property is situated in an area of outstanding natural beauty and a conservation area.

The property consists of old run down buildings which have never been equestrian facilities.

or a stable yard. I have ridden around this area for over 40 years and I know this not to be true.

I walk my dog along the footpath which runs past this property and I object to having a holiday home built in this beautiful area.

Neighbour 5

██████████: Support

My name is ██████████ and I am currently a resident in the village of Studham but have lived in Markyate and surrounding areas for more than 15 years.

I'm a keen walker who has always owned dogs and loves to explore the beautiful countryside in this area. I have known Mr and Mrs Andrews for the majority of the 15 years I've lived in the area and know them to also love and respect the countryside we live in.

The existing outbuildings and stable yard are currently unattractive yet the plans describe the new buildings will be constructed in the style of a Chiltern farmyard which I would suggest is preferable to the existing buildings. They have gone to

great lengths to seek guidance and advice from historians and FWAG to ensure the planned buildings have not been done in isolation, rather they have been done sympathetically, given it is an area of outstanding natural beauty. They have also ensured that the plans include enhancements to existing habitats with the planting of a heritage orchard, new wildlife ponds and additional tree planting, to name but three.

Mr and Mrs Andrews have already demonstrated that they can develop a viable business by converting several acres of land into a private secured paddock for the benefit of exercising their own dog as well as allowing others to enjoy it too. This led to them being granted a 5 star animal license for the care of dogs. Their plans to continue to develop their business always put the wildlife and environment first.

In summary, I am supportive of the plans as they have clearly been drawn up taking into consideration it is an area of outstanding natural beauty. The plans are intended to create a sustainable and viable business that is sympathetic to the local environment and wildlife and for that Mr and Mrs Andrews should be applauded.