MINOR DEVELOPMENT PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT REF. NO. F/14/74335

DESCRIPTION/ ADDRESS	Erection of 1 no. 3 bed agricultural worker's dwelling to replace temporary mobile home Stroudwood Nurseries Stroudwood Lane Lower Upham Southampton SO32 1HG

SITE VISIT DATE	17.4.14
ARE PLANS ACCURATE?	Yes
HAVE ALL NECESSARY NEIGHBOURS BEEN CONSULTED?	Yes

THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION	Erection of 1 no. 3 bed agricultural worker's dwelling to replace temporary mobile home.
SITE AREA	The total site area is 1.04 hectares with the domestic curtilage being 30 x 30 metres squared, although much of this is taken up by a large Oak tree.
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT DENSITY (NET)	Approx 11 dwellings per hectare for the domestic part of the site which is higher than the average density of other dwellings along the lane which equates to approximately 8-9 dwellings per hectare.
TOPOGRAPHY	Flat and level ground.
TREES	There are a number of mature trees which form part of the boundary treatment. The majority are along the northern boundary.
BOUNDARY TREATMENT	2.0 metre hedge on all four site boundaries, together with some mature trees mainly along the northern side but there are other individual trees on the other site boundaries.
SITE CHARACTERISTICS	Open field accessed directly off Stroudwood Lane with the current glasshouse in the middle of the site.
CHARACTER OF LOCALITY	Fairly open countryside, mostly paddocks and grazing land but some arable fields.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	DECISION
F/11/68385	Siting of mobile home for a temporary period of 3 years, extension of glass house and retention of water tank.	Approved 21/4/2011
F/09/64849	Erection of glasshouse for horticultural use.	Approved Jun 2009

REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

SOURCE	SUMMARY OF CONTENT
None	

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

CONSULTEE	SUMMARY OF RESPONSE
Fair Oak Parish Council	Object – Members felt there was insufficient evidence to show a viable business was in place. Concerns were also raised that, if permitted, it would set a "trend" along the lane.
Head of Planning Policy and Design	No comments received.
Head of Transportation and Engineering	No objection. The proposals accord to standard in regard to highway matters inclusive of parking. The will however be a requirement for transport developer contributions, if a permission is to be given to the application, in line with the HCC Transport Contributions Policy. This was not applied to the existing mobile home as this was a temporary permission (F/11/68385), and so in effect, the multimodal trips associated with the development are new to the network. For a 1-bed residential unit, this equates to £3,745 (+indexation). Stoudwood Lane is a narrow rural lane with no footways and the location is well away from other facilities, so as a principle additonal residential development at such a location is unsatisfactory. However as a replacement for the existing mobile home supporting the business on site no objection is raised. It is proposed to drain sewage by a septic tank, the access to site is adequate to accommodate a tanker lorry for emptying. Conditions B06b,e

POLICY CONTEXT

DESIGNATION APPLICABLE TO SITE
Outside Built-up Area Boundary Within Designated Conservation Area Within a Landscape Assessment Area – Stroudwood Pastures (7a)

DEVELOPMENT PLAN SAVED POLICIES, EMERGING LOCAL PLAN POLICIES AND SPD'S

Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review (2001-2011):

- 1.CO (Protection of the Countryside)
- 6.CO (Agricultural Workers Dwellings)
- 18.CO (Landscape Character)
- 28.ES (Waste Collection/Recycling)
- 34.ES (Energy and Climate change),
- 59.BE (Development Criteria)
- 100.T (Minimise Travelling)
- 101.T (Infrastructure Contributions)
- 104.T (Parking)
- 147.OS (Public Open Space)
- 191.IN (Social Infrastructure)

DEVELOPMENT PLAN SAVED POLICIES, EMERGING LOCAL PLAN POLICIES AND SPD'S

Amended Draft Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2011-2029:

- DM1 (Development Criteria)
- DM2 (Sustainable Development)
- DM23 (Transport)
- DM24 (Parking)
- DM25 (Residential Development)
- DM27 (Rural Workers Dwellings)
- DM29 (Internal Space Standards)
- DM32 (Public Open Space)
- DM35 (Community Infrastructure)
- DM37 (CIL/S106)

Supplementary Planning Guidance: Quality Places
Supplementary Planning Document: Planning Obligations
Supplementary Planning Document: Environmentally Sustainable Development
Supplementary Planning Document Residential Parking Standards

CHARACTER APPRAISAL AREA

Not within a Character Area

SPECIAL POLICY AREA

Not within a Special Policy Area

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE

National Planning Policy Framework encourages the support of a prosperous rural economy. It also encourages the delivery of a wide choice of high quality homes and sustainable development in rural areas. This sequential approach should be applied to applications for small scale rural development however the NPPF advises Local planning authorities to avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances such as: the essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside.

POLICY COMMENTARY

The above policies combine to form the criteria against which this application will be assessed with particular regard to the principle of that proposed, justification for the permanent agricultural workers dwelling, its layout and design and its impact on the visual amenity and character of the surrounding countryside.

COMMENT ON CONSULTATION RESPONSES

In response to the Parish Council's comments, the applicant has run his business successfully for fifteen years from another site within the Borough and has provided information that show the business continues to prosper and grow from the existing site. The LPA are therefore satisfied that the business is profitable and can sustain a residential property associated with the business.

COMMENT ON REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

None.

PLANNING OBLIGATION/CONSIDERATIONS

In accordance with the provisions of Circular 05/05 saved policies 101.T, 147.OS and 191.IN of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review 2001-2011 and supplementary planning document. Planning obligation contributions are sought to offset the impact of the development on local infrastructure. For this development contributions are sought towards Community Infrastructure, Sustainable Transport, Recreational Disturbance Mitigation and Public Open Space. The applicant has agreed to secure the contributions through a direct payment.

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSAL

DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND/OR LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:-

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Principle: The site has a permitted use for horticultural purposes and further investment in the greenhouse has recently been made. The need for a permanent presence on the site was established via the 2011 application for the temporary siting of a mobile home. The proposal is for the replacement of mobile home with a permanent agricultural workers dwelling.

The application site lies outside the urban edge where the general principle of development is not considered acceptable unless for justifiable agricultural, horticultural or forestry purposes. This is set out in saved Policy 1.CO of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review (2001- 2011). Also of relevance is saved Policy 6.CO which relates to agricultural workers dwellings and sets out five of criteria that must be met: i) size, design and layout of the dwelling is appropriate; ii) the business is viable and will remain so; iii) there are no suitable buildings on the site which can be converted; iv) there are no suitable dwellings in the vicinity; and v) a dwelling serving the holding has not been recently alienated from the holding.

i) The size, design and layout of the dwelling is appropriate, as set out below.

ii) Accounts for 11/12 and 12/13 and projections for 13/14 have been provided to support the application and financial information for 07/08 and 08/09 were provided as part of application F/11/68385. These statements show a steady and progressing increase in income and thus showing the business is viable. There are no reasons to anticipate that the business will fail.

iii) There are no other structures on the site other than the current glasshouse

iv) There are no suitable available dwellings within the vicinity.

v) There are no dwellings on the holding or dwellings that have been recently alientated.

In view of this all the criterion of Policy 6.CO are considered to have been met.

Justification: The site currently contains a glasshouse which was erected almost 5 years ago but the applicant's business has been running for approximately 15 years, 12 years of which were in another location which was no longer suitable for the scale and nature of his business and the type of plants grown. These plants are of a very specialist nature and require substantially more care than those grown in the average nursery. They are very sensitive to changes in temperature and humidity and could die within a very short space of time, therefore requiring someone to be available on site at all times to ensure that the glasshouse is kept at the required temperature and humidity. The success and expertise of the applicant at cultivating these plants is also highlighted

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSAL

DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND/OR LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

by his numerous awards and competition medals from the Royal Horticultural Society.

The business has been established over a considerable amount of time. Whilst PPS7, Annex A has been superseded by the NPPF and NPPG it provides a useful guide for the functional needs tests for proposals such as this. Due to the specific type of crop, the proposal as set out appears to meet the needs test as workers would need to be on hand at short notice to deal with emergencies which may result in loss of crops. Evidence has been provided both within this application and the 2011 application to support this from technical specialists.

Based on all of the above information, which has been corroborated by suitable evidence submitted with this and the previous application, it is felt that there is sufficient and reasonable justification to demonstrate that the proposed dwelling meets all of the criterion set out in saved Policy 6.CO.

The temporary mobile home consented in 2011 was conditioned as an agricultural works dwelling and a defined curtilage established. This needs to be permanently established through this application and the imposition of appropriately worded conditions.

Layout & Design: The position of the previously consented mobile home considered the long term possibility that it may be replaced with a permanent dwelling.

The site is accessed via the current track which runs along the northern edge of the site.

The property itself at 117.3sqm is a very modest 3 bed bungalow compared to other existing dwellings along the lane. This is however of an appropriate size to meet the long term needs of the applicant and his family. It has a very simple and low key appearance to it and will not, with the landscaping implemented as part of the 2011 application, be overly noticeable. It is sited a similar distance from the road as the existing mobile home but is now sited closer to the southern boundary. The proposed dwelling has been orientated so that the ridge runs parallel with the road and the frontage addresses the road. This orientation reduces the physical appearance, scale, and bulk of the dwelling when approaching the site from either direction of Stroudwood Lane.

As established within the 2011 application, an area 30 x 30 metres in size, when measured from the north-eastern corner of the site will form the domestic curtilage of the property. This area includes the current access track, the required parking provision and amenity space. The curtilage is smaller than all the other domestic curtilages along the lane but is considered suitable for the size and long term needs of the property proposed.

The position of the new dwelling is such that the mobile home can be retained in its current position during construction. A condition requiring its removal prior to occupation of the dwelling is recommended.

Visual Impact/Character of the Area: The site is situated in an area defined as Stroud Wood Pasture (7a) in the Landscape Assessment of Eastleigh Borough. The land was part of Stroud Wood Common but has been divided up into small rectilinear field defined with low hedges. The small fields are now in multiple ownerships and now have a mixture of uses.

The rural character of Stroudwood Lane and the surrounding area is already dotted with agricultural barns and other structures, as well as dwellings and the existing mobile home/glass house/water tanks on the site.

The site is in a prominent countryside location and whilst landscaping was secured via the 2011 application to screen the greenhouse none was considered necessary for the mobile home. The proposed house will undoubtedly be highly visible however its scale form and design is considered acceptable and will not unduly spoil or restrict long views across the countryside.

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSAL

DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND/OR LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

The introduction of a permanent residential property, in place of the existing mobile home is not felt to diverge from this established character and will further screen the large glasshouse, which is quite prominent when viewed from the lane, especially in sunny conditions.

Access/Parking: As detailed above, the site is accessed via the current track which runs along the northern edge of the site. The access leads to a driveway area capable of accommodating more than the required parking however it does not explicitly show this. A condition is therefore recommended to ensure details for the provision of 3 parking spaces and bike storage to be provided.

Residential Amenity: Due to the countryside location of the site and its location remote from other residential properties and uses, there are not considered to be any impacts to amenity.

Other Matters: Supporting information demonstrates the proposal is capable of achieving code level 4 for sustainable homes and an appropriately worded condition is recommended to ensure compliance with this along with other conditions to protect the amenity of the area during construction.

OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Also of relevance is the Revised Draft Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2011-2029. While not yet adopted it does carry weight by virtue of being intended as the current local plan's replacement. With regards to this application, the new policies essentially echo those of the current plan and are not considered to affect the recommendation put forward.

CONCLUSIONS

For the reasons given above, the application is recommended for approval subject to conditions.