REF. NO. F/15/76388

PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT

DESCRIPTION/ ADDRESS	-	Conversion of former stables into a four bedroom dwelling including addition of a two storey rear extension and attached double garage with first floor accommodation. Lane End House, Snakemoor Lane, Durley, Botley, Southampton, SO32 2BW

SITE VISIT DATE – 27/08/2015

ARE PLANS ACCURATE? - Yes

HAVE ALL NECESSARY NEIGHBOURS BEEN CONSULTED? – Yes and site notice posted.

THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION	As above.
SITE AREA	2360 sqm.
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT DENSITY (NET)	Approx. 4 dwellings per hectare.
TOPOGRAPHY	The site is relatively flat with a very gentle slope down in a south-westerly direction towards the main road.
TREES	The site was last used as an orchard/market garden but has not been used for many years resulting in many of the fruit trees becoming overgrown and diseased. These have all been cleared from the site leaving a number of Oak, Ash and other deciduous trees mainly around the edges of the site. With the removal of the old fruit trees and overgrown undergrowth, this has opened up space for these remaining trees to flourish.
BOUNDARY TREATMENT	The whole of the site boundary is marked by a 1.8 metre close board timber fence. However, this fence is set in a number of metres from the actual ownership boundary, which is the highway edge between which is mature planting which ensures a soft natural edge to the site suitable for its countryside location.
SITE CHARACTERISTICS	The application site sits within the curtilage of Lane End House, which is to be sub-divided to form the new plot. While Lane End House is a relatively recent dwelling (1992), it was a replacement for a previous late Victorian farmhouse which was built at the same time as the stables to be converted. This Victorian house itself replaces a modest 17th Century thatched farmhouse, so the site has been in some form of domestic and agricultural use for many years.
CHARACTER OF LOCALITY	The site lies just to the south of Horton Heath at the junction of Botley Road and Snakemoor Lane which lead to the village of Durley. The site is just inside the Borough boundary in an area designated as countryside, although

THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

there is residential development dotted fairly frequently around the area.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	DECISION
Z/30606/001/00	Demolition of existing dwelling and construction of replacement dwelling and garage.	Approved May 1989

REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

SOURCE	SUMMARY OF CONTENT
None received.	

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

CONSULTEE	SUMMARY OF RESPONSE
Head of Transportation & Engineering (Policy Officer)	No objection. "Whilst the location is not exactly sustainable in regard to lack of foot and cycleway opportunities, as a single dwelling, overall impacts of car reliance are minimal. As such an objection for this reason would not be viable. In regard to the site itself, the layout is acceptable with adequate parking on an internal driveway, which onwards allows sufficient space for forward gear access and egress. Onwards, gates are provided, but these are set sufficiently into site, and a suitable bin collection point has been specified. In regard to visibility in/out of site, this is acceptable, utilising an existing access point that is set back sufficiently (including the access defining wall) to retain adequate visibility."
Head of Transportation & Engineering (DM Engineer)	"This site is not good for residential development location wise being on a busy country C road where there is no footways or useable verges for walking. However a highway safety refusal alone would not be recommended for this conversion proposal, the lack of pedestrian accidents would seem to indicate that the public do not tend to walk there because of the personal risk involved. As regards the specific proposals, the scheme includes new gates for Lane End House, but they are not set far enough westwards along the drive to create space for a clear parking area outside gates or turning area without obstructing the proposed new dwelling access. Please request an amended plan showing proposed Lane End House gates set about 5m further along drive. As already advised, suggest EA is consulted regarding the proposed package foul sewage treatment plant which shows treated liquid waste infiltration into the ground by a fishtail outlet pipework system. If contacting agent, you could ask for details of compounds/parking

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

CONSULTEE	SUMMARY OF RESPONSE
	areas for operatives /unloading areas etc. to be shown on plans now, or it can be conditioned. Parking or deliveries loading/unloading on Snakemoor Lane would be obstructive and hazardous to highway users."
Tree Services Manager	"Having assessed the site I can confirm that I have no arboricultural concerns therefore raise no objection."
Biodiversity Officer	Phase I habitat survey is required before woodland is removed due it its proximity to Scorey's Copse Site of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC), as is a bat survey to establish if the building is being used by bats.
Environment Agency	"The Environment Agency has no objection to the proposed development as submitted."
Botley Parish Council	No objection.

POLICY CONTEXT

DESIGNATION APPLICABLE TO SITE
Outside Built-up Area Boundary Close to Established Residential Area Close to Site of Special Scientific Interest

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

Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review (2001-2011), saved Policies 11.CO, 15.CO, 16.CO, 25.NC, 28.ES, 34.ES, 59.BE, 100.T, 101.T, 146.OS & 191.IN

Submitted Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2011 - 2029, July 2014, (the Submitted Local Plan) comprising:

- Revised Pre-submission Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2011 - 2029, published February 2014; and
- Schedule of Proposed Minor Changes, submitted to the Secretary of State in July 2014'

Policies S9, DM1, DM2, DM9, DM16, DM17, DM23, DM24, DM32, DM35 & DM37

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

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports and encourages sustainable development which is considered to have three roles, economic, social and environmental. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF states that "These roles should not be undertaken in isolation, because they are mutually dependent. Economic growth can secure higher social and environmental standards, and well-designed buildings and places can improve the lives of people and communities. Therefore, to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system. The planning system should play an active role in guiding development to sustainable solutions."

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE

Paragraph 17 sets out twelve core principles that underpin the planning system, one of which is that planning should "always seek to secure high quality design and good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings".

Paragraph 49 states that, "Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites."

Paragraph 56 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that "The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people."

Paragraph 60 states that "policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative…" It goes on to state that "It is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness."

It goes on to state in paragraph 137 that, "Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably."

POLICY COMMENTARY

The above policies and guidance combine to form the criteria against which this application will be assessed with particular regard to the principle of that proposed, its layout and design, impact upon the amenity of the area and neighbouring properties, trees, nature conservation and biodiversity, parking and highway safety.

COMMENT ON CONSULTATION RESPONSES

The comments are noted and responded to where appropriate below.

COMMENT ON REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

n/a

PLANNING OBLIGATION/CONSIDERATIONS

In accordance with the provisions of the following;

- National Planning Policy Guidance
- Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (SI 2010/948) as amended by the Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (2011/987)
- Saved policies 101.T, 147.OS and 191.IN of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review 2001-2011
- Emerging policies DM23, DM32, DM35 and DM37 of the Revised Draft Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review 2011-2029
- Supplementary Planning Document – Planning Obligations

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, Public Open Space and towards the Solent Disturbance Mitigation Partnership. The applicant has secured the contributions through an appropriate up-front 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."*

In this case policy issues for consideration include:

Principle – The application site lies outside the urban edge where the principle of development is not usually considered acceptable unless for agricultural or horticultural purposes, together with a number of suitable countryside uses. However, saved Policies 15.CO and 16.CO of the adopted Local Plan does allow the re-use of buildings in the countryside for residential purposes provided certain criteria are met. That proposed is considered to meet all of the relevant criteria in this instance in that: (15.CO) i) the building has not been and is no longer suitable for agricultural use; ii) the building is in a good state of repair and can easily be converted to a residential use; iii)the design of that proposed retains the important qualities of the stables; iv) it will be a self-contained dwelling with relatively modest additions which meet the requirements of saved Policy 11.CO; v) it will not adversely impact any neighbours; vi) will not result in any significant additional traffic; vii) will not involve extensive areas of hardstanding; and viii) is not for an office use, and (16.CO) i) a residential use is considered preferable in this instance; ii) a residential use will best preserve the character of the building; and iii) the additions proposed are not excessive and are kept close to the building.

While usually the principle of creating a new dwelling outside the urban edge would not be considered acceptable, in this instance it is considered that an exception to the usual rule is justified in order to preserve this attractive local building and bring it back into use.

Layout & Design – The old stables which it is proposed to convert are around 120 years old and have remained relatively untouched during all that time. Considering its age the building is in very good condition with little sign of rot or damaged despite it being covered in undergrowth for many years. It was obviously originally well-built and intended to complement the Victorian Farmhouse which has since been demolished. This gives the building a very domestic appearance and scale, more than suitable for conversion into a dwelling, although some extensions will be required.

It is proposed that the ground floor of the current building will form the main lounge, dining room, kitchen and utility room for the dwelling with the first floor providing three of the proposed four bedrooms. To the rear of the building it is intended to construct a two storey extension which will provide a lounge/family room opening onto the garden at ground floor level and a master bedroom with en-suite at first floor. In addition to this rear extension it is intended to construct a detached double garage to the side with first floor accommodation above which could be used as a games room or office/study linked at ground floor to the main dwelling. Both of these additions will be clad in timber to differentiate them from the original red brick stable building. In addition to these extensions a number of new openings will need to be punched into the existing walls to make the building more suitable for habitable use.

Overall the proposed additions and alterations to the old stables are considered to be sufficiently subservient and sympathetic to what is an attractive old building, retaining its rural/agricultural appearance and will bring back into use a piece of local history which can continue to be used for many years to come. As such the application is considered to accord with saved Policies …..

REF. NO. F/15/76388

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSAL

DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND/OR LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

Amenity – With regards to the residential amenity of the nearest neighbour, Land End House, that proposed will have no negative impact due to the orientation and separation between the proposed dwelling and the existing. Equally, Lane End House will have no adverse impact upon occupiers of that proposed.

As to the general amenity of the area, the introduction of a further dwelling close to this busy route between Horton Heath, Hedge End, Botley and Durley will have no unacceptable impact and as such the proposal is considered to accord with saved Policy 59.BE of the adopted Local Plan, Policy DM1 of the Submitted Local Plan, and the Council's 'Quality Places' SPD.

Trees – As has been set out above, the Borough's Tree Services Manager has raised no arboricultural concerns and has not recommended any conditions.

Nature Conservation & Biodiversity – With regards to the Council's Biodiversity Officer's comments regarding the need for a habitat survey, these comments were given on a desk based study using aerial photographs before much of the site was cleared. That being the case, any potential habitat which related to the nearby SINC has already been lost, negating the need for a habitat survey to be undertaken given much of the site is now nothing but low level scrub which has been recently created by clearance of the site. Scorey's Copse SINC which has been highlighted is some 200 metres north of the application site, so any impact upon the SINC is likely to be negligible.

The possibility of bats has been highlighted which given the age and nature of the building would not be unusual. However, despite the building's age, it is in very good condition and there is no sign that bats have been using the building as a roost. However, in order to ensure that the applicant is aware of the possible presence of bats, a note to application is included as part of the planning approval.

The proposal is not considered to result in a likely significant impact on a European Protected site (SPA, SAC or Ramsar). HRA (Habitat Regulations Assessment) screening was not required for this development as it falls outside the designated zone of impact.

The site falls inside the 5.6km buffer zone for the Solent SPA. A contribution of £174 per dwelling is therefore required to mitigate the increased recreational pressure resulting from the development.

Parking & Highway Safety – The application site is more than capable of providing the three off-road parking spaces required by the Council's 'Residential Parking Standards' SPD and will not impact upon the parking arrangements for the existing Lane End House.

With regards to highway safety, as has been highlighted by the Head of Transportation and Engineering, Snakemoor Lane is not well used by pedestrians due to it not being particularly safe. While the entrance to the site is not great, it was originally in a much worse position prior to the construction of the current dwelling in the early 1990s. Given that this is an existing access and it will only serve two dwellings, it should not result in any significant highway issues and could not be used as a reason to refuse the application.

Amended plans have also been secured which adequately address the other comments raised with regards to the position of the new gates, which will no longer result in obstruction of the neighbouring property should both need to use the shared driveway at the same time.

Overall therefore, the proposal is considered to accord with saved Policy 59.BE of the adopted Local Plan, Policies DM1 and DM24 of the Submitted Local Plan, and the Council's 'Quality Places' and 'Residential Parking Standards' SPDs.

OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Also of relevance is the Submitted Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2011 - 2029, July 2014. 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.