

# Forest Heath District Council

**DEVELOPMENT  
CONTROL COMMITTEE**

**7 JANUARY 2015**

**DEV/FH/15/001**

**Report of the Head of Planning and Growth**

**PLANNING APPLICATION DC/14/2163/FUL – MILLFIELDS, FORDHAM ROAD,  
FRECKENHAM**

## **Synopsis:**

Application under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and associated matters.

## **Recommendation:**

**It is recommended that the Committee determine the attached application and associated matters.**

## **CONTACT OFFICER**

Case Officer: Julie Sheldrick  
Tel. No: 01638 719277

# Planning Application DC/14/2163/FUL

## Millfields, Fordham Road, Freckenham

**Date:** 17 November      **Expiry Date:** 12 January 2015  
**Registered:** 2014

**Case Officer:** Julie Sheldrick      **Recommendation:** Approve with conditions  
**Parish:** Freckenham      **Ward:** Manor

**Proposal:** Planning Application - construction of 3 bedroom detached dwelling and single detached garage.

**Site:** Millfields, Fordham Road, Freckenham

**Applicant:** Mr & Mrs Huggan

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### **Background:**

**This application is referred to Development Control Committee because the applicant is related to an elected Member.**

**The application is recommended for approval.**

### **Proposal:**

1. Planning permission is sought for the erection of a three bedroom detached dwelling. It would be one-and-a-half storeys with an overall ridge height of 6.4 metres.

### **Application Supporting Material:**

2. Information submitted with the application as follows:
  - Location and Site Plans
  - Drawings of Proposed Elevations and Floor Plans
  - Street Scene Elevation
  - Drawings of Proposed Garage
  - Contamination Report (Landmark Homecheck)
  - West Suffolk Land Contamination Questionnaire

### **Site Details:**

3. The site is located at the western end of the village of Freckenham but outside of the defined settlement boundary. It is accessed from the B1102 (Fordham

Road) to the north and existing residential dwellings lie immediately to the east and west. The site currently comprises of a paddock that is used in conjunction with the equestrian use to the rear (south). This comprises of an American barn that accommodates 16 loose boxes and associated facilities to accommodate horses in convalescence or pre-training.

### **Planning History:**

4. The following planning history is considered relevant to the consideration of this application:
  - F/2005/0776/FUL - Enlargement of the roof (with insertion of 3 dormer windows) to provide living accommodation within roof; erection of side and rear (East and South) extensions (approved with conditions) (Existing bungalow – Millfields)
  - F/2002/428 - change of use of the land and erection of American barn to house 16 loose boxes for horses in convalescence and pre-training (approved with conditions)

### **Consultations:**

5. Planning Policy: Comments have been given on the current planning policy position when considering this application, with the following summary:

*"In common with all residential proposals received at this time, it is advisable that you consider/balance the benefits of the 'scheme' against the adverse impacts, (in economic, environmental and/or societal terms). It has been demonstrated that there are potential societal and economic benefits to be accrued from permitting such a proposal and that although relatively modest, (as an inevitable consequence of the scale of the proposed development), it is conceivably that these outweigh the loss of 'countryside', (i.e. environmental dis-benefit), in this particular location. Further, the proposal lies in a relatively sustainable location, being on the periphery of the established settlement of Freckenham and it is not considered that the proposal would constitute an isolated new dwelling within the countryside, (that should be avoided), as envisaged by the NPPF. For these reasons and on balance, you may well find the principle of the proposal acceptable in planning policy terms"*

6. Highway Authority: Recommend conditions.
7. Environmental Health: No objection. Recommend informative.

### **Representations:**

8. Freckenham Parish Council: No objection.
9. No letters of representation have been received from local residents.

**Policy:** The following policies of the Forest Heath Core Strategy (2010) have been taken into account in the consideration of this application:

10. Forest Heath Core Strategy (2010):

- Policy CS1: Spatial Strategy
- Policy CS5: Design Quality and Local Distinctiveness
- Policy CS10: Sustainable Rural Communities

11. Forest Heath Local Plan (1995):

- Saved Policy 4.15: Windfall Sites
- Saved Policy 9.1: The Rural Area and New Development

12. Joint Development Management Policies (Submission Document, October 2012):

- Emerging Policy DM28 (Housing in the Countryside)

### **Other Planning Policy:**

13. The objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) and guidance contained within National Planning Policy Guidance have been taken into consideration.

### **Officer Comment:**

14. The issues to be considered in the determination of the application are:

- Principle of Development
- Character and Appearance of the Area
- Residential Amenity
- Highway Safety

### Principle of Development:

15. The site lies outside the defined settlement boundary for Freckenham and for planning purposes is located within the 'countryside'. Policy CS1 and CS10 seek to restrict new development in the countryside unless there are exceptional circumstances, for example, affordable housing to meet a local need, replacement dwellings or dwellings required in association with an existing rural enterprise. However, when determining this application consideration must be given to recent policy changes with particular regard to the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Planning Practice Guidance and the emerging Joint Development Management Policies Local Plan document.

16. The comments provided by the policy officer identify the policy position for considering this application. The fundamental consideration is the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development and para. 14 which requires planning permission to be granted unless '*any adverse effects of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole*'. The three dimensions of sustainable development (social, economic and environmental) therefore need to be considered in the assessment of this application.

17. The proposed dwelling would provide some societal benefits in terms of

contributing to the Authority's housing land supply (albeit modestly) and in terms of economic benefits, future occupants of the dwelling would help support local services and amenities in Freckenham and the surrounding area. There would also be some economic benefits arising from the construction phase of the development and Officer's are satisfied that the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the existing equestrian business at the site.

18. When considering environmental factors, the proposal would not constitute an 'isolated' new dwelling within the countryside, as referred to by the NPPF. The site lies within an existing cluster of development and within reasonable walking distance of Freckenham, a settlement that has been categorised as a 'Secondary Village', (Policy CS1), as a consequence of the basic level of amenities and services to be found within it.
19. The emerging Policy DM28 offers support for new dwellings in the 'countryside' where the site is located within a closely knit cluster of 10 or more existing dwellings adjacent to or fronting an existing highway and where the scale of development consists of infilling a small undeveloped plot by one dwelling or a pair of semi-detached dwellings. It should be noted that the Joint Development Management Policies Document has been through an Examination in Public but has not yet been adopted and as such, has some weight at this time but is not an adopted development plan policy.

#### Character and Appearance of the Area:

20. The site is not an isolated site in the countryside as it lies within a cluster of other residential properties and this infill development is considered in keeping with the built-up character of this part of Fordham Road. The proposed dwelling would be set back from the road by a front garden and the existing boundary hedge would be retained to soften the overall appearance of the development. The width of the proposed dwelling is comparable to the adjacent bungalow to the east (Millfields) and it would be set back from the road at a similar distance. The proposal is therefore not considered to appear dominant or intrusive within the street scene.
21. There is a range of dwelling styles and types within this part of the village and these comprise of a mix of bungalows, one-and-a-half storey and two storey dwellings. The proposed dwelling would have a hipped roof to the front with a dormer window to serve the front bedroom and a gable to the rear which incorporates a Juliet balcony to serve the rear bedroom. The immediate neighbouring properties to the east and west comprise of bungalows, however, the proposed dwelling has been designed to keep its height and bulk to a minimum so that it does not dominate these neighbouring dwellings and would be in keeping with the overall character and appearance of the area.

#### Residential Amenity:

22. The first floor windows to serve the bedrooms would be positioned within the front and rear elevations. A bathroom window is proposed in the west elevation but this would be obscure glass and a rooflight would be positioned in the east elevation that would provide light into the landing. This arrangement is considered acceptable to prevent any overlooking to

neighbouring properties. Furthermore, a condition could ensure that no additional windows are inserted within the side elevations as permitted development in the future.

23. The proposed dwelling would be positioned two metres from the east and west boundaries of the site. The shared access lies between the dwelling and the existing bungalow (Millfields) to the east and the proposed dwelling would be separated from the bungalow to the west (No.8) by the single storey garage that serves No.8. The spaces between the existing and proposed dwellings are considered satisfactory in terms of visual and residential amenity and Officers are satisfied that the proposal would not result in any issues of overshadowing or dominance to the detriment of residential amenity.

#### Highway Safety:

24. The existing access currently serves the bungalow (Millfields) and the associated equestrian use to the rear. The proposed dwelling would also share this access with a single detached garage and parking space located to the rear, which would provide adequate parking spaces within the site.
25. The proposal incorporates the repositioning of the existing gate further into the site to ensure that all vehicles can safely enter the site from the road and that they would stop to open the gate past the proposed dwelling and not adjacent to it, in contrast to the existing arrangement. This will minimise any potential noise and disturbance to future occupants of the dwelling.
26. The access into the site falls within the 30mph section of Fordham Road and the Highways Authority raises no objections to the proposal subject to conditions, which include the provision and maintenance of visibility splays.

#### **Conclusion:**

27. Overall, it is considered that the change in policy context, against which this proposal must now be considered, including the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development and the identified benefits of the proposal give favourable consideration to the principle of development in this location. It is Officer's opinion that the proposed dwelling would not result in significant harm in terms of loss of countryside or have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area, residential amenity or highway safety.
28. In conclusion, the principle and detail of the development is considered to be acceptable and in compliance with relevant development plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework.

#### **Recommendation:**

29. It is **RECOMMENDED** that planning permission be **Approved** subject to the following conditions:
1. Time Limit – 3 years
  2. Materials as specified on drawings
  3. No additional first floor windows in east and west elevations

4. Boundary treatment to be provided prior to occupation
5. New vehicular access to be surfaced with bound material
6. Details of bin storage
7. Details of surface water drainage
8. Parking and turning area to be provided prior to occupation
9. Visibility splays to be provided and maintained
10. Construction hours limited to 08:00 – 18:00 Monday to Friday, 08:00 – 13:30 Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Bank Holidays
11. Compliance with approved drawings

**Documents:**

All background documents including application forms, drawings and other supporting documentation relating to this application can be viewed online:

<http://planning.stedmundsbury.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage>

Alternatively, hard copies are also available to view at Planning, Planning and Regulatory Services, Forest Heath District Council, District Offices, College Heath Road, Mildenhall, Suffolk, IP28 7EY (or West Suffolk House details as applicable)