

ITEM NO:Application No.
15/00856/FULWard:
Wildridings And CentralDate Registered:
23 September
2015Target Decision Date:
18 November 2015

Site Address:

33 Saffron Road Bracknell Berkshire RG12 7BT

Proposal:

Conversion of existing garage into habitable accommodation, erection of a first floor extension, external alterations to enable subdivision of existing four bedroom dwelling to create 1no. three bedroom and 1no. two bedroom dwellings.

Applicant:

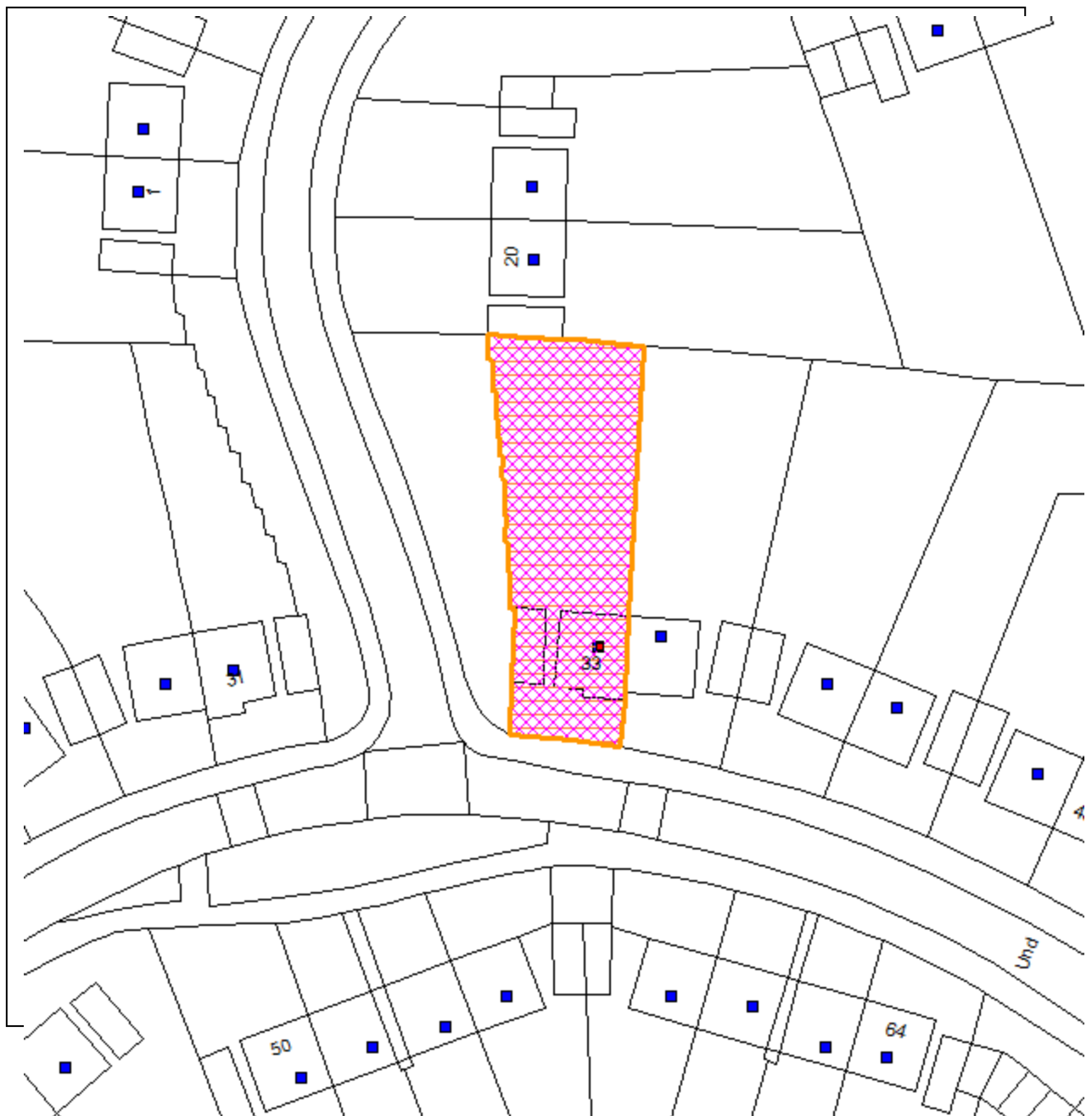
Mrs Zuzana Pollakova

Agent:

Mr Stephen Vaughan

Case Officer:

Matthew Miller, 01344 352000

development.control@bracknell-forest.gov.uk**Site Location Plan** (for identification purposes only, not to scale)

OFFICER REPORT

1. SUMMARY

1.1 The proposal is the conversion of the existing garage into habitable accommodation, and the erection of a first floor extension above the garage with associated external alterations, to enable a sub-division of the existing four bedroom dwelling to create 1no. three bedroom and 1no. two bedroom dwellings.

1.2 The proposed development relates to a site within the settlement boundary and is therefore acceptable in principle. It would not adversely affect the residential amenities of neighbouring properties and would not adversely impact upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The proposals would be acceptable in terms of highway safety and parking, subject to proposed conditions. Relevant conditions will also be imposed in relation to detailed design, biodiversity, trees and sustainability and a section 106 agreement will be entered into in relation to impacts on the SPA.

RECOMMENDATION
Planning permission be granted subject to conditions in Section 11 of this report and a section 106 agreement relating to mitigation measures for the SPA.

2. REASON FOR REPORTING APPLICATION TO COMMITTEE

2.1 The application has been reported to Planning Committee as four objections have been received to the proposal.

[Officer Comment: Prior to the receipt of the fourth objection the application was also called in by Cllr Dudley over concerns of the impact of the proposal on highway safety and on trees to the west].

3. PLANNING STATUS AND SITE DESCRIPTION

PLANNING STATUS
Within settlement boundary
Within 5km of the SPA

3.1 33 Saffron Road is a four bedroom, two storey semi-detached dwelling located in a predominately residential area. The dwelling contains an attached single garage on the western side elevation with habitable first floor accommodation above. The front of the dwelling contains a soft landscaped front garden with a hardsurfaced driveway leading to the attached garage. The property benefits from an enclosed rear garden. The dwellinghouse has not been previously extended.

3.2 Trees are sited on a section of amenity land located between the application site and the highway of Dundas Close to the west. However these trees are not subject to formal protection.

4. RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

4.1 No planning applications received.

5. THE PROPOSAL

5.1 The proposed development is the sub-division of the existing four bedroom dwelling into 1.no. three bedroom, and 1.no two bedroom dwellings, including a first floor extension above the attached garage, and the conversion of the garage to habitable accommodation with associated external alterations. In association with this it is proposed to sub-divide the existing rear garden.

5.2 The ground floor of the existing garage would not be increased in width or depth.

5.3 The proposed first floor extension to the existing garage would measure 4.3 metres in width, 9.3 metres in depth, and 8.1 metres in height from ground level.

5.4 It is also proposed to enlarge the existing hardsurfaced driveway across the frontage of the property to provide additional parking.

5.5 During the course of the application amended plans have been received to increase the height of the proposed side extension, and to clarify the parking capacity of the proposed driveway enlargement.

6. REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

Bracknell Town Council:

6.1 Bracknell Town Council object to the proposal on the grounds that the proposal would not have adequate provision for parking, and also raise concerns over the proposed access point to the proposed parking layout.

Other representations:

6.2 A total of 3no. objections have been received from residents of surrounding properties within Dundas Close to the west and north. The objections can be summarised as follows:

(i) The proposal would result in an adverse impact on highway safety as an acceptable level of parking provision has not been demonstrated, and the proposed access to the additional spaces would be unsafe, particularly in view of existing indiscriminate on-street parking that occurs.

(ii) Furthermore in conjunction with the approved development for two dwellings to the rear of 1 Dundas Close (14/00813/FUL) it is considered that the cumulative impact of the developments would result in an intensification of on-street parking. Concerns have also been raised as to the impact of the vehicle movements that the proposal would create on the existing 'speed humps' and bus route within Saffron Road, and to visibility and access within the junction of Saffron Road and Dundas Close.

(iii) The proposal would set a precedent for similar development in the surrounding area.

[Officer Comment: With regards to the potential for setting a precedent, every application must be assessed on its own merits, and is assessed in relation to the impact of the character of the area etc. as detailed in the report below. The remaining above matters are also assessed in the report below].

7. SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Highway Officer

7.1. Following the receipt of amended plans clarifying that the frontage of the property would provide capacity for four parking spaces with associated pedestrian access, the Highway Officer raises no objection.

Biodiversity Officer

7.2 The Biodiversity Officer raises no objection subject to the imposition of conditions concerning the protection of bird-nesting periods and potential bat roosts.

7.3 No further statutory or non-statutory consultations have been required.

8. MAIN POLICIES AND OTHER DOCUMENTS RELEVANT TO THE DECISION

8.1 The primary strategic planning considerations applying to the site and the associated policies are:

	Development Plan	NPPF
General policies	CP1 of SALP, CS1 and CS2 of CSDPD	Consistent
Housing and sub-division of dwellings	CS15 and CS16 of CSDPD, 'Saved' Policy H3 of BFBLP	Consistent
Design	CS7 of CSDPD, 'Saved' Policy EN20 of BFBLP	Consistent
Parking	'Saved' Policy M9 of BFBLP	Consistent
Transport	CS23 of CSDPD	Consistent
Sustainability	CS10 and CS12 of CSDPD	Consistent
SPA	SEP Retained Policy NRM6, 'Saved' Policy EN3 of BFBLP, and Policy CS14 of CSDPD	Consistent
Trees and biodiversity	'Saved' Policy EN1 of BFBLP, CS1 and CS7 of CSDPD.	Consistent
Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)		
Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Avoidance and Mitigation SPD (2012)		
Parking Standards SPD (2007)		
Other publications		
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)		
CIL Charging Schedule		
BRE Site Layout planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A Guide to Good Practice (2011).		

9. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 The key issues for consideration are:

- i Principle of development
- ii Impact on character and appearance of the area, including trees
- iii Impact on residential amenity
- iv Transport implications
- v Biodiversity considerations
- vi SPA
- vii Sustainability
- viii Community Infrastructure Levy

i. Principle of Development

9.2 The application site is located within a defined settlement as designated by the Bracknell Forest Borough Policies Map and is a previously developed site. The proposal would provide a net increase of one dwelling, contributing to the supply of housing within the Borough. Therefore, the principle of development on this site is acceptable.

ii. Impact on Character and Appearance of Area, including Trees

9.3 The existing attached garage with first floor accommodation has a total height of 5.6 metres, subordinate in height to the 8.1 metre height of the main dwelling. The initially submitted plans proposed to increase the height of the existing side element to 7.8 metres, which would remain subordinate to the host dwelling. It was recommended that the height of the proposal be increased to 8.1 metres, matching the height of the host dwelling, and extending the dual-pitched roof line, as this would provide a design and character to the additional dwelling of an independent dwellinghouse rather than as an extension.

9.4 The proposal would therefore effectively create a short terrace of three dwellings. Terraced properties are characteristic of Saffron Road, including the terraced properties immediately south of the application site. In view of this it is not considered that the revised proposal would be incongruous in the street scene, and would be appropriate to the urban context. Furthermore the proposal would result in the existing front-projecting gable feature of the host dwelling being sited in the middle of the terraced dwellings, thereby providing a symmetrical appearance to the overall combined structure, to which the proposed development would be harmoniously integrated.

9.5 It is not considered that the proposed external alterations to the existing garage, involving replacing the garage door with windows and a front door, would result in an adverse impact on the character of the area considering the nature and extent of the proposed works.

9.6 Although the proposal would involve the loss of the soft landscaped front garden of the property, hardsurfaced frontages are a common feature of properties within Saffron Road, and the applicant would be entitled to undertake this work without requiring planning permission, subject to the use of permeable materials or a soakaway drain.

9.7 The rear garden of the property in its existing form would be uniformly sub-divided in line with the established plot layouts of the surrounding properties.

9.8 Although the proposal would not contain allowance for external access to the rear of the properties for bin storage, it is noted that the existing property does not have any such external access, and this is also the case for many properties within Saffron Road. Particularly as there is no practical means to provide such access within the proposal, it is not considered that the absence of such access would result in an adverse impact on the character of the surrounding area, as to justify a refusal of planning permission when applying the balancing exercises of the NPPF.

9.9 Trees are sited on a section of amenity land between the application site and the highway of Dundas Close to the west. These trees do not benefit from Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). As the ground floor of the existing garage would not be enlarged in width or length, the existing built footprint of the current dwelling would be retained. It is therefore considered in view of the above that the proposal would not result in an adverse impact on the character of the surrounding area through any potential tree impacts.

9.10 It is therefore considered that the development would not result in an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with CSDPD Policy CS7, BFBLP 'Saved' Policies EN1 and EN20, and the NPPF, subject to a condition requiring matching materials.

iii. Impact on Residential Amenity

9.11 The proposal would not be readily visible from the adjoining dwelling of 35 Saffron Road to the east due to its siting on the western side of the current host dwelling.

9.12 The proposal would be visible from the residential properties to the front and rear (south and north, respectively). In view of the existing separation distances, which would be retained, and the presence of existing front- and rear-facing first floor windows on the current host dwelling, it is not considered that the proposal would result in an adverse impact on the residential amenity of the occupants of these properties.

9.13 The proposal would be visible from the dwelling of 31 Saffron Road to the west. There is an intervening feature consisting of the highway of Dundas Close, and existing intervening planting provides a degree of screening. Furthermore the existing first floor accommodation above the garage contains a west-facing side window. No such side windows are proposed to be installed on the proposal, but in any case in view of the existing window and the separation features, any such windows would not be considered to result in an adverse impact on the amenity of the residents of no.31.

9.14 Although the garden serving the existing residents of the host dwelling would be reduced in width, the proposed sub-division of the garden would retain significant depths for the individual dwellings. The resulting rear gardens are not considered to be so small as to detrimentally impact the living conditions of any future occupants of the proposal.

9.15 It is therefore considered that the development would not result in an adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties, in accordance with BFBLP 'Saved' Policy EN20 and the NPPF.

iv. Impact on Highway Safety

9.16 The proposal as initially submitted provided two parking spaces to the three bedroom dwelling and one parking space to the two bedroom dwelling. In accordance with the Parking Standards SPD, a two or three bedroom dwelling requires the provision of a minimum of two acceptable off-street parking spaces. Therefore there was a shortfall of one parking space.

9.17 The Highway Officer was consulted on the initially submitted plans and raised concerns over the shortfall in parking provision. Concerns were also raised as to the provision of unobstructed pedestrian access as this had not been indicated on the submitted plans.

9.18 Following the receipt of the Highway Officer's comments, amended plans have been received to clarify that the proposed hardsurfacing to the front of the property would provide capacity for four off-street parking spaces of acceptable size (two to each dwelling), thereby providing adequate parking provision. The amended plans have also shown that 0.9 metre wide unobstructed pedestrian access could be provided to the dwellings.

9.19 The proposal would require the enlargement of the existing dropped kerb eastwards, however this would therefore result in the kerb being enlarged away from the junction between Saffron Road and Dundas Close to the west. Although a raised traffic calming feature (a 'speed hump') is present on Saffron Road to the east of the application site, the enlarged dropped kerb would not intersect this feature. Furthermore as Saffron Road is not a classified road, planning permission is not required for the enlargement to the dropped kerb in isolation. However, the applicant would need to contact the Council's Street Care team in order to implement the dropped kerb works. The applicant is therefore to be advised of this by informative.

9.20 As Saffron Road is not a classified road, there is no requirement for vehicles to be able to enter or egress the property in forward gear. Reversing onto Saffron Road is therefore considered acceptable, especially considering its nature as a residential road. The traffic calming features would serve to assist in encouraging passing vehicles to pass the property entrance at low speed.

9.21 As the proposal would provide adequate off-street parking provision, it is not considered that the proposal would detrimentally add to any indiscriminate vehicular parking that may occur. In respect of objections received, it is also noted that development 14/00763/FUL (rear of 1 Dundas Close) was also approved with adequate allocated off-street parking, and in any case every proposal must be considered on its own individual merits. It is therefore not considered that the proposal would intensify existing on-street parking, including any parking in the vicinity of highway junctions, on pedestrian footpaths or traffic calming features, and would therefore not be detrimental to highway safety. As a result of this it is also not considered that the proposal would interfere with the established bus route passing through Saffron Road.

9.22 Furthermore the proposal is considered to be sited in a sustainable location in respect of highway safety considerations, as it is served by public transport via the bus route, and is sited within an established residential area.

9.23 In the event of granting planning permission it is recommended that a condition be imposed to provide and retain the proposed parking layout, in the interests of highway safety.

9.24 As a result it is not considered that the proposed development would result in an adverse impact on highway safety, in accordance with CSDPD Policy CS23, BFBLP 'Saved' Policy M9, the Parking Standards SPD, and the NPPF, subject to the recommended condition.

v. Biodiversity implications

9.25 The proposal would involve demolition of sections of the existing garage. The Biodiversity Officer has been consulted on the proposal and considers that this garage has negligible potential for the roosting of bats due to its structure. The Biodiversity Officer has recommended that a condition be imposed to restrict site clearance of demolition during the main bird-nesting periods, in the interests of nature conservation.

9.26 The Biodiversity Officer also suggested that conditions be included to provide bird and bat boxes, and to provide a bat survey before commencing any works to the existing roof. It is however considered that these conditions are onerous in respect of the extent of the external building works proposed, and do not meet the test of being reasonable. However an informative is to be included with respect to potential bat roosting.

9.27 It is therefore considered that the proposed development would not result in an adverse impact on biodiversity, in accordance with CSDPD Policies CS1 and CS7, BFBLP 'Saved' Policy EN1, and the NPPF, subject to the imposition of the recommended conditions.

vi. SPA implications

9.28 The Council, in consultation with Natural England, has formed the view that any net increase in residential development between 400m and 5km straight-line distance from the Thames Basin Heath SPA is likely to have a significant effect on the SPA, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects. This site is located approximately 2.13 km from the boundary of the SPA and therefore is likely to result in an adverse effect on the SPA, unless it is carried out together with appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures.

9.29 On commencement of development, a contribution is calculated on a per-bedroom basis to be paid to the Council towards the cost of works and measures to avoid and mitigate against the effect upon the Thames Basin Heaths SPA, as set out in the Council's Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy including a contribution to Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace

(SANG). In this instance, the development would result in a net increase of one two bedroom dwelling. The total SANG contribution is therefore £1,303.

9.30 The development is required to make a contribution towards Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) which is also calculated on a per bedroom basis. Taking account of the per bedroom contribution whilst netting off the existing 4 bedroom dwelling results in a total SAMM contribution of £430.

9.31 The total SPA related financial contribution for this proposal is £1,733. The applicant has agreed to enter into a S106 agreement to secure this contribution. Subject to the completion of the S106 agreement, the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on the SPA and would comply with SEP Retained Policy NRM6, CS14 of CSDPD and the NPPF.

vii. Sustainability implications

9.32 CSDPD Policy CS10 seeks to ensure the best use of natural resources, and CS12 requires 10% of energy requirements for 5 or fewer dwellings to be generated from on-site renewables. This is in line with paragraph 97 of the NPPF, which seeks to promote energy from renewable and low carbon sources. A condition is therefore recommended to be imposed which would secure the submission of a sustainability statement, to demonstrate that the proposals can meet these requirements. A condition will also be included to ensure that the development will be SuDS compliant, in line with the NPPF and CSDPD Policy CS1.

9.33 Subject to these conditions, the application is acceptable with regards to CSDPD Policies CS10, CS12 and the provisions of the NPPF.

viii. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

9.34 Bracknell Forest Council introduced charging for its Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on 6th April 2015. CIL is applied as a charge on each square metre of floor space for new dwellinghouses. The amount payable varies depending on the location of the development within the borough and the type of development.

9.35 CIL is not chargeable for the conversion (sub-division) of a dwelling into more than one new dwelling. However, the proposal would involve the formation of additional floor space through the proposed extension, which would contribute to the net additional dwelling. As a result this additional floor space created is CIL-liable.

9.36 The site falls within the CIL charging zone of 'Outer Bracknell', for which the charge is £75 per square metre for 1-14 additional dwellings.

10. CONCLUSIONS

10.1 The proposed development relates to a site within the settlement boundary and is therefore acceptable in principle. It would not adversely affect the residential amenities of neighbouring properties and would not adversely impact upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area. No highway safety implications will arise subject to the imposition of conditions. Relevant conditions will be imposed in relation to detailed design, biodiversity and sustainability. A legal agreement will secure contributions for SPA mitigation and the scheme is CIL liable. The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy CP1 of the SALP, Policies CS1, CS2, CS7, CS10, CS12, CS15, CS16 and CS23 of the CSDPD, 'Saved' Policies EN1, EN3, EN20, H3 and M9 of BFBLP, Retained Policy NRM6 of the SEP, the Parking Standards SPD, and the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Avoidance and Mitigation SPD, all in accordance with the NPPF.

11. RECOMMENDATION

Following the completion of planning obligation(s) under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 relating to measures to avoid and mitigate the impact of residential development upon the Thames Basins Heath Special Protection Area (SPA);

That the Head of Planning be authorised to **APPROVE** the application subject to the following condition(s):-

01. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
REASON: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
02. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out only in accordance with the following approved plans received by the Local Planning Authority on 4 November 2015:
002 'All Plans, All Elevations & Plot Map As Proposed' [Amended]
REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out only as approved by the Local Planning Authority.
03. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be of similar appearance to those of the existing dwelling known as 33 Saffron Road, Bracknell.
REASON: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area.
[Relevant Policies: Core Strategy DPD CS7, BFBLP 'Saved' Policy EN20]
04. The additional two bedroom dwelling hereby approved shall not be occupied until the 4no. off-street parking spaces as shown on drawing 002 'All Plans, All Elevations & Plot Map As Proposed' [Amended] received by the Local Planning Authority on 4 November 2015 has been provided in accordance with the approved plans. The parking spaces shall thereafter be retained for the use of the parking of vehicles at all times.
REASON: To ensure that an acceptable level of off-street parking is provided to the property, in the interests of highway safety.
[Relevant Policies: CSDPD Policy CS23, BFBLP 'Saved' Policy M9]
05. The additional two bedroom dwelling hereby approved shall not be occupied until vehicular access as shown on drawing 002 'All Plans, All Elevations & Plot Map As Proposed' [Amended] received by the Local Planning Authority on 4 November 2015 has been constructed.
REASON: In the interests of highway safety.
[Relevant Policies: CSDPD Policy CS23, BFBLP 'Saved' Policy M9]
06. No site clearance or demolition shall take place during the main bird-nesting period of 1st March to 31st August inclusive, unless a scheme to minimise the impact on nesting birds during the construction of the development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be implemented.
REASON: In the interests of nature conservation
[Relevant Plans and Policies: BFBLP EN3 CS1, CS7]
07. The development shall not be begun until a Sustainability Statement covering water efficiency aimed at achieving an average water use in new dwellings of 110 litres/person/day, has been submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the Local Planning

Authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the Sustainability Statement, as approved, and retained as such thereafter.

REASON: In the interests of sustainability and the efficient use of resources.
[Relevant Policy: Core Strategy DPD CS10]

08. The development shall not be begun until an Energy Demand Assessment has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall demonstrate that a proportion of the development's energy requirements will be provided from on-site renewable energy production (which proportion shall be 10%). The buildings thereafter constructed by the carrying out of the development shall be in accordance with the approved assessment and retained in accordance therewith.

REASON: In the interests of the sustainability and the efficient use of resources.
[Relevant Plans and Policies: CSDPD Policy CS12]

09. The development shall incorporate surface water drainage that is SuDS compliant and in accordance with DEFRA "Sustainable Drainage Systems - Non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems" (March 2015). It shall be operated and maintained as such thereafter.

REASON: To prevent increased risk of flooding, to improve and protect water quality and ensure future maintenance of the surface water drainage scheme.

[Relevant Policies: CSDPD CS1, BFBLP EN25]

Informative(s):

01. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern within the application (as originally submitted) and negotiating, with the applicant, acceptable amendments to the proposal to address those concerns. The proposal has been assessed against all relevant material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received. As a result, the Local Planning Authority has been able to grant planning permission for an acceptable proposal, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

02. No details are required to be submitted in relation to the following conditions; however they are required to be complied with:

1. Commencement
2. Approved Plans
3. Materials
4. Parking provision
5. Access provision
6. Bird-nesting period
9. Drainage

Details will be required in respect of the following conditions before the commencement of development:

7. Sustainability Statement
8. Energy Demand Assessment

03. The Streetcare Team should be contacted at Department of Transport & Transportation, Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell, RG12 1JD, telephone 01344 352000, to agree the access construction details and to grant a licence before any

work is carried out within the highway. A formal application should be made allowing at least 4 weeks notice to obtain details of underground services on the applicant's behalf.

04. The applicant is reminded that all bat species are protected under section 41 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act (as amended) and the 2000 Countryside and Rights of Way Act. It is illegal to obstruct, disturb, damage or destroy any bat roost, whether occupied or not, or disturb or harm a bat. Planning consent for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation. If you are aware that bats roost in the trees or buildings for which work is planned, you should take further advice from Natural England (via the Bat Conservation Trust on 0845 1300 228) or an ecological consultant before you start. If bats are discovered during the work, you must stop immediately and contact Natural England (0845 600 3078) for advice before continuing.
05. The Applicant is advised that this permission does not convey any authorisation to enter onto land or to carry out works on land not within the Applicant's ownership.

In the event of the S106 agreement not being completed by 17 March 2016, the Head of Planning be authorised to extend the timescale for completion of refuse the application on the grounds of:

The occupants of the development would put extra pressure on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area and the proposal would not satisfactorily mitigate its impacts in this respect. In the absence of a planning obligation to secure suitable avoidance and mitigation measures and access management monitoring arrangements, in terms that are satisfactory to the Local Planning Authority, the proposal would be contrary to Policy NRM6 of the South East Plan, Policy EN3 of the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan, Policy CS14 of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document and the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Avoidance and Mitigation Supplementary Planning Document (2012).

Doc. Ref: Uniform 7/DC/Agenda

The application file to which this report relates can be viewed at the Council's Time Square office during office hours or online at www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk