



REFERENCE NO	PARISH/WARD	DATE RECEIVED
17/02730/APP	WING	20/07/17
CONVERSION OF FARM BUILDINGS TO PROVIDE FOUR DWELLINGS GLEBE FARM STEWKLEY ROAD LU7 0JZ MR DAVID MASON	The Local Member(s) for this area is/are: - Councillor Mrs N Glover	
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1.0 **The Key Issues in determining this application are:-**

a) **The planning policy position and the approach to be taken in the determination of the application.**

b) **Whether the proposal would constitute a sustainable form of development.**

- **Build a strong competitive economy**
- **Deliver a wide choice of high quality homes**
- **Promoting sustainable transport**
- **Requiring good design**
- **Promoting healthy communities**
- **Meeting the challenge of climate change and flooding**
- **Conserving and enhancing the natural environment**
- **Conserving and enhancing the historic environment**

c) **Impact on Residential Amenities**

The recommendation is that permission be **DEFERRED AND DELEGATED for APPROVAL subject to the receipt of satisfactory Natural England comments and subject to conditions as considered appropriate by Officers. If this cannot be achieved then the application will be refused for reasons as considered appropriate by Officers.**

2.0 **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 This application has been evaluated against the extant Development Plan which is the starting point for all decision making. The Development Plan comprises of the Local Plan, including the Wing Neighbourhood Plan and the report has assessed the application against the core planning principles of the NPPF and whether the proposals deliver sustainable development. Paragraph 14 of the NPPF requires that where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of the NPPF taken as a whole or specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.

2.2 The development would make a positive contribution to the housing land supply with there being economic benefits in terms of temporary jobs for the works required and benefits associated with the resultant increase in population.

- 2.3 Compliance with some of the other core planning principles of the NPPF have been demonstrated in terms of promoting healthy communities, highway matters, parking, landscape, trees/ hedgerows, biodiversity, historic environment, archaeology, design of the development, flooding and residential amenity.
- 2.4 Compliance with WNP policies CGS1, HE1, HE2, T1, T2 & HO2, relevant saved AVDLP policies GP8, GP24, GP35 and RA11, and the core planning principles of the NPPF have been demonstrated. All other considerations in respect of transport, residential amenity and flood risk are considered to have a neutral impact and the proposal is considered sustainable. It is considered that the proposal accords with the development plan and there are no material considerations which indicate a decision otherwise.
- 2.5 It is therefore recommended, given the above assessment, that the application be DEFERRED AND DELEGATED for approval subject to the satisfactory receipt of Natural England comments and subject to conditions as considered appropriate by Officers. If this cannot be achieved then the application will be refused for reasons as considered appropriate by Officers.

3.0 WORKING WITH THE APPLICANT/ AGENT

- 3.1 In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework, the Council, in dealing with this application, has worked in a positive and proactive way with the Applicant / Agent and has focused on seeking solutions to the issues arising from the development proposal. AVDC works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by; offering a pre-application advice service, updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application as appropriate and, where possible and appropriate, suggesting solutions. In this case discussions have taken place with the Applicant / Agent who responded by submitting additional information as part of this application which was found to be acceptable and approval is recommended.

4.0 INTRODUCTION

- 4.1 The application needs to be determined by committee as the Parish Council has raised material planning objections and confirms that they will speak at the Committee meeting. Whilst Local planning authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside, however there are special circumstances where development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting, in accordance with paragraph 55 of the NPPF.

5.0 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 5.1 The application site is Glebe Farm a predominately disused and redundant farmstead located to the south of Stewkley Road between Stewkley and Wing. Glebe Farm is located approximately 800 metres from the settlement of Wing. The site itself currently contains a farmhouse and agricultural buildings in a courtyard arrangement.
- 5.2 The materials found on the buildings do vary, with the farmhouse being constructed with render and a slate roof. On the remaining agricultural buildings, the predominant materials found are red brick and slate, however corrugated iron, timber weatherboarding and white brick can also be found.
- 5.3 The site is currently accessed via a metal double gate which provides a single vehicular access off of Stewkley Road. To the north of the application site is mature hedgerow obscuring the complex from the local streetscene. Located to the north-west of the site is footpath WIN/29/4 with footpath WIN/16/1 being situated to the south. The site is situated within Quainton- Wing Hills Area of Attractive Landscape and is a non-designated heritage asset.

6.0 PROPOSAL

- 6.1 This application seeks the conversion of the existing agricultural buildings into four residential dwellings. There are a number of modern agricultural structures to be removed as part of the application with the existing farmhouse being retained. The proposed development would utilise the existing vehicular access to the south of Stewkley Road. Although the proposed development seeks predominately a conversion of the existing agricultural buildings there is an element of rebuild as part of the application. The submitted plans have been annotated to demonstrate that the re-build element of the scheme is in regard to rebuilding of the roof and walls associated the southern elevation. In addition to this, there are a number of agricultural structures which seek to be removed as part of this application.
- 6.2 Plots 1 and 2 shown on the submitted plans will utilise the height of the existing building, forming two-storey dwellings. The remaining plots, 3 and 4 are shown to be of a single storey. Each of the dwellings will comprise of three bedrooms. Each dwelling will be served by two on-plot parking spaces located within the courtyard. One of the parking spaces for plots 2 to 4 would be in the form of a single carport. The existing parking arrangements for the farmhouse will be retained. There are to be two visitor spaces located to the north of the site, towards the entrance.
- 6.3 As outlined in the submitted Design and Access Statement there are works noted which are subject to separate planning applications. The alterations and extension to the existing farmhouse was granted planning permission under application 17/02619/APP on 04th September 2017. The new farmyard entrance was also subject to a separate planning application (18/01028/APP) which received planning permission on 12th June 2018.

7.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

74/01195/AV - Erection of portal framed covered cattle yard, conversion of existing building into milking parlour – Approved

79/00470/AV - Erection of agricultural Dutch barn – Approved

17/02619/APP - Two storey side extension – Approved

18/01028/APP - New farmyard entrance - Approved

8.0 PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS

- 8.1 Wing Parish Council: "We would like to submit our objections regarding the above application at Glebe Farm.
- 8.2 Request that the application be refused permission because of its adverse effects. The development is outside the village boundary so it is felt that it is not sustainable.
- 8.3 The location of the new dwellings means that to use the village facilities the residents would need to have their own means of transport as walking would not be a viable option. The road from the proposed dwellings is subject to the national speed limit of 60mph, does not have a footpath so it would not be safe for family members walking into and from the village. This goes against The Neighbourhood plan policy T2: Impact on traffic – 'new development in the village will only be supported where it is demonstrated that there is no unduly adverse impact on the road network and pedestrian safety would not be compromised.' As accessibility between the proposed site and the village boundary is limited, it will impact the scope of people that would be able to reside in the dwellings. It would exclude low income families, people with mobility issues, the elderly and other vulnerable groups. Supporting that it is not a viable or sustainable development for the parish.

- 8.4 The application goes against the Neighbourhood plan policy H02 - Housing Mix. The policy outlines the need for appropriate dwelling for the occupation of elderly persons and/or first time buyers or those on low income. As the dwellings are situated outside the village boundary access to shops, schooling, doctors, play areas and other village facilities they are not appropriate for occupation by the groups mentioned above therefore not sustainable.
- 8.5 We appreciate the need for suitable housing but feel that there is no need for the this kind of market housing outside the village boundaries, AVDC has more than a 5 year supply of housing to meet requirements according to their Five year housing land supply position statement, August 2017

If application is to go to committee we would like to speak on behalf of the parish.”

9.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES

- 9.1 Heritage: Verbally advised that Glebe Farm would be a non-designated heritage asset and that its significance is the building's form. Subject to the development retaining, where possible, the existing built form and the development being sympathetic and not disrupting the existing form the building there would be no objection.
- 9.2 Highways: The development would be reliant upon private motor vehicle which goes against the overarching policy set out in the NPPF, however the NPPF does support farm diversification. The Local Planning Authority will need to way this up within the planning balance. The development seeks to utilise an existing access and adequate visibility splays can be achieved in both directions. The Local Planning Authority as the parking authority should make an informed decision upon the quantum of parking requirements. Adequate space has been provided for vehicles to enter, turn and manoeuvre then egress in forward gear. The Highway Authority has no objection or conditions.
- 9.3 Environmental Health: The existing hay barn on the farm yard is to be retained, approximately 40m from the rear façade of the buildings on plot 1 and 2 with the other intervening buildings being removed. There are barns/ sheds to the south of the courtyard that are to be rebuilt, although it is not clear where these are to be located or what their use is/ will be. A condition has therefore been suggested to ensure that no farm buildings within 30m of the development will be used to house livestock in order to preserve the amenity of residents.
- 9.4 Ecologist: Raised no objection. The submitted survey and mitigation measures contained in the Bat Survey are sufficient. The survey outlines the requirement for a Natural England Protected Species License which will protect the bat roost which has been identified on site and incorporate features in the development. A condition has been suggested requiring the mitigation and enhancement measures detailed in the submitted survey to be provided.
- 9.5 Rights of Way: Raised no comments from a Rights of Way perspective.

10.0 REPRESENTATIONS

- 10.1 One third party representations was received raising neutral comments on the application. The comments were as follows:

- Poor condition of footpath WIN/16/1.
- A condition should be imposed on this application requiring the upgrade of footpath WIN/16/1. The footpath should be extended to improve connectivity in accordance with Wing's Neighbourhood Plan.

11.0 EVALUATION

a) The planning policy position and the approach to be taken in the determination of the application:

11.1 Members are referred to the Overview Report before them in respect of providing the background information to the Policy. The starting point for decision making is the development plan, i.e. the 'made' Wing Neighbourhood Plan (WNP) and the adopted Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan. S38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) are both important material considerations in planning decisions. Neither change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making but policies of the development plan need to be considered and applied in terms of their degree of consistency with the NPPF, PPG and other material considerations. Determination of any formal application would need to consider whether the proposal constitutes sustainable development having regard to the policies within the Development Plan and the NPPF as a whole.

Neighbourhood Plan:

11.2 The Wing Neighbourhood Development Plan: (WNP) was made in 2015. Within the WNP there are no specific policies which relate to the principle of the proposed development, however there are a number of policies which are relevant and should be taken into consideration when determining the application.

- Policy CGS1: Respecting the Environment
- Policy HE1: Heritage
- Policy HE2: Archaeology
- Policy T1: Residential Parking Standards
- Policy T2: Impact on Traffic
- Policy HO2: Housing Mix

Adopted Local Plan: AVDLP:

11.3 A number of general policies of the AVDLP are considered to be consistent with the NPPF and therefore up to date so full weight should be given to them. Consideration therefore needs to be given to whether the proposal is in accordance with or contrary to these policies. Those of relevance are GP.8, GP.24, GP.35, GP38 – GP.40, GP.45, GP.86-GP.88, and RA11. Policy RA11 of the AVDLP advises that outside settlements, the Council will endorse the re-use of buildings subject to a number of criteria to form dwellings if a commercial re-use of the building is proven to be unviable or unsuccessful. However, this policy pre-dates the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which does not require an economic use to be considered first before a residential use. Consequently, this aspect of Policy RA11 is not entirely consistent with the Framework.

Emerging Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan

- 11.4 As set out in the overview report, the draft plan examination commenced on Tuesday 10 July 2018 for two weeks and the adoption of the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan is planned to be during 2018. Currently this document can only be given limited weight in planning decisions as it is still too early in the plan making process, however, the evidence that sits behind it remains a material consideration.

The Principle of Development

- 11.5 There are no specific policies relating to the principle of converting agricultural buildings into residential properties within the Wing Neighbourhood Plan (WNP). Within the WNP two sites have been allocated for housing and there is a further policy in regard to infill development (Policy HO1: Infill Housing), however the WNP does not identify a settlement boundary. Where settlements are defined, this explicitly outlines where the settlement stops and countryside begins. As such, until the emerging Local Plan is adopted, the acceptability of where to site residential development will have to be assessed in accordance with the advice within the NPPF
- 11.6 The application site is located approximately 800 metres from Wing, the nearest settlement and therefore the site is located in the open countryside. Policy RA11 of the AVDLP advises that outside settlements, the Council will endorse the re-use of buildings subject to a number of criteria to form dwellings if a commercial re-use of the building is proven to be unviable or unsuccessful. However, this policy pre-dates the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which does not require an economic use to be considered first before a residential use. Consequently, this aspect of Policy RA11 is not entirely consistent with the Framework.
- 11.7 Notwithstanding the above, Policy RA11 also requires that buildings to be converted are of a permanent and substantial construction, do not involve major reconstruction or significant extensions and should respect the character of the building and its setting. These objectives closely align with the core planning principles of the Framework, to secure high quality design and recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and should therefore be afforded material weight in the assessment of this application. Similarly, they are broadly consistent with one of the special circumstances cited in paragraph 55 of the Framework, that where development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to: "*an enhancement to the immediate setting.*"
- 11.8 Paragraph 55 of the NPPF states that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. For example, where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby. Local planning authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances which includes inter alia where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting.
- 11.9 With regard to the requirement in Policy RA11 for a commercial use to be considered first, given this aspect of the policy is not consistent with the NPPF the applicant is not required to adhere to this requirement within Policy RA11. As part of this application no information has been provided to demonstrate whether the site has been marketed for commercial uses.
- 11.10 Turning to the second part of policy RA11 relating to the extent of rebuilding, extension and alterations, the majority of the conversions can be achieved without substantial re-building of the main bodies of the buildings. As part of this application the submitted plans have been annotated to demonstrate which elements are new/rebuild, these are as follows:
- New roof and walls on the southern building, including a small connecting section between the southern elevation and western elevation. In addition to a small area of transition between the eastern and southern roof slope.

- 11.11 The proposed development largely seeks to retain the existing buildings, with the proposal utilising existing openings and limiting the number of new openings, where possible. Where new/ rebuild is required, this is predominately to replace aspects which are not of great quality or where there are structural issues. Consequently, in line with the advice contained in “The Conversion of traditional Buildings” design guide, much of the existing traditional agrarian appearance of the buildings would be retained in accordance with RA11 and GP35 of the AVDLP and the advice within the NPPF.

b) Whether the proposal would constitute a sustainable form of development

Sustainable Location

- 11.12 The Government’s view of what sustainable development means in practice is to be found in paragraphs 18 to 219 of the NPPF, taken as a whole (paragraph 6). It is only if development is sustainable that it would benefit from the presumption set out in paragraph 14 of the NPPF. The following sections of the report will consider the individual requirements of sustainable development as derived from the NPPF and an assessment made of the benefits associated with the issues together with any harm that would arise from the failure to meet these objectives and how the considerations should be weighed in the overall planning balance.
- 11.13 It is acknowledged that the NPPF promotes sustainable development and encourages consolidation of smaller rural settlements where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Within the Council’s Settlement Hierarchy Assessment September 2017, Wing is identified as a ‘large village’. Large Villages typically have a population of between 2,000 and 3,000 and have between 8 to 10 of the key criteria (within 4 miles of a service centre, employment units or more, food store, pub, post office, GP, village hall, recreation facilities, primary school, hourly or more bus service and train station). It is reasonable to assume that those settlements which have at least 8 out of the 11 key criteria have a good level of sustainability. Larger, more sustainable villages have reasonable access to facilities, services and public transport, making them sustainable locations for development. On this basis, it is therefore accepted that Wing is sustainable location for limited development subject to the scale of growth that could reasonably be considered sustainable not only in terms of its impact on the localised site and surrounding but also in terms of the wider capacity of the village to accept further population growth, having regard to its impact on the infrastructure and local services and the community itself.
- 11.14 Whilst, Wing is identified as a ‘larger settlement’ the application site itself is detached from the settlement of Wing by approximately 800 metres. As part of the housing allocation process for WNP the pretext outlines that *‘all possible sites around the settlement of Wing were considered... Land remote from the village has not been considered because the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to promote sustainable development and a key element of that is access to village facilities without relying on a car’*. As such, it is acknowledged that the site does lie within the open countryside and is remote from any settlement. In accordance with paragraph 55 of the NPPF, Local Planning Authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances. One of the special circumstances outlined under paragraph 55 in the NPPF is *‘where the development would re-use redundant or disused building and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting’*. Whilst the proposed development does consist of a small element of new/rebuild, the development predominately seeks the re-use of redundant and disused agricultural buildings. Due to the time in which the buildings have been disused they have begun to fall into disrepair, consequently the re-use of these buildings is considered to lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting of the site. As such, whilst the proposed development would result in residential dwellings being detached from the settlement of Wing and reliant upon private vehicles, the proposal does fall within special circumstances

for isolated dwellings and therefore, on this basis the proposed development does accord with paragraph 55 of the NPPF.

Build a strong competitive economy

The NPPF states that the Government is committed to securing and supporting sustainable economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. The NPPF advises that planning policies should be positive, promote competitive town centre environments and set out policies for the management and growth of centres over the plan period. It recognises town centres as the heart of their communities and pursue policies to support their viability and vitality

- 11.15 There would be economic benefits derived from this development which would include creation of temporary jobs during the conversion period and the resultant increase in population contributing to the local economy. These benefits include extra demand for goods and services and increased local spending from the resultant increase in population, which would be positive and long lasting to the local economy.

Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes

- 11.16 Local planning authorities are charged with delivering a wide choice of high quality homes and to boost significantly the supply of housing by identifying sites for development, maintaining a supply of deliverable sites and to generally consider housing applications in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 11.17 With regards to housing supply, at present, the Council can demonstrate a 11.7 year supply housing supply (based on the findings of the HEDNA) as published in the Aylesbury Vale District Council – Five year housing land supply position statement, June 2018. This scheme would provide a contribution of 4 dwellings to the housing supply for the District which is a significant benefit and would assist in boosting the District's housing supply. It is considered that the scheme could be delivered within a reasonable time, subject to approval due to the development being small scale.
- 11.18 Within the Wing Neighbourhood Plan (WNP), Policy HO12 (Housing Mix) outlines that '*a proportion of all new dwellings to be built shall be designed to be appropriate for occupation by elderly persons and/ or first time buyers or those on a lower income... and generally be either 1 or 2 bed properties*'. The proposed development seeks to predominately convert existing agricultural buildings and therefore would not be considered as new built residential development that would need to comply with policy HO12 of the WPN. As a result of the proposed development the existing farmhouse will be retained with a further four residential dwellings being created. Each of the new residential dwellings would have 3 bedrooms. Whilst this is noted, plots 3 and 4 are of a single storey and therefore can be considered appropriate for the occupation of elderly persons. In this instance, the proposed development is considered to provide an acceptable mix of housing.
- 11.19 Policy GP.2 of AVDLP outlines that developments of 25 dwellings or more, or sites of 1 hectare or more there is a requirement to provide the provision of on-site affordable housing. The proposed development seeks the retention of the existing farmhouse and the creation of 4 new dwellings on a site area of less than 1 hectare and therefore there is not a requirement to provide affordable housing.

Promoting sustainable transport:

- 11.20 The NPPF at para 32 seeks to encourage sustainable transport modes and to ensure safe and suitable access to new development. It is necessary to consider whether the proposed development is located where the need to travel will be minimised, the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised and that safe and suitable access can be achieved.

- 11.21 The application site is located within the open countryside and therefore is remote from the settlement of Wing, local services, footpaths and public transport links. Consequently, the site is considered not to be sustainable in transport and accessibility terms in the context of the requirements of the NPPF as the occupants would be reliant on the use of the private motor vehicle. However, it is also recognised that other policies of the Framework support the principle of farm diversification and that accessibility to non-car modes will not be as good in rural areas. On this basis, Buckinghamshire County Council Highways has raised no objection or conditions.
- 11.22 The development will be served by a single vehicular point off of Stewkley Road which is a class C road subject to a 60 mph speed limit. The proposed development would utilise the existing vehicular access to the site which would not need to be upgraded as a result of this development as the existing access appears to be constructed to agricultural standards with sufficient visibility splays being achieved in both directions.
- 11.23 The site seeks to utilise and retain the existing courtyard arrangement with a turning circle being provided within the courtyard. This will provide adequate space for vehicles to enter, turn and manoeuvre before then egress in forward gear. Policy T2 of the WNP states '*New development in the village will only be supported where it is demonstrated that there is no unduly adverse impact on the road network and pedestrian safety would not be compromised*'. For the reasons outlined above the proposed development would not result in an adverse impact on the road network or pedestrian safety. The development would not give rise to any significant levels of traffic. Although the Parish Council has raised a safety concern with pedestrians walking to the settlement. It is accepted that the occupiers of the development would be reliant upon private vehicles and therefore there is not an expectation that residents will be walking to the nearest settlement.
- 11.24 AVDLP policy GP24 requires that new development accords with published parking guidelines. SPG 1 "Parking Guidelines" at Appendix 1 sets out the appropriate maximum parking requirement for various types of development. Policy T1 of the WNP states "*for new homes with one, two or three bedrooms, two parking spaces within the plot must be provided*". The submitted, proposed floor plans show each of the new residential dwelling to have three bedrooms, requiring two on-plot parking spaces. Parking provisions for the proposed new dwellings are in the form of on-plot parking provisions or a single carport, with each property having at least the required two spaces. In regard to the parking provisions for the existing farmhouse, the property is shown to have 5 bedrooms requiring three on plot parking spaces. Although the submitted plans shown only two on-plot spaces indicated, the further space required could easily be accommodated to the front of the dwelling with the two spaces shown. In addition to this, parking provisions for the farmhouse are to be retained and therefore the parking provisions for the farmhouse is considered to be sufficient. Two visitor parking spaces are shown towards the entrance of the site which are considered to be acceptable.
- 11.25 It is noted that an additional space above the required two spaces for plot 2 is shown on the submitted plans. Whilst GP24 of the AVDLP, in accordance with Parking Guidelines SPG outlines the maximum levels of parking for a development, which the Authority would not normally exceed, it is considered that in this instance the overprovision of a single space in this rural location is acceptable.

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Landscape Impact:

- 11.26 In terms of the impact on the landscape, proposals should use land efficiently and create a well-defined boundary between the settlement and countryside. Permission will not be granted for development that impairs the character or identity of the settlement or of the adjoining rural area. Regard must be had to how the development contributes to the natural and local environment through protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and geological interests, minimising impacts on biodiversity and preventing any adverse effects of

pollution, as required by the NPPF. AVDLP Policy GP35 seeks to ensure that development proposals should respect and complement features and characteristics of the site and area.

- 11.27 The application site is located within Quinton- Wing Hills Area of Attractive Landscape. Traditional agricultural buildings positively contribute to the rural character of the countryside and therefore it is essential that conversions of agricultural buildings are sympathetic and sensitive to ensure that residential conversions are not overly domesticated, causing harm to the character and appearance of the area. The form and appearance of the buildings play a key role in preserving the rural nature of the site and its surroundings. Whilst the application site does contribute to the character and appearance of the countryside, the buildings have begun to fall into disrepair.
- 11.28 The majority of the proposed works would be a conversion of the existing buildings, however due to the quality and state of the southern building, this element of the scheme would need to be re-built. Whilst this is noted, the section of the proposed scheme which is to be rebuilt will use the existing footprint of the building with a small extension to connect/ 'round-off' the building. In order to provide adequate residential amenity, new openings were also required in the external southern elevation. Where possible, conversion should utilise existing openings as agricultural buildings are characterised by few openings. Where new openings are required this should preferably be located on the 'inside' elevation away from the public realm. Although the number of openings on the southern elevation does raise some concern it is considered that on balance this impact would not cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. This is due to the southern external elevation being relatively concealed from wider public view because of the topography of the land and surrounding landscaping and therefore is mainly visible when viewed directly from footpath WIN/16/1. The most sensitive, wider landscape views are considered to be the views towards the eastern elevation of the site, where the landscape is relatively open allowing the site to be visible from Cublington Road.
- 11.29 The submitted site layout shows the gardens for the proposed dwellings to be enclosed by 1.2 metre post and rail fencing which is considered to appropriate for the site's context. Due to the sensitive location of the site conditions have been imposed removing permitted development rights in terms of extensions, alterations and boundary treatment in order to preserve the character and appearance of the area of attractive landscape. Given the proposed development is considered to respect the existing built form the farmstead with the alterations/ works being sensitive and sympathetic to character of the buildings it is considered that the proposed development would not have an adverse impact on Quinton- Wing Hills Area of Attractive Landscape or the surrounding area.
- 11.30 The reuse of the buildings and the require repairs are considered to complement the site's setting within the open countryside and area of attractive landscape and therefore the proposed development is considered to comply with policy GP35 and RA8 of the AVDLP.

Tress and Hedgerows:

- 11.31 Policies GP39 and GP40 of the AVDLP seek to preserve existing trees and hedgerows where they are of amenity, landscape or wildlife value.
- 11.32 There are a number of existing trees and hedgerow around the perimeter of the site. The arrangement between the existing landscaping and built form will not alter as a result of the proposed development and therefore the proposed development would preserve the existing landscaping around the perimeter of the site in accordance with policy GP39 and GP40 of the AVDLP and NPPF guidance.

Rights of Way:

11.33 Policy GP84 of the AVDLP outlines that development affecting a public right of way will have regard to the convenience, amenity and public enjoyment of the route and the desirability of its retention or improvement for users, including people with disabilities. Located to the south of the site is footpath WIN/16/1 with footpath WIN/29/4 being located to the west. As part of this application the Rights of Way Officer was consulted and no objections were received. The proposed development would not affect either of the surrounding footpaths. As a result of the proposed development, there will be a visual change in the appearance of the application site. Whilst the agricultural appearance of the buildings has been retained as much as possible, the southern elevation, in particular does have a more domestic appearance and the residential gardens serving plots 3 and 4 do face onto WIN/16/1 right of way. It is the southern elevation which is most prominent from WIN/16/1. Whilst this is noted, the visual impact is largely when the site is viewed directly and does not affect wider public views.

11.34 A representation has been received regarding the maintenance of the surrounding rights of way and a request that a condition is imposed in order to upgrade the rights of way. The surrounding rights of way are not within the application site and it is considered unreasonable to impose the suggested conditions as conditions should only be used to enable development where otherwise the application would be refused, which is not the case in this instance.

Biodiversity:

11.35 Policy CGS1 of the WNP states “*new development in the Parish will be required to protect and where possible, enhance wildlife value, on the site, surrounding sites and wildlife corridors*”. Paragraph 109 of the NPPF requires new development to minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains in biodiversity where possible. Paragraph 118 of the NPPF states that when determining applications that local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying the principles, amongst the things, if significant harm cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated or as a last resort, compensated for then planning permission should be refused; encouraging opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in an around development. The application seeks residential development on a greenfield site and therefore it is likely to have a negative impact on biodiversity if unmitigated.

11.36 As part of this application a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment and Barn Own Survey was submitted. The Biodiversity Officer raises no objection subject to a condition ensuring the development is implemented in accordance with the mitigation measures contained within the Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment and Barn Own Survey. As outlined in the survey a Natural England Protected Species Licence will be required as a bat roost has been identified on site.

11.37 Under Regulation 53(2) (e) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended), the applicant will need to acquire a mitigation licence as the development is anticipated to have impacts on European Protected Species, that would otherwise be illegal, such as: capturing, killing, disturbing or injuring them (on purpose or by not taking enough care) damaging or destroying their breeding or resting places (even accidentally), obstructing access to their resting or sheltering places (on purpose or by not taking enough care). With the requirement for the applicant to obtain an EPS Licence, the Local Planning Authority has to have regard to the three tests as set out in the Natural England Advice Note: European Protected Species and the Planning Process in respect of protected species. These three tests are:

Test 1) A licence can be granted for the purposes of preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social and economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment.

Test 2) The appropriate authority shall not grant a licence unless they are satisfied “that there is no satisfactory alternative”.

Test 3) The appropriate authority shall not grant a licence unless they are satisfied “that the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population off

11.38 Natural England have been consulted and their comments are awaited. However, in terms of the 3 tests above, officers comment:

1) It is considered in this case that if the buildings are not converted they are likely to fall further into disrepair causing a possible public safety risk to individuals visiting the site. There is an overriding public interest in that the buildings are considered to be a non-designated heritage asset and therefore their preservation would be in the public interest. Further to this, whilst the Local Planning Authority can currently demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply the proposal would contribute additional housing to maintain the Districts supply. Given the level of future growth envisaged across Aylesbury Vale there will be a need to make efficient use of land, re use of land and release greenfield sites. There will be social and economic benefits to the public and beneficial consequences to the environment and therefore the proposal meets the imperative reasons of overriding public interest. Provision of housing is further consistent with core planning principles of NPPF para 17 that should underpin plan-making and decision-taking which states that planning should, amongst other principles, proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver homes.

2) The site has been assessed as being appropriate for conversion into residential with no adverse impacts. Although there may be an alternative use for the proposed buildings, some form of conversion is likely to be required due to the current state of the buildings and therefore in order to reuse the building it is considered that there is no alternative to conversion.

3) The Council’s Biodiversity Officer is satisfied that the mitigation measures proposed by the applicant will ensure the development is not detrimental to the maintenance of the population of roosting bats on the site.

11.40 Whilst the development would constitute a material change to the baseline character of the site, the development proposal offers opportunities to secure sufficient benefits to offset the adverse effects of the change. Subject to conditions as set out above, the application proposal accords with national planning policy and would complement the local area and conserve existing natural and other features of value as far as possible and accord with CGS1 of the WNP.

Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

11.41 The application site is not located within nor does it affect the setting of a Conservation Area. In addition to this, the site itself is not a Listed and due to the isolated location of the application site, the proposed development would not affect the setting of any Listed Buildings. Whilst this is noted, the application is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset as the built form of the application site is reflective of a traditional courtyard farmstead.

11.42 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF outlines that *‘the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset’*.

11.43 Policy HE1 (Heritage) of the WNP seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment of the parish and heritage assets (both designated and non-designated). One of the most relevant sections of this policy highlights the importance of materials and finishes which should be reflective of the surrounding area, character and heritage of the immediate environment. The materials and finishes shown on the submitted plans are considered to be sympathetic and appropriate to the character of this farmstead. To ensure the materials

are in keeping with the existing, a condition should be imposed requiring materials to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

- 11.44 In accordance with the advice from the Heritage Officer, the significance of this non-designated heritage asset is the form the buildings. This application is largely for the conversion of the existing buildings and where new/rebuild is required this element will be sited on the footprint of the existing structure retaining the form of the buildings. The buildings have begun to fall into disrepair where the farm buildings become redundant and disused, therefore as a result of the proposed development the appearance of the buildings will improve. As such the proposed development is considered to preserve the significance of this non-designated heritage asset and enhance its appearance.
- 11.45 Overall, the proposed development is considered not to have an impact on any designated heritage assets. Consequently, there is no need to offset the impact of the proposals against any public benefit. Great weight has been applied to the consideration of this application and the impact it would have on any designated and non-designated heritage assets. As such it is considered that the local authority has discharged their statutory duty to pay special regard to the preservation of Listed Buildings and conservation areas..The proposal is considered to accord with Policy HE1 of the WPN and paragraph 135 of the NPPF.

Archaeology:

- 11.46 The NPPF at paragraph 128 advises that in situations where a site includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.
- 11.47 Policy HE2 (Archaeology) of the WNP states *'Archaeological investigation of sites where new developments or improvements are planned will be required. Following a desk based assessment, appropriate archaeological investigation must be carried out prior to construction of new developments. Any reports should be made available for public viewing'*.
- 11.48 In order to comply with the WNP and ensure the development as a neutral impact on archaeological interests of the site a condition has been requested to secure appropriate investigation, recording, publication and archiving of the results. Subject to this condition the proposal is considered to have an acceptable impact on archaeology in accordance with policy GP.59 of AVDLP, HE2 of WNP and the NPPF.
- 11.49 **Requiring Good Design:**
- 11.50 The NPPF sets out that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment and that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.
- 11.51 Policy GP35 of AVDLP is particularly relevant and requires new development to respect and complement the physical characteristics of the site and surroundings; the building tradition, ordering, form and materials of the locality; the historic scale and context of the setting; the natural qualities and features of the area; and the effect on important public views and skylines. This policy is also reinforced by the Council's adopted supplementary planning guidance in the form of the New Houses in Towns and Villages Design Guide which encourages new development to recognise and respect landscape and local character.
- 11.52 In addition to this, RA11 of the AVDLP outlines that *'conversion works should not involve major reconstruction or significant extension and should respect the character of the building and its setting'*. The adopted Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings (Design Guide 2) SPG (supplementary planning guidance) provides guidance on how to sympathetically convert a traditional farm building.

- 11.53 As part of this application the submitted plans have been annotated to demonstrate the extent of new/rebuild elements of the scheme. The elements of the scheme which are shown to be new/rebuild involve the site's southern building. The existing roof on the southern building is profiled cement sheet and therefore this seeks to be removed and replaced with slate in order to match roof of the remaining buildings. In order to further ensure a cohesive design the existing white brick work on the internal elevation of the southern building is to be removed and replaced with red brick to match the adjoining buildings within the courtyard. In regard to the existing, external southern wall, a proportion is built from weatherboarding which is falling into disrepair with the remaining section being built from red brick. On the submitted plans this entire external elevation is shown to be new/rebuilt. As part of this application a pre-planning structural report has been submitted however it does not include this southern building and therefore it unknown as to whether this rear wall is structurally sound. Officers have raised concern with the loss of the brick element on this southern however the applicant/agent has not amended this application to show this element being retained. Although Officers seek to retain as much of the existing structure as possible to ensure that the development is predominately a conversion and not a rebuild it is not always possible. Given the submitted plans do demonstrate that the proposed development is predominately a conversion and does not involve major reconstruction or significant extension, even with the removal of the entire external southern wall, it is considered that this impact is not significant to warrant the refusal of this application.
- 11.54 In regard to the extension and alteration of the existing farmhouse, these works have been approved under application 17/02619/APP and therefore significant weight has been afforded to this.
- 11.55 Where possible, the development has utilised existing openings, with rooflights being located on the inside of the courtyard where they are not highly visible from the public realm. Greater openings than what would normally be expected have been shown on the external southern elevation however as outlined in the landscape section of this report this elevation is visible from footpath WIN/16/1 however not highly visible from the wider public realm. Traditional materials are to be used in order to match the existing materials found of the building and the form of the building is to be retained. Overall the proposed development is considered to accord with policy GP35 and RA11 of the AVDLP and the advice within the Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings SPG.
- 11.56 **Promoting healthy communities**
- 11.57 The NPPF seeks to promote healthy communities by facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities. This includes the provision of active street frontages, strong neighbourhood centres, safe and accessible developments and should include the provision of sufficient choice of school places, access to high quality open spaces with opportunities for sport and recreation.
- 11.58 Policies GP.86-.88 and GP.94 seek to ensure that appropriate community facilities are provided arising from a proposal (e.g. school places, public open space, leisure facilities). In accordance with the NPPF, policies GP.86 - GP.88 and GP.94 seek to ensure that where appropriate, community facilities are provided from the proposal and, where necessary, require financial contributions to meet the needs of the development. However, the NPPG was amended in May 2016 such that tariff-style s106 contributions should not be sought from developments of 10-units or less, and which have a maximum combined gross floorspace of no more than 1000sqm. In this case the proposed development would not exceed the threshold of 10 dwellings, or 1000m2 floorspace and therefore financial contributions cannot be sought.
- 11.59 **Meeting the challenge of climate change and flooding**

- 11.60 The NPPF at Section 10, "Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change" advises at paragraph 103 that planning authorities should require planning applications for development in areas at risk of flooding to include a site-specific flood risk assessment to ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere, and to ensure that the development is appropriately flood resilient, including safe access and escape routes where required, and that any residual risk can be safely managed. Development should also give priority to the use of sustainable drainage systems.
- 11.61 As part of this application SUDs was consulted and no comments were received. The application site is located within Flood Zone 1. The Environment Agency Flood Maps shows that the majority of the site is situated in an area of very low flood risk from surface water, however there is a small area of low flood risk from surface water within the centre of the courtyard. As such, it is considered that there would not be any significant concerns in regard to flooding. To ensure the site is adequately drained a condition has been imposed requiring details of foul and surface water drainage.
- 11.62 Overall, subject to the imposition of planning conditions to secure the submission of acceptable drainage details, it is considered that the proposed development would be resilient to climate change and flooding in accordance with NPPF guidance.

c) Impact on residential amenities

- 11.63 The NPPF at paragraph 17, under the heading "Core planning principles" sets out guiding principles for the operation of the planning system. One of the principles set out is that authorities should always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. AVDLP policy GP8 states that permission for development will not be granted where unreasonable harm to any aspect of the amenities of nearby residents would outweigh the benefits arising from the proposal.
- 11.64 Due to the isolated location of the application site there are no surrounding neighbouring properties which would be affected by the proposed development. Each of the properties are served by their own sufficiently sized private garden. The residential gardens, particularly serving plots 3 and 4 would be visible when viewed from WIN/16/1 right of way. It considered that this impact is not unacceptable in this instance due to the nature of the development. In addition to this any future occupier will be aware of this matter prior to the purchasing of the property.
- 11.65 The Local Planning Authority has not adopted the national space standards. Whilst this is noted, the spacing within each of the properties is considered to be acceptable. All of the habitable rooms within each of the properties would be served by an opening to ensure adequate amenity is afforded to the future occupiers of the proposed development. It is however noted that a number of bedrooms within the development are served by a rooflight. However under permitted development there is the provision to convert lofts into habitable accommodation and therefore it is considered on this basis that the impact would not cause significant harm in regard to residential amenity to warrant the refusal of this application.
- 11.66 Overall, it is considered that the proposal would have an acceptable impact on residential amenities in accordance with saved policy GP.8 of AVDLP and the advice within the NPPF, and this is attributed neutral weight in the planning balance