

REPORT 2

APPLICATION NO.	P07/W0575
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL
REGISTERED	01.06.2007
PARISH	WEST HAGBOURNE
WARD MEMBER(S)	Mr Patrick Greene
APPLICANT	D C & R J Allen & Partners
SITE	Off Brook Lane to York Farm West Hagbourne
PROPOSAL	New access to York Farm through existing gateway off Brook Lane. (As amended by Drawings received 21 June 2007).
AMENDMENTS	Amended plans showing passing bay received 21.6.07
GRID REFERENCE	451333188040
OFFICER	Ms N Bedggood

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application is before the Planning Committee as the Officer's recommendation conflicts with the views of the Parish Council.
- 1.2 The existing farm buildings lie within the built up area of West Hagbourne. The site has no statutory designation and is identified on the Ordnance Survey extract **attached** at Appendix 1.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application is for a new access to York Farm through an existing gateway off Brook Lane, West Hagbourne. A portion of an existing hedgerow is to be removed to achieve the required vision splays. New metal gates are also proposed.

The current farm access is off York Road within the built up limits of the village. The applicant has stated that due to an increasing number of vehicle journeys in and out of York Farm and the large size of the lorries and trailers, they are having difficulty negotiating access to the farm due to parked cars within the village.

The applicant sought pre-application advice from OCC Highways regarding the best location for a new access.

During the processing of the application, the applicant was advised of OCC highways preference for a passing bay along the access track. Amended plans were received on 21 June 2007 showing a passing bay.

2.2 A copy of the amended plans and the applicant's covering letter are **attached** at Appendix 2.

3.0 CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

3.1 Parish Council

Refuse. Query the need for a new access.

Use of the byway (RoW 197/23) would be a better alternative.

New access point will make Brook Lane more dangerous than it already is.

Removal of hedgerows will reduce habitat.

Hard surfaces will contribute to flooding

Proposal may lead to further applications

for

infill development to the north.

Metal gating not in keeping with

Conservation

Area management plans.

Impact on agricultural land.

OCC Highways
Proposal will

No objection – support application.

improve highway safety.

Countryside
of

No objection – hedgerow and pasture land

little ecological significance

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 None

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

5.1 Adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan Policies (SOLP 2011):

G2 – Protection and enhancement of the environment

C6 – Biodiversity conservation

T1 – Transport requirements for new developments

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The main issues to consider with this application are:

- Design and scale of the proposal and effect on the character of the countryside
- Impact on biodiversity and habitat
- Impact on highway safety.

6.2 Design and scale of the proposal and effect on the character of the countryside

It is considered that the design, materials and scale of the proposal are acceptable. The new access utilises an existing gateway on to Brook Lane. The viability of the farmland will not be affected by the proposal as the land can still be used for grazing (as it is currently). The access will only be hard surfaced for the first 5 to 15 metres (tarmac). The main visual impact will be from the removal of the hedgerow which is not considered to significantly contribute to the rural scene along this stretch of Brook Lane where there is no footpath and the national speed limit is in place. A new farm access is not out of keeping with the rural environment. The proposed gates are similar in appearance to the existing gates and are typical of gates used on farms throughout the district. While the farm buildings themselves are within the West Hagbourne Conservation Area, the proposed access falls well outside the Conservation Area. The proposed gates are considered acceptable in terms of design and materials.

6.3 Impact on biodiversity and habitat

The countryside officer has visited the site and does not object to the proposal. He has advised that the access crosses pasture land which is of limited ecological value. The proposal will necessitate the removal of approximately 8 metres of hawthorn hedgerow however the countryside officer has advised that due to its proximity to the road, it is unlikely that the hedgerow has any significant value to nesting birds and under the Hedgerow Regulations (1997) was found to be of little importance.

6.4 Impact on highway safety

OCC Highways was involved in pre-application consultation and recommended this position for the new access off Brook Lane. They have assessed the proposal

and support the development. In their opinion, the new access will improve the existing situation and improve highway safety by removing the need for heavy vehicles to travel through the village. The current access to York Farm via York Road has very poor visibility and the proposal will remove large vehicles from roads within the centre of West Hagbourne.

The Parish Council suggest that the new access is unnecessary and that the byway would provide a better alternative. OCC Highways has made some brief observations on the access put forward by the Parish Council as a better alternative to the proposal, even though the application is being assessed on its own merits. The byway would require significant works to improve the visibility at the junction with Brook Lane. Highways would not support such an application for increased use of this access. The byway would also require significant widening works and potentially re-surfacing in order to accommodate large vehicles. In addition, OCC Right's of Way group have indicated informally that they too would not be supportive of a proposal to utilise the byway as this would have serious implications on the adjoining public footpath.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 Your officers consider that the design and siting of the proposed access is acceptable. The proposal does not adversely affect the character of the surrounding rural environment, does not remove important wildlife habitat and does not adversely affect highway safety.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

1. Commencement 3 years
2. That prior to the first use of the proposed access road to York Farm, the proposed means of access on to Brook Lane is to be formed and laid out to the approval of the LPA and constructed strictly in accordance with the highway authority's specifications and that all ancillary works specified shall be undertaken.
3. That no surface water from the development shall be discharged onto the adjoining highway, and a scheme to prevent this occurrence shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and constructed prior to the commencement of building operations.
4. That as part of the works relating to the proposed access, the existing ditch shall be culverted and laid out to the approval of the Local Planning Authority and constructed strictly in accordance with the highway authority's specifications and that all ancillary works specified shall be undertaken.
5. Replacement hedgerow planting

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