APPLICATION No:	EPF/1603/05
SITE ADDRESS:	King Street Farm, King Street, High Ongar
PARISH:	High Ongar
APPLICANT:	Mr A G Metson
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:	Change of use of barn and adjoining buildings to a mixed residential and business use.
RECOMMENDED DECISION:	GRANT

CONDITIONS:

- 1 The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this notice.
- 2 The workspace area as identified on drawing no. 260/6 shall be limited to this area of the building only and for the purposes of Class B1 use only. There shall be no direct retailing taking place from the workspace, nor shall it be used for residential purposes unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 3 No conversion or demolition or preliminary groundworks of any kind shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority.
- 4 Prior to commencement of development, including demolition or site clearance works, a phased contaminated land investigation shall be undertaken to assess the presence of contaminants at the site in accordance with an agreed protocol as below. Should any contaminants be found in unacceptable concentrations, appropriate remediation works shall be carried out and a scheme for any necessary maintenance works adopted.

Prior to carrying out a phase 1 preliminary investigation, a protocol for the investigation shall be agreed in writing with the LPA and the completed phase 1 investigation shall be submitted to the LPA upon completion for approval.

Should a phase 2 main site investigation and risk assessment be necessary, a protocol for this investigation shall be submitted to and approved by the LPA before commencing the study and the completed phase 2 investigation with remediation proposals shall be submitted to and approved by the LPA prior to any remediation works being carried out.

Following remediation, a completion report and any necessary maintenance programme shall be submitted to the LPA for approval prior to first occupation of the completed development.

- 5 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 1995 as amended (or any other order revoking, further amending or re-enacting that order) no development generally permitted by virtue of Part 1 Classes A - H shall be undertaken without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority.
- 6 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town & Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 1995 (or of any equivalent provision in any Statutory Instrument revoking or re-enacting that Order), the garage(s) hereby approved shall be retained so that it is capable of allowing the parking of cars together with any ancillary storage in connection with the residential use of the site, and shall at no time be converted into a room or used for any other purpose.
- 7 Before the commencement of the development or any works on site, details of the landscaping of the site, including retention of trees and other natural features, shall be submitted in writing for the approval of the Local Planning Authority, and shall be carried out as approved. This includes details of a replacement hedgerow for the existing hedgerow to be removed at the front of the site.
- 8 The area within the sight splays indicated on drawing no. 260/8 shall be formed before first occupation of the residential and live/work unit hereby approved and thereafter give a clear and continuous view of traffic and shall not contain obstructions above the crown of the adjacent road.
- 9 Details of any walls, fences and entrance gates shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority before works commences on site.
- 10 Prior to the commencement of the development details of the proposed surface materials for the entrance, drive and parking/turning area, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The agreed surface treatment shall be completed prior to the first occupation of the development.

Description of Proposal:

Alterations to and change of use of former farm barn and adjoining buildings into a dwelling house with attached Class B1 business space. The existing vehicular access to King Street would be slightly widened.

Description of Site:

Mid-19th Century, Grade II listed two-storey barn of traditional red brick and pitched slate roof appearance. Two single wings project at both ends to form a 'U' shape group around a courtyard. A small modern shed is attached on one side. North of this group there is a timber framed single storey cart shed.

The site is currently part of the curtilage of King Street Farmhouse, a Grade II listed house, set further back, about 25m from the road frontage. The surrounding area is Green Belt open countryside with a scattering of relatively remote dwellings set back from the road.

Relevant History:

None.

Policies Applied:

Structure Plan:

- RE2 Re-use of Rural Buildings.
- C2 Development in the Green Belt.
- H2 Sequential Approach to Housing.
- CS4 Sustainable New Development.
- HC4 Conversion of listed Buildings.

Local Plan:

GB2 and GB8	-	Metropolitan Green Belt.
DBE4, DBE5, DBE6,	DBE8	and DBE9 - Impact on amenity and design.
T17	-	Highways and Traffic.
HC12	-	Affect on setting of a Listed Building.
HC13	-	Conversion of a Listed Building.

Issues and Considerations:

The key issues are considered to be whether the proposal accords with the policy criteria for the re-use of rural buildings and if so, what its impact will be on the local area, neighbours, setting of a Grade II Listed Building and the Green Belt in general.

1. Principle of Conversion:

Structure Plan Policy RE2 and GB8 of the adopted Local Plan allows for the re-use of rural buildings subject to a criteria which requires the building to be permanent and of substantial construction, capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction and be worthy of retention in keeping with its surroundings.

The policy continues, specifying that the proposed use should be in accordance with Green Belt policy GB2, i.e. recreational or tourism related or for business or storage use which should not include open storage or significant vehicle parking. Finally, residential usage where the building is unsuitable for any of the above uses, particularly where it is desirable that the building be brought back into the beneficial use.

Policy HC13 of the Local Plan supports the principle of conversion of a Listed Building, as does Policy HC4 of the Structure Plan, where this would preserve the building, its setting and its special character or architectural qualities.

2. The Building:

This is a Grade II Listed Building and appears to have been neglected for a number of years. It is no longer required for modern day agricultural purposes. But this is an attractive group of buildings and 19th Century brick built barns, which are less common than the traditional timber framed structures. Little adaptation other than refurbishment and repair to sections of the walls are required, but its preservation is important and essential it is brought back into beneficial use.

3. The Proposed Use:

Given the proximity of the Farmhouse and neighbours on the opposite side of the road (Spencers, Tree Tops and King Reading House), a full commercial re-use of the 420 square metres would be inappropriate and likely to result in undue noise and disturbance. In this respect, the objection from neighbours in respect of exclusive commercial use is accepted by Officers. The proposed scheme does include a small office element within it, but is most likely to be used as a home office where the owner manages a business remotely from its main workplace and only accounts for 12% of the overall floor space.

Residential use, as a single dwelling, will introduce a new home into a rural area where any new resident is going to be reliant on private motor vehicles for transport, which broadly contradicts with sustainability policies within the Structure Plan. However, it is close to Ongar and not so remote as to be isolated. Fundamentally, the listed building needs to be brought back into use to safeguard the future of this fine rural structure and a single residential use with a live-work element to encourage the owner to work at home and reduce lengthy commuting, is justified in this case. Furthermore, any residential garden would be concealed within the courtyard and overall the openness of the Green Belt would not be harmed.

4. Highways and Traffic:

Two parking spaces and domestic storage space for the proposed dwelling would be provided by converting two-thirds of the existing cart-shed to the north of the barn. The final third would provide parking for the existing Farmhouse/parking provision is acceptable.

The existing access does not have adequate sightlines and despite this serving an existing house and, in the past, agricultural vehicles, the Council's Highway's Officer seeks improvements to driver visibility for any vehicle emerging from the site entrance. It will, however, result in the loss of a section of existing hedgerow either side of the entrance to achieve the sightlines. There will therefore be a requirement for a new hedgerow to be planted behind the visibility splay in the interest of visual amenity. The public right of way will not be affected.

Conclusion:

The building proposed for conversion is a good quality brick built Listed Essex barn. It needs to be put to good use to ensure its future, and is capable of conversion without the need for major or extensive repair work.

The proposed residential use would be a suitable, low key and most sustainable use, particularly in the latter case where there is a linked small work unit.

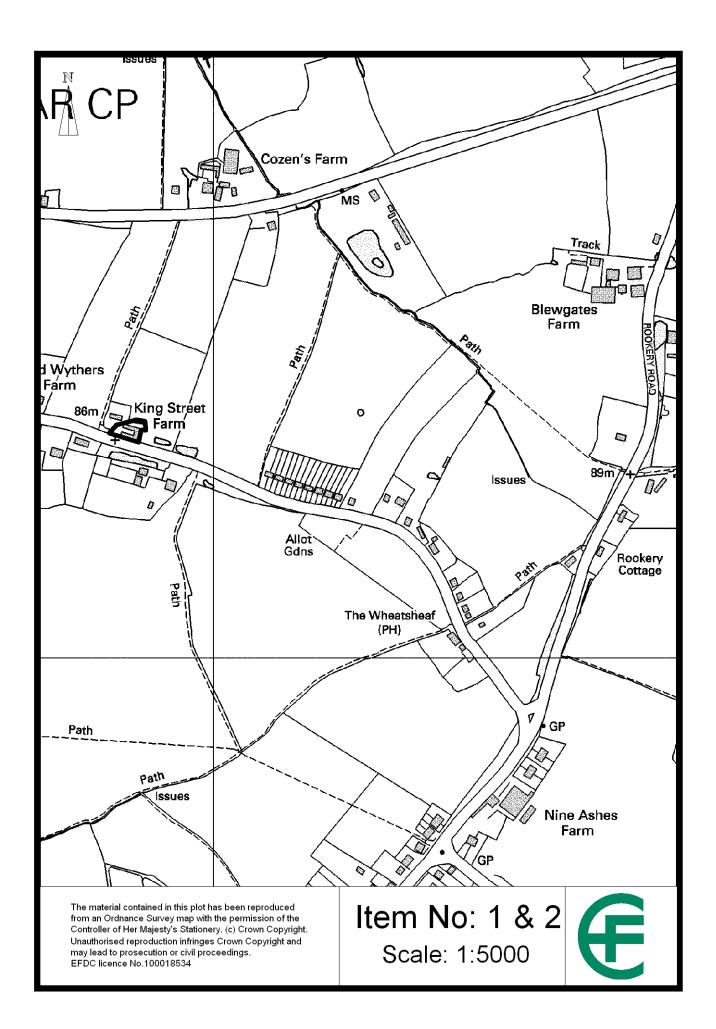
The access improvement is in the interest of highway safety and there will be no undue impact on existing residents living in the vicinity of the site.

It accords with the relevant policies of the Local and Structure Plan and is recommend approval.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS:

TREETOPS, KING STREET – If successful, other plots of current grazing land and the farmhouse may be sold for development, object to an extra dwelling facing us, prospect of an unknown business bringing extra traffic to a country lane, damage and erosion to verges and hedgerow, noise, pollution and loss of privacy, unnecessary to remove hedgerow and widen the access which has proved adequate for farm traffic, public right of way to the side of the property which should be taken into account.

KINGS READING HOUSE, KING STREET – No objection as it appears sympathetic to the environment and should keep the building long standing. If the commercial use of the barn was for live/work use by the residents I would have no real objections, but have reservations if the premises will be let on a commercial basis to external users because of possible increase in traffic in this road where there are restrictive views, no footpath or street lighting on this section of the road which is used as a cut through for high speed traffic.



APPLICATION No:	EPF/1604/05
SITE ADDRESS:	King Street Farm, King Street, High Ongar
PARISH:	High Ongar
APPLICANT:	Mr A G Metson
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:	Listed building application (Grade II) for alteration and change of use of barn and adjoining buildings to a mixed residential and business use.
RECOMMENDED DECISION:	GRANT

CONDITIONS:

- 1 The works hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of three years, beginning with the date on which the consent was granted.
- 2 Samples of the types and details of colours of all the external finishes, shall be submitted for approval by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the development, and the development shall be implemented in accordance with such approved detail.
- 3 Additional drawings that show details of proposed new windows, doors, rooflights, eaves, verges, fascias, cills, structural openings and junctions with the existing building, by section and elevation at scales between 1:20 and 1:1 as appropriate, shall be submitted to and approved by the LPA in writing prior to the commencement of any works.
- 4 A scheme of landscaping including samples of external surfaces shall be submitted to and agreed by the local planning authority prior to commencement of the works.

Description of Proposal:

Application for listed building consent for the works described in the previous item to enable a residential unit to be created.

Policies Applied:

Structure Plan: HC4	-	Conversion of listed Buildings.
Local Plan: HC13	-	Conversion of Listed Buildings

Issues and Considerations:

The key issue is whether the conversion of the barn and the two adjoining single storey ranges would harm its historic character and appearance.

The conversion will ensure the future use of this fine, but neglected, listed building. The appearance would be little altered, particularly from the road where the fabric will not be changed. New doors and windows would replace existing openings, which are predominantly facing into the inner courtyard area. Part of the northern single storey range is open to the courtyard, but enclosing with full glazing this section will not harm its historic character.

The Listed Building Adviser raises no objections and recommends that consent be granted subject to details of external materials, where replacement roof material is required to match the slates on the barn, design of new windows and door types and landscaping.

There is no objection to this application, which complies with policies HC4 and HC13 of the development plan.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS:

See EPF/1603/05

APPLICATION No:	EPF/1657/05
SITE ADDRESS:	Site at Former Braces Yard, Mill Lane, High Ongar
PARISH:	High Ongar
APPLICANT:	High Ongar Parish Council
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:	Erection of new village hall including new vehicular access.
RECOMMENDED DECISION:	REFUSE

REASON:

1 The proposed new vehicular access would result in serious amenity to the residents of houses opposite in Mill Lane, particularly to the occupants of Nos. 38 and 40 Mill Lane, by reason of noise, disturbance and light intrusion, contrary to policy DBE2 of the adopted Local Plan.

Description of Proposal:

Proposed village hall building, 13m x 20m in footprint, 6.8m high to ridge of proposed tiled, hipped, pitch roof. It would be located centrally towards the Mill Grove end of the site; with a village green and grassed area south-east and north of it. A new vehicular access will be formed through the existing hedge from Mill Lane leading to a car parking area for 29 parking spaces. An existing access into the site, in the south-west corner of the site, will be retained for "emergency and maintenance access only".

Description of Site:

Since Mill Grove housing development for 25 houses was built about 3 years ago, the southern part of this former timber yard site (Braces Timber Yard), intended for a new village hall, has been left vacant. Located on the east side of Mill Lane, previous buildings on the site associated with the timber yard have been demolished. Whilst the site is located in the Green Belt, it is surrounded on three sides by housing. Views into the site from Mill Lane and from the open countryside to the east are generally screened by tree and hedges.

Relevant History:

EPF/985/00Demolition of existing buildings and proposed development for 25 houses (7affordable) and a village hall with open space - Granted planning permission 22/1/02.EPF/577/02Proposed village hall (Revised application) - Approved 29/4/02.

Policies Applied:

Local Plan: Green Belt - GB2, C2 (Structure Plan). Community Buildings - CF8 + CF9. Siting, amenity issues, design + appearance - DBE1 + 2. Parking - T14, T12 (Structure Plan). Highway Safety - T17, T8 (Structure Plan). Landscaping + Trees - LL10. Promoting Accessibility - T3 (Structure Plan).

Issues and Considerations:

The main issue is whether the proposed building would be in keeping with its surroundings, particularly the amenities of the Green Belt, street scene and local residents living in the vicinity of the site. Also, would there be any serious highway issues associated with a new vehicular access onto Mill Lane?

1. Visual Impact

A village hall has been previously approved on this site. Very special circumstances were demonstrated to justify redevelopment of this site in the Green Belt as it was previously brownfield land and the residential element (25 houses) have been built and are occupied. The principle of a village hall was accepted at this time and has been further agreed since.

This proposal is smaller in footprint (260sqm compared with previous approvals for 360sqm and 500sqm) and more compact. In design terms it will be similar and have a traditional, brick and tile appearance. There will be no undue intrusion into the Green Belt. The boundary of the site to the open fields to the east is screened by existing vegetation and the larger portion of the site will be grassed. The building itself would be a reasonable 35m away from houses to the west in Mill Lane and not cause direct impact to these residents.

Soft landscaping to the side of the nearest house, 22 Mill Grove, will reduce the impact of parking in this part of the site. Soft landscaping, involving retention and replanting of the current hedgerow along the Mill Lane frontage, will help screen the parking area from being visually prominent in the street scene.

2. Amenity Issues

The previous two planning permissions proposed vehicular access via Mill Grove, which currently ends as a T-shape turning area. This was because the housing development and the village hall were part of one planning application and it was always intended that access would be from the new estate road. However, the new village hall was not built and access through the housing estate would now bring increased vehicular movement and likely disturbance to these residents. To safeguard against this, a new vehicular access is proposed but this will be directly opposite 38 and 40 Mill Lane.

A total of 29 parking spaces with a possible reinforced grassed area for overspill parking would potentially bring excess vehicular movement, particularly at busy times. This is going to result in increased disturbance and headlight glare from cars exiting at this point, to the serious detriment of these residents, opposite.

3. Parking and Highway Issues

Parking provision (29 spaces) is commensurate with a communal hall building of this size. There is further space potential in the site for further parking when the need arises, and therefore onstreet parking associated with the proposed development is unlikely. Highway Officers have raised no objection to the new vehicular access in highway terms, subject to sight lines being clear to allow clear vision both ways on exiting the site. This will remove existing hedges and shrubs along this part of Mill Lane, and initially open up the site to residents living opposite. Highway Officer requirements for street lighting at this junction will also lighten up this part of the site in front of Nos. 38 and 40 Mill Lane.

With an existing access further to the south, where no hedgerow removal is required, would be a more suitable access point. Alternatively, as originally intended, it could be accessed through Mill Grove. However, with no objection raised by the Highway Officer to the new proposed access, subject to detailing of the access and parking area, footway with lighting provided along the boundary of the site to Mill Lane by means of a Section 106 legal agreement, no highway objection can be claimed.

Summary

There is no objection in principle to the development.

The size, design and appearance of the proposed building and parking area is commensurate with its surroundings and does not cause harm to the character of this part of the green belt or the more open countryside beyond.

The access arrangements in terms of highway safety is considered acceptable and should Members be minded to grant planning permission, the highway improvements at the expense of the applicant will be required by means of a suitable Legal Agreement.

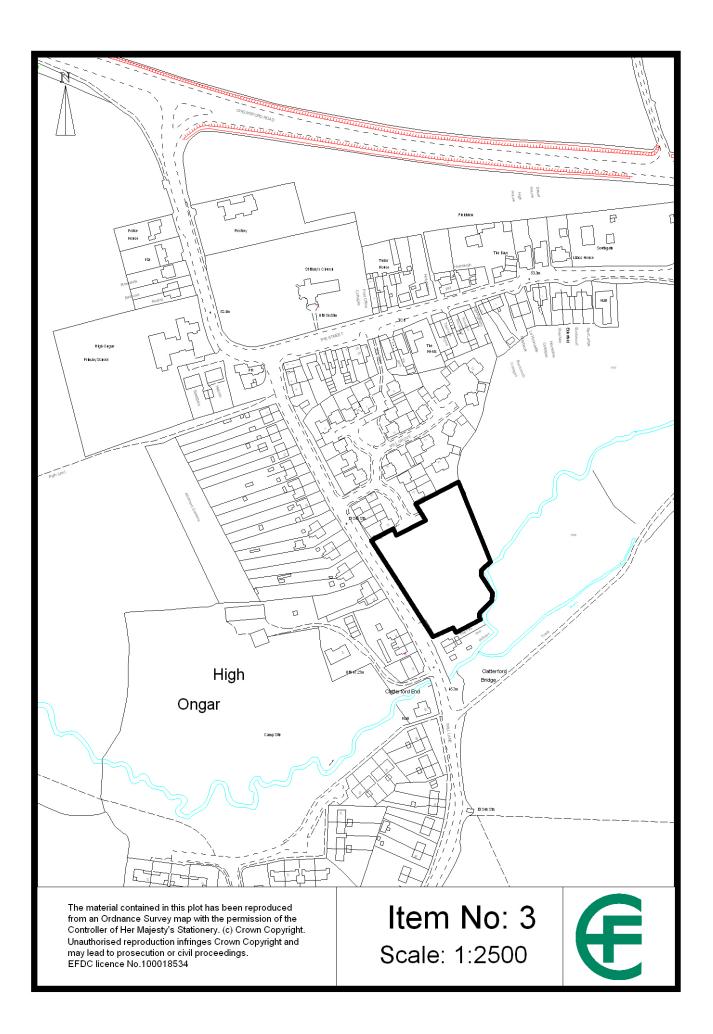
However, the planning application is recommended for refusal by officers because of the position of the new vehicular access. It would not only open up the site to the residents living opposite by the removal of the existing vegetation, but more intrusively, result in serious loss of amenity to the residents particularly nos. 38 and 40 Mill Lane, whose houses are further forward to the road than their neighbours and would directly face the entrance. The proposal is therefore, contrary to Policy DBE2 of the Local Plan.

In view of the above concerns the application is recommended for refusal.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS:

STREET HOUSE, THE STREET – Object, proposed access will not have adequate sight lines and will make an additional traffic hazard to Mill Lane. The current planned access from Mill Grove is adequate. Another entrance in Mill Lane in such close proximity could be an additional hazard as there will be confusion as to who has priority, and residents of Mill Lane will find their own parking further restricted. 28 spaces are inadequate, where will the overflow parking go, parking of additional cars in emergency access is not acceptable in Green Belt. Lighting to the new entrance will cause light pollution to residents in Mill Lane.

38 MILL LANE – Object to new access if opposite my property.



APPLICATION No:	EPF/1658/05
SITE ADDRESS:	High Ongar Village Hall, The Street, High Ongar
PARISH:	High Ongar
APPLICANT:	High Ongar Parish Council
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:	Outline application to demolish existing village hall and erection of two domestic dwellings.
RECOMMENDED DECISION:	GRANT

CONDITIONS:

- 1 The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this notice.
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall only be carried out in accordance with detailed plans and particulars, which shall have previously been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Such details shall show the siting, design and external appearance of the building(s), landscaping and the means of access thereto.
- 3 Details of the types and colours of the external finishes shall be submitted for approval by the Local Planning Authority in writing prior to the commencement of the development, and the development shall be implemented in accordance with such approved details.
- 4 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 1995 as amended (or any other order revoking, further amending or re-enacting that order) no development generally permitted by virtue of Part 1, Class A, shall be undertaken without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority.
- 5 No gates shall be erected at any new access to the site served by a new crossover over the existing footway.

Description of Proposal:

Replacement of village hall building with a pair of semi-detached, two storey houses. New vehicular access to be formed at the front of the site into The Street. Outline application with all matters reserved.

Description of Site:

Village hall building at eastern end of residential properties, at the far end of the built-up area of the village, with countryside (Green Belt) beyond to the west and to the rear (south).

Relevant History:

None.

Policies Applied:

- GB7 Development conspicuous from the Green Belt.
- H3 Criteria for assessing housing outside the Green Belt.
- CF8 Facility provision of public halls.

Issues and Considerations:

The main considerations are the principle of the development, visual impact and amenity issues, and highway safety.

1. Principle of Development

The village hall removal relies upon a replacement building elsewhere in the village. Its current facilities require a more modern building and there is no off-street parking provision here. A new site, the subject of planning permission EPF/1657/05, on the previous item on this agenda, is acceptable in principle, subject to detailing and has an existing granted planning permission, (despite this latest application being recommended for refusal). The surrounding area is made up of predominantly housing, and a pair of houses would fit readily on the site, as shown on the submitted indicative plans, without detriment to the street scene, the amenities of the adjoining, neighbouring house (Red Lodge) or the visual amenities of the adjacent open countryside. Trees would be removed from the eastern site boundary, but an existing hedgerow can be retained. None of the trees are of preservable quality.

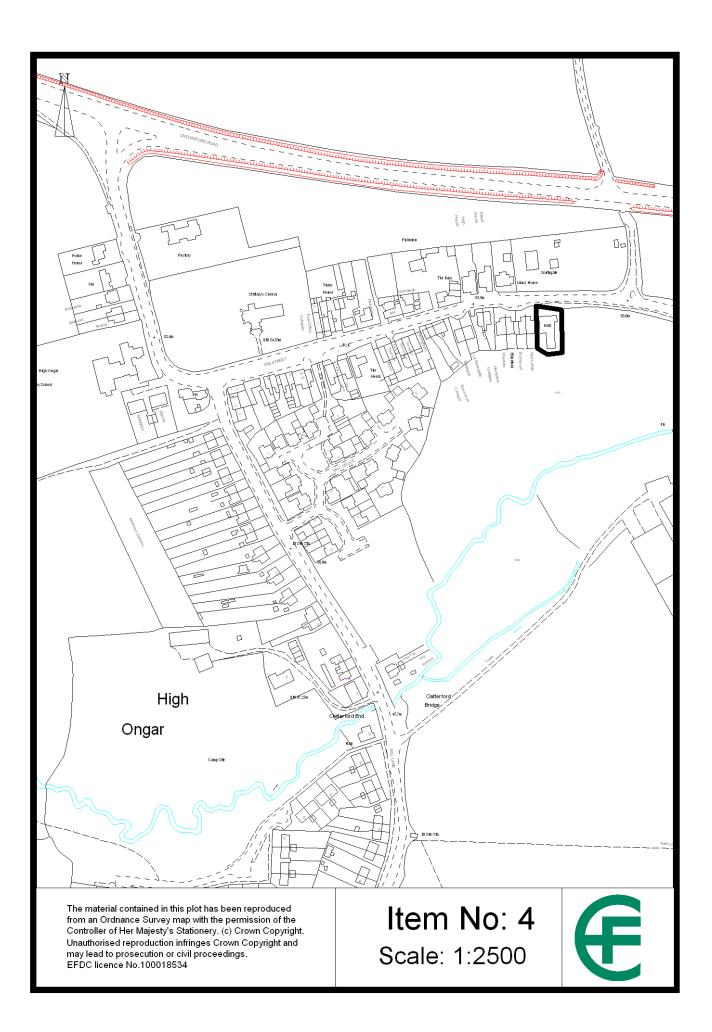
2. Highway Issues

A vehicular access will be introduced to the site and there would potentially be room for car parking and a turning area for both houses. The proposed access can achieve moderate sight lines, but not the 90m required by Highway Officers. However, with vehicle turnaround possible in the site, this, on balance, is considered acceptable in this case.

In summary, the principle of two houses on the site is acceptable and the application is recommended for approval.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS:

None.



APPLICATION No:	EPF/0289/05
SITE ADDRESS:	Village Hall, The Street, Sheering
PARISH:	Sheering
APPLICANT:	Sheering Village Pre-School
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:	Single storey extension, with loft storage area, for pre-school activities.
RECOMMENDED DECISION:	GRANT

CONDITIONS:

- 1 The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this notice.
- 2 Details of the types and colours of the external finishes shall be submitted for approval by the Local Planning Authority in writing prior to the commencement of the development, and the development shall be implemented in accordance with such approved details.
- 3 Details of suitable external storage locations and collection arrangements for refuse shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of the development.
- 4 A flood risk assessment shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of the development. The assessment shall demonstrate that adjacent properties shall not be subject to increased flood risk and, dependant upon the capacity of the receiving drainage, shall include calculations of any increased storm run-off and the necessary on-site detention. The approved measures shall be carried out prior to the first occupation of the building hereby approved and shall be adequately maintained.
- 5 This consent shall inure solely for the benefit of the applicant and for no other person or persons.

Description of Proposal:

It is proposed to construct a single storey extension to the Hall, around 13m long by 7m wide, with a relatively high pitched roof to accommodate ancillary storage in the roofspace. The height to ridge is about 6.5m. The floor area created would be around 92 sq m.

Description of Site:

The Village Hall at Sheering is located centrally off The Street, on the northern edge of the settlement in an open location adjoining the Green Belt. The Hall itself lies behind three detached dwellings, next to the rear curtilage of the Sheering C of E School, which has a hedgerow of varying height affording screening of the site. Access to the large car park for the Hall is via a narrow drive near to the junction of The Street with Church Lane. There is a flat roofed single storey extension at the eastern end of the Hall, which it is proposed to extend further to the northern site boundary, replacing two separate prefabricated single garages on the boundary with the school.

Relevant History:

EPO/682/71 – Village hall – Approved 9.11.71 EPO/1000/73 – Extension to hall – Approved 10.4.74 EPF/717/74 – Extension to car park – Approved 16.10.74 EPF/1673/79 – Garage for storage use – Approved 21.1.80

Relevant Policies:

Structure Plan Policies: CS4 Sustainable new development. RE1 Development in rural settlements T12 Vehicle parking

Local Plan Policies: DBE1 Design of new buildings BDE2 Impact of new buildings on neighbouring property DBE6 Car parking DBE9 Impact of development on amenity LL3 Landscaping on settlement edges LL11 Landscaping of developments T17 Traffic implications of developments

Issues and Considerations:

Sheering Village Hall houses a variety of community uses, including a well-used pre-school activities group which has a small hall area for morning use only, ending at 12.30pm. No other community group has used the space in the afternoon for some years.

In principle, the improvement of a community facility such as this playgroup is acceptable in land use terms, as it is sited centrally in the settlement where most of the children live, enabling them to be brought on foot or with a minimal journey. The new building would, however, appear unusually high, being higher than the existing Hall and its earlier flat-roofed addition. This is to provide roof level storage without creating a larger building, which would intrude into either the car park or the open playing field in the Green Belt. Although it is 6.5m to ridge level, this is no higher than a chalet bungalow. On balance it considered that it would be acceptable in terms of the view into the village from the north across Green Belt land, given the variety of building heights along this side of The Street (Local Plan policy GB7).

The County Highways section has concerns about the additional accommodation enabling a net increase in traffic movements at the Village Hall, with detrimental effects on traffic flow on The

Street (B183) and on highway safety in relation to poor visibility at the access. Although these concerns are understood, in practice it is not considered that there will be any net increase in traffic, the pre-school group not being expected to grow but rather gain more useable accommodation. Any take-up of the vacated space by another local group would not necessarily involve movements at the same time as the pre-school group. A condition limiting use of the new extension to the pre-school group only will further ensure that the additional floorspace is for local activities, reducing the number and length of journeys anticipated.

The need for matching materials, routine flood risk assessment and suitable refuse collection arrangements should be the subject of conditions, as in the recommendation.

Conclusions

The Village Hall extension is considered acceptable, on balance, subject to conditions limiting occupation to the Sheering Village Pre-School group only; matching external materials; requiring a flood risk assessment; and for details of refuse storage and collection arrangements prior to occupation of the development.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS:

SHEERING PARISH COUNCIL – No comments received. NEIGHBOURS – No replies.

