

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

MAIDENHEAD DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PANEL

19 December 2016

Item: 1

Application No.:	16/01411/FULL
Location:	Land To North And East of Cookham Nursery School Station Hill Cookham Maidenhead
Proposal:	Erection of 4 No. dwellings with associated access works, public open space, car parking and landscaping to include on site parking area for nursery staff and additional parking for the residents of Roman Lea.
Applicant:	Oakford Homes
Agent:	Mr Paul Thomas
Parish/Ward:	Cookham Parish/Bisham And Cookham Ward

If you have a question about this report, please contact: Susan Sharman on 01628 685320 or at susan.sharman@rbwm.gov.uk

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This application is the subject of a non-determination appeal. As such, it is not for the Council to formally determine the application, but to advise the Planning Inspectorate of what decision it would have reached had an appeal not been made.
- 1.2 The application relates to an area of land, known locally as the Pony Field, which itself forms part of a larger area known as Poundfield. Poundfield has a lengthy and complex planning history, which reflects the pressure to build on it. Details of this history are set out further in the report, but the current situation is that the land, including the application site, is not within the designated Green Belt boundary. The application site is however within the Cookham High Street Conservation Area.
- 1.3 The application has attracted considerable public interest, not least because Cookham is strongly associated with the British painter, Sir Stanley Spencer. Given the unique circumstances of this site and the interest in the application, external experts have been consulted specifically in relation to heritage and design matters. Their advice is clear; the association of Cookham with the work of Sir Stanley Spencer puts the Cookham High Street Conservation Area at an international level of importance.
- 1.4 The building of 4 dwellings, together with the associated drives, garages etc, on this site would cause substantial harm to an exceptionally significant heritage asset. National Planning Policy advises that, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm, planning permission should be refused.
- 1.5 The Tree Officer has advised that the proposed cartshed garage adjacent to the eastern boundary can not be implemented without having a detrimental impact on the health and visual amenity of the principal trees along this boundary in both the short and long term. These principal trees contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area, provide screening to the site and are subject to a Tree Preservation Order.
- 1.6 The Highway Authority has raised no objections to the parking provision and layout, and has advised that the additional parking proposed along Roman Lea and within the site for nursery staff is a highway benefit. Archaeological issues have been fully investigated and raise no objections. The Council's Ecologist has raised no objections to the proposal subject to conditions.
- 1.7 The proposed development would contribute to the supply of housing in the Royal Borough.

- 1.8 Paragraph 133 of the NPPF advises that where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm. In terms of public benefits, it is acknowledged that the proposal would contribute to the Borough's housing stock, which represents a benefit of the scheme. However, while the proposed designation of the site as a Local Green Space in the emerging Borough Local Plan cannot be afforded any weight at this stage, it is clear from the evidence provided that the proposal would substantially harm the Cookham High Street Conservation Area and all that it entails. This Conservation Area is an exceptionally significant heritage asset and the benefits of providing a further 4 dwellings to the Royal Borough's housing does not outweigh the substantial harm caused.

It is recommended the Panel refuses planning permission for the following summarised reason (the full reason is identified in Section 10 of this report):	
1.	Substantial harm to the Cookham High Street Conservation Area which is an exceptionally significant heritage asset. No substantial public benefits exist to outweigh the harm to the heritage asset. Contrary to policies DG1, CA2, LB2 RBWM LP, G4.5 and G14.1 of the Cookham VDS and paragraph 133 of the NPPF.
2.	The proposal would have an adverse impact on important trees along the boundary of the application site, causing detrimental harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Contrary to Local Plan policies N6, DG1 and CA2 and paragraph 109 of the NPPF.
3.	Loss of open space and loss of open space with historical significance, which is valued by the community and offers an open space enjoyed for its tranquillity in the heart of the settlement. Contrary to NPPF paragraph 74.

2. REASON FOR PANEL DETERMINATION

- At the request of Councillor. Saunders irrespective of the recommendation by the Head of Planning for the reason: Substantial objections, including contradiction of the unanimous Council decision on 23 February 2016 to seek Local Green Space status for 'Poundfield' and the closing paragraph in the 2001 Court of Appeal judgement, which otherwise technically prevented RBWM's decision to designate 'Poundfield' as Green Belt but also stated *'The appellants can have small cause only, to rejoice. Other rigorous planning controls will still apply to the land and there can be little expectation of any extensive planning permissions. The Cookham Society and others interested in this area need not be too concerned.'*

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

- 3.1 The site comprises an irregular shaped parcel of land located on the north side of Station Hill, Cookham at the junction with Maidenhead Road and The Pound. The site area is approximately 0.43ha. The site currently has no buildings or structures above ground, but is fenced. The site rises from south to north by approximately 2 metres, the paddock land to the north rising perceptively towards a flatter area at the top of the hill approximately 20m above the site.
- 3.2 The site has an open frontage to Station Hill of approximately 33m. Directly opposite this is a mini roundabout at the junction with Maidenhead Road which although an historic route is, by virtue of twentieth century development, a suburban residential road. At the south eastern corner where Pound Field Lane joins The Pound is Anchor Court, a 2.5 storey apartment block in a Victorian/Edwardian style with Victorian sash windows, tile hanging and steeply sloping gabled roofs. Behind this are an amenity area and a car park. On the eastern boundary is Pound Field Lane, a bridleway of approximately 70m. Roman Lea road runs approximately 85m along the site's western boundary. To the north-east is a field hedge line separating the enclosed site from the more open paddock land to the north. Adjacent to the application site, to the south-west, is Cookham Day Nursery which is an early post-war structure of a modern design.
- 3.3 The application site is located within the Cookham High Street Conservation Area

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL AND ANY RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 As the application site is included within the area of land known as 'Poundfield', its planning history is lengthy. The table below therefore sets out a summary of this, in particular how the current designation of site, in planning terms, has been arrived at.

Date	Application / Event	Decision/outcome
1967 - 1973	Four planning applications for residential development refused planning permission.	Appeals were dismissed on highway grounds. All Inspectors and the Minister at the time accepted that the site was physically suitable for residential development.
1985	Berkshire County Council adopted the Green Belt Local Plan for Berkshire.	Poundfield excluded on the ground that the site's suitability for development had been established by a series of appeals (subject to the resolution of access difficulties) and thus to transfer to the Green Belt was not appropriate.
1985	Draft Maidenhead and District Local Plan allocated land at Poundfield for housing.	This Plan was not adopted.
1989	Outline planning permission sought for two alternative residential development schemes on the Poundfield site.	Both schemes proposed 25 sheltered housing units, together with either 88 or 66 houses.
21 April 1991	The Secretary of State dismissed both appeals.	The Planning Inspector recommended that planning permission be granted, however the Secretary of State disagreed.
1992	Draft Berkshire Structure Plan deposited.	Poundfield excluded from the Green Belt. This Plan was later adopted in 1995.
1993	RBWM published its consultation draft for the new Local Plan.	Two main fields to the east of Poundfield Lane were designated as Areas of Important Urban Open Space. Cookham Conservation Area was extended to include the houses to the west of the Lane.
1994	Deposit draft of the new Local Plan published with Green Belt boundary revisions.	The Plan identified Poundfield within the Green Belt.
1995	Appellants object to the proposed Green Belt boundary revisions.	An Inspector hears the objections but proposes no modifications.
30 July 1999	RBWM adopt the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan/	The Plan includes land at Poundfield within the Green Belt for the first time.
31 March 2000	Appellant's application to the High Court, pursuant to s287 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, to quash the Local Plan in respect of the Objection Site (which includes the land forming the current application site). Permission to appeal is granted because of the potential wider importance of the matter.	The Local Plan is adopted and land at Poundfield (hereinafter referred to as the Objections Site) is Green Belt for the time being.
7 February 2001	Appeal allowed and the RBWM decision to adopt the Local Plan was quashed in so far as it relates to the Objection Site.	The extent of the Objection Site is identified by a plan attached to the Court Order dated 7 th February 2001. (see Appendix F)
3 March 2001	RBWM submit an application seeking leave to appeal the decision of the Court of Appeal.	
25 July 2001	RBWM application for leave to appeal is denied by the House	

	of Lords Appeal Committee.	
2001	All the land within the Poundfield area which had been identified in the 1999 Local Plan as Green Belt (including the current application site) was removed from the Green Belt.	The land removed from the Green Belt designation mistakenly included land which did not fall within the Objection Site. RBWM had incorrectly removed land which had lawfully been designated Green Belt from the Green Belt boundary.
September 2001	Land outside of the Green Belt within the Poundfield area, but outside of the Objection Site, that had been mistakenly taken out, is reinstated.	
2014	RBWM receives an allegation that land within the Objection Site which in 2001 did not belong to the Appellants should be returned to the Green Belt.	The Court had ordered that the Local Plan should be quashed insofar as it relates to the Objection Site. The fact that parts of the Objection Site were not owned by the appellants was not relevant to the decision reached by the Court. Although the judgement refers to the appellant's land, the application related to the Objection Site and the Court order specifically states that the Local Plan be quashed in respect of the Objection Site. If the Council were to amend the Green Belt boundary to only exclude from the Green Belt land within the Objection Site owned by the appellants, it would be in breach of the Court.
25 th November 2014	Legal advice obtained confirms that RBWM was correct to exclude all the land in the Objection Site from the Green Belt.	Further legal advice on the matter has confirmed that the Court's decision applied to all land within the Objection Site, regardless of its ownership. The application site was correctly removed from the Green Belt pursuant to the Court order.
December 2014 and January 2015	Legal opinions sought maintain the advice that RBWM was correct to exclude all the land in the Objection Site (including the application site) from the Green Belt.	

- 4.2 The application seeks planning permission for 4 dwellings, comprising three 4 bedroom dwellings and one 2 bedroom property. In addition to providing parking for the development itself, parking (7 spaces) is also proposed for staff from the adjacent nursery together with 11 layby spaces and a turning area for residents along Roman Lea. The site would be accessed from a new arm off the existing roundabout at the Station Hill, The Pound and Maidenhead Road junction. Public open space would be provided at the front of the site, adjacent to the new access.
- 4.3 The proposal is to erect a 2 storey detached farm house and a range of 3 barn style homes arranged in the form of a farmstead. The farmhouse would face south across an enclosed yard with the main barns and cowshed range arranged on the west and south sides respectively. The east side would be partially enclosed by a range of cartshed garages.
- 4.4 The proposed farm house is a simple 3 bay house, such as may have been built in the late 18th or early 19th Century. It has a steeply pitched straight gabled roof with simple roof detailing in brickwork, and with the gable ends buttressed by chimney stacks symmetrically placed on the ridgeline at either end. The tripartite windows to the front elevation have stone surrounds and there is a church style porch. There are 2 single storey elements; a lean-to off-shot to the right hand side and a hipped garden room extension to the left rear. The tallest building on the site, the farm house has a ridge height of 9m and an eaves height of 5m.
- 4.5 Units 2, 3 and 4 consist of a range of "barn conversions". Plots 2 and 3 have low eaves, generally of 3m, with the main gabled-ended pitched roof having a ridge height of 8m. Plot 4 is

lower, with a 2m eave height and 6.5m ridge height. Detailing on these units has been kept simple with areas of full height glazing to the ground floor, large areas of ground and first floor glazing constrained to the gable ends, and flush conservation grade rooflights with black frames set into the roof slopes where necessary, generally facing into the courtyard. Glazing is supplemented by a limited use of apex glazing at high level.

- 4.6 Proposed materials include a locally appropriate multi-red stock brick facing for the farm house and barn bases, natural timber boarding for the barn style houses, a dark good quality clay tile to help blend the roofs into the landscape and natural slate for the subsidiary cartshed range.
- 4.7 Automatically opening garage doors and a forecourt apron is proposed to prevent vehicles parking outside the garages.
- 4.8 The proposal includes the development of a strip of land along the western boundary of the site to provide 11 layby parking spaces and a small turning area for residents of Roman Lea. In addition, the frontage of the site, adjacent to the proposed access, would be replaced by an area of public open space, approximately 33m wide (including the access) and approximately 16m deep, the maintenance of which would be secured through a Section 106 legal agreement.

5. MAIN RELEVANT STRATEGIES AND POLICIES RELEVANT TO THE DECISION

- 5.1 National Planning Policy Framework Sections 6, 7, 8, 11 and 12 and paragraphs 14 and 17.

Royal Borough Local Plan

- 5.2 The main strategic planning considerations applying to the site and the associated policies are:

Within settlement area	Highways and Parking	Trees & Hedgerows	Conservation
DG1, H10, H11	P4, T5	N6, N7	CA1, CA2, LB2

Supplementary planning documents

- 5.3 Supplementary planning documents adopted by the Council relevant to the proposal are:

- Cookham Village Design Statement, including sections G4.5 and G14.1.

More information on these documents can be found at:

https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/info/200414/local_development_framework/494/supplementary_planning

Other Local Strategies or Publications

- 5.4 Other Strategies or publications relevant to the proposal are:

- RBWM Townscape Assessment
- RBWM Parking Strategy

More information on these documents can be found at:

https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/info/200414/local_development_framework/494/supplementary_planning

6. EXPLANATION OF RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 The key issues for consideration are:

- i Whether the principle of development is acceptable;
- ii The impact of the proposal on the Cookham High Street Conservation Area (excluding the impact on trees which is covered in point vi);
- iii The impact on the living conditions of neighbours;

- iv Parking provision and highway safety;
- v Ecological issues;
- vi The impact on trees;
- vii Archaeological issues;
- viii Impact on open space;
- ix Other material considerations, and
- x The planning balance.

The principle of development

- 6.2 Section 14 of the NPPF advises that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that for decision taking this means, unless material considerations indicate otherwise and where development plan policies are out of date, granting permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the NPPF as a whole; or specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted. A footnote to section 14 provides examples of specific policies where development might be restricted; these include land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space and designated heritage sites.
- 6.3 The table in section 4.1 of this report concludes that the application site is not in the Green Belt. However, the site is located within the Cookham High Street Conservation Area, which is a designated heritage asset. The site's location within a designated heritage asset does not preclude development, but requires that the specific policies relating to that designation (in this case the policies set out in Section 12 of the NPPF), be complied with.

The impact on the Cookham High Street Conservation Area

- 6.4 Given the unique circumstances of Poundfield, in which the application site is located, and the level of public interest in this site and application, the Head of Planning commissioned two independent consultants to advise specifically on the heritage and design aspects of the proposal.
- 6.5 The Cookham High Street Conservation Area was originally designated in 1969 by Berkshire County Council. In 1991 the boundaries were reviewed and enlarged to incorporate new areas. The boundaries were further reviewed and extended in 2002. There are six listed buildings in proximity to the Pony Field, all Grade II: Englefield House; Hayden's Cottage; Old Oak Cottage; Old Timbers; Old Farmhouse and the Granary at Old Farmhouse. The Cookham Nursery School (1949) designed by architect John Stillman as a model of educational architecture is a non-designated heritage asset.
- 6.6 Nationally listed buildings are by virtue of this designation of national significance. All of the buildings in the vicinity of the proposed development are designated Grade II and of moderate-high significance.
- 6.7 The Pony Field and Poundfield together create an important wedge of green space between the ancient village of Cookham and the nineteenth-century and later development around the railway (Cookham Rise). The low-lying nursery school in its substantial grounds contributes to this sense of space. Taken as a whole this space is of high significance for historical, aesthetic and communal reasons. Historically it is significant as an area of agricultural land immediately adjacent to the village. It is an important space for maintaining the visual integrity and setting of the historic village of Cookham and separating it from later development. The space is valued by residents and visitors as an open space.

6.8 Views are an important element of the significance of the Conservation Area. Upon entering the village from Maidenhead Road, the first view is of the wedge of open land (the Pony Field) which has a semi-rural appearance, although appreciation is harmed by the large number of permanent and temporary signs, reflecting local campaigns, cultural and community events, on the fencing fronting the highway and the somewhat out-of-scale residential block to the east of Poundfield Lane. This view is of moderate-high significance on aesthetic grounds, though it could be improved with better management. Standing between Anchor Court and the Nursery School opens up a panoramic view towards Roman Lea in the west, past the low lying Nursery School, up the hill to Poundfield and towards the large trees at Englefield House. This view has moderate-high significance.

6.9 Sir Stanley Spencer

“A Village in Heaven”: Stanley Spencer’s Cookham

The reputation of Sir Stanley Spencer (1881-1959) as an outstanding 20th-century artist continues to grow. Observation of real life, an ambivalent attitude to the self, and a deep spirituality pervade Spencer’s paintings. His use of Cookham as the setting for so many visionary subjects makes the village a popular destination for aficionados. The paintings however are not always accurate depictions of the village; he was not afraid to exercise artistic licence to aid his narratives. Many details in the smaller canvases are recognisable views and are as direct as many of his bold portraits. In other pictures, however, artistic liberties are taken so that the spirit of the place is captured. It is this spirit which designation as a conservation area serves to protect.

6.10 Spencer painted more than 100 pictures in and around Cookham. Spencer’s deep attachment for Cookham as a ‘village made in heaven’ and a place where he felt divine intervention happened, contribute to his standing out from his contemporaries. Many of the artist’s Cookham-related works depict views, scenes, facades and other details.

6.11 The association of Cookham with Sir Stanley Spencer raises the significance of the Conservation Area to an international level. Poundfield, and Englefield House are particularly important in this respect not just for the preservation of particular views, but as a key element in Spencer’s inspiration, the world in which he lived and the world that he created in his art.

6.12 Cookham has high significance as an ancient settlement and river crossing. There is little evidence of archaeological remains in the Pony Field and in this respect the area’s evidential value is low. However, the distinctive layout of the village, the distribution of buildings, and the absence of buildings (gaps between buildings or groups of buildings) is particularly significant.

6.13 The proposal is for four dwellings with access and garaging in the form of a farmhouse and associated outbuildings on land known as the Pony Field adjacent to Cookham Nursery School, Poundfield Land and Roman Lea.

6.14 The NPPF requires that,

“In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary.”

6.15 The applicant’s Heritage Statement describes the heritage assets affected in an appropriate level of detail, but the section on significance has no scale against which significance is judged and does not refer to the heritage values set out in Historic England’s Conservation Principles (Evidential, Historical, Aesthetic and Communal). The assessment of significance states that, “Despite its openness, the site is of insufficient scale to provide a meaningful degree of separation between the conservation area and Cookham Rise to the west.” In fact the site is in the Conservation Area, not separating the Conservation Area from Cookham Rise. Although the Heritage Statement says that “The rural village setting has been eroded particularly at the western end by progressive suburban development”, the gap represented by the site has been

largely unaltered since the building of the Edwardian houses in Roman Lea, with the single exception of the modest Nursery School built in 1949. The section entitled Heritage Impact Assessment makes little attempt to assess the impact of the proposal. There is no attempt to address the loss of space or views and no understanding of the harm caused to historic farmsteads by the insertion of a faux-farmyard into a street with several listed buildings which the Heritage Statement describes as "...cottages or former farmhouses that would have originally been set within a village or rural setting."

- 6.16 The design of the development is described as being in the form of a farmstead, consisting of a farmhouse, barn, cart sheds and one other unidentified building. As a representation of a farm with 'barns' converted to residential use, the design is unconvincing. Farmhouses do not usually face into the working farmyard. The facade of the house would face the highway with the service buildings behind or to the side. The design of the 'barn' is particularly inauthentic. Cart bays do not usually rise to the same height as the ridge of the 'barn' roof. It is not usual to have cart bays on both sides of a barn. The very large barn doors that a cart bay is designed to accommodate are only needed on the entrance side as the cart will be full going in, unloaded in the barn, and empty going out. What is required however is that the cart can drive through the barn, so even if there were two cart bays, they would have to line up with one another, which they do not here.
- 6.17 The NPPF states that,
- 132. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification....*
- 133. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss....*
- 134. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.*
- 138. Not all elements of a World Heritage Site or Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 133 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 134, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.*
- 6.18 The listed buildings are of moderate-high significance. No listed building is being physically changed, though the setting of these listed buildings (farmhouses, cottages and a granary) within a rural historic village would be diminished. The setting of the non-designated Cookham Nursery School would also be impacted.
- 6.19 Space has been identified as being of high significance in this part of the conservation area. The proposed development would result in the loss of the visual gap between The Pound, part of the historic settlement of Cookham, and the nineteenth-century and later settlement around the railway. What space remains would be totally altered in that what is now an open field would become a managed open space adjacent to the highway. This represents a major impact on a heritage asset of high significance.
- 6.20 There are a number of views available across the Pony Field. It is the first view of the village when approached from Maidenhead via the B4447. The proposed development would eliminate these views. This represents a major impact on a heritage asset of moderate-high significance.

- 6.21 The Cookham High Street Conservation Area is of international significance on account of its association with Sir Stanley Spencer and his work. Although there are no known paintings by Spencer of the Pony Field, it is continuous with Poundfield which is important for an understanding of the work of the artist. The loss of space and would be harmful to the setting of Spencer's work in Cookham.
- 6.22 The design of the development as an imitation of an historic farmstead that has been converted for residential use is the creation of a false history. The design is an inaccurate representation of a farmstead. It falsifies history in a location where history is important. This false farm would be standing just a short distance from the listed Old Farmhouse and the Granary at Old Farmhouse. The false history of this pretend farm undermines the real history of Cookham.
- 6.23 The character of the area, which a conservation area is intended to preserve and enhance, would be totally changed by this development. The filling in of this gap would create a continuous street frontage linking two historic settlements.
- 6.24 The NPPF sets out 12 Core principles
Para 17 Within the overarching roles that the planning system ought to play, a set of core land-use planning principles should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. These 12 principles are that planning should: [Bullet 10] conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations
- 6.25 The Pony Field makes a positive contribution to the high significance of the Cookham High Street Conservation Area. The proposed development would:
- Create a false history by building a faux-farmstead in a sensitive location;
 - Eliminate the important gap between the ancient settlement of Cookham and the nineteenth-century and later settlement around the railway;
 - Eliminate the view across the Pony Field to the higher ground of Poundfield, the setting and inspiration for some of Stanley Spencer's most important paintings.
- 6.26 The proposal represents substantial harm to the high significance of the Cookham High Street Conservation Area. The NPPF (133) indicates that a proposal causing substantial harm should be refused unless the harm is outweighed by the public benefit. The proposal does not represent a substantial public benefit.
- 6.27 The main issues raised specific to the proposal are that:
- 6.28 The form of development, described as a farmstead, seems incongruous with surrounding development and there would appear to be no reference or precedent for this in the immediate area. It fails to relate to the patterns of development that define the character of the surrounding area. The site has an established street to the west but the proposal turns its back on it. The siting of car parking to the front of the site results in a weak relationship to Station Road and The Pound. The development would appear as a relatively large building plot in a backland setting and is considered out of character with the surrounding development.
- 6.29 The farmstead is a highly stylised proposition in both layout and appearance in contrast to the surrounding housing, which is generally arranged in a regular street fronting pattern, with some good examples of architecture representative of when it was built, as well as an amount of pastiche or vernacular. The development is set back from public routes and somewhat inward looking and therefore its roof profile would be most apparent. Whilst no issue is taken in terms of its vernacular pitch form or materiality, the development would appear as a relatively large building plot in a backland setting and is considered out of character with the surrounding scale of development.
- 6.30 The form and scale of development would result in filling in the gap and the substantial loss of the green wedge, which would detrimental to the open character of the land, which is an important

characteristic of the Conservation Area at this point. The development would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The impact on the living conditions of neighbours

- 6.31 The application site is surrounded by residential properties; Anchor Court is a flatted development that lies to the east, houses along Maidenhead Road to the south and Roman Lea to the west.
- 6.32 At its closest point, the dwelling on plot 4 would be approximately 28m from the corner of Anchor Court. Given this separation distance and the dwelling's siting to the north-west and orientation, the proposal would not harm the living conditions of the occupiers in Anchor Court by reason of loss of privacy, loss of daylight or by appearing overbearing. Similarly, the properties along Maidenhead Road are at least 60m away from the proposed building and, as such, would be unaffected by the development.
- 6.33 At its closest point, the dwelling on plot 2 would be approximately 21m from No.8 Roman Lea. Given this separation distance, the dwelling would not result in any loss of light to or appear overbearing when viewed from No.8 Roman Lea. Three roof lights are proposed to plot 2, but these would not cause any loss of privacy to any of the properties along Roman Lea.

Parking provision and highway safety

- 6.34 The Highway Authority has provided the following advice:
- 6.35 Station Hill is subject to a 30mph speed limit and forms a priority roundabout with The Pound and Maidenhead Road. The site is located to the north of Station Hill and bounded on two sides by Roman Lea to the west and Poundfield Lane to the east. In the immediate vicinity, on street parking is prohibited along the site frontage and through to The Pound and Maidenhead Road. The site boundary also abuts Cookham Nursery School. Roman Lea is a private street that serves some 15 residential dwellings and has a carriageway width that varies between 3.6 and 5.50 metres. The private street effectively operates as a single carriageway, due to the presence of cars parked along its eastern boundary. Roman Lea offers limited opportunities for vehicles to turn and leave in a forward gear.
- 6.36 Permission is sought to construct 4 dwellings served by a gated access directly off the north side of the roundabout. The proposals include the provision of 7 car parking spaces for the neighbouring property, Cookham Nursery School. The development also proposes the provision of 11 car parking spaces along the eastern boundary of Roman Lea. Based upon site observations, on street parking already occurs along the eastern side of Roman Lea. The proposal would increase the width of the existing carriageway, with the added benefit of enabling two-way vehicular flow to occur across this section whilst allowing vehicles to continue to park on Roman Lea. An additional benefit is the introduction of a turning facility directly opposite number 12/13 Roman Lea, which would allow cars to turn at the end of Roman Lea. In highway terms, these improvements are considered to be a highway gain.
- 6.37 The Borough Parking Strategy sets a requirement of 3 spaces for a 4 bedroom unit and 2 spaces for a 2/3 bedroom unit. Plot 1 is a detached 4 bedroom unit which is provided with 4 car parking spaces – 2 surface spaces with 2 spaces in a garage block. Plot 2, a terraced 4 bedroom unit has 2 spaces in the detached garage block and Plot 3, a terraced 4 bedroom unit, would have a double integral garage. To comply with the Parking Strategy Plots 2 and 3 should both be provided with 3 car parking spaces. However, the submitted layout plan, indicates that there is sufficient room within the site to satisfy the Borough's parking requirement. Plot 4 is a 2 bedroom terraced dwelling with 2 spaces in a car port. As the car port is bounded on three sides the minimum internal dimension should be 6.0 x 6.0m. This could be covered by a suitably worded planning condition.
- 6.38 In addition to the residential parking, the applicant proposes providing 7 spaces for the nursery and for visitors during evenings and weekends. In highway terms this could potentially lead to a reduction in on street parking in the immediate vicinity.

- 6.39 The plans show a shared cycle and bin storage facility attached to the side of the garage block. It is questionable whether this facility is sufficient in size to accommodate both uses. However, given that there is sufficient room within the site this could also be covered by a planning condition. The submission includes a plan demonstrating that sufficient space is provided to allow refuse and service vehicles to enter, manoeuvre within the site and leave in a forward gear.
- 6.40 The submission is accompanied by a Transport Statement, normally required for residential developments ranging between 50 and 80 units. Based upon a worst case scenario the traffic generated would result in 4 additional trips during the *am* and *pm* peak periods. The assessment of the traffic impact arising from the proposal infers that there would be an imperceptible effect on the operation of the roundabout. Having assessed the Transport Statement and visited the site, the Highway Authority considers that the development would have a negligible effect on traffic in the immediate and surrounding area. The introduction of the 4th arm onto the roundabout, together with the maintenance of the access, driveway and parking areas, would need to be secured by way of a Section 106 legal agreement. With regard to the gated entrance to the site, the gates should either be removed or a vehicle pressure pad opening system should be installed; the Highway Authority would not support an arrangement which forces vehicles to reverse onto the public highway if access is denied. This could be sufficiently addressed by way of a planning condition.
- 6.41 The Highway Authority raises no objections subject to the inclusion of conditions to any approval relating to the submission of details of the access to be submitted and approved prior to commencement, the submission and approval of a Construction Management Plan, details of the parking spaces, cycle parking facilities and refuse storage area, and gates to open away from the highway and include a vehicular pressure pad system to open.

Third party review of the submitted Transport Statement

- 6.42 The Cookham Society has commissioned its own review of the Transport Statement submitted with the application (Report by ADL Traffic Engineering Ltd, August 2016). The report concludes that the proposal should be refused on the following grounds:
- ∩ Lack of accurate assessment of The Pound/Maidenhead Road mini-roundabout and its interaction with Poundfield Lane which is considered to be very critical;
 - ∩ An addition of a new arm to this roundabout would therefore result in increased vehicular movements and manoeuvres which could increase the likelihood of conflicts, which is a major highway safety concern. This would also result in likely pedestrian and cycle safety concerns, arising from uncertainty about where traffic is heading towards;
 - ∩ By not providing speed reduction facilities at the roundabout, this could result in possible collisions that may involve other non-motorised users and therefore the impact of the proposal is considered to be severe.
 - ∩ The traffic generation methodology is flawed in relation to the proposed houses as well as the nursery traffic and the ARCADY for the mini-roundabout has not been validated against observed queues;
 - ∩ No justification has been provided on the provision of seven car parking spaces for the nursery. No measures have been proposed to ensure that these seven spaces would be used by the nursery staff only;
 - ∩ A gated vehicular site access could result in vehicles reversing onto the mini roundabout since there is no turning area on the site access for the vehicles to turn around, thus resulting in further increased risk of accidents at this roundabout.
- 6.43 The report concludes that the cumulative impact of the proposed residential development is severe and hence should be refused on transport and safety grounds based on the NPPF's severity test: "32. *All developments that generate significant amounts of movement should be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment. Plans and decisions should take*

account of whether: • Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.”

6.44 This third party submission has been assessed by the Highways Officer who has provided a comprehensive rebuttal to the issues raised. In short, the response stresses that the proposal is for four dwellings only, the traffic generation for which would be imperceptible and unlikely to cause harm to those that reside or commute in the area. A number of the issues raised could be sufficiently addressed by planning conditions and, as advised in The Department for Transport Guidance on Transport Assessment, proposals for less than 50 dwellings do not require a Transport Statement.

Ecological issues

6.45 An extended Phase 1 habitat survey, bat and reptile surveys and detailed landscaping proposals have been assessed by the Council's Ecologist.

6.46 A bat activity survey was undertaken at an optimal time of year to determine the value of the site for commuting and foraging bats. The site was assessed as being of local value for commuting bats and negligible value for foraging bats. The majority of the site comprises grassland which is of low value for commuting bats, although the scrub in the north will be removed and therefore a small area of commuting habitat is to be lost. In order to mitigate for this, the applicant's ecologist has provided some recommendations for site enhancement for bats including boundary hedgerow planting, native species planting, sensitive lighting and installation of bat boxes/ tubes into the new properties.

6.47 The mosaic of habitats on site were recorded as providing suitable habitat for reptiles. All native species of reptile are protected from killing and injury under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) as amended. In addition, all common native species of reptile are Species of Principal Importance under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 and receive further protection through national planning policy. A reptile survey was undertaken at an optimal time of year with a low population of slow worms at the site being recorded. A reptile mitigation strategy was prepared and included details of exclusion of reptiles from the site, the translocation process, post translocation works and enhancements of the receptor site for reptiles. The strategy did not contain details of a receptor site although the updated Phase 1 habitat survey has provided a location for this. The applicant's ecologist has recommended that the receptor site is managed and enhanced for reptiles. The reptile mitigation strategy should be updated to include further information regarding the receptor site including its management and enhancement.

6.48 The site was assessed as having low potential to support great crested newts in their terrestrial phase. Great crested newts receive full legal protection under the Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations 2010 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This makes it illegal to deliberately injure, kill, capture or disturb a great crested newt, or to damage, destroy or obstruct any places used for shelter and protection. There are three suitable water bodies which had the potential to support great crested newts, the closest being 270m from the site. The applicant's ecologist has undertaken Natural England's Risk Assessment for great crested newts and concluded that given the distance from the potential breeding ponds and the small amount of suitable habitat lost, the development is highly unlikely to cause an offense under legislation protecting great crested newts. As a precaution, the applicant's ecologist has recommended that a non-licensed method statement is prepared for great crested newts and followed during development.

6.49 No badgers or signs of badgers were recorded during the extended Phase 1 habitat survey, although the habitats on site were recorded as providing moderate potential to support this species. It is recommended that as badgers are highly mobile animals, that immediately prior to development works, a check of the hedgerows and scrub for badgers is undertaken, to ensure badgers have not moved onto the site.

6.50 The scrub and hedgerow boundaries on site were recorded as having high potential to support breeding birds. Breeding birds, their eggs and active nests are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended. The ecology report makes reference to the protection of breeding birds during development including removal of vegetation outside the breeding bird

season (which spans from March to August inclusive) or else vegetation clearance should be undertaken immediately subsequent to checks by an experienced ecologist.

- 6.51 Paragraph 109 of the NPPF states that: “*The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by [...] minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government’s commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures*”. In addition, Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 states that “*Every public authority must, in exercising its function, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity*”.
- 6.52 The ecology reports and landscape plan provide details of a number of ecological enhancements which are to be incorporated into the proposed development and include wildlife friendly planting and installation of roosting opportunities for bats, breeding opportunities for birds and insect boxes. In addition, it is important to maintain movement of wildlife across the site and to the wider area and therefore it is recommended that should close board fencing be used for boundary treatments, suitable sized holes should be provided at the base in order to allow for the migration of wildlife.
- 6.53 The Council’s Ecologist has raised no objections to the proposal subject to suitably worded planning conditions, where necessary, to cover the ecological issues referred to above.

The impact on trees

- 6.54 As the application site is located within the Conservation Area the trees within it are afforded protection. In addition, the trees on the northern and eastern boundaries are subject to a tree preservation order TPO 060/1991.
- 6.55 The Council’s tree officer has advised that the tree survey, whilst broadly accurate, does not include the larger mix of species present in the hedgerows along the northern and eastern boundaries, nor the walnut tree growing close to the eastern boundary, all of which are covered by the TPO. The proposed cartshed garages are shown to be positioned 2.5m away from the eastern boundary, however, this would not provide sufficient space to construct and maintain the building and retain the larger boundary trees. As such, the proposal would have a detrimental impact on the health and visual amenity of the principal trees along this boundary in both the short and long term. These principal trees contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area, provide screening to the site and are subject to a Tree Preservation Order; Harm to them is contrary to saved policies N6, DG1 and CA2 of the Local Plan and paragraph 109 of the NPPF.

Archaeological issues

- 6.56 An archaeological desk-based report was submitted with the application. The report noted the significance of Cookham in the Saxon period, including the discovery of a Saxon inhumation cemetery in the 19th century at Noah’s Ark, 600m north of the application site and the discovery in 2008 of possible Mid-Saxon (6th – 7th century AD) settlement remains at Spencers (now The White Oak), less than 200m to the east of the application site.
- 6.57 While this is not a large site (0.43ha), the proposal represents a significant development within the context of Cookham, on previously undeveloped land. In view of the site’s archaeological potential, Berkshire Archaeology initially considered that there was insufficient evidence to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the buried archaeological heritage. Berkshire Archaeology therefore advised that prior to determining the application, further information be obtained through field evaluation, through exploratory trial trenching.
- 6.58 Following Berkshire Archaeology’s initial advice, an exploratory archaeological field evaluation was undertaken at the application site in accordance with Paragraph 128 of the NPPF. The field evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation provided to and approved by Berkshire Archaeology.

- 6.59 Three exploratory archaeological trial trenches were excavated within the site. The trenches recorded a sequence of flinty, clayey gravel, below a clay silt hillwash between 0.15m and 0.9m thick, below subsoil and topsoil. Two features were recorded, only one of which was considered to have an archaeological origin. A linear feature was recorded buried below the hillwash and cutting through the gravel. It contained no finds and *‘it was decided that it was most likely of glacial [non-human] origins’*. The second feature was a pit, most likely of 20th-century date. The hillwash indicates agricultural activity upslope from this site but no finds of any period were recovered from this deposit to indicate the date of its deposition. As regards past disturbance, the report of the exploratory works concludes *‘there is little in the way of post-depositional impact upon the site. Disturbance has been limited due to the site’s continued use as open fields’*.
- 6.60 The results of this exercise provide clarity on the site’s archaeological potential and provide sufficient information to enable an informed decision to be made in determining this planning application. The results of the field evaluation have established that the archaeological potential of the application area is limited. On this basis, Berkshire Archaeology has advised that sufficient information has now been submitted in order to enable the implications of the proposed development on the buried archaeological heritage to be assessed from a position of knowledge. There are, therefore, no grounds to object to the proposal on archaeological grounds and, should the scheme be permitted, no further archaeological mitigation would be sought, provided the proposed scheme remains unchanged.

Impact on open space

- 6.61 The NPPF states that, “access to high quality open spaces... make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities” (paragraph 73) and that “open space should not be built on”, unless it is surplus to requirements, can be replaced by an equivalent or better open space, or if the need for the development would clearly outweigh the loss (paragraph 74). Annex 2 of the NPPF explains that the term ‘open space’ means all open space of public value, which offers important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.
- 6.62 It is clear from the Cookham Village Design Statement and numerous representations received for this application, that Poundfield is highly valued by local residents. It is not only appreciated for its beauty, but provides a tranquil space within the settlement that is clearly important to the community’s well-being. This significance is acknowledged in the Draft Borough Local Plan, which designates Poundfield as a Local Green Space, (the only designation of its kind within the Royal Borough), affording it special protection from inappropriate development. The proposed development would substantially harm the experience of this open space and is therefore contrary to paragraph 74 of the NPPF.

Other Material Considerations

The impact on the Public Right of Way

- 6.63 The Rights of Way Officer has advised that Poundfield Lane, which runs alongside the eastern boundary of the application site, is a public right of way (Public Footpath 45 Cookham). The Lane forms a link in various circular walks and an access route to the wider countryside to the north.
- 6.64 As noted in the Visual Impact Assessment submitted with the application, the application site is visible from this public footpath. However, views into the site from Poundfield Lane are partially screened by existing boundary vegetation, and this screening will be further enhanced by additional planting as set out in the application. Longer views into the site from the wider public rights of way network to the north are almost entirely screened by existing vegetation.
- 6.65 The proposal does not entail the creation of any accesses onto the public footpath, or any vehicular use of the public footpath.
- 6.66 Although there will remain some partial views into the site from parts of Poundfield Lane, (in particular, the cart shed garage will be visible), the adverse effect this will have on the amenity value of the footpath is not considered so severe as to justify an objection to the application on public rights of way grounds.

Housing Land Supply

- 6.67 Paragraphs 7 and 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) set out that there will be a presumption in favour of Sustainable Development. Paragraph 49 of the NPPF states that applications for new homes should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and that relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.
- 6.68 It is acknowledged that this scheme would make a contribution to the Borough's housing stock and it is the view of the Local Planning Authority that that the socio-economic benefits of the additional dwelling(s) would also weigh in favour of the development.

Local Green Space designation

- 6.69 A petition was received by the Council in January of this year and presented at the Full Council meeting on the 23rd February requesting the designation of the Poundfield area in Cookham, including the land adjacent to the nursery school, as a Local Green Space in the new Borough Local Plan (BLP). In response, the Full Council endorsed this designation, recognising Poundfield's importance as a peaceful and tranquil space within the settlement and this is now reflected in sections 14.14.4, 14.14.5 and Policy NE5 of the Draft Borough Local Plan. As a Local Green Space, Poundfield will be afforded special protection from inappropriate development that will only be permitted in very special circumstances.

The Planning Balance

- 6.70 Paragraph 133 of the NPPF advises that where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm.
- 6.71 In terms of public benefits, it is acknowledged that the proposal would contribute to the Borough's housing stock, which represents a significant benefit of the scheme. However, while the proposed designation of the site as a Local Green Space in the emerging Borough Local Plan cannot be afforded weight at this stage, it is clear from the evidence provided that the proposal would substantially harm the Cookham High Street Conservation Area and all that it entails. This Conservation Area is an exceptionally significant heritage asset and the benefits of providing a further 4 dwellings to the Royal Borough's housing does not outweigh the substantial harm caused.

7. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

- 7.1 The application proposes a new residential development and therefore would be liable for a Community Infrastructure Levy contribution. Based on the submitted information, the tariff payable for this development would be £200,880.

8. CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT

Comments from interested parties

24 occupiers were notified directly of the application.

The planning officer posted a statutory notice advertising the application at the site on 13 May 2016.

2 letters were received supporting the application, summarised as:

Comment	Where in the report this is considered
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1.	Poundfield is currently and has been for many years an area of wasteland, which does not do the village justice.	Noted.
2.	Please to see parking and drop off for the nursery school adjacent to the field.	6.33
3.	It will remove the eyesore of the pony field that has been a blot on Cookham for many years.	Noted.
4.	Will remove the clear danger of an accident involving a child due to the indiscriminate, illegal parking in the roads near the nursery school.	6.33
5.	I am fed up with a vocal minority who are deluging us with banners, petitions, mailshots etc. They do not represent the majority of Cookham residents. If the same nimbyism had prevailed in the past, Cookham as we know it would not exist.	Noted.
6.	The Poundfield fields are hardly used by residents – many would be hard pressed to identify them on a map, and there are much better areas to walk close by. The only people actually adversely affected by the proposed development are the very few houses that overlook the site – and they do not “own the view”.	Noted.
7.	There are no real grounds under planning regulations for rejecting the development.	6.79- 6.80

533 letters were received objecting to the application, (of which 233 (44%) were from people living outside of Cookham) summarised as:

Comment		Where in the report this is considered
1.	This will spoil local country walks and the unique history and atmosphere of Cookham. This is a beautiful and tranquil part of the village.	6.4 – 6.30, 6.61 – 6.62
2.	Building in an unspoilt rural field in a village environment is not a sensitive development.	6.4 – 6.30
3.	There has been opposition to building on Poundfield for decades.	4.1
4.	There is zero benefit for the community. The community cherish it.	Noted.
5.	Destruction of our nature and wildlife is incredibly upsetting. The hedgerows and meadows provide important havens for wildlife.	6.45 – 6.53
6.	Cookham is a village – part of that character is the greenery. The pony field is a beautiful wedge of greenery and should be retained as green space for all to enjoy.	6.4 – 6.30
7.	The new buildings will dominate the row of Edwardian houses on Roman Lea.	6.31 – 6.33
8.	The site is central to the village, passed and enjoyed by many local residents and visitors every day.	Noted.
9.	The Pound is so dangerous already and this will make it worse.	6.34 – 6.44
10.	Tiny open space – who would maintain it?	This would be covered by a S106 legal agreement.
11.	Increased risk to pedestrians from the 4 th proposed spoke onto the roundabout.	6.34 – 6.44
12.	The Cookham Village Design Statement is an adopted Supplementary Planning Document. If used correctly, the application	6.61 – 6.62

	should be refused.	
13.	The site entrance will have to be heavily lit.	This could be cover by a planning condition.
14.	The site parking is totally inadequate.	6.34
15.	Why has this not been put forward as a housing site in the Local Plan?	Policy issue.
16.	Poundfield was a major subject depicted in Stanley Spencer's landscape work. The development will change this forever, spoiling it for future generations. This is part of Cookham's heritage.	6.4 – 6.30
17.	This is a change of use from agriculture to housing – the application has not been described as such.	Noted.
18.	Contrary to Policy CA2 of the Local Plan. Harmful to views that contribute to the conservation area.	6.4 – 6.30
19.	Contrary to guidance in the Cookham VDS. The VDS makes clear how important the land is.	6.4 – 6.30
20.	Cookham will lose so much wildlife and heritage.	6.4 – 6.30 6.45 – 6.53
21.	There are not enough primary school places in the area, the doctors are already at breaking point and the drainage and sewerage works are old. This is will to the over stretched local infrastructure.	7.1
22.	Residents of Roman Lea do not want the parking spaces on offer. The bribe offered to us is not acceptable.	Noted.
23.	Who wants a public open space on a busy roundabout?	Noted.
24.	Please leave out village alone.	Noted.
25.	This area was designated Green Belt, but its removal from this state had no justification.	4.1
26.	There is huge support for the site's green space designation. The Council has pledged its unequivocal support to make this area a Local Green Space.	6.61 – 6.62
27.	The application should not even be considered.	Noted.
28.	This is an important site for Saxon remains	6.56 – 6.60
29.	This will exacerbate the traffic problems in the village – adding to congestion and causing delays.	6.34 – 6.44
30.	Should be protected as the site is in a conservation area. It is not appropriate to build in this area.	6.4 – 6.30
31.	There must be many brownfield sites which could be developed to provide housing rather than destroying the countryside.	Noted.
32.	The Council has never identified this site for housing.	Noted.
33.	Cookham's attraction to visitors would be significantly diminished if this housing estate goes ahead.	Noted.
34.	This space is important to the footpaths of Cookham and how they are enjoyed.	6.61 – 6.62
35.	The proposal will spoil views from Maidenhead Road.	6.4 – 6.30
36.	The frontage of the development is a blank wall and highly unattractive.	Noted.

37.	This is encroachment of development across an essential natural corridor.	6.45 – 6.53
38.	Please can you come up with a Plan that makes it clear that Poundfield is not to be developed.	6.61 – 6.62
39.	The view of Cookham Village from the top of the hill will be totally spoilt.	6.4 – 6.30
40.	The parking proposed for the nursery will be used by the occupiers of the new houses, leading to further on-street parking.	6.34 – 6.44
41.	The site is important to the setting of listed buildings and the Conservation Area.	6.4 – 6.30
42.	This is a tranquil green space, where families, community groups, dog walkers, cyclists and horse-riders enjoy the countryside and admire the beautiful scenery.	6.62, 6.69
43.	The people of Cookham have fought for over 50 years to preserve Poundfield and over 1600 people have signed a petition to have it formally protected as a Local Green Space.	4.1 6.62
44.	We are not nimby's – we just want to protect this beautiful green space	Noted.
45.	The population of the village will increase and therefore levels of pollution in the area will increase.	Noted.
46.	The Cookham Society, our local MP and 3 local councillors have spoken clearly and convincingly for no development.	Noted.

Consultees (non-statutory)

Consultee	Comment	Where in the report this is considered
Cookham Parish Council	<p>At a public meeting on Tues 24th May 2016 attended by more than 65 residents who raised numerous strongly held concerns about the proposal, the Planning Committee of Cookham Parish Council voted unanimously to object to the above application based on the following grounds:</p> <p>Contrary to RBWM's agreement that Poundfield should be designated as a Local Green Space in the forthcoming Borough Local Plan</p> <p>Inappropriate development in the Conservation Area (CA1-6) leading to an adverse impact on the setting of heritage and listed properties.</p> <p>Known existing evidence of possible archaeological remains on the site although no archaeological report has been included with the proposal.</p> <p>Adverse impact on flora and fauna with the loss of vital habitat.</p> <p>Adverse impact on traffic at a busy junction.</p> <p>The 'Community Gains' stated in the proposal regarding parking and open space provision are not valid.</p> <p>No evidence that the proposal meets any local housing need.</p> <p>Contrary to VDS Guidance</p> <p>The VDS states categorically that the role of Poundfield in providing a green wedge separating the Pound from</p>	6.2 – 6.62

	<p>Station Hill area should not be compromised. The following specific Guidance points would be overturned if the application is approved.</p> <p>G2.1 Location and setting G4.5 Poundfield G6.4 Rural and semi-rural G6.14 Walls G8.2 Cookham Rise and Station Hill G11.1 Cookham's homecoming routes</p>	
The Cookham Society	<p>The Society strongly opposes the application. The site has planning history going back some 50 years. In recent years this land has no longer been seen as having development potential, indeed in the 1990's the Borough sought to have it and the adjacent land to the north and north-east placed within the Green Belt and this would have occurred had not the Court of Appeal ruled against it. It has become consistent Borough policy that this area shall remain undeveloped. On the 23rd February the Council unanimously endorsed the proposed designation of this land as part of a Local Green space in the emerging Borough Local Plan, in recognition of the role the land plays for the community in providing a link between the developed parts of the village and the open countryside. To grant planning permission would therefore be inconsistent with established Borough policy.</p> <p>There are 5 Grade 2 Listed Buildings within the vicinity of this land and it lies within the Cookham High Street Conservation Area, which was reviewed as recently as 2002. The Planning Act and NPPF make clear the requirement to preserve Designated Heritage Assets and this obligation extends not only to buildings but to their settings and to open land within Conservation Areas. The duty imposed is quite clear and reinforced by several recent court judgements, such as Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Ltd v East Northants DC (2014) and R (Forge Field Society) v Seven Oaks DC (2014).</p> <p>In this instance the proposal entails not only the erection of 4 houses but also a garage block, large areas of communal hard standing and a considerable amount of surfaced parking space and roadway would transform an open space, which is an inherent character of the area and setting of the listed buildings nearby. This would bear no relationship whatever to the designated heritage assets which are required to be protected.</p> <p>The Borough's own Local Plan policy CA2(6) states that the Council will not grant permission for development on sites which form important open spaces within the conservation area, or sites which by their openness form part of the essential character of the conservation area. The Society and local people in Cookham fully expect the Royal borough to adhere to this policy in determining this application.</p>	6.2 – 6.62
Conservation	Objection – would cause substantial harm to an exceptionally significant heritage asset.	6.4 – 6.30
Highway Authority	Advice summarised in main report. No objections, subject to conditions.	6.34 – 6.44
Ecology	Advice summarised in main report. No objections, subject	6.45 – 6.53

	to conditions.	
Trees	Advice summarised in main report. Recommends refusal.	6.54 – 6.55
Archaeology	Advice summarised in main report. No objections.	6.56 – 6.60
PROW	Advice summarised in main report. No objections.	6.63 – 6.66
Environmental Protection	No objections subject to informatives being attached at any approval in respect to dust and smoke controls, and permitted hours of construction working.	Noted.
Thames Water	<p>No objection – Summary of advice: Thames Water would recommend that petrol / oil interceptors be fitted in all car parking/washing/repair facilities. Failure to enforce the effective use of petrol / oil interceptors could result in oil-polluted discharges entering local watercourses.</p> <p>Surface Water Drainage - With regard to surface water drainage it is the responsibility of a developer to make proper provision for drainage to ground, water courses or a suitable sewer. In respect of surface water it is recommended that the applicant should ensure that storm flows are attenuated or regulated into the receiving public network through on or off site storage. When it is proposed to connect to a combined public sewer, the site drainage should be separate and combined at the final manhole nearest the boundary. Connections are not permitted for the removal of groundwater.</p> <p>Thames Water would advise that with regard to sewerage infrastructure capacity, we would not have any objection to the planning application.</p>	Noted.

9. APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT

- Appendix A - Site location plan
- Appendix B – Site layout plan
- Appendix C – Farmhouse elevations
- Appendix D – Barn houses elevations
- Appendix E – Cartshed garages
- Appendix F – Plan of Objection Site (referred to in 4.1)

Documents associated with the application can be viewed at <http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/pam/search.jsp> by entering the application number shown at the top of this report without the suffix letters.

10. REASONS RECOMMENDED FOR REFUSAL IF PERMISSION IS NOT GRANTED

- 1 The proposal, by reason of its siting, scale and design, will lead to substantial harm to the Cookham High Street Conservation Area, which is an exceptionally significant heritage asset. The NPPF advises local planning authorities to refuse consent unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm. In this case, no substantial public benefits exist that outweigh the harm to the heritage asset. The proposal is therefore contrary to saved policies DG1, CA2, and LB2 of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan (Incorporating Alterations adopted in June 2003), G4.5 and G14.1 of the Cookham Village Design Statement SPD (Adopted May 2013) and

paragraph 133 of the NPPF.

- 2 The siting of the proposed cartshed garages in close proximity to boundary trees would not be provided with sufficient space to construct and maintain the building and retain the larger boundary trees. As such, the proposal would have a detrimental impact on the health and visual amenity of the principal trees along this boundary in both the short and long term. These principal trees contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area, provide screening to the site and are subject to a Tree Preservation Order. Harm to or loss of these important trees is contrary to saved policies N6, DG1 and CA2 of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan 1999 (incorporating alterations adopted June 2003) and paragraph 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2012.
- 3 The proposed development, by reason of its siting, would result in the loss of important open space and open space with historical significance. This open space offers a place enjoyed for its tranquility in the heart of the settlement and is highly valued by the community. The proposal would substantially harm the experience of this open space and is therefore contrary to paragraph 74 of the NPPF.

Informatives

- 1 The attention of the applicant is drawn to Section 59 of the Highways Act 1980 which enables the Highway Authority to recover expenses due to extraordinary traffic.