

Application Ref: P14/V2822/O Application Type:

Outline Proposal: Outline application for erection of 21 new dwellings. Address: Land at Bow Farm, Bow Road, Stanford in the Vale, SN7 8JB.

STANFORD IN THE VALE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN  
STEERING COMMITTEE OBJECTS to this application  
for the following PLANNING REASONS

See attached papers

Signed on behalf of Stanford in the Vale NPSC

Date: 24 April, 2015.

1 **CONTRARY TO LOCAL & GOVERNMENT POLICY** - The Proposal is Contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Paragraphs 17, 28, 55 plus Core Planning Principles and Local Plan Policies GS2, DC9, NE10, NE11, H11, H13, H16, H17 and H23.

2 **PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND** - The Proposal is NOT on Previously Developed land as defined in the NPPF, which specifically ***“excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forester buildings”***.

The previously approved development for 17 units at Bow Farm (**P13/V1546/O**) was Contrary to the NPPF and Saved Policy GS6, as they were NOT on Previously Developed Land but on land occupied by Agricultural buildings.

The initial approved development was limited to the conversion of 2 barns (**P12/V1739/FUL**) and the later proposal was for replacement of redundant agricultural buildings (**P13/V1546/O**) confined to the large areas of existing concrete hardstanding and agricultural building foot prints. This current Proposal is totally unacceptable use of green field, high quality, agricultural land, which contributes to the important rural character of the village. As such, it is considered that this Proposal constitutes an unacceptable intrusion into open countryside, Contrary to both Local Plan and Government Policy.

3 **SITE ASSESSMENTS** - As part of the Neighbourhood Plan, the NPSC has completed close to 50 Site Assessments in the Parish, to establish the most suitable sites to meet any future housing requirement. The current Application Site was found to be totally unsuitable for development due to the landscape value of this agricultural field and its importance to the rural character of Stanford in the Vale.

4 **PRECEDENT & URBAN SPRAWL** - The morphology does not work with the existing settlement or wider built area and granting consent, irrespective of any mitigation, would undoubtedly put further development pressure on adjoining agricultural land. The Proposal would therefore set a Precedent, by introducing intrusive development in to the open countryside, causing unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Any benefits arising from the proposal would be limited and would be significantly and demonstrably outweighed by the adverse impact of this development on the open countryside and its harm of the intrinsic character of the area through the addition of urban sprawl. It is therefore considered that the Proposal would be contrary to the aims of the NPPF and Local Plan policy, which aims to prevent urban sprawl in the open countryside.

5 **QUANTITY** - The previous Planning Application (P13/V1546/O) was initially for the development of 7 residential buildings comprising a total of 10 residential units (6 dwellings, 4 flats) following the demolition of existing modern agricultural buildings on the site. This was later increased to 17 new homes, in addition to the original Application (P12/V1739/FUL) for 2 barn conversions (3 Units). This has significantly increased from 3 Units to 10, then 20 and now 39 units on Agricultural land in open countryside, which is totally unacceptable and totally Contrary both to Local Plan and Government Policy.

- 6 **INFRASTRUCTURE & GROWTH** - Growth of Settlements over time is to be expected but with growth should come improved infrastructure, services and facilities to meet demand. This proposal will only add pressure on existing infrastructure, services and facilities and does not appear to contribute to the wider community in any significant or positive way.

The main Sewers and Treatment Works require major upgrading, Water Pressure is low, there are no local Public Transport improvements planned in the VoWHDC Local Plan (Part 1) and The Stanford in the Vale Primary School is close to capacity. This is prior to 73 new dwellings being completed to the West of the A417, and the 17 dwellings (+ 3 units in 2 barn conversions) covered by the applicant's previous permissions, plus 18 dwellings following the Penstone's Farm Appeal. It would be short-sighted to place further strain on these facilities without appropriate measures and plans to deal with the expected influx of children from such developments, particularly as the VoWH DC have proposed a Strategic Site for 200+ new homes to the West side of A417 Faringdon Road (Local Plan Part 1).

- 7 **UNSUSTAINABLE** - The proposal is outside the main Build Area of the settlement and is detached from local facilities and services. The size of dwellings allocated will naturally appeal to families. Unfortunately, the current plans do not include any play facilities for children, whilst the nearest facilities are located at the Village Hall, which is over 1000 metres away from the site, on foot. Our estimates indicate that the local shop, Post Office and Primary school are all over 1,100 metres from the site, whilst the last public house in the village is some 1,600 metres from the site. Thus the development fails to support sustainable transport modes, and as such will place increased reliance on the car, further exacerbating existing parking issues within the vicinity of the High Street.

- 8 **IMPACT** - There is a major environmental impact in the locality, due to the recent loss of open countryside and agricultural land; at the David Wilson Homes Appeal site (P14/V1543/A) for 73 homes, and Penstones Farm (P14/V0080/FUL) for 18 homes; plus a proposed Strategic Site, submitted for Inspection under Part 1 of the VoWHDC Local Plan for 200+ homes. With the previously approved developments of 20 units at Bow Farm, this total of 311 new homes represents **an increase in housing in excess of 31% in the past 2 years. Page 6 - BOTH D&As state** Stanford in the Vale parish itself has approximately 855 households and an estimated population of 2,093 residents, which would indicate an increase in excess of 36% in 2 years. The impact upon the character of the landscape and the visual amenity of the area, both alone and cumulatively with the previous applications at Bow Farm, are Contrary both to Local Policies and the NPPF.

- 9 **SITE ACCESS** - The Proposed site access is constrained and arrangements from the junction with the public road have been revised and differ from the previously Approved plans. The revised access significantly reduces the side parking area and rear garden of number 2 Bow Cottage, which is unacceptable and Contrary to both local plan and Government Policy in respect of private parking, turning and amenity space. Cars legally parked on the front drive of 2 Bow Cottage will now obstruct views up Bow Road to the North, dangerously restricting visibility both for emerging vehicles, looking North, and vehicles approaching the access from the North.

The Proposed access road extending to the rear (East) of the previously Approved site would represent unwarranted intrusion into the open countryside beyond the limits of the existing settlement, resulting in inappropriate development into the open countryside.

- 10 **REPLACEMENT OF HISTORIC BARN** - The proposed housing layout appears to show replacement of one of the 2 previously consented barn conversions with a pair of semi-detached homes, which are NOT consented. This replacement and demolition have NOT been granted consent and this barn was to be preserved in the previous Planning Application (P13/V1546/O).

**The D&A Statement in the previous Planning Application (P13/V1546/O) states – “The traditional barns are grouped towards the north end of the site and these are considered redundant for agricultural use *thus preserving the character and historic nature of these structures both of which would be included as part of the development”***

- 11 **HOUSING MIX** - The proposed housing mix is completely different, with significantly less two bed homes, NO one bed homes and a large increase in three and four bed homes. It is unclear what percentage of the 39 homes proposed would be Affordable Housing and the site can NOT be considered as a Rural Exception Site. The D&A Statement (January 2014), submitted by the applicant, clearly states - **Section 1.0 INTRODUCTION, Page 4;**

*“The proposed housing is proposed to achieve 50% of dwellings to be two-bedroom properties or less in compliance with Local Planning policy.*

*The proposed mix of dwelling units on the whole site is as follows:*

*2-bedroom = 10 units (50%) 3-bedroom = 6 units (30%) 4-bedroom = 4 units (20%)*

*The proposal complies with local policy H17 to contribute on-site affordable housing of 40%.”*

**The current PLANS (Proposals for 39 Units) indicate the following housing mix;  
2-bedroom = 7 units (18%) 3-bedroom = 19 units (49%) 4-bedroom = 13 units (33%)**

The current Proposal is completely Contrary to Local Policy H17 and Government Guidelines.

- 12 **MISSING & INACCURATE SITE PLANS**

The Site Plans in the January 2014 D&A Statement only show the Existing Agricultural Buildings, including the 2 Barns for conversion. The Site Plans submitted do not accurately show the final Approved scheme agreed in the previously consented Applications, which is completely misleading. The Site Plans in the July 2013 D&A Statement, and the Transport Statement, only show an initial scheme for 10 Units and 2 Barn Conversions. A revised scheme showing the 2 barns (3 units) and 17 new homes was totally inappropriate as it included a significant number of new Units built on the existing Open Green Space and in close proximity to the existing homes in Bow Road to the South.

The current proposal suggests an additional 20 homes. With 20 homes already consented this makes 40, not 39 as shown on the submitted Site Plans and Housing Mix.

**The final Approved Scheme (P13/V1546/O)** Retained the 2 barn conversions (3 Units), Retained a large open Public Green Space, Relocated proposed new homes that were in unacceptably close proximity to existing houses in Bow Road; and showed a revised access next to 2 Bow Cottage. These Approved Plans appear to be missing from the current Proposals. **This is extremely misleading when judged against those plans now submitted.**

### 13 MISSING DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

**There appears to be NO current D&A Statement accompanying the current Proposals.**

**The previous 2 Design and Access Statements (July 2013) and (January 2014) contradict the current Proposals in a number of areas.**

**The D&A Statement (July 2013) states;**

**Page 4 – “The proposed housing is proposed to achieve **46% of dwellings to be two-bedroom properties or less in compliance with Local Planning policy.**”**

**The D&A Statement (January 2014) states;**

**Page 4 – “The proposed housing is proposed to achieve **50% of dwellings to be two-bedroom properties or less in compliance with Local Planning policy.**”**

**The current Proposal** suggests a significant reduction **18% of dwellings to be two-bedroom** and NO 1-bedroom Units. The Site Plans show 39 Units indicating the following housing mix; 3-bedroom = 19 units (49%) 4-bedroom = 13 units (33%) **2-bedroom = 7 units (18%)**

**Page 6 - BOTH D&As state – “The site itself comprises in the main a farmyard area of hardstanding land that incorporates a cluster of traditional and modern buildings comprising seven barns and associated outbuildings of which two traditional barns have been consented for residential conversion (ref 12/V/1739/FUL). **The traditional barns are grouped towards the north end of the site and these are considered redundant for agricultural use thus preserving the character and historic nature of these structures both of which would be included as part of the development.** The remaining modern agricultural buildings are to be demolished”. AND**

*“The application site enjoys privacy and distance from the public domain, public views into the site are limited to those from Bow Road, and views out are framed by existing mature planting, existing dwellings and agricultural land. The design approach can exploit this to maximize the aspect amenity, while minimizing impact on the immediate environs.”*

**Page 6 - BOTH D&As state “Stanford in the Vale parish itself has approximately 855 households and an estimated population of 2,093 residents.”**

**Page 8 - BOTH D&As state “To the east is low-lying arable and pasture farmland defined by regularly shaped fields bound by tall hedgerows and trees.”**

**Page 11 - BOTH D&As state “Bow Farm is part of 370 acres of agricultural land in ownership of Mark Stoneham and currently contracted to acquire a further 190 acres to expand the agricultural enterprise” AND “Mark Stoneham has a variety of farming enterprises and is seeking to expand those. If Bow Farm was to be made the centre of operations for all livestock and arable operations new buildings and alterations to existing would be required.**

*This would inevitably incorporate the small level grass field between the farmyard and houses. However, from an agricultural point of view its location on the edge of the settlement and at one end of the farmland does not lend itself to continued agricultural activities.”*

**NB.** The relocation of the agricultural operation is what gave rise to the replacement of farm buildings with new housing units – on the existing concrete hard standing and footprints. However, allowing this development was still contrary to Local Plan Saved Policy GS6 and Government Policy, as the agricultural area is NOT by definition Previously Developed Land.

**Page 13 - BOTH D&As state** *“The existing planting around the boundaries of the site, are of both ecological and visual value to the proposed site and should be retained where possible. There are existing hedgerows and trees along the southern boundary which will be retained. There is an opportunity to provide new hedge and tree planting along all borders and inclusive within the site to provide a further buffer and improve landscape character of area.”* **AND** *“The eastern boundary encloses the site from the agricultural fields and countryside by its mature hedgerows and woodland boundary planting. **This element will be respected by retaining the important vegetation and providing enhancement where required or possible; thus ensuring there is not over bearing impact on the countryside.”*** **AND** *“The location of the proposal separated from the main village area (but alongside the remaining village settlement boundary) would be addressed through **the provision of pedestrian footpath** which will be acceptable to the county highways officer.”*

**NB.** This new footpath formed part of the negotiations with the Applicant and agreed with the VoWHDC Planning Officer to be the existing access route from Horsecroft, now offered in the current Proposals.

All the above Submissions made in the 2 previous D&A Statements are considered to be ‘Mitigation’ in allowing the original scheme, which was otherwise completely Contrary both the Local Plan and Government Policy.

The current Proposals go against all the previous submissions, which went some way to making the previously consented plans more acceptable.

## **14 FUTURE AGRICULTURAL ACCESS**

**BOTH D&A Statements (July 2013 and Jan 2014),** submitted by the applicant, state as follows:

- **Section 6.0 EXISTING USE, Page 11, Final Paragraph**

*“From an agricultural point of view its location on the edge of the settlement does not lend itself to continued agricultural activities.”*

**Please note the current plans show a “Future agricultural access to land to the East of the site”.**

In light of Section 6.0 of the 2 previous D&A Statements submitted, clearly this access is **NOT** required, as the agricultural operations of the applicant have been relocated to Stanford Park Farm and this agricultural land to the East can easily be accessed both from Coldharbour Farm (Applicant's actual place of residence) and Stanford Park Farm (both owned and managed by the Applicant). The NPSC fear this 'Access' could be used to further extend development into the agricultural land to the East (owned by the Applicant), leading to further unacceptable intrusion into the countryside and urban sprawl.

- **Section 8.0 DESIGN Elements & OPPORTUNITIES – Page 13, Paragraph 6**

*“The Eastern boundary enclosed the site from the agricultural fields and country side by its mature hedge rows and woodland boundary planting. This element will be respected by retaining the important vegetation and providing enhancement where required or possible; thus ensuing there is NOT over bearing impact on the countryside”*

This statement by the applicant was offered as 'Mitigation' for the previously approved scheme which was otherwise completely contrary to both the Local Plan (Saved Policy GS6) and Government Policy. An exception was made as the applicant was moving his farming operations elsewhere and it was agreed both with the NPSC and Planning Officers, that any new development would be limited to the concrete hard standing and existing foot print of buildings to the West of the Eastern boundary as described above.

## SUMMARY OF OBJECTIONS

The proposal is NOT on Previously Developed Land and is NOT a Rural Exception Site.

The proposal represents an inappropriate extension of the settlement resulting in unacceptable intrusion into the open countryside and urban sprawl and granting consent, irrespective of any mitigation, would undoubtedly put further development pressure on adjoining agricultural land;

The amount of new homes proposed, on Agricultural land in open countryside, both alone and cumulatively with the previous applications at Bow Farm, would result in acceptable pressure on services, facilities and infrastructure, including but not limited to the lack of capacity at the Primary School.

The proposal is NOT sustainable due to its location away from services and facilities and any benefits arising from the proposal would be limited and would be significantly and demonstrably outweighed by the adverse impact of this development on the open countryside and its harm of the intrinsic character of the area;

The proposed development in the open countryside would result in significant detrimental impact upon the character of the landscape and the visual amenity of the area,

The Revised Site Access is not suitable, especially in light of the additional traffic which would result from more homes at this location, outside the existing built area and some distance away from services and facilities;

The Public Right Of Way, offered in exchange for this new Proposal, was previously agreed with the Vale Planning Officer, Mr Mark Doodes, as mitigation for the previously approved scheme **(P13/V1546/O)**, following lengthy meetings with the Applicant and representations made by the NPSC and Parish Council. The NPSC understands the Applicant is now suggesting the same Right of Way will be offered ONLY in exchange for support of this current inappropriate development in the countryside.

The proposal includes replacement of an approved barn conversion (1 unit) for 2 homes, which have not been consented;

The proposed Housing mix is contrary to both Local and National policy;

**Stanford in the Vale Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee strongly objects to the current proposal for all the reasons detailed above. It is Contrary to both Local Plan and Government Policy, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Paragraphs 17, 28, 55 plus Core Planning Principles and Local Plan Policies GS2, DC9, NE10, NE11, H11, H13, H16, H17 and H23.**

SIGNED BY THE CHAIRS

For and on behalf of Stanford in the Vale NPSC