1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1 This statement is written to accompany an application for planning permission as required by the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Amendment) (England) Order 2006 [SI 1062 2006]/Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 Article 4C.



This statement provides the following information:

2. SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA.

2.1 This application relates to Pulham House (formerly known as Tennis Court House) which is situated in the grounds of Bedwell Park within the Green Belt.

2.2 This is a recently constructed house built as part of a package of proposals involving both conversion of the original house to a number of apartments and the erection of new buildings permitted by the Council in 2007. It has 6 bedrooms and lies in 2.25 acres of its own grounds.

2.3 This application relates specifically to changes to one of two modest outbuildings which have been constructed within the grounds of the house.

2.4 With the exception of the summer house referred to below, there are no other ancillary buildings on the site.

3 PLANNING HISTORY.

3.1 The original planning permission (S6/2006/365/FP) was conditional and included a condition removing all permitted development rights relating to the house, including the ability to construct buildings within the curtilage of the house that would be incidental to its enjoyment. The reason for imposing the condition was to enable the Council to exercise control over the siting and size of any future buildings or structures on the site in the interests of safeguarding the openness of the Green Belt. In other words the policy is not saying that such building is unacceptable as a matter of principle, but that they wish to maintain control over it.

3.2 In October 2007 an appeal against the Council's decision to refuse planning permission for the erection of a swimming pool and summer house was allowed under reference APP/C1590/A/07/2048215. The summer house measures 6 x 6 metres and is 5.5 metres high at its western end and replaced a previously permitted smaller summer house. In allowing the appeal, the inspector concluded that the works represented a proportionate extension to the dwelling house and concluded that the development would be screened by existing vegetation from surrounding view, other than in a limited number of minor views. He concluded that the summer house would not look out of place within the parkland landscape.

3.3 In March 2009 a retrospective application seeking full planning permission for the retention of two small outbuildings in the grounds of Pulham House, namely:-

a) a shed in the south eastern corner of the grounds; and

b) a dog kennel to the south west of the house,

was submitted to the Council.

3.4 In submitting the application the applicant noted that planning permission would not normally be required for works of this small-scale nature. They would normally be permitted by Class E of Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order as amended in 2008. It is also worth noting that these permitted development rights normally extend to houses in the Green Belt and would do so in this case had the condition removing them not been imposed by the Council.

3.5 Notwithstanding this, the Council decided to refuse planning permission for a single reason set out in a decision notice dated 10th August 2009 for the following reason:-

*"When taking into account the case for enabling development under application S6/2006/0365/FP and the previously approved summer house and tennis pavilion, the shed and kennel result in a disproportionate increase in the size of the dwelling and therefore represent inappropriate development. Cumulatively, the structures also have a detrimental effect on the openness of the Green Belt. No very special circumstances have been shown to exist. The proposal is therefore contrary to PPG2 and Policy RA3 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005".*

3.6 In an attempt to resolve this situation with the Council, rather than by recourse to the appeals procedure, the applicant commissioned drawings showing each of the buildings reduced and a separate application for the retention of each of them was submitted to the Council. That relating to the shed (S6/2009/2400/MA) was approved while the application for the kennel was refused but subsequently allowed on appeal.

3.7 This DAS relates to the retention of the shed as it was originally built.

4. PROPOSAL.

4.1 This is a retrospective application seeking full planning permission for the retention of a shed in the south eastern corner of the grounds of Pulham House. The building is fully identified on the GML drawings 3338-01C and 03C which accompany the application but the following explanation is also provided.

Design.

4.2 The building is located in a position where it can benefit from the screening effect of existing trees on the site. It will sit against the trees as a backcloth.

4.3 It has been constructed using timber as the primary material. This will weather down to blend into the trees that provide their backcloth.

Layout.

4.4 As identified above, the building has been located in a position where it will blend into the landscape.

Scale.

4.5 The building is of a modest scale measuring 4m x 5m with a double pitched roof rising to 3.26m.

Landscaping.

4.6 There is no new landscaping proposed as part of the proposal but the building is set in extensive landscaped grounds.

Appearance.

4.7 As described above the building has a predominantly timber appearance, being clad in pine. The shed has cedar shingles on the roof.

5. ACCESS.

5.1 There are no access implications (disabled or otherwise) arising from the development.

6. MERITS OF THE DEVELOPMENT.

6.1 This is a large house set in extensive grounds in a relatively remote location.

6.2 As a result the applicant has the specific needs which this building is required to satisfy, namely the need to house the various items of equipment needed to maintain the grounds. These include ride on lawn mower, lawn mower, grass strimmers, shovels, axe, rakes, hedge cutters, tree lopers, wheel barrows, work bench, water irrigation equipment and childrens toys. They are not items which could reasonably be expected to be stored in the house or left outside in the open (either from a maintenance or security point of view). The shed of the existing size is needed to accommodate them.

6.3 This building is typical of those that might be found in connection with a house of this size set in extensive grounds within the countryside.

6.4 It is ancillary to, and essential for, the enjoyment of the dwelling house. There is no justifiable reason not to provide it in the Green Belt. The fact that a building of this size and type are normally permitted development in the Green Belt suggests that they should be considered as appropriate development. Had this not been the case then the Government would not have allowed such permitted development rights. However in this case there also exist the very special circumstances, set out in 6.2, above which justify it.

6.5 This is therefore a modest building entirely appropriate to its location.