

ITEM 05

COMMITTEE REPORT

Reference: 16/00727/OUT	Site: Land Adjacent To Landings Outings Lane Doddingtonhurst Essex
Ward: Brizes & Doddingtonhurst	Proposal: Outline application for construction of 2 x four-bedroom detached dwellings (Access, appearance and landscaping reserved matters).
Parish: Doddingtonhurst	

Councillor Parker has referred the application on the basis that the 'reasons for refusal do not match the LDP in relation to infill sites and the closeness to a listed building'

Plan Number(s):

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION; PLANNING & HERITAGE STATEMENT;
8270_100_00; 200/03; 201/05; 300/04; 301/05; 400; 500/05; 500/10; 600/03; 601/00;

Applicant: Haynes Building & Development Ltd	Validated: 17 June 2016
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Case Officer: Mr Nick Howard

1.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

This planning application is in outline, seeking consent of the layout and scale at this stage. All other matters are reserved for a future application. The proposal seeks to create two detached dwellings, which the applicant states are of a similar scale to those approved at the adjacent development of the Surgery Site and Landings. Plot One, located to the front of the site is served off of an existing access and is a full two storey dwelling. Plot two, which is also a two storey dwelling, is located to the rear of the site and is to be served from the access road for the adjacent development.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is located on the edge of the village of Hook End, part of the parish of Doddingtonhurst. The site is located to the western side of Outings Lane, to the immediate southeast of the former Landings doctors' surgery and immediately northwest of the Grade II Listed Barfield Farmhouse. The site is situated within the Green Belt as defined in the Brentwood Replacement Local Plan.

The site comprises some 0.175 hectares of land, is undeveloped, with no buildings or structures on it and includes a number of trees, mainly along the boundaries. The plot is fairly regular in shape, with a frontage of 23m to Outings Lane and a maximum depth of 75m. The site slopes naturally from the southwest to the northeast.

3.0 RELEVANT HISTORY

The application site has no relevant planning history. The history set out below relates to the adjacent former surgery site.

- 15/00267/FUL: Demolition of former doctors surgery and adjacent dwelling known as The Landings and construction of 6 no. detached dwellings and 2 no semi-detached dwellings. -Approve (Subject to Section 106)
- 14/00627/FUL: Demolition of former doctors surgery and adjacent dwelling known as The Landings and construction of 5 no. detached dwellings. -Application Refused
- 13/00578/FUL: Construction of 2 No dwellings. -Application Refused
- 13/00008/OUT: Outline application for the demolition of former doctors surgery and construction of two detached dwellings. Access, layout and scale to be determined. appearance and landscaping reserved. -Application Permitted
- 12/01280/OUT: Outline Application with all matters reserved for 2 No detached residential dwellings. -Application Permitted (Adjacent site Surgery)
- 12/00718/OUT: Outline application with all matters reserved for 3 no. detached residential dwellings. -Application Refused

4.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Detailed below is a summary of the consultation responses. The full version of each consultation response can be viewed on the Council's website via Public Access at the following link: <http://publicaccess.brentwood.gov.uk/online-applications/>

- **Highway Authority-**
No objections subject to conditions

- **Environmental Health & Enforcement Manager-**

No objections subject to conditions relating to hours of operation whilst constructing, minimise noise from machinery, wheel washing and no bonfires on site.

- **Historic Buildings And Conservation Officer-**

Strongly object on the grounds the proposal will cause material harm to the setting of the listed building.

The content of the HBC's officer's objection is addressed within the assessment part of the report.

- **Arboriculturalist-**

The application states that there are no trees on site, however the 2014 aerial photographs show considerable tree cover. The trees have been removed prior to the submission of the application and the Council have not been able to assess the merits of any of the trees. If they had not been removed then a full arboricultural report would have been required.

- **Parish Council-**

The Parish Council strongly objects to this application for the following reasons:

(a) The land is virgin Metropolitan Green Belt in that it has no building or structure on it whatsoever.

(b) The land proposed for development provides a "Green" space between the new development of 8 dwellings on the land that used to be a Doctors Surgery / the garden and land of "The Landings" to the North West and the adjacent listed building that is "Barfield Farm" to the South East.

(c) Whilst it will be claimed as an infill opportunity this Green belt space has been zoned as such to maintain the openness of character that is already put at risk by excessive development at the North West end of Outings Lane by the merging together of two previous building sites (the old doctors surgery and the Landings) and the replacement by 8 houses in a "mini" estate type development. This existing, and in progress development, makes the preservation of this green space even more precious.

(d) Any development on this Green Belt land will create a cramped and crowded street scene especially inappropriate next to Grade 2 listed timber framed buildings that form Barfield Farm.

(e) There are no exceptional circumstances that exist that could be considered relevant to permit development of this Green Belt land.

5.0 SUMMARY OF NEIGHBOUR COMMENTS

This application has been advertised by way of individual neighbour notification letters, press advert and public site notice which has been displayed nearby.

Detailed below is a summary of the neighbour comments, if any received. The full version of each neighbour response can be viewed on the Council's website via Public Access at the following link: <http://publicaccess.brentwood.gov.uk/online-applications/>

1 letter of support

3 letters of objection on the grounds the site is within the Green Belt, potential flooding, precedent for similar development, it would mar the presence of the adjacent Grade II listed building, the lane is too narrow for a two way flow and the site entrance is at the narrowest width of the lane.

6.0 POLICY CONTEXT

The starting point for determining an application is the development plan, in this instance, the Brentwood Replacement Local Plan (BRLP) 2005. Applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Relevant material considerations for determining this application are the following RLP policies: CP1, GB1, GB2, T2 and C16. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 and National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) 2014.

7.0 ASSESSMENT

In February 2016, planning permission was granted for the demolition of the former doctors' surgery and adjacent dwelling known as The Landings and construction of 6 no. detached dwellings and 2 no. semi-detached dwellings, under reference 15/00267/FUL. This development is currently under construction and abuts the application site. It should be noted that the site is within the development boundary of Hook End as defined by the BRLP

In contrast this application site is situated within the Green Belt as defined in the BRLP. The way in which the LPA handles new development in the Green Belt is set out in the NPPF (The Framework). All new development in the Green Belt is considered to be inappropriate development unless it represents the redevelopment of previously developed land or infill development in a village. The main issues are therefore whether the proposal is inappropriate development in the Green Belt and would it be harmful to the openness of the Green Belt and whether the proposal would affect the setting of the adjacent listed building.

The applicant considers the proposal represents infill development i.e. the site is situated between the adjacent housing site and the listed Farmhouse. The Framework in Paragraph 89 defines a number of exceptions against inappropriate development in the Green Belt, one of which is limited infilling in villages. The applicant acknowledges the site is lying outside of the defined settlement limits of Doddington, however he considers the subject site is clearly part of the village by stating it is surrounded on three sides by residential properties, with the dwellings to the northwest and northeast, falling within the defined settlement boundary. The draft Local Plan proposes no change to the settlement boundaries or the Green belt boundaries in the vicinity of the site.

However for settlements where a Green Belt boundary has been defined, the boundary usually marks the edge of the settlement where there is a break in development or a change in character to more loose-knit development. The former surgery was within the development boundary of Hook End and it was therefore appropriate for redevelopment. This site has been redeveloped for housing.

To the west of that site is the application site which comprises an open area devoid of structures or buildings. Although there are residential properties opposite the site, the character on the southern side of Outings Lane has clearly changed from an urban context to a rural character. Therefore the proposal would compromise the purposes of the Green Belt which seeks to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas and to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. The proposal would therefore represent inappropriate development and be harmful to the openness of the Green Belt. Accordingly the proposal is contrary to Policies GB1 and GB2 of the BRLP.

In addition officers consider that if the proposal were to be approved then a precedent for similar proposals may arise. The character of this area is villages or built up areas defined by settlement boundaries and beyond these boundaries in the Green Belt there is more loose knit development, comprising single dwellings or small clusters of dwellings with gaps between the settlement boundary and these dwellings. Planning approval of this scheme may lead to more speculative development that further diminishes the functions of the Green Belt.

Turning to the issue of the impact the proposal would have on the adjacent listed building Barfield Farmhouse, it is considered the proposal would have less than substantial harm to the heritage asset. Paragraph 134 of the Framework states that 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.

The development site is located upon the thoroughfare of Outings Lane immediately adjacent to the historic curtilage of the Grade II listed building, Barfield Farmhouse. The Farmhouse was originally constructed as a hunting lodge and similar examples occur at Chingford, Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge, and at Lodge Farm, Gallywood. By referring to the cartographic data for the Doddington Parish, the building historically stood in open countryside with long views; 'Barfields' as it was known, presented itself as a nucleus in open countryside, it is comparable to other hunting lodges in East Anglia and this contributes to its historical significance.

The Heritage assessment, submitted by the applicant, has failed to demonstrate the impact of development upon the setting of the listed building and importantly the significance of the designated heritage asset, it just relies on the tree planting at the boundary to screen development. Given the building was originally a hunting lodge set in open countryside, to erode this further by way of inappropriate development will cause material harm to the Heritage Assets' significance.

In summary, the Historic Buildings and Conservation officer strongly objects to this application because development of this land will cause material harm to the setting of the listed building. The evidence is that, historically, the listed building was positioned prominently on a significant thoroughfare set within open countryside. That open setting has been lost to an extent with residential development. However, the open setting of the development site should be retained as views to and from the development site are integral to the historic significance of the listed building. These factors are considered to outweigh the public benefits of providing two dwellings. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy C16 which restricts development within the vicinity of the listed building and the Framework.

Other Matters

The lack of a five year supply is not in itself considered to be a very special circumstance that clearly outweighs the harm through inappropriateness in the Green Belt and the other harm identified.

Neighbours have also raised issues in respect of flooding, the lane is too narrow for a two way flow and the site entrance is at its narrowest width of the lane.

8.0 CONCLUSION

The proposal would represent inappropriate development, in that it does not constitute infill development, it would be harmful to the setting of the adjacent listed building and be detrimental to highway safety.

9.0 RECOMMENDATION

The Application be REFUSED for the following reasons:-

1. The proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt that would materially detract from openness and would represent an encroachment of development into the countryside. It would therefore conflict with Brentwood Replacement Local Plan Policies GB1 and GB2 and the objectives of the Framework as regards development in the Green Belt.
2. Other matters that may weigh in favour of the proposal have been considered but collectively they do not clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt or the other harms identified. Therefore very special circumstances to justify inappropriate development in the Green Belt do not exist.
3. The proposed development would be harmful to the setting of the adjacent Grade II listed building 'Barfield Farmhouse', by reason of its close proximity to the listed building and its curtilage structures. The proposed harm to the setting of the Listed Building outweighs the public benefit that would be derived from the scheme. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy C16 of the Brentwood Replacement Local Plan and the provisions of the Framework.

4. The proposed development due to its size and massing will have an overbearing impact on the adjacent Grade II listed building 'Barfield Farmhouse' to the detriment of its setting. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy C16 of the Brentwood Replacement Local Plan and the provisions of the Framework. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy C16 of the Brentwood Replacement Local Plan and the provisions of the Framework.

Informative(s)

1. The following development plan policies contained in the Brentwood Replacement Local Plan 2005 are relevant to this decision: GB1, GB2, C16 and T2 ; the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 and NPPG 2014
2. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern with the proposal and clearly identifying within the grounds of refusal either the defective principle of development or the significant and demonstrable harm it would cause. The issues identified are so fundamental to the proposal that based on the information submitted with the application, the Local Planning Authority do not consider a negotiable position is possible at this time.

Documents:

All background documents including application forms, drawings and other supporting documentation relating to this application can be viewed online: www.brentwood.gov.uk/planning