



Ms Elizabeth Sims
Head of Planning
Waverley Borough Council
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16 July 2016

Dear Ms Sims

Planning Applications WA/ 2016/1225 and 1226

These are alternative applications, said to be to determine the principle of new housing development, of either 10 or 25 dwellings, on a green field site described as Area A in the plans, within the Surrey Hills on the outskirts of Haslemere. The Haslemere Society objects to the principle of such development on the grounds set out below and we request that this letter be registered against both applications.

1. The application site is within one of three areas identified in the Haslemere Design Statement as a Special Green Area, which in the words of the Statement are:

*"One of the very important factors regarding the town and its ambience" and " an integral part of the character and intrinsic value of the town and **should be retained**". HDS Area 6 page 43.*

This area is highly visible approaching Haslemere from the South or West. There is no physical linkage between the site and the adjacent Sturt Farm development and it will in fact provide one of the " green screens " to such development which the Design Statement advocates.

2. The entire site is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) and thus subject to the National Planning Policy Framework(NPPF), Waverley (WBC) Local Plan and Surrey Hills Management Plan 2014-2019 (SHMP) policies applicable to such designations. The governing principles of which are:

*" Great weight should be given to **conserving landscape and scenic beauty** in National Parks, the Broads and AONBs, which have the **highest status of protection** in relation to landscape and scenic beauty". NPPF 115.*

*" **Planning permission should be refused for major developments in these designated areas** except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest". NPPF 116*

*“ The Surrey Hills and High Weald AONBs are of national importance. The primary aim of designation is to **conserve and enhance their natural beauty**. Development inconsistent with this primary aim **will not be permitted** unless proven national interest and lack of alternative sites has been demonstrated”. WBC C3 a.*

*“ great weight will be attached to **any adverse impact that a development proposal would have on the amenity, landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB** “. SHMP LU1.*

Any development of this green field site Area A would be inconsistent with the purpose of this landscape`s designations. We fully endorse the consultation response and recommendations to Waverley of the Surrey Hills AONB Planning Advisor, that these applications be refused as being contrary to or in conflict with the applicable planning policies.

3. The new Waverley Local Plan is at an advanced stage, and any temporary short-fall in the 5 year housing supply in the Borough will be overcome very soon. In so far as such matters might currently be relevant we would advocate that the determination of opportunistic applications such as these, which would have an irrevocable adverse impact on the landscape, should not be influenced by short-term considerations but by the underlying principles set out above.

4. As these applications are stated to be to address the principal of new housing development on the green field Area A, we do not understand why they are complicated by the addition of proposals to develop Longdene House itself and surrounds, with which there is no connection other than common control. There is no apparent reason why that should not form an entirely separate application. As we argue that the applications should fail on the grounds cited above there should be no need to consider the details of the Longdene House part of the proposals.

5. Similarly if the principle of housing development of green field Area A is to be refused there is no need to consider the merits of the alternative proposals for 10 or 25 new homes. However it needs to be pointed out that in either case the entrance/ exit to the new Estate would be on Hedgehog Lane, a narrow no-through lane quite unsuited to such additional traffic flows. When the nearby Sturt Farm development was under consideration great importance was attached to the fact that all traffic would use the A286 Sturt Road and not Hedgehog Lane because all parties (including the developer) recognised the unsuitability of that lane.

The Haslemere Society therefore objects to both these applications on the grounds that they conflict with the development principles set out in the Haslemere Design Statement, and are contrary to National and Local Planning Policies in that they do not conserve or enhance the natural landscape, and would have an adverse impact on the amenity, landscape and scenic beauty of this area which has been accorded the highest level of protection.

Yours sincerely

A.J. Bennett

www.haslemeresociety.org

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