



The Oast House
West End Lane
Frensham
Surrey GU103EP

Waverley Borough Council

Planning Department

1st December 2020

WA/2020/1684

Erection of 99 dwellings (Including 30% Affordable Housing) associated highways and landscape works following demolition of Hollyoak. HOLLYOAK AND LAND TO REAR COORDS 503762 135006 LOXWOOD ROAD ALFOLD.

CPRE Surrey has considered the above application and wishes to record its objection to the grant of permission for the following reasons.

Appeal Decision WA/2015/1381: Land at Springbok Estate, Alfold. Part full/Part Outline application

In 2015 the applicant submitted a similar but larger application for a development on the Springbok Estate for the erection of 125 dwellings plus another 275 dwellings together with associated buildings.

CPRE objected to the 2015 application, Waverley Borough Council refused the grant of permission, the case went to appeal in 2017 and was dismissed.

The site now put forward in 2020 is a part of the 2015 site consisting of 99 dwellings on 5.91ha of open arable farm land as part of the Springbok Estate.

Paragraph 92 of the December 2017 Inspector's report found in relation to the site of which the land in this application is part that:

"The appeal site would not be a sustainable location for major residential development, and this part of the proposal would be inconsistent with the approach to the distribution of housing development set out in the ELP which has progressed to a relatively advanced stage."

The contents of the then ELP (Emerging Local Plan) have now been substantively included in all respects material to this application in Local Plan Part 1 Strategic Policies and Sites of February 2018 (LPP1). LPP1 clearly reinforces the 2017 Decision that this site is not a sustainable location for major residential development.

Local Plan Part 1 Supply of homes

LPP1 Policy SP2 confirms that development will be directed towards the four main settlements of the borough and that with regard to the smaller villages it will allow only "limited levels of development in/around other villages (Alfold, Churt, Dunsfold, Ewhurst, Frensham, Tilford, Shamley

Green, Wonersh).” The large size of this proposal can in no way be considered “limited” for the purposes of the plan.

Under “The Waverley Settlement Hierarchy” Alfold and Alfold Crossways are classed as rural communities with limited services. Accordingly set an allocation to accommodate 125 new homes up to 2032, the communities have already met and by far exceeded the total quota with granted planning applications to date.

WBC have recently released a five year housing land supply position statement showing they are meeting the requirements for the borough over the next five years as outlined in the local plan using an April 2020 base date.

The Application is not only inconsistent with LPP1 but is inconsistent with the principles set by Waverley for the emerging Alfold Neighbourhood Plan as these are described in the Pre-submission draft of Local Plan Part 2 (Site Allocations and Development Management Policies November 2020). This states at Paragraph 7.5 that in relation to Waverley Parishes such as Alfold, where the minimum housing allocation set in Local Plan Part 1 has already been met:

“there is no need to allocate housing for these areas in either Local Plan Part 2 or neighbourhood plans.”

It follows that there is no need for the houses proposed by this application on this site found by the Inspector to be unsuitable for this purpose.

Harm to the Character of Alfold and the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside

Alfold, including Alfold Crossroads, is an attractive village which lies in the heart of the beautiful "fold" countryside on the Surrey / West Sussex border with its cluster of small villages and many period houses. This countryside is attractive and relatively remote: in some ways it is a quintessential English rural landscape. The proposed development would significantly impact the rural settlement of Alfold Crossways increasing the existing 200 plus dwellings to in excess of 300 households.

The scale of the proposed housing development would cause substantial harm to the character of the village; it would not respect the scale or character of the village and would fail to respect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. It would therefore conflict with LPP1 and the NPPF.

Loss of Agricultural Land

The 5.91ha site is arable farmland classified as grade 3 agricultural land with a significant proportion falling into grade 3a as reported in a site survey by Tim O'hare Associates in 2015. Document TOHA6061_v1 “Agricultural Report”, put forward in 2015 to support the WA/2015/1381 application includes the proposed 2020 site showing the site for 99 homes contains 3a and 3b classified land.

Saved local plan policy RD9 in line with the NPPF considers Grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) system as the best and most versatile agricultural land and in accordance with the principles of sustainable development should be protected as a national resource for future generations. The cultivation and use of land for farming helps to maintain the attractive appearance and undeveloped character of the countryside.

Sustainable Transport

A development of the proposed scale would create a significant demand for movement on the local road network. The A281 has been recognised as one of the main transport congestion hotspots in Waverley and would be one of the main routes for new residents in Alfold Crossroads to access major shopping centres, rail hubs and places of work.

Residents in rural Waverley have above the national average car ownership and limited access to other more sustainable forms of transport.

LPP2 (emerging) reinforces this in paragraph 2.55 “The spatial vision and strategic objectives of Local Plan Part 1 seek to encourage sustainable modes of transport and a reduction in the need to travel wherever possible. Reducing people’s reliance on driving by directing new development to sustainable locations.....”

Conclusion

For these reasons we consider that the application should be refused.

COLIN HALL
VICE CHAIRMAN

CPRE SURREY WAVERLEY DISTRICT COMMITTEE