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TEST VALLEY

B O R O U G H C O U N C I L

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FAO: Mr J Lancaster

12th March 2009

Your ref:

Our ref: 08/02976/PREAPS

Ext or DDI: 01794 527833

Please contact: Mrs Georgina Wright

Dear Mr Lancaster,

APPLICANT: Community Action Hampshire (fao:- John Lancaster)
PROPOSAL: Pre-application advice for proposal to provide affordable housing in the Braishfield Area.
LOCATION: Sites In Braishfield Area, , ,

Thank you for your letter, which was dated 12th December, which was received on 15th December and acknowledged on 22nd December 2008. I apologise for the delay in responding to your enquiry. However I have now had an opportunity to visit all of the sites identified and consult with a number of internal consultees. Please note that none of these comments are based on any third party or external consultee comments as we do not consult such external bodies for pre application proposals.

Proposals:

You have identified that there is a housing need for an affordable housing exception scheme in the village of Braishfield. Your letter has therefore identified 14 possible sites for such a form of development which you consider to be appropriate for the development of 10 dwellings.

Assessment:

Test Valley Borough Local Plan (June 2006) (TVBLP) Policy ESN05 (Rural Exception Affordable Housing) accepts the principle of affordable housing developments on land that is in a rural area but is within or adjoining an existing settlement. This is accepted subject to a local need being identified via the relevant Housing Needs Survey and the proposal meeting that identified need.

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Site 1:

- This is a good site adjacent to existing housing.
- There is some landscape impact, particularly from the Harrold Hillier Gardens (Registered Park/Garden) which adjoins the southern boundary (TVBLP policy ENV16 (Registered Historic Parks & Gardens) needs to be considered).
- TVBLP policy ENV04 (SINCs) needs to be considered as site is adjacent to SINC (to the south). Potential impact on biodiversity. Appropriate surveys should be undertaken and submitted with any planning application.
- Any layout would need to be spacious and landscaped to accommodate needs of biodiversity.
- There is visual containment formed by the field boundaries to the three sides.
- However potential views from public footpath which extends around the western, northern and eastern boundaries of the site.
- Not in close proximity to heart of village - site lies in 'detached' southern part. However there are existing pavements/footpaths linking this part of the village to the main part of the village/schools etc.
- Although no trees within the site the northern boundary has a line of large mature Oak trees which are prominent and important features in the landscape.
- If this site was chosen for development these trees would need to be retained and would need to be carefully considered within any site layout.
- The tree line to the south of the site consists of smaller trees which are not so important.
- The off site large mature Oak trees to the west of the site are already protected by a TPO (TPO.TVBC.301) and any development would need to consider the shade that these trees cause to the corner of the site.
- Acceptable from a highway point of view.
- Adjacent to a flood zone so issue needs to be considered.
- Adjacent properties are bungalows and therefore any 2 storey development would have to be sensitively designed to mitigate any potential impact.

Summary: Issues but a possibility.

- Issues with adjacent SINC to be considered
- Issues with adjacent registered park and garden to be considered.
- Potential flooding issues to be considered
- Tree issues to be considered.
- Visual amenity issues from surrounding public right of way network.
- Location in relation to the heart of the village.

Site 2:

- Site surrounded by existing housing to east, south and west.
- Layout would be an important consideration.
- Site not in close proximity to heart of village but footpaths/pavements along Braishfield Road do link this part of the village to the rest of the village.
- Site is very prominent both from immediate and long distance views along Braishfield Road and Kiln Lane. Would need to be carefully designed to ensure

that any scheme integrated effectively into the area. As per your letter, a group or cul-de-sac design may not be appropriate or successful. Concerned that the development of this site would look like a housing estate and thus out of keeping.

- There are no trees in or around the boundary of this site. One mature Oak tree stands on the road side boundary just outside the proposed site.
- Access could be acceptable off Kiln Lane with improvements.
- Potential concern for hedgerow loss. Dependent on required site lines.
- Impact on neighbouring residential amenity needs to be considered.

Summary: Not acceptable

- Prominence of the site and development in the landscape/street scene.
- Appropriateness of any layout.
- Integration of any layout.
- Links to the heart of the village.
- Loss of hedgerow to form access.

Site 3:

- Adjacent to existing pub garden. Potential conflict between pub activities and future occupants. Amenity issues.
- Site too small for any meaningful mitigation or separation from the above.
- This is right at the entrance to the Conservation Area and a prominent site, shown as an important open area in the conservation area document. TVBLP policy ENV15 (Development in Conservation Areas) needs to be taken into account.
- The only trees affecting this site are along the southern boundary. These are semi mature hedgerow trees which although not of great quality would provide some screening of the site if it was to be developed.
- Acceptable from a highway point of view.
- However required sight lines may be out of keeping with the character of the road.
- Good links to the rest of the community and heart of the village.
- Visual amenities/impact from views from the adjacent public footpath that extends along the eastern boundary will need to be taken into account.
- Slight level changes across the site.

Summary: Not acceptable

- Visual amenity issues from surrounding public right of way network.
- Conflict with adjacent uses.
- Conservation area impact.

Site 4:

- Opposite existing linear form of development.
- Long distance views from the nearby public right of way network that needs to be taken into account.
- Long distance views from Harrold Hillier Gardens (Registered Park/Garden). TVBLP policy ENV16 (Registered Historic Parks & Gardens) needs to be considered).

- Adjacent to social club so there may be a conflict or amenity issues although site larger so may have more room to provide separation/mitigation.
- Adjacent to conservation area so need to consider any potential impact on its setting (as per TVBLP ENV17 (Setting of Conservation Areas))
- There are no trees within the site only semi mature Oak, Ash and Beech within road site boundary hedge.
- These trees should be retained to continue screening of the site and allowed to mature.
- These trees have the potential to become prominent road side trees.
- The trees towards the north eastern end of the site should also be retained and considered by any layout.
- Minimise access points onto this road.
- Loss of hedgerow to create accesses should be kept to a minimum.
- However development on this side of the road would be inappropriate, detrimentally affect the character of the landscape and is thus contrary to the principles and objectives of TVBLP policy DES01 (Landscape Character)
- Significant level changes which may be an issue and make the site more prominent in the street scene.

Summary: Not acceptable

- Detrimental to landscape character
- Tree issues.
- Conflict with surrounding uses.
- Prominence and visual amenities of the existing landscape
- Level changes.

Site 5:

- Adjacent to farm buildings which are listed buildings. Also adjacent to the conservation area. TVBLP policy ENV17 (Setting of Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings) therefore needs to be considered.
- Site not closely related to existing housing and there are not any good links to the heart of the village.
- Long distance views of the site across the countryside.
- No trees within the site but two semi mature Horse Chestnuts on the south western boundary which are providing screening for the site and are worthy of retention.
- The two mature Willow trees, which are growing next to the Horse Chestnuts, although more prominent at this time would need on going management to retain and if lost through development the Horse Chestnuts will have greater space to mature and become large prominent trees.
- Lane narrow and proposals would be unacceptable from a highway point of view.
- Site is important in settlement character terms.

Summary: Not acceptable

- Unacceptable Highway issues.
- Links to the village
- Impact on conservation area and adjacent listed building.

- Tree issues.

Site 6:

- Open site surrounded by roads on 3 sides.
- Many immediate and long distance views of the site
- Significant level changes which will increase prominence
- Existing housing to north and west is in a linear pattern. Any scheme would need to be carefully designed to ensure that it integrated effectively. A group or cul-de-sac layout may not be appropriate or successful.
- This is a prominent site at the core of the Conservation Area and is shown as important open area in Cons Area document (policy ENV15 (Development in Conservation Areas) needs to be taken into account)
- Also forms part of the important view no 8 in the Braishfield Village Design Statement.
- None starter from a landscape point of view.
- Heart of village location
- No trees within the site and only a few trees around the boundary.
- The most prominent and important of these is a large mature Oak which is growing on the southern boundary of the site, this tree would need to be considered with any development proposal and retained. Due to its location to the south of the site extra consideration would need to be given to the shade which the tree cast to prevent on going pressure to prune it.
- The other trees along the southern boundary are Eucalyptus which although visible do not warrant protection/retention.
- On the western boundary there are a number of hedgerow trees which would provide screen for the site and it would be desirable for some them to be retained
- Access is off a minor road

Summary: Not acceptable

- Detrimental to Landscape Character.
- Important open space in conservation area and Village Design Statement
- Tree issues
- Prominent and visual impact.
- Pattern of development in the area.

Site 7:

- Open area adjacent to allotments (to south) with existing housing to west.
- This is a prominent site at the core of the Conservation Area and is shown as important open area in Cons Area document (policy ENV15 (Development in Conservation Areas) needs to be taken into account)
- None starter from a landscape point of view.
- Heart of village location
- There are no trees within this site and the only boundary tree is a large Oak which boarder's site 6 and is described above.
- Acceptable from a highway point of view

Summary: Not acceptable

- Detrimental to Landscape Character.
- Important open space in conservation area and Village Design Statement
- Prominent and visual impact.
- Pattern of development in the area

Site 8:

- Adjacent to existing housing but encroaching into open countryside
- Prominent in landscape terms and would have an impact on landscape character.
- Would break through a well defined and important hedge/tree line that forms the edge of the village.
- Adjacent to conservation area so impact on setting needs to be considered (TVBLP policy ENV17 (Setting of Conservation Areas))
- No trees within the site only boundary trees on the eastern edge to be considered – some on site and some off.
- The most prominent tree is a large Ash which has been reduced in size and is just off site
- Acceptable from a highway point of view

Summary: Issues but a possibility

- Prominent and visual impact needs to be considered
- Any scheme would have to carefully consider and mitigate impact on landscape character.

Site 9:

- Landscape impacts of views from west.
- Within conservation area so need to consider TVBLP policy ENV15 (Development in Conservation Areas).
- Impact on character of the lane.
- No trees within the site only boundary trees along the south eastern boundary to be considered.
- Narrow lane.
- Only a linear form of development would be appropriate for the character of the area.
- Unacceptable from a highway point of view.

Summary: Not acceptable

- Unacceptable Highway issues.
- Character of conservation area.
- Landscape character

Sites 10 & 11:

- Open areas adjacent to existing development.
- Very prominent in the landscape.
- Detrimental to the landscape character of the area and thus non starters from landscape point of view.
- Adjacent to conservation area so impact on setting needs to be considered (as per TVBLP policy ENV17 (Setting of Conservation Areas)).
- Difficult highway access (as stated in submission) and is considered to be unacceptable from a highway point of view.
- Mostly shrub land with a line of large and prominent Oak trees between the two sites. These trees are to the south of site 11 and shading issue would need to be considered to prevent ongoing pressure to prune or fell the trees.
- These trees should be retained.
- Some smaller boundary trees are providing screening from the site for Potters Clay.

Summary: Not acceptable

- Unacceptable Highway issues.
- Detrimental to landscape character.
- Tree issues.

Site 12:

- Site at far northern end and is well away from heart of village.
- Poor footpath links to the village.
- Impact on character of lane.
- Adjacent to conservation area so impact on setting needs to be considered as per TVBLP policy ENV17 (Setting of Conservation Areas).
- Parkland setting for the main house would be affected.
- Access would result in unacceptable harm to frontage bank/vegetation and so the scheme is a non starter from landscape point of view.
- There are numerous large and prominent trees within this site and a young avenue of Lime trees has been planted in the last 5 years.
- This site is unsuitable for development due to the trees.
- Unacceptable from a highway point of view.

Summary:

- Unacceptable from a highway point of view.
- Detrimental to landscape character.
- Unacceptable impact on trees.
- Poor links to village.
- Impact on conservation area.

Site 13:

- In heart of the village.
- Narrow lane potential highway issues.

- Within conservation area so TVBLP policy ENV15 (Development in Conservation Areas) needs to be considered.
- No trees within this site and only one Field Maple at the south western end of the site in the hedge. This is a small tree which although retention would be appropriate it could be replaced within a landscaping plan.
- Level issues.
- Non starter from a landscape point of view.

Summary: Not acceptable

- Detrimental to landscape character
- Highway Issues
- Impact on the conservation area.

Site 14:

- Directly adjacent to church affect setting/views of this listed building (TVBLP policy ENV17 (Setting of Listed Buildings) needs to be considered).
- Important open area.
- Detrimental to landscape character and therefore a non starter from landscape point of view.
- Within conservation area so TVBLP policy ENV15 (Development in Conservation Areas) needs to be considered.
- Narrow lane and so is unacceptable from a highway point of view.
- There are no trees within the site but the trees along the northern boundary (2x Horse Chestnut, one Holly and one Birch) are protected by TPO.TVBC.248.
- Any development would need to consider these TPO trees as part of the plan.
- Although just outside the proposed site a small group of large mature trees may impact on any design of the site due to there location to the south of the site.
- Open aspect to neighbouring gardens which are also fairly short gardens. Proximity is likely to result in an unacceptable impact on their residential amenities
- Level changes are significant just outside site with neighbouring residential properties on a higher land. Thus overbearing/dominance might be an issue.

Summary: Not acceptable

- Neighbouring amenity issues.
- Detrimental to landscape character
- Unacceptable highway Issues.
- Tree issues
- Impact on the conservation area.

Other Issues:

Any application involving a net increase in the number of dwellings in the village will be subject to financial contributions towards public open space provision, highway improvements, and if the scheme involves 10 or more dwellings, it may also be subject to contributions towards education facilities. These contributions would be secured by means of a Section 106 Agreement which will need to be prepared and completed within the planning application process. Any application for any of these sites should therefore

be accompanied by details of ownership of the land to which the application relates and a solicitor's Certificate of Title stating in whom legal title to the land is vested, and whether it is subject to any encumbrance, such as a mortgage.

It should also be noted that any application should be sensitively designed to reflect the rural character of the village, character of the conservation area, and surrounding uses. In most cases for the above sites a traditional architecture incorporating chimneys and local materials would be most appropriate.

Conclusion:

Whilst the principle of a new residential exception site in Braishfield is supported and the need has been identified and substantiated, many of the sites identified are considered to be inappropriate and thus non starters from highway, landscape and/or conservation points of view.

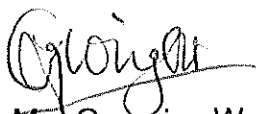
Site 1 seems to be the best option out of the 14 suggested, but it still has a number of issues which will affect the possible layout and that will need to be considered and addressed in any scheme.

Site 8 also has a number of issues, particularly regarding landscape character, which if addressed may also make this site acceptable.

In either case, I recommend a pre application enquiry by submitted so that the issues raised can be carefully considered before you formally submit a planning application

I trust that this advice is of assistance to you. However please note that this is an officer opinion only and therefore does not constitute a formal determination and is without prejudice to any planning application/prior notification that may be submitted in the future.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Georgina Wright
Senior Planning Officer