

APPLICATION NUMBER: **OUT/2019/1375**

ADDRESS: **260 A Hawkes Mill Lane**

PROPOSAL: Demolition of existing buildings and erection of four dwellings (Outline application with access, scale, layout and appearance to be considered)

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to consider the above application

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be **refused** for the reasons outlined in the attached schedule.

DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION SITE

The application site is located within the Green Belt, accessed via a private farm track which is located between 260 & 262 Hawkes Mill Lane. 260 & 262 Hawkes Mill Lane are single storey dwellings. The site currently accommodates a range of agricultural buildings which are screened from the wider public area by dense tree and shrub planting, to the point that one is not aware of the site when traversing Hawkes Mill Lane.

PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION

The proposal is to demolish all of the existing buildings on site and erect four detached dwellings. Two of the houses would be located to the east of the access road and two to the west. The two pairs of dwellings would be separated by around a 2m gap. Two houses would have a footprint of 9m x 7.5m and the other two 9.3m x 7.5m. Both would be about 9.2m in height with eaves height of around 5.4m. They have many traditional features such as chimneys, open canopy porches, brick arched headers and brick detailing at verge and eaves level.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Reference	Proposal description	Decision and date
OUT/2018/2693	Outline application for erection of two dwellings (access, layout and scale submitted)	Granted (2019)

LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

As required by Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the proposed development must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Statutory Development Plan for the area relevant to this application site comprises of the Coventry City Council Local Plan 2016. Relevant policies are outlined below:

- DE1 – Ensuring High Quality Design;
- DS3 – Sustainable Development;
- H3 – Provision of new housing;
- H5 – Managing Existing Housing Stock;

AC2 – Road network;
 GB1 – Green Belt and Local Urban Green Space;
 GE3 – Biodiversity, Geological, Landscape and Archaeological Conservation;
 GE4 – Tree protection

SPG Design Guidelines for Development in Coventry’s Ancient Arden

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
 National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highways (CCC) 	No objection as impacts not severe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban design (CCC) 	Recommend refusal as siting of dwellings needs to be more irregular and less rigid and require a greater level of separation between them to allow for substantial landscaping to give a more naturalistic setting. The houses should be designed to be all slightly different.

PUBLIC RESPONSES

- Neighbour notification was sent in accordance with the Communications Record.
- A site notice was erected at the site
- 12 representations have been received with 7 objecting and 5 supporting the development. The comments are summarised below:
 - Loss of privacy
 - Loss of wildlife
 - The houses would be too tall
 - The houses are not affordable
 - The houses would be affordable
 - The site would be an improvement to the derelict site
 - Additional traffic on the substandard track
 - Increased noise and pollution
 - Track not wide enough for fire service
 - Inadequate sewage
 - There will be lots of bins on the highway next to adjacent houses on bin collection day, which could result in accidents

Note: Although 5 representations in support have been received, not all give material planning reasons for doing so, therefore the application does not need to be taken to Planning Committee.

ISSUES AND APPRAISAL

Key issues:

- Principal of development
- Design and visual
- Neighbouring amenity
- Highways issues
- Ecology and biodiversity

Principal of development in Green Belt

The previous permission (2018/2693) for two dwellings has established the principle of residential development on the site. As the footprint of the two approved dwellings is 280 sq m, the currently proposed footprint is no greater. Furthermore the heights of the proposed dwellings are slightly less than previously approved. Therefore the impact upon the openness of the Green Belt would be no greater.

Design and Visual

Section 7 of the NPPF, specifically paragraph 56 states in part that 'good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute to making places better for people'. This is echoed by Policy DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016 which seeks to ensure that development complement or enhances the character of the surrounding area with regard to scale, layout, density, mass, design, materials and architectural features.

Dealing with the layout first, the proposal is for two rows of houses in close proximity to each other. As a result it has a regular suburban appearance as opposed to a more adhoc, looser more rural layout. Whilst large, the previous permission was for two individual houses set in substantial landscaped grounds which would give them a more 'naturalistic' setting. By increasing the number of dwellings the space between dwellings reduced dramatically and this will have a significant effect on how they appear. It is considered that this more rigid, regular layout would result in harm to the character of this semi-rural site.

Furthermore, whilst the houses contain many traditional features it is considered that they should all be slightly different to each other in this setting. Having pairs of the same house type, again, appears more suburban in character. Notwithstanding the extant permission, the houses are also very large with high eaves and ridge lines. Normally traditional dwellings would have a gable depth of no more than about 6m with a low eaves of no more than 5m in height and ridge of under 8m. Finally, the front gable and porch on the front elevation of one of the house types would link and this results in a visually jarring appearance.

Therefore the proposal would be contrary to Policy DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016, SPG Design Guidelines for Development in Coventry's Ancient Arden and guidance contained within the NPPF.

Other issues

Highways are satisfied that the increased use of the existing single width track would be acceptable as there is adequate visibility to Hawkes Mill Lane and the increase in trips using the track would not be significant.

The previous outline permission conditioned a tree survey and ecological survey of the site. As such it is not considered to be reasonable to refuse this application due to the lack of such details.

Turning to residential amenity, the houses would be a considerable distance away from existing properties. Whilst plot 2 would have a south facing window on its front elevation, which would be close to the rear garden of No.262 Hawkes Mill Lane, this area of the 70m long garden is mainly covered by buildings and is not as sensitive to overlooking as areas closer to the house.

Whilst access for the fire service may not be possible, it would be feasible to build sprinklers in the houses to aid fire safety.

As the application is for less than 10 dwellings, sewerage and drainage will be dealt with under the Building Regulations regime and with the relevant statutory undertakers, as oppose to the lead local flood authority being consulted.

CONCLUSION

I therefore recommend that permission be refused.

REASON FOR REFUSAL

The proposal would result in harm to the character of the area, due to the layout and design of the dwellings, contrary to Policy DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016, SPG Design Guidelines for Development in Coventry's Ancient Arden and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.