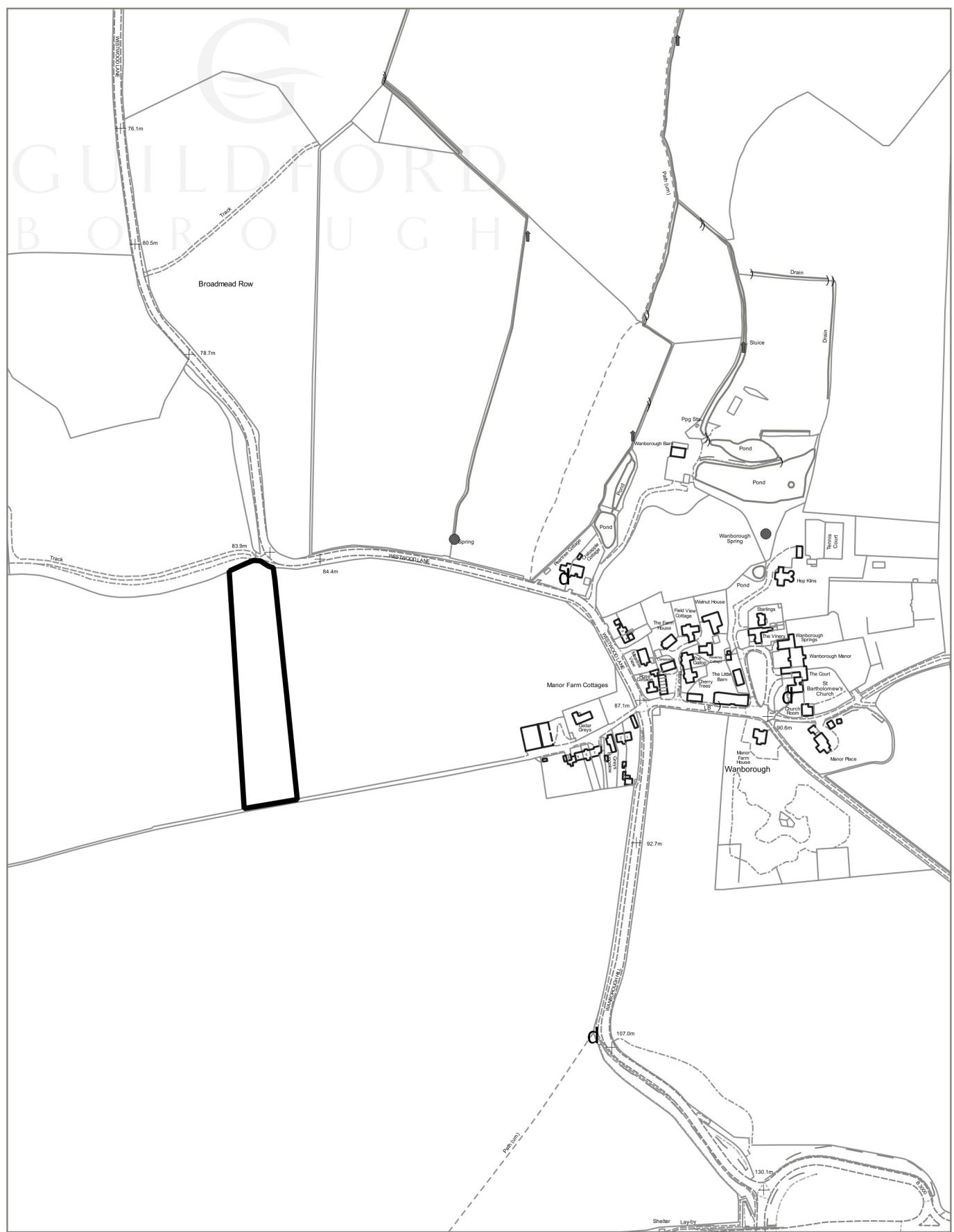


21/P/00976 - Lot 5, Land To The West Of Manor Farm Cottages, Westwood Lane, Wanborough, Guildford



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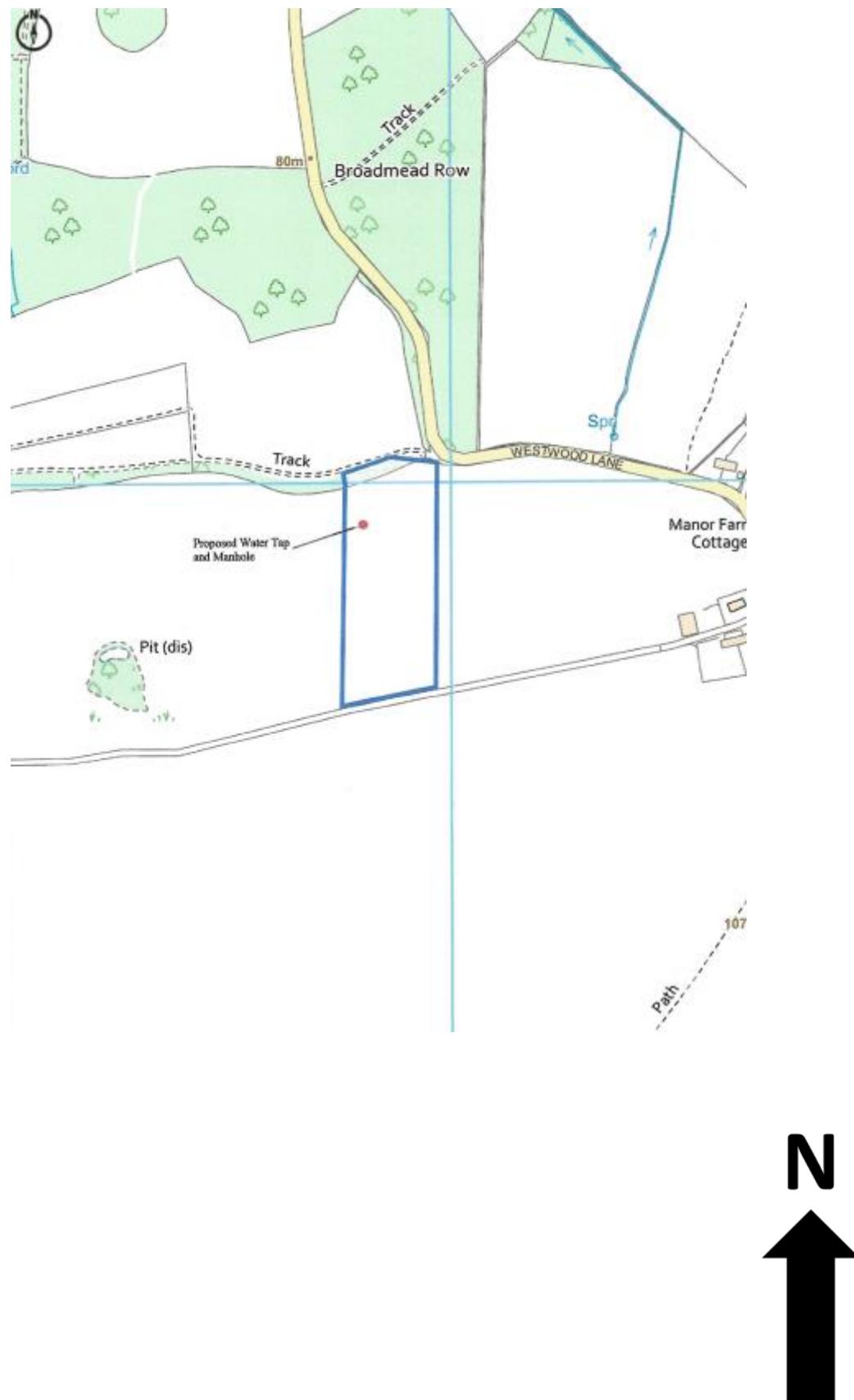


Not to Scale



GUILDFORD
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21/P/00976 – Lot 5, Land To The West Of Manor Farm Cottage, Westwood Lane, Wanborough, Guildford



Not to scale

App No: 21/P/00976 **8 Wk Deadline:** 05/07/2021
Appn Type: Full Application
Case Officer: Emma Wachiuri
Parish: Wanborough **Ward:** The Pilgrims
Agent : **Applicant:** Mrs Zhu
 8 Chestnuts
 Hutton
 CM13 2PA

Location: Lot 5, Land to the west of Manor Farm Cottages, Westwood Lane, Wanborough, Guildford, GU3 2JF

Proposal: Provision of a water tap and a manhole to facilitate the provision of a mains water supply for the purposes of agriculture.

Executive Summary

Reason for referral

This application has been referred to the Planning Committee because more than 20 letters of objection have been received, contrary to the Officer's recommendation.

Key information

This application seeks permission for the provision of a water tap and a manhole to facilitate the provision of a mains water supply for the purposes of agriculture. There are plans to plant some trees. The trees will need to be watered regularly during the early growing stages and there are also plans to graze livestock at a later stage, which requires a water supply as well.

Summary of considerations and constraints

This is an agricultural land within the Green Belt and part of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV).

The proposal is for an engineering operation and not a new agricultural building and therefore, there is no requirement to establish whether the proposed works are 'reasonably necessary' for the purposes of agriculture.

The proposed development would be in keeping with the character of the area and would conserve the AONB and would not harm the distinctive character of the AGLV. Furthermore, it would not result in any adverse impact on neighbouring amenity.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve - subject to the following condition(s) and reason(s) :-

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: block plan and location plan received on 13.05.2021.

Reason: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and in the interests of proper planning.

Informatics:

This statement is provided in accordance with Article 35(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. Guildford Borough Council seek to take a positive and proactive approach to development proposals. We work with applicants in a positive and proactive manner by:

- Offering a pre application advice service
- Where pre-application advice has been sought and that advice has been followed we will advise applicants/agents of any further issues arising during the course of the application
- Where possible officers will seek minor amendments to overcome issues identified at an early stage in the application process

However, Guildford Borough Council will generally not engage in unnecessary negotiation for fundamentally unacceptable proposals or where significant changes to an application is required.

In this case pre-application advice pre-application advice was not sought prior to submission and the application was acceptable as submitted.

Officer's Report

Site description.

The site comprises part of an agricultural field located to the south of Westwood Lane. The land is within the Green Belt and part of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV). There is an Article 4 Direction covering the site.

The area is rural in nature and is defined by a small cluster of dwellings further to the east, open fields immediately to the east, west and north. The site itself is a narrow strip of land accessed via a track running to the north of the application site towards Westwood Lane to the east. The land is currently a field and remains undeveloped, sloping up southwards to the Hogs Back.

Proposal.

Provision of a water tap and a manhole to facilitate the provision of a mains water supply for the purposes of agriculture.

According to the submitted supporting information, the use the land for agricultural purpose will continue and there are plans to plant some trees.

The trees will need to be watered regularly during the early growing stages and there are also plans to graze livestock at a later stage, which requires water supply as well.

The proposal is to install a standalone water tap on a post of no more than 1m high above ground level and the manhole will have a cover with the dimension of 600mmX450mm.

Relevant planning history.

None for the site but the adjoining site has relevant planning history as follows:

Lot 4, Westwood Lane

21/P/00293 - Provision of a water tap to facilitate water for the purposes of agriculture and a manhole to gain access to the metre and stop tap. (Approve 21.05.2021)

Consultations.

Non-statutory consultees

Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Officer: no response

Wanborough Parish Council

Objection raised on the following grounds:

- Lack of tree survey
- Lack of biodiversity impact assessment and no measures are being proposed on the conservation or enhancement of the natural environment
- Impact on views across the AONB
- Harmful impact on the setting of the AONB and on character of the AGLV
- Lack of surface water disposal measures
- Increased risk of flooding and no mitigation measures being proposed

[Officer note: the installation of a water tap would not lead to an increase in surface water run-off as there would be no increase in impermeable surfaces]

Third party comments:

21 letters of representation have been received raising the following objections and concerns:

- Reduce the openness of the area
- Standpipes would be highly visible from all areas of the fields
- Highway safety issues along access road due to increased visits
- Ecological damage
- Would lead to further degradation of the landscape through increased activity
- No evidence of agricultural use of the land

- Planting trees will alter the Wanborough Fields open landscape
- Proliferation of mains water taps in a small area within Wanborough Fields
- Proposed trees would detract from the open landscape for which AONB/AGLV
- Proposal is in speculation to build houses or other development on the site (Officer note: There is nothing within the application to suggest this and any future proposals would be considered in their own merits)
- Planned future livestock grazing that is mentioned within the submission would require fencing which is inappropriate in this area

[Officer note: This application is for a water tap and manhole only. Planning permission is not being sought for the use of the land which is currently in agricultural use and would remain so should this application be approved.]

Planning policies.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

Chapter 2: Achieving sustainable development

Chapter 4: Decision-making

Chapter 13: Protecting Green Belt land

Chapter 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

The Guildford Borough Council Local Plan: Strategy and Sites 2015 - 2034

The Guildford Borough Local Plan: Strategy and Sites was adopted by Council on 25 April 2019. The Plan carries full weight as part of the Council's Development Plan. The Local Plan 2003 policies that are not superseded are retained and continue to form part of the Development Plan (see Appendix 8 of the Local Plan: strategy and sites for superseded Local Plan 2003 policies).

S1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development

P1 Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Area of Great Landscape Value

P2 Green Belt

D1 Place Shaping

Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003 (as saved by CLG Direction 24 September 2007):

G1(12) Safeguarding and enhancement of the landscape and existing natural features

G1(3) Protection of amenities enjoyed by occupants of buildings

Surrey Hills AONB Management Plan 2020-2025

Other Planning Documents

GBC Landscape Character Assessment & Guidance (2007)

Planning considerations.

The main planning considerations in this case are:

- the principle of development
- impact on character, AGLV and AONB
- impact on neighbouring amenity

Principle of development

The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. In accordance with paragraph 150 of the NPPF, certain forms of development are also not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. One such exception is engineering operations. This policy stance is echoed by Policy P2 of the Local Plan. The proposal is for a minor engineering operation and there will be no detrimental impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

According to the submitted supporting information, the use the land for agricultural purpose will continue and there are plans to plant some trees. The trees will need to be watered regularly during the early growing stages and there are also plans to graze livestock at a later stage, which requires water supply as well. Section 336 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 defines 'agriculture' as including: 'horticulture, fruit growing, seed growing, dairy farming; the breeding and keeping of livestock (including any creature kept for the production of food, wool, skins or fur, or for the purpose of its use in the farming of land. As such the proposed use of the land would fall within the definition of agriculture and no change of use of the land is sought.

Policy RE13 of the saved Local Plan relates to proposals for new agricultural buildings within the Green Belt. However, this is not considered relevant in this case as the proposal is for an engineering operation and not a new agricultural building. There is therefore no requirement to establish whether the proposed works are 'reasonably necessary' for the purposes of agriculture. The principle of the development is therefore considered acceptable.

Impact on character, AGLV and AONB

Both Policy P1 of the LPSS and the NPPF makes clear that development within the AONB should be limited and that development within its setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the AONB. It also requires that planning decisions should ensure that they protect and enhance valued landscapes of the AONB and that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty of these areas. Policy P1 also sets out that development proposals will be assessed against the provisions of the Surrey Hills AONB Management Plan.

The site is within Landscape Character Areas Rural E1 - Wooded rolling claylands where the key landscape characteristics are:

- Gently undulating lowland based on the Clay, Silt and Sand of the London Clay Formation.
- A largely peaceful, rural area with views to the unsettled slopes of the Hog's Back.
- A predominantly pastoral area of cattle and some horse grazing with some arable farmland, plus copses and woods particularly to the west.
- Varied field patterns with large, medium and small scale fields bounded by hedgerows and fences.
- Mature hedgerow trees and occasional field trees.

The proposal consists of a standalone water tap on a wooden post which will be no more than 1m above ground level and the manhole will have a cover measuring 600mm by 450mm which will be flush to the ground. The proposed development would therefore be minimal in terms of its scale and would therefore not be a prominent feature in the landscape. Furthermore, the provision of taps within the countryside to meet the water needs of livestock would not be out of character in this rural landscape. It is considered that the proposed development would continue to conserve and enhance the AONB and would not result in any harm to the distinctive character of the AGLV. The proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable in this regard and to comply with policy P1 of the Local Plan: Strategy and Sites 2015 - 2034.

Impact on neighbouring amenity

The proposed development would be located at a distance of over 200m to the nearest residential dwelling. Taking into consideration the nature of the proposal and the significant distance between the development and the neighbouring property, no concern is raised with regard to any adverse impact on neighbouring amenity.

Conclusion.

There is no in-principle objection to the proposed development which does not cause any change of use of the land away from an agricultural use, therefore, would be appropriate development under para.150 of the NPPF. Furthermore, it would be in keeping with the character of the area and would conserve the AONB and would not harm the distinctive character of the AGLV. Furthermore, it would not result in any adverse impact on neighbouring amenity. The proposal is therefore recommended for approval.

The proposed development would be in keeping with the character of the area and would conserve the AONB and would not harm the distinctive character of the AGLV. Furthermore, it would not result in any adverse impact on neighbouring amenity. The proposal is therefore recommended for approval.