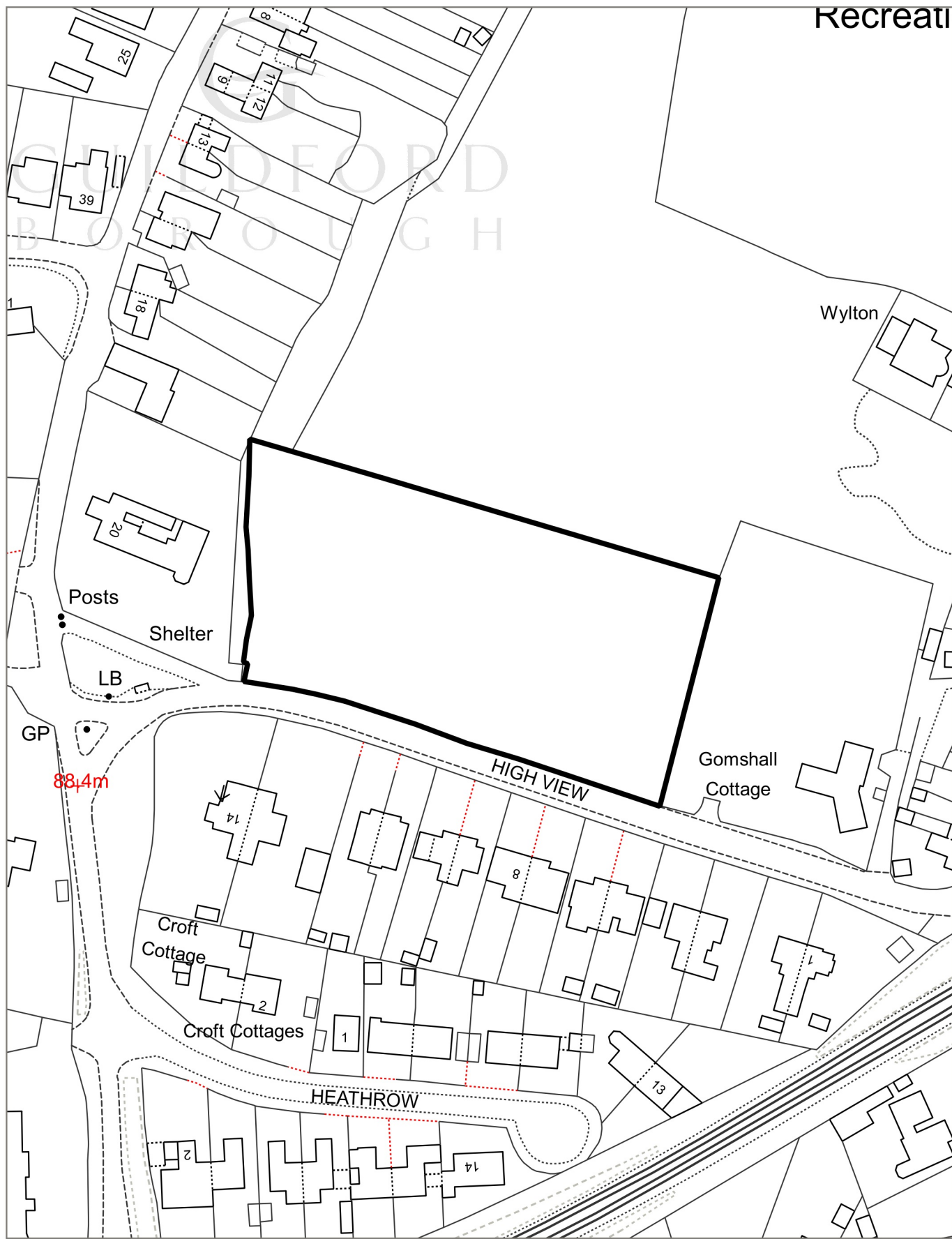


22/P/01037 - Land At, High View, Gomshall



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Print Date: 18/11/2022



Not to Scale



GUILDFORD
BOROUGH

22/P/01037 – Land at High View, Gomshall



Not to scale



App No: 22/P/01037
Appn Type: Full Application
Case Officer: Daniel Cooklin-smith

8 Wk Deadline: 17/11/2022

Parish: Shere
Agent : Miss L. O'Brien
Future Planning and
Development
2 Wardrobe Place
London
EC4V 5AH

Ward: Tillingbourne
Applicant: Gold Property Development
Ltd
Gold Property Development
Ltd
4 Churchill Court
Hortons Way
Westerham
TN16 1BT

Location: Land at, High View, Gomshall, GU5 9LT
Proposal: Erection of two pairs of four-bedroom dwellings with associated access and landscaping.

Executive Summary

Reason for referral

This application has been referred to the Planning Committee because Local Ward Member Councillor Diana Jones has requested that this application brought to committee. Councillor Jones does not agree that the development constitutes 'limited infilling' and believes the site should not be built on at all due to its environmental value and being located within the Green Belt and Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Key information

Permission is sought for the construction of 4x dwellings on an existing open plot of land with associated landscaping and parking spaces. Each dwelling has 4 double bedrooms and is two-storeys in height.

Summary of considerations and constraints

The proposal is situated within the Green Belt, contains 2 protected trees on the western side of the existing plot of land and the site is located within the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

A similar proposal for 10 dwellings on the same plot (15/P/01497) was refused by the council and subsequently dismissed at appeal. The Planning Inspector stated that the site is situated within the village of Gomshall Village as a matter of fact and degree. However, it was determined that the construction of 10 dwellings is inappropriate development within the Green Belt.

Since the refusal and subsequent dismissal at appeal, Policy P2 (Green Belt) has been adopted in the Local Plan (2019). The policy states that Gomshall is one of several villages where limited infilling outside of an identified settlement boundary may be appropriate within the Green Belt where it can be demonstrated that the site is within a village.

As such, it is considered that this proposal represents limited infilling due to the quantum of dwellings proposed. Furthermore, whilst the site is within the AONB and Green Belt, the proposal provides highly sustainable housing and landscaping which would outweigh any harm to the Green Belt and the AONB. Moreover, it is the officer's opinion that this site is not visible to such an extent that the proposal would have a detrimental impact on the wider area.

Regarding S.106 contributions the site is not located within the Thames Heaths Basin Special Protection Area. As such the provision of new dwellings does not require a SANG or SAMM contribution.

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:

P2028-IOA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-3200 REV C05 – Proposed Site and Ground Floor Plan;
P2028-IOA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-3203 REV C04 – Proposed Driveway Plan H1 & H2;
P2028-IOA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-3204 REV C04 Proposed Driveway Plan H3 & H4;
P2028-IOA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-3230 REV C03 – Proposed Visibility Plan;

Received on 14th October 2022 and;

P2028-IOA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-3225 REV C03 – Proposed Layout/Floor Plans; and
P2028-IOA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-3225 REV C03 – Proposed Room Layouts Plan.

Received on 5th October 2022.

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

3. No development shall take place until details and samples of the proposed external facing and roofing materials including colour and finish have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and samples.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the building is satisfactory.

4. The approved Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan prepared by PJC Consultancy, dated 24th May 2022, must be adhered to in full, and may only be modified by written agreement from the LPA. The protection measures shall be maintained in accordance with the approved details, until all equipment, machinery and surplus materials have been moved from the site.

Reason: To protect the trees on site which are to be retained in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality. It is considered necessary for this to be a pre-commencement condition because the adequate protection of trees prior to works commencing on site goes to the heart of the planning permission.

5. Prior to occupation, the landscape strategy/mitigation as set out by Harper Landscape Architecture LLP (HLA R01 REV A (20/04/2022)) shall be implemented in full and shall be retained thereafter. Any landscape changes shall require express permission from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of an appropriate landscape scheme in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality.

6. The approved scheme shall ensure that the sustainable design principles set out in the sustainability statement, questionnaire and the Design & Access Statements to ensure the dwellings achieve 'Passivhaus' performance standards. This includes the minimum performance indicators set out below:

- Maximum U-values of 0.15W/m².k for opaque fabric
- Thermal bridge free construction
- Maximum U-values of 0.85W/m².k for windows (installed)
- Maximum air leakage rate of 0.6 air changes/hour (ACH-1) @ 50Pa.
- Minimum installed efficiency for MVHR of 75%

This will ensure a Dwelling Emission Rate (DER) of 70-75%. All measures shall be implemented prior to the first occupation and remain as operational thereafter.

Reason: To reduce carbon emissions and incorporate sustainable energy in accordance with the Council's 'Climate Change, Sustainable Design, Construction and Energy' SPD 2020.

7. The development hereby permitted must comply with regulation 36 paragraph 2(b) of the Building Regulations 2010 (as amended) to achieve a water efficiency of 110 litres per occupant per day (described in part G2 of the Approved Documents 2015). Before occupation, a copy of the wholesome water consumption calculation notice (described at regulation 37 (1) of the Building Regulations 2010 (as amended)) shall be provided to the planning department to demonstrate that this condition has been met.

Reason: To improve water efficiency in accordance with the Council's 'Climate Change, Sustainable Design, Construction and Energy' SPD 2020.

8. No development shall commence until a Site Waste Management Plan has been submitted to an approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority that demonstrates how waste generated from construction and excavation activities would be dealt with in accordance with the waste hierarchy. The Site Waste Management Plan will subsequently be kept up-to-date throughout the development process in accordance with the established methodology.

Reason: To ensure that the development takes waste hierarchy into account to manage waste. It is considered necessary for this to be a pre-commencement condition because waste will begin to be generated as soon as any development commences on the site.

9. No development shall take place until a scheme to enhance the nature conservation interest of the site has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall be implemented in full prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved.

Reason: To increase the biodiversity of the site and mitigate any impact from the development.

10. No vehicle shall access the site unless and until the proposed vehicular accesses and tactile paving to High View hereby approved have been constructed and provided with visibility zones in accordance with the approved plans, Drawing No. P2028-IOA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-3230 Rev C03, and thereafter the visibility zones shall be kept permanently clear of any obstruction over 0.6m high.

Reason

In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users and to promote sustainable forms of transport in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

11. The development hereby approved shall not be first occupied unless and until space has been laid out within the site in accordance with the approved plans for vehicles to be parked and for vehicles to turn so that they may enter and leave the site in forward gear. Thereafter the parking and turning areas shall be retained and maintained for their designated purposes.

Reasons

In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users and to promote sustainable forms of transport in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

12. The development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless and until each of the proposed dwellings are provided with a fast-charge Electric Vehicle charging point (current minimum requirements - 7 kw Mode 3 with Type 2 connector - 230v AC 32 Amp single phase dedicated supply) in accordance with a scheme to be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter retained and maintained to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason

In order to promote sustainable forms of transport in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

13. The development hereby approved shall not be first occupied unless and until facilities for the secure, covered parking of bicycles and the provision of charging points for e-bikes by said facilities have been provided within the development site in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter the said approved facilities shall be provided, retained and maintained to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason

In order to promote sustainable forms of transport in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

Informatives:

1. If you need any advice regarding Building Regulations please do not hesitate to contact Guildford Borough Council Building Control on 01483 444545 or buildingcontrol@guildford.gov.uk
2. 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 was sought and provided which addressed potential issues, the application has been submitted and minor issues have arisen resulting in negotiations with the applicant. These have been overcome and planning permission has been recommended.

Officer's Report

Site description.

The application site is a 0.6ha site located in Gomshall Village on the northern side of High View. The site is enclosed on the east and west and bounded by woodland to the north. South of the site is Highview, a rural road with residential housing. The site was formerly used as gardens and tennis courts for Gomshall Lodge and is now undeveloped land. There are two trees along the frontage which are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) and there are trees and vegetation along the other site boundaries.

High View is residential in character and there are a number of semi-detached and detached houses in the surrounding area. The site is opposite a row of semi-detached housing (5-14 High View).

The site is reasonably accessible and sustainable and within walking distance from Gomshall Village Centre with good transport links to Dorking and Guildford, with good access to local amenities such as supermarkets, shops, post office and railway stations.

Planning constraints:

The site is set within the Green Belt and is outside of an identified settlement boundary;
The site contains 2x protected trees on the western aspect of the frontage;
The site is within the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV);
The road and parts of the site are identified as being in a 1 in 1,000 year risk of surface water flooding.

Proposal.

Permission is sought for the construction of 4x dwellings (2 pairs of 2 houses) with associated landscaping and parking. The development proposes materials consistent with the existing character. Each dwelling will have private access with garden space directly accessible from the driveways.

Housing mix

4 x 4 bedroom (8 person) dwellings

As set out in the Nationally Described Space Standards, a 2-storey, 4 bedroom dwelling should have a Gross Internal Floor Area (GIA) of 124 m². This, amongst other space standards will be considered throughout the report.

Parking provision

Each dwelling will be provided with 2x off-street car parking spaces and obscured from public view.

Relevant planning history.

15/P/01497 - Details provided in the 'Site Background' section.

Consultations.

Statutory consultees

Thames Water: No objection subject to informatives relating to waste water network, sewage treatment works and the water treatment network.

Environmental Health Officer: No objection subject to conditions.

Surrey County Council Highways: Requested additional details relating to a visibility splays.

Arboricultural Officer: No objection subject to conditions.

Shere Parish Council: Object to development as it is outside a settlement area and is not limited infill. Concerns also raised regarding existing wildlife.

Surrey AONB Officer: Gomshall is a fine Surrey Hills AONB Village attracting many visitors including walkers, some of whom walk along this lane. I consider this to be a valuable asset of the village making a major contribution to its attractive rural character. It comprises an open area important to the setting of the tall and many trees adjoining to the north.

The proposed development would result in a loss of the natural rural feel of this part of the village along High View.

The proposal is situated with a Site of Nature Conservation Importance. Such sites are protected from development that would damage their conservation value and the protection of nature is an important aim within the Surrey Hills AONB.

The officer questions if contemporary architecture is appropriate within the context of this site and argues the design may be better suited in an urban context.

Surrey Wildlife Trust: Recommendations are for the applicant to provide a Construction Environmental Management Plan and Landscape and Ecological Management Plan prior to commencement. In addition to this, a Sensitive Lighting Plan should also be implemented as a general recommendation. Contrary to the AONB officer's advice, there is not a Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) to the north of the site. The nearest sites are Netley Heath and Effingham Woods SNCI which are 0.4km away from the site. The officer states that they agree with the Ecological Assessment which states that the 'localised scale of the proposed development...will result in no deleterious impact to these or any other designated sites'.

Third party comments:

12 letters of objection have been received; key issues raised are as follows:

The application does not address the previous reasons for refusal; namely that the proposal does not constitute limited infilling and harm to the openness of the Green belt;

The scale of the development is not appropriate within the village;

Does not enhance Gomshall Village;

Clearance resulting in a loss of biodiversity;

The proposal presents a fire risk during dry summers;

Nearby application refused on the basis that it is on Green Belt land and therefore this should be refused;

Provision of water and electricity and impact on demand;

Traffic safety concerns resulting from increased car usage;

2 letters in support have been received. These raised the following:

This is a good use of infill land that has been unused for decades;
Good use of space that should be more ambitious in delivering a larger quantum of new homes.

Planning policies.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

Chapter 2: Achieving sustainable development

Chapter 4. Decision making

Chapter 5: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes.

Chapter 8: Promoting sustainable transport

Chapter 11. Making effective use of land.

Chapter 12: Achieving well-designed places.

Chapter 13: Protecting Green Belt land.

Chapter 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change.

Chapter 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

Guildford Borough 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).

The Council has a deliverable supply of housing land for in excess of five years. The Council's published Position Statement is that the Council has 7 years supply, however the Council's published position has been subject to challenge in the context of an ongoing planning appeal. The Council has been represented at inquiry by external consultants who have confirmed their view that the Council has in excess of a five year supply of housing land. In addition to this, the Government's recently published Housing Delivery Test indicates that Guildford's 2021 measurement is 144%. For the purposes of NPPF footnote 7, this is therefore greater than the threshold set out in paragraph 215 (75%). Therefore, the Plan and its policies are regarded as up-to-date in terms of paragraph 11 of the NPPF.

H1: Homes for all

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

P2: Green Belt

D1: Place shaping

D2: Climate change, sustainable design, construction and energy

ID3: Sustainable transport for new development

ID4: Green and blue infrastructure

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

G1: General Standards of Development

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

G5: Design Code

G5(2): Scale, proportion and form

G5(5): Layout

NE4: Species Protection

NE5: Development Affecting Trees, Hedges & Woodlands

Supplementary planning documents:

SPG - Residential Design Guide 2004

SPD - Vehicle Parking Standards 2006

SPD - Planning Contributions 2017

SPD - Climate Change, Sustainable Design, Construction and Energy 2020

Other guidance:

Guildford Borough Council - Guidance on the storage and collection of household waste for new developments July 2017

Surrey County Council Vehicular and Cycle Parking Guidance 2018

National Design Guide 2021

Planning considerations.

The main planning considerations in this case are:

- The principle of development
- Housing mix
- Impact on character and appearance of the surrounding area
- Living environment
- The impact on neighbouring amenity
- Highway/parking considerations
- Sustainability
- Impact on protected species and biodiversity
- Impact on trees and vegetation
- Impact on the Greenbelt
- Impact on the AONB
- Legal agreement requirements
- Other considerations

Site background

A scheme for 10 dwellings (15/P/01497) which was refused by the Council for the following reasons:

1) *The proposed development is located in the Green Belt outside any identified settlement area and represents inappropriate development, which is by definition harmful to the Green Belt, its openness and permanence and the purposes of including land within it. No very special circumstances have been identified by the applicant that clearly outweigh the substantial harm to the Green Belt. The development therefore fails to accord with policy RE2 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003 (as saved by CLG Direction on 24/09/2007), the NPPF and NPPG.*

2) *The proposal is required to provide a sustainable urban drainage system, where it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that surface water can be managed on the site with a system of on-going maintenance for the lifetime of the development or any details to confirm that it would be inappropriate. The development therefore fails to accord with policy G1(7) of the Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003 (as saved by CLG Direction on 24/09/2007), the NPPF (para. 103) and the NPPG (Paragraph: 079 Reference ID: 7-079-20150415).*

The refusal was upheld at appeal with the Inspector concluding that the development constituted inappropriate development in the Green Belt as the addition of 10 dwellings could not be considered limited infilling. The Inspector stated that Policy RE3 from the now superseded Guildford Plan (2003) and the wording of 'small scale housing' is the main requirement for a new building to be 'infilling'. It is established in the Inspector's report that the site is as a matter of fact and degree, within Gomshall Village.

The Inspector provided further rationale and stated that when considering the wider context, the site is 100m in width and is bound by single-detached houses on both sides in substantially sized plots with loose and undeveloped land on three sides. The Inspector state that the site is *therefore expansive in its scale (and considered) that the development of ten dwellings, spanning the full width of the site, would not represent limited infilling.*

This application is a re-submission following pre-application advice that was issued on 31/08/2021. The officer concluded that due to the size, context and characteristics of the site, any number of dwellings on the site would be unlikely to receive officer support as it does not meet the criteria set out in Para 149 (Protecting Green Belt Land) of the NPPF (2021).

The principle of development

The NPPF 2021 sets out the government's aim to significantly boost the supply of housing with housing applications considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Paragraph 69 of the NPPF states that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should support development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes and encouraging the sub-division of large sites where this could help to speed up the delivery of homes.

Policy RE3 (Identified settlements in the green belt) has now been superseded in the most recent Local Plan by Policy P2 (Green Belt) and states that the Green Belt will be protected against inappropriate development in accordance with the NPPF (2021). However, Policy P2 further stipulates that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt will be acceptable provided development falls within the list of exceptions including limited infilling.

Limited infilling may be considered appropriate outside the identified settlement boundary where it can be demonstrated that the site should be considered to be within a village (Paragraph c(i)). Gomshall has been identified as one of the villages for this exception. Furthermore, it has been established in the previous application (15/P/01497) that the site is within the village of Gomshall.

As previously highlighted, the refused application (15/P/01497) was upheld at appeal on the basis that it did not constitute limited infilling. When considering the revised proposal it is the Officer's opinion that the site is not expansive given that the quantum of dwellings is reduced from 10 to 4. It is considered that the reduction in dwellings as 2x semi-detached units with surrounding open space is more in keeping with the surrounding area.

The issue of quantum is not directly addressed by the Inspector, but it is clear that 10x dwellings exceeds the acceptable level required for the development to be considered limited infilling. It is also known that the Inspector's view was that the development spanning the entire 100m of the site would make the development too 'expansive'.

The Legal Opinion provided by Cornerstone Barristers highlights that limited infilling is open to interpretation. Whilst there are contextual and differences in planning designations, the examples of precedent set out by Cornerstone Barristers are of relevance. Whilst the dwellings are not necessarily reflective of Gomshall Village, there is a cogent argument put forward that suggests that less than 5 dwellings can be considered limited infilling provided that the scale of development, neighbouring impact and rural character are not adversely impacted. Furthermore, it is considered that the 4 dwellings can be considered a 'small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage' (Guildford Local Plan Para. 4.3.23) and is therefore compliant with Guildford policy.

As such, it is the opinion of the officer that the development constitutes limited infilling and that the proposal is considered acceptable in principle subject to compliance with other local and national policies.

Housing mix

Policy H1 of the Local Plan (2019) sets out that 'New residential development is required to deliver a wide choice of homes to meet a range of accommodation needs as set out in the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment. New development should provide a mix of housing tenures, types and sizes appropriate to the site size, characteristics and location'. The housing mix is to be delivered over the plan period. The SHMA sets out a requirement for market homes of 10% - 1 bed homes, 30% - 2 bed homes, 40% - 3 bed homes and 20% - 4 bed homes.

The proposal seeks to provide 4 x 4-bed dwellings. Given the relatively small scale nature of the development, it is considered that the proposal does have an acceptable housing mix which meets a range of accommodation needs appropriate to the site's size, characteristics and location. The proposal therefore complies with policy H1 of the Local Plan.

The Impact on character and appearance of the area

The National Design Guide sets out that well-designed development is influenced by local character and the characteristics of existing built form, and it is important to consider the composition of street scenes, the height, scale, massing and relationships between buildings, the scale and proportions of building and landscaping, both hard and soft.

Policy D1 of the Local Plan requires (1) all new development to achieve high quality design that responds to distinctive local character of the area in which its set. Section (4) requires all new development to be designed to reflect distinct local character of the area and to respond to and reinforce locally distinct patterns of development, including landscape setting. Policy G5 of the Saved Local Plan sets out criteria to ensure new development is in keeping with the surrounding area.

Within the most recent appeal decision relating to the site (ref: 15/P/01497) the inspector states the following with regards to the character of the area:

The appeal site is an undeveloped area of land which sits outside of the settlement boundaries for Gomshall. However, the Council accepts, as a matter of fact and degree, that the site is within the village of Gomshall. There is residential development on the south side of High View opposite the site and that, considered in the wider context, the built up area extends around the other sides of the site. (The site) is bounded on both sides by single detached dwellings in substantial, well planted plots. To the rear is a strong belt of mature planting, beyond which is an undeveloped open space.

The site is, therefore, expansive in its scale and surrounded on three sides by loosely or undeveloped land.

The surrounding area is residential in nature with large semi-detached houses with driveways opposite the application site. The site is bounded by more large residential housing although there is natural screening on both sides of the existing area. To the rear is a wooded area which again would be screened by flora fauna. The plans show that the proposed dwellings would all benefit from landscaping along High View and also separating the two pairs of semi-detached dwellings to retain the well-landscaped character of the area. The applicant has submitted a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment in which it is concluded that the dwellings would be discreet in terms of visibility and public views would be limited to 5-14 High View.

With regard to the built form, the site is visible from High View and is also visible from No 5 - 14 High View (inclusive). These existing houses are built in a traditional 19th century rural form with stone on the ground floor and red brick on the first floor. The pitched eaves and red bricks are a key component of this row of houses and the character of the north of Highview. The proposed dwellings have a more contemporary design which is evident through the use of zinc rooftops and timber cladding, although the majority of the front elevation will consist of brickwork facing Highview. A condition will be included to ensure the materials are appropriate within the context of the area. This will be assessed by Guildford's Heritage and Design team.

As such, it is considered that the location of the proposed development would not harm the established character of the surrounding area by reason of providing a degree of interest to the area through contemporary materials. This opinion reflects the opinion set out in the original pre-application response from 2021. Furthermore, the site's landscaping and relatively sparsely plotted residential housing would be acceptable in scale, height, plot size and therefore would preserve the character of Gomshall.

Living environment

Policy H1(3) of the LPSS requires all new development to conform to the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDDS, 2015) as set out by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing, Communities and Local Govt (DLUHC). The application proposes the creation of 4x 4 bed Passivhaus dwellings and are split into 2 pairs of semi-detached dwellings.

In line with the NDDS, a 2-storey 4-bed dwelling for 8 people should have a gross internal area (GIA) of 124m². The proposed dwellings GIA is outlined below:

Unit 1: 235m²

Unit 2: 238 m²

Unit 3: 235m²

Unit 4: 238m²

Therefore, all dwellings meet the criteria set out in the NDDS. With regard to rooms, the dwellings require double bedrooms to have an area of 11.5m² and be 2.75m in width. The dwellings should have a ceiling to floor height of 2.3m on each floor. The proposed dwelling meets the standards set out and therefore complies with NDDS policy.

The proposed garden areas are generous and provide good amenity space around the dwelling, creating a pleasant and open environment that responds well to the current open space whilst also providing the occupiers a good standard of accommodation regarding living space. Therefore, the proposal is acceptable in this regard.

The impact on neighbouring amenity

Policy G1(3) of the Saved Local Plan seeks to protect the amenity of occupants of buildings from unneighbourly development in terms of privacy, access to sunlight and daylight, noise, vibration, pollution, dust and smell. Policy H4 states that permission will be granted provided that development does not have an unacceptable effect on amenity.

The proposals have been designed in a way that ensures that the two pairs of dwellings are well separated by natural screening. Furthermore, each of the semi-detached pairs do not impact one another's amenity due to the configuration of the floorplan, fenestration and access to outdoor amenity space.

Accordingly, there is no unacceptable material impact on neighbouring amenity anticipated.

Highway/parking considerations

Paragraph 104 of the NPPF states that development should promote sustainable modes of transport and consider patterns of movement and parking in order to contribute towards making high quality places. The proposed development will provide x bicycle storage spaces per dwelling, along with EV charging ports and 2x off-road parking spaces per dwelling which is compliant with policy. Bicycle storage and EV charging ports shall be enforced with a suitably worded condition.

Refuse and recycling has been located along the driveways, which are generous in size and owing to the high-quality landscaping are kept discreet. The discreet nature of the driveways also helps to reduce the visibility of parked cars. With regard to highway safety, there are no concerns as a result of this application owing to the large driveways. However, suitably worded conditions will be imposed to ensure that no vehicles use the site for residential purposes until vehicular access has been constructed in accordance with visibility zones set out in the proposed plans. Another condition will also set out that the development should not be occupied until space has been made for cars to turn safely and enter and exit the site in forward gear. This will ensure that there are no highway safety concerns when driving onto Highview.

Sustainability

Policy D2 of the LPSS sets out that new dwellings need to achieve a 20% reduction in carbon emissions through the use of renewable energy.

A sustainability questionnaire has been submitted, along with additional details within the submitted planning statement. A statement has been provided by Future Planning and Development and outlines how the proposal meets local and national policy requirements including Policy D2 (Sustainable design, construction and energy) and Part L of the National Building Regulations.

The term Passivhaus is translated in English to 'Passive House' and refers to the energy efficient standards and small ecological and carbon footprint these dwellings create. The Sustainability statement details how the Passivhaus dwellings result in energy savings due to minimum performance standards to achieve 'Passivhaus':

- Maximum U-values of 0.15W/m².k for opaque fabric;
- Thermal bridge free construction;
- Maximum U-values of 0.85W/m².k for windows (installed);
- Maximum air leakage rate of 0.6 air changes/hour (ACH-1) @ 50Pa;
- Minimum installed efficiency for MVHR of 75%

The dwellings will achieve 'Passivhaus' standard through measures including air-source heat pumps for heating and hot water, heat recovery ventilation, 100% low-energy lighting, low-flow sanitary ware and solar thermal hot water panels.

It is noted that an objection was raised in relation to water and electricity provision. It is proposed that an appropriately worded condition will be used for electricity and water efficiency calculations and will need to be submitted to the local planning authority for approval.

The predicted energy efficiency of these dwellings would be around 75% less energy when compared with other new dwellings. As such, the proposal is highly sustainable and would not cause undue long-term environmental harm.

The impact of biodiversity and protected species

The NPPF states that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising the impact on and providing net gains for biodiversity (Para. 174). The development makes use of the open space and landscaping to preserve and respond to the openness of the surrounding area.

With regard to ecological concerns, Surrey County Council's officer has confirmed there are no major concerns with respect to this proposal. The developer has submitted the following documents:

- Ecological assessment;
- Biodiversity net gain report; and
- Arboricultural impact assessment.

The reports conclude that the proposal would have a minor impact on local trees. In line with Surrey Wildlife Trust's advice, a condition will be used to ensure that any should any trees be felled, they should be managed in line with the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). The applicant has also provided an ecological report to show that there would be no deleterious impacts on designated sites, ancient woodlands or habitats of conservation concern within a 2km radius. Given the potential impact for lighting on wildlife, the applicant will be notified via informative that any external artificial lighting should comply with standards set out in BCT & ILP (2018) Guidance Note 08/18.

A condition will also be included relating to Landscape and Ecological Management Plan to ensure the site achieves a biodiversity net gain. As such, the development is acceptable from a landscape and ecological perspective.

Impact on trees and ecology

The application is supported by an Arboricultural Report prepared by PJC Consultancy. The report recognises that the site is situated within an AONB and is subject to a Tree Protection Order (TPO No.3 (1986)). The proposal will involve the removal of one group of self-seeded willow and sycamore saplings to facilitate the proposal. A T1 lime will also be pruned in order to enable the construction of a footpath.

The proposal will involve permanent garden fencing along with soft landscaping to create a pleasant environment that is in keeping with the local surroundings. Guildford Council's arboricultural officer has confirmed that no objection is raised to the arboricultural proposals although a condition is required to ensure that the Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan are adhered to in full. A pre-commencement condition will be applied to ensure that any tree protection measures as set out in the AMS and TPP have been implemented in full.

Impact on the AONB

Policy P1 (Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Area of Great Landscape Value) of the Local Plan (2019) states that development within an AONB should conserve or enhance special or scenic landscapes. Proposals should give regard to protecting the setting of an AONB and consider management policies set out in the Surrey Hills Management Plan (2019).

The Surrey Hills Management Plan highlights that small developments can have a cumulative impact on AONBs over time and therefore development management should take strict measures to address this. The officer recognises the benefit that the AONB brings to residents' quality of life as well as visitor experience.

In the case of this site; it is a 0.6ha site, approximately 110 metres wide x 55 metres deep. When looking at the site from above, it is shown to be surrounded by trees to the north, east and west. Whilst further east and west is residential housing and to the south is the Shere Millennium Walking Trail (on High View) and residential housing. It is clear that the site is situated on a gradient which gently slopes down to the north, thereby ensuring that the site is not visible northwards of the site given the natural screening of vegetation and open spaces such as Gomshall Play Park sitting lower than the application site. It is also notable that from the street level at Towerhill and Heathrow, the site is not visible, despite being south of the application site as it is elevated.

As such, the officer concludes that the site does not represent a significant parcel of land or highly valuable asset in the context of the Surrey Hills AONB given that the site only has direct viewpoints from the dwellings at 5-14 Highview and even these are obscured by landscaping and hedgerows. Furthermore, the open land is isolated in terms of other open fields and this negates any potential for cumulative development. As such, it is concluded that development in this area of the AONB is acceptable.

With regard to design, the proposal is contemporary in nature which is considered acceptable due to the absence of any architecturally significant buildings in the surrounding areas. The dwellings located at 5-14 Highview have a traditional rural form and contribute towards the character of Gomshall. As mentioned in an earlier paragraph, the design would provide a level of interest to the surrounding area – although a condition will be included to ensure that the materials are appropriate.

The development also incorporates a high quality landscaping strategy and is set out in the statement prepared by Harper Landscape Architecture. Trees will be planted and protected trees will be preserved along the site to keep the development discreet. A suitably worded condition will be used to ensure the development is implemented in accordance with the strategy.

To conclude, the proposal is acceptable within the Surrey Hills AONB and would comply with policies set out in Policy P1 of the Local Plan (2019).
Legal agreement requirements

The proposed development would not be subject to any legal agreements.

Other considerations

There are no other relevant considerations as part of this application.

Conclusion.

The proposed development for 4x new dwellings is located within the Gomshall Village and the officer considers this to be an appropriate infill and as such, the principle of the proposed development is acceptable. The applicants have undertaken the pre-application process, following a refusal for a larger scheme which incorporated 10x dwellings on the application site. It is considered that the applicant has responded to previous council feedback in order to overcome previous reasons for refusal. The proposed development would lead to the creation of four family sized homes in a sustainable location that reflect the character of the area.

It has been shown that the proposed development respects the amenity of the adjacent neighbours and would not result in detrimental impacts on trees, highways or ecology.

Overall, it is considered that the scheme represents a sustainable form of development, makes effective use of a suitable and accessible site which accords with both local plan and national policy requirements as set out. Furthermore, the officer is of the opinion that this application site can be considered infilling. As such, planning permission should be granted subject to conditions.