

Land at Elite, Hornash Lane, Shadoxhurst, TN26 1HU

Planning and Design and Access Statement

On behalf of SE & LS Ransley

**Outline application for the erection of six residential units, with
demolition of existing agricultural storage buildings**

HPPC Ref: 30985

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application seeks planning permission for the erection of 6 detached dwelling houses in the place of existing agricultural barns used for agricultural purposes, at land known as 'Elite', off Hornash Lane, Shadoxhurst.
- 1.2 This proposal is to utilise land that was previously developed with substantial existing agricultural buildings that are now redundant to agricultural activities and large areas of concrete hard-surfacing.

2 SITE AND LOCATION

- 2.1 The site is located at the end of a long residential frontage on Hornash Lane, Shadoxhurst and is adjacent to residential properties at the western end of the village. The character of the area is almost entirely residential in nature and the site is well related to the settlement.
- 2.2 To the north of Hornash Lane lies a large detached dwelling, with generous gardens, opposite the proposed development site. Several large scale agricultural buildings are located on site, which are not currently in active use.
- 2.3 The site benefits from an existing large access off Hornash Lane leading to an extensive area of hard standing at the front of the site, which continues through to the rear.
- 2.4 Shadoxhurst has good proximity to a range of community facilities, with Ashford centre located 5 miles away, including Ashford's International Station, super markets, pubs, restaurants, shops, entertainment venues, schools and churches. The closest bus stop is at the junction of Hornash Lane and Tally Ho Road at a distance of approximately 0.4 miles.
- 2.5 Woodland bounds the site to the east and south, with an open grass area to the southeast fronting Hornash Lane, over which passes an existing rout-way, presently overgrown, with separate vehicular gated access onto Hornash Lane.

3 PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 There is some planning history related to the proposed development site where individual buildings have changed use over the years from agricultural to storage, display and retail sale of cars.

3.2 Site History

- May 1982 - Jun 1982: Permit
82/00594/AS - Garage
- Apr 1984 - May 1984: Permit – Temporary
84/00403/AS – Change of use of buildings (marked a and b on site plan) to use as storage for up to 12 cars at any one time
- Mar 1987 - May 1987: Permit
87/00385/AS – Change of use of buildings to use as storage for up to 12 cars at any one time
- Jun 1992 - Jul 1992: Permit
92/0085/AS – Change of use of buildings on site to use for display and retail sale of up to 30 cars at any one time
- 17/01672/AS – Change of use of land and erection of 7 detached dwellings – withdrawn.

3.3 The site is no longer considered viable as a commercial business or for solely agricultural purposes.

4 PROPOSAL

- 4.1 This outline proposal is to erect 6 detached 2 storey dwellings with gardens and parking and suitable turning space, in the place of the existing agricultural buildings. At this outline stage, access is to be agreed, with all other matters, including layout and design, to be addressed at the Reserved Matters stage.
- 4.2 The proposed houses would benefit from ample gardens and views towards the adjoining woodland site, without affecting any of the trees, since their sitting is away from any of the existing trees canopies. This woodland area was previously designated as Ancient Woodland, however, following successful application to Natural England, has been agreed to be removed from the Ancient Woodland designation given the past grazing use of this parcel of land.
- 4.3 An indicative layout plan is provided to show how the dwellings might be arranged within the site, whilst reflecting local form and retaining existing trees.

5 PLANNING POLICY

Ashford Borough Council Development Plan Core Strategy 2008

- 5.1 The site is considered to be a reasonably sustainable location and in such circumstances would be suitable for development for residential purposes in accordance with the Framework as a windfall site.
- 5.2 Policy CS1 states the need for sustainable development; specifically paragraph F, stresses the importance of best use of previously developed land and buildings, while paragraph D touches on security and the creation of spaces that complement their surroundings, which this proposal aims to achieve on both accounts. Being agricultural, the site does not fall within the NPPF definition of 'previously developed land', however it must be recognised that substantial agricultural buildings are already located on the land and there is an extensive amount of hard-standing already in place over the land, therefore the site cannot be considered a Greenfield site. The site adjoins and lies opposite existing residential properties and has attracted unwanted visits. By developing it the level of security would locally improve, making it safer for existing neighbouring residents. Additionally, delivering buildings of similar design and architecture of that of the area, would significantly improve the appearance of the immediate setting, compared to the existing buildings of agricultural appearance.
- 5.3 Policy CS9 states the importance of high quality design which this development aims to achieve through the proposed design. The architectural design of the proposed buildings is reflective of the character and architecture of their surroundings. High standards of materials are to be used, reflecting the character and locality of the area, creating a high standard of living for future residents and enhancing the immediate setting.
- 5.4 Policy CS15 addresses transport, parking and access needs. The new development will provide sufficient parking according to the parking standards requirement for all future residents, including visitors parking and secure cycle storage. It therefore meets Policy CS15 aims and objectives.
- 5.5 Policy CS20 seeks the use of sustainable drainage systems in all new developments. This was since brought in by Government as a requirement in 2015 and supersedes Policy CS20. The proposal, as a new development, should and will include SUDs as a matter of requirement, thus meeting the Policy aims and objectives.

- 5.6 The proximity of the site to local amenities is in keeping with the Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 29, in that it promotes less travel by non sustainable means, such as private cars. This proposal is located within walking distance of a bus stop, conveniently connecting the site to Ashford and its community facilities, while minimizing the need for private car use, thus meeting the Policy's aims and objectives.

Tenterden and Rural Sites Development Plan Document (DPD)

- 5.7 In the Tenterden and Rural Sites DPD, adopted October 2010, Policy TRS2 regarding new residential development outside the village settlement's confines, any new development must satisfy one of the following:

- Be an agricultural dwelling, justified under PPS7, or,
- Be a re-use or adaptation of an existing rural building of architectural or historic interest, justified under policy TRS13, or,
- Be a replacement dwelling that is justified under policy TRS3, or,
- Be a 'local needs' scheme on an exception site justified under policies TRS4 or TRS5.

The proposal satisfies bullet point number one. However, this Policy predates the National Planning Policy Framework and is therefore considered outdated. Ashford Borough Council (ABC) does not currently have a five year housing supply and subsequently there is a need for housing. This proposal would help ABC towards achieving their housing target.

Emerging Draft Local Plan to 2013

- 5.8 The Draft Local Plan has been considered at the Examination in Public and the Council is currently preparing responses to the Inspectors on several matters. It has been indicated at the Enquiry that the Council can provide a 5 year supply of housing land, with those sites proposed for allocation. However, a number of windfall sites are still expected to be provided.
- 5.9 Draft Policy SP1 identifies the Strategic Objectives of the Plan. It states that all planning applications are expected to adhere to focus development at accessible and sustainable locations, utilise existing infrastructure and brownfield land whenever possible, create sustainable and high quality design that responds to the prevailing character of the area and encourage non-car based travel. The site is not brownfield but makes best use of already developed land, is in an accessible and sustainable location, is in keeping with the character of the area, proposes high quality design and encourages non-car based travel, being located within walking distance of a bus stop, subsequently connecting it to Ashford, which is located nearby. It therefore meets Policy SP1 aims and objectives.

- 5.10 Draft Policy HOU3a has replaced policies HOU3 and HOU4 and states that minor scale development is accepted within the confines of Shadoxhurst, providing that the development is of compatible scale, layout, design and appearance compared to its surroundings and can provide residents with safe lighting and access without compromising their neighbours or the integrity of the street-scene. They also require that the property is safely accessible from the main road network, it does not increase traffic to unaccommodating levels, it does not require substantial infrastructure to support it and it does not displace any active use of employment, leisure or community facilities. The proposal meets this Policy's aims and objectives.
- 5.11 Emerging Policy HOU12 referring to the National Space Standards is supported by the proposal.
- 5.12 Emerging Policy ENV7 relates to water efficiency in new developments. The development will be capable of meeting the requirements of said Policy. Emerging Policy ENV8 addressed water supply, quality and treatment and Emerging Policy ENV9 requires sustainable drainage in new developments. The proposal will be capable of meeting these aims and objectives.
- 5.13 Emerging Policy TRA5 requires proposals to demonstrate how they can safely accommodate pedestrians and Emerging Policy TR6 requires cycle parking and storage provision. The proposal meets the aims and objectives of both Policies.

Supplementary Planning Documents

- 5.14 There are 3 Adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) which are considered to be relevant to these proposals;
- Sustainable Drainage SPD;
 - Residential Parking and Design Guidance SPD;
 - Residential Space and Layout SPD;
- 5.15 Sustainable drainage SPD; The Government introduced a requirement in 2015 for SUDs provision within all new developments. This will be met within the scheme.
- 5.16 Residential Parking and Design Guidance SPD; rural location guidance requires two allocated parking spaces for a two bed house, preferably side by side. Paragraph 13.4 also indicated that two cycle storage spaces are required for a two bed dwelling. The requirements can be met within a detailed scheme on this site.

- 5.17 Residential Space and Layout SPD; The National Space Standards have superseded the internal space standards set out within this SPD. All other external standards are relevant and can be met within the site.

National Planning Policy Guidance

- 5.18 The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published in July 2018. At the heart of the Framework is a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' and promotes 'approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay' (paragraph 11).
- 5.19 Paragraph 11 addresses both decision making and decision taking; from allocating sites to granting planning permission for a scheme. Where relevant policies are out of date, the Framework is clear that planning permission should be granted unless 'any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework when taken as a whole or specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted'.
- 5.20 Paragraph 59 requires local planning authorities Local Plan's to ensure 'a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay'. This land is available, well located, not isolated and can be developed without delay making it an ideal site to provide a small housing development.
- 5.21 The Framework supports small sites, recognising that they can 'make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly' and requires local planning authorities to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirements on sites no larger than one hectare' (paragraph 68). At some 0.75 hectares, this site would be suitable and would comply with the aims of the Framework.
- 5.22 Landscape and biodiversity must also be considered and the impact or benefits to these matters given due consideration (paragraph 170 onwards). The land is currently laid to concrete with substantial agricultural buildings arranged throughout. The proposed dwellings have been designed to reflect the more rural location of the site and take account of the changes in land levels within and around the site, ensuring visibility is kept to a minimum. The new gardens associated with the dwellings will improve the variety of habitat available at this site, which will benefit local biodiversity. The accompanying layout drawings show how the site might be arranged. These are indicative drawings only and the final site layout

would be agreed with the local planning authority at the detailed stage. However, the current indicative layout is sufficient to show how dwellings might be arranged within the site.

Technical Standards for Housing

- 5.23 In March 2015, the Government published the Technical Housing Standards – a new national space standard which seeks to address continuity in internal room sizes nationally. The proposed scheme would be capable of meeting these requirements.

6 DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Use

- 6.1 This application proposes the following within the application site:
- The removal of all modern unattractive agricultural and commercial buildings and structures and the extensive area of concrete covering the site; and
 - The erection of six detached two-storey residential dwellings, with size and layout to be agreed.

Amount

- 6.2 The proposed scheme will see the erection of six residential units through the demolition of existing modern agricultural buildings. Buildings proposed to be demolished consist of a garage, an office, a cold store and five barns of a considerable size and bulk. Additionally, a significant area of concrete will be removed.

Scale and Appearance

- 6.3 Design and appearance are matters that will be considered at the detailed stage. However, it is envisaged the buildings will be two storey and a similar scale and appearance to the existing neighbouring residential units. It is likely that traditional materials will be used in their external finish to reflect local character. An example of what an indicative street scene could be accompanies this application.
- 6.4 The proposed new buildings will improve views for residents of neighbouring properties and would provide more grassed space in place of the existing hard-standing, which would further improve the appearance of the area and broaden the variety of local habitat available. A residential development would additionally be a more appropriate use with regards to the woodland setting in the south and south-east of the site and would enable the existing buildings, tucked up closely to the trees to be removed with a good degree of separation

between the trees and the dwellings. The trees lie outside the site boundary.

Layout, landscaping and parking

- 6.5 The layout is only indicative at this outline stage and is a matter to be agreed at the Reserved Matters application. It indicates that the proposed dwellings will be sited further away from existing trees and seeks to improve the setting of the site, being that it is adjacent to residential properties and has an element of nature surrounding it, where the existing modern agricultural buildings and agricultural use do not seem appropriate. Parking facilities for each unit can be provided in accordance with Policy requirements
- 6.6 The extend of space to the east, south and south-eastern sides of the site is currently defined by mature vegetation and established trees, with some further trees and vegetation to the north of the site, along the frontage. No changes to the extent of the boundaries are proposed, with potentially additional native species planting within the application site taking place. Existing and proposed groups of established trees and vegetation reinforce the character of the area and its landscape setting and where possible, screen the development from the street, further enforcing the privacy of future residents.
- 6.7 In summary, the removal of the modern agricultural buildings and structures will significantly change the appearance of this site for the better. It will also contribute towards the future of a stronger local community through the provision of additional family housing which will bolster the settlement.

Access

- 6.8 There are currently two access points along the site frontage, capable of accommodating vehicles of agricultural nature, one being used as an entrance and one as an exit point. It is proposed that the exit point, to the east of the main entrance, is closed.
- 6.9 A residential use would be beneficial to the character of the area in terms of frequency of vehicular use and types of vehicles accessing the site. It currently can be used and has been used in the past, for agricultural and commercial purposes, which are not considered appropriate for the residential character of the street.

7 KEY ISSUES

- 7.1 The key issues are;

- Need for Development;

- Appropriateness of Location;
- Character and Appearance;
- Access;
- Drainage;
- Other Matters;

Need for Development

- 7.2 The application site lies on a residential street within a rural location in Shadoxhurst. It has been accepted by Ashford Borough Council that they do not currently have a 5 year supply of housing land as required by the Framework. Where an insufficient supply of housing land has been identified, any site which comes forward and can meet the requirements of Paragraph 14 of the Framework is not in conflict with other parts of the Framework or the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise and is both deliverable and developable, should be approved.
- 7.3 To be deliverable a site must be *‘available now, offer a suitable location for development now and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on site within five years and is particular development of the site is viable’* and to be developable the site must *‘be in a suitable location for housing development and there should be a reasonable prospect that the site is available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged’*.
- 7.4 The SHMA update January 2017, G L Hearn, estimates the projected population growth within the Plan period to 2031 to be 23.7% (SHMA Table 1, page 5) with a continuous annual increase in demand for housing of approximately 10%. Ashford continues to show projected growth moving forwards.

Appropriateness of Location

- 7.5 The site is located at the end of a long residential frontage on Hornash Lane. The residential development of this land would be a logical and suitable continuation of the street’s frontage and an appropriate addition to area’s character, without extending the line of the existing village built development. A residential use in this location would be better related to surrounding developments than the existing agricultural buildings.
- 7.6 It is considered that the reinstatement of a commercial use on this site or reuse of the buildings for business purposes would be detrimental to the living conditions of existing residents of Hornash Lane, due to increased noise and disturbance.

- 7.7 The proposed site cannot be considered previously developed, or Brownfield, given its agricultural background. However, it is not an open Greenfield site either, with the land currently developed with farm buildings and extensive areas of hard-standing.
- 7.8 Ashford has proven to be favourable towards similar cases within the vicinity. Approvals were granted for the erection of 12 dwellings at a Greenfield site at Woodchurch Road and Blindgrooms Farm on Blindgrooms Lane, which was granted approval for 4 large detached houses. It is therefore considered that this land is suitable for development, which would contribute towards the achievement of Ashford's five year housing supply target. Considering it is on already developed land, the design proposed is of high quality and the proposed use would be more appropriate given the residential character of the area, this proposal would positively improve and enhance the immediate location.

Character and Appearance

- 7.9 An indicative site layout and elevations have been provided to show how the proposed dwellings will be viewed within the street scene and show their relationship to the adjoining properties. Local character will be preserved and enhanced through the use of materials found on nearby properties, such as render, brick and clay tiles. The design and roof structure will be of traditional design, similar to the neighbouring properties as to not be visually intrusive but more modern in terms of quality and efficiency. It is important that the proposed buildings are of similar height to their surrounding houses and that there is enough space between them to maintain a relaxed density, thus being in keeping with the general rural character of the area.
- 7.10 The proposal aims to complement the character of the area. Development on the site frontage is designed to be set back from the road, partially screened by existing vegetation and reflecting the existing form of development along Hornash Lane. The extent of existing hard standing will be significantly reduced with gardens and new landscaping, thus improving the character of the area and extending the availability of habitat corridors within this site.
- 7.11 The proposal is in keeping with the area's existing scale, height, massing and materiality, resulting in a discrete and elegant addition to the scene.

Access

- 7.12 The site benefits from existing access from Hornash Lane leading to an extensive area of hard-standing at the front of the site, which continues through to the rear. This road was created to be used by commercial and long farm vehicles. It is therefore wide enough to provide access to private cars, as well as refuse collection trucks and fire rescue vehicles.

This use will be an improvement over its previous land use in terms of noise, relevance to the site's surroundings and pollution, which includes a second smaller access track through the grassed area to the east of the main access. The track has now become overgrown but still exists just below the grass surface, with its raised route clearly visible on site. This secondary agricultural access is still in use and is proposed to be closed off.

- 7.13 The location is easily accessible, with ample visibility in both directions on Hornash Lane and has been used by large agricultural buildings in the past without any difficulties.

Drainage

- 7.14 The properties are proposed to be connected to mains drainage and on-site drainage will be carried out with the use of sustainable drainage system. A drainage statement accompanies this application, providing further details.

Other Matters

- 7.15 There are very few designations tied to the proposed development land. There are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPO), archaeology, nature reserve or mineral issues or other on-site designation issues.
- 7.16 The site itself lies within Flood Zone 1 and is not at risk from flooding from marine, river or surface water events, being located outside Flood Risk Zones 2 and 3.
- 7.17 Pre application advice has confirmed that affordable housing will not be required for this site.
- 7.18 The Ancient Woodland designation previously adjacent to the site on the east border has been removed, following successful application to Natural England for an amendment to the site's boundary, given this land's history for use as grazing land. There is also a wildlife site designation nearby. The environmental assessment done on-site suggests there should be no issues with development, if appropriate mitigation measures are implemented.

8 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The proposal fully complies with the aims and objectives of Ashford's Emerging Local Plan 2030 as well as the NPPF, in providing a windfall housing site.
- 8.2 The proposed development is considered sustainable. It would not cause any loss of habitat or any particular natural feature, it is well related to the residential character of the area, there are very few physical constraints to be considered and it is looking to improve the setting of

its immediate surroundings through landscaped gardens, high quality architectural design and sustainable infrastructure implementation, while making use of already developed land.

- 8.3 The site benefits from existing access, it provides ample space for retaining visual amenity, sufficient resident and visitor parking spaces and secure cycle storage. The location it lies in is predominantly residential, very quiet, with attractive views and wonderful garden opportunities, thus making it ideal for this housing development proposal. It is also reasonably sustainable, as it is satisfactorily connected to various community services and amenities via public transport, including the town of Ashford.
- 8.4 This proposal would significantly and positively improve the character and appearance of the area and its immediate setting, including the quality of life of existing local residents, by removing potentially noise generating agricultural and business activities.
- 8.5 It is considered that the proposal will complement and enhance the character of this area and it is respectfully requested that the application be approved.