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**Land off Old Park Lane.**

## **Draft Landscape Statement of Case**

### **1.0 Introduction**

This Statement of Case in respect of landscape character matters has been prepared on behalf of Waverley Borough Council in relation to the appeal against the decision of the council to refuse outline planning consent for the development of up to 83 dwellings and public open space/county park including related play space, community orchard, wildlife pond, internal access roads, footpaths and drainage basins on land at Old Park Lane, Farnham (Ref APP/R3650/W/24/3353124).

#### **1.1 The reasons for refusal are:**

*1. The site is outside the defined settlement and Farnham Neighbourhood Plan 2020 Built up Area Boundary and within the open countryside, so it is contrary to Policy FNP10 of the Farnham Neighbourhood Plan 2020. The development proposed on an unallocated greenfield site would lead to an urbanising impact and the erosion of landscape character which would be significantly harmful to the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and would fail to satisfactorily enhance, conserve or protect the landscape character of the Area of Great Landscape Value and Area of High Landscape Value and Sensitivity. The proposed development would therefore also be contrary to Policies RE1 and RE3 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018 and the Farnham Design Statement (2010)*

*2. The proposed vehicular access to the site along Keepsake Close and Cascade Way would result in the reduction in the width of the grass verge, the removal of*

*street trees and the resulting increased proximity of vehicle movements to dwelling. Overall, this would have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area and residential amenity and adversely affect the quality of life of the residents of the Abbey View development. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policy TD1 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018, Policies DM4 and DM5 of the Local Plan (Part 2) 2023, Policy FNP1 of the Farnham Neighbourhood Plan 2020 and the Farnham Design Statement 2010.*

*3. The applicant has failed to enter into a Section 106 Agreement to secure the provision of affordable housing, open space and highway contributions therefore failing to create a sustainable, inclusive and mixed community, contrary to the requirements of Policy AHN1 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018 and Waverley's Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document Update, March 2023.*

## **2.0 Scope and Structure of the Statement of Case**

2.1 This Statement focuses on the landscape matters contained within the above RfR: whether the proposed development would have “an adverse impact on the character of the area”, whether it “would be detrimental to the character of Great Landscape Value and Area of High Landscape Value and Sensitivity”, and whether the proposed access arrangements would “have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the Abbey View development”.

## **3.0 Site and Surrounding Area**

3.1 The site comprises pasture fields that are currently grazed and are crossed by three public rights of way (Ref 7, 94 and 92) which connect Farnham Town Centre with the wider countryside to the north. Footpath 92 forms part of the promoted route of St Swithin's way. These routes all appear to be well used.

3.2 The site does not fall within Green Belt or any Statutory Designated Landscapes such as National Landscapes or National Parks. It does however lie within the locally designated Area of Strategic Visual Importance (ASVI) but outside and adjacent to an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV).

## **4.0 Landscape Effects**

4.1 The site lies within the Surrey Landscape Character Type LF: North Farnham Rolling Clay Farmland. The Farnham Landscape Character Assessment identifies the site as lying within the LCA4: Castle Paddocks area. The Landscape

Sensitivity is given as Medium; Landscape Quality as Moderate; and Landscape Value as High.

- 4.2 In this location the existing site, by virtue of the open fields, fulfils the ASVI role and maintains open areas of undeveloped land between settlements, preventing coalescence between them, which in turn maintains the urban character of settlements. The site provides a landscape buffer to the adjacent AGLV. New development in this location would erode this and bring development closer to the AGLV.
- 4.3 The proposed development would directly and adversely affect the landscape and visual character of the appeal site by the introduction of new built form within the countryside and outside the settlement boundary. The proposals are contrary to the objectives of the ASVI designation and would result in localised harm to the receiving landscape and visual receptors.
- 4.4 The proposals include vehicular access to the site along Keepsake Close and Cascade Way, which would result in the reduction in the width of the grass verge and the removal of street trees. This would have a localised adverse effect on the character and appearance of the residential area.

## **5.0 Visual Effects**

- 5.1 The proposals would adversely affect views from the Public Rights of Way by the introduction of new built form and extending the urban edge of the town. This would change the views from open undeveloped landscape adjacent to the settlement edge to a suburban character. It would adversely affect the users' perception of leaving the defined settlement, and result in a marked change to the existing views.
- 5.3 Existing views from dwellings along the northern section of the settlement edge would be adversely affected by the introduction of new built form replacing the open views across the landscape.
- 5.4 The proposed vehicular access to the site along Keepsake Close and Cascade Way would result in the reduction in the width of the grass verge, the removal of street trees and the resulting increased proximity of vehicle movements to dwellings. The additional vehicular movements and removal of existing landscape features would visually harm the amenity of existing residents.

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