

**PLANNING & DESIGN
STATEMENT IN RESPECT OF A
PROPOSED BARN**

AT

**SCARLETTS LODGE, SCARLETTS LANE,
HARE HATCH RG10 9XD**

MLP REF: SL/26/188

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Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Planning history
- 3.0 Relevant planning policy and its application
- 4.0 Other material planning considerations
- 5.0 Summary - the planning balance

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1. This statement sets out relevant planning policies and the application of those policies. In so doing the following conclusions are reached:
 - The local authority has accepted the development of equine buildings as well as extensions to the dwelling. Together these reflect an acceptance of development which is considered to be “not inappropriate” in the green belt.
 - This is compliant with both the development plan and more recent national policy which identifies that which is “not inappropriate” development in the green belt and would preserve openness
 - It is shown that the proposed equine building is planning policy compliant and is acceptable in principle as well as not resulting in a degradation of openness. There is potential for biodiversity gains and this is a positive to be weighed in the balance.
 - 2.1. As such, the proposal is acceptable on its merits and represents sustainable development which should be granted planning permission.
- ### **2.0 Relevant planning history**
- 2.1. In October 2002 under reference F/2002/7407 planning permission was granted for the erection of two loose boxes, a tack room and feed store. This was limited to domestic use (condition 6) and in conjunction with the dwelling, Scaletts Lodge (condition 7). This determination followed the refusal of application F/2002/5830 for a similar development.
 - 2.2. The host dwelling has been extended by virtue of permissions granted in under references F/1998/67285, 161763 (as later amended) and 171825. These have been implemented.
- ### **3.0 Planning policy and its application**
- 3.1. The application site lies within the Countryside and Green Belt designations to which national and development plan policy apply.

- 3.2. National planning policy as set out in the Framework (December 2024) supersedes both parts of the development plan. The key matter in regard to this application is that all development in the Green Belt is “inappropriate” aside from the list of categories where local authorities “should regard as not inappropriate”. This includes:
154. Development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of the following exceptions applies:
- a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;
 - b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings, for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- 3.3. This reflects a change in approach from previous policy which contained the more onerous test of “necessary” for outdoor sport and recreation to one of “appropriate”.
- 3.4. Additional aspects relate to the principle of sustainable development (7) and biodiversity interests (187 onwards).
- 3.5. The relevant adopted Core Strategy and MDD (DPD) policies are as follows:
- CP3 the General principles for development and include:**
- (a) matters of design and materials
 - (b) the effect on landscape
- CP11 Development in the countryside and include:**
- (1) It contributes and promotes recreation
 - (2) Does not involve excessive expansion or encroachment away from existing buildings
- CP12 Development in the Green Belt** - development will not be granted for inappropriate development
- CP7 Biodiversity** - with the broad objective of protection and safeguarding of nature conservation or protected sites
- CC01 - Sustainable development**
- TB01 - Development in the Green Belt**
- TB23 - Biodiversity** - with the objective of not only safeguarding (CP7) but also enhancing nature conservation interests

- 3.6. As is shown by the submitted plans the barn measures 6.0m by 14.0m and has a height to the ridge of 5.5m. As is detailed below, this is commensurate with need the objective of an additional horse for recreational purposes.
- 3.7. The applicants have a requirement for machinery for animal husbandry purposes and this comprises:
- A small tractor
 - A dumper truck for transporting manure to the adjacent garden centre
 - A field roller
 - A topper
 - A harrow
 - A school rotovator to manage the manège
- 3.8. All is required to tend the land holding and manage the paddocks in accordance with BHS recommendations. Additionally, the applicant's have a horse transporter which is around 8.0m in length and is stored on the site.
- 3.9. The machinery is stored in the open and would benefit in terms of longevity and to ease maintenance requirements, of being stored within the barn although this is not the primary function. More critically, the requirements for bedding and feed cannot be satisfied in the existing buildings and require regular deliveries to satisfy need. It is proposed to reduce the frequency of deliveries in the manner described below. The barn is proposed to be 6.0m by 14.0m and will be used as follows:
- Haylage - 110 packages per annum per horse (30kg packages 0.5m x 0.4m x 0.8m) 0.16 cu m each
 - Hay - 4 tons (20 large round bales) per annum per horse - 1.2m x 1.2m x 1.5m (2.1 cu m each)
 - Bedding: chopped straw - 220 packages per horse per annum (0.8m x 0.4m x 0.4m - 0.15cu m each)
 - Wood Chip Shavings 220 per annum per horse (0.8m x 0.4m x 0.9m 0.3 cu m each)
 - Barley Straw Bales 50 per annum per horse
 - Hard feed: say 250 bags per annum per horse - varying from Hi Fi (20kg per bag) High Fibre Nuts (20kg per bag), Bran etc + others.
- 3.10. When aggregated and allowing for appropriate stacking techniques which readily enables day to day use, the hay takes up around 18cu. m at 2.5m in height, a floor area of circa 45 sq m for 20 bales. This and the other storage requirements account for size of the barn as shown on the drawings.

- 3.11. In this way it can be seen that there is a need for the barn of the size shown and this is, in planning policy terms, an “appropriate building” for “outdoor recreation”. As such it is not inappropriate in the green belt and by definition is acceptable as an exception to the policy of restraint.
- 3.12. Whilst the green belt is of greater weight than a countywide designation, policy CP11 is relevant and sets out various exceptions to the approach of general restraint on development.
- 3.13. The list of exceptions is as follows:
- 1) It contributes to diverse and sustainable rural enterprises within the borough, or in the case of other countryside-based enterprises and activities, it contributes and/or promotes recreation in, and enjoyment of, the countryside; and*
 - 2) It does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings; and*
 - 3) It is contained within suitably located buildings which are appropriate for conversion, or in the case of replacement buildings would bring about environmental improvement;*
- 3.14. In this case, the proposal is a countryside-based activity and promotes recreation, as well as the economic spin off in veterinary, equine related sales (bedding, hay and tack) and farriers. Thus, category 1 is satisfied.
- 3.15. In terms of the dispersal of buildings, the proposed barn as is shown by the site plan - extract below - is sited close to the existing stables and indeed the host dwelling. This is both a consequence of practical use and meeting the objectives of sub-category 2 of CP11.
- 3.16. The proposed building is neither a replacement or a reuse of existing buildings and to this extent does not meet the “and” criteria of CP11(3). This said, there is a proven need and the proposed development meets the requirements of relevant planning policy.
- 3.17. In terms of the effect on residential amenity and in applying policy CP3(a), it can be seen that whilst in proximity to the common boundary with Scarletts Barn and The Granary House, it is at a significant distance from the dwellings and amenity space immediately outside of the dwellings. Furthermore, there is a mature tree screen and verdant cover which even at times of leaf fall would soften the impact of the proposed barn.

- 3.18. The other aspect of CP3 is one of the effect on character and design. The proposal is utilitarian in design as befits its function as a hay (and other) barn. It is open sided and is a building which would typically be found in a rural landscape. As such it is planning policy compliant with these aspects of CP3.
- 3.19. TB23 and Framework24 (7 and 187 onwards) relate to safeguarding and enhancing biodiversity interests. The development meets the thresholds for BNG in accordance with the legislation and this is detailed in the report, plan and Metric which are submitted with this application. In this way the proposed development meets the requirements of the relevant planning policies.
- 3.20. On the planning balance the proposed development is “not inappropriate” and are compliant with relevant Green Belt policies as well as other policies relating to the countryside and amenity considerations.

4.0 Other material planning considerations

- 4.1. The single material consideration which may be weighed in the balance is that the development will readily enable sport and recreation and rural enterprise, whilst allowing for less vehicular movements and bulk deliveries.

5.0 Summary - the planning balance

- 5.1. By way of summary, the following matters are set out:
- The local authority has granted planning permission for stables and related equine buildings and various extensions to the dwelling. In so doing green belt policy has been applied and this remains consistent. The effect is that equine related development as part of outdoor sport and recreation is agreed to be “not inappropriate” in the green belt and this is an important principle.
 - The material test as set out in Framework24 is that the proposed buildings must be “appropriate” to enable outdoor sport and recreation and this is established in this case. In short, the needs of the horses in terms of feed and bedding are shown to be provided for by the proposed building and this also applies to the reasonable need to store necessary machinery.
 - The proposal is appropriate in terms of design and character and meets the objectives of relevant planning policy as well as not materially harming the openness of the green belt. It is planning policy compliant.

- The biodiversity interests are both safeguarded and enhanced in accordance with planning policy and the legislative requirements.

5.2. On the planning balance it is shown that the proposal is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt. It is acceptable on its merits and represents sustainable development which should be granted planning permission.