



Groves Town

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Client	Hatton Parish Council
Document Title	Objection Statement
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GTP ref	20-06-001
Application reference	2020/36932
Applicant	Mr S Parkin
Site	Land at Goose Lane Hatton

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Groves Town Planning has been engaged by Hatton Parish Council to provide advice and support in the lodging of representations in respect of the application described above.
- 1.2 The Parish Council were not contacted in respect of the application prior to submission and comments reflect the information contained in submissions made with the application for planning permission.
- 1.3 The Parish Council consider that there are a number of policy and practical issues which can substantiate objection to this application and justify a refusal to grant planning permission.
- 1.4 In general terms the description of the site and the listing of applicable policies outlined in the support planning statement submitted with the application are accepted.
- 1.5 It is noted however that the site is not located within the defined settlement boundary; that the TPO noted originally referred to 3 trees; and that no reference is made to the Grade 2 listed status of the Hatton Arms and the locally listed status of other buildings close to the application site. In other similar circumstances the LPA has seen it fit to seek a Heritage Assessment to consider the impact of development. Such submission is absent in this case.
- 1.6 Critically the application does not take account of the constraint of a major water pipeline which crosses the site. It is understood that this pipeline seriously compromises a large part of the application site and makes the illustrative plan of no value as it would be impossible to implement.

2 The application site

- 2.1 The application site is correctly described as being an existing grassed paddock, used for the keeping of horses. The southern part of the site is relatively level but it should be noted that the northern edge of the site slopes steeply to the lower level of agricultural land to the north.
- 2.2 Some caution should be taken having regard to the precise line of the northern boundary of the site, as alteration to the rear fence line of properties on Goose Lane may not coincide with ordnance survey base mapping. This boundary is not demarcated by any existing hedge line.
- 2.3 As noted above Council records suggest that there were three trees on the Goose Lane frontage. Each was subject to a tree preservation order. There is no record of consent being attained for the removal of the two trees which no longer exist. Review of historic mapping suggests that at least one of the trees since removed was still in place in 2012.
- 2.4 Critically, the open paddock on the north eastern side of the junction of Goose Lane with Warrington Road is repeated with similar space opposite the junction on the western side of Warrington Road. To some extent, the "open" form of the car park to the Hatton Arms also contributes to the openness and scattered form of development around the historic heart of the settlement.
- 2.5 This arrangement and settlement pattern plays a crucial part in the character of Hatton, to the setting of the listed Hatton Arms and the setting of other buildings listed as being of local importance.

3 Planning Policy

3.1 The planning policy context outline in the planning statement submitted with the application is generally accepted. Key policies within the NPPF and the development plan relating to development in the green belt are noted. Reference to paragraph 145(e) relating to infilling in villages is noted.

3.2 Neither the setting out of policy or the applicant's assessment of proposals against policy, go far enough into the consideration of the development against a wider suite of relevant policies.

3.3 It is acknowledged that the proposals are made in outline with all matters reserved for subsequent approval. However the proposal already relies heavily on details of access to demonstrate acceptability in terms of the relationship of development with the protected tree on the site frontage.

3.4 Even though the application seeks only outline consent for the principle of development, it is still relevant to consider the impact of development – as a matter of principle, in terms of achieving well designed places, the impact on the historic environment and wider principles of sustainability. Sections 2, 12 and 16 of the NPPF are relevant to the consideration of this application.

3.5 Similarly, the following policies of the Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy of 2014 are of relevance:

- Policy QE7 seeks to ensure that development ensures results in a high quality place. The policy seeks to achieve this objective through the application of the following criteria

The Council will look positively upon proposals that are designed to;

- *be sustainable, durable, adaptable and energy efficient;*
- *create inclusive, accessible and safe environments;*

- *function well in relation to existing patterns of movement and activity;*
 - *reinforce local distinctiveness and enhance the character, appearance and function of the*
 - *street scene, local area and wider townscape;*
 - *harmonise with the scale, proportions and materials of adjacent and / or existing buildings;*
 - *maintain and respect the landscape character and, where appropriate, distinctiveness of*
 - *the surrounding countryside;*
 - *use the density and mix of development to optimise the potential of the site without damaging*
 - *the character of the area; and*
 - *be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and the inclusion of appropriate public space.*
 - *Developers will be encouraged to engage*
- QE8 relates to the protection of the historic environment. In particular the proposed development is expected *to recognise and enhance an assets contribution to the special qualities, local distinctiveness and unique physical aspects of the areas.*

3.6 It is contended that the application as currently submitted fails to adequately address these elements of policy.

4 Appraisal

4.1 It is considered that the proposed development fails to meet policy objectives of both the NPPF and the development plan in a number of respects.

- The site does not represent infill development and is therefore not covered by any exception to the presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt

- The proposal does not meet development plan objectives relating to development within green belt settlements as established by CC1 of the Local Plan Core Strategy;
- The proposal is contrary to the provisions of section 16 of the NPPF and policy QE8 of the Local Plan relating to protection of the historic environment.
- The proposal is contrary to the provisions of section 12 of the NPPF and policy QE7 of the Local Plan in terms of maintaining and achieving the highest possible quality of place

Infill development in the Green Belt

4.2 It is not accepted that the development of the application can be considered as limited infill. The application seeks permission for two dwellings with all the expected accoutrements of a new dwelling. The site is far from a modest gap in an established pattern of development.

4.3 The principle of the Wood case referenced in the applicant's supporting statement is acknowledged. It is clear that there may be instances where the definition of a settlement boundary within a plan is not always determinative of a settlement to which the provisions of NPPF 145(e) should apply. It is clearly logical to consider whether a settlement boundary can be considered to remain logical and consistent with the pattern of development on the ground.

4.4 In this case the settlement boundary does not include the application site. The settlement boundary was accepted within an adopted development plan as

recently as 2014. The settlement boundary has been confirmed in the 2019 proposed submission draft of the emerging Warrington Local Plan. It is not suggested that any weight should be given to emerging policy, but it would seem logical to expect that the Council would have given some consideration to the relevance of the settlement boundary around Hatton when drafting a new plan as recently as last year

4.5 There is considerable logic in the current extent of the defined settlement on the ground. Whilst there are buildings to the south, east and west, it is wrong to imply that the application site is surrounded by development on three sides. The pattern and form of development around the junctions of Goose Lane with Warrington Road provide for a general sense of openness and green space around this central node within the settlement.

4.6 Hatton is not a conventional village with a clearly defined centre and its character and form is defined by sporadic, loose groups of development with significant areas of space between and around them.

4.7 The settlement boundary is logical and relates to the situation on the ground. The proposed development cannot be considered as infill in the manner envisaged by Paragraph 145(e).

4.8 This position is reinforced by the approach taken in Local Plan policy CC1. As noted in the applicants submission CC1 elaborates on the principles established by Para 145 in noting that new infill development within washed over settlements may be acceptable where the proposal constitutes limited infill, in a small break between existing development; of a scale, design and character. Development should have an affinity with the built form of the settlement as opposed to

openness of the Green Belt unless the break contributes to character of the settlement

4.9 The proposed development, irrespective of detail of design and form cannot be considered to meet these clear objectives of development plan policy. The existing open space clearly contributes to openness of the Green Belt. Development would represent an expansion of settlement in open countryside into a clear break in built development which contributes significantly to the character of the settlement.

4.10 The loss of the application site to development would inevitably harm the character and appearance of this part of Hatton.

4.11 The constraint of the water main which crosses the site would further inhibit development which would be acceptable in terms maintaining development of an appropriate character design and scale as required by CC1.

4.12 Development of the site cannot satisfy the requirements of Para 145(e) or CC1.

Impact on the Historic Environment

4.13 The submissions made with the application have not taken account of the setting of the Hatton Arms a grade 2 listed building. This is contrary to the expectations of Section 16 of the NPPF. This is recognised by the Council's conservation officer who has requested submission of a heritage assessment.

4.14 The Parish Council would reserve right to comment on the submission of such a document.

- 4.15 The Hatton Arms is the central focus of the village in terms of history, settlement pattern and community. Buildings used for the village school and post office are now in alternative use and there is no other focus of community activity other than the local public house.
- 4.16 Additionally the building has considerable architectural merit and sets a tone for the character of the settlement. Although this has not always been reflected in later development, the historic and architectural value of the asset is enhanced by its setting with undeveloped space to the north and west – to some extent including the relatively open aspect of the pub car park.
- 4.17 The heritage asset is considered to be of significance and the loss of space and openness around it would be detrimental and reduce that significance.
- 4.18 As such the principle of development is considered to be contrary to the provisions outlined in section 16 of the NPPF and inconsistent with the objectives of policy Q8 of the development plan.

Achieving well designed places

- 4.19 As noted above it is considered that the proposed development will disturb the pattern of existing development and will remove open space protected for its contribution to openness.
- 4.20 The site sits prominently above land to the north and is open to view on approach to the village from the north. Development would represent a prominent and highly visible change to the pattern of development, particularly when viewed from Warrington Road.

4.21 The arrangement and juxtaposition of existing buildings and green spaces around and between them does much to make Hatton an attractive place to visit and live. The proposed development would detract from the existing character and appearance of the area – irrespective of design and form, through the loss of the existing space and would therefore fail to meet the objectives under pinning section 12 of the NPPF.

Sustainability

4.22 The proposed development is in a poor location in terms of sustainability. With the exception of the public house there are no services within Hatton. The closest shop, schools and medical facilities are located in Stretton more than 3km away.

4.23 Stretton is accessible by walking and cycling along Warrington Road and Hatton Lane, but this road largely has no footpath and for most of its length is unlit.

4.24 A bus service does run from Hatton into Warrington but services are infrequent and often inconvenient for shorter trips, with long waits for return services

5 Conclusions

5.1 Consideration of the proposed development against the provisions of Paragraph 145(e) of the NPPF enables the conclusion that the proposed development is inappropriate development in the Green Belt. There is consequent definitional harm to the Green Belt and a requirement to demonstrate very special

circumstances which would outweigh that harm and any other harm which results from the development.

- 5.2 The proposed development cannot be considered as infill within a village.
- 5.3 It has been shown that the proposed development would have a clear and detrimental impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it.
- 5.4 The more specific requirements and objectives of Development Plan policies would not be met. In particular policy CC1 which relates to development within Green Belt settlements in Warrington, establishes a series of criteria which the proposed development fails to meet.
- 5.5 The application fails to take account of the relationship of the application site and the impact of development on the Hatton Arms – a grade 2 listed building. This is contrary to the provisions of QE8 of the Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy.
- 5.6 The NPPF and the development plan set out ambitions to deliver well designed places and to enhance the character of place. The open space provided by the application site makes a key contribution to the quality of place and the character and appearance of this part of Hatton. The proposed development would be contrary to the provisions of policy QE7 of the development plan.
- 5.7 The location of the site causes the development to fail to meet expected levels of sustainability given complete reliance of use of the private car to access work, services etc
- 5.8 It is suggested that the application for planning permission should be refused.