



Mr James Leaver
Melrose
Logmore Lane
Westcott
Dorking
Surrey, RH4 3JY
jamesandfrancesca@hotmail.co.uk

Planning Department
Mole Valley District Council
Pippbrook
Dorking
Surrey, RH4 1SJ

8 September 2021

Dear Sirs

MO/2021/1571 – Dene Cottage, Westcott

Outline application for the consideration of the demolition of Dene Cottage and the erection of 3 No. dwellings with all matters reserved.

I refer to the application above and write in my capacity as the lead for planning matters for Westcott Village Association (WVA). We have discussed this application and we write to object. A consent would set worrying precedent for a number of large green belt properties on the edge of our village.

As the applicant's planning adviser notes, the application site is Green Belt AONB, AGLV and is also outside the settlement boundary of Westcott.

At paragraphs 5.19 and 5.20 of their supporting statement we believe the applicant makes a very tenuous argument for "Very Special Circumstances" where they say:-

"The NPPF, at paragraph 147, states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. 'Very Special Circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

The very special circumstances are listed below before being discussed in more detail:

- *Lack of 5-year housing supply*
- *The lack of conflict with the purpose of the Green Belt*
- *The provision of 3-bedroom housing*
- *Mole Valley is 80% Green belt*
- *Adjacent to the settlement boundary in a non-isolated location*
- *The high-quality design of the proposed development, which would be a significant improvement over the existing built form on the site and delivering an attractive residential development suitable for the sites rural location*
- *More rationalised and attractive parking arrangement*
- *Provision of affordable housing"*

Our principal concerns are as follows:-

5 year housing supply – the applicant's planning consultant should be aware that a lack of 5 year housing supply is only relevant to land which is not in Green Belt. The fact that Mole Valley is 80 percent Green Belt is not relevant.

Lack of conflict with the purpose of the Green Belt - the tree plan for the scheme is at odds with google earth. We believe many mature trees might need to be felled in order to deliver the scheme which would be visible from Ranmore.



Provision of affordable housing – this is not a rural exception proposal. All 3 units would be market housing but it is noted a CIL payment in lieu for affordable is proposed.

We do not believe there is any precedent to be drawn from the neighbouring Dene Farm if this is consented (MO/2021/1197/PLA) because this is outside the Westcott settlement boundary and is underpinned by the permitted development rights of B1 to residential.

Yours sincerely,

James Leaver

Planning Lead, Westcott Village Association