

APPEAL REF: APP/E2205/W/24/3345454

ADDRESS: - LAND NORTH OF POSSINGHAM FARMHOUSE, ASHFORD ROAD, GREAT CHART, KENT

CASE MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE HELD AT 10.00 HOURS ON TUESDAY 30 JULY 2024

Inquiry Arrangements

1. The Inquiry will open at **09.30am** on Tuesday 8 October 2024 and will be held at Ashford Borough Council's Council Chamber at Ashford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford, Kent TN23 1PL.
2. The Inquiry is provisionally expected to occupy between 4-8 sitting days on the basis that Reason for Refusal (RfR) 6 (heritage assets) has been withdrawn. It also appears possible that RfR 4 (protected species), 5 (drainage), 7 (climate change), 8 (Stodmarsh SPA), 9 (planning obligations) and elements of RfR 3 (traffic) could also fall away before the Inquiry commences.
3. A final programme for the Inquiry will be determined once Proofs of Evidence and Statements of Common Ground have been submitted.
4. All Inquiry documentation must be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate Case Officer in the usual way. All correspondence to the Planning Inspectorate must be cross copied to the other parties.

Main Issues

5. The main issues will be as follows:
 - a. Whether the proposed development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area;
 - b. Whether the proposed development would provide a good standard of amenity for future residents of the development;
 - c. Whether the future residents of the proposed development would be able access to local services with genuine alternatives to car-based travel;
 - d. Whether traffic from the proposed development would have an unacceptable effect on the safe operation and capacity of the local highway network, and
 - e. Whether the benefits of the scheme would outweigh any identified harm.

Evidence and Inquiry Programme

6. The Inquiry will start with the Inspector's opening remarks followed by opening statements from the Appellant, Kent County Council as a Rule 6 Party and the Council. Any unrepresented third parties will be heard after opening statements.
7. At this stage the Council will then call its witnesses who will give evidence on planning matters and landscape. The Rule 6 Party will then call witnesses in relation to flood/drainage, education and highways. The Appellant will go last calling witness witnesses who will give evidence on landscape, planning and highways. For all parties' additional witnesses may be called if existing areas of disagreement are not resolved before the Inquiry.
8. At this stage it is envisaged that round table discussions regarding planning conditions and obligations will take place after all the witnesses have been heard.
9. Any interested parties who intend to give evidence of the first day should provide a copy of their presentation/speaking notes/video to the Inspectorate at least 7 days before the Inquiry opens i.e. **1 October**.
10. Please provide the Inspectorate with the names of the witnesses and relevant qualifications at the earliest opportunity.

Conditions

11. A schedule of suggested planning conditions, agreed as far as possible between the main parties, with the reasons for them, including references to any policy support, should be appended to the Statement of Common Ground to be submitted at the same time as the proofs.
12. The conditions must be properly justified having regard to the tests for conditions, in particular the test of necessity. Any pre-commencement conditions will need the written agreement of the Applicant. Any difference in view on the suggested conditions, including suggested wording, should be highlighted in the schedules, with a brief explanation.

Planning Obligations

13. A draft planning obligation and accompanying CIL compliance statements should be available before the start of the Inquiry in conjunction with proofs.

Core Documents, Proofs etc

14. A list of core documents should be agreed by the main parties in advance of submitting proofs so that they can be properly referenced. The list and electronic copies of the core documents, proofs, Statement of Common Ground and the latest draft Section 106 planning obligation must be submitted to the Inspectorate by the agreed date (below).
15. Public versions of all Inquiry documents will be posted on the Council website.

Submission of Documents

16. As set out in the start letter, proofs and the Statement of Common Ground are to be submitted no later than 4 weeks before the Inquiry – i.e. by **10 September 2024**.
17. The draft s106 agreement, CIL compliance statements and rebuttal proofs (if necessary) should all be submitted 2 weeks before the Inquiry – i.e. by **24 September**. It is important that any rebuttal proofs do not introduce new issues.
18. Final timings for advocate openings and closings as well as time estimates for the individual witnesses (Evidence in Chief and Cross-Examination), shall be provided 7 days before the Inquiry – i.e. by **1 October 2024**.

Site Visits

19. The Inspector will visit the site and surrounding area on the afternoon of Monday 7 October and will also conduct a further visit once the evidence has been heard at a time and date to be confirmed in due course. Should the parties wish to suggest locations or a route for the unaccompanied site visit, please provide this to the Case Officer by Friday 4 October.

Other Matters

20. All parties are encouraged to continue co-operation and to take up any queries promptly via the Case Officer.

Dominic Young

Inspector

5 August 2024