

## **Planning Application – Plough Farm (23/00385/PREAPP)**

Following the recent planning pre-application posted on the Hart planning website, a number of Dogmersfield residents have asked for more background to help them decide whether they wish to respond at this stage and if so how they might respond. This note sets out the background and matters residents may wish to consider and suggested wording of a note that could be submitted to Hart.

Hart do not accept comments on pre-applications through the planning website however there is a publicly available email ([planningadmin@hart.gov.uk](mailto:planningadmin@hart.gov.uk)) which we will use to lodge our objections.

It is clearly up to each Parishioner to form their own views on this proposed development and decide the course of action best for them. Hart are due to issue their opinion on this application by 12 April 2023.

### **1. Background**

This pre-application relates to the change of use of land which, since the application is unclear, we are assuming is currently agricultural in anticipation of the siting of residential lodges/park homes on land to the south west of the existing buildings at Plough Farm. A pre-application is used to discover what detailed supporting information needs to be included in a full application.

The application suggests that the proposed development will be marketed at the retirement market and will be set in “extensively landscaped” grounds. The lodges will all fall within the statutory definition of a “caravan”.

A caravan is a structure potentially in 2 parts up to a total size of 20m by 6.8m and capable of being towed.

The covering letter to the pre-application notes that the site is within 7km of the Basin Heaths SPA, where under Policy NBE3 residential development of over 50 new dwellings may be required to provide mitigation measures.

The application also notes that while the site is outside of any settlement boundary the type of accommodation proposed represents a low-cost form of housing which can be sold in a way which is compatible with affordable housing

The site highlighted for change of use is approximately 8.5 acres and is just opposite the entrance to the Four Seasons. It is outside the Dogmersfield settlement area.

The process for obtaining approval is first to change the land use through the planning process (which needs a full application) and then apply for a licence through the Hart Private Housing Team who are responsible for deciding any conditions such as the number and style of caravans, and any health and safety requirements - this is a different process to the planning application and does not involve public consultation.

### **2. Hart District Local Plan**

In general the Hart Local Plan would not support development in the countryside unless it is designed to provide appropriate facilities for rural enterprise, agriculture, forestry, or leisure, and to do so in a manner which demonstrably benefits the rural economy without harming countryside interests.

Regardless the Hart Local Plan also requires that developments should seek to achieve a high quality design and positively contribute to the overall appearance of the local area maintaining its distinguishing features and special characteristics of the landscape.

There is an exception in the Hart Plan permitting development in the country side if it is designed to provide small-scale affordable housing on land adjoining or closely related to a village that would address a proven local need for affordable housing available in perpetuity for those with a local connection which may include some market housing if it facilitates the provision of subsidised rented accommodation to meet local needs.

### **3. Site Layout**

There is little detail as to the site layout or style of the buildings since this would be covered as the developers apply for a licence to operate the caravan park.

### **4. The Parish Council View**

The principles underpinning this pre-application are certainly in conflict with the Dogmersfield Neighbourhood Plan which does not permit development in the countryside except in limited special circumstances and then only if it benefits the parish. This proposed development does not offer any benefit to the Parish.

Given the size of the site and the reference in the application to “over 50 dwellings” and the relatively small size of Dogmersfield Parish we do not believe that the potential development falls under the provisions of Rural Exception Sites.

Although details of the design are not available, based on similar developments it is highly likely to be in conflict with the Dogmersfield Neighbourhood Plan policies covering “Design”, “Landscaping” and “Dark Skies”.

### **5. Other matters**

The land proposed for change of use is on a small overused country lane with no footpaths or street lighting. There are no local amenities (for example shops or doctors) in Dogmersfield and there is no local bus service which would mean reliance on private transport and/or deliveries with a consequent increase in traffic on a narrow country lane.

### **6. Draft wording of comments to Hart Planning**

It is the decision of each Parishioner whether or not they support this type of development and if they do wish to comment whether they do so now or wait until the full application is submitted. Commenting now does not prevent further comments later.

If you do not support this potential development and wish to comment now then this could form the basis of an email submission to Hart Planning:

***“Planning pre-application 23/00385/PREAPP***

*Dogmersfield is a small rural community characterised by heritage sites and conservation areas. It is served by narrow over used country lanes with no local amenities and no bus*

*service. The Parish has a well developed Neighbourhood Plan which is designed to maintain the character of the Parish.*

*The development envisaged by this planning pre-application is for agricultural land in the countryside outside the settlement boundary. It is likely to be totally out of character with the character of the Parish and be very large in comparison to the rest of the Parish. As such it would likely conflict with many of the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan.*

*On this basis I object strongly to the proposed change of use of this land.”*

## **7. Further Questions**

If residents have any further questions, please forward them to the Parish Clerk.

Andy Simonds

Councilor for Planning