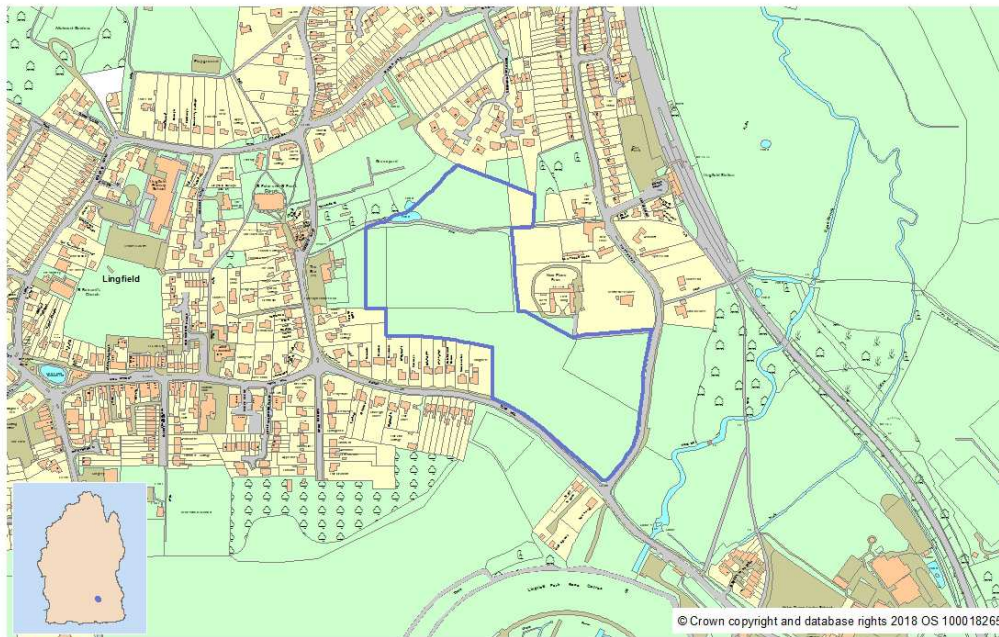


LIN 030 – Land at the Old Cottage, Station Road, Lingfield

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EXTENT & LOCATION OF SITE



Land at the Old Cottage, Station Road, Lingfield

Proposed Development: Residential, 50 units

Spatial Strategy

Is the site strategy compliant?

The site is undeveloped land located on the edge of the built-up area of Lingfield, a sustainable settlement designated as Tier 2 in the Council's Settlement Hierarchy and identified as a preferred location for development as part of the spatial strategy. Accordingly, the Council consider that the site is strategy compliant and would have a significant role to play in achieving sustainable patterns of development across the district.

Green Belt Assessment

Does the Green Belt Assessment recommend that the GB in this location should be retained/or further considered in terms of exceptional circumstances?

The site has been considered through the Green Belt Assessment Part 1 as part of GBA 042. The Green Belt evidence concludes that the parcel is effective in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, contributes to preserving the setting and special character of part of the Lingfield Conservation Area, plays a critical role in checking urban sprawl from East Grinstead and preventing it expanding northwards, and plays a role in maintaining settlements. This site was also considered through Part 2, falling with AFI 045, which concludes that this Area provides a rural setting and approach to the church, and that the Green Belt serves to prevent sprawl, the merging of built-up areas and encroachment on the countryside, as well as being essential in preserving the setting of the conservation area. Furthermore, that overall it is open in character. It is not recommended for further consideration.

What is the nature and extent of the harm to the Green Belt if the site is developed?

Development in this location would result in sprawl, the merging of built-up areas, encroachment on the countryside and could fail to preserve the setting of a conservation area. However, whilst the area is generally open, it is also contained by built form and accordingly development is likely to have a limited impact with respect to its encroachment on the countryside, sprawl, merging with other

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	settlements and subject to a robust and defensible boundary being identified, the wider Green Belt. It would also, by infilling this area, make positive contribution to settlement form.
To what extent can the consequent impacts on the purposes of the Green Belt be ameliorated or reduced to the lowest reasonably practicable extent?	The impact of development could be reduced through buffers, landscaping and sensitive design, in particular it could be designed such that it conserves the setting of the Lingfield Conservation Area. Further, Town Hill which aligns with the southern site boundary and Station Road marking the eastern site boundary provide robust and defensible boundaries, whilst making a positive contribution to settlement form in this location. As such this would limit the impact on the wider Green Belt's ability to continue to serve these purposes.
Other evidence base considerations	
Does the ecology evidence consider the site is ecologically suitable?	The majority of the site is ecologically suitable and development would need to be within the ecologically suitable parts of the site. The off-site woodlands and orchards to the north and east of the site would require a buffer zone of 10 to 15m, and there is s.41 woodland within the site which is ecologically unsuitable. The open grasslands are ecologically suitable and a well-planned development can retain or replace the "stepping-stone" corridor value of the field-boundary hedgerows. Therefore development of this site would need to include an unlit buffer for semi-natural woodland, orchard and linear hedge/tree/scrub habitats and to avoid the loss of irreplaceable habitats, additional land may need to be considered.
Does the landscape evidence consider the site has capacity to accommodate development in the landscape?	With both moderate sensitivity and value, the site is considered to have medium landscape capacity for development. The site is potentially suitable for limited development within the northern part of the site, in association with the existing surrounding development, provided it has regard for the existing character of the area and demonstrates no adverse impacts on the surrounding local landscape or separation to Dormansland. The southern portion of the site begins to protrude into the surrounding landscape, and is a noticeable part of the south-eastern approach to Lingfield providing a rural setting to the village; it is also part of the undeveloped land between Lingfield and Dormansland. Any development would need to be of a form that is closely related to, and in scale with, the existing settlement adjacent to the site, in particular it should be in keeping with the conservation area and preserve views of the church spire from the south-east. However, potential planting could screen the site effectively from the south-east.
Does the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities Assessment consider that the site is surplus provision or can facilities be re-provided elsewhere?	Not applicable as the site is not existing open space. However, the population resulting from proposed development on this site would generate demands for open space. These would need to be considered against existing provision in the parish and result in policy requirements for on or off-site provision, if the site is allocated.
Does the Sustainability Appraisal consider that the site is a sustainable location?	It considers that the site can provide sufficient housing, has satisfactory access to a GP surgery, employment opportunities and public transport. The northern half of LIN 030 is within the Lingfield Conservation Area. At present the northern area of the site is an open field, therefore residential development of LIN 030 would be expected to change the nature of the conservation area in this location. Further, development of the site is expected to restrict views of the church from the east. Its development would be expected to preserve and enhance the Lingfield

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	<p>Conservation Area and its setting through design and low density. It is greenfield and its development would be expected to lead to the loss of soil. The site overlaps with the Eden Biodiversity Opportunity Area. Given that the same area of the site is also an area of flood risk, there is the potential to enhance the habitat in this area however it is not known whether this opportunity would be undertaken at this time. The site classified as Grade 3 (good to moderate quality) land under the Agricultural Land Classification system.</p>
<p>Is the site sequentially preferred? Would development of this site increase flood risk or impact on water quality?</p>	<p>The majority of the site is within Flood Zone 1, but also contains Flood Zones 2, a low risk of surface water flooding and negligible risk from groundwater flooding. Therefore it is not sequentially preferred however a sequential approach within the site would be expected and given the extent of Flood Zone 2 it is considered that mitigation through design and layout would be possible. It would pose negligible inherent risk or benefits to water quality. In order to mitigate these effects, SUDs would be required.</p>
<p>Is the proposed development of the site likely to result in harm that would be difficult to mitigate and/or provide opportunities for community benefit?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity enhancement opportunities comprising enhancement of grassland (within orchard and alongside hedgerow network) and woodland and creation of wetland habitats. • Community Infrastructure Levy eligible/potential contributions or on-site provision of infrastructure.

Discussion

Are there exceptional circumstances that would outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and justify Green Belt release?

Having considered (i) the acuteness/intensity of the objectively assessed need for housing, (ii) the inherent constraints on supply/availability of land prima facie suitable for sustainable development and (iii) the consequent difficulties in achieving sustainable development without impinging on the Green Belt (Calverton principles (i) to (iii)) in the main report, as well as the reasonable options set out in the draft NPPF 2018, it is evident that development within the Green Belt is necessary.

In light of the above, housing development on this site would make a contribution of 50 units which would help meet the district’s housing need in the short term, consistent with the principles of sustainable development. Furthermore, the site comprises undeveloped land located on the edge of a Tier 2 settlement and as such is in a preferred location on sustainability grounds, being within close proximity to a GP surgery, schools, countryside, employment and public transport. In addition, the site is considered, in principle, suitable for development from a landscape and ecology perspective subject to mitigation measures. Other potential adverse effects such as the impact upon the setting of listed buildings, surface water flooding and groundwater contamination could similarly be adequately mitigated.

The Green Belt in this location serves the Green Belt purposes in terms of safeguarding from encroachment, preventing sprawl, preventing settlements from merging and preserving the Lingfield Conservation Area, and as such its development would impact upon the site’s ability to serve these purposes however as the site is physically and visually well contained by built form on three sides, and subject to the use of sensitive design, buffers, landscaping and robust and defensible boundaries, its impact on the wider Green Belt would be limited and its harm to the Green Belt purposes in this location mitigated. Accordingly, development is likely to have a limited impact on openness because it would infill a gap confined by built development and roads in the built-up area. It would ‘complete’ the settlement form. In addition this site is not within a satisfactory distance from secondary schools; however this is the case for all Lingfield sites

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It is considered that, subject to appropriate design, development would make a positive contribution to settlement form, whilst providing an opportunity to enhance the Lingfield Conservation Area through townscape design. The development of this site would attract CIL, and as such would contribute towards infrastructure needed to support the growth of the district. In addition this site could provide benefits above and beyond any needed to off-set impacts associated with its development, contributing to a wide range of community benefits including the opportunity to contribute to the funding of a new DDA compliant footbridge at Lingfield Station, Lingfield Surgery improvements, highway improvements and by providing additional community parking and public open space. In addition the site overlaps with the Biodiversity Opportunity Area and Flood Zone 2, and this site's development could include biodiversity enhancement measures.

Having considered all of the factors set out in section 3 of the paper "Green Belt Assessment Part 3: Exceptional Circumstances and Insetting" it is considered, as a matter of planning judgement, that this site does justify the exceptional circumstances necessary to recommend amendment of the Green Belt boundary.

Is there an alternative boundary that would be suitable, permanent and endure in the long term and serve to meet the exceptional circumstances of this site?

Town Hill aligning the southern site boundary and Station Road marking the eastern site boundary provide robust defensible boundaries that are capable of enduring in the long term.