

Theydon Bois Action Group

P R O T E C T I N G T H E V I L L A G E O F T H E Y D O N B O I S

c/o 32 Theydon Park Road
Theydon Bois
Essex
CM16 7LP

26 March 2010

Reference EPF/0423/10

Grazing land adj Broadlawn Coopersale Lane Theydon Bois Epping Essex.

Erection of single storey building containing 4 loose boxes/stables and feed and machinery store, and provision of manege alongside in the south west corner of grazing field (Revised application to previously refused application EPF/2117/09)

Dear Mr Preston

Theydon Bois Action Group (TBAG) would like to object to the above application.

Many of the objections we raised with regard to application EPF/2117/09 still apply to this new application.

The site is within the Metropolitan Green Belt and is an undeveloped green field site. The proposed works represent inappropriate development and are therefore at odds with Government advice, as expressed in PPG2, the policies of the Adopted Local Plan and alterations and the East of England Plan. The latter state that within the Metropolitan Green Belt permission will not be given, except in very special circumstances for the construction of new buildings or for the change of use or extension to existing buildings except for the purposes of agriculture, mineral extraction or forestry, small scale facilities for outdoor participatory sport and recreation, cemeteries, or similar uses which are open in character.

This application will have a material and adverse impact on the openness, character and appearance of the Metropolitan Green Belt due to its scale, appearance, external parking, external storage, and traffic generation. In addition, the siting of the scheme will be visible within the Metropolitan Green Belt and highly conspicuous, thereby detrimental to its visual amenity. The proposed stable block is a dominant structure, some 10 metres wide, 17 metres long and 5 metres high. The associated manege is 23 metres by 15 metres. The development would be close to Coopersale Lane (a historic, protected lane), and would be highly visible. It would damage the openness of the Green Belt, particularly from this unique viewpoint in

Coopersale Lane, which affords uninterrupted, open views, across Theydon Bois village to the distant Epping Forest Ridge, rising to the north west. Thus the scheme is contrary to PPG2, SS7 of the East of England Plan, and policies GB2A, GB7A, GB8A, DBE4 and HC4 of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations.

The proposed scheme is in a rural area which is not served by public transport. The scheme would see an increase in vehicle movements and this site is not in a sustainable location, contrary to policies CP1, CP2, CP3 and 9 of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations.

The proposed scheme would lead to an increase of use on a currently, rarely used access onto a stretch of secondary distributor highway (Coopersale Lane) where the principal function is that of carrying traffic freely and safely between centres of population. The slowing and turning of vehicles associated with the use of the access would lead to conflict and interference with the passage of through vehicles to the detriment of that principal function and introduce a further point of possible traffic conflict, being detrimental to highway safety, contrary to policy ST4 of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations. The access is on a sharp and dangerous blind bend and does not have effective and clear sightlines. Coopersale Lane is a heavily used 'rat run' and this proposal would amount to an accident waiting to happen.

There is a precedent of applications involving additional traffic generation on Coopersale Lane, a Protected Lane being refused. EPF/1772/09 was refused recently. Other applications include EPF/0832/06 *continued use for storage of building materials and equipment and ancillary office at Green Barn (Western Half) Blunts Farm Coopersale Lane Theydon Bois Epping Essex CM16 7NT change of use from Agriculture/Horticulture/Glass to B1 - Offices, R & D and Light Industry, B8 - Wholesale warehouse, distribution centres, repositories.*

Refusal reasons included; *The use is inappropriate in the Metropolitan Green Belt as it entails open storage and a significant amount of vehicle parking which detracts from the open character of the countryside and is therefore contrary to policies GB2 and GB8 of the adopted Local Plan. The use generates vehicle movements which harm the rural character of Coopersale Lane. This is a protected lane identified in the adopted Local Plan and the development is contrary to policy HC4 of the plan.*

EPF/0831/06 change of use from *Agriculture/Horticulture/Glass to B8 - Wholesale warehouse, distribution centres, repositories at Green Barn (Eastern Half) Blunts Farm Coopersale Lane Theydon Bois Epping Essex CM16 7NT* was also refused. Refusal reasons include; *The use generates vehicle movements which harm the rural character of Coopersale Lane. This is a protected land identified in the adopted Local Plan and the development is contrary to policy HC4 of the plan.*

Application EPF/940/96 for Proposed riding school – incorporating stable block with 14 stables, alteration to existing access, dressage and training area, car parking area and cross country course. Land adjacent Blunts Farm Coopersale Lane. This application is a revision of an earlier application. It is minuted on 17th February 1997 that *'The item was deferred from Plans Subcommittee on 9th December 1996. Members were concerned about the provision of an access off Coopersale Lane. The applicants have considered this and submitted revised plans showing access from Abridge Road. The layout of the stable complex has consequently been altered and*

car parking area set away from Coopersale Lane. The highway engineers raise no objection to the scheme subject to conditions. They do not require a right hand turn land as with the previous proposal for the playing fields. This is because they consider that the concentration of traffic will be less than any one time.'

We also note that in section 16 of the application form Trees and Hedges; "Are there trees or hedges on the proposed development site or on land adjacent to the proposed development site that could influence the development or might be important as part of the local landscape character?" The applicant has ticked 'NO'. This is incorrect. There are 5 old oak trees in the section of hedgerow along Coopersale Lane which are not shown on the plans. We understand that four of the five oak trees have provisional Tree Preservation Orders assigned to them; TPO65/09. There are three trees to the rear of the field that have Tree Preservation Orders; T54, T55, T56 all oak trees. We assume mature oak trees on a Protected Lane have some degree of protection. This will have a considerable effect, along with the ancient hedgerow, in restricting the sight lines onto the lane at this blind bend. TBAG are of the opinion that this Protected Lane and its environs are a very important part of the 'local landscape character'. We ask that a full tree survey and plan be carried out, to BS5837, before the application can be determined, as stated on the EFDC Planning Application Form.

Precedents have been clearly set that any increase of traffic on Coopersale Lane is inappropriate and this application for stables and manege should be refused. We remain concerned that this application still represents a commercial venture. The number of stables is still too many for the area of available space for the horses, the recommendation being 2 horses per hectare, and is unsustainable. This application harms the openness of the Green Belt and is inappropriate development and contrary to policy HC4, as Coopersale Lane is a Protected Lane. This application is inappropriate and unsustainable and should be refused.

This is a cynical application to develop this green field green belt site. Although the application for change of use has changed from commercial to recreational, the size of the stables would still be very dominant. The history of the adjoining land (Blunts Farm) is well known to officers and the 'land locked' site behind this field is on the EFDC call for sites list. Published plans for the site at <http://www.themovechannel.com/property/details/1390597/> include an access road that runs to the back of the field, which is the subject of this application. Any established access onto Coopersale Lane from this field would greatly enhance the chances of developing the Blunts Farm site. If this application was approved, it could set a dangerous precedent for the future development of Blunts Farm, which is a green field site. We object to this application for the above reasons and because it does not represent very special circumstances to justify the proposed change of use of the land from Agricultural to D2 .

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Dodman

Secretary Theydon Bois Action Group

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