

**For the Attention of: Jason Seed, Planning Case Officer, Planning & Development,
Dacorum Borough Council, The Forum, Marlowes, Hemel Hempstead, HP1 1DN**

KINGS LANGLEY & DISTRICT RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION (KL&DRA)

Comments in respect of Planning Application: 4/02282/18/MOA –

RECTORY FARM, GADE VALLEY CLOSE, KINGS LANGLEY, WD4 8AL - DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS; REDEVELOPMENT UP TO 55 RESIDENTIAL UNITS WITH RELATED ACCESS AND ASSOCIATED WORKS

The KL&DRA do not object in principle to the re-development of previously developed land within the Rectory Farm Green Belt site, however we do have a number of comments regarding this Major Outline Application which we wish to draw to Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) Planning's attention:

1. The application contains insufficient information to determine the impact on the Green Belt because the application states that all matters are reserved with the one exception of Access. Despite this fact, Angle Property has submitted an Assessment of Impact on the Green Belt in their Planning Statement (section 6 – page 26). This assessment relies on a comparison of footprint to justify there is no harm to the openness of the Green Belt. The footprint assessment does not include the additional hard surfacing from the proposed scheme and Angle Property has not submitted information on volumetrics and this is required in order to make an informed decision.
2. Rectory Farm was considered in the 2002 Local Plan Inspector's report. The Council had previously allocated the land as a reserved housing site. However, through the Inquiry it was acknowledged that there was no longer any need for the land at Rectory Farm to be allocated or released for housing. The inspector concluded that: *"In reaching this conclusion, I have taken account of the fact that Rectory Farm would be well located in terms of its accessibility to local bus routes, schools and shops in the village centre. However, in the light of its impact on the Green Belt, on the character of the area and on the capacity of the local infrastructure I am not satisfied that it would constitute a more sustainable location for housing than any of the other greenfield housing proposal sites."*

It has long been acknowledged therefore, that the greenfield land at Rectory Farm makes a significant contribution to the Green Belt and should be protected as such. The situation surrounding either the site or local context has not materially changed since the Inspector's report such that a change to his overall conclusion should be made. As set out in the KL&DRA's earlier representations with respect to the Local Plan consultation, matters of objection relate to:

- The character of the area;
- The capacity of the local infrastructure.; and
- The impact on the Green Belt.

In fact, Apsley is now much more developed than it was in 2002 which means Rectory Farm provides an even more significant contribution to the prevention of coalescence with Apsley and the defining of Kings Langley as a village through the openness of the Green Belt.

3. The proposed temporary access for construction traffic off the Hempstead Road is going to be problematic for through traffic which is travelling through or into a 40mph section. It

would be sensible to incorporate a temporary traffic island to the north or south of Rectory Lane to slow traffic.

4. The decision to relocate the apartments from being adjacent to Gade Valley Close/Kings Meadow to a location abutting the Green Belt appears at odds with the importance of protecting the openness of the Green Belt. This is also a change from the original discussions Angle Property had with DBC.
5. The impact of a loss of a community asset for Transition in Kings (TiK) and The Revue Company. Although the allotments are staying what is not accounted for is the loss of the large shed that is used by The Revue Company to store props and the provision of enough car parking for the TiK volunteers. This will have an impact and therefore it needs to be explained in more detail how this development will not have a negative impact on TiK's ability to operate. This has not been addressed in the application and therefore may not be compliant with Policy CS23: Social Infrastructure which states: *"Existing social infrastructure will be protected unless appropriate alternative provision is made, or satisfactory evidence is provided to prove the facility is no longer viable. The re-use of a building for an alternative social or community service or facility is preferred."* Unless the application addresses this issue, the principle of development could be considered unsustainable because it does not protect existing social infrastructure.
6. The impact on small businesses and their employees. The Rectory Farm site currently provides spaces for up to eight small businesses with their associated employees. There are also four garages, in two of which enthusiasts are restoring vehicles. All these will disappear from Kings Langley. The loss of all these activities will have an impact on the local economy.
7. Traffic. The Transport Assessment Summary on page 21 of the Planning Statement states that:
 - The additional trips generated by the development will have a minimal impact on the junctions local to the site
 - The road network and junctions local to the site will remain well within operational capacityBuilding 55 dwellings must increase car journeys by at least 100 on a typical weekday, putting pressure on Kings Meadow and Gade Valley Close as well as adding to the load on Rectory Lane and then onto Hempstead Road. Kings Langley has one main artery through the village – the A4251 Hempstead Road and due to development at Apsley and Nash Mills, this road is already experiencing significant increases in congestion and further local development in Three Rivers at sites like Masters Yard will only add more pressure. Accordingly the KL&DRA do not agree with the conclusions drawn in the Transport Assessment included within the Planning Statement. Further, we are concerned that the cumulative effect of other developments in and around Kings Langley and the associated levels of increased congestion that are occurring on the A4251 through the village are not being taken into account.
8. Parking. The Parking Standards section of the Planning Statement (page 20) suggests that 110 spaces are required and that 119 will be provided. This does not seem to be enough when taking into account not only the new residents on the site but also visitors, trades

people and allotment holders. The number should be increased to prevent overspill parking onto existing narrow roads.

9. Road safety. Building 55 houses will result in extra traffic and could result in an additional 150-200 new residents, many of whom will need to regularly cross the A4251 Hempstead Road. There is no crossing point between the High Street (north end) and Rucklers Lane. It is essential that a crossing be installed in the area to prevent road traffic accidents between the increased volume of traffic and pedestrians. It is expected that Angle Property would pay for the construction of a suitable crossing.
10. Other local infrastructure issues. The KL&DRA are also concerned that 150-200 additional residents in a village with a population of 5,200 plus the additional residents of the new care home being built in the village will further stretch healthcare and education services which are already over capacity.
11. Planning Statement – page 9 – Pre-Application Advice. Section 3.7 states: *“Prior to the submission of this application, pre-application advice was sought from the Council on 09 April 2018 with regard to a scheme for 125 dwellings on the site.”*
Angle Property’s Planning Statement clearly states that they have sought pre-application advice for more development on the Rectory Farm Green Belt site than is contained in the MOA. The KL&DRA are extremely concerned that the approval of this MOA will then lead to the rest of the site being declassified from the Green Belt resulting in a further application for permission to develop an additional 70 dwellings on greenfield Green Belt land in the village of Kings Langley, a situation which the Association and its members considers not sustainable and wholly unacceptable. The KL&DRA would welcome a statement from DBC Planning regarding the protection of the Green Belt status of the rest of the Rectory Farm site.

The KL&DRA respectfully request that the DBC Strategic Planning and Regeneration Team consider our comments carefully when making its decision on the application and request confirmation that our comments have been reviewed by the DBC Strategic Planning and Regeneration Team.

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