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Dacorum Borough Council
Civic Centre
Marlowes
Hemel Hempstead
Hertfordshire
HP1 1HH

Our ref: NE/2014/121854/02-L01
Your ref: 4/03584/14/OUT
Date: 29 April 2015

Dear Joan

Land at Apsley Mills, London Road, Hemel Hempstead.

Outline application for the construction of 50 one bedroom flats with car parking and vehicular access.

Thank you for reconsulting us on the above planning application.

Unfortunately, we have a number of issues with the submitted flood modelling which means it is not fit for purpose (see attached model review). Therefore, we cannot rely on the results of the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) or be confident that flood risk will not be increased as a result of the development. We also do not believe that the applicant has provided adequate justification for failing to open up the culvert.

In the absence of an acceptable FRA or adequate justification regarding the deculverting we have the following **two objections**.

Objection 1 – Inadequate FRA

Reason

The FRA submitted with this application does not comply with the requirements set out in the Planning Practice Guidance or your policy CS31. The submitted FRA does not therefore provide a suitable basis for assessment to be made of the flood risks arising from the proposed development.

In particular, the submitted FRA fails to:

1. Include an approved flood risk related hydrological model.
2. Adequately assess the flood risk implications of a breach adjacent to the development.
3. Assess the flood risk protection level to the basement car parking.
4. Adequately address the implications of opening up the culvert.
5. Address the implications of the culvert being in poor condition.

Resolution

The applicant can overcome our objection by submitting an FRA which covers the



deficiencies highlighted above and demonstrates that the development will not increase risk elsewhere and where possible reduces flood risk overall. If this cannot be achieved we are likely to maintain our objection.

Note: An updated flood model will need to accompany the updated FRA. This should cover the points identified in the attached model review.

Objection 2 – Opportunity missed for watercourse restoration

Reason

Culverted river channels are one of the most severe examples of the destruction of ecologically valuable habitat. We seek to restore and enhance watercourses to a more natural channel wherever possible. This stance is supported by your policies CS26, CS31 and CS32.

Paragraph 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local planning authorities to aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity when determining planning applications by minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible. Paragraph 118 of the NPPF also states that opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged. In addition, the Thames River Basin Management Plan requires the restoration and enhancement of water bodies to prevent deterioration and promote recovery. As the River Gade is currently at moderate ecological potential it is essential that improvements are made.

Resolution

It may be possible to overcome this objection if a scheme is submitted by the applicant demonstrating how the watercourse will be restored and enhanced to a more natural state and maintained as such thereafter. If this is not possible we would expect to see adequate justification for why this is. We would also require a Section 106 agreement for works offsite.

Please contact me if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

Natasha Smith
Planning Advisor – Sustainable Places Team

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cc Chris Watts