

Dacorum Borough Council Planning Department

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14 ST AGNELLS COURT
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B GATES
NEW MAULDEN FARM
VENUS HILL
BOVINGDON
HERTS
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TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

APPLICATION - 4/00562/98/OUT

**ADJ. THE CONIFERS, LONG LANE & ADJ. THE BUNGALOW, VENUS HILL,
BOVINGDON, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD, HERTS
THREE DETACHED HOUSES**

Your application for outline planning permission dated 26 March 1998 and received on 26 March 1998 has been **REFUSED**, for the reasons set out overleaf.



Development Control Manager

Date of Decision: 11 May 1998

REASONS FOR REFUSAL APPLICABLE TO APPLICATION: 4/00562/98/OUT

Date of Decision: 11 May 1998

The site is within the Metropolitan Green Belt on the adopted Dacorum Borough Local Plan wherein permission will only be given for use of land, the construction of new buildings, changes of use of existing buildings for agricultural or other essential purposes appropriate to a rural area or small scale facilities for participatory sport or recreation. No such need has been proven and the proposed development is inappropriate in the terms of this policy.



The Planning Inspectorate

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Your Ref:

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Our Ref:

T/APP/A1910/A/98/301167/P4

Date:

28 JAN 1999

Dear Sirs

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990, SECTION 78 AND SCHEDULE 6

APPEAL BY MISS B GATES

APPLICATION NO: 4/00562/98/OUT

1. The Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions has appointed me to determine your client's appeal against the decision of the Dacorum Borough Council to refuse outline planning permission for three detached houses on land at Venus Hill and Long Lane, Bovingdon. I have considered all the written representations together with all other material submitted to me. I inspected the site on 18 January 1999.

2. The application included the siting of the proposed houses and the means of access, with all other matters reserved for later approval.

3. The two appeal sites are within the Metropolitan Green Belt defined in the Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991-2011 adopted in 1998 and the Dacorum Borough Local Plan adopted in 1995. Structure Plan Policy 5 states that there is a presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt and permission will not be given, except in very special circumstances, for purposes other than those defined in Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 2. Local Plan Policy 3 takes a similar approach.

4. From the written representations and my inspection of the site and its surroundings, I consider that the main issue in this case is whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt and, if so, whether there are any very special circumstances sufficient to overcome the presumption against such development.

5. You argue that the sites are within the village of Bovingdon. However, the Local Plan Proposals Map excludes the built-up area of this large village from the Green Belt, and the text supporting Policy 3 states that the boundary has been drawn at the confines of existing development. The appeal sites are well beyond that boundary.

6. It was clear at my visit that the area around the appeal sites has a much more rural character than that of the relatively dense development within Bovingdon itself. The sites are open pasture land within a loosely developed group of well-spaced dwellings and horticultural or stable buildings. The area to the east along Venus Hill is even more open and largely undeveloped. Although there are other residential properties to the north fronting Long Lane,

which leads to Bovington, I see them as development within the countryside rather than part of the village. These properties are also within the Green Belt.

7. You accept that the proposals would not qualify as appropriate development in the Green Belt through any agricultural need. As you point out, limited infilling in villages is another category which PPG 2 paragraph 3.4 states to be appropriate, but only under the circumstances described in the box following paragraph 2.11. The latter advice deals with the treatment in development plans of villages in Green Belt areas, including the approach to infilling policies. In this case, Local Plan Policy 3 makes no provision for infilling in the Green Belt outside Bovington. The supporting text to Policy 3 further states that Bovington should not be allowed to expand beyond the defined confines, in order to protect the character of the village and avoid a strain on services. As the proposals do not therefore fall within any of the categories of appropriate development in either the development plan or PPG 2, I am in no doubt that the proposals would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

8. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. You contend that the proposals would respect the open nature of the locality, bearing in mind that PPG 2 paragraph 1.4 states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. A single house would be erected on the smaller site fronting Long Lane, with two on the larger area in Venus Hill. Even though the low density would broadly match that of other nearby properties, and there are hedges along parts of the site frontages, the houses and their garages, gardens and drives would be obvious from the roads. Both sites contribute significantly to the openness of the Green Belt and the remaining rural character of the locality by virtue of being undeveloped land between residential properties. The loss of such land, and its transformation from grazing to residential use, could not fail to reduce substantially the openness of this part of the Green Belt. Infilling within these gaps would also serve to intensify the development which has already occurred in this semi-rural area. Consequent damage would be caused to the setting of the village in the Green Belt countryside. The proposals therefore conflict with the intentions of the development plan and national planning guidance.

9. I have not been made aware of any positive planning benefits from the proposals which would be sufficient to outweigh the considerable harm to the Green Belt. Very special circumstances do not therefore arise.

10. In reaching my conclusions, I have taken account of all other matters raised in the written representations but I have reached my decision that the appeal should be dismissed.

11. For the reasons given above and in exercise of the powers transferred to me, I hereby dismiss this appeal.

Yours faithfully



A J RUGMAN BSc(Econ) DipTP MRTPI
Inspector