



THE HAYCUTTER,
TANHOUSE ROAD, OXTED

**DESIGN & ACCESS, HERITAGE and
PLANNING STATEMENTS**

On behalf of Brunning & Price Ltd



February 2016

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1 Executive Summary

The enclosed Design & Access, Heritage and Planning Statements have been prepared by Frost Planning Ltd. They are submitted on behalf of Brunning & Price Ltd in support of their application for planning permission and conservation area consent for works at The Haycutter public house in Oxted.

The application essentially seeks approval for: internal refurbishment and remodelling of the existing pub; demolition of late 20th century extensions to the side and rear; new single storey rear extensions to accommodate new bar servery, kitchen and restaurant accommodation; remodelled and extended car parking area; access paths and patio terraces around the pub; rerouting of the existing farm track to the adjacent site; plus improvements to the existing boundaries and soft landscaping throughout.

The statements address the relevant design, access, heritage and planning issues. They are informed by the submitted plans and other supporting technical statements. They collectively demonstrate that the proposed development is acceptable in terms of Local and National Planning Policy, including relevant Green Belt and Conservation Area policies. Accordingly, the application should be granted.

2 Introduction

2.1 About the Author

This statement has been prepared by Frost Planning Ltd on behalf of the applicant. Frost Planning is an independent planning consultancy, based in Cheshire. The Managing Director and author of this statement is Mr Andy Frost. Andy is a Chartered Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) and has over 25 years' experience in planning practice.

2.2 About the Applicant

The applicant is Brunning and Price Ltd (hereafter referred to as 'B&P'). The company was established by Jerry Brunning and Graham Price in 1988. It has since grown to become a highly acclaimed and award-winning pub company.

B&P pubs offer a sophisticated, relaxed and attractive place to eat and drink. Their pubs are primarily geared towards attracting adults to meet and chat without the intrusion of any other forms of entertainment. Their food and drink offer is relatively uncomplicated but of high quality.

B&P own or lease a significant number of pubs across England and Wales already. The Haycutter is a very recent acquisition and represents a perfect opportunity for them to establish a new pub in the Tandridge District of Surrey.

B&P has a very successful track record of restoring, remodelling and where necessary extending pubs sympathetically. Many previous pubs and other buildings which they have acquired have already been listed or are located in conservation areas. The company prides itself on being able to work sensitively with heritage assets by enhancing their best features and replacing insensitive modern additions. Recent examples of such projects are: The Architect (Chester), the Inn at Shipley (Wolverhampton), and the Garden House (St Alban's).

B&P is an award winning pub operator. They have been voted Good Pub Guide Pub Chain of the Year on four occasions. They currently operate from 54 pubs across England and Wales. The submitted 'B&P Philosophy Statement' provides further information on how they operate.

2.3 Purpose

The enclosed Design & Access, Heritage and Planning Statements demonstrate the case for granting planning permission and conservation area consent.

The Design and Access Statement is a legal requirement of Article 4 to the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2013. The Heritage Statement is a requirement of National Planning Policy. The Planning Statement provides the overarching planning justification.

2.4 References

These statements should be read in conjunction with the submitted plans and technical statements which accompany the application.

2.5 Scope and Structure

The scope of this document follows a logical structure as follows:

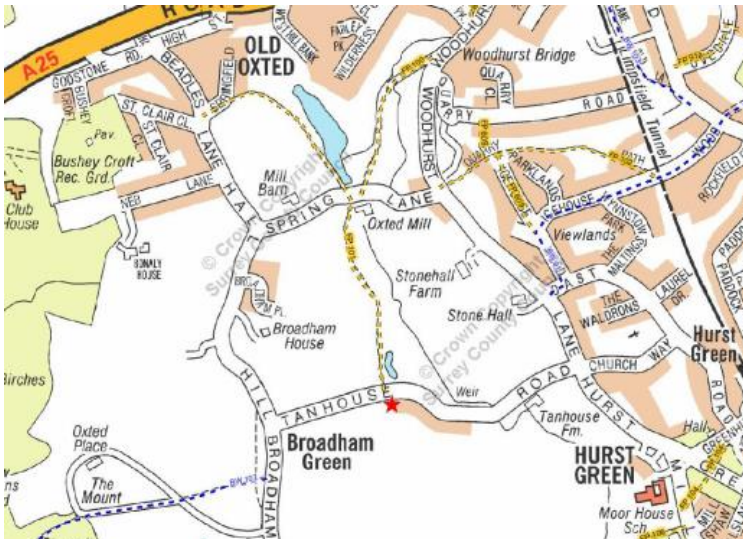
- Site Analysis (section 3)
- Proposed Development (section 4)
- Design and Access Statement (section 5)
- Heritage Statement (section 6)
- Planning Statement (section 7)
- Summary and Conclusion (section 8)

3 Site Analysis

3.1 Location

The Haycutter public house is situated on the outskirts of Oxted. It is located along Tanhouse Road which runs between Hurst Green to the east and Broadham Green to the west. The main urban area of Oxted is approximately 1.5km to the north east.

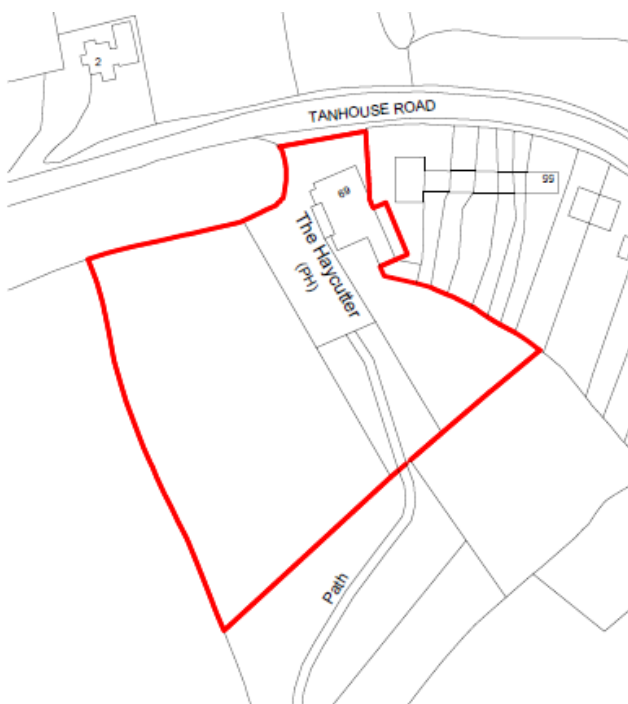
Image 1: Context Plan



3.2 Characteristics

The site is irregular in shape and covers approximately 0.8 hectares. It comprises a storey pub with single storey extensions to side and rear, beer garden, car parking and paddock area to the side.

Image 2: Location Plan



3.3 About the Haycutter

The Haycutter is a traditional country pub, dating in part from the 19th Century. In more modern times it has been extended with small extensions to the side and rear.

The ground floor has been reconfigured to create a series of interlinked trading areas grouped around the central bar. To the rear is a skittle alley function room, and there is a small store room to the rear of the main building. There is a basement beer cellar, whilst to the first and second floor are a total of six rooms and a bathroom which have previously been used as a living accommodation for the previous tenant landlord.

The Haycutter holds a Premises Licence. The permitted opening hours are currently: Monday – Wednesday 10.00 to 23.00; Thursday & Saturday 10.00 to Midnight; and Sunday 12.00 to 22.30.

The pub closed in 2015 and the site is now vacant and secured with fencing to prevent intruders and vandalism.

Image 3: The Haycutter 'today' (now closed)



3.4 Access

The pub is accessed off Tanhouse Road via a short tarmac driveway which runs along the western elevation and opens into a small car park which is surfaced in loose gravel.

3.5 Surroundings

The site is situated in a rural area. Its setting is relatively isolated apart from a row of terraced cottages immediately to the east and a detached house opposite. Visually, the site is very well contained by mature trees and shrubbery along its boundaries.

The site is located within the Green Belt and partially within the Broadham Green Conservation area.

3.6 Lawful Use

The lawful use of The Haycutter is Class A4 under the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) and The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015.

4 Proposed Development

4.1 Proposals

The application for Planning Permission and Conservation Area Consent essentially seeks approval for: internal refurbishment and remodelling of the existing pub; demolition of late 20th century extensions to the side and rear; new single storey extensions to accommodate a new bar servery, kitchen and restaurant accommodation; remodelled and extended car parking; access paths and patio terraces around the pub; rerouting of the existing farm track to the adjacent site; plus improvements to the existing boundaries and soft landscaping throughout.

Image 4: Proposed Landscape Layout (not to scale)



4.2 Commercial Need

The Haycutter is a country pub in a good market location. It has traded successfully as a 'wet-led' pub in the past. However its physical condition, capacity and food offer are totally unsuited to today's marketplace. The submitted Commercial Report by Colliers International explains the reasons behind the pub's commercial decline over the years, and compares this to pubs in the area which continue to trade successfully. Section 8 of the report concludes that:

"From our research and analysis it is clear that most of the successful pubs in the area have a balanced trade which includes both food and drink...Whilst the Haycutter occupies a generous size site and has an attractive beer garden and space for car parking the buildings are small in comparison to its competitor set, all of which have substantial public areas and bigger kitchens and service areas.

B&P's proposals are the absolute minimum needed to transform the pub's competitiveness and commercial viability. The rear extensions will vastly improve the bar and dining capacity, kitchen facilities and overall customer experience. The other internal and external works, including increased car parking, are also essential elements. The pub will not re-open without these works and B&P would be forced to sell-on the property.

Image 5: The Haycutter 'tomorrow'



5 Design and Access Statement

5.1 Background

This statement has been prepared in accordance with Article 4 of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2013. The statement provides information on and evaluates the physical, social and economic context of the development; the pre-application process which has informed the application; the opportunities and constraints posed; and the use, scale/amount, layout, landscaping, appearance and access elements of the proposed development.

5.2 Physical Context

The Haycutter is presently closed, fenced-off and in a deteriorating condition. As discussed below and within the submitted Colliers Report there is no prospect of the pub reopening unless the works proposed are permitted.

In physical terms the main works include: internal refurbishment and remodelling of the original pub; demolition of existing extensions to the side and rear; installation of a new bar server, dining-room, toilet and kitchen extensions to the rear; remodelled and extended car parking area; access paths and patio terraces around the pub; rerouting of the existing farm track to the adjacent site; plus improvements to the existing boundaries and soft landscaping throughout.

The submitted report by Colliers International explains that these works are essential if the pub is to become commercially viable again. Furthermore the submitted plans and supporting Landscape Assessment, including the 3D visuals, demonstrate that the proposed development will complement the physical appearance of the pub and the setting of the site overall. Above all, the proposed rear extensions are proportionate in scale and sympathetic in appearance to the existing pub.

5.3 Social Context

On 7 July 2015 the “Haycutter Supporters” nominated the Haycutter as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). The nomination was accepted by Tandridge Council and the property is now listed as an ACV. This essentially demonstrates that the community cherishes the existence of the pub and does not want to see its use changed (e.g. to housing).

This is highly relevant because the works proposed are an absolute minimum in order to ensure the pub re-opens and remains commercially viable in the long-term. It is very unlikely that another pub operator would view this any differently. Inevitably, if re-marketed, it will attract interest for alternative commercial uses and possibly housing. Property agents Fleurets confirmed that when the pub was sold to B&P in 2015, at the time only three firm offers were received. One offer was from a party who intended to apply to convert the property to an alternative use (i.e. a day nursery), which would have been contrary to the ACV; one from a potential pub operator who was unable to provide proof of funding; and one from the Restaurant Group (parent company of Brunning and Price Limited) who were the eventual purchasers.

B&P’s proposals for the Haycutter will therefore have a positive social impact on the local community in line with its ACV listing by ensuring the pub is re-opened and preserved as a pub - providing local employment and a high quality meeting, eating and drinking venue for local businesses, residents and visitors to the area.

It is also worth noting that the Haycutter Supporters met with B&P when the site was being marketed to discuss B&P's proposals. Following that meeting we understand they advised the Council they are happy with the proposals put forward by B&P.

5.4 Economic

These days with greater personal mobility, busy lifestyles, tighter drink driving limits, the smoking ban, cheap take-home drinks, satellite TV and a whole host of other competing ways to spend leisure time, few, if any rural pubs can survive by simply serving a decent pint of beer or having a very limited food offer. The Haycutter is such an example. The situation for the Haycutter is compounded due to its relatively small size, it's poor and deteriorating physical condition (both inside and out); the very limited walk-in trade available; and the lack of high volume passing trade. Very few rural pubs can survive on locals alone, especially not in locations such as this with competing pubs nearby offering a far superior food offer and customer environment. To reiterate, should the level of investment proposed by B&P not be permitted then the pub will not ill not re-open.

The proposals by B&P are essential to ensuring the economic revival of the pub. This in turn will generate wide-ranging economic benefits for the area through the 'multiplier effect'. In terms of direct employment the pub will generate around 27 full-time equivalent jobs. Inevitably, many jobs will be sourced locally. This in turn will create greater spend on local shops and other services. The pub's reopening will also support wider economic growth through using local suppliers and boosting the local hotel and tourism trade, etc. It will also create a more positive economic image for the area.

5.5 Planning Context

Please refer to Planning Statement (section 7).

5.6 Involvement

Pre-application advice was sought from Tandridge District Council and the issues raised in their pre-application response are addressed by these statements and other submitted technical reports.

In addition, a public meeting was held on 28 October 2015. This was attended by representatives of B&P to present their proposals to the local community prior to B&P formally acquiring the pub.

The meeting was attended by approximately 70 people. Feedback slips were completed by 55 people. A majority of 86% expressed either 'excitement or support' for the proposals. A further 11% were 'satisfied'. Only 3% expressed 'some concern'. Significantly, 0% of respondees were fundamentally opposed to B&P's proposals.

The feedback from the public meeting therefore reflects very positive and overwhelming local support for B&P's proposals.

5.7 Evaluation of Opportunities and Constraints

An evaluation of the opportunities and constraints of the site were identified at the outset.

The principal opportunities are: existing pub in an attractive setting, country road frontage, strong market catchment, good sized and visually contained site, overwhelming local support for B&P's proposals, ACV listing.

The principal constraints are: existing pub too small with poor trading history, inadequate bar area and dining capacity, inadequate kitchen facilities, poor toilet facilities, poor internal layout, deteriorating internal and external

condition, limited car parking, Green Belt location, partially located within Broadham Green Conservation Area, small walk-in and drive-by catchment.

On balance, B&P took the decision to acquire the pub given its fundamental potential and to address the various constraints through the submission of a planning application, buoyed in particular by the overwhelming local support for their proposals.

5.8 Design Evaluation

Use

The use will remain a public house within Class A4 where the primary purpose will be the sale and consumption of alcoholic drinks and food on the premises. The main difference will be the reliance on providing a much higher quality food offer.

Scale and Amount

There will be a significant but necessary increase in the building footprint and overall volume but this will be offset by the demolition of the existing side/rear extensions, the site's visual containment along all boundaries, a sympathetic building design, and extensive soft landscaping works.

Layout

The submitted Site Plan shows the proposed layout of the site in relation to internal and external drinking/dining areas, kitchens and toilets (including disabled WC), ancillary staff accommodation, car parking, and outside open space for the use of customers. The layout is commercially necessary and accords with both Health and Safety and Building Regulations.

Landscaping

Although the building enjoys a beer garden already it does not benefit what a quality 'country pub' should offer. The submitted Landscape Layout proposes a number of measures to achieve this. The proposed works include a new outdoor terrace, feature shrubbery, extensive new tree planting, and open play space. Collectively, these works will create an ideal outdoor dining and informal garden setting for the pub. The submitted Landscape Layout and 3D Visuals demonstrate this.

The landscape works will also ensure the development is sympathetically blended into the surrounding countryside. New planting will be used to reinforce the site's natural boundaries where necessary to ensure there is no adverse impact on either the wider Green Belt or Conservation Area.

The landscaping works to the front of the pub will also create a more attractive frontage to Tanhouse Road.

Appearance

The original pub exterior will be largely preserved but extensively renovated through repainting of the main render to improve its appearance and accentuate the architectural detailing of the building.

Whilst it is accepted that the cumulative built footprint/volume of extensions is significant, this is mitigated by their individual styling and form, and their visual containment by mature trees and existing housing. The proposed rear extensions are also only single storey in height. In their pre-application response, the LPA case officer accepted

that “...the erection of small buildings linked together would appear a reasonable concept as pubs and other buildings evolve and expand over time and the proposal would resemble this gradual expansion process...”.

Overall, the proposed extensions and other ancillary works will complement the pub and enhance its setting. Please also refer to the Heritage Statement (section 6), Planning Statement (section 7) and the submitted Landscape Assessment which demonstrates that the visual and landscape impacts will be acceptable in the context of the Green Belt, the Conservation Area, and other receptors.

Access

The proposal will re-use the existing access point onto Tanhouse Road. The customer parking will be increased to reflect the uplift in the pub's customer capacity and likely demand for parking. The parking provision also reflects the fact this will remain a generally car-dependant pub destination. The new car parking layout will provide for dedicated disabled spaces (noting none exist at present). Please also refer to the submitted Highway Statement which demonstrates that the proposals will be acceptable in terms of road traffic conditions and highway safety.

The internal and external access works for customers will fully comply with Building Regulations.

6 Heritage Statement

6.1 Context

Heritage Statements are required to be submitted with planning applications where heritage assets may be affected (directly or indirectly) in accordance with paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states: “Local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting”.

Accordingly, this statement assesses the site’s historic context and the significance of any heritage assets. It then assesses the impact of the proposed development on these assets.

6.2 Heritage Context

The site straddles the eastern edge of the Broadham Green Conservation Area, as defined by the red edge boundary below. Only the pub building and a small part of the beer garden lie within the boundary.

Image 6: Extract from Broadham Green Conservation Area (source: Tandridge Core Strategy)



The pub itself is not listed. Internally, any special character or architectural interest it once had has been lost through late 20th century alterations. Externally, its original 19th century form and architectural features remain generally intact. Whilst it is not a designated heritage asset it is nonetheless a building of some historic and architectural interest. This no doubt explains its inclusion within the Conservation Area boundary.

There are two listed buildings nearby (63 and 65 Tanhouse Road) but they are located outside the Conservation Area and are unaffected by the proposed development.

6.3 The Significance of the Heritage Asset

Information regarding the origins, development and significance of the Broadham Green Conservation Area in the context of this site is scarce. Clearly the pub itself is the only building of significance within this part of the Conservation Area.

The significance of the Conservation Area is really only centred on buildings within the hamlet of Broadham Green to the west, and Oxted Mill to the north. The site has no physical or visual relationship to any of these buildings.

6.4 National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. This includes conserving and enhancing 'heritage assets'.

Policies 126-141 of the NPPF are related to conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Policies 128 and 129 of the NPPF require applicants and local planning authorities to assess the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be appropriate to the assets' importance and no more than sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

Policy 132 states: *"When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional."*

Policy 134 states: *"Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use."*

6.5 Local Policy

Tandridge District Council Core Strategy Policy DP20 (Heritage Assets) applies. The policy supports development proposals which seek to protect, preserve and wherever possible enhance the historic interest, cultural value, architectural character, visual appearance and setting of the district's heritage assets and historic environment. Only where the public benefits of a proposal significantly outweigh the harm to, or loss of a designated heritage asset or its setting, will exceptional planning consent be granted. These benefits must be proportional to the significance of the asset and to the level of harm or loss proposed. In all cases the applicant will be expected to demonstrate that: i) all reasonable efforts have been made to either sustain the existing use, find viable alternative uses, or mitigate the extent of the harm to the asset; and ii) where relevant the works are the minimum necessary to meet other legislative requirements.

Under Policy D20 with the granting of permission or consent the Council will require that: i) the works are sympathetic to the heritage asset and/or its setting in terms of quality of design and layout (scale, form, bulk, height, character and features) and materials (colour and texture); and ii) in the case of a Conservation Area, the development conserves or enhances the character of the area and its setting, including protecting any existing views into or out of the area where appropriate.

6.6 Heritage Impact Analysis

As outlined above, the only designated heritage asset to consider in the context of this development is the Broadham Green Conservation Area. However, the original pub building itself is also considered to be a heritage asset and contributes in a limited way to the overall character and appearance of the conservation area.

That said, at the outset it is noted that this is not an especially significant or sensitive part of the Conservation Area. It is physically remote and visually divorced from the nucleus of historic buildings within the hamlet of Broadham Green to the west or Oxted Mill to the north.

In reality, any views of the development will be confined to the site itself (or occasional glimpsed views from passing traffic) due to the intervening distances, topography and mature tree-lined boundaries around the site.

The proposed rear extensions represent the most significant change to the site's character and appearance. However, they are carefully designed to minimise their sense of scale and massing and will appear sympathetic to the original pub. Their individual styling is also visually interesting and resembles 'organic' development. In short, they befit the original building and its setting. In their pre-application response, the LPA case officer clearly agrees in stating that *"...the erection of small buildings linked together would appear a reasonable concept as pubs and other buildings evolve and expand over time and the proposal would resemble this gradual expansion process..."*.

It is also important to note that immediate views of the pub from Tanhouse Road will be enhanced – i.e. repainted façade and new landscaped frontage.

Furthermore, the Haycutter is presently closed, fenced-off and in a deteriorating condition. There is no likelihood of the pub-reopening without the works proposed. Therefore, should there be any alleged harm to the conservation area this would be marginal at worst and be clearly outweighed by safeguarding the original pub building as a heritage asset within the conservation area, rather than it fall into further decay and be subject to pressures for redevelopment for alternative uses, such as housing.

In summary, the impact of the proposal on the heritage asset (the Broadham Green Conservation Area) will accord with the NPPF and Core Strategy Policy DP20.

7 Planning Statement

7.1 Context

Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that: “...where in making any determination under the Planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.”

Accordingly, this Planning Statement assesses the proposed development against the framework of National and Local Planning policy, and other material considerations. More specifically, this framework comprises:

- Tandridge District Core Strategy 2008 – Policies CSP1, CSP11, CSP12, CSP14, CSP15, CSP17, CSP18, CSP21, CSP22
- Tandridge Local Plan: Part 2 – Detailed Policies DP1, DP5, DP7, DP9, DP10, DP13, DP18, DP19, DP20, DP22
- Tandridge Parking Standards SPD (2012)
- Surrey Design Guide (2002)
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- Technical Considerations

7.2 Planning Analysis

Based on the above framework, the main issues are:

- Impact on the Green Belt (and whether there are ‘Very Special Circumstances’)
- Impact on the Broadham Green Conservation Area
- Impact on trees
- Impact on neighbouring properties
- Highway impact
- Ecological Impact
- Accordance with the NPPF

These issues are addressed in turn below:

7.3 Impact on the Green Belt

Paragraph 89 of the NPPF says that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as ‘inappropriate’ in the Green Belt. However, it then provides exceptions to this rule. One of these is “the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.”

In this instance the individual extensions are relatively small in scale, single storey high, individually designed, subservient in scale, and sympathetic in appearance to the main pub. They cleverly resemble what one would expect to see if the pub had grown more organically over the past 100 years or so. Both individually and

cumulatively the proposed extensions will not therefore appear visually disproportionate to the original pub. In their pre-application response, the LPA case officer accepted that “...the erection of small buildings linked together would appear a reasonable concept as pubs and other buildings evolve and expand over time and the proposal would resemble this gradual expansion process...”. Visually, the proposed extensions therefore accord with the exemption under paragraph 89 – i.e. they appear proportionate to the original pub and therefore satisfy Green Belt policy.

Notwithstanding, we are alert to the pre-application advice of the Council and the need in their opinion to demonstrate ‘Very Special Circumstances’. Paragraph 87 of the NPPF makes it clear that development that is deemed to be inappropriate should still be approved if “Very Special Circumstances” override any harm. Paragraph 88 adds that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. It states “*Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations*”.

In this context it is important to recognise that even if the extensions were judged to be disproportionate and therefore inappropriate in Green Belt terms, any actual impact on the Green Belt as perceived ‘on the ground’ would be very marginal at worst, as explained below.

Paragraph 79 of the NPPF states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their ‘openness’ and their permanence. Paragraph 80 adds that the Green Belt serves five purposes: i) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas; ii) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another; iii) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; iv) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and v) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land. The proposed development does not conflict with any of these fundamental aims or purposes. The proposed extensions and car parking are discreetly sited. They are physically and visually contained by the existing pub, houses, and mature shrubbery/trees along the site boundaries. They will replace existing extensions and car parking. The new soft landscaping proposed will increase the site’s visual containment even further. The works will only be visible in the immediate vicinity and primarily within the site itself. They will therefore have no perceptible impact on the sense of openness or permanence of the Green Belt. They will not cause urban sprawl, or lead to towns coalescing, or cause urban encroachment, or harm the setting and character of historic towns, or discourage urban regeneration.

Furthermore, in any case there are ‘*Very Special Circumstances (VSC)*’ which cumulatively clearly outweigh any limited alleged harm to the Green Belt. These VSC are outlined as follows:

Ensuring Commercial Viability

The crucial issue here is that the proposed works represent the minimum level of investment required to ensure the pub reopens and remains commercially viable in the long-term. We have gathered evidence for this as set out below.

Please refer to the Commercial Report prepared by Colliers International. Their report has been undertaken by a Director and specialist in Licensed & Leisure property with 25 years’ experience in the pub, bar and restaurant sectors. The report considers the pub’s historic trading performance and operating format; the provision of other licensed premises in the vicinity; their expert opinion of its future viability as a public house; and their views on the commercial necessity for the scale and nature of the proposed alterations and extensions.

The report starts by outlining the underlying market conditions. It comments that the last few years have been a challenging period for the pub sector with economic, social and regulatory pressures all impacting on owners, operators and investors. There are circa 48,000 pubs in the UK, around 20% fewer than at the turn of the millennium, and beer volumes have been in long-term decline. The principal areas of contraction in pub numbers have been the tenanted, leased and freehouse segments. Colliers anticipate that regulatory and economic pressures will lead to further small, underinvested pubs, like the Haycutter, closing permanently. They add that the pubs which have closed in recent years have generally been 'wet led' businesses where there has been unwillingness, or inability, to invest. The report notes that in its "Pub Visiting UK May 2015" report Mintel commented that *"...many of the venues which have closed in recent years were over-reliant on alcoholic drink sales, but are likely to also have had an insufficiently appealing food proposition. Venues where drink sales are two thirds or more from beer and cider have often struggled. Instead, those where alcoholic drink sales are only around 40-50% beer and cider, with around 20% each of wine, spirits and soft drinks, and supported with a family-led food offering, tend to have performed better."*

The Colliers Report also makes the point that the Haycutter is too small in comparison to its competitor set, all of which have substantial public areas and bigger kitchens and service areas. It notes that these other pubs are succeeding whereas the Haycutter has failed. The truth is that the pub no longer meets the demands of its customer base – the public areas are still roughly the same size as when the pub was built over 100 years ago and whilst the bar and skittle alley may have been adequate when the Haycutter was serving a very localised bar (drinking) trade they are now far too small.

The Colliers Report further notes that the previous tenant was in occupation for a number of years and appears to have been a competent operator, introducing a number of initiatives to increase revenues. Despite these initiatives the business ultimately failed and closed. It is also clear from the Fleurets report at Appendix 3 that when the marketed the site there was little demand for the Haycutter from the private market, most of who would have been put off by the significant capital investment required to reposition the business to meet the demands of the customer base.

The Colliers Report adds that in recent years the Haycutter has been operating in increasingly challenging market conditions and despite the best efforts of the previous tenant it has suffered from underinvestment, leading to its long-term decline and eventual closure. The firm conclusion reached by Colliers is that B&P needs to substantially improve its food and drink offer in order for the pub to remain competitive and viable in the long-term.

More specifically, commercially the pub needs to be able to recruit good quality chefs and staff and provide a kitchen big enough and up to modern standards of hygiene to deliver the right standard of food. The pub needs to have enough customer space inside to be able to generate the volumes of custom and revenue to afford to employ good quality staff and to invest sufficiently in the facilities and property as a whole. The fact is that the proposed pub extensions and other alterations are the absolute minimum required to achieve these aims and ensure the long-term viability of the pub. For this reason, commercial viability is a very special circumstance in this instance.

Employment and Wider Economic Benefits

These days with greater personal mobility, busy lifestyles, tighter drink driving limits, the smoking ban, cheap take-home drinks, satellite TV and a whole host of other competing ways to spend leisure time, few, if any rural pubs can survive by simply serving a decent pint of beer or having a very limited food offer. The Haycutter is such an example.

The situation for the Haycutter is compounded due to its relatively small size, its poor and deteriorating physical condition (both inside and out); the very limited walk-in trade available; and the lack of high volume passing trade. Very few rural pubs can survive on locals alone, especially not in locations such as this with competing pubs nearby offering a far superior food offer and overall customer environment.

Should the minimum level of investment in the pub as proposed by B&P not be permitted then the pub will not re-open. The proposals by B&P are essential to ensuring the economic revival of the pub. This in turn will generate wide-ranging economic benefits for the area through the 'multiplier effect'.

In terms of direct employment the pub will generate around 27 full-time equivalent jobs. Inevitably, many jobs will be sourced locally. This in turn will create greater spend on local shops and other services. The pub's reopening will also support wider economic growth through using local suppliers and boosting the local hotel and tourism trade, etc. It will also create a more positive economic image for the area. However, these benefits would not arise if B&P's proposals are not approved. The employment and wider economic benefits arising are therefore a very special circumstance in this instance.

Community Feedback

A public meeting was held on 28 October 2015, attended by representatives of B&P to present the draft scheme at the pre-application stage and prior to B&P formally acquiring the property. The meeting was attended by approximately 70 people. Feedback slips were completed by 55 people (some expressed a 'couple's' view and not all people completed one).

A majority of 86% expressed either excitement or support for the proposals. A further 11% were satisfied. Only 3% expressed some concern. Significantly, 0% were against the proposals.

The feedback from the public meeting therefore reflects very positive if not totally overwhelming local support for B&P's proposals. In our view this level of community support constitutes a very special circumstance.

Safeguarding a Community Asset

On 7 July 2015 the "Haycutter Supporters" nominated the Haycutter as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). The nomination was accepted by Tandridge Council and the property is now listed as an ACV. This essentially demonstrates that the community cherishes the existence of the pub and does not want to see its use changed (e.g. to housing).

However, the reality is that should B&P's proposals for the pub not be approved then the pub will not re-open. B&P will be forced to re-sell the property on the open market. Inevitably, it will attract interest for alternative commercial uses and possibly housing. Indeed, property agents Fleurets confirmed that when the pub was sold to B&P in 2015, at the time only three firm offers were received. One offer was from a party who intended to apply to convert the Property to an alternative use (i.e. a day nursery), which would have been contrary to the ACV, one from a potential pub operator who was unable to provide proof of funding, and one from the Restaurant Group (parent company of Brunning and Price Limited), who were the eventual purchasers.

The B&P proposals will therefore have a very positive social impact on the local community in line with its ACV listing by ensuring the pub is reopened and preserved as a pub - providing local employment and a high quality meeting, eating and drinking venue for local businesses, residents and visitors to the area.

It is also worth noting that the Haycutter Supporters met with B&P when the site was being marketed to discuss B&P's proposals. Following that meeting we understand they advised the Council they are happy with the proposals.

For the above reasons we therefore consider the pub's ACV listing to be a 'very special circumstance'.

7.4 Impact on the Broadham Green Conservation Area

This is not an especially significant or sensitive part of the Conservation Area. The site actually straddles the edge of the Conservation Area boundary. Only the pub plus a small part of the garden and driveway lie within. The pub is not listed. Furthermore, the original pub will be retained and visually enhanced as part of B&P's proposals.

Furthermore, the site is visually well contained. No important views or settings of buildings within the wider Conservation Area will be affected by the development.

Crucially, the proposed works by B&P will safeguard the long-term survival of the pub as a heritage asset within the Conservation Area.

In summary the overall character, appearance and setting of the Conservation Area will be changed in a small but positive way.

Please also refer to the Heritage Statement, Landscape Assessment and submitted 3D images.

7.5 Impact on Trees

The impact of the development on the arboricultural value of the site will be positive. Please refer to the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Landscape Layout and Landscape Assessment.

7.6 Impact on Neighbouring Properties

In light of the existing lawful use (Class A4) and opening hours, the sympathetic scale/design of the proposed extensions, and the juxtapose of nearby residential properties (principally nos. 55-67 Tanhouse Road), it can be concluded that residential amenities will be unharmed.

B&P would be happy to adhere to reasonable planning conditions regarding hours of opening, restrictions on outdoor music (apart from occasions such as Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve), and high-level external lighting. The nearest and most affected occupier at no.67 Tanhouse Road has been consulted and has privately pledged support for the proposal.

The submitted Noise Assessment considers potential noise sources associated with the proposals and subject to compliance with recommended measures concludes that the noise impact of the development would be within acceptable limits.

7.7 Highway Impact

The development will use the existing pub access. Peak times will be on a Saturday and Sunday afternoon and also at weekday evening periods associated with dining activity. At those peak times it is expected that demand would be equivalent to around one vehicle per minute accessing The Haycutter. It is not expected that the additional vehicle movements would have any adverse effect on local highway conditions.

The car park provision on the site is within the parking standards set by Surrey County Council.

To support the pub as a destination for cyclists, 6 cycle stands/racks will be provided within the grounds, conveniently close to the main entrance.

The site is located close to local walking routes and would be attractive to visitors as part of a leisure walk.

In summary, there are no material reasons why the development should be resisted on highway impact grounds. Please also refer to the submitted Transport Statement.

7.8 Ecological Impact

The submitted Ecological Assessment advises that the site does not appear to contain any ecological constraints. In summary there are no reasons to resist B&P's proposals on ecological impact grounds.

7.9 Accordance with the NPPF

At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a “...golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking”. The presumption in favour of sustainable development requires development proposals to be approved unless the adverse impacts of doing so would ‘significantly and demonstrably’ outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies of the NPPF, or where the NPPF indicates development should be restricted.

It is also especially significant to note section 3 of the NPPF entitled ‘Supporting a prosperous rural economy’ which states that:

“to promote a strong rural economy, local and neighbourhood plans should: i) support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings; ii) support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside. This should include supporting the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in rural service centres; and iii) promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.”

It is our view that the development accords with the NPPF on all levels. In summary:

- Good design which complements the existing pub and wider setting.
- Revives a rural pub which is an ACV and therefore demonstrably important to the local community.
- Creates local employment and benefits the economy in other ways through the ‘multiplier effect’ (i.e. increased spend, local suppliers, etc.).
- Appropriate in size in Green Belt policy terms and otherwise acceptable in terms of cumulative and overriding ‘very special circumstances’.
- Preserves and enhances a heritage asset – both the Broadham Green Conservation Area and the pub itself.
- No adverse impact on residential amenity.
- Sustainable in other ways (i.e. enhanced landscaping, improved sustainable energy measures, improved disabled parking and internal access, provision of cycle stands, improved noise mitigation measures, etc.).

8 Conclusion

The Haycutter is an existing pub which requires substantial reinvestment if it is to re-open and remain commercially viable. The proposed works represent the absolute minimum required to achieve this.

The proposed extensions to the pub will appear in proportion to the original pub building. Any notional harm to the Green Belt due to their size is clearly outweighed by the 'very special circumstances' outlined.

The pub is not listed and lies on the periphery of the Broadham Green Conservation Area. It is physically and visually remote from the main nucleus of heritage buildings within the area to the north and west. Any views of the pub and the proposed works will be confined to the immediate vicinity only. In any event, the proposed extensions and other works will complement the original pub and enhance the overall character, appearance and setting of the area.

There will be no adverse impact on residential amenities. There are no other policy or technical constraints.

In summary, the proposal is policy compliant and above all represents sustainable development in a rural area. It will greatly benefit the locality economically, socially and environmentally. The application for planning permission and conservation area consent should therefore be granted.

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