

17 April 2023

Owen Fayers
Planning Officer,
Babergh Mid Suffolk District Council
Endeavour House
8 Russell Rd
Ipswich, IP1 2BX

Dear Mr Fayers,

DC/23/01344 Application for Outline Planning Permission (Access points to be considered. All other matters reserved) Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) - Erection of 6 no. dwellings. Land West of Bury Road Lavenham Suffolk

I write on behalf of the Suffolk Preservation Society (SPS) to object to the proposal for 6 dwellings on a greenfield site at Lavenham which we consider will result in an incongruous ribbon development extending into the countryside to the north of the village.

SPS disagrees with the applicant's statement that this should be considered an infill site. Although the site extends from the current built edge of the village to Park Farm Cottages, the cottages are currently perceived as separate from the village and are associated with Lavenham Park Farm to the west. Moreover, the land on the opposite side of the highway to the application site is open farmland. When approaching the village from the north, the cottages are encountered in isolation before the land rises and the edge of the village is experienced only as the road reaches the brow of the hill and turns a corner.

The landscape to the north of Lavenham is rolling, undulating agricultural countryside. The 2015 Lavenham Landscape Character Assessment includes an assessment of the landscape surrounding the village and the application site lies on the edge of LAV5 Brights Drift and LAV6 Clay Hill character areas. LAV5 is described as open, arable clay-plateau farmland with a somewhat elevated feel and notable characteristics of LAV6 include the steeply rolling valleyside landscape and the attractive landscape composition of rolling valleyside, and its interaction with the historic village edge and river corridor. The 2018 Heritage and Settlement Sensitivity Assessment for Babergh and Mid Suffolk Districts notes that the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul is a prominent landscape feature which sits on high ground and is visible from long distances in all directions. It identifies that the church is susceptible to development which intrudes upon these long views.

Due to the site's elevated position within the rolling topography, the proposed 2 storey dwellings will be visible from a number of viewpoints – as confirmed by the LVIA accompanying this application. SPS is particularly concerned that the ridges of the dwellings will be visible in views from the north when approaching along Bury Road as well as in views from Park Road in the west

and Preston Road to the east, often breaking the skyline. In addition, views of the village edge will also be impacted from a number of PROWs to the east and west.

Summary

The character of the current compact form of the village will be seriously compromised by a strung-out row of houses along the Bury Road to the north. The proposal is not well related to the existing pattern of development and is therefore contrary to policy H1 of the Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan. Moreover, whilst this is an outline application and details on the scale of the dwellings is not available, the introduction of 6 two storey dwellings in this prominent, elevated site will impact the character of the landscape and important historic views towards the village.

We hope that these comments are helpful in the consideration of this application and request that SPS is consulted on any amendments.

Yours sincerely,

Bethany Philbidge BSc (Hons) MSc (Town Planning) MRTPI
Planning Officer

Ccs: Ward Councillors
Lavenham Parish Council
Lavenham Society