

BOXFORD – LAND TO REAR OF 1 BOXFORD COURT, COOPERS AND FIELD VIEW,  
COX HILL, BOXFORD

Change of use from agricultural land to domestic garden.

Applicant: Messrs Waspe, Bevan and Lambert

Case Officer: Deborah Board

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BACKGROUND

1. The application is reported to the Development Committee as Mr Lambert is an employee of Babergh District Council.

SITE

2. The site is a parcel of land 0.28 hectares in area located rear of the properties Field View, Coppers and Boxford Court, which are located on Cox Hill, Boxford. The site extends 30m into the countryside.
3. The site is located adjacent to the built up area boundary, conservation area and special landscape area. There are no significant features to note on the site itself but immediately to the north is a belt of TPO protected trees.

PROPOSAL

4. The application seeks full planning permission for the change of use of the site from agricultural land to part of the domestic gardens of the properties Field View, Coppers and Boxford Court.

HISTORY

5. None

POLICY

**Suffolk Structure Plan 2001**

ENV4 (Countryside)

**Babergh Local Plan, Alteration No.2 (2006)** *(the policy references below relate to the adopted version of the Local Plan - the policy numbers in some cases differ from those in the second deposit draft. Where this is the case, the previous reference number is given in brackets).*

CR01 (Landscape Quality)

CR10 (CR22) (Change of Use from Agricultural Land)

*\* please note that details or extracts of policies are no longer included in reports - see page 4 of these papers.*

## OBSERVATIONS

6. PC – to be reported

## ASSESSMENT

7. The main issue to consider when assessing the application is whether the change of use of the land from agricultural to a domestic use is appropriate. Policy ENV4 of the Structure Plan and CR01 set out general advice for considering proposals in the countryside, namely character of the countryside will be protected for its own sake and development will be restricted to that which is essential for the efficient operation of agriculture, forestry and horticulture. Consideration of proposals for the change of use of land is clarified within Policy CR10. This policy refers specifically to developments of this nature and sets out situation where it is not appropriate. These are where the change of use would:
- Have an adverse impact on the landscape quality of the locality and biodiversity;
  - Where the best agricultural land would be lost;
  - Where the site intrudes into the open countryside; and
  - Where the proposal would break up agricultural land thereby impacting on the viability of a farm holding.
8. The policy also clarifies that in locations where change of use is accepted that boundary treatments should be rural in character.
9. In this instance the second and fourth points are not considered to be of issue, with the land being situated on the edge of a field and abutting the boundary with the residential area of Boxford. Therefore the proposal turns on points one and three.
10. The site is located outside of the built-up area boundary of Boxford and therefore is in the open countryside, wherein the Local Planning Authority seeks to safeguard the landscape character of such areas in accordance with the policies of the development plan. The site is open to views from the east along Sand Hill and would be visually prominent in this regard. The use of the land for domestic purposes and the inevitable enclosure associated with this would impact on the character of the site when viewed in this context. The site projects into the open countryside by some 30 metres. Therefore, on balance, the proposal is considered harmful to both the landscape quality and open countryside in this location.

## RECOMMENDATION

- A. Refuse planning permission for the following reason:
- The proposal, by virtue of the change of use of a large area of agricultural land to domestic garden outside of the built up area will have an adverse impact on the landscape of the locality and intrude into the countryside Contrary to policy CR10 of the Babergh Local Plan Alteration No. 2 (2006).

## DECISION

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