

Report to District Development Control Committee

Date of meeting: 9 June 2009



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Subject: Planning Application EPF/0247/09 – Land adjacent to Copperfield Lodge, Hainault Road, Chigwell – Erection of new five bedroom house with basement and integral garage.

**Officer contact for further information: K Smith
Committee Secretary: S Hill Ext 4249**

Recommendation:

That the Committee considers a planning application on land adjacent to Copperfield Lodge, Hainault Road, Chigwell for the erection of new five bedroom house with basement and integral garage which has been referred by Area Plans Subcommittee South without recommendation.

Report Detail

1. This application has been referred by the Area Plans Sub Committee South. The report to the sub-committee carried a recommendation from officers to refuse planning permission and the planning merits of the case are attached.

Planning Issues

2. The debate at the sub-committee meeting centred around whether the site fulfils the purposes of being included within the green belt; whether there is a need for the provision of additional parking spaces for Victory Hall; and whether the provision of the additional car parking spaces is sufficient grounds to justify an otherwise inappropriate development within the green belt.

3. Some Councillors thought that the inclusion of this piece of land within the green belt was anomalous and that the construction of a house on the site would be more in keeping with the street scene. The view was also expressed that the land is in an untidy condition. Other Councillors felt that the green belt boundary should be considered through other processes and that it was not appropriate to consider the merits of the inclusion of the land in the green belt through the Development Control process.

4. Accordingly, they felt it was too soon to consider allowing a dwelling on the site. With regard to the dwelling itself, there was some debate regarding its size, with some Councillors considering that the dwelling was too big, and others considering that its size was in keeping with other dwellings within the street. One Councillor expressed an opinion that the amount of car parking proposed was not enough to justify very special circumstances for allowing a development within the green belt,

but felt that there was sufficient space within the site for the amount of car parking provided to be increased.

5. When the application was finally considered Councillors were unable to make a decision. 7 votes were recorded against the proposal and 7 votes were recorded in favour of the proposal, with one abstention. The Committee Chairman declined to use her casting vote and accordingly the application has been referred to the District Development Committee.

Conclusion

6. The Committee should consider whether there are exceptional circumstances in this case that would outweigh the harm to the open character and appearance of the Metropolitan Green Belt.