

Our Ref: LH/SPP/15.2839

Your Ref:

17 February 2015

Planning Policy Team
Brentwood Borough Council
Town Hall
Brentwood
Essex
CM15 8AY

By email: planning.policy@brentwood.gov.uk

Dear Sir/Madam

**Strategic Growth Options Consultation – Submission of New Site
South Essex Golf Club, Herongate, Brentwood, CM13 3LW**

I enclose a submission in relation to the above consultation. The documents are set out in the attached 'Schedule of Documents'.

This consultation is being undertaken as one of the early stages of producing a new Local Plan for the area. The Local Plan will seek to protect the essential qualities of the Borough whilst also delivering housing, jobs, open space and other infrastructure that will be required in future. Central to Brentwood Council's Strategic Objectives is attracting new commercial investment and improving community infrastructure and facilities which will support new development growth.

In light of this it is clear that the Council need to find suitable land with capacity for growth. Whilst this submission does not strictly relate to the questions asked within the consultation document, it does provide another site that can easily accommodate a new hotel with conference and leisure facilities. It is therefore submitted that this new site is considered to be suitable for a country club style hotel which will significantly benefit the local community. The Council are requested to consider this site for inclusion within their emerging Local Plan.

South Essex Golf Club is located on the A128 between Herongate and West Horndon. This is at the south of the Brentwood Borough, just minutes from the A127 and 4 minutes from junction 29 of the M25 motorway (please refer to the submitted Location Map and Plan, reference 15.2839/M001 and 15.2839/M002). The site is therefore strategically located within an area the Growth Options Consultation document defines as '**C – A127 Corridor**' with '*suitable land with potentially a higher capacity for growth than elsewhere in the Borough*'.

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Head Office: Old School House, Rettendon Turnpike, Battlesbridge, Essex, SS11 7QL
T 0870 013 6996 E contact@smartplanning.co.uk W www.smartplanning.co.uk

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The site itself comprises an established building envelope which sits within a flat plateau. There are a cluster of large former agricultural buildings currently used as an indoor bowling club and green store with loose surface car parking in association with the Golf Club and other facilities. Views into the site are limited due to the site topography. In this regard the rectangular plateau is surrounded by the golf course and several public footpaths, on land which rises in all directions.

In addition to the built form on site, considerable extant planning permissions exist as part of a partially implemented scheme adjoining the golf clubhouse. A hotel proposal would provide a synergy of facilities at this site.

In terms of planning policy it is acknowledged that the site is within the Green Belt where the construction of new buildings is considered inappropriate unless the proposed development falls within one of six listed exception categories at Paragraph 89 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). In this regard the (NPPF) introduces both replacement building criteria and comprehensive redevelopment criteria. The latter relates to previously developed land of which the subject site falls within the definition. Furthermore, the NPPF advocates the use of brownfield land at Paragraph 17.

The Local Planning Authority (LPA) acknowledge they have a tension between Green Belt objectives and a need to provide a fully serviced hotel with conference facilities, potentially achieved through a country club/golf hotel in a sustainable location in close proximity to strategic highway networks.

The Brentwood Borough Hotel and Visitor Accommodation Futures Report (2008) was commissioned to provide an assessment of future needs and opportunities for hotel and visitor accommodation development through to 2021. In particular the report identified an unmet demand for hotel accommodation and significant barriers to the successful delivery of a hotel.

It is important to note the failure to deliver a hotel at the former scrapyards site, Roman Road, Mountnessing. Planning permission was originally granted in 2007 and this permission has been renewed on multiple occasions, however it has become apparent that the hotel industry does not have an interest in this site. Furthermore, draft Development Plan Policy DM7 proposes to allocate the site for B1, B2 and B8 uses, with the Growth Options Consultation document identifying that this site could be suitable for residential use. In this regard, a current planning application has been submitted for a mixed use residential scheme with office building, open space and riverside walk. This application is due to be determined in April 2015. It is overwhelmingly clear that a hotel will not be delivered at this site.

By contrast, the South Essex Golf Club site has received considerable interest from the hotel industry. A comprehensive Hotel Feasibility Study has been produced which identifies the optimum scaling, demand and viability of a hotel in this location. Potential hotel operators were approached, and all of those initially engaged expressed an interest in this site. There is now a shortlist of potential hotel partners interested in delivering a successful hotel and conference centre at South Essex Golf Club. This would represent a sustainable form of development, redeveloping the existing unattractive agricultural buildings and providing an excellent hotel and community facility for the Brentwood Borough.

The submission of this site provides a suitable and deliverable hotel in the Brentwood Borough which would benefit the local population and draw additional visitors and businesses to the Borough. The hotel would provide new conference and leisure facilities that would be neither exclusive nor expensive. In addition a considerable number of jobs will be created during both the construction phase and management of the proposed facilities.

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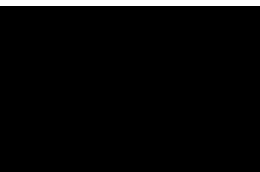
Central to the Growth Options Consultation document is the requirement for additional employment land and the creation of new jobs. The proposed Dunton Garden Suburb Strategic Allocation and West Horndon Strategic Allocation are both to the immediate south of the A127, in close proximity to this site. The Consultation document identifies that locations close to the strategic highway network and junctions are most appropriate to meet modern business needs.

The Brentwood Economic Futures Report (December 2014) forecasts that there will be at least a 25% increase in Employment Sector Growth within the 'Accommodation and Food Services' sector between 2015 and 2030. This is directly relevant to the submission of the current site, however it is clearly apparent that the Growth Options Consultation document does not allocate any sites for a proposed hotel.

Whilst this submission does not seek to provide any detail on potential future development for the site, any proposed hotel would be of a high quality design, in keeping with the surroundings and sympathetic to the setting and existing golf club facilities. It is clear that the proposed hotel would significantly improve the Green Belt, without having a detrimental impact on openness. Such a redevelopment would be in full accordance with the NPPF. In addition it would provide a new hotel, conference and leisure facility, meeting an identified unmet demand to the benefit of the local community.

Should you have any queries relating to this proposal please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully



**Lauren Hawksworth BSc (Hons) MSc
Planning Consultant**

Enc. Submission as Schedule of Documents

c.c. Mr R Bartlett
SPL

Date:	17 February 2015
Our Ref:	LH//SPP/15.2812
Application Site:	South Essex Golf Club, Herongate, Brentwood, CM13 3LW
Proposal:	Strategic Growth Options Consultation – Submission of New Site

Schedule of Documents

1. Strategic Growth Options Consultation – Submission of New Site and this Schedule of Documents
2. Drawing Register and Plans as set out on Register

Distribution List:	No. of Copies	Full Submission	Purpose
Brentwood Borough Council	1	Yes	P
Mr R Bartlett	1	Yes	I
SPL (<i>Internal use only</i>)	1	Yes	F