

**St. Leonard's Farm
New Years Green Lane
Harefield
UB9 6LX**



Retention of 3-metre high wooden boundary fence. Erection of additional 3-metre high boundary fence and 2.3-metre high steel access gate.

PLANNING STATEMENT

NOVEMBER 2019

1. Introduction

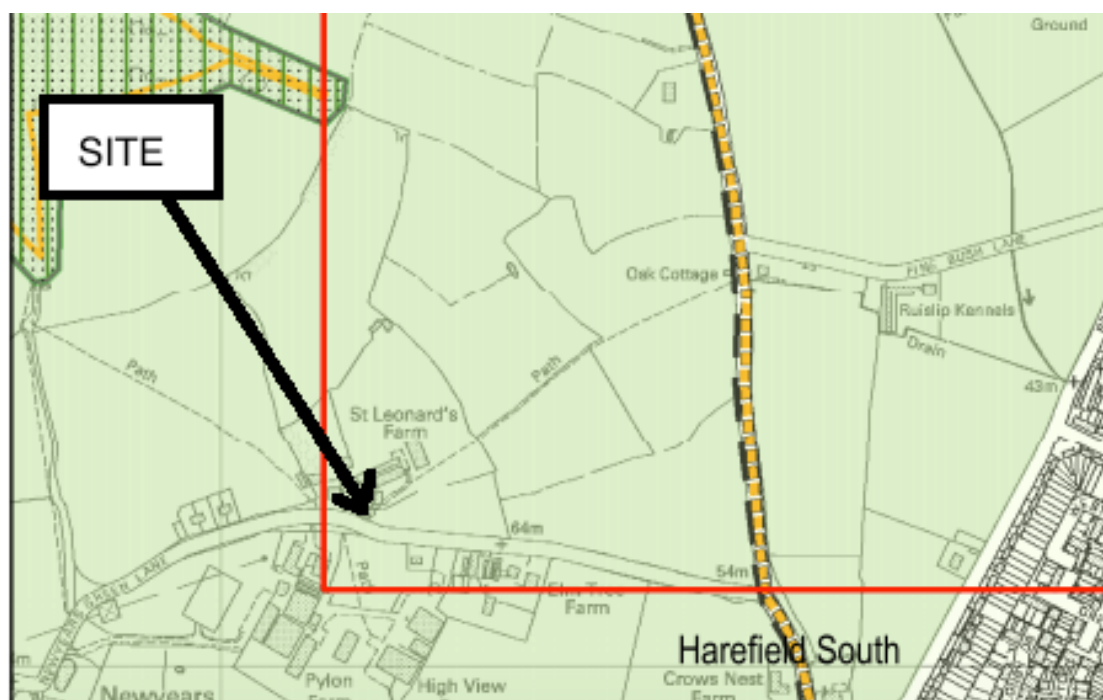
- 1.1** Following a planning enforcement investigation and subsequent letter issued on the 10th October informing the applicant of a 28 day informal compliance period, this application seeks to regularise the unauthorised erection of a 3-metre high boundary fence at the site.
- 1.2** In addition to regularising the existing fence, it is proposed to extend this section of fence along the length of the site boundary with New Years Green Lane in order to improve security and the site and prevent thefts and danger to trespassers.
- 1.3** For the same reasons, it is also proposed to erect a 2.3-metre high steel sliding gate at the vehicular access to the site.

2. Impact on the Green Belt

Planning policy

2.1 The site is situated within the Green Belt, as depicted by the excerpt of the Council's UDP Proposals map below.

Fig.1 – UDP proposals map excerpt showing the site's land use planning designations.



2.2 The Council's Local Plan Part 2, which comprises the 'Development Management Policies (Revised Proposed Submission Version, October, 2015) was submitted to the Secretary of State on 18th May 2018 to begin the examination in public phase. The Inspector's Report was provided on 22nd October 2019. The adoption of the Local Plan Part 2 is to be discussed by Cabinet on 12th December 2019.

2.3 The Local Plan policy most relevant to the consideration of this development is Development Management Policies policy DMEI 4 'Development in the Green Belt or on Metropolitan Open Land'.

2.4 Policy DMEI 4 states the following:

A) Inappropriate development in the Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land will not be permitted unless there are very exceptional circumstances.

B) Extensions and redevelopment on sites in the Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land will be permitted only where the proposal would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land, and the purposes of including land within it, than the existing development, having regard to:

- (i.) the height and bulk of the existing building on the site;*
- (ii.) the proportion of the site that is already developed;*
- (iii.) the footprint, distribution and character of the existing buildings on the site;*
- (iv.) the relationship of the proposal with any development on the site that is to be retained; and*
- (v.) the visual amenity and character of the Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land.*

The site

2.5 The site is located on the north side of New Years Green Lane and has the character of a developed site. The aerial image in Fig.2 below shows how the fence relates to a site that is of a completely different character to the surrounding Green Belt. Figs. 3-6 below show the site and its existing boundary from ground level.

Fig.2 – Aerial image showing the site's location and previously developed land character in relation to the open Green Belt around it.

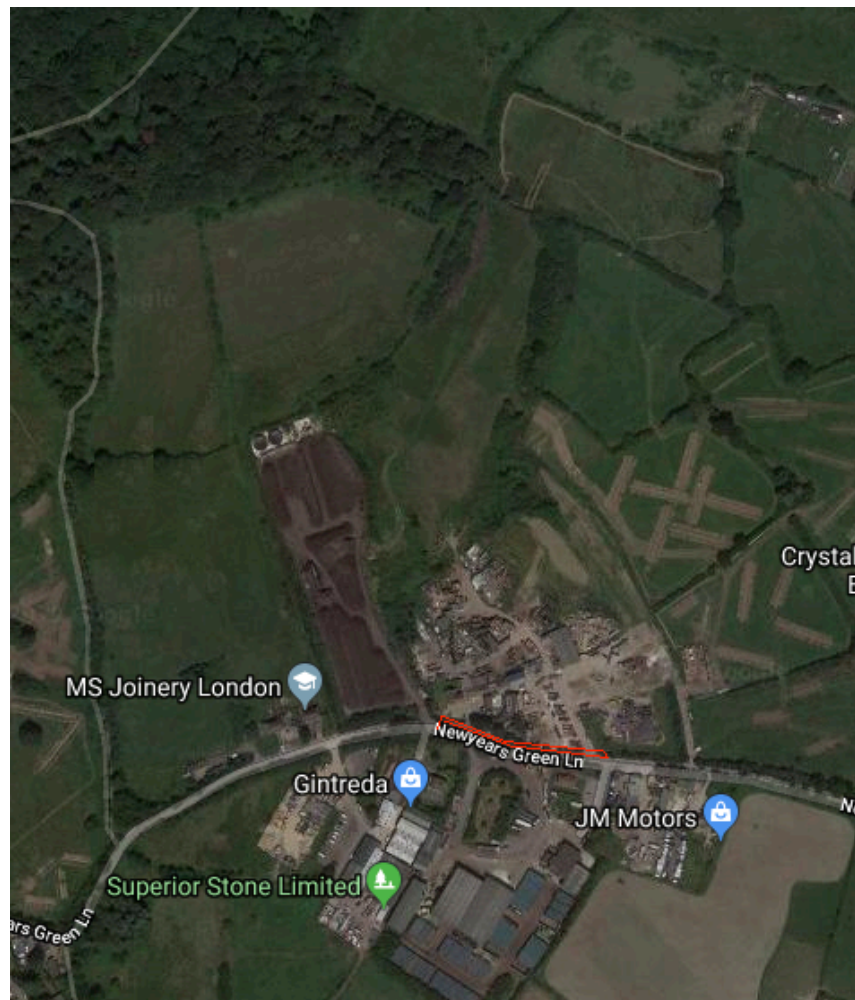


Fig.3 – Image showing the access to the site.



Fig.4 – Image looking west along New Years Green Lane showing boundary hedgerow.



Fig.5 – Image looking east along New Years Green Lane showing boundary hedgerow.



Fig.6 – Image showing site on the opposite side of New Years Green Lane, close to the entrance of St. Leonards Farm.



2.6 The images in Figs. 3-6 above show how the site is currently enclosed by high trees and hedgerow and therefore this part of the Green Belt is not really open. Fig.6 also shows how the employment site opposite the application site also has very high and solid boundary hedgerows/trees that enclose that particular site and do result in an area of Green Belt that can be characterised as 'open'.

Argument in favour of the development

2.7 The existing employment site suffers from poor security and with expensive equipment on site is prone to burglary. There is also concern that without a suitable gated entrance that travellers could access the site and remain there for months or even years – something that would be inimical to the applicant's business and livelihood. For these reasons, the proposed fence and gate are required.

2.8 The site and the wider, long-established employment site to which it relates, has the character of a developed site and is of a completely different character to the surrounding Green Belt. For this reason, the site does not contribute to the openness of the Green Belt.

2.9 Furthermore, there will be little impact on the openness of the Green Belt as the proposed fence is a similar height to the existing boundary trees and hedgerow.

2.10 Also, the proposed fence will be painted green to blend in with the existing boundary trees and hedgerow which already screen the site (but crucially do not provide security) and therefore the impact on the Green Belt will be not be noticeable.

2.11 Taking into consideration the height and bulk of existing buildings on the wider St. Leonards Farm site, the size of this developed site, its character in relation to the real open Green Belt land around it and, the height of the existing boundary trees and hedgerow, the proposed fence and gate will not harm openness of the Green Belt and in this instance comprise an appropriate form of development.