

Reference: 22/01241/FUL	Site: The Hollies Rectory Road Orsett Essex RM16 3EH
Ward: Orsett	Proposal: Proposed replacement dwelling and relocation of existing swimming pool

Plan Number(s):		
Reference	Name	Received
2121. 10C	Proposed Site Layout	9th September 2022
2121. 10D	Location Plan	9th September 2022
2121. 17A	Proposed Elevations, Sections and Roof Plan	9th September 2022
2121. 18A	Proposed Elevations and Floor Plans	9th September 2022
2121. 19	Existing Elevations and Floor Plans	9th September 2022
2121. 20	CGI View Plan	9th September 2022
2121. 21	CGI View Plan	9th September 2022
2121. 22	CGI View Plan	9th September 2022
LS6022/1	Topographical Survey	9th September 2022

The application is also accompanied by:

- Simon Burke Design LTD, Design and Access Statement dated April 2022

Applicant: Mr And Mrs M Watts	Validated: 9 September 2022 Date of expiry: 17 th February 2023 (Extension of time agreed with applicant)
Recommendation: Refusal	

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 1st December 2022 Members of the Planning Committee were unable to reach a decision in voting on the application. As a consequence, the decision was made to was defer the application in order for Members to take consider the application at the next available Planning Committee in January 2023.

- 1.2 The report recommended that planning permission be refused for the following reasons:
1. *The proposal would, by reason of its siting, scale, layout, mass, height and footprint, represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt which is, by definition, harmful. The proposal would also cause a reduction in the openness. No very special circumstances have been put forward and the identified harm to the Green Belt is not clearly outweighed by any other considerations so as to amount to the very special circumstances required to justify inappropriate development. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies CSSP4 and PMD6 of the adopted Thurrock LDF Core Strategy and Policies for the Management of Development (as amended 2015) and the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.*
 2. *The proposal by reason of its siting, footprint, layout, scale, height, massing and use of external finishes, would appear poorly related to the character and development pattern of the area which is harmful to the character and appearance of the Orsett Conservation Area. The application is therefore contrary to policies CSTP22, CSTP23, CSTP24 and PMD4 of the Thurrock Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development 2015 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.*
- 1.3 At the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 5th January 2023 Members considered an Update Report on the above proposal. For completeness this is also attached.
- 1.4 During the debate Members indicated support for the application on the basis of the following reasons, none of which were afforded any particular weighting at the Committee:
- A) The movement of an existing dwelling and the site being on Previously Developed Land (PDL);
 - B) Due to the repositioning of the proposal it would result in an improvement to the street scene and the setting of the neighbouring property which may benefit its security;
 - C) There were no objections received;
 - D) The site is enclosed;
 - E) The size of the infrastructure project and its cost would likely go towards employing local trades which would be good for the local economy;
 - F) The proposal would feature a low carbon dwelling;
 - G) Recently the Planning Committee has granted permission for replacement dwellings which are larger in similar situations (e.g. High Fields, Lower Dunton Road (application ref. 22/00210/FUL) determined at the 18th August 2022 Planning Committee and the volume of this proposal should be referenced);

- H) The impact on the Orsett Conservation Area would be limited;
- I) A substantial fence should be incorporated to the eastern boundary to provide a more solid border to the Green Belt.

1.5 In accordance with Chapter 5, Part 3, section 7 of the Council's Constitution, the item was deferred to allow Officers to prepare a report outlining the implications of making a decision contrary to the Planning Officer's recommendation and to consider appropriate conditions that could be imposed.

2.0 ASSESSMENT

2.1 The Officer recommendation gives two separate reasons for refusal, set out fully in paragraphs 1.2 and 5.1 of this report. To achieve a lawful decision to the contrary, each reason for refusal should be dealt with individually, accompanied by reasons why the recommended grounds for refusal should be rejected. These reasons are required to be material planning considerations, relevant to the points made and also to be underpinned with cogent evidence. This is important.

2.2 Unlike technical matters (such as dimensions), or matters requiring evidence (such as ecological credentials), subjective matters such as design leave room for different opinions (provided clearly stated).

2.3 When material, relevant, evidenced reasons have addressed each ground of the officer recommendation, then, as benefits of the proposal they can weighed against the harms to the Green Belt.

2.4 As explained in detail in earlier report on this application, the proposal is inappropriate development in the Green Belt, in essence because it is not policy compliant due to its scale thereby causing harm to the Green Belt, and harm to the appearance of the Orsett Conservation Area.

2.5 The NPPF states:

'147. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

148. When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from

2.6 To carry out the balancing exercise, the reasons for refusal are individually placed on one side of the scales, as these cumulatively represent the harms to

the Green Belt. The benefits of the proposal can then be placed on the other side of the scales, and cumulatively weighed against the harms which paragraph 148 of the NPPF says carry 'substantial weight'.

- 2.7 If, when the benefits are all placed on the scales together, they clearly outweigh the harms (this means more than evenly balanced, so the scales are clearly tipped), then very special circumstances are shown to exist, which will give the green light to an approval decision.
- 2.8 If however, the scales do not clearly tip in favour of benefits, then it is advisable to follow the Officer recommendation to refuse because compliance with policy has not been met and departure from policy has not been justified, and to avoid judicial review challenge. Other implications are mentioned elsewhere in the report.
- 2.9 As set out in the original report, the Council is required to consider the following questions in order to determine whether the proposal is acceptable in the Green Belt:
1. Whether the proposals constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt;
 2. The effect of the proposals on the open nature of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it; and
 3. Whether the harm to the Green Belt is clearly outweighed by other considerations so as to amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify inappropriate development.
1. Whether the proposals constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt;
- 2.10 In order to determine whether the proposal constitutes inappropriate development the relevant development plan policies and paragraphs of the NPPF must be considered.
- 2.11 The application site is located within the Green Belt as defined within the Thurrock Local Development Framework, Core Strategy (2015). Policy PMD6 applies and states that permission will only be granted for development in the Green Belt providing it meets the requirements of the NPPF and specific restrictions within PMD6.
- 2.12 The starting point for this assessment is paragraph 147 of the NPPF. This states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

2.13 There are a number of exceptions to inappropriate development in the Green Belt set out in paragraph 149. In this instance the relevant exception is the following:

‘d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;’

2.14 In this regard, Policy PMD6 of the Thurrock Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development 2015 is consistent with the NPPF. This states that:

i. Replacement dwellings in the Green Belt will only be permitted provided that the replacement dwelling is not materially larger than the original building.

ii. The replacement of other buildings shall only be for the same use, and the replacement building shall not be materially larger than the one it replaces.

2.15 Footprint, floorspace and volume calculations were set out within the previous report, which unequivocally demonstrate that the replacement dwelling would be materially larger than the existing building at the site, mindful that the original building has been extended.

2.16 At the November committee meeting the following table was presented which summarised the size of the existing and proposed dwelling. This is shown again below but an additional column has been added to highlight the size of what is presumed to be the original dwelling.

	Assumed Original Dwelling	Existing Dwelling	Proposed Dwelling	Increases Relative to Original/Existing	Percentage Increase Relative to Original/Existing
Footprint	158.80m ²	232.80m ²	444.32m ²	285.52/+211.52m ²	279% / +61%
Floorspace	267.54m ²	312.48m ²	676.04m ²	408.86/+363.56m ²	395% / +73.5%
Volume	Unknown	1,144.78m ³	2,829.22m ³	1,684.44m ³	84.77%

2.17 As demonstrated from the table above, the proposed building would be materially larger than the original building at the site.

2.18 The development is, therefore, inappropriate development in the Green Belt. In all future considerations, it is a requirement of paragraph 148 of the NPPF that the harm arising from this is afforded substantial weight

2. The effect of the proposals on the open nature of the Green Belt and the

purposes of including land within it;

- 2.19 As established above, the proposed building would be significantly larger than the existing / original building at the site and would, therefore, cause a reduction of openness. Owing to its scale, layout and mass, the replacement dwelling would be significantly larger than the ones it would replace. The harm to openness caused by the proposal is unacceptable when considered against the NPPF and in accordance with the NPPF, this harm must be afforded substantial weight.
3. Whether the harm to the Green Belt is clearly outweighed by other considerations so as to amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify inappropriate development.
- 2.20 For the reasons set out above, officers are firmly of the view that the development is inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Moreover, further harm to openness has been identified. The NPPF is clear that the development should not be approved unless Very Special Circumstances exist.
- 2.21 Therefore, it is necessary for the applicant to demonstrate Very Special Circumstances. Neither the NPPF nor the Adopted Core Strategy provide guidance as to what can comprise 'Very Special Circumstances', either singly or in combination. However, some interpretation of Very Special Circumstances has been provided by the Courts. The rarity or uniqueness of a factor may make it very special, but it has also been held that the aggregation of commonplace factors could combine to create very special circumstances (i.e. 'very special' is not necessarily to be interpreted as the converse of 'commonplace'). However, the demonstration of very special circumstances is a 'high' test and the circumstances which are relied upon must be genuinely 'very special'.
- 2.22 In considering whether 'very special circumstances' exist, factors put forward by an applicant which are generic or capable of being easily replicated on other sites should not be accepted.
- 2.23 The provisions of very special circumstances which are specific and not easily replicable may help to reduce the risk of such a precedent being created. Mitigation measures designed to reduce the impact of a proposal are generally not capable of being 'very special circumstances'. Ultimately, whether any particular combination of factors amounts to very special circumstances will be a matter of planning judgment for the decision-taker.

2.24 At the Planning Committee Meeting of 5th January 2023, Members considered the circumstances set out above although no specific weight was afforded to each of them. Each is assessed below.

A) The movement of an existing dwelling and on Previously Developed Land.

2.25 For reasons that have been set out earlier, while the application site could be considered as Previously Developed Land (PDL), Officers disagree that the development involves a movement of an existing dwelling. The existing property would be demolished and replaced with a significantly larger dwelling in a more easterly position and in a more open part of the rear garden serving the site. By virtue of a site being considered as PDL, it would not automatically follow that all of the site should or could be built upon. By erecting a dwelling further eastwards it is considered that the proposal, by virtue of its design, layout, scale, width, bulk and massing, would result in an unsympathetic dwelling, which poorly integrates with the character and appearance of the Orsett Conservation Area and immediate setting resulting in an incongruous and discordant development. The development is therefore considered to be contrary to Policies CSTP22, CSTP23, CSTP24, PMD1, PMD2 and PDM4 of the adopted the Thurrock Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development 2015 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2021. It therefore follows that no weight should be given to this factor.

2.26 It can be accepted that the assessment of the visual impact can be a matter of judgement and it is not unreasonable for a decision-maker to reach a different view in respect of the acceptability of a proposal in design terms. However, this is not reason to consider that the size of the replacement dwelling is acceptable in terms of complying with the limitations of Green Belt policy and is not a reason to reach a different view in respect of the proposal representing inappropriate development. The harm identified in this respect must continue to be given substantial weight.

B) Due to the repositioning of the proposal it would result in an improvement to the street scene and the setting of the neighbouring property which may benefit its security.

2.27 One reason for supporting the siting of the proposed replacement dwelling further east into the site was to enable the applicant to re-landscape and increase the size of the frontage of the property when it is approached from the existing access. This existing access serves the application site property and the neighbouring dwelling, Rozen House, which sits immediately north of the application site. The proposal as submitted would provide an expansive area of both hard and soft landscaping providing for a larger front entrance and wider vehicle accessing to the proposed

new garaging site, and much of the massing and bulk of the proposed dwelling would be moved eastwards and northwards. The result would be to relocate some of the existing bulk and mass of the existing dwelling slightly further away from the neighbour at Rozen House. While this might not result in any detrimental amenity impact upon this neighbour there would be no alteration to this neighbour's access or site layout arrangements and the existing layout between the two dwellings is considered acceptable to the Council. The lack of any detrimental impact, or indeed benefit to, neighbour amenity would not warrant recommending approval of an application that is contrary to Green Belt policy in principle. In addition this does nothing to address the issue of scale that was raised in the reason for refusal.

- 2.28 For these reasons, even if the development would be considered an amenity benefit for a neighbour, it is not considered that this should be afforded weight, particularly given that this outcome is fundamental to what planning should achieve in all instances.

C) There were no objections received

- 2.29 While there may not have been any neighbour objections received regarding the proposal, a full and proper assessment of the application is obliged to be undertaken. Concerns were raised by the Council's Heritage Advisor regarding the impact upon the character and appearance of the Orsett Conservation Area. The irregular shape, use of wings and sprawling layout, and the proposed use of external finishes would not be those typically found within the locality, including the Conservation Area. As a result of this, and the building being of wholly different appearance, the proposal would be jarringly at odds with the character and appearance of the other buildings within the locality in the Orsett Conservation Area. The Heritage Advisor raised concerns regarding the initial application submitted (LPA ref. 22/00614/FUL) and reiterated those same concerns with the current proposals and the application would be considered contrary to Policies CSTP22, CSTP23, CSTP24, PMD2 and PMD4 of the Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development 2015. The proposal would also be contrary to the guidance contained within the NPPF and the Council's Design Guidance SPD.
- 2.30 A lack of responses objecting to a proposal cannot be used as a positive reason to approve. For these reasons, it is considered that the lack of any objections raised by local residents should not be afforded any weight, particularly given there were Heritage impact concerns raised, and that this outcome is fundamental to what planning should achieve in all instances.

D) The site is enclosed

- 2.31 The plot being set back from Rectory Road is not considered to be relevant to the size of the dwelling that can be built upon it. Indeed, the degree of visibility of the

proposed development is not considered to be a valid argument for permitting the development because of the emphasis upon preserving the openness of the Green Belt. If visibility were the only consideration, it would mean Green Belt policy on openness has no value, with housing estates, for example, being built in the middle of woods, not visible from the public realm. A case in point occurred in 1997 when a conservatory was proposed to be erected at a cottage located within the Green Belt (New Forest DC 23/12/97). The Inspector took the point that the development would rarely be seen by the general public but this was not a matter which could reasonably be employed to prevent development plan policies to be overruled for if it was it would follow that planning law need not apply with large country estates from which the public were excluded. As such, whilst it is recognised that the plot is set back from Rectory Road, this is not reason to enable a larger dwelling and, as such, it should not be afforded weight as a very special circumstance.

E) The large size of the infrastructure project and its cost would likely go towards employing local trades which would be good for the local economy

2.32 The applicant has submitted no evidence that the demolition of the existing dwelling, and the replacement with a significantly larger property, would result in the employment of local trades and be of benefit to the local economy. Even if local trades were used for the project, the scale of the project would not warrant or justify the granting of planning permission contrary to local and national Green Belt policies. For these reasons, the potential economic benefits suggested by the development should not be afforded any weight as a very special circumstance.

F) The proposal would feature a low carbon dwelling.

2.33 Similar to E) above, the benefits arising in this regard have not been identified in detail nor quantified and it is therefore respectfully suggested that it could be viewed as inappropriate to afford weight to a factor that has not been quantified.

2.34 The application contends that the proposal would provide a contemporary energy efficient highly insulated, 'fabric first' dwelling, annexe and garaging. The meeting of current Building Control standards are a requirement and the bare minimum, so is not special. The applicant's viewpoint of an improvement to the carbon footprint and efficiency to that of the existing building could readily be applied to and replicated in relation to many buildings throughout the Borough, and therefore is not special. Further, a negative point cannot be used as a positive reason.

2.35 Notwithstanding the above, it is considered relevant to highlight that the existing dwelling was constructed during the 1980s and has been extended and modernised since then. Irrespective of the current proposal the existing dwelling would be unlikely to poorly perform with respect to energy efficiency. While a policy compliant

replacement dwelling might achieve energy efficiency benefits there is no known reason to conclude that a larger dwelling would be more efficient to occupy than a the existing smaller detached dwelling. Indeed, it is illogical to argue that a significantly larger dwelling would be better for the environment than a smaller dwelling that would have a smaller carbon footprint during the build and over its lifetime.

2.36 The applicant has provided no details that the dwelling would achieve carbon reduction or energy generation beyond the requirements of Building Regulations. Accordingly, the development is not shown to be special in relation to its energy efficiency or generation and, as such, it should not be afforded weight as a very special circumstance.

G) Recently the Planning Committee has granted permission for replacement dwellings which are larger in similar situations (e.g. High Fields, Lower Duntun Road (application ref. 22/00210/FUL) determined at the 18th August 2022 Planning Committee and the volume of this proposal should be referenced);

2.37 Turning to the recently approved High Fields application (LPA ref. 22/00210/FUL) which sought the, *'Demolition of existing detached chalet style dwelling. Erection of one four bedroom dwelling including associated landscaping, hardstanding, cycle store and refuse/ recycle storage area'*, this application sought the following increase in the sizing of the replacement dwelling:

	Assumed Original Dwelling	Existing Dwelling	Proposed Dwelling	Increases Relative to Original/Existing	Percentage Increase Relative to Original/Existing
Footprint	90m ²	137m ²	214m ²	124 / 77m ²	137% / 56%
Floorspace	90m ²	171m ²	417m ²	327 / 246m ²	363% / 144%
Volume	Unknown	448m ³	967m ³	519m ³	116%

2.38 There are several notable differences between the High Fields planning application proposal considered at the August 2022 Planning Committee, and this current proposal at The Hollies. The first difference is the fact that the replacement dwelling at High Fields was proposed to be on the same siting as the existing dwelling, albeit with an increase in the existing footprint. The second difference between the two proposals is the marked difference between the increase in the size of the replacement dwellings; High Fields replacement dwelling sought a significantly lesser increase in the footprint, floorspace and volume of the replacement property in comparison to the proposals at The Hollies.

2.39 It is a core principle of planning that each case should be considered on its own merits. And the very fundamental point of Very Special Circumstances is that a

case should be “Very Special”. By definition this matter be a VSC because it is easily replicable so not very special. Other developments have been justified for reasons that were applicable to those developments. The developments discussed at the recent Planning Committee meeting are wholly different to this proposal in terms of their nature and the factors that would have been applicable in their assessment. As a consequence, this example of another replacement dwelling at a site elsewhere would not be considered to represent any special circumstance, and is indeed contract to the VSC principles, which could be put forward for inappropriate development elsewhere in the Green Belt.

H) The impact on the Orsett Conservation Area would be limited;

2.40 As previously highlighted under C), the Council’s Heritage Advisor raised concerns regarding the impact upon the character and appearance of the Orsett Conservation Area. The irregular shape, use of wings and sprawling layout, and the proposed use of external finishes would not be those typically found within the locality, including the Conservation Area. These same concerns were raised by the Heritage Advisor regarding the initial planning application submitted (LPA ref. 22/00614/FUL) and those same concerns have been reiterated with the current proposals. While it is accepted that the site is set back from Rectory Road is does fall within the designated Orsett Conservation Area and the application would be considered contrary to Policies CSTP22, CSTP23, CSTP24, PMD2 and PMD4 of the Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development 2015. The proposal would also be contrary to the guidance contained within the NPPF and the Council’s Design Guidance SPD.

2.41 Given there are concerns regarding the impact upon the character of the Orsett Conservation Area, it is not accepted that the development would have limited impact and this reason should not be afforded weight.

I) A substantial fence should be incorporated to the eastern boundary to provide a more solid border to the Green Belt.

2.42 The eastern boundary of the application sites forms the boundary with eastern side of Orsett and the wider, open Green Belt. It was suggested at the last Planning Committee that a more solid boundary fence could be located along this eastern boundary with the view to providing a solid edge to the Green Belt at the site. The current eastern boundary treatment consists of post and rail timber fencing which would be considered typical of boundary treatment at a site in this semi-rural location such as this. The applicant has also planted trees immediately inside this border which are now established and help to form a natural defence.

2.43 The erection of a 2m high lapped wooden fence as a solid border against the Green Belt would not be considered an appropriate boundary treatment along this edge of

the site. The applicant does not propose to include any such treatment nor any change to the existing boundary treatment. Irrespective as to whether a change in boundary treatment or design would be acceptable or not, this would have no bearing on the acceptability of the proposed replacement dwelling with respect to local and national Green Belt policies. As a consequence, this consideration would not be considered to represent any special circumstance which could be put forward for otherwise inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Overall Assessment

- 2.44 The principle of a replacement dwelling is a stated exception with the NPPF policy on Green Belt. However, the details of this proposal cause it to be inappropriate development.
- 2.45 For the reasons set out above, Officers considered that the other matters that have been raised do not represent the very special circumstances necessary to justify the approval of inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
- 2.46 No evidence has been presented by Members as the evidential basis for their conclusions.
- 2.47 Even if weight was to be afforded to any or all of the other matters, the sum of them being afforded no weight in combination means that they do not clearly outweigh the substantial weight that is required to be afforded to the harm caused by inappropriate development in the Green Belt and the loss of openness, whether these are considered individually or collectively. In this regard, it is considered important to note that the other considerations must clearly outweigh the potential harm to the Green Belt by way of the inappropriateness of the development in order for the Very Special Circumstances to exist that would justify such development.

3.0 OTHER MATTERS

- 3.1 Consideration has been given to potential conditions that could be imposed in the event that permission is granted. For reference, a suggested list of conditions are included at the end of this report. These conditions are set out without prejudice and, it is the opinion of officers that these conditions would not mitigate the effect of the development or make it acceptable in planning terms.
- 3.2 Particular consideration has been given to the imposition of a condition removing Permitted Development rights to prevent further extensions and alterations without planning permission. Given the scale of the dwelling that is proposed relative to the existing dwelling, it is considered that removing permitted development rights

set out within Classes A, B, D and E of Part 1 of Schedule 2 of The GPDO meets the relevant tests for a planning condition. In this regard, if approved, the resultant dwelling should certainly be viewed as the upper limit of what can be acceptable in the Green Belt.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 This application seeks planning permission for a replacement dwelling in the Green Belt. When considered against the Council's Development Plan, the proposal is found to be unacceptable, constituting 'inappropriate development', which is harmful by definition. The proposal would also cause a loss of openness as a result of it being materially larger than the original dwelling at the site or the dwelling it would replace, although the former is the test that is set out within national and local policy. The proposal is therefore unacceptable when assessed against Policy PMD6 and the NPPF. Substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt.
- 4.2 Further harm has been identified through the design, layout, massing and bulk of the dwelling, particularly at the sprawling key-shaped layout, width and depth of the resultant dwelling. There are also concerns about these specific design, layout and use of materials which would be considered to have a detrimental impact upon the character of the Orsett Conservation Area.
- 4.3 Officers have reconsidered the case put forward but remain of the opinion that it falls some considerable way short of constituting the very special circumstances that are required to allow a departure to be made from national and local planning policy. The matters discussed are not considered either individually or collectively to constitute very special circumstances. In fact, they fall somewhat short of that stringent test. As a result, these cannot clearly outweigh the harm arising. Accordingly, the application fails the relevant Green Belt tests and should be refused.
- 4.4 The reasons for supporting the application, as put forward by the Planning Committee on 5th January 2023, are not considered to provide sufficient grounds to approve the application. In particular, no evidence has been presented concerning the economic nor any environmental benefits, and no weighting has been considered by Members. Members would be reliant upon this position to underpin these reasons, without which these reasons are not substantiated. Therefore, the recommendation remains the same as previously advised.
- 4.5 In terms of the implications of granting planning permission contrary to the development plan and national policy this would potentially set a precedent for development in the Green Belt. Whilst every application is assessed on its own

merits, a similar logic and interpretation of policy should be applied to ensure consistency of decision making. By granting planning permission for inappropriate development in the Green Belt contrary to policy on the basis of circumstances that are easily replicated elsewhere, Members would potentially be establishing a precedent for development in the Green Belt.

- 4.6 The application has been advertised as a departure from the development plan as any decision to grant planning permission would be contrary to local and national policy.

5.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 The application is recommended for refusal for the following reasons:

1. The proposal would, by reason of its siting, scale, layout, mass, height and footprint, represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt which is, by definition, harmful. The proposal would also cause a reduction in the openness. No very special circumstances have been put forward and the identified harm to the Green Belt is not clearly outweighed by any other considerations so as to amount to the very special circumstances required to justify inappropriate development. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies CSSP4 and PMD6 of the adopted Thurrock LDF Core Strategy and Policies for the Management of Development (as amended 2015) and the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.
2. The proposal by reason of its siting, footprint, layout, scale, height, massing and use of external finishes, would appear poorly related to the character and development pattern of the area which is harmful to the character and appearance of the Orsett Conservation Area. The application is therefore contrary to policies CSTP22, CSTP23, CSTP24 and PMD4 of the Thurrock Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development 2015 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

