

PLANNING REF : 261624
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Castle Close
: Lodge Road, Whistley Green, Berkshire
: RG10 0EH
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Mark Campbell
DATE SUBMITTED : 29/07/2026

COMMENTS:

I'm writing to put forward a strong objection to this latest Permission in Principle (PiP) application on Hogmoor Lane. Honestly, it feels like we've all been here before this field has seen rejection after rejection over the years, including an appeal dismissed as recently as October 2025 (and another ongoing appeal). Slipping in a PiP application for two houses feels like a tactical effort to get a foot in the door so the land can be developed bit by bit.

Having looked through the application and the clear concerns raised across the local community, this site is completely wrong for housing for several major reasons:

1. It's Greenfield Countryside, Not an "Infill" Plot

The developer is trying to label this as an "infill" plot, but a 92-metre-plus gap of open field isn't a small gap between houses it's a massive piece of working countryside. The site lies outside the Hurst village settlement limits and development boundary.

Building

here breaches policies CP1, CP9, and CP11. In fact, back in a 1999 appeal on this exact field, the Planning Inspector pointed out that the gap is far too wide to ever be considered infill, and that hasn't changed.

2. Heritage & Squeezing Out the Village Character

Hogmoor Lane is a historic, medieval route lined with characterful, listed, and non-designated heritage buildings like Long Barn, Wards Cross House, and Munfin House. Building two modern, suburban houses right opposite and beside them ruins the historic farmstead setting and degrades the Hurst Area of Special Character. The Council's own heritage and landscape experts have repeatedly noted how important this open field is for keeping the countryside feel and maintaining the visual gap between Hurst and Twyford.

3. Flooding Risks Are Being Brushed Aside

Anyone who actually knows Hogmoor Lane knows it floods badly and regularly. Rainwater sits on this field for months, and water routinely pours off the land into the Lane, turning it impassable and overflowing the ditches. The applicant's Flood Risk Assessment seems to rely on desktop reports that get basic facts wrong like putting the drainage ditch inside the site boundary when it's on highway land, or claiming there are no groundwater flooding issues. Adding concrete, roofs, and culvert bridges over deep ditches will only block drainage and make the flood risk worse for surrounding homes.

4. Dangerous Access & A Narrow Lane

Hogmoor Lane is a narrow, single-track country lane (roughly 3 to 3.5 metres wide) with no footpaths, no streetlights, and no passing places. It's heavily used by dog walkers, cyclists, children, and horses from the local riding school. Extra car movements onto this lane create a genuine safety hazard. Furthermore, the Y-junction where Hogmoor Lane meets the A321 already has terrible sightlines onto a fast 30mph road (prone to speeding). The proposed "fixes" for this junction (like tearing up the island containing electrical and fibre substations) are completely unviable.

5. Inappropriate Use of the PiP Process & Outdated Reports

Using a Permission in Principle route for a site this complex, sensitive, and prone to flooding is entirely inappropriate. It bypasses essential technical details, leaving locals with no say on crucial layout and environmental details. To make matters worse, reports submitted alongside this application (like the heritage and tree reports) actually relate to previous, different schemes or ignore the threat to nearby TPO and veteran oak trees.

6. Wildlife & Community Value

This site isn't just empty space; it's part of the Haines Hill Valued Landscape, serving as a wildlife corridor for bats, mammals, and birds. It also provides lovely, open rural views that give Hogmoor Lane its recreational value. Hurst is a minor settlement with limited infrastructure it doesn't need speculative executive houses built on prime agricultural land.

Conclusion

Trimming down the number of houses doesn't fix the fundamental problems with building on this field. It remains an unsuitable, flood-prone countryside site where development causes unacceptable harm to local heritage, highway safety, and visual character.

I strongly urge Wokingham Borough Council to refuse this application.

Yours faithfully,

Mark Campbell