

PLANNING REF : 242067
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Eastwood
: Eastwood Wokingham Road, Hurst, Berkshire
: RG10 0RU
SUBMITTED BY : Ms Sirkka Autio
DATE SUBMITTED : 19/09/2024

COMMENTS:

I strongly object to this development. It's only a new attempt to destroy the the heart of the Hurst village. The previous one, albeit bigger, was dismissed just months ago. This proposal is basically the same and as damaging to the village character and identity as the previous one. Even with the new gimmicks brought in by the developer (cycle hubs, parcel lockers, minibus service etc) do not hide the unsustainability of the proposed development.

I've lived in Hurst for last eighteen years. As a keen cyclist I have noticed the increase of the traffic as well as drivers unwillingness to obey the speed limit. It's not safe to cycle in the village! The proposed development would inevitable increase the traffic - some short added cycle paths or added street lights won't make any difference.

The idea that children from Hurst would be able to get place (or even willing to attend) at the Piggot secondary school (hence the minibus service) is interesting and shows that the developer does not understand the local life. My two children applied for the secondary school in 2013, one was offered a place in Wokingham, other in Winnersh. To proposed minibus service between Hurst, Twyford and Piggot school would not serve many students, in any. Both of my children ended in secondary school and sixth form in Reading but although they're both fit and able, cycling or walking to Twyford station was not an option (nor the unreliable 128/129 bus service) for them. To make the roads safer to everyone - especially for the cyclist and pedestrians - would require a whole new traffic plan for the area and the surroundings!

I'm lucky enough to hold a plot at the Tape Lane allotment, just by the proposed site. I know the soil and the growing conditions. The site is good agricultural land. The applicants dismiss this by arguing that the site is too small for food production (but not for 99 dwellings, 200-250 new residents!). However as the climate change and the political uncertainty grows we need to reconsider the use of valuable, fertile soil. If it's filled with concrete it's hard to turn back to produce any kinds/amount of food if/when needed. The application also underestimate the biodiverse value of the site. At the allotment you can see hedgehogs, toads, frogs and many birds of pray, the surrounding hedgerows provide safe habitat to many other species. Any attempt to destroy these habitats should be rejected by the council.

As the climate change we need protect the infrastructure and the people. Fields as this are important to alleviate the damages of changing weather conditions. They hold extra water during the flooding (the field is regularly waterlogged) and as a greenfield site with ancient trees and vibrant hedgerows plays important role in

helping sequester atmospheric CO2. Instead of building or "developing" the site, we might even need to consider planting more trees on it. We have to take local air pollution seriously - as required in Wokingham Borough Council's own "Climate Emergency declaration".

I do hope Wokingham Borough Council rejects this application. It's nothing new, it wouldn't bring anything for the Hurst village or villagers. As a council taxpayer it would be interesting to know how much money has been spent to the process this (this round and previously) utterly unnecessary proposal. Anyone living in Hurst can confirm that the village is prone to flooding. The new 99 dwellings would contribute to further flooding as the existing overwhelmed and inadequate drainage system would not be able to cope.