

PLANNING REF : 242067
PROPERTY ADDRESS : The Gables
: Wards Cross, Hurst, Berkshire
: RG10 0DS
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Nick Willson
DATE SUBMITTED : 19/09/2024

COMMENTS:

I am writing to object to the application to build 99 houses on Land Between Lodge Road and Tape Lane Hurst RG10 0EG.

This application comes after the original applications for 200 new houses was turned down at appeal (APP/X0360/W/22/3309202). The reasons for objecting to such a large-scale development, in a low-density, green belt area remain clear and are backed by Wokingham Councils detailed response prior to dismissing the previous appeal.

In the latest application, the applicant has gone to great lengths to address some of the objections and points made at appeal but, has essentially avoided responsibility for mitigating the risks, with no commitment or timeline for resolving the issues around public transport, traffic (car) management, safe walking routes, cycle paths, local amenities, and flood management. For example, in the I-transport Framework Travel Plan, the author works hard to show that many of the objections relating to transport including improvement of public transport provision, footpaths, cycle paths, and car management can be simply solved by "upgrades" through footpath widening, curb changes, and additional signage throughout the village. What the report doesn't say is how this will consume already narrow road surface and impact the surrounding street scene. The developer has indicated that much of the works will rely on third parties to facilitate (ie. Reading Buses for improved bus services, WBC for public highway works, etc.). This is unsatisfactory and will soon be forgotten if the application is approved.

By contrast, the new Local Plan (Update 2023-2040) establishes a strategy to provide much of the Borough's housing need over the next few years without the destruction of existing villages. Loddon Valley Garden Village for example, is a ground up green-belt development which will incorporate sustainable development for 3,900 homes, the opportunity for new schools and services, and "designed in" travel links to encourage pedestrians and cyclists, and fewer car journeys to work and school.

It seems to me that the developer is trying to squeeze a large-scale development into a village that has neither the infrastructure or accessibility to support such a development. Much smaller development clusters such as the recent Nursery Gardens development of 16 houses, put more than enough strain on services, but that development was at least within the brown-field development envelope. This large-scale application on green-field land is highly inappropriate and should be refused.

Yours sincerely,

Nick Willson