

PLANNING REF : 252934
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 2 Nursery Close
: Hurst, Reading, Berkshire
: RG10 0EQ
SUBMITTED BY : Mr James Kiddie
DATE SUBMITTED : 04/02/2026

COMMENTS:

I wish to make the following observations regarding this application: My wife and I have lived in Hurst for over 30 years. Our two sons went to school here. Much has changed in those years, particularly with regard to traffic and flood risk, both of which have increased visibly.

This area of Hurst has no public surface water sewers. We are therefore highly dependent upon a grid of drainage channels, or ditches, for surface water drainage. These ditches have been completely neglected for the last 30 years, and in many cases are badly overgrown and, in some cases (such as Hatchgate Ditch) completely blocked. They no longer provide adequate surface water drainage. The Environment Agency are well aware of this problem.

1 FLOOD RISK.

1.1. The Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) uses an Environment Agency "Flood Map for Planning" where the EA states, "Your selected location is in flood zone 3, an area with a high probability of flooding." On the same page it notes that the flood map the EA is providing "...shows river and sea flooding data only. It doesn't include other sources of flooding." In other words, it shows fluvial, but not pluvial (surface water) flooding, which is the main flood risk in this case.

1.2 "Storm water run-off from a hard surface is 20 times greater than that of a lawn." (Financial Times 12 April 2014) This development would therefore greatly increase surface water run-off. The FRA identifies (Para 1.10) "...an underlying geology of clay (Lambeth Group)." This is highly impermeable and prone to surface water retention.

1.3 The FRA states (Para 1.7) that, "A topographical survey has been undertaken which shows the land within the site falls towards the ditch which runs along the eastern side boundary." IT DOES NOT. The lowest boundary elevation readings are along the southern boundary. This confirms the reality that surface water runs further south, mainly to the gardens of 1 & 2 Nursery Close, which are lower still.

1.4 The FRA states (Para 1.8) that, "There have been no recorded instances of historic flooding at the site..." This is true because no-one lives "at the site." However, in April 2023 the surface water reached a depth of 300 mm over a large part of our adjacent garden at 2 Nursery Close (photos available). Hurst has had many reported flood incidents, some of these within 200m of the proposed site. These

incidents are well documented and include local newspaper reports of the flooding.

1.5 The FRA admits (Para 2.6) that, "The southern part of the site is at risk from surface water flooding..." Whilst the FRA claims to mitigate that risk on the plot it does not mitigate risk further south in the gardens of Nursery Close.

1.6 The FRA states (Para 3.5) that, "...all surface water run-off from the proposal will be attenuated on site and discharged at a restricted rate into the network of ditches within the site." There

are no ditches "within the site." The only ditch available is Hatchgate Ditch on the eastern boundary. This ditch is blocked.

2. FOUL WATER

2.1 The FRA states (Para 3.23) that, "The nearest foul sewer is approximately 120m to the south and it is therefore not considered reasonable to connect to the foul sewer."

2.2 The FRA states (Para 3.24) that, "A package treatment plant will therefore be provided which will discharge treated effluent to the existing ditch." So, it is proposed that this blocked ditch will collect both surface water and treated effluent.

2.3 The FRA DRG 6244/001 is titled "Surface and Foul Water Proposals." It shows no foul water pipework or equipment proposals whatsoever.

2.4 The Environment Agency Pollution Prevention Guidelines PPG4 states that, "Septic tanks or package sewage treatment plants of any sort must not be located in an area at risk of flooding." DRG 6244/002 (which understates the true flood risk) clearly shows that Hatchgate Ditch is at risk of flooding.

2.5 The FRA quotes (Para 3.2) the Building Regulations Approved Document H. These regulations (Para 1.12) state, "Packaged treatment works discharging to a suitable watercourse will normally be more economic for larger developments than septic tanks." The important word here is "SUITABLE" Hatchgate Ditch is not suitable. It is blocked.

2.6 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states in Planning & Flood Risk, Para 182(C) that applications must "have maintenance arrangements in place to ensure an acceptable standard of operation for the lifetime of the development." The FRA dismisses such obligations in Para 3.9 with "A maintenance and management plan can be secured via a suitably worded planning condition." Such responsibilities regarding drainage have been entirely absent for the last 30 years in Hurst, and there is little in this application to suggest this will change.

3 HIGHWAY SAFETY AND ACCESS CONCERNS.

3.1 This proposal introduces a new vehicle access directly into Lodge Road. The addition of so many new homes, particularly in the Wokingham area, has vastly increased traffic flow on Lodge Road over the last ten years. This proposed development would introduce considerable safety issues around the access area.

3.2 There are no safe or convenient pedestrian routes from the site. Any pedestrian movement would require immediate crossing of Lodge Road, making walking unsafe.

4 CONFLICT WITH 2020 APPEAL DECISION ON THE SAME SITE.

4.1 A Planning Inspector dismissed an appeal for residential development of five dwellings on this site in January 2020 (APP/X0360/W/18/3194044). The Inspector identified intrinsic harms relating to countryside incursion, landscape character, and settlement separation which have not been addressed or overcome by the current proposal.

This application appears to be ill-prepared and lacking in detail. I trust that these points will be carefully considered. The flood risk

in Hurst is rising, and failure to acknowledge and act upon this will have serious consequences.