

Interested party 2

Comments

I wish to make the following comments on appeal ref:6014086:

1. Flood Risk

1.1 This area of Hirst has no public surface water sewers. We are therefore highly dependent upon a grid of drainage channels or ditches for drainage. These ditches have been completely neglected for over 30 years. The Environment Agency (EA) is well aware of this problem, although their Flood Map for Planning fails to show the resulting flood risk in the gardens of 1&2 Nursery Close.

1.2 Hatchgate Ditch which runs South to North along the Eastern boundary of the plot is shown on the EA Flood Map for Planning as a 'Main River', yet it blocked.

1.3 The EA Flood Map for Planning states "Your selected location is in Flood Zone 3, an area with a high probability of flooding". The Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) accepts (Page 16 Para 3.13) that, "The southern part of the site is at risk from surface water flooding..." At Para 3.6 the FRA again accepts that, "Part of the proposed carriageway south of plot 3 is located with[in] an area of risk..."

1.4 The declaration by DEFRA that the site has not previously been subject to flooding is therefore wrong and can be afforded no weight. Extensive flooding has been observed over this area for many years and is accepted in the FRA as above.

1.5 The Council declares that the Sequential Test is failed, and the Appeal does not adequately answer the Council's evidence concerning alternative sites.

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 and DRG 6244/001 shows the attenuated flow going directly from the attenuation pond to Hatchgate Ditch. The attenuated flow of 1.1 l/sec (almost 100 tonne/day) cannot be handled by a ditch which is already blocked. This Appeal does not therefore demonstrate that flood risk can be safely managed without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

1.7 The FRA states that, because the proposed houses are in Flood Zone 1, there is no "real world harm". The very substantial loss of surface water absorption would increase the load on Hatchgate Ditch, thereby increasing flood risk. The fact that the houses have to be squeezed onto 16% of the site to avoid Zone 2 flood risk shows the severity of the flood risk. (Appeal Statement Page 11 Para 2.30)

2 Foul Water

2.1 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.

2.2 FRA DRG 6244/001 shows 3 individual Foul package plants. Such plants require little maintenance, but they do require regular emptying (de-sludging) by a road tanker. There is insufficient access for such a tanker. Merely stating that the drainage system will be managed is not a detailed response to a technical objection.

2.3 FRA DRG 6244/001 clearly shows the Foul package for Plot 3 is in a flood zone.

3. Highway Safety and other Concerns.

3.1 The proposal introduces a new vehicle access directly into Lodge Road. To claim that "There is a footpath link immediately opposite the site that connects the site to the rest of the village" is disingenuous. Access involves crossing the B3030 (Lodge Road) at a point where vehicles are often travelling at speed and visibility is not good. The footpath runs parallel to Lodge Road itself and does not therefore connect to the rest of the village.

3.2 In his dismissal of Appeal APP/X0360/W/319044 (January 2020) for the erection of 5 dwellings on this same site, Inspector Mr Philip Major, stated "...Lodge Road has the potential to be an intimidating route..." Indeed, Lodge Road "...would be likely to be used only by the more confident cyclist..." The extensive development in and around Wokingham has markedly increased traffic flow on Lodge Road over the last few years, and this situation can only get worse.

3.3 This Appeal seeks to offer "alternative options" to travel by private car, and it can be argued that public transport is available. However, the idea of doing the weekly shopping by bus is hardly realistic. In the "real world" residents will opt to go to the nearest supermarkets in Twyford or Winnersh, and traffic will be further increased. This is not 'sustainability'.

3.4 The fact that Twyford Station is now on the London Underground network has led to a complete overload of parking facilities at the station, forcing commuters to park for some 200m along part of the A321 Hurst Road for the entire working day. WDC are well aware that this informal "car park" is a hazard to all other road users. This proposed development will only increase the problem as more cars will need to access Twyford Station.

4 Conflict with 2020 Appeal Decision on the Same Site.

4.1 This Appeal declares that "...the development will have a moderate visual impact". This is a personal, non-empirical view, and can be afforded little weight. This particular field performs an important settlement-separation function between Hurst and Whistley Green as identified by previous inspector Mr P W Clark in Appeal 3194044.

4.2 This Appeal conflicts with Core Strategy Policies CP1(11), CP6(b), CP9 and CP11 and Local Plan Policy CC03.

4.3 In his "Conclusions and Planning Balance" Inspector Mr P W Clark finishes Appeal 3194044 with the following statement "Put simply, this would be the wrong development in the wrong place". This conclusion is still valid, and this current Appeal should therefore be dismissed. [Close](#)

Supporting documents

No documents
