

PLANNING REF : 242067
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Fidlers Walk
: Wargrave
: RG10 8BA
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Simon Robinson
DATE SUBMITTED : 19/09/2024

COMMENTS:

I OBJECT to this planning application.

I was born in and lived in Hurst for 35 years, having only just recently moved from Hurst to Wargrave, but I still regularly visit my parents in Hurst.

This development is contrary to so many local policies and national policies it is difficult to know where to begin: The presumption should be in favour of sustainable development. Hurst is not a sustainable location. I know because I had to rely on my parents to drive me everywhere: To school, after school activities, to Reading/Bracknell in the evenings. I had my first car at the age of 18, not everyone can afford that, but it was necessary for me to work in the afternoons and evenings in Bracknell and Wokingham. It will be the same scenario for the existing and any future residents.

The indicative proposal for a 16 seater minibus for the entire community of Hurst village and the additional new residents, only at peak times, to make up for an unreliable and poor bus service is totally unfeasible. It is a poorly thought out short term scheme and will not reduce the residents over reliance on the motor car.

This proposal doesn't promote genuine, safe, alternative methods of transport and cannot be made more sustainable, due to the constraints of being a rural location, with narrow country lanes and roads. It is not feasible to introduce more pavements, widen pavements, narrow the already narrow roads, for a few metres here and there, you still end up using a poor footway network which lacks continuous footways to the Church, Broadcommon Road, Wokingham Road, Davies Street etc and the introduction of a few advisory cycle lanes won't make it any safer for cyclists as they are unenforceable and again do not extend the wider network towards Wokingham, Winnersh and Bracknell.

Neither have they properly considered the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility to all modes of transport once you leave the proposed housing estate, everyone shares with other road users on the road or on very narrow pavements on the wider network, which force you on to the busy roads, which will become all the more busier with the introduction of a further 250 cars and service vehicles to the 99 dwellings proposed.

WBC has substantially over delivered for the last 5 years on their Housing Delivery Test and there is no need for these homes in this unsustainable location. The WBC Local plan is still valid and enforceable until 2026.

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material

considerations indicate otherwise. The previous application (220458) was taken to appeal and even after applying the 'tilted balance' was dismissed only last year - 99 dwellings compared to 200 dwellings does not 'halve the harm', the harm is still just as significant and the location remains as unsustainable for 99 dwellings as it did for 200 households.

Hurst is a rural location, these fields are agricultural Grade 3a and 3b and not brown field. They are designated countryside and outside the development limit. They were not allocated for housing in the recent WBC HELAA assessment as they were assessed as 'unsuitable' (WBC CP11). This proposed development is not the right type of development in the right place (NPPF).

These tranquil fields have stood for centuries in their current form and contribute to the wildlife and habitat so important to the UK and locally; within a radius of 2 km there is an abundance of protected and priority species, many of which visit and/or call these fields their home. These fields act as a wildlife corridor between two important Biodiversity Opportunity Areas, that have Local Wildlife Sites and Local Nature Reserves. The WBC Biodiversity Action Plan and the NPPF state very clearly that proposals should not cause fragmentation of the wider ecological areas (Environment Act 2021, NPPF S15, WBC CP7).

There is nothing in this proposal that will mitigate the substantial harm which will be caused to the existing biodiversity and habitat by introducing 99 homes, 250 cars and 250 additional residents with a road that bisects through the site together with the noise, close board fencing, patios, lighting, domestic animals, etc.

This proposal is significantly insensitive and harmful to the community, biodiversity, rural character and landscape of Hurst.

Hurst is a Tier 3 development location with only basic services and facilities and should have 'limited development', which it has so far achieved in a sensitive and appropriate manner. Hurst is a thriving village community and the introduction of another 99 homes, will upset the status quo of the community and its facilities.

Please refuse this application.