

PLANNING REF : 242067
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Ballacloan
: Tape Lane, Hurst, Berkshire
: RG100DP
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Derek Birtles
DATE SUBMITTED : 16/09/2024

COMMENTS:

We strongly object to this application and the applicants desperate attempts to claim it is a sustainable location. The site was never allocated in the local plan , nor will it be included in the emerging local plan.

At the appeal hearing for 200 houses last year the inspector clearly stated that large scale development on this site was unsustainable and none of the applicants proposed solutions stand up to scrutiny . In fact they resemble suggestions from a brainstorming session, most of which are either unrealistic ,unpractical, unwanted by residents , unnecessary (additional play areas, allotments, bike hiring ,and a mini bus service etc) , or simply wishful thinking requiring permission from highways and other land owners and third parties with no guarantee as to how they will be delivered, managed or funded.

What has become clear these past few years is that landowners and developers with deep pockets are intent on destroying and urbanising our village by removing and building on every single green space, paddock, horse grazing space , open landscapes, and precious wildlife habitats in the centre of Hurst on sites that are all designated

outside of the development limits,were never identified for development by WBC and that collectively exceed the number of houses the inspector decided were unsustainable.

Hurst is classified as a limited development location yet :-
32 Houses have been built in the past 5 years and a further 45 granted permission recently at Amen Corner bringing the total approved to 77

Then we have a further 129 currently submitted for approval or at appeal bringing the total to 206 . This would represent an increase in housing in Hurst of close to 45% with no meaningful or substantial improvements to infrastructure, amenities, or essential services particularly schools, healthcare and community facilities. Of particular concern is the applicants attempts to dismiss residents concerns and their proposed mitigation measures and half baked solutions around drainage ,flooding and highways that for reasons we find hard to understand largely goes unchallenged by Wokingham Council .

Flooding in Hurst is getting progressively worse . At times these past few years it has been difficult if not impossible to exit the village with fields and roads flooded , Tape Lane , Orchard Rd ,Lodge Rd, Church Hill , and Broadwater Road have at times become Impassable and the problems residents in Lodge Rd have with sewage flooding their properties is well documented . I have submitted under separate cover and ask the planning officers to publish and distribute pictures of the landscape throughout the seasons and flooding on the proposed development site and in Tape lane since 2017 and more recently the worst flooding in 40 years that made the road impassable in 2023 and 2024.

By allowing yet more housing and covering natural soakaways with houses, roads and hardstanding this can only make matters worse. The recent survey submitted by Mr AA Butler sets out both the scale of the problem and makes a nonsense of the applicants claims that there is an on site engineering solution to provide adequate drainage capacity to handle the discharge of foul and surface water from the site . Thames water are currently 16 Billion in debt are unlikely to do anything about the drainage system or the inadequate pumping station any time soon and this application should be refused on these grounds alone. Also WBC and its officers should not be ignoring the problem or , as seems to be the case relying on residents to provide the evidence and should be challenging the applicants submission that clearly is nonsense.

Finally ref other proposed sustainability solutions proposed by the applicant , most of which are wishful thinking and few of which make sense

1. Highways : Tape Lane is an access only single lane road and difficult to navigate without passing cars pulling into driveways or damaging the grass verge yet the applicant proposes a new access road thereby increasing traffic from the development site for anyone wanting to find the shortest route to the school , Village Hall or Winnersh.They also want to restrict parking on Tape Lane requiring many residents who either park on one side of the road or have visitors) just so their proposed inadequate and probably uneconomic bus service as an adequate turning circle.

They also propose improving access by narrowing of the A321 through the village to increase the depth of pavement. What nonsense , this will cause absolute chaos and will become a major safety issue in the area around the village shop. Then they propose installing cycle lanes and a bike shelter but have not provided any feasibility study or cost estimate and have no control over the landowners or other

stakeholders or service providers willingness to co-operate or the timescale . Again its just wishful thinking!

2 Environment .if approved the disruption and impact on the village community , habitat wildlife, hedgerows and eco system caused by allowing development of this site would be devastating and as the inspector concluded last year can not be justified

We urge you to refuse this application and do whatever it takes to oppose any appeal