

PLANNING REF : 242067
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 2 Rose Cottages
: Lodge Road Lodge Road, Whistley Green, Berkshire
: RG10 0EN
SUBMITTED BY : Mr And Mrs Thomas and Katherine Stevens
DATE SUBMITTED : 15/09/2024

COMMENTS:

Dear Planning Inspector

We are residents of Lodge Road, Whistley Green, our home sits within the current 30mph boundary just before the junction to Whistley Green. Lodge Road is a busy main road which provides a major road link between Twyford and the Winnersh / Woodley area.

Within the last 3 years, a neighbouring property had their car, which was parked on the side of the road, crashed into overnight by a vehicle travelling at a considerably high speed. The damage required the car to be written off by the insurance company. As there are no traffic calming measures along Lodge Road, and no street lights, vehicles frequently exceed the 30mph speed limit. This is demonstrated by the developer's traffic survey which indicated the 85th percentile speeds to be around 40mph, 10mph greater than the speed limit. We note that the developer refers to the proposed speed reduction on Lodge Road to 20mph in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure plan published by WBC; we welcome this proposal and believe that this would be a vital safety measure needed should this development be approved by WBC. In order for a speed limit like this to be effective, we would recommend additional traffic calming measures be introduced.

Traffic turning right out of the new exit onto Lodge Road will likely be greeted by traffic travelling at 40mph + from Winnersh, potentially making it a difficult and dangerous turning onto an already busy road. Similarly, traffic turning left or right towards the development from Whistley Green or Sawpit Road would face challenging junctions as the visibility from both of these junctions is poor. Poor visibility, combined with speeding traffic, does not bode well for the safety of residents or road users. The sharp bend at the northern end of Lodge Road also makes the road, in its present form, incompatible with the anticipated levels of traffic.

We also remain concerned that there will only be one non-emergency entrance to the site. It is our view that, should this development be approved, there should be a second entrance to the site to enable better access towards the larger towns of Wokingham, Windsor and Bracknell. Access to these major hubs via the Lodge Road exit will encourage residents to use routes which are unsuitable for high mes of traffic.

Based on our knowledge of the area there are four likely routes drivers from the proposed development could take to go towards Windsor, Bracknell or Wokingham if there is only one entrance to the site (on Lodge Road):

Route 1 - turning right out of the estate, driving north up Lodge Road, then taking a sharp right onto Broadwater Lane before driving back through Hurst village and onto Wokingham Road - 0.85 miles from

estate entrance to the village shop. This would presumably be the route developers expect residents to take. However, it involves a very tight bend onto Broadwater Lane; based on this we anticipate that it is unlikely that new residents will use this route and would take one of the two shorter routes listed below.

Route 2 - turn right out of the estate, drive up to Whistley Green [Road] (road past Nursery Gardens that directly connects Lodge Road to Broadwater Lane) before driving back through Hurst Village and onto Wokingham Road - 0.45 miles from estate entrance to the village shop. At nearly half the distance this would be a shortcut for route 1 and one that residents would likely be tempted to take. However, it would involve driving down a narrow road with no road markings or pavement (Whistley Green). The road is also frequently used for parking for local residents which would inevitably provide additional congestion. This route is completely unsuitable for traffic other than for access.

Route 3 - turning left from the estate, drive down Lodge Road and turn left onto Sawpit Road, then turning left onto School Lane all the way down past Hurst pond where they would join Wokingham Road - 0.91 miles from estate entrance to the Pond. This involves going down Sawpit Road which has no pavements and is unlikely to be suitable for use as a main route.

Route 4 - turning left from the estate, drive down Lodge Road and turn left onto Church Hill and continuing down School Lane to Hurst pond where they would join Wokingham Road - 1.58 miles from estate entrance to the Pond. This final alternative route would utilise main roads and is probably be a more suitable route, however, it is by far the longest route and so is unlikely to be used by residence in reality.

If the development had a second exit at the other end of the estate, for example that came out at the base of Tape Lane, this would provide a much safer and quicker route - only 0.15 miles to the village shop / pond. This could easily be achieved whilst keeping Tape Lane as access only and potentially putting in a mini-roundabout at the entrance to ease traffic flow.

Whilst we welcome the developer's plans to increase the footpath along Lodge Road, we believe it is unrealistic to rely on these footpaths as a primary way of accessing the development. There is very limited street lighting in Hurst, and no street lights along Lodge Road; whilst Hurst is a reasonably safe neighbourhood, we imagine that there will be relatively few residents willing to travel on foot to the development, particularly during the winter. In our view, the developer has also completely overestimated the people's willingness to walk or cycle the distances proposed or wait for the extremely infrequent bus service. One example of this unrealistic expectation is the use of the 7:22 bus service to Twyford station, this would enable commuters to take the 7:55 train to London Paddington; however, realistically, the two most popular commuter trains to London Paddington are at 7:25 and 7:55, with really, only the 7:25 service enabling many commuters to get to work before 9am. As such, we do not agree that use of the 7:22 bus would be a popular choice for

most Hurst residents.

Fundamentally, Hurst is a rural area and most residents will rely on being able to use their own personal vehicle to make most of their journeys, especially given the very limited public transport options within the village itself. As such, we believe that it is vitally important that the access to the development and the local road infrastructure is thoroughly considered and reviewed by the Planner Inspector.

Best wishes

Mr & Mrs Stevens