

PLANNING REF : 242067
PROPERTY ADDRESS : The Cricketers
: The Cricketers Wards Cross, Hurst, Reading, Berkshire
: RG10 0DS
SUBMITTED BY : Mr John Vimpany
DATE SUBMITTED : 10/09/2024

COMMENTS:
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My Family has been resident in this village since 1974 and for the last twenty six years at the above address at Wards Cross which is close to the field proposed for this development. Much pressure is felt by those who live in Hurst and who constantly have to fight the many overbearing development schemes - currently three at least - and this pressure detrimentally impacts the quality of life here.

Specifically, the main reasons for requesting that this scheme be REFUSED are as follows:

* Hurst is unsustainable for several reasons. This is a rural location and as such lacks the shops, school places, public transport and appropriate road and footpaths and medical facilities to serve the out of scale additional population envisaged. This obvious and fundamental point has been recognised by Planners and Inspectors who have already declined inappropriately large applications in recent years, most recently during the 2023 Enquiry concerning this same site. The insertion of 99 houses would likely result in introducing 250 additional cars and attract a huge amount of delivery and other vehicle movements all generating pollution and contributing to the negative effects of urbanisation. The whole concept is simply out of scale with the existing settlement and its community.

* The field is outside the Development Limit (known as Hurst's 'village envelope') as stated by WBC's policy CP11 of their Core Strategy 'PROPOSALS OUTSIDE THE DEVELOPMENT LIMIT WILL NOT NORMALLY BE PERMITTED' unless, by exception, specific conditions are met - which is not the case here.

* There is no reason to sacrifice this green open land that has remained in agricultural use for centuries, that provides the Hurst area of settlement with much of its rural character and is home to much wildlife. The village is a successful modern rural community, sustainable only on its present scale. The only parties that would make a case for over-riding urbanisation in such a location are the Developers themselves.

* There seems to be confusion as to whether WBC has met its 'housing land supply' targets. Driving around the Borough today it seems plain that more than enough land has been acquired and built on for housing projects in the last 3-5 years, and sufficient countryside surrounding a country town has been found by the Borough to devote to housing purposes.

* The Developer suggests they can advance their case for securing planning permission by arranging and subsidising a number of beneficial incentives such as improved bus services and shelters,

bike sheds etc. These are simply window dressing. As most will need on-going permissions and financial support from other parties they are unlikely to be delivered or sustained. Buses using Tape Lane would not be welcomed by the residents and neither would proposals to deprive residents of roadside parking to make way for buses.

Tape Lane was flooded and the field was waterlogged earlier this year. I understand there are sound engineering reasons for avoiding construction of any significance on this field because of the difficulties in finding a reliable solution to existing drainage problems that would not affect other parts of the village.

The destruction of the Tape Lane route as pathway for children walking to St Nicholas school and a quiet route for horses (although the majority of village horses would no longer have grazing in the Field itself) would diminish the rural character of the village.

So much is at stake here, and it seems that in these circumstances, governed by an apparent need to meet 'targets', local residents find the odds stacked against them. There are many emotional reasons to reject this inappropriate entrepreneurial application but I believe that those listed above are all 'material planning considerations' which support the case for refusing it.

I find no advantages in the scheme that will benefit the residents of Hurst, only harm to the community and the environment.

Yours faithfully

John Vimpany