

PLANNING REF : 242067
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Cranford Drive
: Hurst
: RG10 0ET
SUBMITTED BY : Mrs Sandy Butler
DATE SUBMITTED : 10/09/2024

COMMENTS:

I would like to object strongly to this very inappropriate proposal.

This watery, low-lying village already suffers many instances during the year of flooding around its lanes. Development of any kind, and of this size in particular, would only add to the very real risk of serious damage to property, and to the frightening risk to health of cross-contamination from the Summerlease leachate segregated ditch system. In any high water, this threatens to merge with what remains of the Lodge Rd roadside ditch, which in turn would threaten the whole village. We have lived in our house here for almost 30 years, it is a little higher than most of the property in Hurst, and is classed as at Medium Risk from flooding, but as recently as three nights ago, during a very intense thunderstorm with torrential rain, the water around the house came frighteningly close to entering the air bricks! The Environment Agency maps used by the applicant are not current and do not illustrate accurately the rivers and ditches in Hurst. There are many, many changes that need to be made to the map before it could realistically be used for planning purposes.

If this development is allowed, there will be no turning back. The semi-rural Hurst with its wonderful countryside feel will no longer exist. Very few of the lanes even have proper kerbside footpaths. Those of us who have chosen to make our home here accept the lack of facilities expected in larger towns and villages. We need to travel outside the village to get to a surgery, pharmacy, vet, library, secondary school or supermarket for example. Our one shop serves us well as a top-up local shop with part-time sub-post office, and we have some pubs, but with a wholly inadequate bus service we all know and accept that a car is needed to reach essential services. The inevitable increase in car numbers and traffic movement around Hurst with an extra 99+ houses would be detrimental and pose so many more road safety hazards.

The village primary school is very, very unlikely to be able to accommodate a much larger intake of children, meaning more car journeys from and around the village even for this younger age group. I believe the pre-school has a waiting list of children currently, so again, it is unlikely that a surge in numbers could be accommodated. It is already necessary to travel further afield to attend one of the area's secondary schools, which are not always easy to reach using public transport, hence the increase in traffic around the village at school start and finish times when again, private cars are necessary. Cycling is just not a safe option. I would definitely not have allowed my daughter to cycle to school in Wargrave from here. Even if a 'cycle lane' were to be created as proposed, this would not guarantee safe passage. Many cars speed along the A321 and it does get very busy at times. This road is not wide enough for two lanes of traffic plus cycle lanes. A minibus service has been proposed as a benefit (though in reality the cost of this to residents would

probably prevent the idea from ever taking off), The intention is for this to travel to Twyford and Wargrave Piggott School only, so this would be of very limited use. The Piggott is just one of many schools chosen by families in Hurst and some are finding it difficult to get a place there now. With the large development taking place in Twyford , this situation will only worsen.

The proposal to change the main High Street by introducing build-out kerbs with widened footways will further urbanise the street scene through Hurst, and very possibly cause problems for existing residents living along that stretch of road in terms of parking and gaining access to and from their properties.

This proposed development falls outside the development limit for Hurst. As such, it should not normally be permitted unless, by exception, specific conditions are met - as they have not been met by this proposal, it surely should not be granted permission.

This development is not at all in keeping with the character of the village. The size and density is excessive in a village like this. The WBC Local Character Assessment strategy is to conserve and enhance the rural character of the area - a development like this involving the removal of hedgerows and introduction of access roads on a much loved and appreciated green space that has remained unchanged for centuries will damage forever the rural character of Hurst and

Whistley Green. The dark sky nature of this space provides a wonderful habitat for a lot of wildlife, including nocturnal and protected species such as bats and hedgehogs. A large, urbanized development like this with street lighting, vehicle movement and all associated noise and activity, will totally destroy the habitat.

All the findings and reasons for refusal of the previous proposal for this site last year by Mr Wildsmith still stand (ref: APP/X0360/W/22/3309202.) I sincerely hope that this proposal will be rejected.