

PLANNING REF : 260353
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Hogmoor Lane
:
: RG10 0DH
SUBMITTED BY : Robert Leigh
DATE SUBMITTED : 06/03/2026

COMMENTS:

Dear Sirs,

This document constitutes notice of objection to the above planning application.

Permission in Principle (PiP) Application

This is a Permission in Principle (PiP) application, which is a two-stage process normally used for small, straightforward developments of which this is not one.

The first stage is limited to considering only Location, Land Use and Amount of Development. Details such as layout, scale and landscaping are reviewed later if PiP is granted.

PiP is a totally inappropriate form of application for this Site, particularly since a recent Appeal Decision found that development of the Site would harm amongst other things the Hurst Area of Special Character.

Housing Land Supply

Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) currently has a 2.5-year housing land supply, which usually triggers a presumption in favour of sustainable development in planning decisions. The new Local Plan is at an advanced stage and can be taken into consideration when determining opportunistic, speculative applications. A proposal for 5 to 7 homes will make a minimal contribution to the housing supply and in the case under review does not include affordable housing for the benefit of local residents.

Rural Nature of Hurst

As with most residents of Hurst, I moved into the village over 35 years ago principally to enjoy the rural nature of the village and its tranquillity to the City of London atmosphere where I then worked.

That characteristic is at significant threat from this application:

1. Potential for development creep - my thoughts on the potential for development creep were summarised in my objection lodged nearly two years ago to this applicant's previously refused planning application (planning reference 240583). They apply equally here;
2. Change of land use - Since I arrived in the village, there has been considerable pressure for development on this Site which has always been refused and the land has remained in agricultural use. This application proposes to change the use of a large section of the field into residential development. The grant of Permission in Principle to develop part of a subdivided large, open field can lead to development creep and make further incremental applications difficult to resist.

Any one of these issues would cause irreparable harm to the rural identity of Hurst. Taken together, it would destroy Hurst as a charming, rural setting.

Flooding

I have lived in Hogmoor Lane Hurst for over 30 years. During that

time, the Lane has been badly flooded on a number of occasions making it impossible to access my home by car for periods ranging between 24 and 72 hours.

The flood risks in and surrounding this site have been aired extensively in previous comments/objections submitted to WBC, including in relation to this applicant's previous planning applications (planning reference 240583). Those risks have also been repeated by a number of objectors to this PiP application and so I do not intend repeating them here.

The Site's area has been reduced (a cynic might say duplicitously) to under 1 hectare by excluding the attenuation basin and flood mitigation measures from its Red Boundary designation for the specific (and most likely sole) purpose of meeting the PiP application threshold.

Approval for development ought not be granted in areas of known flood risk when essential mitigation measures are located off site and where the application gives no detail whatsoever regarding ownership of the swale and does not identify who will be responsible for its subsequent management and maintenance. In addition, since the PiP

application excludes in its entirety any discussion of the attenuation basin residents of both Hogmoor Lane and Broadwater Lane have no assurance at all that an effective flood and drainage management scheme will be implemented.

In summary, I am bound to question how the Council's officers are supposed to consider, fully, the scheme proposed by Shorewood Homes if their proposed flood mitigation measures are not part of the application. As stated, Shorewood Homes has excluded the proposed swale and (presumably) connection pipes from the site area the subject of this new application merely to meet the PiP threshold.

Highway Safety

The proposed development will pose an unacceptable risk to highway safety. The A321 Broadwater Lane is the main road between Twyford and Wokingham and gets busier every year.

Twyford railway station, secondary schools, medical and dental facilities, pharmacies and supermarkets cannot reasonably be reached on foot.

Accordingly, residents of the development will be heavily reliant on using motor cars for the vast majority of their journeys thereby only adding to the increased traffic flows on the A321. All vehicular

traffic accessing and egressing the site will use the one site entrance from and onto Broadwater Lane. I would surmise this entrance will handle up to 50 journeys a day.

Finally, the proposed bell mouth site entrance would be around 15 metres wide. It is situated within the Hurst Area of Special Character and would result in significant vegetation loss affecting this section of the Green Route Enhancement Area and would be an eyesore to the houses located directly opposite on Broadwater Lane.

Hogmoor Lane - 1999

An application to build five houses in Hogmoor Lane on 'this site' was refused and the Appeal dismissed in 1999. The Inspector's decision is still relevant today as the Lane (and its rural nature) has not

changed since that time. He noted (a) that the 80-90 metre length is too large to be termed a normal infill site, (b) that the Site

makes a significant contribution to the Lane's semi-rural character and (c) that development would be highly visible and create an urbanising effect.

The Site is raised well above the Lane and three to four large modern houses would visually dominate, be overbearing and overshadow the neighbouring, more traditional, homes.

Time, Expense and Stress

Finally, I am bound to ask the Council officers how many more applications, and revisions to applications, must the residents of Hurst have to face from this applicant, and indirectly from the landowners, before WBC states clearly that a 'Refusal' means just that - a refusal.

After all, one assumes that the applicant (and the landowners) have a significant financial incentive to continue submitting application after application (and revision after revision) - a significant number have been made in the last two years - whereas the residents' sole inducement is to protect the integrity and character of the village - a principle which one might have assumed would be shared by other residents of Hurst whatever the size of their landholding.

I ask the Council to refuse this application.