

PLANNING REF : 242067
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Castle Close
: Lodge Road, Whistley Green, Berkshire
: RG10 0EH
SUBMITTED BY : Mrs Claire Campbell
DATE SUBMITTED : 19/09/2024

COMMENTS:

I object to this planning application.

My original objections to the previous application which was rejected by the Planning Inspector still apply. The change from 200 to 99 houses along with other proposed additions such as widening pavements and subsidising a minibus service to Twyford Station and The Piggott senior school make no material difference to my reasons for objection. Hurst children typically are not awarded a place at Piggott senior school and I don't expect the proposed minibus service to Twyford station will address traffic concerns. None of your proposed mitigations have any form of costing, approval or commitment to implement by the relevant stakeholders. Even were such commitments in place these proposed mitigations do nothing to make Hurst sustainable, and will likely make existing traffic bottlenecks worse. Also I fear that without any such commitments agreed in advance of this planning application these proposed mitigations are not binding and can be abandoned without any being put in place.

Please find below the text of my original objections, which still apply:

I object to this application for a number of reasons.

The proposed site on a designated area of countryside is a greenfield site and outside the development limits of the village. Should this be approved I fear it will set a precedent for further largescale development thereby urbanising the rural village of Hurst.

Furthermore, the proposed site hosts a variety of wildlife that will be dramatically impacted by the development.

There is only one primary school in the village, St. Nicholas primary school. It is already at capacity with split year groups and an annual intake of only twenty pupils. There is no scope for further expansion of the school. Residents of this proposed development will be forced into their cars to take their primary school aged children to school elsewhere.

In a similar vein, while Hurst is in catchment for several secondary schools, many of which are also at capacity and only some are served by a timely bus service. You mention the Piggott School in Wargrave as being served by the 128129 and then the 850 services. In reality the timing of these bus services already forces many Hurst parents into their cars for the school run at either end of the day for all or part of the way. Over the years fewer and fewer children from

Hurst have actually been awarded a place at the Piggott School and it is unlikely that secondary school aged children residing on this proposed development will be offered a place based on this trend. You also mention Waingels College as a secondary school option. This is neither in catchment for the village of Hurst, nor is it on a bus route and cannot be walked safely. The route is rural (and therefore unlit) and these footpaths are often a mud bath. The reality is that the public bus service as it currently stands is not fit for purpose when it comes to accessing many of the secondary schools that are in catchment to Hurst residents. Many parents will be forced into their cars.

Motorists already flout the 'access only' restrictions along Tape Lane, using it as a rat run for the primary school, the village store, the village halls and to avoid the traffic bottlenecks and hotspots around the village, often citing ignorance when challenged. Despite there being no proposed motor access to the site from Tape Lane the extra vehicles will undoubtedly add to the misuse of Tape Lane. Incidentally, Tape Lane is a designated safe walking route for the local school. Along with the lack of public footpaths (many of which are overgrown and force pedestrians either into the road or to walk in single file), the need to constantly cross roads to use a pavement (often around cars forced to park on the pavements) and the additional influx of cars is a safety and visibility concern. Providing new pedestrian and cycle routes within the new development does not address these challenges.

Hurst is served by Twyford Surgery. It is already oversubscribed.

Hurst has very few local amenities (a single shop and post office) which again forces people into their cars in the absence of a reliable public transport system.

The Whistley Green end of Lodge Road is served by two blind junctions that are often used as rat runs. I feel the increased traffic flow such a development will introduce will only serve to send more traffic along these roads. Turning right onto Lodge Road from these junctions is done blind (and done slowly!) and I can't help but feel this is a serious accident just waiting to happen.

As a home owner on Lodge Road I already experience difficulties getting my car on and off my driveway, often to angry beeps from motorists and (on occasions) being overtaken as I am in the process of turning right onto my driveway. Again, I feel the increased traffic flow will only make accessing and leaving my property even more of an undertaking.

The proposed location is prone to flooding and surface water can regularly be seen pooling in the fields. Broadwater Lane regularly floods which has caused road closures, insurance hikes and issues for several of the properties on that road. Such flooding also has a huge impact on the drainage and sewage due to the design of the drainage network. The local pumping stations are already running at capacity. Properties on Lodge Road regularly experience their

drains being backed up when excess flood water runs off meaning that they cannot flush toilets, use washing machines or shower as the water has nowhere to go (myself included). Adding another 200 houses to the network will mean that the issues we already experience will happen more often it may not be visible to the residents of these extra dwellings but the knock-on effect of their water usage will have an impact at this end of Hurst due to the underlying drainage design.