

PLANNING REF : 242067
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 2 Whywick Cottages
: 2 Whywick Cotta Davis Street, Hurst, Berkshire
: RG10 0TJ
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Paul Drayton
DATE SUBMITTED : 18/09/2024

COMMENTS:

Let me preface my comments by stating that I have lived in the Hurst area for 33 years and in Hurst village for the last 21 years, during which my wife and I have raised four children all educated locally. Over the last 20 years I have owned an allotment on Tape lane that overlooks the fields under proposal for development plus Tape lane is on my cycle route used for my commute to work. As such I feel I know the area well and can provide informed comment on the changes this proposal will bring into effect.

Hazard of lorries and extra cars on village roads:

If 99 houses are built on the proposed fields adjacent to Lodge road and tape lane then all of the lorries delivering concrete and building supplies plus those removing spoil and waste will be using the minor roads through the village to gain access. This will represent a massive increase in heavy lorries and contractor vans using these

roads and constitute a real hazard to any resident, pedestrian or cyclist attempting to use these. This increase in heavy traffic would materially impact the quality of life for those Villagers that live on or close to these roads for the full period of the building phase. Once the builds were complete, we could safely expect each house to have an average of 2 - 3 cars each so a total of 250 additional

vehicles trying to use the roads and lanes around the village. Each new householder within this new development would have to drive to get anywhere safely because the proposed walk and cycleways have been poorly conceived and do not provide safe links with existing pedestrian or cycle routes. For example, the proposed cycle routes, are extremely limited towards Twyford and absolutely no improvements are provided for any pedestrians or cyclists towards Wokingham or innersh.

Further more, the proposed walk way along Lodge road is essentially unsafe - the road has fast moving traffic (40 - 60 mph limits) and yet the walk way is not wide enough in places to safely accommodate those in wheelchairs or parents and pushchairs with children.

The proposed provision of bus, mini-bus and incentives to cycle this proposal are piece meal and will not encourage sustained use. The buses will be too infrequent (see how well current bus services are used) and the cycle lanes are not contiguous. As such homeowners will use their own cars instead of more environmentally forms of transport which completely opposes any sensible strategy for community planning and sustainability. Indeed, I understand that this proposal actually contravenes WBC own policies (CP1, CP3 CP6 and CP11) of its own Planning Core Strategy.

Environmental impact:

The proposed building site is a level field surrounded by hedgerows and mature deciduous trees located in the countryside and used historically for farming or raising stock. Over millennia it has built up a typical range of biodiversity in plant, animal and bird life which will be decimated if it were to become a large building

site. Retro planting a few spindly trees and providing a grass play area post build will in no way make up for the wildlife lost to this area. In addition, the destruction and loss of 140 m of native hedgerow will deplete nesting sites for birds and remove vital wildlife corridors for mammals, birds and invertebrates. This at a time when we should all be doing our very best to enhance our local environment and improve opportunities for wildlife.

A further tangible environmental risk from this proposal is the impact that 99 additional houses will have on the village drain and sewage infrastructure. Hurst is already at full capacity so this mammoth

increase in homes will overwhelm the current systems leading to flooding and far worse, the potential for sewage release into local waterways during periods of high rainfall.

Impact on the existing community

Hurst village has very limited facilities or infrastructure and therefore cannot sustain a major development of this sort. For example, what impact is this going to have on the primary school? This is too small to host an influx of new school children so these will have to be accommodated outside of the village creating more "school run" traffic.

The green field space between the village of Hurst and Whistley green is outside of the Development limit for the parish and has been identified by local residents as significant during recent community consultations. It represents a green gap separating these villages and to build on this would destroy the rural character of the area which would contravene Wokingham councils own local character assessment and it's vision to conserve and enhance rural character. This area was also rated as "unsuitable for development" in Wokingham councils recent local plan for housing growth.

As such this development proposal should be rejected assuming that if we have rules and guidelines for development then they should be respected by developers and enforced by WBC.

WBC has a core strategy for development from which a policy (CP11) articulates explicitly that 'proposals outside of the Development Limit will not normally be permitted' unless, by exception, specific conditions are met. This proposal is literally a green field site, well outside this limit and none of those conditions have been met. Rationally, this proposal should be rejected.