

FAO DEVELOPMENT CONTROL
(Online submission not working)

36 Martineau Lane
Hurst
Reading
RG10 0SF

18 September 2024

Letter of OBJECTION to Planning Application 242067

I strongly **OBJECT** to this planning application due to the harm that this housing development will inevitably cause to the rural character and landscape of the village, its community and habitat.

The notion that this planning application for 99 houses and a tokenistic range of third party resourced benefits funded by residents (50% of whom will be living in 'Affordable Homes') will allegedly outweigh the harm caused to the character of Hurst's timeless rural landscape, character and habitat through the provision of *a car club (x1 single EV car), a re-routed public bus service, a weekday only 16 seater minibus service plus a residents bus pass, parcel delivery lockers and a bike repair area* will through service charges in some mythical way enhance the lives of all residents is a total mystery.

In the absence of any employment within Hurst capable of sustaining the lifestyle of 99 new households it is inevitable that this new 'inner' community will be totally dependent upon commuting to higher tier employment areas through increased car usage.

That said it is very apparent that Twyford Station overflow car parking has already informally taken over about 100 metres of kerbside parking on the A321 Hurst Road (south of the junction with Hurst Park Road) and disrupting the southbound flow of traffic towards Hurst. The possible daily commuter out pouring from the proposed development will only make car parking in Twyford worse and cause further traffic flow problems on the A321.

This proposed development site is typical of Hurst's rural landscape consisting of farm land, rural footpaths and open spaces embracing the delightful background sound of wildlife at night, owls and bats flying in the half light, the sight and sound of farm animals, watching native birds forage, red kites gliding overhead, with all manner of migratory birds, ducks & geese splashing in flood water (perhaps mistaken at times for lake at Dinton Pastures), waking up to watch and listen to those early morning moments of foxes playing is sheer joy, muntjacs and deer roaming, rabbits playfully hopping around whilst grazing horses, ponies and donkeys quietly get on with life, whilst a pair of pheasants or ducks will drop in for a wander around our garden – this development will destroy all this at a stroke.

As a land locked housing development this site is wholly unsustainable and falls a long way short of new far larger housing developments and associated facilities under construction around purposefully planned, designed and built infrastructure in Wokingham that negates the increased dependence on car travel and road infrastructure that this development will necessitate.

Whilst bikes may be of recreational value they are not a safe or realistic means of undertaking a family weekly shop or journey to school or GP surgery. Irrespective of the purpose or alleged cycling skill,

roads in and around / to or from Hurst after dark are even more perilous than during daylight hours. Like it or not the car is a practical prerequisite to everyday day life and commuting. I don't suppose that any Planning Officer or Planning Inspector has ever arrived in Hurst on a bus, bike or on foot.

The community of Hurst is very much a single entity sharing the experience of children being brought up together, developing friendships from pre-school, to primary school and then to travelling together to secondary schools in neighbouring towns; living in a caring and supportive community of like-minded individuals, contributing and supporting community events, participating in community groups, working locally, sharing life experiences with friends and neighbours and the freshness of the country air.

The character and charm of village life in Hurst is undoubtedly all about the rural lifestyle and not the imposition of a faceless developer's desktop vision or opinion as to the community's needs.

In conclusion, this proposed development is not only outside of the village settlement and not compliant with WBC core policy CP11 but also by virtue of its geographic location, size and containment does not convey or promote any sense of community through existing wider village facilities, protect its fragile infrastructure or the countryside for future generations to enjoy.

Please REFUSE this planning application.

Mrs Heather Norris