

Good ~~morning~~ *afternoon*

My name is Huw Griffiths I live on Tape Lane and have been a resident in Hurst for 30 years.

I am a Chartered Surveyor and have been working specifically in regeneration and development for the last 25 years. I'm here today as a concerned resident and speak for many of the people of Hurst.

As my credentials would suggest I am not entirely against all development but In my experience, location is a defining factor and **“the right development needs to be in the right place”**, it should enhance an environment and not cause harm. This development sits uneasy in its setting and ultimately causes harm.

~~As a wise mentor once told me – if it looks right and if it feels right then it's generally right.~~

BSG

this does not feel right

Having looked at the revised proposals and some of the accompanying documents it strikes me for all the noise around design, housing numbers, housing delivery etc. the crux of the whole appeal seems to be whether the site has suddenly become sustainable?

At the last appeal Mr Wildsmith (Appeal Decision App/X360/W/22/3309202 dated 9th March 2023) made it clear in his overall decision the site is not a sustainable location and development would cause harm: in particular I quote point 138:

138. I have further found that the appeal proposal would not fully accord with the 3 objectives of sustainable development as set out in paragraph 8 of the Framework, and would not represent development in a location which can currently be considered sustainable, or could be made sustainable by the improvements and contributions offered by the appellant. The appeal proposal would therefore not represent sustainable development and does not benefit from the presumption in favour of such development.

So what has changed to reopen this debate?

What would sustainable development look like? Is it numbers game ?

The new proposals have shrunk from 200 to 99.

Hurst is an area of Limited development, and 99 homes and infrastructure is still very significant development and cannot be delivered without harm.

So what's sustainable development look like? If you take existing Policy as a barometer this suggests developments of up to 24 residential units could be considered appropriate, so I guess therefore this is sustainable?

As so happens this was the size of the recently approved Orchard Road and School Road planning permission (23 units). So if this is what sustainable development looks like it would appear the Orchard Road and School Road approval has already absorbed any debatable spare capacity for sustainable development within or adjacent to the village of Hurst.

So is this where the developer throws in the wild card of Titled Balance ? Are the Policies out of date ? But does this matter ?

Surely if the site is not sustainable then it does not benefit from the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

At the last Appeal Mr Wildsmith was quite specific about this point (last sentence of point 138).

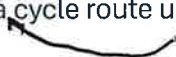
"The appeal proposal would therefore not represent sustainable development and does not benefit from the presumption in favour of such development"

This would seem to make the Tilted Balance discussion a moot point.

So what else has changed?

Location? No change there,

Transport? Roughly the same access point with fundamentally the same issues. Public Transport remains unchanged and the primary mode of transport for development clearly remains the car and a cycle route un tenable.



Since the last Appeal the parking situation at Twyford train station car park has become far worse and many cars are being parked along Hurst Road (A321) and narrowing it. Tuesdays to Thursdays during school term this parking quite literally stretches from Twyford to Hurst.

Two cars barely have room to pass one another and certainly no room for a cycleway.

The concept of a community minibus for the proposed development site is a lovely idea but is not a practical solution and will quickly cease to exist through lack of interest and funds.

Design & Layout?

More details on building design have been added to pacify concerned residents but the application remains for Outline permission and still asks for “all matters to be reserved” except means of access.

So “it could look like this “– “but it might not”.

Inevitably degradation of the design and quality will be driven by economics and this is difficult to defend in reserved applications. The development of 16 houses at Valley Nursery at Whistley Green is testament to this. It was great on paper !

Biodiversity and Landscape:

It's difficult to see how you can take a Green Field site, develop it with 99 houses add infrastructure and say you have improved biodiversity and made it sustainable?

There is a proposed large open space but it's not clear who will own or manage the land.

Would this be a public benefit, will it be private amenity to the development, will it be a nature sanctuary, or will it simply be Phase 2 of the development in waiting? It's not clear.

Where does this leave us ?

Lodge Road – Planning Appeal – Huw Griffiths 12th August 2025.

Planning history clearly sets on the record that the site is not a sustainable location for development and nothing that has been proposed that changes this.

In fact the consent granted at Orchard Road/School Road and the worsening parking position on Hurst Road makes the site less sustainable than it was at the time of the last appeal.

I believe that the proposals are not sustainable development and request the appeal should be dismissed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'H. Griffiths'.

Yours faithfully

Huw Griffiths BSc (Hons) MRICS