

Application Number: 260353

Site Address: Land North of Broadwater Lane and West of Highmoor Lane

Proposed Development: Permission in principle application for the proposed erection of maximum 7 no dwelling (or a minimum of 5 no. dwellings including formation of an access from Broadwater Lane.

St Nicholas Hurst Parish Council objects to this application for the following reasons:

1. Impact on existing settlements

Whilst this application has reduced the impact of the proposed development on the separation of Wards Cross and Whistley Green and some undeveloped land would remain. However, the new proposal does impact on Hogmoor Lane with development on the West side of Hogmoor Lane in an area that is currently undeveloped. The proposed development would increase the amount of development on Hogmoor Lane although the indicative plan does not include any access from the development onto Hogmoor Lane.

The site is itself outside the established settlement area and therefore would be contrary to the existing WBC policy CP11.

2, Flooding

As the applicants note the site is subject to a flood risk assessment. The drainage on the site is poor. Much of the site is in Flood zone 1 and a flood risk assessment is included in the application. The A321 Broadwater Lane is however subject to surface water flooding when there has been heavy rain. The indicative plan includes an attenuation pond – however the pond is outside the red-line of the plan. Given the flooding is mainly surface water it is not clear that the attenuation pond would address the issues.

3. Sustainability

As noted in the previous applications for this and adjacent sites, the location within Hurst is not sustainable. The village shop and the Hurst Primary Schools are accessible along a pavement although both would require Broadwater Lane to be crossed at least once. The A321 is a busy through route and although there is a 30mph speed limit the road could be challenging to cross particularly in the morning and afternoon school times. However the Hurst Primary School has capacity constraints, and it is possible that any primary school children in the new development would be required to attend alternative primary schools and none of the alternative schools are accessible except by car. The local secondary schools – Piggot at Twyford and Waingels (Woodley) are not accessible except by car. Cycling along the A321 for school aged children could be considered unreasonably risky.

Other facilities are only accessible by car – the major shops are in Twyford or Wokingham more than 2km away. Whilst there is a bus along the A321 (128/129) the service is relatively infrequent (approximately hourly on weekdays with the last service before 7pm and two-hourly on Saturdays). The nearest railway stations are Twyford and Winnersh and again these are only really accessible by car. The development could therefore potentially add to the existing parking issues at Twyford.

4. Local Plan

The applicant refers to the lack of an approved local plan as support for the presumption in favour of development. The Wokingham Local Plan is now at formal consultation stage and therefore should have some weight in considering the appropriate development sites in the parish. Hurst has been identified as an area for limited development and as noted above the change in the spatial separation arising from the development would appear to be inconsistent with the limited development status. This site has not been identified in the local plan that is under review.

5. Landscape and Visual Impact

The development as proposed would limit the visibility across the fields from Broadwater Lane and Hogmoor Lane. This would change the character of both roads. The impact on Broadwater Road is reduced when compared to the earlier application.

This application is for a reduced number of houses compared to the previous planning applications on the site. However, the fundamental issues with the site remain despite the reduction in the number of houses. For this, and the reasons above, the Parish Council objects to this application 260353.