

Planning Application 260353

Land north of Broadwater Lane and west of Hogmoor Lane, Hurst

Permission in Principle application for the proposed erection of a maximum of 7 and a minimum of 5 dwellings, including formation of an access from Broadwater Lane

Submitted by: Jean Dolinski

Address: 34 Martineau Lane, Hurst, RG10 0SF

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I wish to object to the above development on the following grounds:

1. Permission in Principle

This type of application would appear to be inappropriate for this type of site and seems to be a “cheap” way of submitting an application with minimal information provided up front. It is in effect robbing people of the chance to assess important information which is relevant to the decision making process.

2. Red Line Area

The red line perimeter of this application has once again cynically been drafted to exclude tree protection areas and the attenuation pond. The total land area required to deliver a site should be included in the red line area, as it is all required for effective delivery of a development.

In addition it would appear that if this site was granted permission, then the applicant would surely submit a further application for the remainder of land within their blue line as follows:



The access road will already be there to facilitate entry to the remainder of this field. If permission is granted for this application, then it would surely be the case that there would be no effective grounds to refuse development on the remainder of the field immediately adjacent to it? The developers are just going to chip away until they develop all of the land within their control. Piecemeal development, bit by bit.

3. Location of Development

The site lies outside of the settlement boundary of Hurst, and adjacent to the Area of Special Character. The impact of modern development must be considered in both the setting of listed buildings in the immediate vicinity and also the proximity to the AOSC. The Inspector's 2025 Inspector's appeal decision stated the following:

Para 31 - I must give considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings. Harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme.

Para 57 - I have also found that the proposal would harm the significance of the AOSC and I have taken this into account.

The current proposal is just as bad, if not worse, than the previous proposal in that it would introduce modern housing immediately adjacent to Wards Cross House (which is listed) and Long Barn. It therefore wraps itself around a corner of the AOSC and the applicant is in effect just trying to hide the development behind a more extensive planted frontage onto Broadwater Lane. This particular area of Hurst and the listed buildings within it very much contribute to the historical settlement. Development anywhere within the applicant's blue line area will have a detrimental effect on the AOSC and the listed buildings within it.

Instead of infilling the green gap along Broadwater Lane, this proposal now infills the green gap along Hogmoor Lane. Plots 4 to 7 effectively front on to Hogmoor Lane, but have no access on to it, which is a poor design feature. Four large, modern, executive style houses built higher than the lane itself would have a very intrusive and urbanising effect, and would eliminate existing views across the open fields.

4. Flooding

The applicant is well aware of the flooding concerns of Hurst residents. Many residents have already posted photos of flooding in both Broadwater Lane and Hogmoor Lane in recent years. The applicant's response to resident's concerns is very dismissive. They merely conclude that as the houses will be built higher than the surrounding lanes, and attenuation will collect rainfall, then that is sufficient to meet current regulations. The WBC s19 flood report stated that "assets" (i.e. drainage ditches and culverts) in Hurst were very poor. It is therefore irresponsible of the developer to assume that ditches and culverts in the area will work as expected. They have not done so in the past, and the flooding in Poplar Lane, very close to this site, is testament to that fact.

5. Sustainability

Hurst residents know that living in the village requires a car to access more extensive and higher level services such as employment, doctors, dentists, shopping and leisure facilities. We are a two person household and we have two cars. We own cycles but have not used them for many years as the local roads are now too busy and the traffic is too fast. Once in a blue moon we walk to Twyford station to use the train, but would not dream of doing so on a regular basis as it is at least a 30 minute walk each way. We would also only choose to walk there during daylight hours when the weather is good. We very rarely use the Hurst bus (it is too expensive and the service is not regular enough) and the park and ride requires a trip out of the village by car. For residents of Hurst a car is essential for daily life .

6. WBC Local Plan

The local plan is now at a more advanced stage with hearings due to take place in the next four months. The progress of the plan should now be given more weight, with Hurst still being proposed as a limited development location. In the last few years Hurst has seen 4 properties already built at Sawpit Road and an additional 23 are to be built imminently on School Road. These 27 extra properties will place additional pressure on primary school places and must be considered as a sufficient recent contribution by a limited development location. There is no urgent demonstrable need for any more expensive executive style houses in Hurst.

Conclusion

No must mean no. The Inspector refused application 240583 for many good reasons. The constant tweaking of plans and the use of repeated applications is an attempt to wear everybody down. The presumption in favour of sustainable development did not apply four months ago, and nothing has changed since then. The harms of this development still significantly outweigh the benefits - the only benefit being the negligible addition of seven unaffordable houses.

I urge the Council to maintain its resistance to any development on this site.