



ANDREWS OF HINDHEAD – OUTLINE APPLICATION 2016/1833

The Haslemere Society wishes to object to this outline application because of :-

- Its overbearing size
- Loss of employment and service facilities
- Inadequate standards of accommodation and amenity
- Drainage questions.

We explain these objections in more detail as follows :-

1.0 OVERBEARING SIZE

It is stated that pre application advice was given on the basis of a three storey scheme but this application is for four storeys, described misleadingly as “three storeys with accommodation within its roof space” which is four storeys and it does not refer to the high main four storey wing fronting on to Portsmouth Road.

It is also stated that this will fit comfortably with the scale of residential development along this side of the road. We disagree with this and would also point out the dominating effect on the two storey housing on the opposite side of the road.



The applicant states that the proposed development has been carefully designed to fit comfortably on the site and will be in keeping with the character and appearance of the area. It does not. Our view is that it has been carefully designed to maximise the number of units to be built on the site to produce the maximum profit at a very high density of 74 units per hectare against the 2002 Local Plan H4 Policy limit of 50. It is thus overdevelopment

## 2) LOSS OF EMPLOYMENT AND SERVICES

In addition to garden machinery servicing and sales several other businesses traded on this site and the loss of these facilities will be felt by local people as well as the employees. In recent years Haslemere (including Hindhead) has lost 19 commercial premises to residential development and with this declining employment the area is in danger of becoming purely a dormitory town and most of its inhabitants having to travel considerable distances for services and employment. Any relocation of these businesses outside of Haslemere will still result in the undesirable loss of commercial space within Haslemere. This application contravenes Local Plan Policies IC2 and IC3 and also does not meet sustainability objectives.

## 3) INADEQUATE STANDARDS OF ACCOMMODATION AND AMENITY

The applicant refers to the site being suitable for the elderly because it is very close to shops and is well served by a variety of alternative modes of transport. The shops in Hindhead are few and do not provide the required everyday supplies. There is a small supermarket some distance away in Grayshott and the main supermarkets are much further away in Wey Hill or Haslemere town centre. The local shops are very limited as are medical facilities.



The local bus services are very infrequent, limited in destinations and slow making car ownership an important factor. The applicant's indication that a seven seater people carrier is to be provided (for a population of approaching a hundred) bears out this point. The 'out of town' location of this proposed large development does not meet sustainable transport objectives.

As this is not a town centre location the stipulated minimum Waverley parking provision of one space per unit will need to be increased (1.14 spaces provided). The parking facilities provided by other retirement housing operators, referred to, are irrelevant.

The development is referred to as retirement accommodation but there appear to be no specified controls to prevent employed people occupying the properties which would increase the minimum parking provision significantly. This needs to be clarified. Homes for working people require more parking.

A lift is not described on the drawings but a square at the corner of a corridor which might be indicating a lift is only 1.5m x 1.5m and a very inadequate size. A single lift for so many residents is also inadequate, providing no back up when one lift is out of action, being serviced or in an emergency (eg. for someone on a stretcher) for 37 apartments.

The description of the two storey accommodation as "cottages" is very misleading and inaccurate. These are small terraced houses.

Rooms appear to be of absolute minimum sizes; presumably to maximise profit. A bathroom and a kitchen each 2.5m (8ft) square is totally inadequate and the general space provision too small for modern standards of living.



The Waverley 2002 Local Plan policy H4 (inadequately) refers to a limitation on space but this is shortly to be superseded by a new plan. The Haslemere Society recently commented regarding the new Pre Submission Local Plan that many local older couples accustomed to living in larger family houses with generously sized rooms and gardens wanting to downsize will not be attracted to such cramped housing. This scheme will not attract many people with gardens and more spacious houses and thus will not help to release larger homes for younger families. The application wrongly claims that these cramped, minimum space homes with very little external recreation space (only about 12 sq. m per unit including pathways) will enable existing under occupied housing to be released!

#### 4) DRAINAGE

Several letters of objection have referred to the current dire drainage problems in this area. There appear to be serious current problems with the foul sewerage system but this application does not indicate whether the existing sewer has the capacity to cope with the increased discharges from the fifty new housing units or indeed investigate the condition of the existing sewer.

The proposed large development will result in almost the whole site being hard surfaced and a resulting significant amount of rainwater to be collected and disposed of. A soakaway system is proposed. The Soil Investigation Report indicates that a water infiltration test was only carried out in a borehole and strongly recommends that a full soakage test is carried out in a pit at an appropriate level to confirm the feasibility of a soakaway system and its required size.



The soakaway cannot be located below or within 5m of the buildings which occupy most of the site. The excavation for a large soakaway shown adjacent existing mature trees on the Portsmouth Road frontage will cut through their roots leading to the loss of these trees contrary to the recommendations of the submitted tree report. The applicant indicates the importance of these trees in the landscaping proposals with which The Haslemere Society concurs.

The applicant has misleadingly submitted several almost identical documents labelled as 'Drainage Strategy'. These are merely standard Drainage Enquiries provided by Thames Water and do not contain any strategy or confirmatory design for the drainage system.

It is appreciated that this is an outline planning application but the foul sewerage system and the disposal of rainwater are such important and fundamental issues these must be satisfactorily addressed before an outline approval is considered.

The Haslemere Society wishes though to strongly object to this application and would suggest a smaller scheme including some commercial content.



