



The Planning Officer
Waverley Borough Council
Western Planning Committee
BY EMAIL

1st September 2022

Dear Sir

Red Court Phase 2 WA/2022/01887 - Objection

The Haslemere Society wishes to object to the above planning application on the following grounds:

- 1. Development on AONB land.** The proposed development is situated on the Surrey Hills AONB in an elevated position and is immediately north of the boundary of the South Downs National Park. It is a fundamental planning tenet that no development should be permitted on AONB apart from exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances are not present, are patently not demonstrated and so the application should be refused.
- 2. Town boundary.** This site is outside the agreed Haslemere settlement boundary. As such it runs counter to planning policy of developing within the town boundary and avoiding urban sprawl into unspoilt countryside. It represents a substantial new and isolated estate on the outskirts of the town. This is a further ground for refusal.
- 3. Provision of fresh water.** The submission by statutory consultee Thames Water clearly indicates that there is currently no capacity for anything other than a small additional water provision for the town without significant upgrading of the mains network. There is clear and evident equivocation by Thames Water in their ability to provide additional fresh water supply. The latest few summer months indicate that this is likely to be an understatement. Periods of mains outage have occurred in the town to the distress and inconvenience of existing residents. Water has had to be trucked to the town regularly by tanker and discharged into the mains reservoir both this summer and last. This is an unacceptable and unsustainable method of supply. With the additional housing both being developed and pending development in the town, this represents a real hazard of supply failure.
- 4. Unsustainable location.** The situation of the proposed development site is unsustainable and predicates extensive and regular use of cars by residents. This, in itself, would be grounds for refusal of permission. The topography of the area and distances from the town centre and railway station make walking or cycling unattractive,

arduous and time consuming. To situate a major development so far from rail transport, shops and services runs entirely contrary to planning policy. In addition, through pages of fanciful, self-serving and speculative verbiage, the Redwood Environmental Statement Chapter 12 on Traffic and Transport concludes that any environmental impacts attributable to the proposed development would be 'negligible'. The Statement doesn't begin to address the dangers of access from the site to the fast traffic on the busy Midhurst Road. Neither is there any consideration of the significant additional traffic generated by the proposed development on the major pinch points in the town at peak periods. Traffic gridlock even now, is not an uncommon event in the town. The likely requirement for additional parking in the town to facilitate the additional 140 dwellings isn't even mentioned. The applicant has also submitted a Residential Travel Plan in support of the application by promoting access by walking and cycling. The very existence of this submission appears to acknowledge problems of access by foot and cycling. However, it attempts to whitewash these by providing meaningless minimum distances to the town and station determined as the crow flies. Only a trained athlete could reach the station and town centre in the times suggested in the plan. Most importantly, there is no recognition of the actual distances and topographical challenges for the walker or the cyclist, which are substantial. An almost comical solution of appointing a 'Travel Plan Coordinator' is proposed **after completion** of the development. The intention appears to be to browbeat residents into physically active modes of transport. The recognised probability of failing to meet predetermined targets would be dealt with in the most desultory manner with no recourse to the developer. Frankly, this whole Residential Travel Plan is disingenuous and looks like a desperate attempt to minimise the very real difficulties of walking and cycling up and down the steep hills to and from the proposed development.

Yours Sincerely

David Smith
(on behalf of The Haslemere Society Planning Group)