



The Planning Officer
Waverley Borough Council
Western Planning Committee
BY EMAIL

6th April 2023

Dear Sir

WA/2022/01887 - Objection

The Haslemere Society wishes to object to the above application on the basis that all of the comments in our original objection dated 1st September 2022 remain valid for this resubmitted application but we wish to restate the most important of them:

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 simply not present or demonstrated here and therefore the application should be refused.
2. The proposal remains contrary to Policy H1.3 of the Haslemere Neighbourhood Plan given the above and it is outside of the Town Settlement Boundary.
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 maximum of 50 dwellings without significant upgrading of the mains network.
There is clear statement from Thames Water underlines their inability to provide a material additional fresh water supply. This statement should be taken seriously given the significant periods of mains outage which have occurred in the town to the distress and inconvenience of existing residents.
Water still has to be trucked to the town regularly by tanker and discharged into the mains reservoir. This is an unacceptable and unsustainable method of supply.
With the additional housing both being developed and pending development in the town, the statement from Thames Water is to be welcomed as this development presents a real hazard of a material supply failure without a major infrastructure upgrade.
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 as the topography of the area and distances from the town centre and railway station make walking or cycling unattractive, arduous and time

consuming. To place a major development so far from rail transport, shops and services runs entirely contrary to planning policy.

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 Haslemere and 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 which assume that all of the new residents will be able to take the same aerial route as a crow !

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. The inane suggestion of appointing a 'Travel Plan Coordinator' after completion of the development is ridiculous and an insult.

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.

The Residential Travel Plan is disingenuous and seeks to minimise the very real difficulties of walking and cycling up and down the steep hills to and from the proposed development thereby necessitating material increases on vehicle movements for which there is simply not enough room.

Yours Sincerely

C L R Boobyer (by email)
(on behalf of The Haslemere Society Planning Group)