



26th September 2022

E-Mail to Development.control@wokingham.gov.uk

For the attention of the Case Officer, Development Control. Re; Planning Application; 222664

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re; Alma Cottage, Lodge Road, Hurst, Wokingham RG10 0EH; Full Application for the Proposed Erection of 1 No. Residential Dwelling and Associated Parking and Access in Rear Garden of Existing Residential Dwelling

Hurst Village Society (HVS) is grateful for the opportunity to comment on this planning application.

HVS fully supports this application, and believes that if the development proposals therein are actioned together with those proposals included in the two existing planning permissions 201282 and 212124, as referred to in the Design and Access Statement, there will be a general and positive improvement to the character and visual amenity of the residential area of Whistley Green. It is important to note that whilst the contribution is modest, the proposals will also result in a positive contribution to the overall delivery of housing in the area, the importance of which is emphasised in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The Society notes that the applicant has held Pre-Application discussions with Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) in its role as the Planning Authority and that

“the scheme presented in this application has taken on board the comments from the pre-app response to successfully alleviate concern.” In addition, on behalf of HVS, I have met the applicant on site and would agree with him that the pattern of development in this area is demonstrably mixed, such that, as stated above these proposals, particularly having regard to the design of the new property and the enhancements to the existing property, will provide a welcome enhancement to the visual amenity of the whole site. The Society fully believes that the differences of opinion between the applicant and the Planning Authority as to the interpretation of details in the Design Guidance in relation to “overlooking” and “separation distance” can be very easily resolved so as to allow this application in its current form to be approved.

HVS believes that the house as proposed will provide high quality, modern accommodation to a young family that wishes to remain in the village with some notable design features; a vehicle turntable which will aid local road traffic safety in that it will allow vehicles to enter and exit the site in a forward gear; and to be thermally efficient and utilise the latest in renewable technologies and energy storage to limit reliance upon the national grid and natural gas.

In terms of Planning Policy (both local and national), importantly the site is included inside the settlement boundary of Hurst. The case as made in the Design and Access Statement in relation to the current position in relation to the emerging new Local Plan and therefore the limited weight that should be given to those relevant policies included in that plan (Paragraph 48 NPPF) is noted. The Society fully understands this logic, and so too the argument put forward in relation to the “tilted planning balance” which is necessarily triggered because of the inability of WBC to demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing. Whilst it is correct to state therefore that “planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the NPPF when taken as a whole” which the Society accepts is the case in relation to this application, HVS is also of the opinion that this application as submitted complies with all relevant planning policy and is both welcomed and should be approved on its own merits.

Hurst Village Society hopes that these comments are helpful in your consideration of this planning application.

Yours Faithfully,

John Osborne, on behalf of Hurst Village Society