



East Horsley

Parish Council

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21st June 2021

GBC Planning Services,
Guildford Borough Council,
Millmead House,
Millmead,
Guildford GU2 4BB

Attention: Case officer, John Busher

RE: Application 20/P/02067 Land at Manor Farm, East Lane, West Horsley KT24 6HQ

Hybrid application for a) Outline planning application for 7 self-build/custom build dwellings with access from Long Reach and b) Full planning application for the erection of 132 dwellings alongside provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), together with new Junior Sports Hall, two Padel Tennis Courts and Nursery School Facility with associated accesses, car parking, refuse/re cycling storage, landscaping, earthworks and infrastructure following demolition of existing bungalow and agricultural buildings.

Dear John,

On behalf of East Horsley Parish Council ('EHPC') I am writing to OBJECT to the planning application by Thakeham Homes ('Thakeham') for the development at Manor Farm in West Horsley as summarised above.

On 18th Jan 2021, I wrote to you setting out the detailed reasons for our OBJECTION to this proposed development. For convenience I also attach a copy of this original submission with this letter.

Recently, we have received notification from GBC of revised plans which have been submitted by Thakeham. Having reviewed these new plans I can confirm that East Horsley Parish Council maintains our OBJECTION to the proposed development, for the reasons explained below.

Reasons for maintaining our Objection

As set out in our letter of 18th Jan 2021, our reasons for OBJECTING to this development are summarised as follows:

- a) The proposal is for an urbanised development set within a semi-rural location, where we noted in particular:
 - *The high level of housing density proposed*
 - *The high Plot Ratios for the majority of dwellings*
 - *The excessively tall building heights*
 - *The urban forms of street layout*
 - *The lack of rural character in the housing designs*
 - *The numerous street lights*
- b) The development will have a material adverse impact on local infrastructure
- c) The development may have severe traffic impacts within the local area
- d) There is a disappointing response towards addressing Climate Change

None of these concerns have been addressed at all by the revised plans, which show only minor design changes from the original Thakeham submission.

One issue in particular that we previously criticised were the excessively tall building heights proposed for most of the homes at this site. Below we set out a comparison of the ridge heights shown in the revised plans as compared to the initial submission:

<u>Plot No.s</u>	<u>Initial ridge height (m)</u>	<u>Revised ridge height (m)</u>
38	8.61	8.61
41	8.61	8.44
59-64	8.54	7.80
65-68	9.22	9.22
69-74	9.27	9.27
75-80	9.27	9.27
98-103	9.46	9.46
115-120	9.46	9.46

As shown, despite the criticism we levelled at the initial proposal that the housing was much too tall, it seems that just 6 houses out of a total of 139 proposed will see any reduction at all to their ridge heights.

Overall, and taking into account the latest revised plans, we calculate there will be no less than 61 houses, out of a total development of 139 homes, where the proposed ridge heights will be in excess of 9 metres. Except for three plots (42, 49 & 88), all of the remaining houses will have ridge heights in excess of 8 metres.

Such tall urban-style housing is not seen at all today in the rural village of West Horsley where most houses have ridge heights in the range of 7.0 – 8.0 metres. It is especially inappropriate at this particular location on the edge of the settlement, where the convention is usually to soften the impact of the rural transition through smaller houses and bungalows.

This theme is explicitly included in the West Horsley Neighbourhood Plan where Design Management Policy WH2 states:

i. Where adjoining the boundaries of the built-up area of the village, the emphasis will be on the provision of housing types and built forms that help maintain an appropriate transitional edge to the village and maintain local character and countryside views;

ii. Buildings should be of good design and use high quality materials. Scales, heights and form of buildings should be sympathetic to the existing built environment;

The proposal to construct so many tall buildings over most of this site is clearly contrary to Design Management Policy WH2 of the West Horsley Neighbourhood Plan.

Moreover, almost the entire housing stock at the site is being proposed with very large roof spaces which would be easily convertible into a third level of accommodation. In effect almost all the dwellings are being pre-designed as three storey housing. As a result, we anticipate that many householders will in future readily seek to extend their homes with the outcome that most of the dwellings at this site would very soon become 4, 5 or 6 bedroom homes.

Such a housing mixture is directly contrary to the housing mix policy of the West Horsley Neighbourhood Plan (Policy WH4) which states that:

Proposals for new residential development within the defined settlement boundary of West Horsley will be supported, provided they have had full regard to the need to deliver the following housing types:

i. Open market one, two and three bedroom market homes and bungalows suited to occupation by younger families and older households;....

We note that there are just two bungalows being proposed for this development of 139 homes.

Given the very large roof spaces in almost all the house designs being proposed, the resultant housing mix at this development will very quickly become heavily skewed towards 4 – 6 bedroom houses, contrary to Neighbourhood Plan policy WH4. It is also contrary to Local Plan Policy H1, which identifies the need for 80% of new market homes and 95% of new affordable homes to be either 1, 2 or 3 bedroom dwellings (Para 4.2.4). The resultant development, if approved, will come nowhere near to meeting these housing mix targets.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposal submitted for Manor Farm will involve a highly urbanised development of very tall houses that are completely out of character for this semi-rural location and which would result in a housing mix policy contrary to both GBC Local Plan policy and the policy of the West Horsley Neighbourhood Plan.

None of the issues we flagged in our earlier submission of 18th Jan 2021 have been addressed by the revised plans. Accordingly East Horsley Parish Council OBJECTS to this proposed development and requests that GBC should refuse this application.

Yours faithfully,

N.S.Clemens

Nicholas Clemens
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer,
East Horsley Parish Council