

Hersham Residents Association

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(by email) to:

The Planning Department
Elmbridge Borough Council

info@hershamresidents.info

18th November 2016

Reference Number: 2016/2217

Email: tplan@elmbridge.gov.uk

Dear Planning Team

**HRA response to Drake Park Outline Planning Application (2016/2217)
for 1,024 new residential units and associated amenities**

Whilst this development is outside Hersham, the HRA committee agreed that it should respond and object, this follows a previous letter of objection in August 2016.

Our primary concerns are that it would represent a serious incursion of the green belt, and also that a development of this size would have a substantial negative effect on traffic and associated pollution in the surrounding area, including Hersham.

These and other reasons for our objection are explained in more detail below.

Green belt incursion

The committee felt that building on this land would represent a massive intrusion into an important area of green belt land which helps to separate Walton-on-Thames and Molesey.

To allow this application would also mean that, without a better regional policy to encourage development in other areas, all green belt land in and around Elmbridge would be vulnerable to development.

Transportation volume and capacity

The committee's other main concern about the application was the likely huge increase in traffic of all types not just during construction, but also crucially once the development has been built. We suggest that the impact on all roads in the area including those in Hersham would be substantial in terms of congestion and pollution.

It was agreed that Surrey County Council's traffic assessment grossly underestimated vehicle movements and overestimated the likely cycling and walking activity. It was noted that the developers would subsidise a bus route, but the committee was concerned that this subsidy was only for a year after which there was no guarantee the service would continue.

In considering this application, it is important to appreciate the wider picture that Greater London and surrounding districts, including Elmbridge, are already suffering from over-development and the transport infrastructure, especially roads and railways, are hardly able to meet existing demands.

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Other considerations

Funding and construction arrangements

The group welcomed the building of a primary school, but was concerned to learn that the developers appeared to be assuming that Surrey County Council will pay for the land and the building work; it was agreed that given the county council's current funding position, this would be unlikely to happen.

The committee were also concerned that the houses might be built first, after which the amenity work (lake football ground etc) would be vulnerable to shortfalls in funding and associated legal wrangling. To avoid this, it was suggested that a planning condition be imposed that none of the houses will be issued with completion certificates (needed to allow them to be sold) until the promised amenities have been provided.

Construction related Matters

It was highlighted that there would be massive amounts of spoil from digging the lake and other earthworks. Although some of this might be used in the flood wall which is planned, there was concern about noise dust and congestion from the vast number of lorry movements needed if this spoil was to be moved off site.

It was suggested that this development land was unsuitable because it is on a floodplain with a high water table level, and problems will likely arise when the river level is high. As a related point, it would be difficult to provide sufficient capacity to drain surface water.

The HRA would also highlight the need for the developers to provide or fund adequate sewage disposal capacity for the development.

David Lock

Chair - on behalf of the HRA

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CC to: - Hersham EBC Councillors, Margaret Hicks Surrey Council Councillor for Hersham, Walton Society and Molesey Residents Association.