

**Our reference:** COM565761394

**Application number:** 2023/2860

**Application address:** Land at 12 and Land West of 10 to 26 Claygate Lane Esher Surrey KT10 0AQ

**Name:** Mr Levins

**Address:** 21 Cumberland Drive, Esher, Surrey, KT10 0BG

**Comment type:** You object to the planning application

**Date of comment:** 29 Nov 2023

**Comment:** Claygate Lane, Chesterfield Drive, Cumberland Drive and part of Manor Road North form a unique grid pattern. It is a cohesive and balanced development from the 1930s. The application completely undermines the character of the area by shoehorning 9 dwellings into a heavily constrained, cramped and narrow plot.

The proposed design is flawed; communal gardens rather than individual gardens, inadequate service roads, architecture not in keeping with the area, poor flood-risk management, mass destruction of trees and shrubs, and disregard for birds, mammals and insects. The Financial Viability Assessment describes this as a 'high-risk development' with 22 out of 25 financial scenarios projecting the achieved return to be below 20% (P42). Consequently, 'the development cannot viably provide the targeted contributions' (P3).

The application makes references to other 'backland developments' in the area. All are not directly comparable. E.g., 5 Hinchley Way included affordable housing and building on 'previously developed' land. Neither apply to this application.

The proposal is extremely harmful to the area by its 'out of character nature' and several other points which follow.

#### IMPACT ON OUR HOME

The outlook is of uninterrupted historic woodland. Trees and other shrubs in the land border our garden. No other houses are visible. The new development would be visible and the communal lawn scheme likely to generate noise and disturbance. The distinctive outlook enjoyed for over 25 years would be lost forever.

The application does not consider the impact on our trees/shrubs/outbuildings by the removal of trees on site boundaries. Our trees should have their own root protection areas respected. We have several mature trees close to where an oak and other trees/shrubs will be removed. It will be impossible to separate intertwining roots. This will destroy shrubs and trees in our garden as well as potentially disturbing the foundations of a patio and garden shed.

#### BIODIVERSITY

The land is historic, showing up on an Ordnance Survey map of 1895. It has only ever been a wooded area. It is a haven for wildlife including goldfinches, spotted woodpeckers, robins, nuthatches, long tailed tits. Bats and owls are regularly sighted.

The Bat Survey focused on 12 Claygate Lane. It did not include other more likely roosting points. The survey references an ecological report by Cherryfield Ecology (as does the Reptile Survey). This report is not included in the application. The Reptile Survey looked at a small portion of the land (page 8 section 3.1) but could not conclusively determine the absence of species.

Both reports are therefore incomplete and without merit.

#### CLAYGATE LANE TRAFFIC

Access to the site is via a road with significant traffic. It is notorious at school pickup/dropoff times

as a traffic nightmare. Residents have witnessed increasing numbers of 'road rage' incidents. Parking in Claygate Lane, Chesterfield Drive and Cumberland Drive is at capacity Monday to Friday. 3-4 parking spaces will be lost on Claygate Lane. The reality is that there is no overflow for parking in surrounding roads.

#### SITE ITSELF

- Width of access road. Traffic flow in and out of the access road is poor, leading to more jams on Claygate Lane. The largest vehicles such as pantechnicons could not access plots 8 and 9 without damaging TPO trees, if indeed they could gain access due to their size.
- Light Pollution. The back of our house is dark at night. New street lighting, house lights, traffic movements and bike storage (with security lighting) will severely degrade the amenity of our back garden and that of all surrounding properties.
- Scheme. No individual gardens for the properties. This is out of keeping with the area and means anyone can use the 'garden' space.
- Security. High concern about potential access/security to our property as well as the strong probability of general noise nuisance.
- Flood risk. Replacing a healthy strip of biodiverse/natural soak away with 80% hard standing will mean heavy rain flowing off the land into surrounding properties. Claygate Lane is already in a 'flood risk' area. The Flood Risk Assessment does not include assessment of the impact on adjoining gardens likely to be affected by waterlogging.

#### PLANNING APPLICATION OMISSIONS

- Only 5 of 6 TPOs are shown on master plan
- No provision for siting of new trees
- No lighting plan for the proposed road or security lighting on bike storage
- No consideration for damage to trees, shrubs and outbuildings belonging to adjoining properties at their respective boundaries
- Ecological report by Cherryfield Ecology.

In Pre-Application documents EBC required certain information to be submitted with the Planning Application. These are absent from the application:

- Justification why the benefits of the scheme outweigh the identified harm (letter to developers - EBC 14/12/2023)
- Biodiversity net gain plan (letter to developers - EBC 14/4/2022)