

**Our reference:** COM567755220

**Application number:** 2023/2860

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

**Name:** Mr Cruickshank

**Address:** 14 Claygate Lane, Esher, Surrey, KT10 0AQ

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

**Date of comment:** 07 Dec 2023

**Comment:** 1. Massive loss of unique Privacy and Amenity

Currently when I look out onto our back garden we see no other houses just our trees, neighbours' trees and the trees in The Woodland at the bottom of our garden. At night we see no light from houses opposite on Cumberland Drive and none at all from any other houses. The proposed development would remove that. Additionally, the rear of our house is largely floor to ceiling glass doors across the width our house, for which we have no curtains as we are not overlooked at all - again the proposed development would lose that very valued privacy.

2 Destroys a unique high value urban Woodland

The development cannot be implemented without destroying a high value urban Woodland that has been in place for over 150 years. It would lead to a massive loss of biodiversity for the area. Having lived with my family at 14 Claygate Lane since 2012, we are conscious of how unique our plot is to have such rich wildlife ranging from foxes, mice, bats, woodpeckers, owls, frogs and a multitude of insects. My family, like a number of our neighbours, simply call the land 'The Woodland'.

The owners of the urban Woodland do not care about this ecology. This was clearly demonstrated when prior to this application being submitted, they performed an act of eco vandalism. They gained access through a neighbour's house – they have no access themselves to their land as it is landlocked – and hired two men with chainsaws and instructed them to cut down as many trees as they could. In addition, they cruelly ring barked a number of other trees, presumably in the hope that they would die.

Myself and a group of residents from the properties adjoining The Woodland, made a combined single offer to purchase the plot in order to protect it from any development. Our offer was declined by the owners as insufficient.

3. Greenfield site not viable

The loss of such a precious piece of Woodland is not justified by the gain of 7 homes (2 sets of semis and a block of 3 flats, 3 buildings altogether). The development in the land to the West of 10-26 Claygate Lane is not viable or appropriate for a greenfield site.

4. Not consistent with the Character of the Area in terms of the design appearance of the proposed

new houses

The area of Claygate Lane, Chesterfield Drive, Cumberland Drive and the section of Manor Road North that those streets adjoin, all follow a repeat pattern of 4 or 5 designs of 30's detached houses (with exception of the heritage house at 112 Manor Road North). The building proposed for the development of both the garden land and The Woodland are not in any way consistent with this design.

5. Destroys the character of the area in terms of the pattern and layout of the houses

The area of Claygate Lane, Chesterfield Drive, Cumberland Drive and the section of Manor Road North that those streets adjoin, all follow the same layout. They are deep plots with gardens front and rear, they have long back gardens and front driveways with tree lined streets. This is a unique layout and the new Cul de Sac development on the greenfield site would destroy that character.

6. Worsen an existing challenging traffic problem on Claygate Lane

A new access road and additional traffic from the development will make an already very difficult traffic situation significantly worse. There is already numerous occurrences of gridlock, which often require intervention by teachers from Hinchley Wood School. On a number of occasions, the former headmaster, Mr Bartlett came out to unblock the jammed traffic and calm the tempers of irate motorists stuck and refusing to back up. I have witnessed this on many occasions as I work from home at a desk that looks out onto Claygate Lane, opposite Hinchley Wood secondary school.

These jams or gridlocks occur because there is only room for one way traffic when cars are parked on Claygate lane. It is not just at school pick up and drop off times, but at any time of the day.