

Our reference: COM616077084

Application number: 2023/2889

Application address: Land Off Anyards Road and Copse Road Cobham Surrey KT11 2LH

Name: Mr DAVIES

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Comment type: You object to the planning application

Date of comment: 20 May 2024

Comment: I have posted a previous set of objections to this application, but having received notice from EBC on 09/05/24 of 'amendments' to the application – although not what these were – I have now had time to again go through the extensive documentation, and have these addenda.

1. - The most striking apparent alteration is that the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment has reversed its findings.

The original report concluded – “3.12 Initial calculations indicate that a +60.02% net gain would result from the current agreed site layout.”.

The amended document now states – “3.12 Initial calculations indicate that a -7.31% net loss would result from the current agreed site layout.”, with the new appearance of red panels on the summary tables – indicating a failure to satisfy the requirements of “Same broad habitat or a higher distinctiveness habitat required (\geq)” and “Same distinctiveness or better habitat required \geq ”.

Not only is it worrying that the original claim of a substantial biodiversity net gain has been revised to a significant net loss, but the fact that this has happened with little or no updating of the site plan must beg the question of the credibility of the reporting experts, and how much even the current report can be relied upon. Be that as it may, I strongly object to the significant biodiversity loss even as currently claimed, and that it seems it cannot be offset locally.

2. – With reference to the site plan 4465430.pdf, and the memorandum from Joint Waste Solutions (13/05/24)

The latter states that access to Copse Road should “Be a minimum of 4metres high and wide.” And “Be arranged for the collection vehicle to continue in a forward direction.” If the plan is to scale, then this requirement is only barely met at best. Also, this minimal width runs for around 30 metres, making it barely possible for cars to pass both ways, and impossible for a car to pass a refuse collection vehicle. It is hard to see that there would not be circumstances in which the collection vehicle would be obliged to reverse, and that there would not be circumstances conducive to conflict. This compounds the other serious access difficulties alluded to by many local objectors previously.

I note the STAGE 1 RSA RESPONSE attempts to address this, but I can only conclude that several errors have been made, or that an unrealistic interpretation of the facts has been presented. Referencing the Design Organisation Response to 'Problem 3.1.2', to start with, 4.1m is NOT adequate for vehicles to pass in the real-world conditions shown on the plan. The statement that “this access arrangement is proposed to only serve 11 parking spaces” is plainly incorrect. As the site plan shows, it clearly serves 25 parking spaces. I wonder how they could get this so wrong, and thus claim “the number of vehicle movements through this access are (sic) very low.” To use this to go on to claim, “In fact, this is a betterment over the existing situation as this access currently serves 24 garages so the number of vehicle trips expected for the proposed scheme would in theory be less.” - is disingenuous at best. You cannot equate 25 (not 11) very active

parking spaces - inadequately serving a similar number of households - with garages. Garages would not all be subject to daily movements, or even any vehicle movements at all, since they are frequently not put to that use in practice. Moving on to the statement that “the majority of vehicles using the access will be residents who will be aware of the narrow width and potential for oncoming vehicles.” Are the residents to have no visitors arriving by car? No emergency or other service vehicles? No deliveries? What are they supposed to do with this 'awareness' – presumably reverse into vehicles waiting behind them around the 90 degree bend, or back on to Copse Road with its well documented traffic issues, especially in rush-hours when residents' vehicle movements would be likely to be maximal. Finally, the statement “There is good visibility along the access road so a vehicle within the development can give-way to a vehicle entering the development” is almost ludicrously wrong. The plan clearly shows a 90-degree bend at about 30m. from the entrance, with trees potentially further obstructing visibility. Anyone wanting to “give-way to a vehicle entering the development” would be obliged to reverse round that bend, with parking spaces as an additional obstacle. In summary, the attempt to justify the access arrangements reads as a little desperate, substantially inaccurate, and is quite clearly not viable.

Overall, the amendments do not adequately address or answer the objections put forward by both private residents and the various authorities consulted. If anything they appear to worsen the case for approval. Previous objections still stand, but the inevitable disastrous impact to local traffic conditions, thus safety, alone must render this application unsustainable. I therefore urge you to reject it.