

Application TA/2025/730. Objection of 81 dwellings

Subject: Developing ⁸¹90 homes in a field to the west of Chaldon Common Road

I hereby register my objections to the above planning application for the following reasons:

Developing ⁸¹90 homes in a field to the west of Chaldon Common Road presents a range of challenges that require careful consideration.

Below is an in-depth overview of the key factors involved:

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1. Planning and Regulatory Constraints

• Green Belt and Protected Land:

Rural areas in and around Chaldon are designated as Green Belt or are subject to other environmental protections. Such designations are intended to prevent urban sprawl, preserve natural landscapes, and maintain local biodiversity. Securing planning permission in these areas is inherently challenging, and proposals for large-scale development should face significant scrutiny from planning committees and will encounter strong objections from local residents.

• Local Planning Policies:

The local council's planning framework includes strict guidelines regarding the density and nature of new developments in rural or semi-rural settings. A proposal for 90 homes should be viewed as inconsistent with the strategic vision for the area, leading to delays, required modifications, or even outright rejections unless significant compromises are made.

2. Infrastructure and Service Provision

• Transportation and Road Capacity:

Chaldon Common Road is a rural route, designed to accommodate relatively low traffic volumes. It is used constantly by dog walkers and horse riders from the local stables in Willey Farm Lane. The road has no pavements and is undulating in nature due to being constantly excavated to effect service works. The introduction of ⁸¹90 new homes with the possibility of as many as 180 cars, as well as delivery vehicles, would significantly increase traffic, leading to congestion, compromised road safety, and the need for costly upgrades to the road network. Emergency access and public transport options would also require comprehensive planning. The developer's plan for an emergency entrance in Willey Farm Lane, an unmade private road, is frankly laughable. A proposed development of 8 houses of a similar nature at number 22A Chaldon Common Road in 2009, rightly refused by Tandridge District Council, was dismissed at appeal by the Inspector citing several factors including the condition of Chaldon Common Road, being narrow with no pavements. That development would have involved approximately one-eighth of the road, this proposal will affect almost the entire length! Current difficulties exiting on to Rook Lane, an already over-used 'B' Road would become intolerable during busy times with traffic likely backed up over the entire length of the road. The developer's suggestion of a roundabout in mitigation would make no difference whatsoever as one would still have to

give way to the right and traffic lights would be even worse as has been proven many times over when service/roadworks are being carried out. The development of up to 30 properties in Lavender Close, High Standing, Birchwood Lane, Birchcroft Close and other brownfield infill have been introduced over the years with no consideration given to the highway infrastructure.

- Utilities and Public Services:

The existing infrastructure in the area is not equipped to handle the demands of a new residential development. Extensive upgrades or extensions would be needed for utilities such as water, sewage, electricity, gas, and broadband service. Additionally, the provision of public services including schools, healthcare facilities, and community centres are already overstretched and insufficient for an influx of new residents, necessitating further investment and careful long-term planning.

3. Environmental Considerations

- Loss of Natural Habitat and Biodiversity:

Converting this open field into a residential area will lead to the loss of valuable green space and adversely affect local ecosystems and wildlife. Environmental impact assessments (previously carried out by a local highly respected ecologist) have shown the potential ecological consequences, and all necessary mitigation measures would add significant costs and complexities.

- Drainage and Flood Risk Management:

Fields often play a crucial role in natural water management. Development will alter existing drainage patterns, increasing surface runoff and raising what are already considerable well established flood risks. Robust engineering solutions would be required to mitigate these risks, further complicating the project.

4. Socio-Economic and Community Impact

- Local Community and Cultural Impact:

The introduction of a large residential development in this rural area will fundamentally change the character of the local community. There will be significant local opposition due to concerns about the loss of rural charm, increased noise, and shifts in community dynamics. Such opposition must lead to extended consultation periods and additional planning delays.

- Heritage and Landscape Preservation:

The field is near historical sites and landscapes of significance requiring additional protective measures, potentially restricting the design or scale of the development. Sensitive design and planning would be required to harmonise new construction with the surrounding heritage. The proposals offered thus far by the Developer fall well short of these requirements.

5. Financial Viability

The financial viability of developing ³¹20 homes in this location hinges on several critical factors. No doubt cost estimates have been accounted for when land acquisition costs are elevated due to the scarcity of suitable development sites in desirable rural settings are considered. Moreover, the costs of upgrading or extending essential infrastructure, such as roads, utilities, and public services can be substantial. Supply chain costs, including materials and labour, are

subject to market fluctuations and may experience further increases due to regional shortages or logistical challenges, including site access for development.

A fair process estimate would involve comprehensive feasibility studies that encompass detailed projections for all capital expenditures, contingency funds for unexpected overruns, and an analysis of potential delays due to regulatory or environmental challenges. Additionally, the economic return on investment must be carefully balanced against the risk of market saturation in the local housing market and potential fluctuations in buyer demand. All these factors contribute to a complex cost-benefit analysis that must be rigorously reviewed before proceeding.

Conclusion

While the prospect of developing ³¹ homes to the west of Chaldon Common Road may seem attractive in terms of utilising open land, the practical challenges including planning restrictions, infrastructure limitations, environmental concerns, and substantial financial risks render the project highly complex. A comprehensive feasibility study, along with stakeholder consultations and environmental impact assessments, would be critical to evaluate whether such a development is both viable and sustainable in the long term.

It is more probable that the developer has once again undertaken this whim because of the significant financial gain imagined, rather than a desire to build sustainable dwellings for the greater good and they would be better served to look elsewhere for a site with more balanced infrastructure capabilities.

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Signature: 

Date: 23-8-2025