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Chesterfield
Western Avenue
Emsworth
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10th July 2017



Mrs Rachael McMurray.
Planning development
Havant Borough Council
Public Service Plaza
Civic Centre Road
Havant
Hants
PO9 2AX

Dear Mrs McMurray,

Ref: Planning Application-APP/17/00633- Objection

I am writing to notify you that I **strongly object** to the proposed development by McCarthy and Stone, that is to replace Orchard House, the existing residential dwelling. This 3 story building with 25 double bed retirement flats, with commercial communal services, looks more like a block of business offices. It is over bearing and not in keeping with Western Avenue, which is a street with great character, charm and serenity.

Increased housing is inevitable and necessary, but to replace a single house with the type and size of the proposed application, which results in loss of garden and loss of the last open aspect of the neighbourhood, is overdeveloping land that is already of a high density. **Please see my husband's submitted objection which has photographs to demonstrate this. We have submitted an objection each, because we both have many points we need to make**

This proposed development will bring a huge increase in traffic, pollution, noise and chaos. This will compromise the safety of all the residents in the 5 remaining dwellings, along with the staff and residents of the nursing home. I believe it will bring harm to both me and my family.

I ask Havant Council to take all of the above concerns into consideration and refuse this application on these grounds. I will attempt to elaborate further in the sub headed texts below.

Safety

I have deliberately mentioned this aspect first because being disabled, one of the benefits of living here in Western Avenue, is that I can go out walking along the path with my crutches or in my wheel chair without feeling at risk. It is a no through road and there are very few passing cars in front of my home. The path is a private road which prevents vehicles from the Nursing home, parking or turning in our road. These benefits have enabled me to maintain and promote a good quality of life and I have been very happy here with my family for many years. My adult daughter visits frequently with her toddler, she feels safe to park her car outside our house, if she needs to, because there is no passing traffic, or very little. The proposed development will impact and change my daily living greatly, as well as compromise my safety, along with my families. The increase in passing vehicles will increase greatly, no longer will I feel safe when crossing the path outside my home.

Access and Traffic

Western Avenue has a very narrow entrance and currently vehicles cannot exit and enter safely, unless they use the whole of the width of the entrance. There are no road markings and visibility is poor on approaching the exit, on to the A259. Lorries servicing the Nursing Home very often park directly outside the entrance, or just inside the entrance, causing hazardous blind spots. Cars have to drive on the foot path, which is a dropped kerb, to be able to exit safely. Pedestrians walk along the path, quite rightly expecting vehicles to give way, they do not realise this is the exit to the road.

Visitors, delivery lorries, do not always slow down and check, as they are not aware of the danger. This danger will only increase if the volume of traffic is allowed to grow. Another extra 104-129 vehicle movements have been calculated to be attributable to the proposed development. Western Avenue was not built for this purpose and is not fit for purpose. The road surface is not suitable for this increase in traffic, it will damage the path interface and potholes will develop.

The increase in traffic at the Western Avenue exit/entrance is likely to cause congestion and chaos on to the A259, with cars backing up and obstructing free flow of traffic, causing long delays. There is already long delays getting out of Western Ave, with traffic building up behind. This is already a hazard for an accident, the huge increase in traffic will only increase this risk further.

Western Avenue is a single track, no through road which serves 6 residential properties and the Nursing Home. The road is very narrow and cars, for the most part, cannot pass each other at the same time. There are no street lights, road markings, kerbs or pavements. Car parking outside of the Nursing Home can be chaotic. The Nursing home car park is frequently congested. Visitors and taxis to the home often park dangerously, blocking and obstructing the road. Emergency ambulances frequent the home often with no where to park, and also end up blocking the road. This is unsafe and may well obstruct the crew doing their duty. The staff regularly cross the path loaded with meals, clothes or equipment, and currently don't have to anticipate the risk of vehicles coming towards them. The increases in traffic will put them at significant risk, increasing the chance of an accident occurring.

All the factors I have mentioned, demonstrate just how totally unsafe and preposterous it is, to allow this application to be developed, this, contradicts Policy CS8, that requires the safety aspects of the development to be paramount and on these grounds planning permission must be refused.

Noise

Increases in traffic, will bring an increase in noise and disturbance at all times of the day. Western Avenue will lose its unique ambience and tranquility. The 25 bedded proposal will bring more people and more noise again. Our residence is almost facing the proposed development, noise from passing vehicles, deliveries, visitors, emergency vehicles will impact us greatly. No longer will we benefit and enjoy our privacy and peacefulness, key factors why we chose to live here.

Pollution

As a consequence of the increase in traffic to the proposed site, the pollution from the cars, lorries, etc will directly affect my husband and I. Our health may well be compromised over time from this.

Effect on the Character of the Area

Currently there are 6 character residences in Western Avenue, set in pleasant, quiet, green surroundings. We look across to Claremont and Orchard House both of which have beauty, character and plenty of green space. The proposal of this 3 storey monstrosity, which has no character and would look better situated on an industrial estate, is preposterous. Its sheer size will dominate the Avenue, taking away light, trees and vegetation. We will be sandwiched in between the Nursing Home and the new proposed site.

This is certainly not in keeping with our current surroundings and will change the character of our secluded, private neighbourhood into noise and chaos. This new development does not respect the character of our surroundings and is therefore in breach of Policy CS9 which requires housing proposals to do so. The law states that where a policy is breached, planning permission should be denied, so I ask the Council to refuse the application on these grounds.

Impact on the Wildlife

Western Avenue has a small wood, situated just to the right of our residence. This attracts many diverse wildlife species. A keen wildlife supporter, I invite birds into my garden to feed and encourage all types of wildlife species to use the woodland and utilise my garden. Occasionally a hedgehog can be seen foraging, using the safety of the path to travel across the gardens. Pipistrelle bats have been frequently cited flying in and around Western Avenue. Both bats and hedgehogs are on the endangered species list and must be protected.

The trees, bushes and shrubs are also part of their habitat and vital for their survival. It is devastating to see the proposed plan indicates that the boundary walls, trees, shrubs and vegetation will be removed and replaced with a car park. Our wild life is already very fragile due to overdeveloping in the area. We have a chance to preserve it and save the homes of many of our wildlife, not demolish it with this proposed development.

Please may I ask the council to support us in promoting the Planning Law that advises the Council to preserve trees and shrubs to prevent harm to the wildlife and environment.

Supply of Housing Land

From consultations carried out by McCarthy and Stone before the application was submitted it is evident they will argue that the current estimate of housing need is such that the Council cannot demonstrate a five year supply of housing. Enquiries have revealed two important caveats to this perspective.

The first concerns a Supreme Court judgment issued in May 2017 where, it is understood, the Court decided that whilst the absence of a five year supply of housing land introduces a presumption in favour of the grant of planning permission, that presumption cannot be consummated until after the development has been weighed against the relevant policies of the Council's development plan. A reading of policy AL1 suggests that Havant Borough Council have been well ahead of the Supreme Court's game in this as the policy states the need to take into account other plan policies where there is a deficit in housing land requirements.

The second concern relates to the overall need for housing in Havant. Residents have been informed that the Council has undertaken an assessment of housing need with other Councils in the area. The residents have been advised that these joint studies are not based on the latest Government projections of housing need, which are significantly less than those calculated in the joint study. Given this it is likely that the current five year need is likely, on the basis of latest Government figures, to be much less than the joint study indicates.

Whilst it seems likely that the Applicants will call upon housing need as a support for their policies this argument is now very much watered down, in the light of (a) the Supreme Court decision (which was not available when they spoke to residents) and (b) the reduced Government calculations of housing requirements (available to them but not revealed).

Any argument regarding the absence or otherwise of a five year supply of land is required to be tempered (through the Supreme Court decision, and the impact of Policy AL1) by a weighing of the adverse impacts of the development and conflict with policy. Key factors in this respect are the impact on the character of the area, the inadequate access arrangements, and the risk of increased surface or groundwater flooding. These point to the need to refuse the planning application.

Regards,

Angie Craven