



Effingham Parish Council



June 2017

Dear residents of Effingham,

Wisley airfield planning appeal: survey by Effingham Parish Council and Effingham Residents Association

This letter is being sent to you along with a questionnaire issued by Effingham Parish Council (EPC) and Effingham Residents Association (EFFRA) in connection with the planning appeal for a new settlement of up to 2,068 dwellings proposed at the site of the former Wisley airfield and adjoining land (115 hectares) in Ockham. We kindly ask that you take the time to complete this survey which should take no more than ten minutes.

The planning application was refused by Guildford Borough Council (GBC), subsequent to which Wisley Property Investments Ltd (the developer) have lodged an appeal. The planning appeal will take the form of a public inquiry due to start on 19th September 2017, and is expected to last four weeks. EPC and EFFRA will be presenting the views of Effingham's residents to the Inquiry. The results of this survey will form part of our evidence base.

Details of the planning application and appeal submissions may be found on the GBC planning portal (www.guildford.gov.uk/searchforaplanningapplication) under the reference 15/P/00012 and on the Planning Inspectorate website under reference APP/Y3615/W/3159894.

Responses to this survey can be made by returning the paper questionnaire to Jon Short, Parish Clerk, Effingham Parish Council, 3 Home Barn Court, The Street, Effingham, Surrey, KT24 5LG or to Sibleys Newsagent, 255 Guildford Road, Effingham, KT24 5NY, by Friday 7th July 2017. The questionnaire may be completed by any resident aged 18 years or older and living in Effingham.

Arnold Pindar
Chairman, Effingham Parish Council

Vivien White
Chairman, Effingham Residents Association

Summary of the proposed development

Wisley Property Investments Limited (WPIL) propose a phased development of up to 2,068 dwellings with up to 60 sheltered accommodation units and associated infrastructure at the old Wisley Airfield including access to the A3 (Ockham interchange) Ockham Lane and Old Lane and revised access to Elm Corner. They propose to build a new primary and secondary school and “to provide: community provision, a nursery, a health facility, local centre (incorporating food & drink, retail, a visitor centre and offices), 8 gypsy and traveller pitches, sports and recreational facilities (incorporating a floodlit sports pitch and pavilion), Sustainable Drainage Systems and an area of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) incorporating a landform feature and car parking. The erection of associated utilities infrastructure. Matter for determination is access (with matters of scale, appearance, landscaping and layout reserved)”.

The development proposal includes the following undertakings by the developer:

1. Funding contribution towards the cost of a local medical centre at the development, time-scale not specified.
2. Funding contribution towards the cost of a local primary school in Year 7 of the project, prior to the 500th home.
3. Funding contribution towards the cost of a local secondary school in Year 8 of the project, prior to the 750th home.
4. Funding contribution towards a shuttle-bus service to Horsley & Effingham Junction railway stations, however the frequency or capacity of the service is not specified, nor the length of time in years for which financial support will be provided.
5. Funding contribution for a cycle route along Old Lane.

Guildford Borough Council’s grounds for refusal (in brief) included:

1. The development is in the Green Belt and ‘very special circumstances’ had not been demonstrated to overcome the harm to the Green Belt from the development.
2. Proximity to RHS Wisley and the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area (TBHSPA).
3. Proximity to the A3/M25 bottleneck, and local road network, in particular in Ripley.
4. Totally disproportionate attempted location of 2068 dwellings within the ancient village of Ockham.
5. Lack of local transport facilities and narrow country lanes with no footpaths and cycle ways.
6. Lack of affordable housing.
7. Lack of a coherent plan to meet secondary school requirements.
8. The extreme density of the proposed housing with tiny garden spaces.
9. Heights up to five storeys.

In addition to the above Effingham Parish Council and Effingham Residents Association have also objected to the development with the following points (again in brief):

1. Impact on Effingham Junction station with increased parking and an increase in the number of commuters.
2. Increased road traffic at the junction of Effingham Common Road, Forest Road and Old Lane.
3. Road safety issues, especially at the Effingham Common Road, Forest Road junction.
4. Local roads, including Old Lane, are particularly narrow with poor visibility and unsuited to the large number of vehicle movements that would be generated by the development, and during the build phases.
5. Provision of secondary school places in the area until the proposed new secondary school is built and in operation.
6. Increased demand on local GP surgeries.
7. Pressure to put a car park on Effingham Common as additional SANG cover for the development.
8. The proposals have suggested the closure or partial closure of several roads including Old Lane which is to be made one way with the closure of the exit on to the A3. This will have a significant impact on Effingham residents driving to the A3. It would lengthen journey times, create additional congestion throughout the area and hamper the timely arrival of emergency service vehicles.
9. Impact on the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area (TBHSPA) at Wisley and Ockham Commons, due to the large increase in people, dogs and cats, and this will have a negative impact on ground nesting birds, for instance the Skylark.