



Planning Enquiries
Planning Department
Guildford Borough Council
Millmead House
Millmead
GUILDFORD
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4th September 2026

Dear Sir or Madam

**26/P/01014 Outline application for the construction of a care home (Use Class C2) with associated access, parking, landscaping, plant and site infrastructure.
Land East of Effingham Common Road, KT24 5JH**

Effingham Residents Association (EFFRA) objects to this planning application.

The following summarises EFFRA's view of the main features and implications of the proposed care home development:

- This application is for a large care home for 72 high dependency adults outside of the settlement area of Effingham Village, close to the boundary of the Effingham Conservation Area and on an undeveloped small field in the Green Belt.
- The care home will be a large dominant building, but it will have minimal gardens for residents to use allowing insufficient landscaping to mitigate its visual and acoustic effects. EFFRA estimates the care home building including the hard standing is planned to occupy about 90% of the site.
- It would be situated less than 60 metres from the buildings of St Lawrence Primary School which is located on a busy junction at the northern entrance to Effingham Village. It would add an extra access with associated vehicles movement including emergency vehicles next to the access to the primary school carpark, making four accesses within 180 metres of the junction. The junction has an important pedestrian crossing point used by children and adults going to the primary school and into the village and the footpaths are well used by children and adults. There is an obvious concern of increased risks to pedestrians.

- Much of the large building would be just 7 metres from the boundary of the primary school's playing field that is adjacent to the field and would overlook it. This is likely to give rise to safeguarding and privacy issues for the school children and noise disruption because of the proposed narrow garden of the care home. There may also be acoustic and environmental disruptions, with high dependency care homes experiencing a higher than average frequency of emergency vehicle call outs with sirens audible from the playing field.
- The care home building will also dominate the residential homes opposite. This impression would be increased as the building would be standing on land considerably higher than the road and homes. Because of the density of the proposed development the footway outside the home will be narrow and the safety of pedestrians will be compromised.
- The care home which will require 24 hour staffing would be in a village which has poor public transport. The village has a half hourly bus service with limited destinations between Guildford and Leatherhead, which only runs between the hours of 6.18 and 20.56. The nearest railway station is 1½ miles away with pedestrian access to it is via a poor, unlit footpath. Staff (who will be needed 24 hours) and visitors would therefore have to mainly rely on transportation by cars, causing the carpark and access to it to be continually in use.
- The care home would also be located close to a village with few shops, no post office or ATM, no GP practice and 8½ miles from the nearest hospital with an A&E unit which is inappropriate when its residents will generally have complex medical issues.

EFFRA believes that the above summary demonstrates that the location is entirely unsuitable for a care home. This is the view of local residents and is reflected in their personal objections. We also believe that this development is contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Guildford Development Plan and Effingham Neighbourhood Plan as detailed below:

1. **Green Belt and grey belt status** The proposal is inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The land is claimed by the applicant to be Grey Belt. EFFRA disputes this. Guildford Borough Council's recently completed Green Belt Assessment defines it as "provisionally" grey belt, but this piece of land is a continuation of the area of Green Belt identified in the Mole Valley District Council Development Plan October 2024 as making a strong contribution to containing the further outward sprawl of the built-up area of the towns of Leatherhead, Fetcham and Bookham. It also fails to comply with the "Golden Rules" of GB7 and GB8. No contribution of affordable housing is offered as required by GB8. This site will damage local infrastructure rather than improve it and will replace 0.562 hectares of green space mainly by building and concrete.
2. **Unsustainable location** The proposed location is not sustainable for a high dependency care home providing 24 hour care requiring 24 hour staffing. The site is difficult to access by public transport or by foot and not possible overnight. Staff and visitors will be inevitably reliant on transport by car. It is also not close to NHS hospital or GP services. It is a clear requirement of the NPPF and the Local Plan that development should be sustainably located (NPPF TR3 and Guildford Local Plan policies S1 and D2). This is even more important for a 24 hour high dependency care home.
3. **Lack of evidence of need and alternative sites** The applicant claims that is evidence of need for the high dependency care home and that there is a lack of alternative sites in order to justify development of an "inappropriate" site in the Green Belt. EFFRA submits that the

applicant has not proved either of these claims and that its analysis is flawed. It has used solely raw population data to forecast future need without taking account of other factors; it has based its analysis on the size of care homes it provides; it has identified a geographical area of need based on the local authority and ignoring the actual location of Effingham in the countryside on the boundary of Guildford and it has disregarded the existence of nearby care homes which currently have empty spaces.

4. **Harm to Character of the Village and Designated Heritage Assets** This development would cause harm to the character of the village and the Effingham Conservation Area, a designated heritage asset. Such harm would significantly outweigh any benefits from the provision of 72 care places and therefore under policy S5 of the NPPF should not be allowed. Although not in the Conservation Area, the site is situated at its northern entrance and will be the first view of the village before entering the Conservation Area. The scale and institutional form of the building are totally out of character with the existing buildings in the village and Conservation Area. If allowed it would be by far the largest building in the village. The applicant claims that they have reflected the local vernacular so that the building fits into its setting, but that is an impossible task with a building of this size – 92.5 metres in length, 36.2 metres in depth and 7.9 metres in height. The applicant's Heritage Report describes the buildings as *"of a domestic character and respect the prevailing character of the streetscape"*. (para 8.10 page 23), but EFFRA believes it is impossible to view a building of this size as having a domestic character or respecting the prevailing character of the streetscape when that streetscape is small in size and low in height.
5. **Impact on Amenity of School and Residents** This development would adversely impact the amenity of the school and residents nearby. This must be a factor in any balancing of the benefits of the development with the harm it will create. The close proximity of the building to the school playing fields that run adjacent to the site will inevitably cause activities on the playing field to be adversely affected by the noise from the site both during and after construction. The building will also cut off light from the playing fields on the western side and will be a dominating presence. Some windows will also overlook the school. There will be safeguarding and privacy issues from a care home being sited so close to a primary school. There will also be safety issues from vehicles using the access to the care home which will be in such close proximity to the access to the school playing fields. Neighbouring residents' amenity will also be adversely affected, both from the overbearing appearance of the building and the light, noise and disturbance from a site operating over 24 hours.

The applicant has submitted an outline application with landscaping to be reserved. EFFRA does not understand why landscaping has been reserved when the size and mass of the proposed building make landscaping an important consideration. However, because of the small amount of space left on the site after the planned building, paths and carpark it is clear that landscaping will not be able to mitigate the harm caused.

EFFRA believes this application is contrary to national and local planning policies and asks Guildford Borough Council to refuse it.

Yours faithfully for EFFRA

Vivien White, Chairman