



Mr A. Gardner,
Mole Valley District Council,
Pippbrook,
Dorking,
Surrey,
RH4 1SJ

13th October 2023

Dear Sir,

Planning Application: MO/2023/1626 Environmental Impact Assessment
Location: Land North West of Preston Farm, Lower Road, Little Bookham, Leatherhead, Surrey
Description: Screening opinion pursuant to the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (2017) (“the EIA Regulations”) for a proposed development of approximately 200 dwellings (Use Class C3), alongside with associated infrastructure, a Country Park (Suitable Alternative natural Greenspace (SANG)), a community and/or medical facility, play space and three gypsy and traveller pitches.

The Bookham Residents Association objects to this Application.

Outline details of the proposed development have been made public as part of the Regulation 18 & 19 proposals for the draft Local Plan and also discussed during the Inspector’s Examination Hearings. Our comments here are based on a knowledge of the above and are based on the concerns expressed by the community in written submissions and during the hearings. Detailed comments are reserved for the full planning application but BRA would like to comment on a few key matters relating to this EIA screening request.

In particular we wish to raise our concerns about the impact of neighbouring, cross boundary, developments on key areas such as highway and water management. We feel this has been dismissed unfairly by the applicant as having no significance and would also like to correct their summary of these developments in section 1b. These issues will need to be properly considered by SCC (highway and drainage issues) taking into account both large developments. Similarly the utility providers will need to confirm that they can cope with a substantially increased demand.

1. In addition to the 295 homes mentioned as having approval (258 of which have direct access onto Lower Road), the applicant fails to mention the more recently approved 114 homes by the same developer, also with access to Lower Road <https://publicaccess.guildford.gov.uk/online->

[applications/files/125EDF741B1AC38EA1B044ABF54B0692/pdf/21_P_01306-APPEAL_DECISION-1746434.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/125EDF741B1AC38EA1B044ABF54B0692/pdf/21_P_01306-APPEAL_DECISION-1746434.pdf) . Within little over 1km of Lower Road between Preston Cross and Effingham there is potential for ca. 572 (372 (258 + 114) plus 200 at Preston Farm) new homes exiting to Lower Road. This is in addition to vehicular traffic relating to the enlarged new school – there will be 500 more pupils.

- We cannot comment on the traffic modelling in this current application but believe it needs to be properly carried out in relation to the actual planning application, ensuring that the correct figures are used for the neighbouring development.
2. The proposed entrance to the new Preston Farm development will be within about 30m of Preston Cross roundabout and opposite a care home and also a bus stop used by vulnerable adults from The Grange Centre, just up Rectory Lane.
 3. Lower Road is a fairly narrow single carriageway road and there is no pavement on the north side from the planned access to the site as far as the Vineries Garden Centre. This has serious implications for pedestrian and cycle safety which must be addressed as part of the full application.

The applicant refers to flooding along the pond line but does not mention the existing issues with surface water drainage to the west nor to the rear of properties in Little Bookham Street. The east of the site of the neighbouring development to the west drains towards Preston Farm and the poorly maintained ditching there. There is not an inconsiderable flow at times of long lasting rainfall events. At the moment it floods some of the fields between Water Lane and The Saddlery and then flows to the east causing flooding to the LBS properties. One might assume that this would be exacerbated by the surfacing of a large area of the site where the 200 homes are built.

The sewer across Preston Farm is unfit for purpose and has led to much Thames Water activity on site in recent months to clear blockages in a line some of which is still pitch fibre and subject to tree root ingress. This has led to sewage flooding onto the field from full manhole(s). A full upgrading of the line will be necessary should the Preston Farm development go ahead.

In relation to drainage matters, part of the site is already being investigated for chalk streams which have protection under the new *Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 Chapter 55, part 6*. The chalk streams on Preston Farm have been identified as additions to the definitive map by Natural England as part of its current exercise to map all chalk streams, and were visited as part of the survey by South East Rivers Trust last December, as part of its mapping exercise.

Under the section on the use of natural resources, the applicant refers to sustainable water use through design and fit out of the scheme; it is not clear whether the extra load on the water supply of both developments, and also gas and electric supply, will overwhelm the available capacity.

In summary, we request the planning authority to consider the issues we have specifically raised and ensure that appropriate analysis is carried out before any planning consent is granted, either via an EIA or by appropriate documentation at time of the planning application. It is recognised that some items may be subject to planning conditions, discharge of which will require careful consideration by the planning authority. We of course have other concerns with issues pertaining to this development but they can await the full application.

Yours faithfully



Diane Poole
On behalf of the Bookhams Residents' Association