

The Planning Inspectorate

COMMENTS ON CASE (Online Version)

Please note that comments about this case need to be made within the timetable. This can be found in the notification letter sent by the local planning authority or the start date letter. Comments submitted after the deadline may be considered invalid and returned to sender.

Appeal Reference: APP/M3645/W/25/3366613

DETAILS OF THE CASE

Appeal Reference APP/M3645/W/25/3366613

Appeal By MR AND MRS D TAYLOR

Site Address
Orchard Cottage Farm
Red Lane
Limpsfield
Surrey
RH8 0RT

SENDER DETAILS

Name MS SOPHIE MARTIN

Address
Limpsfield Parish Council
The Pound Wolfs Row
OXTED
RH8 0EB

Company/Group/Organisation Name Limpsfield Parish Council

ABOUT YOUR COMMENTS

In what capacity do you wish to make representations on this case?

- ☐ Appellant
- ☐ Agent
- ☒ Interested Party / Person
- ☐ Land Owner
- ☐ Rule 6 (6)

What kind of representation are you making?

- ☐ Final Comments
- ☐ Proof of Evidence
- ☐ Statement
- ☐ Statement of Common Ground
- ☒ Interested Party/Person Correspondence

☐ Other

YOUR COMMENTS ON THE CASE

Thank you for the opportunity to submit further representations on the proposal to erect 4 dwellings at Orchard Cottage Farm. The site lies within the Parish of Limpsfield and the Parish Council is a statutory consultee. The Limpsfield Neighbourhood Plan (2019) forms part of the Statutory Development Plan for the District.

We have already made representations on the proposed development (letter dated 3rd May 2023) and, in an e-mail after the District Council had made its decision (dated 27th April), have queried one element of the Council's consideration of the application.

Having reviewed the appeal statement made on behalf of the applicants, we would like to make two further comments:

1. Green Belt/Countryside.

In our e-mail of 27th April, we noted that, notwithstanding the statements in the officers' report on the application, the site is not 'remote from all settlements' nor are the closest settlements, Hurst Green and Holland, separated from the site in any significant way, other than by Red Lane itself. We now note that, in this respect, the appellants have reached the same conclusion (Appeal Statement para 3.22).

However, the appellants also conclude that the proposed development would not conflict with any of the five purposes of the Green Belt and would not conflict with the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. We fundamentally disagree with this conclusion and cannot see that special circumstances have been demonstrated that would question the Green Belt status.

As we indicated in our representations, Red Lane acts as a firm boundary both between Oxted and Limpsfield parishes, and also between Hurst Green, Holland and the open countryside. A site visit will confirm that there is a distinct change in character and that, notwithstanding the small amount of new development which has been permitted or taken place, the area to the east of Red Lane retains its open and generally rural character, a character which the Limpsfield Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect. We acknowledge the presence of commercial buildings on the site. However, we consider that those buildings have a limited impact on the openness of the area and that, by contrast, the proposed development, including the access and the amenity space around the new dwellings, would result in a fundamental change in character, causing substantial harm to the Green Belt and the open countryside of which the site forms a part.

We would also ask the Inspector to note that, already, with respect to the land immediately to the north of the site, it is being argued that urban sprawl is established in this area (planning application 2025/28, planning statement para 7.34). We do not agree that this is the case and have made representations to that effect. However, it is clear that any development which further changes the character of the area, including the development now at appeal, would contribute directly to the creation of urban sprawl which would extend beyond the site to other land on the east side of Red Lane both to the north and the south. We consider that this would cause significant harm to the Green Belt in this location, directly contrary to the provisions of the NPPF.

We also note that a direct neighbour, the resident of Orchard Cottage, has submitted representations in this respect and we would ask the Inspector to note that we support those representations.

2. Sustainable Development

We support the District Council in its decision to refuse planning permission on the grounds that the site is in an unsustainable location, without suitable access to public transport, services or local amenities and we agree with the comments submitted by the resident of Orchard Cottage in this respect. We would add that the appeal statement refers to a public footpath which is directly opposite the appeal site and which provides a short pedestrian link for occupiers of the proposed development to The Hollies. We acknowledge this. However, as we have commented on the application recently submitted to the north of the appeal site (2025/28), we consider it unlikely that residents of the new development would consider this dark and narrow footpath, flanked by hedges, to be a safe and appropriate means for their primary access to local facilities, particularly in hours of darkness.

We thank you again for the opportunity to make further comments on the application and respectfully ask that the appeal be dismissed.

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of Jenny Williams, Chair Limpsfield Parish Council Planning Committee