

TO: Eastleigh Borough Council - Planning Office

FROM: Residents of Willow Mead written concerns requested from the Planning Office.

Date: 5th January 2024

**BY HAND - DELIVERED INTO
EASTLEIGH BOROUGH COUNCIL OFFICES/8TH JANUARY 2024
F.A.O- Gary Osmond (Case Officer)**

Re: Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedures) (England) Order 2015

Application No. F/23/95982 – Planning Application – Site: Willow Mead, Wildern Lane, Hedge End, Southampton, SO30 4RB

Thank you for the Planning Office letter sent from Nicholas Parker, Planning Manager, dated Monday 18th December 2023 received on the 20th December 2023, inviting comments with regard to the above planning application, in respect of the construction of 4 new 1no Bedroom retirement flats and associated parking on the above site.

The comments detailed below for consideration are related to tangible concerns from residents living in Willow Mead, directly affecting block ‘A’ as follows:

Entering into Willow Mead Retirement Flats from Wildern Lane by road and turning immediately left into a short narrow one-lane access road, with car parking spaces either side of it, is where the outlook is viewed from residents’ living rooms facing Willow Mead’s access road. The access road leads to a small car park providing limited car parking spaces mainly for the use of Willow Mead ‘A’ Block, which includes the following allocations. The spaces on one side of the car park are designated to: 1 space for – an ambulance or doctor, 1 space for disabled driver, 2- spaces for residents/visitors/service providers, that overlooks the gardens on the side of the complex where the boundary of Willow Mead ends close to the public pathway. On the opposite side of the car park are 5 spaces allocated for residents/visitors/service providers to Willow Mead. This is where the edge of the car parking spaces links to the small piece of wasteland prone to becoming waterlogged at the point where a considerable dip in ground level sloping downwards occurs, across the proposed build area.

Currently the access road suitably accommodates the traffic coming in and out of Willow Mead, as indicated above. This small access road leading to the proposed construction site appears to be vastly inadequate to receive the sizes and tonnages of Heavy Goods Vehicles that inevitably will be using the access road to transport numerous amounts of building material and equipment to the construction site. The loss of privacy to residents would cause a devastating effect on them, should there be intentions to widen the road to accommodate not only vehicles of such proportionate capacity, but crucially also to consider, would leave vulnerable residents enduring the disturbance from excessive noise, dust and pollution. Linking significant changes in road design, suggests a huge impact on residents lives, by an imposed upheaval on the elderly and vulnerable, where front doors are the closest to the access road. Presently, from a frontage point of view, residents enjoy great pleasure in looking out on a scenic view across an environmental area established with lawns and shrubs at the immediate frontage to properties, with a clear view across the other side of the access road, where healthy trees, shrubs and lawns are seen.

Unaware of untold disruption to daily lives from major works being carried out involving digging up the small access road close to where residents’ doors lead straight onto lawns; is of grave concern. Focussing on that point, by creating new parking facilities regarding the allowance of widening the road in order Heavy Goods Vehicles can access the proposed construction site, suggests distressing outcomes

for residents, deliberated as an enforcement of planning presently being considered, upon vulnerable residents in Willow Mead Block 'A', who will be exposed, by way of great intrusion of privacy, loss of environment; and the tranquillity it provides to residents sharing the outlook on an ecosystem that has grown up around this peaceful part of Willow Mead.

Further cause of concern is as follows:

A valid point is noted close to the public pathway where a Nature Reserve includes a Balancing Pond, artificially designed specifically created when connected to a new housing project, as a basin into which water drains. Balancing ponds hold water to control the amount of excess water entering the drainage system, to prevent it from becoming overwhelmed. Thereby reducing the likelihood local water courses are not encumbered during heavy rainfall, thus a method for preventing flooding. The balancing pond is known acting as a buffer. A reference stated on the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 F6 (A4) noted as "inland waters" that do not form part of the sea or of any creek, bay or estuary or of any river as far as the tide flows". The understanding to the reason why balancing ponds are artificially designed indicates that around the area of Willow Mead, measures have been taken to prevent such flooding described as "inland waters" presumably surface water overflow. Owing to the creation of the artificial balancing pond close to Willow Mead land, signifies the surrounding area is a target for flooding.

Compared to the seemingly higher ground level Willow Mead flats were constructed on, to the sloping lower ground level of a site proposing construction of flats, implies the safeguarding of a new build area on this specific piece of land is at risk, since the ground is prone to saturation, if not addressed properly. Due to the balancing pond so close to Willow Mead boundary, it is feasible to suspect how soaked the ground may become across the planned site, and therefore is a serious matter to investigate. Also taking into consideration, the construction of the planned building of flats reveals how much damage is to be expected to the environment, peace, and residents becoming subjected to breathing in construction dust, plus irritation to residents' eyes and skin, that undoubtedly leaves them open to the risk of breathing in pollutants contained in construction materials such as concrete and mortar, which subsequently may well bring on problems to health.

To upkeep the site in question that would fit into the well-being of residents enjoying a peaceful environment within the Willow Mead Retirement facilities - to landscape the wasteland would be an ideal solution.

Owing to the aforementioned concerns, to consider a delay in decision making would be appreciated in respect of this Planning Application since the letter dated 20th December 2023 gave little time to digest the content, without due discussion afforded to residents, bearing in mind it was delivered over the Christmas period.

Electronic signatures – letter herewith signed by residents living in Willow Mead Retirement Flats

A. Smith
S. Hill
A. Godwin
L. Blowes
M. Cove
L. Scurr
G. Meritt
A. Settle
L. Meritt
D. Rands
B. Begg

CC: Nicholas Parker (Planning Manager)