

Objection to Planning Application DM/25/3191 – Burleigh Lane

Address: Burleigh House farm, Burleigh Lane, Crawley Down. West Sussex. RH10 4LF

Executive Summary

This objection relates to planning application DM/25/3191 and concerns the cumulative and permanent impacts arising from reliance on a narrow, single-track, private, dead-end access road. The lane currently serves approximately ten existing homes and is regularly used by walkers and dog walkers. The proposal would introduce eight additional dwellings, almost doubling the number of homes dependent on this constrained access. This intensification occurs in the wider context of further residential growth at The Croft, Burleigh Lane, and ongoing expansion within Crawley Down village, which will continue to increase pedestrian pressure on nearby rural lanes. The impacts would arise during construction and, critically, would continue permanently after occupation. Taken together, these effects represent site-specific, cumulative, and irreversible harm that cannot be adequately mitigated through planning conditions. For these reasons, the application should be refused.

1. Site Context and Access Constraints

The access serving the proposal is a narrow, single-track, private road that is a dead end and provides the sole means of access to existing homes, including properties at the far end of the lane. The road has no alternative route, limited passing capability, and no resilience. Introducing eight additional dwellings represents a step-change in intensity on infrastructure never designed to accommodate such use.

2. Cumulative Development Pressure

The proposal cannot be assessed in isolation. The near-doubling of homes served by the lane would occur alongside additional residential development at The Croft, Burleigh Lane, which will increase pedestrian and recreational use of nearby rural routes, and continued growth within Crawley Down village. These combined pressures will significantly intensify use of the lane by both vehicles and pedestrians.

3. Lifecycle Transport Impacts

The impacts of the proposal extend beyond construction. The self-build nature of the development implies phased and prolonged construction activity. After occupation, increased daily movements from residents, visitors, servicing, and deliveries would permanently intensify traffic on the lane, resulting in irreversible change to its function.

4. Pedestrian Safety

The lane has no pavements, formal refuge space, or street lighting and is used daily by walkers and dog walkers. Rising pedestrian activity combined with increased vehicular movements creates an unavoidable and ongoing safety risk that cannot be mitigated through conditions.

5. Emergency Access and Resilience

The dead-end nature of the lane creates a single point of failure for emergency response. Obstruction caused by construction activity, servicing, or visitor parking could delay or prevent access for emergency vehicles. As more homes rely on this access, the severity of this risk increases permanently.

6. Environmental and Drainage Impacts

Increased hardstanding and traffic raise concerns regarding surface water runoff, pressure on informal drainage, verge erosion, and loss of vegetation. These environmental effects would accumulate over time and are difficult to reverse once degradation occurs.

7. Infrastructure Strain and Maintenance

As a private road, the lane is not designed for intensified servicing traffic. Increased use is likely to accelerate surface deterioration and verge collapse, placing a disproportionate maintenance burden on existing residents and increasing the risk of access disputes.

8. Change in Character and Amenity

The proposal would permanently alter the function and character of the lane from a quiet rural access into a multi-dwelling service route. This would result in lasting loss of tranquillity and rural character.

9. Disproportionate Impact on Existing Residents

Residents at the end of the lane are wholly dependent on uninterrupted access and cannot avoid disruption or safety conflict arising at the entrance. The proposal therefore places an unreasonable and disproportionate burden on established households.

Conclusion

The proposal would almost double the number of homes reliant on a constrained private access while surrounding development continues to increase pedestrian pressure on the same route. The resulting cumulative impacts on access, safety, emergency response, environmental integrity, and rural character are permanent and cannot be adequately mitigated. For these reasons, planning application DM/25/3191 should be refused.