

Summary of Public Body Feedback on 25/P/01726

Based on the documents submitted by various public bodies regarding planning application **25/P/01726** (Land at Follyhatch Farm), here is a summary of the key points and arguments from each party. As these are AI-generated, they may contain small errors of detail, but we believe that they nevertheless represent a fair summary of the submissions that have been made.

1. Objection

1.1 Normandy Parish Council

The Parish Council detail several practical and safety-related objections:

- **Highway Safety:** The proposed access off Guildford Road is near a "blind hump-back" section and an area prone to winter flooding.
- **Parking Shortage:** The provision of only **20 parking spaces** is deemed "wholly insufficient" for a regional visitor attraction.
- **Poor Connectivity:** Most residents of the new development would be **1.5km to 2km away** from the SANG, making it too far for many to access by foot.
- **Inaccessible Infrastructure:** Existing footpaths are often narrow, muddy, or blocked by kissing gates, making them unusable for wheelchairs or pushchairs.

1.2 Ash Parish Council

The Council has submitted a concise objection based on:

- **Environmental Impact:** General concerns regarding the effect on the local environment.
- **Habitat Loss:** The potential loss of natural habitats.
- **Traffic and Pollution:** Anticipated increases in traffic volume and resulting air pollution.
- **SANG Accessibility:** Concerns regarding the distance to the Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG).

2. Concerns / Further Work

2.1 Surrey County Council: Archaeological Officer

The officer has highlighted the need for further investigation due to the site's historical potential:

- **Archaeological Potential:** The site is partly within an **Area of High Archaeological Potential (AHAP)** where medieval pottery has previously been found.
- **Specific Risks:** While superficial landscaping is low-risk, the proposed **woodland copse** and **pond excavations** could disturb buried remains.

- **Required Action:** The officer advises that a **geophysical survey** and an Archaeological Impact Assessment are necessary before determining mitigation needs.

2.2 NatureSpace (Great Crested Newts)

NatureSpace identifies significant ecological risks concerning protected species:

- **High Risk Zone:** The site sits in a "red impact risk zone," indicating a high likelihood of **Great Crested Newt (GCN)** presence.
- **Habitat Connectivity:** There are **11 ponds** within 500m of the proposal, and the development has direct connectivity to these features.
- **Inadequate Evidence:** They argue the applicant's current ecological report is insufficient to rule out impacts.
- **Recommendation:** The applicant must either provide more detailed pond surveys or enter the District Licensing Scheme to address GCN impacts.

2.3 Natural England

Natural England states that **further information is required** before they can determine if the proposal will successfully mitigate recreational impacts on the **Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA)**. Without this information, they may need to object to the application.

Key Requirements

- **Full SANG Management Plan:** The applicant must provide a plan detailing capital works, long-term management, and costs.
- **In Perpetuity Management:** A management company must be agreed upon in writing to maintain the site "in perpetuity".
 - **Option 1:** Guildford Borough Council agrees to manage the site directly.
 - **Option 2:** If a private company is used, the Council must be granted "step-in-rights".
- **Design Revisions:** Natural England suggests several changes to the SANG concept plan:
 - **Pinch Points:** Realigning paths at "position 1" to increase separation and prevent a narrow feeling.
 - **Habitat Protection:** Avoiding re-routing paths directly through priority deciduous woodland.
 - **Path Removal:** Removing a secondary path at "position 2" in favour of thick scrub planting to reduce intervisibility between parallel paths.

Regulatory Context

- **Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA):** The authority must determine if the proposal has a significant effect on European sites and proceed to an "Appropriate Assessment" if necessary.
- **Biodiversity Duty:** The local authority has a duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- **Landscape Protection:** The council should consider impacts on protected landscapes and the statutory purposes of National Parks or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Natural England requests to be **re-consulted** once the specified management details and design amendments have been addressed.

3. No Objection

3.1 Surrey County Council: Countryside Access Team

This team focus on the protection of **Footpath 362 Normandy**:

- **No Objection:** They do not object to the application in principle.
- **Operational Requirements:** They mandate that safe public access to the footpath must be maintained during works.
- **Site Management:** No obstructions (vehicles, plant, or materials) are permitted on the right of way.
- **Restoration:** The applicant must repair any damage caused to the surface of the right of way during development.

3.2 Surrey County Council: Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)

The SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems) team has reviewed the water management strategy:

- **No Objection:** They do not object, noting that the change of use to SANG involves **no increase in impermeable area**.
- **Flood Risk:** Because the site remains largely natural, it is unlikely to increase surface-water flood risk.
- **Best Practices:** They recommend retaining existing ditches and ensuring all new paths or parking areas remain permeable to avoid soil compaction.