



WESTCOTT VILLAGE ASSOCIATION

Mr James Leaver



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Planning Department

Mole Valley District Council

Pippbrook

Dorking

RH4 1SJ

17 May 2023

Dear Sirs

**MO/2023/0550**

**The Observatory, Old Bury Hill, Westcott, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 3JU**

**Proposed Shipping Container Holiday Let**

I write in my capacity as planning lead for Westcott Village Association (WVA). WVA occasionally makes representations, as consultee, on behalf of the Westcott community.

This application follows MO/2021/0424 for the erection of a 'tree house' for holiday let which WVA objected to and was refused by MVDC. It was then dismissed at appeal in January 2023.

This application shares many characteristics with the previous application, save the fact that the proposed structure is more incongruous than the tree house. WVA are therefore writing to object.

The application site falls within:-

- Green Belt
- An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- An Area of Great Landscape Value
- It also falls within the curtilage of the Grade 2 Listed Old Bury Hill House and the original formal grounds of the wider estate.

The relevant Mole Valley policy context is Policy CS13 – Landscape Character

**Policy CS 13  
Landscape Character**

1. All new development must respect and, where appropriate, enhance the character and distinctiveness of the landscape character area in which it is proposed. Landscape enhancement works may be required to avoid adverse impacts associated with new developments.
2. The Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is of national significance, and as such, the conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape will be a priority in this area. The AONB will be protected in accordance with the objectives in Planning Policy Statement 7 (Sustainable Development in Rural Areas) and the Surrey Hills Management Plan, with particular focus on the impact of development on ridgelines, significant views, peace, tranquillity and levels of artificial light.
3. The AGLV (Area of Great Landscape Value) will be retained until such time as there has been a review of the AONB boundary. Development in the AGLV area will be required to be supported by evidence to demonstrate that it would not result in harm to the AONB, particularly views from and into the AONB and the key features identified in point 2 above.
4. Small scale development for the reasonable needs of the rural economy, outdoor recreation as well as that for the local community in the AONB or AGLV, will be supported subject to meeting other relevant criteria within the LDF.

We do not believe this application meets the four criteria within Policy CS13. Nor does it meet the “very special circumstances” required to make the case for development in the Green Belt as stated in paragraphs 147 and 148 of the NPPF.

We also note the AONB Officer’s valid concerns in his representation dated 11 May 2023.

We kindly ask MVDC to refuse permission.

Yours sincerely,



James Leaver  
Planning Lead, Westcott Village Association