

LOCAL PLAN REVIEW (LPC) – THATCHAM 2,500 HOME PROPOSAL

OBJECTION

Dear WBC,

As a local resident, likely to be very severely affected, I strongly OBJECT to this plan on the following grounds:

1. Principle - were permission to be granted the number of dwellings proposed will lead to an intolerable burden on the area in every conceivable way. There have been a number of infill developments to the north of Thatcham over the years, as well as to many other villages nearby including Hermitage, Hampstead Norreys etc. Where will this all end? As a general principle it would be better to redevelop former industrial units within current town boundaries.

The proposed site is also on the edge of an AONB and close to various SSIs - again highly questionable positioning.

2. Roads - many of the current roads in the area are either very narrow or very restricted B roads - and are already coping with traffic way beyond their intended volume. (A4, Cold Ash, Pang Valley etc) This will place new burdens of danger and emissions on the existing residents and road users.

3. Environment - it is undoubtedly the case that the development will completely destroy greenfield sites and their associated wildlife, flora and fauna. There is no proper mitigation plan, nor any proper offset plan. The plan is flawed in every way in this area and offers no environmental help in any way. Given the inevitable road traffic volumes there seems to be only cursory lip service paid to increased CO2 emissions. In any case the area proposed for development is an attractive one and should not be carved up. Period.

4. Services - this development and the precedent it sets will add more burden onto the provision of services in the area. Most notably schools, surgeries, hospitals etc. How will this increased population be serviced ? We are already paying the price of the extra homes built near Thatcham and Newbury over the past 15 years that haven't had infrastructure support. Again this will exacerbate the parlous roads capacity in the valley (see above).

5. Precedent - if this is approved where next ? Each approval merely encourages the next swathe of construction.

Conclusion

This plan is not fit for purpose. Too many houses are proposed, in the wrong place, with too much collateral damage, with too little support.

Given the current demand for new housing a more profitable approach in every way would be the redevelopment of existing residential sites of which there are a number of well managed examples in the area - specifically along the A4 and along the railway line to Reading.

If this plan is approved it will cause irreparable damage and fundamentally wreck West Berkshires remaining rural areas and the lives of those who live there.

Yours sincerely,