

From: [REDACTED]
To: [PlanningPolicy](#)
Subject: WBC LPR Regulation 19 Objection - SP17
Date: 27 February 2023 15:51:24

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Dear Sir or Madam

I have set out my objections to this development below (WBC LPR Regulation 19 Objection - SP17). These are categorised into a number of areas.

OBJECTIONS TO THE NORTH EAST THATCHAM DEVELOPMENT

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1. Historical Concerns

The proposed development is in close proximity to known archaeological sites :

- a. the Iron Age community at the top of Harts Hill and Cold Ash ridge
- b. Romano British sites which are likely within this area. Silchester is a major Roman site with extensive local links with a major crossing near Thatcham.
- c. the medieval farms and communities of Newbury Castle and Reading Abbey which extended throughout this area.
- d. the civil war battle fields of Newbury and skirmishes from Thatcham and neighbouring ridgelines

It does not detail the archaeological mitigation strategy and methodology to be employed for archaeological monitoring and recording of the proposed development. The proposal is wholly inadequate and does not set out how the site will be investigated for historic features of the area nor what actions would be taken in the event a site was found.

2. Sites of Special Scientific Interest

The proximity to sites of special scientific interest. I know that Big Gully near Upper Harts Hill farm until recently was designated a site of special scientific interest. Whilst SSI's as a designation has lapsed the reason for this designation has not. Any and all development near this should be done to ensure the flora and fauna are not disrupted. Building work inevitably involves pollution and therefore must not be allowed (The pollution consists of chemical, light, noise and people [both building works and then residing in the building]). This also applies to all the gully's that descend towards to the River Kennet these are the only natural corridors that allow wildlife to migrate safely.

- a. There is nothing in the plans which set out how these gully's are to be protected to ensure that the flora and fauna remain untouched.

3. Proximity to an Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Like world heritage sites AONBs do not have a hard edge there is a blurring between what is the natural boundary and the mapped edge. The woodland to the South of Upper Bucklebury are clear examples of where the natural boundary lie and the natural ecological succession that lead to the tree line extends considerably into the adjoining fields. The natural boundary of the AONB should be considered rather than just the mapped edge.

- a. This development is urbanisation of the countryside and therefore should not be in close proximity of the AONB. There should not be any development that would constitute urbanisation within 1 kilometre of an AONB.

(Many County Councils have clear guidelines for developers on what is allowed within an AONB and then within 1 [and sometimes 2 kilometres of it]. I cannot find any such guidelines on the West Berks Council website.)

4. **Urbanisation of the Countryside**

The scale of this development makes it unequivocally urbanisation. Roads and houses will be built on open countryside. This is in direct contravention of Government and West Berks own guidelines – indeed they recently refused a development near Cold Ash on just these grounds. I cannot see why this development is being supported by the local council as it clearly is urbanisation of the countryside and should be rejected on these grounds alone.

5. **Nature Under Pressure**

Bucklebury Common and the adjoining woods of Hartshill Copse, Burdens Heath Plantation, Blacklands Copse, Long Grove Copse, Wimbles Wood, Big Gully, Kents Down Gully, Ouzel Gully the intervening fields and the openland abutting the woods are a haven of flora and fauna in the South of England. They are the environment of rare and common species – I personally have seen rare bats, birds and insects as well as healthy populations of native mammals enjoying the tranquillity of life without human interference here. (I am sadly no expert on flora and the insect world but am an ornithologist and have some knowledge of mammals). In the summer sky larks nest and fly above the fields surrounding Colthrop Manor and Harts Hill. I have seen Roe deer stags bask in the sun in the fields beside Blacklands and the does, fawns and stags feed at dusk and dawn in the fields adjoining all these woods. Nightingales sing in the evenings in Long Grove Copse and Night Jars reside nearby on Bucklebury Common as well as Midgham and Cold Ash woods. In winter there are significant migrant bird populations moving through the area including Redwings, Mistle Thrushes, Starlings as well as rarer birds such as Goshawks. This is an extraordinary environment that needs protecting from people and I have long loved it for being relatively unknown and going below the radar of more famous nature reserves.

The absence of people is key to its continued success and the pressure this development will place on this vulnerable environment is self-evident.

- a. The proposed development will destroy the natural corridors across the Kennet Valley and a proper protection plan needs to be drawn up.
- b. The number of people residing in the development will inevitably lead to the environment being used for leisure activities where new paths are created for walks leading across the spaces and woods disrupting the natural balance and ecology. These are natural spaces and are not human parks. A human park is not a space created by nature but one for humans to enjoy. The plan clearly thinks they are one and the same – THEY ARE NOT. A proper mitigation plan which excludes humans from these spaces needs to be drawn up.
- c. To ensure that the natural balance of the area is maintained any development needs to be at least a kilometre away from the boundary of these woods.

6. **Social Concerns**

Thatcham today has significant social issues (unusually high for the South of England) adding significant housing to an area of social need with no additional social infrastructure is difficult to

understand. If education, health (medical and dental) are inadequate today why will this development help? Education, nursery, pre-school, primary and secondary appear to have been largely overlooked as there are no social centres being proposed and the education provision seem inadequate for the population. The proposal also no longer includes provision for a social centre or health centre. There is also no provision for additional police, social service and medical staff.

- a. These are clearly costs of the development but are not included here.
- b. The traffic disruption will mean that Thatcham retail economy is severely impacted as West Berkshire shoppers go elsewhere.

7. **Personal Concerns**

I am also concerned that as a resident of Upper Bucklebury that this development will disrupt our lives significantly.

- a. The amount of traffic going through Upper Bucklebury will increase considerably and our own journeys to Thatcham and Newbury will be disrupted - what plans are there to ensure that this cannot happen?
- b. The disruption to journeys to Thatcham and Newbury will be severely disrupted whilst building work is on going (and afterwards). This will affect access to hospitals for us as well as retail opportunities. How will this development ensure that access is not disrupted?
- c. The value of property in Upper Bucklebury will be impaired by the proximity of this development. What reparations will be made by the developer and WBC to me?
- d. My own walks and rides will be severely impacted as I will no longer be able to watch the wildlife in the fields adjoining the woodland adjacent to this development. How am I

I hope these points are clear but if anything is unclear please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Adam Phillpot

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Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows