

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: WBC Local Plan Main Modifications MM25 & MM26
Date: 29 January 2025 14:14:40

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Dear Sirs

[REDACTED]

I have many concerns regarding the planned development of two thousand and five hundred homes to the north east of Thatcham.

This is a very large addition to a town which is already struggling to cope and provide basic services and infrastructure for its residents. Is the current need for housing in West Berkshire this extensive? Is it necessary to turn a very rural area into an urban one? Is there an ultimate goal to join Reading and Newbury and develop laterally along the A4? There appears to be growing evidence of this.

However, my main concern is the environment, the impact will be huge, both in terms of destruction of the countryside and all that entails in terms of habitat destruction; impact of water run-off in an area already prone to flooding; loss of amenity; reduction in food production; loss of farmland; and reduction in green space between Thatcham and Reading.

There are other concerns which I understand are not planning matters but which I believe are relevant and need consideration. For instance, I do not expect development to start until the police have sufficient resources in the local neighbourhood policing team. An increase in population, I am sure, will mean an increase in crime.

There will be a lack of medical facilities in terms of GP practice and hospital facilities and I do not expect development to start until the redevelopment of the Royal Berkshire Hospital has been completed to cope with increased demand.

As far as I am aware the capacity for sewage disposal is at capacity and I expect development not to start until Thames Water has completed the necessary sewage capacity increase. Together with analysis of the quantity of clean water that will be available to service an increase in housing. With increased development also planned for Oxfordshire is the River Thames expected to provide water for this area too, or will some clever use be made of future water run off?

What facilities will be provided in terms of retail and leisure? This needs to be considered in terms of all age groups from the youngest to the oldest and I expect this to be put in place before other development begins.

It would be good to know that consideration is being given to providing places of worship.

I would ask the planning department to reconsider allowing traffic access to Hart's Hill Road. There is serious concern that an increase in the use of this road will lead to a significant amount of traffic through the villages here, Upper Bucklebury, Chapel Row and Southend Bradfield. This road was not designed to take heavy traffic and no amount of improvement will alter the fact that it passes through a rural area.

On a significantly different subject, I understand that financial help is only forthcoming from the government when a development is of a significantly greater size. However, I would ask that consideration be given to asking the government for help in setting up a local property bond. In this way funding can be generated locally which should give us, the local community, some degree of control over what is built. It could also provide funding for much needed social housing.

Thank you for taking the time to read my comments and I trust you will find them constructive and helpful.

Best wishes

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Sent from my iPh