

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: LPR 2022-2039 Proposed Main Modifications
Date: 31 January 2025 21:53:04

This is an **EXTERNAL EMAIL**. **STOP. THINK** before you **CLICK** links or **OPEN** attachments.

To whom it may concern,

Please see below my response to the LPR 2022-2039 Proposed Main Modifications:

Part A:

Mr Steven Taylor

Part B: (your representation(s))

All comments made at previous stages of the LPR have been taken into account by the Inspector, and there is no need to resubmit these. Publication of the proposed Main Modifications is a regulatory stage, and any representations made should relate specifically to the legal compliance and soundness of the proposed Main Modifications and should not relate to parts of the Plan that are not proposed to be modified.

***Please note** your representation should cover succinctly all the information, evidence and supporting information necessary to support/justify the representation and the suggested change.*

Your Name or Organisation: Steven Taylor

Proposed Main Modifications and Proposed Changes to the Policies Map

1. Please indicate whether your representation relates to the Schedule of Proposed Main Modifications or the Schedule of Proposed Changes to the Policies Map and provide the modification/change number you are commenting on below:

Document name: Schedule of Proposed Main Modification

Modification/Change reference number (MM / PMC): MM3, MM45

2. Do you consider the Proposed Main Modification or Proposed Policy Map Change to be:

a) Legally Compliant - **YES**

b) Sound - **NO**

If you consider the Proposed Main Modification or Proposed Policy Map Change not to be sound, please identify which test of soundness your representation relates to:

Positively Prepared: The LPR should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements.
- **X**

Justified: the LPR should be the most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives - **X**

Effective: the LPR should be deliverable - **X**

Consistent with national policy: the LPR should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies of the NPPF - **X**

3. If you have answered 'No' to questions 2a or 2b above, please provide details of why you consider the Proposed Main Modification or Proposed Policy Map Change is not legally compliant or is unsound, including any changes you consider necessary to make the Plan legally compliant or sound.

You will need to say why this change will make the Local Plan Review legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text. Please be as precise as possible.

Firstly, I do not feel qualified to say whether the modifications are legally compliant and would have preferred a "don't know".

However, I don't believe the plan is sound due to the inclusion of the approx. 138 house allocation at the Pincents Lane site in Calcot (MM45) and the associated extension to the settlement boundary (MM3) to include the part of that site proposed for development.

My reasons for believing this is not sound are as follows:

- ALL previous planning applications for housing at this site have been refused. At the last application, which appears to be similar to that currently being proposed, the West Berkshire Council Eastern Area Planning Committee rejected the application unanimously. It was then referred to the council's District Planning Committee, who also rejected the application overwhelmingly, with particular reference to the site being outside the settlement boundary and the impact of traffic on access to the site, which has only one access road through a retail and warehouse estate including a large IKEA store which results in heavy traffic, particularly at weekends and bank holidays. The whole planning process, from application to decision, took over three years.

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- At the last application, it was highlighted that there are flood risk concerns at the site along with issues/concerns with Thames Water that were not resolved at the time of the last application. These issues/concerns remain.
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- I believe traffic conditions have and will continue to worsen due to the new care home on Pincents Lane, which has planning permission, immediately opposite the proposed site entrance. There is also evidence of increased occupancy of warehouse and office units off Pincents Lane, along with a very large new housing estate currently being built in Theale and Reading, as well as other areas in and around Tilehurst/Reading that will most certainly increase the weekend visitor traffic causing lengthy delays and traffic jams in and around the area.
- The major concern is the suitability of the emergency vehicle access from the north via a lengthy, narrow, winding single-track lane, which freezes over every winter due to streams running down the roadway. Several residents a few weeks ago who were using the local off-leash dog park on Pincents Lane, Tilehurst, got stuck for several hours until they were rescued due to the bad conditions of the road due to the road being iced over.
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- Noise from the M4 is considerable, with council officers recommending that some windows in the new housing would have to be sealed. Surely, this would be a major deterrent for prospective buyers if told you can't open the windows due to high noise pollution.
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- The site is adjacent to the National Landscape, North Wessex Downs National Landscape and a grade 2 listed building on which it will have considerable visual impact.
- Windfall sites in other parts of West Berkshire can more than compensate for a loss of 138 houses. Such as the Newbury Kennet Shopping Centre housing proposal, which was rejected recently. A perfect place (brown land) to provide 427 new homes for residents who need homes. Surely, this would fulfil the council's housing quota that is required by the Labor government. But for some reason, this was rejected, and instead, it's now been proposed to build on valued green land that not only has great value to local wildlife (including protected species) that live and feed off the land but has great value to residents who love and cherish this land. Land that residents have fought very hard to protect for over 30 years and have succeeded.
- There appears to be disagreement between the council and the developer as to the number of houses that should be built here, which might lead to a planning application not coming forward and/or delays in processing it.
- - There were over 3000 individual objections to the previous planning application, and Tilehurst, Holybrook, and Theale Parish Councils (3 Parish Councils) all objected. Over 1000

people signed a petition objecting to the development. This land has been loved by residents for over 30 years. One of the main reasons (along with the adjoining Sulham Woods area) why residents (council ratepayers bought houses in this area, is due to its natural beauty and flora and fauna, which provides great benefits to residents' well-being both mentally and physically.

- The existing and two previous members of parliament objected to development at this site. Members of all three main parties have publicly stated their opposition to this site being allocated for housing. There is a high risk that a future application would be called in as would have happened with the last application had it been approved.
- Development of this site would create an isolated community of houses separate from the existing settlements of Tilehurst, Theale and Calcot.
- The Tilehurst and Calcot communities would lose a valuable green space much loved and used for exercise, a chance to relax and unwind, walk their dog, to observe the abundant wildlife, plants and trees (many TPOs). Public rights of way run across the site with many additional well-used paths.
- This is a historic site with evidence of settlement going back to Roman times. Evidence/findings of past surveys are held in Oxford. Delays could occur if further historical findings were discovered.
- Tilehurst Parish Council is seeking to have the site designated as local green space as part of its Neighbourhood Development Plan, which was supported in a resident's survey. This is expected to be decided upon during 2025 as the plan is in its final stages.
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- Due to ecological issues on the Pincents Manor Site (where the care home is to be built), long delays in the construction of this site have been caused by the findings of several protected flora and fauna living in and around the site. As this site is directly across the road from the proposed site in question, these same issues/delays will potentially come up and also cause long delays with the development of this land. The same protected species have also been discovered and highlighted by ecologists in past development applications on this proposed site. So, a quick housing development plan on this site is more than likely not to happen due to the same issues/delays that Pincents Manor (care home) is currently experiencing.

For all the above reasons I find it very hard to believe that a planning application can succeed here.

The proposed inclusion of this site after so many previous applications and appeals is of considerable distress to the Tilehurst and Calcot communities. I strongly feel this site is not suitable for development. This site has been rejected time and time again (over 30 years) due to its unsuitability for development and due to the great love the residents have for it. Residents who are willing to continue to fight to stop development on this land for however long it takes. Other far more suitable sites in other West Berkshire areas could be developed. Pincents Hill site is most certainly not one of them and should be designated as permanent local green space as part of its Neighbourhood development plan.

Immense time will be spent by many people in processing a future application. I would urge careful consideration as to whether this will be time well spent. There must be a better and quicker way to resolve our housing needs.

In relation to the proposal to extend the Tilehurst Settlement Boundary to include the Western part of the Pinsent's Site, I object to this for the following reasons:

- This has only been proposed so as to increase the likelihood of the site being development
- The boundary has existed for many years so as to prevent urban sprawl into green space and to protect the strategic gaps between Tilehurst, Calcot and Theale
- There has been no consultation whatsoever with Tilehurst Parish Council on this proposed change nor with its NDP Steering Group
- [REDACTED]
- Due process should be followed in consulting and talking to the communities that this proposed change affects. This hasn't happened.

Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA)

4. Do you have any comments on the updated Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment Report – Proposed Main Modifications (November 2024)?

Habitats Regulations Assessment

5. Do you have any comments on the addendum to the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Proposed Main Modifications (November 2024)?

Notification of Progress of the Local Plan Review

6. Do you wish to be notified of any of the following?

(please tick/mark 'X' all that apply)

The publication of the report of the Inspector appointed to carry out the examination - X

The adoption of the Local Plan Review - X

Please ensure that we have either an up-to-date email address or postal address at which we can contact you. You can amend your contact details by logging onto your account on the Local Plan Consultation Portal or by contacting the Planning Policy Team.

Regards

Steven Taylor