

PLANNING REF : 241933
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 52 Hatch Ride
: Crowthorne, Berkshire
: RG45 6LB
SUBMITTED BY : Councillor Marc Brunel-Walker
DATE SUBMITTED : 07/11/2024

COMMENTS:

Subject: Objection to Planning Application at Land west of Old Wokingham Road and North and South of Easthampstead Road, Wokingham

Dear Planning Officer,

I am writing to formally object to the proposed development at the site located west of Old Wokingham Road and north and south of Easthampstead Road, Wokingham. While I recognize the need for new housing, this application raises multiple concerns, which I believe could have significant and negative impacts on local infrastructure, community connectivity, road safety, and environmental assets.

1. Inadequate and Outdated Traffic Model

The traffic model underpinning this application is based on outdated data (last updated in 2015). It fails to consider recent, large-scale developments in nearby areas such as Beaufort Park in Bracknell and the Bucklers Park extension. Moreover, the impact of Grays Farm and its access onto Easthampstead Road has not been factored into this model. With substantial cumulative impacts from these nearby projects, the proposed development would place unsustainable demands on local roads, particularly Heathlands Road, which is not adequately designed to support a major increase in traffic.

2. Impact of Road Closures on Community Access

The proposal to close Easthampstead Road would effectively isolate large portions of Crowthorne and Wokingham Without from Wokingham Town Centre, forcing residents to rely on longer, less direct routes. The resulting traffic on Heathlands Road has not been appropriately accounted for, and assumptions that residents would simply turn to public transport are unrealistic due to limited, indirect public transport options between Crowthorne and Wokingham.

3. Inadequate Infrastructure and Safety on Heathlands Road

Heathlands Road lacks the necessary infrastructure, including street lighting, footpaths, and safe pedestrian access, to support increased traffic safely. The Star Lane level crossing is likely to be significantly impacted by additional traffic from this development, yet this concern has been ignored in the planning documents. The absence of an updated, realistic traffic model, combined with these infrastructure shortcomings, makes this project incompatible with current road capacity and safety standards.

4. Environmental and Flood Risks

The application has not adequately addressed environmental concerns, such as the impact on the Tudor flood beds adjacent to Easthampstead Road. Flood mitigation measures in these lower fields remain unclear and unresolved, posing a potential risk to local wildlife and increasing flood hazards for nearby properties. Additionally, the development's proximity to existing homes on the Byway presents substantial harm to the local amenity, compromising residents'

quality of life and privacy.

5. Dangerous New Access Road Position

The design and position of the proposed new access road near RedLakes is highly unsafe, emerging onto a bend with a well-documented accident history. This configuration raises serious concerns about road safety, putting both new and existing residents at risk of increased traffic accidents.

6. Non-Compliance with the Current Local Plan

This site is not designated as an approved housing site in the current local plan. While it is included in the emerging local plan, it has not yet achieved formal settlement site status and should therefore be rejected on this basis. Premature approval of housing development on this land would undermine the integrity of the local planning process and the strategies outlined within the approved plan.

In summary, I strongly urge the Planning Department to reject this application due to its reliance on outdated and incomplete traffic data, the adverse effects it would have on community connectivity and road safety, environmental risks, and non-compliance with the current local plan. A thorough reassessment, incorporating accurate, up-to-date traffic models and addressing the cumulative impacts of recent local developments, is essential before considering any future applications for this site.

Thank you for your consideration of these points. I would appreciate being kept informed of any updates or decisions related to this application