

PLANNING REF : 252430
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 17 Foxborough
: Swallowfield, Reading, Berkshire
: RG7 1RW
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Chris Leafe
DATE SUBMITTED : 22/11/2025

COMMENTS:

I believe that this planning application should be rejected for numerous reasons.

The proposed site has been identified as a medium to high flood risk by the Environment Agency. The development proposal itself also appears to be suggesting that some properties will be built on parts of the site that have been identified by the Environment Agency at 'High Risk' of flooding.

Development here would increase the surface runoff and exacerbate downstream flooding.

There doesn't appear to be any mention of surface water/groundwater flows entering the development from the various other new developments planned on adjacent land.

This is all contrary to various parts of Section 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework NPPF (Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change). Specifically, 'Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future).'

It also goes against part of Policy CP1 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy which states that developments should 'Avoid increasing (and where possible reduce) risks of or from all forms of flooding (including from groundwater).'

Access to the site is via a narrow country lane (Trowes Lane) with a small footpath. The existing footpath is barley wide enough for a pushchair or wheelchair and requires pedestrians to use the road to pass each other. The lane is quite popular with horse riders too. The road has recently become busier as a result of another new development of housing which is now approaching completion and will be further impacted by a second significant development of 81 new houses on a site opposite this proposal for 79 houses.

Effectively, over the last few years there will potentially be an increase in the number of dwellings in Swallowfield by over 50%, which will clearly put more pressure on stretched local resources. This contravenes the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Paragraph 15, which emphasises that planning should be 'genuinely plan-led' and reflect the 'aspirations and needs of local communities. The Wokingham Borough Core Strategy also seeks to maintain the identity of smaller settlements and avoid urban sprawl. The footpath on Trowes Lane ends some distance away from the access to the proposed sites and there is no streetlighting on this part of the lane either. This also puts pedestrians, at significant risk.

The local GP surgery is already over-subscribed and has no space to expand on its current site.

There are no schools in the Swallowfield parish. The nearest primary school with availability is over 4 miles away and it is a similar situation with secondary schools.

The nearest significant employment opportunities are over 3 miles away, north of the M4.

Whilst there is a small village shop any significant amount of

grocery shopping requires driving some miles.

These issues are not consistent with the Policy CP4 of the Wokingham Core Strategy document - 'Planning permission will not be granted unless appropriate arrangements for the improvement or provision of infrastructure, services, community and other facilities required for the development taking account of the cumulative impact of schemes are agreed.'

The 'City & Country Group EPS Residential Travel Plan' document contains incorrect information about available public transport in the village.

Contrary to their claim, the only bus service from Swallowfield to Reading runs once an hour on Mondays to Saturdays with no service at all on Sundays.

There is no direct service to Shinfield, Thames Valley Science Parks or Heckfield.

There is no direct service to Wokingham.

There is no direct service to Green Park Station - the nearest bus stop is 2 miles away from the station.

Consequently, the surrounding B-roads are already congested and will only get worse.

This is inconsistent with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Paragraphs 115 to 117, which include statements such as '...to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use'.

This is inconsistent with Policy CP6 of the Wokingham Core Strategy document - 'Planning permission will be granted for schemes that:

a) Provide for sustainable forms of transport to allow choice; b) Are located where there are or will be at the time of development choices in the mode of transport available and which minimise the distance people need to travel;

c) Improve the existing infrastructure network, including road, rail and public transport, enhance facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, including provision for those with reduced mobility, and other users;'

Common sense suggests that this site, which is currently used for agricultural purposes, is totally inappropriate for any type of development.