

PLANNING REF : 241567
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 53 Longwater Road
: Finchampstead, Berkshire
: RG40 3TS
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Philip Alan Lewis
DATE SUBMITTED : 30/12/2024

COMMENTS:

The renewed plan has done nothing to change my view, in fact it is probably worse - moving the new houses nearer to the existing houses. I think it is a cheap, cynical ploy to have the submission over Xmas and close on the 28th - and I hope this comment will still be considered. This application has been ongoing for years now, and I guess the applicants feel the noise coming from Westminster adds weight to their case - it does not. The government have been very clear as to the sort of applications they want to encourage - and this is not one of them. Destroying villages is not their intent - there's no case for redefining this application as 'grey-belt'. I get that people would want to live here, but wrecking the very thing you desire is not the way forward.

The new plan does nothing to address the traffic concerns, nothing to address the huge negative impact on local wildlife, nothing to address lighting up the area with a vast array of street lights - the road currently has a single street light, and (for me, at least) that's one too many. With the already extensive building in the area, local services including doctors, dentist and sewerage are already beyond maximum capacity.

Selling this application as 'affordable housing', is a cynical joke.

Anyway, please see my comments from the last application - nothing's changed, and I suspect previous comments on a revised plan would otherwise be ignored:

SUBMITTED BY : Mr Philip Alan Lewis
DATE SUBMITTED : 29/07/2024

COMMENTS:

I write to you to express my strong objection to the planning application reference 241567. I feel any development of this site will be detrimental to the village as a whole, but particularly damaging for the wildlife we share the area with. With the aggregate extraction, there has been significant reduction of local open grassland areas, so important to support local wildlife. The field in question is home to deer and foxes, and doubtless countless other smaller animals not obvious to the passerby. This is a semi-rural location and with the loss of this field there will be no connection between the areas on either side of Longwater Road, with the village to the north, and the huge extraction site to the south which itself has removed 100s of acres of grassland.

Longwater Road itself is already very busy, with cars speeding down the road all day. Traffic is often queueing all the way down the road during peak hours, an additional 40 houses will likely add at least another 40 cars to this problem - probably many more than that. There is little or no public transport access to the village and new residents will have no option other than to add to the

problem. This seems wholly at odds with the stated intention for planning to be sustainable.

The site would be completely out of character for the village, and I remain to be convinced it is even inside the development boundary of the village at all. I'm fairly sure the footpath to the north of the site represents the limit of the village. The site is also not included in either the Wokingham Local Plan or the recently adopted Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The village itself has almost no street lighting, and the plan includes extensive lighting in a high density housing development - both completely at odds with the village. It's just absurd, this site will change the character of the village for ever, sucking it into the sprawling development that has been going on in the area for years. With the huge development in Arborfield local infrastructure and amenities are already being pushed to the limit. The local Doctor's surgery is already at full capacity - and getting a dentist in the area is next to impossible. On a more 'earthy' point, the sewage works that serve the area are also at capacity.

The need for affordable housing in the area is already well served, with the above mentioned Arborfield development and redevelopment in the California area of Finchampstead.

We live on the edge of this development and would suffer a significant amount of the noise pollution, loss of light and privacy we have, with any building surely overlooking our garden.

On a personal note, the wonderful view from our kitchen window was one of the reasons we moved to the house in the first place, although I realise this is unfortunately of no concern of any planning considerations. I walk most of the various paths in the village daily, and the path here is almost unique amongst them with its open view of wildlife, I would be very sad to lose it. I would also be absolutely mortified to live next to a field of street lights after spending the last 20 odd years in splendid (almost) darkness. At risk of repeating myself, I think the impact would be felt beyond the immediate field itself as countryside either side of Longwater Road become completely separated.