

PLANNING REF : 241567
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Willows
: Cricket Hill, Finchampstead
: RG40 3TN
SUBMITTED BY : Ms Edwina Kilsby
DATE SUBMITTED : 18/07/2024

COMMENTS:

I object to this application for the following reasons:

This is an unacceptable form of development in a completely unsustainable rural location, beyond any defined settlement boundary for which no justification exists it also fails to maintain the integrity of the environment and due to encroachment is detrimental to the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside.

The proposal to build 14 new houses on a Greenfield site beyond the settlement boundary is fundamentally not compliant with local or national planning policy or the FNDP.

This location provides an important green buffer between Finchampstead and Eversley. It also provides an essential buffer between the Woodmoor wood housing and the new nature reserve to the immediate south. It is inevitable that the new housing associated traffic and street lighting will all be detrimental to wildlife on the adjacent to reserve. These reasons were specifically referred to by WBC's own landscape officer when considering the previous unsuccessful application on this site (171993), since then nothing has changed.

Since the previous similar unsuccessful application here in 2018 the village has lost a number of essential facilities including the village shop a post office and petrol station which have all permanently closed. All essential facilities including doctors secondary school bus service and railway station are only accessible by private car and are approximately three miles of distant, this is contrary to policy and also to WBC's declared climate emergency.

Thames water has confirmed there may be insufficient capacity to provide a pumped sewage connection to the site additionally the Blackwater river to the South appears to be at 51 meters whilst this proposing housing site is at a similar level suggesting a heightened flood risk particularly due to climate change. More worryingly it is apparent that the flood risk data obtained from the Environment Agency does not reflect the substantial quarrying, landfill and restoration that has happened immediately to the south of the site and I note the final form of restoration has still not been approved by WBC even though the planning application is now almost five years old. Relying on flood risk data that was prepared prior to the restoration of the quarry is alarming, as the restoration has altered the landform and likely levels.

Surprisingly there are no proposals in this detailed application to mitigate the impact of this development upon the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area as it lies within the five km mitigation zone.

For all of the above reasons I would request that this application is refused.

