

PLANNING REF : 260774
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Oak Cottage
: Bull Lane, Riseley, Berkshire
: RG7 1SE
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Charles Raynsford
DATE SUBMITTED : 14/05/2026

COMMENTS:

Like many other residents in the area, we would like to raise my concerns and objection to the proposed development on Land North Of Sun Lane in Riseley, Application #260774

Although I am not totally against the proposal, (indeed I can think of areas surrounding Riseley where development would be visually worse and more detrimental to the character of the village) I do however feel that I must raise concerns over the limited facilities and infrastructure which prospective future residents on the development would be subjected to being members of the Riseley Community.

I also believe that many of the concerns raised by the Riseley community are mostly the same as those raised by other villages in the area, such as Swallowfield, where recently developers were granted permission for up to 94 new homes on the edge of the village, despite objections by the local Parish Council, Wokingham Borough Council, and a large number local residents about sustainability and the impact upon the current support infrastructure.

The majority of these concerns and objections against that development would also, in my opinion, only add to and further raise the level of concern of the impact this proposed development in Riseley would have. Namely:

Local Services and Infrastructure.

It is well documented in previous applications, and also from the feedback by local Councils, support groups, and (perhaps most importantly) the personal experience of local residents - that local services and infrastructure are already at, or near, maximum capacity.

I believe the 4 main areas of need/concern in this aspect are:

a) Health Services

Local residents will already know how difficult it can be to get an appointment with a GP, even for those with life limiting illnesses. Though the staff at the Surgery in Swallowfield are excellent, and highly professional in performing their roles, (often above and beyond expectations it has to be said) then there must be accountability by local and national government to ensure that residents (both existing, and "new") have health services available to fulfil their needs immediately, and not "at some future time".

b) Education services.

It should be noted that like the Swallowfield planning application, Lambs Lane Primary School is once again cited in the Riseley application as able to provide educational services for local school

children. This is not the case I understand, nor is it still for Swallowfield children.

Like the provision of Health support services above, provision for children's education must be demonstrated, with all appropriate support services shown to be in place, before any potential further demands are made by new development.

c) Rain Water retention/drainage management.

It is also well documented that the area has been subjected to localised and widespread flooding in past years. Indeed a local Flood Resilience Group has been established to monitor and assist in related issues following major flooding in the area in 2007. The group,

together with various environmental agencies and land owners have only recently concluded preventative actions in the area intended to

hopefully reduce the risk of flooding in the area. Bull Lane to the North East, and the Devils Highway to the South West of the proposed development are water drainage paths that are part of a controlled discharge of surface water that feeds much further downstream into Swallowfield and Heckfield water courses. Further hardstanding drainage run-off from the development could significantly impact the existing surface water course calculations for the area if consultation with the appropriate agencies and local action groups is not undertaken with required preventative flood risk actions implemented and maintained.

d) Foul Water drainage/management.

Again, it is well documented that Swallowfield, which lies downstream from Riseley has suffered major flooding in the past when excessive, and "higher than predicted" rainwater volumes fed into the foul water system. I understand that this was also a major concern raised by

local Parish Council members and residents when the application for 94 new homes was made in Swallowfield, and I can only assume a further 44 new homes in Riseley is only going to add to the volume of future foul water management feeding into Swallowfield.

Local residents in Swallowfield have most recently had to endure many days and nights of Thames Water tankers pumping foul water out of the area when the current system, (put in place following the flood in 2007) failed. This only highlights the single dependency failure point in place by Thames Water at present and which will only become more critical if further demand is placed upon a limited service.

I would also further raise some concern for traffic flow/management in the village which an additional development could also bring. At present, traffic flow during peak travel times accessing the A33 at either the Wellington Roundabout or further up towards the M4 at MereOak can be significantly backed-up with vehicles throughout the area using these points to access the M4, M3, A30, A33, Basingstoke and Reading.

Routes East towards Arborfield/Wokingham can also be highly impacted, as was recently the case when the bridge at Swallowfield Church was demolished by an HGV truck - closing the road for several weeks.

It should be noted, that previous planning applications elsewhere in the region have listed Arborfield as a major nearby shopping

facility, yet the local roads from Riseley to Arborfield is, to be frank, quite dangerous in places. Any further traffic in this direction to Arborfield and beyond without a significant improvement in road safety is a major accident waiting to happen in my opinion, as traffic volume is only increasing in the region, road maintenance and upgrading is limited, and modern cars only seem to be getting bigger and heavier!

Finally, the fact that there is only one Bus service serving Riseley, (which only travels North) makes residents pretty much entirely reliant on owning a car. (or two/three cars if both parents are working and have a grown family)
In the past, the Bus service to Riseley has been withdrawn - so unless there is a recorded commitment to continue, or ideally expand the service, it should not be seen as a long term public transportation.

I have tried to be honest and fair in my comments above, and do hope that the feedback of a local resident, (who is not entirely against new housing and the benefit to everyone that it could bring) is considered an honest and realistic view of the challenges of living in a location where the local support infrastructure has not kept up with continued housing development.