

PLANNING REF : 250517

I am writing to formally submit my strong objection to the above planning application for the proposed development at Land Off Basingstoke Road, Spencers Wood.

While the developers have submitted a revised scheme (reducing the dwelling count slightly from the previously proposed 475-480 homes down to 420), this minor reduction does absolutely nothing to address the fundamental flaws of building a massive urban-scale development in a rural community. The inclusion of a care home, a primary school, and commercial units alongside 420 houses will overwhelm our local area.

My objection is based on several critical planning concerns, outlined below:

1. Public Safety: AWE Burghfield Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ)

This is perhaps the most critical barrier to this development. The proposed site falls directly within the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) for AWE Burghfield.

Under the Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations 2019 (REPPiR), local authorities must ensure that emergency evacuation and shelter plans are viable in the highly unlikely, but severe, event of a radiation emergency. The Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) and AWE themselves heavily advise against any new development that increases the population within the DEPZ.

Introducing over 1,000 new residents, an 80-bed care home, and a primary school into this zone is a direct threat to public safety. A care home and a primary school represent highly vulnerable populations that require complex logistical support to evacuate or shelter.

Approving this application would put unbearable strain on the Off-Site Emergency Plan (OSEP) managed by the local authorities and emergency services. Public safety must take absolute priority over housing targets.

2. Crippling Strain on Existing Infrastructure (Water & Sewage)

Our local infrastructure is already at breaking point, and this development would push it over the edge. Official comments submitted by Thames Water regarding this very application state a clear "inability of the existing SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS infrastructure to accommodate the needs of this development" as well as an "inability of the existing water network infrastructure." It is entirely irresponsible to approve a development of this magnitude bringing hundreds of new toilets, showers, and commercial water demands when the statutory water undertaker has explicitly stated the sewage and water networks cannot handle it. This poses a severe risk of low water pressure for existing residents and, worse, sewage flooding and pollution incidents.

3. Traffic Chaos and Air Pollution

The applicant's own Transport Assessment reveals significant

negative impacts on our local road network. The B3349 Basingstoke Road is already a heavily trafficked route. Adding 420 homes, school drop-off/pick-up traffic, care home staff/visitor traffic, and commercial deliveries will result in severe gridlock.

The modeling clearly shows that key junctions, particularly the Basingstoke Road/Hyde End Road and Basingstoke Road/Beech Hill Road intersections, will operate over capacity. Furthermore, the assessment admits that to avoid congestion, traffic will likely "rat-run" through unsuitable rural routes like Clares Green Road and Church Lane.

This drastic increase in stationary and slow-moving traffic will directly result in a severe drop in air quality. Increased vehicle exhaust emissions and particulate matter from tires and brakes will create localized air pollution hotspots, posing long-term respiratory health risks to both current residents and the proposed new primary school children.

4. Overdevelopment and Loss of Rural Character

Spencers Wood is a rural community. This hybrid application is an urban-scale intrusion that threatens to destroy the village's identity. The continuous relentless development in this area is blurring the historic boundaries between Spencers Wood, Three Mile Cross, and Swallowfield, turning distinct Berkshire villages into a single, sprawling commuter suburb.

The loss of this greenfield agricultural land will permanently scar the landscape. While the developers propose a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), this does not compensate for the loss of established, natural habitats and the disruption to local ecology and wildlife corridors that currently exist on the site. A manicured park next to a sprawling housing estate is no replacement for genuine rural countryside.

Conclusion

Comparing the previous iterations to this revised plan, it is glaringly obvious that a minor reduction in housing numbers does not mitigate the severe impacts this development will have. It remains too large, too dense, and entirely inappropriate for the location.

Between the severe public safety risks regarding the AWE Burghfield DEPZ, the confirmed lack of sewage and water capacity by Thames Water, and the inevitable traffic gridlock, this application is unsustainable and unsound.

PROPERTY ADDRESS : 8 Bryant Crescent

I strongly urge Wokingham Borough Council to listen to the local community, prioritise public safety and environmental health, and REFUSE this application outright.

: Spencers Wood, Berkshire

: RG7 1FG

SUBMITTED BY : Mr Anthony Allen

DATE SUBMITTED : 27/02/2026

COMMENTS:

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