

PLANNING REF : 250549
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Albecq
: Barracks Lane, Spencers Wood, Reading, Berkshire
: RG7 1BB
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Raymond Phillips
DATE SUBMITTED : 14/04/2025

COMMENTS:

I am registering my objection to the planning application for the development of up to 420 dwellings, 80 bed care home, primary school, GP Surgery and other development proposals covered by this application. In my opinion the following should be considered and addressed prior to any building activities commence:

This application is not included in the Updated Wokingham Borough Council Land Plan 2025, which was only submitted for government review recently. The land under consideration has been identified as suitable for moderate development. The proposal to develop 420 dwellings and other facilities is disproportionate to the development classification.

Provision of affordable housing in this application falls short of the 50% as per the draft local plan and should be amended if the development proceeds.

The land is located within the AWE Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) which includes Spencers Wood and Three Mile Cross with a stated "No development should be undertaken" position. This proposal is in contravention of the DEPZ. There are no evacuation routes towards the east of the site leading to a situation that all evacuation routes are towards Burghfield, i.e. the area causing the emergency. Siting of an 80 bed care home within the DEPZ is questionable due to the difficulty of evacuation such a facility or servicing the facility should a lockdown or restricted access be imposed impacting care home staff and provision of supporting services such as 3rd party meal supplies.

Traffic on Basingstoke are already congested during peak times with several pinch points, creating high risk scenarios with insufficient parking opportunities in the vicinity of the One-Stop, Bakery, Pharmacy, Industrial Area and daycare centre. Addition of circa 500 vehicles from the new housing and facilities, entering at the new junction at Back Lane will exacerbate the congestion and adequate developments will have to be undertaken to address shortcomings. Extra traffic on adjacent lanes will have to be managed to prevent any further areas of risk, e.g. Lambs Lane, Back Lane and White House Lane.

Pedestrian and cyclist access via Barracks Lane to Basingstoke Road is not a safe option. The lane is narrow with no safe areas for pedestrians or cyclists to pass any oncoming traffic in the lane (only space for a single vehicle to pass). The road surface is very uneven and there is no provision of light to allow safe walking at night. The area where the lane meets Basingstoke Road at the bakery is very unsafe due to traffic volume and parked vehicles for bakery customers. The lane is privately owned with the upkeep of the lane being carried by the dwellings in the lane. Liability for any injuries in the lane cannot lie with the current residents.

An electric substation and cathodic protection station for the high-pressure Aviation Fuel pipeline is located on the proposed pedestrian/ cycling route to Basingstoke Road. Increased footfall in the lane may pose a tampering risk and should be addressed in any future development. The location of the fuel pipeline through the proposed development presents a significant hazard that needs to be addressed sufficiently before any development can be considered. Consultation with property owners near the pipeline should be done in the process.

Other access routes also come with challenges - access to Century Drive would pass through an established children's play area.

As many residents on the adjoining properties will attest, infrastructure for electricity and water supply are already constrained and pro-active investment is required to improve the situation considering any proposed developments being undertaken.

As a Barracks Lane resident, I am very concerned with "opportunistic" photographs showing a "filtered view" to the site, mainly due to the current owner (farmer) not maintaining the hedge on the Barracks Lane edge for the past two years. Other hedges on the property are in mint condition but the hedge on our side is overgrown and in some areas are more than 10 feet high.

As a parent with children attending Lambs Lane School, it is imperative that any development of a new primary school within the facility be well managed to ensure a seamless impact on the current schooling at Lambs Lane. Demand in the area is high with unmet demand from Spencers Wood and Swallowfield. The development will add significantly to the need. A new school will have to be built sufficiently in time before any residents take up residence in the new estate. Consideration of a three-form school should actively be considered to give parents more options for the schooling of local children.

Provision of a GP surgery on site is to be welcomed, but it needs to be put in place pro-actively and staffed sufficiently with the inflow of new residents to counteract any untenable strain on current medical services in the area.

Development of the land will reduce the availability of such for the production of crops, which has been successfully done for many a year, impacting on the government's target of UK food security. The loss of significant of a significant green space, albeit some provisions are made for green spaces in the proposal, will impact existing residents as well as wildlife on the site and adjacent area.

I also have a major concern relating to noise pollution in the event of the development going ahead. Inclusion of a sports facility and recreational areas in the proposal could lead to increased levels of noise generated by people in attendance/ participating and the noise being carried into neighbouring areas. I have a son with severe learning difficulties, who is very sensitive to external sounds, frequently resulting in him engaging in self-harm behaviour.

As set out above, I have grave concerns regarding the development and do not support this proposal at all.

Regards
Raymond Phillips