

PLANNING REF : 251143
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 4 White Cottages
: Culham Lane, Upper Culham, Berkshire
: RG10 8NP
SUBMITTED BY : Ms Anne Fairs
DATE SUBMITTED : 20/06/2025

COMMENTS:

I have lived at White Cottages for over 32 years and the land to the front of White Cottages, looking North and East, has always been cultivated open farmland with far reaching views to the A4130 and beyond. This large field has not been used for any equestrian activities and has been cropped every year for all the years of my tenure at White Cottages.

The land has been designated SSI status and the existing hedges were planted around 15 years ago and have been allowed to grow to an excessive height, blocking views from ground floor windows and for anyone walking or cycling or riding along Culham Lane and along the track between Culham Lane and the A4130.

Objections:-

Loss of outlook
Loss of light
Noise and disturbance
Environmental Impact
Light pollution

Loss of outlook and loss of light

Far reaching uninterrupted views from the North side of White Cottages are currently enjoyed towards the A4130 and beyond from the top floor windows looking both North and East , across Culham Lane , and are very much valued and unique to the character of these cottages which date from 1840 and earlier.

The proposals to plant trees in front of the cottages to screen the proposed development would not only change the character and biodiversity of the open land from Kenton's Lane to Cockpole Green but would also result in a further loss of light to White Cottages and obliterate the long distance sight lines currently enjoyed.

Noise and disturbance and impact on local amenities

The scale, size and number of ponies being proposed with all the associated staff and activities and facilities (excluding any matches) will be intrusive and noisy.

Sounds carry and echo across this chalk plateau.

Unlike the current light industrial units which are indoor businesses active during working weekdays, the proposed change of use would result in noise and activity 24/7 and 365 days a year with constant movement of large and small vehicles servicing this enterprise and business. Horses will need to be exercised and matches held will inevitable result in additional excessive noise.

Even with a new access from a very busy and fast A4130 (no speed limits until the top of Remenham Hill), there would still be vehicles coming to this site along Culham Lane from the A4 junction

at Knowl Hill. This cannot be controlled.

Culham Lane is part of a popular cycle route and has many narrow stretches and blind bends. Vehicles often have to mount the verges in front of White Cottages to pass each other. Any increase in traffic, especially larger vehicles resulting from this new business, will be dangerous to the community and visitors walking, cycling and horse riding in this area.

Environmental Impact

The proposed development will impact the wildlife, birds and butterflies and mammals. We are privileged to have sight and sound of a wide range of wildlife including skylarks and yellow hammers, owls and bats and birds of prey and so much more. These thrive in diverse habitats with minimal disturbance. Studying the plans it seems that literally every piece of this land will be disturbed by building, excavations or drainage etc.

Of great concern to White Cottages is the proposed reservoir within a few yards of the front of our properties. I have noted that the assessment undertaken in August 2024, "Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage", makes reference to 3 ponds and not to a 67298 cubic meter reservoir literally on our doorstep. This puts us and our properties at a high and unacceptable risk of flooding and will have to be declared on our buildings and contents insurance and could even result in our properties being uninsurable.

I also have concerns about the ground work required to put this structure in place and the impact it would have on cottages built in the 1840s where foundations are at best minimal.

A reservoir of this scale so close to White Cottages is completely unacceptable. The current soak away maintained by Wokingham Council in front of the cottages often backs up during times of heavy rainfall and the road floods.

What steps are being taken to control what will inevitably be a great deal of mosquito activity with the proximity of so much water?

Light pollution

White Cottages and Culham Lane is an area where there is no light pollution which is rare and the enjoyment of the dark night skies will inevitably be lost with the introduction of such a big enterprise and valuable ponds where no doubt security lighting will be required.

To conclude, the proposed change of use and intended development is not appropriate for Upper Culham. The scale of the enterprise as currently outlined, will change the character and enjoyment of this Area of Special Character.

