

PLANNING REF : 250517
PROPERTY ADDRESS : The Shieling
: Lambs Lane Swallowfield, Reading, Berkshire
: RG7 1JB
SUBMITTED BY : Ms Amanda Knowler
DATE SUBMITTED : 06/03/2026

COMMENTS:

I object to the latest version of this planning application and believe there are many valid planning reasons for doing so. The site proposed for development is not sustainable and was excluded from the Local Development Plan, it is located within a detailed emergency planning zone (DEPZ), no improvements are proposed to the local road network to safeguard against the creation of a Spencers Wood by pass using the A33 south of M4 via Whitehouse Farm Lane, Lambs Lane and Back Lane and the site is on productive agricultural land.

It does not accord with the council's policy on development limits (CC02); para.2, "Planning permission for proposals at the edge of settlements will only be granted where they can demonstrate that the development, including boundary treatments, is within development limits and respects the transition between the built-up area and the open countryside by taking account of the character of the adjacent countryside and landscape". Proceeding with this development would create a hard edge to the settlement of Spencers Wood with its 'modest' development status. This a major development that is being proposed and out of proportion with anything that might be reasonably accommodated in this area.

With the proposed development located within the AWE Burghfield (AWE B) DEPZ it should not be allowed to proceed. Not least because of the added burden on blue light services and future constraint on the capacity of AWE B to produce sea defence armoury to keep the country safe. Some points made recently when dismissing an appeal locally for residential dwellings within the DEPZ included: local authority has a responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of its residents; getting caught up in a nuclear emergency would cause anxiety to people affected; put extra pressure on timely response of emergency services; no guarantee residents would have the means to remain in their homes for 48 hours; Office for Nuclear Regulation expressed complete lack of confidence in the ability of the off site emergency plan (OSEP) to adequately take care of its existing population, and are opposed to adding to the population in the zone.

The current plan for accessing and exiting the development by means of a new roundabout on to the B3349 at its junction with Back Lane is in the wrong place, should the council be minded to approve. It should be further north and a pragmatic solution would be to incorporate the roundabout with Benham Drive. So many advantages would accrue from

this change including: improved safety for the estate to the west of the B3349; junction located nearer to Spencers Wood would reduce adverse effect of urbanising the transition from the settlement of Spencers Wood to the south towards Swallowfield; safeguard against the creation of a rat run to avoid Spencers Wood by travelling south on the A33 from M4 via White House Farm Lane, Lambs Lane and Back Lane and, protecting the recent introduction by the council in February 2024 of a maximum weight restriction of 7.5 tonnes along most of Back Lane to improve highway safety around Lambs Lane School.

The site is on good agricultural land that has grown arable crops in recent years. The government published a roadmap for agriculture for the next 25 years in Autumn 2024. It aims among other things to increase home production from the perilous current low level of self-sufficiency of around 58% to a much higher amount. This is deemed imperative to help the UK in future to better absorb major shocks to food supplies in a changing world. The agricultural report with the planning application is flawed in its attempt to illustrate the small economic loss to the farming economy. This loss ignores the value added between the farmer and the consumer and its overall contribution to gross domestic product and does not bear scrutiny when the cumulative effect on developing land classified as best and most versatile land is taken into consideration.

Thank you for reading my comments.