

PLANNING REF : 251086
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Park View
: Basingstoke Road, Spencers Wood
: RG7 1AE
SUBMITTED BY : Ms Marie Louise Griffin
DATE SUBMITTED : 07/06/2025

COMMENTS:

I am writing to express my strong objection to the above planning application.

It would seem that the decision to allow, or not, this development to go ahead will ultimately rest on the question of whether or not WBC can successfully demonstrate that there will be an adequate housing supply to meet future projected demand across the borough. It is hugely disappointing and frustrating that the future of Spencers Wood relies upon (and is being failed by) the Council's inability to convincingly prove they will have an adequate housing supply across the borough.

In the process, other considerations fall by the wayside, and a series of individual planning decisions override all other policies and principles and cumulatively destroy the landscape and village character of Spencers Wood. Furthermore, it seems that any future housing needs should be distributed more widely across the Borough. Spences Wood, Three Mile Cross and Shinfield simply cannot support such a high volume of development.

In this context, I fear the views of local residents such as me do not really have a chance of being heard. Nevertheless, I shall make my objections to this application clear, with accompanying policy references where relevant.

- There is an arrogant and presumptive tone to this application. Referring to it as "Phase 2" is disingenuous and misleading. It is a stand-alone application and should be assessed accordingly. The applicant seems to imply that having got approval for development of 57 houses from the planning inspector, all objections raised previously fall away as they relate to any future application. Far from it, the cumulative impacts cannot be underestimated. Many of the objections to the initial development have come to pass and cannot simply be ignored.

- The proposed reduction in size of the SANG demonstrates how little the developers respect their obligations and local residents. The size of the SANG was approved and agreed as a separate application. It should be kept (and maintained) at the agreed size, regardless of the outcome of this application.

- During the construction phase of the development of 57 houses there were numerous breaches of planning conditions and enforcement issues raised - indeed one remains "under investigation". For example,

king outside permitted days/hours, mud left on the Basingstoke Road, lorries reversing into the site rather than going forwards, lorries parking on Basingstoke Road and blocking residents' access, contractors parking off the site, destruction of trees with a TPO. This proposal would be even more challenging - much of the previous site is now occupied, the development is not taking place during a pandemic where traffic is considerably lighter. Past performance, and the expressed desire to reduce the size of the SANG, suggests there is likely to be scant attention paid to planning obligations

and
constraints.

- The scale of development on land outside the settlement boundary (Policy CC02, TB21, Policy 1 & Policy 2). Any further development erodes any remaining sense of separation between villages and the distinct definition and identity of each village.
- The scale of development on land inside the DEPZ (Policy TB04). This is an aspect where cumulative impact is critical. "It's only another 63 houses", and "the chances of an incident are low" give me no reassurance and to suggest otherwise might endanger the lives of many current and future residents.
- Excessive urbanisation of the small village (Policy TB26 as well as Policy 1 and Policy 2 of the Neighbourhood Plan). Spencers Wood simply cannot support such a high volume of development.
- Inadequate access arrangements onto Basingstoke Road (Policy CP6). The junction of Copenhagen Rise onto Basingstoke Road is the only means of entry to and from the site. This is unsustainable. Furthermore, the junction is offset against The Square on the opposite side and this frequently leads to confusion and near misses.
- Lack of public transport provision (Policy CP6). The application refers to Bus service 7. This has not run for many years. Already few of the local residents use the local bus services, its funding is often in doubt and cars are relied upon heavily.
- Crucially, there is insufficient infrastructure to support this development. Specifically:

a. Roads and Pavements: Traffic along Basingstoke Road can back up from Three Mile Cross to at least the junction with Hyde End Road during the morning rush hour, and in reverse in the evening.

The west side of the road, where the entrance to the development is, has no pavement along this stretch of the road. Even dog walkers do not risk walking along this section of the western side of Basingstoke Road, let alone parents with children, buggies and bicycles. So a trip to, for example, the library, would be treacherous for a parent and child.

Adding a further 63 houses and families, and, let's assume, a minimum of 126 cars into the mix is simply going to add to problems of pollution, congestion and poor road safety for car drivers, pedestrians and residents.

b. Schools: Primary school capacity is inadequate and secondary school provision locally is woeful.

c. Other amenities: There is no doctor's surgery within walking or cycling distance of the proposed development, the area has only one convenience store.

- Utilities. No consideration appears to have been given to the demand for water and waste-water and the impacts on water pressure off site. This area already suffers from low water pressure and such an increase in housing numbers will only exacerbate that problem. In a similar vein, the electricity supply in this area is notoriously unstable. This short section of Basingstoke Road and its surrounding roads suffers a disproportionate number of power cuts. Again, the additional demand a further 63 properties would place on the electricity supply network does not appear to have been considered.

- Change in light and immediate visual impact. Were this development to go ahead the natural light, fields and open skies would be lost and a significant increase in artificial street and residential lighting would occur.

I trust you will give due consideration to my objections to this application and find them compelling and sufficient grounds to refuse the application.

Yours faithfully,

Marie Louise Griffin