

PLANNING REF : 243099
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Orchard Cottage
: Orchard Cottage Church Lane, Arborfield, Reading, Berkshire
: RG2 9JA
SUBMITTED BY : Ms Michala Jarvis
DATE SUBMITTED : 31/12/2024

COMMENTS:

I object to this application on the basis of the following factors:

1. Development density out of character with the local area - the proposal for 111 dwellings is quite a dense use of the available land, and with a mix of up to 2 1/2 stories out of character with the surrounding residential developments and the village. I also note that the previous consultation leaflet mentioned 130 dwellings and that as an outline application little detail has been supplied on the character and nature of the dwellings - if initial permission is granted I can foresee greater density and unsuitable dwellings being reintroduced, and a likely reduction in the proportion of affordable homes. The proposed development also rides roughshod over existing building lines in the area which tend to run alongside the existing road/lane network.
2. Loss of green space/wildlife supporting areas - with the Arborfield Garrison development and the potential Hall Farm development this development would be a further destruction of local green space in the area, impacting local wildlife and biodiversity.
3. Arborfield and Newland does not have the supporting infrastructure and amenities to support such a development, including but not limited to; schools, GP surgery and other medical support, public transport and general retail and service suppliers.
4. Traffic and access - the recent construction of Observer Way was designed to lessen the density of traffic along the Reading Road and through Arborfield Village, and as a result traffic calming measures were applied around the village, including in Church Lane. This development would significantly increase not reduce traffic along the Reading Road, through Arborfield Village and through Church Lane - the residents of which have already submitted to the council the ineffectiveness of the traffic calming measures, reduced speed limit and further use of an unsuitable lane as a cut through at speed. I am also concerned at the proposed access from Reading Road and its proximity to the traffic calming measures as being unsuitable and potentially dangerous. In reality, despite the claims to 'good' public transport links (the bus service along the Reading Road), a development of this size is going to increase the use of vehicles in the area for day to day living of the residents for commuting, shopping, school run etc.
5. Flooding and surface water risk - the existing land retains standing water after rainfall and therefore prevents additional flood risk to properties on Church Lane. Also at times of high rainfall the drainage channels along Church Lane and run off of water from the proposed development already cannot cope and regularly flood the area at the end of Church Lane/Reading Road junction - this would be greatly exacerbated by the development whose own flood report vaguely describes the drainage of water onto Church Lane as the outlet for standing water. Is the developer therefore proposing to increase the flooding risk to existing properties on Church Lane, or even proposing building dwellings likely to suffer from flood risk or damp conditions? I am not satisfied that the proposals address this risk

sufficiently or realistically.

5. Pedestrian access - the plan highlights the pedestrian and cycle opportunities for the development - in reality there is not a footpath along the entirety of the Reading Road for safe walking to school or the village for shopping, and Church Lane residents have already highlighted the difficulties walking along the lane (with no footpath either) given the current traffic conditions.

Therefore the proposed pedestrian link to Church Lane to aid pedestrian journeys is not going to support increased pedestrian use of the locally to the development.

6. Impact on the character, properties and residents of Church Lane - currently Church Lane is exactly that - a semi rural, relatively narrow lane with a low density building line alongside the lane, often only to one side. It already suffers as a cut through by traffic a high speed (acknowledged by Wokingham district council), and this development would add additional stressors on potential flooding, property being overlooked and change of character of the area, let alone the impact and inconvenience of the building works of any

proposed development. With the potential development on the North Side at Hall Farm it would no longer be a semi rural lane but a road squeezed on both sides by the urbanisation of the countryside. I also have concerns that ultimately the proposed pedestrian access to Church Lane could become vehicular and be totally unsuitable and add more risk to the lane traffic conditions.

In summary, I strongly object to the current development proposal on the basis of unsuitability for the local area and lack of consideration/mitigation for the risks outlined above.