

PLANNING REF : 252498
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 27 Instow Road
: 27 INSTOW ROAD Earley, Wokingham, Berkshire
: RG6 5QH
SUBMITTED BY : Mr John Booth
DATE SUBMITTED : 16/01/2026

COMMENTS:

This application should be rejected.

Hall Farm is not the most sustainable location for this level of development. If central Berkshire really requires more homes they should be located on brownfield sites within or on the edges of existing developments to conserve agricultural land and minimise demand for transport. This location is too far from major centres of commerce, employment and transport and is far from railway stations. Consideration of such a major application should await completion and adoption of the update of the Wokingham Local Plan to 2040 so that it may be judged against up-to-date criteria to cover the period to 2040. The current Local Plan was adopted in 2010 and runs until 2026 so is inappropriate for this application.

I am particularly concerned with the implications for increased traffic. This application only covers a fraction of the housing proposed for the site so transport requirements should be considered in a wider context. To reduce congestion and greenhouse gas emissions from transport more priority should be given to bus and cycle lanes on new and existing major roads to encourage alternatives to the car. According to the Transport Assessment there will be very significant increases in traffic on residential roads in Earley even if projected changes to current network (which will have substantial environmental and financial costs) are implemented.

NPPF paragraph 20 requires plans to make sufficient provision for infrastructure for transport. Paragraph 73 requires new developments to be supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities (including a genuine choice of transport modes).

Paragraph 152 says planning should help to: shape places in ways that contribute

to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

I do not think the proposed Loddon Valley Garden Village development will adequately address these requirements.

There is likely to be relatively high car use with impacts on congestion, climate/energy demand, and travel times for residents. I note the Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal says "None of the strategic sites are ideally located from a transport perspective - with LVGV located between strategic transport corridors".

- It is too small to support a wide range of functions - especially employment, retail and entertainment - so residents will have to travel off-site to access these.

- It is too small and too far from likely destinations to support high quality of public transport provision - especially in early stages

before all proposed transport links are in place - so car use will be incentivised.

- For people wanting to visit further destinations for work or leisure, access to mainline railway stations will be quite difficult

- but M4 junctions are fairly close so car use will be incentivised.
- It is not clear whether road infrastructure for travel outside the development will include priority lanes for public transport (e.g. B3270, A329, A327) - but if so costs will be high.
- Capacity on B3270 is likely to be reduced by proposed conversion of Shire Hall site for logistics.
- New road infrastructure will entail loss/damage of habitat: along current roadsides especially B3270 and whatever route is chosen to give access to Mereoak P&R; and the proposed route over Loddon and M4 to access B3270 .

I am also concerned at the projected operational greenhouse gas emissions from the new buildings on the site. They don't seem compliant with the draft Local Plan's aims.

Section 2.9 says:

Key opportunities/challenges:

- To improve opportunities for active travel, reducing car and vehicle dependency for local and unnecessary journeys.
- To ensure new buildings meet the highest fabric and energy efficient standards, so reducing impacts on climate change from development and acting to reduce energy demand and fuel bills.
- To increase resilience of communities and the environment to the effects of climate change.
- To increase the amount of energy generated locally from low carbon and renewable resources.

Section 4.41 says:

4.41 The Local Plan Update includes policies that will ensure that new and redeveloped sites deliver high quality development that meets the economic, social and environmental objectives of national legislation, the NPPF, and the council's climate emergency declaration. New homes will be required to be energy efficient and include renewable energy generation sufficient to meet the total energy need over the course of a year. Development will also seek to minimise embodied carbon arising from the construction of new buildings.

I am also concerned at the loss of ancient trees and in particular the exclusion of 'The Holt' area from the application area which means that the impact on its wildlife and amenity will not be assessed and managed. I am sure that surrounding it with development, even if access is strictly prohibited, will have a major impact on it.