

PLANNING REF : 242421
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Adrian.Betteridge@wokingham.gov.uk
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SUBMITTED BY : Councillor Adrian Betteridge
DATE SUBMITTED : 24/10/2024

COMMENTS:

I object to this application and ask that it is reviewed by the planning committee.

The proposed scale of development of up to 95 dwellings will add an additional circa 20% to the existing Arborfield Cross community. It extends significantly the settlement boundary and reduces the settlement gap between Arborfield Cross and neighbouring settlements, including the proposed development of Barkham Square in the latest Local Plan Update.

The application relies heavily on the lack of a Local Plan and five-year land supply at the time of submission. The Local Plan Update has since progressed and when approved will resolve the land supply issue.

The Local Plan does not include this location as one for sustainable development, preferring other locations in the surrounding area. The Local Plan does, however, propose an additional 900 houses to the south of this location in Arborfield Green and Barkham Square, and 3,930 to the north in the

Loddon Valley Garden Village. These proposals are the result of extensive sustainability assessment which this application, if approved, would undermine.

The application makes many claims about sustainable transport, both existing and proposals to improve mode share. References to cycling, including the existence nearby of a regional cycle route, make no qualitative assessment of suitability. The destinations identified as cycleable are used only by the most risk-tolerant cyclists and the proposal makes no proposals to improve this. Bus routes are some walk from the site and have low frequency and there are no proposals to influence this for the better. As a result, it can be expected that private car will remain the mode of travel for most. With considerable pressure on local roads from

existing and proposed future dwellings within the Local Plan, the additional traffic generated by this site, which is not considered in the Local Plan travel assessment, will be unsustainable. It will more than double the number of dwellings using School Road for access, a road which has been calmed through recent road filtering.

Development permission at this location has been sought on many previous occasions, most recently in 2018, when multiple grounds for rejection were identified by planning officers. Most of these objections remain valid, particularly the extension of the existing settlement and the loss of countryside.

With the approval of the new Local Plan I believe that there are no grounds on which this proposal is beneficial and, as described above, multiple grounds on which it is unacceptable and should be rejected.