

PLANNING REF : 250517
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Clythers
: Church Road, Swallowfield, Reading, Berkshire
: RG7 1TJ
SUBMITTED BY : Mrs Kate Armitage
DATE SUBMITTED : 09/04/2025

COMMENTS:

OBJECT to the development based on the following points:

The development is in the Evacuation Zone for AWE (DPEZ) should there be a fire / radiation leak from the (DPEZ) facility. The development as proposed is not appropriate considering DPEZ because:

- All evacuation routes from the site head towards AWE therefore towards any hazard, rather than away from it. The application should be refused on this basis alone.

- The available evacuation routes out of the area are not fit for purpose for current traffic volumes at times of high traffic volumes; for example, on weekday it can take 90 minutes to drive from the proposed site exit on Basingstoke Road to the A33 junction.

- DPEZ requires that "any new development, re-use, or re-classification of an existing development that could lead to an increase in residential or non-residential populations within the DEPZ must be managed in the interests of public safety." This proposed application would significantly increase the residential population at risk; this is counter to the letter and spirit of the DPEZ public safety considerations.

- The application includes a proposal for an elderly residential care home. This would introduce an additional 80 vulnerable residents to the DPEZ zone. This is in contradiction of Wokingham Borough

Council's obligations to consider the safety of vulnerable groups under DPEZ.

Site Capacity

The land in question is currently graded as an area fit for moderate development only. The building of 450 houses and other proposed developments on the Body's Site far exceeds what should be considered as 'moderate' building levels. The plan proposed high-density housing on a greenfield site. The amount and concentration of housing should be reconsidered before any approval are granted.

Transport and Access Considerations

The 'access points' to the proposed development will result in significant road safety problems and it is essential that these are honestly and adequately addressed BEFORE properties are built as detailed below:

The proposed roundabout at the junction of the Basingstoke Road is unsuitable for the following reasons:

- It is on a bend with limited visibility.

- For traffic heading towards Reading and the M4, traffic emerging from the proposed development will have priority over traffic on the main road (Basingstoke Road). This will lead to tailbacks on the limited visibility bend. This issue plays out every day at the mini-roundabout in Three Mile Cross where the inappropriate priority at the roundabout causes traffic to queue from Spencers Wood.

- For traffic heading away from Spencers Wood, Reading and the M4, traffic emerging from Lambs Lance will have priority over traffic on the main road (Basingstoke Road). This will lead to tailbacks on

the limited visibility bend. More seriously, it will encourage more drivers to use Lambs Lane to take advantage of this priority and to avoid the traffic lights at the end of Beech Hill Road,

- The Beech Hill Road cross junction with Lambs Lane and Whitehouse Lane is a known accident black spot with numerous severe accidents on record in recent years.

The transport statement in their proposals is factually incorrect in relation to the increase in number of vehicles this would bring to the area. Most homes in this area usually need minimum of 2 cars per household and often 3 or more.

The application places great reliance on the potential to cycle and places great emphasis on a low level of road traffic accidents involving cyclists. However, the application makes no mention of the current limited number of road users who are cyclists. It is very low. It is very low because the roads are not safe to cycle on, hence local people know that cycling is not currently a viable means of transport for commuter and school children alike.

Significant road safety improvements would need to be made to align with the assertions made within the planning application.

Mortimer Railway Station is frequently cited as a close access point for rail services. The planning application fails to mention that the car park is usually full by 08:00 on weekday mornings. It is not mentioned that there is no bus service to Mortimer Station.

Instead, the application states that it is possible to cycle from the proposed site to Mortimer Station. The application does not mention that the road to Mortimer Station is hilly, exposed and unlit. More

importantly, it does not mention that the road is busy, bendy and narrow with fast moving vehicles but without pavements or any provision for cyclists. Road safety improvements and an increase in parking at Mortimer Station must be implemented ahead of any development as proposed.

Water / Waste and Energy Considerations.

The provision of water and removal of waste water and sewage is not adequately documented; to the extent that Thames Water have not been able to comment on the application. Considering that there are known "water infrastructure" issues in the area. Spencers Wood and Shinfield already suffer from known low water pressure to existing properties. Swallowfield has regular sewage issues with tankers having to be brought in to support the inadequate sewage infrastructure capacity. Within the WBC local area outflows of sewage into local waterways is a serious and persistent issue and must be a matter of serious concern not only from a planning perspective but also from public health / safety and environmental perspectives. This must be addressed before any approval can be considered and certainly before any additional properties are added to the network

Power Supply

The application makes many claims regarding suitability, but a key sustainability consideration is power supply and consumption. There is no adequate documentation of how existing local power supply issues will be mitigated. Spencers Wood and Shinfield already suffer with sub-standard / inadequate electricity provision in the area; this issue must be addressed before more homes are added to the network. If the proposed development is to be approved as a "sustainable development" then matters such as solar panels on roofs, ground source or heat pump heating should be included in the design of the development as a firm commitment before planning approval can be considered.

