

PLANNING REF : 241567
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 17 Cricket Hill
: Finchampstead Wokingham, Berkshire
: RG403TN
SUBMITTED BY : Miss Hannah Minns
DATE SUBMITTED : 31/07/2024

COMMENTS:

I strongly object to the proposed development on the land to the east of Longwater Road Finchampstead for the following reasons. The site is not suitable or sustainable. The Labour government only yesterday stated that all new developments whether on green belt or green field sites must have adequate infrastructure. There is no suitable infrastructure currently in the village for example shops, post office, garage or public transport, neither does this development make provision for any, in its proposal. Any residents of this new development would need a car to access amenities elsewhere and this is in contradiction to the WBC neighbourhood plan to reduce car usage and emissions. The inevitable increase in traffic due to this proposed development, should it go ahead, will put further strain on the village roads which are not designed to cope with large numbers of vehicles. The old war memorial junction is already a pinch point and extremely hazardous, this will only be made worse. Dell Road, Ambarrow Lane, Lower Sandhurst Road and Cricket Hill were meant to be preserved as country lanes but they will be used as shortcuts to access neighbouring villages. Many stretches along these aforementioned roads are only suitable for single file traffic with very few passing points. To access the nearest shops at Nine Mile Ride approximately 2 miles away pedestrians would need to take their life in their hands walking down Jubilee Road. There are no footpaths or verges or any way to escape on coming traffic, only steep banks each side of the road. Likewise there are no footpaths towards Waitrose in Yateley or indeed Yateley centre itself. The Doctors surgery and Dentists situated at Nine Mile Ride are already at capacity and any further influx of residents will add extra burden to an already struggling NHS. The Church Of England Primary School in the village will not be able to accommodate all the children requiring a place and they will need to travel further afield by car. The field in question is a natural soak away and is known historically for being wet. It is adjacent to the Manor Farm Lakes which was a former Cemex gravel workings, the levels of the land have been changed due to this and there are no guarantees that this will not flood. The bund that was built to protect the residents from noise during the gravel extraction to the north of Manor Farm Lakes has been removed, in previous years water has been observed being held back by this bund so now with its removal who knows what will happen, which further demonstrates why this site is NOT suitable for development. The lakes have also been designated as a nature conservation area and any development will have a detrimental impact on the many bird species that reside in and visit the wetland habitat. A pair of breeding Barn Owls are regularly observed hunting in the field, this is a privilege to witness. They are a protected species and should remain that way so that future generations can also enjoy them. Contrary to Catesby, the developers comments regarding the wildlife surveys conducted, there is an

abundance of wildlife at this location. These include Bats and Newts which are protected species, Deer, Foxes, slow worms, Badgers, Hobbies, Shelducks and many many more! Undoubtedly a development of this size, 40 houses is too dense and completely out of keeping with the local vernacular. This will have a semi urbanising affect on what has always been a rural village. A semi urban alleyway will be created between this proposed new development and the existing Woodmoor settlement. At present this is a public right of way affording spectacular views to the south across open countryside. This lifts the spirits and gives one a feeling of wellbeing and tranquility when strolling along this path. For this application to be given the green light would be an absolute travesty and will seriously damage the mental health of myself and countless others. Street lighting is a major concern as we are currently in a dark sky area with no light pollution. There are very few street lights within the village and this will affect existing residents quality of life and sleep patterns . Wildlife would also be hugely impacted, especially the nocturnal creatures some of which I have already mentioned. This proposed site is in the countryside, and as recorded in the WBC local plan is ' outside the settlement boundary'. This site does also not comply with the recently adopted Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan which the majority of residents voted in favour of. With the development at Arborfield and re-development of Gorse Ride, Finchampstead is well catered for with sociable and affordable housing and they are in much more sustainable locations with adequate infrastructure. In summing up please give my valid comments due consideration before agreeing to any development on this totally unsuitable site.