

PLANNING REF : 241567
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Cobblers Cottage
: Southend Road, Bradfield Southend, Berkshire
: RG7 6EU
SUBMITTED BY : Mrs P Hasler
DATE SUBMITTED : 31/07/2024

COMMENTS:

Having lived in Wokingham and had strong connections with Finchampstead for over 50 years, I believe I am suitably qualified to submit an objection with the following comments.

1. An application was submitted in 2017 (No 171993) but it was deemed to be unsuitable and was subsequently withdrawn without even reaching planning committee stage. The numerous reasons for objection to this speculative application still exist.
2. The proposed site is outside the settlement boundary as recorded in the WBC Local Plan.
3. The site does not comply with the recently-agreed Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan.
4. The application does not comply with policies cp1, cp3, cp4, cp6 or cp9 of the Wokingham Local Plan.
5. The proposal suggests WBC's CP9 as an exception - however, this is a Rural Exception provision intended to support rural communities. Given the limited employment opportunities and lack of local facilities and services within the village, it would be necessary to use the car for nearly all journeys. Thus, the development would not be providing housing for a rural community but more likely provide housing for those commuting to work elsewhere.
6. The local infrastructure is not in place to adequately sustain the development.
7. There are no local facilities or services (GP, dentist, shops, schools or places of employment) in the village itself or within safe walking or cycling distance.
8. There is limited public transport and the nearest railway station is three miles away. Cars would be necessary for all journeys, exacerbating the existing local traffic problems.
9. The NHS Primary Care network responsible for Arborfield, Swallowfield and Finchampstead is at full capacity.
10. The sewage plant is at full capacity.
11. The density and style of housing is out of keeping with the rest of the village. Furthermore, it is likely that street lighting would be proposed, urbanising the character of the location and having a detrimental effect on the existing wildlife and that of the adjoining nature reserve.
12. Affordable housing already provided for in more suitable locations within the Borough. It is questionable whether the so-called affordable housing would actually be put in place or even achievable for those who need it, never mind that the local infrastructure simply can't sustain the additional development in this location.
13. The development would reduce the buffer zone between the villages of Finchampstead and Eversley.
14. The area provides a haven for wildlife including protected species and also act as a buffer zone between the new nature reserve and the existing Woodmoor housing.
15. The development could be viewed as a place for non-residents to park.

16. The proposed traffic junction at Longwater Road is at a potential ly dangerous point as there is an existing track opposite (to allotments) and the speed changes from 60mph to 30mph.