

PLANNING REF : 260774
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Langstone
: Basingstoke Road, Riseley, Berkshire
: RG7 1QL
SUBMITTED BY : Mr John Francis McDermott
DATE SUBMITTED : 18/05/2026

COMMENTS:

Subject: Objection to Proposed Development of 44 Dwellings - Land North of Sun Lane, Riseley

1. Inappropriate Development in an Unsuitable Countryside Location
a. The site comprises agricultural fields and pastureland forming part of the open countryside on the south western edge of Riseley. The proposal represents an unjustified and harmful encroachment into rural land beyond the settlement boundary.

b. Previous applications for residential development on this land have been rejected as unsuitable. Nothing material has changed: the land remains outside the settlement boundary, is not allocated for development, and continues to perform a countryside function.

c. Wokingham Borough Council has already objected to nearby development proposals (e.g., Hart District Council's Dukes Meadow application) on the basis of:

- o Detrimental landscape impact
- o Loss of important woodland buffers
- o Harm to rural character
- o Adverse effects on wildlife habitats

All of these concerns apply equally to this site.

d. The applicant's own Planning Statement acknowledges:

o Conflict with the adopted development plan

o Failure to meet criteria 1-7 of Core Strategy Policy CP11 (Development in the Countryside)

o That development would "inevitably change" the landscape character
This is a clear admission that the proposal is contrary to policy and harmful by definition.

2. Heritage Harm to Nearby Grade II Listed Buildings

Riseley contains three Grade II listed buildings in close proximity to the site:

- Coldharbour Cottage (Sun Lane)
- Pound House (Basingstoke Road)
- Bull Lane Cottage (Bull Lane)

Under Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Council must give "special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting."

This proposal fails that statutory test.

Key harms include:

a. Urbanising effect on a rural setting that forms part of the historic significance of these buildings.

b. Bulk, massing, and density of the proposed estate are incompatible with the low profile, historic character of the listed cottages.

c. Visual intrusion: the development would introduce a prominent built form visible from the listed buildings, eroding their rural backdrop. d. Loss of historic context: these cottages were

historically rural dwellings surrounded by fields. Replacing those fields with a modern estate fundamentally alters their setting.

e. Loss of tranquillity: increased noise, traffic, and activity would harm the quiet rural environment that contributes to their

significance.

f. The scale of 44 dwellings constitutes clear overdevelopment and provides strong grounds for refusal.

3. Flooding and Environmental Risk

a. The proposal would significantly increase flood risk to neighbouring and downstream properties.

b. The applicant acknowledges that Sun Lane and Bull Lane already experience flooding.

c. Properties along Basingstoke Road sit at a lower elevation than the development site. Replacing permeable fields with hard surfaces will:

- o Increase surface water runoff
- o Reduce natural drainage capacity

- o Exacerbate existing flood pathways

d. Water and sewage infrastructure is already failing in Riseley and Swallowfield.

- o Thames Water and WBC are aware of chronic capacity issues.

- o Tanker operations are required annually to remove sewage.

- o This year alone, tanker operations are estimated to have cost over 500,000.

Adding 44 dwellings to an already overstretched system is unsustainable.

4. Road Safety and Highway Constraints

a. The nearby Dukes Meadow development (Hart DC Applications 18/002242/REM and 16/02989/OUT) includes a legally binding condition:

"The vehicular access approved on the western boundary of the site fronting onto Basingstoke Road (B3349) shall not be used by motor vehicles other than emergency vehicles." Reason: Highway safety (Policies GEN1, T14, NPPF, and Hart Local Plan Policy I3)

If access to the B3349 is unsafe for one development, it is equally unsafe for this one. This alone is sufficient grounds for refusal.

b. Numerous additional road safety concerns have been raised by residents and consultees, including:

- o Narrow rural roads

- o Lack of pavements

- o Existing congestion

- o Conflict with agricultural vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians

These concerns reinforce the case for refusal.

5. Additional Material Considerations

a. Wildlife and Ancient Woodland

- Permanent loss of habitat

- Harm to local ecology

- Erosion of wildlife corridors

b. Archaeology

- The site lies adjacent to a recognised Roman Road, increasing the likelihood of archaeological interest.

c. Local Facilities and Infrastructure

- Only one bus service operates to Reading, six days per week; funding ends in 2027.

- Nearest shop is in Swallowfield.

- Local medical practice is already over capacity confirmed by the Planning Inspector during the Trowes Lane (Croudace) appeal.

These constraints demonstrate that Riseley cannot sustainably support further development.

6. Request - Flood Mitigation Condition (If Approved)

Should the Council be minded to approve the application, I request that a statutory condition be imposed requiring the developer to:

Install a permanent culvert from Sun Lane down Barge Lane, replacing the existing overgrown and partially missing drainage ditches, to mitigate flood risk to existing properties.

Conclusion

This proposal is:

- Contrary to the development plan
- Harmful to heritage assets
- Unsafe in highway terms
- Environmentally unsustainable
- Unsupported by local infrastructure

For these reasons, I respectfully request that Wokingham Borough Council refuse planning permission.