

PLANNING REF : 252430
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 1 Loddon Court Farm Cottages
: Lambs Lane, Spencers Wood, Berkshire
: RG7 1JG
SUBMITTED BY : Miss June Salisbury
DATE SUBMITTED : 28/11/2025

COMMENTS:

I refer to the proposed development of 79 Houses in Swallowfield east of Trowes Lane - Wokingham Ref. 252430.

I strongly object to the proposed development as I think it is disproportionate, unsustainable and contrary to Wokingham Borough Council's own planning guidelines. It is not included in the Local Plan and lies outside the defined village boundaries. It will destroy the nature of Swallowfield as a village, an important habitat which is fast becoming a rarity in Wokingham District, for the following specific reasons:

(a) Is the development appropriate in the context of the existing character of the landscape?

No. The area is surrounded by trees, farmland, woodland and rural roads lined with ditches. The style and size of the development does not align to this environment.

(b) Is the development appropriate in the context of the existing development form?

No. Swallowfield has been classified as a limited development location yet this site would represent an enormous increase in the size of the village.

(c) What are the sources of flood risk?

According to the development's Design and Access Statement, at least part of the site is at high risk of flooding. The field in question already floods across Part Lane and the development will increase this risk.

(d) Are the provision of services adequate?

No. The surface run-off created by the development will risk overwhelming the local network. Thames Water has categorised the nearby approved development as a Red Risk. This means there is no adequate water supply, surface water drainage or foul water disposal capacity. No funds have been allocated for upgrades until at least 2030. It make no sense whatsoever to increase this problem.

(e) Criteria - Does the development have accessibility to services and facilities?

Very limited. Few services and facilities are available within a 20 minute walk. In addition Farley Hill School has been moved further away to Arborfield. Most journeys would require dependency on private vehicles, which is contrary to Local Plan objectives. A specific example of inadequate critical service is the Swallowfield Surgery which is significantly over subscribed already. The development documents note that it will contribute to funding for NHS services. Crucially however, unless this fits with NHS plans and resources, additional services will not actually be provided. This is a fundamental flaw in piecemeal development being promoted outside the Local Plan when, presumably, development will include the necessary additional funded and approved vital local services.

(f) Is the standard of vehicular highway and access sufficient?

No. The site is surrounded by narrow unlit lanes and would require the removal of mature hedgerows. Outrageously, the proposal is based on walking to the limited local services in the village based on the lanes being considered safe, even though there are no footpaths, as they are 'Quiet'. This will not be the case when the lanes are subject to the additional traffic from the development.

(g) Is the standard of public travel and active travel sufficient?

No. The bus service is limited, particularly on the weekends, and there is no direct service to the district centre of Wokingham. There are no footpaths and very limited pedestrian access. Much is made of cycle routes in the development documents, but the lanes will become even more dangerous with the increase in traffic.

(h) Would the development provide acceptable and achievable levels of accessibility?

No. The proposed site is reliant on rural, single track roads. Works to widen the lanes would irrevocably change the character of the area.

The above criteria can clearly not be met by the proposed development. They demonstrate why it is totally out of keeping with the area and would destroy the nature of Swallowfield village and the surrounding area. This is self-evident in local feedback given in the 'Statement of Community Involvement' where 75% of attendees said there was no need for more housing in the area and approximately 25% of attendees felt Swallowfield could be improved by not having any more housing.

I note Wokingham DC's comments in the 'Common Concerns About The Local Plan Update' document. I appreciate that an approved Local Plan is needed to protect Wokingham for unplanned and even more inappropriate development and support the challenges that WDC is making to

Government about increases in required development. This should be the primary means of objection on the basis that the required level of development in Wokingham is inappropriate given the nature of the Borough. This should be looked at across the country - levelling up other areas that will benefit from sustainable development to increase economic improvement and growth of housing demand compared to the very crowded south east of England.

Allowing for that objection, I also believe there are more appropriate means for Wokingham to achieve the Government targets than 252430. The use of brownfield sites are more likely by their nature to meet sustainability criteria. It sounds like the main objection is one of cost. I believe this is because the true costs of the lack of sustainability of sites such as 252430 are not taken into account.