

PLANNING REF : 252430
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Cherrytree Cottage
: Basingstoke Road, Riseley, Reading, Berkshire
: RG7 1QL
SUBMITTED BY : Mrs Deborah Bergstrom
DATE SUBMITTED : 24/11/2025

COMMENTS:

I strongly object to this planning application, as it is in direct contradiction to Wokingham Borough Council's policies of sustainable development allied with provision of appropriate infrastructure. It is yet another speculative application which seeks to piggyback on previous applications approved on appeal, and to impose a dense, urban-style development on a rural community. If this trend of inappropriate development is allowed to continue, all the agricultural land between Swallowfield and Riseley will eventually be swallowed up, turning the whole area south of Reading into one giant commuter suburb.

Swallowfield has been identified as a limited development location, and the proposed site is not included in the draft Local Plan for Wokingham Borough. It also lies outside of the defined settlement boundary. These facts should militate against any significant development in the area. However, this planning application sidesteps these issues, and "massages reality" to put a positive gloss on Swallowfield as a suitable location for development.

In reality, the whole of Swallowfield parish suffers from a creaking and inadequate infrastructure, with poorly-maintained roads, inadequate sewerage system and few local facilities. Swallowfield village in particular has a well-documented history of drainage and flooding issues, which will only be exacerbated by further development. In addition to this, the medical practice is massively over-subscribed, and there is a wait of several weeks for any appointment. There are no local schools, and residents require a car to access most services, such as retail centres (apart from the small Parish Stores), and there are few local employment opportunities.

There is currently an hourly bus service into Reading (which is at risk of funding being withdrawn at any time), but no service to the district centre of Wokingham.

Trowes Lane is a rural lane, primarily used at present by pedestrians, cyclists and horses. Even if the lane is widened, it would be unsuitable for the volume of traffic generated by the already approved Croudace estate, not to mention the addition of some 200 extra cars from the proposed development. The roads within Swallowfield village were never designed to carry large volumes of traffic, and unless the whole of The Street is widened, there will be total traffic chaos.

In summary, I believe that this development is unsuitable for the location in which it is planned, and permission should be refused. If for any reason the application does gain approval, it needs to be accompanied by commitments to put in place major infrastructure improvements, and conditions need to be imposed on the developer to make concrete and measurable contributions towards genuine sustainability.

