

PLANNING REF : 251143
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 5 Ashley Hill Place
: Cockpole Green, Berkshire
: RG10 8NL
SUBMITTED BY : Dr Frank Hope
DATE SUBMITTED : 13/06/2025

COMMENTS:

This comment is provided to register an objection to planning application 251143 in relation to the expansion of equestrian facilities and associated works at Upper Culham Farm.

The proposed expansion does not meet the criteria for building on green belt land, and the plan falls within the green belt. Green belts help safeguard the countryside from encroachment, ensuring that open space is preserved. This area has traditionally been used for agriculture, and there is a popular footpath from Culham Lane, from Upper Culham Farm across to Middle Culham and the A3140.

This planning proposal will contribute significantly to light, noise, and environmental pollution. The proposal fails to consider the impact on the adjacent hamlet of Cockpole Green and does not disclose the development details of the site for entertainment purposes.

The existing barn that was built several years ago was allowed on condition that trees were planted to soften the visual impact of the barn. This was done after consultation with the inhabitants of Ashley Hill Place, Cockpole Green and has taken several years to mature. What was not appreciated was the light pollution that arose due to the lights in the barn remaining on overnight. The proposed American barns dwarf the existing barn and the light pollution will be on a much larger scale.

Please note that Ashley House Place residents were notified of that previous planning application and a local councillor visited us to look across to the site in order to assess the impact of the very large proposed barn.

It is proposed to convert the existing barn into a staff day facility; no information is provided on any staff accommodation that would be necessary for the management of the facilities and the security of the horses and the site. Accommodation building on green belt land should be declared within this planning application.

The three huge American barns are of a size that is not in keeping with any other building in the area and not meeting the requirements of building on green belt land. The barns are also being erected close to several nearby hamlets and no effort has been made to position them in a location with minimum visual impact on the local communities.

It is well-known that horse stables, and muck heaps, attract a variety of flies. The location of the proposed muck heap is directly adjacent to a public bridleway (a drove, regularly used by the local farmer) and close to the hamlets mentioned in the application and also to Cockpole Green. The bridleway is frequently used by walkers, runners and cyclists. No assessment has been made of the environmental impact of flies and smell.

No assessment has been made as to the potential of visitors deciding to use the bridleway for free viewing access and parking on the dleway (drove) or nearby lanes or, for example, in Ashley Hill Place cul-de-sac.

The proposal mentions the erection of a stadium, but no details are provided regarding this stadium or its location. Two areas are marked for parking, and presumably some of the parking will be associated with the stadium and events to be held on the polo field. There is no mention of any catering facilities that would be needed to support events and the entertainment of polo matches. The development of an entertainment and commercial venture within the green belt should be properly declared and detail provided.

There is no assessment provided for the noise pollution that will arise from such events.

There is no assessment of the increased level of traffic that will arise from traffic following satellite navigation; from the A4 along the narrow lanes of Warren Row Road and Culham Lane; from the A3140 and up narrow Rose Lane; lastly, from the Wargrave Road along Kenton's Lane and Worley's Lane, which also have narrow passing points.

The application has failed to engage with the local communities on the grounds of sensitivities around purchasing the farm. No information is provided on what these sensitivities are. The application only anticipates that traffic and biodiversity are likely to be of main concerns to the local community. As set out above, the application has failed to anticipate the considerable concerns set out in this objection.

Finally, there has been a lack of communication with residents of Ashley Hill Place, Cockpole Green, which is adjacent to the development site. Out of six houses, only two appear to have received a "card" relating to the application. This is very poor and inconsistent communication providing important notice of this significant planning application.