

PLANNING REF : 251310
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Farley Hill Cottage
: Church Lane, Farley Hill, Berkshire
: RG7 1UP
SUBMITTED BY : Mrs Amanda Hatfield
DATE SUBMITTED : 11/06/2025

COMMENTS:

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to formally object to the Screening Opinion application for the proposed large-scale development at Blackcroft Farm, Reading Road, Arborfield.

While I appreciate the Council's duty to assess whether the proposal requires a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), I strongly urge the Planning Authority to require a comprehensive EIA before progressing any further consideration of this application.

This development, which proposes a total of 650 new residential units, a care home, leisure complex, industrial estate expansion, and a major new road junction, represents a major transformation of the local landscape and infrastructure, and poses significant environmental and community risks, including but not limited to:

1. Cumulative Environmental Impact

The cumulative effect of this proposal alongside other nearby developments would place immense pressure on local ecosystems, infrastructure, roads, schools, and healthcare services.

2. Ecological Sensitivity

Farley Hill and surrounding areas are rich in biodiversity, and any disruption to local wildlife corridors, hedgerows, watercourses, and green space must be thoroughly assessed. A proposal of this scale risks significant harm to local flora and fauna without rigorous ecological evaluation.

3. Flood Risk and Water Management

The proposed Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) requires detailed analysis. The site's hydrology, proximity to flood-prone zones, and the impact of increased impermeable surfaces on local drainage systems must be scrutinised within a full EIA framework.

4. Traffic and Highways Impact

A new 4-arm roundabout on Reading Road and the projected traffic from hundreds of new homes, a care facility, and expanded industrial operations will dramatically alter traffic volumes, congestion, and safety in and around Farley Hill. This should be properly modelled in a Transport Assessment included in a wider EIA.

5. Character of the Area

Farley Hill is semi-rural in nature, and this development will fundamentally alter the area's character, tranquillity, and landscape setting. The impact on heritage assets and long-range views must also be properly considered.

6. Air Quality and Noise Pollution

Construction and long-term occupation will increase noise, dust, and

vehicle emissions, with health and wellbeing implications for current and future residents. These impacts should not be underestimated and must be assessed in full.

7. Public Consultation and Transparency

Given the significance of this development, the public has a right to be fully informed and consulted. Skipping an EIA undermines the democratic planning process and the opportunity for informed objection or support.

Conclusion

In light of the above, I respectfully request that Wokingham Borough Council determines that this development does meet the criteria for a full Environmental Impact Assessment under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

The scale, complexity, and potential harm posed by this proposal warrant a full, transparent, and scientifically robust environmental assessment to ensure any planning decisions made are in the best long-term interests of both the local community and the environment.

Yours faithfully,
Amanda Hatfield