

PLANNING REF : 241567
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Hunters Moon
: Longwarer Lane, Finchampstead, Berkshire
: RG40 4NX
SUBMITTED BY : Mrs Gill Kennington
DATE SUBMITTED : 25/07/2024

COMMENTS:

I've lived in Finchampstead village for almost 30 years. It has been a fantastic place to bring up my family and dogs, (despite the need for a car journey to get anywhere else). I was upset to hear the plans for this new large development of houses and would like to raise my objection for the following reasons.

The main feature that attracted us to the village was its semi-rural nature:

We are surrounded by countryside. The new development would urbanise the village by significantly increasing its built-up area and reducing the green space around it. This is more significant as the proposed site is on the edge of the village. I believe that it is also, 'not within the settlement boundary according to Wokingham local plan'. The number of houses proposed in a large block is larger than any in recent memory and will be totally out of character with the place.

The site is also adjacent to the proposed new Wildlife Conservation Site. It will therefore disturb the wildlife and cut off a corridor for their movements. Increased visitor numbers to the area would result in further disturbance and potential damage to local diversity. There is currently very little street light in the village to aid nocturnal wildlife.

This concern I express is not just my view. The Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan (FNDP) mentions, 'The semi-rural nature of this parish and the sense of closeness to the countryside is repeatedly mentioned by residents as what they value most about living here.'

The FNDP also states that, 'special protection (from development) should be applied where the Green Space is, 1. In reasonably close proximity to a local community.
2. (that any development) should be local in character and is not an extensive community tract of land.

The development proposed would directly negatively impact my quality of life.

I have a dog and also run an allotment, the entrance of which is directly opposite the proposed development site. I often walk Felix after we have visited the allotment and go home the long way round through the footpath adjacent to the site. It is a very pleasant. I enjoy the countryside view, watching the birds and the blackberries in the autumn. I understand this path would be degraded into an alley way between buildings and would therefore completely lose its attractive character. The NDP aims 'a potential expansion of green corridors through the current rights of way network', not reduce it. It also aims to 'recognise, respect and preserve the identity and rural setting of this parish'. These aims are not congruent with allowing this development.

I also have concerns about the capacity of the sewage works to manage more effluent as it is already struggling to cope with the current levels.

I am worried about the busyness and safety of turning into and out of the track to the allotment. Cars drive faster than they should in this area and the junctions onto Longwater Road will be directly opposite each other.

My final set of objections relate to the lack of sustainability of building these large number of houses in Finchampstead.

Because we only have one bus a week, the only way out of Finch village is by car. There are no safe walking routes along the roads. This fact means that many more cars will be on the road which must be contrary to your green credentials as a council.

I believe that it is very difficult to get a place at a Doctor's Surgery and there is no dentist in the village. There is only a very small, 'high end' food shop with a tiny selection of foodstuffs.

The NDP mention various roads through and out of the village which are narrow and not suitable for frequent two-way traffic. The area where the Memorial Cross used to be is a 'pinch point'. The FNDP mentions that an increase in traffic would, 'adversely impact both safety and flow'.

I appreciate the opportunity to express my views. I do hope that you take them into account. Please think twice before making an irreversible step that will really adversely affect our village lives.