

PLANNING REF : 250517
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Field View
: Back Lane, Spencers Wood, Reading, Berkshire
: RG71YG
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Richard Meakin
DATE SUBMITTED : 15/03/2026

COMMENTS:

****Subject: Formal Objection to Proposed Development****

I wish to register a formal objection to the proposed development for the following planning and environmental reasons.

****1. Conflict with the Local Development Plan (LDP)****

The site is not allocated for development within the Local Development Plan and therefore represents speculative and opportunistic development. Allowing development on unallocated land undermines the strategic planning framework and risks setting an undesirable precedent for further unplanned development in the area.

****2. Highway Safety and Traffic Impact****

The local road network is not adequate to accommodate the significant increase in traffic generated by the proposal. It is estimated that the development would generate approximately 1,000 additional vehicle movements per day. This presents serious highway safety concerns, particularly around Wellington Industrial Estate and the retail outlets located along the eastern side of the B3349 in Spencers Wood, and further north toward Three Mile Cross. Increased congestion and traffic volumes would significantly worsen road safety for residents, commuters, and pedestrians.

****3. Inadequate Local Infrastructure and Public Services****

The planning application relies on existing local services which are already operating at or near full capacity. For example:

- * Lambs Lane Primary School is already close to full capacity.
- * Swallowfield and Shinfield Medical Centres are already operating at capacity.

The proposal does not provide adequate new infrastructure to address this additional demand, placing further strain on already overstretched services.

****4. Unsuitable and Unsustainable Location****

This development is effectively a stand-alone scheme that is random in nature and not well integrated with existing settlement patterns. The site currently forms part of a low-density transition area between the built environment and the surrounding open countryside. Development would create a hard urban edge, significantly altering the character of this semi-rural landscape.

****5. Impact of Proposed Business Park****

In addition to the 420 new homes, the proposed 1-hectare business park would generate further traffic, including commercial and heavy goods vehicles. This would negatively impact road safety,

particularly given its proximity to the local primary school on Back Lane. The proportion of children walking to school is already low and would likely decline further due to increased traffic and inadequate provision for pedestrians and cyclists.

Furthermore, the proposed business park is located opposite the long-established Lambs Farm Business Park. This site has recently expanded but is not currently operating at full occupancy, with numerous units regularly available to let. This clearly indicates that the supply of business premises in the area already exceeds demand, making additional provision unnecessary.

****6. Lack of Sustainable Development Principles****

Taken together, the factors outlined above demonstrate that the proposal does not constitute sustainable development. It fails to properly integrate with existing infrastructure, services, or community needs.

****7. Existing Planned Housing Allocations****

The borough already has substantial planned housing provision through strategic developments, including the Shinfield and Arborfield Strategic Development Locations. In addition, the Local Plan includes proposals for a Garden Village of approximately 4,000 homes at Hall Farm, located approximately three miles from the proposed site. These developments include planned and integrated infrastructure improvements and represent a more sustainable and strategic approach to meeting housing needs.

****8. AWE Burghfield Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ)****

The site lies within the expanded Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) associated with the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Burghfield. This zone restricts major residential development due to safety and emergency planning considerations. In February 2021, a High Court judge rejected attempts by developers, including Crest Nicholson, to overturn the enlarged planning zone in order to allow development at Grazeley. The presence of this zone highlights the exceptional safety considerations that apply in this area and should be fully respected.

****9. Environmental and Ecological Impacts****

Development at this location would have significant negative impacts on the local environment and landscape habitat. The site's north-to-south elevation and its close proximity (approximately 100 metres) to the River Loddon increase the risk of surface water runoff and potential river pollution. The development would also lead to the displacement of wildlife and degradation of the surrounding natural habitat.

****Conclusion****

For the reasons outlined above including conflict with the Local Development Plan, inadequate infrastructure, significant highway safety concerns, environmental harm, and safety considerations related to the AWE Burghfield DEPZ the proposal represents an unsustainable and inappropriate development for this location.

I therefore strongly urge the planning authority to refuse this application.