

PLANNING REF : 250517
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Oaklands
: Basingstoke Road, Reading, Berkshire
: RG7 1PH
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Jonathan Beavon
DATE SUBMITTED : 10/04/2025

COMMENTS:

Subject: Objection to Planning Application 250517 - Development at Body's Farm

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to object to Planning Application 250517 concerning the proposed development at Body's Farm. I believe this proposal raises several serious concerns that require urgent reconsideration.

1. Safety Issues Within the DEPZ

The development falls within the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) of AWE Burghfield, a site where nuclear warheads are assembled, maintained, stored and disassembled.

Simply dismissing DEPZ policy and the expert opinion that DEPZ represents with phrases like "The actual risk of an incident is incredibly low", raises grave safety concerns, specifically:

- The proposed emergency 'Refuge' lacks clarity, for example, who can use it, how will access be controlled, how many people can use it and how does it align with existing emergency protocols.
- All of the proposed evacuation routes head west, towards Basingstoke Road; there is no route to the east. As an illustration, consider my commute to the M4 J11, a journey which takes 6 mins with little traffic, often takes me 20 to 25 mins at normal peak times. If the whole of Spencers Wood attempted to evacuate along the Basingstoke Road in the event of a DEPZ evacuation there is no chance of a quick evacuation along the Basingstoke Road.
- The siting of a care home in the DEPZ is an unacceptable risk, given the difficulty of evacuation and servicing during a lockdown. This location is not suitable for vulnerable populations or new development of dense housing.

References

This lack of clarity regarding safety issues within the DEPZ can be seen in the document "250517-Planning Statements and Reports-13032025.pdf250517-Planning Statements and Reports-13032025.pdf"

Page 43. - "Potentially incorporate a building within the primary school that is designed to provide a centre in the event of an emergency at AWE Burghfield."

Page 43 - The land falls within the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone for AWE Burghfield. The actual risk of an incident is incredibly low."

Page 58 - "Land has been set aside for the provision of a Primary School which will also double as a Recovery Centre facility in the event of an emergency at AWE Burghfield"

Page 118 - "6.1.1.1. The proposal sits within the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone for AWE Burghfield. The proposal incorporates elements which can be designed to provide assistance to the local population, the local authority and emergency services in the event of an emergency."

Page 118 - "6.1.1.2. Concept Plan Summary: School and Emergency Shelter Adaptation The proposed school and its surrounding site have been designed to serve both as an educational facility and an emergency reception centre and radiation monitoring unit. Key provisions ensure flexibility in emergency response scenarios while maintaining the school's primary function."

Page 4 - just says, "school (emergency shelter/recovery centre)"

Page 40 - "APRIL TO DECEMBER 2024: Numerous consultant team meetings to inform the emergency planning strategy and the design / layout of the local centre and school".

2. Inadequate School Provision

The development will put unsustainable pressure on local schools:

- Existing schools, particularly Lambs Lane, are already over capacity.

- The proposed primary school must be a three-form entry to meet expected demand, and its construction must be front-loaded in the development timeline.

- The S106 agreement should include significant funding for the expansion of Oakbank School to support secondary provision.

3. Traffic and Road Safety

- The proposed development will place huge pressure on Lamb's Lane, Back Lane, and White House Lane roads that are narrow, uncurbed, and already hazardous.

- A full upgrade to the junction with the A33, and realignment of the B3349 south of Back Lane to remove blind spots, is essential.

- HGVs should be banned from using the section of White House Lane between the A33 and Yew Tree Lane.

- A pedestrian crossing near the bottom of Back Lane will be essential if a school is included.

4. Pedestrian and Cycle Access Issues

- Barracks Lane is unsafe for pedestrian or cycle use due to its width and lack of visibility.

- The eastern access via the Century Drive playground is unclear. Do the developers have rights to use this space?

- Footpaths connecting to Hyde End Road are poorly maintained. Developers must commit to upgrading and maintaining these paths.

5. Lack of Adequate Community Facilities

- A small convenience store is insufficient. The development should include a full supermarket to meet the needs of a growing population.
- The community needs a flexible-use public building for meetings, youth activities, nursery, and use as a polling station.
- There is no provision for allotments, and parking for visitors to the care home and SANG is inadequate.

6. Public Transport Improvements

- The developer must contribute to sustaining and enhancing the 600 bus route, offering a half-hourly service to Reading.
- A bus turning circle within the development is necessary to support future service extensions.

7. Commercial Development Concerns

The proposed commercial area in the south-west corner of the site is inappropriate:

- It will create a "canyon effect" along the B3349 due to its height and proximity to the Lambs Lane Business Park.
- This stretch of road is already dangerous, with poor visibility and a blind bend.
- The area already contains multiple business parks within a one-mile radius; further industrial traffic on the B3349 should be avoided.
- This area could serve better as open space, preserving the rural character and views toward Farley Hill.

Conclusion

This development poses unacceptable risks and deficiencies particularly in relation to safety, traffic, infrastructure, and community impact. I urge Wokingham Borough Council to either reject this application and if it is not rejected, require substantial revisions and binding commitments through the S106 agreement before proceeding.

Yours sincerely,