

PLANNING REF : 252430  
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Parish Office  
: Swallowfield Street, Swallowfield, Reading  
: RG7 1QX  
SUBMITTED BY : Swallowfield Parish Council  
DATE SUBMITTED : 13/11/2025

COMMENTS:

Swallowfield Parish Council strongly objects to this application. The reasons as to why this application is inappropriate have been well documented in objections to the two previous sadly approved applications on Trowes Lane, namely:

181130 and 202845: Cove

Homes

230422: Croudace

In particular the Croudace application, which was approved on appeal following a fully justified refusal by Wokingham Borough Council, exhibits all the disqualifying factors that must also be taken into account when considering this new application. To quote the Conclusion of the planning inspector:

"The development would conflict with policies relating to the location of new development, protection of the landscape, and accessibility to facilities and services. It would therefore conflict with the development plan as a whole."

The same comments apply here.

The inspector then went on to apply a tilted balance as per NPPF paragraph 11d.

We believe that the application of tilted balance was flawed in the Croudace case, and it would be even more flawed to apply it to this new application as compounding the unsustainability already increased by previous approvals.

It is not sensible or right to claim that a development is sustainable when:

It is not in catchment for any primary or secondary schools: children are assigned to a wide range of schools with no coherent plan to bolster the community of Swallowfield Parish.

It has rudimentary public transport (the applicant states there are on average four buses per hour: this is untrue. At best we have one bus an hour, and that only to Reading). There is no public transport to Wokingham itself. It is ridiculous to suggest that commuting residents or school children should cycle several miles in the dark on unlit roads with no pavements to reach necessary destinations (schools, stations or place of work). We ask planners, councillors and/or inspectors "would you be happy for your loved ones to do this?"

Residents who commute by train will drive to stations. Parking at local stations is already totally inadequate, with cars parked along roads restricting other traffic.

Its medical service is heavily overloaded and unable to fully meet the needs of its current patients

It has only a small convenience store

The village sewage system is already inadequate, with regular overloads, and pumping tankers used at the main pumping station by the village hall for many days each year. It is unlikely that Thames Water will upgrade this in the near or medium future.

Traffic is already such

that the access to major road networks (the A33) is gridlocked at

commuting times

The residents in "affordable" housing will, like all other residents, need cars to go about their daily business.

Flood risk: whatever the EA flood maps show, the site is soggy.

Surface water is likely to be a problem. In fact, the applicant's own flood risk assessment suggests a medium to high risk of flooding up to 0.2m to the site access. An analysis of the applicant's flood assessment has been posted as a comment by Graham Stanley, chair of the

Swallowfield Flood Resilience Group, and we urge WBC/inspectors to give careful consideration to his findings.

IF, despite the obvious unsuitability of this scheme, planners do decide to approve, either through WBC process or appeal, we request that, among other conditions, the developer should:

Contribute towards continuation of and improvement of the bus service

Provide funds to the PC for improvements to the main village playground rather than wild play equipment in the onsite woods (as we all know such stuff will decay, leaving costs of repair or maintenance to the residents).