

PLANNING REF : 250517
PROPERTY ADDRESS : The Shieling
: Lambs Lane Swallowfield, Reading, Berkshire
: RG71JB
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Roderic Vaughan
DATE SUBMITTED : 06/03/2026

COMMENTS:

I wish to register my strong objections to the latest version of this planning application (250517)

1. The site is not in the Local Development Plan (DLP) and is therefore opportunistic and speculative. Being outside the DLP it has not been planned for and lacks the infrastructure support to make it viable. It is not sustainable and is contrary to the council's own policies: CC01; CC02; CC04. It also fails to comply with the central thrust of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for presumption in favour of development to apply. It must align with planning policies and be sustainable; application 250517 fails this test.

2. The proposed development site is located within the AWE Burghfield (AWE B) DEPZ. Whilst the Office for Nuclear Regulation does not actively discourage building houses in a DEPZ it needs to be satisfied the emergency support network can cope in the event of a nuclear accident. Furthermore, it must also be satisfied the productive capacity of AWE is not impaired by adding to the existing population. AWE B is a major employer and is integral to keeping the UK safe. The dismissal at appeal in 2025 of proposed developments located within the AWE B demonstrates the current strong policing by the ONR. It recognises that adding to an already significant existing population is unwise. Mounting pressure on the emergency services is already prevalent dealing with the existing population. Adding a major development at this location would significantly increase the responsibility of the local authority to keep its residents safe. Given current budgetary challenges it is hard to imagine they would cope. The ONR's recent damning evidence that the off-site emergency plan does not have the ability to cope with the existing population in the event of a nuclear accident is a clear warning that should be noted. The focus by the developer on the very, very low risk of such an accident occurring is not a valid reason for ignoring the points listed here.

3. The developer concedes no major improvements are planned for the existing local road network. In one of their responses to potential bottlenecks along the B3349 in Spencers Wood they suggested an alternative route would be created to bypass the congested traffic along A33, Whitehouse Farm Lane, Lambs Lane and Back Lane. From the A33 this route would be predominantly a single-track lane, with larger vehicles having to mount the pavement in Lambs Lane along its narrowest point, on to Back Lane which is mostly restricted to vehicles not exceeding 7.5 tonnes in the vicinity of the local primary school. This would increase highway safety risks immeasurably in an area with already high traffic volumes at both ends of the school day. The roundabout to enable access and exit from the new estate on to the B3349 at its junction with Back Lane is in the wrong place. Moving it further north opposite the junction on B3349 with Benham Drive would result in numerous advantages including: improved highway safety for residents on the estate to

the west; reduce the adverse effect of urbanising this part of Spencers Wood and minimising impact on the landscape to the south of the site; safeguard against the creation of a rat run referred to above and allow for works to be undertaken to limit the volume of traffic using Lambs Lane and Back Lane by means of pinch points or similar at west end of Back Lane and east of Back Lane just to west of entrance to Lambs Farm Business Park.

4. The site is on good agricultural land and is graded 3a according to MAFF soil classification and is considered best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land according to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF advises against developments on BMV land with good reason. In autumn 2024 the government published a roadmap in autumn 2024 for agriculture for the next 25 years. Its principal aim is to increase production of indigenous food from the perilous low level of self-sufficiency of around 58% at present. Government is determined to encourage higher levels of self-sufficiency to ensure the UK in future is better able to absorb major shocks to food supplies in a changing world. The agricultural report with the planning application is flawed in its attempt to highlight the small economic loss to the farming economy by building on the site. No account is taken of the value added along the food chain from the farmer to the consumer and its overall contribution to gross domestic product. It also does not bear scrutiny when the cumulative effect is noted when developing on land classified as BMV land is taken into consideration.

Thank you for reading my comments.