

From: [REDACTED]
To: [PlanningPolicy](#)
Subject: WBC LPR REGULATION 19 OBJECTION
Date: 24 February 2023 18:22:53

This is an EXTERNAL EMAIL. STOP. THINK before you CLICK links or OPEN attachments.

WBC LPR REGULATION 19 OBJECTION

Jason Bovington

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

I am writing to the Local Plan as I find it unsound in a number of ways. It appears to have been rushed, not coherent, not addressing statutory responsibilities, contradictory in places and lacking a great deal of the detail required to be judged sound. Specifically in the matter of the proposed Thatcham NE Development it seems a particularly ill thought through plan and no longer completely necessary given the change in the governmental approach to development and the recognition that local circumstances need to have greater impact of the level of development in an area. West Berkshire with large areas of land not able to be developed on and large areas of natural beauty fall squarely in that camp and as such the desire to build such a large development on green belt land is deeply questionable and appears to be being led by developers. The government policy to fully investigate the potential development of brownfield sites rather than greenfield has been inadequate and again appears to be being led by developers rushing through this proposal.

Having lived in [REDACTED] for 21 years one of my most personal concerns is the potential impact on flooding. My family were flooded out of our home for 8 months back in 2007 and the prospect of a large amount of fields being concreted over from the very direction that the floodwater in 2007 came from fills me with dread. I realise that a lot of work to improve the flood defence system has been undertaken but that system hasn't really been tested yet with extreme weather. To build in this location seems to me to be reckless and there is nothing in the local plan of specific modelling that measures the impact of this development on potential flooding of the wider area and as such I do not see how the plan can be approved without this modelling being done upfront. I find this irresponsible.

In terms of the plan itself in relation to the development I believe there are a

number of areas that make it unsound. The whole tortured premise seems to be to have a very large development in Thatcham to help improve the infrastructure. Yet the document itself has very little detail and even less commitment on how the infrastructure is actually going to be improved. And it appears therefore that the development will just given its size put additional strain on a number of areas that are already over stretched. Specifically:

Provision of education. The existing schools in the area particularly Kennet school have no ability to expand further. The local plan is vague and contradictory with the solution to provide secondary education for these existing houses and is therefore unsound. It mention land being allocated, but no details on the location of the land. It references £15m being contributed by developers, but nothing on what this is exactly for and any assessment of what this sum could deliver. It is recognised that schools need to be a certain size to be viable, but the land, promised funds and the size of the development itself isn't big enough to support a new secondary school. It clearly doesn't have a proper plan to deliver secondary education for these additional houses and therefore is unsound.

Healthcare: My family are patients at the burdwood surgery and this surgery is currently very stretched. Ability to get appointments is very difficult and has deteriorated. In addition we are nhs dental patients and again these services are overstretched. The plan proposes a primary healthcare facility within the development. However there is no associated health impact assessment with the plan or any details of whether an additional surgery can or will be set up with the proposed development. There has been no investigation of this and therefore no assessment of viability and there is nothing on provision of dental services. Therefore it is impossible to say that this plan is sound. It again speaks of a poorly thought through and rushed plan with little detail to enable it to be properly assessed.

Environment: The statement that that the overall plan will have a positive impact on the environment I find laughable when it is proposing such a large development on green belt land. The sustainability appraisal itself states it would have a negative impact on environmental sustainability and this would need to be mitigated. But as in the rest of the plan there is obviously no detail on what would be done to mitigate this. What is particularly annoying is that so little has been done to try to promote the development of smaller brownfield sites which is actually now the government policy. As such on environmental ground this plan is unsound.

Traffic and safety: the development is going to undoubtedly bring increased traffic to already busy roads. I drive every day along the a4 towards reading and there are significant traffic jams along that road to the extent that the road up to bucklebury is used by some drivers as an alternative and that road in places is not designed for lots of cars. This development at the base of and straddling harts hill road is going to significantly increase traffic both along

the a4 and up through bucklebury and chapel row. There seems to have been no assessment of the impact on this and in particular the impact on road safety. So how the council can say the policy will have a positive impact on road safety is beyond me. Particularity as no assessment of this seems to have been undertaken.

Given all the inconsistencies and the amount of detail missing the obvious thing would be to revisit the plan, particularly in light of the change in governmental guidance on development. To properly assess the alternative of developing smaller brownfield sites or to properly assess the impacts of this development and actually detail how the infrastructure and services will be delivered to support this development.

yours

Jason Bovington
