

From: [REDACTED]
To: [PlanningPolicy](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: WBC LPR Regulation 19 Objection
Date: 03 March 2023 16:22:30

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Dear Sir/ Madam,

Re WBC LPR Regulation 19 Objection

As family residents of [REDACTED] (address/ details below), we object to your plan as we find it unsound and have the following serious objections:

1. Increase in traffic pollution and hazards in Upper Bucklebury and Chapel Row. The WBC predicts 'some displacement of A4 traffic onto wider rural routes such as Upper Bucklebury' which we seriously object to. We moved to this area to live in the countryside and be away from car, light and noise pollution. Over the 10 years or so we have lived in [REDACTED], we have already noticed a significant increase in traffic on Carbinswood Lane and Bucklebury roads. The introduction of such a huge development to the area would necessarily increase traffic pollution, cause additional road hazards to cyclists and walkers and dog walkers (a number of neighbours have sadly lost dogs on the road hit by speeding cars and local wildlife, including snakes, have been run over) and cause significantly more disturbance to the residents and nature, on what are rural country unmarked and unlit roads and lanes.
2. Significant increase in traffic on the A4 which is already busy and gets heavily congested at peak times. When there are even minor traffic delays/congestion on the A4, drivers resort to the rural routes which are simply not designed for these increased traffic volumes. An increase in houses in the area stands to significantly increase the traffic volume on our rural roads that are not designed for any increase in traffic volume (nor should they ever be!) Increase in traffic and increased potential of speeding through Upper Bucklebury, which is of a major concern due to the primary school and many family residents with children (and pet dogs/ cats). With an increase in traffic, this will only worsen the situation.
3. Access and junctions – The transport assessment at para 3.26 shows NO modelling result. Why is this?
4. The proposed new carpark on Harts Hill will only add to more traffic on an already dangerous road and may also promote night-time anti-social behaviour.
5. I see absolutely NO positive impact on current (or any) residents on significantly increasing cars on our roads, which will clearly negatively impact the safety and enjoyment of walking, cycling – NOT increase it as the council claims!?
6. West Berkshire declared a climate emergency on 2 July 2019. <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/media/48362/Draft-Environment-Strategy->

[2020-2030-Summary-document-January-2020-
/pdf/WBC_Environmental_Strategy_Summary_A4_20.pdf?](#)

[m=637141844400230000](#) WBC - Environment Strategy - with declaration of climate emergency. Building 1500 new houses will certainly increase the WBC carbon footprint and goes against the emergency/accelerated goal of carbon neutrality and "protecting and enhancing our natural environment" P5. Increased pollution will certainly be created by the entire construction process, increased light pollution from the development and more cars will bring increased vehicle pollution and noise pollution to our rural area. There are seemingly NO environmental advantages of building a massive development in rural area. A large development can only bring negative environmental impact and therefore goes against the intent, statement and purpose of the WBC environmental strategy.

7. It is cited in the Bucklebury vision and Bucklebury Plan to maintain a strong greenbelt in our area. The vision and plan uphold Bucklebury as a rural village community, for the village to remain a predominantly rural AONB. That there is no wish amongst residents to allow growth to change the character and nature of our historic, rural community identity. This document is approved and agreed with WBC and should be included as supplementary planning consideration – yet it is not mentioned in the WBC documentation!?
8. Loss of village identity. There is simply not enough space between the proposed development and Upper Bucklebury and the boundary of the AONB. WBC are therefore suggesting that the Parish of Bucklebury should maintain its identity but the proximity of the development is in contradiction to WBC's own intentions.
9. Unacceptable impact on our AONB. According the [gov.uk](#), an AONB has to a combination of several criteria, two of these are:
 - relative wildness, such as distance from housing or having few roads
 - relative tranquillity, where natural sounds, such as streams or birdsong are predominantBoth of these points stand to be significantly impacted by such a massive nearby development and may no longer be able to be met.

10. Impact on Nature. We have seen a number of protected species including the great crested newt, adder, slow worm and bats in and around Bucklebury Common. There are also birds such as the nightjar, which are under conservation concern. We fear increased numbers of cars and people visiting the area of outstanding natural beauty will have a large negative impact. Wildlife like this needs to be protected and not put under more threat. The development to the south of Blacklands Copse and Harts Hill Copse will mean open space dramatically reduced and wildlife forced to retreat, adding more pressure on species in decline. Over the last 7 years we have seen a significant increase in the litter in and around the Common and fly tipping in the area. Bringing significantly more people to the area stands to cause more problems like this and more damage to what is already a fragile ecosystem.

11. Bringing more houses and cars to the area will significantly increase the noise and light

pollution to a predominantly rural, peaceful area where people live to escape from developments like the the one proposed.

12. The proposal is an over development of the countryside of rolling hills and farmland and also stands to overdevelop Thatcham. This proposed over development is out of character for the area plans and will have a detrimental impact for the town itself as well as the surrounding villages. Thatcham is at capacity as it. Pre-covid, it was often hard to find a parking space in the town centre, doctors/dentists are apparently stretched, there's limited parking at the train station and already almost full train services at peak times into London. Not to mention the traffic delays around the crossing. There is no evidence that the development will enhance Thatcham town centre (or indeed Newbury).

13. A previous application was resoundingly rejected by the secretary of state in 2017 <https://www.newburytoday.co.uk/news/news/22093/very-strong-message-to-developers-after-thatcham-appeals-turned-down.html>. Why, only a few years after this, are WBC now considering this site in light of the previous rejection, what has changed? Knowing a smaller planning application has been refused once and that there is clearly significant local objection again, why have massive funds been spent pursuing it?

14. Re Healthcare – neither WBC or the developers, as public and private stakeholders appear to have arranged or published a prospective HIA specific to the proposed N-E Thatcham development.

15. There has been no direct engagement between the N-E Thatcham Development Consortium and the local GPs.

16. Few new GP practises are commissioned by NHS England and there seems very little realistic prospect of a new GP practise being established in Thatcham or West Berks in the foreseeable future. The current GP practises are extremely busy - overstretched - and I strongly suspect do not have any further capacity to add so many potential new residents to their lists. There has been no approach by WBC or the developers to any local GP practise to discuss possible relocation and expansion of a current practise.

17. Thatcham dental care are unable to provide dental care for the current population. There is no evidence that WBC or the developers have approached any local dentists about their capacity/ ability to work with the plans – or not!!

18. WBC and the developers appear not to have arranged a relevant HIA or provided evidence of having appropriately liaised with local health care agencies or providers. They are proposing a healthcare site that is unsustainable and therefore have not made provision ot mitigate the burden of the 1,500 or more new houses. Local NHS provision is significantly unsatisfactory for these new houses. This is not improving access – it is making access worse for everyone. They have not provided evidence for a viable primary care medical facility.

19. There is no evidence to support claims that SP17 will have a positive impact on the environment. By contrast, there is every reason to believe it will have a significant negative impact. IN a time where we need to protect species – particularly pollinators – a negative impact on environmental sustainability is not acceptable.

20. SP17 has no proven plans for providing adequate green space and protecting biodiversity, so there will be spill-over of people visiting adjacent areas.

21. Schooling – the provision of extra schooling is not clearly defined. Secondary schools

are currently over-subscribed and the plan for secondary school provision is unsound with no clarity on that the proposed funding is sufficient to meet the council obligations to provide education. It is unclear if the numbers will even be high enough to sustain a new school!?. Many local families are very concerned that the proposal could overwhelm the brilliant local village schools that currently attract a good number of pupils and maintain a good balance of class sizes. Just because the plans include new schools, it does not mean that new families moving to the area will necessarily choose them. Many may well prefer to try for places at the existing, sought-after, traditional village schools, causing increased class sizes, over-stretching of school resources, increased cars, traffic, people and disruption to small rural villages.

22. West Berks Council has a duty as an education authority to make arrangements for suitable school provision. How this obligation will be met across all school years is not defined or evidenced.

Please do keep us posted with an update on this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

Melissa and Charles Bennett

Mr & Mrs C Bennett

[Redacted address lines]

Contact: [Redacted contact information]