

WEST BERKSHIRE  
COUNCIL  
16 FEB 2023  
DEVELOPMENT & REGULATION

Planning, Council Offices,  
West Berkshire Council,  
Market Street,  
Newbury,  
RG14 5LD

8th February 2023

To Whom it may Concern

**Re: North East Thatcham | Local Plan Review | Regulation 19 Consultation**

The above plan for NE Thatcham has been poorly thought through with numerous reasons why it should not proceed, which I will set out below.

**Location**

This is a totally Greenfield site on a relatively steep hillside, adjoining areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and ultimately having severe negative impact on these areas and the local natural diversity. On the wrong side of Thatcham for major business, shops and arterial roads. Too far away from Thatcham Town Centre and Railway Station to encourage walking, along with the steep hill on one's return. Effectively cutting the natural break between Thatcham and Upper Bucklebury.

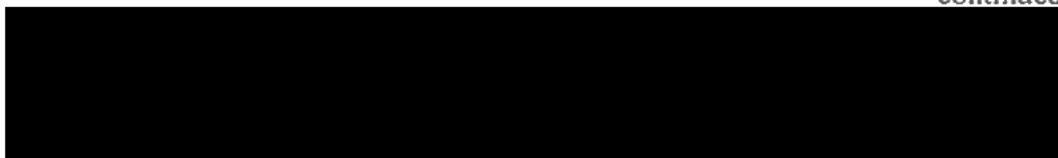
**Transport**

On this development there is likely to be 3,000 plus cars. There is very limited work locally, so residents will need to drive to work, or to Thatcham station, (limited parking here with no space for more), and to major shops and schools.

No bridge proposed within this development for Thatcham station, thus restricting Southern access and meaning much increased traffic queues. At peak times now all the local routes around the station are full with stationary or slow moving traffic and this site will only make this much worse. The massive increase in car journeys from this development will increase pollution and carbon dioxide exponentially around the area.

With a **Northern exit** from the site, these journeys will almost certainly come through the villages of Cold Ash and Upper Bucklebury to access the M4 and Reading. These villages already suffer from greatly increased traffic at peak times owing to slow moving traffic on the A4. Both these villages have 'pinch points', where long queues of stationary vehicles is normal now. Harts Hill is a narrow, winding and steep hill with no pedestrian walkway or safe verges from the junction with the Cold Ash road in Upper Bucklebury, and in places has high banks either side of the road. It is exceedingly dangerous for walkers and cyclists, who invariably have to push their bikes back up the steep hill, causing much danger to themselves and frustration and dangerous overtaking from cars.

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### **Flood Risk and Domestic Water**

With all of the development on the side of a hill, once large areas are built on and paved, there will be a massive increase in runoff water during periods of heavy rain, and very high risk of floods in low areas of Thatcham.

Domestic water has to be pumped up the hill to Upper Bucklebury now, and we have times of low pressure due to demand, or no water when there is a leak, or the power or pump fails. As it's up the hill, all the domestic water will have to be pumped to the entire site, with the potential problems that we experience now.

### **Education**

Local schools are at capacity now and struggling to employ enough staff. This development will only exacerbate the problems.

### **Dental and Healthcare**

Again, local GP Practices and Dental Surgeries are at capacity now and Pharmacies closing. The local NHS Trusts have not been approached, so I cannot imagine anyone would think it will make financial sense to set up a satellite practice on the site.

### **Sport and Leisure Facilities**

Most outdoor sports require level playing fields, given that the majority of the site is on a gradient, this will require major earthworks to achieve. There is no real indication of sports buildings and where they would be sited.

### **Conclusion**

The whole document of the NE Thatcham LPR is ill thought out with many flaws and questionable processes in its production.

I protest most strongly against most aspects that are being suggested, with no real thought given to their impacts on society, the environment, the planet and local bio-diversity.

Overall, a major negative impact, with no foreseeable positives.

With regards

