
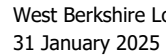


From: 
To: 
Subject: West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2022-2039 (LPR) Consultation
Date: 31 January 2025 11:53:40

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**West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2022-2039 (LPR)
Consultation on Proposed Main Modifications
(6 December 2024 – 31 January 2025)**

Dear Sir/Madam

We do not consider the Proposed Main Modifications or Proposed Policy Map Changes - MM3, MM44, MM45, PMC5, PMC14 - to be sound or justified.

We do not therefore consider that the land at Pincents Lane should be included as a development site in the Local Plan, nor that the proposed amendment of the Tilehurst settlement boundary should be included.

It has been shown on multiple occasions that Pincents Lane is not an acceptable site for development, and multiple planning applications for the site have previously been refused.

Our particular comments on this are as follows:

1. Pincents Hill is a strategic gap which clearly sets apart Tilehurst and Calcot from Theale. Any development in this location, would erode this strategic gap and would be inappropriate and completely out of character with the natural environment and rural atmosphere that exists. It would also breach the Council's policies which previously sought to retain current settlement patterns and boundaries.
2. Pincents Hill is a valuable, much-used and much-loved green space and recreational amenity for the people of Tilehurst and Calcot. It is within easy walking distance of the two communities and gives much needed natural open space in which to relax and escape the stresses of modern life, without having to drive. It is effectively a "green lung" for the residents of Tilehurst and Calcot. It has been demonstrated widely during the recent Covid Pandemic, that people need access to green spaces and to nature, for their physical and mental wellbeing. This in turn is vital to reduce ever-increasing pressure on the NHS. So it is crucial to retain valuable spaces such as Pincents Hill. There is already a severe lack of natural recreational amenity space in the area. If development is allowed, people would lose a natural amenity open space and be forced to travel by car to reach the next-nearest open space, bringing environmental dis-benefits of noise, pollution, carbon dioxide and congestion. Indeed, the area has previously been earmarked for inclusion in the Local Green Space, and it would be a travesty for West Berkshire Council, the Local Planning Authority, to include this site for development and so destroy this natural green open space.
3. Pincents Hill is a valuable home for wildlife. As well as badgers, foxes, deer, hedgehogs, voles, tadpoles and newts that live nearby, on the ground and in the local ponds, it also supports and encourages birds such as Jays, Kestrels, Buzzards and Red Kites, also bats, bees and numerous

other insects. It forms part of an important wildlife corridor linking Tilehurst and Calcot to the open countryside. Development would disrupt this corridor and have a negative impact on the natural environment and rural atmosphere. It would reduce the extent, diversity and continuity of natural habitat, forcing these and other important species further away from the urban area and isolating those areas of habitat which are cut off by development. Furthermore, development could turn an area of natural environment into built environment and associated public parkland, which would be artificial and would destroy the natural environment and rural atmosphere that exists.

4. The site has inadequate and inappropriate road access and any proposed development would exacerbate this. Development would also generate additional traffic on the already congested local roads, causing more jams, more noise, more pollution and more carbon dioxide. Langley Hill is already a particular problem for congestion, regularly causing tail backs into Park Lane and Halls Road. Peak traffic has also reached saturation levels on the A4 Bath Road at Calcot, Savacentre and around Junction 12 of the M4. The situation is made worse by recent development at nearby Dorking Way and would be made worse still by any further development. The resulting increases in traffic on nearby existing housing estates and near to existing local schools, would also bring increased dangers to children. The impact of the increased traffic should not be underestimated.

5. Development on this site is not sustainable. As well as the above reasons, the increase in population would have an impact on local schools, local GP surgeries and other local amenities. Walking distances to local train stations would be lengthy - it is at least a mile to Theale station and at least two miles to Tilehurst station, neither of which are comfortably walkable on a regular basis. Development would inevitably lead to increased road traffic which would detract from the Council's aspiration of becoming a carbon neutral district by 2030. Indeed, West Berkshire Council have previously declared a climate emergency, and any development on this green field site, along with the increased traffic it would generate, would contravene the ideals and principles of this.

6. The site has not previously been included in the council's DPD and is therefore an inappropriate site for development. The Secretary of State has also previously ruled that this site is not suitable for development.

7. Instead of including Pincents Hill in the Local Plan, proper consideration should be given to development in and around Newbury to help satisfy local housing targets.

Thank you for taking these matters into consideration in this consultation.

Yours faithfully

David and Sonia Ludford

