

Response to the proposed Neighbourhood Plan for Hungerford

Currently on the Agenda for consideration by

West Berks Council

19 May 2025

From Martin J Crane OBE

As a Former Mayor of Hungerford, I have been involved in several plans considering the options for new housing in and around our town. None of these ever included the proposed use of the land above Cottrell Close.

It has been my understanding that the present owner also owned 50% of the land that was used to build the existing stock of houses. I believe that at the planning stage for this estate, the developer, David Wilson Homes, was offered the opportunity to buy the whole site, including the land now under consideration. However, this was declined as DWH believed that elevation , drainage issues together with other issues, did not meet their construction criteria and therefore was left out of their final plans.

That being the case, to consider building on that same site would be even more problematic for both the elevation, drainage, provision of services and now with extremely limited access.

Currently, the Close enjoys the benefit of a self-contained community with limited traffic and no through route. This provides the residents with a quiet and safe environment for residents and especially children, who can play safely on and around the greens.

The impact of 12 new houses as offered would completely destroy this amenity and shatter the peaceful atmosphere of the Close.

It remains an obligation of both HTC and WBC to provide the service and safety to present and future inhabitants. It is also necessary to follow the Duty of Care to protect existing residents from enhanced risk factors.

Furthermore, there needs to be a more strategic examination of the longer term housing requirement for 100 or more houses in the next decade or beyond. The current proposal for 12 houses in Cottrell Close would be no more than a sticking plaster.

Has the land around Hungerford Newtown ever been considered for such strategic development being that much closer to the M4?

Reverting to my opposition to the current plans for 12 new houses to be built north of the existing dwellings, I would ask that consideration be given to :-

- 1] The development would subject existing residents to at least 2 years of constant movement of heavy construction traffic.
- 2] A complete rebuild of the drainage and other services would be required.
- 3] The potential impact of considerably more traffic movement in, out, and within the area to the detriment of residents' safety and the environment.
- 4] The questionable matter of Emergency vehicles being able to service the residents of the 12 new houses via a very restricted
- 5] The safety of pedestrians accessing/exiting via the site without any pedestrian footpath.
- 6] Destroys the option of extending the nearly full Cemetery into an adjacent area.
- 7] My property enjoys the benefit of two supporting walls, one at the back underneath the site and the other at the side, which could be in danger of collapse from the heavy construction traffic. Has there been a Landslip study to assess these risks?

From

Mr M J Crane OBE

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