

From: [REDACTED]
To: [PlanningPolicy](#)
Subject: WBC LPR Regulation 19 Objection
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WBC LPR Regulation 19 Objection

From Caroline Hinke / [REDACTED]

Please find following my objections to the Thatcham NE Development

Traffic Problems

Without the council stating the potential locations of any additional primary healthcare and dental Care facilities or pre-school or secondary schools, it is impossible for them to evidence the likely flow of additional traffic from this development in any direction. This must be modelled, and improvements to the existing road infrastructure assessed as necessary to accommodate it before this development is considered for approval.

I live in Midgham, which is accessed either end from via Cox's Lane or Church Hill. Both roads are barely adequate for local traffic because the former is single track for most of its length, and the latter single track at certain points with passing places. These roads are used as rat runs when traffic is congested on the A4: Last year due to an accident on the A4 the entire length of Cox's Lane, Birds Lane and Church Hill was grid locked as traffic tried to find alternatives routes around the road blockage.

These roads are already experiencing more traffic from new builds along the A4 and more locals new to the area exploring the country side in their cars, on their bikes and walking dogs. It's almost impossible to make any journey now along Coxs Lane without encountering two or three vehicles and one driver or another having to reverse back to one of the few limited passing places. I use this road to collect my daughter from school and every journey now takes longer and raises the risk of a collision for every journey!

These roads are heavily used by cyclists, horse riders, people and dog walkers accessing public byways and footpaths. There are no footpaths along these roads. It is unconscionable for any increase in traffic along Coxs Lane, Birds Lane or Church Hill without an unacceptable increase in the likelihood of injury to me, other humans and animals. I'd like to see modelling that shows there will be no increase in traffic along these narrow local roads without impacting on their current use for recreation, leisure and sustainable commuting by bike by the local community.

When I try to exit either Coxs Lane, or Church Hill to turn right to travel towards Thatcham, I have to wait for up to 5 minutes and sometimes longer to find a safe gap in the traffic. And the risk of a collision is high because there is a constant stream of drivers using the Bath Road to travel between M4, Newbury and beyond. This road simply can't safely accommodate any increase in traffic.

When travelling to Thatcham, I use Hart Hill and Floral Way. Harts Hill has several dangerous

blind bends and a steep descent into floral way: treacherous in icy conditions. Floral Way is heavily congested during rush hour traffic. It would be good to see the traffic modelling for any junctions on these roads, and in particular any safety assessment done on the risk to other road users of having junctions on these roads? I can't see how increased traffic is going to encourage safe and sustainable commuting: riding a bike down Harts Hills will be even more perilous?

How will this development have a positive impact on walking, cycling and public transport?

I note the proposal for a car park on Harts Hill. For what purpose?

I'd like to see the council's traffic modelling at the various bottle necks in the area during peak traffic to see what the likely impact will be on commuting time (all modes), safety & emissions from this development?

Environment

I note the plan makes reference to providing green space and playing fields for the new households, but again no detail is provided. The idea that schools will open their playing fields to the general public is not feasible due to H&S, safeguarding, maintenance issues etc. I am concerned that if these are not provided, new households will gravitate to other green spaces in the area, increasing traffic in areas around the Common, and disturbing the flora and fauna. There are already a high number of deer, badger and kites struck by traffic on the roads around our wooded areas and fields. I fear this will increase with more traffic flowing through our local roads.

We need a thorough impact assessment to be done on the impact the NE Development plan will have on local flora and fauna.

I and other walkers will also lose access to the popular footpaths from Coxs Lane leading to Colthrop and Upper Bucklebury. How are we expected to be able to access these areas safely on foot with our animals without these footpaths? This development will limit my access on foot to areas of the countryside I currently enjoy and will impair my ability to enjoy it as a local citizen. I'd like to better understand how the council is proposing to compensate the local community for what it will lose in footpath access to areas we currently enjoy?

Primary & dental care

I am registered at Chapel Row surgery. The medical facility is stretched to capacity with long waits to see GPs in particular. The dispensary regularly operates reduced hours due to demand and recruitment problems - what plans have been created for additional primary and dental care to meet the needs of these additional households? Not a generic statement that the needs will be met, but something more substantive showing where these facilities will be, the size, feasibility of resourcing them and so on. For example, if local facilities struggle to resource their practices, how will this problem be overcome with any new practices?

House price devaluation/other options

Many home owners here have paid a premium to live on the doorstep of an AONB: to benefit from the peace & quiet, less congested roads and access to open countryside. What consideration has the council given to changing the character of this local area and the impact this will have on the value of our properties?

There are thousands of individual building plots sites which could spread the load of this proposed housing development, and potentially meet the need for new housing development within the country without degrading the rural landscape.

The council must surely have access to a register of potential individual building plot sites within the county that it reviews before proposing impactful developments in greenbelt areas as part of its due diligence? Will this be shared?

This should form part of the consultation documentation.

Consultation

I find this entire “consultation” to have been discriminatory. I’d like the council to evidence that fact that they have done everything practically possible to get local residents like us informed, engaged and able to contribute before this plan goes any further. I thank the hard work of other local residents who’ve gone over and beyond to explain things to us in a way we can understand as best they can. Something our local council should have done, but has not.

May I also ask why the exit onto Hart Road at the proposed North of the site was only revealed to the local community on the 6th January 2023? This fact, and the impact this will have displacing traffic through Cold Ash, Bucklebury & Chapel Road (rural roads) would have encouraged more local residents to get involved.... had they known.

These facts, the inaccessibility of the planning documents and the late disclosure of key facts makes this application unsound

Caroline Hinke