



Thatcham development has been arranged or published by WBC or the developers. Furthermore, there has been no recorded direct engagement between the NE Thatcham Development Consortium and local general practices (local GPs) on setting up a new site or logistics around this.

The NHS Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group confirms there is a worse shortage of GPs in other parts of the country and as such it is clear that there is no real prospect of a new GP practice being established in Thatcham or West Berkshire as a result of this as our area will be a much lower priority vs other areas in the country with greater need and demand. Any indication in the plan therefore around establishing a new GP surgery are misleading, unrealistic and purely lip-service. The true viability has not been fully considered.

There has also been limited provision to mitigate the impact of increased patients to both local GP surgeries (three in the vicinity) and Thatcham dental practices. The three GP surgeries (Thatcham Medical Practice, Chapel Row and Burdwood Surgery) are already over-stretched with the current local population. Adding 1500 new houses and patients into that is therefore unfeasible.

Next; the environment. There are a number of challenges with regards to the environment for this plan which indicate the plan is unsound in this area. There is concern over the damage to the Bucklebury Plateau Biodiversity Opportunity Area and particularly the Common. There is no evidence to support the claims that SP17 will have a positive impact on the environment - there is reason to believe the impact will actually be negative due to the damage to the local biodiversity and the Common. A Sustainability Charter is required but there is no evidence that this has been undertaken or shared publicly.

With the development proposal and an estimate of 4000 additional people concentrated on one site the detailed provisions for parks and green space are at risk of not being appropriate for the volume of people. There is no indication of management of parks or detailed proposals for what these may look like. The initial proposed country parks have also now been downgraded to 'community parks.' The plan therefore lacks evidence of adequate green space and steps to protect biodiversity as well as lacking any mitigation of impact of footfall on nearby countryside.

The Sustainability Appraisal from the Local Plan Review accepts that SP17 will have a negative impact on environmental sustainability. 'The site is a greenfield site and therefore would result in a negative impact on environmental sustainability which would need to be mitigated.' There is no view or detail around plans to mitigate this; only the need to do so. The same Appraisal then contradicts this by indication an overall positive impact on sustainability through not taking into consideration the impacts on the environment (impact on biodiversity, impact on a major greenfield site, impact to legally protected wildlife) and outweighing any impacts with a perceived social and economic benefit impact.

Finally; Education. This is an area particularly important to me as a resident as I have a young son and another baby due in July. I am also [REDACTED] at a local primary school and know the impact on schools that new developments have. Within the Local Plan Review, the provision of Nursery, Early Years, Primary and Secondary education is not clearly outlined. There are no details for Nursery or Early Years. There is unclear information

shared around Primary Education with no evidence or insight to support any view of planned numbers. Prior to gaining my current role, I was a teacher [REDACTED] for the Early Years and Key Stage One teams at [REDACTED]. The school was already hugely oversubscribed and situated in a building which was no longer fit for the size classes that it was being forced to take. This new development is going to put huge pressure on both Bucklebury Primary School and Francis Baily and I sincerely believe that the educational outcomes of current pupil will be put at risk as a result of further developing housing as proposed.

For Secondary education, there are no details of the location of the land to be provided or suitability of this; just a sum available from the developers to contribute to secondary education (without associated detailed timescales). There is not a number of Form Entries defined or satisfactory evidence of the number of pupils the school would cater for. There is also no clear provision or funding for adequate Sports Fields which require flat land and the only available land being adjacent to the A4 with all its traffic and fumes. The provision of Secondary schooling is unclear and lacking. Currently the two catchment secondary schools are The Downs School or Kennet. Where the schools are oversubscribed, children closer to their location are prioritised. The NE Thatcham children would therefore be prioritised for Kennet, removing the choice in this scenario for Bucklebury children. This proposal is therefore detrimental to our children and the future children of Upper Bucklebury.

In conclusion, as a local resident and professional in the care of children in West Berkshire, I am extremely concerned about this plan due to the lack of detail or clarity and believe this will have an adverse impact on myself and my family both now and in the future. Given my above objections, I find this plan to be lacking in robustness and feasibility.

Regards,

Mike Steer