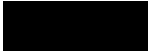
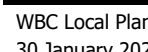


From: 
To: 
Subject: WBC Local Plan Main Modifications MM25 & MM26
Date: 30 January 2025 09:45:30

This is an EXTERNAL EMAIL. STOP. THINK before you CLICK links or OPEN attachments.

Dear Sir

I should like to comment on the Modifications to the WBC Local Plan.

The number of dwellings allocated for the site has been increased to 2500, but there is no indication of how the increase will be accommodated. 1500 houses were already found to have a harmful impact on highways, 2500 will obviously increase this impact further.

The access onto Harts Hill road means that traffic will come through the narrow lanes of the connecting villages for access to the M4 J12 and J13 . These lanes simply cannot cope and many do not have pavements.

I understand that the A339 Newbury to Basingstoke route has little improvement planned, and that no improvements at all are envisaged for the A4, which is often gridlocked.

Of major concern is that it is unclear how community infrastructure will be delivered, particularly for essential services such as schools and surgeries. If these are to be delivered away from the 2500 houses, this will mean more car journeys. The developer does not appear to be helping to fund schools and health facilities. These services are already under considerable pressure in the Thatcham area and I feel that it is vital to have some commitment and clarity on these issues from the developer.

There is significant concern over potential harm to biodiversity resulting from development of the site. Bucklebury Parish Council engaged an ecological expert who found the ecology surveys and evidence were incorrect and insufficient for 1500 houses, and this has not been updated for the extra 1000 houses. Pressure will be put on the local environment, which naturally connects to other wildlife sites, and encroaching housing and human activity will have a detrimental effect on this.

The National Landscape setting (AONB) will be greatly impacted.

The flood risk in Thatcham is of great concern, and infrastructure for water and sewage is currently insufficient.

In order to achieve a workable local plan for housing, other sites are available to reduce the reliance on North East Thatcham, particularly lower quality great belt/brownfield sites. There are several of these around Thatcham which might be considered.

I hope these comments will be helpful for the modifications you plan.

Yours faithfully

Glen Higgins

