

From: [REDACTED]
To: [PlanningPolicy](#)
Subject: WBC LPR Regulation 19 Objection
Date: 03 March 2023 16:21:37

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

Dear sirs

I am writing to voice my objection to, and grave concerns regarding, the Council's proposal to build up to 2500 new homes in a large swathe of green belt fields to the north east of Thatcham. This would represent a very large increase in the population of Thatcham and create a very significant strain on the wider area, much of which remains deeply rural (and much of which to the north is protected by the AONB for precisely this reason).

We moved as a family with small children to the Thatcham area from a more heavily developed suburban area precisely because we wanted to get away from crowded schools and roads and for the fresh rural air. The proposal to house an extra 10,000 people, representing an extraordinary increase of over 30% in local population of Thatcham and surrounding area is unbelievable.

How are so many additional people going to get to work? The A4 is single carriageway and the roads along the side of Bucklebury Common are even smaller. There is no way they could cope with an extra 2,500 commutes and school runs, and the "increased use of public transport"? What public transport? The train services are on their knees and buses even worse.

Where are these extra 10,000 people going to register with GPs? I work on the frontline in healthcare myself and see on a daily basis how congested and overcrowded our healthcare service are. Without huge increased capacity an increase in the local population of this magnitude would simply collapse our local services.

Local schools are also at capacity yet the Council plans for where an extra 5,000 children might go to school seem to be a late afterthought in "Phase 4" with no concrete strategy for schooling within this plan.

The local environment and Bucklebury Common are ecology unique, including Ancient Woodland, and loved by visitors from a wide area. The environmental impact of an extra 10,000 people less than a mile away does not seem to have been given much consideration at all in the proposals, with wildly optimistic claims that the impact can be minimised, without any concrete evidence of how this can possibly be achieved. Even the use of green belt fields in a rural area, rather than looking for dispersed brownfield sites, seems like environmentally unjustifiable.

While I understand the need for more housing in West Berkshire, for the Council to focus such a huge increase in a small and essentially rural area without consideration of local schools, medical services or transport is completely unjustifiable and would have a grave and irreversible effect on local wellbeing, services and the character of the area.

If necessary I would attend a public hearing if necessary (so long as the timing of attendance did not impact on my patients' care).

Yours sincerely

Dr Alexander Foulkes FRCP DPhil

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