

Steve & Jennie Bridle



28<sup>th</sup> February 2023

Dear WBC Local Plan Inspector,

**West Berkshire Local Plan – Resident comments.**

As residents of [REDACTED], we would like to ensure our comments are recognised and incorporated into the local plan regarding the Membury Industrial area.

We urge the plan to **Stop further development at Membury** for the following reasons.

Having [REDACTED] the notorious Membury crossroads for over [REDACTED] years, we wanted to highlight the ever-increasing numbers of HGVs using the road and the negative impact on the quality of life for residents. Ermin Street (The primary road access to Membury), originally a narrow country lane, widened to aid the construction of the M4 in the late '60s. It was never designed for the current traffic levels and, in places, is barely wide enough for 2 HGVs to pass. There are numerous sharp bends; adverse cambers and long straights encourage speed and overtaking, which is extremely dangerous on most of the road and hazardous in certain sections. As an unnaturally widened road, most of the properties that front onto the road are very close to the road, making life next to the road increasingly unpleasant, noisy and dangerous. We can vouch for this when pulling into or out of our driveway, having had numerous near misses. Recently a local property was narrowly missed when an out-of-control HGV crashed through its garden wall; the same property was also hit in a separate incident only days earlier. The reality of living on Ermin Street, the main road leading to Membury!

We object to further expansion to the Membury industrial area as this is leading to unsustainable traffic and HGVs on Ermin Street. This also highlights the danger of the Membury crossroads junction, the main route into the already over-expanded Membury. There have been many crashes on Membury crossroads in recent months, and it's only a matter of time before fatalities occur.

There is no public transport to Membury, so further development will only increase traffic levels (clearly not a sustainable location). Recent planning applications give little or no serious consideration to travel plans. Even more alarming is the lack of environmental impact assessments in what is supposed to be an AONB.

As residents, we often experience power outages, with the utility companies blaming the increased demand of the industrial users as the infrastructure can't cope.

We hope the plan will incorporate the real-world experiences of residents, halting or seriously limiting future development at Membury the current uncontrolled expansion is unsustainable, environmentally disastrous and will lead to further RTA's and, inevitably, fatalities at the dangerous Membury crossroads.

Other objections and consequences of allowing further expansion at Membury include the following.

- No environmental Impact Assessments – why?
- No cumulative impact assessments for Membury and development impact the Critical Infrastructure-e.g constant power cuts.
- No flood risk assessments-the increased business footprint has caused localised flooding and no permeable membranes.
- Pollution/Carbon Footprint increase-which goes against WBC's Policy as there is no public transport.
- Noise impact and Air quality loss as experienced by many local residents. Loss of amenity from the uncontrolled development at Membury.
- Size and scale of developments out of keeping with the AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) Policy at a time when the Government is stressing the importance of protecting these areas.
- WBC Need to Protect the Night skies and Wildlife habitats.
- The Stantec report still states that there is no need for Industrial development in this area but that it is required in Newbury and Reading.
- The economic arguments do not outweigh the environmental impact that these massive industrial developments are having on the landscape.
- The rural character of the area is being destroyed by WBC. It's not too late to halt the sprawl of Membury.