

From: [REDACTED]
To: [PlanningPolicy](#)
Subject: WBC LPR 2022-2039 : Regulation 19 Objection
Date: 28 February 2023 14:08:20

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I object to Policy SP 17 in this plan, the proposed North-East Thatcham Development, on the following grounds.

EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT

I do not accept WBC's claim that there would be a "net biodiversity gain" and I believe the basis for that claim is unsound and not supported by any meaningful evidence. The small areas of "community park" and "greenway" proposed for the development's boundary would not become homes to deer and foxes, hares and badgers and owls. I have seen artificial creations like this beside housing estates and they just have litter and fly-tipped rubbish. It seems ridiculous even to suggest that building houses over an area of farmland and woodland will do anything other than reduce the numbers and varieties of wildlife in that area.

EFFECT ON THE BUCKLEBURY COMMON AONB

WBC has a legal obligation to "conserve and enhance" Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, but its SP17 Plan proposes a huge housing development alongside a small AONB which local volunteers are struggling to maintain and restore following the impact of the crowds who visited Bucklebury Common during the 2020 COVID lockdown. Even the responsible walkers and cyclists had an adverse effect, the increased numbers scaring away wild animals and ground-nesting birds and inevitably trampling on more plants. The irresponsible ones also trampled new paths, lit fires, dropped masses of litter and left behind dog excrement. The population of the proposed NE Thatcham Development would bring back all of that negative impact upon the AONB, as a permanent thing. SP17 does not even acknowledge this inevitable and unpreventable consequence.

The new population would clearly use the lanes across the Common as a "rat-run", adding to the large numbers already doing this. Yet I cannot see, in the proposal's Transport Assessment, any assessment of the likely impact of this, or any plan to limit or prevent it. The volume of traffic on these lanes is already causing harm to the AONB's wildlife. So I think the SP17 proposal is unsound and contrary to WBC's legal obligations regarding AONBs.

EFFECT ON HEALTHCARE

The local surgeries are overloaded and struggling to cope with current patient numbers. If the SP17 development were allowed, a large new surgery would be needed but only a very small one is proposed and I can see no evidence or reassurance that the NHS could or would provide even that. This makes the proposal unsound.

EFFECT ON ME

I have a long-term and debilitating medical condition. I moved to Upper Bucklebury ten years ago, needing for genuine reasons of health to get away from the levels of noise and building in the urban area in which I lived previously, but still remaining not too far away from my children and grandchildren. The comparative peace and quiet of this village has helped my condition, being able to enjoy my garden and the calm of the surrounding countryside. So far I have seen a total of 46 different bird species in my garden, the most recent being a tawny owl who visits regularly. The quiet woodland nearby is also very restful, when I am able to visit it.

For the reasons given above, the creation of the SP17 development would clearly increase the numbers of vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians passing through the village, making it a busier and noisier place, while the increased numbers of pedestrians, cyclists, off-road motorbikes and 4x4s on Bucklebury Common would reduce the diversity and volume of its wildlife. I would find myself no longer living in the calm and peaceful environment

which has benefitted me these past ten years and I would find less enjoyment in watching the wildlife in my garden, because there would be less of it.

My medical condition, coupled with my advancing years, means that I am also very worried over the impact that the development would have on local healthcare services.

I strongly believe that the North-East Thatcham Development plan, if permitted to proceed, would do great harm to the local environment, both within the AONB and in its surrounding areas, while also diminishing the quality of life for many of the area's residents.

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Maria Kelly

