

Bucklebury Says No! Communications to Parishioners

Communications to parishioners on the Bucklebury Parish Council and 'Bucklebury Says No' Opposition to the proposed NE Thatcham development

At the Zoom meeting on the proposed NE Thatcham development on 5th January we confirmed that there will be **regular communications** on aspects of our opposition to this proposed development. These will provide information to help parishioners formulate their responses, under Regulation 19, to West Berks Council.

The first of these communications is on **Transport** and is shown below. There will be subsequent ones on provision of medical services; ecology and the environment; and the direction of travel on housing numbers in light of Central Government policy pronouncements.

Regulation 19 Consultation : Transport

1 Increased Traffic

Reviewing the comments by Bucklebury residents submitted at Regulation 18 about North East Thatcham, a recurring theme is increased traffic through the villages. We sought assurances and were led to understand by WBC planners that traffic from the development would link to Floral Way and the A4. This is true but what they 'forgot' to mention was **a plan for an exit at the north of the site onto Harts Hill**. This only became apparent on Friday, 6th January when the Transport assessment was

published: [Phase 2 Transport Assessment Report July 2021.pdf](#) (westberks.gov.uk). This is serious for us because traffic from, or to, the site is only going to go in one direction from this exit – **towards Upper Bucklebury** where it will split between the traffic going through Cold Ash and

the traffic through Upper Bucklebury and Chapel Row.

The proposed development will funnel traffic from the development and, **WBC predicts**, - '**some displacement of A4 traffic onto wider rural routes such as Upper Bucklebury**'. This would be where the roads are inadequate, without pavements and have the potential for serious accidents. See also point 4 below on increasing opportunities for walking and cycling – under '**Safe**' Transport.

2 Access and junctions

The Transport Assessment says at paragraph 3.26 : '*The access arrangements for the northern end of the NET site proposes **new priority junctions** (with right turn lanes where appropriate) on both Floral Way and **Harts Hill Road**. Results from the modelling suggest that these will not cause problems*'. However, the document has **no** modelling results for this. There are drawings for all the other proposed junctions but none for the Harts Hill one – why not?

3 Car Parks

We have also seen drawings showing **a new car park on Harts Hill**. The purpose is a mystery but will surely add more traffic to the same part of what is already a dangerous road and may also promote the night-time antisocial behaviour all too apparent in the car parks on the Common.

4 Safe and Sustainable Transport

The **Sustainability Appraisal (SA) / Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** which accompanies the Local Plan consultation assesses the allocation of North East Thatcham against key Sustainability Objectives. Objective 4 is – **To promote and maximise opportunities for all forms of safe and sustainable transport**. The SEA makes the following assessments:

- '**To Reduce Accidents and Improve Safety**'

Council Assessment - *The policy is likely to have a Positive Impact on road safety as safe travel will be critical to the design of the site.*

- 'To increase opportunities for walking, cycling and use of public transport'

Council Assessment – Significant **Positive Impact**

Council Commentary - *The policy is likely to have a significant impact on walking, cycling and public transport as the development should be designed with these in mind.*

We urge you to question both of these Council assessments.

We hope that residents will be able to develop and comment on all the above in their Regulation 19 objections.

Please could you inform friends and neighbours whom you think may not see this message.