



Kennet Valley Park

Outline Planning Application to West Berkshire Council by Prudential Assurance Company Limited

06/01795/OUTMAJ

Introduction and Management Summary

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2 Summary

2.1 KVPA Verdict on The Prudential's Kennet Valley Park Proposals

The KVPA fundamentally believes that the application is for an unnecessary development in a completely inappropriate location. In addition if this development were to go ahead it would set a very dangerous precedent for future developments. It has so many aspects to it that go against planning policy, sustainable development and local opinion that for it to be approved would set a dangerous precedent nationwide, but especially for areas served by West Berkshire, Reading and Wokingham councils. For these reasons it should be rejected.

- The Development is unnecessary as West Berkshire Council has confirmed that neither the current West Berkshire Local Plan, the emerging South East Plan nor the draft Local Development Framework show the need for housing on this scale on the proposed site. In every region of England, the number of dwellings exceeds the number of households by between 3.2 and 4.7% and rising house prices is NOT a supply-side issue - shortage of housing -, but in fact a demand-side issue – changes in lending policies and low interest rates. The only housing shortage is one of affordable housing.
- The Environment Agency not only believes that The Prudential's Flood Risk Assessment is inadequate, but they object on principle to the development happening on functional flood plain. Scientists agree that flood risk will only worsen as a result of climate change.
- The Development Area is a rich and biodiverse environment that nature has reclaimed after it was developed for gravel extraction. The development will destroy the habitats of valuable and in some cases increasingly rare species that have made it their home. Whilst The Prudential plan to retain the area to the north of the River Kennet and to put it into trust as a Country Park for the benefit of the local community, this is not where the wildlife is. The area to the south of the river, where the planned development will happen is a designated Wildlife Heritage Site by West Berkshire Council – the Country Park to the north has no such designation.
- The Development will greatly increase traffic flows on the Burghfield to Reading Road, especially with the thousands of HGV movements that will be working to move the 8.5 million m³ of material over nearly 20 years. It will also permanently disrupt traffic movements along Reading Road to the A4 at Calcot and there will be inevitably more congestion at the other pressure points in the road system of the area from increased traffic going to and from the 7,500 houses – for example J12 of the M4, Rose Kiln Lane and the Reading Inner Distribution Road (IDR), Three Mile Cross and J11 of M4. The Prudential have purposely made no provisions for trying to ameliorate the impact of increased traffic preferring the road network to “find its own equilibrium”.
- The whole area will be a building site for around 20 years. The scope is enormous with the creation of utilities infrastructure, transport infrastructure as well as the buildings themselves. This will disrupt everybody's lives in the area – whether it be those whose homes are being built round, or those trying to travel through or around the development area. The dirt and dust from this development will not only affect households in the middle of the development but it will be carried across Reading on the prevailing wind. The development will spread urban sprawl and will only add to the existing acute pressure on all associated infrastructure.

- If the Development does go ahead the site will be lost forever. This cannot happen for a Development where the need is not justified and the risks are too great. We urge everyone to register their objection by writing to Mr Gary Lugg, Head of Planning, West Berkshire Council, Market Street, Newbury. RG14 5LD or by using the link at http://ww2.westberks.gov.uk/publicaccess/dc/DcApplication/application_detailview.aspx?caseno=J3BH88RDG4000

and clicking on the Submit Comments button. **West Berkshire Council have confirmed that people should try to provide feedback by 11th September although it will be accepted after this date into November.**