

Statement from Cllr Nick Carter

Mortimer West End Parish Council Meeting – 25 October 2025

Good evening. I'm Cllr Nick Carter — West Berkshire Council ward member for this area and also a Mortimer Parish Councillor. I'm sorry I can't be with you in person this evening due to a prior commitment.

I first heard about the proposal for 350 homes at Mortimer West End at the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meeting earlier this summer, and I'm grateful to the residents who raised it then.

I took it straight to a senior planning officer at West Berkshire Council in early August and shared her advice with the Steering Group.

Some have suggested that West Berkshire Council — officers or councillors — isn't interested. I want to be clear: that's not the case.

Council officers have quite rightly said that, when the consultation opens, responses need to focus on planning grounds — because that's what determines what can or can't go ahead.

Separately, we councillors have already taken political and representational steps. I wrote directly to Basingstoke and Deane's Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning on 17 September, copying Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council.

I also lobbied Cllr Jeff Brooks, Leader of West Berkshire Council, and Cllr Denise Gaines, Portfolio Holder for Planning, to make a leader-to-leader objection. That letter is now being finalised and will be issued shortly — slightly delayed by the Leader's holiday.

At this stage, we don't think a chief-executive-to-chief-executive approach is the right next step, but we're keeping that under review.

Now is the right time for residents to research, share ideas, and, if you wish, sign a petition. I set up such a petition on 7 October and created a dedicated web page that pulls together background information, documents, and FAQs.

Please do visit the site — and I hope there's a copy of the petition available here tonight.

We all want to see joined-up planning, not piecemeal development. This is a team effort between residents, parish councils, and your West Berkshire councillors.

But ultimately, this will be decided on planning grounds, not sentiment.

Thank you.

■ Website: stratfieldmortimer.com/mortimerwestend