

Nick Carter – District Councillor for Mortimer, West Berkshire Council

Chair, members — thank you.

You are tonight considering including land at **West End Farm, Mortimer West End**, for around **350 homes** in your next Local Plan.

I'm presenting a **petition objecting to this proposal**, which states:

“Although this land lies within Hampshire, it sits beside Mortimer in West Berkshire and would, in practice, function as a large extension of the village. The proposed development would dwarf Mortimer West End — which has only about 20 dwellings — and place significant pressure on schools, GP services and other West Berkshire facilities, while providing no funding to support them. We, the undersigned, strongly object to inclusion of this site in BDBC's Local Plan Review and call on the Council to withdraw it from consideration.”

Although currently promoted only online, the petition already exceeds **650 signatures** and continues to grow daily.

Your own **Settlement Study**, reviewed on 4 September, states that *“Mortimer West End does not contain key services or facilities serving at least two functions... it is not suitable for inclusion in the settlement hierarchy.”*

That hierarchy focuses growth in sustainable locations.

Mortimer West End isn't even a Category 3 settlement — it has no shop, school or bus link to Basingstoke or to the railway station two miles away — yet is proposed for major growth.

This proposal is inconsistent with your **spatial strategy** and with the entry under **SPS5.15**, which acknowledges the land lies on the borough boundary and outside any established service centre.

Development on this site would depend on **West Berkshire's doctors, schools and dentist** — services already under strain — yet would contribute no **CIL** or **Section 106** funding to them.

The site is also **too small to accommodate this density** while respecting the **NPPF** and the **Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Plan**, which require rural-edge development to reflect local character and two-storey height limits.

I understand that if you go ahead, both the **Office of Nuclear Regulation** and **West Berks Emergency Planners** will need to consider the development's impact on the **West Berks Off Site Emergency Plan**, given the site's proximity to the **Outer Consultation Zone** and its exceeding **200 homes**. This raises further questions about whether this scale of development here is appropriate or deliverable.

Chair, you must of course plan for housing need — but **sustainable growth means the right homes in the right places**.

A site with no services, cross-boundary impacts and emergency-planning constraints cannot deliver that.

I urge Cabinet to **remove West End Farm from the draft Plan** and focus instead on **better-connected, sustainable sites** within your own settlement hierarchy.

Thank you.