

## **Title: Save our A340 by removing Skates Lane from the Draft Local Plan**

### **Request: Remove Skates Lane, Tadley (Ref SPS5.16) from the Draft Local Plan**

#### **([Local Plan Draft Spatial Strategy Regulation 18 Consultation Link](#))**

Circa 13,000 people in Baughurst and Tadley will be affected on a daily basis by the proposed road changes should the Skates Lane development proceed as proposed. The ensuing ongoing traffic disruption will also affect neighbouring villages such as Little London, Ramsdell, Charter Alley, Bramley, Silchester, Sherborne St John, Monk Sherborne and Baughurst. This will also affect workers travelling through Tadley to get to AWE.

We, the undersigned, urge the Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council to remove the Skates Lane site from the Draft Local Plan for the reasons indicated below, not least of which would be the adverse impact on the A340 and surrounding roads and Lanes.

1. The likely impact on the A340 is indicated by the proposal by Bewley Homes in their planning application 24/00349/OUT which suggests the already narrow road be further compromised by the creation of a cycle path between Skates Lane and Sainsbury's on Mulfords Hill. This will significantly restrict traffic flow through the town of Tadley, creating traffic chaos. Additionally the inclusion of a new junction with ghost lane, two pedestrian refuges, one Copenhagen crossing and one set back combined two way cycle/pedestrian crossing on the A340 inherently increases risk of RTAs (Road Traffic Accidents)
2. When traffic flow on the A340 is obstructed or during peak commuting hours, vehicles are diverting through neighbouring villages. This diversion has created hazardous conditions on these roads, where edges have eroded. The resulting safety concerns are likely to incur repair costs that far exceed the existing backlog of pothole repairs, as well as vehicle damage. Many of these roads are rural lanes, with some sections being single-track. This situation reflects not planned development, but rather the degradation of our countryside.
3. Currently, landowners are proposing development areas on both sides of the A340, potentially introducing around circa 2,000 new homes within 2 km of, and connecting to, the road. This development must be questioned. The proposed projects, for example, at Skates Lane and Sherborne St John, Weybrook Park, will require the construction of new junctions, including a roundabout for one and a ghosted T-junction for the other. Both the construction phases and operation phases would cause further damage to the road network adjacent to the A340 and the aforementioned villages. More critically, what will be the impact on emergency services, and how long will they face delays? Additionally, how will B&DBC address the increase in traffic-related pollution resulting from congestion?
4. The proposal to narrow the A340 from Skates Lane to Sainsburys will present significant safety challenge such as:
  - 4.1 No space for ambulances or fire appliances to have emergency right of way through traffic.
  - 4.2 Deliveries, buses and refuse collection along a dense residential road will cause delays and disruptions with every stop as there would be no room for cars to overtake. The traffic could tail back as far back as Pamber End in one direction and AWE in the other, clogging up the tributary roads as well. These occurrences will occur on a continuous basis throughout the day. During rush hour people entering and leaving Tadley for work will bring the traffic to a standstill.

4.3 Residents along this stretch of road already find that leaving their driveways increasingly difficult. If the proposals go ahead, people will struggle to leave their properties by car.

5. There would be an adverse impact on the locally valued landscape which is characterised by agricultural fields, grassland and open countryside bordering Ron Ward's Meadow SSSI to the north, to the west and south by the ancient and semi-ancient woodlands of Moor Copse and Lee Copse – both Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and to the east by Pamber Forest SSSI. There are also a further three SINCs, within the site, which will be significantly harmed by proposed alterations to natural drainage and flooding as well as predation of wildlife. No meaningful assessment of the Environmental damage for both the construction and operation of this site have been made.

6. A housing development on this site would result in significant net loss in the existing biodiversity, with no amount of off-site compensation mitigating the loss of site-specific species and wildlife corridors. It does not uphold the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), nor the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).

7. The allocation of this site for housing fails to respect the setting the heritage assets of the listed Skates Farm House, Barn at Skates Farm, Burrells Farmhouse and the Tadley Conservation Area and the Tadley Church Road Conservation Area, all of which derive their significance from their setting. The site allocation also fails to respect and protect the archaeological significance of the Portway, Roman Road which traverses the site.

8. Nicholas Conran protected this land from development with a Covenant to protect the countryside habitat and landscape – this Covenant has not been declared void or removed.

9. As no Planning Policy Map has been produced for this site allocation, as yet, it is clear from the layout and comments on the outline planning application that the site ownership is not supportively established.

10. The impact on emergency sewage outlet pollution and the damage done to aquifers for supply water has not been assessed for this site.

11. The site is separated from the settlement of Tadley by a significant area of countryside with access to shops, schools, GP surgeries and employment etc. reliant, in the main, on private motor transport. The site could not, therefore, be considered sustainable. Indeed, the site was specifically excluded from the previous iteration of the Draft Local Plan “due to its inaccessibility and distance from facilities and impacts on settlement character, biodiversity and heritage” – Cllr Andy Konieczo, Cabinet member for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure, Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council. For this reason and those described above, we request that the site is also removed from the latest Draft Local Plan.

For all the reasons listed above, it is clear that the allocation of this site for housing development would result in such disadvantages for the people of Tadley and surrounding villages as to far outweigh any benefit of building a mere 235 houses with potentially in excess of 20,000 people being adversely impacted on a daily basis.

Please sign this petition to Object to Skates Lane being included in the Reg18 draft Local Plan and then write individual objections on the B&DBC Planning Portal for 24/00349/OUT at [Link to Planning Application](#). Also, share this petition as widely as possible.