

PLANNING REF : 252782
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 184 Victoria Road
: Wargrave, Berkshire
: RG108AJ
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Leon Michael Cook
DATE SUBMITTED : 02/01/2026

COMMENTS:

Consultation response to Speedy Fuels / Grove Service Station
Planning Application No: 252782

January 2nd, 2026

Dear Sir or Madam,

I write to register my strong objection to the application by Speedy Fuels & Lubricants Ltd for the change of use of the existing service station to a fuel and oil storage distribution facility, and associated works.

I support and echo fully the numerous robust concerns raised by local residents that highlight the severe potential harm to the local environment in relation to flood risk, highway safety, biodiversity and environmental protection. The application is completely inappropriate for its size, scale and use next to a woodland and nature area, not to mention densely populated by a local community that wholeheartedly does not want this on their doorstep. The planning application and proposals fundamentally do not accord with the adopted local plan or the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and should therefore be refused.

Procedural Issues:

The site location plan (ref.5104-24-90) shows the application site outlined in red. No scale bar is provided.

The Council's validation requirements (September 2025) require a site location plan to identify the extent of the application site, using up-to-date mapping (preferably Ordnance Survey based). The submitted site location plan shows no OS licence. If the submitted plans are using OS data, the applicant/agent is in breach of OS copyright, and the application should be made invalid.

The application form declares that Notice was served on all landowners - specifically 'The Oil Centre' and 'Wokingham Borough Council' (WBC). However, the Land Registry identifies multiple Titles within the application site, and unregistered land. The applicant does not appear to have advertised the application to establish the owners of the unregistered land and therefore Notice may not have been served on all landowners.

Further, normal cartographic convention is that an edging on a plan drawn to define a particular area of land will lie within that land. Hence, the extent of the application site should show the red line edging on the inside of the black line drawn by Ordnance Survey. The submitted site location plan relies on the OS information at the centre of the red line. Hence, the outside of the red line extends beyond the land controlled by the applicant or land on which Notice has been served.

The application is therefore procedurally incorrect and should be made refused.

Technical Issues:

The application lacks sufficient technical input in various areas.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) - This is a highly sensitive site. It is considered that the proposals could meet the thresholds for EIA. No such screening appears to have been undertaken and therefore the impact of the proposals cannot be properly or fully assessed.

Flood Risk - As identified by others, almost the entire site is located within Flood Zones 2 & 3. Where any sources of flooding are identified, the latest National policy requires a sequential test to be undertaken. The submitted Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) refers to the need for a sequential test yet provides nothing further. This is a major flaw in the application given the acknowledged flood risk issues in the local area and therefore does not comply with WBC own Local Plan. Moreover, the Flood and Water Management Act places statutory duties on risk management authorities to reduce flood risk and prevent adverse flood consequences. The siting of a major fuel depot in an area subject to flooding would materially conflict with those duties, given the heightened risk of pollution, containment failure and exacerbation of flood impacts during flood events.

Trees - The application is supported by a tree survey. This identifies that there are Category B&C trees close the application site boundary beyond the applicant's control. These arguably contribute to the rural character of the area and form part of the adjacent Local Wildlife Site (LWS). The proposal introduces the raising of the ground levels along the southern site boundary along with several retaining walls. These works would appear to fall within the root protection areas (RPA) of these offsite trees. No Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) & Method Statement appears to have been submitted to demonstrate how the proposed works will be implemented without causing harm to these trees.

Ecology - The building to be demolished was only identified as having low potential for the presence of bats, therefore requiring only one emergence survey. Rural buildings near woodland and water have a very high footprint for bats with records showing high numbers in the area. It is highly dubious that only one survey has been requisite for this application and therefore is not in keeping with NPPF guidance (193) that prioritises mitigating impacts, even promoting net gains for biodiversity and enhancing the natural environment in an area already rich in biodiversity. How this application meets WBC's CP7 test to ensure that sites designated as of importance for nature conservation will be conserved and enhanced given its proximity to Loddon Lakes, is beyond me.

Traffic - An increase of anticipated daily traffic to the extent of one vehicle arriving every three minutes to site is completely unacceptable for a road that is already extremely busy between two villages. An industrial fuel depot should not be sited next to a nature reserve and river supply, not to mention the hours of

operation of the site which would contravene NPPF 185. Planning applications should be refused if the application presents a 'severe residual impact' to the local area (NPPF 116). Splay and sightedness of traffic from the point of access to the site cannot be adhered to in both directions of travel, not to mention the knock-on effect that high HGV numbers would have on active travel locally.

Safety - the proposed site is very close to local schools including Charvil Piggott Primary School. Many children walk through the village including along the Old Bath Road to school. The local Neighbourhood Plan expects new development to: "Enhance the existing condition and provide safe and easy access to local amenities". This planning application includes no mitigation measures whatsoever and therefore presents a real and tangible risk to both parents and children walking to school.

Summary:

In summary, the application has a number of procedural flaws and should be invalidated. In addition, the application is lacking sufficient technical detail which means the proposals cannot be fully assessed against relevant planning local plan policies and the NPPF.

The lack of thorough environmental assessment falls short of the minimum required to enable the planning department to determine the impact of development on the surrounding natural environment, including the nature reserve, wetlands, protected species and trees. The LPA has a duty to resist development where these impacts are unknown.

I strongly oppose the proposed development and would expect the Planning Officer and Planning Committee to ensure that resident concern is put first before commercial interest and refuse this application.

Yours faithfully,

Leon Cook
WBC Conservative Council Candidate