

PLANNING REF : 252782
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SUBMITTED BY : Mr Justin jeffery
DATE SUBMITTED : 22/11/2025

COMMENTS:

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22/11/2025

Planning Department Wokingham Borough Council Shute End Wokingham
RG40 1BN
Subject: FORMAL OBJECTION to Planning Application - Former Prince
Bros Garage, Grove Service Station, Old Bath Road, Charvil, RG10 9QJ

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to formally object to the above planning application for an oil storage facility at the former Prince Bros Garage site on Old Bath Road, Charvil.

I am a member of the Charvil Fishing Syndicate, which operates on waters directly connected to the River Loddon, and I have grave concerns about the environmental, traffic safety, and operational impacts of this proposed development.

Environmental Concerns - Flood Risk and Watercourse Contamination

The site is located in an area that floods annually. The proximity of this oil storage facility to both our fishing lake and the River Loddon presents an unacceptable environmental risk. In the event of flooding, any fuel leak or spillage would be catastrophic:

- Contaminated floodwater would flow directly into our lake and the River Loddon
- Fish populations would face mass mortality from petroleum contamination
- The ecological damage to the river system would be severe and -lasting
- Remediation costs would be astronomical and recovery could take decades

The proposed outfall pipe discharging treated wastewater and surface water runoff into the River Loddon raises serious concerns. Even "treated" effluent from an oil storage facility will contain residual hydrocarbons, suspended solids, and chemical pollutants that pose a significant risk to aquatic life. The fact that this facility proposes to discharge any waste into the River Loddon should, in itself, be sufficient grounds to refuse this application.

The Environment Agency's own guidance states that pollution prevention measures must be robust for sites near sensitive watercourses. I question whether adequate safeguards can ever be sufficient given

the annual flooding and direct hydraulic connection to the River Loddon.

Highway Safety Concerns

The proposed access point on Old Bath Road is wholly inadequate and dangerous:

- Old Bath Road is already heavily congested, particularly during peak hours
- The planned entrance is located on a blind bend, creating severe visibility issues
- HGVs entering and exiting the site would pose a significant hazard to other road users
- The increased volume of fuel tanker movements would exacerbate existing traffic problems
- Emergency vehicles could be impeded, and the risk of serious accidents is unacceptably high

The Highways Authority should conduct a full safety audit of this access arrangement. I believe it fails to meet the required safety standards for a facility expecting regular HGV movements.

Light and Noise Pollution

The application proposes 24-hour operation, which is completely inappropriate for this semi-rural location:

- Light pollution from security lighting and operational areas would affect nearby residential properties and wildlife
- Constant noise from tanker movements, pumping equipment, and loading/unloading operations throughout the night would severely impact quality of life for local residents
- The site's proximity to the river corridor, which serves as a wildlife habitat, means that nocturnal disturbance would harm protected species

There has been inadequate assessment of the cumulative impact of round-the-clock industrial operations in this location.

Inadequate Assessment and Consultation

I am concerned that the application fails to adequately address:

1. The cumulative environmental risk of flooding, fuel storage, and river discharge
2. Alternative sites that would pose less risk to watercourses
3. The full highway safety implications of the blind bend access
4. The impact of continuous operations on the local community and environment
5. The long-term liability for environmental contamination

Conclusion

This application should be refused on the following grounds:

- Unacceptable environmental risk to the River Loddon and connected waters
- Highway safety concerns that cannot be adequately mitigated
- Inappropriate 24-hour operation causing light and noise pollution
- Inadequate pollution prevention measures given annual flooding
- Direct threat to aquatic ecosystems from proposed discharge pipe

The proposed oil storage facility is simply the wrong development in the wrong location. The risks to our waterways, local wildlife, and community safety far outweigh any potential benefits.

I urge the Planning Committee to refuse this application and protect the River Loddon and its dependent ecosystems from this unacceptable threat.

Yours faithfully,

Justin Jeffery