

PLANNING REF : 252782
PROPERTY ADDRESS : PO Box 8250
: Reading
: RG6 9SZ
SUBMITTED BY : Twyford Parish Council
DATE SUBMITTED : 04/12/2025

COMMENTS:

Twyford Parish Council - Objection to Application 252782

Twyford Parish Council formally objects to application 252782 on the grounds of inappropriate development, unjustified change of use, and loss of amenity within an area of high environmental sensitivity, negatively impacting residents of Twyford.

1. Environmental Risk and Inadequate Protection

The proposed change of use to an oil storage facility presents a significant risk of harm to the neighbouring watercourses and Loddon Nature Reserve. The design of the proposed storage is inadequate to prevent against accidental releases from the tanks.

Whilst there is a primary bund within the tanks there needs to be further measures to protect against release if catastrophic events overwhelmed these primary protections. Also, it requires some form of assurance for protection against risks of smaller releases when transfer operations are taking place, which would seem to be an almost constant activity on site.

The overall site is already impacted by flooding on a regular basis and whilst only a proportion of the site is in flood zone 3 this will increase in years to come. This then cannot be viewed as a sustainable site.

2. Loss of Amenity and Odour Impacts

The application fails to address fuel odour emissions. The previous period of unauthorised operation shows that transfer operations are accompanied by smells that cover a wide area and will inevitably be detected on the nature reserve and will entail a loss of valuable amenity for Twyford residents who regularly use the area.

Design Code 3.02 of the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan (TNP) states:

"New development should protect and enhance the existing habitats like Loddon Nature Reserve, local wildlife sites, protected trees, grazing marsh and other habitats."

It is difficult to see how this proposal does this when it constantly reeks of fuel oil.

3. Highway Safety and Access Concerns

Although the site is in "open countryside," access requires travel through the residential areas of Charvil and, if the primary route is unavailable, through Twyford itself. The Old Bath Road contains two safe routes to school which traverse Twyford Parish. School children walk, usually independently to The Piggott School situated in the parish of Wargrave, whilst parents will typically take their children to primary schools in Twyford along the Old Bath Road. The proposed development will entail a significant increase in risk for parents and children walking this route with its inadequate and dangerous paths with the increase in HGV movements in both morning and afternoon periods.

Design Code 2.02 of the TNP expects new development to:
"Enhance the existing condition and provide safe and easy access to local amenities."
The application includes no mitigation measures and proposes no infrastructure improvements to address these risks. This lack of consideration further renders the proposal unsustainable and undermines efforts to encourage active travel.

4. Operational Hours and Impact on Residents

The proposed operating hours are excessive and would negatively affect the comfort and amenity of nearby residents. The application reserves the right to operate 24 hours a day if deemed necessary by the operators, which is unacceptable in a residential and environmentally sensitive context.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, Twyford Parish Council considers that application 252782 represents inappropriate development, carries unjustified environmental and public safety risks, and will result in significant loss of amenity. The proposal has impacts on the objectives of the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan and should therefore be refused.