

PLANNING REF : 252782
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 1 Quantock Close
: 1 Quantock Close, Charvil, Bershire
: RG10 9QQ
SUBMITTED BY : Mrs Nelmarie Rennison
DATE SUBMITTED : 04/12/2025

COMMENTS:

I am writing to highly object to the proposed Speedy Fuels development at the former Prince Bros site on the Old Bath Road, Charvil. After reviewing the application documents and considering the existing characteristics of the area, I believe this proposal is wholly unsuitable for this location and poses significant risks to public safety, local residents, and the surrounding natural environment.

1. Inadequate Road Infrastructure for HGV Movements

Although the A3032 is classified as an A-road, its width, alignment, and residential setting make it functionally inappropriate for frequent heavy-goods vehicle traffic. The road network leading to the site is narrow, heavily used by local residents, and not designed for the safe manoeuvring of fuel tankers. Evidence already exists of tankers struggling to enter and exit the site, demonstrating the inherent limitations of the current road layout. Increased HGV movements would present unacceptable risks, including congestion, reduced highway safety, and noise and vibration impacts on nearby homes.

2. Severe Flood Risk and Environmental Vulnerability

The site lies adjacent to the Charvil Country Park lakes, floodplains of the River Loddon, and hydrological pathways that ultimately feed into the River Thames. This area is widely recognised as a flood-prone zone. Storing approximately 800,000 litres of fuel within metres of water bodies creates an unacceptable ecological hazard. In the event of flooding or accidental spillage, there is a real possibility of widespread contamination of protected habitats, recreational lakes, and waterways. Remediation of fuel pollution in such an environment is extremely difficult and often incomplete, with long-term impacts on biodiversity and water quality.

3. Fire and Emergency Response Limitations

A development storing such large volumes of fuel carries inherent fire and explosion risks. The surrounding road network, being largely residential in scale, does not provide the access, turning space, or response speed required for emergency services to safely and effectively manage a major incident. This raises serious concerns regarding the safety of local residents and the potential escalation of any emergency involving hazardous materials.

4. Incompatibility With the Residential and Semi-Rural Setting

The proposed use represents an industrial-scale operation incompatible with the character of Charvil and its surroundings. The village is predominantly residential and rural in nature, with significant recreational and ecological assets nearby. A fuel storage and

distribution hub would introduce industrial noise, odour, lighting, and risk, fundamentally altering the character of the area and diminishing the amenity of local residents.

5. Concerns Regarding Compliance and Operational Conduct

It has been observed that tanker operations took place on the site earlier this year despite no planning permission being in place for such activities. This raises legitimate concerns about the operator's willingness or ability to comply with planning controls and safety regulations. For a facility handling hazardous materials, robust compliance is essential, and the evidence to date does not inspire confidence.

6. Existence of More Suitable Alternative Locations

Facilities of this type are typically located within designated industrial zones, with purpose-built infrastructure, appropriate separation distances, and direct access to major trunk roads capable of accommodating HGV movements. This site meets none of these criteria, making the proposed development inherently inappropriate.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, namely the inadequate road infrastructure, flood and environmental risk, emergency access limitations, incompatibility with the local setting, and concerns about operator compliance, I strongly urge the Council to refuse this application in full. The proposed development presents disproportionate risks and is fundamentally unsuited to this location.