

Alan Simpson
103 The Hawthorns
Charvil
RG109TT

To: WBC Planning Committee

Subject: Full planning application 250959

28th May 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

Reference the full planning application 250959 for the redevelopment and operation of the former Princes Bros site by Speedy Fuels.

As usual the "Consulting reports" supporting this application downplay the negatives, simplify the issues and ignore the compound effect on the sustainability of our community. I am seriously disappointed that in line with WBC officers request at the pre - application stage, all vehicles would be routed westbound from the site via Charvil toward the A4 New Bath Road. This directive serves to amplify the complete disregard WBC and the planning process has for the residents of Charvil and is particularly alarming for those on the Old Bath Road as this represents noise and air pollution early in morning 7 days a week giving no respite from the noise and air pollution that they currently live with during the day.

I am objecting to this application for the following reasons, all of which will have a major implication for the residents of Charvil and impact on our rural status, environment, traffic and general safety.

1. Inappropriate Industrialisation of a Rural Setting, this development is fundamentally at odds with the character of Twyford and Charvil, which is a residential and semi-rural community. The construction of a fuel depot introduces a level of industrialisation that is out of scale and context with its surroundings, impacting the rural landscape and the views enjoyed by residents and visitors using the many public paths and facilities which surround the development.
2. Impact on Charvil Country Park. The Speedy Fuels site is immediately adjacent to Charvil Country Park which is of significant importance for local nature. In 2022 it was recognised as a Local Wildlife Site that plays an important environmental role providing corridors for wildlife. The impact of this use of the site will only be negative to local valued nature through noise, air and light pollution. Additionally, the Country Park, and the Meadows to the north of the Old Bath Road are central to residents' enjoyment of the area, and as already experienced this was negatively impacted by the air pollution when Speedy Fuels started unapproved operations earlier this year. Moreover, a number of popular footpaths surround this development most notably a crossing point from the Country Park to Charvil Meadows which is in close proximity to the access point where visibility is already poor, parking is already an issue and speeding will all require mitigation due to the increased vehicle movements this development represents.

3. Site Access Safety. The wider site is already busy with the large Total Tyres (TT) site at Denmark House next door regularly having articulated lorries parked outside, obstructing the highway and providing a hazard to other road users. More regular lorries based as well as entering and exiting the site will significantly worsen the situation. Additionally, employees will travel to work by car, further increasing local traffic congestion at Twyford cross roads and the A4 roundabouts. Furthermore, Total Tyres' employees park informally on the grass verge outside the site.

The reality – note parked cars on verge and red lorry on road



Versus the theoretical plans



The current un enforced Total Tyres parking issues are a significant safety issue at this entrance/exit.



4. Degradation of Active Travel Options. The Old Bath Road represents the only direct route from Charvil to Twyford. The extra traffic using the road as well as those entering and exiting the site will not only negatively impact car users with increased journey times but will also make the route less attractive to cyclists and pedestrians on what is already demonstrably a challenging active travel environment, causing further car dependency in Charvil.
5. Road Traffic Safety. There have been 13 road accidents attended by Thames Valley Police on the Old Bath Road between this site and the Charvil mini roundabout from 2011 to 2022 including 1 fatality, 1 serious accident and 11 slight accidents. (Source crashmap.co.uk.) The addition of further regular heavy vehicle traffic using as well as entering and exiting the site will only make the road less safe. The road outside the development is on a bend and has a 40-mph limit. Increased numbers of lorries entering/exiting this site will present a significant hazard on this fast-moving road. This requires mitigation as part of any approval.
6. Child Safety. Approximately 250 schoolchildren in Charvil attend The Piggott School (Wargrave). The vast majority live south of the Old Bath Road and need to cross it on their daily walk or cycle to school. There is one Zebra crossing, but this is not convenient for many, so they cross in other places. In line with WBC officers request at the pre - application stage, all vehicles would be routed westbound from the site via Charvil toward the A4 New Bath Road therefore the increased traffic on the Old Bath Road in Charvil associated with this site will significantly increase the risk and make these children less safe. This requires mitigation as part of any approval.
7. Mini Roundabout. The Mini roundabout junction between Old Bath Road and Park Lane has been an area of concern and stress for local residents for a considerable time. The traffic on the mini roundabout at peak times causes significant air and noise pollution for nearby residents. The large increase in the number of Total Tyres Artics and A Better Service (ABS) tankers based in Park Lane in recent years has further worsened this. In line with WBC officers request at the pre - application stage, all vehicles would be routed westbound from the site via Charvil toward the A4 New Bath Road therefore Speedy Fuels lorries moving through this roundabout regularly will cause a significant reduction in the quality of life for local people. The design of the mini roundabout is suboptimal and not appropriate for 50 x 44 tonne Articulated lorries expected on a daily basis, presenting dangerous driving conditions for all. This requires mitigation as part of any approval.
8. Charvil-Sonning Roundabout (A4). In line with WBC officers request at the pre - application stage, all vehicles would be routed westbound from the site via Charvil toward the A4 New Bath Road where significant existing congestion on the Charvil roundabout caused by the limited capacity of the Thames crossing at Sonning will be worsened with additional lorries being routed here at peak times. This requires mitigation as part of any approval.
9. Local Traffic Increase (HGV). The anticipated daily traffic movements are. Mon to Fri - 59 x 44 Tonnes Artics and 73 x Cars/Vans, Sat – 12 x 44 Tonnes Artics and 20 x Cars/Vans, Sun - 6 x 44 Tonnes Artics and 2 x Cars/Vans As Speedy Fuels begin to operate from this site these can be added to the recently increased figure of 20 tankers operating from the ABS site on Park Lane and the now increased 850 bus service which now runs up to every 10 minutes along the Old Bath Road through the village. Cumulatively this represents a major increase in bus and lorry traffic along the Old Bath Road in Charvil which remains essentially a residential road in a semi-rural setting. This will have a negative impact on residents' quality of life through increased noise and air pollution and decreased road safety. The site will be operational; Mon to Friday 5am to 6pm, Saturday 5am to 2pm, Sunday 6am to 4pm, Bank Holidays 6am to 4pm. This is alarming for residents of the Old Bath Road as this represents noise and air pollution early in morning 7 days a week with no respite from the noise and air pollution that they already live with during the day.

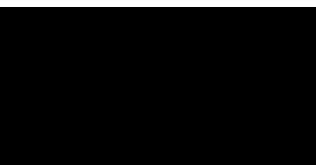
10. Fire Safety. Whilst increased risk of fire due to the storage of volatile biodiesel should be addressed as part of the normal approval process, there remains an additional concern with the accessibility of the site during a period of flood that would compromise any emergency response. This is a real concern as it happened in the past at Newlands Farm in Charvil. <https://www.getreading.co.uk/news/localnews/farmers-fears-wargrave-farm-blaze-6501031>. Mitigation conditions have to be agreed with the local fire, police and ambulance services as to their ability to deal with an incident on site in these circumstances.
11. Flood Risk and Local Waterways. The site sits within Flood Zone 3, although the site may have been raised to somewhat mitigate this. The recent increase in wetter summers means the potential risk of flooding on the site is increasing. The site backs on to a lake in Charvil Country Park and is adjacent to the Old River branch of the River Loddon. Any leaks or spills of the volatile biodiesel stored on the site is likely to have an immediate and highly negative impact on local waterways, possibly spreading far and wide in periods of severe flooding, as there is an integrated web from the River Thames to the north, stretching to at least Dinton Pastures to the south. This requires mitigation as part of any approval.

It's an island when it floods



Thank you for your time and attention to this matter

Sincerely,



Alan Simpson

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Email - [REDACTED]