

PLANNING REF : 251221
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 8 Woodrow Drive
: Wokingham
: RG40 1RS
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Stephen Hart
DATE SUBMITTED : 23/06/2025

COMMENTS:

I am writing to object to the Application for a Lawful Development Certificate ref 251221 for land to the rear of 302 and 304 London Road, Wokingham.

I note that the application form refers to "Use Class B2, General Industrial Car repairs business within the workshop and adjoining yard". From my observations, as a near neighbour and a cursory check on the Google Earth history, it is obvious that this site has been used at times for much more heavy weight commercial activities. Other uses including commercial storage and transport vehicles (often articulated and high sided), various civil engineering, building and construction related vehicles. It has certainly not been limited to car repairs. the web site ukvehicledisposal.co.uk also list this as a local site open seven days a week and includes photos of recovery trucks clearly parked on this site. The extensive use of this site has not been declared and often concealed.

The application form refers to there not having been "any material change of use of the land since the start of the use for which the certificate is sought". This is incorrect. The parcel of land immediately behind 302 London Road, up to the "workshop", was for a significant period over the last 10 years transferred to use by the Vets (302, London Road) as an extension to their carpark. The fence line was moved so this section of land became exclusively within the curtilage of 302 London Road. This can be clearly seen on the 2021 and 2022 Google Earth record photos of the area. My understanding is that, following intervention by the Local Authority, the land was reinstated to within the curtilage of land to the rear of 304 as no planning application had been approved for the change of use. The Local Authority will have records of this intervention but my assertion is that this land could not have been used continuously for "car repairs" during the last ten years.

The Planning Report prepared by Davis Planning Ltd. states that the "Aerial photographs .. provide supporting evidence that the use has been continual for at least 12 years." The photographs are a snap shot, updated at approx 12 month intervals. They cannot be relied upon to show "continual use".

The application does not provide evidence sufficient to prove continuous or uninterrupted use carried at the same level of intensity. There are 5 planning applications relating to this site listed on the Council Web site over this last 10 years. There has also been a planning appeal. During the period leading up to and during the se applications and appeals, works on the site virtually stopped in terms of noise, vehicle movement and atmospheric pollution. This is also the case for the current period of this application. If we assume each application took about 8 weeks to determine that would result in a significant total period of 48

weeks of inactivity or non continuous use.

The David Planning Ltd. report also states that the owner continued to operate during the Covid period. There was significant noisy and disruptive works going on during this period but this appeared to be construction work including re-fencing, surfacing and electrical installations. If car repairs were being carried out the applicant should be able to provide contemporary risk assessments to show how this was being done in accordance with Covid guidelines.

The photomontage submitted with the application includes photos that are not date stamped or geo-located so cannot be verified. They do not prove continuous or uninterrupted use of application site. Some of the photos appear to show vehicles outside of the application site area (red line).

The application includes no company accounts, contemporary invoices, council tax, water rates, waste disposal certificates etc. relating to any business use of the red lined site over the last 10 years.

The supporting letters attached to the application offer circumstantial evidence that the site has been used for car repairs. They do not individually or collectively show that the red lined site has continuous or uninterrupted use for this purpose carried out at the same level of intensity over the last 10 years.

The application site has been the subject of two "certificate of lawful development" applications in 2017 and 2019 both of which were refused. Unfortunately the applicant appears to have continued to use the site for car repairs and other industrial type uses with impunity. I see nothing new in the current application that supports approval and would urge the Planning Authority to refuse and enforce.

As a neighbour, with back garden just a few meters from the said "workshop", and having lived here for over 30 years, we have experienced the full range of disturbance from this site including at times continuous industrial noise, (eg. banging, grinding, jetting, compressor and engine revving and running), noxious fumes from engines and chemicals, loud music from radios, cars and PA equipment and continual bleeping from manoeuvring vehicles and the on site industrial forklift. There has also been an ongoing problem of the burning of industrial waste from this site, at all times of the day and night, the most recent occurrence being the apparent burning of construction waste from the bungalow constructed behind 306 London Road.

I'm not against a neighbour running an appropriate business provided that it does not cause nuisance. I do object to a neighbour running a business that causes detriment to the normal use of my property. At times we are unable to use our back garden or have our rear windows open due to the noise, dust, fumes and smoke. This use continues to cause disturbance and our concern is that should the application be approved it will only increase and intensify.