

PLANNING REF : 252185  
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Hill Cottage  
: 8 Silverdale Road, Wargrave, Berkshire  
: RG10 8EA  
SUBMITTED BY : Mr And Mrs Ian and Melissa Kirker  
DATE SUBMITTED : 15/01/2026

COMMENTS:

We have previously responded and formally objected on 26 Oct 2025 and 04 Nov 2025 to the revised Planning Application 252185 for the commercial development at Thames Wood House Care Home, School Hill, Wargrave. Our previous objections are based on the significant negative impact that the proposed rooftop HVAC units, ancillary equipment and ductwork will have on the residential amenities of the surrounding area, specifically concerning noise and visual intrusion. Our objections noted the harm to residential amenity and local

character, and the impact on:

- Noise levels
- Visual Intrusion
- Loss of amenity
- Proximity to neighbours
- Aesthetic harm
- Insufficient mitigation.

The addition of these proposed rooftop HVAC units, ancillary equipment and ductwork will cause significant nuisance and disturbance to the occupiers of neighbouring properties, especially those in Silverdale Road.

With the exception of the recently and hastily issued flawed Noise Impact Assessment (NIA), none of these detailed comments have been addressed by the Developer, and sadly nor by the Wokingham Borough Council (WBC). We would request that our previous comments be relooked at, in addition to our new comments below.

We formally object (again) to the revised Planning Application 252185 including the NIA and revised GA plans and elevational drawings, uploaded to the WBC Planning website on 17 Dec 2025. It is also worth noting that NO neighbour notification was received by ourselves nor several neighbours of this new information and consultation period, despite assurances by WBC Planning Dept, that they were sent out. It is quite possible that some previously notified neighbours do not know about this latest revision.

Specific comments on the NIA and overall concerns are as follows:

1. Failure to relocate HVAC Plant:

The Developer has failed to address any of our and our neighbours' comments/objections, including giving proper consideration to our proposed solution of relocating the HVAC plant and ancillary equipment to the south side of the building on the side walls or at ground level on the south side where there is plenty of space (enclosed within appropriate noise-reducing enclosures or housing with air flow) in order to minimise the detrimental noise and visual impacts.

Section 6.4 of the NIA states that the "option of completely

enclosing the noisiest items of plant within acoustic enclosures has been reviewed and discounted due to a lack of available space and the resultant loss of adequate airflow to the plant items." This may not be correct, and should be interrogated/investigated further. There appears room on the south side of the development for some of the HVAC units. The Developer's lack of planning in their design is not a justification for locating the units on the roof, causing unnecessary maximum visual and noise intrusion to the residents of Silverdale Road.

2. Alternative Placement / Relocation of HVAC units and ancillary equipment to the south side:

As noted above, the noise levels can be reduced/mitigated and the unsightly and intrusive visual impact can be avoided if the proposed HVAC units and ancillary equipment are relocated to the south side of the building on the walls or at ground level on the south side. Definitely, do not place at the east end, which directly abuts our garden, and our close neighbours to the east.

The south elevation is shielded by trees and vegetation and a rarely used walkway, whereas the north and east elevations abut the back of our garden, and others in Silverdale Road and Beverley Gardens.

3. Location of Noise Measurements not representative:

The noise measurement location on the south east of the site is nowhere near the affected neighbours' properties in Silverdale Road, so the data results are unhelpful and not representative. The objections relating to the noise and visual intrusion are mainly from residents in Silverdale Road. Therefore, the location of the noise measurements is not relevant, and should have been to the north of the site, and immediately behind Nos. 4, 6 and 8 Silverdale Road.

Most of the bedrooms of the adjoining properties in Silverdale Road are at the rear of the properties, and therefore nearer to the care home. They are detrimentally affected. This again illustrates that the selected noise measurement location does not consider the properties most affected.

4. Background Noise base levels taken during Construction

Activities: The day time noise measurements taken include the current construction work noise. Section 4.9 of the NIA notes "The noise environment .was primarily influenced by construction activities." The measurements taken simply do not give a true reflection of the day time background noise to the south side of our property, including to our bedrooms, living areas and garden. The background base figures used in the NIA will be higher than the noise levels before the construction works. Prior to the construction works, the only noises in the back of our garden were birds singing, plus the occasional noise of school children playing during lunch hour and breaks at the infant school, plus planes on approach to Heathrow Airport in certain wind or flight path routes. It was quiet and private, with frequent periods of no noise at all. Currently, the background noise is dominated by the construction works, to the extent that we do not open windows or use our garden for relaxation. Therefore, the figures in the NIA are unreliable, and do not represent a true or actual reflection of the normal historical background noise levels. Lawrence Baker Ltd's

claims of a representative background noise level are flawed, and have been artificially elevated (intentional or otherwise).

5. Noise Impact level is underestimated:

As noted above, the artificial elevation of the representative background noise level presented in the NIA have the additional impact of underestimating the additional impact of the roof mounted HVAC units, when compared to the real lower original background noise level.

6. Noise duration:

The 24-hour noise levels will be higher in warm or hot weather when the equipment will be used at or near to maximum capacity, which is when we, the neighbours and other local residents will have their windows open (including their bedroom windows at night). The enjoyment of gardens and amenities will be disrupted for everyone affected by the noise levels. Those residents working from home will also be affected by the noise levels. Mitigation measures must be further improved. Constant humming from the HVAC equipment during the night, or at other quiet times will severely impact the quality of life and local amenity of those of us affected.

7. Assumptions about plant operation are not valid:

Section 5.6 of the NIA states that "it is unlikely that all plant items will operate simultaneously." However, in reality, the most probable time for full operation is during warm and hot weather (which is becoming more frequent and extreme with global warming) when neighbouring residents to the care home will have their windows open for natural ventilation. Therefore, this is an assumption that cannot be relied upon, and the worst-case scenario should be considered and modelled.

8. Effectiveness of acoustic screens:

The visual appearance, long-term durability and effectiveness of any proposed acoustic screens needs to be presented and discussed. They will be exposed to wind, and must be sturdy and visually tolerable.

9. Amendment under Section 73 of Town and Country Planning Act not valid:

Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 allows Developers to apply for minor material amendments. However, this HVAC issue and its associated visual obtrusion, noise impact, and increase in building height is a major material amendment, and needs proper due diligence. The late addition of these roof mounted HVAC units is clearly a major change, as if nothing else it is adding 2-2.2m to the roof sightline. Condition 2 of the original Planning Approval 222456 allows for variations; however, variations should not include such new issues as substantial HVAC, additional high mounted plant equipment and ducting, high screens and roof top maintenance pathways. It is a poor reflection on the Developer and the WBC that such fundamental design parameters were not included at all, and were overlooked in the original Planning Application 222456.

10. Visual and Acoustic Impact of Added Equipment not assessed:

The external HVAC units and ancillary ducting and piping now being proposed at the last minute, were not included in the original Planning Application 222456, or alluded to on any drawings. This

omission may have materially affected the original Planning Decision and Approval. The additional height, visual and noise impact have never been properly consulted on. A redesign should have been carried out to enable the ground floor siting of a proper acoustically

enclosed HVAC facility to the south of the buildings. Hopefully, it is not too late to do this. It is not fair to residents that this material change to the original Planning Application 222456 is being retrospectively accepted. In accordance with Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP3, the WBC are meant to ensure that no nuisance or disturbance is caused to the occupiers of neighbouring properties, and to safeguard the residual amenities of neighbouring properties.

#### Conclusion and Summary:

The revised Planning Application 252185 and NIA do not specifically or fully address the potential impact of the rooftop HVAC units and ancillary equipment on nearby residential properties, including the properties in Silverdale Road adjoining the development.

We request that more options are considered and that a new, properly executed NIA is carried out, namely addressing the following:

- Use valid and representative baseline measurements, that do not include current construction related noise.
- Location of measurements to be immediately behind Nos. 4, 6, 8 Silverdale Road.
- Propose and investigate alternative and more effective solutions, such as using quieter units, better quality acoustic screens/enclosures or relocating to the south side addressing the concerns of all the neighbours to the development, i.e. to properly include those in Silverdale Road.

Still of relevance, we refer to the Nexus Planning letter of 02 December 2022, supposedly addressing the issues raised by the public in their comments on the original Planning Application 222456. As the building work has progressed, it is now obvious that the developer/owner has in fact not addressed the issues raised by the public and local neighbours. In particular, (and just one example of this) the building height is not consistent with the general height of domestic development in the area. The comment that "the proposed building height will not dominate the surrounding area or surrounding properties" is sadly not the case. The development is not sensitive (as promised) to those of us who view and back onto it in Silverdale Road and adjacent roads.

The unsightly view of rooftop HVAC units and ancillary equipment is totally out of keeping with the surrounding residential area, and affects the view from our property at 8 Silverdale Road and all the neighbouring properties in Silverdale Road, and adjacent roads.

Our rear garden, our windows at the rear and side, which include our kitchen, dining room, family room, lounge room, 3 of our 4 bedrooms and ensuite, all look out on to this unsightly view. Similarly, this is also the case and the same for our neighbours at No's. 4, 6, 10 and 12 Silverdale Road, and for neighbours in Beverley Gardens.

We, therefore object to the latest Revised Planning Application 252185 for the reasons stated above, and all those raised in our

very  
detailed objections of 26 October 2025 and 04 November 2025.

We request that the latest Revised Planning Application 252185 be refused.

Ian Kirker, C.Eng., FICE  
Melissa Kirker