

PLANNING REF : 260577
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Ramose
: Range Road, Wokingham, Berkshire
: RG40 3NR
SUBMITTED BY : David Craddock
DATE SUBMITTED : 29/04/2026

COMMENTS:

Objection to planning application 260577

The Planning Application includes a number of material inaccuracies and omissions that I feel should be corrected in order for the application to be properly considered.

The Application does not include the Applicants full details, with their Forename not provided for some reason.

The Application states that the work or change of use had already started when in fact work only began after the Application was made on the 6th March 2026.

The Application states that the work or change of use had been completed by the 6th March 2026 which is incorrect, work on the site (including fencing, introduction of a gate and the bringing of a static caravan onto the site) took place after 6th March 2026. Whilst a small touring caravan was brought on site at some point in the night presumably to demonstrate that someone was "living" there this was just performative. The small touring caravan has since been moved off the site. It should also be noted that the development of the site as set out in the plans is still not complete.

The applicant has responded "No" to the question "Does the proposed development require any materials to be used externally?". This should be Yes given that the fencing and gate facing onto Range Road is significant in size and location.

Under Pedestrian and Vehicle Access, Roads and Rights of Way the applicant states that there is no new vehicular access proposed to or from the public highway. This is incorrect as the site did not previously have an access point to Range Road (access had previously been via Valois Farm). After the planning application was made on the 6th March 2026 the applicant made an access point onto Range Road (a Byway and hence public highway).

Under Vehicle Parking the applicant has said no to the question "Does the site have any existing vehicle/cycle parking spaces or will the proposed development add/remove any parking spaces?" The site did not have any vehicle parking prior to its development and the planned development includes a parking area. As such I would say that the statement is false as parking spaces are being added.

Under Trees and Hedges it states that there are no trees or hedges on the proposed development site. There were trees in the south west corner (now removed) and trees on the boundary with Range Road (some of which were removed to make way for the Access road). As such the statement that there are no trees on the proposed development site is false.

Under Assessment of Flood Risk it states that surface water will be disposed of via a Sustainable Drainage System and a Soakaway. There is nothing in the plans provided that set out where the Sustainable Drainage System and Soakaway are (to be) located or how they will function. The aspect of the site means that any surface water will flow from the site and onto Range Road. Range Road itself has no drainage which means that the surface water will flow down and either into Silverstock Bog which is a Local Wildlife Site or onto the Sandhurst Road which currently suffers from frequent flooding which is a safety risk for drivers. Contaminated water from the site could therefore pollute the Silverstock Bog. Increased run-off will increase the degradation of Range Road which is unmade.

Biodiversity - The decision to put this in as a retrospective planning application is a clear attempt to avoid the net gain requirement. The current plans will see most of the site covered in hardcore and as a result there will have been a significant reduction in biodiversity.

Foul Sewage - It is concerning that there are no plans for Foul Sewage. There are currently what appear to be a portable shower and toilet unit on site (note that these are not in the plans) and a cess pit. There is no mains sewage on the lane and so how the foul sewage is to be dealt with needs to be resolved. There is a risk of local watercourses being polluted by foul sewage and this risk must be eliminated.

I believe that the application does not do enough to satisfy CP1 as they do not sufficiently limit any adverse effects on water quality (including ground water), do not ensure the provision of adequate drainage and avoid increasing (and where possible reduce) risks of or from all forms of flooding (including from groundwater).

I do not believe there to be any utilities to the site. The water main runs along Nine Mile Ride and the electricity comes up Range Road from the Sandhurst Road but only as far as Valois Farm. The lack of utilities to the site and the lack of facilities for recycling of water and waste to help reduce per capita water consumption or on-site renewable energy features (as set out in CP1) would suggest that the site is not sustainable.

It should be noted that in order to access electricity and water the applicant has partaken in illegal activity. For electricity the applicant dug a cable into the private verge outside of Valois Farm and under their driveway in order to illegally tap into the electricity supply. For water it is understood that they have tapped into the water supply of Valois Farm. This is a flagrant disregard for the health and safety of neighbours and those using the lane.

Waste Collection - It is concerning that there are no plans for Waste Collection. If refuse bins were to be permanently positioned outside of the gates to the site this would not be in keeping with the

character and appearance of the area (designated after all as countryside).

In the section Residential/Dwelling Units the application states that proposal will include a gain, loss or change of use of residential units. At the time of the application this was the case but in the following section it says that there are two existing units.

Currently there is only one unit (static and touring caravan) on the site so either way the response is incorrect. The response is inconsistent and should be revised.

The Design and Access Statement includes a number of material inaccuracies:

"The land appears to have historically been part of a residential garden until subdivided and sold." This is factually incorrect. The land has never been part of a residential garden as can be seen in Tab 3 - Local Old Maps, it was woodland that was cleared for pasture. Up until recently it was used as pasture for grazing animals.

"The proposed development is compliant with the Wokingham Local Plan." The statement is incorrect as the site lies within designated countryside and is outside the settlement boundary, contrary to FNDP Policy AHD1, with no allocation for development in the 2010 Wokingham Local Plan, the 2024 draft Local Plan nor the FNDP.

"The development has a very limited effect on the areas landscape and is merely an 'infill' development in an existing residential area." The statement is incorrect as the site lies within designated countryside and is outside the settlement boundary, it is not therefore "infill". The site already has had a significant impact on the areas landscape. The development would introduce an urbanising effect into a rural setting, contributing to incremental encroachment into the countryside, contrary to FNDP Policy D2.

"The access is from Range Road onto Nine Mile Drive. The access is already in existence and is safe. The intensification in use through the development is minimal and should be no more than four vehicular movements a day. The access is safe."

The reference to the access being safe twice belies the fact that it is far from safe.

The application states that there should be no more than four vehicular movements per day. Given that there are typically 3 vehicles on site and the site is not fully occupied I would say that the applicant is understating the number of movements each day. The proposal would generate additional traffic on Range Road which is sub standard in respect of width (circa 2.8m wide) and construction (it is unpaved, uneven and muddy after rain). In March 2026 the Applicant took it on himself to widen the road between the site and Nine Mile Ride (the widening was done to allow access to Range Road for their caravans). The material removed was piled high onto the remaining verges creating an eyesore but also making the verges inaccessible for all but the most sure footed. Range Road is well used by dog walkers, runners and cyclists, additional traffic combined with the lack of refuge at

the sides of the road due to the illegal widening of the road mean that the risk of accidents to road users will be increased. As such the development is contrary to policies in Core Strategy Policy CP6 - Managing Travel Demand.

The proposal would generate additional traffic on the substandard road junction of Range Road with B3430 Nine Mile Ride which would adversely affect road safety and the flow of traffic. When exiting Range Road the junction has very poor visibility of traffic from the right. I would estimate visibility of less than 30 metres from the right which is significantly less than the minimum forward visibility that would be required for a new road junction on a 30mph road. This combined with a sloping aspect up onto the B3430 and high prevalence of speeding makes the junction high risk and unsuitable for use by caravans. As such the development is contrary to policies in Core Strategy Policy CP6 - Managing Travel Demand.

As noted above, Range Road is typically 2.8m wide (with the exception of where it was illegally widened) and has a number of mature trees on its verges. With a typical static caravan being 4m or more wide (in the document "Caravan Plans & Elevations" the caravan in the plan is 4 metres wide), I consider Range Road to be unsuitable for bringing such large units onto the site. This was demonstrated when the Applicant tried and failed to bring a static caravan onto the site. I am also concerned that further widening of Range Road would be required to get a static caravan of the size proposed onto Range Road from the B3430 and then from Range Road onto the site without further widening of Range Road, damage to the verges and removal of trees.

The stretch of Range Road between the B3430 and the site is single track and has no passing places. For Vehicles entering Range Road from the B3430 from the east there is limited visibility of any vehicles coming up Range Road to the junction until they are on Range Road. This means that one of the vehicles will need to reverse on a narrow and substandard road (possibly with a touring caravan). This increases the risk of accident for all road users. As such I consider the location is unsuitable for such large static caravans and is not in compliance with in Core Strategy Policy CP6 - Managing Travel Demand.

CP1 states that plans should "demonstrate how they support opportunities for reducing the need to travel, particularly by private car in line with CP6". By the increasing the risk to more vulnerable road users such as horse riders, cyclists and walkers, the current application will only increase the need for travel by private car rather than seeking to reduce it.

In the document "Aboricultural Impact Statement" it states that no trees were removed as part of the development. This is a false statement. Mature oak, holly and birch trees were removed to make access to the site (the "track"). These can be seen on Google Street View.

The statement also says "It is proposed that as a precaution that

matting is placed under the track to minimise any potential effect on the trees." I would question why this was not done when the "track" was first built and whether this will ever be done retrospectively?

It is also stated that " The possibility of compaction of the soil around the Oak Trees due to vehicular movement is minimal. The main area of roots of the trees are unaffected by the development." This is subjective and given that the verge which is likely to contain the roots of the trees was removed to make way for the "Track" and the laying of hardstanding I would say there was damage to the roots of the trees and continued use of the "Track" will result in further damage.

I note also that the Arboricultural Impact Statement was completed by the agent rather than a qualified Arboriculturalist. The statement was prepared after the trees on site had been chopped down to make the access "track". It is not clear whether the agent has even been to the site and if so, how could he make the assertions made.

I do not believe the proposed development is in compliance with Policy CC03 of the Core Strategy Policy as the felling of the trees to make access to the site was not in compliance with the need to protect and retain existing trees.

As noted above the development will change a piece of grazing land to an area predominantly covered by hardcore. This will result in a reduction in the biodiversity of the area. For the reasons above I do not believe the proposed development is in accordance with the Core Strategy Policy CP7: Biodiversity, CP3 (d) and MDD Policy TB23: Biodiversity and Development.

In the document "GCN" it is stated "The site was developed following a fingertip search of the land for Great Crested Newts." Development of the site took place after 6pm on the 6th March when it was already dark. I would suggest therefore that a finger tip search would be unlikely to identify anything given the level of light. I would also question whether a fingertip search is the best way of locating such animals. I note also that the GCN document was completed almost a month after the site was developed which could suggest Great Crested Newts were an afterthought, why complete a search for something you didn't know you had to complete a search for?

In the document "Tab - 12 - Redacted Contamination Screening. It states that the Proposed land use will be Domestic and Agricultural. With so much of the land now covered in hardcore I don't believe the land is still fit for Agriculture. It states that past land use was Domestic and Agricultural, this is not the case. The land was used for animal grazing and has never been for Domestic use. In response to the statement "What have the existing buildings onsite been used for?" the agent has responded with "Believed to be storage and accommodation". When the document was completed by the agent on 04 March 2026 there were no existing buildings onsite and as such this declaration was false at the time it was made. The only buildings on the site are those put there by the Applicant.

In the section Waste Disposal Activities they have said that there was evidence of demolition activities on site and that "There was evidence of previous development on the land. The land is heavily

disturbed." At the time of completing the document there was no rubble in the field and it had been used for animal grazing for many years. The land was not heavily disturbed until the 6th March 2026 when several tonnes of building rubble (e.g. concrete, bricks, tiles etc) were deposited on the site (to form hardstanding for the caravans) and the privately owned road outside of the site to allow better access to the site by the applicant. Whilst the site pre-development is highly unlikely to have been contaminated (given its previous use), the rubble brought onto the site by the applicant could be contaminated.

In the Document "Community Involvement Statement" it is stated by the agent that "The applicant purchased the land on the open market so it is assumed that no-one had any objection as to what use it was put, provided that it met the requirements of the Local Plan and Planning Policy." This response beggars belief for a number of reasons.

Firstly, I cannot see how it can be assumed that because it was purchased on the open market that no one could have objections. There are no mechanisms for the community to object when the land is purchased on the open market and as such this statement is untrue. The local community are not objecting to the applicant purchasing the land, they are objecting to its (illegal) change of use. Secondly, whilst the land had been on the open market it did not sell and was taken off the market. It was whilst off the market that the land was sold to the applicant and as such this is another false statement. In the second part of the statement says that no one would have objections "provided that it met the requirements of the Local Plan and Planning Policy." Again, if the applicant actually thought this and had any consideration for the impact on the community they would not have developed the site before planning approval had been received. There has been no "Community Involvement" and the applicants actions by developing the site after 5pm on a Friday and working with heavy machinery into Saturday morning, and continuing throughout the weekend. This caused disrupted sleep and a significant amount of distress for local residents. They also blocked Range Road on a number of occasions without notifying local residents such as when they completed widening works on Range Road (a private road). Such actions show their total disregard for local residents.

In the Document "Landscaping Details" it states "The access is through about a 10m gap between trees covered by tree preservation orders." Mature oak, holly and birch trees were removed to make access to the site. The tree removal would have been in breach of the TPO. The document labelled "Tab - 1 - Access" does not actually show where the site accesses Range Road. The access to the site is to the right of the picture and a picture of where the actual access has not been provided, possibly because the picture would show the trees that were removed in breach of the TPO.

In "Landscaping Details" it is also stated that "The site is well shielded from public views and should have a minimal effect on the character and appearance of the area." Whilst this is subjective I believe it to be fundamentally untrue. The site is visible from Range Road which is a public byway and from neighbouring properties. The development of gate and frontage is not sympathetic

to the area (designated as countryside). At night the site is floodlit which results in significant light pollution which is detrimental to wildlife and not in keeping with the sites classification as countryside. In order to provide access for caravans the applicant widened Range Road (a private road) and piled the removed spoil, stone and rubble onto the remaining verges. This has resulted in an eyesore that is not in keeping with the character of appearance of the area.

The sloping nature of the site means that it will be clearly visible from the properties on Nine Mile ride which will be looking down on the site.

The Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment of 2019 sets out some Landscape Guidelines which are not being met by this application. For example:

"Conserve the rural character between adjacent towns and village centres, to protect the individual identity of settlements, and retain their sense of physical and visual separation that helps define them. In particular protect the sensitive areas of open land remaining along the B3016 and the A321 between Finchampstead and Wokingham, retain blocks of woodland along the rides and rear of properties under threat from backland development." This development is in one of the "sensitive areas of open land remaining along the B3016 and the A321 between Finchampstead and Wokingham".

"Encourage retention of wooded edges and boundaries along roads, while retaining existing views to open countryside and wooded ridges. Minimise fencing and other boundary structures." The removal of trees to allow access to the site and the high gate and fencing that face Range Road are not consistent with the guidelines.

"Reduce and prevent further noise and light pollution through the sensitive siting of any new development, especially any proposed night-time lighting." The flood lighting on the site is not consistent with the guidelines.

There is no landscaping set out in the plan to offset the impact of the site on the character and appearance of the area. The proposal is out of keeping with the established character of the area and fails to enhance the street scene, contrary to FNDP Policy D3,1b, and Policy AHD3,3 which states that proposals should have appropriate landscaping to mitigate their impact on the surrounding landscape.

In the proposal the amount of land covered by hard standing is excessive given that space is only required for two Gypsy/Traveller pitches and vehicle parking. The amount of hard standing could accommodate a far larger number of caravans or vehicles. This excess of hardstanding will result in additional run-off onto Range Road, a loss of biodiversity and is out of character with other properties in the area.

The Policy TB10: Traveller Sites of the MDD is relevant and has not been met as the application is not able to prove that:

a) The site is located in the Borough's existing settlements or is adjacent to an existing settlement either with or adjacent to the Borough;

The site is designated as countryside and outside the settlement boundary in the 2010 Wokingham Local Plan, the 2024 draft local plan and the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan. The site is not adjacent to an existing settlement as there is a field between it and Nine Mile Ride. Approval of the application will encourage urban creep and further Gypsy/Traveller sites on Range Road ("the lane") (of which there is currently one also seeking planning permission 260439), significantly changing the character of the lane.

b) The site has access to a range of local services such as shops, health facilities including doctors, schools, and a range of amenities including play areas and other recreation facilities. The site is over 1km from local facilities which is not considered to be close and in effect the distances are unlikely to be covered other than by car. Range Road is an unmade road that is very muddy after periods of rain and this means that walking will be impractical and will only increase vehicle use on the lane.

c) Unacceptable impacts on the character and appearance of the surrounding landscape will be minimised through the sensitive and appropriate design of the scheme.

The application if viewed in conjunction with the Gypsy/Traveller site (application 260439) on the opposite side of Range Road from this proposal will have a significant impact on the character and appearance of the landscape. The local landscape is largely woodland with four houses set back from Range Road. The lack of detail in the plan about how the impact on the character and appearance of the area will be minimised mean that this requirement is not met. The y/Traveller pitch would result in a physical intrusion of development into this verdant woodland area. The presence of four caravans, two of which would be static, and ancillary outbuildings together with the trappings of residential paraphernalia would be substantially out of place in the current setting. From Range Road the change to the appearance of the area would be very noticeable and this would be significantly harmful to the present appearance of the area. This would be contrary to the provisions of Core Strategy Policy CP3(a).

If both applications for Gypsy/Traveller sites (this and the application opposite) were to be approved then they would equate to 50% of the current dwellings on Range Road. I consider this to be

disproportionate to the scale of the existing settlement and so contrary to the requirements of Core Strategy Policy CP2(d)(i)

Core Strategy Policy CP9 seeks to manage growth in the borough to achieve sustainable development and the strategy includes allowing development within the development limits of Finchampstead. The site lies outside of the defined village boundary of Finchampstead and in an area recognised as countryside.

Policy CP11 of the CS also applies in these circumstances and it advocates a general presumption against development except in a few exceptional cases which does not explicitly include gypsy and traveller sites. The requirements of CP11 are not met in any way by the proposal.

In conclusion, application should be rejected on account of the number of material, inaccuracies, errors and omissions.

The planned development should be rejected for a number of reasons which are:

The site is designated countryside and the requirements for development of such a site have not been met.

The site is not sustainable with no access to utilities and only accessible by a motor vehicle via a substandard road.

The development of the site will damage wildlife and not generate a net biodiversity gain.

There will be loss of amenity and increase in danger to the users of Range Road.