

PLANNING REF : 251862
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Eversley House
: 21 Reading Road, Finchampstead, Berkshire
: RG27 0RP
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Jon Jensen
DATE SUBMITTED : 07/10/2025

COMMENTS:

I am writing as a deeply concerned resident of Reading Road, Finchampstead, to register my strongest possible objection to Planning Application 251862 for a proposed change of use to provide Light Industrial (E(g)) and Internal/External Storage and Distribution (B8).

The proposal, which involves a company operating in waste removal, skip hire, and handling hazardous materials, is entirely incompatible with our area's established semi-rural character and quiet residential setting. If approved, it would cause irreparable harm to the local environment, the quality of life for all residents, and critically, to public safety on Reading Road. I urge the Council to refuse this application without delay.

Key Grounds for Objection

My objection is firmly grounded in material planning considerations under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and relevant local policies, including Wokingham Borough Council's Core Strategy, the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan, and the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan.

1. Critical Highway Safety and Traffic Impacts (The Danger on Reading Road)

This is my most significant and personal concern. Reading Road (A327) is already a dangerous, heavily congested road, often used by pedestrians, cyclists, and horse riders who rely on it for local travel.

- Increased Danger: The proposed development would introduce a significant and sustained increase in Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) traffic vehicles that are completely out of place in this residential, semi-rural pinch point. This will exacerbate congestion, accelerate road wear, and, most importantly, create an unacceptable risk of severe accidents.
- Personal Accident Experience: I must inform you that I have personally been involved in an accident on this very stretch of Reading Road. I know first-hand how unsuitable the current infrastructure is for accommodating increased large commercial vehicle movements, particularly given the site's access limitations to the rear of 80 Reading Road.
- Policy Conflict: The proposal contravenes Core Strategy Policy CP6 (Managing Travel Demand) and Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan Policy GA1 (Traffic Pollution and Health), and fails the test set out in NPPF paragraph 111, which requires refusal

if the highway effects are unacceptable.

2. Severe Residential Amenity and Health Impacts

The proposed activities are a direct threat to our community's well-being and peaceful environment.

- Unacceptable Pollution: The operation involving waste, skip hire, and hazardous materials like asbestos will generate chronic and unacceptable levels of noise, vibration, dust, and odours. This activity will severely degrade the quality of life for nearby residents.

- Policy Conflict: This directly violates Core Strategy Policy CP3 (General Principles for Development) and Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan Policy LPU/DH2 (Safeguarding Amenity), which strictly prohibit such significant disturbances. The pollution risks evident here align with NPPF paragraph 185 on mitigating noise and pollution.

3. Inappropriate Development in Designated Countryside

The site is located outside defined development limits, within designated countryside.

- Erosion of Character: The industrial and storage use would constitute inappropriate urbanisation of open, semi-rural land, irreversibly damaging its intrinsic character and risking the coalescence of settlements.

- Policy Conflict: This fundamentally conflicts with Core Strategy Policy CP11 (Countryside Protection), which limits non-essential development in rural areas, and Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan Policies IRS4 (Preserving Identity) and D2 (Rural Character). This is a material objection well-supported by previous Wokingham Council refusals in similar semi-rural locations.

4. Serious Environmental and Sustainability Risks

The nature of the proposed business carries significant environmental hazards without adequate safeguards.

- Contamination: Waste storage and distribution, particularly of hazardous materials, pose a clear and present risk of soil contamination, water runoff pollution, and air quality degradation.

- Sustainability: The proposal fails Core Strategy Policy CP7 (Biodiversity), which demands net gains, and conflicts with local employment policy by directing intensive industrial use to an isolated, unsustainable countryside location, contrary to NPPF paragraph 105.

Summary

This application represents an inappropriate and unacceptable development that conflicts with a multitude of core local and national planning policies, most critically on the grounds of public safety and residential amenity. The risk to life and limb on Reading Road, coupled with the irreversible harm to our environment and quality of life, provides a compelling case for refusal.

I strongly recommend the Council refuse this application. I request immediate acknowledgment of this objection and notification of any future amendments, decisions, or presentation of the application to the planning committee.