

14 APR 2026

12/04/2026

Alexis Fraatz,
299a Nine Mile Ride
Finchampstead
RG403NL

Email:

Mob:

H:

Objections to Planning Application 260439: Land to rear of 297 to 303 NMR, RG40 3NR

I strongly object to this planning application and would ask that WBC refuse this application.

Harm to the Countryside and Ecology

Range Road is part of the "Finchampstead Forested and Settled Sands" area and has Valued Landscape status under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Having M1 primary area classification, Range Road is subject to strict planning constraints. The proposed site lies within designated Countryside, 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 listed for development in any of the aforementioned plans.

Range Road is a key Green Gap between the historic Rides in the forests such as Nine Mile Ride and Sandhurst Road. Development of this site would erode this Green Gap (as defined in the FNDP) and would completely change the rural, wooded character of the area.

The rural, undeveloped isolation of Range Road allows it to remain a diverse, ecologically important area, used mainly by walkers for leisure. Stepping into Range Road from either the busy Sandhurst Road or NMR is akin to stepping into a different world., serene and verdant, with an abundance of wildlife and birds who thrive in their undisturbed habitat.

The proposal (caravans, mobile homes, hard standings, parking) would have an urbanising effect on the countryside, encouraging urban creep and more traveller sites. It would be totally incongruous, a stark intrusion into the rural landscape of Range Road which, hitherto, has only had five long-established dwellings which blend harmoniously into the countryside, and which are compatible with the surrounding area.

Highway Safety Concerns

Planning Application 260439 directly contravenes policy CP6 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy. This states that any development must enhance road safety and avoid causing highway or traffic related environmental concerns.

Additional traffic including heavy wide caravans would have an adverse impact on Road Safety causing risk to life.

Section 66(1) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 defines a byway open to all traffic (BOAT) as a highway over which the public have a right of way for vehicular and all other kinds of traffic, but which is used by the public mainly for the purpose for which footpaths and bridleways are so used. Additional traffic and use of caravans is contrary to the accepted use of this Byway (BOAT).

Range Road is used mainly by walkers (of which I am one) who enjoy the unspoilt, rural character. I am concerned about any increase in traffic because there are no passing places, no separation of pedestrians and vehicular access when pedestrians must clamber onto verges for safety to allow vehicles to pass (verges which have been destroyed by the recent, illegal scraping of Range Road to facilitate wide caravan access).

Access in and out of Sandhurst Road and Nine Mile Ride is hazardous and substandard with severe visibility issues.

The incline and sightlines for exiting Range Road onto NMR makes it very difficult to see what is coming from the right.

Equally, turning from NMR into Range Road from NMR, it is difficult to see a vehicle coming up Range Road, necessitating reversing onto busy NMR, as it would be impossible for the vehicle on RR to reverse as there are no passing places. An increase in traffic will mean a higher chance of vehicles coming from opposite directions and meeting, with adverse consequences for drivers and pedestrians.

Evidence of the substandard access from RR onto NMR is further substantiated by the rejection in 2006 of stables and hardstanding on the site of the current application 260439.

This Application (F/2006/8196) was rejected on the grounds of how dangerous it would be for vehicles to pull out onto NMR. Considering the increase in volume of traffic in the last 20 years since that rejection, there is all the more reason to reject planning application 260439 now.

Character and Appearance of Location

The applicant felled many trees and cleared the site (October 2025, when he was questioned under caution) causing a notably detrimental effect on habitat for wildlife and birds. Site development will further destroy habitat.

The planning application's assertion that there would only be "glimpses" of the site is totally false. It would be clearly visible from Range Road and from the NMR properties which are directly adjacent to it.

There is no drainage, sewerage or mains utilities to the site. The addition of hard standing will cause great harm by changing the drainage properties of the area. Vehicle movements and electric lights will change the rural, wooded character.

NOTE

A gypsy/traveller who has moved illegally on 12th March 26 onto land opposite the proposed site 260439 illuminates a vast area around his caravan throughout the night, causing havoc/chaos for wildlife and birds accustomed hitherto to total darkness at night in Range Road. This totally disrespects the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

Sustainability – Access to Services and Facilities

The proposed site is unsustainable. It is accessed via a Byway with no paved surface. There are no local services (shops, schools, healthcare, etc) within walking distance or accessible by public transport. Future occupants would therefore rely heavily on private cars, adding traffic to busy highways. This conflicts with planning policies aiming for sustainable development.

Conclusion

Range Road is a key Green Gap which must be retained as it is to maintain the rural character of Finchampstead.

Proposal 260439 conflicts with local planning policies in the Wokingham borough plans that: -

- Restrict development in the countryside
- Protect rural character
- Control where Gypsy/Travellers sites should go

National Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) states that such developments should not dominate the nearest settled community.

17% of Gypsy/Traveller pitches in the Borough are in Finchampstead, while Finchampstead only accounts to 10% of the land mass of the Borough. Any further Gypsy/Traveller pitches in Finchampstead would be disproportionate to the scale of existing settlement in Finchampstead.

There are other sites in the Borough which are far more suitable for Gypsy/Traveller developments. The emerging Local Plan update contains provisions for additional Gypsy/Traveller pitches, notably at High Barn Farm, Barkham,

The proposal would harm the landscape and appearance of the area, neither maintaining nor enhancing the quality of the environment.

The proposal would not be in a suitable location for the development, in respect of the spatial Strategy for the area.

The proposal would cause serious concerns to highway safety, both to vehicles and pedestrians.

The proposal is in a poor location for sustainability, conflicting with planning policies aiming for sustainable development.

I would draw your attention to a recent appeal decision regarding an application for a Gypsy/Traveller site at Warren Lane, Finchampstead (APP/X0360/W/25/3364902). The inspector, whilst not disputing the need for such sites, nonetheless rejected the application.

I believe there are even stronger grounds to reject the Range Road application 260439, which I respectfully ask you to do.

Yours faithfully,

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of Alexis Fraatz.

Alexis Fraatz

~