

PLANNING REF : 241933
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 1 Shute End
: Wokingham
: RG40 11BH
SUBMITTED BY : Councillor Marc Brunel-Walker
DATE SUBMITTED : 05/06/2026

COMMENTS:

Dear Case Officer,

I am writing in my capacity as the elected Borough Councillor for Wokingham Without to lodge a formal objection to hybrid planning application 241933.

While I recognize that the previous council leadership established the principle of development by inserting this site into the emerging Local Plan Update, I must strongly object to the current highway

design, internal layout, flawed traffic impact assumptions, and inadequate infrastructure mitigation. As currently configured, this scheme will inflict severe long-term impacts on the local and strategic highways network. It stands in direct conflict with Wokingham Core Strategy Policy CP3, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) guidelines, and critical safeguards detailed within our

emerging Local Plan Update (LPU).

My objection is focused strictly on the following planning, highways, and infrastructure failures:

1. Failure to Account for Strategic Rat-Running via the SWDR, Waterloo Road, and Peacock Lane

The Transport Assessment accompanying this application operates on a flawed micro-simulation model that completely ignores real-world driver behavior. By introducing the South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR), the applicant is inadvertently creating a major strategic bypass.

Commuters seeking to access the A329(M) from the south will actively use the SWDR and Peacock Lane as a high-speed "cut-through" to

entirely avoid the heavily congested London Road and the Coppid Beech Junction. Furthermore, the model fails to address the severe localized impact of traffic flowing freely from the existing Montague Park

development via Waterloo Road directly through to Peacock Lane. The infrastructure of Peacock Lane, Waterloo Road, and the surrounding rural junctions is fundamentally incapable of absorbing this high-volume strategic traffic. This directly violates emerging Policy TRA01 (Sustainable Transport) and TRA03, which demand that new

development networks do not create severe adverse impacts on the capacity and safety of the surrounding network.

2. Woefully Inadequate Mitigation on Vigar Way

The proposed mitigation measures for Vigar Way are woefully inadequate. Modelled on flawed and out-of-date traffic data, the applicant's current design will have no material impact on relieving the immense pressure this development will exert.

Crucially, the current design entirely omits traffic light signalization on Vigar Way where it accesses the A329(M) corridor. Without mandatory traffic lights at this critical junction, the

surge of new vehicular movements generated by this development will cause immediate, severe tailbacks and introduce unacceptable highway safety risks at a major strategic intersection.

3. Poorly Designed Internal Through-Roads and Market Square Bottleneck

The design of the main spinal route running through the development raises significant highway safety and capacity concerns. The current internal layout funnels multiple roads and conflicting movements together into a new "market square" junction within the development. Funnelling modern, high-volume distributor traffic into a tightly constrained multi-road convergence will inevitably create severe traffic bottlenecks. Rather than facilitating free-flowing movement, this design will lead to significant local congestion and localized air pollution, conflicting directly with emerging Policy DH1 (Design Principles) of the LPU.

4. Unjustified Closure of Easthampstead Road, Democratic Deficit, and a Viable Alternative

The application includes the highly controversial proposal to permanently close off sections of Easthampstead Road to through-traffic, converting a critical, historic vehicle artery into a cul-de-sac.

Severe Displacement: This closure will cut off a vital historic connection for the residents of Wokingham Without, forcing thousands of weekly vehicle movements onto alternative, already-saturated routes.

Lack of Public Mandate: There is absolutely zero public support for this closure. To date, over 4,000 local residents have signed a petition explicitly demanding that this junction be improved and kept open, rather than closed.

The Infrastructure Solution: The correct planning solution is to keep Easthampstead Road fully open and properly upgrade the junction. This can be achieved safely by utilizing a small portion of the SANG

(Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace) land located directly to the south of the site to deliver either a fully signalized junction or a new roundabout. To ensure this is economically viable, and in line with the flexible delivery aims of emerging Policy SS4 (South Wokingham SDL), the Council should explore allowing the developers a minor, sensitive increase in housing density on the remaining parcels to fully fund these essential junction improvements.

5. Reliance on an Obsolete and Statistically Flawed Strategic Traffic Model

The Transport Assessment submitted by the applicant is fundamentally compromised because it relies on an obsolete strategic traffic model that is now considerably out of date. Consequently, it entirely fails to account for the massive cumulative impact of recent, major cross-boundary and local developments.

Before this application can be safely determined under emerging Policy TRA03, the strategic traffic model must be completely recommissioned to evaluate the following cumulative pressures:

The Expanded Scale of Buckler's Park (Crowthorne): The model fails to incorporate the updated volume of vehicle movements originating from the ongoing phases of the Buckler's Park development just over the boundary in Bracknell Forest.

The Impact of Beaufort Park (Nine Mile Ride): The traffic model

completely ignores the approved allocation and imminent delivery of 226 homes at Beaufort Park, which will dump massive peak-hour loads directly onto the Nine Mile Ride/Old Wokingham Road junctions.

The Traffic Pull of the Proposed Grays Farm Sports Hub: Crucially, the model completely omits the heavy traffic patterns that will be generated by the new proposed Grays Farm Sports Hub off Heathlands Road, which will attract massive surges of evening and weekend traffic cutting directly through Wokingham Without.

6. Deficiencies in Flooding, Drainage, Utilities, and Sewage Provision

Beyond the profound highway's failures, I am completely unconvinced that the proposed flooding, surface water drainage, utilities, and sewage management plans are sufficient to mitigate the sheer scale of this development.

The local infrastructure in Wokingham Without is already under severe strain. The applicant has failed to demonstrate a robust, proofed Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) or confirm that the foul water network has the capacity to absorb this massive increase without increasing local flood risk or causing utility failures. This fails to satisfy Core Strategy Policy CP1 and emerging Policy CC02 (Managing Flood Risk).

Conditional Safeguards (If approved)

Should the Planning Committee be minded approving this application despite these severe objections, it is absolutely vital that robust, mandatory, and enforceable planning conditions and Section 106 triggers are attached to the consent.

Emerging Policy HC2 (Community Infrastructure and Mitigating Impact) explicitly dictates that infrastructure must be provided in tandem with, or ahead of, the completion of new homes. I request the following strict, staged-delivery triggers:

Commercial & Retail Facilities: A strict Grampian-style condition must be imposed dictating that the proposed new shops and local centre must be fully constructed, fit for occupation, and opened to the public prior to the completion or occupation of, for example, the 300th dwelling, preventing a violation of emerging Policy SS4's master planning requirements.

Education & Community Hubs: Similar strictly enforceable, phased triggers must be hardcoded into the legal agreement for the delivery of schools and other vital community spaces, preventing the developer from expanding housing numbers until the structural foundations of our community are fully built.

Mitigation Funding for the Pinewood Centre: Given the massive influx of new residents this development will bring directly to the borders of Wokingham Without, a proportional and significant allocation of Developer Contributions (via Section 106 or CIL) must be legally ringfenced for infrastructure improvements at the Pinewood Centre under the provisions of emerging Policy HC2. This funding must specifically target, but not be limited to, upgrading and improving the heavily used entry and exit access roads to ensure they can safely handle the increased local capacity.

Conclusion and Request for Committee Determination

NPPF guidelines state that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if the residual cumulative impacts on

the road network are severe. The combination of unmodeled rat-running via Peacock Lane and Waterloo Road, woefully inadequate design on Vigar Way, the democratic rejection of the Easthampstead Road closure, obsolete traffic modelling, and unproven drainage/sewage capacity guarantees that the impact of this development will be severe and permanent.

As the local Ward Member, I formally request that:
Given the size and scale of this application that it be brought before the Planning Committee for full public determination. The applicant be directed to completely revise the internal highway layout to preserve the through-route functionality of Easthampstead Road as demanded by 4,000 residents, utilizing the southern SANG land to deliver a safe junction or roundabout.
The applicant be required to introduce full traffic light signalization at the Vigar Way access to the A329(M).
An independent, comprehensive strategic traffic model be commissioned to evaluate the true cumulative pull-factor of the network, fully incorporating the impacts of Buckler's Park, Beaufort Park, Montague Park/Waterloo Road, and the Grays Farm Sports Hub.
If approved, mandatory, non-negotiable staged conditions be attached to enforce the delivery of shops and schools in line with emerging Policy HC2, alongside a clear s106 allocation for the Pinewood Centre

That the Developer MUST establish a formal community forum following the very successful forum created for Bucklers Park.

Yours sincerely,
Councillor Marc Brunel-Walker