

PLANNING REF : 261722
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Rosecroft
: 26 Hartley Court Road, Three Mile Cross, Reading, Berkshire
: RG7 1NS
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Hamid Ragheb
DATE SUBMITTED : 06/08/2026

COMMENTS:

Planning application 261722 - Land at Leafields, Great Lea, Wokingham, RG7 1NP

I wish to object to this application for the change of use of agricultural land to a mixed agricultural and residential Gypsy and Traveller pitch, including two static caravans, a dayroom, parking, access, landscaping and associated works.

My objection relates solely to the planning merits of the proposed development and not to the identity or background of the intended occupants.

1. Location within the AWE Burghfield Detailed Emergency Planning Zone

The site lies within the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone associated with AWE Burghfield. Residential development at this location would introduce additional permanent occupants and vehicles into an area where emergency evacuation, sheltering and access arrangements are already significant planning considerations.

The Council should obtain and give substantial weight to the formal views of the Office for Nuclear Regulation, AWE and the relevant emergency-planning authorities. The application should not be approved unless it has been clearly demonstrated that the proposed residential use can be safely accommodated within the relevant emergency arrangements and would not adversely affect public safety or emergency response.

2. Flooding and drainage

The site and adjoining land have experienced flooding and water ingress. I understand that water has previously passed beneath the boundary fence of a neighbouring property.

Historic ponds and natural drainage features also appear to have been filled or altered when the land was cleared and levelled. These changes may have affected the way surface water is stored and discharged, potentially increasing runoff onto neighbouring land and the highway.

The proposed caravans, dayroom, parking areas, access and additional hardstanding could further reduce natural infiltration.

A robust site-specific flood-risk and drainage assessment should therefore address:

all recorded historic flooding, including surface-water and groundwater flooding;

the effect of any previous filling or alteration of ponds and drainage features;

runoff from the proposed hardstanding, access, roofs and parking areas;

safe access and evacuation during a flood event;

whether the proposal would increase flood risk to neighbouring properties or elsewhere.

Permission should not be granted unless the Council is satisfied, on reliable evidence, that the development would remain safe for its lifetime and would not increase flood risk elsewhere.

3. Highway and pedestrian safety

The proposed access is close to a bend on a narrow rural road.

Visibility, vehicle speeds and the ability of vehicles to enter and

leave safely therefore require careful examination.

The proposal may generate movements by cars, delivery vehicles, refuse vehicles, emergency vehicles and vehicles towing caravans. The application should demonstrate adequate visibility splays, turning space and safe access without vehicles reversing onto or obstructing the highway.

I am also concerned that the proposed pedestrian access would connect to a road with no continuous pavement or other safe pedestrian route. The absence of safe walking access would increase dependency on vehicles and expose pedestrians to avoidable danger.

4. Unsustainable and inappropriate rural location

The application would introduce a permanent residential use, two static caravans, a dayroom, parking and associated infrastructure onto agricultural land outside an established settlement.

The Council should assess whether the development is suitably located in relation to shops, schools, medical facilities, public transport and other essential services. The absence of safe pedestrian routes and the likely reliance on private vehicles indicate that the location may not be environmentally or socially sustainable.

The combined physical development would also urbanise the site and alter its open rural character.

5. Landscape, ecology and previous alteration of the land

The land was reportedly cleared, levelled and significantly altered in or around July 2023, including the removal of established vegetation and changes to historic ponds or wet areas.

The Council should establish the lawful baseline condition of the site and assess whether any previous clearance, earthworks, infilling or drainage alterations require enforcement action, ecological remediation or further investigation.

An up-to-date ecological appraisal should examine habitats, protected species, nesting birds, ponds, drainage features and the cumulative effects of the earlier land clearance together with the proposed development.

Landscaping proposed as part of the current application should not be treated as a substitute for properly assessing any habitat previously removed.

6. Residential amenity

The caravans, dayroom, external lighting, parking and regular vehicle movements could cause noise, light spill, overlooking and disturbance to neighbouring occupiers in what is presently a rural environment. The Council should require precise details of external lighting, boundary treatment, site levels, drainage, waste storage, vehicle parking and the positioning and height of all structures before determining the application.

7. Previous refusal and cumulative planning history

The previous application for residential development on this land, reference 241057, was refused.

Although the current proposal differs in scale and type, the underlying site constraints, including emergency planning, flooding, highway safety, landscape impact and ecological concerns, remain relevant.

The fact that the present proposal covers a smaller part of the land does not remove those constraints.

The Council should assess the cumulative planning implications of the proposal together with any reasonably foreseeable development of the remaining land. Any permission should be limited clearly to the

development described in the application.

Conclusion

For the reasons set out above, I respectfully request that planning application 261722 be refused.

At the very least, the application should not be determined until the Council has obtained satisfactory responses from the Office for Nuclear Regulation and emergency planners, the highway authority, the Lead Local Flood Authority, drainage officers and ecological officers, together with a full assessment of the previous physical alterations to the site.

I also request that the application be referred to the Planning Committee rather than determined solely under delegated powers, and that neighbouring residents be informed of any substantial amended plans or additional technical documents.