

PLANNING REF : 252498
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Kielder
: Mole Road Mole Road, Sindlesham, Berkshire
: RG41 5DJ
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Simon Foster
DATE SUBMITTED : 06/01/2026

COMMENTS:

Formal Objection to the Proposed Allocation of Gypsy and Traveller Pitches at the Loddon Development (RG41 5PT)

I wish to formally object to the proposed allocation of 20 Gypsy and Traveller pitches within the Loddon development on the following planning grounds.

1. Inadequate Consultation and Lack of Transparency

Local residents were not properly consulted on the inclusion of 20 Gypsy and Traveller pitches, despite evidence suggesting that this element formed part of the scheme from an early stage with the following points:

- The pitches were not identified on the published development plans available on the developer's website.
- They were not clearly presented or highlighted during the public consultation period, nor adequately explained in consultation materials distributed to residents.
- The proposal only became apparent in November, after the effective conclusion of consultation opportunities.
- This lack of transparency has prevented meaningful public engagement and significantly undermines confidence in the integrity and robustness of the planning process.

2. Unsuitable and Unsafe Access Arrangements

The proposed access via Betty Grove Lane is fundamentally unsuitable to serve the development:

- Betty Grove Lane is a narrow, single-lane road with limited width, constrained visibility, and inadequate drainage.
- The lane does not form part of the Loddon development, meaning the developer does not have full control over its upgrade, maintenance, or long-term management.
- No robust evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the lane can safely accommodate the additional vehicle movements associated with 20 pitches.
- These shortcomings raise serious concerns regarding highway safety, sustainability, and compliance with adopted access and design standards.

3. Absence of a Purpose-Built Access Road

The proposal fails to provide:

- A dedicated access road constructed to adoptable standards;
- Appropriate drainage and surface-water management;
- Safe and suitable pedestrian access.
- This contrasts starkly with the infrastructure provided for the

main housing development and results in an unbalanced and poorly planned layout that is not justified by sound planning principles.

4. Inappropriate Siting and Failure to Promote Integration

The proposed pitches are located at a considerable distance from the main body of the new housing development and immediately adjacent to the existing residential area at Wheatsheaf Close. This location:

- Physically separates the pitches from the wider development;
- Restricts access to shared amenities and infrastructure.
- Fails to promote integration or inclusive placemaking, contrary to the objectives of national planning policy.
- The application does not adequately justify why the pitches cannot be located within the main development area, where access, infrastructure, and opportunities for integration could be designed in from the outset.

5. Failure to Assess Reasonable Alternative Sites

- There is no published evidence demonstrating that alternative, potentially more suitable locations have been properly assessed, including:
 - Sites within the main development where access roads and infrastructure could be delivered as part of the wider scheme;
 - Other land parcels, such as the orchard and allotment area, which may offer safer access and improved opportunities for integration.
 - The absence of a transparent and comprehensive site-selection assessment significantly undermines the soundness of the proposal.

6. Over-Concentration into one small area

- There are several existing Gypsy and Traveller sites within the surrounding area, including sites in close proximity to Wheatsheaf Close and Mole Road.
- Both national and local planning policy require decision-makers to avoid the over-concentration of Traveller sites and to assess cumulative impacts. In this case:
 - No clear cumulative impact assessment has been provided;
 - The proposal does not demonstrate how it contributes to balanced and sustainable communities;
 - The absence of an evidence-based analysis makes it impossible to conclude that the scale of provision in this locality is appropriate.
 - Without a transparent cumulative impact assessment, the proposal cannot be considered compliant with planning policy.

Conclusion

For the reasons set out above, including inadequate consultation, unsuitable access arrangements, inappropriate siting, lack of integration, absence of alternative site analysis, insufficient detail, and failure to assess cumulative impacts the proposed allocation of Gypsy and Traveller pitches is unsound in its current form.

At a minimum, the proposal should be:

- Subject to a full and transparent consultation process;
- Supported by safe, purpose-built access infrastructure;
- Located in a manner that promotes genuine integration within the wider development;
- Accompanied by robust assessments of alternative sites and cumulative impacts.