

PLANNING REF : 251486
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 378 Barkham Road
: Wokingham, Berkshire
: RG41 4DL
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Paul Robinson
DATE SUBMITTED : 24/07/2025

COMMENTS:

Objection to Planning Application Ref: 251486 - Land Adjacent to Edney's Hill

I write to object to the above planning application, which proposes the construction of 16 new dwellings with vehicle access via Edney's Hill.

In March 2022, I submitted a planning application (Ref: 220991) seeking permission to construct a garage at the rear of my property at 378 Barkham Road, with occasional vehicular access from Edney's Hill. Planning officers advised that the application would be refused on highways grounds, citing the narrow width, limited visibility, and lack of footways on Edney's Hill as making any new access unsafe.

It is therefore concerning and inconsistent that a significantly larger development comprising 16 properties and the associated daily vehicle movements is now being proposed with access via the same stretch of Edney's Hill. If occasional access for a single household was deemed unacceptable, the proposed scale of use in this new application should be considered wholly inappropriate. This discrepancy raises serious questions about consistency in the planning process and the application of highways safety policy. In addition to this inconsistency, I wish to also object on the following grounds:

Inadequate Parking Provision

The application proposes just one parking space per dwelling, with no clear provision for visitors. This is insufficient, especially given modern patterns of car ownership. The absence of visitor parking is likely to lead to informal and potentially unsafe on-street parking on Edney's Hill or neighbouring roads.

Incompatibility with Local Character

The proposal includes flats, which are not in keeping with the surrounding housing stock, which predominantly comprises detached and semi-detached family homes. The density, scale, and design of the development are not in harmony with the character of the area.

Wildlife Disruption

From my own property, I have regularly observed owls flying across the open space included in the proposed development and into my garden. While this is an informal observation rather than a formal ecological survey, it suggests that the site may form part of a regular wildlife route or habitat. Development here could disrupt local biodiversity and should be assessed accordingly.

Not Included in the Local Plan

The application site is not identified for development in Wokingham Borough Council's Local Plan. Allowing housing on unallocated land undermines the Council's strategic approach to development and risks encouraging speculative applications in other unsuitable locations.

Local Infrastructure Capacity

There is already pressure on local infrastructure, including schools, GP services, and transport networks. This development would place additional demands on services without any clear provision for mitigating these impacts.

This application raises several planning concerns, most notably the inconsistency with my own previously refused application for a garage with occasional access via Edney's Hill. If such limited use was considered unsafe, a development of 16 dwellings generating multiple vehicle movements daily should be considered wholly unacceptable on the same grounds. In addition, the scheme is out of keeping with the area, underprovides parking, risks wildlife disruption, and does not align with the borough's adopted planning strategy.

I therefore urge Wokingham Borough Council to refuse this application.