

PLANNING REF : 252498
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Wheatsheaf Close
: Wokingham, Berkshire
: RG415PT
SUBMITTED BY : Mr J McKinnon
DATE SUBMITTED : 23/01/2026

COMMENTS:

I submitted this on the 16th January and it has not appeared on the list of comments so am resubmitting this again.

I object to this development for a number of reasons. Whilst the need for GRT sites across the borough are clear I have to make objections to the current proposed location due to the reasons below:

1. Lack of Meaningful Consultation

There has been a significant lack of transparency and clear consultation regarding the specific location of the GRT site. Residents have not been afforded a fair opportunity to engage with the site-selection process, undermining the procedural integrity of the application. Even the leaflet provided by WBC to comment on this planning application even failed to mention this site was included, and to the eye of residents not versed in planning rules, this could easily be missed under this consultation process.

2. Improper Commercial Motivation

It has been indicated by representatives of the University of Reading in a recent meeting that the site's placement seemed to be determined by commercial interests, which appears to be avoiding impacting the property values of the new development. Planning decisions should be based on sustainable development and land-use compatibility, not the protection of the applicant's profit margins at the expense of existing residents.

3. Failure of Social Integration

The proposal fails to meet the requirements of various planning Policy. With multiple pitches already situated within a one-kilometer radius (e.g Mole road and Belvedere park) the over-concentration of sites in this specific area prevents integration throughout the WBC area and creates an imbalance that contradicts the goal of fostering a diverse community.

4. Unsuitable Access and Highway Safety

The proposed access road is entirely inadequate for the intended use.

Arboricultural Impact: The road is flanked by trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). As these trees sit outside the development boundary, the applicant lacks the authority to perform necessary road widening or mitigation, risking unlawful damage to protected natural assets.

Equestrian Safety: The road is a regular route for horses. The significant increase in heavy traffic, specifically wide caravan-style vehicles on a single-track road poses a severe safety risk. There is insufficient provision for safe passing or reversing maneuvers when encountering horses.

5. Non-Compliance with WBC Housing Topic Paper

The WBC Topic Paper "Housing: Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation" mandates that pitches be part of a "mixed community." This application fails this test by: Placing the site in a remote corner, isolated from the new district centre and local amenities and failing to integrate the pitches within the primary residential fabric of the development. By deliberately segregating the site, the applicant is in direct conflict with the Local Plan's vision for inclusive, mixed-use communities.

6. Lack of Transparency in Site Allocation

This specific location was not identified in Table 3 (Sites promoted for Gypsy and Traveller use) of the WBC Topic Paper. Its sudden inclusion outside of the established site-promotion framework demonstrates a lack of transparency and disregards the evidence-based work previously completed by the Council.

7. Established Planning Precedent

A clear precedent for refusal exists in the immediate vicinity. Planning application 171063 (located only meters away) was rejected in 2017, which only requested 3 pitches. The decision notice stated the proposal was "inappropriate development" that failed to contribute positively to the character of the area, citing NPPF, Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP3, and MDD Local Plan Policies TB06 and TB21. To ensure consistency and fairness in the planning process, the same policy-based restrictions must be applied to this proposal.