

PLANNING REF : 251621
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 22 Park Avenue
: Wokingham
: RG40 2AJ
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Duncan Gillingwater
DATE SUBMITTED : 01/09/2025

COMMENTS:

I am writing as a local resident to formally object to the proposed development referenced above. I believe the scheme remains materially harmful to the character, amenity, and infrastructure of the surrounding area. My objections are outlined below.

1. Scale, Height, and Massing

Objection: The building is visually dominant, overbearing, and incongruent with adjacent properties in Station Road, Wellington Road, and Park Road. The scheme breaches the ridge-line principle and fails to respect the prevailing roof heights and street rhythm. The "gateway site" justification does not apply to the Park Road frontage, which demands contextual sensitivity to the surrounding two-storey Victorian/Edwardian houses rather than the bulk and height proposed. While the application describes a "stepped massing" the third storey and roof form still exceed the contextual scale of adjacent properties.

2. Parking Pressure and Infrastructure Strain

Objection: It is wholly unrealistic to expect the development to be car free now or in the future. Existing affordable and key worker housing in the town centre at Norton Road and Peach Place recognises the need for parking by advertising one parking space per residence despite being within walking distance of all the same local transport links as the proposed development.

No enforceable tenancy clauses are proposed for the new development to prevent car usage despite the units being potentially offered to key workers and those on the housing register who may have access to a vehicle for work purposes. The application references car-share schemes or hiring cars which implies a requirement for parking spaces to park hired or shared vehicles. Overspill parking onto the private roads Park Road and Park Avenue is inevitable and unacceptable. It places additional maintenance costs on the residents, compromises pedestrian safety, obstructs access for emergency and delivery vehicles, and erodes the quiet residential character of these privately managed roads.

3. Highway and Pedestrian Safety

Objection: A number of parents with young children walk up and down Park Road and Park Avenue each day (including me and my son). The lack of turning space, drop-off space and increased delivery traffic pose risks to pedestrians and road users and delivery drivers will likely race up these private roads to find a turning spot thus increasing the likelihood of accidents. The inevitable traffic generated will also cause additional wear and tear on the road

surface which is paid-for by the residents. The application also lacks clarity on the adoption of the entrance to Park Road undermining the potential enforcement of the proposed double yellow lines.

4. Loss of Green Space and ecological impact

Objection: The scheme fails to meet the 10% biodiversity uplift required under national guidance. The site currently provides a dense, self sown area of trees and vegetation in excess of 300 sqm. The removal of vegetation and trees, including a 24M high TPO-protected specimen with a useful life expectancy of 40+ years, represents irreversible ecological harm, the loss of a natural acoustic buffer, and a significant reduction of amenity particularly when viewed from Park Road.

5. Removal of tree covered by TPO

Objection: No alternative development plans appear to have been considered by the council to retain the tree covered by the TPO rather than remove it, suggesting the harm caused by tree removal was not meaningfully considered or justified. The elevations for Park Road are inconsistent with the site plan and mislead the public by showing 2 trees where the disabled parking bays are planned and a fifth tree in the middle of the access road to the shared service yard which again show a lack of consideration.

6. Procedural and Consultation Concerns

Objection: No public notice has been posted on or near the site regarding the application. I walk past the site daily and was unaware of the application until I heard through word of mouth. I have lived in Park Avenue for two and a half years but do not recall being consulted or notified by the council about this development.

7. Disabled Parking Safety and Non Compliance

Objection: The disabled parking bays proposed appear to be non-compliant with national accessibility standards. At only 6.0 metres in length, they do not allow safe rear access for wheelchair users, potentially forcing individuals to stand in the road while unloading. Additionally, the elevation drawings show trees located within the bay footprint which is inconsistent with the site plan and misleading to the viewer. The proposed entrance route from the disabled parking bays is shown as stairs, rendering the access unsuitable for wheelchair users. This directly contradicts the scheme's stated purpose of supporting vulnerable adults. The proposal must provide level or ramped access from disabled bays to the entrance without obstruction.

Conclusion

The cumulative impact of these objections demonstrates that the proposal remains in conflict with Wokingham Borough Council's planning policies and guidance. I respectfully urge the Council to refuse this application and protect the integrity of Park Road and its surrounding community.