

PLANNING REF : 260774
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Northcote
: Swallowfield Street, Swallowfield, Reading
: RG7 1QX
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Graham Stanley
DATE SUBMITTED : 02/05/2026

COMMENTS:

My comments below relate to the surface water drainage, foul drainage and drinking water infrastructure for this proposed development.

Wokingham Borough Council is already aware of the inadequacies of the foul drainage network in Swallowfield and Riseley. Earlier this year residents experienced prolonged disruption when a fleet of tankers were required to take away foul sewage. This was not an isolated incident and many residents regularly suffer from overflows and restricted toilet use following periods of heavy and/or protracted rainfall.

There is currently no publicly available evidence demonstrating that the existing drinking water infrastructure has sufficient capacity to support additional development in Swallowfield and Riseley and several residents have reported low water pressures.

In the 2024 Appeal Decision concerning the proposed development of land to the west of Trowes Lane in Swallowfield, the Planning Inspector imposed two conditions (8 and 19), requiring details of foul sewage and water supply proposals to be submitted to the local planning authority, who can then assess their adequacy. The conditions require that the development shall not commence until the foul sewer proposals are approved in writing and no occupation shall take place until the water network infrastructure has been demonstrated to have adequate capacity and approved in writing. It is difficult to imagine how such approvals can be granted without substantial investment in infrastructure development by Thames Water.

In the absence of demonstrable improvements to the water supply and sewerage, the local planning authority must impose similar conditions for the Sun Lane development, should it decide to approve the application.

The Flood Risk Assessment submitted with the application states that the site has falls in a north-easterly direction at a consistent gradient of 1 in 48. The slope of the site is not, however, entirely uniform and, following rainfall, surface water and mud are frequently discharged to the north-west, onto Bull Lane, particularly at the location of the farm gate. If the local planning authority is minded to approve this application, the proposed drainage design must ensure that all surface water is captured within the site and contained by the sustainable urban drainage system. Installation of cut-off drains and/or ground reprofiling may be required along the Bull Lane boundary to achieve this end.