

PLANNING REF : 250467
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Redacted
: Reading, Berks
: REDACTED
SUBMITTED BY : Ms M REDACTED
DATE SUBMITTED : 28/03/2025

COMMENTS:

I would like to object to this application.

Retrospective applications go against the intent of planning legislation, and in this instance I feel have been intentionally used to reduce consultation with statutory bodies.

Prior to any work commencing on the site, significant clearance of trees and bushes has been undertaken. So much so, many residents were not aware of the property or scale of plot until this work was completed. I am able to provide photographs of the original site if required (also available via Google maps). Whilst bats have been considered in the application, it is not clear what other environmental assessments were undertaken (e.g. nesting birds, badgers, arboriculture etc).

The removal of trees has had a significant landscape impact in relation to the property. The gates installed are quite imposing, even when considered against the suburban landscape of the area, and variation of entrances on Wokingham Road.

Whilst I understand the property was considered derelict, and considered by the structural engineer working for the applicant to be unstable, the fact that the building has already been demolished should be taken as an indication that the applicant did not want independent assessment of this by other parties.

When works began on this property I requested that Historic England consider the property for listing due to its age. Sadly, they were unable to determine suitability without internal pictures, which I was clearly not able to provide. The property is now gone and therefore, again, there is no possibility of further assessment by relevant heritage specialists. I feel the application has been intentionally completed after demolition by the applicant to prevent involvement of Historic England and other statutory consultees.

I feel the lack of residents comments in this application should also be a flag to the committee that the application has not been suitably advertised, as the works underway have been discussed on social media between local residents.

I note in the comments that land ownership for this property is also contested. If it is founded that the property is not owned by the applicant, I would like the council to engage with with Environment Agency and Historic England to determine the correct legal action to be taken against the applicant for the demolition works which were undertaken without appropriate planning consent. This should also be considered, in addition to the requirement to put back what has been lost, if the application is rejected, since the damage to the site is already completed.