

PLANNING REF: 251621

PROPERTY ADDRESS: 8 Park Road, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 2AH

SUBMITTED BY: Mrs Meli Scinto

DATE SUBMITTED: 28/08/2025

COMMENTS:

Planning Officer

Wokingham Borough Council

Shute End

Wokingham

Berkshire

RG40 1BN

28th August 2025

Ref: Planning application number: 251621 – Land at the junction of Wellington Road and Station Road Wokingham RG40 2AH

I strongly object to this planning application for various reasons and ask you to refuse this application on the following grounds:

Anyone looking at the plans submitted could be mistaken in thinking all the land within the red boundary lines belong to Wokingham Borough Council especially as the Design and Access statement by Kendall Kingscott states, "The site is owned by Wokingham Borough Council" but the council do not own all this land and I ask if they have adhered to the covenants and schedules of the land they do not own in this planning application as I have not been notified of any amendments to them as I too have access to these areas. (See question 1)

Wokingham Borough Council does not own the land from the entrance of Park Road up to and including the simple single track access road but say they will make it up to an adoptable standard. There is no mention of who will maintain these parts of the road afterwards (See question 2) and who will enforce the double yellow lines it proposes on both sides of Park Road as Wokingham Borough Council does not own this land? (See question 3) This needs to be made clear as to whom this responsibility will fall upon.

The red boundary line which runs along the wall of Number 4 Park Road is incorrect and should be further out. How many other mistakes could have been made?

Design, overlooking, overbearing impact, loss of light and an increase in artificial light

The proposed building is overbearing for this site at 3 stories high and is out of character with the 2 story and 1 story buildings in the immediate area. It is not in keeping with the houses in the immediate area and does not blend in with the current street scene on this corner. The balconies are a very modern feature of newer buildings and not in line with the historical character of the immediate area.

The proposed building is taller than the surrounding buildings, our property and our neighbour's properties will be overlooked, causing a loss of privacy and amenities to us all. I have enjoyed the benefits of living in this area for over 48 years and would like to continue my legal right to, the peaceful enjoyment of my property for the foreseeable future.

The daylight and sunlight impact assessment admits there is an impact of loss of light to 4 Park Road and 42 Station Road therefore this application should be refused.

The stairwell on the first floor and second floor facing the east side have glass windows which will directly look into number 4 and 8 Park Road resulting in overlooking and a loss of privacy and an increase in artificial light.

The same can be said of Flat 14 on the first floor which has a window overlooking number 4 Park Road resulting in overlooking and loss of privacy for them.

Flat 20 and 21 on the second floor have balconies and windows overlooking 1a Park Road again resulting in overlooking and a loss of privacy for them as too will the entrance to the flats on the Park Road side.

I cannot find any suggestions to state these windows and large glass panels will be frosted or treated in a way to ensure privacy is protected to the surrounding properties. I can find no suggestion that restricted openings will be put on the windows and doors so they cannot be fully opened ensuring the privacy of neighbouring properties are protected and our legal right to continue to enjoy this peaceful area we live in is not taken away from us.

I can find no mention of the green flat roof not being accessible to anyone and would like this confirmed otherwise this will become a viewing area which will directly overlook my property and neighbouring properties. Please confirm there is no access to the flat green roof at any time. (See question 4)

Very little consideration has been given to the one story buildings on the east side which will experience an overbearing impact and shadowing from the proposed 3 story tall building.

There is no assessment re the increase in artificial light for neighbouring properties including my own and the impact it will have on our properties.

The increase in artificial light from the proposed building will have a detrimental impact on myself and others living in this area particularly the visual disturbance throughout the evenings and into the night from the well-lit stairwell and windows on the east side. I cannot see if any lights will be placed around the outside of the building but if they are, they should be not be motioned sensor lights and should be turned off in line with the "Part-night street lighting policy that Wokingham Borough Council has implemented with lights turned off at midnight. (See question 5)

The Draft Construction Management Plan by Entran states, "4.11 Lighting 4.11.1 Demolition and Construction will only take place during daylight working hours; therefore, temporary flood lighting shall not be necessary and will not be used. Will this be true throughout the year including autumn and winter during the darker mornings and evenings? (See question 6)

Noise, overcrowding and vibrations

I cannot express enough how the noise level will impact myself, my family and neighbouring residence. We currently enjoy the quiet peacefulness of this little pocket of paradise in the town centre and the proposed building if built will not only contribute to the noise level when it is being built but also in the long term as there could be up to 46 people living in 21 flats and there will be no going back to our peaceful little pocket of paradise if this goes ahead so again I urge you not to approve this proposed planning application.

The noise and impact assessment by RSK acoustics acknowledges there will be an increase in noise level. The initial site risk assessment was high risk and the prediction of the balcony noise levels range from 57 to 68dB which ideally should not be above the range of 50 – 55dB.

People congregating and chatting outside the entrance to the flats on the Park Road side will contribute to a rise in noise level compared to current noise levels in this area. The footfall of the comings and goings of people to the flats and cycle parking spaces will also add to an increase of noise in this area.

21 flats housing up to 46 people on this small pocket of land will result in overcrowding. The design and access statement states, "all apartments meet national space standards" The smallest apartment for 2 people is only 50.6m². I have tried to imagine what living in this space would feel like and I think it would be claustrophobic with very little storage space. I can't imagine how people living in these flats for a short or long period of time would be able to cope with living in such a small space. Having a lift would make this building more accessible to all. Why is there only a future lift provision in this proposed planning application (See question 16)

The minimum estimated time scale for this building is a year but this timeframe has a potential to increase, one example of this is the flats being built next to the Wokingham leisure centre. Building on this site will have a detrimental impact on the well-being and health of me and other residence in this area. Just the noise, dust and combination of people coming and going is a lot to endure for a year let alone if it takes longer and more so in the spring and summer when windows are open and a lot of time is usually spent in our gardens. If this planning application is approved I ask that conditions be placed on it to ensure no work is to be carried out on Saturday and Sunday so I and other residents in this area can have a minim of 2 days rest and recuperation from the noise and upheaval and try to enjoy the amenities as we do so currently.

The vibrations and ground movements caused from vehicles and machines which will be used to construct a new road, foundations and the building may cause damage to my property and in particular to number 4 Park Road which is closer to the site. A portable crane may be required for some activities and up to 4 HGV's a day could come and go during the peak demolition period. The movement of soil will affect the ground around it and there is no knowing how far reaching this impact of soil movement will extend to. At present my property shows no signs of subsidence but in the future this could change if this building comes to fruition as my older property and neighbouring properties have very little foundations which are not deep. How will you protect my property and neighbouring properties from any damage and changes that might occur while constructing this building if it is approved? And for how long afterwards? (See question 7) As the impact may not be immediate but could occur many years later.

Parking, highway safety and traffic impact

In theory the transport system, walking and cycling could be a good option but in reality people own cars for necessity and for pleasure. Public transport is expensive and not reliable. 22 residential and 2 visitor cycle parking spaces have been proposed but even with good intentions of walking and cycling being motivated to walk and cycle in the autumn and winter months can be challenging and a lot of would be cyclists will be put off by the traffic and dangers of cycling in the town therefore a car is more appealing. With only 4 visitor parking spaces and 2 blue badge spaces proposed for this site with no car parking provision made for workers on site or staff working in the support office or in the concierge area there will naturally be a car parking problem which will overspill into the surrounding streets including Park Road and Park Avenue.

An example of car parking overspill was in Outfield crescent where double yellow lines have now been implemented to stop people from parking in this area. Park Road and Park Avenue will be affected by this decision and I can find no mention of how Park Road and Park Avenue will be protected by this overspill of car parking and I think this should be addressed during this consultation phase. (See question 8)

The simple single track access road on the east side is only a simple unmade single track and not very wide. It was never intended to be used by heavy machinery or have lots of vehicles passing up and down it let alone to be made up to adoptable standards and it is not owned by Wokingham Borough Council. This land has covenants and schedules on it to protect it and I'm concerned they are not being adhered to in this proposal and ask: Have the covenants and schedules of this land been taken into account and adhered to? (See question 1)

The junction of Park Road and Wellington Road is already hazardous especially when turning right out of Park Road as the cars approach at speed on the Wellington Road and it is difficult to see beyond the bend. The proposed new set of 5 lime trees will not help drivers to see cars approaching from the right, especially as they grow. The increase of cars and cycles in this area will add to this problem and make it worse.

The blue badge bays are in a dangerous position being situated in between the entrance/exit of Park Road and the entrance/exit of the simple single track access road in between the car wash and 4 Park Road. An accident is more likely to occur here especially as the plans have not taken into account the pillars which have been built on Park Road or the soon to be erected boundary wall at 4 Park Road.

Wildlife and ecological impacts

The Landmark Practice plays down the Majestic Black Poplar Tree (TPO – 514 – 1989) which is over 36 years old and the many younger Black Poplar trees which surround it. There is no mention of the younger Oak Trees in this area which are classed simply as Grade C trees. There has been no consideration to lift the younger Black Poplar trees and replant them in a different position to conserve them especially as they are an endangered species as written on the woodland trust website according to the Forestry commission, "Black poplar is the most endangered native timber tree in Britain." They can live up to 200 years. Instead a hornbeam and 5 lime trees will be planted with the hornbeam not reaching maturity over the 30 year timeframe of target condition and will require pruning to prevent encroachment. The documents by the Landmark Practice concludes "The proposed development has failed to achieve a level of on-site measurable net gain in habitat units.

Off-site compensation or payment will therefore be required to avoid net loss. This will be done by offsetting payment with a local habitat bank provider or purchase of statutory biodiversity credits/units.” What is the cost of this? (See question 9) Not only is there a monetary cost but also a moral cost of not preserving endangered species for future generations.

The site in question has an abundance of flora and fauna. I enjoy the birdsong and dawn chorus. A large building would displace the birds and other wildlife in this area and they will move onto different habitats creating a truly urban area which would be one of the biggest regrets for future generations experiencing less green areas which could never be reinstated once built upon.

Other planning applications in this area have been required to have an up to date bat survey included. I could not find a bat survey and ask that one be carried out as this area includes trees that could give bats a good opportunity for roosting. (See question 10)

Other Environmental impacts

The proposed planning site is currently a piece of land soaking up rainwater alongside the drains and sewers in this area. As to date my house including my front and rear garden have never been flooded. I am concerned if this planning application is passed the land surrounding my property could be more susceptible to flooding and waterlogging which could change the characteristics of the soil, as keen gardeners not only am I worried about the detrimental impact it could have on our garden but most importantly the stability of the foundations of our house and neighbouring properties. As stated previously the foundations of our older properties are not that deep. An excess of water could cause the soil to change and destabilise our houses not only in the short term but in the long term as it can take a long time for the soil to settle even once the work is finished.

Although many suggestions have been made to try to soak up the rainwater such as permeable paving and a green roof and rainwater harvesting, Once the rainwater harvesting systems are full to capacity and there is no activity using this water no attenuation will be provided presumably this will add to surface water flooding. In addition soakaways cannot be positioned a minimum of 5m away from the building as the building takes up the majority of the site which is worrying. The Flood risk assessment and drainage strategy report does not sound confident that attenuation tank and the rate of discharge into the public sewer will be enough prevent this land from flooding and protect my land and neighbouring land from flooding.

Wokingham SuDS Strategy guidance (January 2017) States, “Developers when masterplanning SDLs and large scale development to assist in incorporating regional SuDS features to help address flood risk both on site and in the wider catchment.” There has been no mention of the wider catchment in the Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy by Price and Myers (May – July 2025)

I ask for further investigations, clarifications and assessment regarding the wider catchment of the site to ensure my property and neighbouring properties will not be affected by flooding in the short or long term (See question 11)

The report states, “A Pre-development enquiry will be carried out to confirm there is capacity within Thames Water sewer network and a Section 106 application will need to be made for consent to connect to the public sewer.” This should be made available to assist in making the decision on this planning application because if there is no capacity, what is the alternative? (See question 12)

There is no report on the effect on water pressure on neighbouring properties including ours if 21 flats are built on this site? Is there capacity for water to flow at the rate it does currently to include 21 flats and not drop or fluctuate? (See question 13)

I can find little written about the bin storage facility for 21 flats and a potential 46 people living in the building. Will the 5, 360L general waste bins, 7, 360L recycling bins and 4 240L food waste bins be enough to store all the rubbish from this site? I'm concerned about the smell and how the smell from the refuse will be contained? (See question 14)

The storage of rubbish can also make the rat problem in this area worse. Wokingham Borough Council knows there is a rat problem in this area starting from the pond at the council offices and continuing in the surrounding areas. How will they address this? (See question 15)

Having a catering/coffee van near the station furniture shop will take away customers from other business in the area. It would contribute to more noise and litter in this area and seems to have been added as an afterthought.

Previous planning decisions

Previous planning applications were withdrawn as they were not suitable for this area and neither is this one. The finer details cannot be left to chance or left to last minute decision making. They need to be addressed as this decision will affect not only us and neighbouring properties but also those who will live in this building and the larger community living in Wokingham. Wokingham has lost much of its green land. The carnival field is now Wokingham Leisure Centre with carpark. The cricket pitch has been built upon and Elm's field has shrunk. I urge Wokingham Borough Council to preserve this green pocket of land at the Station Gateway into Wokingham and make it into a conservation area for future generations to enjoy and to withdraw this proposed planning application and I ask the planning officer to consider, my comments, the comments of others and the wider costs, not just the monetary costs, and refuse this planning permission.

I have placed the questions asked in this objection below so they are not lost in the text of the above statement.

1. Have Wokingham Borough Council adhered to the covenants and schedules of the land they do not own in this planning application?
2. As Wokingham Borough Council does not own the land from the entrance of Park Road up to and including the simple single track access road but state they will make it up to an adoptable standard. To whom will the responsibility and maintenance of these roads fall to?
3. Who will enforce the double yellow lines on both sides of Park Road as Wokingham Borough Council does not own this land?
4. Please confirm there is no access to the flat green roof at any time.
5. Will the building have external lights? If so how will they operate?
6. Confirm, flood lighting will not be necessary at any stage during or after development.
7. How will you protect my property and neighbouring properties from any damage and changes that might occur while constructing this building if it is approved? And for how long afterwards? As the impact may not be immediate but may occur many years afterwards for example subsidence?
8. How will Park Road and Park Avenue be protected from an overspill of car parking?
9. The development has failed to achieve a level of on-site measurable net gain in habitat units. What is the exact cost for Off-site compensation or payment which will be required to avoid net loss?
10. Other planning applications in this area have been required to have an up to date bat survey. I could not find a bat survey and ask that one be carried out as this area includes trees that could be a good roosting opportunity for bats.
11. I ask for a wider catchment and assessment of flood risk to be carried out.
12. The pre-development statement to confirm there is capacity within Thames Water sewer network to connect to the public sewer should be made available to assist in deciding this application.
13. Is there capacity for water to flow at the rate it does currently to include 21 flats and not drop or fluctuate?

14. Is there enough bins to store all the refuse which 21 flats will accumulate and how will the smell be contained from the refuse storage area?
15. How will the rat problem be addressed?
16. Why is there is only a future lift provision in this proposed planning application?

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150 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill. 60610-5075

Telephone: (312) 837-3000

Telex: 245500