

PLANNING REF : 250824
PROPERTY ADDRESS : The Barn
: 72a Waterloo Road, Wokingham, Berkshire
: RG40 2JF
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Colin Horne
DATE SUBMITTED : 12/06/2025

COMMENTS:

Following my initial comments, I have now reviewed the full planning documents in much greater detail and feel it is important to raise additional concerns.

Before receiving the official notice, the applicant visited me and described what I understood to be a modest structural upgrade to the roof of the existing home. At no stage was it made clear that this was in fact a proposal for a complete demolition and replacement with a much larger, multi-storey new-build featuring a substantial rear balcony/veranda and extensive upper-level glazing. The scale, design and overlooking elements of this application go far beyond what was initially indicated.

1. Size, Scale and Massing

The proposed building is materially larger than the existing structure in height, footprint, and massing. The degree to which it fills the plot may be seen as overdevelopment in this location. I respectfully ask the Council to consider whether this level of scale is appropriate and proportionate to the context of the surrounding area.

2. Privacy and Overlooking

The new dwelling introduces elevated views directly over neighbouring gardens including my own through upper-level glazing and the proposed rear-facing veranda. While there are boundary trees at present, these are not a permanent or year-round solution, and the impact on the privacy of outdoor spaces is significant.

3. Elevated Balcony / Veranda - Serious Privacy Intrusion

One of the most concerning aspects of the proposal is the inclusion of a large, elevated balcony/veranda at the rear of the property. By its very nature elevated, projecting, and open its primary function is to look out across the rear gardens of neighbouring homes. This is not a passive architectural feature; it is an intentional viewing platform. The height and positioning of the structure would give direct lines of sight into multiple private gardens, and its size suggests it is intended as a regularly used leisure space.

This represents a profound intrusion on the privacy of neighbouring properties and fundamentally alters the relationship between homes. Even where trees are currently in place, they do not offer a sufficient or reliable barrier especially in winter or over time. I believe this element of the design is incompatible with the duty to protect residential amenity, and I respectfully urge the planning officer to treat this issue as a key reason to oppose the application or, at the very least, remove the balcony from the plans entirely.

4. Visual Impact and Character

The height, form, and architectural style of the proposed building appear visually dominant and quite different from surrounding properties. While modernisation is of course welcomed, it is important that new development integrates with the character of its setting.

5. Proximity to Boundaries

The new structure appears to extend closer to plot boundaries than the current building, which could affect the openness and spacing that defines this part of Waterloo Road.

6. Site Access During Construction

My home (The Barn, 72a Waterloo Road) shares a narrow private driveway with two other properties. Given the extensive works proposed, I ask that any approval be contingent on a Construction Management Plan that ensures continuous, unobstructed access to all homes throughout the construction period.

7. Retention of Boundary Trees

Privacy currently depends on a line of mature trees along the boundary. These provide important screening, but their long-term survival or replacement is not guaranteed. I would ask the Council to consider whether protections or replacement planting could be conditioned to maintain this essential screening should the application be permitted.

Conclusion:

I remain supportive of appropriate home improvements, but this proposal in its current form raises serious concerns around scale, design, and privacy. I hope the planning team will give full consideration to these points when determining the application.