

PLANNING REF : 260386
: Lambs Lane Swallowfield, Spencers Wood, Reading
PROPERTY ADDRESS : The Shieling
: RG7 1JB
: Lambs Lane Swallowfield, Spencers Wood, Reading
SUBMITTED BY : Mrs Roderic Vaughan
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DATE SUBMITTED : 27/03/2026

COMMENTS:

Planning application 260386 proposes large scale expansion and involves land not previously developed and, away from the established operating area of the business park. It conflicts with the council's policy on development in the open countryside. In 2016 a similar

proposal (planning application 162594) to expand away from the existing operation at a nearby business park was dismissed at appeal. The inspector noted.. "the proposal would result in the considerable encroachment of built form and associated parking into an existing open area of countryside. This would erode the spatial and rural qualities of the area by a substantial degree. Moreover, it would

appear at considerable odds with the well contained layout of the existing business units within the business park and would therefore fail to respect the prevailing pattern of development in the area. Consequently, the proposal would result in an incongruous form of development that would give rise to significant harm to the character and appearance of the area".

The site is on an elevated location and is not visually contained and, the building ridge height of 10 metres, will give 360 degree visibility, including across the Loddon Valley from the public footpath that runs along the river Loddon from Kingsbridge to the Mill House Hotel on B3349. A recent Valued Landscape Character Assessment by Wokingham Borough Council noted the site was inappropriate in terms of its established settlement form and its pattern and, also its landscape character.

The site is located within the rural parish of Swallowfield, which has limited development status. The scale of the units being proposed are substantially larger than the existing units on site. They are disproportionate and overbearing within this sensitive rural landscape and, conflict with the requirement for limited development in the parish. It would lead to the 'massing' of buildings in its sensitive rural setting.

Planning policies steer large developments such as this towards settlement limits and Core Employment Areas. The site does not have Core Employment Area status and the proposed large-scale development is not a sustainable rural enterprise, as it conflicts with among others the council's spatial development planning policies.

In addition to the buildings themselves, additional areas would need to be created to provide operating space for car parking and routine vehicle/ heavy goods vehicle movements within the expanded sites. These substantial footprints would lead to excessive encroachment west and south onto an area of land that at present contributes to a large amount of openness to the site's character. The very tall buildings at 10 metres would adversely affect the visual amenity of its surroundings.

Although the National Planning Policy Framework positively supports businesses that contribute to the rural economy, it emphasises the

importance that growth must be sustainable. The design and scale of the proposals will dominate its surroundings and encroach into open countryside away from the established business park. The new buildings would be at odds with other buildings close by, particularly the heritage asset of Wyvols Court. When dismissing the appeal to build houses on Wyvols Field (application no. 162360)
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countryside away from the established business park. The new buildings would be at odds with other buildings close by, particularly the heritage asset of Wyvols Court. When dismissing the appeal to build houses on Wyvols Field (application no. 162360) the inspector gave significant weight to preserving the significance of this designated heritage asset, stating it outweighed among other issues the public benefit of the additional houses. The proposal is therefore not sustainable when assessed on how it blends in with its surroundings.

Other points that warrant mention include increased noise, pollution and highway safety risks. Noise and pollution invariably arise from activities associated with B2 general industrial and B8 storage and distribution operations. The entrance is on a bend with a 40 mph limit, which is not strictly adhered to on this stretch of the B3349. Increased volumes of vehicles, including heavy goods vehicles movements will arise from the expanded operation in and out of the site and will pose much higher highway safety risks than is currently the case.

For these reasons I respectfully object to planning application number 260386.

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