

PLANNING REF : 251621
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 12 Park Avenue
: Wokingham
: RG40 2AJ
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Kevin Wood
DATE SUBMITTED : 29/08/2025

COMMENTS:

This planning application is deeply flawed and is an extremely poor body of work. I object to the application and request that it is refused. My comments as follows ;

PROBITY AND PROCESS

- There has been no consultation with Park Road & Park Avenue Ltd ("PR&PA") or residents affected by this development..Why? PR&PA has been consulted on earlier schemes proposed for the site and has always adopted a constructive approach. Development of housing on the site is acknowledged but it must be appropriate and give full consideration to all related issues.
- Wokingham Society's support is questionable and, as an influential local body, could be considered prejudicial as its reasons (eg."affordable housing") go beyond its remit. It should be "promoting high standards of planning and architecture" (Source ; Governing Document, Charity Commission).
- Other objections refer to the "Residents Round Up" email from Wokingham Borough Council ("WBC") dated 8th August. This email suggested that the development is "set" to be built and is therefore grossly misleading. "Set" infers that something is already in place, so why would anyone necessarily read further to find a later reference to a planning application? This displays an assumption of approval and potential bias.

TPO (nb...PROBITY)

- Put simply.."it's okay for us but not for you", so we will remove the tree. This is a bad precedent. The statement "not appropriate to retain (the tree) in a restricted urban setting" could apply to any tree in Wokingham Town Centre! Are WBC giving licence for any town centre tree to be removed? The opening statement on page 45 of the WBC Design Guide says "Retain existing mature landscape such as hedges and mature trees where possible". This should be called out for the hypocrisy that it is. There is an obligation on WBC to assess planning issues fairly (ref ; Local Government Assoc' "Probity in Planning" guidance). This is important with implications for "Democratic Deficit".

DESIGN, MASSING

- The proposed scheme is not in keeping with guidelines, it is not sympathetic to surrounding properties, it is much too big and should be limited to 2 storeys. A well known label for such poor design is "Carbuncle". There are no diagonal or rounded design features to soften the block on the corner elevation of Wellington/Station Road.
- The proposed building is overbearing to neighbours resulting in loss of privacy, loss of light and inevitable noise pollution.
- Design cues are taken from Elms Field which is wrong. Elms Field is not a fair comparison and is not visible from the site.
- The scheme breaches the WBC Design Guide on street scenes (sections 4.2/4.5..R11 in particular). Section 4.2 emphasises the need to build with underlying character limiting scope for "new distinctive

identity" only where the site is large enough. This is a small cramped site as evidenced by the pressure on the building footprint, parking etc. Elms Field is a "large" site.

- Noted are comments by Paul Edwards, Architect, and the conflicts between the proposed scheme and the National Planning Policy Framework, WBC's Core Strategy and WBC's Design Guide.

- There is no precedent for 3 storey buildings on Park Road. The scheme provides a single 2 storey building adjacent to 4 Park Road. This is such an obvious "sop".

- WBC's Town Centre Masterplan (9.3.1) "seeks to preserve and enhance the town centres historic pattern..."to protect building lines". This scheme does neither.

PARKING

- Parking has been discussed at length at consultations on previous schemes but the applicant has chosen to ignore this. Whilst I am doubtful that a "car free" scheme is viable it was discussed on the basis of a number of mitigations to the inevitable nuisance parking that would ensue, namely ; a) clauses in tenancy agreements to prohibit parking in any nearby roads including Park Road/Avenue, b) adoption of the lower section of Park Road to allow enforcement of double yellow lines, c) use of parking permits at nearby car parks (Station, Carnival Pool), and d) reduce building footprint to allow adequate provision of essential parking, deliveries, turning, service vehicles etc.

ROAD MAINTENANCE

- The comments on behalf of PR&PA dated 27th August refer. It is worth pointing out that from at least 1974 (as confirmed by residents), or when WBC acquired the subject site, to date WBC has made no effort whatsoever in maintaining the surface of the lower section of Park Road despite it's ownership of the frontage to Park Road. It has never been proactive and has belatedly made small contributions to repairs upon request. PR&PA and residents have either undertaken repair works themselves or appointed contractors when necessary. Now...when it suits!...WBC seeks to remove PR&PA from any contractual undertaking from a contractor on repairing the road post construction (ref; Construction Management Report). Furthermore, it refuses to adopt the road and remove itself from any ongoing maintenance obligations. WBC wants all the benefits...but not the associated liabilities. Where is the fairness? This is extremely high handed and one sided. Again, I refer to Democratic Deficit.