

PLANNING REF : 252782  
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 2 Northbury Avenue  
: Ruscombe, Berkshire  
: RG10 9LG  
SUBMITTED BY : Mrs Rachel Craig  
DATE SUBMITTED : 01/01/2026

COMMENTS:

Dear Planning Officer,

Re: Objection to Planning Application Reference 252782 - Change of Use to Fuel Oil Storage and Distribution Facility at Former Prince Bros site, Old Bath Road, Charvil, RG10 9QJ.

I am writing to formally object to the above planning application. The proposed development involves the installation of eight fuel storage tanks and associated works in a location that is environmentally sensitive and prone to flooding. I believe this proposal is inappropriate for the site and would have significant adverse impacts on the local area. My objections are based on material planning considerations, including flood risk, environmental protection, biodiversity, highway safety, and amenity, as outlined below.

1. Flood Risk and Potential for Contamination

The site is located in a designated flood zone adjacent to the River Loddon, which is known for frequent flooding. The Environment Agency's flood maps confirm that this area is at high risk of fluvial flooding. Installing fuel storage tanks in such a location poses a severe risk of spills or leaks during flood events, which could contaminate the river, groundwater, and surrounding land. This would contravene national planning policy, including the National Planning Policy

Framework (NPPF) paragraphs on flood risk and water quality, as well as local policies in Wokingham's Core Strategy that require developments to avoid increasing flood risks or causing pollution. The application's flood risk assessment appears inadequate, failing to fully address containment measures in extreme weather scenarios.

2. Impact on Biodiversity and Nearby Country Park

The development is in close proximity to the Loddon Nature Reserve and other local green spaces, which support diverse wildlife, including protected species such as otters, birds, and aquatic life along the River Loddon. The storage and distribution of fuel could lead to habitat disruption through potential pollution, noise, light, and increased traffic. This conflicts with Wokingham Borough Council's biodiversity policies and the NPPF's emphasis on protecting and enhancing natural environments. The semi-rural character of the area, including the country park, would be harmed by an industrial facility, potentially setting a precedent for further unsuitable developments.

3. Highway Safety and Traffic Impacts

The proposal would introduce heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) for fuel delivery and distribution on Old Bath Road, a route already

congested and not designed for such traffic. This could exacerbate road safety issues, increase accident risks, and cause damage to local infrastructure. Access to the site appears insufficient for safe maneuvering of tankers, particularly during peak times or adverse weather. These concerns align with local transport policies that prioritise safe and sustainable highways, and the additional vehicle movements would strain the surrounding residential and rural network.

#### 4. Fire, Pollution, and Health Risks

Storing large quantities of flammable fuel in a flood-prone area heightens the risk of fire, explosion, or vapor releases, posing dangers to nearby residents, park users, and the environment.

Ongoing

operations could result in air and soil pollution from emissions or accidental leaks, affecting public health and amenity. This is incompatible with planning policies aimed at safeguarding community safety and preventing nuisance, especially in a location near homes and recreational areas.

#### 5. Noise, Odor, and Loss of Amenity

The facility's operations, including loading/unloading and vehicle movements, would generate noise, odours, and visual intrusion, disturbing the tranquility of the nearby country park and residential properties. Extended operating hours could amplify these issues, violating local amenity protections under the NPPF and Wokingham's development plan. The industrial scale of the depot does not fit the area's character, leading to a detrimental impact on the quality of life for local people.

In conclusion, this development is fundamentally unsuitable for the site due to its environmental vulnerabilities and potential for long-term harm. I urge the Council to refuse planning permission to protect the River Loddon, the Country Park, and the wider community.

Yours sincerely,

Rachel Craig