

PLANNING REF : 260225
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Maidensfield
: Winnersh
: RG41 5TJ
SUBMITTED BY : Mr N Boulkroune
DATE SUBMITTED : 05/03/2026

COMMENTS:

Formal Objection to Planning Applications 260224 and 260225
Land East of Watmore Lane / Maidensfield - Proposed 111 dwellings
(Phase 1) and 118 dwellings (Phase 2)
I strongly object to planning applications 260224 and 260225 for the
proposed erection of 111 dwellings (Phase 1) and 118 dwellings
(Phase 2) on land located to the east of Watmore Lane /
Maidensfield

pursuant to outline planning permission 230208. Together, these
proposals represent 229 dwellings outside the defined development
limits of Winnersh, on greenfield land that forms part of an
important countryside gap separating Winnersh from Wokingham.
This land performs a clear planning function by maintaining the
separation between settlements and preserving the rural character of
the area. A development of this scale would significantly erode that
separation and undermine the spatial strategy of the development
plan.

While access to the proposed development via Maidensfield has been
granted, the Planning Inspector explicitly recognised that the
proposal conflicted with the development plan taken as a whole and
stated in his conclusion, Paragraph 123 of the Appeal Decision:

"Conclusion

123. The appeal scheme would conflict with the development plan
taken as a whole. However, in this instance material considerations,
namely the Framework, indicate that the appeal should be determined
otherwise than in accordance with the development plan. "

This clearly demonstrates that the appeal decision was primarily
driven by wider national housing delivery considerations rather than
the suitability of the site itself. The decision therefore does not
remove the fundamental planning concerns regarding the location,
sustainability, and impact of this development on the existing
community.

The proposed development would represent a substantial expansion
beyond the settlement boundary of Winnersh, and would dwarf the
existing residential area of Maidensfield. A major development of
this scale should be properly considered through the plan-making
process rather than through individual planning applications.

The proposed development would place significant additional pressure
on already constrained local infrastructure and public services. A
development of 229 dwellings would introduce a substantial increase
in population, which would inevitably increase demand for school
places, GP surgeries, dental services, public transport and other
community facilities.

Local residents are already aware of the pressures facing schools,
healthcare services and transport infrastructure in the area.
Without clear evidence that sufficient additional infrastructure
will be delivered in parallel with the development, there is a real
risk that the proposal would place unacceptable strain on existing
services and

facilities.

The National Planning Policy Framework emphasises that development should be supported by adequate infrastructure provision and should not place unreasonable pressure on existing communities. In this case, the scale of development relative to the surrounding residential area raises serious concerns about whether the necessary infrastructure capacity exists to accommodate such growth.

Furthermore, the development would lead to the loss of greenfield countryside and fundamentally alter the character of the area, particularly Maidensfield, which is currently a quiet residential cul-de-sac. The proposal is therefore contrary to the core planning objective of creating well-designed, sustainable places that respect the character of existing communities.

Importantly, the Planning Inspector himself acknowledged the unsuitability of Maidensfield as the primary access route. Paragraph 58 of the Appeal Decision states:

"58. . Indeed, it is fair to say that Maidensfield is not currently designed to be a through road or signal the presence of a large housing development to its east."

The anticipated traffic increase is also extremely significant. Paragraph 70 of the Appeal Decision states:

"70. The level of traffic in Maidensfield would increase from 335 movements a day to a combined total of 1,709 (existing and proposed flows). Most of this would be through traffic, which by definition would significantly change the current character of Maidensfield as a cul-de-sac. In the peak hour the flow would go from approximately one movement every two minutes to about one every 22 seconds if all development traffic used Maidensfield. This would be a noticeable increase in vehicle movements."

This represents approximately a five-fold increase in traffic movements. Such an increase would materially and adversely alter the character of Maidensfield from a quiet cul-de-sac into a busy traffic route, with associated impacts in terms of noise, pollution, road safety and residential amenity.

Moreover, the appeal decision itself recognised that a single access arrangement would create an unsustainable and poorly integrated development. Paragraphs 15, 16 and 17 of the appeal decision emphasise the need for a second access to improve accessibility, reduce journey distances and prevent the development from becoming an isolated enclave.

"15. However, a second access to the south would reduce the walking distance to the nearest convenience shop, a sports and social club, a dental practice and, crucially, a frequent bus service on Reading Road. Wheatfield Primary School would also be closer making the round trip for an escorting adult shorter and more likely to occur. Given the mixed picture regarding the site's accessibility to services and facilities, it is necessary for journey lengths to be reduced as far as possible, especially for those residents furthest into the site."

"16. A second access would also lessen the extent to which the appeal scheme would be experienced as an insular enclave of housing on the edge of Winnersh. This is because visitors and residents

would be able to pass through the development, giving it the feel of an integrated parcel of townscape. Future residents would also have a choice of routes out of the estate, with the interest and variety that would entail. ."

"17. Accordingly, a second access to the south of the site is necessary to achieve good urban design and enhanced accessibility. "

However, the creation of such an access near Oak Tree School would effectively establish a new direct connection between Maidensfield and Woodward Close, thereby creating a convenient bypass route to avoid congestion at Winnersh Crossroads. This would have serious implications for the surrounding residential road network. Roads such as Danywern Drive, Watmore Lane, Maidensfield and Woodward Close were not designed to accommodate through-traffic or the significantly increased traffic volumes that such a bypass would generate. The area also contains four schools, meaning that any substantial increase in through-traffic would raise serious road safety concerns for pedestrians, cyclists and school children. Crucially, the Transport Assessment appears to consider only traffic generated by the proposed development itself, while failing to properly assess the wider network effects of creating a new through-route that would attract additional external traffic seeking to bypass Winnersh Crossroads. This represents a significant shortcoming in the assessment of transport impacts. Historically, the local road network has been deliberately designed to prevent bypassing of Winnersh Crossroads, as demonstrated by the dead-end arrangement at the southern end of Watmore Lane where it meets Woodward Close near Wheatfield Primary School. The current proposal would undermine that long-standing planning approach and introduce a traffic pattern that the network was never intended to support. Accordingly, the creation of a through-route that effectively bypasses Winnersh Crossroads via Maidensfield should not be permitted under any circumstances.

The National Planning Policy Framework emphasises that development should create safe, sustainable and well-integrated places, and that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or if the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. Given the scale of traffic increase, the residential nature of the surrounding streets, and the presence of multiple schools, the cumulative impacts in this case are likely to be severe.

Finally, the decision-making process must give proper weight to the impact on existing residents and established communities, not solely the needs of future residents. In this instance, the cumulative impacts in terms of highway safety, congestion, noise, air quality, environmental harm and loss of local character would be substantial. For all of these reasons, the proposal represents an unsustainable form of development in an inappropriate location, and the overall impact would be significantly harmful to the local community. I therefore strongly urge the Council to refuse these planning applications.