

PLANNING REF : 252185
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Hill Cottage
: 8 Silverdale Road, Wargrave, Reading, Berkshire
: RG10 8EA
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Ian Kirker
DATE SUBMITTED : 26/10/2025

COMMENTS:

We are writing to formally object to the Planning Application 252185 for the commercial development at Thames Wood House Care Home, School Hill, Wargrave. Our objection is based on the significant negative impact that the proposed rooftop HVAC units, ancillary equipment and ductwork will have on the residential amenities of the surrounding area, specifically concerning noise and visual intrusion.

The development has already caused harm to residential amenity and local character. The proposed addition of all the rooftop HVAC equipment, ancillaries and ductwork will only add to what is already an ugly, obtrusive and overbearing development for the residents of Silverdale Road and adjacent roads.

As we all pointed out in our objections to the original Planning Application 222456, the new much enlarged and higher care home building is out of keeping to this residential area, is overbearing and is far too big for the site. It should have been significantly scaled down.

Of relevance, we refer to the Nexus Planning letter of 02 December 2022, supposedly addressing the issues raised by the public in their comments on the original Planning Application 222456. As the building work has progressed, it is now obvious that the developer/owner has in fact not addressed the issues raised by the public and local neighbours. In particular, (and just one example of this) the building height is not consistent with the general height of domestic development in the area. The comment that "the proposed building height will not dominate the surrounding area or surrounding properties" is sadly not the case. The development is not sensitive (as promised) to those of us who view and back onto it in Silverdale Road and adjacent roads.

We object to Planning Application 252185 for the following reasons:

1. General

The planning application does not specifically address the potential impact of the rooftop equipment on nearby residential properties, including the properties in Silverdale Road adjoining the development. The documents in the application are vague in nature, and the changes are not highlighted on the latest drawings (e.g. by means of revision bubbles). There was absolutely no rooftop HVAC shown on elevation and plan drawings in the original Planning Application 222456. The roof had clean lines with no mounted equipment or appendages. This Planning Application 252185 mentions about "Minor building modifications due to M&E design." They are not modifications or variations at all. They are new and additional to the original planning application.

The development harms the local residential area visual amenity and character. The addition of roof mounted HVAC and mechanical equipment will most likely further devalue all our properties in Silverdale Road.

2. Noise Levels Concerns - Impacts all neighbours

The installation of mechanical HVAC equipment and services, at roof level will generate continuous noise that will be audible from nearby residential properties, including our own property, located at 8 Silverdale Road.

This constant humming or operational noise will cause a significant loss of residential amenity, disturbing the peace, quiet and enjoyment of our and our neighbours homes and gardens. The constant (or even any intermittent) noise from the proposed HVAC units and ancillary equipment will be a significant disturbance to our property and the neighbouring properties. We will lose enjoyment of our garden.

The noise level of up to 70 dBA and 80 dBA, from equipment data sheets provided, is very high for a residential area. This is an unacceptable noise level. Quieter units are needed. We will have to keep our windows shut when we are working from home, when we are at home generally and at night. This will be a particular problem in the hot summer weather, especially at night.

The noise impact needs to comply with Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) noise standards (MCS 020). It is a statutory nuisance.

The proposed equipment is likely to generate noise above background levels, contrary to local policy and NPPF paragraph 130(f). The proximity of nearby dwellings makes this unacceptable without detailed acoustic assessment to BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 standards.

There are also potential vibrations and resonance coming from the proposed HVAC units and ancillary equipment to consider.

The unwanted significant noise level impact to us and other property owners in Silverdale Road (up to 24 hours a day) in a residential area can be avoided if the proposed HVAC units and ancillary equipment are relocated to the south side of the building on the walls or at ground level on the south side. The south elevation is shielded by trees and vegetation and a rarely used walkway, whereas the north and east elevations abut the back of our garden, and others in Silverdale Road and Beverley Gardens.

3. Visual Intrusion - Impact/Increased height of building - Impacts all neighbours:

The proposed HVAC roof plant would be visible from surrounding properties and public viewpoints. It would introduce industrial clutter to the skyline, contrary to local policy and the aims of the Wokingham Borough Council Borough Design Guide Supplementary

Planning Document to preserve local character. The elevations are now totally different to the original Planning Application 222456. The proposed new plant equipment and external ventilation points are noticeably ugly. The proposed new M & E equipment is shiny and metallic, and not in keeping with the natural area character, colours and shapes. It looks industrial and will cause aesthetic harm.

The developer/owner has not proved that the proposed HVAC roof plant will not harm the area's visual amenity or character.

By omitting to include the location of the proposed HVAC units and ancillary equipment in the original Planning Application 222456, the proposed location of this HVAC equipment will also raise the height of the building, higher than in the original planning application. This will have a negative and unsightly visual impact for all the residents in Silverdale Road, and adjacent roads.

The location of the proposed HVAC units and ancillary equipment should have been addressed in the original Planning Application 222456.

Why did the developer/owner not include this in the original Planning Application 222456?

Will it now exceed the permitted height of the development?

The unsightly view of rooftop HVAC units and ancillary equipment is totally out of keeping with the surrounding residential area, and affects the view from our property at 8 Silverdale Road and all the neighbouring properties in Silverdale Road, and adjacent roads.

Our rear garden, our windows at the rear and side, which include our kitchen, dining room, family room, lounge room, 3 of our 4 bedrooms and ensuite, all look out on to this unsightly view. Similarly, this is also the case and the same for our neighbours at No's. 4, 6, 10 and 12 Silverdale Road, and for neighbours in Beverley Gardens.

There are already angled rooftop solar panels in our view, which increase the height of the building. These were not shown on the drawings in the original Planning Application 222456.

We note that the developer/owner is already placing shiny metallic equipment on the roof. Presumably, this is the start of the HVAC equipment. If this is the case, why has the developer/owner been allowed to do this prior to the submission date for objections to this planning application?

Again, this visual impact can be avoided if the proposed HVAC units and ancillary equipment are relocated to the south side of the building on the walls or at ground level on the south side.

4. Alternative Placement / Relocation of HVAC units and ancillary equipment to the south side:

As noted above, the noise levels can be reduced/mitigated and the unsightly and intrusive visual impact can be avoided if the proposed HVAC units and ancillary equipment are relocated to the south side

of the building on the walls or at ground level on the south side. Definitely, do not place at the east end, which directly abuts our garden, and our close neighbours.

The south elevation is shielded by trees and vegetation and a rarely used walkway, whereas the north and east elevations abut the back of our garden, and others in Silverdale Road and Beverley Gardens.

Otherwise, this is a situation causing substantial and unreasonable interference to our properties and the use and enjoyment of our land.

5. Summary:

For the reasons noted above, namely:

- Noise Impact
- Visual Intrusion
- Loss of amenity
- Proximity to neighbours
- Aesthetic harm
- Insufficient mitigation,

We request that Planning Application 252185 be refused, or that the Applicant be required to locate the equipment at ground level or fully enclose it within acoustically screened housing to the south side of the development.

6. Other - Gate, fence and beech tree hedge to the rear of 8 Silverdale Road:

The original site plan, 5813-PAL-XX-00-DR-A-1200, Rev P02, dated 25.07.2022 and the latest site plan, PAL-00-ZZ-DR-A-8000, Rev C01, dated 25.09.2024 noted the following behind our property at 8 Silverdale Road:

"Existing gate into neighbour's property to be removed and replaced with a 1.8m high timber close board fence".

Soil, fill and rubble has been repeatedly moved about and stockpiled hard up against our above-mentioned gate and also our back boundary fence in places, which has caused damage. It is likely upon completion of the works, that our fence will need to be replaced, to a standard that we are agreeable with, and that will keep the wild animals out of our property.

Unfortunately, when the trees and vegetation were cleared behind us, wild animals (including bats, badgers and foxes) that resided in the grounds of The Mount Care Home lost their habitat. Badgers and foxes are now coming into our gardens and causing damage to our fence, lawn, property and upsetting/threatening our own pets. A badger and fox proof fence is now needed on our back boundary.

Furthermore, the only protection and shielding for our own property at 8 Silverdale Road, and our immediate neighbours at no's 6, 10 and 12 Silverdale Road from the dust and noise during the construction phase, and screening from the visual impact of the final development, is the high beech tree hedge on the development

immediately behind no's 6 and 8 Silverdale Road.

We agreed with the site manager in 2024 that the developer/owner would not cut down the beech tree hedge on the property immediately behind no's. 6 and 8 Silverdale Road.

Can we please ensure that this is formally agreed with the developer/owner. While the (deciduous) beech tree hedge will not provide us with any visual or noise screening in Winter, it will at least provide screening during the rest of the year.

The noise (especially diggers and construction vehicles with mind numbingly reversing beepers, and general construction noise right behind our house); the dust from all the works; the visual ugliness of the development; lighting; workers talking loudly and swearing; impact on privacy; and the parking nightmare and associated safety issues of construction traffic in Silverdale Road, has all created a stressful, annoying and disruptive living environment for us and our neighbours in the last 16 months.

We have been very accommodating with what we have all had to put up with during the construction phase, often 6 days per week. All we can do now is focus on the future impact of the development.

With this in mind, the least the developer/owner can do is to keep and maintain the beech tree hedge to our satisfaction, please

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