

Objection to Planning Application 252498: Loddon Valley Garden Village

Resident Information:

Mr & Mrs D R Shukla

2 Wheatsheaf Close, Sindlesham, RG41,5PT

Date of submission by email – 20 NOVEMBER 2025

1. Summary of Objection

I strongly object to planning application 252498 for the Loddon Valley Garden Village. My objection is based on concerns regarding:

- The scale, deliverability, and sustainability of the overall development.
- The inclusion and design of the proposed 20 gypsy and traveller pitches, which lack clarity and proper integration.
- The cumulative impact on local infrastructure, environment, heritage, community cohesion, and services.

Approval at this stage would be premature and inconsistent with both local and national planning policy.

2. Objections to the Overall Development

2.1 Prematurity and Local Plan Context

Approving this development now would pre-empt the proper consultation and adoption of the Local Plan, especially regarding the gypsy and traveller allocation. This risks prejudicing future Local Plan decisions, contrary to planning principles demonstrated in similar cases (e.g., Northstowe Phase 2, Cambridgeshire).

2.2 Infrastructure Delivery and Phasing

Serious concerns remain regarding delivery of essential infrastructure, including highways, bridges, and utilities required to support up to 3,930 new homes. The viability assessment

does not guarantee timely delivery of the £140m+ highways infrastructure. Without legally binding conditions, homes may be occupied before supporting infrastructure is complete, leading to congestion, safety issues, and stressed services.

Requested action: A binding Infrastructure Delivery Plan linking housing occupation to infrastructure completion.

2.3 Sustainability, Transport, and Climate Change

The development does not convincingly demonstrate high accessibility via public transport, walking, or cycling. Risks of car dependency are significant. Climate resilience measures—particularly flood mitigation, green infrastructure, and sustainable drainage—lack detail and enforceability.

Requested action: Submission of detailed transport, climate, and sustainability commitments before approval.

2.4 Environmental, Ecological, Flood Risk, and Landscape Concerns

Biodiversity net gain is not fully evidenced, and large areas fall within flood-risk zones. Proposed flood mitigation appears insufficient for high-severity weather events, placing future residents and traveller pitches at risk.

The development may adversely affect rural character, heritage assets, and result in loss of high-value agricultural land.

Requested action: Completion of site-specific ecological, landscape, flood, and heritage assessments with mitigation.

2.5 Health, Education, and Community Impacts

Local schools, healthcare facilities, and emergency services appear unable to accommodate the large population increase. Risks to community cohesion rise if services are overstretched or if the G&T pitches are poorly integrated.

Requested action: Submission of capacity assessments for education, healthcare, emergency services, and social infrastructure.

2.6 Community Opposition

More than 700 residents objected during the Local Plan consultation. Concerns about traffic, scale, environmental impact, and traveller site integration have not been sufficiently addressed.

Requested action: Improved community engagement and detailed design consultation.

2.7 Precedent and Cumulative Development

Approval would set a precedent for further large-scale development in sensitive rural areas. Cumulative impacts from nearby developments have not been fully assessed.

3. Objections to the Gypsy & Traveller Pitches

3.1 Insufficient Justification and Location Concerns

Although 20 pitches are allocated under Policy SS13, the suitability of the location has not been demonstrated. Alternative locations may pose lower environmental or community risk.

Requested action: Full justification and alternatives assessment for the pitch location.

3.2 Design, Social Integration, and Safety

The layout, landscaping, access arrangements, and integration strategy for the pitches remain unspecified.

There is a risk of social segregation or unsafe access—especially if wider infrastructure is delayed.

Requested action: A detailed reserved-matters plan covering layout, landscaping, access, parking, day rooms, and long-term management.

3.3 Flood and Environmental Risk

Traveller sites often face disproportionate flood risk and the submitted mitigation is not site-specific.

Ecological impacts also require further assessment.

Requested action: Site-specific flood and ecological assessments with integrated mitigation.

3.4 Policy Compliance and Management

The proposal does not demonstrate long-term management arrangements, contrary to the National Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS). Proper governance is required to ensure sustainability and cohesion.

Requested action: A detailed long-term management plan for the traveller site.

4. Conclusion

Given the multiple unresolved risks relating to infrastructure, sustainability, flood safety, ecology, heritage, agricultural land, and community cohesion—including concerns about the proposed traveller pitches.

I request that Wokingham Borough Council refuse or defer this application until:

1. A binding Infrastructure Delivery Plan links housing occupation to completion of roads, bridges, schools, and utilities.
2. Detailed design, landscaping, access, and management plans for the G&T pitches are submitted.
3. Site-specific flood, landscape, ecological, education, and healthcare assessments are completed with mitigation.
4. Enhanced community consultation is carried out regarding scale, traffic, environmental, social, and climate impacts.

Approval at this stage would be premature and contrary to planning policy.

D R Shukla

Date: 20 November 2025