

PLANNING REF : 252782
PROPERTY ADDRESS : The Ramblers
: Beggars Hill Road, Charvil
: RG10 0UB
SUBMITTED BY : Mrs Este MacLeod
DATE SUBMITTED : 01/12/2025

COMMENTS:

I would like to formally object to the above planning application for an oil depot. My concerns are based on environmental, safety, and community-impact grounds. The proposed plans for an oil depot will have significant negative consequences for the local area and provides no clear public benefit. Points of objection are set out below.

1. Road safety and suitability

Access to the proposed site is entirely unsuitable for the volume and size of HGVs expected to service the facility. Old Bath road is a narrow village-to-village route that already experiences substantial residential and school-related traffic. This road is used constantly by local residents for school runs and errands, by cyclists (including school children), commuters and pedestrians. It is an important alternative route in case of accidents and roadworks on the A4, and often gets congested. Old Bath Road is winding in places resulting in blind corners, by adding 130 daily movements on this road, including HGV's the situation will become worse. Road degradation because of additional HGV use is also a concern.

It will be problematic for large HGVs to turn safely in and out of the site without requiring oncoming vehicles in both directions to slow or come to a complete stop. Clear highway safety risks and congestion will be introduced.

2. Risk to rivers, lakes, and ecosystems that are on a flood-plain location

The site lies on a recognised flood plain. Storing such large 830,000 litres of fuel oil in an area known to flood presents unacceptable environmental risks. Any flooding events are likely to cause contaminants, oils, or chemicals to enter the surrounding waterways including tributaries of the Thames. Approving an oil depot on the proposed site could have severe and long-lasting ecological impacts on fish, birds, invertebrates, and plant life.

3. Impact on the community and use of green spaces

Charvil Country Park, the surrounding lakes, and rivers are heavily used by local residents for walking, cycling, fishing, bird-watching and general outdoor recreation and should be protected at all cost. I regularly walk my dogs on the narrow pathway behind the proposed site, around 10m from boundary to lake. Any deterioration in water quality, increased pollution risk, or industrialisation of the landscape directly harms the wellbeing and amenity of the community.

4. Fire and major-incident hazard

Storing 830,000 litres of fuel oil close to residential areas and sensitive ecological habitats. In the event of a fire or accident the consequences could be catastrophic for nearby homes and the surrounding eco system.

Concentrating such a volume of hazardous material within metres of homes and lakes does not reflect a responsible or proportionate approach to local risk management.

Any operational fuel spills and clean ups for a depot of this size are likely to result in the continuous contamination of nearby areas including Charvil Country Park lakes, the River Loddon and the River Thames. What methods will be put in place to monitor it?

5. No demonstrable community benefit

Using the proposed site as an oil depot will have no benefit to Charvil or neighbouring communities. On the contrary:

- It will increase traffic and congestion.
 - It will introduce industrial hazards to a rural area.
 - It will compromise environmental quality.
- It will reduce the enjoyment of valued public green spaces.

The application clearly fails to provide public benefit that outweighs its significant harms.

In conclusion, and for the reasons stated above, road safety concerns, environmental and flood-related risks, threat to wildlife and community recreation, major-incident hazards and lack of any demonstrable community benefit I request that this planning application be refused in full.