

PLANNING REF : 261695
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 14 Hart Dyke Close
: Wokingham, County (Optional)
: RG412HQ
SUBMITTED BY : Mrs Ellen Crewe
DATE SUBMITTED : 13/08/2026

COMMENTS:

Subject: Objection to Planning Application 261695 - Concerns regarding Ecological Assessment and Protected Species

Submission on behalf of Hart Dyke Close/Denby Close - Advocates of Countryside & Environment (HDC-ACE) group

Dear Wokingham Planning Department,

As a local resident, I am writing to formally object to Planning Application 261695 for the proposed sports pitches on land adjacent to Luckley school and Hart Dyke Close. While I understand the school's desire for new facilities, I am very concerned that the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) submitted with this application does not give a fair or accurate picture of the wildlife on this site.

I have looked back at the 2017 FPCR Ecological Appraisal, which was carried out for a previous application on this exact same piece of land. There are major differences between what was found then and what is being claimed now. I believe these are "material considerations" that the Council must look at before making a decision.

1. Important Missing Records

The 261695 report explicitly states that "no records were found for the application site" during its desk study. This is a significant oversight. The 2017 FPCR Ecological Appraisal is a formal planning record for this land and contains years of detailed survey data. By ignoring this baseline, the new application fails to acknowledge the protected species that have already been proven to live there.

2. Inaccurate Description of the Habitat

The 261695 report describes the fields as "species poor" and of only "site level" value, largely because the grass had been "cut recently" at the time of their visit. However, the 2017 FPCR Ecological

Appraisal explains that when left unmanaged, as it has been for (at least) the 30 years I have lived here, this land becomes "unmanaged tussock grassland" a specific type of habitat that is vital for several protected species. Simply looking at the site when it has just been mown is a "snapshot" that misses the true ecological function of the land.

3. The "Inevitable Loss" of Red-List Birds (Skylark)

The 261695 report claims the site is "unlikely to support a bird assemblage of conservation importance". This completely contradicts the 2017 FPCR Ecological Appraisal, which established confirmed breeding territories for Skylark in these specific fields. The 2017 report was very clear: it stated that because Skylarks need open, unmanaged grassland for nesting, they "will inevitably be lost as a

breeding species" if this land is developed. The Skylark is a Red List species of high conservation concern, and its total loss from this site should be grounds for refusal.

4. Impact on Reptiles and Rare Bats

The current application downplays the presence of other animals, but the 2017 FPCR Ecological Appraisal found:

Reptiles: A "good population" of Slow Worm and a population of Grass Snake.

Bats: Seven different species using the site, including the rare Barbastelle bat (a European Protected Species).

Barn Owls: Confirmed records of a Schedule 1 Barn Owl foraging directly over these fields.

The intensive mowing and high human activity required for sports pitches are completely incompatible with the needs of these species.

Because the 261695 appraisal fails to mention these confirmed populations or the site's previous ecological history, I do not believe the Council has the full information needed to approve this. I urge you to reject this application to protect the proven biodiversity of our local area.