

PLANNING REF : 252498
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 19 Harrow Way 19 Harrow Way
: Wokingham
: RG41 5GJ
SUBMITTED BY : Dr Karen Ireland
DATE SUBMITTED : 15/01/2026

COMMENTS:

Planning Application 252498
Loddon Garden Village

I am writing to object to planning application 252498 concerning the proposed Loddon Garden Village development. My objection is based on material planning considerations, including flood risk, environmental impact, infrastructure capacity, and concerns regarding the prematurity of determining this application ahead of the emerging Local Plan.

1. Flood Risk and Drainage Concerns

The Lower Loddon Valley is widely recognised as highly flood sensitive. Recent Environment Agency (EA) alerts for Shinfield, Arborfield, Lower Earley and Sindlesham demonstrate the ongoing risk, with warnings such as: "Flooding of low lying land and roads" and "River levels remain high flooding is expected." These repeated alerts confirm sustained flood pressure in the area.

Council SFRA mapping also identifies significant areas within Flood Zones 2 and 3. Given this evidence, the drainage strategy and proposed SuDS measures must be considered inadequate and unreliable for a scheme of this scale.

2. Prematurity and Local Plan Concerns

The development is allocated under Policy SS13, which has not yet been approved. Planning Inspectors have raised serious concerns about the deliverability of the Local Plan, including unresolved issues around infrastructure, environmental mitigation, and site justification.

Determining an application of this magnitude before the plan is adopted would be premature and risks predetermining the Local Plan examination. National planning practice guidance makes clear that refusing an application is justified where granting permission would prejudge the plan making process, particularly for large strategic sites.

This proposal clearly meets those criteria:

- It is the largest allocation within the emerging Local Plan (2,800 homes).
- Its viability depends entirely on the soundness of SS13, including phasing, infrastructure delivery, and mitigation measures.

Approving the application now would undermine proper democratic planning processes.

3. Insufficient Infrastructure Capacity

Essential infrastructure required to support this development including bridges, roads, utilities, schools, and healthcare provision remains unfunded or uncertain. Existing networks are already under strain, and no credible evidence has been provided to demonstrate that this level of growth can be accommodated without

significant adverse impacts.

4. Traffic and Transport Impacts

The proposed development would significantly increase congestion on key routes including the A327, Lower Earley Way, and M4 access points. Current infrastructure is already operating at capacity and cannot support the additional traffic volumes anticipated.

Mitigation

measures proposed are insufficient and lack clarity on delivery and effectiveness.

5. Environmental and Biodiversity Impacts

The site contains sensitive habitats, and the development raises concerns regarding biodiversity loss, habitat fragmentation, and ecological disruption, particularly to the River Loddon corridor. There are a number of ancient woodland areas in the locality and ancient grazing areas. Claims of achieving 20% biodiversity net gain appear unsubstantiated and reliant on assumptions rather than demonstrable outcomes.

6. Health related outcomes

There is already significant noise in the area from the M4 motorway. How will the noise of development and loss of natural tree barriers to noise be mitigated? How will the pollution impact on local residents with existing lung disease and young children who are most vulnerable be mitigated both during the build (airborn building particulates) and after with the increased pollution from the extra vehicles and roads?

How has the green sustainability and community cohesiveness been assured? Has anyone reviewed the Blue Zone data on walkability and ensured that all community facilities are walkable for all members of the community? Where are the bus routes to Twyford and Elizabeth line station? Has anyone considered making the entire development a car

free zone with parking and access for disability on periphery and a network of electric vehicles for safe community transport on small streets with all other streets centered around community spaces where community members can sit, play (with ball games) and exercise? Development of flats in Wokingham new build estates have car parking rather than communal garden spaces in the centre of them-no consideration made of community or health of occupants.