

PLANNING REF : 260577
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Nine Mile Ride
:
: RG40 3NL
SUBMITTED BY : Vicki Chappell
DATE SUBMITTED : 24/04/2026

COMMENTS:

Site Address: Range Road, Finchampstead

I am writing to formally object to the above-referenced planning application. The development represents an unsustainable, unsafe, and harmful encroachment into the countryside that violates both local and national planning policies.

1. Breach of Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) and Environmental Damage The site and the entrance to Range Road are subject to Tree Preservation Orders. Trees were felled both onsite and at the entrance to Range Road without prior consent to facilitate access for larger vehicles.

- Policy Violation: This is a direct contravention of the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012.

- The loss of this woodland canopy has already caused immediate harm to the biodiversity and the visual amenity of the area.

2. Highway Safety and Access (Range Road & Nine Mile Ride)
Range Road is an unadopted, single-track rural lane with no passing points, paving, or street lighting.

- Substandard Junction: Previous applications on this site have been refused due to the substandard junction at Range Road and Nine Mile Ride (B3430). The lack of visibility and the requirement for vehicles to reverse back onto a main road to allow oncoming traffic to pass creates a severe highway safety risk.

- Unsuitable Infrastructure: The road construction is unstable for heavy vehicles such as touring caravans or emergency services (Fire/Ambulance).

- Vulnerable Road Users: Without footpaths, the increased vehicular movement poses a direct threat to pedestrians, cyclists, dog walkers and existing residents.

3. Impact on Character and the "Green Gap"
The development would result in a significant "urbanising" effect on a protected rural landscape.

- Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan: The site is a recognized "Green Gap" between Nine Mile Ride and Sandhurst Road. This proposal erodes that gap, damaging the wooded rural character.

- Visual Amenity: The introduction of hardstanding, floodlighting, and domestic structures is wholly out of keeping with the streetscape defined in the 2010 Local Plan and 2024 Draft Local Plan.

4. Sustainability and Lack of Utilities

The site is entirely unsustainable for residential use:

- Location: There are no shops, schools, or medical facilities within walking distance, necessitating total reliance on private car use.
- Utilities: There is no access to mains sewage or utilities. The introduction of hardstanding on a woodland site will negatively alter natural drainage, increasing the risk of localized flooding and runoff.

5. Ecological Impact and Wildlife Displacement

The unauthorized clearance and subsequent floodlighting have already disrupted local fauna.

- Muntjac Deer: Observed displacement of wildlife into residential gardens and toward the B3430 proves that the development has destroyed and disrupted their natural habitat, creating an increased risk of road traffic accidents involving displaced animals.

6. Procedural Irregularities and Local Plan Consistency

- Inaccurate Designation: The retrospective application was submitted on March 6th, yet works commenced simultaneously that evening. Labeling this as "retrospective" at the point of filing is inaccurate and misleading regarding the timeline of the breach.
- Local Plan: The site is not allocated for development in the 2010 Wokingham Local Plan, the 2024 Draft Local Plan, or the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- Precedent: Approval would set a dangerous precedent for further unsuitable developments along this single-track road, as evidenced by a second similar application already being submitted.

Conclusion

This development shows a blatant disregard for planning procedures and the local community. It fails to meet the criteria for traveller sites as it is not sustainably located, poses a severe risk to highway safety, and causes irreparable harm to a TPO-protected woodland/wildlife and the character of the Finchampstead countryside. I urge the Planning Department to refuse this application and take enforcement action to restore the site.