

PLANNING REF : 251621
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Park Avenue
: Wokingham
: RG40 2AJ
SUBMITTED BY : Mrs Debbie Gillingwater
DATE SUBMITTED : 09/12/2025

COMMENTS:

Further to the Council submitting revised plans on 14th November 2025, the detailed comments I made on 2nd September 2025 objecting to the plans, still stand.

Some of my previous comments have been summarised below, with new points added:

Lack of planning consultation/notification - In the three years since moving into Park Avenue I do not recall being consulted about this new development prior to the Council applying for planning permission. Also, as far as I am aware, there are still no Planning Notices on public display around the proposed site.

Scale, height and design - The proposed development of 21 apartments over three storeys is far too large a building for such a small plot of land and is totally out of keeping and scale with the surrounding houses/environment.

In the recently revised plans, the Proposed Sections A-B and North and West Elevation Plans appear to show how the development will be a storey higher than neighbouring houses in Park Road, as well as those on Wellington Road. The ground level of the land on Wellington Road near the entrance to Park Road is much higher than the land opposite on Wellington Road and the new development would tower over neighbouring properties. This would be completely out of scale for the area.

Road/Pedestrian Safety - It appears from the Refuse Tracking Plan that refuse vehicles will reverse onto Wellington Road from Park Road. This would be an extremely hazardous manoeuvre onto a busy main road and should be reviewed.

Parking - It is totally unrealistic to expect that the development of 21 apartments in Wokingham Town Centre with only four visitor and two disabled parking bays, will ever be 'car free.' There are very few households without at least one car within a town (and with transport links on their doorstep) these days, as public transport is too infrequent, expensive or unreliable. In addition, how will this 'car free' situation be 'policed?' How will the council ensure that the residents of Park Road and Park Avenue (private roads) will not be overwhelmed with nuisance parking from residents (or visitors) of the proposed development?

Surplus office space - A Council news article on 6th August stated that (the proposed site which had been) "previously earmarked for office use, has been reallocated for residential development due to a surplus of office space and a growing need for affordable housing." I support the need for more affordable housing. However, perhaps all of this "surplus of office space" could be better used for providing residential/affordable housing rather than continually building on small/limited areas of green space?

Nature conservation and biodiversity - The scheme fails to meet the 10% biodiversity uplift required under national guidance. The development would remove one of the last few green spaces in the town centre and will involve cutting down an established poplar tree on the site, which has a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), and replacing it with a new tree (not the same maturity or stature) on the corner of Station Road and Wellington Road. This is clearly not an adequate replacement. Why have TPOs if a tree can simply be cut down if it is in the 'wrong place' for a planned development on Council land? The removal of this tree would be contrary to the Wokingham Borough Design Guide (section 4.6). Why couldn't the plans for the proposed development have incorporated this protected tree?

I respectfully request that this planning application is refused for the reasons stated above, in addition to those I previously made on 2nd September.