

PLANNING REF : 251621
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 18 Park Road
: Wokingham, 18 Park Road, Wokingham, Berkshire
: RG40 2AH
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Danny Spencer
DATE SUBMITTED : 08/09/2026

COMMENTS:

PLANNING OBJECTION

Transport, parking and deliverability concerns

I wish to register my objection to this planning application following the submission of further documents to the planning portal, about which local residents were not informed.

1. The proposed 'car-free' model is internally contradictory and unsupported by local evidence

The development is presented as 'car free', with only two Blue Badge resident parking spaces and no general resident parking. However, the applicant's own documents indicate that the scheme is not based on a credible expectation of zero vehicle ownership. Instead, they seek to manage likely vehicle ownership through tenancy controls, resident notifications and post-occupation monitoring.

The Residential Travel Plan states that there will be "zero private residents' car usage" and that the target for car-driver trips will remain at 0% "in perpetuity". Yet the Framework Parking Management Plan simultaneously requires residents to notify the management company if they acquire a vehicle; anticipates residents who "genuinely require a vehicle"; directs those residents to town-centre parking; provides an enforcement process for parking infringements; and sets out procedures for investigating reports of residents parking on nearby roads.

Those provisions would not be necessary if zero resident car ownership were a realistic assumption. The Travel Plan itself is also aimed at "encouraging sustainable travel behaviour, so that single occupancy car use can be reduced". The language of reduction, rather than elimination, further undermines the central assumption on which the scheme is based.

The applicant's assumptions are also difficult to reconcile with local travel behaviour. Census 2021 data cited in the submitted material shows that 90.9% of Wokingham households had access to at least one car or van, while 53.5% had two or more vehicles. The same data shows that 4% of employed Wokingham residents walked to work, 1.3% cycled, 1.5% travelled by train and 1.5% by bus, compared with more than 39% travelling by car as either driver or passenger.

Against that background, the assumption that 75%-80% of journeys will be made by walking and cycling, with 0% driving, requires particularly robust evidence. The submitted documents do not provide it. They also assume 8%-15% of journeys will involve car passenger trips, yet no drop-off or pick-up parking is provided.

The result is a material risk that the development will not operate as genuinely car-free and that unmet resident parking demand will be

displaced onto surrounding roads.

2. The proposed parking controls are not sufficiently robust or enforceable

The Travel Plan acknowledges that its details cannot be finalised at this stage because much will depend on residents' initial travel choices. It nevertheless proposes a strategy intended to achieve "no car-related traffic demand from residents". That is difficult to reconcile both with the local evidence above and with the plan's own assumption that a proportion of residents will travel as car passengers.

Considerable reliance is placed on the marketing, allocation and management of the development. However, the submitted documentation does not demonstrate that the prohibition of vehicle ownership, or the absence of resident parking, will be secured through legally binding tenancy provisions. Without such safeguards, there is no certainty that occupiers will remain car-free.

The Framework Parking Management Plan expressly states that residents who genuinely require a vehicle will be directed to existing town-centre parking facilities and permit arrangements. The nearest parking identified is at Wokingham railway station, at a stated cost of 135.40 per month. It is unrealistic to assume that every resident with a vehicle will choose to incur that cost rather than seek free parking closer to home.

The Local Lettings Plan also requires a resident who acquires a car during the tenancy to notify the management company and states that persistent breaches "may be addressed through tenancy management procedures where appropriate". This is not the same as demonstrating a clear, certain and enforceable mechanism capable of preventing overspill parking.

The concern is compounded by the proposal to rely on post-occupation monitoring. A parking survey is to be undertaken within three months of full occupation, with further action considered only if monitoring shows a material increase in parking demand. In practical terms, this means that parking impacts may first be allowed to arise and only then be addressed. The application should instead demonstrate, before permission is granted, that unacceptable parking impacts can be avoided.

3. Visitor parking has not been adequately demonstrated

Only four visitor spaces are proposed, yet no robust assessment has been supplied to demonstrate that this provision is sufficient. The application does not appear to quantify likely parking demand from family and friends, on-site staff, support workers, housing officers, healthcare professionals, social workers, maintenance contractors, carers, deliveries, emergency visits and other authorised visitors.

Without a quantified assessment of these demands, it is not possible to conclude that visitor parking can be accommodated on site.

The documents place responsibility on the building manager to enforce visitor parking arrangements, but do not explain when the manager will be present, how parking will be managed outside those hours, or what powers the manager would have to control parking beyond the application site.

4. Neighbouring roads are inadequately protected from displaced parking

The applicant acknowledges that Park Road and Albert Road are private roads and therefore fall outside the Council's Traffic Regulation Order powers. Despite this, the proposed safeguards consist principally of tenancy clauses, resident information, local lettings arrangements and tenancy-management action following complaints.

These are behavioural and reactive measures. No practical mechanism has been identified that would physically prevent residents or visitors from parking on surrounding roads if on-site provision is insufficient.

The application therefore fails to demonstrate how parking displacement will be prevented on Park Road, Albert Road, Park Avenue and nearby sections of Wellington Road. This is particularly significant because the private-road status of Park Road and Albert Road limits the enforcement mechanisms available to both the Council and local residents.

5. Errors and inconsistencies undermine confidence in the Travel Plan

The Travel Plan contains a number of inaccuracies and inconsistencies which raise legitimate concerns about the robustness of the wider transport assessment. These include:

- describing the site as being on the edge of a "City Centre" with a "vast range" of facilities, when Wokingham is not a city and the document itself contains an error in its description of local facilities;

- stating that excellent rail accessibility makes travel by bus a viable alternative to car travel, which appears confused and internally inconsistent;

- assuming that 75%-80% of journeys will be made by walking and cycling without presenting local evidence to justify such a substantial

- departure from the Census 2021 travel patterns cited above; and

- referring to a 500 car-club credit without identifying an established car-club network serving Wokingham town centre. Taken together, these issues reduce confidence in the assumptions underpinning the proposed transport strategy.

6. Construction-phase parking is also unresolved

The construction programme is itself unclear. One part of the document states that the contractor will aim to complete the project

within a "contract time scale of 12 months (estimate) weeks", while another states that construction will begin in November 2026 and finish in September 2027, an 11-month period.

The documents do not state how many people will be involved in construction, but nevertheless expect there to be no on-site contractor car parking. The proposed solution is to encourage contractors to travel by other means. In the absence of evidence about workforce numbers, travel patterns or alternative parking arrangements, this appears unrealistic and creates a further risk of overspill parking on surrounding roads.

Conclusion

The applicant has not demonstrated that this development can operate successfully as a genuinely car-free scheme. The transport case depends on an assumption of zero resident car use that is contradicted by the applicant's own management provisions and is not supported by the local travel and vehicle-ownership evidence cited in the documents.

The proposed mitigation relies heavily on behavioural controls, tenancy management and action after occupation, rather than demonstrating from the outset that resident, visitor and construction parking demand can be accommodated without harm to neighbouring roads. This is particularly concerning given the acknowledged limitations on enforcement on nearby private roads.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the application be refused.