

8 August 2025

FAO Chief Planning Officer
Planning Department
Wokingham Borough Council
Shute End
Wokingham
Berkshire
RG40 1BN

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Re: Objection to Application Reference 251618 for the proposed development of the land next to 236 Reading Road, Winnersh, RG41 5AA.

This letter is written on behalf of Mr Bradley of 244 Reading Road Winnersh, RG41 5AA and comprises a formal objection to application reference 251618, that is currently being considered by Wokingham Borough Council. The application seeks planning permission for the erection of 1no. two storey dwelling, following the demolition of the existing double garage and part demolition of the existing brick shed.

You will already be aware of and have access to the information relative to this application and therefore I shall not repeat it here within this letter. The purpose of this letter is to provide constructive comments to be read in conjunction with the 3rd party objections received by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) regarding this application.

Multiple 3rd party objections have been received by the LPA which object to the development for various reasons. Specifically, as the neighbouring landowner to the proposed development, Mr Bradley has objections in regard to the following key issues:

- 1 Character and Appearance
- 2 Overlooking and Privacy

- 3 Drainage
- 4 Safe and Useable Access

I have separated this letter into sections to discuss the various planning matters.

Objection Reason 1 - Character and Appearance

The site is located on Reading Road, within the major settlement boundary of Winnersh. The area is characterised by detached dwellings built in the 1960s, as shown in Figure 1. The dwellings along Reading Road are characterised by 2.5 storey detached dwellings that front Reading Road in a uniform manner with similar set-back distances, front garden/ parking space and sizeable rear gardens. Along Reading Road, some garages break the building line and are set back further into the private gardens of the properties. These garages are 1-1.5 storeys in height. This uniform, suburban type of development consisting of predominantly 4+ bedroom detached dwellings is a specific design characteristic for the area.



Figure 1 - aerial view of Reading Road, the application site indicated by a red star and Mr Bradley's dwelling indicated by a yellow star

Wokingham Borough Council's Core Strategy (adopted in 2010) has key Policies to protect the character of localities within the Borough. Policy CP3 specifically, emphasises that: "Planning permission will be granted for proposals that are of an

appropriate height and character to the area". This Core Policy was vital in the refusal of planning application: 213719, for 236 Reading Road, RG41 5AA. This proposal requested to erect a detached timber garage and was consequently refused primarily due to its scale, position and orientation on the site. It was argued, in the decision notice, that the garage would look like "*an alien feature*" and be incoherent with the existing street scene, misaligning with Policy CP3. This same analysis can be used for the current application at 236 Reading Road, with the scale, position and orientation of the proposed dwelling clearly being incongruous with the development pattern of the existing residential dwellings along Reading Road.

Specifically, with regard to Policy CP3, the erection of a two-storey dwelling will oppose the current scene as the outbuildings and garages that are set back into the private gardens are of a maximum height of 1-1.5 storeys, seen in Figure 2 below. Furthermore, the submitted Planning Statement provides no information regarding how the development will be integrated into the surrounding character of the area.

In addition, the proposed development would create 'backland' development in a suburban location. This conflicts with Policy TB06 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (adopted in 2014), that clearly states that proposals must "*not lead to unacceptable tandem development.*" In addition, Policy TB06 confirms that proposals must make a positive contribution to the character of the area in terms of: the relationship of the existing built form and spaces around buildings within the surrounding area, layout which integrates with the surrounding area with regard to the built up coverage of each plot and the building line(s) and the compatibility with the general building height within the surrounding area.

As such, the development has not been evidenced to preserve or enhance the existing character of the area and creates an anomaly in the existing street scene with the proposed house clearly set behind the existing building line of the residential dwellings fronting Reading Road. Furthermore, due to the sizeable private gardens of properties along Reading Road (and elsewhere in Wokingham), the approval of this application risks creating a precedent for future 'backland' development across the Borough, that clearly conflicts with Policy TB06.



Figure 2 - existing view from rear bedroom window of Mr Bradley's property. Red circle indicates approximate location of where the proposed dwelling will be erected

Notwithstanding the above, if the LPA are minded to approve this development, in light of CP3, it is not unreasonable to suggest the dwelling should be designed as a bungalow and developed up to a maximum of 1.5 storeys high, to match the heights of existing garages that are slightly set back from the development line of existing homes along Reading Road. This alteration would make the proposed scheme more in-line with the surrounding character and of a reasonable height, aligning with development grain of Reading Road and according with the design-related policies of the LPA's Development Plan. We strongly urge for this recommendation to be considered by the LPA if they wish to grant the planning application.

Objection Reason 2 - Overlooking and Privacy

As seen in Figure 2 above, the proposed dwelling is located within close proximity to Mr Bradley's property. Within the plans, it is proposed that part-frosted windows would be placed on the elevation looking into Mr Bradley's garden, as well as a velux window on the second storey of the proposed dwelling. These would look directly into the rear windows of Mr Bradley's home, that includes his bedrooms,

kitchen and living space. Understandably, this has raised concerns in regards to privacy and overlooking.

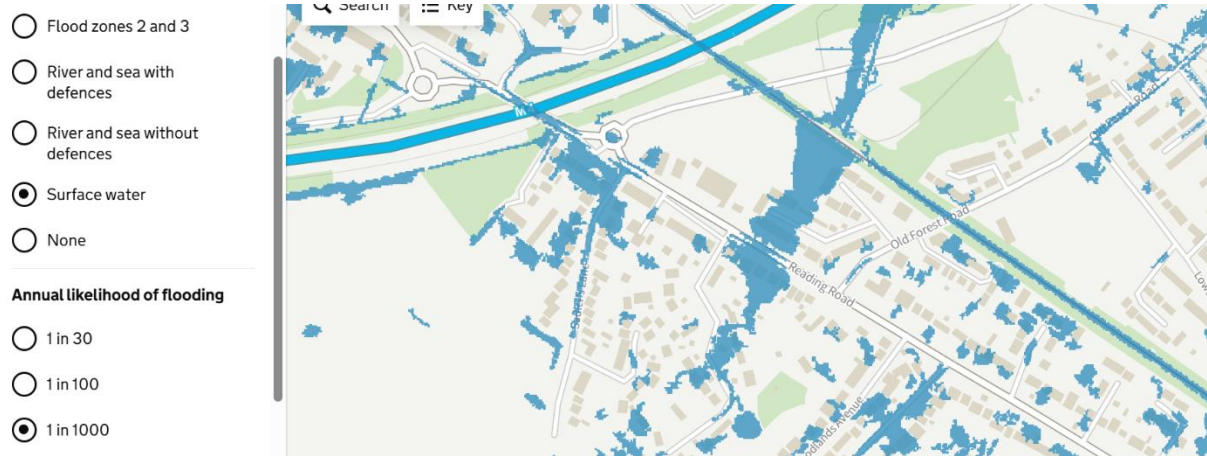
Notwithstanding our argument set out above that the location and scale of the dwelling is incongruent with the character of the surrounding area, should the LPA approve this application as per the proposed drawings, Mr Bradley has requested that the windows overlooking his garden should be fully frosted or removed entirely to enable no loss of privacy when he is using his private garden and interior living spaces.

It is also requested, that mature tree planting should be added between the site boundary and Mr Bradley's property to appropriately screen views from the proposed dwelling into Mr Bradley's garden and living space. Specifically, this amendment to the scheme would enable it to more fully comply with Policy CP3 which states under part f) that "*Planning permission will be granted for proposals that: Contribute to a sense of place in the buildings and spaces themselves and **in the way they integrate with their surroundings (especially existing dwellings) including the use of appropriate landscaping.***" [our emphasis added]

We therefore request that both glazing and planting be controlled by planning condition.

Objection Reason 3 – Drainage

Whilst it is noted that the application site doesn't fall within Flood Zones 2 or 3, Figure 3 below showcases the vulnerability of the local area and surrounding homes to surface water flooding, which will only intensify with climate change.



In particular, it is noted that the gardens on the southern boundary of the site are effectively the top of the local water table and typically four months of the year, it is impractical to walk down the lower half of 'The Hollies' garden and mitigation measures to combat surface water runoff needs to be adequately addressed. It should also be noted that 'Tarvers', the house adjacent to 'The Hollies' and Mr Bradley's home, also suffers from similar flooding issues in the rear of their gardens. The surface water runoff converges at Mr Bradley's home, 'Tarvers' and 'The Hollies' causing localised flooding at the rear of these three properties. The rear gardens of these properties, where frequent flooding occurs, is located directly adjacent to the application site for the proposed dwelling (as shown in Figure 4 below).



Figure 4 – Application site shown by red outline. Mr Bradley's property shown by yellow star. 'The Hollies' is labelled to the south-west of the map. The 'Tarvers' is denoted by the blue star.

It is clear that moderate consideration within this proposal has been given to SUDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems) in the form of permeable paving, to combat this issue. However, given the historic issues with flooding in the local area, we feel that further flood mitigation is required in order to ensure adequate drainage for the proposed dwelling.

It is therefore requested that a more robust SUDS mechanism is incorporated into the proposal to combat the negative impacts of the local water table. This supports and reflects Policy CC09 and CC10 to ensure there are no adverse impacts of the proposed development on the surrounding flood risk areas.

Objection Reason 4 - Safe and Useable Access

The Parking Provision Plan that forms part of the planning application clearly shows the parking and access arrangements to the proposed dwelling (please refer to Figure 5 below).

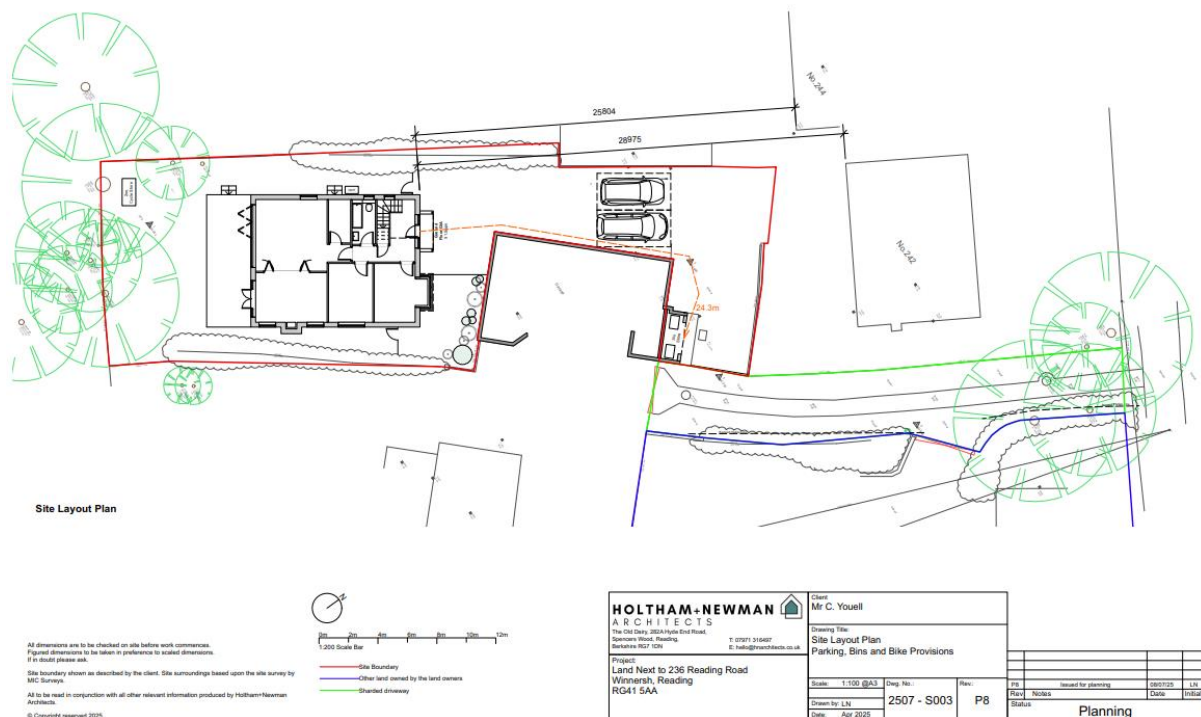


Figure 5 - 2507-S003-P8 – Parking Provision Plan

It is clear from the drawing that the parking arrangement will be set back from the existing building line of the dwellings along Reading Road and adjacent to the existing private garden of Mr Bradley's property. In regards to the relationship between the proposed dwelling and existing homes, we would reiterate our comments made in regard to Objection Reason 1 – Character and Appearance. However, in addition, we would like to highlight the increase in noise and disturbance caused to Mr Bradley and his neighbours if the proposed driveway and access road is used regularly by future occupants of the proposed house. In effect, the active frontage of this property is clearly set behind the existing homes along Reading Road and there will be both increased noise and air pollution when the driveway is in use. The current design of the parking adjacent to the private amenity areas of neighbouring homeowners clearly conflicts with Policy CC06 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan.

In addition, the proposed access arrangements present highway safety concerns that have not been adequately addressed in the planning application. Specifically, the access to the proposed property is extremely constrained with insufficient width and no provision for vehicle turning within the site. This would necessitate

vehicles reversing onto the main road, which is a busy thoroughfare with significant traffic volumes. The proposed access arrangements would therefore create unacceptable highway safety risks that are contrary to Policy CP6 of the adopted Core Strategy which requires appropriate vehicular parking and for development proposals to mitigate any adverse effects upon the local and strategic transport network.

Conclusion

This letter has demonstrated how the proposed development will have significantly detrimental impacts on the local character of the area and lead to 'backland' development which clearly conflicts with Policy TB06 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan. This results in the proposal representing an inappropriate use in respect of the established character of the area, and therefore failing to respond positively to the surrounding development context.

It is considered that the proposed scheme does not comply with the relevant Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP3, as well as the Policies TB06, CC06, CC09 and CC10 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan.

As such, we would request that this application is refused.

If the LPA are minded to approve the application, we would request the following revisions in order to make the scheme acceptable in light of the policies highlighted above:

- Reduction in scale to dwelling from two storeys to a 1.5 storey bungalow;
- Removal of windows overlooking Mr Bradley's property;
- Creation of mature planting buffer between Mr Bradley's property and proposed development;
- Revised parking arrangement to move the proposed spaces further away from existing private garden amenity space; and
- Incorporation of adequate SUDS' mitigation to reduce the impact of surface water flooding.

I trust the above is clear however if you require any further information regarding the above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,



Tom Ryan BSc (Hons) MRTPI

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