

FULL PLANNING APPROVAL **DRAFT DECISION NOTICE**



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Expiry Date: 30 September 2026

Application Number: 251413

Location: Robin Lodge Nursery, Part Lane, Swallowfield, Wokingham, RG7 1TB

Proposal: Proposed erection of 2no. buildings and open log store with associated parking, access and landscaping, repositioning of site boundary fence, plus installation of acoustic screen following demolition of existing buildings.

Recommendation: Refused

Reasons

1. The application site lies within Flood Zone 3b, the functional floodplain. The proposed forestry development is classified as less vulnerable and is incompatible with Flood Zone 3b. The proposal should therefore be refused in accordance with Policy F6 and Annex F of the National Planning Policy Framework 2026. It also conflicts with Policies CP1 and CP11 of the Core Strategy 2010 and Policy CC09 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014.

2. The submitted Flood Risk Assessment does not adequately demonstrate that the development would be safe for its lifetime, would not increase flood risk elsewhere, or would provide safe access and egress during a flood event. In particular, the suitability of the flood modelling, flood hazard, finished-floor levels and allowance for climate change have not been satisfactorily demonstrated. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies F6 and F7 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2026, Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy 2010 and Policy CC09 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014.

3. Insufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate that surface water can be sustainably managed without increasing flood risk. In particular, groundwater monitoring has not been undertaken during the expected seasonal peak, and the suitability of infiltration drainage has therefore not been demonstrated. The proposal is contrary to Policy F8 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2026, Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy 2010 and Policy CC10 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014.

4. In the absence of a completed planning obligation pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 securing a financial contribution towards the monitoring of the approved biodiversity enhancements and implementation of a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP), the Local Planning Authority cannot be satisfied that the biodiversity mitigation, enhancement and management measures associated with the development would be effectively monitored and

enforced over the required management period. The proposal is therefore contrary to Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021), policy CP7 of the Core Strategy 2010, policy TB23 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014 and policy N2 of the NPPF 2026.

Informatives

1. In reaching this decision, the Local Planning Authority took into consideration the following plans and documents:

Location Plan

Application Form

CIL Form

979/ 11A - Revised proposal (2 of 2)

979/01 A - Existing

Biodiversity Net Gain Proposed Habitat Plan

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

979/02 C - Existing (based on survey)

979/11 D - Revised proposal (1 of 2)

Planning Design and Access Statement prepared by ET Planning Provisional Environmental Assessment (including Phase 1 bat survey) Biodiversity Net Gain Report (Report ref: R2623_BNG_b) June 2025 Arboricultural Report prepared by SMW Tree Consultancy Ltd dated 4th May 2023

Flood Risk Assessment dated 19th March 2025 prepared by GeoSmart Acoustic assessment of a new forestry facility prepared by ACA acoustics, report reference 230103-R001C dated 8th December 2025

GCN Survey (Report ref.:R2623_GC_N_a) dated May 2026

Sustainable Drainage Assessment dated 31/07/2026 prepared by GeoSmart

Received 12th June 2025, 16th June 2025, 4th July 2025, 8th July 2025, 11th July 2025, 16th July 2025, 22nd July 2025, 10th December 2025, 29th January 2026, 22nd May 2026 and 3rd August 2026

2. The Council engages with all applicants in a positive and proactive way through specific pre-application enquiries and the detailed advice available on the Council's website. On this particular application, no pre-application advice was sought before the application was submitted. As the proposal was clearly contrary to the provisions of the Development Plan, it was considered that further discussions would be unnecessary and costly for all parties.

Recommendation and conditions/reasons agreed:

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to be 'Aje', is written over the text 'Recommendation and conditions/reasons agreed:'.

Date: 30/09/26

REMEMBER - The earliest date for a decision on this application is: **21 August 2025**