

PLANNING REF : 241933
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Vinewillow House
: Old Wokingham Road, Wokingham
: RG40 3BT
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Colin Wright
DATE SUBMITTED : 02/06/2026

COMMENTS:

Formal Objection to Planning Application 241933

I object strongly to this application on the grounds that it conflicts with the principles and requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and fails to demonstrate that the development would constitute genuinely sustainable development.

The proposal seeks permission for up to 850 dwellings and associated infrastructure on a substantial area of greenfield land. Given the scale of the proposal, the burden on the applicant to demonstrate policy compliance should be particularly high. In its current form, that burden has not been met.

Conflict with the NPPF Presumption of Sustainable Development

The NPPF makes clear that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Sustainable development requires economic, social and environmental objectives to be pursued in mutually supportive ways.

This proposal risks failing all three tests:

Socially, by placing further pressure on already stretched services.

Environmentally, through the loss of countryside and increased traffic generation.

Economically, through worsening congestion and infrastructure strain.

The applicant relies heavily on future mitigation measures while seeking approval for immediate and permanent development impacts.

Failure to Demonstrate Sustainable Transport

The NPPF requires transport issues to be considered from the earliest stages of planning and requires a vision-led approach that prioritises sustainable transport outcomes rather than simply accommodating traffic growth.

The application appears to remain heavily dependent on private car usage.

There is insufficient evidence that residents would have realistic and attractive alternatives to car travel for:

Employment

Education

Healthcare

Retail services

Rail connections

The proposal risks creating a large car-dependent urban extension that conflicts with the NPPF objective of reducing reliance on private vehicles and promoting sustainable transport choices.

Severe Cumulative Highway Impacts

The NPPF states that development should be refused where there would be unacceptable impacts on highway safety or where residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe following mitigation.

The applicant has not convincingly demonstrated that:

Existing congestion levels are accurately reflected.
Cumulative impacts of surrounding developments have been fully assessed.
Proposed mitigation is capable of preventing severe impacts. Future transport assumptions are realistic.

Residents already experience significant congestion across the South Wokingham and Bracknell corridor. The addition of up to 850 homes is likely to generate substantial vehicle movements every day.

The council should not accept theoretical modelling at face value where observable real-world conditions already indicate network stress.

Infrastructure Delivery Remains Uncertain

The NPPF requires planning decisions to ensure sufficient infrastructure is available to support development.

Yet the application lacks certainty regarding:

GP provision
School capacity
Secondary education demand
Public transport improvements
Community facilities

The proposal effectively asks existing residents to accept growth first while trusting that infrastructure will follow later.

Experience across many strategic developments demonstrates that this approach often leaves communities dealing with years of infrastructure deficits.

Environmental Harm Outweighs Claimed Benefits

The NPPF requires planning decisions to protect and enhance the natural environment and recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

This proposal would result in:

Permanent loss of greenfield land.
Urbanisation of open countryside.
Harm to landscape character.
Increased traffic-related emissions.

Pressure on ecological networks.

The environmental cost is immediate and irreversible.

The claimed mitigation measures do not alter the fact that substantial countryside would be permanently lost to development.

Cumulative Growth Is Being Underestimated

One of the most serious weaknesses in the application is the apparent underestimation of cumulative impact.

The NPPF requires decision-makers to consider cumulative effects rather than assessing developments in isolation.

Residents are entitled to ask:

At what point does growth become excessive?
At what point does congestion become unacceptable?
At what point does countryside loss become irreversible?
At what point do public services become overwhelmed?

This application contributes significantly to a wider pattern of strategic expansion that is fundamentally changing the character and functioning of the area.

Conclusion

The proposal represents a major speculative expansion of housing into open countryside while failing to provide sufficient certainty regarding transport, infrastructure and environmental impacts.

The development appears contrary to key NPPF objectives relating to:

Sustainable development.
Sustainable transport.
Infrastructure-led growth.
Environmental protection.

Management of cumulative impacts.

The council should apply rigorous scrutiny to the applicant's assumptions and claimed mitigation measures.

In its current form, the application fails to demonstrate that it constitutes genuinely sustainable development and should therefore be refused.

Additional Cross-Boundary Highway Objection

A further major concern is that the most critical affected highway infrastructure does not sit entirely within Wokingham Borough

Council's control.

The junction of Old Wokingham Road and Easthampstead Road lies across the administrative boundary between Wokingham Borough Council and Bracknell Forest Council.

Publicly available information confirms that responsibility for the junction is effectively split between the two authorities, with Old Wokingham Road falling within Bracknell Forest and Easthampstead Road within Wokingham. This fragmented ownership and responsibility has already been identified as a factor contributing to delays in delivering safety improvements despite longstanding concerns and repeated collisions.

This is highly relevant to Planning Application 241933.

The applicant is proposing development on a scale that could generate well over 1,200 additional vehicle movements at peak periods and several thousand additional daily vehicle trips across the surrounding network.

Yet the key junction most directly affected is:

Already the subject of serious safety concerns.
Already acknowledged as having physical and environmental constraints.
Already under discussion between two separate highway authorities.

Already associated with multiple reported collisions.
Already considered to require major intervention as part of wider South Wokingham growth plans.

The council's own published information acknowledges that because of the limitations of the existing junction, long-term development proposals involve effectively severing parts of Easthampstead Road and diverting traffic onto entirely new road infrastructure.

That fact alone raises serious doubts about the applicant's claim that the existing highway network can accommodate development of this magnitude.

If the junction already requires strategic reconstruction to cope with existing and committed development, it is difficult to see how a further 850-home scheme can be considered acceptable.

The Local Planning Authority should not approve a development whose transport impacts depend on future highway interventions that:

Extend beyond its administrative boundary.
Require coordination with Bracknell Forest Council.

Remain subject to future funding, design and delivery processes.
Have not yet resolved the longstanding safety problems already affecting the junction.

The NPPF requires authorities to consider cumulative and cross-boundary impacts and to refuse development where residual

cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe or where highway safety would be compromised. The evidence currently available suggests both risks are present in this case

I respectfully request that Planning Application 241933 be rejected.