

PLANNING REF : 252185
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 12 Silverdale Road
: Wargrave
: RG10 8EA
SUBMITTED BY : Mr M Hickman
DATE SUBMITTED : 13/01/2026

COMMENTS:

I wish to object to the current planning application. The measures proposed to reduce the HVAC noise from the care home are inadequate and do not provide meaningful protection for residents.

1. Background Noise Levels Before vs After Construction

The central issue for residents is the difference between noise levels before the care home existed and the levels when it is operating. The Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) prepared for Lawrence Barker fails to address this fundamental comparison. Nor does it provide the reliable data needed by the Council to know whether the new care meets its acoustic criteria.

2. Inadequate and Unrepresentative Measurement Location

The noise measurements were taken at the south east corner of the site, yet the modelling was applied to the opposite side away from the homes on Silverdale Road most affected by the HVAC units. As a result, the data used for prediction does not represent the actual conditions faced by residents.

3. Measurements Taken During Construction Activity

The noise monitoring took place at a time when construction noise appears to have been present. This means the reported background levels are artificially elevated. For example, during one daytime period, the LA90 did not drop below 50 dB between 08:00 and 15:30 higher than normal for Silverdale Road.

Despite this, the assessment claims a 'representative' background level of 37 dB, which appears inconsistent with the measured values. Lawrence Baker's NIA admits the average daytime level was 50dB. The report does not explain how this representative level was derived. Can Lawrence Barker confirm that this figure is genuinely reflective of pre construction noise conditions?

4. Likely Underestimation of Noise Impact

Based on the questionable background level used, Section 5.7 of the report concludes that noise levels at nearby houses "will be no higher than the representative background sound level of 37 dB LA90." If the 37 dB figure is incorrect and the real baseline is lower then the impact of the roof mounted HVAC units has been significantly underestimated.

5. Lack of Quantified Benefit From Proposed Screening

The report does not provide a clear, quantified dB reduction from the proposed screening. Without numerical reduction data, residents cannot assess whether the mitigation is effective or merely cosmetic.

6. Absence of Assessment of Alternative, More Effective Solutions

The NIA does not explore alternative methods of reducing noise, such as:

- positioning HVAC equipment at ground level on the south side of the site (needs to be explored in detail, rather than dismissed out of hand)
- fully enclosing the units
- using higher grade, low noise heat pumps or air conditioning systems

What other options are possible, and why were they dismissed?

7. Incorrect Assumptions About Operational Behaviour

The report asserts that the units are "unlikely to be working together." In reality, the most likely time for full operation is during hot weather precisely when residents will have their windows open. This assumption therefore cannot be relied upon.

8. Unassessed Visual and Acoustic Impact of Added Equipment

The external piping and HVAC units now proposed were not shown on the original planning application. This omission may have materially affected the original decision.

- The added height, bulk, and noise impact have never been properly consulted upon.
- A redesign may have been required to enable the ground floor siting of a proper enclosed HVAC facility
- It is unfair to residents that this is being retrospectively justified.

9. Effects on Resident Well Being and Property Values

The increased noise will negatively affect residents' comfort, well being, and enjoyment of their homes. It may also impact property values. Residents will reasonably expect compensation from WBC or the care home operator if the issue is not properly resolved.

Conclusion and Request

I object to this planning application. I request that the Council require the applicant to commission a new, properly conducted Noise Impact Assessment that:

- uses valid, representative baseline measurements,
- assesses a full range of alternative mitigation options, and
- proposes a solution that demonstrates genuine consideration for neighbouring residents of the care home.

M Hickman