

Mr D Blackmore
4 Wenlock Edge
Charvil
Reading
Berkshire
RG10 9QG



Objection to planning application No 250959

Address, Former Prince Bros Service Station Old Bath Road Reading RG10 9QJ

To Whom it may concern

I am writing to register my objection to the proposal by Speedy Fuels to develop the old “Princes Brothers” site on the Old Bath road into a fuel storage and distribution centre.

I am objecting as a local resident who uses the Country Park for many purposes and have grave fears for what may become / happen.

It is vitally important that you realise that the entire site is surrounded by Country Parks, these being known as “Charvil Country Park” and “Charvil Meadows”. Both of these parks flood every year without fail, they are a vital part of the flood plain which is used to absorb additional water within the area during wet periods. It does not take much for the area to start to flood!

I utilise the parks for various reasons,

- 1) I run Charvil Angling Club, a club created around 12 years ago to administer the rights of local Charvil residents to fish the Charvil Country Park Lakes.
- 2) As a dog owner I walk the Country Parks on average 10 times a week.
- 3) As an Angler I fish the lakes, on average 3-4 times a month and help with the maintenance of the lakes.
- 4) As a local scout leader we use the Country Parks for various outdoor based activities, for example, to practise navigation and for simple treasure hunt events.
- 5) As a casual bird watcher and photographer I have a personal bird list for the 2 parks consisting of 75 Bird species (see list below)

Whilst I have read through the various documentation and have even met a Speedy Fuels employee who explained their plans, I still have grave concerns over the potentially massive ecological disaster that could so easily occur which could wipe out the natural resource for years to come.

We know the site is not suitable for house building due to the grounds unstable structure, so wonder how suddenly it's suitable for the storage of many thousands of gallons of fuel?

If a leak/spill was to occur and it was to escape the bunded area or even occur outside of the bunded area it would then enter the ground, which we know is porous and thus the fuel/pollution would be absorbed and no doubt keep on leaking into the local lakes and River Loddon whenever the water table rose (which is often). This would no doubt ensure continual pollution for many years to come.

Below is an arial image with key areas marked.



- Key:-
- | | | |
|------------|---|---|
| Red area | - | Site of Proposed Depot |
| Blue area | - | Anglers Carpark |
| Pink area | - | European Union sponsored reed bed |
| Cyan area | - | Area of Current Reed Bed Expansion works. |
| Green Line | - | Course of the River Loddon |

Lets look at the EU sponsored reed bed, this is approximately 6 meters away from the southern boundary of the proposed depot, any leak here will hit this reed bed hard, this reed bed is home to our resident Swan family who, for at least the last 5 years, nest in the reed bed. It is also home to other nesting birds, Coots, Mallards, Great Crested Grebes, Reed Warblers to name the obvious ones. This reed bed is also the only place within both parks where I have seen Water Rail's and then only on 2 occasions to date.

The eastern end of this reed bed is also where the frog population spawn every year, noting they do not spawn anywhere else in the Parks that I have seen, only at this eastern end.

Looking to the Cyan area, this is an area of approximately 100m long where there is currently an ongoing project to plant a new reed bed and thus expand the reed bed habitat for the lake. Several weeks of tree removal works have taken place with the next step to be to plant new reed plants.

Whilst I enjoy the fish and birds within the parks, it should be noted that there are many other creatures living in and around the parks, Moles, Rabbits, Mice, Otters, Munjac Deer, Smooth Newts, Common Frogs etc.

It should be noted, that when Speedy Fuels first moved onto the site they immediately placed large fuel storage tanks around the perimeter of the site and started storing/distributing fuel, without any

concerns for the environment in which they were operating or even basic health and safety. There was no bunding in place and with the tanks located around the perimeter of the site any leakages would have entered the environment immediately and with the weight of the tanks placed on the perimeter of the site the chance of the ground collapsing was a very real risk. Please visit the site and from the EU reed bed footpath you will see the very weak and porous nature of the site's slab construction as it is fully exposed. There was also a very strong smell of fuel whilst standing downwind of the site (in this period there was a westerly wind and thus the anglers carpark (marked in Blue) stank of fuel.

Whilst a Speedy Fuels employee has explained to me that they "had to" get the site operational quickly as they were being evicted from their previous site (through no fault of their own I understand), it does very clearly show their willingness to put business/profit over and above all else and whilst they are now trying to do things properly with bunding and filters on tank vents etc. it does demonstrate that as a company cutting corners when they see fit is an OK practise for them.

Unbelievably, the site has already obtained permission for a limited amount of vehicle movements through the village of Charvil, via a relatively narrow (for lorries) road with tight, blind bends, this road being part of a national cycle route and is crossed daily by many local school children, the route encompassing an already dangerous mini-round-about, where recently a car ended up on its roof following an accident!

If we then look at their proposal to park lorries onsite overnight, these would be parked around the southern perimeter of the site and thus every morning and evening the disturbance of many lorries starting and manoeuvring adjacent to the EU reed bed. The disturbance being noise, vibrations and during the winter months, lights, none of which will enhance the attractiveness for nature to either resume their occupation or encourage new creatures. Nor a major attraction for those of us that utilise the lakes for recreation and leisure.

And again with regards to their transport they are proposing a vehicle wash with a drain into the R Loddon, the poor R Loddon is already suffering, with reduced fish stocks (as per a recent EA fish survey) so the idea of draining potentially dirty/polluted water into it has to be a non-starter. Even if it has been "cleaned" I'd very much doubt that it will be draining "drinking" quality water into the river and then with such a direct connection there is always the possibility of an error and polluted water being drained directly into the river.

To summarise, I can see no benefits what's-so-ever for Charvil residents or Charvil's precious and under pressure environment, wildlife or fauna, with the entire proposal full of potential hazards.

A worse business type for this location I cannot think of.

David Blackmore, Birds List as of 28/05/25, location Charvil Country Park and Charvil Meadows.

Black Headed Gull	Greenfinch	Pied Wagtail
Blackbird	Green Woodpecker	Pochard
Blackcap	Grey Heron	Raven
Blue Tit	Grey Wagtail	Red Kite
Buzzard	Greylag Goose	Redpol
Canada Goose	Hobby	Redwing
Carriion Crow	House Martin	Reed Bunting
Cetti's Warbler	Jackdaw	Reed Warbler
Chaffinch	Jay	Robin
Chiffchaff	Kestral	Shelduck
Common Tern	Kingfisher	Shoveller
Coot	Lapwing	Song Thrush
Cormorant	Little Egret	Sparrow
Cuckoo	Long Tailed Tit	Sparrowhawk
Dove	Magpie	Starling
Dunnock	Mallard	Swallow
Fieldfare	Mandarin Duck	Swift
Firecrest	Mistle Thrush	Tawny Owl
Gadwall	moorhen	Teal
Garden Warbler	Mute Swan	Treecreeper
Goldfinch	Nuthatch	Tufted Duck
Great Crested Grebe	Oystercatcher	Water Rail
Great Tit	Parakeet	Whitethroat
Great White Egret	Pheasant	Wigeon
Greater Spotted Woodpecker	Pidgeon	Wren