

PLANNING REF : 261171
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Maypool
: The Street, Swallowfield, Reading, Berkshire
: RG71RE
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Martin Nelhams
DATE SUBMITTED : 17/06/2026

COMMENTS:

Let me state at the outset that I fully support the Swallowfield Parish Councils objections for refusing this planning application. I object to application 261171 for the following reasons -

A) Conflict with Emerging Policy H10. This planning application places significant reliance on the current shortfall in traveller pitch provision within the borough. This does not automatically make every countryside site suitable for development. Emerging Policy H10 exists precisely to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate

locations for future provision. Further, PPTS paragraph 26 states that traveller development in the open countryside should be "very strictly limited". This is particularly relevant in Swallowfield, where cumulative development is already eroding rural character and placing increasing pressure on local infrastructure. Emerging policy H10 reinforces this approach, paragraph 9.99 states that proposals in the open countryside will be assessed in accordance with the PPTS. Given its isolated location, constrained access, and cumulative

impacts, this proposal conflicts with both the objectives of the PPTS and emerging Policy H10.

B) Insufficient Road Infrastructure under policy SS5.

C) Constraints to Emergency Vehicle Access. The substandard physical width of the single-track lanes serving this site presents a severe operational hazard to emergency service vehicles. I would further refer you to the comments of the "Croudace" Inspector who acknowledged that Trowes Lane is "narrow with verges and ditches", however that site is just off the wider part of Trowes Lane. This current application is along a narrower, pinch-point section. Under national transport and building regulations, a standard fire pumping appliance requires a minimum unobstructed operating width of 3.7 metres to safely manoeuvre and deploy firefighting equipment. Because these rural lanes are narrow, single track, any introduction of long-chassis touring vehicles, stationary commercial vehicles, or regular

residential parking will create immediate physical bottlenecks. This could impede emergency access, contrary to Core Strategy Policy CP6.

D) The single-track lanes which lack formal passing places, because these cannot be accommodated, will significantly increase movement of larger heavy vehicles along these narrow roads will be unsustainable and cause localised gridlock and the physical erosion of protected rural verges.

E) There will be conflict with Vulnerable Road Users on the single-track lanes, there is poor sustainable accessibility and substandard, unsafe pedestrian access. This directly compromises public safety in clear violation of Wokingham Core Strategy Policy CP6.

F) Conflict with Spatial Strategy (Policies CP9 and CP11). Swallowfield is a LDL, which is designed to protect the countryside and prevent urban sprawl outside settlement boundaries. This

application constitutes a speculative intrusion into the open countryside that fails to meet any of the exceptional criteria required for development outside settlement boundaries.

G) More concerning is the Localised Drainage Constraints and Surface Water Flooding Risks. The local sewer network is heavily overburdened, frequently requiring emergency tanker pumping to manage capacity. The proposed development seeks to clear permeable green space and replace it with substantial areas of impermeable hardstanding, gravel tracks, and structures. This rapid change in land use will accelerate unattenuated surface water runoff directly onto the adjoining single-track lanes, which feature no comprehensive highway drainage infrastructure. This proposal fails to satisfy Policy CP7 regarding flood risk mitigation and directly threatens to worsen the existing hydrological instability of the immediate area. Policy TB10 and policy H10 require traveller sites to avoid poor drainage systems and flood risk issues. Infrastructure impacts have not been comprehensively assessed and cumulative development pressure is already occurring in Trowes Lane.

H) In direct contradiction to Policy CP7 this planning application would result in the severe degradation of a valued rural landscape. The southern edge of Swallowfield remains recognisably rural and the introduction of hardstanding, fencing, and utilities will strip the plot of its open, pastoral visual amenity, causing irreversible harm to the rural edge of the parish. Furthermore, the development risks destroying local ecological habitats, mature hedgerows, and natural drainage fields.