PLANNING REF : 252782
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 173 Preston Drove
: Brighton & Hove, East Sussex
: BN1 6FN
SUBMITTED BY : Mr David Allen
DATE SUBMITTED : 10/12/2025

COMMENTS:
Application 252782 - Former Prince Brothers Service Station, Old Bath Road, Charvil
OBJECTION - Environmental Risk to the River Loddon and River Thames
I want to register a strong objection to application 252782 for a fuel-storage and distribution depot at the former Prince Brothers Service Station, Old Bath Road.
Our objection focuses on the severe environmental and ecological risks to the River Loddon, the Lakes, and in turn the River Thames, all of which are clearly material planning considerations.
1. Location within active floodplain - and history of flooding

The site lies directly within the functional floodplain of the River Loddon.
Critically, the site and surrounding area were underwater during the 2014 floods. Floodwater reaches the southern boundary of the site every winter, and regularly extends across Charvil Country Park.
Intensity and frequency of flooding events is expected to rise due to climate change.
Installing nearly 1 million litres of fuel in a location with a proven history of inundation creates an unacceptable environmental hazard.

2. High risk of catastrophic pollution in a flood or equipment failure
A spill, leak or tank failure particularly during flood conditions would rapidly carry diesel and kerosene into:
The adjacent lakes,

The Old River Loddon, and
Downstream to the River Thames.
Hydrocarbon contamination in saturated ground is impossible to clean effectively, and would cause long-term, possibly irreversible ecological damage, including:
Fish kills and collapse of aquatic invertebrates,

Toxic impacts on birds, amphibians and mammals,
Contamination of groundwater and soils,
Destruction of habitats already under pressure from sewage pollution and nutrient loading.
The applicant's mitigation measures cannot meaningfully protect the environment in the event of flooding, overtopping, infrastructure failure or human error.
3. Major threat to a key wildlife corridor and designated green space Charvil Country Park, the lakes, and the River Loddon form a critical wildlife corridor supporting otters, bats, amphibians, breeding birds and rare invertebrates.
Placing an industrial fuel depot at the park's gateway is incompatible with the ecological importance of this landscape. The proposed
"biodiversity improvements" (six trees and small shrub beds) are trivial compared with the scale of environmental risk introduced.
Conclusion

Given the site's position in an active floodplain, its history of being underwater (including in 2014), and the scale of potential pollution to the River Loddon and the River Thames, this development poses an extreme and unjustifiable environmental risk.
Having worked for a nearby local Boatyard for over 40 years and know the area well I believe that this development would be extremely harmful to the local environment.

I therefore urge Wokingham Borough Council to refuse application 252782 in full.
Yours faithfully,
David Allen