

PLANNING REF : 260439
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Spinney
:
: RG40 4UN
SUBMITTED BY : Miss Redacted Redacted
DATE SUBMITTED : 19/04/2026

COMMENTS:

To whom it may concern, I wish to object in the strongest possible terms to planning application 260439. I write not only as a local resident who regularly uses Range Road for walking and recreation with my young family, but also as someone with a deep-rooted connection to this area, having lived in a property directly adjoining the proposed site for 25 years. Over that time I have witnessed the gradual and often sensitive evolution of Finchampstead parish, and I remain closely connected to the locality through ongoing family ties. It is precisely because of this long-standing familiarity with the landscape, infrastructure, and planning context that I feel compelled to raise serious concerns.

Unsuitable Location and Lack of Sustainability

The proposal represents development in a demonstrably unsuitable location when assessed against both local and national planning policy. Range Road is a narrow, single-track, largely unmade lane that is entirely inappropriate for the level and type of vehicular use that would inevitably arise from the proposed scheme. There are no

meaningful amenities within safe or realistic walking distance, which directly conflicts with the principles of sustainable development embedded within the National Planning Policy Framework. This would result in an overreliance on private vehicles, increasing traffic movements along a route that is already constrained, hazardous, and fundamentally unsuited to intensification. Such a pattern of development is inconsistent with both the spatial strategy of the Wokingham Borough Local Plan and the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan, which seek to direct growth to sustainable locations with appropriate infrastructure.

Highway Safety and Junction Constraints

The junction of Range Road with Nine Mile Ride presents particular concern. Visibility splays are poor, and the alignment of the road combined with traffic speeds creates an inherently dangerous situation even under current conditions. This junction is already experiencing increased pressure as a direct consequence of major nearby development, including that associated with Arborfield Garrison and along Easthampstead Road. The cumulative impact of further traffic generated by this proposal would exacerbate an already strained local highway network, contrary to Wokingham Borough Council's Local Plan policies on transport safety and capacity, as well as national guidance which seeks to prevent development that would result in severe residual cumulative impacts on the road network.

Previous Refusal and Worsening Conditions

It is also important to note that a previous planning application relating to this site was refused, in part due to access concerns. Those concerns have not been resolved and, if anything, have intensified due to increased background traffic and further degradation of the lane itself. The physical characteristics of Range Road remain unchanged; it is winding, lacks formal passing

places, and has recently suffered damage to its verges through unauthorised activity. This has further reduced its already limited functionality, making safe passage for both vehicles and pedestrians increasingly difficult. The inability of vehicles to pass safely, combined with the lack of pedestrian refuge, presents a clear and ongoing hazard that should weigh heavily in the determination of this application. Inadequate Access for Development and Servicing

The practicalities of accessing the site for the type of development proposed raise further significant concerns. The delivery and siting of caravans or similar structures would be extremely challenging without causing additional harm to the surrounding environment, including verges, mature trees, and potentially protected features such as those subject to Tree Preservation Orders. Routine servicing requirements, including septic tank maintenance and waste collection, would necessitate access by larger vehicles that the road is simply not capable of accommodating without further physical damage. This

directly conflicts with local plan requirements that development be supported by adequate infrastructure and safe access arrangements.

Emergency Access and Fire Risk

Emergency access is a critical issue that appears not to have been adequately addressed. Modern emergency service vehicles require sufficient width, turning capability, and reliable access routes to respond effectively, none of which are provided by Range Road in its current form. In the context of caravan-based accommodation, which is widely acknowledged to carry a higher fire risk than conventional housing, this becomes an even more serious concern. National fire safety considerations highlight the vulnerability of such developments, particularly where access is constrained. The proposal would therefore place future occupants at an elevated and unacceptable level of risk, while also potentially delaying emergency response times to the detriment of both the site and surrounding properties. Environmental Impact and Policy Conflict

In terms of environmental impact, the site and its surroundings form part of a sensitive rural landscape that contributes significantly to the character and function of the wider countryside setting of Finchampstead. Local planning policy, including the Wokingham Borough Local Plan and the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan, places considerable weight on protecting rural character, resisting inappropriate development in the countryside, and safeguarding

biodiversity. The introduction of a development of this nature would erode that character, introducing visual intrusion, noise, and activity that are wholly at odds with the established use and appearance of the area.

DEFRA Magic Map and Ecological Sensitivity

Reference to the DEFRA Magic Map further reinforces the environmental sensitivity of the location. The mapping layers identify areas of ecological and landscape importance, and developments within or adjacent to such areas are expected to demonstrate clear avoidance of harm and, where possible, measurable enhancement. It is difficult to see how the current proposal could meet these requirements, particularly given the access constraints and the likelihood of physical disturbance to surrounding habitats during both construction and ongoing use. The proposal therefore appears to conflict with both national environmental protections and local policy objectives relating to biodiversity and landscape conservation.

Overall Conflict with Local and National Planning Policy

Taken as a whole, the proposal conflicts with key principles of sustainable development, fails to align with the spatial strategy and policies of the Wokingham Borough Local Plan, and undermines the locally derived objectives of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan. It also raises serious concerns when assessed against national planning policy and environmental protection frameworks. The cumulative weight of these issues clearly indicates that the development is inappropriate for the site and would result in unacceptable impacts on highway safety, environmental quality, and local character.