

PLANNING REF : 260439
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Nine Mile Ride
: Wokingham, Berks
: RG40 3NL
SUBMITTED BY : Mrs B Pope
DATE SUBMITTED : 20/04/2026

COMMENTS:

Subject: Objection to Planning Application 260439 proposed Traveller Site

I am writing to object to the above planning application.

I live on Nine Mile Ride, directly adjacent to the proposed site. For many years I have used Range Road for recreational purposes - dog walking, running and nature explorations with my young Grandson. It is in fact the only option for those residents on this section of Nine Mile Ride to walk etc without crossing either the busy Nine Mile Ride or Sandhurst Road - neither of which have pedestrian crossings nearby and are increasingly difficult to cross with pushchairs and young children given the higher volume of traffic

I have serious concerns about the impact this development would have for the reasons set out below.

1. Conflict with Planning Policy

The site is in open countryside and outside the defined development limits. Because of this, the proposal goes against:

Core Strategy Policies CP1, CP3 and CP11

These policies are there to protect the countryside from inappropriate development, and this proposal does not meet those requirements.

2. Conflict with Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan

The proposal also conflicts with the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan, in particular:

FNDP1 (Spatial Strategy)

FNDP2 (Character and Design)

FNDP9 (Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure)

Overall, the development would harm the rural character of the area and have a negative impact on wildlife.

3. Conflict with Traveller Site Policy

The proposal does not meet the requirements of the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, which expects sites to be:

In sustainable locations
Safely accessible
Not place pressure on local infrastructure

This site does not meet those expectations.

4. Unsustainable Location

There are no local shops, schools or services within walking distance. Anyone living here would have to rely entirely on car journeys, increasing traffic on the lane.

This goes against policies aimed at reducing car use, including CP1, CP6 and FNDP1.

5. Unsafe Access

Range Road is a narrow, single-track lane with no pavements and no proper passing places. It is not suitable for increased traffic, especially larger vehicles.

The junction with Nine Mile Ride is already difficult and has been described as substandard in 2006 by the council. More traffic, particularly vehicles turning right, would make this even more dangerous given the higher volume of traffic caused by the large developments in the locality such as Arborfield Green and Bucklers Park in recent years.

6. Previous Refusal on site

A planning application for this site was refused in 2006 because of unsafe access. Since then, traffic in the area has increased, making the situation worse.

7. Relevant Appeal Decision (Warren Road)

A similar traveller site proposal at Warren Road (Appeal Ref: APP/X0360/W/23/3364902) was recently refused on appeal.

The Inspector raised concerns about:

Poor and unsafe access
Unsustainable countryside location
Harm to the character of the area

These issues clearly apply to this proposal as well and if anything should raise even more concern given the unmade road status of Range Road compared to the considerably wider and Standard road surface on Warren road.

8. Overdevelopment

The amount of hardstanding (around 35% of the site) seems excessive and raises concerns that the site could be used more intensively than stated. This would further harm the character of the area and increase traffic.

9. Missing Information

Important details are missing from the application, including:

- Number of pitches and likely number of occupants
- How sewage will be dealt with
- Drainage arrangements
- Details of utilities

Without this information, it's not possible to properly assess the impact and it is highly likely any drainage works, sewage arrangements and connection of other utilities would be detrimental to the remaining flora and fauna on site. Given the limited road width it would prove very difficult for the vehicles needed for the above to access the site safely and without causing more damage to the lane and proposed site.

10. Impact on Wildlife

Since trees were cleared in October 2025, there has already been a noticeable drop in wildlife.

Previously the site supported bats, owls, deer, adders, grass snakes and slow worms. These have now been disturbed and displaced, with animals increasingly appearing in nearby gardens and roads resulting in the recent death of a distressed deer trying to return to its previous habitat.

The application does not properly address this impact. I note the applicants report from GHA Trees undertaken on January 7th 2026 states a no dig policy will be required however this seems a highly unlikely option given the amount of hard standing proposed as well as the work needed to carry out sewage, water drainage and utilities connections. I would also like it be noted that their assessment stating no trees would need to be cleared is irrelevant given the extensive clearance of many mature trees and shrubs that took place in October 2025 with no concern being given to the state the land was left in - gas

canisters, scrap metal and general detritus can clearly be seen on the cleared area of land nearly 6 months later !

11. Impact on Character of the Area

The site is now clearly visible following tree removal. Development here would change the rural, wooded character of the area and make it feel more urban. The felling of mature trees and shrubs has hugely impacted the wildlife already before any proposed works have begun.

12. Infrastructure Concerns

There is no clear plan for how essential services like water, sewage, and electricity will be provided. Installing these would likely involve significant groundworks, which could damage tree roots and further harm the site.

13. Priority Woodland (DEFRA Magic Map)

According to the DEFRA Magic Map, the site is within or next to priority deciduous woodland habitat. This type of habitat is important and sensitive. Development like this would cause further damage especially with hardstanding and increased activity.

This adds to the concerns about the impact on wildlife and the environment.

14. Overall Planning Balance

Taking everything into account, the negative impacts of this development clearly outweigh any benefits.

The proposal would:

- Be in the wrong location
- Create highway safety issues
- Harm wildlife and the environment
- Change the character of the area
- Proceed without enough information to properly assess it

There are no strong reasons given that would justify these impacts and there are already far better suited areas in the borough where these concerns would not arise.

15. Conclusion

For all of the many reasons above, I strongly urge the Council to refuse this application.