

PLANNING REF : 251458
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Jardine Meadows
: Spencers Wood
: RG7 1YP
SUBMITTED BY : Mrs Susan Bond
DATE SUBMITTED : 27/07/2025

COMMENTS:

The site has already been the subject of a planning application (App 233039) which was refused by Wokingham Borough Council in February 2024. The main reason for refusal was the removal of existing trees, carried out by the developer before the application was submitted.

This reason for refusal still stands, as nothing has been done to mitigate the loss of the mature trees which provided a significant backdrop to Jardine Meadows. No attempt has been made to reintroduce the variety of trees which were removed and, indeed, the land in question has been constantly cut to ensure that no saplings grow in their place.

The arboricultural report submitted in support of this application appears to attempt to gloss over the wholesale destruction of the many trees which were felled by the applicant during the height of the bird-nesting season, in preparation for submission of application 233039. It necessitated the immediate placing of a tree preservation order on the cleared land (TPO-1968-2024), but disappointingly no requirement on the applicant to replace the trees lost with mature species.

The trees form an important part of the wildlife corridor which stretches the length of both Croft Road and Hyde End Lane. Further breaches of this corridor would be deplorable.

The second reason for refusal of the previous application was that no assessment for the presence of great crested newts had been carried out. As far as I am aware, no assessment has been made for this current application.

Equally, it appears that no bat survey was undertaken to support this application. While the number of bats has definitely reduced since the destruction of much of their natural habitat in 2023, there are still significant numbers in the immediate area. A full bat survey should be carried out and mitigation measures need to be put in place should this application be allowed.

Finally, the site lies within the DEPZ of AWE Burghfield, within which development is restricted. The policy against such development must be followed rigorously and consistently to have any impact.