

PLANNING REF : 252498
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 14 Wheatsheaf Close
: Wokingham, Berks
: RG41 5PT
SUBMITTED BY : Mrs Rebecca Brannan
DATE SUBMITTED : 14/01/2026

COMMENTS:

Dear Sir/Madam,

I write to formally object to the above planning application, specifically the proposal for 20 Gypsy and Traveller pitches located off Betty Grove Lane / Mole Road. My objection is not to the provision of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in principle, but to the unsustainable and harmful location and layout proposed in this application.

My objection is made on planning grounds and relates to the following matters:

1. Inadequate Consultation and Lack of Transparency

Local residents were not appropriately consulted regarding the inclusion of 20 Gypsy and Traveller pitches, despite evidence suggesting this element was part of the scheme from an early stage.

- The pitches were not shown on the development plans published on the developer's website.
- They were not clearly identified during the public consultation period or highlighted in materials circulated to residents.
- The existence and location of the pitches only became evident once the planning application had been submitted, after consultation had closed.

This absence of transparency prevented meaningful community engagement and calls into question the integrity of the consultation process.

2. Site Selection Not Justified on Planning Grounds

The applicant has publicly stated (at a meeting held on 09/01/26 at Winnersh Community Centre with Wokingham Borough Council, the University of Reading, and local residents) that this location was chosen in preference to inclusion within the main development due to commercial considerations.

This indicates that the site has not been selected on the basis of planning merit or sustainability, and that reasonable alternatives have not been properly explored.

3. Failure to Assess Reasonable Alternative Locations

There is no publicly available evidence that alternative, potentially more appropriate sites were assessed, particularly locations within the main development where access and infrastructure could be delivered as part of the overall scheme.

The absence of a transparent site selection process undermines the credibility of the proposal.

4. Unjustified Separation and Lack of Integration

The proposed pitches are located at a considerable distance from the main housing development and directly adjacent to the established residential area of Wheatsheaf Close.

This arrangement:

- Physically isolates the pitches from the wider development; -
- Restricts access to shared facilities and infrastructure;
- Fails to support integration or inclusive placemaking, contrary to national planning policy.

The application does not explain why the pitches could not be incorporated within the main development area, where infrastructure and integration could be properly planned.

5. Unsuitable and Unsafe Access Arrangements

Access via Betty Grove Lane is wholly inappropriate for the proposed use:

- Betty Grove Lane is a narrow, single-track road with restricted width, poor drainage, and limited visibility.
- The lane does not form part of the Loddon development, meaning the applicant lacks full control over its improvement, upkeep, or long-term management.
- No robust evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the lane can safely accommodate the additional traffic associated with 20 pitches.

These issues raise significant concerns regarding highway safety, stainability, and compliance with access standards.

6. Lack of a Properly Designed Access Road

The scheme fails to deliver:

- A dedicated access road built to adoptable standards;
- Adequate drainage and surface water management;
- Safe and suitable pedestrian provision.

This is in stark contrast to the infrastructure proposed for the main housing development and results in an inequitable and poorly conceived layout.

7. Cumulative Impact and Over-Concentration

There are several existing Gypsy and Traveller sites in the surrounding area, including sites close to Wheatsheaf Close and Mole Road.

National and local policy requires consideration of cumulative impacts and avoidance of over-concentration. However:

- No clear cumulative impact assessment has been provided;
- The proposal does not demonstrate how it contributes to balanced or sustainable communities;
- Without an evidence-based analysis, it is impossible to determine whether the scale of provision in this area is appropriate.

In the absence of such an assessment, the proposal cannot be considered policy-compliant.

8. Insufficient Information on Site Nature and Management

The application lacks clarity in relation to:

- Whether the pitches are intended to be permanent or transit; - How the site will be managed;
- What facilities will be provided;
- How impacts will be mitigated over time.

This lack of detail prevents residents from making fully informed representations and raises concerns about the adequacy of the submission.

9. Unacceptable Loss of Privacy Through Overlooking

The proposed site would be approximately 18 metres from a principal window of my property, with the site boundary located around 8 meters from my private rear garden. The layout would result in direct

overlooking from pitches and associated activity areas into both habitable rooms and private amenity space.

These separation distances fall below accepted design standards and would lead to a permanent and unacceptable loss of privacy, contrary to the Wokingham Borough Design Guide and Local Plan policies protecting residential amenity.

10. Overbearing and Enclosing Effect

The land is currently open grazing field, providing a rural and open outlook. The introduction of pitches, hardstanding, vehicles, fencing, and associated infrastructure in such close proximity would create a visually intrusive and overbearing development.

The scale, intensity, and closeness of the proposal would result in an oppressive sense of enclosure, causing material harm to residential amenity.

11. Noise and Disturbance

The development would introduce frequent residential activity and vehicle movements immediately adjacent to my property, leading to increased noise and disturbance, including:

- Vehicle movements, manoeuvring, and engine noise;
- Day-to-day activity close to the boundary;

- Early morning and late evening movements.

This would have an unacceptable impact on living conditions.

12. Light Pollution

The site would inevitably require external lighting and would generate vehicle headlights in an area that is currently unlit and rural in nature. Light spill would directly affect my property, further harming residential amenity.

Conclusion

For the reasons set out above including inadequate consultation, unjustified site selection, inappropriate access, poor integration, lack of alternative site assessment, insufficient detail, and failure to consider cumulative impacts the proposed Traveller pitches are unsound in their current form.

As a minimum, the proposal should be subject to full and transparent consultation; supported by safe, purpose-built access infrastructure; located in a manner that promotes integration with the wider development; and accompanied by clear assessments of alternative sites and cumulative impacts.

In addition, the proposal would result in significant and unacceptable harm to residential amenity through loss of privacy, overbearing impact, noise, light pollution, and disturbance from vehicle movements. The development therefore conflicts with Wokingham Borough Council policies on residential amenity and good design.

Yours faithfully,
Rebecca Brannan

