

PLANNING REF : 250517
PROPERTY ADDRESS : The Garage
: Back Lane, Spencers Wood, Reading
: RG71YG
SUBMITTED BY : Ms Stephanie Meakin
DATE SUBMITTED : 15/03/2026

COMMENTS:

I am writing to formally object to the proposed development of approximately 420 homes and an associated business park on land near Spencers Wood.

Firstly, I wish to raise a concern regarding the consultation process. I live within a stone's throw of the proposed site and yet I did not receive any notification or consultation letter regarding this planning application. Given the scale of the development and its direct impact on nearby residents, it is concerning that households in such close proximity were not properly notified.

My objections to the development are outlined below.

The site is not included within the Local Development Plan and therefore represents speculative and opportunistic development outside the borough's agreed growth strategy. Development should take place within sites that have been properly assessed and allocated through the plan-led process.

The existing road infrastructure is already under considerable pressure and is not adequate to accommodate the traffic that would be generated by this proposal. It is estimated that the development would create around 1,000 additional vehicle movements per day. This would exacerbate congestion and increase highway safety risks, particularly along the B3349 through Spencers Wood and towards Three Mile Cross, including the areas around Wellington Estate and the retail outlets located along the route.

The development would also place significant additional strain on local services that are already operating at or near capacity. Lambs Lane Primary School is already full, and local medical services are under severe pressure. In particular, the GP provision in the village is already oversubscribed and struggling to accommodate existing residents. The proposal does not include provision for a new GP surgery, and it is unrealistic to expect existing practices such as Swallowfield Medical Practice to absorb the healthcare needs of an additional 420 households.

The proposal also includes a one-hectare business park that would generate additional commercial traffic, including heavy goods vehicles. This would further worsen road safety conditions, especially given the proximity to Back Lane Primary School where traffic conditions are already a concern and where increased vehicle movements would further discourage walking or cycling to school.

Furthermore, there appears to be little justification for additional business space in this location. The nearby Lambs Farm Business Park has expanded significantly in recent years and is not currently

operating at full occupancy, with units frequently available to let. This suggests that existing provision already exceeds demand.

This proposal also represents an isolated and poorly integrated development. The surrounding area currently consists of low-density housing which provides a gradual transition into the open countryside. The scale of this development would create a harsh urban edge that would be entirely out of character with the existing semi-rural environment.

Significant housing growth is already being delivered in this part of the borough through the Shinfield and Arborfield Strategic Development Locations, as well as the planned Garden Village at Hall Farm which proposes approximately 4,000 homes alongside integrated infrastructure for roads, schools and services. These developments demonstrate that housing needs are already being addressed in a coordinated and planned way.

The site is also located within the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone associated with the Atomic Weapons Establishment Burghfield. Major residential development within this zone raises serious safety concerns and should be carefully scrutinised. The importance of these safety zones was reinforced when the High Court of Justice rejected attempts by developers to challenge the expanded emergency planning zone in connection with proposed development at Grazeley.

Finally, the site's proximity to the River Loddon raises environmental concerns. The slope of the land combined with development pressure increases the risk of surface water runoff, potential pollution to the river system, and the displacement of wildlife habitats that currently exist in the area.

For all of these reasons including inadequate consultation, pressure on already overstretched infrastructure, road safety concerns, environmental risks, and conflict with the Local Development Plan I strongly urge the council to refuse this application.