

PLANNING REF : 260439
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Graiswold
: Sandhurst Road, Wokingham, Berkshire
: RG40 3JQ
SUBMITTED BY : Mr R Aspin
DATE SUBMITTED : 17/04/2026

COMMENTS:

Re: Planning Application 260577 - Objection

This objection is made having regard to the development plan, material considerations, and the clear planning harms arising from the proposal. It is my view that the application should be refused for the reasons set out below.

Conflict with the Development Plan and Policy Framework:

The application site is identified as countryside and lies outside the defined settlement boundary, as established in the 2010 Wokingham Local Plan, the 2024 draft Local Plan, and the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan. The site is not allocated or otherwise identified as suitable for development within any of these adopted or emerging policy documents.

Accordingly, the proposal represents development in an inappropriate and unallocated location, in direct conflict with the spatial strategy of the development plan. Furthermore, both the adopted and emerging local plans make clear that development should contribute positively to the character of the area. In this instance, there are no comparable developments in the vicinity, and the proposal would be wholly out of keeping with the established character of the locality.

Unsustainable Location:

The site is demonstrably unsuitable. It is accessed via a minor, unpaved road and is not within reasonable walking distance of local services, including shops, schools, and healthcare facilities. There is no accessible public transport provision serving the site.

The consequence of this location is a reliance on private motor vehicles for all journeys. There are no safe or practical opportunities for walking or cycling, and no footpath access to the site. This is contrary to the fundamental objective of reducing reliance on private car use and promoting sustainable modes of transport.

Highway Safety and Access:

The proposal gives rise to significant and unacceptable highway safety concerns given that Range Road is a narrow, single-track rural lane, substandard in both width and construction, and wholly unsuitable for the level and type of traffic that would be generated by the development. The road lacks adequate passing places, resulting in vehicles being required to reverse, including onto or from the main

road.

Visibility at the junction with Nine Mile Ride is poor, and the intensification of use would materially increase the risk of conflict and accidents. The road is unsuitable for larger vehicles, including caravans, and the proposal would exacerbate existing safety issues.

It is notable that a previous application on this lane was refused on the basis that it would result in increased use of a substandard junction and generate additional traffic on an inadequate road network, leading to an increased risk of accidents. Those concerns apply equally, if not more so, to the current application.

Harm to Rural Character and Landscape:

The site forms part of a rural area outside the settlement boundary, and Range Road is characterised by its undeveloped, wooded and countryside setting. The introduction of development, including hardstanding, lighting, and increased vehicular activity, would have an urbanising and gentrifying effect, fundamentally altering the character of the area.

The site also forms part of an important green gap between the historic forest rides, including Nine Mile Ride and Sandhurst Road. Development would erode this gap, contrary to the objectives of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan, and would result in a significant and irreversible change to the character of the locality.

Lack of Infrastructure and Environmental Impact:

The site lacks essential infrastructure, including drainage, sewerage, and access to main utilities. The introduction of hardstanding would alter the drainage characteristics of the land and risks causing environmental harm.

In addition, the loss of woodland and countryside would have a detrimental impact on local wildlife, further weighing against the proposal.

Precedent:

Approval of this application would set a clear and undesirable precedent for similar developments along Range Road and in surrounding woodland. This would lead to incremental and cumulative harm, resulting in the gradual erosion of the rural character of the area and a material departure from the development plan strategy.

Retrospective Nature of the Application:

It is also of great concern that this application is retrospective, indicating that the development has been done without the benefit of prior planning permission, and would suggest the need for careful scrutiny.

For the reasons set out above, the proposal is contrary to the development plan, represents unsustainable development, gives rise to significant highway safety concerns, and would cause material harm to the rural character and environmental quality of the area.

In light of these significant issues, I request that the Council refuses planning permission.