

PLANNING REF : 242066
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Flat 22 Ascot House
: Finchampstead Road, Wokingham, Berkshire
: RG40 2NW
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Jack Johnson
DATE SUBMITTED : 16/11/2024

COMMENTS:

I own and have lived in Flat 22 Ascot House on the first floor since December 2022 and strongly object to the proposed plans.

Fire Safety

I have concerns regarding fire safety. When I purchased the apartment I questioned what the fire strategy and evacuation plan for Ascot House was bearing in mind the tragic Grenfell Tower and Lakanal House fires. I was assured by the Site Manager and shown documents that because I only have a single means of escape (i.e. my normal access and egress into Ascot House) that is why each apartment is fully sprinkled to compensate for the single travel distance (Approved Document B Fire Safety) and Wokingham Planning Department made this a requirement. There is no mention of a sprinkler system within the Fire Strategy First Floor Plan 105PL2FS01Rev A document, or sprinklers shown in mine or any of the other apartments current or proposed. Do the proposed plans and fire strategy continue the use and maintenance of the existing sprinkler system?

Passenger Lift

The original plans showed a passenger lift going from ground to first floor. This did not materialise and the existing lift car and mechanism was removed but the lift shaft has remained. I feel this discriminates against less abled bodied people, and should the proposed plans go ahead with higher floors this again could be seen as discriminatory.

Parking Issues

Parking is a constant issue due to the location of Ascot House to Wokingham Leisure Centre and town centre amenities. Motorists finding difficulty in parking revert to parking in Ascot House grounds (see photographs submitted to Wokingham Borough Council ref number: 31934). Proposed plans do not allow for any additional parking for Ascot House visitors, as it did in the original plans. In the 2 years I have been here there has never been any enforcement carried out by the managing agent leaving residents to challenge illegal parking in their numbered parking spaces. The transport statement supplied on page 15 paragraph 4.16 uses data from 2011. I feel this is outdated now and with the advent of homeworking I would challenge that the ratio of 0.71 cars to apartments now is too low based on current parking allocations being fully utilised.

Community Involvement

The statement of community involvement supplied is dated October 2021 and the process was to engage with local people and stakeholders. This should be revisited as Ascot House is now full of stakeholders and therefore should be disregarded as a current statement of community involvement.

Homeworking

I am a homeworker and do not know how I am going to carry on working with construction work going on around me and above me, five days a week plus Saturday mornings. I am concerned for my safety with construction work being carried out right above my head and the risks involved. The construction workers with their vehicles will add to the already congested parking situation around Ascot House and surrounding streets.

Demand for Additional Apartments

There are numerous small apartments under construction or for sale around the town within a quarter of a mile of Ascot House. Is there really a need or demand for yet more apartments on top of Ascot House with all the issues it would bring and the current objections.

Issues with Karla Homes

I have no confidence in Karla Homes and their proposals because they have not honoured what they detailed in the sales brochure when I brought the apartment. During the buying process I asked both the Site Manager and Estate Agent about further development upwards, and both said there are no plans to do so.

Issues with Building

Building maintenance has been minimal or very very slow for example failure of the front door has left the building unsecured for many days on numerous occasions. There have been 3 major water pipe failures and flooding due to the high pressure resulting in no water for the whole building and they have failed to act on plumbers' advice on a water pressure reduction valve fitted to prevent further plastic pipe fittings failing.

Issues with Car Park

No lighting on the East side walkway and rear car park makes it dangerous and unsecured. The car park and landscaping has never been completed and there are exposed electrical cables.

Kendrick Close Houses

I am also concerned for my neighbours in Kendrick Close having to deal with more construction work, more vehicles and they have already lost their privacy as apartments on the East side of Ascot House have full view into their back gardens and houses (see photographs submitted to Wokingham Borough Council ref number: 31934).

I would like to invite the planning officers and borough councillors to visit the site in person and I would like to extend a welcome into my apartment to have a better view of the surrounding properties and give context to the objections they have raised.