

PLANNING REF : 252782
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 17 Mendip Close
: Reading
: RG10 9QE
SUBMITTED BY : Miss Sharne Kirkwood
DATE SUBMITTED : 25/11/2025

COMMENTS:

I wish to object to Planning Application 252782 for a proposed fuel storage facility with access on Old Bath Road, immediately adjacent to Loddon Reserve, on the grounds of highway safety, environmental risk, proximity to a sensitive nature reserve and water system, and conflicts with Wokingham planning policy. Reasons being: -

1. Major Highway Safety Concerns on Old Bath Road

The proposed access point on Old Bath Road is highly problematic:

The road is already hazardous with narrow stretches, poor visibility and limited safe passing places.

It is not designed for frequent HGV movements, particularly articulated tankers carrying fuel.

Increased turning movements from heavy vehicles will significantly raise the risk of collisions.

There are vulnerable users in the area, including pedestrians and cyclists, with limited dedicated pavements or safe refuges.

Fuel tankers entering and exiting the site would create a serious and unacceptable safety risk, contrary to Wokingham's Local Plan policies requiring development to provide safe and suitable access for all road users.

2. Proximity to Loddon Reserve - High Environmental Sensitivity

The site is immediately adjacent to the Loddon Reserve, a locally significant ecological area with wetlands, river systems, bird habitats, and sensitive plant communities.

A fuel storage depot at this location introduces:

potential for contamination of the Loddon river system

disruption to protected species

degradation of important ecological habitats

increased noise, air pollution, and disturbance

Any spill, leak, or run-off could cause severe, long-term ecological damage. This is entirely inconsistent with Wokingham's biodiversity protection policies and national planning guidance on safeguarding sensitive natural assets.

3. Risk to Water Bodies and Hydrology

The Loddon Reserve and connected watercourses are highly vulnerable to pollution. Fuel depots pose risks from:

tank failure

pipework leaks

surface-water contamination during rainfall

HGV accidents leading to fuel spills

Given the site's proximity to water, even a single failure could result in irreversible contamination of both surface and groundwater.

This is unacceptable for a location directly bordering a wetland reserve and contradicts policies aimed at protecting water quality and preventing pollution.

4. Hazardous Substances and Insufficient Environmental Safeguards

Large-scale fuel storage requires robust evidence of:

fire safety systems

secondary containment

emergency response plans

pollution prevention measures

compliance with national hazardous substances regulations

Unless the application demonstrates these in extensive detail, the proposal cannot be safely assessed.

Given the environmentally sensitive setting, even minor deficiencies should weigh heavily against approval.

5. Incompatibility With Local Plan and Spatial Strategy

Old Bath Road and the surrounding Loddon Reserve area are not allocated for industrial or hazardous uses.

This proposal conflicts with:

Wokingham Local Plan policies supporting the protection of wildlife sites and watercourses

policies requiring safe access and traffic impacts that do not endanger residents

policies resisting inappropriate industrial development in rural or environmentally sensitive locations

the Council's duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity

The development is fundamentally unsuitable for its proposed location.

Conclusion

The combination of dangerous access via Old Bath Road, adjacency to the Loddon Reserve, and significant environmental, safety, and pollution risks makes this proposal inappropriate and unsafe.

I respectfully request that Wokingham Borough Council refuse Planning Application 252782.