

PLANNING REF : 253071
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 2
: Canberra Lake Way, Charvil, Berkshire
: RG10 9DH
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Mark Fursman
DATE SUBMITTED : 01/06/2026

COMMENTS:

Dear Members of the Planning Committee,

I am writing to formally object to the proposed pedestrian link intended to connect Canberra Lake Way with the neighbouring development.

Canberra Lake Way was designed and marketed as a quiet residential cul-de-sac, and since residents first moved into the development in 2021 it has become a settled, secure, and close-knit community. The overwhelming majority of households have remained since initial occupation, reflecting the strong sense of safety, stability, and neighbourly atmosphere that the current layout provides.

As a father of a three-year-old and a one-year-old child, the safety and peaceful nature of the area are particularly important to me and my family. Canberra Lake Way provides an environment where young children can play, socialise, and grow up within a safe and familiar community setting. This is one of the key reasons we chose to make our home here.

Residents purchased homes with the clear understanding that the road would remain a closed cul-de-sac rather than becoming a public pedestrian route between developments. Altering this arrangement now would fundamentally change the character and function of the street from what homeowners reasonably expected when making a significant long-term investment.

My objections to the proposal are set out below.

1. Increased Security and Crime Risk

The existing cul-de-sac layout naturally discourages unnecessary foot traffic and unfamiliar visitors. Introducing a pedestrian cut-through would remove this layer of passive security and create unrestricted public access through a previously self-contained residential cul-de-sac.

Crime prevention guidance has consistently identified "permeable" or "leaky" cul-de-sacs as carrying greater risk for opportunistic crimes, as multiple access and escape routes make residential areas easier to move through unnoticed. At present, individuals entering Canberra Lake Way are almost always residents, deliveries, or invited guests. A through-route would significantly weaken this sense of natural surveillance and security.

2. Harm to Child Safety and Community Cohesion

One of the defining strengths of Canberra Lake Way is the safe environment it provides for families and children. The current layout allows children to cycle, play outdoors, and interact safely within the street without the constant presence of passing pedestrian traffic.

The proposed footpath would transform the area from a quiet residential cul-de-sac into a pedestrian corridor connecting separate developments. This would inevitably increase the number of unknown individuals passing through the estate and erode the sense of privacy and community cohesion residents currently enjoy. The strong neighbourly atmosphere that exists today is directly linked to the enclosed and low-traffic nature of the development.

3. Risk of Anti-Social Behaviour

In addition to security concerns, pedestrian cut-throughs can unintentionally attract nuisance behaviour, particularly during evenings and weekends. Residents are understandably concerned that the pathway could become an area for loitering, littering, vandalism, or general anti-social behaviour.

Even relatively minor increases in nuisance activity can have a substantial impact on residents' sense of comfort, wellbeing, and enjoyment of their homes.

4. Overspill Parking from the Adjacent Development

There is also significant concern that the proposed link will encourage overspill parking from the neighbouring development, where parking provision already appears limited.

This issue is not simply hypothetical. My family relies heavily on the available parking within Canberra Lake Way for childcare and family support. During the recent period when a sinkhole caused disruption to parking at the nearby school car park, it took only a relatively small number of additional vehicles parking within the cul-de-sac before my mother was unable to find a suitable space nearby.

This had a direct impact on our family's day-to-day childcare arrangements and highlighted how sensitive parking capacity already is within the road. In addition, my father is disabled, and accessible nearby parking is particularly important for family visits and support. Even modest increases in non-resident parking can therefore create genuine practical difficulties for residents and their families.

Creating a direct pedestrian connection into Canberra Lake Way risks encouraging further parking displacement from surrounding areas and neighbouring developments. This issue is particularly unfair given that parking areas within Canberra Lake Way are privately maintained by residents rather than adopted by the Council.

Residents should not be expected to absorb additional parking pressure, congestion, and inconvenience caused by the insufficient parking arrangements of a separate development.

5. Noise, Disturbance, and Loss of Privacy

The introduction of a public pedestrian route would inevitably increase noise and general disturbance within what is currently a quiet residential environment.

Additional foot traffic, particularly during early mornings, evenings, and school-related periods, would reduce the peaceful nature of the street and impact nearby homes directly overlooking the proposed route. Increased usage may also create pressure for additional

lighting or signage, further diminishing residential privacy and altering the character of the estate.

6. Impact on Local Wildlife and Tranquillity

One of the most valued aspects of Canberra Lake Way is its peaceful atmosphere and connection to the surrounding natural environment. Residents regularly observe local wildlife within and around the area, including deer and foxes, which contribute significantly to the tranquil character of the street.

The increased pedestrian activity associated with a through-route would inevitably create greater noise, disturbance, and disruption to these natural patterns. Increased footfall, particularly during early mornings and evenings when wildlife is most active, risks adversely affecting the local habitat and diminishing the quiet, semi-rural feel that residents currently enjoy.

7. Limited Public Benefit Compared to Significant Residential Impact
The practical benefit offered by the proposed footpath appears extremely limited given that alternative pedestrian routes already exist nearby via Park Lane. The proposed connection would provide only marginal convenience while creating a disproportionate and permanent impact on the quality of life, safety, and residential amenity of existing households.

The Council must carefully consider whether such limited gains in permeability genuinely justify undermining the established character of a successful and settled residential community.

8. Impact on Residential Amenity and Property Desirability

The quiet cul-de-sac nature of Canberra Lake Way forms a key part of its residential appeal and desirability. Residents specifically chose to live in a low-traffic, self-contained environment offering peace, privacy, and security.

Transforming the street into a public pedestrian route risks undermining these qualities and diminishing the attractiveness of the development as a place to live.

9. Lack of Demonstrated Need

Finally, there appears to be insufficient evidence demonstrating a genuine need for this proposal. No compelling case has been presented showing that the existing pedestrian infrastructure is inadequate or that the proposed route would deliver any meaningful improvement in safety or accessibility.

Given the significant impact on existing residents, it is reasonable to expect a very strong justification before such a fundamental alteration to the character of the street is considered.

For all of the reasons outlined above, I respectfully urge the Council to reject the proposed pedestrian link and preserve the safety, privacy, residential amenity, tranquillity, and established character of Canberra Lake Way.

Yours faithfully,

Mark Fursman