

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	261551
Site Address:	St Bartholomews Church, Church Lane, Reading, RG2 9JA
Expiry Date:	26 August 2026
Site Visit Date:	Site visit made for original application (04/04/23)
Proposal: Application to vary Conditions 2 and 9 of planning permission 230594 dated 17/06/2024 for Full application for the formalisation of existing parking area to provide 24 parking bays in association with St Bartholomew's Church. The variation seeks to amend the approved plans and arboricultural information following the removal of two Poplar trees by the electricity board, including replacement of Proposed Site Layout Rev E with Rev F, replacement Tree Protection Plans and replacement Arboricultural Method Statement.	

PLANNING POLICY	
National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
Core Strategy (CS)	CP1 – Sustainable Development CP3 – General Principles for Development CP6 – Managing Travel Demand CP7 – Biodiversity CP8 - Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area CP11 – Proposals outside Development Limits (including countryside)
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)	The JMWP is not relevant to this application site
Wokingham Borough Local Plan	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS2 – Spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy SS5 – Development in the countryside C2 – Mitigation of transport impacts and highway safety and design C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging

Update (LPU)	NE1 – Biodiversity and geodiversity NE4 – Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows NE5 – Landscape and design DH1 – Place making and quality design DH2 – Safeguarding amenity DH5 – The historic environment HC5 – Environmental protection
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document Arborfield and Barkham Neighbourhood Plan Arborfield and Newland Village Design Statement

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
230594	Full application for the formalisation of existing parking area to provide 24no. parking bays in association with St Bartholomew's Church	Approved 16 th June 2024

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Landscape and Trees – No objection subject to conditions

WBC Built Heritage Officer – No objection

WBC CIL – No comments received

WBC Ecology – No objection subject to conditions

External

None

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Arborfield Parish Council provided the following comments: <i>Arborfield & Newland Parish Council notes that this application seeks to vary Conditions 2 and 9 of planning permission 230594 in order to update the approved plans and arboricultural documentation following the removal of two Poplar trees by the electricity board. The Council understands the need for these technical updates and recognises that they do not alter the scale, layout or purpose of the previously approved parking area. No response needed as WBC has already responded that no EIA is needed for this work. The Council requests that Wokingham Borough Council ensures that the revised Tree Protection Plans and Arboricultural Method Statement provide appropriate safeguards for the remaining trees and deliver suitable replacement planting where required. Subject to these matters being satisfactorily addressed, the Parish Council supports the proposed variation.</i>
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	Officer comment: <i>The above is noted. No objection is received from the Council's tree specialist and therefore providing the applicant adheres to these updated reports (which will be a condition of the permission), the development should suitably safeguard retained trees on site. A proposed landscaping scheme will also be secured via condition.</i>
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site is located on the northern side of Church Lane, Arborfield. St Bartholomew's church is Grade II Listed. There is also a church hall on the site which is a more modern addition. The site generally well screened and trees on site are subject to an area Tree Preservation Order 1883/2022.

Surrounding land on the northern side of Church Lane is mainly open countryside. There are several residential properties and other uses (i.e. stables) on the opposite side of Church Lane.

Proposal:

Planning permission was granted under reference 230594 on 16/06/24 for the following:

Full application for the formalisation of existing parking area to provide 24no. parking bays in association with St Bartholomew's Church

The applicant now seeks to vary two of the conditions on that permission. Those are condition 2 (approved plans) and condition 9 (arboricultural information). The variation is sought because 2 x poplar trees were removed by the electricity board in spring 2026 and this has reduced the overall amount of no dig excavations. Consequently this requires the tree plans and reports to be updated together with the site layout plan

Assessment

The principle of development was considered and accepted in the report for the original application. Officers see no reason for the LPA to adopt an alternative view on the principle of development.

As such, this application (and assessment) will only focus on the proposed changes in the development and their impact on relevant material considerations.

Due to the nature of the proposal, it is primarily an administrative one. The proposed layout and arboricultural documents are proposed to be updated due to on site trees being removed by a utility company., The submission therefore seeks to update the arboricultural documents to reflect the reduction of onsite trees.

Upon consultation with the WBC Tree & Landscape Officer, no objection was raised to the revised arboricultural information or site layout plan submitted. Other than the

omission of 2 x trees, no changes to the layout generally, including the approved parking configuration, are incorporated on the site layout plan.

The WBC Tree & Landscape and Ecology Officers requested that previously imposed conditions were re-attached such as biodiversity enhancement, lighting details, landscaping and tree protection. This will be the case, with the only changes to the previously imposed conditions being those to conditions 2 and 9.

The recommendation is therefore to grant permission with the variation to conditions 2 and 9 of planning permission 230594.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): When planning permission is granted for a development that is CIL liable, the Council will issue a liability notice as soon as practicable after the day on which the planning permission first permits development. Completing the assumption of liability notice is a statutory requirement to be completed for all CIL liable applications.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010): In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that persons with protected characteristics as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application and there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

RECOMMENDATION

Conditions agreed:	Yes – all previous conditions attached to application 230594 will be attached, with conditions 2 and 9 updated as per this application
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	3 August 2026
Earliest date for decision:	27 July 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	04/08/26

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

- Badger Sett Consultation Zones

- Archaeological Sites
- Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
- Scale and Location of Development Proposals - Countryside
- Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
- Minerals Site Consultation Area
- Nuclear Consultation Zone
- Tree Preservation Orders
- Landscape Character Assessment Area
- SSSI Impact Risk Zones
- Thames Basin Heaths SPA Mitigation Zones – 5km zone
- Listed Building Buffer Zone