

PLANNING REF : 261939
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Arborfield & Newland Parish Office
: Office The Pavilion At Arborfield Park, Swallowfield Road, Ar
: RG2 9JR
SUBMITTED BY : Mrs Hilary Carless
DATE SUBMITTED : 17/09/2026

COMMENTS:

Although the provision of the nursery and pre-school facilities are of fundamental importance to the Parishes and the local community, there are a number of factors that cause Arborfield & Newland Parish Council to object to this particular application. The most significant factor is the health and safety of the nursery and pre-school users who are potentially put at risk due to insufficient parking and the inability to just 'drop off' children of nursery and pre-school age.

The Parking Strategy, Lighting Assessment and Design Statement submitted for this application collectively fail to demonstrate compliance with key national and local planning policies. While each document provides descriptive narrative, none of them supply the technical evidence required under the NPPF, Wokingham Core Strategy, MDD Local Plan or the Arborfield & Barkham Neighbourhood Plan. Together, they present a scheme that is under assessed, under evidenced and operationally risky, with significant gaps in transport safety, amenity protection, environmental impact and cumulative effects.

Parking & Drop Off Arrangements - Unsafe and Under Assessed The Parking Strategy does not provide any modelling of nursery/pre school drop off and pick up peaks, despite these being the most intense and safety critical periods of operation. The 30m drop off bay is described but not tested against real world parent arrival patterns, dwell times or queueing behaviour. No assessment is provided of overspill parking, informal stopping, or conflict with deliveries and refuse vehicles. The strategy also assumes, without evidence, that shared District Centre parking will always be available for both nursery users and residential visitors, with no cumulative parking analysis across Bohunt School, the leisure centre, retail units and existing residential streets. This fails to meet NPPF 110-113, Core Strategy CP6, and MDD TB21/TB23, which require safe, suitable and evidence based access arrangements.

Lighting Impacts - Incomplete, Unenforceable and Ecologically Weak

The Lighting Assessment shows measurable spill light from Bohunt School's sports pitch floodlighting onto the proposed dwellings, including exceedances of ILP limits on the eastern facade and non compliance with post curfew standards. Compliance is claimed only because the design avoids placing windows on affected elevations and because Bohunt "does not intend" to operate lights after 9:30pm an unenforceable operational assumption rather than a planning control. The assessment does not consider cumulative lighting from the NEAP, skate park, SANG paths or District Centre, nor does it assess ecological impacts on bat corridors or nocturnal species. This is contrary to NPPF 174 & 185, Core Strategy CP3 & CP7, and Neighbourhood Plan IRS3, which require protection of amenity, dark skies and ecological sensitivity.

Design Statement - Descriptive but Not Policy Compliant

The Design Statement provides architectural and landscaping descriptions but omits several material planning considerations. It does not assess access safety, noise impacts, lighting spill, drainage, flood risk, ecological connectivity or cumulative effects arising from the site's location within a busy District Centre. Landscaping is presented visually but without functional justification or evidence of how it mitigates noise, lighting or visual intrusion. The document repeatedly asserts compliance with the outline consent but does not demonstrate how detailed design choices meet the Design Code, local plan policies or amenity protection requirements. This falls short of NPPF 130, Core Strategy CP3, MDD CC06, and CP7.

Summary

Taken together, the Parking Strategy, Lighting Assessment and Design Statement do not provide the evidence required to demonstrate that the proposed development can operate safely, sustainably or in accordance with the Development Plan. The parking arrangements fail to account for peak time nursery drop off and pick up behaviour or cumulative

District Centre parking pressure. The lighting assessment relies on unenforceable operational assumptions and does not address ecological or cumulative lighting impacts. The Design Statement omits key

assessments relating to access safety, amenity, drainage, noise, ecology and cumulative effects. As a result, the submission relies heavily on narrative rather than technical justification and does not meet the evidential standard required under the NPPF, Wokingham Core Strategy, MDD Local Plan or the Arborfield & Barkham Neighbourhood Plan. The application therefore fails to demonstrate compliance with the Development Plan and should not be approved in its current form.