

PLANNING REF : 252498
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Yew Tree Cottage
: Swallowfield Road, Arborfield Cross
: RG2 9JY
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Geoff Hughes
DATE SUBMITTED : 14/01/2026

COMMENTS:

Having lived in Arborfield Cross for nearly 30 years, I, along with the majority of the village at the time, recognised and were resigned to the fact that using the brownfield site on the former Royal

Electrical Mechanical Engineers Garrison was a logical use of the land for the provision of new houses.

We were all told at the time that NO more major development would take place as Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) had a plan to place future housing requirements in other areas of the Borough, recognising that Arborfield & Barkham have more than met their share of new housing.

Why should the villages of Arborfield and Barkham have to carry the new housing numbers on behalf of the rest of Wokingham borough given our communities have already taken 1000's of new houses? Why is it that 97% of all new housing development is to the south of the borough?

The proposed Hall Farm development completely ignores the (<https://arborfield.org.uk/arborfield-barkham-joint-neighbourhood-plan/>) and if approved will result in the destruction of the villages respective identities along with Shinfield. WBC proactively choosing to develop additional 2800 houses at Hall Farm is tantamount to "bullying" the residents who have had to absorb the over development of the Garrison site with broken promises. Enough is enough. We have taken our share of mass development.

Hemming in a housing estate for 1000's of new houses built on farmland, with no existing transport, utilities, or community infrastructure risks locking residents into car dependent lifestyles from the outset. Exacerbating the unsuitability of the Hall Farm development is the fact that houses will be butted up against the M4. The requirement to spend 100's of millions of pounds to build a bridge over the M4 to relieve traffic congestion bottlenecks is a ridiculous proposition and runs counter to the UK governments plans to reduce journeys by car. The Hall farm development will generate higher traffic volumes and undermine local and national objectives for reducing carbon emissions and improving air quality.

The proposed housing development should be directed toward locations that comply with the government's National Planning Policy Framework(NPPF); within a 15 minute walk, cycle, or public transport connection of an existing railway station. Concentrating growth in these well connected areas supports sustainable travel patterns, reduces reliance on private cars, and makes full use of established public transport infrastructure. Focusing new homes in accessible, infrastructure rich locations maximises use of public investment

already made in rail services. It supports local high streets and station area regeneration. It reduces congestion and transport related emissions. It enables residents to meet daily needs without

long car journeys. Lowers infrastructure delivery costs for councils and developers. The north of Wokingham Borough with its' world class railway infrastructure is ideally placed to meet the NPPF framework guidelines.

I am registering my strong objection to the proposed Hall Farm development for up to 2,800 dwellings, schools, roads, and associated infrastructure. This proposal is incompatible with the adopted development plan, contrary to the NPPF, and is fundamentally at odds with the community endorsed vision for Arborfield, Barkham, Shinfield Sindlesham, Earley, Lower Earley, Finchampstead (north) and Winnersh.

The (<https://arborfield.org.uk/arborfield-barkham-joint-neighbourhood-plan/>) (ABJNP) was approved by referendum in February 2020 with 94%

support and adopted by Wokingham Borough Council in March 2020. It forms part of the statutory development plan for the area. Neighbourhood Plans take precedence over non strategic Local Plan policies where there is conflict. The ABJNP did not allocate, support, or contemplate a strategic settlement of this scale. The Hall Farm proposal therefore directly conflicts with the adopted development plan and should be refused on that basis alone. The scale of the development is fundamentally inappropriate.

The ABJNP was prepared to manage the impacts of the already approved Arborfield Green Garden Village. Its policies are designed around proportionate, sustainable, and character sensitive growth. A second strategic settlement of 2,800-4,500 homes (as referenced in various promotional material) is wholly incompatible with the settlement hierarchy and the rural character of Arborfield. This proposal represents a complete re planning of the area, not an extension of the adopted strategy.

Approving this application would undermine public confidence in the plan led system and contradict the NPPF's core principles. There is no credible evidence that the necessary infrastructure can be delivered in a timely, coordinated, or sustainable manner.

I respectfully request that Wokingham Borough Council refuse the application