

From: Connie Davis <Connie.Davis@wokingham.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 June 2026 11:47:23 UTC+01:00
To: "Connie Davis" <Connie.Davis@wokingham.gov.uk>
Subject: Appendix 2 - 251486/FUL - Land west of Edney's Hill

Private: Information that contains a small amount of sensitive data which is essential to communicate with an individual but doesn't require to be sent via secure methods.

From: Connie Davis
Sent: 27 October 2025 16:49
To: Tim Northey <tim.n@amh.co.uk>
Subject: RE: 251486/FUL - Land west of Edney's Hill

Hi Tim,

Thanks for your email and apologies for the delay in getting back to you.

Appreciate there are decisions that go either way in terms of the planning balance and there are also notable recent examples where appeals have been dismissed with issues similar to the ones raised in this application. Ultimately each application is assessed on its own merits. Regarding site sustainability, it is appreciated that this was not a reason for refusal of previous applications. However, as noted in the report, this is for a greater number of dwellings/ households than previous applications which is a contributing factor, along with greater emphasis on sustainable locations for development in the NPPF. The circumstances between this application and previous applications is therefore not identify and the basis for why a different conclusion was reached. Within the HEELA, the site also was removed due to it being deemed an unsustainable location.

Officers would be willing to work proactively in any appeal, albeit officer time is not able to be committed in advance of an appeal starting. However, to try and be of some help at this stage, I have contacted the Head of Green Infrastructure to enquire as to whether he, as the portfolio holder, would allow this development to be accommodated in the Rooks Nest SANG (so that you can fulfil your SANG/ SAMM requirements). If not, you will have to seek alternative SANG/ SAMM provision to comply with policy CP8 and to try and overcome reason for refusal 8. You will note commentary on this in the officer report. I will let you know when I hear. However please note, it is often the case that appeal schemes are not able to be accommodated, hence why I wanted to check to let you know as this matter will need to be resolved your end, in advance of lodging an appeal.

I cannot advise of the outcome of any future resubmission as each application is assessed on its own merits. I do think that on this occasion pre-application engagement would have been beneficial in advance of submission owing to the planning history. There will likely always be some level of harm with a proposal on this site, simply owing to its current state and countryside status. As such, it will be down to whether the planning balance can re-balance in

favour of the scheme. I do not consider a scheme for 16 dwellings could achieve this at the time of writing and based on the previous submission. I can only advise that pre-application advice is sought for any future scheme or resubmission to consider further, but I could not guarantee of a different outcome as it will come down to the planning balance.

I hope this is of help.

Best wishes,
Connie

From: Tim Northey <tim.n@amh.co.uk>
Sent: 21 October 2025 16:31
To: Connie Davis <Connie.Davis@wokingham.gov.uk>
Cc: Matthew Whatley <matthew.w@amh.co.uk>
Subject: RE: 251486/FUL - Land west of Edney's Hill

Dear Connie,

Further to my previous email below, I have been reviewing the reasons for refusal in more detail with a view to preparing our appeal. Reasons for refusal 4-13 appear readily resolvable through submission of additional information including completion of a legal agreement. The substantive issues are therefore reasons for refusal 1-3, which relate to policy conflict, harm to the character and appearance of the area and being an unsustainable location.

A review of recent decision making in the Borough does indicate inconsistencies on these matters, with Officers supporting speculative residential proposals in similarly located sites and with similar issues associated with them. In particular, I would highlight recent applications at Arborfield Cross (Application Ref: 250735) and Finchampstead (Application Ref: 241567).

The Arborfield Cross application for up to 70 dwellings has a comparable background to our site – it is located in open countryside adjoining a limited development location; has an adverse planning history; was rejected as a suitable residential site through the HELAA; encountered a highways objection on sustainability grounds; and Trees and Landscape due to its harmful effect on the Bearwood and Barkham Valued Landscape. Despite this and a number of other issues, Officers recommended the application for approval (see attached committee report) which was supported by Members with a resolution to approve at the July 2025 committee.

In the case of Finchampstead involving a scheme for 38 dwellings, again the site forms open land on the edge of the settlement and is a site that was rejected through the HELAA process with development considered inappropriate due to the character of the landscape and that it performs poorly in terms of highways and accessibility issues. Objections to the proposal were raised by Trees and Landscape and Highways. Irrespective, Officers in carrying out the planning balance found a way to support the application recommending it for approval at the March 2025 Planning

Committee (see attached committee report). Members resolved to approve this application.

These cases highlight that despite the matters included in reasons for refusal 1-3, Officers have been supporting similar residential applications in the Borough given the significant land supply shortfall that currently exists. Certainly, our site is much more favourably located in sustainability terms than either of these highlighted applications given its proximity to Wokingham town centre and ability to access it via non-motorised transport means. Importantly, sustainability has never previously been an issue raised by the LPA, LHA or Planning Inspectors in the planning history of our site, and with no material change in circumstance that would justify such an altered position this could be considered unreasonable behaviour on the part of the LPA.

In light of the above information and in an effort to avoid the need for an appeal, do you consider that there would be any value in exploring whether the cited reasons for refusal could be addressed through a resubmission involving amendments to the scheme? We are open to this option if indeed Officers consider there is value in doing so, but if not and as per my previous email, would you be willing to work with us to try and resolve as many issues as possible as part of the appeal process?

Kind regards,

Tim

Tim Northey *MRTPI BA Hons*
Planning Director

Number: 07792 330576
Email: tim.n@amh.co.uk

www.amh.co.uk



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From: Tim Northey
Sent: 17 October 2025 15:29
To: 'Connie Davis' <Connie.Davis@wokingham.gov.uk>
Cc: Matthew Whatley <matthew.w@amh.co.uk>
Subject: RE: 251486/FUL - Land west of Edney's Hill

Thanks Connie for the clarification.

In terms of trying to narrow the issues for the appeal, is the LPA willing to work with us to assist the process so time doesn't need to be spent on matters that appear to me relatively easy to resolve? I am thinking reasoning 4-7 and 9, together with a legal agreement for reasons 10-13. If so, would you be willing to accept and co-ordinate on material issued prior to formal lodging of the appeal?

Kind regards,

Tim

Tim Northey *MRTPI BA Hons*
Planning Director

Number: 07792 330576
Email: tim.n@amh.co.uk

www.amh.co.uk



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From: Connie Davis <Connie.Davis@wokingham.gov.uk>
Sent: 17 October 2025 13:46
To: Tim Northey <tim.n@amh.co.uk>
Subject: RE: 251486/FUL - Land west of Edney's Hill

Hi Tim,

Thanks for your email.

I appreciate it does appear quite a few reasons for refusal, although you will note 4 of these relate to S106 matters.

The reasons not previously indicated were those pertaining to overlooking concerns from plot 11 was not identified at the time of my earlier email to you as at that point I had not completed my delegated report where some of these finer matters were then reviewed. The reason relating to BNG was also incorporated following the consultation response from Ecology which was also subsequently received after our correspondence. The issue surrounding the BNG baseline relates to the status of T20, although the Ecologist did indicate that this reason could very likely be resolved if the application were to be appealed with some amendments to the baseline. However, at present the baseline could not be agreed, hence the reason for refusal.

Lastly, late comments were also received from Green Infrastructure (POS) who raised the concern about the site's proximity to existing POS and this was then interlinked into concerns about the site's general sustainability to facilities/ amenities by non-motorised means.

All consultation responses and the Officer report should now be viewable on the Council's website - if there are any that are not viewable please let me know. You are correct that there was no objection from the WBC Drainage Officer and so no reason for refusal.

I hope this helps.

Best wishes,
Connie

From: Tim Northey <tim.n@amh.co.uk>
Sent: 17 October 2025 09:58
To: Connie Davis <Connie.Davis@wokingham.gov.uk>
Cc: Matthew Whatley <matthew.w@amh.co.uk>
Subject: RE: 251486/FUL - Land west of Edney's Hill

Hi Connie,

I received the decision notice yesterday and there were quite a few more reasons than had been indicated, and is going to make for a fairly arduous appeal for the parties.

Are you able to provide the ecologist's comments please so we can better understand reason for refusal 9? And we also assume that drainage was satisfied with the proposal as no reasoning relating to flood risk or drainage is included.

Kind regards,

Tim

Tim Northey MRTPI BA Hons
Planning Director

Number: 07792 330576
Email: tim.n@amh.co.uk

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From: Connie Davis <Connie.Davis@wokingham.gov.uk>
Sent: 26 September 2025 15:43
To: Tim Northey <tim.n@amh.co.uk>
Subject: RE: 251486/FUL - Land west of Edney's Hill

Hello Tim,

Thanks for your reply.

In response to your points:

1. Please see attached comments from consultees. I have narrowed these down to the ones that raise concern/ further information for your scheme. If you wish to see those that raise no objection or those no objection subject to condition please let me know.

Please note I am still chasing updated comments from WBC Drainage (as from their initial response it would appear that they missed your drainage strategy that you have submitted), and also comments from WBC Ecology.

2. I haven't yet drafted the report or reasons for refusal. However, based on my thoughts and consultee comments, I would anticipate the reasons for refusal to be along the following lines:

- By virtue of the introduction of new dwellings within this countryside location, the proposal would have an acceptable urbanising of impact on the designated countryside and rural character of the area.
- Highway reason for refusal, to be worded in conjunction with Highway officers based on the contents of their memo
- Impact on RPAs on good quality trees - Although to clarify with Tree Officer
- Failure to demonstrate that the site would be acceptable for residential development in terms of noise impacts - see Environmental Health comments
- Lack of S106 obligations which at this stage appear to be (Affordable Housing, Public Open Space, Employment Skills Plan, Thames Basin Heath (SANG/SAMM), NHS) - appreciated these could have been resolved if the application was able to progress

Owing to the fundamental issues outlined in the first reason, and also the Highway comments regarding an unsustainable location, addressing other matters outlined under this application, would in my view be abortive work at this time.

3. Public Open Space - apologies for any confusion. In your submission I could not see any reference to policy TB08 or how its requirements would be addressed. As mentioned, given the countryside location, officers would expect a landscape led scheme with more areas of open space in the layout. It is appreciated not all typologies can be provided on site, and therefore contributions could likely be sought for typologies as appropriate.

I look forward to hearing how you would like to proceed.

Many thanks,
Connie

From: Tim Northey <tim.n@amh.co.uk>
Sent: 26 September 2025 09:58
To: Connie Davis <Connie.Davis@wokingham.gov.uk>
Cc: Matthew Whatley <matthew.w@amh.co.uk>
Subject: RE: 251486/FUL - Land west of Edney's Hill

Dear Connie,

Thank you for the email although of course it is disappointing that Officers are not willing to support our proposal.

I appreciate that you have set out the LPA's position on the matter, but from our perspective it is a suburban parcel of land with no special status being beyond the

settlement boundary in open countryside and serving no specific purpose. In contrast with previous applications on the site this proposal is much more considered and sensitive toward the character of the area, and offers significantly greater public benefits than previous applications, including the provision of much needed affordable homes. The land supply shortfall now is also much more severe requiring much greater weight to be attributed toward the delivery of new housing.

Notwithstanding this, before I am able to confirm our intentions with the application I would be grateful for clarity on a few matters:

- Are you able to share the consultee comments please as this will help inform our decision making. For instance, Highways require further technical information but we have no idea what this involves and will need to understand this if we pursue an appeal;
- Can you be more specific as to what the reasons for refusal will be if you were to refuse the application?;
- I don't understand your point that we haven't demonstrated compliance with Policy TB08 and open space typologies – a scheme of this size is never going to be providing parks, public gardens, cemeteries etc as it doesn't have the capacity to do so onsite. Offsite contributions are the normal approach as they are civic spaces under the management of the local authority – can this approach not be pursued here?.

I look forward to hearing from you on these matters.

Kind regards,

Tim

Tim Northey MRTPI BA Hons
Planning Director

Number: 07792 330576
Email: tim.n@amh.co.uk

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From: Connie Davis <Connie.Davis@wokingham.gov.uk>

Sent: 25 September 2025 17:43

To: Tim Northey <tim.n@amh.co.uk>

Subject: RE: 251486/FUL - Land west of Edney's Hill

Hi Tim,

Hope you're well.

Thank you for your patience whilst the application has been reviewed in more depth.

I have familiarised myself with the 3 previous schemes at this site (2 applications for 5no. dwellings and 1 application for 8 no. dwellings). All were dismissed at appeal.

Character/ Appearance/ Countryside matters

I note these decisions were relatively 'short and sweet' in their discussion on character and appearance of the area, however all came out with the same strong conclusion that this site, as a largely undeveloped appearance and currently offers a significant break in the built frontage along Barkham Road. This is reflected by its designation as countryside and represents a break in the settlement around the site. Whilst I can see how the site may present itself as an opportunity to infill the settlement, its retention as a visual and physical break of built form has always been protected and valued (by Inspectors). I have no evidence to now disagree with this, and this view is also shared by the Tree & Landscaping Officer.

Under the previous appeals, the layout of the schemes was noted to not relate well to Barkham Road. I note in your planning statement that you have look to overcome this by positioning the dwellings facing Barkham Road whereas previous schemes had rear/ side on relationships. However, from looking at the appeal against application 171276, it would appear that the dwellings under that scheme would face Barkham Road in light of the positioning of the access road. Given this appeal was too dismissed, I do not consider that the dwellings not facing Barkham Road was the sole or primary issue; it would appear from previous decisions that it is the presence of built form in this gap in the built environment.



Given the site's location in the countryside, officer's expectations are that any scheme in such a location should be low density and landscape led. Fully appreciate you have made some density calculations, however in light of the previous appeals for half/ less than half of the numbers we have here, the quantum of development is too high. The application site area is less than that of the previous appeals which means that the density is even higher. Here, the density is approx 23 dph but under the appeal schemes was 8 - 10 dph.

Relative to the size of the site, 16 homes would result in a substantial urbanisation of the site which is in a sensitive location and transitional point with the open countryside when travelling down Edney's Hill. There would, in particular, be a lot of hardstanding in the form of roads/ parking. The more dwellings proposed, the more domestic paraphernalia, movements etc come along with that, which can have non-tangible impacts on the landscape character. The proposed block of flats is a particular feature that is incongruent with surroundings; I appreciate the variety of dwelling types and sizes this brings, and that the block would be two storey like a dwellinghouse, however inevitable its scale is larger and therefore would appear as it is (a block of flats).

I appreciate that a green buffer has been left around the perimeter of the site, and vegetation could help screen the development. However, screening otherwise unacceptable development is not suitable, and indeed the inspector at the previous appeals made reference to relying on it (and how this is not acceptable). Some of the boundary screening is also from trees outside the application site, and so their longevity cannot be relied upon for this reason either as they are not withing the applicant's control.

Given the location in the countryside, parcels of landscaping/ public open space are also expected. I see some has been provided at the southern end of the site. However given the detention basin, presence of parking spaces and the turning head, the true usability of this space is questioned. It would have also been expected to see more landscaping perhaps more centrally within the site, in light of the high dwelling number relative to the size of the site. This, to officers, indicates an over-development of the site as a whole. This is also highlighted by garden depths being sub-standard, although the shortfall not overly drastic, there is not justification for non compliance with the BDG (which states gardens should be 11m depth) however if that cannot be achieved it again highlights a cramped arrangement.

I cannot see that any mention of the requirements of policy TB08 (which breaks down the required public open space typologies required for residential developments) are referred to within the planning statement. Please note that at the time of the previous applications, public open space provision may have been covered by CIL, however this is now not the case and so applicants are expected to comply with TB08 requirements, which has been supported by Inspector's deciding recent appeals in the borough.

Here is a summary of other consultation comments/ their general position to date:

Consultee	Comment
WBC Environmental Health	Noise assessment required
WBC Drainage	TBC - comments made but appears drainage strategy was missed when they were reviewing
NHS	No objection subject to contribution of £14,499 towards creation of additional clinical capacity
Berkshire Archaeology	No objection subject to condition
Highways	Further information on technical matters however unlikely to support the application on the basis of it being an unsustainable location
Affordable Housing	Proposed mix is not currently supported
Natural England	Mitigation for impact on Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area required (ie. SANG/ SAMM required)
Ecology (Newts)	No objection subject to condition
WBC Ecology	Not received
Green Infrastructure	Not received
Planning Policy	The application site closely resembles Call for Sites promotion 5BA017 (see map below), albeit the application site does not extend as far west as the site promotion. Site 5BA017 was promoted for the development of between 8-14 dwellings. The site was assessed through the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) (2024). The site was considered unsuitable for development, as a result of the erosion of the open, rural character of the site and the lack of services and facilities within a 10-minute walk of the site, as it would increase reliance on private car usage and therefore undermine the site's sustainability. The site was therefore excluded at Stage 2c of the HELAA.

Thames Valley Police (Designing out Crime)	Recommendations made to further design out crime
WBC Sustainability	No objection subject to conditions
WBC Tree & Landscaping	Objection
Thames Water	No objection subject to condition
CIL	Development would be CIL liable

Fully appreciate that the tilted balance is engaged owing to the Council being able to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply. The current supply is 2.7 years (increased slightly since your submission when it was 1.7 years). As such, and per the NPPF, any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination. Unfortunately in this case, the adverse impacts, particularly to landscape/ character/ the countryside are considered to outweigh the benefits. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to local policies CP3, CP9, CP11 and TB21.

Summary:

Whilst Officers aim to be positive and proactive with applications, unfortunately in this case it is a scheme that cannot be supported primarily for reasons pertaining to the countryside landscape/ character and appearance of the area. In light of this, I would not be seeking amendments to overcome other consultee requirements as the overall outcome of the application would not change, so there would likely be other reasons for refusal relating to consultee matters. You would of course have the right to appeal the refusal decision. However, in the event you would like to withdraw the application, would you be able to let me know by 1st October?

I do regret this is not better news but I hope an update which allows you to consider next steps.

Many thanks,
Connie

From: Tim Northey <tim.n@amh.co.uk>
Sent: 24 September 2025 09:27
To: Connie Davis <Connie.Davis@wokingham.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: 251486/FUL - Land west of Edney's Hill

Hi Connie,

Thank you for the email and I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

Tim

Tim Northey *MRTPI BA Hons*
Planning Director

Number: 07792 330576
Email: tim.n@amh.co.uk

www.amh.co.uk



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From: Connie Davis <Connie.Davis@wokingham.gov.uk>
Sent: 23 September 2025 17:23
To: Tim Northey <tim.n@amh.co.uk>
Subject: RE: 251486/FUL - Land west of Edney's Hill

Hi Tim,

Many thanks and hope you are well.

Apologies I have not got back in touch sooner. I am currently reviewing the proposal and the consultation responses. I should be able to get back in touch with you with a further and fuller update by the end of the week.

Speak again soon,
Connie

From: Tim Northey <tim.n@amh.co.uk>
Sent: 22 September 2025 17:09
To: Connie Davis <Connie.Davis@wokingham.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: 251486/FUL - Land west of Edney's Hill

Hi Connie,

I hope you had a good break the other week.

I wondered if you are able to provide me with an update on our planning application please and whether you have yet received all the consultee responses you need to make an assessment of the proposal.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

Tim

Tim Northey *MRTPI BA Hons*
Planning Director

Number: 07792 330576
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From: Connie Davis <Connie.Davis@wokingham.gov.uk>
Sent: 26 August 2025 17:35
To: Tim Northey <tim.n@amh.co.uk>
Subject: RE: 251486/FUL - Land west of Edney's Hill

Thanks Tim.

Consultee comments only appear on the website once a decision has been issued and not before.

I have received a number of consultee comments, although still awaiting some key ones (at this stage it is namely Green Infrastructure, Trees & Landscaping and Ecology).

I will endeavour to review the application more comprehensively ASAP and I hope to receive these comments outstanding ones to help inform the assessment. I also note there is some planning history that I will also need to take a look at.

I am out of the office 29th August - 5th Sep inclusive so if there is not much update from me before then, I will put to the top of my list for my return.

Best wishes,
Connie

From: Tim Northey <tim.n@amh.co.uk>
Sent: 26 August 2025 09:58
To: Connie Davis <Connie.Davis@wokingham.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: 251486/FUL - Land west of Edney's Hill

Thanks Connie, that would be helpful if they can correct it.

Do statutory consultee comments go up as I haven't seen that any have come in yet?

Kind regards,

Tim

Tim Northey MRTPI BA Hons
Planning Director

Number: 07792 330576
Email: tim.n@amh.co.uk

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From: Connie Davis <Connie.Davis@wokingham.gov.uk>

Sent: 22 August 2025 15:15

To: Tim Northey <tim.n@amh.co.uk>

Subject: RE: 251486/FUL - Land west of Edney's Hill

Hi Tim,

Thanks for your email. Yes, site visit all fine thank you.

I have passed this over to our admin team to look at. Duplicates do often appear on the system - it is not always clear if it is because the individual has submitted this many times in a row (for example because they are not sure if the submission of comments worked the first time) or if it is a system issue. It could be a combination of both. I will let you know when I hear back. Please note that duplicates of comments will only be considered as one single representation.

Many thanks,
Connie

From: Tim Northey <tim.n@amh.co.uk>

Sent: 22 August 2025 10:48

To: Connie Davis <Connie.Davis@wokingham.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: 251486/FUL - Land west of Edney's Hill

Hi Connie,

I hope the site visit went without incident the other day.

Just something I have noticed is that comments by members of the public are all being posted multiple times under the application – up to 6 times in some cases – is this something the admin team is able to correct please as it makes it hard to follow whether these are separate or duplicate comments?

Thanks,

Tim

Tim Northey MRTPI BA Hons
Planning Director

Number: 07792 330576

Email: tim.n@amh.co.uk

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From: Connie Davis <Connie.Davis@wokingham.gov.uk>
Sent: 18 August 2025 13:56
To: Tim Northey <tim.n@amh.co.uk>
Subject: RE: 251486/FUL - Land west of Edney's Hill

Hi Tim,

That's great, thanks for confirming.

Speak again in due course.

Best wishes,
Connie

From: Tim Northey <tim.n@amh.co.uk>
Sent: 18 August 2025 12:05
To: Connie Davis <Connie.Davis@wokingham.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: 251486/FUL - Land west of Edney's Hill

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Dear Connie,

Just to confirm there is no issue with you visiting the site this Wednesday.

I look forward to discussing the application with you in due course.

Kind regards,

Tim

Tim Northey *MRTPI BA Hons*
Planning Director

Number: 07792 330576
Email: tim.n@amh.co.uk

www.amh.co.uk



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From: Connie Davis <Connie.Davis@wokingham.gov.uk>
Sent: 15 August 2025 12:10
To: Tim Northey <tim.n@amh.co.uk>
Subject: 251486/FUL - Land west of Edney's Hill

Dear Mr Northey,

I hope you're well.

I am the case officer assigned to your above referenced planning application.

You will note we are still in the consultation period for the application. To date I have also not reviewed the application in depth. However, I do feel it would be beneficial at this stage

to carry out a site visit. The visit does not need to be accompanied if it can be agreed I can enter the site alone. I would anticipate this would take around 15 minutes. I was hoping to do the visit Wednesday 20th August at 11am. Please could you let me know if convenient? I apologise for the relatively short notice so if this is not convenient then please let me know.

Many thanks.

Kind regards

Connie Davis

Principal Planning Officer

Development Management and Enforcement

Wokingham Borough Council

Email: connie.davis@wokingham.gov.uk | Tel: 07599103345

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