



Arborfield & Newland Parish Council

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Rodwell St Clair
The Planning Inspectorate
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol BS1 6PN

5 January 2026

Dear Mr St Clair

**RE: PLANNING APPEAL MADE UNDER SECTION 78 (AS MODIFIED) OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY
PLANNING ACT 1990**

Ref: APP/X0360/W/25/3371069

Arborfield & Newland Parish Council strongly object to this application to build 111 properties at Land north of Reading Road, Arborfield.

As detailed in the Council's previous representation (Appendix 1), the application fails to meet many of the policies of the Arborfield and Barkham Neighbourhood Plan, Wokingham Borough Council's Core Planning Policies and the site is not included in the Local Plan which is currently in progress with the Planning Inspectorate.

Whilst the Parish Council is cognisant of the need for additional housing across the Borough and are aware that land north of Reading Road is currently left unused, the massing and density of the development are far in excess to that of the surrounding village. The site may be suitable for development in line with the low-density housing, as evidenced locally, rather than the proposed density which is at odds with the local rural setting.

None of the additional documents from the developer address the fundamental issues with this site, namely:

- Its countryside location on best and most versatile land (as cited in the appeal application)
- Its reliance on car travel – the location of the site means that the only available mode of transport is by car
- The very poor sustainability of the site – Arborfield Cross has one village shop, one primary school and one public house. There is no continuous footpath or pavement to the limited facilities available making it impossible to access safely on foot
- Regular flooding of the site – Appendix 2

Access to the site is also a concern. The entrance/exit to the site is directly onto Reading Road which benefits from a traffic calming scheme. The volume of cars entering and exiting the site will adversely impact the safety of drivers passing through the traffic calming scheme which already has issues with visibility and safety.

The presence of Barbastelle bats on the site must also be a consideration on appeal. These are the rarest bat species in Europe and are protected under Annex II of the EU habitats directive.

The Parish Council urge that due consideration is given to these concerns which directly impact our residents and our community.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hilary Carless'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'H' and a long, sweeping underline.

Hilary Carless

Parish Clerk

Sent on behalf of Arborfield & Newland Parish Council

Arborfield and Newland Parish Council

Planning application 243099 Land North of Reading Road

Arborfield and Newland Parish Council strongly object to this planning application for 111 properties at Land north of Reading Road. The application is a speculative proposed development out of keeping with the locality and development of a greenfield site outside the settlement boundary. The development offers nothing in the way of additional infrastructure or benefit to the local community and brings additional issues to the village locality with respect to traffic volumes and stresses on current services.

This planning application tries to circumvent, through timing, the implementation of the new Local Plan Update which is currently in process. The planning statement with this proposed development makes the admission that the development doesn't meet a number of the core planning policy criteria which is further indicative of a speculative planning application

The proposed development fails to meet the policies of the Arborfield and Barkham Neighbourhood Plan as detailed below:

IRS02 – Recognise, respect and preserve identity and rural nature of settlement -

this proposed site fails to preserve the nature of the rural identity of the village by building on green fields that define the rural nature of the village. It fails to respect the green fields in and around the village in its entirety as the proposed development sits on green fields outside the settlement boundary.

IRS04 — Protection and enhancement of the historic character of the area –the proposed development makes no attempt to address this policy and the proposed 111 properties being out of keeping with the historic nature of the area.

TC2 – Properly planned and designed new facilities –the development fails to offer any new facilities for the local area of any kind.

AD1 – New development within development limits –the development fails to meet any of the criteria for this policy in that this is solely a green field development outside the settlement boundary of Arborfield.

GA1 – Minimise additional traffic on unsuitable roads –the proposed development will add additional vehicle movement to local roads.

GA3 – Public transport improvements and long-term viability –the proposed development shows no intent to improve local public transport. The village is served by a daytime bus route which links to Reading and to Wokingham, but buses are infrequent and poorly routed for most required services.

The proposed development fails to meet the Wokingham Borough Council's Core Planning Policies as shown below:

CP1 – Sustainable Development

7) This development site sits wholly on greenfield agricultural land outside the settlement boundary of Arborfield.

11) Demonstrate how they support opportunities for reducing the need to travel, particularly by private car in line with CP6 – the development relies solely on the use of cars, the local bus routes are poor and not directly linked with this site, which would push most residents to opt for the car as their primary source of transport.

CP2 – Inclusive communities – the development fails to meet any of the core principle of inclusive communities and offers nothing to the local community and, in fact, relies solely on the link to the local community infrastructure while adding or offering nothing of value in return.

CP3 – General Principle for development

- a) **Are of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area** – the massing of this site is completely at odds with the size of Arborfield village. Currently the village has circa 87 properties and the development proposes to add another 111 properties which would be an increase of over 100% in the size of the village and unsustainable for the facilities currently in the village.
- h) **Contribute towards the provision of an appropriate sustainable network of community facilities** - the proposed development offers no additional facilities to the community but solely relies on those already in place to provide for the development.

CP6 – Managing Travel demand

- a) **Provide for sustainable forms of transport to allow choice** - the proposed development offers little in the way in terms of choice for residents. There is a bus service through the village, but this is limited to daytime travel and not well connected with local towns and centres. This development relies solely on the use of cars to and from the site with alternative forms of transport given little thought.
- c) **Improve the existing infrastructure network, including road, rail and public transport, enhance facilities for pedestrians and cyclists** - the development offers no improvements to the infrastructure network locally, with only additions to facilities being for entry and exit to the site and altering the present network to add only benefit to the proposed development.

CP9 – Scale and location of development proposals.

3) **The limited development locations of Arborfield** – the proposed development sits wholly outside the settlement boundary of Arborfield but relies completely on the settlement to provide justification for its development. Arborfield is designated as an area of limited development due to the levels of facilities and services and this development would put an additional 111 properties to the village which only consists of approximately 87 properties an increase of over 100% and offering no improvement to services or facilities currently in place. The proposed development would create an unsustainable site relying solely on the facilities already in place.

CP11 - Proposals outside Development Limits (including countryside)

2) **It does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings** - the development fails to meet this policy in all facets of the development. It is a greenfield development outside the settlement boundary.

CP18 - Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location

As note to CP18, this proposed development site outside the Arborfield Garrison SDL but, as with many other previous refused applications, tries to imply the use of the facilities and its location close to the SDL as part of the reasoning for planning approval.

Flooding at the proposed development site on Land north of Reading Road on 1 October 2024

