

PLANNING REF : 261394
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Arborfield Village Hall
: Eversley Road, Arborfield
: RG2 9PQ
SUBMITTED BY : Arborfield & Newland Parish Council
DATE SUBMITTED : 22/07/2026

COMMENTS:

Arborfield & Newland Parish Council object to this application for the reasons set out below.

1. Conflict with Countryside and Landscape Policies (WBC Core Strategy & MDD)

The proposal represents a permanent change of use of agricultural land to a residential caravan site, introducing hardstanding, fencing, day rooms and domestic activity into an area of open countryside.

This is contrary to:

- Core Strategy CP11 - Development in the Countryside - restricts non essential development outside settlement limits
- Core Strategy CP3 - Character of the Area - requires development to respect rural character.
- MDD Policy TB21 - Landscape Character - seeks to protect the openness and rural qualities of landscape character areas.
- Wokingham Landscape Character Assessment (Area L2) - referenced in the application documents, which emphasises the sensitivity of this landscape to build development.

The proposed

caravan site would materially erode the rural setting of Eversley Road and introduce urbanising features incompatible with the established landscape character.

2. Conflict with the Arborfield & Barkham Neighbourhood Plan)

The Neighbourhood Plan contains several policies directly relevant to this proposal:

- IRS1 - Separation of Settlements - reduces perceived separation between settlements, contrary to IRS1.
 - IRS2 - Rural Identity and Setting - harms the rural identity of the area
 - IRS3 - Protection of Natural Environment and Green Spaces - Results in loss of natural green space and countryside character
 - AD1/AD3 - Development Outside Settlement - represents inappropriate development outside settlement limits without compelling justification
 - GA1 - Traffic on Unsuitable Roads - Adds vehicle movements, including towing caravans, onto Eversley Road, which the Neighbourhood Plan identifies as a road already under pressure
- The proposal is therefore in conflict with multiple Neighbourhood Plan policies.

3. Insufficient Justification for Location of Gypsy & Traveller Pitches

While Wokingham Borough Council must meet its Gypsy & Traveller accommodation needs, PPTS (Planning Policy for Traveller Sites) requires sites to be:

- Well located
- Safe
- Non harmful to the local environment
- Acceptable in terms of access and

infrastructure

This application does not demonstrate:

- Why this specific countryside location is appropriate
- How landscape harm

will be mitigated beyond basic planting

- That Eversley Road is suitable for additional traffic movements
- That alternative, less sensitive sites have been considered

The Sustainability Appeal Decisions document listed in the application does not provide sufficient justification for this particular site.

4. Landscape,

Visual and Character Harm

The Landscaping Detail and Block Plan documents show fencing, day rooms, hardstanding and domestic paraphernalia that will be visible from Eversley Road and surrounding viewpoints. The proposed planting:

- Is limited in extent
- Will take years to mature
- Does not fully mitigate the introduction of permanent built form

This results in long-term visual harm contrary to:

- MDD TB21 – Landscape Character
- Core Strategy CP3 – Character of the Area
- Neighbourhood Plan IRS2 & IRS3

5. Traffic and Access Concerns

Eversley Road is a rural road with known constraints. The addition of:

- Multiple vehicles per pitch
- Towing caravans
- Service vehicles
- Increased turning movements

Raises concerns under:

- Core Strategy CP6 – Managing Travel Demand
- Neighbourhood Plan GA1 –

Traffic on Unsuitable Road

No robust transport assessment has been provided.

6. Cumulative Impact – Reference to Applications 260746, 260735 and 260737

Arborfield & Newland Parish Council notes that applications 260746, 260735 and 260737 relate to additional Gypsy & Traveller pitches in the wider Arborfield area. Taken together, these applications represent a significant cumulative increase in Traveller accommodation within a small geographic area.

This cumulative impact:

- Intensifies pressure on rural roads
- Concentrates development in the countryside
- Further erodes rural character
- Conflicts with Neighbourhood Plan policies on settlement identity and rural setting

The Parish Council considers that the cumulative effect of these applications must be assessed, and that approving 261394 would contribute to an unbalanced distribution of Traveller sites in Arborfield.

7. Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

Concerns

Although a Biodiversity Net Gain Report is included, the proposal still results in:

- Loss of agricultural land
- Introduction of hard surfaces
- Fragmentation of green infrastructure

This

conflicts with:

- MDD CC03 – Green Infrastructure
- Neighbourhood Plan IRS3 – Natural Environment

BNG calculations alone do not mitigate the landscape and character harm caused by the change of use.

8. Conclusion

Arborfield & Newland Parish Council objects to application 261394 on the grounds of:

- Conflicts with WBC countryside, landscape and character policies
- Conflicts with multiple Arborfield & Barkham Neighbour hood Plan policies
- Insufficient justification for the site's suitability
- Harm to rural character and landscape
- Traffic and access concerns

Accordingly, the Parish Council objects to the application as the information submitted is insufficient to enable a full and proper assessment of the proposal.