PLANNING REF : 262409
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Arborfield Village Hall
: Eversley Road, Arborfield
: RG2 9PQ
SUBMITTED BY : Arborfield & Newland Parish Council
DATE SUBMITTED : 24/11/2026

COMMENTS:
The Parish Council recognises the requirement for Wokingham Borough to provide sufficient Gypsy and Traveller accommodation to meet identified needs and supports the principle that suitable and sustainable sites should be brought forward through the planning system. However, the Parish Council objects to this application because it fails to demonstrate compliance with key policies of the Wokingham Core Strategy and the wider objectives of sustainable development contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Conflict with Core Strategy Policy CP11 – Development in the Countryside The application site lies outside the defined development limits and within the countryside. Policy CP11 seeks to protect the countryside from inappropriate development and maintain its rural character. Whilst the applicant relies heavily on existing
vegetation and screening to reduce visibility, the Parish Council considers that the proposal would nevertheless introduce an intensified residential use, together with associated vehicles, hardstanding, domestic activity, lighting, storage and infrastructure into a countryside location. The proposal would result in the further urbanisation of the area and would contribute to the gradual erosion of rural character. Screening does not remove the fundamental change of land use or the impact on the character and function of the
countryside. Conclusion: The proposal conflicts with Policy CP11 Conflict with Core Strategy Policy CP3 – General Principles for Development Policy CP3 requires development to be appropriate in scale and character and to avoid unacceptable impacts on the surrounding environment. The Parish Council is concerned that insufficient weight has been given to: • The cumulative impact of development within and around Highfield Park. • The increase in residential activity in a rural location. • The visual impact of caravans, vehicles, domestic paraphernalia and associated infrastructure. • The effectiveness of
screening throughout the year, particularly during winter months. • The incremental suburbanisation of the countryside. The application fails to demonstrate that the scale and intensity of development is compatible with the character of the surrounding area. Conclusion: The proposal conflicts with Policy CP3. Unsustainable Location Contrary to Policy CP1 and the NPPF Policy CP1 and the NPPF seek to promote sustainable patterns of development and reduce dependence on private vehicles. Although the Transport Statement seeks to demonstrate that vehicular access can be achieved safely, it does not adequately demonstrate that the site is a sustainable location for
permanent residential occupation. The Parish Council notes that: • There is no continuous footway along the Eversley Road frontage. • Residents would be heavily dependent upon private motor vehicles for day-to-day journeys. • Limited evidence has been provided regarding realistic access to services by walking, cycling or public transport. • The application focuses primarily on vehicle movements rather than sustainable travel opportunities. Conclusion: The proposal fails to demonstrate compliance with the sustainability

objectives of Policy CP1 and the NPPF. Inadequate Demonstration of Active Travel Connectivity Whilst the Transport Statement references relevant
transport guidance and standards, it provides limited analysis of pedestrian and cycle accessibility. The site lacks direct frontage pedestrian infrastructure and there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate safe, convenient and attractive walking and cycling routes linking the development to local facilities and services. Conclusion: The proposal does not adequately support the objectives of active travel and sustainable movement promoted by both local and national planning policy. Cumulative Impact and Incremental Intensification The Parish Council is concerned that the application has not fully assessed the cumulative effects of existing and proposed development associated with Highfield Park and the surroundingarea. The cumulative impacts include: • Progressive loss of countryside character. • Increased residential intensity. • Additional vehicle
movements. • Pressure on local infrastructure and services. • Incremental urbanisation of a rural location. Applications should not be considered in isolation where there is a clear potential for cumulative effects arising from ongoing and future development proposals. Conclusion: Insufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the cumulative impacts ofdevelopment can be accommodated without harm. Ecology, Trees and Long-Term Landscape Protection The Parish Council acknowledges that ecological and arboricultural assessments have been submitted. However, concerns remain regarding the long-term protection of the vegetation relied upon by the applicant to mitigate visual impacts. The Parish Council remains concerned about: • Potential impacts on hedgerows and mature trees. • The adequacy of root protection measures. • Future pressure to remove or reduce boundary screening vegetation. • The long-term management and retention of landscape features relied upon to justify the application. Conclusion: Insufficient certainty has been provided that the existing landscape framework will be protected and maintained in perpetuity. Need for Traveller Accommodation and the Emerging Local Plan The Parish Council acknowledges the identified need for additional Gypsy and Traveller accommodation within Wokingham Borough and supports the objective of delivering sufficient authorised sites to meet future requirements. However, Wokingham Borough Council is currently progressing its updated Local Plan, which is expected to be adopted in the near future and will provide a comprehensive, evidence-led strategy for meeting future housing and Traveller
accommodation needs across the Borough. The Local Plan process is specifically intended to identify the most appropriate and sustainable locations for development following detailed assessment of: •
Accessibility and transport sustainability. • Landscape and environmental constraints. • Infrastructure capacity. • Cumulative impacts. • Relationship to existing settlements and communities. The Parish Council considers that the existence of an identified need does not automatically render every site suitable for development. The critical issue is whether the proposed site is appropriate,
sustainable and compliant with planning policy. Given the advanced stage of the emerging plan-making process, significant weight should be given to the forthcoming strategic approach to Traveller site provision rather than permitting unsuitable development in the countryside that conflicts with adopted policy. Conclusion: The acknowledged need for additional Traveller accommodation does

outweigh the policy conflicts and harms identified within this objection. Conclusion The Parish Council fully acknowledges the need for additional Traveller accommodation within Wokingham Borough and supports the provision of suitable sites through theplanning system. However, this need must be balanced against the requirements of the adopted development plan. For the reasons set out above, the Parish Council considers that the proposal: • Conflicts with Core Strategy
Policy CP11 through inappropriate development in the countryside. • Conflicts with Core Strategy Policy CP3 through its adverse impact on character and the cumulative urbanisation of the area. • Fails to adequately satisfy the sustainable development requirements of Core Strategy Policy CP1 and the National Planning Policy Framework. • Does not sufficiently demonstrate sustainable access by means other than the private car. • Raises ongoing concerns regarding cumulative impacts and the long-term protection of landscape features. The rish Council respectfully requests that this planning permission is refused.