

PLANNING REF : 251984  
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Arborfield Village Hall  
: Eversley Road, Arborfield  
: RG2 9PQ  
SUBMITTED BY : Arborfield & Newland Parish Council  
DATE SUBMITTED : 22/01/2026

COMMENTS:

Arborfield and Newland Parish Council

Application number:

251984

Proposal: Application for approval of Reserved Matters pursuant to Outline Planning Consent 223083 (as varied by 243190) for the erection of up to 11 no. commercial units to provide 6,986sqm GIA commercial/employment development predominantly within Class B8 and/or Class E(g)uses with supporting facilities within Class E uses comprising ancillary offices, trade counters and food/drink facilities with highway works and strategic landscaping. Details of appearance and landscaping to be considered.

Site Address: Land south of Bridge Farm, Reading Road, Arborfield, Berkshire RG2 9HT

Response from Arborfield & Newland Parish Council

251984 - Bridge Farm - Arborfield and Newland Parish Council

strongly objects to this planning

application - 223083 originally passed at planning committee on the merits of its economic benefit to the area and no other reason. The continued changing of the planning application and lack of any progress of the development highlights that the economic argument was and is fundamentally flawed with demand absent in the area for further business units of this type or they would have been built. The planning documentation is a confused mass of erroneous assumptions and abuse of the English language. One section goes on to state that not answering a leaflets is considered as support which is a ridiculous statement and demonstrates the depths this developer will stoop to to paint the development in a positive light.

This is now a confusing jumble of additional reserved matters deviating from the original application and an attempt to use planning applications to stretch out the timeline for as long as possible on this development while not undertaking the development itself. The site started as 11 units and now reduced to 7 units of varying size.

The original application 223083 was submitted in October 2022 and decided finally in February 2024 - now 2 years later nothing has been done with the development site and we see continual changes and applications under reserved matters to stretch the time to develop the site. If this site was of 'economic benefit' to the area then it would have been built and sits in the same pot as Boundoak industrial site which though planning approval was given no work has begun on that site, so the argument in favour of 'economic benefit' must be fundamentally flawed and hold no weight. We urge WBC planning team to reject these further applications and remove prior approval on the grounds that no work has begun on the sites and the original driving argument for economic benefit is fundamentally flawed.

Arborfield and Newland Parish Council

reiterates the failure of this development to meet many of the neighbourhood plan policies and the core planning policies of Wokingham borough council. All these still hold true for this site and more so now the 'economic benefits' can be shown to be fundamentally flawed

Policy IRS1 - PRESERVATION OF SEPARATION OF SETTLEMENTS- section a - Preserve the character and appearance of the countryside - this development aims to build an industrial estate on designated countryside and from the Landscape and visual impact assessment confirming that significant landscaping and tree planting would be required to hide the buildings from all directions of visual aspect would indicate that this development will not preserve the character or appearance of the countryside but irrevocably alter the countryside along Observer Way.

Policy IRS2: RECOGNISE, RESPECT AND PRESERVE IDENTITY AND RURAL SETTING OF SETTLEMENTS, Development proposals must recognise, respect and preserve the identity and rural setting of settlements, with regard to: a) Scale and form of the development - this development is out of scale with all the building and residences in its locality,, with it multiple large business units it is incongruous with the present farm buildings and residential properties in close proximity to the development site. As stated previously the need to plant significant numbers of trees to screen the development is tacit acknowledgement of its over scale design for the area and foreseen visual impact by virtue of its out of place scale.

Following on from this, with reference to section 4.13 to 4.16 the development would restrict views of Pound Copse ancient woodland from the West and additional tree planting as suggested by the visual impact assessment would further hide the scale of the business units and any direct views across the fields of Pound Copse.

POLICY IRS3: PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND GREEN

SPACES - 1. Development proposals should conserve and enhance the natural environment and green spaces of the area, this development will have an overall negative affect on the biodiversity locally, it will affect Pound Copse Ancient woodland with light, noise and particulate pollution from the large industrial vehicle movements. It will affect the use of the ancient woodland for a number of species locally by adding a barrier to their entry to the ancient woodland and creating barren tarmac area adjacent to the ancient woodland.

The building of a sizable industrial development next to Pound Copse will change the nature of the ancient woodland forever and cause a loss of amenity for the public who use these public open spaces by virtue of the scale and massing of the business units directly next to the ancient woodland, including noise and particulate pollution into Pound Copse.

POLICY TC3: CONDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES IN THE RYSIDE AND AGRICULTURE 1. New or existing businesses in the countryside are encouraged to re-use lawful buildings that are vacant - it should be noted that with reference to the policy of TC3 there are already a number of industrial units available in the locality such as Hogswood industrial estate and Nine Mile Ride industrial units that have numerous vacancies for small and medium sized businesses and ANPC would encourage the full use of those facilities before further units are built anywhere locally.

POLICY AD3: HIGH

QUALITY DEVELOPMENT WITH GENEROUS OPEN SPACE, PROPERLY LANDSCAPED – in stark contrast to this neighbourhood plan policy this development is built of metal clad industrial units with no reference to local form or character of buildings. In addition, as stated numerous times in this objection the use of increased tree planting to screen the site is again acknowledgement of the impact on visual aspect of the site in both scale, massing and design of the units. POLICY GA1: MINIMISE ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC ON UNSUITABLE ROADS – the development would bring ever more heavy industrial vehicles to the roads across Arborfield parish and show marked increases in traffic volumes locally for both persons working at the development and the frequent deliveries required to sustain an industrial estate and the businesses within.

With regards to WBC Core Planning Strategies for development this development can be seen to contravene the following policies...

CP1 – Sustainable development section – section 2 – minimise emissions of pollutants – in this case this development would be bring industrial traffic into the centre of Arborfield and additional vehicle use of local roads by cars, vans and large lorries.

CP1 sustainable development – section 11 – demonstrate how they support opportunities for reducing the need to travel particularly in private cars – this development offers no alternatives to accessing the site but by car or industrial vehicle. This is an island site well away from any alternative travel arrangements.

CP1 sustainable development – section 12 – There is little to no evidence of the inclusion of on-site renewables or any further environmental considerations for the site such as grey water recycling.

CP3 – General principles for development – are of an appropriate scale and mass without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces and their quality of life. This development is for large industrial units to be placed in direct line of site from Pound Copse and Greensward Lane and would be an have an overbearing impact on the amenity of Pound Copse ancient woodland which abuts this development. The massing and scale of this development is such that their own impact assessment concludes that additional screening is required and tacitly admits that the mass and scale is beyond what would reasonably be allowed to be developed at this location without much additional screening (hiding) of the development.

CP6 Managing Travel Demand – section e – this development offers no mitigation for the adverse effect of the vehicular traffic to and from site on local and strategic roads. This industrial site would facilitate large heavy goods vehicles and routes to and from the site would require use of traffic controlled local roads and very busy strategic roads and only add to the already congested nature of the local roads.

CP7 – Biodiversity sections A B and C – the location of this development abutting an ancient woodland at Pound Copse and designated borough greenspace and would be detrimental to the biodiversity of Pound Copse through Light, Noise and particulate pollution from the industrial nature of the development. The PA offers no appropriate compensation measures to offset the harm it will inflict upon the local environment and especially the ancient woodland. This development does nothing to enhance local biodiversity and would on the balance of probability irrevocably harm the biodiversity locally.

CP9 – Scale and location of development proposals – this development

is located in Arborfield which is stated as an area of limited development in WBC core planning policies.

CP10 - Improvements to Strategic Transport Network - in combination with the developments lack of approach to sustainable travel locally this development has made no attempt to offer improvements in local strategic travel network, a network that by its intended use will rely heavily upon for the movements of the heavy industrial vehicles that will be using the site.

CP11 - Proposals

outside development limits (including countryside) section 1 and 2 - this development would not contribute to local rural enterprises or to encourage rural enterprises, there are already many local industrial estates with vacant plots not being used. The development by its location is an expansion of the original farm building and away from the original farm building that have been on site for some time. This development would act as a slow in-fill of the area along

Observer way and act to alter countryside aspect of the area to one of industrial development.

CP15 - Employment Development - this development is in direct contravention to CP15 as it sits outside any of WBC Core employment areas.