

PLANNING REF : 242421
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Arborfield Green Community Centre
: Arborfield, Reading
: RG2 9ND
SUBMITTED BY : Barkham Parish Council
DATE SUBMITTED : 14/10/2024

COMMENTS:

Barkham Parish Council object to this application.

The easterly part of this site on the north side of School Road was included in an earlier planning application dating back to 2018 - 180596 - which was refused. The reasons for refusal then are just as valid as today even though the proposal does not extend south of School Road as did the earlier failed application.

Barkham strongly opposed Application 180596 - its response is attached - as it does the current version. The reasons for this continued opposition are briefly summarised below:

The development will do considerable and unnecessary harm to the countryside

It lies outside the settlement area
It will encroach on the green wedge between Barkham Hill and Arborfield Cross will lead to the urbanisation of a countryside area.

It is contrary to many local policies including: CP1, CP3, CP11 of the 2010 Core Plan and CC01, CC02 and TB21 of the 2014 MDD.

The Site is not sustainable

In 2018, BPC carried out an extensive survey of access to a number of facilities - both existing and planned - and matched these to the requirements of The Wokingham Borough Guide SPD dated Jun 2012. The requirements were not satisfied.

The deficiencies identified in 2018 become even more significant today as WBC has declared a climate emergency and there is even more need to reduce the frequency of private car travel.

Policies CP1 and CP3 of the 2010 Core Plan are amongst those that are not satisfied by these proposals.

The application attempts to pre-empt the Local Plan Update WBC has just approved an updated version of the Local Plan for Regulation 19 submission within the timing allowed by the transition rules for introducing the updated NPPF. This would repair the 5 Year Land Supply metric.

This site is not included in the LPU submission on grounds which include being located between settlement limits of Arborfield and Arborfield Cross and it would fail to provide a satisfactory relationship within the existing settlement pattern.

Planning History and Location

There have been many planning applications along School Road which have been refused for similar reasons and include: Oakwood View (172165 - Jul 2017) for 70 dwellings, Langley Pond Farm (171186 - Apr 2017) for 18 dwellings, Langley Pond Farm Stables (171597 - May 2017) for 3 dwellings, Land N & S of School Road (180596 - Apr 2018) for 120 dwellings and Suncot (210874 - Mar 2021) for 4 dwellings.

The site is close to the Arborfield Cross conservation area and The Coombes Woodlands which are designated a local wildlife site, an area of geological interest and ancient woodlands.

Barkham Parish Council strongly requests that this application be refused.