

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	251981
Site Address:	Linear Park Phase 3a, Arborfield Garrison & Adjoining Land, Arborfield, Reading
Expiry Date:	Extended to 6 July 2026
Proposal: Application for the approval of reserved matters pursuant to outline planning permission O/2014/2280 (140977) dated 02/04/2015. The Reserved Matters comprise details of the erection of the Linear Park Phase 3A of the wider site, together with associated landscaping, a substation and an attenuation pond. Details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale to be considered.	

PLANNING POLICY	
National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
Core Strategy (CS)	CP1 – Sustainable Development CP2 – Inclusive Communities CP3 – General Principles for Development CP4 – Infrastructure Requirements CP5 – Housing Mix, Density and Affordability CP6 – Managing Travel Demand CP7 – Biodiversity CP8 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals CP18 - Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC05 – Renewable Energy and Decentralised Energy Networks CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB08 – Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Standards TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development TB25 – Archaeology
Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)	N/A

Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS2 – Spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy SS3 – Development within or adjacent to major and modest settlements SS5 – Development in the countryside SS11 – Arborfield Green Strategic Development Location SS14 – Sites allocated for residential development, including residential as part of mixed use development CE1 – Design principles for efficient buildings C1 – Active and sustainable transport and accessibility C2 – Mitigation of transport impacts and highway safety and design C4 – Green and blue infrastructure and public rights of way C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging FD1 – Development and flood risk (from all sources) FD2 – Sustainable drainage NE1 – Biodiversity and geodiversity NE2 – Biodiversity net gain NE3 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area NE4 – Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows NE5 – Landscape and design DH1 – Place making and quality design DH2 – Safeguarding amenity DH6 – Archaeology HC4 – Open spaces, sports, recreation and play facilities HC5 – Environmental protection HC6 – Air pollution and air quality HC7 – Light pollution HC8 – Noise pollution
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location Supplementary Planning Document Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions Supplementary Planning Document Barkham Village Design Statement Arborfield and Barkham Neighbourhood Plan Living Streets: A Highways Guide for Developers in Wokingham National Design Guide Wokingham SuDS Strategy National Design Guide

PLANNING HISTORY		
Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
SO/2010/0611	EIA scoping opinion	Replied 13/04/2010
O/2014/2280	OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION FOR: Demolition of buildings and phased redevelopment of Arborfield Garrison and adjoining land for: Up to 2,000 new dwellings	Approved 02/04/2015

	(including up to 80 units of extra care housing). District centre comprising a foodstore up to 4,000 sqm gross with up to a further 3,500 sqm (gross) floor space within Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, D1 and D2 (with residential above - Class C3)), and transport interchange, village square, car parking, servicing and drop off area. Up to a further 1,500 sqm (gross) floor space within Classes D1 and D2. Neighbourhood centre to provide up to 300 sqm (gross) floor space within Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, D1 and D2, with parking/servicing area. Secondary school for up to 1,500 pupils (Class D1) including sports pitches, flood-lit all-weather pitch, and indoor swimming pool and parking areas. Up to three-form primary school (Class D1) with sports pitch and parking areas. Associated phased provision of: car parking; public open space including sports pitches, informal/incidental open space, children's play areas including multi-use games area (MUGA), skate park, community gardens/allotments; landscaping/buffer areas; boundary treatments; new roads, footpaths, cycleways and bridleways; sustainable urban drainage systems, including flood alleviation works. PART 2 - FULL PERMISSION FOR phased development of: Creation of two new areas of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGS) (In the north-eastern part of the application site ("Northern SANGS") and at West Court ("West Court SANGS") including car parking areas, path/walkways, fencing and associated landscaping; re-use of existing MoD gymnasium for sports/community uses/centre (Classes D1/D2; new roundabout junction to A327 Reading Road; junction improvements to Langley Common Road, Baird Road and Biggs Lane; junction improvements and new access at Biggs Lane/Princess Marina Drive; re-use and improvements to existing site accesses from Biggs Lane.	
F/2015/0001	Application for erection of 1500 place Secondary School with associated sports facilities, parking provision and access roads within SDL site.	Approved 26/03/2015
150162	Reserved Matters application for the erection of 113 dwellings with access from Biggs Lane and Princess Marina Drive, with associated internal access road, parking, landscaping and open	Approved 26/11/2015

	space, footpaths and sustainable Urban Drainage (Suds), relating to Parcel O1.	
152235	Application for submission of details to comply with the following condition of planning consent O/2014/2280 (dated 01/04/2015): 13. Landscape strategy.	Approved 05/10/2015
152156	Application for submission of details to comply with the following condition of planning consent O/2014/2280 (dated 01/04/2015): 32. Walking, cycling and equine strategy	Approved 13/10/2015
152157	Application for submission of details to comply with the following condition of planning consent O/2014/2280 (dated 01/04/2015): 33. Phased public transport strategy	Approved 26/11/2015
212104	Application for submission of details to comply with the following condition of planning consent O/2014/2280 dated 02/04/2015. Condition 9 (Design Code: Village Green Area)	Partially discharged 05/08/2022
173734	<i>[Relates to Parcel K, south of Baird Road].</i> Application for approval of Reserved Matters pursuant to Outline Planning Consent O/2014/2280 for 12 dwellings with access from Sheerlands Road, with associated internal access roads, parking, landscaping and open space, footpaths/cycleway, Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDs) (Parcel K) (Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and scale to be considered)	Approved 11/04/2018
181982	<i>[Relates to Parcel M, to the north of the Village Green].</i> Reserved Matters application for Parcel M only following Outline Planning Permission O/2014/2280 for the erection of 37 dwellings. Matters seeking approval: Access, Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale.	Approved 01/08/2018
181443	Application for a non-material amendment to planning consent O/2014/2280 to allow amendment to green corridor adjacent to Lakeside Bus Route. <i>[NON-MATERIAL AMENDMENT TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION O/2014/2280 AS ABOVE]</i>	Approved 26/06/2018
191753	<i>[Relates to Parcel AA, south of Princess Marina Drive and west of Buttenshaw Avenue].</i>	Approved 10/10/2019

	Application for approval of reserved matters pursuant to Outline Planning Consent O/02014/2280 for the erection of 44 dwellings associated internal roads, parking and landscaping.	
220421	<i>[Relates to Parcel V2N, Biggs Lane, Arborfield Green].</i> Application for the approval of reserved matters pursuant to outline planning consent O/2014/2280 for the erection of 73no. dwellings within parcel V2N with associated internal access roads, parking, landscaping, open space, footpaths and drainage. (Access, Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale to be determined).	Approved 16/09/2022
223764	<i>[Relates to the Sports & Community Infrastructure Parcel, Arborfield Green].</i> Application for approval of Reserved Matters pursuant to O/2014/2280 for the refurbishment of the existing rugby, football, cricket pitches and tennis courts, the demolition of the existing Pavilion building and the erection of a new Pavilion building, the provision of two play areas, Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) and allotments, with associated internal access roads, parking, landscaping, footpaths and drainage. Access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale to be considered.	Approved 12/06/2024
230872	<i>[Relates to District Centre, Arborfield Green].</i> Application for approval of Reserved Matters pursuant to Outline Planning Consent O/2014/2280 (dated 02/04/2015). The Reserved Matters (access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) comprise details of a mixed-use District Centre including 206 dwellings, commercial floorspace (Use Class E), a preschool, public open space, pedestrianised high street, and a mixed-use community centre building including cafe, associated community facilities and day nursery. New vehicular, pedestrian and cycle accesses to be provided with associated internal roads, parking, landscaping, drainage, substations, plant, bin and cycle storage	Approved 17/10/2023
230152	<i>[Relates to Parcel O2, Arborfield Green].</i> Application for the approval of Reserved Matters	Approved 31/10/2023

	pursuant to outline planning consent O/2014/2280 (dated 02/04/2015). The Reserved Matters comprise details of 135 dwellings within Parcel O2 (including both market and affordable housing) with access from Biggs Lane, associated internal access roads, parking, landscaping, open space, footpaths and drainage. Access, Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale to be considered.	
251816	<i>[Relates to Parcel S, Arborfield Green].</i> Application for the approval of reserved matters pursuant to outline planning consent O/2014/2280 (dated 02/04/2015). The Reserved Matters comprise details of the erection of 4 detached dwellings together with an associated internal access road, parking and landscaping. Details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale to be considered.	Approved 16/04/2026
252379	<i>[Relates to Parcel N, Arborfield Green].</i> Application for approval of Reserved Matters pursuant to Outline Planning Consent O/2014/2280 for the erection of 67 dwellings with associated infrastructure, access and landscaping. Details of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale to be considered.	Pending determination

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Environmental Health – No objection
 SDL Flood Risk Officer – No objection
 SDL Landscape and Trees – No objection
 SDL Ecology – No comments received
 SDL Highways – No objection
 SDL Green Infrastructure – No objection

External

SDL South East Water – No comments received
 SDL Thames Water – No objection
 SDL Southern Gas Networks – Refer to standing advice
 SDL Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue – Refer to standing advice
 SDL SSE Power Distribution – Refer to standing advice

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Barkham Parish Council raised concerns on the following: - The PC seeks clarification on section 2.11 of the Design Statement, regarding which specific treatment
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	works from Thames Water are required, and evidence in support that there would be capacity to accommodate the development. - The PC is concerned that the cumulative impact of multiple developments may exceed current capacity and believe that significant capital investment by Thames Water might be needed to provide adequate services. <i>(Officer's note: Thames Water were consulted on the application and raised no concerns on the proposed development on the grounds of capacity, and it is noted that in this case the proposal relates to a section of the linear park and does not include any residential/commercial development. In the absence of an objection from Thames Water and given their ongoing duty to maintain and upgrade their network in response to planned growth, it is not considered that the proposed development would result in unacceptable impacts on wastewater infrastructure.)</i>
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	One letter from a local resident with the following query: - Whether there will be public access (via footpath and/or road to this via Tope crescent (current separated from site by tall unattractive metal fencing. <i>(Officer's note: the application site red line for this section of the Linear Park 3a is not in close proximity to Tope Crescent; however, it is proposed that a direct public access connecting Tope Crescent to the Linear Park and District Centre will be available through Parcel N which is currently under consideration.)</i>

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The Linear Park Phase 3a site is located within the heart of the overall Arborfield Green development site, and currently comprises of vacant land, as well as an already constructed attenuation basin which will serve the proposed residential parcel immediately to the north of the application site (Parcel N). To the south of the site is the district centre to be comprised of residential dwellings, commercial space, pub, community centre, nursery and a pre-school; this parcel has been granted Reserved Matters approval under ref. 230872. To the east is an allotment site, and to the west is to be the site for an orchard. The applicant indicates that both of these parcels will come forward for Reserved Matters approval separately.

Proposal:

The proposed development is for the creation of a linear park to the south of Parcel N. The wider linear park will be brought forward in phases, this application being Phase 3a. The linear park will comprise of soft landscaping, and a pedestrian footpath proposed out toward the east to improve pedestrian connectivity across the sites in the surrounding area. The existing attenuation basin will be retained, with appropriate boundary treatment proposed around its edge for safety.

The proposed development also includes the creation of a new substation required to serve both Parcel N and the new district centre to the south. The substation will be finished in red brick and grey tile roof, with soft landscaping around it. Vehicular access to the substation will be taken from the new road serving Parcel N.

Principle of Development:

The National Planning Policy Framework has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan. The Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (MDD) Policy CC01 states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The application site forms part of a larger area designated under the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy as the Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location (SDL).

Wokingham Borough Core Strategy policy CP17 establishes a requirement to provide at least 13,487 new dwellings with associated development and infrastructure in the period 2006-2026. The majority of this new residential development will be in four SDLs, of which Arborfield Garrison is one. Policy CP18 identifies that the Arborfield Garrison SDL will deliver a sustainable, well-designed mixed-use development of around 3,500 dwellings and associated infrastructure.

Core Strategy Policy CP18 is amplified by Appendix 7 of the Core Strategy, the Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions SPD, which address the associated infrastructure impacts across the whole borough. These documents establish a requirement for a sustainable, well-designed, mixed-use development and make clear that a co-ordinated approach to the development of the SDL will be required to deliver the necessary infrastructure, facilities and services to meet the needs of the expanded community.

Outline planning permission for the site was granted by Wokingham Borough Council on 02/04/2015. This established the principle for development for the site together with access for up to 2,000 new dwellings, district centre, neighbourhood centre, secondary school, primary school and two Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGs). These were considered against the relevant Core Strategy policies and Local Plan policies. The current application seeks Reserved Matters approval for appearance, layout, landscaping and scale in relation to part of the Linear Park (Phase 3a).

The details approved under the Outline Planning Permission established parameters for the development including general site layout including the quantum of

development, principal access, indicative location of housing, open space, density and building heights. It also secured an Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Section 106 legal agreement for the coordinated delivery of the infrastructure necessary to support the development and fair share of the SDL-wide infrastructure. This included contributions towards off-site infrastructure and services such as roads, education, sports facilities, community facilities and green infrastructure. An affordable housing contribution was also secured in accordance with the Core Strategy and Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions Supplementary Planning Document.

Character of the Area:

Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP3 require a high-quality design that respects its context. The proposed linear park (Phase 3a) is considered to make a positive contribution to the character of the area, by providing a continuous green corridor that helps structuring the layout, maintaining visual openness between the adjoining development parcels within Arborfield Green, while also supporting biodiversity and sustainable development. This green infrastructure enhances the sense of place by reflecting the borough's emphasis on high-quality design, accessible open space, and the retention of natural features, in accordance with national and local planning policies.

The proposed development also includes the creation of an electric substation to serve the residential development to the north (Parcel N) yet to be approved and the emerging district centre development to the south. The substation has been sited so as to minimise impact upon the adjacent open space as well as the residential parcel. The building itself has been designed to be in keeping with the adjacent development, using red-brick and grey roof tiles to match the appearance of detached garages found in the adjacent site. Overall, the location and appearance of the substation would not result in any harmful impact upon visual amenity or local character.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Core Strategy Policy CP3, General Principles for Development requires that new development should be of a high quality of design that does not cause detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users or their quality of life.

There is no residential development proposed within the application site, being for part of the linear park, and the proposed electric substation would be enclosed and adequately located as to not result in any detrimental impact upon future residents of dwellings on Parcel N.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP6 seek to manage travel demand by a variety of measures and Policies CP10 and CP19, Arborfield Garrison SDL amplify this aim. The submitted plans demonstrate 2.4m x 25m visibility splays which are suitable for the design speed of 20mph according to Manual for Streets. A crossing with dropped kerbs and tactile paving is shown at the point the bridleway crosses the spine road, and proposed trees are adequately set back from the edge of the carriageway. The proposals meet the requirements of the Local Highways Authority and are therefore

acceptable.

Flooding and Drainage:

Core Strategy Policy CP1 and MDD Local Plan Policies CC09 and CC10 establish that new development should avoid increasing and where possible reduce flood risk. Design Principle 1c(ii) requires provision of a comprehensive system for water management, which takes account of existing features and includes proposals for effective sustainable urban drainage (SuDS), measures to avoid flood risk. MDD Policy CC10 states that all development proposals must ensure surface water arising from the proposed development is managed in a sustainable manner and demonstrated through a Flood Risk Assessment, and/or Surface Water Drainage Strategy.

A review of the original Flood Risk Assessment (originally undertaken in support of the outline planning application) has been undertaken in support of the current Reserved Matters application. The Linear Park Phase 3a itself and all landscaping areas are shown to be outside of the design 1 in 100 year plus climate change flood events. Details of the basin have been provided while the exceedance flow plan indicates that exceedance flow will be contained within the road network and channelled towards the attenuation basin. The proposals meet the requirements of the Lead Local Flood Authority and are therefore acceptable.

Landscape and Trees:

MDD Local Plan Policies CC03 and TB21 and Arborfield Garrison SPD stipulate that development proposals are to protect and enhance the Borough's Green Infrastructure, retain existing trees, hedges and other landscape features and incorporate high quality - ideally native – planting as an integral part of any scheme, within the context of the Council's Landscape Character Assessment.

There are several protected trees within the application red line towards the south-east part, however these are all proposed to be retained. The proposal is accompanied by a Landscape Masterplan which sets out the general approach and landscape principles for this section of the Linear Park. Soft and hard landscape proposals including a details soft landscape specification have also been provided. The Masterplan demonstrates that a robust landscape structure will be established whilst also enhancing existing landscape assets, in accordance with the approved site-wide landscape strategy.

Environmental Health:

Core Strategy Policy CP1, Sustainable Development and MDDL Policy CC06, Noise direct development away from areas where noise would impact upon amenity and require mitigation where noise cannot be completely avoided. As mentioned above, whilst it is acknowledged that there might be some noise generated by the electric substation when in operation, it is noted that this would be fully enclosed and located at an adequate separation distance from residential dwellings (particularly those within Parcel N, yet to be approved). The WBC Environmental Officer raises no objections to the proposal.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): When planning permission is granted for a development that is CIL liable, the Council will issue a liability notice as soon as practicable after the day on which the planning permission first permits development. Completing the assumption of liability notice is a statutory requirement to be completed for all CIL liable applications.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010): In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that persons with protected characteristics as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application and there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

Conclusion:

The Reserved Matters are consistent with the principles and parameters established by the outline planning permission, which themselves reflect the Council's adopted policies and guidance for development within the Arborfield Garrison SDL. It is considered that the proposals will deliver high quality development in accordance with the Council's spatial strategy and vision and therefore can be recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION

Conditions agreed:	Not required
Recommendation:	Approval subject to conditions
Date:	24 June 2026
Earliest date for decision:	24 September 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	26/06/2026

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

- Strategic Development Location (SDL) – Arborfield Garrison
- Modest Development Location – Arborfield Garrison
- Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Linear Mitigation Zone – 5Km
- AWE – 12Km Zone
- Farnborough Aerodrome Consultation Zone 3 (buildings exceeding 90m)
- Flood Zone 2
- Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
- Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zone Green and Amber
- Potentially Contaminated Land Consultation Zone
- Landscape Character Assessment – Arborfield Cross and Barkham Settled and Farmed Clay
- Tree Preservation Orders - TPO-1480-2014 & TPO-1503-2015