

PLANNING REF : 261059
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 25 Langley Common Road
: Wokingham, Berkshire
: RG40 4TU
SUBMITTED BY : Mrs Carolyn Kay
DATE SUBMITTED : 02/07/2026

COMMENTS:

I am lodging my strong objection to the proposed development of Barkham Square.

I live at number 25 Langley Common Road and have been resident here for over 26 years and therefore familiar with the changes to this area and the issues, particularly with traffic, it has. The proposed development will have a direct effect on my living conditions. The glossy Masterplan and Environmental studies skew information to indicate a wonderland development where I believe the reality will be a shadow of this.

1. The Local Plan (LPU) which includes Barkham Square has neither been passed or adopted. It also allows for 600 houses, not 660, and a care home is not mentioned which I believe to be a sweetener to get the plans approved.

2. 3.11 of the Environmental Statement, Volume 4 states "There is no planning history of relevance associated with the Site." This is not true. Previous plans have been rejected by the Inspectorate for developing this area, quoting it would 'not achieve sustainability benefits, would affect separation from nearby villages and would have an adverse landscape impact'. Nothing has changed in this respect. 3. The extensive plan for Barkham Square reduces the buffer area between Arborfield Green and Barkham to a minimum and essentially

Barkham would disappear. I already note that the site address for planning is Arborfield Green. That is disrespectful to existing residents whose address is recognised by Royal Mail as Barkham.

4. What's the hurry for planning for this area to be submitted? The LPU is to cover the current government housing targets up to 2040. We are living in a quickly changing world so while Barkham Square may be needed for future development, it does not mean to say it is required at this moment in time. Further, Wokingham has been caught in the government trap of building more than the target for a particular year only to find any surplus cannot be carried forward to the next year. Who will monitor all the parcels of development to ensure this doesn't happen again? I'm sure the different builders won't as it is for their individual benefit and profit.

5. The increased volume of traffic is a major concern. We know of 330 houses planned for the Arborfield studio site, which was part of the original Arborfield Green development, plus the 50 houses passed for development on Langley Common Road. These, along with the current ongoing building, should be completed first to assess the impact on the roads.

6. The plan for 660 houses together with the proposed houses in 5 above means the overall numbers are in excess of 1000 homes whose only access is onto Langley Common Road.

7. Previous reports have stated that 'Wokingham South, including Finchampstead and Arborfield is rural with a high car dependency' and so we can count another 2000 cars who have no option but to use Langley Common Road for access and inflames an infrastructure already struggling.

8. With regards to the trip survey (notably the figures are reduced by 10% to take into account the council's reduced emission plan

which may or may not happen, skews actual figures) will become out of date quite quickly.

9. The new proposed roundabout will result in three in a space of less than half a mile. The outcome will be queues of traffic at peak times as has recently been seen at the roundabouts at Biggs Lane and Eversley Road due to the closure of Bearwood Road.

10. Further, the angle of the road from the proposed new roundabout towards School Road looks as though our vision from exiting (by car) our drive will be obscured and feels dangerous.

11. While the glossy Masterplan continually tells us of how long a walk or cycle ride is to get to immediate amenities, the reality is that a car is much easier to carry groceries and get to the pharmacy and doctor (who wants to cycle when you are feeling sick?). If it's

raining, too cold, too hot (as recently), time poor, need a last-minute item, it'll be 'just jump in the car'. That is human nature. I have shopped at both Co-op and Sainsbury's since they opened and have not seen people cycling to these shops. Further, this

thinking does not recognise the ageing population in this area where walking and cycling is not an option. Care home anyone?

12. The Masterplan does not indicate new services to the area but relies on the ones in place to cover the development of Arborfield Green which, remember, is around 3500 houses. The services which are in place have taken years to develop and do not represent a community of such a large scale. Let's again jump into the car and go to where we can what we need.

13. The creaking Royal Berkshire Hospital where there is a delay in building further medical care needs no explanation of the increasing burden it is under.

14. I note there is a section on recording of accidents which amounts to 7. That is 7 that have been reported, not the ones who have settled on the spot. I have had personal experience of two shunts in the last 6 months which would not have been reported so this is a meaningless statistic.

15. Buses: In the Environmental Statement, it mentions bus stops on Langley Common Road between Biggs Lane and Barkham Street. That is correct, there are just no buses to stop at them. Misleading information.

16. There is note of new and improved bus services but as the developers are not in control of our bus services, I'm not sure how they can guarantee this.

17. Speaking of misleading information, there is a pub but it has essentially been closed for years. While there may be new landlords in the future, the pub's success since Covid has been minimal and the general outlook for rural pubs is bleak.

18. Care home: Its position is immediately behind the existing residents of Langley Common Road. The result of this, given the plan is for the road behind that housing is the main one, will mean daily traffic of catering deliveries, maintenance, 24/7 staff, visitors and there has to be an ambulance or two, resulting in constant vehicle noise. Why not place it in the furthest away corner, still on the 'main' road and inconvenience new residents who can choose to live next to it? We have no choice where it is located at the moment.

19. Environment: What better contribution to the environment is not to develop Barkham Square in this way. Green space to allow birds, small mammals and deer to flourish. No concrete to exaggerate the

heat from the warming climate. An area where the predicted heavier rains due to climate change can drain. And no cars to contribute to pollution. Seems like a win-win.

20. The land for Barkham Square has always been agricultural. The farmer can rear his sheep or it can be used to grow feed to sell for livestock. Where will all that be done now with the decreasing agricultural land use?

In summary, while there is an acceptance that Barkham Square will eventually be developed because the Government and Council in their wisdom want it and the builders want profit, it doesn't necessarily make it right. The documents we are given to read are hefty with usually little time to digest (although make good tools for insomnia) and understand. What isn't right is the unsympathetic burden imposed by the development on existing infrastructure and the disregard of existing residents. This development as it stands should not be passed and certainly not at this time.