

PLANNING REF : 261059
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 25 Langley Common Road
: Barkham, Wokingham, Berkshire
: RG40 4TU
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Chris Garrood
DATE SUBMITTED : 01/07/2026

COMMENTS:

I strongly object to this application on many grounds.

- 1) This application is way in excess of the proposal in the draft local plan in that an extra 60 houses plus a care home is much greater than the 600 proposed and should be rejected on these grounds alone.
- 2) Part of the original plan of Arborfield Green was for 300 (now proposed at 330), houses on the site known as Arborfield Studios. This was deferred because of issues with the site but is now available for development. As it was part of the original approval nothing should be approved for Barkham Square before these houses are built and their impact can be assessed on the current infrastructure especially on traffic conditions in Langley Common Road. It is said this is a natural extension of Arborfield Green, but it is hardly that as it is not currently directly adjoining the area and the proposed area forms a natural buffer between Arborfield Green and Barkham. Development will destroy Barkham as a rural community.
- 3) Approval has already been given to 50 houses on Langley Common Road so together with the film studios and Barkham Square this amounts to over 1000 new houses plus a care home which is totally unsustainable. Apart from the road congestion this will cause the pressure on local services will be immense as there aren't anything you can call local.
- 4) The draft plan is to last until 2040 so why does everything have to be built now? The council has already fallen foul of the Government by building more than the annual target, houses which have not been allowed to be offset against the next years targets.
- 5) The situation currently with the roads is enough on its own to show that any extra development will increase the pressure on Langley Common Road which is heavily congested at rush hour and busy most of the day. Entry to this site is a single-entry point which will only increase the congestion and create a blind bend for properties along Langley Common Road. Langley Common Road was never intended to be a major route being of similar width to Barkham Street which has a 6'6" width restriction and the problem has been made worse with the closure of School Road part of the original route from Wokingham Station to Alton in Hampshire.
- 6) Local services referred to in the plan are a joke! They quote the Co-Op which is no more than a corner store and is invariably understocked. Sainsbury in Arborfield Green is also quoted but this is over a mile from the site and is not a big store check out the number of parking spaces! For most the main weekly shop is and still will be travelling to one of the Wokingham Supermarkets for the main shop or for some online. It is also mentioned that these sites are a pleasant walk or cycle ride which is a laugh really. This assumes everyone can walk or ride a bike which is not the case. Not withstanding that who carries their shopping home on a bicycle of walking with shopping bags. The vast majority of people will do their shopping by car and will continue to do so adding further pressure to the system.
- 7) Medical services are mentioned but these

are nil! Finchampstead Surgery is 3 miles away and already under great pressure with the existing population and any increases caused by new development is just unsustainable. There are also services at Swallowfield which is operating way over capacity. The only hospital is the Royal Berks at Reading where waiting times are unacceptable and some serious thinking has to be done as to how to increase these services before any development can be considered. The application somewhat patronisingly suggests medical services are a pleasant cycle ride or walk away. In my opinion people who visit medical services are generally unwell and more likely to take a car (there is no public transport option here in spite of what the applicants state), and everybody in times of bad weather.

8) Environment. There is a great deal of wildlife in this area which will be seriously affected by any development. The north side of the site has a very varied and extensive bird population which rely on the fields and surrounding vegetation, woodland for survival as it provides the perfect habitat for insects and small rodents. Sparrows alone are in the hundreds plus the many species of tits finches,

woodpeckers, wrens, sparrowhawks and red kites to name but a few. This seems to have been totally overlooked by the applicants. This area is also good quality farmland, another fact ignored in the application which states it has been destroyed by sheep which just isn't true. The land has been farmed for generations, and we should not be developing such a valuable asset, and we owe it to past and future generations to maintain this land. Over the last 30 yrs the fields have been used for horses, cows and sheep especially at lambing. In other years it has been used to provide winter feed and is this not what a farm is and has been here for generations.

9) People The council needs to listen to the people it represents as in 2017-18 over 4000 people signed a petition opposing the development of Barkham Square. There were major concerns over loss of greenspace, severe overstretching of local infrastructure and the potential

physical coalescence of Wokingham and Barkham. These concerns are even greater today and the worry is the swallowing up of Barkham into orfield Green and ultimately Wokingham.

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