

PLANNING REF : 260736  
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Arborfield Village Hall  
: Eversley Road, Arborfield  
: RG2 9PQ  
SUBMITTED BY : Arborfield & Newland Parish Council  
DATE SUBMITTED : 23/04/2026

COMMENTS:

260736 - Highfield Park

Arborfield and Newland Parish Council objects to this planning application

Having reviewed the submitted documents, plans, and supporting statements, It is considered that the proposal is contrary to several key policies of the Wokingham Core Strategy, the MDD Local Plan, and national planning guidance. The application contains significant omissions, unsupported assertions, and areas of non compliance that prevent it from being approved in its current form.

The grounds for objection to this planning application are as follows:

1. Conflict with CP11 - Development Outside Development Limits

The site lies outside the defined settlement limits, where development is strictly controlled.

The Planning, Design & Access Support Statement acknowledges this conflict but incorrectly implies that Policy TB10 overrides CP11.

WBC's established position is that:

- Traveller sites may be permitted outside settlement limits only where all other policy criteria are fully met, and
- The proposal does not cause harm to the character, appearance, or function of the countryside.

The application fails to demonstrate:

- Any landscape or visual impact assessment
- Justification for encroachment into open countryside
- Evidence of local need for a pitch in this location

The proposal therefore remains in conflict with CP11.

2. Non compliance with CP3 - General Principles for Development

The application does not meet the requirements of CP3 due to:

- Highway safety concerns
- Insufficient access design information
- Lack of drainage details
- Absence of emergency vehicle access evidence
- Potential harm to the character of the area

The access plans (HM2509 P 113 and HM2509 P 133) do not include:

- Visibility splays
- Swept path analysis for refuse or fire appliances
- Gradient

information

- Drainage design
- Bound surfacing at the highway interface

Without these, the proposal cannot be considered safe or compliant.

3. Conflict with CC03 - Green Route Enhancement Area

Eversley Road is a designated Green Route, where development must:

- Retain hedgerows
- Enhance landscape character
- Avoid urbanising features
- Protect the rural corridor

The application provides no assessment of:

- Hedgerow loss
- Tree impacts
- Visibility splay creation
- Landscape mitigation
- Compliance with CC03

criteria

Any widening or surfacing changes to the access would directly affect the Green Route and must be justified. They are not.

#### 4. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) – Missing Mandatory

Information

The statement suggests the site “should be exempt” from BNG due to anticipated future NPPF changes. This is incorrect.

Under the Environment Act 2021, BNG is mandatory for minor residential

development unless formally exempt.

The application fails to provide:

- A BNG metric calculation
- A habitat baseline plan
- A BNG delivery plan

Without these, the application is invalid against current policy requirements.

#### 5. Ecological Concerns – Great Crested Newts (GCN)

The ecological section contradicts itself:

- Natural

England data: negligible probability

- WBC mapping: high

probability

The proposed “finger tip searches” are not compliant with Natural England licensing requirements.

The application lacks:

- A formal GCN risk assessment
- A licensed ecologist’s survey
- Evidence of District Level Licensing participation

This is a significant ecological policy failure.

#### 6. Highways and Access – Failure to Meet CP6 and MDD TB20

The access plans do not demonstrate safe or policy compliant access.

Key omissions include:

- No visibility splays
- No swept path analysis
- Turning radii too small for emergency

vehicles

- Gravel surfacing at the highway interface (not acceptable for a main road)

- No drainage design
- No gradient information

The access arrangement fails to assess or mitigate impacts on pedestrian safety along Eversley Road, contrary to CP6, TB20, and national guidance requiring safe separation and protection of pedestrian

routes. No pedestrian visibility splays, crossing assessments, or footway continuity measures are provided

The proposal therefore fails to meet CP6 and TB20.

#### 7. Thames Basin Heaths SPA – Incomplete Mitigation (CP8)

The application asserts “minimal impact” but does not address:

- Whether the site lies within the 400m exclusion zone
- Whether SANG/SAMM contributions are required

- How recreational pressure will be mitigated

This is a required part of any residential development assessment.

#### 8. Affordable Housing (CP5) – Unsupported

##### Viability Claim

The statement claims that providing 50% of one unit is “clearly unviable” but provides:

- No viability assessment
- No policy justification
- No precedent cases

Traveller pitches are not

automatically exempt from CP5; the applicant must demonstrate why.

They have not.

##### Conclusion

The proposal, as submitted, fails to

comply with multiple key planning policies, including:

- CP11 –

##### Countryside protection

- CP3 – General development principles
- CP6 – Transport and access
- CC03 – Green Route protection
- CP8 – SPA mitigation
- CP5 – Affordable housing
- BNG statutory

- Ecological protection policies

The application contains significant omissions, lacks essential technical evidence, and does not

demonstrate that the development would be safe, sustainable, or appropriate in this sensitive countryside location.

For these reasons, Arborfield and Newland Parish Council objects to this planning

application and would urge Wokingham Borough Council to reject this application.