

UPDATE PAPER
Planning Committee – 10 June 2026

1. Planning Application Updates
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Agenda Item: 7

Site Address: St Paul's Church of England Junior School, Oxford Road, Wokingham, RG41 2YJ

Application No: 260425

Pages: 13-42

Condition 18 is added to secure carbon reduction measures set out within the Sustainability Statement submitted as part of the application. These measures are proposed to deliver carbon reduction of 40% over Part L of Building Regulations 2021.

Condition 18

“Sustainable Construction

18. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the energy and sustainability measures set out in the Sustainability Statement Issue 01 (February 2026) prepared by Ingleton Wood and shall achieve a minimum 40% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions compared to the Part L 2021 target emission rate. The approved measures shall be installed prior to the development being first brought into use and shall be retained and maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure developments contribute to sustainable development. Relevant Policies: Chapter 14 of the NPPF (Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change), Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Policy CP1, Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policies CC04, the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (2010), and the Climate Change Interim Policy Position Statement.”

2. Decisions and Updates of Note

App No.	243099
Address	Land North of Reading Road, Arborfield, RG2 9HN
Description	The development proposed is Outline application for up to 111 dwellings, with associated works, parking, landscaping and publicly accessible open space, with access from Reading Road.
Committee/Delegated	Delegated
Decision	Refused
Appeal decision	Allowed (Decision issued XXXX 2026 following Public Inquiry) - APP/X0360/W/25/3371069

Members are advised that the appeal relating to outline planning permission for up to 111 dwellings at land north of Reading Road, Arborfield has been allowed following a Public Inquiry.

The Inspector acknowledged that the proposal conflicts with the adopted development plan, particularly in respect of its location outside defined settlement limits. However, in determining the appeal, significant weight was given to the current shortfall in the Council's five-year housing land supply (approximately 2.3–2.5 years), which meant that relevant spatial policies were treated as out-of-date in this case.

In assessing the scheme, the Inspector concluded that:

- The site would function as a sustainable location for development, with reasonable access to services and public transport;
- Impacts on character and appearance, including the transition from a pastoral to residential use, would result in moderate and localised harm;
- Matters relating to highways, ecology, flooding, and the protection of trees could be satisfactorily addressed through conditions and legal obligations.

The Inspector therefore applied the “tilted balance” and concluded that the benefits of the scheme, particularly the delivery of market and affordable housing, outweighed the identified harms, and that planning permission should be granted.

While the decision reflects the current national policy context and housing land supply position, it is notable that the Inspector attributed limited weight to certain localised impacts and to the role of existing settlement boundaries and reached a different overall planning balance to that previously taken by the Council.

The Inspector recognised the prevailing low densities surrounding the site (between 4 and 11 dph), but highlighted that NPPF (para 130) requires that low densities are avoided where there is a shortage of land to meet identified housing needs. She concluded the 28 dph is therefore appropriate.

Officers are currently reviewing the decision in detail to fully understand its implications, including the approach taken by the Inspector on a number of key matters, and will provide further advice where necessary.

Members should note that decisions of this nature remain highly sensitive to housing land supply position and national policy requirements, and do not diminish the ongoing importance of the development plan in guiding future decisions.

Title	Major Appeals performance update
The appeal performance for the current reporting quarter is 5.32% for this quarter for majors. This is for appeals determined up to 09 June 2026 (the time of writing). The reporting quarter will end on the 30 June 2026. There is currently one appeal yet to be determined. If this is allowed in the next reporting quarter, then the performance level would not breach the 10% threshold. Based on the above, there is no risk of breaching the 10% in the current or next reporting quarters based on the outstanding major appeals.	