

PLANNING REF : 260582
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Arborfield Green Community Centre
: Arborfield, Reading
: RG2 9ND
SUBMITTED BY : Barkham Parish Council
DATE SUBMITTED : 16/04/2026

COMMENTS:

The Council is opposed to the application in its present form for the following reasons:

1. Scale and Extent of Development

While the application notes that much of the extension lies mostly within the existing outline footprint on a large site with most of the development screened from the road, the Parish Council considers the overall scale of the proposal to be substantial. Given the sensitivity of the location, the Parish Council considers that the proposal risks appearing excessive in scale relative to the host dwelling and its setting.

2. Impact on an Area of Special Interest and Design Considerations

Manor Cottage is located within an Area of Special Interest and is a good example of the area's typical and distinctive vernacular architecture. Although the property is not a designated heritage asset, the Parish Council notes that the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that development affecting non designated heritage assets should be assessed with regard to the impact on their significance. As such, careful consideration must be given to any proposal that may harm the character and appearance of the building or its setting.

The Parish Council is concerned that the application fails to provide sufficient detail regarding the proposed architectural style, materials of construction and external finishes. In particular, the proposed use of timber cladding is considered inappropriate, as it does not appear sympathetic to the existing red brick construction of the property nor reflective of the prevailing character and built form of the surrounding area.

In the absence of clear and comprehensive information on design, materials and detailing, the Parish Council considers that the potential harm to the character and appearance of the building and the wider Area of Special Interest cannot be properly assessed. The Parish Council therefore objects to the application in its current form and considers that it should not be approved unless full details of the proposed design, materials and external finishes are submitted and approved prior to the commencement of development.

3. Front Porch and Street Scene

The existing front porch is a prominent and characteristic feature of the property and contributes positively to the street scene. This feature is typical of properties within the area and is an important element of the dwelling's local character. While a simple enlargement may be acceptable in principle, the Parish

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strongly objects to any proposal to remodel or significantly alter the porch. No such changes should be permitted without detailed drawings being submitted for approval.

4. Railings, Gates, and Boundary Treatment

The proposed metal railings and new gates are of particular concern. The Parish Council questions if the metal railing and gates would be in keeping with the street scene and the adverse impact these features will have on the street scene in the immediate area. Also whether it would provide effective screening. The Parish Council requests that these elements be redesigned using materials that are more appropriate to, and reflective of, the character of the surrounding properties.