

PLANNING REF : 252498
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Arborfield Village Hall
: Eversley Road, Arborfield
: RG2 9PQ
SUBMITTED BY : Arborfield & Newland Parish Council
DATE SUBMITTED : 15/01/2026

COMMENTS:

Arborfield & Newland Parish Council objects to the University of Reading planning application number 252498 on the following grounds.

We firstly comment on the 16 January 2026 deadline for responses on this planning application. This deadline is wholly premature given that:

1. It is in advance of any determination by the planning inspectors as regards the soundness of the inclusion of the Loddon Garden Village site in the LPU,
2. It is prior to the planned consultation in spring 2026 on the Design Code (Masterplanning) for Loddon Garden Village,
3. We are expected to respond to this planning application before having sight of the planning application for the Hatch Farm area of Loddon Garden Village. We therefore are not able to see the full picture.

We therefore urge WBC to extend the deadline for comment on this application and the planning application number 252769 in respect of the Gleeson Land section of LGV. We will be making further comments on both of these planning applications later in 2026, having had the opportunity to consider when the three conditions above have been met.

In the meantime, we make the following high level objections to this planning application: The LGV site significantly lacks current infrastructure, such that the overall infrastructure costs in the Financial Viability Assessment considered at the recent Examination in Public (EIP), amount to more than

£100,000 for every dwelling on the site. No information has been forthcoming as regards how the various site promoters at LGV will be splitting these infrastructure costs. What happens if one of the promoters encounters financial difficulties? Does the responsibility for the infrastructure expenditure then pass to the other promoters or would we be left with the situation of the infrastructure not being delivered? There should be a clearly set out infrastructure delivery apportionment between the various promoters at LGV with details of whether the financial responsibility is joint and several.

Timely delivery of the required infrastructure is important for all major housing developments, and this is particularly the case for Loddon Garden Village given the scale of the infrastructure requirements for the site. Therefore, Wokingham BC together with the developers of the site should be actively exploring the ability to deliver the required infrastructure as early as possible by borrowing sufficient funds in advance of selling the houses. This requirement should be a strict planning condition included with any agreement on the planning application.

The site promoters of LGV are relying on assurances from Thames Waters as regards the delivery of the necessary upgrade of the Arborfield Sewage Treatment Works. Without such an upgrade of sewage capacity the housing at LGV will be adding effluence to a system that is already over capacity. There should be a strict planning condition included with any agreement on the planning

application that no houses should be sold in advance of the upgrade of the Arborfield Sewage Treatment Works.

The delivery of the M4 bridge to link the LGV site to Lower Earley Way is deemed critical by the traffic modelling. However, as highlighted by A&NPC at the recent EIP, policy SS13 (which relates to LGV) in the Local Plan Update does not specifically reference the M4 bridge. The delivery of the M4 bridge should be specifically referenced in policy SS13. In addition, there should be a strict planning condition included with any approval that the M4 bridge should be delivered before the sale of any housing above a set level of dwellings.

All previous Strategic Development Locations (SDL's) created by Wokingham BC have incurred a significant charge under the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) regime. However, the assumption in the plans for LGV is that a nil rate of CIL will apply to this development. Such a nil rate of CIL is contrary to the current WBC policy and would require consultation and examination if it were to be adopted. The infrastructure delivery for LGV does include an amount of £3m for what is described as "parish infrastructure requirements" but this is a de minimus amount compared to the amount of CIL that would be payable under the existing CIL policy. The planning application should be rejected until such time as there has been a proper consultation on the revisions to the WBC CIL charging structure.

The proposed public transport options in the planning application do not address the fundamental problems with the LGV site. Firstly, adding a new bus route will not be attractive to the majority of householders at LGV because once the buses leave the site they will be part of a road network where it is not possible to give buses any priority. Hence users will face interminable delays at peak times in trying to reach Reading or Wokingham. Secondly, the public transport options make no attempt to link up with Twyford, which has excellent train connections. If the promoters of LGV were serious about encouraging public transport, then a solution utilising Twyford is essential. Winnersh railway station will be of only minimal use by householders at LGV, given the lack of car parking and the fact that no segregated and therefore safe cycle route will be made available from LGV to Winnersh station.

The planning application documents, including the non-technical summary, make no reference to the provision of clean water for the site. In contrast the Gleeson Land planning application for its part of the LGV includes a clean water capacity report from Thames Water. Such a clean water capacity report should be produced for this planning application