

PLANNING REF : 242696
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SUBMITTED BY : Councillor Adrian Betteridge
DATE SUBMITTED : 28/11/2024

COMMENTS:

Applications 242653 and 242696 are implicitly linked and the first part of my response relates to both applications accordingly.

Application 242653 for 48 additional dwellings will increase the total number of new dwellings in the Arborfield Garrison SDL and thus the pressure on roads, facilities and other infrastructure. Given the dependency between developer funded sports facilities I assume that the per-dwelling contribution to general facilities will be lower. Whilst 48 dwellings may seem insignificant compared to the overall development scale, the additional pressure needs to be considered alongside that from the recent approval of housing north of Langley Common Road and additional housing to the north of the SDL proposed in the Local Plan Update. The Transport Statement identifies an additional 28 peak hour trips from the development, based on 2021 pandemic census data. Some of these will inevitably be towards the closest major settlement and railway station of Wokingham, exacerbating existing congestion on Barkham Road. On the basis of the above issues my inclination would be to not support the proposal.

However, in this case there are mitigations compared to other emergent applications, and one significant benefit. The proposed development is within the existing SDL boundary and thus does not contribute to urban sprawl or closing of settlement boundaries. The loss of open space is proportionately small within the combined applications boundary. The associated sport and leisure facilities appear to be of a good quality and their early delivery will be a genuine positive for the community given the challenges funding such facilities from the available council funding.

A primary factor in the community benefit from the linked applications is that the sport and leisure facilities are provided early. Appropriate conditions defining timing for completion should be included in the approval. If this is done, I support these applications.

Further, in relation to Application 242696:

Provision of car parking appears to be adequate, noting lessons from the equivalent Arborfield Green facility.

However I note that 12 cycle parking spaces are proposed, compared to 96 car spaces. This indicates how out of step current guidance is

with the emerging Local Transport Plan aim for 50% of local trips to be by walking and cycling. Space should be reserved to increase secure cycle parking in the future if required.

The proposed cycle 'BMX' facility has the potential to be a valued community asset, particularly for young people. There is an opportunity for this to be co-designed with the local youth cycling club to ensure that what is provided is the best available within space and cost

constraints.