

PLANNING REF : 261059
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 8 Archer Grove
: Arborfield Green
: RG2 9TB
SUBMITTED BY : Mr James King-Taylor
DATE SUBMITTED : 17/05/2026

COMMENTS:

Objection to Planning Application 261059
Land south of Langley Common Road, Arborfield Green, Wokingham

I am writing to formally object to Planning Application 261059, specifically in relation to the proposed siting of allotments adjacent to Commonfield Lane within the Barkham Square development.

1. Site Context

Our property is located within the existing Arborfield Green development (constructed circa 2018) and sits at the edge and corner of the Barkham Place parcel, directly facing both the land proposed for allotments & Commonfield Lane. The allotments would be positioned immediately beyond our property boundary. We have lived at this property for approximately nine years and currently benefit from an open, unspoilt outlook across Barkham Square. This contributes significantly to the amenity, character and overall quality of the local environment.

2. Loss of Residential Amenity

The introduction of allotments in this location would result in a material and harmful change to residential amenity.

The existing open grassland would be replaced by subdivided plots, structures (e.g. sheds), fencing, and associated activity. This represents a clear shift from undeveloped countryside to an intensively used and managed space. The current sense of openness, tranquillity and rural aspect would be lost.

While allotments are classified as green infrastructure, their operational characteristics are fundamentally different from open field land and introduce visual clutter and increased activity.

3. Impact on Wildlife and Ecology

The site currently forms part of a quiet and undisturbed habitat.

Local wildlife, including roe deer, regularly utilise this area for resting and shelter. The field contributes to a wider ecological corridor within Barkham Square.

The proposed change in use would:

- Displace wildlife due to increased human presence
- Reduce habitat quality and continuity
- Undermine the ecological value of this edge-of-development location

This sits at odds with the requirement for development to conserve and enhance biodiversity and deliver measurable improvements.

4. Crime, Fly-Tipping and Security Concerns

The location is relatively isolated, with limited natural surveillance.

Commonfield Lane is not a residential street and experiences varied activity, very busy with traffic during weekday rush hour & school runs, but also particularly quiet outside of daylight hours. The area already suffers extensively from persistent fly-tipping - often numerous times a week.

Allotments in such locations are known to be vulnerable to:

- Vandalism and theft
- Anti-social behaviour
- Further fly-tipping

The proposed siting introduces a land use that would be intermittently occupied and largely unsupervised, increasing the likelihood of these issues.

5. Traffic and Activity Impacts

Although the car park shown on the plans is intended to serve the SANG rather than allotments specifically, its presence will:

- Increase vehicle movements along Commonfield Lane
- Increase general footfall and activity in proximity to residential properties
- Introduce additional noise and disturbance along what is currently a quiet boundary edge
- Increase littering and no doubt dog poo bag decorations in borders and trees

The cumulative impact represents an intensification of use in an area not currently subject to this level of activity.

6. Site Suitability for Allotments

The proposed location does not appear well suited to allotment use:

- Productive allotments require consistent sunlight exposure - this site is heavily shaded from the fabulous protected Oak trees on its East and South border... so sunlight just won't land on crops! - This corner of the site is significantly shaded due to orientation and surrounding features

As a result:

- The long-term viability and attractiveness of the allotments is questionable
- There is a risk of underuse or poor maintenance

7. Availability of More Suitable Locations

The wider Barkham Square development includes extensive areas of open space and landscape uses.

Given this, there are clearly opportunities to:

- Locate allotments in a more central and accessible position - Use areas with better natural surveillance

- Select land with more appropriate sunlight conditions
- Avoid adverse impacts on existing residential properties

There is no clear justification for placing this use directly on the boundary of existing housing where impacts are most acute.

8. Planning Policy Considerations

The proposal raises conflicts with both national and local planning policy:

- The National Planning Policy Framework requires development to provide a high standard of amenity for existing residents and to create safe environments where crime does not undermine quality of life [gov.uk]
- It also requires development to deliver biodiversity net gain and protect existing ecological value [maldon.gov.uk]
- Wokingham's adopted development plan emphasises the need to protect the quality of life of residents and maintain a high-quality living environment [wokingham.gov.uk]

In its current form, the siting of the allotments appears inconsistent with these objectives.

9. Conclusion

While the provision of allotments within new developments is recognised as beneficial in principle, their success depends on appropriate siting.

In this case, the proposed location adjacent to existing residential properties is unsuitable due to:

Loss of residential amenity and outlook
 Harm to wildlife and existing ecological value
 Increased risk of fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour
 Additional traffic and activity along a quiet boundary

Poor practical suitability for allotment use
 Availability of more appropriate alternative locations within the site
 Lack of sunlight due to shading from protected trees

For these reasons, I respectfully request that Wokingham Borough Council requires the applicant to reconsider the location of the allotments and identify a more appropriate and sustainable alternative within the wider development.

The proposal, as currently presented, appears inconsistent with both national planning policy and the adopted Wokingham Development Plan, particularly in relation to residential amenity, environmental protection, and the creation of safe and sustainable communities.