

Arborfield & Barkham Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2036



Annex VII Heritage November 2017

A plan for the community by the community

Arborfield & Barkham Neighbourhood Plan

1. Introduction

This narrative is a collation of many inputs and extracts from various sources – see below. Guidance was provided by the WBC Conservation Officer. The issues emerging have been discussed with residents at a number of public events.

2. Key Documents

The following key documents have provided source material:

- Arborfield Village Design Statement
- Barkham Village Design Statement
- Arborfield Local History Society website
- The Arborfield and Newlands Woman's Institute Book of 1922
- Barkham. A History by David French and Janet Firth
- Barkham 952 – 1990. Richard Noble
- Arborfield and the Army Remount Service 1904 – 1937. Colonel R Hume
- Berkshire Record Office: New Landscapes Website - Enclosures
- Public Event Boards and Individual Inputs

3. WBC Conservation Officer

Guidance was sought from the local Conversation Officer, Mr Giles Stevens, as to overall approach and sources of relevant information. He also drew attention to useful inputs from Historic England.

4 Historic England

The following link will take you to the relevant publications issued by Historic England (at the bottom of the page).

<http://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/local-heritage-listing-advice-note-7/>

There is a duty to consult with Historic England before submitting a Neighbourhood Plan to local authorities if heritage assets are affected. Historic England have been consulted as part of the Regulation 14 Consultation which commenced on 23 June 2018. The Steering Group included in the Neighbourhood Plan some useful suggestions made by Historic England, especially regarding Non-Designated Sites.

5. Approach

The following approach was used to develop this review.

- i. The context of the local heritage has been described with reference to the local history, natural environment and geography.
- ii. Heritage assets (Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings) are identified as Non-Designated sites Areas of Historic Interest (see Neighbourhood Plan Policy IRS4) and Appendix 1 Map 14.
- iii. Other assets that may warrant designation either at the national or local level are being identified.

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6. Key Findings

Arborfield and Barkham have a wide range of heritage assets – houses, farm building, military establishments, moats and gardens spanning the period from, possibly, around 1300 to the present day. Those that have survived reflect well the history and culture of the area over the years.

6.1 Historical background

Both Arborfield and Barkham are semi-rural Parishes with landscapes comprising historic farmland, wooded areas and ancient hedgerows, interspersed with residential areas of different ages and styles. Employment, traditionally, was farming or domestic service but residents now commute in all directions to work in modern technology and service industries.

The parishes have a rich and well documented history with evidence of habitation from the Bronze Age. The earliest recording of Barkham, as Beorchamme, is in a Saxon Chronicle of 952 and both Parishes are referenced in the Domesday Book of 1086 – Arborfield as, then, part of the lordship of the Bishop of Sonning and Barkham as Bercheham. The Bullock family of Arborfield, who for hundreds of years were the Lords of both Parishes, can be traced back to 1166.

The histories of Arborfield and Barkham have much in common. In 1220, the Rector of Arborfield was appointed as the Rector of Barkham and in 1330 the two Manors were united by marriage. In more recent times, they share a common war memorial erected at Arborfield Cross in 1919 and in 1974 the Churches of St Bartholomew, Arborfield and St. James, Barkham were combined.

Despite having much in common, each parish has its own distinct historical heritage.

6.2 Arborfield

During the reign of Edward the Confessor (1042-1066) a Saxon Squire by the name of John Simonds lived in Arborfield and it is possible that his descendants are landowners in the area today.

Arborfield today is in fact two settlements - Arborfield and Arborfield Cross, the latter was in the Liberty of Newland until the two parishes were merged in 1948.

The medieval settlement of Arborfield by the River Loddon included a manor house and a wooden Saxon church which was re-built in the 13th Century and in turn replaced during the latter 19thC by a new Church some 800 metres to the east. Five of the bells used in the modern church were hung in the original church including the oldest which was cast in the Wokingham Foundry probably between 1363 and 1381. The manor was rebuilt in 1603 and 1842 with increasing scale and grandeur but was finally demolished during the mid 20th C. A water mill, which produced high quality paper and was an important feature of the settlement was also lost during the 20th C.

By the 15th Century, a group of buildings were established near the crossroads which included two inns and created a centre of trade for local farmers and travellers. This is now known as Arborfield Cross and the core of the village is designated as a Conservation Area. The Bull Inn is celebrated as one of the places Queen Victoria stopped as she drove from Windsor to Stratfield Saye to visit the Duke of Wellington. The Swan Inn Probably dates from the 15th Century and has had many other uses including a mortuary and tea rooms.

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6.3 Barkham

The adjacent parish of Barkham was originally part of Windsor Forest and significant areas of forest remained until comparatively recent times.

The medieval village centre which includes the church, a moated manor site and a pond lies outside the modern village of Barkham which is distributed across two modern housing areas with ribbon development along some of the more important roads. The area stretching from the medieval village centre to the current 18th C Manor encompassing the Bull Public House late 17th C, Sparkes Farm 15th C and Barkham Square mid 18th C, is an Area of Special Character. The church was rebuilt late 19th C and the original 15th C moated manor house is still occupied.

Much of the property and land in the south of Barkham (Brook Farm, part of the Bearwood Estate) was acquired by Berkshire County Council in 1919 to provide housing and work – smallholdings and allotments – for servicemen returning from WWI. The properties were either returned to private ownership in the 1980s or have been demolished and the surrounding historic farmland is owned by WBC.

6.4 The Remount Depot and Arborfield Garrison

For hundreds of years the army relied on horses but it was not until 1887 that their procurement and welfare became more formalised under the Remount Department at the War Office. In 1904, the use of three farms, all in Barkham, was acquired to establish a new Remount Depot with the main entrance in Arborfield. This was extended in 1914. The Depot became a major feature in the life of the two Parishes and the Infirmary Stables built around 1912 are scheduled as being unique.

The Remount Depot was reduced in scale after WWI and finally closed in 1937 as mechanisation came to the fore. The site was used by the REME and its forerunners until it closed in 2015.

6.5 Heritage Assets

Despite much change, many important buildings and sites remain which depict events and styles from moats possibly dating back to 1300 and buildings from the 15th Century through to the 20th Century. Moreover, the setting for many of these locations has remained virtually unchanged and needs equal consideration. The designation of important sites should be continually reviewed as their contribution to the evolution of the local area is further understood e.g. Langley House (Barkham) and The Avenue (Arborfield).

Although heritage is the past, it is also very much part of the future and should be used to reinforce local distinctiveness and contribute to the economic well-being of the area wherever possible. The approximate numbers of the overall heritage assets are given below.

	Arborfield	Barkham	Total
Listed Buildings	[32]	[9]	[41]
Listed Gardens/Parks	Bearwood Estate		1
Scheduled Sites	[1]	[3]	[4]
Conservation Areas	1	0	1
Areas of Special Character	[2]	[1]	[3]

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6.6 Locally Valued Historic Assets

The following locations have been identified as Locally Valued Historic Assets, as mentioned in Policy IRS4. These locations require special recognition. In the longer term should it is an aspiration for these to receive formal protection within Wokingham's Local Plan.

The historic chestnut avenue at Arborfield



Chestnut avenue in spring



Chestnut avenue in summer

The historic chestnut avenue at Arborfield connects The Old Rectory, adjacent to Church Lane, to the remains of the old church at Arborfield, which is a scheduled monument and some early buildings at Hall Farm including the original Arborfield Mill. Avenues were the invention of the Renaissance, when the rules of scientific perspective were being applied to garden design. In the centuries that followed, the approach to the villa or great house was always by way of an avenue of cypresses, oaks, limes or chestnuts. In this case the 'great house' would have been Arborfield Grange, the residence of John Ponsonby Conroy (1786-1854) who was the controversial and hated advisor of Queen Victoria as a young monarch. He is buried in the old Churchyard. Thus the avenue is important for two reasons:

- a) Its historic context in the original village of Arborfield
- b) Its value as a landscape feature

The lime grove at Nashgrove Ride



The lime grove

The four-line lime avenue seems to have been planted at the behest of John Walter III who then owned the land, circa 1884-5. It was said that he wanted to create a grand route for his sons to travel along to Wellington College; it was however uncompleted. It is very unusual to find four lines of limes; it is not unusual to find limes and sycamore or limes and chestnut on either side of a private roadway, but the only other place known to have four lines of limes planted is at Clumber Park, Nottinghamshire which is over two miles in length. Thus the avenue is important for two reasons:

- a) Its historic context in the former Bearwood estate
- b) Its value as a landscape feature

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Carters Hill



Tudor House at Carters Hill



Carters Hill House from the west

Carters Hill is a small settlement in the northern part of the Plan Area, containing a number of old buildings. The Carter's Hill/Loaders Lane area, as defined by the names, was historically linked to the Mill at Sindlesham in that it was home to a number of large medieval barns. Arborfield Barn is now to be seen in the Chiltern Open Air Museum. From the 18th Century to the present day, in addition to farming, the area was associated with both the Bearwood Estate (The Times Newspaper) and the Simmonds family (Brewing and Banking). Thus retention of the avenue is important for three reasons:

- a) Its historic context
- b) The contribution it makes as a landmark in the local landscape
- c) The character presented by a group of old and unusual buildings isolated from other more modern development.

Granary in Barkham Street



The granary

The granary is an interesting example of a grain store dating from the early 19th century. In order to keep the grain dry and protected from vermin, it is raised on mushroom shaped staddle stones to keep the floor above ground level. It has been kept in good repair by its current owner. Located on an open plot adjacent to a busy road, it is clearly visible to passing traffic. Preservation of the granary is important for two reasons:

- a) The granary is an unusual architectural feature
- b) It is a significant component of the Barkham Street Area of Special Character

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7. Aspirations for the Heritage Assets of Arborfield and Barkham

Arborfield and Barkham Parishes are eager to retain and protect these important heritage assets by applying the following aspirations in accordance with NPPF paras 126 and 128 and Local Policy CP3(c).

- i. Any development must protect, enhance and not cause harm to heritage assets or their settings.
- ii. Similar protection should be afforded to non-listed building and non-scheduled sites provided their significance can be demonstrated in either a national or local context and a viable and sustainable end-use can be determined e.g. Langley House (Barkham) and The Avenue (Arborfield).
- iii. For buildings that are not extant dwellings or work buildings, their long term financial status should be assured – possibly by becoming a charitable trust, part of a visitor or community centre, being included in a themed retail outlet or a combination (e.g. Infirmary Stables, Garrison site).
- iv. Development of a heritage asset or in the vicinity of a heritage asset will only be allowed if any impact on the asset or its setting can be mitigated or, preferably, enhanced.