Working together to create a Neighbourhood Plan

27th March 2014

Dear Mrs Wragg,

Barkham and Arborfield Parish Councils are delighted to present to you their Application for the designation of a Neighborhood Plan Area for Arborfield and Newland and Barkham Parishes.

We are aware that there is a six week consultation period for the designation of the area. The date of the next Executive Meeting of the Council is 26th June. The Parish Councils look forward to working along with you to produce this Plan which will be a huge benefit for our Parishes and residents.

Yours sincerely,

Judith Neuhofer
Clerk to Barkham Parish Council
Application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Plan Area for Arborfield & Newland and Barkham Parishes

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 require Parish Councils who intend to prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan to submit an application for designation of a neighbourhood area.

S61F Statement

Arborfield & Newland Parish Council and Barkham Parish Council have agreed to work together on a Neighbourhood Plan due to the areas of common interest affecting both Parishes. The two Parish Councils have agreed that Barkham Parish Council should be named the lead or named Parish in taking forward this Neighbourhood Plan. Section 61F(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act (inserted by paragraph 2 of Schedule 9 to the Localism Act 2011 (c.20)) allows for Neighbourhood Plan areas to be designated which contain areas of other parishes with those parishes’ consent. This consent has been given by Arborfield & Newland Parish Council at the end of this statement.

Area to be designated

The map attached identifies the area to which this application relates.

It covers the whole of both parishes of Arborfield & Newland and Barkham.

Statement

The boundary of the proposed Joint Neighbourhood Plan for Arborfield and Barkham coincides with the civil and historic parish boundaries for Arborfield & Newland Parish Council and Barkham Parish Council.

The Neighbourhood Plan boundary represents the full extent of both Councils’ administrative areas of responsibility in terms of both statutory obligations and discretionary powers to provide services to the people of Arborfield & Newland and Barkham.

Each Parish has its own characteristics, which play a key part in defining local identity, but they also share common concerns and interests about environment, transport and education and in particular traffic flows to the nearest towns of Reading and Wokingham which pass through both villages.
A considerable part of the major Strategic Development Location (SDL) identified by Wokingham Borough Council's Core Strategy for the Arborfield Garrison site falls within the boundaries of the two Parishes. The SDL will have a profound effect on the two parishes which are keen to create policies and solutions within the Neighbourhood Plan that support Wokingham Borough Council's vision of a sustainable new community within the SDL that integrates well with the existing Parishes.

The Parishes recognize that a Neighbourhood Plan must have regard to the National Planning Policy framework, be compatible with EU obligations and human rights requirements, and be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the local authority's Local Plan, and will not apply to planning applications which have already been approved.

The two Parishes have established a joint Steering Group that has already canvassed opinions in the two communities through: a Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire; open community sessions; and established working groups on specific topics including transport, employment, education and green routes.

A joint Neighbourhood Plan will enable the two communities to assess the need and develop such solutions as creating and linking safe green routes (cycling, footpaths, and bridleways) across the Parishes and integrated with the SDL. Land use policies would also be developed to enable other potential objectives including: facilities for Parish Office/community facilities; employment opportunities; improving green space and access between Arborfield and Barkham; playing fields.

The designation of the whole area of Arborfield & Newland and Barkham will ensure that both communities will have a unique opportunity fully to shape the respective parish areas, enabling the two councils to make full use of the resources and skills from their respective community representatives to maximize local involvement.

In making this area application Barkham Parish Council is a relevant body for the purposes of section 61G of the 1990 Act, and has secured the written consent of Arborfield & Newland Parish Council whose area is encompassed in the

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Agreement to support the application for Neighbourhood Plan Area Registration for the areas covered by Arborfield & Newland and Barkham Parishes

Arborfield Parish Council has resolved to support the development of a joint Neighbourhood Plan covering the areas of Arborfield and Newland Parish and Barkham Parish.

For this purpose Arborfield Parish Council supports the application by Barkham Parish to be the Qualifying Body for the registration of the joint Neighbourhood Plan area. The two Parishes will work together as equal partners and devolve powers for the development of the Plan to a joint steering group under the terms of an agreed constitution.

Chairman
Arborfield and Newland Parish Council
Date 18 May 2014

Parish Clerk