

PLANNING STATEMENT

Section 73A Planning Application for the demolition of stables and the use of land for the stationing of caravans for residential purposes, and dayrooms and hardstanding ancillary to that use. (Retrospective) at Donnas Paddock, Wargrave Road, Twyford, RG10 9PN.

December 2025

Green Planning Services Ltd

Unit D Lunesdale

Upton Magna Business Park

Shrewsbury

SY4 4TT

Tel: 01743 709364

Email: admin@gpsltd.co.uk

Green Planning Services Limited

Unit D, Lunesdale, Upton Magna Business Park, Upton Magna, Shrewsbury SY4 4TT

Directors

Matthew Green BA

Michael Rudd BSc(Hons), MSc, LL.M, PgDip Law, FGS

Hugh Jackson RIBA ARB

Helen Morris LLB (Hons) MSc PgDip

Eleanor Simmons BSc (Hons), FCILEx

Jo Clayton BSc (Hons), FCCA

Tel: 01743 709364

Email: admin@gpsltd.co.uk

Reg. No: 16145333 VAT Reg. No.

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Green Planning Services Limited

Unit D, Lunesdale, Upton Magna Business Park, Upton Magna, Shrewsbury SY4 4TT

Directors

Matthew Green BA
Michael Rudd BSc(Hons), MSc, LL.M, PgDip Law, FGS
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APPENDICES:

Appendix PS1 - *Invitation of planning application; email from Benjamin Hindle (Principal Planning Officer) dated 8 October 2025*

Green Planning Services Limited

Unit D, Lunesdale, Upton Magna Business Park, Upton Magna, Shrewsbury SY4 4TT

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Matthew Green BA

Michael Rudd BSc(Hons), MSc, LL.M, PgDip Law, FGS

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Green Planning Services Ltd (“**GPS**”) Ltd have been instructed by Mr Sheridan (“**the Applicant**”) to apply for “*the demolition of stables and the use of land for the stationing of caravans for residential purposes, and dayrooms and hardstanding ancillary to that use (Retrospective)*” (“**the Application**”) at Donnas Paddock, Wargrave Road, Twyford, RG10 9PN.
- 1.2. This planning statement has been produced in support of the Application, which will be determined by Wokingham Borough Council as the Local Planning Authority (“**LPA**”).
- 1.3. The site is identified within the red line on the location plan submitted as part of the application under **Drawing No. 24_1361 001 P01 Site Location Plan**.
- 1.4. The application site consists of formerly enclosed paddock land that contained a stable block, bordered to the west by the A321 (Wargrave Road), and the south and east by a cul-de-sac (also named Wargrave Road, but not classified).
- 1.5. The surrounding area to the east is mainly residential with paddock land to the south. Sited to the north is amenity land and a public footpath connecting to the main section of Wargrave Road.
- 1.6. The site is located within the edge of the London Area Greenbelt. The site is also within the Sheeplands Nitrate Vulnerable Zone. The site is located within Flood Zone 1.
- 1.7. The site spans an area of 0.14 ha.

2. PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1. A planning history search was undertaken to establish whether any relevant planning consents exists for the application site. All relevant planning history identified is listed below in Table 1:

Table 1: Relevant planning history at Donna Paddock, Wargrave Road, Twyford, RG10 9PN

Reference	Notes	Decision Date	Decision
L242330	Application to vary conditions 1 and 4 of planning consent 202499 (allowed on appeal APP/X0360/W/21/3288874) for the proposed demolition of existing building and change of use of land for the stationing of a mobile home for residential purposes (one Gypsy and Traveller pitch) and the erection of a single storey utilities building along with access. Condition 1 attaches the permission to a named occupier, and the variation is to change this to the current occupier. Condition 4 refers to the approved plans, and the variation is to amend the layout.	07/11/2024	Refused
L240140	Full application for the erection of 2no. CCTV poles with cameras (retrospective).	15/03/2024	Refused
L250058	Application to vary conditions 1 and 4 of planning consent 202499 granted under appeal reference APP/X0360/W/21/3288874 dated 17/10/2022 for the	13/03/2025	Refused

	proposed demolition of existing building and change of use of land for the stationing of a mobile home for residential purposes (one Gypsy and Traveller pitch) and the erection of a single storey utilities building. Condition 1 relates to occupation by named persons for a temporary period and condition 4 to the approved plans, and the variation is to remove or amend the personal permission and remove the temporary time period, and for changes to the site layout and landscaping.		
L232125	Application to vary condition 4 of planning consent 202499 granted under appeal reference APP/X0360/W/21/3288874 dated 17/10/2022 for the proposed demolition of existing building and change of use of land for the stationing of a mobile home for residential purposes (one Gypsy and Traveller pitch) and the erection of a single storey utilities building. Condition 4 relates to the approved plans and the variation is for amendments to the layout of the site and access, and changes to the proposed landscaping. (Part retrospective)	27/02/2024	Refused
L230519	Application for submission of details to comply with the following condition of planning consent [202499] dated [11/ 6/2021]and appeal dated (17/10/2022) (ref: APP/X0360/W/21/3288874) Condition 6) landscaping scheme,7) Arboriculture Assessment and Method Statement, 8) details of surface and foul water drainage, and 9) details of biodiversity net gains and a timetable for implementation.	21/04/2023	Split Decision
L221405	Full application for the proposed demolition of existing building and change of use of land for the stationing of a mobile home for residential purposes (one Gypsy and Traveller pitch) and the erection of a single storey utilities building along with access.	08/07/2022	Refused
L202499/ APP/X0360/ W/21/32888 74	Full application for the proposed demolition of existing building and change of use of land for the stationing of a mobile home for residential purposes (one Gypsy and Traveller pitch) and the erection of a single storey utilities building.	11/06/2021	Refused, allowed at appeal
L120290	Proposed change of use of land from grazing to keeping of horses and erection of a stable building, construction of hardstanding and improvement of access.	09/01/2013	Approved
L120193	Proposed erection of stable building and covered midden, laying of hardstanding and construction of access road.	05/10/2012	Refused
L121624	Erection of stable building, laying of hardstanding and construction of access road.	25/06/2012	Refused

2.2. The site previously had an application allowed at appeal for the proposed demolition of existing building and change of use of land for the stationing of a mobile home for residential purposes (one Gypsy and Traveller pitch) and the erection of a single storey utilities building dated 11th June 2021, ref: APP/X0360/W/21/3288874.

2.3. GPS are of the opinion that the works, subject of this retrospective application, constitute a material change of use as opposed to a breach of condition in respect of the 2022 permission.

Green Planning Services Limited

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Directors

Matthew Green BA

Michael Rudd BSc(Hons), MSc, LL.M, PgDip Law, FGS

Hugh Jackson RIBA ARB

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- 2.4. The main consideration when reaching a determination as to whether the 2022 Permission has been lawfully implemented is whether all pre-commencement conditions have been complied with, and if not, whether each of those conditions constituted “true” conditions precedent and the failure to comply with those conditions prevented the lawful implementation of the 2022 Permission.
- 2.5. The 2022 Permission was granted subject to 14 conditions. Four of those conditions were pre-commencement conditions, these were as follows:
- Condition 6 – Landscaping scheme
 - Condition 7 – Arboricultural protection measures
 - Condition 8 – surface and foul water drainage
 - Condition 9 – Biodiversity net gain
- 2.6. The Inspector, in the appeal decision for the 2022 Permission states:
- “65. I have considered the conditions suggested by the Council and the appellant. In doing so, I have had regard to the Framework and Planning Practice Guidance on the use of planning conditions. In the case of each of the pre commencement conditions identified, I consider that resolution of the matters specified to be of sufficient significance to the achievement of satisfactory development such that it would be inappropriate to proceed further without the certainty that would arise from their approval.” [GPS Emphasis]*
- 2.7. On the 20th April 2023 the Council pursuant to application 230519. discharged Condition 6 (landscaping scheme) and Condition 7 (arboricultural assessment and method statement).
- 2.8. The Council set out the following in relation to conditions 8 and 9 of the 2022 Permission:
- “Further details are required for Condition 8 of planning permission as no details on the surface and foul water drainage has been provided.*
- No details have been submitted so far in relation to condition 9. These will need to be submitted in accordance with the timescales set out by the condition wording.”*
- 2.9. Condition 8 states:
- “Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, details of surface and foul water drainage to serve the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The drainage systems shall be provided in accordance with the approved details prior to the first occupation of the site and shall thereafter be retained as such.” [GPS Emphasis]*
- 2.10. Condition 9 states:

“Prior to the commencement of development, details of biodiversity net gains and a timetable for implementation shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved timetable.” [GPS Emphasis]

- 2.11. To date the above details have not been submitted to the Council in order to discharge those conditions.
- 2.12. The basic premise is that for a planning permission to be lawfully implemented, a developer must ensure that all pre-commencement conditions (condition precedents) have been complied with (“the Whitely principle” - *Whitely and Sons v Secretary of State for Wales and Clwyd CC (1992) 64 P & CR 296*).
- 2.13. In this case, all pre commencement conditions have not been complied with and therefore the 2022 planning permission has not been lawfully implemented.
- 2.14. It is understood that the Council are accepting of such following the recent withdrawal of the enforcement notice (dated 02/07/2025) alleging the *“Use of land for the stationing of a mobile home for residential purposes (one Gypsy and Traveller Pitch) without compliance with conditions 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 of planning permission 202499 allowed on appeal (reference APP/X0360/W/21/3288874) dated 17 October 2022.”* Appendix PS1 sets out such in addition to the invitation of this application.

3. THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1. This application is retrospective for the *“demolition of stables and the use of land for the stationing of caravans for residential purposes, and dayrooms and hardstanding ancillary to that use.”*
- 3.2. Following a site visit and consultation with the applicant and intended occupier, the site layout has been determined to best meet the occupiers’ requirements and although it has been withdrawn by Government, in the absence of any replacement document, the pitch has been designed with reference to the standards that were defined in 'Designing Gypsy and Travellers Sites – A Good Practice Guide (2008)'.
- 3.3. The proposed development has been designed to be in keeping with the character of the area and positioned to limit its visual impact, as shown on **Drawing No. 24_1369_003 Proposed Retrospective Site Plan**. The proposal incorporates a No. 1 mobile home, a touring

caravan, and a dayroom. The pitch provides sufficient parking, turning, and private amenity space.

- 3.4. The proposed caravans will conform to the definition within Section 29(1) of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 and Section 13(1) of the Caravan Sites Act 1968, and therefore, plans and elevations of individual units are not required.
- 3.5. The dayrooms will provide facilities that enable the occupants of the caravans to minimise the recognised hazards associated with cooking and fire in the close confines of caravans and provide facilities for washing and bathing, and the maintenance of basic hygiene.

Technical Documents

- 3.6. This application has been submitted with the following accompanying supporting documents, plans and drawings:
 - 24_1369_001 Site Location Plan
 - 24_1369_002 Existing Site Plan (Pre Commencement)
 - 24_1369_003 Proposed Site Plan (Retrospective)
 - 24_1369_012 Landscape Proposal
 - 24_1369 Planning Statement

4. PLANNING POLICY

- 4.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 require that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

National Planning Policy, Guidance and Legislation

- 4.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is relevant and a material consideration in planning decisions as per NPPF paragraph 2.
- 4.3. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in December 2024, coming into effect immediately. The NPPF 2024 replaces the previous NPPFs published in 2023, 2021, 2019, 2018 and 2012.
- 4.4. The NPPF is relevant and a material consideration in planning decisions as per NPPF paragraph 2. Key elements of the NPPF relevant to this application are:

- Paragraph 61 - seeks to ensure sufficient land is developed to boost the supply of homes including ‘that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed.’ The 2023 NPPF expanded this paragraph and states ‘The overall aim should be to meet as much of an area’s identified housing need as possible, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community.’ This remains a focus of the 2024 NPPF.
- Paragraph 63 - requires that the needs of travellers must be addressed, both those that meet the definition in the PPTS and those that don’t.
- Paragraph 135c - stipulates that “planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character”.
- Additional key points that should bear consideration during the decision-making process consist of:
 - Paragraph 8: setting out the three dimensions to sustainable development.
 - Paragraph 11: setting down the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
 - Paragraph 39: stating that decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
 - Paragraph 49 & 50: setting out how weight should be attributed to Development Plan policies.
 - Paragraph 155 which sets out the circumstances where development in the Grey Belt is not inappropriate development.

4.5. Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (“the PPTS”) is the current National Policy in relation to provision for gypsy caravan sites. It was published on Monday 26th March 2012 and came into effect on Tuesday 27th March with the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework. The PPTS was amended in August 2015, December 2023 and most recently December 2024.

4.6. Elements of the policy with significant relevance to this application are:

- The clear intention of paragraph 4 to increase the number of gypsy sites with planning permission.
- In Policy A at paragraph 7(c) the need for a ‘robust evidence base to establish accommodation needs.
- In Policy B at paragraph 10(a) the need to maintain a five-year supply of sites.

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- Policy C which deals with traveller sites in rural areas and the countryside.
- Policy H which deals with determining applications. In particular paragraph 24 which refers to the presumption in favour of sustainable development and paragraph 25 which sets down some of the material considerations to be considered by the decision maker.
- Paragraph 28 sets out that if a local planning authority cannot demonstrate an up-to-date 5-year supply of deliverable sites, the provisions in paragraph 11(d) of the National Planning Policy Framework apply.
- *Annex 1: Sets down the revised definition of “gypsies and travellers” as: “Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, and all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a caravan, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.”*

Adopted Local Plan

- 4.7. Wokingham Borough Council’s current local plan was adopted in January 2010. The Council are currently undertaking an update of their local plan, which will put in place a new planning strategy for the period to 2040. Once adopted, it will replace the current Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans.
- 4.8. The adopted plan documents comprise the following, which are relevant to the site;
- Wokingham Borough Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2010 (“Local Plan”)
 - Wokingham Borough Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014 (“Development Plan”)
- 4.9. The applicable Core Strategy policies are as follows:
- CP1 – Establishes the overarching spatial strategy for the borough, identifying the broad locations and principles for development and ensuring that growth is sustainable and aligned with infrastructure provision.
 - CP2 – Focuses on the distribution of housing, jobs, and services, promoting balanced growth and ensuring local needs are met across the borough.

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- CP3 – Requires that new development provides appropriate infrastructure, such as open space and allotments, to support community health and well-being, as demonstrated in site-specific S106 agreements
- CP6 – Addresses the need for safe and accessible transport infrastructure, ensuring development locations are well connected and support sustainable modes of travel.
- CP9 – Highlights the importance of protecting Green Infrastructure, landscape character, and biodiversity through well-designed, site-appropriate development.
- CP11 – Prioritises achieving high standards of design and quality in new developments to create attractive, well-integrated built environments.
- CP12 – Promotes energy-efficient, resource-conscious construction in line with climate change and sustainability objectives, including low-carbon and zero-carbon building standards.

4.10. The relevant Managing Development Delivery (MDD) plan policies are as follows:

- TB01 – Sets specific thresholds and requirements for delivering affordable housing on new developments, ensuring mixed and inclusive communities.
- TB10 – Applies detailed criteria for Traveller site provision beyond the definitions in PPTS, ensuring that both authorised and unauthorised traveller needs are considered via planning assessments.
- TB21 – Provides guidance for site layouts in new housing developments to secure adequate amenity space, landscaping, and built form that supports neighbourhood character.
- CC03 – Specifies requirements for minimising flood risk and managing surface water drainage in new developments, ensuring resilience to climate impacts.

5. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

5.1. The main considerations relating to the application are the relevant National and Local Planning Policies, as set out above, and the following principal matters:

- Grey Belt Assessment,
- Character & Appearance; and,
- Other Considerations

Grey Belt Assessment

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- 5.2. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published on 12 December 2024, introduces the concept of the “Grey Belt.” This new designation is considered relevant to this application and has a direct bearing on the assessment of the proposals within the Green Belt.
- 5.3. The 2024 NPPF defines “Grey Belt” as follows:
- “For the purposes of plan-making and decision-making, ‘grey belt’ is defined as land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143. ‘Grey belt’ excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development.”*
- 5.4. Land is excluded from the Grey Belt category if it is subject to any of the protections listed in footnote 7 of the NPPF (excluding the Green Belt itself) that would offer strong grounds for refusal or restriction of development. This exclusion does **not** apply in this case.
- 5.5. Notwithstanding the above, the site must be assessed against the second part of the ‘Grey Belt’ test. This requires an evaluation of whether the site makes a significant contribution to any of the Green Belt purposes listed under Paragraph 143 of the NPPF—namely purposes (a), (b), and (d). Further clarification on this approach is provided in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), at Paragraph 5 (Reference ID: 64-005-20250225).
- 5.6. Purpose A seeks to prevent the unchecked spread of large urban areas.
- 5.7. In this case, the site is located near the village of Twyford. The settlement boundary can be found in the Settlement Boundaries Review by Wokingham Borough Council.
- 5.8. The next closest settlement to the site is the village of Wargrave.
- 5.9. In line with the guidance set out at Paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 64-005-20250225 villages should not be considered large built-up areas.
- 5.10. The role of the site in preventing urban sprawl is therefore weak to none given the site is not located adjacent to or within a large built-up area.

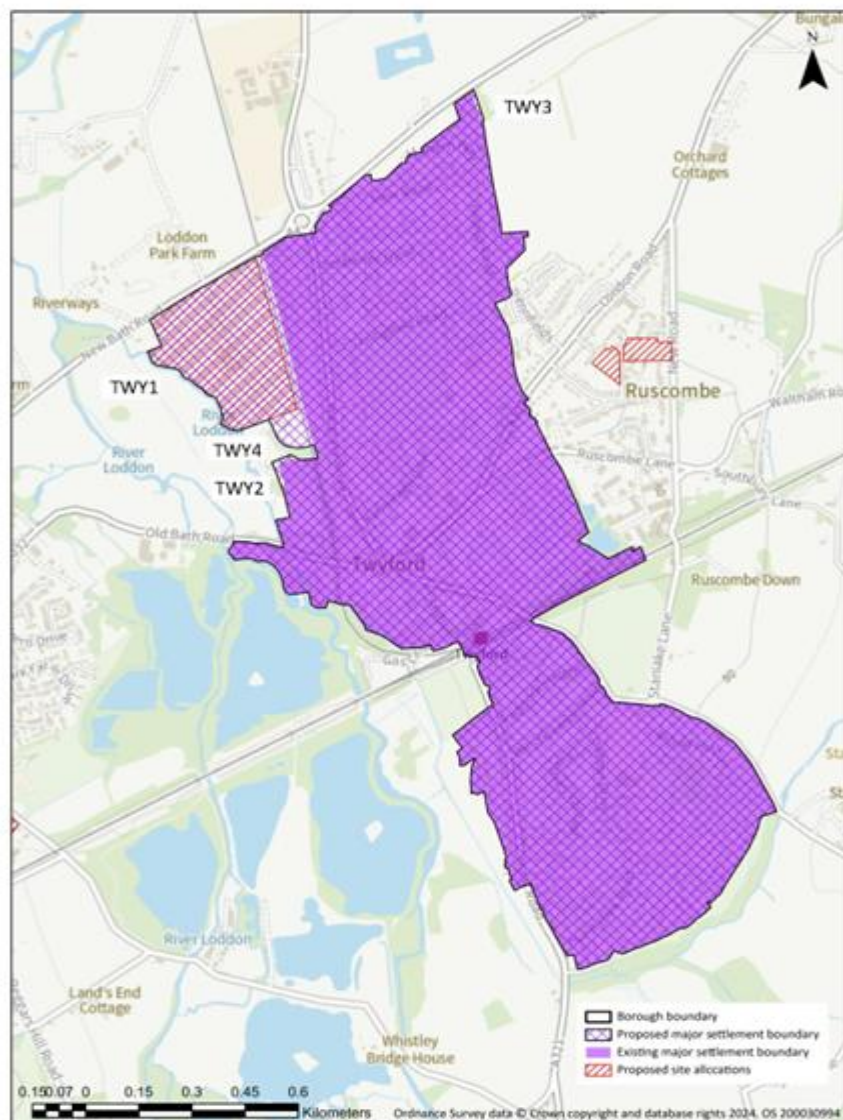


Figure 1: Twyford settlement boundary – Wokingham Borough Council's Topic Paper Settlement Boundaries Review (September 2024).

- 5.11. Purpose B seeks to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another; to protect the visual and spatial separation between distinct settlements. According to the PPG, this purpose relates to the merging of towns, not villages. As above, Twyford is a village as is Wargrave, the next closest settlement.
- 5.12. Reading is the nearest large town to Twyford, which is 10km away. The site does not lie within a meaningful or strategic gap between towns and forms only a small and peripheral part of the intervening countryside. Furthermore, due to local topography and intervening landscape features, the site does not make a significant contribution to the perceived or

actual separation between settlements. As such, its contribution to Purpose B is assessed as weak.

5.13. Purpose D aims to protect the historic setting and identity of towns with notable heritage significance. There are no designated historic towns in the vicinity of the site that would be affected by development. The site lies well beyond the influence of any historic settlement's setting or character, and its development would have no impact on the integrity or legibility of historic towns. Therefore, the site's contribution to Purpose D is weak.

5.14. In summary, the site fails to make a strong contribution to any of the relevant Green Belt purposes set out under the NPPF. It is not subject to other constraints listed in Footnote 7, such as national ecological designations, heritage assets, or areas at high risk of flooding. For these reasons, the land subject to the application should be considered Grey Belt.

NPPF Paragraph 155.

5.15. Having established that the site constitutes Grey Belt, it is necessary to consider whether the provisions of paragraph 155 are met:

"The development of homes, commercial and other development in the Green Belt should also not be regarded as inappropriate where all the following apply:

- a. The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan;*
- b. There is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed;*
- c. The development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to paragraphs 110 and 115 of this Framework; and d. Where applicable the development proposed meets the 'Golden Rules' requirements set out in paragraphs 156-157 below."*

Paragraph 155(a)

5.16. It has been shown that the development would use Grey Belt land in the section above. The PPG (at Paragraph 8 Reference ID: 64-008-20250225) sets out how to determine whether the remaining purposes of the Green Belt across the remaining area of the Plan are fundamentally undermined:

"In reaching this judgement, authorities should consider whether, or the extent to which, the release or development of Green Belt Land would affect the ability of all the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan from serving all five of the Green Belt purposes in a meaningful way."

5.17. The scale and location of the land subject to the application mean that it could not fundamentally undermine all of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan.

Paragraph 155(b)

5.18. The Wokingham Borough Council (GTAA) (2023) identified that there are 146 Gypsy and Traveller pitches on 30 sites across the Borough comprising two council-managed sites (35 pitches), 23 private authorised sites (85 pitches), four private tolerated sites (15 pitches) and one private temporary site (11 pitches).

5.19. The GTAA states *‘a total need of 86 pitches (of which 74 is from households who meet a PPTS (plus unable to travel) test and 53 for those that meet the PPTS nomadic habit of life test) over the period 2022/23 to 2039/40.’*

5.20. The Council provide no basis as to how they plan to meet this identified need other than *‘the regularisation of sites that are not authorised and the expansion/intensification of existing sites.’*

5.21. Even if permissions were granted in respect of the unauthorised sites, of which there is no evidence of, this would only provide 15 pitches against the 86-pitch unmet need.

5.22. In addition, the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (“the PPTS”) (2024) has been produced, altering the definition of a gypsy and traveller for planning purposes. The 2023 GTAA does not consider the most up-to-date PPTS definition, which sees an expansion to the 2023 version and could identify an increased level of need in Wokingham Borough.

5.23. The Council cannot currently demonstrate a 5-year supply of sites and Paragraph 155(b) is therefore satisfied.

Paragraph 155(c)

5.24. The PPTS sets down eight considerations for local authorities in terms of sustainability, demonstrating that sustainability needs to be considered in the round and not just in terms of transport mode and distances to services. Notwithstanding, even considering sustainability in terms of transport mode and distance to services, the site is sustainable.

5.25. The application site is situated within Twyford. Within this settlement is all the necessary facilities required for day-to-day living. The nearest shop is 300m away, the nearest school is 1.2km away, and the nearest bus stop is 100m away. Frequent services are accessible from this bus stop. These factors all support the application site being a socio-economically sustainable location.

Paragraph 155(d)

5.26. Paragraph 18 (Policy E) of the PPTS states that the Golden Rules do not apply to traveller sites.

5.27. As the conditions of paragraph 155 are met, the development should not be considered inappropriate in the Green Belt.

NPPF Footnote 55

5.28. Footnote 55 sets out that Grey Belt development, which is not inappropriate, is excluded from the policy requirement to give substantial weight to any harm to the Green Belt, including its openness. Therefore, the tests of impacts to openness or Green Belt purposes are addressed, and proposals do not have to be justified by ‘very special circumstances’ (PPG paragraph 14 Reference ID: 64-01420250225).

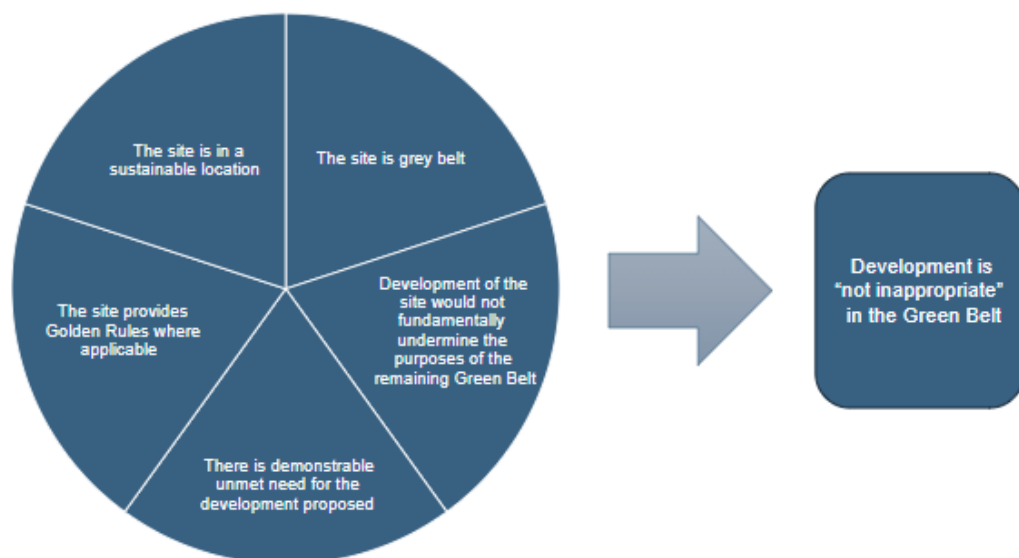


Figure 2: When is development in the Green Belt not inappropriate under paragraph 155 of the NPPF? PPG Paragraph: 010
Reference ID: 64-010-20250225.

5.29. As the conditions of paragraph 155 are met, the development should be considered appropriate in the Green Belt.

Character and Appearance

5.30. The visual impact of the development should be assessed from publicly accessible viewpoints. In this case, such viewpoints are limited primarily to views from the A321 and Wargrave Road, which lie to the east and south of the site, respectively. The A321 is a designated 60mph main road, and as such, any views toward the site from this location would be fleeting and transient in nature, due to the speed of traffic and intervening vegetation.

5.31. The brick pillars and gate on site are similar in scale and material to that of the nearby 136 Wargrave street. Therefore, the entrance fits in with the surrounding character and appearance of the area. Please see attached an image below.



Figure 3: Neighbouring access of 136 Wargrave Street.

5.32. To further limit the, at worst, minimal impact upon the character and appearance of the area, the application seeks to replace the extant close-boarded timber fencing on the southern boundary of the site with a traditional post and rail fence, to reinstate the fence in 2019. Accompanied by native hedgerow and tree planting, thereby restoring the boundary treatment to its previous condition with new appropriate native species planting more in keeping with the rural character of hedgerows in the immediate area.

5.33. The existing close-boarded timber fence is proposed to be set back behind both the supplementary native planting and the reinstated post and rail fence allowing for a more sympathetic and appropriate appearance to be attained. This has been depicted upon **Drawing No. 24_1369 P01 012 Landscaping Proposal** to provide a visual representation.

5.34. In keeping with planning consent 202499 (allowed on appeal APP/X0360/W/21/3288874); specifically, the noise assessment produced by LFAcoustics (February 2021), the fence along

the western boundary of the site would be a two-metre-high acoustic fence to provide effective acoustic screening from the Wargrave Road.

- 5.35. These adjustments and augmentation of the boundary planting will soften the visual impact of the development when viewed from Wargrave Road, with views toward the site to a condition closely resembling the pre-development appearance. An illustrative image from Google Earth 2019 is provided below.



Figure 4: Pre-existing site frontage (southern boundary) adjoining Wargrave Road.

- 5.36. The applicant proposes to retain the current fencing on all other boundaries, with the addition of native hedge and tree planting in appropriate locations to screen and soften the views of such
- 5.37. The proposed landscape plan indicates supplementary native tree planting to enhance biodiversity and strengthen the rural character of the site along with landscape amenity. All non-native planting previously introduced will be removed to further reinforce the local landscape character.
- 5.38. The applicant also commits to a ten-year tree replacement strategy: any trees along the site's boundaries that are identified as damaged or dying within this period will be replaced on a like-for-like basis with the same native species, either in the same location or elsewhere on site. Final details of such can be secured by condition.
- 5.39. In terms of character, all nearby and adjacent land uses and buildings should be considered as part of the character of an area regardless as to whether they are considered positive or

Green Planning Services Limited

Unit D, Lunesdale, Upton Magna Business Park, Upton Magna, Shrewsbury SY4 4TT

Directors

Matthew Green BA

Michael Rudd BSc(Hons), MSc, LLM, PgDip Law, FGS

Hugh Jackson RIBA ARB

Helen Morris LLB (Hons) MSc PgDip

Eleanor Simmons BSc (Hons), FCILEx

Jo Clayton BSc (Hons), FCCA

Tel: 01743 709364

Email: admin@gpsltd.co.uk

Reg. No: 16145333 VAT Reg. No.

not. It should also take into account the pattern of development in the immediate area whether it is visible or not. The residential stationing of caravans is part of the current character and appearance of the area, due to the Gypsy and traveller pitch located south of the site approved at appeal ref: APP/X0360/W/23/3320780. It is therefore established that the stationing of caravans already forms part of the character of the area. This underscores the acceptability of caravan use within the local context and helps to position the application as compatible with the character of the wider landscape.

Other Considerations

Personal Circumstances

- 5.40. The above analysis demonstrates that the proposal constitutes appropriate development, and there is no need to demonstrate very special circumstances.
- 5.41. These matters notwithstanding, detailed personal circumstances of the intended occupant will be provided should the Council require them for demonstrable planning purposes.
- 5.42. Please note, in regard to making a decision, children will be living on the site and as such, any decision taken by the council should be made having considered the best interests of said children. There is an explicit requirement to treat the needs of the children on the site as a primary consideration (UNCRC Article 3, fully set out at para 80-82 of AZ) and, in respect of a decision by the LPA to safeguard and promote the welfare and well-being of the children (Children's Act 2004, s.11(1)).

Foul & Surface Water Drainage

- 5.43. In accordance with Circular 03/99 and 11/95, in the absence of any replacement document, final drainage details can be dealt with by condition and therefore specifics are not required. For preliminary details, please refer to the application form.
- 5.44. It is our contention that a full drainage assessment is not required at application stage for an application of this type and scale. In the absence of any replacement document, Circular 01/99 states at Annex A, paragraph 4:
- "If, by taking into account the cost and/or practicability, it can be shown to the satisfaction of the local planning authority that connection to a public sewer is not feasible, a package sewage treatment plant incorporating a combination of treatment processes should be considered."*
- 5.45. Paragraph 5 of Circular 03/99 proceeds to state that:

“Only if it can be clearly demonstrated by the developer that the sewerage and sewage disposal methods referred to in paragraphs 3 and 4 above are not feasible, taking into account cost and/or practicability, should a system incorporating septic tank(s) be considered and proposed if appropriate. Applications for planning permission should be supported by a full assessment of the proposed use of septic tanks, to confirm that the adverse effects by reference to the factors in paragraph 6 below will not arise.”

5.46. As such, in accordance with Circular 03/99, a full drainage assessment is only required for septic tanks and cess pits; neither of which are proposed at this stage.

Biodiversity Net Gain

5.47. It is considered that if the application is granted, the general Biodiversity Gain Condition (as set out in Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)) would not apply.

5.48. In accordance with Paragraph 20 (Limb 1(a)) of Schedule 7A, planning permission is granted under section 73A (planning permission for development already carried out) The Secretary of State may by regulations make provision modifying or excluding the application of this Part of this Schedule.

5.49. Echoing such, the PPG explicitly states: *“Biodiversity net gain does not apply to: retrospective planning permissions made under section 73A”* [Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 74-003-20240214].

5.50. However, given the incorporation of additional landscaping features that would in turn act as ecological and biodiversity enhancements on the site, if deemed necessary a proportionate Biodiversity Gain Condition is welcomed to protect, and enhance, the biodiversity interests of the area. A condition would be necessary to secure the implementation of net gain measures. This approach is consistent with the approach taken by the Inspector in the aforementioned Appeal Decision APP/X0360/W/21/3288874.

5.51. In regard to other ecological site assessments, I would echo the comment made by the ecology officer for the 2022 application, which reads:

5.52. “This application is not supported by an ecological assessment. Looking at our protected species and habitats GIS layers, I am minded to think that there is limited potential for the proposed development to adversely affect protected species or species of principal importance.”

5.53.

6. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

- 6.1. In accordance with national and local Green Belt policy, the development site makes only at best a weak contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt. On this basis, and in line with national guidance, the land should be considered as Grey Belt.
- 6.2. The proposal satisfies the conditions of NPPF Paragraph 155, notably that it (a) utilises grey belt land without undermining the wider Green Belt, (b) responds to an unmet need for a 5-year housing land supply in Wokingham, (c) is located sustainably, and (d) does not require application of the 'Golden Rules' given the minor scale of development. The development proposed is therefore appropriate.
- 6.3. The absence of a five year supply of gypsy and traveller sites triggers paragraph 11(d) NPPF.
- 6.4. The material considerations in favour of the application include:
 - **The Absence of a Five-Year Supply of Gypsy and Traveller Pitches:** The local planning authority is currently unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable Gypsy and Traveller pitches, as required by national planning policy and the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS). This represents a substantial and urgent unmet need which weighs heavily in favour of the development.
 - **Contribution Toward Meeting GTAA Requirements:** The proposed development would deliver an additional pitch, directly contributing to the shortfall identified in the most recent Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA). The provision of a pitch in accordance with the identified need strengthens the justification for the proposal.
 - **Sustainable Location:** The site is situated in a sustainable location, with access to essential services and facilities within a reasonable distance, thereby reducing reliance on private vehicles.
 - **Enhancement of Character and Appearance:** As detailed in preceding sections, the proposal includes significant visual and landscape improvements. These include the removal of incongruous close-boarded fencing, reinstatement of traditional rural boundary treatments, and the introduction of native hedgerows and tree planting.
 - **Likely location of alternative Gypsy and Traveller pitches:** Given the level of Green Belt in the area, it is likely that alternative sites would be in the Green Belt in any event.
 - **Personal circumstances:** if considered necessary.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1. In accordance with national and local Green Belt policy, the development site makes only at best a weak contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt. On this basis, and in line with national guidance, the land should be considered as Grey Belt.
- 7.2. The proposal satisfies the conditions of NPPF Paragraph 155, notably that it (a) utilises grey belt land without undermining the wider Green Belt, (b) responds to an unmet need for a 5-year housing land supply in Wokingham, (c) is located sustainably, and (d) does not require application of the 'Golden Rules' given the minor scale of development. The development proposed is therefore appropriate.
- 7.3. Paragraph 11(d) is engaged through the lack of a supply of gypsy and traveller sites and any adverse impacts of granting permission would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 7.4. Permission for the demolition of stables and the use of land for the stationing of caravans for residential purposes, and dayrooms and hardstanding ancillary to that use (Retrospective) should therefore be granted without delay.

Green Planning Services Limited

Unit D, Lunesdale, Upton Magna Business Park, Upton Magna, Shrewsbury SY4 4TT

Directors

Matthew Green BA
Michael Rudd BSc(Hons), MSc, LL.M, PgDip Law, FGS
Hugh Jackson RIBA ARB

Helen Morris LLB (Hons) MSc PgDip
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Tel: 01743 709364
Email: admin@gpsltd.co.uk
Reg. No: 16145333 VAT Reg. No.

Appendix PS1

Invitation of planning application; email from Benjamin Hindle (Principle PlannPrincipaler) dated 8 October 2025

Green Planning Services Limited

Unit D, Lunesdale, Upton Magna Business Park, Upton Magna, Shrewsbury SY4 4TT

Directors

Matthew Green BA

Michael Rudd BSc(Hons), MSc, LL.M, PgDip Law, FGS

Hugh Jackson RIBA ARB

Helen Morris LLB (Hons) MSc PgDip

Eleanor Simmons BSc (Hons), FCILEx

Jo Clayton BSc (Hons), FCCA

Tel: 01743 709364

Email: admin@gpsltd.co.uk

Reg. No: 16145333 VAT Reg. No.



Eleanor Simmons <eleanor.simmons@gpsltd.co.uk>

FW: Donna's Paddock - Wargrave Road - Notification of Withdrawal

1 message

Benjamin Hindle <Benjamin.Hindle@wokingham.gov.uk>

8 October 2025 at 12:25

To: "appeals@gpsltd.co.uk" <appeals@gpsltd.co.uk>, Eleanor Simmons <eleanor.simmons@gpsltd.co.uk>

Cc: Jason Varley <Jason.Varley@wokingham.gov.uk>, Brian Conlon <Brian.Conlon@wokingham.gov.uk>

Dear Eleanor/ Team,

Further to the attached confirmation of withdrawal served today (both letters attached) in light of *Mole Valley DC vs Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and Margaret Meloney [2025]* and subsequent decisions, the Council invite you to withdraw the submitted appeals. The Council are willing to consider a fresh planning application with this in mind, which we are happy to discuss.

Please do not hesitate to contact me concerning the above.

Kind Regards,

*Ben***Benjamin Hindle, BA (Hons), AssocRTPI**

Principal Planning Officer (L3 Specialist) – Development Management and Compliance

Wokingham Borough Council

Email: Benjamin.Hindle@wokingham.gov.uk

Telephone: 01182378680

Mobile: 07917080027

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Website: www.wokingham.gov.uk**DISCLAIMER**

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From: Benjamin Hindle**Sent:** 08 October 2025 13:15**To:** TeamE3 <teame3@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>**Cc:** Eleanor Simmons <eleanor.simmons@gpsltd.co.uk>; 'appeals@gpsltd.co.uk' <appeals@gpsltd.co.uk>; Planning Appeals <Planning.Appeals@wokingham.gov.uk>; Jason Varley <Jason.Varley@wokingham.gov.uk>; Brian Conlon <Brian.Conlon@wokingham.gov.uk>**Subject:** Donna's Paddock - Wargrave Road - Notification of Withdrawal

Dear Team E3,

Please find the attached letter and explanatory note confirming withdrawal of the breach of conditions enforcement notice pursuant to APP/X0360/C/25/3370255. This was served by hand on the appeal site earlier today. The Appellant's agent is cc'd for information.

Kind Regards,

Ben

Benjamin Hindle, BA (Hons), AssocRTPI

Principal Planning Officer (L3 Specialist) – Development Management and Compliance

Wokingham Borough Council

Email: Benjamin.Hindle@wokingham.gov.uk

Telephone: 01182378680

Mobile: 07917080027

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Private: Information that contains a small amount of sensitive data which is essential to communicate with an individual but doesn't require to be sent via secure methods.

2 attachments

 **EN withdrawal letter 2025 Sheridan.pdf**
146K

 **EN withdrawal letter 2025 Baxter.pdf**
146K