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Linear Park Phase 3, Arborfield Green

Planning Statement

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	3
1. Introduction	5
2. Site and Surrounding Area	7
3. Proposed Development	11
4. Planning Policy Context	17
5. Consideration of Planning Issues	24
6. Summary and Conclusion	35

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Crest Nicholson Operations Ltd. ('Crest') are pleased to submit a Reserved Matters application for the proposed development at Linear Park Phase 3, situated within the central core of the Arborfield Green development.

The Linear Park is an integral part of the site-wide green infrastructure, connecting the eastern and north-western extents of Arborfield Green with the District Centre. It seeks to deliver the open space principles which have been established as part of the Hybrid Planning Permission, providing a variety of open and amenity spaces for the community across Arborfield Green.

To date, the delivery of the Linear Park has been phased. Phase 1, located at the western end of the development, has been completed. Phase 2, situated at the centre of the development and incorporating the Village Green, has been approved and is currently being delivered as part of the District Centre. Phase 4, comprising the northernmost part of the Linear Park network and including Watermans Lake, has also been delivered. Linear Park Phase 3 is therefore the final element of the strategic green infrastructure network to be delivered.

Linear Park Phase 3 is situated within the central core of Arborfield Green, and will incorporate a variety of different open space, play and community facilities including:

- Allotments (with an associated parking area);
- A Skate Park;
- A Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play (NEAP);
- An additional area of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) which forms an extension to the Hazebrouck SANG (known as the Northern SANG Extension area); and
- New pedestrian and cycle links to provide connectivity with the wider site, including the existing Secondary School, Leisure Centre and wider green infrastructure.



As part of the Hybrid planning permission for the whole Arborfield Green Site, the Linear Park Phase 3 area, along with the entire Linear Park, is currently designated as Parks and Gardens within the approved Open Space Parameter Plan (PL11 Rev. L). However, since the approval of the original Hybrid planning application (Ref. O/2014/2280), Crest have undertaken a comprehensive review of how the green infrastructure is being delivered across the Site. This identified the opportunity to convert part of the Linear Park Phase 3 area to function instead as a SANG extension to the existing SANG at Hazebrouck Meadows. This will allow a more comprehensive and varied green infrastructure corridor to be provided.

Accordingly, a Non Material Amendment (NMA) application has been submitted concurrently to this Reserved Matters (RM) application in order to update the approved set of Parameter Plans to reflect the proposed amendment to the part of Linear Park Phase 3 which is proposed to be converted to SANG. Further details relating to the proposed change of use of this element of open space from Parks and Gardens to SANG can be found in the NMA application which is submitted alongside this RM application.

As identified on the approved set of Parameter Plans, Linear Park Phase 3 also includes elements of associated play and community facilities, which are to be delivered alongside the area of open space. This includes new Allotments (also known as Allotments Area D), a new Skate Park and the Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play (NEAP) 2; which will be brought forward in line with the principles established as part of the Hybrid Planning Permission, offering additional social and leisure facilities for the community at Arborfield Green.

The proposed delivery of Linear Park Phase 3 will provide significant benefits, including:

- The delivery of 29 allotment plots of varying sizes to suit a variety of needs, located in the central part of the Site; alongside dedicated composting areas and community spaces capable of serving the wider Arborfield Green development;
- Improved and additional pedestrian and cycle connections across the wider Arborfield Green Site, in particular providing an important connection between the northern part of the Site to the District Centre, Bohunt School and other facilities to the south;
- The Provision of an additional NEAP and a Skate Park which have been designed to cater to a variety of ages and abilities, providing variation and interest through sporting themes and appropriate equipment; and
- The opportunity to bring forward ecological enhancements, including incorporating landscape-led Sustainable urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) which can support amenity features, into the scheme.

Crest welcomes the on-going engagement of the Council, statutory consultees, stakeholders and the community in the formulation of the proposals and the detailed feedback, which has informed the evolution final development scheme.

We look forward to continuing to work positively and proactively with Officers and all other key stakeholders to swiftly secure planning permission for this high-quality scheme, which we will be delighted to deliver, thereby securing one of the final key elements of green and community infrastructure within this Strategic Development Location.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Crest Nicholson Operations Ltd. ('Crest') ('the Applicant') for submission to Wokingham Borough Council ('WBC'), in respect of a proposed Reserved Matters ('RM') planning application for Linear Park Phase 3, Arborfield Green (formerly Arborfield Garrison).
- 1.2 The proposed development would comprise a sustainable new green space, play areas, and allotments for new and existing residents to enjoy; which captures the vision and objectives set as part of the Hybrid Planning permission. The Site is located to retain and enhance the green character of this part of the Site, and to make up the remaining section of the Linear Park. Linear Park Phase 3 will support the leisure and social lifestyle for both existing and new communities.
- 1.3 Arborfield Green and the adjoining land to the south, known as Hogwood Farm, are identified in Policy CP18 of the WBC Core Strategy (2010) as the Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location ('SDL') which is identified as being capable of delivering around 3,500 new homes, appropriate retail facilities and employment.
- 1.4 In April 2015, Hybrid planning permission (Ref: O/2014/2280) was granted for the phased redevelopment of Arborfield Garrison. The permission approved the development for up to 2,000 dwellings, alongside a district centre, transport interchange, village square, neighbourhood centre, a primary and secondary school, car parking, public open space, sports pitches, play areas, community gardens/allotments, landscaping, new roads, footpaths, cycleways, sustainable urban drainage systems, two new areas of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), a new roundabout junction to the A327 Reading Road with an extension to Nine Mile Ride, and new accesses. Given the scale of the development, the site is being delivered in phases, with development expected to continue until approximately 2030.
- 1.5 The main development delivery partner for the wider Arborfield Green masterplan is Crest Nicholson, who are delivering the site on behalf of the Defence Infrastructure Organisation ('DIO'), the former owner of the site.
- 1.6 Since the Hybrid planning permission was granted, Crest have submitted a number of RM and Non-Material Amendment ('NMA') applications to facilitate delivery of the development. In 2018, an amended set of parameter plans were approved as part of an NMA application to the Hybrid Planning Permission (Ref.181443).
- 1.7 This application seeks RM approval for appearance, access, landscaping, layout and scale of development in accordance with Condition 3 of the Hybrid planning permission (Ref. O/2014/2280). The application relates to the Linear Park Phase 3 area, which sits within the central core of the Arborfield Green development.

Description of Development

- 1.8 The Reserved Matters application to which this Statement relates seeks approval for the details relating to the extension of the existing Hazebrouck Meadows SANG (known as the

Northern SANG Extension area), alongside the provision of new allotments, a skate park and a NEAP. The description of development, as set out on the application form, is as follows:

‘Application for approval of Reserved Matters pursuant to O/2014/2280. The Reserved Matters (access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale to be considered) comprises details of the Linear Park Phase 3 including the Northern SANG Extension, the provision of a Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play (NEAP), a Skate Park and allotments, alongside associated landscaping, footpaths, parking and drainage.’

- 1.9 The Proposed Development has been the subject of pre-application discussions with Officers at Wokingham Borough Council, further details of which can be found within **Section 3** of this Statement.

Accompanying Documentation

- 1.10 This submission is accompanied by several drawings and reports, which demonstrate the proposals conform to the principles established as part of the Hybrid planning permission (Ref. O/2014/2280).
- 1.11 The documents and drawings which accompany this planning application are set out within the separate covering letter, which accompanies this submission.

Structure of the Planning Statement

- 1.12 This Planning Statement is structured as follows:
- **Section 2** – sets out the context for the Proposed Development, including a description of the Site, its surroundings and characteristics and constraints along with the Site’s planning history;
 - **Section 3** – provides a description of the Proposed Development and an overview of the pre-application discussions with WBC;
 - **Section 4** – provides an overview of national and local planning policy and guidance considered relevant to determination of the application;
 - **Section 5** – provides an assessment of the Proposed Development against the identified salient planning policy framework; and
 - **Section 6** – provides a summary of the application and conclusions.

2. SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

Site Context

- 2.1 The Site is located centrally within Arborfield Green (formally Arborfield Garrison). Arborfield Green and the adjoining land to the south, known as Hogwood Farm, are identified in Policy CP18 of the WBC Core Strategy (2010) as a Strategic Development Location (SDL). This is identified as being capable of delivering around 3,500 new homes, appropriate retail facilities and employment.
- 2.2 Arborfield Garrison is situated approximately four kilometres to the southwest of Wokingham town centre and five kilometres south of the M4 motorway (junction 11). The settlements of Arborfield and Arborfield Cross lie to the north-west, whilst Barkham lies to the northeast.
- 2.3 The Site comprises approximately 5.26ha of land located within the heart of the Arborfield Green development and the northwestern part of the Arborfield Garrison SDL, and at present comprises a grassed area, existing vegetation and some small areas of hardstanding (which were in use when the Garrison was operational).
- 2.4 The Site forms part of the approved strategic green infrastructure network and occupies a central position within the wider development, providing an important connection between the surrounding residential neighbourhoods, community facilities and the District Centre as part of the approved Linear Park network. The location of the Site can be found at **Appendix 1**.
- 2.5 Biggs Lane forms the northern boundary of the Site, beyond which are existing residential properties. Parcel O2 and part of the Hazebrouck Meadows SANG lie immediately to the eastern boundary of the Site. Bohunt School is located immediately to the south, whilst Development Parcel N lies to the west.
- 2.6 Existing residential development also lies to the west of the Site. Buttenshaw Avenue defines the western boundary, beyond which are existing homes formerly used to accommodate employees at the British Army Garrison.
- 2.7 The Arborfield Green District Centre lies to the south-west of the Site. The District Centre (Ref. 230872) received Reserved Matters approval on 11 October 2023 for a mixed-use development comprising 206 dwellings, commercial floorspace (Use Class E), a pre-school, public open space, a pedestrianised high street, and a mixed-use community centre building including a café, associated community facilities and day nursery.
- 2.8 There are no statutory landscape, biodiversity, ecological or heritage designations affecting the Site. None of the trees within the Site are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), and there are no Ancient or Veteran trees within the Site.
- 2.9 The Site lies within the 5km Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBHSPA) mitigation zone and forms part of the approved strategic green infrastructure network, with the proposed SANG extension contributing towards the delivery of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace within the Arborfield Green development.
- 2.10 The majority of the Site lies within Flood Zone 1 and 2, with the northern section of the Site located within Flood Zone 3.



Policy Designations

- 2.11 In planning terms, the Site is located within the Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location (SDL) which is identified in Policy CP18 of Wokingham Borough Council's Core Strategy (2010) as being capable of delivering up to 3,500 new dwellings in conjunction with the Hogwood Farm site to the south.

- 2.12 Policy CP18 of the Core Strategy states:

"Within the area identified at Arborfield Garrison, a sustainable, well designed mixed use development will be delivered including:

1) Phased delivery of around 3,500 dwellings including affordable homes in accordance with Policy CP5;

2) Employment

3) Appropriate retail facilities;

4) Social and physical infrastructure (including provision of at least two new primary school and a secondary school, together with children's centre and youth facilities);

5) Measures to maintain and separation from Arborfield Cross, Barkham Hill and Finchampstead North;

6) Necessary measures to avoid and mitigate the impact of development upon the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area in line with Policy CP8 to meet the requirements of the Habitats Regulations and in accordance with Natural England's latest standards. This will include sufficient Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (subject to monitoring of the quality and quantity standards);

7) Improve to transport capacity along the A327 (to both the M3 and Reading) and routes towards Bracknell and Wokingham (including the extension of the Nine Mile Ride to the A327); and

8) Measures to improve accessibility by non-car transport modes along the A327, B3030, B3349 and B3430 corridors especially on the routes to Bracknell, Reading, Winnersh and Wokingham

The development will be guided by a Development Brief Supplementary Planning Document produced with the involvement of stakeholders including all interested landowners in the area covered by the Strategic Development Local as defined on the Proposal Map. A co-ordinated approach to the development of the Strategic Development Location will be required to deliver the necessary infrastructure, facilities and serviced to meet the needs of the expanded community."

- 2.13 This RM application has been prepared in the context established by both the designation of the wider Arborfield SDL as allocated in the Core Strategy, and the approved hybrid planning permission (ref: O/2014/2280).

Planning History – Application Site Specific

Hybrid Planning Permission

- 2.14 A Hybrid planning permission (Ref: O/2014/2280) was granted in 2015. The description of development was:

“OUTLINE PERMISSION FOR: Demolition of buildings and phased redevelopment of Arborfield Garrison and adjoining land for: Up to 2,000 new dwellings (including up to 80 units of extra care housing). District centre comprising a foodstore up to 4,000 sq m gross with up to a further 3,500 sq m (gross) floor space within Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, D1 and D2 (with residential above -Class C3)), and transport interchange, village square, car parking, servicing and drop off area. Up to a further 1,500 sq m (gross) floor space within Classes D1 and D2. Neighbourhood centre to provide up to 300 sq m (gross) floor space within Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, D1 and D2, with parking/servicing area. Secondary school for up to 1,500 pupils (Class D1) including sports pitches, floodlit all-weather pitch, and indoor swimming pool and parking areas. Up to three-form primary school (Class D1) with sports pitch and parking areas. Associated phased provision of: car parking; public open space including sports pitches, informal/incidental open space, children's play areas including multi-use games area (MUGA), skate park, community gardens/allotments; landscaping/buffer areas; boundary treatments; new roads, footpaths, cycleways and bridleways; sustainable urban drainage systems, including flood alleviation works.

PART 2 - FULL PERMISSION FOR phased development of: Creation of two new areas of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGS) (In the north-eastern part of the application site ("Northern SANGS") and at West Court ("West Court SANGS") including car parking areas, path/walkways, fencing and associated landscaping; re-use of existing MoD gymnasium for sports/community uses/centre (Classes D1/D2; new roundabout junction to A327 Reading Road; junction improvements to Langley Common Road, Baird Road and Biggs Lane; junction improvements and new access at Biggs Lane/Princess Marina Drive; re-use and improvements to existing site accesses from Biggs Lane.”

Non-Material Amendment (NMA) Applications

- 2.15 Since the Hybrid planning permission was granted, Crest have submitted a number of NMA applications to regularise minor alterations with the Local Planning Authority (LPA).
- 2.16 This includes an NMA application (Ref. 181443), which resulted in an amended set of parameter plans being approved.
- 2.17 The application was approved by WBC on 26 June 2018. The revised parameter plans did not change this part of the Site, however the revised parameter plans have been utilised to inform the design of this RM application.
- 2.18 A further NMA application (Ref. 260530) was also submitted in March 2026 to seek further amendments to Condition 1 (Approved Plans) to update the Land Use, Density, Building Storey Heights, Movement and Access, and Open Space Parameter Plans. This application is currently pending determination, and proposes minor realignments and corrections that do not alter the function of development across the Site.

- 2.19 Linear Park Phase 3 is identified in the approved Open Space Parameter Plan (Ref. P11 Rev. L) as Parks and Gardens. However, as referenced above, a further NMA application has also been submitted alongside this RM application to amend part of the Linear Park Phase 3 area to function as an extension to the existing SANG at Hazebrouck Meadows, in order to provide a comprehensive green infrastructure corridor.
- 2.20 The NMA application also seeks to amend the description of development associated with the Full planning permission granted under the original Hybrid permission (Ref. O/2014/2280). Specifically, the amendment would update the description to refer to the creation of three areas of SANG, rather than two under the existing wording (Northern SANGs and West Court SANGs), thereby aligning the description of development with the approved plans and the intended SANG provision at the Northern SANG Extension area.

3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Application Proposal

- 3.1 The application seeks Reserved Matters approval for access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale in accordance with Condition 3 of the Hybrid planning permission.
- 3.2 The Proposed Development comprises the following:
- Delivery of new allotments;
 - Provision of a Skate Park and a Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play (NEAP); and
 - Creation of the Northern SANG Extension, including new planting, meadow grassland, a wildlife pond, and a network of pedestrian and cycle routes.
- 3.3 The description of development, as set out on the application form, is as follows:

'Application for approval of Reserved Matters pursuant to O/2014/2280. The Reserved Matters (access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale to be considered) comprises details of the Linear Park Phase 3 including the Northern SANG Extension, the provision of a Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play (NEAP), a Skate Park and allotments, alongside associated landscaping, footpaths, parking and drainage.'

NEAP and Skate Park

- 3.4 As identified on the approved set of Parameter Plans, Linear Park Phase 3 also includes elements of associated play and community facilities, which are to be delivered alongside the area of open space.
- 3.5 As part of the community infrastructure proposals, it is proposed to incorporate a NEAP and Skate Park. The NEAP is proposed to be located near the southern boundary of the Linear Park, with the Skate Park situated to the east of the NEAP, allowing the spaces to be connected and easily be reached by a number of the surrounding residential parcels with new footpath links proposed to increase accessibility.
- 3.6 The NEAP will provide a mixture of equipment including play equipment for all ages reflecting the sporting nature with fitness agility and play value, including a sensory area and playhouse for younger children, and a zip line and rope swing for older children. Climbing equipment is also proposed to provide a challenge piece for a range of ages whilst also providing traditional play equipment for younger children. The NEAP will include a grass matta safety surfacing, connected by a self-binding gravel path with timber edging.
- 3.7 To confirm, the NEAP and Skate Park will sit outside of the proposed SANG extension area and will be separated by significant buffer planting and a 1.2m timber post and rail fence with mesh, as shown on the accompanying suite of Landscaping Plans.
- 3.8 Proposed planting has also been incorporated within the play area itself, providing further visual interest and helping to establish a natural setting for the play equipment. The pieces of equipment have also been carefully selected to comprise naturalistic pieces, ensuring sensitivity and cohesiveness with the surrounding landscape.

- 3.9 The Site areas of the NEAP and Skate Park reflects the requirements as set out within the approved S106 Agreement connected with the Hybrid Planning Permission.

Allotments

- 3.10 In addition to the play facilities at this Site, Development Parcel O3 (also known as Allotments Area D) is located to the east of the existing housing at Buttenshaw Avenue, along the western boundary of the proposed SANG extension area.
- 3.11 In accordance with the approved Parameter Plans, the Site will deliver 29 allotments plots, alongside x1 allotment sheds per plot, plus a further 2 sheds for storing maintenance equipment. The south of the allotments area will comprise a composting area, and 6no. car parking spaces at the entrance to the allotments, with reinforced grass to provide a soft landscape treatment.
- 3.12 A central community space is proposed at the heart of the allotments area, connected by a central access hoggin surface path with a timber edge.
- 3.13 The boundaries have been sensitively designed to respond to surrounding landscape and character of the area. They are proposed to consist of a 2.1m-high close board fencing to the west and the north, and a 2m-high green mesh fencing alongside mixed native hedge planting along the eastern and southern perimeter, providing a secure perimeter to the allotment site and to provide visual amenity for nearby residents.
- 3.14 The allotment proposals accord with the specifications outlined within the Section 106 Agreement at Schedule 4 Part 2 as indicated within the Allotment Area D Layout Plan (ref. 14558/SANGX/LS/5001 rev P11).
- 3.15 Vehicular access to the allotments is proposed to be provided via Development Parcel N. On-site parking will also be provided to accommodate at least 15% of allotment holders at any one time (6 spaces) as required by the S106 Agreement. A central access road will also be provided throughout the site to access each individual allotment, with internal paths comprising grass surfaced paths to be provided between plots to be a minimum of 1.4m wide.
- 3.16 Watering points are proposed through the use of a watering point and a galvanised steel allotment dip tank so that all plot holders will have easy access to a water supply.

Northern SANG Extension

- 3.17 The Northern SANG Extension area will form an extension to the existing Hazebrouck Meadows SANG, which is located immediately to the east of the Site. It provides an opportunity to extend the existing SANG, offering a longer route through the SANG and adding further variety.
- 3.18 As discussed within the accompanying NMA application, the proposed Northern SANG Extension area is required to provide additional SANG capacity to mitigate the recreational impact associated with development proposed at the Arborfield Studios and the Moat House within Arborfield Green, whilst also providing additional accessible green space and recreational routes for future residents and users of the wider development. Details relating

to the make-up of the different Site areas is discussed in Section 5 of this Statement and as part of the NMA application which is submitted in parallel with this RM application.

- 3.19 The SANG Extension area will comprise parkland tree planting, native mix planting, meadow grassland, and a wildlife pond, as well as a number of different connection routes for users. This includes a 3.5m shared Flexipave path, a 1.8m hoggin path which matches the existing SANG footways, a footway/cycle connection in a Bitumen bound gravel path, and mown grass paths, which offer a variety of routes and support the key connectivity route for pedestrians and cyclists across the Site.
- 3.20 The SANG area will be appropriately fenced with a 1.2m post and rail fence with mesh at the northern and southwestern boundaries, a 3-bar fence at the boundaries to Parcel O2 to the east, and a 2m-high green mesh fence with 1m wide hedge proposed at the boundary to the allotments. As such, the proposed SANG Extension area is still able to reflect the key principles of the Linear Park, whilst also acting as an appropriate extension to the Hazebrouck Meadows SANG. The area will offer an additional space which creates further variety within the SANG as well as alternate walking routes.
- 3.21 As part of the SANG design, a sensitive lighting strategy has been developed which will ensure appropriate lighting columns are provided along the 3.5m Flexipave route in line with Council specification and NE requirements. The proposed locations of these lighting columns can be seen within the Arborfield Footpath/Bridleway Report (Ref. 03-24-S38-LO-C2) and the Lighting Plan (Ref. 03-24-S38-LO-C2) which accompanies this submission.
- 3.22 Pedestrian access to the SANG extension will be provided from Biggs Lane to the north of the Site, and further pedestrian and cycle routes will be provided to connect to the parcels surrounding the Site. Access to the SANG will be gated, including a pedestrian kissing gate and an equestrian gate to the side of the path.

Pre-Application Engagement

- 3.23 Significant pre-application engagement has been undertaken with both Wokingham Borough Council Officer's and Natural England, in order to discuss the proposals and table updated iterations of the proposals for comment.
- 3.24 An evolution of the proposals can be found in the Design and Access Statement which accompanies this submission, with a summary of key points provided below.

Natural England

- 3.25 Following a virtual pre-application meeting held on 15 December 2025, a formal response was provided by Natural England via email on 12 January 2026. The principle of converting the land parcel Linear Park Phase 3 to a SANG was established during these discussions. Several detailed points were subsequently considered which are discussed in detail below.

Lighting

- 3.26 The approach to the lighting scheme was discussed, in order to develop a strategy which would be appropriate for pedestrian / cyclists using this key route through the SANG, whilst also being ecologically sensitive and adhering to the principles of a SANG. It was advised

that low bollard type lighting in natural materials, e.g. wood, could be accepted along the primary pedestrian / cycle route through the SANG, instead of tall traditional street lighting. Natural England sought clarity on the height of the lights, the scope for a more natural material, and whether the lights would be timer controlled, to ensure they are not on all night.

NEAP/Skate Park

- 3.27 Natural England advised the Skate Park should be placed as far from the boundary with the SANG as possible, with good vegetative screening in place between the two uses, as it is important for the entry to Hazebrouck Meadows SANG to feel open and welcoming. It was requested the Skate Park should be repositioned down towards the southern boundary of the Site.
- 3.28 It was noted the NEAP should be constructed in a natural play area manner – i.e. limited bright colours, plastic etc. Natural England advised the NEAP should be well screened by trees and bushes from the main walking route into the existing SANG. The importance of maintaining a sufficiently open corridor to the SANG was also advised.

Path Materials

- 3.29 Natural England noted the mown paths, Hoggin paths and natural-looking resin bound would be acceptable materials, and that it would be important to ensure that the surfacing was not too urban in feel.

Other

- 3.30 Natural England also noted the inclusion of trees would help with the feeling that the lighting posts would not be overly visually intrusive. They highlighted the importance for trees to be planted at an early stage as possible, to allow them to reach a level of maturity to provide the screening benefit.
- 3.31 Following the virtual pre-application meeting and written response, the following amendments were made to the proposals:
- The lighting scheme has been revisited and further developed, in which the specified products were reviewed to ensure the selected solution meets the relevant requirements while also delivering an environmentally sensitive outcome. It was demonstrated that a neutral grey finish blends more effectively with the colour temperature of UK skies, allowing the columns to recede into the background more successfully than alternative paint colours.
 - The location of the NEAP and Skate Park has been revised to provide a more generous SANG extension route, with an approximate width of 40 metres, while also allowing sufficient space for screening planting around both facilities. To the south of the play area, the design was amended to create a more open character, with an additional landscape buffer provided to the residential dwellings.
 - The proposed palette of path materials have been revised to reinforce a more natural landscape character across the Site. Resin bound gravel and hoggin surfacing is proposed for the primary paths, with Flexipave specified, providing durable and

accessible routes while maintaining a softer, more sympathetic appearance within the landscape setting. The use of tarmac has also been removed from the proposals.

- The SANG design has also been developed to retain substantial areas of existing tree cover, to ensure the Site will benefit from an established landscape character from the outset.

Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) Pre-Application

- 3.32 Prior to consultation with Natural England, the project team met with WBC Officers on 3 December 2024 and 3 June 2025 to discuss the initial proposals for Linear Park Phase 3. Officers requested that there be a lit route between the District Centre and Biggs Lane, after which Crest engaged a lighting designer and subsequently discussed lighting options with Natural England.
- 3.33 Following on from this consultation with Natural England, the scheme was further amended accordingly, and a formal pre-application request was submitted to WBC on 10 June 2026. The proposals were discussed with Officers at an initial virtual pre-application meeting on 19 June 2026.
- 3.34 Following the initial virtual pre-application meeting, a site visit was arranged for 15 July, which was attended by Officers and relevant members of the consultant project team. Following a walk of the Site, discussions with Officers are summarised as follows:
- Officers noted that they were content with the inclusion of a proposed pond to the north but suggested the location may need to be reviewed in order for the pond to be wet throughout the year.
 - Officers noted that it would be important to include sufficient planting at the edge of the SANG to the properties in Parcel N to the southwest.
 - It was requested the proposed trees within the SANG should be pulled back from the proposed paths to ensure mowers could easily cut the edges to the paths.
 - Officers requested the proposed 1.8m high close board fence along the western boundary of the allotments, adjacent to the rear gardens, be replaced with a 2.1m high fence. It was also requested the mixed native hedge planting and 2m-high mesh fencing be included at the eastern and southern perimeter boundaries.
 - Further lighting details, clarification on proposed paving materials, and clarity on flood risk concerns were requested by the Officers to be submitted alongside the RM application.
 - Officers advised the use of rubber materials is not considered suitable for the natural play areas, and it was advised that large metal elements and materials should be avoided.
 - WBC Officers advised that an additional 2no. sheds would be required for the allotment area to meet the Parish Council's operational requirements.

- 3.35 In addition, written comments were also received from the Landscape and Tree Officer which requested a revised location for the NEAP/Skate Park to be placed south of the tree line in an area where there would be opportunity to achieve passive surveillance from the adjacent development.
- 3.36 Following the virtual pre-application meeting and post site visit discussions, the following amendments have been made to the proposals:
- The NEAP/Skate Park area has been further revised following Landscape Officer comments. This area is now proposed to be located entirely south of the existing tree line, which has allowed for a larger area of SANG to the north of the tree line.
 - The proposals for the natural play areas have been revisited, and the use of rubber has been limited at these locations. The colour of the Flexipave and the surfacing within the NEAP have been selected to have a more natural appearance. The play equipment similar timber products for a more natural appearance.
 - Increased planting has been provided at the boundary with Parcel N, to further screen the development at this location.
 - The proposed trees within the SANG have been moved back, with a separation distance from the trunks of all trees of at least 3.5m from the path edges.
 - A 2.1m high fence is proposed to the western boundary of the allotment area adjacent to the rear gardens. The eastern and southern boundaries have also been revised to align with Officer's requests.
 - An additional 2no. sheds for communal use have been incorporated into the allotment plans to meet Parish Council requirements. These will provide space for solar battery storage and communal tools/equipment. The sheds will be of the same size as those already proposed for allotment holders.
 - The proposed wildlife pond has been relocated to the north into an area to ensure that the pond will be wet throughout the year.
 - Further details relating to lighting, proposed paving materials, and information relating to the drainage strategy and flood risk are provided as part of this application submission.

4. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 4.1 This section provides a summary of the relevant planning policy framework against which the planning application will be determined.
- 4.2 Section 38 of the Planning Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.3 The Development Plan for WBC currently comprises the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (2010), the Managing Development Delivery ('MDD') Local Plan (2014), and the Arborfield and Barkham Neighbourhood Plan (2019 – 2036).
- 4.4 Consideration has also been given to Natural England's Guidelines for Creation of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) (2021).
- 4.5 The National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') (August 2026), Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) and Wokingham Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), in particular the Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location (SDL) SPD, are all relevant material considerations.

National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026)

- 4.6 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides the overarching planning policy framework against which all local plans and neighbourhood plans should be prepared and against which all planning applications are determined.
- 4.7 The Government adopted the new NPPF (2026) on 17 August 2026. The document includes distinct sections on plan-making and decision-making. The NPPF is a material consideration of 'critical importance' (Paragraph 1) in the determination of planning applications. Where local plan policies are inconsistent with national decision-making policies, they will carry 'very limited weight' in planning decisions.
- 4.8 Policy S3 takes forward the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Notably, S3(1)a confirms that Policy S4 should be applied when considering development proposals inside of settlements. Policy S3(1)c states that in all locations, development proposals that accord with both an up-to-date development plan and the decision-making policies in the NPPF should be approved without delay.
- 4.9 The principle of development within settlements is set out within Policy S4, which sets out that development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects when assessed against national decision-making policies as stated at S4(1).
- 4.10 Policy S4 (2) sets out the circumstances in which the benefits of approving development are likely to be substantially outweighed by adverse effects include (but are not restricted to) situations where the development proposal would:

- a. Have a substantial adverse impact in relation to:
 - i. The allocation or safeguarding of land or buildings for particular uses in the development plan, unless there is no reasonable prospect of an application coming forward for the allocated use, or there is evidence that the safeguarding is no longer appropriate; or
 - ii. The application of the policies in this Framework for existing recreational land and facilities (HC7), Local Green Space (HC8), areas of particular importance for biodiversity and geodiversity (N6), Protected Landscapes (N4) and development within residential curtilages (L2(1)(d)).
 - b. Involve the whole or partial loss of undeveloped land which is used for a cemetery or burial ground; or for water storage and/or flood risk management (unless suitable compensatory provision is made that does not increase the risk of flooding either on or off-site); or
 - c. Fail to comply with one of the national decision-making policies which state that development proposals should be refused in specific circumstances.
- 4.11 Policy S4(2)c also includes the failure to comply with one of the national decision-making policies which state that development proposals should be refused in specific circumstances.
- 4.12 In addition to the above, the following national decision-making policies are also relevant and summarised below:
- **CC2: Mitigation of climate change:** Requires development proposals to contribution to climate change mitigation and transition to net zero through a series of considerations outlined at CC2 1(a-g). CC2(2) states substantial weight should be given to the benefits of improving the energy efficiency where this would be achieved through development proposals.
 - **CC3: Adaptation to climate change:** CC3 (1) requires development proposal to take account the current and potential impacts of climate change over the lifetime of the scheme, where relevant addressing the considerations outlined at CC3 (1) a-e. Whilst CC3(2) confirms substantial weight should be give the benefits of improving resilience of existing buildings and public spaces to anticipated climate change impacts where this would be achieved through development proposals.
 - **DP3: Key principles for well-designed places:** DP3(1) requires development proposal to respond to their context (site history character and features of their site and its setting) to integrate and enhance their surroundings. DP3(2) a-g sets out a series of design principles which should be considered as appropriate give the nature of the development and its location.
 - **DP4: The design process:** DP4(1) confirms design quality should be considered throughout the evolution, assessment and delivery of development proposals, including at pre-application engagement.

- **TR3: Locating development in sustainable locations:** TR3(1)a-e sets out the principles that should be taking into account for the vision of the site, the type of development and its location to ensure it can support sustainable patterns of movement, enable good accessibility for different users and make the most of existing and proposed transport infrastructure.
- **P2: Ground conditions;** P2(1) requires proposed development sites to be suitable for their proposed use taking into count a. ground conditions, including any risks arising from land instability or contamination, and b. the extent to which any such risks can be mitigated.
- **P3: Living conditions and pollution;** P3(1) requires development proposals to be appropriate for the locations taking account of likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment. P3(2)a-f provide a series of considerations the development proposal should apply. P3(3) states that unless there is clear evidence to the contrary, that separate regulatory regimes for the control of pollution will operate effectively as set out in policy DM7.
- **F4: Assessing flood risk for decision-making;** F4(2) requires a site-specific flood risk assessment to inform and accompany all development proposal in Flood Zone 1 where proposals involve:
 - Sites of 1ha or more
 - Land which has been identified by the Environment Agency as having critical drainage problems; and
 - Land identified in strategic flood risk assessment or the Flood Map for Planning as being at risk of flooding from any source, whether now or in the future.

F4(3) confirms site-specific flood risk assessments should be appropriate to the scale, nature and location of development and, should where relevant, support an assessment of whether a development proposal satisfies the sequential and exception tests set out in policies F5 and F6.

- **F8: Sustainable drainage systems and watercourses:** F8(1) requires development proposal which could affect drainage on or around the development site to incorporate sustainable drainage systems to control flow rates and reduce volumes of runoff, in ways that are proportionate to the nature and scheme of the proposal. F8(2) a-c sets out the requirements of the sustainable drainage systems with F8(3) confirming development proposals should not enclose existing watercourses where this is not already the cause, unless there are compelling reasons to do so and remove existing culverts, unless this would increase flood risk, result in other environmental harm or cause harm to heritage assets.
- **N2: Improving the natural environment:** N2(1) requires development proposals to contribute positively to the natural environment, and support natures recovery through consideration of requirements outlined at N2(1)a-g. N2(2) states if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an

alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for, then the development should be refused.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

4.13 The Planning Practice Guidance sets out guidance on a wide range of topics which are considered relevant to the determination of this application, including *inter alia*:

- Climate Change
- Design
- Healthy and Safe Communities
- Light Pollution
- Natural Environment
- Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities, Public Rights of Way and Local Green Space

Local Policy

4.14 The Development Plan for WBC currently comprises:

- the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (2010), and
- the Managing Development Delivery (MDD) Local Plan (2014).

Wokingham Borough Core Strategy

4.15 The Wokingham Core Strategy (2010) sets the strategic direction for the Borough up to 2026. The following policies considered to be relevant to the determination of this application include:

- **Policy CP1** – Sustainable Development;
- **Policy CP2** – Inclusive Communities;
- **Policy CP3** – General Principles for Development;
- **Policy CP4** – Infrastructure Requirements;
- **Policy CP6** – Managing Travel Demand;
- **Policy CP7** – Biodiversity;
- **Policy CP8** – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area; and
- **Policy CP18** – Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location

Wokingham Borough Managing Development Delivery Document (MDD) (2014)

4.16 The Managing Development Delivery Document (MDD) takes forward and develops the policies of the Core Strategy. It contains a number of cross-cutting policies which have particular relevance when considering the detailed aspect of the RM applications. The following policies are considered relevant to this application include:

- **Policy CC01** – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development;

- **Policy CC03** – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping;
- **Policy CC04** – Sustainable Design and Construction;
- **Policy CC06** – Noise;
- **Policy CC07** – Parking;
- **Policy CC09** – Development and Flood Risk (from all sources);
- **Policy CC10** – Sustainable Drainage;
- **Policy TB08** – Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Standards for Residential Development;
- **Policy TB21** – Landscape Character; and
- **Policy TB23** – Biodiversity and Development

Emerging Local Plan

- 4.17 WBC are currently in the process of undertaking a Local Plan Update (LPU) which will help to guide the future development strategy and long-term spatial vision for the Borough in the years up to 2040.
- 4.18 The Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update 2023–2040 (LPU) was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination on 28 February 2025, with Part 1 examination hearings held in November 2025 and Part 2 hearings in March 2026. Following the Inspectors' Final Examination Hearings letter issued on 6 August 2026, the LPU policies are now capable of being afforded significant weight in the determination of planning applications and are material considerations for decision-making.
- 4.19 As such, substantial weight is given to the policies within the LPU as per the NPPF (2026).

Arborfield & Barkham Neighbourhood Plan (2019 – 2036)

- 4.20 The Arborfield & Barkham Neighbourhood Plan was made on 22 April 2020 and forms part of the statutory Development Plan. The following policies are considered relevant to the determination of this application:
- **Policy IRS3:** Protection & Enhancement of the Natural Environment & Green Spaces;
 - **Policy TC2:** Properly Planned and Design New Facilities;
 - **Policy AD3:** High Quality Development with Generous Open Space, Properly Landscaped;
 - **Policy AD4:** Address Local Flood Risk Management; and
 - **Policy GA2:** Implement Local Network of Green Routes for Non-Motorised Users.

Other Relevant Documents

- 4.21 As provided for in Policy CP18 of the Core Strategy, the development of the Arborfield Garrison SDL is guided by a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which was adopted by the Council in October 2011.
- 4.22 The Arborfield Garrison SPD does not contain detailed proposals for the SDL, although it is a material consideration in determining the planning application.
- 4.23 The following further SPDs are also considered to be of relevance:
- Borough Design Guide SPD (June 2012); and
 - Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (May 2010).
- 4.24 The following supplementary guidance document is also relevant:
- Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy (November 2013)
- 4.25 The Guidelines for Creation of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) (2021) (Natural England) has been designed as an Appendix to the full guidance on SANG to be used as mitigation (or avoidance) land to reduce recreational use of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA.
- 4.26 The guidelines set out what a SANG needs to be provide, including adequate parking for visitors, unless the site is intended for local use; a 2.3km-2.5km circular walk, appropriate access points; paths that are easily used and well maintained but most should remain unsurfaced to avoid the site becoming too urban in feel; semi-natural spaces with little intrusion of artificial structures; a variety of habitats for users to experience; and access which is largely unrestricted with plenty of space provided where it is possible for dogs to exercise freely and safely off lead.
- 4.27 In addition, the guidelines suggest that a SANG should:
- Be clearly sign-posted or advertised in some way; and
 - Have leaflets and/or websites advertising their location to potential users.
- 4.28 The guidelines suggest the following is desirable:
- For an owner to be able to take dogs from the car park to the SANG safely off the lead;
 - To choose sites with a gently undulating topography for SANG;
 - For access points to have signage outlining the layout of the SANG and the routes available to visitors;
 - The SANG to provide a naturalistic space with areas of open (non-wooded) countryside and areas of dense and scattered trees and shrubs. The provision of open water is encouraged and desirable on sites. However large areas of open water cannot count towards capacity; and
 - Have a focal point such as a viewpoint, monument etc.

- 4.29 As discussed throughout this submission, the proposals which are being considered as part of this submission seek to deliver an extension to the existing SANG at Hazebrouck Meadows (as opposed to a new standalone SANG); and therefore the proposals have been developed in line with the above guidance, in the context of delivering an extension to an established SANG.
- 4.30 Relevant extracts from the planning policies and guidance documents highlighted above are discussed in relation to the Proposed Development in the technical reports, drawings and associated documents (where relevant) which are included as part of this application submission.

5. CONSIDERATION OF PLANNING ISSUES

- 5.1 This section of the Planning Statement provides an assessment of the Proposed Development against relevant planning policy and other material considerations.

Principle of Development

- 5.2 The Site sits within the wider Arborfield Garrison SDL which is identified as an allocated strategic site for housing and associated infrastructure in Policy CP17 of the Core Strategy. Policy CP18 of the Core Strategy sets out requirements for the SDL which is to deliver ‘a *sustainable, well-designed mixed-use development*’ which includes the provision of green infrastructure.
- 5.3 Hybrid planning permission for the redevelopment of Arborfield Garrison was granted in April 2015 (Ref: O/2014/2280).
- 5.4 Policy CC02 of the MDD states “...*development proposals within the areas allocated as SDL in the adopted Core Strategy (policies CP18-21) will be permitted that are within the identified development limits*”.
- 5.5 Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy states planning permission will be granted for development proposals which maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment and provide attractive, functional, accessible, safe, secure, and adaptable schemes which enhance the overall sustainability of the area.
- 5.6 The Site sits centrally within the Arborfield Garrison SDL and within the development limits.
- 5.7 The Site sits within the Development Limits where the principle of development is supported in line with S4 of the NPPF. The proposal would have clear social and environmental benefits, and the Site would be in a sustainable location.
- 5.8 Alongside the delivery of new homes, community infrastructure must also be delivered as part of the SDL. Subsequently, this application provides much needed community infrastructure for new and existing residents. As identified in the Open Space Parameter Plan (Ref. PL11 Rev L), the area located directly west of the Linear Park Phase 3 area, which is located within the red line boundary (Allotment Area D), will be provided as allotment space, whilst the rest of the Site is identified as:
- Parks and Gardens (Linear Park) (proposed to be converted to SANG through concurrent NMA application);
 - A Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play (NEAP); and
 - A Skate Park.
- 5.9 The principle of development has been established as part of the Hybrid planning permission for Arborfield Garrison. This RM application for the Linear Park Phase 3 seeks to meet the requirements of Condition 3 (Approval of details of the appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of development for each phase) of the Hybrid planning permission and contribute to the delivery of this SDL.

- 5.10 Condition 1 of the Hybrid planning permission sets out the approved plans and documents with which any subsequent RM application must accord.
- 5.11 Since the Hybrid planning permission was granted, Crest have submitted a number of Non-Material Amendments (NMA) applications to regularise minor alterations. NMA application (Ref: 181443) resulted in an amended set of parameter plans being approved:

Table 5.1 **Approved Parameter Plans – NMA Application Ref. 181443**

Drawing Number	Drawing Title
PL06 Rev. L	Land Use Parameter Plan
PL08. Rev. J	Density Parameter Plan
PL09 Rev. P	Building Storey Heights Parameter Plan
PL10 Rev. L	Movement and Access Parameter Plan
R11 Rev. L	Open Space Parameter Plan

- 5.12 Subsequently, a second NMA application was submitted in March 2026 (Ref. 260530) which seeks to amend the approved plans in Condition 1 of the original Hybrid Planning Permission (Ref. O/2014/2280) to regularise other elements across the wider Site (primarily the localised realignment of green corridors; a corresponding adjustment to the spine road alignment; regularising of play area locations and Princess Marina Drive connection to Biggs Lane to align with previous approvals; and the inclusion of ‘potential’ allocations within White Land and the addition of Allotment B adjacent to the Infirmary Stables).
- 5.13 This NMA application is currently pending determination, but it is important to note does not propose any changes or have any impact on the proposals being considered as part of this application. The Parameter Plans being considered as part of this application are as follows:

Table 5.2 **Parameter Plans Awaiting Approval – NMA Application Ref. 260530**

Drawing Number	Drawing Title
CRES250532 LUPP.01 Rev. P3	Land Use Parameter Plan
CRES250532 DPP.01 Rev. P3	Density Parameter Plan
CRES250532 SHPP.01 Rev. P3	Building Storey Heights Parameter Plan
CRES250532 MAPP.01 Rev. P3	Movement and Access Parameter Plan
CRES250532 OSPP.01 Rev. P3	Open Space Parameter Plan

- 5.14 As discussed throughout this Statement, a third NMA application has been submitted concurrently with this RM application in order to take account of the proposed amendment to the Linear Park Phase 3 and update the Parameter Plans accordingly.
- 5.15 To note, the Parameter Plans being considered as part of this application also take account of the changes which have been set out in the previous two NMA applications for completeness. These Plans are as follows:

Table 5.3 *Parameter Plans Now Submitted – NMA Application Ref. TBC*

Drawing Number	Drawing Title
CRES250532 LUPP.01 Rev. A	Land Use Parameter Plan
CRES250532 DPP.01 Rev. A	Density Parameter Plan
CRES250532 SHPP.01 Rev. A	Building Storey Heights Parameter Plan
CRES250532 MAPP.01 Rev. A	Movement and Access Parameter Plan
CRES250532 OSP.01 Rev. A	Open Space Parameter Plan

- 5.16 At the point at which the NMA applications have been approved, this RM and any future applications will need to adhere to the updated suite of Parameter Plans. This RM application has therefore been prepared on the basis of, and in accordance with, the above Parameter Plans.
- 5.17 Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy states planning permission will be granted for development proposals which maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment and provide attractive, functional, accessible, safe, secure, and adaptable schemes which enhance the overall sustainability of the area.
- 5.18 The Open Space Parameter Plan denotes the open space and recreational areas across the Arborfield Garrison SDL.
- 5.19 The Site, which forms the basis of this RM application, is identified as an area of Parks and Gardens (Linear Park), NEAP, a skate park and allotments on the approved Parameter Plans.
- 5.20 The area situated directly to the west of the Linear Park Phase 3 area is identified within the approved Land Use Parameter Plan as 'either residential development or a potential allotment site'. As discussed throughout this Statement, the Proposed Development seeks to utilise this area to deliver 29 allotment plots, together with associated infrastructure; therefore complying with the Land Use Parameter Plan.
- 5.21 As set out in Condition 1 of the Hybrid planning permission, any RM application must also accord with the principles of the Design and Access Statement (DAS) and the Design and Access Statement Addendum, which were submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority as part of the Hybrid planning application.
- 5.22 This section therefore provides an overview of the relevant parameters and demonstrates the way in which the RM application for the Site accords with these parameters alongside the relevant planning policies.

SANG and Open Space Capacity

- 5.23 As referenced within this Planning Statement, the area which is currently identified as a Parks and Gardens on the Open Space Parameter Plan is proposed through the separate NMA application to be converted to a SANG extension. This continues to align with the principle of retaining the area as open green space, whilst amending some of the detailed

aspects of the open space to allow it to act as an extension to the Hazebrouck Meadows SANG.

- 5.24 As seen on the Overall Landscape Masterplan which accompanies this submission, the proposed area for the SANG extension will measure 4.19ha. Of this, 0.49ha has already been approved as SANG extensions under previous NMA applications (Refs. 193154 and 210307), while a further 0.08ha is required to mitigate the impact of the 4no. apartments in the Moat House, approved under application Ref. 242252.
- 5.25 The remaining 3.62ha will provide SANG capacity towards the development proposed at Arborfield Studios, the balance of which will be met off-site.
- 5.26 Whilst it is proposed through the separate NMA application to convert 4.19ha of 'Parks and Gardens' open space to SANG; across the entire Arborfield Green site there remains an overprovision of Parks and Gardens typology of open space against policy requirements.
- 5.27 A Green Infrastructure Strategy document (January 2015) was prepared which sought to set out how the various typologies of open space was being delivered across the Site, set out as follows (based on WBC's Open Space, Sports and Recreation Strategy):

Figure 5.1 Open Space and Recreation Calculations, Green Infrastructure Strategy, Murdoch Wickham (January 2015)

Open Space Typology	WBC Standard	Masterplan Requires	Masterplan Provides (Hectares)	Masterplan Provides (Acres)
Parks & Public Gardens	1.1ha/1,000 population	5.28ha	14.83ha	36.65a
Natural and Semi-natural Greenspace	2.84ha/1,000 population (forms part of the SANG contribution)	13.63ha	38.41ha	94.91a
Amenity Greenspace	0.98ha/1,000 population	4.7ha	20.56ha	50.80a
Provision for Children & Young People	0.25ha/1,000 population	1.2ha	0.85ha (The standard would be met with the inclusion of the LAPs)	2.10a
Allotments	0.52ha/1,000 population	2.5ha	2.5ha	6.18a
SANG	8ha/1,000 population	38.4ha	38.41ha	94.91a
Outdoor Sports Facilities	1.65ha/1,000 population	9.2ha*	9.63ha	23.80a

*For the outdoor sports facilities the masterplan has included the 324 retained Annington Homes in the calculations for the proposed population: 2,324 dwellings = 5,578 person. Updates to the proposed sports facilities are within the following section.

- 5.28 As highlighted, an excess of 9.55ha of Parks and Garden spaces was being provided across the Site. Taking account of the 4.19ha which is now proposed to be converted to SANG, this results in an overprovision of 5.36ha in Parks and Garden space still being provided.
- 5.29 It is therefore considered that the proposals continue to align (and indeed in some instances exceed) with the requirements of the hybrid planning permission and relevant policy requirements, and in line with the proposals being considered through the concurrent NMA application, are considered to be acceptable.

Land Use and Density

- 5.30 Policy CP11 of the Core Strategy states planning permission will be granted for development proposals which maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment and provide, attractive, functional, accessible, safe, secure and adaptable schemes which enhance the overall sustainability of the area.

- 5.31 The Land Use Parameter Plan denotes the proposed land use across the Arborfield Garrison SDL. The defined development areas across the Site are classified as being for predominantly residential development with the exception of SANGS, a primary school, a secondary school, a District Centre and potential allotment sites.
- 5.32 Linear Park Phase 3, which forms the basis of this RM application is identified as Parks and Gardens, a NEAP and a Skate Park, as indicated on the approved Land Use Parameter Plan (Ref. PL06 Rev L). As mentioned previously, an NMA application has been submitted in parallel with this RM application in order to update and regularise the approved Parameter Plans, to reflect the change in designation of this part of Arborfield Green. As discussed, this RM seeks to set out the details of the various proposals which make up the Linear Park Phase 3 area.
- 5.33 The RM submission would, therefore, accord with the approved Land Use Parameter Plan, once this has been varied by the Relevant NMA submission.
- 5.34 In addition, in accordance with the approved Land Use Parameter Plan (Ref. PL06 Rev L), the western part of the Site (within the red line boundary) will be entirely within allotment use, in accordance with the Hybrid planning permission (Ref. O/2014/2280).
- 5.35 Accordingly, the RM application will be in accordance with the density and land use parameters approved by the LPA.

Layout and Design

- 5.36 Policy CP2 and CP3 of the Core Strategy require that proposals are of an appropriate scale, mass, layout and height whilst incorporating materials which are in keeping with the character of the local area. The policies state high-quality design which contributes to the provision of sustainable and inclusive communities will be granted planning permission in accordance with the Development Plan.
- 5.37 Policy HC4 of the NPPF states that substantial weight should be given to benefits where development would make a demonstrable contribution towards good health or social interaction, including through the provision of recreation facilities.

SANG Extension

- 5.38 The proposed SANG extension area will extend to 4.19ha and will comprise parkland tree planting, native mix planting, meadow grassland, a wildlife pond, a Flexipave path, a hoggan path, a footway/cycle connection in a Bitumen bound gravel path, and a mown grass path. These will offer a variety of routes which also support the key connectivity route for pedestrians and cyclists across this part of the Site.
- 5.39 The SANG area will be appropriately fenced with a 1.2m heavy post and rail fence with mesh at the northern and southwestern boundaries, a 3-bar fence at the boundaries to Parcel O2 to the east, and a 2m-high green mesh fence with 1m wide hedge proposed at the boundary to the allotments.

Allotments

- 5.40 The proposed allotments (Allotment Area D) will be located along the western boundary of the Site.
- 5.41 In total, 29 allotments plots will be provided, alongside 31 allotment sheds. The south of the allotments area will comprise a proposed composting area, and 6 car parking spaces at the entrance to the allotments, with reinforced grass to provide a soft landscape treatment. A central community space is proposed at the heart of the allotments area, connected by a central access hoggin surface path with a timber edge.
- 5.42 The boundaries consist of a 2.1m-high close board fencing to the west and the north, and a 2m-high green mesh fencing alongside mixed native hedge planting along the eastern and southern perimeter, providing a secure perimeter to the allotment site.

Play Areas

- 5.43 In accordance with the Open Space Parameter Plan, a NEAP and a Skate Park are proposed within the Site.
- 5.44 Both the NEAP and the Skate Park are proposed to be delivered to the south of the SANG extension area. To confirm, these elements will sit outside of the proposed SANG area and will be separated by significant buffer planting and a 1.2m heavy post and rail fence with mesh.
- 5.45 The NEAP will provide a mixture of equipment including play equipment for all ages reflecting the sporting nature with fitness agility and play value, including a sensory area and playhouse for younger children, and a zip line and rope swing for older children. Climbing equipment is also proposed to provide a challenge piece for a range of ages whilst also providing traditional play equipment for younger children. The NEAP will include a grass matta safety surfacing, connected by a self-binding gravel path with timber edging.
- 5.46 The Site areas of the NEAP and Skate Park reflects the requirements as set out within the approved S106 Agreement connected with the Hybrid Planning Permission.
- 5.47 Further details of the proposed design and layout for Linear Park Phase 3 is set out in the Design and Access Statement (DAS) which has been submitted in support of this Reserved Matters application.

Landscaping

- 5.48 Policies CC03 and TB21 of the MDD state development proposals should incorporate high quality planting and landscaping, and proposals must retain or enhance features which contribute to the character of the landscape and the overall landscape value of the Site. In addition, development proposals should demonstrate how they have promoted accessibility, linkages and permeability between and within existing corridors and incorporate high quality planting and landscaping.
- 5.49 Furthermore, Policy TB08 of the MDD requires open space and recreational facilities to be provided on-site as part of residential development proposals in order to improve the accessibility and quality of local facilities.

- 5.50 Policy N2 of the NPPF requires development to consider the environmental qualities of land, including habitats, landscape character and the natural beauty of the countryside, and to identify opportunities to conserve or enhance these qualities. Existing natural features of visual and nature conservation value should be conserved and enhanced where possible and appropriate landscaping used to integrate development into its surroundings.
- 5.51 In line with Condition 14 of the Hybrid planning permission (Ref. O/2014/2280), a hard and soft landscaping scheme has been prepared to support this application, with a suite of landscape and planting plans provided which detail the variety of landscaping and play equipment to be proposed across the Site.
- 5.52 This application adopts a landscape-led strategy through enhancing the existing vegetation on the Site to create an attractive environment. A number of parkland trees, a wildlife pond, and other associated green infrastructure are proposed to be delivered across the SANG extension area which will provide a pleasant environment for users to spend time in, as well as seeking to retain as many existing landscape features as possible.
- 5.53 Through the Design and Access Statement (DAS) and this Planning Statement it been demonstrated the development of the Site would cause no harm to the character and appearance of the area. Offering a number of opportunities to improve the existing landscape. As such the proposals accord with Policy CC03, TB08, and TB21.
- 5.54 Further details of the landscape proposals for the Linear Park Phase 3 are provided in the DAS and on the Landscape Masterplan which accompany this application.

Arboriculture

- 5.55 Policy CC03 of the MDD requires developments to protect and retain existing trees, hedges and other landscape features whilst Policy CP7 of the Core Strategy seeks to protect and enhance the environment and landscape features of a development site in order to support flora and fauna. This is supported by Policies N2 and N3 of the NPPF.
- 5.56 An Arboricultural Implications Assessment (AIA) has been provided by SJA Trees (SJA) as part of the RM application to demonstrate that the arboricultural impact of the Proposed Development is of a low magnitude.
- 5.57 Linear Park Phase 3 contains 187 individual trees and 20 groups of trees within or immediately adjacent to the site. The trees are predominantly broadleaved, with English oak and hybrid black poplar forming prominent landscape features.
- 5.58 The Site does not contain any ancient woodland, ancient trees, veteran trees, wood pasture or parkland. The principal arboricultural features comprise the hybrid black poplar belt, mature English oaks in the central part of the site, an English oak on the western boundary, and a group of English oaks in the south-western part of the Site.
- 5.59 Of the 187 individual trees, 2 have been assessed as Category 'A', 63 as Category 'B', and 116 as Category 'C'. Of the 20 tree groups, 5 have been assessed as Category 'B' and 15 as Category 'C'. No Category 'A' tree groups were recorded.

- 5.60 To accommodate the proposed development, 12 individual trees are proposed for removal. In addition, 3 tree groups are proposed for partial removal, and 1 tree group is proposed for complete removal. No Category 'A' trees, notable trees, or trees of high landscape or biodiversity value are proposed for removal.
- 5.61 The trees proposed for removal are predominantly Category 'C' specimens of low arboricultural quality or limited long-term value. Several removals are also justified on arboricultural grounds, including trees that are dead, moribund or affected by ash dieback disease. Their removal is therefore not considered to have a significant adverse impact on the character or appearance of the local landscape.
- 5.62 6 retained trees will require minor pruning works, principally crown lifting to provide clearance over proposed footpaths. Works are also proposed within the root protection areas of 17 retained trees; however, suitable mitigation measures, including above-soil surfacing and tree protection measures, are proposed.
- 5.63 Overall, the proposed development would have a low arboricultural impact. The principal trees and landscape features would be retained and protected, and the proposed removals would not adversely affect the arboricultural character, appearance, amenity or biodiversity value of the local landscape.

Access and Parking

- 5.64 Policies CP4 and CP5 of the Core Strategy state planning permission will not be granted unless appropriate arrangements for the improvement or provision of infrastructure and associated services have been made. These works must take into account the cumulative impact of the development and provide for sustainable forms of transport whilst enhancing road safety.
- 5.65 Policy CC07 of the MDD states planning permission will only be granted where the proposal demonstrates the proposed parking provision meets the standards set out in Appendix 2 of the MDD to prevent any unacceptable impacts on the local highway network.
- 5.66 Policy CP4 of the Core Strategy states planning permission will not be granted unless appropriate arrangements for the improvement or provision of infrastructure and associated services have been made. These works must take into account the cumulative impact of the development and provide for sustainable forms of transport whilst enhancing road safety.
- 5.67 The overall landscape masterplan details that the Site includes a 3.5m shared path, a footway/cycleway connection, and links to the existing Hazebrouck Meadows SANG, Parcel O2 and Parcel N, the District Centre, and the allotments. The SANG extension area also includes various access points, such as timber kissing gates, pedestrian kissing gates, and SANG entrance gates, to ensure that the SANG area is easily accessible from the wider Arborfield Green Site in line with the Guidelines for Creation of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) (2021) (Natural England).
- 5.68 For the allotments, vehicle access is provided from Parcel N. The allotment area includes dedicated parking for 6 vehicles, described as a reinforced grass parking area, and is enclosed by a 2 m high green mesh fence with a matching vehicle gate.

- 5.69 The NEAP/play area has controlled pedestrian access through gates set within a 1.2 m high post-and-rail fence with mesh.
- 5.70 Further information can be found within the accompanying Design and Access Statement.

Flood Risk and Surface Water Management

- 5.71 Policies CC09 and CC10 from the MDD require all sources of flood risk to be taken into account at all stages of a planning application. The policies require applications to demonstrate surface water arising from the Proposed Development will be managed in a sustainable manner. Proposals must also take account of climate change and guide development into the lowest areas of flood risk in the first instance.
- 5.72 A Foul and Surface Water Drainage Strategy and a Flood Risk Assessment were previously prepared for the entire SDL and assessed the potential for draining the Proposed Development and quantified the risk from all sources of flooding. These strategies were developed in conjunction with WBC and were approved as part of the Hybrid planning permission.
- 5.73 To support this application, a Surface Water Drainage Statement has been prepared which demonstrates the proposals accord with the site-wide strategies previously approved.
- 5.74 The report identifies that the existing site is drained principally by a series of existing watercourses and culverts located to the east, west, and south of the proposed works, which ultimately discharge via culvert into a lake on the northern side of Biggs Lane. These watercourses currently include hydraulic constraints, including small-diameter culverts and bridges at bank level, which restrict conveyance and contribute to flooding within the network.
- 5.75 It is noted that the northern section of the Site is located within Flood Zone 3, whilst the rest of the Site is made up of areas of Flood Zone 1 and 2. The proposed footway has been designed to sit above the modelled flood levels, with the route raised by a minimum of 450 mm in the areas affected by Flood Zone 3.
- 5.76 The scheme will also incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) in the form of permeable paving within the allotment car park. The SuDS will align with national standards, allowing rainfall to pass through the surface into the underlying sub-base, providing temporary storage, and reducing surface water runoff from the car park.
- 5.77 The Statement concludes that the removal of the existing redundant culverts and other hydraulic restrictions will improve the conveyance of flows through the watercourse network, reducing the extent and depth of flooding within the Linear Park, whilst the proposed culverts will replace the existing small-diameter culvert crossings at the watercourses, maintaining access across the watercourses while providing an appropriate conveyance route consistent with the surrounding drainage network.

Ecology

- 5.78 Policy TB23 of the MDD and Policy CP7 of the Core Strategy state planning permission will only be granted where an application demonstrates they provide new opportunities through

design, layout and landscaping to enhance and provide additional biodiversity features whilst providing appropriate buffer zones to conserve protected habitats and species. In addition, all new developments should be ecologically permeable and incorporate integrated green infrastructure networks.

- 5.79 NPPF Policy N2 requires development to minimise biodiversity impacts, conserve and enhance ecological networks and apply the mitigation hierarchy. NPPF Policy N6 establishes specific tests for internationally, nationally and locally important sites and for irreplaceable habitats.
- 5.80 Further to the ecological assessments which were undertaken, submitted and approved as part of the Hybrid planning application: a number of additional surveys have been undertaken throughout the development period of the Arborfield Green site. This survey work has informed the preparation of this RM application.
- 5.81 As set out in the Ecological Mitigation Strategy, prepared by Eco Support, the habitats on-site were considered to be broadly similar to those identified within the original surveys undertaken by AECOM. The only change noted on-site comprised the demolition of previously present buildings and the removal of a pre-existing hedgerow. The habitats identified within the Site consist of modified and other neutral grassland, developed land, bramble scrub, other woodland broadleaved, lowland mixed deciduous woodland, and other rivers and streams. It is also noted the Site is devoid of any ecologically significant hedgerows.
- 5.82 The Site is considered to offer negligible potential to support Great Crested Newts, riparian or aquatic UK BAP species and as such, no further mitigation or contingency measures are required for these species.
- 5.83 As detailed within Condition 22 of the Hybrid planning approval (Ref. O/2014/2280), a detailed scheme to maintain or enhance the ecological permeability of the Site for reptiles, amphibians and hedgehogs has been provided accordingly.
- 5.84 The report accompanying this RM application details the Site offers suitable habitat for a range of protected and notable species, and the proposed mitigation and enhancement measures are considered sufficient to minimise impacts and achieve a net gain in biodiversity value. The proposed measures include the protection of retained habitats, bat boxes, reptile refugia and deadwood habitat, hedgehog homes and measures to maintain ecological permeability, bird boxes and measures to mitigate impacts upon Stag Beetle.
- 5.85 Therefore, the implementation of the mitigation as proposed by this RM application will ensure there will be no adverse impacts upon specific habitats and protected species in line with relevant wildlife legislation and planning policy.

Lighting

- 5.86 A Lighting Assessment was undertaken by It Does Lighting to support the creation and use of the SANG extension area, including the proposed lighting along the 3.5m Flexipave route.
- 5.87 The methodology and approach outlined in this assessment aligns with the aspirations of Natural England, and in compliance with the requirements of British Standards and WBC.

- 5.88 The assessment sets out the schemes' sensitive lighting strategy, which will ensure appropriate lighting columns are provided along the 3.5m Flexipave route in line with Council specification and NE requirements. The proposed lighting is intended to facilitate the creation and use of the SANG and associated route.
- 5.89 The assessment demonstrates light levels are set at the lowest possible, with both front and back light reduction, and vertical grids showing impacts up to 6 metres high at specified locations, which can be seen in the drawing ref. 03-24-S38-LO-C2, and the calculation grids within the assessment. This design improves upon the options permitted by the Council's standard specification.

6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Reserved Matters application to which this Statement relates is submitted on behalf of Crest Nicholson Operation Ltd. and seeks approval for Linear Park Phase 3, which includes the proposed Northern SANG Extension area, the provision of a NEAP, a skate park, and allotments, with associated parking, landscaping, footpath and cycleways and drainage; pursuant to the original Hybrid planning permission (Ref. O/2014/2280).
- 6.2 The site is located within the Arborfield Garrison SDL and has been carefully designed to respond to the key parameters which are contained within the Site Wide Design Framework as well as the parameters established as part of the hybrid planning permission.
- 6.3 Overall, this Planning Statement demonstrates the proposal would be in conformity with the hybrid planning permission, the Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location SPD, the Development Plan of the Local Planning Authority (Wokingham Borough Council) as well as National Policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 6.4 As detailed in the Executive Summary, the proposed delivery of Linear Park Phase 3 will provide significant benefits, including the delivery of a sustainable new green space, play areas, and allotments for new and existing residents to enjoy; as well as the delivery of key pedestrian and cycle routes. Linear Park Phase 3 will support the leisure and social lifestyle for both existing and new communities.
- 6.5 This planning application and the proposals contained therein are commended to the Council for favourable due consideration.
- 6.6 The planning application and proposals contained therein are therefore commended to Wokingham Borough Council for due consideration in order to deliver the final phase of the Linear Park for the Arborfield Garrison development.