



## **Planning Statement**

Land east and west of Hyde End Road,  
Shinfield

September 2025

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Project Number:  
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## Planning Statement

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## Planning Statement

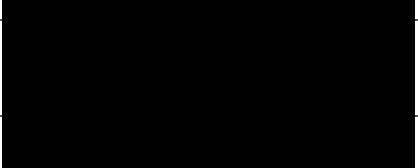
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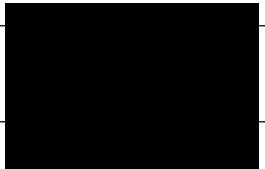
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## **Planning Statement**



# 1 Introduction

1.1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Stantec on behalf of Bloor Homes Limited (the “Applicant”) in support of a full planning application at Land east and west of Hyde End Road, Shinfield (the “Site”) for the creation of new residential dwellings.

1.1.2 This application seeks full planning permission for:

*“Full application for the proposed erection of new dwellings (C3 Use Class) together with associated landscaping, open space provision, drainage infrastructure, parking, access and associated works.”*

1.1.3 Documents submitted with the application alongside this Planning Statement are:

- Design and Access Statement
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy
- Arboricultural Implications Assessment
- Economic Benefits Statement
- Design and Access Statement
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Ecology Impact Assessment and BNG Assessment
- Transport Assessment
- Utilities Statement
- Ground conditions report
- Minerals Safeguarding Assessment
- Agricultural Land Classification and Soil Resources Report
- Construction Environmental Management Plan
- Cultural Heritage Desk Based Assessment
- Noise impact assessment
- Landscape and Visual Assessment
- Lighting Assessment
- Sustainability assessment
- Air Quality Assessment

1.1.4 This Planning Statement is structured as follows:

- Chapter 1 Executive Summary
- Chapter 2 Introduction
- Chapter 3 (Site Description and Surroundings) details the physical characteristics of the Site and its immediate surroundings;
- Chapter 4 (Planning History) sets out the planning history of the Site;
- Chapter 5 (Proposed Development) sets out what is being in the site.
- Chapter 6 (Planning Policy) makes reference to the relevant policies from the Development
- Chapter 7 (Planning Assessment) provides our planning assessment of the proposed development including overall compliance with adopted Development Plan Policy and other material considerations; and
- Chapter 8 (Conclusions) sets out the conclusions of this Statement.

1.1.5 Bloor Homes Limited is a well-known national housebuilder which prides itself on creating new sustainable communities in which people want to live and thrive. The Applicant understands and knows the local area of Shinfield well, having secured permission and delivered housing at Shinfield Meadows which lies immediately adjacent to the north of the western parcel of the Site.

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- 1.1.6 The Site has been promoted through the emerging Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) Local Plan and is currently included as a draft allocation for residential development in the 'Local Plan Update 2023-2040 Proposed Submission Plan' version (site reference: SS14.12). The Proposed Submission Plan consultation was closed on November 2024 and the draft Local Plan has been submitted to the Secretary of State and the Examination is expected later in 2025.
- 1.1.7 The draft allocation allows for 'approximately 175 dwellings. Paragraph 5.116 of the Proposed Submission version states:
- 1.1.8 *"The number of dwellings is 'indicative' and does not represent a fixed requirement for each site. Those proposing developments are encouraged to produce the most appropriate design-led solution, taking all relevant local and national policies, in arriving at a total dwelling figure for their site. The design-led approach should not be unnecessarily constrained by the indicative figure."*
- 1.1.9 This Statement demonstrates that the proposed scheme is a suitable form of development within this location which meets the requirements of Wokingham Borough Council Local Plan, the Local Plan Update and the National Planning Policy Framework.



## 2 Site Description and Surroundings

### 2.1 Site

2.1.1 The Site comprises two separate parcels of agricultural land which are dissected (north/south direction) by B3349 Hyde End Road which runs between Shinfield (to the north) and Spencers Wood (to the south-west). The Site is located immediately south-west of the settlement of Shinfield, south of the M4. The Site is currently used as agricultural land for both growing crops and grazing livestock (cows) and covers 10.75 ha.

2.1.2 The Site has no designated heritage assets within it or in close proximity. The Site is designated as a strategic development location according to adopted Local Plan policy CP19. A small part of the Site lies within the settlement boundary of Shinfield (north-east corner of the western parcel) whilst the majority of the Site is outside and adjoining the settlement boundary according to adopted policy CC02.

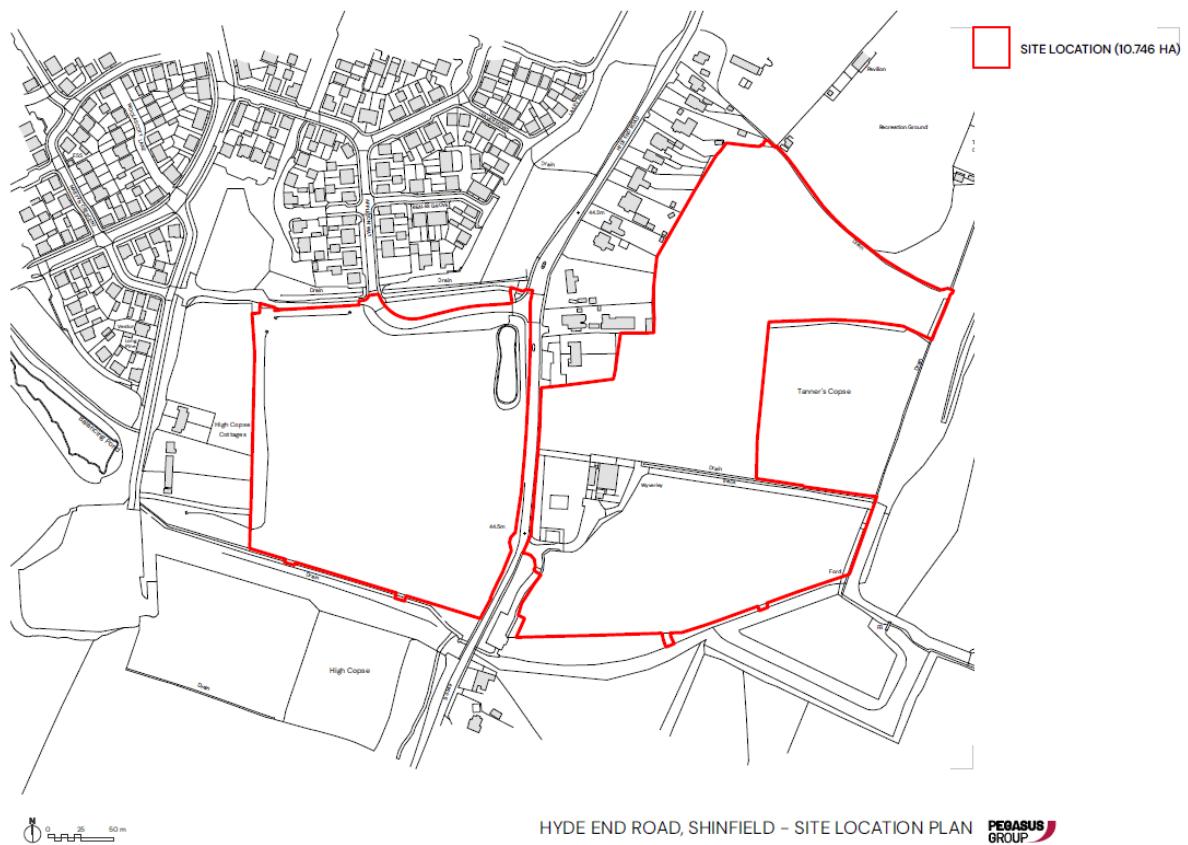


Figure 1: Location Plan

### 2.2 Site surroundings

2.2.1 The Site falls within Shinfield Parish, adjacent to the village of Shinfield to the north-west, with the smaller hamlet of Ryeish Green situated approximately 0.5 km to the west, and other villages of Three Mile Cross and Spencers Wood both approximately 1.5 km to the west and south-west respectively, with Spencers Wood connected to Shinfield via the B3349 Hyde End Road.

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2.2.2 The western parcel is bounded by the Shinfield Meadows development to the north, Hyde End Road to the east, arable land, a footpath and High Copse woodland to the south and Moor Copse to the west. There is also an existing ditch along the western edge which serves the existing Shinfield Meadows development.

2.2.3 The eastern parcel is adjoined by semi-detached and detached houses to the north-west as well as Millworth Lane allotments & Millworth Lane Recreation Ground to the north. It is bound by an existing drain along the northern boundary with a line of existing trees which separates the site from the existing recreation ground to the north. To the east is Tanners Copse ancient woodland, Langley Mead SANG and Hyde End Road to the west. Further east is the Loddon River Local Wildlife Site.

2.2.4 In terms of the wider surrounding area, the area has benefitted from the delivery of new homes which has also brought significant new infrastructure as part of the South of the M4 SDL. The eastern parcel of the Site benefits from an existing priority access junction which serves the Langley Mead SANG car park. The western parcel will be served from Appleton Way which has been delivered as part of the Shinfield Meadows development. Both access junctions provide footways which link to the existing provision along Hyde End Road.

2.2.5 The Site lies in close proximity to the various local services and facilities mostly concentrated to the north-west and north-east of the Site. These services and facilities include a brand new Lidl foodstore in the centre of School Green; School Green Community Centre; schools such as Alder Grove Church of England Primary School north-west of the Site, Shinfield St Mary's CE Junior School, Shinfield Infant & Nursery School, Oakbank Secondary School; medical facilities such as South Reading and Shinfield Group MP Shinfield Health Centre, Shinfield Branch Surgery – Swallowfield Medical Practice Branch; Millworth Lane Recreation Ground; Millworth Lane Allotments and Shinfield Meadows Allotments; Shinfield Micro-Library and convenience store such as Co-op Food Shinfield – School Green.

2.2.6 The Site adjoins substantial open space and sports provision at Shinfield Meadows. The Site is served by a recreation link which connects both this and the suite of SANG along the southern edge of both parcels of the Site. Both parcels of land will benefit from links to the existing Langley Mead SANG which provides opportunities for local visitors and residents to access open natural green space.

2.2.7 The Site is well positioned in respect of various public transport services that operate within the South of the M4 SDL area, including within the Shinfield Meadows development area, located immediately to the north. The closest bus stop Lawrence Place is located along Bolton drive at approximately 5min walking distance from the site. PR600 route provides a connection as farthest as Reading town centre in the north and Riseley to the south via Spencers Wood. Other bus services such as 3 leopard, F52, 983 are available from the next closest stop at School Green located along Hollow Lane north of the Site. Frequency of services for 3 leopard are every 20 minutes serving Reading, Wokingham via Arborfield, Finchampstead. F52 services are match day services serving the Stadium via the Mereoak Park and Ride. The closest bus stop to the south of the Site along Hyde End Road is Croft Road served by PR600.



### 3 Planning History, Community Engagement and Pre-Application Advice

#### 3.1 Planning History

3.1.1 The Site has no relevant planning history according to the Council's website.

#### 3.2 Community Engagement and Statement of Community Involvement

3.2.1 A Statement of Community Involvement was Since early September 2024, a local programme of stakeholder and community engagement has been undertaken. Members of the project team met with members of Shinfield Parish Council to share and discuss the vision and early thinking for the redevelopment of the Site.

3.2.2 In early January 2025 local residents, stakeholders and political representatives were invited by direct mail and email to view the emerging proposals and give their feedback on the Development at an online public webinar, through the consultation website and open communications channels such as email, post and phone. On 16 January 2025, a public online webinar was held with live Q&A via Zoom platform with key stakeholders and the local community.

3.2.3 The webinar provided an opportunity for the local community to learn and understand more about the proposals and ask questions during a live Q&A session. This methodology was designed to be flexible to respond to feedback and interest in the Development and not to discriminate against anyone in digital poverty or digitally disconnected.

3.2.4 An online Public Webinar and stakeholder meetings have been held, as set out in table 1 below.

Date	Details
Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2024	Members of the project team met with members of Shinfield Parish Council to share and discuss the vision and early thinking for the redevelopment of the Site.
Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup> November 2024	Members of the project team met again with members of Shinfield Parish Council to share the evolution of the masterplan following the previous meeting held in September 2024.
Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> November 2024	Pre-application meeting with Wokingham Borough Council officers.
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> December 2024	Emails sent to Ward Councillors introducing the Applicant and sharing the information on the proposal to redevelop the Site. Meetings were offered to the Ward Councillors.
Friday 3rd January 2025	1,208 consultation flyers were posted via Royal Mail to residential and business addresses in the consultation boundary to advertise the consultation and how to register for the online public webinar. The flyer also included the community engagement team's contact details if recipients had any initial questions or comments about the Development. A holding page on the project website was published to share the date and time of the online webinar and live Q&A session and allow for registration.

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Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	Emails were sent to all identified stakeholders including local community groups, informing them of the proposals and the online webinar and Q&A session. A copy of the consultation leaflet was also attached.
Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	The project specific website <a href="http://www.Landathydeendroad.co.uk">www.Landathydeendroad.co.uk</a> was fully published, dedicated to the consultation and engagement process including details of the Site, Development proposals, registration for the webinar and a feedback form. Public online webinar with live Q&A held via Zoom platform. The webinar provided an opportunity for the local community to learn and understand more about the proposals and ask questions during a live Q&A session. Consultation period opened. Pre-application meeting with Wokingham Borough Council officers.
Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	Consultation website updated to include recording of online public webinar in Library section.
Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	Website updated with all questions raised during the webinar and the Applicants responses.
Friday 31st January 2025	Public consultation period closed. Feedback continued to be collated, analysed and considered by the project team in advance of the planning application submission. Consultation website updated to include information about next steps and advise of consultation feedback period closure.

Table 1: Timelines on online Public Webinar and stakeholder meetings

3.2.5 The webinar was attended by 25 members of the local members of the local community attended including some Councillor and 35 questions were asked and responded to by the project team.

3.2.6 Throughout the engagement and consultation programme, the project team has listened to feedback from stakeholders and local residents and where possible have incorporated feedback given in the early engagement. All feedback received, has been reviewed by the project team and again where possible has been included or amendments made to the emerging proposals consulted on to address any concerns, suggestions and comments received. The submitted Statement of Community Involvement includes a table listing out the key issues raised by the residents and Applicant's responses to them.

3.2.7 The majority of the comments raised were from residents living on Hyde End Road whose properties and gardens abut the northwest boundary of the eastern parcel of land proposed for development. The recurring key concerns and the applicant's response were:

- Overlooking into gardens and homes of residents living on the northwest boundary of the eastern parcel. Response: minimise distance by reconfiguring the road to run adjacent to the boundary to increase the separation between the existing and proposed houses. Landscaping strategy will enhance tree cover wherever practicable.
- Large lorries using Hyde End Road; noise and dirt. Response: Construction Management Plan will be submitted alongside planning application submission.
- Speed and traffic along Hyde End Road. Response: The precise nature of any off site highway improvements is a matter that will be discussed with WBC during the course

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of determination period for the planning application. The potential works along Hyde End Road that have been identified include carriageway widening at the two bends to the South of the development parcels and a new pedestrian crossing (with central refuge island) located between the frontages of the two parcels. It is not anticipated that the off-site highway mitigation will encompass traffic calming features along Hyde End Road, other than perhaps at the pedestrian cycle crossing that is being promoted at the frontage of the development parcels.

- The off-road footpath which runs north/south on the southeast of the western parcel, suffers from frequent flooding. Flooding within Langley Mead. Response: Through Sustainable Drainage Systems, a series of swales and basins will collect and manage surface water drainage throughout the site. The development introduces new SuDS features to cater for new surface water generated by the proposals. This will ensure that surface water runoff is passed to existing watercourses at a controlled rate.
- Existing Primary School is full. Increase in people needing to use the GP Surgery. Response: Applicant is very familiar with the position and location of the schools and Doctors surgery that are within the village and within easy working distance from the site. They are aware of the extent of them being well used and will be discussing in detail with WBC officers the local infrastructure requirements arising from this development.

## 4 Proposed Development

- 4.1.1 The Site is proposed to provide 183 dwellings (including 35% affordable homes) along with associated access and landscaping works. The proposal would provide approximately 5.65Ha of residential development, using a mix of house types and tenures.
- 4.1.2 The Site would bring forward much needed housing in a sustainable location within the SDL south of M4 which will benefit from the already available high quality suite of services and facilities present in Shinfield. It would be influenced by the evolving green infrastructure network, including the Langley Mead Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG). It would provide informal amenity public open space and a small play area. The development would support approximately 84 direct construction jobs over the estimated construction period. Direct employment activity throughout the construction phase would generate Gross Value Added (GVA) of approximately £18.7m.
- 4.1.3 The eastern parcel of the Site would benefit from an existing priority access junction which serves the Langley Mead SANG car park. The Site would also bring forward road improvements to Hyde End Road through localised carriageway widening at the location of two bends to the south of the Site which would further enhance safety and accessibility for road users and pedestrians.
- 4.1.4 Shared use footway/cycleway is being promoted within the western frontage of the eastern parcel which will provide a link that routes parallel to Hyde End Road. A pedestrian island crossing is proposed to allow pedestrians and cyclists to cross to the western parcel, where a footway/cycleway will then be provided alongside Hyde End Road. This will connect northwards to the off-road footway / cycleway that routes along the northern side of Appleton Way and also southwards to the permissive path provided alongside the Hyde End Road corridor towards Spencers Wood.
- 4.1.5 Further points of connection will be promoted at both parcels, including SANG Link to the south, and into Millworth Lane Recreation Ground to the north-east.
- 4.1.6 The landscape strategy has been informed by the Site's context, including the retention of existing vegetation and new hedgerow planting. The proposal includes public open space as a play space area and amenity green space with integrated green infrastructure as SUDs, swales, attenuation basins.
- 4.1.7 The built form of the development will predominantly be 2-storey high. Density levels will be higher along the key movement routes to create a higher level of enclosure, with lower density towards the site's edges, to soften the transition between built form and the countryside and Langley Mead along the southern edge.
- 4.1.8 The proposal creates a new access for the western parcel which will be accessed directly from Appleton Way therefore no new vehicular accesses are proposed from Hyde End Road.



## 5 Planning Policy

5.1.1 This chapter of the Planning Statement identifies the national and local planning policies and guidance considered to be of relevance to the determination of this application. The development proposals accord with all the relevant planning policy guidance relating to the Application Site. This planning application also has regard to Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) prepared by WBC.

5.1.2 For the purposes of this reserved matters application, the Development Plan comprises:

- Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (adopted January 2010) (CS);
- Wokingham Borough Managing Development Delivery Document (Local Plan) (adopted February 2014) (MDD);
- South East Plan Policy NRM6 (2010);
- Central and East Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2023);
- Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan (Made 2017).

5.1.3 WBC is preparing a Local Plan Update. WBC submitted the Proposed Submission Plan to the Secretary of State for independent examination on 28th February 2025. The draft policies in the Proposed Submission Plan therefore currently hold limited weight.

5.1.4 Material considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024); the National Planning Practice Guide (NPPG); the National Design Guide; the Borough Design Guide SPD (2012); the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2010); the Affordable Housing SPD (2013); the South of the M4 Strategic Development Location SPD (2011), and Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions SPD (2011).

### **The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)**

5.1.5 At a national level, The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in March 2012 sets out the overarching national planning policy principles, providing guidance for local planning authorities and decision-takers. The NPPF has been subsequently updated with the most recent update published in December 2024. It is a material consideration in determining planning applications and the relevant paragraphs are outlined below.

5.1.6 Sections of the NPPF that are most of relevance in this instance include:

- Section 2 - Achieving sustainable development
- Section 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- Section 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Section 9 - Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places
- Section 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Section 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

5.1.7 The key policies of the NPPF relevant to the Site and submitted proposals are as follows.

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5.1.8 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF sets out that –

***Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.***

***For decision-taking, this means:***

***c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan, without delay; or***

***d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, planning permission should be granted unless:***

***i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or***

***ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.***

5.1.9 Paragraph 14 of the NPPF sets out that –

***In situations where the presumption (at paragraph 11d) applies to applications involving the provision of housing, the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with the neighbourhood plan is likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, provided the following apply:***

***a) the neighbourhood plan became part of the development plan five years or less before the date on which the decision is made; and***

***b) the neighbourhood plan contains policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement.***

5.1.10 Paragraph 61 of the NPPF sets out that –

***To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. The overall aim should be to meet an area's identified housing need, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community.***

5.1.11 Paragraph 66 of the NPPF sets out that –

***Where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect that the mix of affordable housing required meets identified local needs, across Social Rent, other affordable housing for rent and affordable home ownership tenures.***

5.1.12 Paragraph 77 of the NPPF sets out that –

***The supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns, provided they are well located and designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities (including a genuine choice of transport modes).***

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5.1.13 Paragraph 78 requires Local Planning Authorities to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old, including a buffer of 5% or 20% where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the last three years.

5.1.14 Paragraph 96 of the NPPF sets out that –

***Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:***

***a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;***

***b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and***

***c) enable and support healthy lives, through both promoting good health and preventing ill-health, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs and reduce health inequalities between the most and least deprived communities – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.***

5.1.15 Paragraph 103 confirms access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for health and well-being.

5.1.16 Paragraph 116 of the NPPF sets out –

***Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.***

5.1.17 Paragraph 131 of the NPPF sets out –

***The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.***

5.1.18 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF sets out –

***Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:***

***a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;***

***b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;***



- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

5.1.19 Paragraph 170 advises that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future).

5.1.20 Paragraph 175 of the NPPF sets out –

***The sequential test should be used in areas known to be at risk now or in the future from any form of flooding, except in situations where a site-specific flood risk assessment demonstrates that no built development within the site boundary, including access or escape routes, land raising or other potentially vulnerable elements, would be located on an area that would be at risk of flooding from any source, now and in the future (having regard to potential changes in flood risk).***

5.1.21 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF sets out –

***Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:***

- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
- c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
- d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs;
- e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
- f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

5.1.22 Paragraph 193 of the NPPF sets out –

- a) 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 planning permission should be refused;*
- b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;*
- c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and*
- d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.*

5.1.23 Para 195 of the NPPF sets out that –

*The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.*

5.1.24 Paragraph 207 of the NPPF sets out –

*In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.*

## **National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)**

5.1.25 The NPPG was first published in March 2014 and, alongside the Framework, provides guidance notes on various matters including biodiversity net gain, design, flood risk and coastal change, housing supply and delivery, natural environment, noise, and open space, sports and recreation facilities and green space.

## **National Design Guide**

5.1.26 The National Design Guide sets out the fundamental principles for good design and demonstrates what good design means in practice covering ten characteristics including identity, built form, movement, nature, public spaces, context, Uses, Homes and Buildings, Resources, and lifespan.

## 5.2 Local Planning Policy

### Wokingham Borough's Core Strategy (January 2010)

5.2.1 WBC's Core Strategy was adopted in January 2010 and sets out where development will occur within the borough to 2026 and includes a range of planning policies relating to housing, retail, employment and community facilities.

5.2.2 The policies contained in the Core Strategy that are relevant to the consideration of this application are listed below.

5.2.3 **Policy CP1 (Sustainable development)** states that planning permission will be granted for sustainable developments. This includes development proposals that: maintain and enhance the high-quality environment; limit any adverse effects on water quality; ensure the provision of adequate drainage; provide attractive, functional, accessible, safe, secure and adaptable schemes; and reduce the need to travel particularly by car.

5.2.4 **Policy CP2 (Inclusive communities)** states that planning permission will be granted to developments that contribute to the provision of sustainability and promotion of inclusive communities.

5.2.5 **Policy CP3 (General principles for development)** notes that planning permission will be granted for proposals that meet specific criteria. This includes those that have no detrimental impact upon important ecological, heritage, landscape or geological features or water courses and maintain or enhance the ability of the site to support fauna and flora including protected species. Proposals must also be of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area together with a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life. Development proposals will be required to demonstrate how they have responded to the criteria of this policy through the submission of Design and Access Statements, clear and informative plans, elevations and street scenes and where required Masterplans, Development Briefs, Concept Statements and Design Code.

5.2.6 **Policy CP4 (Infrastructure requirements)** states that planning permission will not be granted unless appropriate arrangements for the improvement or provision of infrastructure, services, community and other facilities required for the development taking account of the cumulative impact of schemes are agreed. This shall be secured by planning obligations or condition if appropriate.

5.2.7 **Policy CP5 (Housing mix, density and affordability)** notes that planning permission will be granted for residential developments providing a mix of densities, dwelling types, tenures and sizes. Development proposals of over 5 dwelling or above 0.16 Ha will be required to provide 35% of the net additional units proposed as affordable housing where viable. Minimum percentages of affordable housing sought on site by land type and location are given.

5.2.8 **Policy CP6 (Managing travel demand)** emphasises that planning permission will be granted for schemes that provide for sustainable forms of transport and are located where there will be a choice of transport available, mitigate any adverse impacts upon the highways network and improve the existing infrastructure network, enhance road safety and do not cause highways problems.

5.2.9 **Policy CP7 (Biodiversity)** states that sites designated as important for nature conservation at an international or national level will be conserved and enhanced and inappropriate development will be resisted.

5.2.10 **Policy CP8 (Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area)** states that Development which alone or in combination is likely to have a significant effects on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area will be required to demonstrate that adequate measures to avoid and mitigate any potential adverse effects are delivered.

5.2.11 **Policy CP9 (Scale and location of development proposals)** notes that development should be appropriate in terms of the existing or proposed levels of facilities or services and accessibility at that location. It sets out that development proposals will be acceptable in addition to the strategic development locations within the development limits of the identified major, modest and limited development locations.

5.2.12 **Policy CP10 (Improvements to the Strategic Transport Network)** states that improvements to the Strategic Transport Network will be provided to ameliorate major environmental or safety problems and to support new development in partnership with other authorities.

5.2.13 **Policy CP11 (Proposals outside development limits (including countryside))** sets out that proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted except where: (our emphasis)

*1) It contributes to diverse and sustainable rural enterprises within the borough, or in the case of other countryside based enterprises and activities, it contributes and/or promotes recreation in, and enjoyment of, the countryside; and*

*2) It does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings; and*

*3) It is contained within suitably located buildings which are appropriate for conversion, or in the case of replacement buildings would bring about environmental improvement; or*

*4) In the case of residential extensions, does not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building;*

*5) In the case of replacement dwellings the proposal must:*

*i) Bring about environmental improvements; or*

*ii) Not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building.*

5.2.14 **Policy CP17 (Housing delivery)** outlines the housing requirement for the borough for the plan period. Policy CP17 states that provision will be made for 13,230 dwellings in the period 2006-2026.

5.2.15 **Policy CP19 (South of the M4 Strategic Development Location)** states that within the areas identified South of the M4 motorway, a sustainable, well designed mixed use development will be delivered by 2026 including:

- *Phased delivery of around 2,500 dwellings including affordable homes in accordance with policy CP5*
- *Appropriate employment;*
- *Appropriate retail facilities;*
- *Social and physical infrastructure (including provision for up to 2 new primary schools and the likely expansion of existing primary provision together with existing children's centre and youth facilities);*
- *Measures to maintain separation of these settlements from each other and from Green Park Business Park (Reading), settlements from each other and from Green Park Business Park (Reading), settlements within the administrative Borough of Reading, Shinfield (North of M4) and Swallowfield;*

- *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)*
- *Improvements to highway capacity along the A327 (on routes to Reading and the M3, including Shinfield eastern relief road) and the A33 (route to Reading);*
- *measures to improve accessibility by non-car transport modes along the A327 and A33 corridors and routes to the stations at Green Park and Winnersh Triangle; and*
- *Provision of a Park and Ride in line with CP10.*

*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 Location as defined on the Proposals Map. A co-ordinated approach to the development of the Strategic Development Location will be required to deliver the necessary infrastructure, facilities and services to meet the needs of the expanded community.*

### **Wokingham Borough's Managing Development Delivery (MDD) Local Plan (February 2014)**

5.2.16 Wokingham Borough's MDD Local Plan was adopted in February 2014 and supplements the policies within the Core Strategy.

5.2.17 The document begins by setting out ten cross cutting policies, taking forward the principles and policies set out in the Core Strategy.

5.2.18 **Policy CC01 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development)** states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.2.19 **Policy CC02 (Development Limits)** states that permission for proposals at the edge of a settlement will only be granted where they can demonstrate developments are within development limits and respects the transition between the built-up area and countryside.

5.2.20 **Policy CC03 (Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping)** notes that development proposals should; provide new or protect and enhance the Borough's Green Infrastructure networks; promote accessibility, linkages and permeability between existing green corridors including public right of way such as footpaths, cycleways and bridleways; promote the integration of the scheme with any adjoining public open space or countryside, protect and retain existing trees, hedges and other landscape features; and incorporate high quality, ideally, native planting and landscaping.

5.2.21 **Policy CC04 (Sustainable Design and Construction)** notes that planning permission will only be granted for proposals that seek to deliver high quality sustainable design and construction and that all development will incorporate suitable waste management facilities.

5.2.22 **Policy CC05 (Renewable Energy and Decentralised Energy Networks)** states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that consist of over 10 dwellings that deliver a minimum reduction of 10% carbon emissions through renewable energy and low carbon technologies.

5.2.23 **Policy CC06 (Noise)** states that proposals must demonstrate noise impacts have been addressed to protect noise receptors.

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5.2.24 **Policy CC07 (Parking)** states that planning permission will only be granted where the proposal meets the standards set out within Appendix 2 of the MDD and retains an appropriate overall level of off-street parking.

5.2.25 **Policy CC09 (Development and Flood Risk (from all sources))** sets out that all sources of flood risk, including historic flooding, must be taken into account. Development proposals in Flood Zones 2 or 3 must take into account the vulnerability of proposed development. Development must be guided to areas of lowest flood risk by applying the sequential approach.

5.2.26 **Policy CC10 (Sustainable Drainage)** states that all development proposals must ensure surface water arising from the proposed development including taking into account climate change is managed in a sustainable manner. The policy also emphasises that proposals must incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), where practicable, which meet the long term needs of the development and which achieve wider social and environmental benefits. In addition, the developer must provide clear details of how the proposed SuDS will be adopted and maintained.

5.2.27 **Policy TB05 (Housing Mix)** notes that residential developments must provide an appropriate housing mix taking into consideration underlying character of the area and both the current and projected needs of households. Developments should provide an appropriate mix of affordable housing which reflects the Council's Housing Strategy and Affordable Housing SPD.

5.2.28 **Policy TB07 (Internal Space Standards)** notes that all new residential units should ensure the internal layout and size are suitable to serve the amenity requirements of future occupiers. The policy sets out minimum standards for this purpose.

5.2.29 **Policy TB08 (Open Space, sport and recreational facilities standards for residential development)** provides a list of standards for each type of indoor/outdoor space requirement for residential development.

5.2.30 **Policy TB21 (Landscape Character)** states that proposals must demonstrate how they have addressed the requirements of the Council's Landscape Character Assessment (2004) and must retain or enhance the condition, character and features that contribute to the landscape.

5.2.31 **Policy TB23 (Biodiversity and Development)** states that planning permission for development proposals will only be granted where they comply with policy CP7 of the Core Strategy and demonstrate how they provide opportunities to incorporate new biodiversity features or enhance existing features, provide appropriate buffer zones between development proposals and designated sites and important habitats or species, and ensure that all developments are ecologically permeable.

5.2.1 **Policy TB25 (Archaeology)** states that where development is likely to contain archaeological remains, the presumption is that appropriate measures shall be taken to protect remains by preservation in situ. Where this is not practical, applicants shall provide for excavation, recording and archiving of the remains.

5.2.2 **Policy SAL05 (Delivery of avoidance measures for Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area)** states that Land south and east of Tanner's Copse, Hyde End Lane, Shinfield (18.18ha) is allocated (and defined on the Policies Map) as Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) as part of the avoidance measures required for the Development Plan. There is a presumption against their development of these sites for uses other than SANG unless the applicant can demonstrate that sufficient alternative avoidance measures for all relevant submitted and/or approved plans and projects within the Borough taking account of Natural England's advice on SANGs.

## South East Plan

5.2.3 The Regional Strategy for the South East (The South East Plan) (RS) was adopted in May 2009 and established 'spatial' policies in respect of a number of issues, including the scale and distribution of new housing, priorities for new infrastructure, a strategy for protecting the

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countryside and for tackling climate change. The South East Plan was formally revoked on 25 March 2013 under the Regional Strategy for the South East (Partial Revocation) Order 2013.

5.2.4 Two policies were retained and remain part of the Development Plan. One of these retained policies is of relevance to the proposed development, namely Policy NRM6 (Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area). Policy NRM6 notes that new residential development which is likely to have a significant effect (within 5km) on the ecological integrity of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) will be required to demonstrate that adequate measures are put in place to avoid or mitigate any potential adverse effects in agreement with Natural England. Where mitigation takes the form of Suitable Accessible Natural Greenspace (SANG) this should be provided at a minimum of 8ha of SANG land per 1,000 new occupants.

### Joint Central and East Berkshire Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP) (2023)

5.2.5 The JMWP guides the level of minerals and waste development needed within central and eastern Berkshire and identifies where developments should go. The Plan designates the area within which the Site lies as a Mineral Safeguarding Area and an Area of Search for Sand and Gravel.

5.2.6 **Policy DM1 (Sustainable Development)** seeks to ensure authorities work proactively with applicants to find solutions to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the Plan area. Minerals and waste development that conforms with all the relevant policies in this Plan will be approved, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.2.7 **Policy M2 (Safeguarding sand and gravel resources)** outlines the criteria in which a non-minerals development in the Minerals Safeguarding Area may be permitted.

### Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan made version February 2017

5.2.8 The Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan (SNP) was adopted by the Council on 26 January 2017 and covers the area of Shinfield parish.

5.2.9 The SNP covers the period from 2016 through to 2026, which is the period of growth outlined in the South of M4 Strategic Development Location (SDL) Supplementary Planning Document (May 2011) produced by WBC.

5.2.10 **Policy 1 (Location of Development)** states that development within the Development limits will be supported; development adjacent to the Development Limits will only be supported where the benefits of the development outweigh its adverse impacts.

5.2.11 **Policy 2 (General Design Principles)** states that in new residential developments, provision of an appropriate mix of size, built form and garden size, including style, design and character, will be supported in order to provide variation within a scheme, as long as this respects local distinctiveness and creates safe and sustainable environments.

5.2.12 **Policy 3 (Sustainable Development)** states that all development within the parish should seek to achieve the highest standards of sustainability. Development must meet the strategic sustainability priorities set out by Wokingham Borough Council.

5.2.13 **Policy 4 (Accessibility and Highways Safety)** state that:

*All development proposals should demonstrate appropriate levels of accessibility and highway safety. The following issues should be considered:*

- *Restricting traffic speed through traffic calming measures such as the use of chicanes within residential streets, restricted speed limits within development roads and pedestrian priority zones.*

- *Make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling to schools, work places and local amenities.*
- *Steps to actively encourage the integration of walking and cycling routes and facilities into key destinations within the parish*
- *Provision of safe routes for equestrians.*

5.2.14 Policy 5 Parking states that:

- *Garages should meet the minimum internal dimensions of 7 metres long x3 metres wide, to allow sufficient space for a modern vehicle and provide some storage and to also be considered as cycle storage. However, for garages built at a minimum size of 6 metres long x 3 metres wide, additional storage facilities such as a secure garden shed must be provided, for bicycles and other items. Where garages are not provided, then suitable secure accommodation and access must be provided for the storage of bicycles and motor cycles. The distance to the highway boundary from the face of the garage or car port should meet current WBC standards set out in the borough Design Guide, Parking Standards Study and Core Strategy.*
- *Garage door dimensions must, at minimum, be 2.4m wide by 2.1m high, for a single or tandem garage, as set out with Wokingham Borough Council's MDD parking standards, Borough Design Guide and Parking Standards Study.*
- *Communal car parking areas in residential schemes should be close to buildings where there is appropriate natural surveillance.*

5.2.15 Policy 6 Trees, hedgerows and Woodland states new build development will be supported where it can be demonstrated that:

- *Hedgerows which are appropriate for retention, as determined by the assessment of a survey of affected hedgerows to be carried out by the developer, due to their age or ecological value or in order to screen other development or land use, will have a buffer zone of sufficient width to ensure that the value provided by that hedgerow (as determined by the survey) is adequately preserved.*
- *Ancient Woodlands, Local Wildlife Sites and ponds which are appropriate for retention, as determined by the assessment of a survey of affected woodlands, wildlife sites or ponds to be carried out by the developer, will have a buffer zone of sufficient width to preserve the ecological value of that feature. For Ancient Woodlands, buffers should normally be of a minimum 15m width in accordance with Natural England's Standing Guidance for Ancient Woodlands, except where surveys identify the need for additional width.*
- *All buffer zones should consist of appropriate native species and where appropriate should be designed in such a way as to encourage public access and enjoyment of the zone and with appropriate provision for its maintenance.*

5.2.16 Policy 7 Biodiversity states that new build development will be supported where it can be demonstrated that:

- *The scheme, where practical, provides biodiversity enhancement through the creation of new areas of Habitats of Principal Importance in England (Section 41 Habitats under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)) such as woodlands, ponds, hedgerows and wildflower grasslands.*
- *The scheme provides biodiversity enhancement through the provision of additional bat roosting and bird nesting opportunities, hibernacular and 'Bug hotels'.*

- *The scheme provides biodiversity enhancement through the provision of suitable wildlife corridors<sup>1</sup> to ensure that the development site retains or enhances its ecological permeability.*
- *The scheme provides biodiversity enhancement for garden dwelling species such as hedgehogs through the provision of suitable residential boundary treatments.*

5.2.17 Policy 8 Flooding states that:

- *Where appropriate, new developments must incorporate the existing open watercourses, points and ditches within the development site, to lessen the risk of flooding to property, fields and roads.*
- *Existing open watercourses, ponds and ditches shall be preserved in new developments and substituted only where absolutely necessary or otherwise appropriate.*
- *The creation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in new developments should be promoted wherever practicable.*
- *No development will be permitted which reduces the ability of the site to alleviate flooding, or which results in increases in surface water run-off rates that would have a detrimental effect off-site, unless suitable mitigation is put in place.*

5.2.18 Policy 10 Community and Sports Facilities states that all qualifying developments shall contribute towards formal and informal sport and leisure activities and recreation and social facilities within the parish, either through the provision of on-site or off-site facilities or through financial contributions towards sports, leisure and recreation projects, where they are required to mitigate the impact of the development.

### 5.3 Material Considerations

#### Supplementary Planning Documents

##### Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (May 2010)

5.3.1 The Sustainable Design and Construction SPD and Companion Document provide guidance regarding the approach to considering sustainable design and construction of new development, although they are now outdated.

##### Borough Design Guide and Play Space Design Guide SPDs (June 2012)

5.3.2 The Borough Design Guide SPD was adopted to encourage developers to bring forward well-designed developments which complement and build upon the character of that immediate area. It contains specific guidance for development on settlement edges. The guidance states (RD9) that the location and siting of new development on the edge of settlements must be carefully designed to create an edge to the built-up area with a character that relates to the local pattern and incorporates soft landscape to soften the edge of settlements and help integrate housing into its rural setting.

5.3.3 The Play Space Design Guide Technical Note is supplementary to the Design Guide and Open Space, Sport and Recreation Strategy. It provides guidance and specific requirements for the design of play spaces within the Borough.

##### Affordable Housing SPD (July 2013)

5.3.4 The Affordable Housing SPD provides further guidance of the Council's approach to securing affordable housing through the planning process.

**WBC Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions SPD**

5.3.5 The SPD, adopted in 2011, was produced to update information on infrastructure delivery within the Strategic Development Locations.

**WBC Highway Design SPG**

5.3.6 The Highway Design SPG, adopted in 2019, outlines the key principles to follow when producing highways layouts for all types of development. It is intended to be read in conjunction with WBC's Design Guide

**South of the M4 Strategic Development Location SPD**

5.3.7 The SPD, adopted in 2011, is intended to guide future development of the SDL and to establish WBC's expectations about the master planning and design quality for future applications. It builds on Policy CP19 of the Core Strategy.

**Other guidance and position statements**

5.3.8 The relevant SGD to the proposed development includes:

- Climate Change Interim Policy Position Statement (December 2022)
- First Homes Interim Policy Statement (January 2022)
- Parking Standards Calculation Document
- Highways Development Design Guidance - Living Streets A Highways Guide for Developers in Wokingham (2019)
- Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy (November 2013)

**5.4 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

5.4.1 Wokingham adopted its CIL Charging Schedule in February 2015.

**5.5 Five Year Housing Land Supply**

5.5.1 The most recent Wokingham Borough Five Year Housing Land Supply Statement published in January 2025 for the period 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2029 sets out that the Council has a 1.7 years housing supply including a 5% buffer. As required by the NPPF Paragraph 76(c), housing land supply calculations will require a 20% buffer from July 2026. Once applied, it will further worsen the current housing land supply position of WBC.

**Emerging Policy**

5.5.2 Wokingham Borough Council is progressing its Local Plan Update. In February – April 2020, the Council consulted on a Draft version of the Plan, followed by a Revised Growth Strategy consultation in November 2021 – January 2022.

5.5.3 Between 30th September and 13th November 2024, WBC ran a regulation 19 consultation on its Proposed Submission Plan. Following this, the Local Plan Update was submitted for independent examination on 28th February 2025. The Inspectors submitted their Initial Questions to the Council on 17th April 2025, and hearings are expected to take place in autumn 2025.

5.5.4 The Local Plan which would plan up to 2040, and guide where and how growth will take place in the borough. The new Local Plan will plan for new housing, new employment, schools, roads, parks, shops and community facilities necessary to create places people want to live, work and do business.

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5.5.5 Within the draft Reg 19 submission Local Plan, the site is proposed to be allocated under policy SS14 (Sites allocated for residential, including residential as part of mixed-use development) for 175 dwellings (ref: SS14.12). Paragraph 5.116 states:

***The approximate numbers of dwellings are based on a broad assessment of the site, or the planning application where permission has been granted or a resolution to grant has been made. The number of dwellings is 'indicative' and does not represent a fixed requirement for each site. Those proposing developments are encouraged to produce the most appropriate design-led solution, taking all relevant local and national policies, in arriving at a total dwelling figure for their site. The design-led approach should not be unnecessarily constrained by the indicative figure.***

5.5.6 There are a series of Development Guidelines in appendix E of Wokingham's Borough Local Plan Update 2023 – 2040 (Proposed Submission Plan) which includes the following:

- Vehicle access from Hyde End Road
- Provide connectivity to the adjacent new development
- Provide connectivity to areas of open space within the site and the surrounding area, including the new park Langley Mead
- Sensitivity of new development to the areas of adjacent ancient woodland
- That development be contained within Flood Zone 1 and avoids areas potentially susceptible to reservoir flooding
- That surface water corridors within the western and eastern parcels of the site are left free of development
- That appropriate groundwater monitoring is carried out over the winter months (1 October – 31 March) to inform site development and sewerage
- Undertake a desk based archaeological impact assessment to better understand the archaeological potential of the site.



## 6 Planning Assessment

### 6.1 Principle of development

6.1.1 Development within WBC is informed by the Council's Development Plan, which sets out the vision and framework for the delivery of future housing, employment, community facilities and local infrastructure. The principle of new housing on this Site is established by its location within the South of the M4 Strategic Development Location (SDL). The Site falls wholly within the South of the M4 SDL, within which Policy CP19 of the Core Strategy identifies there will be the phased delivery of around 2,500 dwellings.

6.1.2 It is noted that the location of development, whilst a small part of the Site lies within the settlement boundary of Shinfield (north-east corner of the western parcel) the majority of the Site is outside adjoining the settlement boundary. The development limits (Policy CP11 of the Core Strategy and Policy CC02 of the MDD DPD and depicted on the Proposals Map) were informed by the need to provide sufficient housing to meet the requirement set out in the Core Strategy.

6.1.3 That requirement, for 13,230 homes in the period 2006-2026, was identified more than 15 years ago and is now out-of-date. Based on the current level of need, WBC is unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of housing land. The published land supply position as at 31 March 2024 is 1.7 years. This indicates a need for significant additional housing delivery within the Borough, and the consequent need to identify additional locations for development.

6.1.4 This further demonstrates the need for additional development sites to be brought forward and emphasises the need for sites which can be delivered in a timely manner to provide a boost to the housing land supply position.

6.1.5 In terms of the Site as a potential location for growth to respond to this need, the Site is in a sustainable location adjacent to the existing settlement and benefits from good connectivity to amenities and facilities provided within Shinfield as well as connections to the wider area. This includes significant new infrastructure already delivered as part of the South of M4 SDL. Furthermore, infrastructure coming forward to support additional housing in this location already exists; Shinfield Infant and Junior School, Alder Grove Primary School, Oakbank Secondary School and Shinfield Medical Centre, a new community centre, convenience foodstore, substantial new sports provision and associated infrastructure. New upcoming infrastructure also includes Millworth Lane Recreation Ground (application ref: 242598) proposed for new sports pitches which would contribute towards the benefits the Site would be able to avail from.

6.1.6 Policy CP19 of the Core Strategy required the phased delivery of circa 2,500 dwellings alongside employment, retail, school provision, transport as well as associated infrastructure by 2026 within the SDL.

6.1.7 Given the relatively modest scale of development proposed and its ability to be delivered quickly with limited off-site infrastructure improvements, the Site would also be able to provide a timely boost to housing supply.

6.1.8 The Site's location within the SDL makes it a location for growth consistent with the emerging policy in the Proposed Submission Plan where the Site is allocated for approximately 175 dwellings. Paragraph 5.116 of the Proposed Submission version states:

*"The number of dwellings is 'indicative' and does not represent a fixed requirement for each site. Those proposing developments are encouraged to produce the most appropriate design-led solution, taking all relevant local and national policies, in arriving at a total dwelling figure for their site. The design-led approach should not be unnecessarily constrained by the indicative figure."*

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6.1.9 This demonstrates that the emerging policy does not envisage the dwelling number is a maximum for each allocated site and means that the Site can accommodate more than the associated dwelling number to accommodate 183 dwellings and be consistent with the objective of housing delivery in the SDL.

6.1.10 The Site is within and adjacent to the modest settlement (Shinfield south of M4) where emerging policy SS3 states that within modest settlements, development proposals in addition to those specifically identified as allocations or areas of change will be supported in principle. Importantly the Core Strategy (Paragraph 4.53) recognises that with the delivery of infrastructure supporting the South of M4 SDL major development proposals will be acceptable and states:

**“For the SDL proposed through policies CP18 and CP19, these improvements would enhance the overall sustainability of Arborfield Garrison, Shinfield, Spencers Wood and Three Mile Cross. Consequently, once the following improvements envisaged through policies CP18 and CP19 (respectively) have been achieved or are programmed (as part of the proposal) in a legal agreement associated with a planning permission, major development proposals in line with CP9 would also be acceptable in Arborfield Garrison, Shinfield, Spencers Wood and Three Mile Cross.” (our emphasis)**

6.1.11 It is noted that in the Written Ministerial Statement issued on July 30, 2024, Angela Rayner, Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, announced significant reforms to address the UK's housing crisis. The government has increasing housing targets from around 300,000 to approximately 370,000 homes per year which emphasises the need for new homes. The government has made local housing targets mandatory, requiring local authorities to use a standard method to determine housing needs. The Government recognises the importance of building more homes for economic growth, job creation, and improving living standards.

6.1.12 In addition to this, Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan Policy 1 (Location of Development) states that development within the development limits will be supported and that development adjacent to the Development Limits will be supported where the benefits of the development outweigh its adverse impacts. As set out in this Statement there are clear benefits arising from this proposal. As such, the development is in accordance with Policy 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

6.1.13 Policy CC02 of the MDD sets out 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. Whilst the Site is partially within the development limits, we acknowledge that development will not be fully compliant with policy CC02 of the MDD.

6.1.14 Policy CP11 sets out that proposals for development outside of development limits will not normally be permitted apart from certain exceptions. The Site is outside of development limits and in conflict with the Policy. However, the policy provides some flexibility due to the phrase 'will not normally be permitted' which was mentioned in a recent Appeal dated 29 May 2025 (ref: APP/X0360/W/24/3354667) where the Inspector mentioned that the policy in its essence *“allows a decision-maker to come to judgement about a proposal where it broadly meets the exceptions but not wholly yet still achieves the policy’s purpose.”* It is also of particular note that the development will not conflict with and indeed is fully consistent with the primary objectives of Policy CP11, that is to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment. The appeal decision indicates that there is no bar on development beyond development limits, especially where it still achieves the purpose of the policy. As stated above, the benefits of the proposal are further assessed below. Additionally, as stated above the development is adjacent to development limits and in compliance with Neighbourhood Plan Policy 1.

6.1.15 The policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date given the advice provided by NPPF footnote 8 and the lack of a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. The development would not have any adverse impacts which would significantly or

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demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposal, having particular regard to the Site being in a sustainable location as discussed above, make effective use of land by bringing forward the Site for delivering much needed homes in the Borough, well designed incorporating green infrastructure and landscaping and provides for 35% affordable homes. This demonstrates the development proposed is in compliance with paragraph 11d and 195 of the NPPF.

- 6.1.16 In terms of the Site as a potential location for growth to respond to this need, the Site is in a sustainable location adjacent to the existing settlement and benefits from good connectivity to amenities and facilities provided within Shinfield as well as connections to the wider area. This includes significant new infrastructure provided and being provided as part of the South of M4 SDL including a new local centre within walking distance of the Site, new school provision, new sports facilities and community buildings and extensive SANG provision as well as improved bus services.
- 6.1.17 Given the relatively modest scale of development proposed and its ability to be delivered quickly with no significant off-site infrastructure improvements, the Site would also be able to provide a timely boost to housing supply.
- 6.1.18 In accordance with Footnote 8 of the NPPF, the absence of a 5 year supply of housing means that the Local Plan is out of date and Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is therefore engaged and the tilted balance applies in this case. There are no policies that protect areas or assets of particular importance that provide a strong reason for refusing the development proposed. In accordance with NPPF Paragraph 195, the delivery of SANG will mitigate and avoid an effect on the Thames Basin Heaths SPA and the decision maker in undertaking an Appropriate Assessment will be able to robustly conclude that the project will not adversely affect the habitats site.
- 6.1.19 Further in this chapter the proposed Development is assessed against paragraph 11(d)(ii) to demonstrate that the wider benefits (including those stated above) are substantial and there are no adverse impacts which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, especially having regard to the sustainable location of the proposal, which makes effective use of land, represents a well-designed place which is integrated well with the adjoining development being delivered at Shinfield to the north and west and which provides 35% affordable housing to support housing needs in the local area.

### 6.2 Layout

- 6.2.1 The layout shows a good mix of different types of proposed open spaces such as amenity green space, natural and semi-natural green space and children's play space.
- 6.2.2 The layout concentrates its developable area centrally surrounded by the proposed green infrastructure around the edges of each land parcel. The layout achieves a contiguous green buffer along the eastern edge of the western parcel which forms a green link with the existing ancient woodland of Tanners Copse and the suite of SANG further east. The layout shows the retained University's access in the eastern parcel which will be complemented with further links to the existing Langley Mead SANG.
- 6.2.3 The development respects the 15m woodland buffers as required, however looks to go further by providing generous green corridors throughout the site, meaning the spaces become dual purpose, providing multifunctional green space.
- 6.2.4 Therefore, the development complies with CS policies CP1, CP3 and relevant policies of the NPPF 2024.

### 6.3 Design

- 6.3.1 The application is supported by a Design and Access Statement, and the following further discusses the elements of design of the development proposed.

### Masterplan

- 6.3.2 Analysis of the site and its surroundings have helped to shape the development form. Green infrastructure is a key organising element of the masterplan, aiming to ensure a site-specific identity is created.
- 6.3.3 Existing tree and hedgerow planting have been retained wherever possible within the proposals including all veteran trees. The provision of wider key green infrastructure links will help to improve existing habitats on-site, as well as cater for biodiversity enhancements.
- 6.3.4 The arrangement of the built form creates a network of attractive streets and spaces. Tree lined corridor emphasises the primary vehicular access taken from both site access points. Provision of additional pedestrian routes, reflects key desire lines, and enhances the existing PRoW network. Access to development blocks will be provided via a legible network of streets with a clear hierarchy.
- 6.3.5 The design of the development is based on perimeter blocks that enclose back gardens, providing a strong frontage to the public realm and ensuring active frontages overlook streets and spaces wherever possible.
- 6.3.6 Development is set back from the existing boundaries and existing woodland, enabling the creation of a softer development edge, and a sensitive landscaped transition from built form to the wider countryside beyond the site.
- 6.3.7 The central areas of open space will be linked to additional small-scale spaces via green corridors, creating a network of new spaces and places that vary in function and character. The development will provide active frontages to proposed areas of public open space, landscape planting and areas for formal play, providing natural surveillance and opportunities for active overlooking.

### Housing mix

- 6.3.9 The development proposals provide approximately 5.65Ha of residential development, achieving 183 dwellings, allowing space for a range of dwelling types suitable for people of different ages and lifestyles. 35% of the dwellings provided are to be affordable housing. This will comprise of Affordable Rent and Shared Ownership with a 70:30 split.

### Access

- 6.3.11 The Street Hierarchy Plan in the DAS shows the disposition of land uses and the proposed structure for movement within the development.
- 6.3.12 The access to the site is proposed via Hyde End Road for the eastern parcel and via Appleton way for the western parcel.
- 6.3.13 Pedestrians are led into the site from links created between areas of existing and proposed residential development, including the new proposed foot / cycleway including crossing point along Hyde end Road.
- 6.3.14 Cycle use is encouraged through the high degree of permeability within the layout. With local facilities located nearby and low vehicular speeds proposed within the development, cyclists will therefore find it safe and convenient to use the streets for cycling.
- 6.3.15 Provision of circulatory pedestrian routes (minimum 2m width) through the site, offering pedestrians easy access to development and a choice of routes away from the Avenue. Where possible pedestrian links will be suitable for use by disabled people.
- 6.3.16 Particular attention will be paid to ensure surface material quality and sufficient active overlooking, to provide a sense of safety and security for users; and to ensure that vehicular

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movement corridors do not become a barrier to pedestrian/cyclist movements crossing points will be defined where appropriate, to enable all users to cross safely.

- 6.3.17 Street hierarchy
- 6.3.18 A clear hierarchy of streets is proposed creating an integrated movement network. Variation in the street types proposed aids in the creation of a legible and permeable development, whilst also providing for, and encouraging pedestrian and cycle movement, and delivering necessary vehicular connections. The development proposals have been influenced by "Manual for Streets 1 & 2", which encourages designers to move away from standardised prescriptive measures and to adopt a more innovative approach, in order to create high-quality places for all users, ages and abilities.
- 6.3.19 The development and internal road network will be designed to encourage low vehicular speeds (circa 20mph) and streets will be defined by the building layout, so that buildings and spaces, instead of roads, dominate the street scene. The design will promote safe walking and high permeability through the site and aims to limit the potential for anti-social behaviour.
- 6.3.20 Lower category shared surface streets feed off the spine road serving smaller areas of residential development. Areas of hard paving are broken up with soft landscaping, creating attractive routes within the development. Street lighting is designed in conjunction with street tree planting to ensure safe and acceptable levels of lighting throughout the development.

### 6.3.21 Parking

- 6.3.22 There are 349 allocated parking spaces and 48 visitor parking spaces. Page 42 of the DAS provides a detailed parking spaces plan. Parking is designed in line with the current guidance contained within Manual for Streets and WBC Parking Standards. M4(2) and M4(3) parking bays will be provided in accordance with the appropriate standards.
- 6.3.23 Allocated parking will predominantly be provided on plot, within the curtilage, either to the front or side of dwellings, with individual bays and/or garages set back from the building line. Cycle parking spaces for individual dwellings is to be provided within the curtilage of the dwelling. Visitor parking is provided in accordance with WBC parking standards.

### Density, massing, architecture

- 6.3.24 The development will achieve an average density of 33 dwelling per hectare (dph) across the site, which ensures the efficient use of land, yet is reflective of the surrounding area, helping to assimilate the proposals into the surrounding areas.
- 6.3.25 The height and massing of the proposed development is mostly up to two storey in height, to reflect the edge of town location.
- 6.3.26 Variety in the heights and massing of the residential buildings will be achieved through the use of a range of house types and sizes, ranging from smaller 2 bed terraces, through to larger 4 bedroom detached houses.
- 6.3.27 Key development frontages, such as those overlooking areas of public open space and following the primary movement route, will be particularly prominent and critical to the appearance of the development. Particular attention will be paid to the massing and architectural style of these buildings, so that they contribute positively to the quality and character of the new development. These frontages should be designed as a composition, with consideration also given to the spaces they adjoin, in order to provide a cohesive approach to these prominent positions.
- 6.3.28 House frontages are carefully designed with generous windows from habitable rooms, clearly defined and attractive front doors and planting to act as buffer between the pavement and window. Internal habitable rooms provide high levels of natural daylight and connect well to gardens and terraces. Affordable housing is well-integrated with a tenure blind approach so there is no discernible difference between private and affordable dwellings.

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6.3.29 Refuse storage is provided with access to rear gardens with the requisite internal storage, whilst refuse collection is largely in line with guidance both for resident carry distances (of 30m) and within acceptable operative carry distances typically of (25m).

6.3.30 The site has been divided into 2 proposed character areas. These are - CA1: Internal Streets and CA2: Green Edges.

6.3.31 The Internal Streets CA covers the areas along the primary street, extending from the vehicular access points off Hyde End Road / Appleton Way and is characterised by a more formal appearance. Areas within the Internal Streets Character offer the opportunity for a full range of house-types, parking and plotting preferences to be used, from smaller terraced forms and semi-detached housing, through to detached dwellings. The tighter urban grain of parcels within this area, combined with the higher proportion of terraced and semi-detached housing, will result in a higher density levels compared with the other character area proposed within the development.

6.3.32 The Green Edges CA contains development overlooking the proposed public open spaces and blue / green corridors situated along the peripherals of the site. Characterised by an informal and green appearance, the proposed dwellings located within the Green Edges CA will predominantly be larger, detached and semi-detached family houses, and benefit from views across areas of open space, softening the transition between built form and open space.

6.3.33 Dwellings within the Green Edges CA will tend to be served via shared surface streets and shared private drives, lending the area a quieter and informal appearance and safely accommodating pedestrians and cyclists due to the relatively low vehicular speed along these street types.

6.3.34 Dwellings within the Green Edge CA will be arranged along a relatively inconsistent building line, creating an irregular street pattern to aid in the creation of a more informal, rural appearance and a loose urban grain. Building setbacks will allow for opportunities for soft landscaping at the front of dwellings, contributing to softening the transition from the built-up area into the open space and the rural context beyond.

### 6.3.35 Landscape design

6.3.36 Play provision on Site will comprise of a centrally located combined LAP, providing play facilities for young children of varying abilities. The play space will focus on natural timber play equipment, reflecting the edge of settlement location, and will be set within hedge lined boundaries. The play space will be well overlooked, with multiple entrances and surrounding seating and picnic benches.

6.3.37 The SUDs strategy for the Site focuses on landscape swales through the areas of new public open space. Short sections of these will be culverted in order to provide pedestrian connections between the housing areas and wider open spaces. Attenuation basins are also proposed on site, and will include a permanently wet area for the benefit of biodiversity.

6.3.38 Therefore, the development complies with CS Policies CP1, CP3, CP9, CP17; MDD local plan policies CC01, CC04, TB05; SNP Policies 2 and Policy 3 and the relevant policies of the NPPF 2024.

## 6.4 Landscape and Visual Assessment

6.4.1 The application is supported by a Landscape and Visual Assessment, landscape strategy plan (ref: 12332-FPCR-XX-XX-DR-L-0003-P05) and open space plan (ref: 12332-FPCR-XX-XX-DR-L-0004-P02). The submitted landscape and visual assessment considers the existing landscape resource and the visual receptors and amenity of the Site and how it has been considered by the planning and design process to inform the scheme.

6.4.2 The proposal retains existing trees, hedgerows, and other landscape features, aligning with Policy CC03, which emphasises protecting and retaining these elements. It integrates high-



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quality native planting, enhancing biodiversity and green infrastructure, and promotes educational awareness through interpretive boards on veteran trees. The design also links to existing public rights of way, such as footpaths, supporting the policy's goal of improving connectivity within green corridors.

- 6.4.3 The proposal provides adequate space and protection for trees, especially veteran trees. It enhances the local landscape through additional tree and hedgerow planting and restores habitat links, ensuring integration with development. Creates accessible green spaces, including meadows, swales, and drainage basins, using native, locally occurring species to support ecological function and sustainability.
- 6.4.4 The development retains and enhances key landscape features including respecting and protecting existing woodland, veteran trees and the Langley Mead SANG that runs to the east to support Policy TB21, contributing to local character and integrating with the surrounding landscape.
- 6.4.5 The proposal aligns with Policy NE5, adopting a landscape-led approach. It includes meadows, swales, and drainage basins, enhancing local distinctiveness and addressing the Landscape Character Assessment.

### Landscape management

- 6.4.6 All of the landscape areas and public open space features will be managed and maintained. This would be achieved through the implementation of a Landscape Management Plan (LMP), to ensure the successful establishment and continued thriving of the landscape proposals.

### Landscape Character

- 6.4.7 The Site lies within National Character Area (NCA) 129, "Thames Basin Heaths". The proposal reflects the scale, appearance, and layout of surrounding context to the north of the parcels, namely the recent development off Appleton Way, minimising contrasts with the wider landscape or bringing any uncharacteristic elements into the receiving landscape. While there will be some loss of openness, the limited scale of the development within the broader NCA context is assessed as having a Negligible overall effect.
- 6.4.8 The Site is well-contained by existing woodlands, residential areas, and green infrastructure, and the proposal is expected to have minimal impact on the Spencers Wood Settled and Farmed Clay LCA's key characteristics.
- 6.4.9 The eastern parcel of the Site falls within the "A2 - Loddon River Valley" LCA. The proposals are anticipated to result in a Minor Adverse effect on the landscape at completion. As no major mitigation is proposed, the effect is expected to remain at Minor Adverse by Year 15.

### Visual Envelope

- 6.4.10 The Visual Envelope for the proposed development was initially based on local topography and building heights, then refined through site review to account for visual screening by buildings, trees, and other features. The VE is contained by vegetation, mature tree belts, Tanners Copse, and the southern edge of Shinfield. It extends slightly south into Langley Mead SANG but is generally limited to areas near the Site's boundaries. To the north, the VE reaches PRoW SHIN15, though views are glimpsed. To the east, it is restricted by Tanners Copse, and to the west, by woodland and field boundaries.
- 6.4.11 The proposed scheme establishes a breakdown of the types of open spaces provided on the Site. Refer to drawing ref: 12322-FPCR-XX-XX-DR-L-0004-P02 which shows the breakdown of public open space provided within the Site. The Site goes above the local plan policy requirements for natural/semi natural greenspace and amenity greenspace with proposed areas being 3.31ha and 1.57ha respectively (see image below from drawing ref: 12322-FPCR-XX-XX-DR-L-0004-P02). The provision of children's play space falls very marginally below the policy



requirement and is proposed to be 0.012ha. The Site is however in very close proximity to other play provision at Shinfield Meadows and Millworth Lane Recreation Ground which are both within walking distance of the Site.

Wokingham Borough Council Open space, Sports and Recreation Strategy (Nov 2013)				
Green Infrastructure Type	Local Plan Requirement	Requirement (ha)	Proposed (ha)	Provision Above (green) / Below (red) Requirement (ha)
<i>Natural / semi natural greenspace</i>	2.84ha per 1000 population: Site Requirement (442 pop) = 1.25ha	1.25	3.31	2.06
<i>Amenity greenspace</i>	0.98ha per 1000 population: Site Requirement (442 pop) = 0.43ha	0.43	1.57	1.14
<i>Children's play space</i>	0.25ha per 1000 population: Site Requirement (442 pop) = 0.11ha	0.11	0.012	-0.098

*NB: Above Calculations based on 184 dwellings at 2.4 persons per dwelling (= 442 pop)*

Figure 2: Breakdown of types of open spaces provided on Site

6.4.12 SANG will be delivered as part of the Langley Mead extension, which is already part implemented, i.e. the car park at its northern end. In terms of formal sport, the requirement for the development is 0.76ha. There are two pitches with RM approval (application ref: 223287), referred to as the 'northern pitches' which are already in surplus to the Shinfield Meadows requirements. The provision of allotments can also be delivered off-site on land owned by the University of Reading and will be subject to S106 negotiations.

6.4.13 In conclusion, the Site is situated adjacent to the existing settlement edge of Shinfield and is well contained by surrounding development and vegetation. The LVA identifies a relatively limited number of visual receptors, and the proposals have considered the Site's context, including the retention of existing vegetation and the proposal of new hedgerow planting. It is anticipated that the proposed development can be successfully integrated into the local surroundings, minimising adverse effects. The proposal is therefore in compliance with MDD local plan policies CC03, TB21; local plan update policies NE4, NE5 and the relevant policies of the NPPF 2024.

## 6.5 Highways and Transport

6.5.1 The application is supported by a Transport Assessment. It proposes highway enhancement, widening works on two bends along Hyde End Road. New priority junction to be formed onto Appleton Way. Access into the eastern parcel would make use of the existing Langley Mead SANG priority junction onto Hyde End Road.

6.5.2 A number of design measures to cater for pedestrian and cycle movements within the development have been employed, including:

6.5.3 A street pattern that generates natural surveillance where entrances and frontages face all public routes.

6.5.4 An internal layout that encourages low vehicle speeds and therefore creates an environment where pedestrians and cyclists are not intimidated by motor traffic.

6.5.5 A permeable hierarchy of direct routes within the development comprising a range of shared, segregated and recreational links which would connect all internal areas of the development to the points of access.

6.5.6 Drawing No. HD068-003/P3, provided at Appendix F of the Transport Assessment shows that a 3m shared use footway/cycleway is being promoted within the western frontage of the eastern parcel which will provide a link that routes parallel to Hyde End Road. A 2.5m wide pedestrian island crossing is then proposed to allow pedestrians and cyclists to cross to the western parcel, where a 3m wide footway/cycleway will then be provided alongside Hyde End Road. This will connect northwards to the off-road footway / cycleway that routes along the northern side of

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Appleton Way and also southwards to the permissive path provided alongside the Hyde End Road corridor towards Spencers Wood.

- 6.5.7 Further points of connection will be promoted at both parcels, including access to Footpath 14 to the north-west; the SANG Link to the south, and also into Millworth Lane Recreation Ground to the north-east.
- 6.5.8 Proposed footways are 2.0m footways provided on both sides of the carriageway along the spine road of each development parcel. A 2m recreational path around the perimeter of the western parcel and eastern side of the eastern parcel.
- 6.5.9 In addition, the potential to improve pedestrian connectivity towards School Green in the vicinity of Shinfield Infant & Nursery School has been identified. A possible enhancement scheme that could be promoted is shown on Drawing No. HD068 - 008/P1 at Appendix J of the Transport Assessment.
- 6.5.10 Within areas such as private drives, shared streets will be promoted allowing pedestrians and drivers to share the carriageway where lower volumes and speeds of vehicles permit this.
- 6.5.11 Access
- 6.5.12 Whilst the development proposals seek to maximise connectivity for non-car modes of travel, it is also important that a satisfactory level of highway provision is allowed for within the internal layout of the development which, in turn, affords a satisfactory access arrangement onto the surrounding highway network. The proposed vehicular access arrangements for each parcel are depicted on Drawing No. HD068-003/P3, attached as Appendix F of the Transport Assessment and also on Figure 3below.

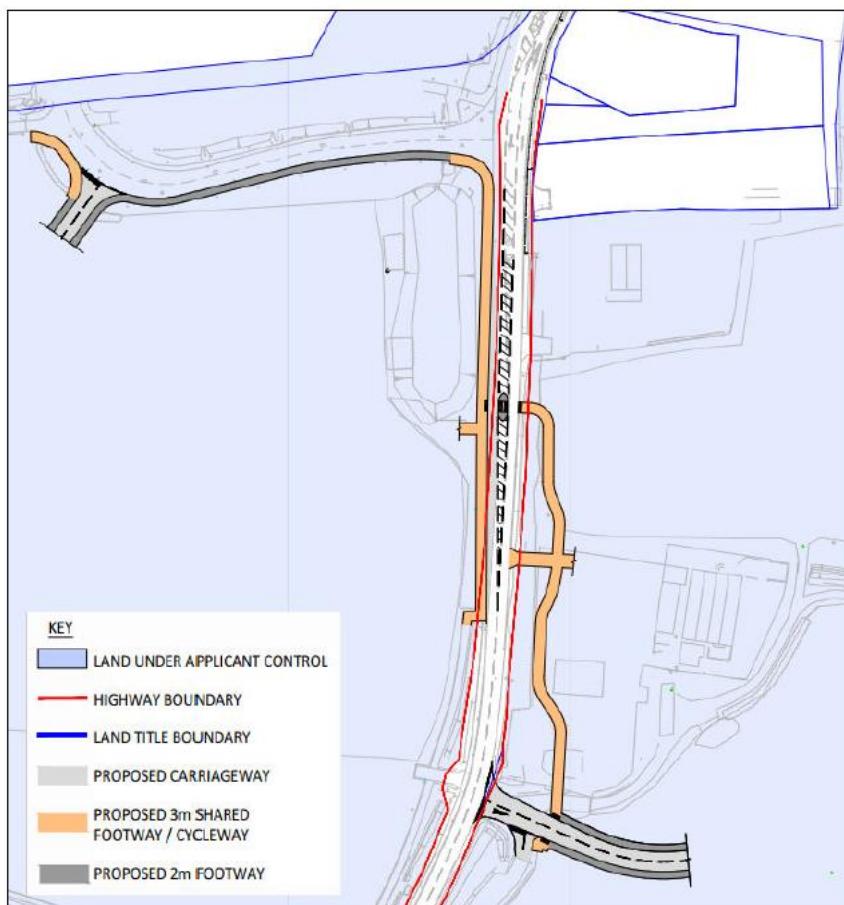


Figure 3: Vehicular access arrangements

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- 6.5.13 Vehicular access to the western parcel, which accommodates 68 units, will be achieved by a new simple priority junction with Appleton Way. The access junction comprises a 5.5m wide carriageway with 2m footways at either side. The proposed priority access has been designed to accommodate junction visibility splays of 2.4 x 43m, commensurate with the speed limit of 30mph along Appleton Way.
- 6.5.14 The eastern parcel accommodating 116 units is proposed to be accessed by utilising the existing Langley Mead SANG car park access onto Hyde End Road. Junction visibility splays of 2.4 x 90m can be achieved for the access which is commensurate with the 40mph speed limit along the corridor.
- 6.5.15 It is proposed to reconfigure the carriageway within the eastern site to provide a 5.5m wide access street routing into the proposed residential area. The entrance to the Langley Mead SANG car park is to be reconfigured slightly so that it is formed off the southern side of the access street. The arrangement being promoted ensures that vehicles utilising the junction to access either the residential area or the SANG car park can do so in a safe and satisfactory manner.
- 6.5.16 Swept path analysis has been undertaken to demonstrate that large vehicles including a refuse vehicle can manoeuvre at each of the proposed site accesses.
- 6.5.17 A spine street routes south to north within the western parcel providing access to a number of shared surface streets generally formed of 5m carriageway and 2m margins at either side. Private drives and courtyards within the development also generally comprise shared surface streets.
- 6.5.18 Similarly, within the eastern parcel a spine street routes to the north with a number of shared surface streets and private drives formed off the street. In addition, an access has been formed onto the spine road to accommodate the existing access track which allows maintenance vehicles to serve the SANG at the east of the site.

### Servicing

- 6.5.19 The swept path analysis presented on the drawings at Appendix H of the Transport Assessment demonstrate that a fire tender is able to manoeuvre within 45m of every property in a satisfactory manner. Similarly, the design of the internal street network has been assessed to identify that a large refuse vehicle can be accommodated with sufficient allowance for turning manoeuvres.
- 6.5.20 Bin Collection Points are provided to prevent excessive carry distances for either residents or waste vehicle operatives as labelled on Drawing No. HD068 - 013/P1 at Appendix H.

### Parking

- 6.5.21 When determining the precise level and type of parking throughout the wider development, consideration has been given to the housing types proposed. A design led approach has been adopted which seeks to provide parking that is well integrated and complements, rather than dominates, the street scene.
- 6.5.22 The proposed Layout allows for unallocated parking, predominantly through the use of on-street parking bays. In this respect, care has been taken to ensure that the on-street parking areas are designed so that they do not impinge on the operation of the street or footways.
- 6.5.23 The proposed layout provides for some 360 allocated spaces and a further 77 spaces within garages. Even when excluding garages, all houses still have benefit of an allocated space which is not a garage. Furthermore, all houses with 2 or more bedroom are provided with 2 allocated spaces which are not garages.
- 6.5.24 In order to cater for the demands of visitors, a requirement of 1 visitor space for every 5 dwellings is required. This equates to a total visitor provision of 36.8 visitor spaces across the proposed development.



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- 6.5.25 The resultant parking provision at the development equates to an average of 2.64 spaces per dwelling.
- 6.5.26 The proposed layout allows for one active car charging point per house or apartment in accordance with Wokingham Borough Council's Living Streets: Highways Design Guide document (2019) and Part S of the Building Regulations 2010 (Updated 2021).
- 6.5.27 Cycle parking will generally be accommodated within the curtilage of each individual house. A total of 65no. of houses are provided with a 7mx3m garage for the storage of bikes, in accordance with WBC guidance. A further 6no. 4 or 5-bed dwellings are provided with double garages suitable for storing bikes. For the remaining 113 units where garages are not provided, each house will be provided with a storage shed in their back gardens suitable for the storage of typically 2no. bikes, with rear accessing gates meaning that residents will not need to bring their bicycles through the house.

### Travel Plan

- 6.5.28 A S106 financial contribution will be provided instead of a Travel Plan given that matters relating to Travel Planning are now addressed through WBC's 'My Journey Wokingham' initiative.

### Off-site mitigation

- 6.5.29 It is recognised that the alignment of Hyde End Road is likely to benefit from carriageway widening at the location of two bends which lie to the south of the site. A drawing which depicts a proposed improvement scheme is attached as Appendix J of the Transport Assessment and as shown in Figure 4 below.



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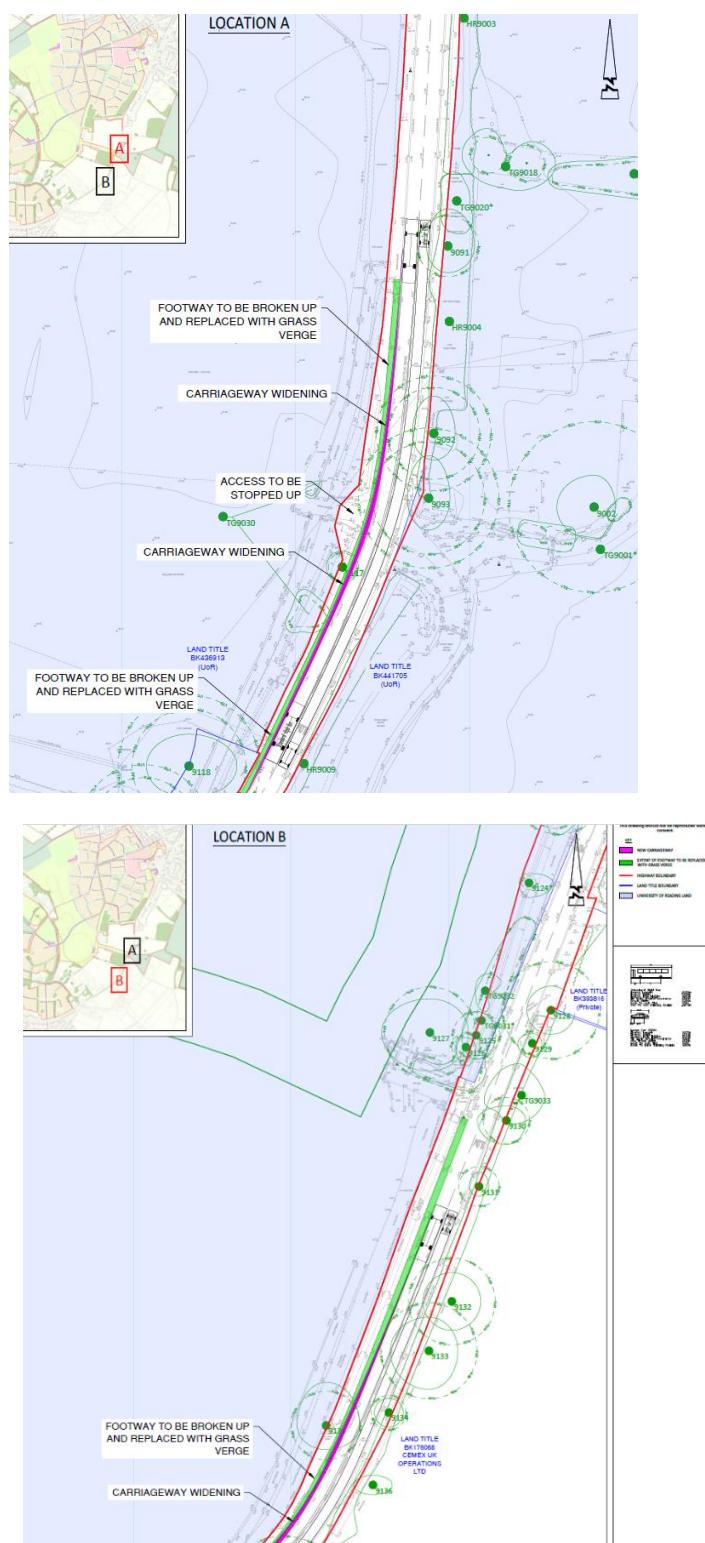


Figure 4: Hyde End Road Carriageway Widening

6.5.30 The works would comprise the provision of additional carriageway along the inside of the two bends which would be achieved by removing the narrow footway which is currently inaccessible to pedestrians due to barriers in place at either end. Importantly, pedestrian movements along the corridor would continue to be accommodated along the parallel path that routes along the western side of Hyde End Road. The works would therefore be accommodated wholly within highway land and would not result in any impacts to the existing vegetation that lies alongside the corridor.

### Traffic Impact

- 6.5.31 Wokingham Borough Council's Strategic Traffic Model (WSTM) is used in order to ensure that the traffic impact of the development proposals is assessed on a common and agreed basis. It has been demonstrated that the proposed site access junctions would operate within capacity with minimal queuing along the approaches during both peak hours. This is the case for both the 2032 and 2038 future year scenarios. It is concluded therefore that the proposed access arrangements can satisfactorily accommodate the traffic generated by the proposed development.
- 6.5.32 It is established that the traffic attributable to the proposed development would not result in any significant impacts to the operation of the highway network in the vicinity of the development.
- 6.5.33 The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in terms of highways and transport matters. The analysis within this Transport Assessment Report has demonstrated that the proposed development accords with the key transport tests as set out in the NPPF.
- 6.5.34 The proposal is therefore in compliance with CS policies CP1, CP3 and CP6; MDD local plan policies CC07; neighbourhood plan policies 4 and 5 and accords with the key transport tests as set out in the NPPF 2024.

## **6.6 Ecology**

- 6.6.1 The application is supported by an Ecological Impact Assessment and Biodiversity Net Gain Report.

### Ecological Appraisal

- 6.6.2 A detailed desktop study was carried out as part of an ecological appraisal. The ecological appraisal recorded no habitats of any intrinsic nature conservation value within the Site boundary although habitats were found to have some suitability to support roosting, foraging and commuting bats, Great Crested Newts, reptiles, Badgers and nesting birds.
- 6.6.3 The desk study did not return any records of dormouse within 2km of the Site. No European Protected Species Licences for Dormice have been granted within 5km of the Site, and no records were returned within 2km of the Site. As a result, Hazel Dormice were not considered further within this EclA. Due to the lack of suitable supporting habitat for Water Vole and Otter within the Site, they were not considered further within the EclA.
- 6.6.4 The Site is within 5km of the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area (SPA) and due its proximity, the Site is in the Zone of Influence for recreation impacts. Therefore, mitigation will be required as Suitable Alternative Greenspace (SANG) and Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) payments.
- 6.6.5 The Site falls within the Zone of Influence for SSSI which will be addressed through the mitigation for Thames Basin Heath SPA. The Site is likely to have an impact on recreational pressure at the five Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) which are located within 5km of the Site.
- 6.6.6 The Site as mentioned above adjoins ancient woodland Tanner's Copse on the eastern boundary of the eastern parcel and High Copse on the western boundary of the western parcel. Since they fall within the Zone of Influence of the Site, mitigation will be put in place to protect the woodland. A fence will be put in place where the current boundary fence is to discourage the public from entering the woodland Tanner's Copse.
- 6.6.7 Non-statutory designated sites such as the Loddon River Local Wildlife Site (LWS) is the closest LWS located 400m east of the Site. Due to the spatial separation between the Site and the River Loddon there will be no impact from the development on the river. All of the Non-Statutory Sites within 2km of the Site are either set up to manage recreational pressure or are located within inaccessible areas, and therefore there are no anticipated impacts as a result of the proposals on the non-statutory sites and therefore were not assessed further in the impact assessment.

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6.6.8 The Site has a variety of habitat types albeit with limited ecological value. The desk study recorded bat species and roosts within 2km of the Site. The habitats on Site including the hedgerows, trees, dense scrub and grassland offer suitable commuting and foraging habitat for bats. The buildings within the Site are in disrepair and are very open and drafty. There were no opportunities for roosting bats present and therefore the buildings were assessed as having negligible potential to support roosting bats. Within the Site there are four trees which have been assessed as being able to support multiple bats. Additionally, on the Site boundary, there is a single tree which has been able to support individual bats. These trees are due to be retained within the development.

6.6.9 The Site supports a low population of Grass Snakes. Reptiles are considered to be of value within the Zone of Influence and the conservation status is unfavourable and stable. Therefore, they are not assessed further in the impact assessment.

6.6.10 The Site does have suitable habitats for foraging Badgers and it is likely that badgers will use the Site infrequently. The Site supports an outlier sett and therefore badgers are known to be present in the area. The Badger population is considered to be of value within the Zone of influence only and the conservation status is favourable and stable. As a result, Badgers are not considered further in the impact assessment.

6.6.11 The proposal is going to avoid ecological impacts as far as possible in the first instance thus reducing the need for extensive mitigation measures. The Impact avoidance measures incorporated in the proposals include:

- 15m buffer from adjoining ancient woodland;
- Hedgerow and treeline buffers; and
- Retention of trees with bat features.

### Site Clearance and Construction Impacts

6.6.12 A CEMP will support the proposal to reduce and mitigate any negative impacts on the Ancient Seminatural Woodland.

6.6.13 The proposals will result in the loss of parts of H2 hedgerow which is located within the eastern parcel along the western edge. To replace this loss, species-rich hedgerows will be planted to replace the loss and there will be no residual negative impacts. The mitigation measures will be covered in the CEMP.

6.6.14 The CEMP will cover accidental disturbance of possible bat roosts in retained buildings and trees. The impacts upon bats from disturbance or damage will result in no residual impacts. Insensitive lighting on the construction site may negatively impact known and potential roosts. Illumination of roosts would result in a temporary negative impact significant at the local level.

### Operational Phase

6.6.15 To avoid the impacts associated with the additional recreation pressure on the SPA, two financial payments will be made in line with the Thames Basin Heaths Special protect Area Delivery Framework. The first financial payment is the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) payment. The second financial payment is a payment to the University of Reading SANG which will be secured through a legal agreement. The above mitigation will lead to no residual negative impacts on the Thames Basin Heaths SPA.

6.6.16 Habitat creation and ongoing positive management, including new species-rich areas of grassland, creation of ponds and SUDS and native tree/scrub planting will increase invertebrate populations at the Site, consequently providing increased prey availability for bats. This has the potential to provide a positive impact, significant at the Zone of Influence level, but only if external site lighting can be sufficiently controlled to enable light levels across the newly created



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habitat areas to be tolerable to bats. A lighting strategy will be developed and implemented to protect nocturnal wildlife such as bats through the operational phase.

6.6.17 It is predicted that impacts on the bat assemblage from artificial lighting would be reduced to being not significant, and the effect of new habitat creation for bats would lead to a permanent positive impact that is significant at the Zone of Influence level only.

### Biodiversity enhancements

6.6.18 Wildlife boxes are to be incorporated to provide shelter, roosting and/or nesting opportunities for local biodiversity. Bird and bat boxes will be provided throughout the Proposed Development. Hedgehog highways will be provided throughout residential gardens within the development. One Hedgehog box will be situated on the Site within a linear feature in a secluded area where they are unlikely to be disturbed.

6.6.19 The proposed development goes above and beyond the measures required to avoid, mitigate the potential impacts described. The enhancement measures are intended to benefit known features of ecological importance present within the Zone of Influence, as well as biodiversity in general and will not have any significant negative residual effects.

### Biodiversity Net Gain

6.6.20 The Metric Calculation Tool submitted with the Application, predicts that the proposals will deliver the following net gains, with all Trading Rules met:

- 4.71 area habitat units, or 19.22%
- 7.20 hedgerow units, or 306.86%
- 0 watercourse units, or 0%.

6.6.21 Significant on-site enhancements will be made on site with a total of 342 trees that will be planted throughout the development. A mixture of grassland seeds, including flowering lawn mixture, long season meadow mixture and wetland meadow mixture will be planted to increase the biodiversity value of the grassland created within the Site. Mixed scrub will be created and retained within the Site.

6.6.22 The Draft Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) will set out the proposed details of how the target habitat types and conditions required to achieve the BNG results reported in Section 3 of the BNG report will be achieved.

6.6.23 Net gains will be delivered on-site through a combination of on-site habitat creation and enhancement, and the purchase of off-site biodiversity credits.

6.6.24 Should planning be granted, full details of the arrangements for the delivery of minimum 10% BNG will be set out in a Biodiversity Gain Plan and final Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan and submitted to Wokingham Borough Council for approval.

6.6.25 It is therefore concluded that the proposals would comply with the minimum requirements for 10% BNG and comply with local plan policies.

## **6.7 Arboriculture**

6.7.1 The application is supported by an Arboricultural Assessment which sets out further details regarding the proposals.

6.7.2 The arboricultural report provides for trees to be placed into one of four quality categories:

- A High quality



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- B Moderate quality
- C Low quality
- U Trees which are unretainable in viable condition, regardless of development

6.7.3 The impact of proposals on existing trees (comprising both individual trees and trees within tree groups) and hedgerows is summarised in Tables 2 and 3 below.

6.7.4 Table 2: *Tree numbers by quality and value categories, after impacts by the proposals*

Grade	Trees before	Trees after	Trees lost	% of tree grade lost	% of tree grade retained
U*	64	45	19	30	70
A	3	3	0	0	100
B	103	101	2	2	98
C	287	274	13	5	95

6.7.5 Table 3: Hedgerow retention and removal by length and percentage, after impacts by the proposals

Total hedgerow length (m)	Retained hedgerow length (m)	Retained hedgerow (%)	Removed Hedgerow length (m)	Removed hedgerow (%)
843	833	98.8	10	1.2

6.7.6 As Table 2 above sets out, tree removals comprise very low percentages of both B and C category specimens (BS5837 moderate low quality and value). No high-quality (A category) trees are identified to be removed. Table 3 informs that a very high percentage of hedgerows are retained and any removal proposed is for proposed pedestrian access routes.

6.7.7 Tree removals to facilitate proposals are shown upon our *Tree Survey and Retention & Removal Plan* project drawing no. 44-1023.02 of the arboricultural report.

6.7.8 Standardised tree protection details for the development phase are provided in the Tree Protection Plan (Outline) drawing ref: 4-1023.03 which includes an Arboricultural Method Statement, Tree Protection Phasing Schedule and an Arboricultural Supervision Schedule.

6.7.9 The Arboricultural Method Statement states that no plant access is permitted for tree work operations within the root protection areas (RPAs) of retention trees, including areas identified for temporary ground protection. All approved tree removals shall be undertaken by tree contractors. Following completion of enabling tree works, each phase will have its full system of physical tree protection measures (barriers and ground protection) installed (i.e. not in piecemeal) in line with the provisions of BS5837:2012.

6.7.10 To the south of Tanners Copse (which is in the Natural England ancient woodland inventory) open space is provided beyond the buffer zone to the south of the woodland, and at the southern end of the woodland's western side. Elsewhere, development adjacent to woodland shown as ancient is proposed up to the 15m buffer zone. The purpose of the buffer zone is to provide a transition area through the creation of proposed new semi-natural habitat.

6.7.11 Therefore, the development complies with MDD local plan policies CC03; SNP Policy 2 and the relevant policies of the NPPF 2024.

## 6.8 Drainage and Flooding

6.8.1 The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment which sets out further details regarding the proposals.

6.8.2 EA flood map for planning shows that the significant majority of the site boundary is located within Flood Zone 1 'Low Probability' of fluvial (or tidal) flooding. The eastern most areas of the Land Ownership boundary are located within Flood Zone 2.

6.8.3 EA Flood Risk from Surface Water mapping pre-2025, shows that majority of the site is at a 'Very Low' (less than 0.1% annual probability) of surface water flooding. There is a flow route with 'Low' (between 1 in 30 and 1 in 1,000 annual probability) along the northern part of the western parcel and within the western parcel.

6.8.4 There is a flow route with a 'High' (greater than 3.3%), 'Medium' (between 3.3% and 1%) and 'Low' (between 1% and 0.1%) risk of surface water flooding along the northern part of the eastern parcel.

6.8.5 It is likely that the EA flow route from the west will be captured by the western watercourse. The flow route in the northern part of the western parcel will follow the location of the Appleton Way watercourse. The flow route in the northern part of the eastern parcel will likely follow the northern watercourse.

6.8.6 The new NaFRA mapping now shows that surface water flooding across the site is greatly reduced and is less extensive. However, in some areas where surface water flooding remains, the risk value has increased. Within the northeast of the eastern parcel, both the flood extent and risk factor has decreased. See below figure 5.

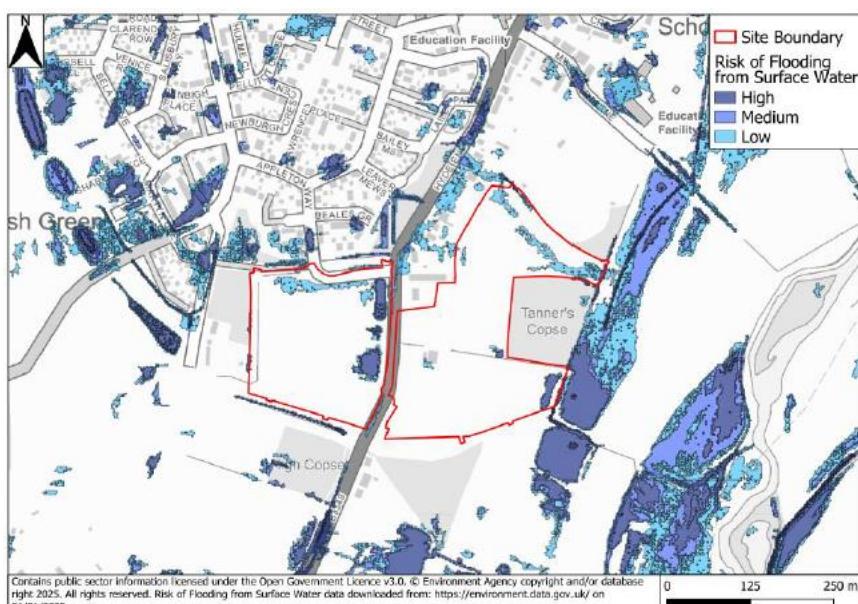


Figure 5: EA Mapping of Surface Water Flooding (from NaFRA data January 28th 2025)

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6.8.7 Abley Letchford has carried out direct rainfall modelling of the catchment, with defined channels to further refine the surface water flooding within the site. The modelling is based on the detailed topographical survey for the site and surrounding area as well as site observations and local catchment knowledge. The detailed modelling report is included within Appendix C of the Flood Risk Assessment.

6.8.8 The risk of groundwater flooding across the majority of the site is therefore considered by the SFRA to be high. The risk of groundwater flooding is likely to be higher in the areas closer to the River Loddon.

6.8.9 The WBC Level 1 SFRA shows that the site is located within a postcode area (RG2 9) with incidents of sewer flooding between 2000 and 2022. This provides evidence of historic sewer flooding and therefore the risk is considered to be medium.

6.8.10 The mapping as shown in Figure 13 of the FRA indicates that the majority of the site is not at risk of flooding in the event of a reservoir breach. However, the eastern edge of the eastern parcel are shown to be potentially impacted by reservoir flooding in the event that reservoir flooding occurs at the same time as fluvial flooding.

6.8.11 The EA Long Term Flooding description states that 'Flooding from reservoirs is unlikely in this area'. Overall, the risk from reservoir flooding is low.

6.8.12 The site is allocated within the WBC Local Plan Update for 175 dwellings. The proposed number of dwellings is slightly above that envisaged in the allocation. This quantum of development carefully considers that this scale of development is appropriate to any constraints of flooding.

6.8.13 The NPPF encourages a 'sequential approach' in master planning for new development: locating the more vulnerable uses of the development in the areas of lowest flood risk from all sources. The sequential test is not required where a site specific flood risk assessment demonstrates that no built development within the site boundary including access, land raising or potentially vulnerable elements would be located on an area that would be at risk of flooding from any source, now and in the future. Through thorough and multiple discussions of where built development would be within the red line boundary of the Site, the final layout ensures that in the areas at risk of flooding there is no built development, access, land raising or potentially vulnerable elements, and all residential development is located within flood zone 1. Therefore, the need to carry out a sequential test was not necessary in accordance with paragraph 175.

6.8.14 Whilst the surface water flood maps indicate some areas within the site to be potentially affected by surface water flooding, further analysis and site observations have confirmed the risk is low or will be managed through the surface water drainage strategy. The parcels for development are therefore within areas of low surface water flood risk.

### Surface water drainage

6.8.15 Based on the Masterplan, the impermeable area of the proposed development is approximately 3.72ha. Furthermore, it is assumed that the areas of the basins will add an additional 100% of their area to the impermeable area calculations.

6.8.16 The watercourses that abut and cross the site naturally splits it into four distinct catchments and these catchments will be maintained in the proposed development.

6.8.17 It is proposed to provide a network of trapped gullies, pipes and Sustainable Drainage (SuDS) features to collect the surface water runoff from impermeable areas such as roads, roofs and driveways. The traditional system will work in combination with such features as permeable paving, roadside swales and filter drains, within the residential parcels and green blue corridors, to filtrate, store and transport water to attenuation basins to provide attenuation storage and high-quality water benefits.

6.8.18 This FRA demonstrates that the proposed development complies with the MDD Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10, policy 8 of the neighbourhood plan and relevant national policies of

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NPPF 2024. The risk of flooding will be adequately managed, and, with the implementation of a suitable surface water drainage strategy, the offsite flood risk is not increased.

### 6.9 Heritage

- 6.9.1 The application is supported by a Cultural Heritage Assessment which sets out further details regarding the proposals.
- 6.9.2 In terms of relevant nationally significant designated heritage assets, no World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Historic Wreck or Historic Battlefield Sites have been identified within the Site, or the vicinity of the Site.
- 6.9.3 No designated or non-designated built heritage assets have been identified as being adversely affected by the proposed development through the alteration of their settings. The proposed development is considered to accord with the provisions of Section 66 of the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act.
- 6.9.4 Based on current evidence this assessment has identified a low to moderate potential for Neolithic and Bronze Age remains; a moderate potential for Iron Age and Roman remains and low potential for all other periods.
- 6.9.5 Any surviving archaeological remains are likely to be encountered at a relatively shallow depth below topsoil and subsoil horizons. Previous agricultural activity across the Site is also likely to have had a widespread but moderate impact on any archaeological remains present. The development proposals, which will require new foundations, service runs, and possible landscaping, are therefore, likely to have a significant adverse impact on any surviving archaeological remains.
- 6.9.6 Given the Site's archaeological potential, and with consideration of the likely significance of any surviving archaeological assets within the Site, it is likely that an archaeological evaluation to fully assess the Site might be required. Considering the results of the previous evaluation, such investigations are likely to be focused on the western land parcel, and the northern field of the eastern land parcel. As remains of a high significance that might preclude development are not anticipated, it is considered that any further archaeological work could be secured by attaching an appropriately worded planning condition to the granting of planning consent.
- 6.9.7 The proposed development therefore complies with CS policy CP3 and relevant polices of the NPPF 2024.

### 6.10 Noise

- 6.10.1 The application is supported by a Noise Assessment which sets out further details regarding the proposals.
- 6.10.2 A noise survey has been undertaken at the site to quantify the prevailing noise climate. From this data, a 3D noise model of the site has been prepared to allow for a detailed appraisal of site conditions.
- 6.10.3 A noise mitigation strategy has been developed to ensure suitable noise conditions for future residents, taking into account noise effects relating to building overheating control measures where appropriate.
- 6.10.4 For the entirety of the site, standard thermal double glazing will be sufficient to suitably control noise to the proposed dwellings and openable windows will be sufficient to control overheating effects for a large proportion of the site (in combination with the proposed ventilation strategy).
- 6.10.5 Noise levels in external amenity areas are expected to meet the aspirational noise target agreed with the local authority, taking into account localised 1.8 m tall acoustic screening to a small number of gardens as per the proposed development layout.



6.10.6 Noise emissions from Air Source Heat Pumps are deemed to be suitably controlled to nearby receptors if the unit(s) in question are installed in line with the requirements of the relevant Permitted Development Rights. A suitably worded planning condition could be applied to the scheme to control noise from any ASHPs to be installed on the proposed development site, where these are not covered under PDRs.

6.10.7 It has been demonstrated that it will be entirely possible to ensure a suitable noise climate internally and externally for future residents of the proposed development. Therefore, the development proposed will be in compliance with MDD local plan policy CC06 and relevant policies of the NPPF 2024.

### 6.11 Lighting

6.11.1 The application is supported by a Lighting Assessment which sets out further details regarding the proposals.

6.11.2 The area to the North and West of the proposed development is built up consisting of residential dwellings. To the South and East lie agricultural fields. All the primary, secondary and tertiary roads are currently lit by systems of street lighting which are owned and maintained by the local council. Sensitive receptors to light are surrounding residential properties and local wildlife.

6.11.3 To minimise environmental impacts, hedgerows and watercourses (both small and large) should not be lit unless necessary. Where lighting is unavoidable, it should be designed according to the following key prescriptions:

- Identify key points in the landscape where artificial light at night disrupts spatial connectivity of dark areas and reduce or remove lighting in these areas if possible.
- Maintain and create unlit 'dark corridors' between habitat patches where possible.
- Avoid use of, and remove where possible, luminaires that waste light by emitting vertically or horizontally – ensure that lighting is designed with minimum spill and is downward facing and directional and that retained hedges and watercourses are not lit.
- Reduce as much as possible the intensities of light emitted from luminaires.
- Avoid use of white and blue light wherever possible. The broader the spectrum of light that a lamp produces the wider the range of organisms it is likely to affect.
- LEDs should generate a colour temperature between 2700K (kelvin) and 3000K. In coordination with the Highway Authority.
- Avoid use of lamps that emit in the ultraviolet (UV) range. UV light is not seen by human's but many animals see UV and it may disrupt their natural behaviour.

6.11.4 The above criteria seeks to ensure that the lighting is not outside of the obtrusive light limits for the Environmental Zone in which the Site is located, is sensitive to the area, and provides a recognised standard level of lighting for all adoptable areas requiring illumination.

6.11.5 The principle of the lighting design shall be sympathetic to the sensitive receptors identified. The Environmental Zone for the site and immediate surrounding is considered to be E2: Rural, sparsely inhabited rural areas, village or relatively dark outer suburban locations (ILP Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light - GN01:2021).

6.11.6 The exterior lighting outlined in the lighting strategy shall comply with the requirements for an E2 Environmental Zone as per BS 5489-1:2020 unless otherwise agreed with the Highway Authority.

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- 6.11.7 To ensure that the potential for obtrusive light is minimised, it is necessary to restrict the mounting heights of the luminaires, tilt angle, colour temperature and lumen output of exterior light sources to those specified in Section 5 of the Noise Assessment.
- 6.11.8 Compliance with the lighting strategy will allow a safe and sensitive level of light for way finding and guidance at night, whilst limiting obtrusive light to a negligible level and in compliance with ILP GN01:2021 and GN08:2023, which seeks to reduce light spill onto sensitive boundaries.
- 6.11.9 It is anticipated that monitoring of the modelled light levels would be completed post installation to verify that the light levels and technical parameters are compliant with the lighting strategy, British Standards and Guidance.
- 6.11.10 The lighting design will accord with the criteria set out in the lighting strategy as well as other relevant guidance. Therefore, the existing illumination levels will not be affected.
- 6.11.11 The proposed development will therefore be in compliance with the relevant policies of the NPPF 2024.

## 6.12 Utilities

- 6.12.1 The application is supported by a Utilities Assessment which sets out further details regarding the proposals.
- 6.12.2 The Site has existing apparatus within the boundary of the development that will constrain the Detailed Site Layout, or require diversions. This has been allowed for in the current scheme.
- 6.12.3 Any overhead cables will be diverted and/or undergrounded where possible and be located within road or green corridors throughout the site.
- 6.12.4 The formation of the vehicular accesses onto Hyde End Road and Appleton Way will consider the existing apparatus that is present.
- 6.12.5 Any localised lowering that might be required as part of the proposed accesses into the site is dependent on the depth of apparatus in conjunction with the construction depth of highway works, and hence can only be fully confirmed when the layouts are fully progressed at the detailed design stage.
- 6.12.6 Any overhead cables will be diverted and/or undergrounded where possible and be located within road or green corridors throughout the site.
- 6.12.7 An investigation of the utility apparatus located within the vicinity of the site indicates that servicing the proposed development in respect of the various service utilities should be relatively straightforward given the presence of the various apparatus.
- 6.12.8 Sufficient capacity is or can be made available in order to serve the proposals and this can be completed in a timely manner in conjunction with any development phasing.
- 6.12.9 The development will therefore be compliance with the relevant policies of the NPPF 2024.

## 6.13 Economics Benefits Statement

- 6.13.1 The application is supported by an Economic Benefits Statement which sets out further details regarding the proposals.
- 6.13.2 The development is estimated could support approximately 84 direct construction jobs over the estimated 45-month construction period. This will consist of a mix of design, management and construction operative roles.

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- 6.13.3 Based on a regional average Gross Value Added (GVA) per construction worker of around £55,500 per annum across the region (Oxford Economics, January 2024), the 84 direct construction jobs could generate GVA of approximately £18.7m over the construction period.
- 6.13.4 The development could support a further 34 indirect jobs. Based on a national average GVA per worker of around £54,400 per annum across all industries (because the indirect jobs could be nationwide across different industries) (Oxford Economics, January 2024), the 34 indirect construction jobs could generate GVA of approximately £7.3m per annum.
- 6.13.5 A proportion of the Development's future residents will be economically active and in employment. It is assumed, based on the proportion of WBC's population who are currently economically active (47%), that the development could accommodate 201 economically active residents, of whom 194 are likely to be in employment (on the basis that 45% of WBC residents are in employment).
- 6.13.6 Utilising a GVA per worker figure of around £75,300 per annum, it is estimated that those residents in employment could generate around £32.2m of economic output (GVA) per annum, contributing to the success of the local and wider economy.
- 6.13.7 The development's staff and residents will contribute to the local economy through spend in local shops, other local community facilities and throughout the supply chain.
- 6.13.8 The development's provision of 183 dwellings will generate an annual convenience goods expenditure of £1.3m; comparison goods expenditure of £2.1m; and expenditure on leisure goods and services of £2.6m. This emphasises the positive contribution the development could have on local businesses.
- 6.13.9 Based on the average of Council Tax bands (groups A and H) for 2023/2024, relating specifically to WBC, the Development's 183 homes could generate around £500,000 in council tax payments per annum.

## 6.14 Minerals Assessment

- 6.14.1 The application is supported by a Minerals Assessment which sets out further details regarding the proposals.
- 6.14.2 The Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals & Waste Plan designates the area within which the study site lies as a Mineral Safeguarding Area and an Area of Search for Sand and Gravel.
- 6.14.3 Study of historical borehole records in the vicinity of the site indicates that the sand and gravel strata of the River Terrace Deposits are relatively thin and are likely to contain elevated levels of fines (clays and silts). For these reasons it is unlikely that this geological formation would be economically viable to extract and is thus not a viable mineral resource.
- 6.14.4 Other reasons of practicality associated with the site, including shallow groundwater also make mineral extraction unviable on economic grounds. The required standoff/buffer zones around the watercourses that border and locally cross the site, and around the site edges which border roads and watercourses would significantly reduce the workable area and extractable mineral volume.
- 6.14.5 With regard to Policy M2: Safeguarding sand and gravel resources, part 3a, the study has identified that whilst the proposed development is likely to sterilise a potential mineral resource at the site, the sand and gravel mineral would be very unlikely to be either practical to extract or of economic value because of its limited extent and the identified constraints.
- 6.14.6 The development of the study site would sterilise off site minerals in the land surrounding the study site. However, the surrounding land within 100m of the site suffers from the same constraints to extraction as the study site and therefore it would be impractical and uneconomic for these areas to be quarried for sand and gravel.

6.14.7 The development is therefore in compliance with the Joint Central and East Berkshire Minerals and Waste Plan policy M2 and relevant policies of the NPPF 2024.

### 6.15 Ground Conditions

6.15.1 The application is supported by a Ground Conditions Assessment which sets out further details regarding the proposals.

6.15.2 The desk study has shown the subject site to comprise agricultural fields and copse/woodland from the earliest mapping period. Buildings (assumed to be agricultural), two wells and a pond were indicated c.1898 within the central portion of the site. Two of the original residential buildings were replaced with two new properties centrally c.1976 whilst the pond and wells were no longer indicated c.1968.

6.15.3 The surrounding area originally formed copse, fields and a farm c.1872. Between 1909 to present, residential development took place to the north and north-west. High Copse Farm was indicated to the west c.1968 along with allotments and recreation ground to the north. A gravel pit was mapped c.450m north on mapping from c. 1898 but was no longer mapped from c. 1969 and appeared to have been developed. A piggery was indicated to the north-west c.1983 but was later developed for residential use.

6.15.4 The site walkover identified overhead power lines within the southern portion of the western most field, running roughly east-west. Although it was not possible to access the farm buildings at the time of the site walkover, it was noted that these buildings may contain asbestos based on the structures observed.

6.15.5 A moderate/low risk has been assigned in relation to on-site shallow soils and end users, on-site infilled pond and end users. Further assessment is recommended to progress characterisation of the contamination status of the site to inform an update of the conceptual site model and allow a robust assessment of the risk to human health, controlled waters and the environment. It is possible that conventional foundations would be suitable for parts of the proposed development, although any design should account for the potential presence of shrinkable soils on site, as well instability of excavations in granular soils, in particular if shallow groundwater is encountered and for the presence of trees on site and/or desiccation of the shallow soils.

6.15.6 It may be necessary to undertake remediation/risk mitigation measures on this site to break pollutant linkages and thus protect key receptors such as human health, controlled waters, built environment, soft landscaping and the like. The requirement and extent of any such remediation cannot be determined until such time as an intrusive investigation and associated testing has been completed.

## 7 Conclusion

7.1.1 This planning statement is submitted in support of a full planning application at Land east and west of Hyde End Road, Shinfield for:

*“Full application for the proposed erection of 183 no. dwellings (C3 Use Class) together with associated landscaping, drainage infrastructure, hard and soft landscaping, parking, access and associated works.”*

7.1.2 The Site is proposed for allocation within the draft Local Plan in Policy SS14 to deliver new homes. The Site benefits from the delivery of wider infrastructure as part of housing schemes in the locality, including Shinfield Meadows immediately to the north of the site. Furthermore, infrastructure coming forward to support housing in this location already exists.

7.1.3 The development will be influenced by the evolving green infrastructure network, including the Langley Mead Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and provide pedestrian access links to the existing SANG suite. It will provide for attenuation basin and design will be led with a green infrastructure perspective including SUDs and amenity open space as play area.

7.1.4 The development will follow the Development Guidelines in appendix E of Wokingham's Borough Local Plan Update 2023 – 2040 (Proposed Submission Plan). It will include vehicle access from Hyde End Road; provide connectivity to the adjacent new development; provide connectivity to areas of open space within the site and the surrounding area including the new park Langley Mead; sensitivity of new development to the areas of adjacent ancient woodland; development within Flood Zone 1 and avoid areas potentially susceptible to reservoir flooding; surface water corridors within the western and eastern parcels of the site that are left free of development; desk based archaeological impact assessment to better understand the archaeological potential of the site.

7.1.5 Overall, the proposed development reflects WBC's aspirations for the future of the Site and is consistent with the adopted Development Plan. The proposal is also consistent with the Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan, including Policy 1 which supports development adjoining the settlement where benefits outweigh adverse impacts, which is the case with this proposal. Indeed, the development will provide much needed housing for Wokingham Borough and contribute to the delivery of a site that is proposed to be allocated for residential development in WBC's emerging Local Plan. In accordance with Footnote 8 of the NPPF, the absence of a 5 year supply of housing means that the Local Plan is out of date and Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is therefore engaged and the tilted balance applied. There are no policies that protect areas or assets of particular importance that provide a strong reason for refusing the development proposed.

7.1.6 Moreover, there are no adverse impacts of the development that would significantly or demonstrably outweigh the range of social, economic and environmental benefits that the development would deliver. The following outlines the key social, economic, and environmental benefits of the development:

7.1.7 Environmental

- Sustainable New Buildings:** The development includes the construction of sustainable buildings.
- New Public Open Space and Landscaping:** The development provides new public open spaces and landscaping, including a new play space.
- Biodiversity Net Gain:** The project aims to enhance biodiversity and will achieve a Biodiversity Net Gain of 4.71 area habitat units, or 19.22% and 7.20 hedgerow units, or 306.86%

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- **Positive Contribution to Sustainable Development:** Overall, the development supports the environmental aspect of sustainable development by incorporating mitigation measures to reduce or avoid adverse impacts.

- **Accessibility:** Improved connections to local amenities, including SANG.

### 7.1.8 Economic

- **Contribution to housing delivery**, thereby supporting additional households in the Borough and consequential benefits for the local economy.

- **Provision of construction jobs.**

- **Provision of Infrastructure contributions as necessary to support the development.**

### 7.1.9 Social

- **Housing:** Provision of high-quality market housing, contribution towards the current housing land supply shortfall.

- **Provision of affordable housing**, consistent with policy and in a sustainable location.

- **Public Realm:** Enhanced public realm for community use.

- Improved access to schools and retail for existing and new residents.

7.1.10 This Statement demonstrates that the proposed development is an acceptable form of development within this location which meets the requirements of National Planning Policy Framework, Wokingham Borough Council Development Plan, as well as taking into account other relevant material considerations. In accordance with NPPF, the development should be approved without delay.



## **Planning Statement**



Project Number: 333101349