

Statement of Community Engagement

Land at Ducks Nest Farm, Arborfield

April 2025

Turley

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Engagement (SCE) has been prepared by Turley on behalf of David Wilson Homes (the Applicant).
- 1.2 This SCE forms part of a hybrid planning application for the development of up to 135 dwellings and associated infrastructure, public space and a detailed application for the provision Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) at land at Ducks Nest, south of Arborfield.
- 1.3 Further details are provided in the accompanying technical reports submitted as part of the planning application. This SCE should be read alongside these other technical documents.

Consultation overview

- 1.4 Engagement was undertaken in 2022 on a previous iteration of the scheme which was greater in size and scale – proposing a total of up to 210 new homes.
- 1.5 The current scheme is similar in character and lesser in size and scale within a close time period, and therefore no further engagement was undertaken. The report reflects engagement undertaken on the previous iteration, in 2022.
- 1.6 The engagement undertaken has enabled the project team to build an understanding of the local context, along with raising awareness and gathering feedback on the outline proposals.
- 1.7 To ensure all groups had the opportunity to view and comment on the plans a number of engagement methods were used. Engagement activities included pre-application awareness raising with key stakeholders and community representatives; distribution of a leaflet; hosting a project website; holding a live webinar and holding a site neighbour meeting.
- 1.8 The pre-application consultation period took place between 30 May and 27 June 2022 – with the feedback period being extended from 20 June 2022 for an additional seven days.
- 1.9 Since launching on 30 May 2022, the consultation website has received a total of 1,034 page views by 471 unique users.
- 1.10 A total of 31 forms of feedback have been received via email, digital feedback forms via the website, and questions asked / comments shared during the live webinar – along with feedback received during a site neighbour meeting that was held following a resident request.
- 1.11 All of the feedback received as part of the consultation has been considered during the evolution of the plans. As such, a number of design changes have been made which are summarised below:

- Reduced Net Drainage Area to accommodate all of surface water flood zone
- Movement of drainage basins to accommodate swales and basins and existing hedges on the boundaries
- Storey heights – up to 2.5 storeys

1.12 In summary, the Applicant considers that the pre-application engagement undertaken with the local community and stakeholders has been timely, meaningful and effective.

2. Policy Context

- 2.1 The Applicant recognises that National Planning Policy places an emphasis on community involvement as an important part of the planning application process. To ensure the approach taken in the pre-application stages of this application is consistent with national and local guidelines; relevant policy was reviewed in full.
- 2.2 The Government's policy on community involvement is set out in a number of statutory and non-statutory documents, including the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004). Wokingham Borough Council provides guidance on pre-application consultation in their Statement of Community Involvement (2024).

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- 2.3 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) ("the Framework") sets out that the planning system should be a collective enterprise with the purpose of helping deliver sustainable development.
- 2.4 Paragraph 40 specifically promotes early pre-application engagement and the frontloading of consultation and explains that applications that can demonstrate effective pre-application engagement should be favoured over those that cannot. The purpose is to better coordinate public and private resources and help identify issues that can be resolved at the pre-application stage. In addition, paragraph 42 states that as a result, the outcomes for the community are improved and the planning system is able to function more effectively and efficiently.
- 2.5 As set out in this Statement, comprehensive community engagement has taken place prior to the submission of the planning application, in full accordance with guidance set out within the Framework.

Wokingham Borough Council Statement of Community Involvement (2024)

- 2.6 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires Local Planning Authorities to produce policy documents, called Statements of Community Involvement. Wokingham Borough Council sets out its expectations for pre-application engagement in their Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) 2024 document¹.
- 2.7 The SCI encourages landowners and developers to *"engage early so that the views of residents and other stakeholders can be taken into account"*.
- 2.8 The project team have fully reviewed both national and local guidelines on pre-application engagement before creating a bespoke engagement strategy as detailed in Chapter 3.

¹<https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/sites/wokingham/files/2024-03/Statement%20of%20Community%20Involvement%202024.pdf>

3. Stakeholder and Community Engagement

Stakeholder engagement

- 3.1 A number of stakeholders were identified early on in the process as being key in the development of the proposals including Councillor Gary Cowan, Arborfield ward member, and Arborfield & Newland Parish Council.
- 3.2 The proposals were introduced to these stakeholders via email, which was sent on 12 May 2022, along with an invitation to a briefing with the team to discuss proposals. A follow up telephone conversation was held with Arborfield & Newland Parish Council clerk on 13 June 2022.
- 3.3 Whilst no key stakeholders accepted the offer of a briefing, project updates were shared with them through the pre-application consultation process.

Community engagement

- 3.4 Engaging with the community was focused on the distribution of a leaflet, hosting a project website, hosting a live webinar and a meeting with site neighbours. Further details on these activities are summarised below.
- 3.5 The pre-application consultation period was held between 30 May and 27 June 2022 - with the feedback period being extended from 20 June 2022 for an additional seven days.

Project website

- 3.6 A project website was launched at www.arborfieldconsultation.co.uk on 30 May 2022.
- 3.7 The website included:
 - An introduction to David Wilson Homes
 - Detailed proposals, including an illustrative layout plan
 - Details of the webinar event
 - Feedback facility, including alternative contact methods (Freephone telephone number and email address)
- 3.8 To date, the website has had 1,034 page views by 471 unique users.
- 3.9 Screenshots of the website are included at **Appendix 1**.

Consultation leaflet

- 3.10 A leaflet was sent to residents on 30 May 2022 to introduce the Applicant, summarise proposals and invite residents to register to attend the live webinar.
- 3.11 The leaflet also directed individuals to the consultation website or to use alternative contact methods to provide feedback or register for the webinar.

- 3.12 Leaflets were sent to 1305 addresses. The distribution area can be seen in **Figure 3.1** below.
- 3.13 A copy of the leaflet is included at **Appendix 2**.

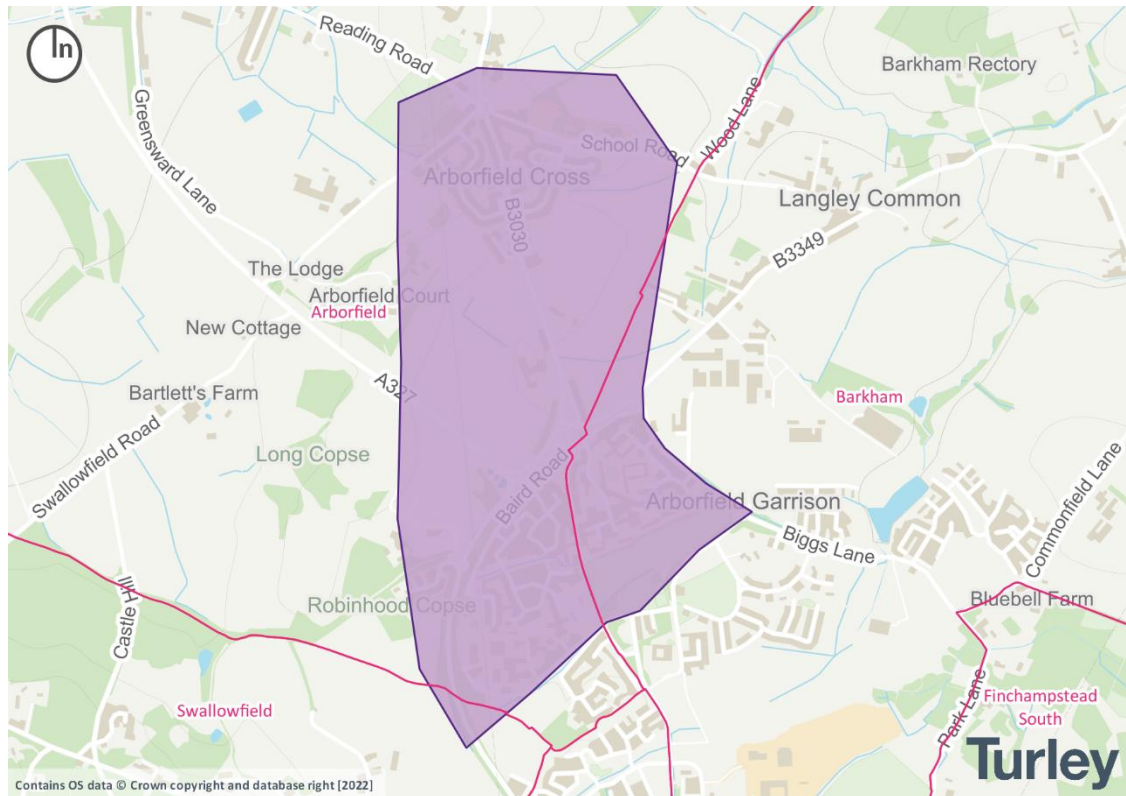


Figure 3.1 – Leaflet distribution area

Live webinar

- 3.14 A live webinar was held on Tuesday 14 June 2022 between 6 – 7pm, where the technical project team presented the proposals and responded to questions.
- 3.15 There was also the opportunity for attendees to join breakout room discussions with members of the project team to ask any further questions or share their feedback. No attendees chose to join the breakout room discussions.
- 3.16 A copy of the presentation is included at **Appendix 3**.
- 3.17 A total of 20 people registered to attend the webinar, with 14 attending, and 12 questions were asked during the event. The questions and comments made during the webinar have been included in Chapter 4.

Site neighbour meeting

- 3.18 A meeting was held with three residents who neighbour the site on Zoom on 20 June 2022 to discuss the proposals following a resident request.

- 3.19 Members of the technical project team were in attendance to present the proposals, respond to any questions and listen to feedback.
- 3.20 The presentation used for the meeting is included at **Appendix 3**.
- 3.21 The questions asked and feedback shared has been included in Chapter 4.

4. Consultation Feedback and Applicant Response

- 4.1 Feedback has been received via the project website, email, telephone and during the live webinar. All the feedback has been reviewed and analysed by the project team.
- 4.2 To date, 31 forms of feedback have been received, including 14 webinar questions, 13 website feedback forms, three emails and one meeting with site neighbours.
- 4.3 A summary of the feedback received has been outlined by theme below along with the Applicant's response to this.

Table 4.1 – Summary of feedback

Theme	Summary of feedback	Applicant's response
Access	It was questioned whether an exit off the new bypass road could be used as an alternative point of vehicular access rather than a fifth exit from the roundabout. Respondents were concerned that a new point of access onto the roundabout could impact on local congestion. One respondent noted that the local authority is undertaking important highways works locally during July / August.	The main point of access to the site will be from the Eversley Road roundabout, which will be converted to a five-arm junction. A second vehicular access will be provided from Observer Way. This will serve the proposed SANG and approximately 50 residential dwellings. The designs of the vehicular access points accord with best practice design guidance. They have been subject to independent road safety audits and have been shown to operate within capacity. In this regard, they accord with the guiding principles of the NPPF. It is also pertinent to note that the works are contained within land that is controlled by the applicant and/or the adopted highway. In this regard, it is feasible for these to be delivered via a Section 278 Agreement with WBC, which allows changes to be made to the local highway network.

Affordable homes	It was questioned whether the 40% affordable provision was too high for the development.	Approximately 210 new homes are proposed, with 40% being affordable, including a mixture of housing types and tenures to meet a variety of local needs at all stages of life. The amount of affordable housing proposed is in line with policy requirements.
Coalescence	There was a concern that the proposals could lead to the coalescence of Arborfield Cross and Arborfield Garrison.	The proposals have been designed to create a garden neighbourhood, including a rich variety of open spaces to promote healthy living and biodiversity. The masterplan has been sensitively designed to take the setting and the surrounding landscape of the site into account and includes green corridors and open spaces along with retained and enhanced boundaries. Importantly the scheme has been designed to provide both a physical, and a perceptual, gap between Arborfield Cross and the proposals, ensuring that as people travel through the landscape (by road or public right of way) there is a sense of separation between the two.
Congestion	Respondents noted the existing congestion on the roundabout on Eversley Road. It was suggested that the development could lead to pressure on local roads, including the southern end of Observer Way.	A Transport Assessment has been undertaken and has been submitted as part of the planning application. The analysis undertaken to date demonstrates that the impact of the proposals on additional traffic would be minor.
Consultation	One respondent questioned how many attendees had joined the live webinar and Q&A event. One respondent questioned whether a further public meeting would be held for the community.	20 attendees registered to attend the webinar event, with 14 joining the event. The webinar formed one part of the pre-application consultation which also included feedback channels such as a dedicated email address, digital feedback form on the project website and a Freephone telephone number. The project website included Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) which were updated throughout the pre-application consultation period to respond to the questions asked.

Design	It was questioned whether any of the homes on the site would be proposed as three storeys.	The proposals have been designed to complement their setting and surroundings – with all homes being designed to a maximum of 2 ½ storeys.
Drainage	It was questioned whether the drainage had been designed to accommodate storm conditions.	The site is within Flood Zone 1, which has the lowest risk of flooding. Flood Risk Assessments and an Outline Drainage Strategy has been submitted with the application. The outline plans include SUDs (Sustainable Urban Drainage systems) to manage drainage within the site, which are likely to be in the form of swales and attenuation basins.
Ecology	Respondents were concerned that the development could impact on existing ecology and species including deer. It was noted that there was existing wildlife on the site and respondents were interested to know what assessments would be undertaken to inform the planning application. It was queried whether hedgehog highways would be incorporated into the development.	The site consists of a range of modified grassland and other neutral grassland fields bounded by hedgerows, lines of trees, mixed and bramble scrub and some small woodland stands. Surveys for protected species have been undertaken. The results of these surveys have been used to inform the final design, which includes measures to avoid any potential impacts and any mitigation measures required. Further detail is included in supporting planning application documents.
Existing homes	Respondents were concerned that the development could impact on existing house prices in the local area.	This matter is subject to external factors such as the housing market.
Groundworks	It was questioned whether any groundworks assessments had been undertaken to assess subsidence.	Assessments have been undertaken to consider the ground conditions. This, along with the other technical assessments, have informed the evolution of the masterplan.
Housing need	It was questioned whether research had been done to assess housing needs. Respondents felt that there was not currently a local need for new homes in Arborfield.	There is a housing need in Wokingham Borough, as set out in the Local Plan, with the delivery of new homes not meeting demand. Sustainable sites such as this will need to come forwards for residential development to meet these housing needs. Further

	One respondent felt that there were currently empty homes in the Arborfield Green development and questioned if there would be a demand for new homes on the proposed site.	detail is included in the Planning Statement which has been submitted as part of the planning application.
Landscaping	It was questioned whether the planting at existing boundaries would be retained.	Existing planting will be retained where possible, along with new planting to enhance the biodiversity of the site. Further detail regarding the landscape strategy can be seen in the supporting planning application documents.
Local infrastructure	It was suggested that the infrastructure serving the local area was already over capacity as a result of the recent Arborfield Garrison development. It was noted that the existing Co-op did not meet the needs of the local community. One respondent noted that the planned community centre in the new Arborfield Green development included an agreement to provide a doctors and dentists. It was felt that legal contributions from consented developments in Arborfield had not yet been felt locally and they were keen to see local benefits delivered.	The site has been designed to create a 20-minute neighbourhood for future residents, ensuring accessibility to existing local services and facilities by sustainable by foot, bike and bus. Subject to planning permission, a number of financial contributions would be agreed towards local services and facilities through Community Infrastructure Levy and agreeing a Section 106 Agreement.
Neighbourhood Plan	It was questioned whether the proposals had taken the Arborfield Neighbourhood Plan into account.	The Applicant is aware of local planning policies including the Arborfield Neighbourhood Plan. Further detail on planning matters is included in the supporting Planning Statement.
Open space	The management plans for the open space on the site were questioned, with one respondent interested in knowing whether there would be a service charge for new residents.	Subject to planning permission, a management plan would be agreed for the areas of open space which could be provided by a management company. This could result in a service charge for future residents and the details of this would depend on the level of maintenance required.

		It is proposed that the SANG would be managed by the Lands' Trust, and that area would not incur any service charge to new residents. This is subject to further discussions with the Lands' Trust.
Planning history	It was questioned whether the Applicant was aware that a planning application had been refused for a single new build to the north of the site. One respondent noted that the site had previously been promoted as part of the Local Plan process but was not allocated for development.	The planning history and context for the site has been assessed by the Applicant and further details are included in the Planning Statement which has been submitted as part of the application.
Planning process	One respondent was interested to know what would be fixed at this stage in the planning process.	The outline application would determine parameters for the site, such as where development zones might be. Further details would be fixed by reserved matters planning application(s) subject to outline planning permission.
Programme	Respondents were interested to know when a planning application was likely to be submitted, along with when the Applicant would expect a decision on the application. The likely timescales for the first property being available for purchase was questioned.	The Applicant submitted an outline planning application in August and would expect a decision in late 2022. Subject to outline planning approval, a reserved matters application(s) would have to be submitted and approved prior to the construction process. Subject to planning permissions being granted, it's likely that homes would be available in 18-24 months.
SANG	One respondent was interested to know whether the SANG was included both to the east and the west of the bridge.	Both sides of the relief road will be used for SANG. The development has followed the design and technical guidance for a SANG and will connect with the rest of the landscape proposals for the wider site, featuring broad green corridors to support habitat movement and foster biodiversity.

Site location	Respondents questioned whether the site was in the Green Belt. It was noted that other areas in Wokingham could be developed before this site.	The site is located to the south of Arborfield Cross, to the west of Eversley Road down to Reading Road. Whilst the site sits outside the current settlement boundary, it is not within the Green Belt.
Sustainability	One respondent was interested to know what was meant by a '20 minute neighbourhood' and how this would be incorporated into the plans.	The plans have been guided by sustainable and active travel to create a 20-minute neighbourhood to ensure local services and facilities are accessible and can be reached within 20 minutes by foot, bike and bus for future residents.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The Applicant has undertaken a comprehensive strategy for pre-application consultation with key stakeholders and the local community. This engagement has enabled the project team to build an understanding of the local context and raise awareness of the proposals.
- 5.2 The Applicant has engaged with the community through a range of methods and techniques including distribution of consultation leaflet, hosting a project website and a live webinar event, along with a site neighbour meeting.
- 5.3 All of the feedback received as part of the consultation has been considered during the evolution of the plans. As such, a number of design changes have been made which are summarised below:
- Reducing the number of proposed new homes to 135 from 210
 - Reduced Net Drainage Area to accommodate all of surface water flood zone
 - Movement of drainage basins to accommodate swales and basins and existing hedges on the boundaries
 - Storey heights – up to 2.5 storeys
- 5.4 In summary, the Applicant considers that the pre-application engagement undertaken with the local community and stakeholders has been timely, meaningful and effective.

Appendix 1: Website



Illustrative sketch of the Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) beside a play area

Our proposals

Our vision has evolved to take technical assessments into account with the ambition of creating a new neighbourhood that is set within sensitively designed areas of natural, open space and community uses for both existing and future residents to enjoy.

The proposals are summarised below and illustrated in the masterplan on this page.

New homes

Around 275 new homes are proposed, with 40% being affordable, including a mixture of housing types and tenures to meet a variety of local needs at all stages of life.

Access and movement

The plans have been guided by sustainable and active travel to create a 20-minute neighbourhood to ensure local services and facilities are accessible by foot and bike for future residents.

Vehicular access to the site is proposed via two new junctions, including:

- The conversion of the four-arm roundabout (serving the Arborfield Garrison SDL) into a larger five arm roundabout
- A priority controlled junction on to Observer Way to provide access to the SANG car park and homes to the west of the site

Car parking provision is included for those visiting the hill-top nature park and SANG, along with resident and visitor parking in line with policy requirements for the residential element of the development.

Natural and green open spaces

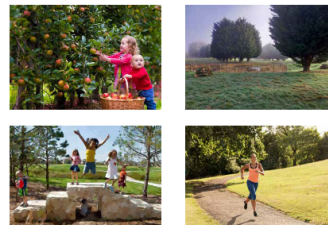
The proposals have been designed to create a garden neighbourhood, including a rich variety of open spaces to promote healthy living and biodiversity. The masterplan includes over 23 hectares of public open space, which makes up around two thirds of the overall site, and includes:

- A Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), including a **hill-top nature park**, which would protect existing and sensitive local ecology by providing the community with an alternative destination to the Thames Basin Health Special Protected Area
- **Natural walking routes** through the site that also provide links to existing local routes and nearby open spaces to promote active travel and healthy lifestyles
- **Play areas** for a variety of ages both for new and existing communities
- **Sustainable Urban Drainage** to manage water run-off along with providing new habitats to create ecological value

The imagery included shows how the natural open spaces could look and be used by the community.



Illustrative Framework Masterplan - click to enlarge



Precedent imagery to show how the SANG and open spaces could be used

Frequently Asked Questions

[Proposal details](#)[+ / -](#)[Highways](#)[+ / -](#)[Services and facilities](#)[+ / -](#)[Technical considerations](#)[+ / -](#)[Planning process and next steps](#)[+ / -](#)

New Neighbourhood at Ducks Nest, Arborfield

[Home](#)[Our proposals](#)[Have your say](#)

Illustrative sketch of the Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG)

New Neighbourhood at Ducks Nest, Arborfield

We are bringing forward outline plans for around 275 homes and significant areas of public green spaces, which would make up around two thirds of the site, featuring play areas and a hilltop nature park along the ridgeline.

This website provides you with the details of **our proposals**, answers to **frequently asked questions** and invites you to **share your feedback** with us.

How can I find out more?

We will be holding a live webinar event at **6pm on 14th June 2022** where we will be presenting our vision, seeking your feedback, and answering any questions you may have. Following the webinar, at **7pm**, there will also be the opportunity to join break-out rooms for further conversations with members of the project team.

Click below to register to attend the webinar and break-out room discussions.

[Register for webinar](#)

About David Wilson Homes

We are part of Barratt Developments PLC. The company is the nation's largest house builder, who aims to build the highest quality homes by putting future residents and communities at the heart of everything they do.

For more information visit www.dwh.co.uk.



Have your say

We are keen to hear your feedback on our proposals and any comments received will be considered before we finalise our application.

We would be grateful if you could complete the feedback form below by **20th June 2022**. Alternatively, you can contact us using the details below.

Register to attend the live webinar event and break-out room discussions [here](#), which will be held from **6pm on 14th June**.

[Register for webinar](#)

Call 0808 168 8296 and a member of the project team will call you back or email contact@arborfieldconsultation.co.uk

Let us know your thoughts on the proposals

Type here...

Name *

First Name

Last Name

Email

example@example.com

Telephone

Data statement: The information you provide will be used only for the purposes of keeping you informed about this project for understanding public opinion. It will be stored securely until completion of the project, after which this information will be deleted. Your information will only be shared with third parties for the express purpose of keeping you informed of the proposals, and with David Wilson Homes and/or the relevant local authority where there is a legal obligation to do so. It will not be forwarded on to any other third parties. You can contact us at any time to request the deletion of your information. Please contact us at contact@arborfieldconsultation.co.uk

Submit

What happens next?

We will consider all the feedback we receive as we evolve and finalise our plans. We will then submit an outline planning application to Wokingham Borough Council who

Appendix 2: Leaflet



New Neighbourhood at Ducks Nest, Arborfield

David Wilson Homes are bringing forward plans for around 275 homes and significant areas of public green spaces, which would make up around two thirds of the site and feature play areas and a hilltop nature park along the ridgeline.

How can I find out more?

To find out more about the proposals and share your feedback, please visit the project website at www.arborfieldconsultation.co.uk.

We would also like to invite you to attend our live webinar event at **6pm on Tuesday 14th June 2022** where members of the project team will share details of the plans and answer your questions. Further information on how to register is included overleaf.



DAVID WILSON HOMES
WHERE QUALITY LIVES

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Visit the project website **www.arborfieldconsultation.co.uk** and complete an online feedback form.



Call the Freephone consultation number on **0808 1688 296** and a member of the project team will call you back.



Email **contact@arborfieldconsultation.co.uk**

We encourage you to share your feedback with us by 20th June, however we will continue to consider any comments we receive as we finalise our proposals.

Once we have reviewed the consultation feedback we will progress and finalise an outline planning application, which will be submitted to Wokingham Borough Council for its consideration later this year.



DAVID WILSON HOMES

WHERE QUALITY LIVES

Appendix 3: Presentation

New Neighbourhood at Ducks Nest, Arborfield



DAVID WILSON HOMES

WHERE QUALITY LIVES



Illustrative sketch of the Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG)

Site location



Constraints and opportunities

-  Site boundary
-  1m contours
-  Opportunity for site vehicular access
-  Existing public right of way
-  Ancient woodland
-  Existing Landscape feature to be prioritised for retention
-  Existing Landscape feature ideally to be retained
-  Existing Landscape feature subject to further survey
-  132kV overhead power lines with associated 30m offset
-  11kv powerlines to be grounded
-  Medium pressure gas main
-  Potential location for attenuation features TBC
-  Surface Water Flood Risk (1 in 30)
-  Surface Water Flood Risk (1 in 100)
-  Surface Water Flood Risk (1 in 1000)
-  Listed buildings



Illustrative layout

-  Site Boundary
-  01 Proposed vehicular / pedestrian and cycle access point
-  02 Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS)
-  03 Potential Swale
-  04 Retained vegetation
-  05 Primary access road
-  06 Proposed SANG car park
-  08 Proposed enhancement planting
-  Existing high voltage powerline including 30m no development zone
-  Proposed LAPs
-  Proposed NEAP / LEAP & LAP
-  Proposed pedestrian crossing points
-  Pedestrian/cycle bridge
-  Existing Public Rights of Way
-  Proposed SANG path
-  Informal pedestrian routes
-  Informal open space
-  Potential development area
-  Proposed SANG



Public open space

The masterplan includes over 23 hectares of public open space, including:

- A Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), including a **hill-top park**
- **Natural walking routes** through the site that also provide links to existing local routes and nearby open spaces
- **Play areas** for a variety of ages for both new and existing communities
- **Sustainable Urban Drainage** to manage run-off and provide new habitats to create ecological value

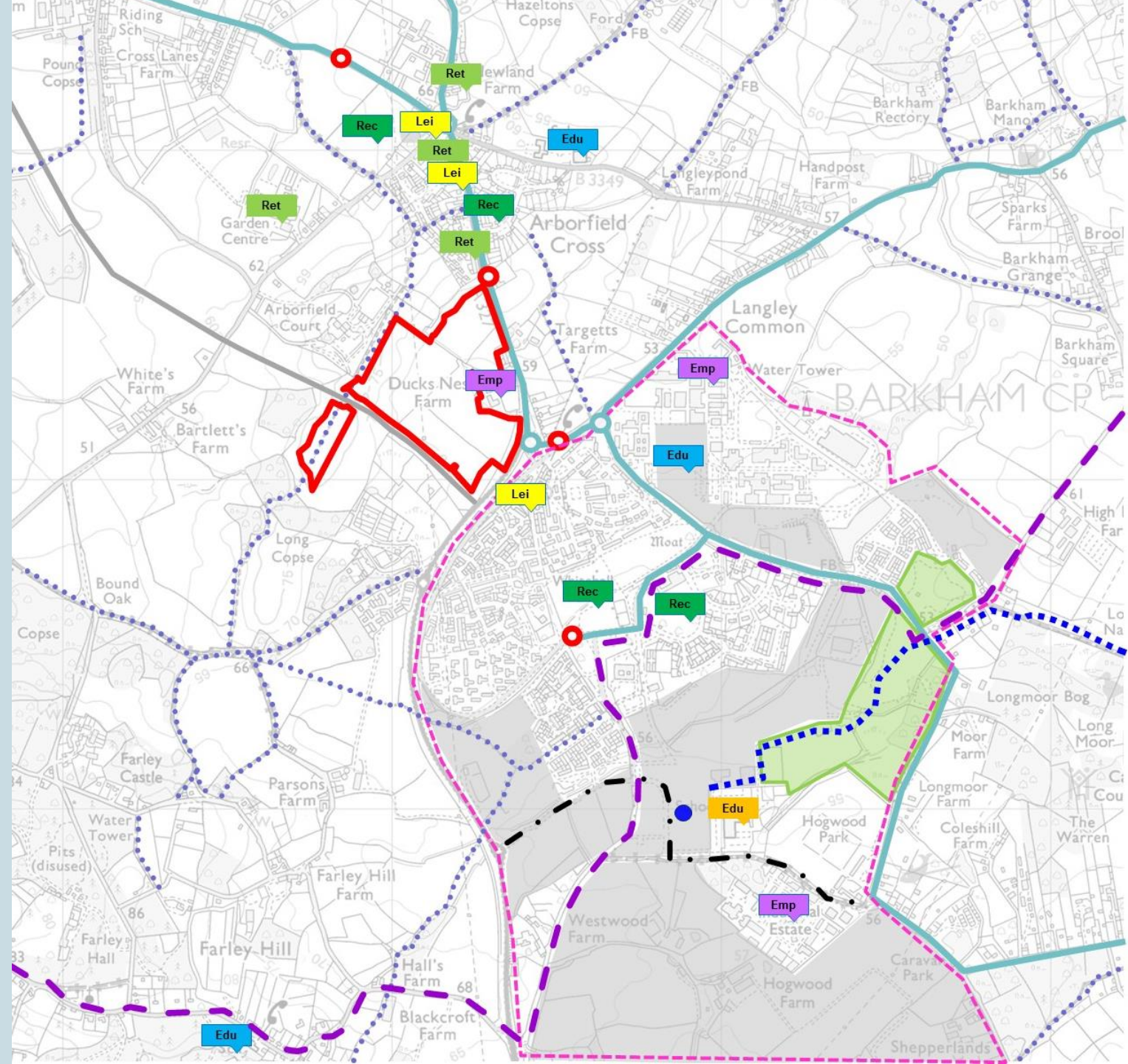


Access and sustainable travel

The site has been specifically designed as a **20-minute neighbourhood** for residents.

Vehicular access is proposed via two junctions, including:

- The conversion of the four-arm roundabout (serving the Arborfield Garrison SDL) into a larger **five-arm roundabout**
- A **priority-controlled junction** on to Observer Way to provide access to the SANG car park and homes to the west of the site



Community consultation

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- Email
contact@arborfieldconsultation.co.uk

Please share your feedback by **27th June**.

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How can I share my feedback?

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DAVID WILSON HOMES

WHERE QUALITY LIVES



urhood at rborfield

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