



Daniel Washington C2010
Designing Out Crime Officer

Thames Valley Police
Headquarters South
Oxford Road
Kidlington
OX5 2NX

31 March 2025

Reference: 250399

Location: Parcel R10 South Wokingham, Phase 2b, Parcel R10

Dear Ms Morris,

Thank you for consulting Thames Valley Police in relation to the above reserved matters submission. I have reviewed the submitted documents and crime statistics for the area and the following comments are provided to ensure the application meets the requirements of;

- The National Planning Policy Framework 2024 paragraph 96(b); which states that Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion...
- The National Planning Policy Framework 2024, paragraph 135(f) which states that "Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible... and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience".

The layout of the proposed development raises a number of issues from a designing out crime perspective. I therefore request the points below are considered and addressed in a revised plans/information submission prior to the determination of the reserved matters.

Layout Around Apartment Buildings

The design of the scheme around a number of the apartment blocks creates a number of issues.

It is noted that the layout of the apartment blocks at the northern end of the site has been revised a number of times as a result of pre-application discussions. However, the current design means that public and private space around the apartment buildings is poorly defined and there are too many accessible pathways through the area, undermining defensible space and providing excessive permeability.

The Secured by Design Residential Guide 2025 notes that neighbourhood permeability is one of the community level design features most reliably linked to crime rates (para 8.5 SBD Residential Guide 2025).

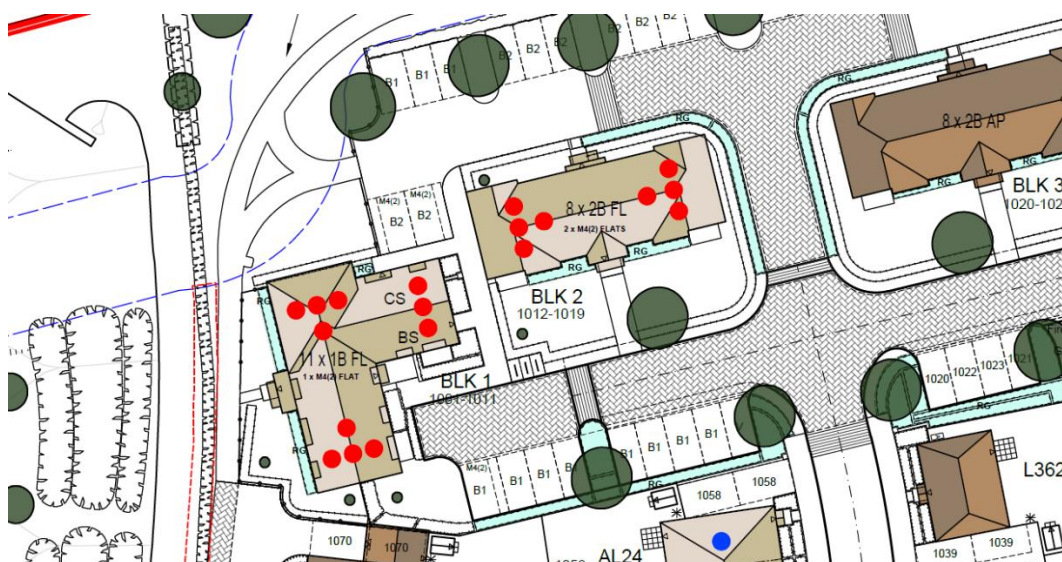
Excessive permeability introduces anonymity, making it difficult for residents to identify and

challenge who should or shouldn't be there.

Providing an excessive number of footpaths through developments dilutes activity and usage levels, leaving them vulnerable to crime and anti-social behaviour and providing a network of escape routes for an offender.

Residential areas should primarily be formed of secure perimeter blocks, which protects the vulnerable side and rear boundaries of properties. Clear and direct routes through developments are important, but they should not undermine the defensible space of neighbourhoods.

A footpath is provided into the car parking area for the apartments (in the northwest corner of the site). This area would benefit from being private/semi private, but the presence of the footpath will invite use by the general public. In addition, the logical, apparent desire line from the footpath /car park down through the site, will be between blocks 1 and 2 and into the car park to the south. Again, this area, between the two apartment blocks and the car parking area should be private/semi private.



The presence of parking areas to the south of the blocks also exposes the vulnerable side boundaries of the housing to the south.

I would recommend that the layout of blocks 1 – 4 are reconsidered so that a clearer definition of public and private space can be provided and excessive permeability can be avoided. Preferably, the parking courts would be provided within private courtyards which do not expose rear/side boundaries of properties, can be overlooked from the apartments, and can be gated.

The parking for apartment block 6 is effectively provided in a rear parking court, which exposes the vulnerable rear and side boundaries of neighbouring properties. It is therefore recommended that the entrance into the car park is gated with electronic gates with only residents of the apartments having access. The visitor parking may need to be relocated outside of the parking court to a more public location. Gated access will also be required from the path leading into the car park area from the apartments. The eastern boundary should be defined by railings (1.8m high) and defensive hedging.

The parking area for Apartment block 7 also exposes the vulnerable rear and side boundaries of neighbouring properties and therefore should be gated, as outlined above.

Access and Security Strategy for Apartments

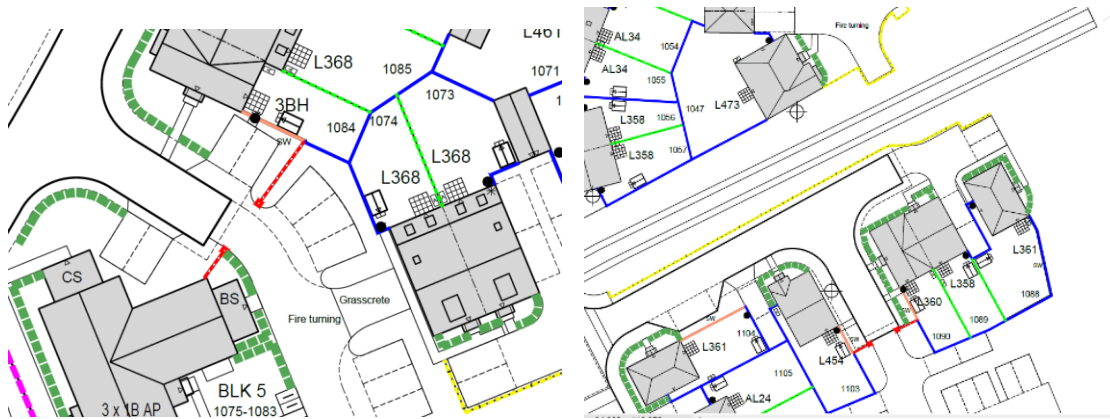
An access and security strategy should be provided for the apartments detailing:

- **Access Control:** Access control measures for residents and visitors. Unrestricted access to apartment blocks must not be possible, and residential access should be controlled by a two-way audio visual system with remote access controls. No trade buttons should be present.
- **Postage and Deliveries:** Postal services must not have unrestricted access to private communal areas, and mail delivery should be provided within a secure lobby at the entrance to the building, or via secure “Through the wall” letterboxes, or external letter boxes
- **Compartmentation:** Proposals for compartmentation of the buildings so that residents only have access to parts of the building that they need to, as offenders have the potential to be both external and internal to the development. Secure lobbies should also be extended to each floor to enable effective compartmentation
- **Bin and Cycle Store:** Details of secure storage of bins and cycles should be provided

Side Boundaries

It is noted that the Design Code which covers the area specifies that side walls facing the public realm should be constructed from brick. This is supported. However, this does not appear to have been achieved in the submitted scheme. Below are some extracts from the submitted boundary treatment plan which shows a number of locations where side boundaries facing the public realm are proposed to be close boarded fencing (blue lines):





The above are not all the locations, and the boundary treatment needs to be revisited and brick walls provided in all locations where side and rear boundaries are facing the public realm.

In addition, defensive planting should be provided in front of the walls to provide additional protection. Some side elevations (such as plot 1044) would also benefit from additional defensive planting in front of the elevations to provide an area of stand off and to mark the change of ownership.

Rear Access Footpaths

Where rear access footpaths are necessary to provide access to the rear gardens of properties the routes must be gated to the front of the building line, and secured with a robust key operated lock, operable from both sides.

Lighting

It is noted that the overarching lighting strategy suggests that shared surfaces and private drives will not be lit. The rationale of this approach from a security perspective should be provided. It is considered that lighting to the general standards of BS5489-1:2020 should not only be provided to adopted highways, but also un-adopted road and parking courts. Bollard lighting is not an appropriate lighting method, and should be avoided. Not only can they be damaged by reversing vehicles, more critically they do not provide sufficient light at the right height to aid facial recognition and reduce the fear of crime.

As a general point, and for any future specification for the development, I would recommend the applicant consults the guidance provided by Secured by Design Residential Guide 2025.

The above comments are made on behalf of Thames Valley Police and relate to designing out crime only. I hope that you find these comments of assistance. If you have any queries relating to crime prevention design, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Dan Washington | Designing Out Crime Officer