

OUTLINE PLANNING APPROVAL **DRAFT DECISION NOTICE**



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Expiry Date: 20 May 2025

Application Number: 243099

Location: Land North Of Reading Road, Arborfield

Proposal: Outline application for the proposed erection of up to 111 no. dwellings with associated works, parking, landscaping, publicly accessible open space and access from Reading Road. (All matters reserved except for means of access.)

Recommendation: Refused

Reasons

1. Principle of development

The location of this unplanned development on a greenfield site in the countryside is unacceptable in principle due to the countryside location outside of settlement boundaries; it's appreciable detachment from any recognised settlement limits and the resulting quantum of development that would be substantially out of scale with the immediate locality. The development conflicts with the spatial objectives of the development plan and policies CP1, CP2, CP3, CP6, CP9 and CP11 of the Core Strategy, CC01, CC02 and TB21 of the MDD Local Plan, Policies IR1, IR2 and AD1 of the Arborfield and Barkham Neighbourhood Plan, the Borough Design Guide SPD and sections 2, 4, 8, 9, 12 and 15 of the NPPF.

2. Quantum and scale of development

The proposed location and quantum of development would result in a development with a scale, character and density that is out of keeping with character and appearance of the area and countryside, resulting in a harmful detrimental impact on the locality, contrary to policies CP1, CP3, CP9 and CP11 of the Core Strategy, CC02, CC03 and TB21 of the MDD Local Plan, IR2, AD1 and AD3 of the Arborfield and Barkham Neighbourhood Plan, the Borough Design Guide SPD and sections 2, 4, 8, 9, 12 and 15 of the NPPF.

3. Impact on the landscape and countryside

The proposed development will have a detrimental impact on the landscape and character & appearance of the area by reason of the loss of fields, paddocks and green infrastructure in the countryside and the erection of a large housing development that is out of keeping with the locality, contrary to policies CP1, CP3, CP9 and CP11 of the Core Strategy CC02, CC03 and TB21 of the MDD Local Plan, IR2, AD1 and AD3 of the Arborfield and Barkham Neighbourhood Plan, the Borough

Design Guide SPD, the Wokingham District Landscape Character Assessment and sections 12 and 15 of the NPPF.

4. Unsustainable Location

The application site is within an unsustainable location that would not encourage a modal shift towards sustainable modes of transport, by reason of the countryside location outside of settlement limits, distances to facilities and services and poor quality of the local walking environment, contrary to policies CP1, CP2, CP3, CP6 and CP11 of the Core Strategy, Policies CC01 and CC02 of the MDD Local Plan, the Borough Design Guide SPD and section 8 & 9 of the NPPF.

5. Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land

Part of the site is grade 3a Agricultural Land and therefore the development results in the loss of Best and Most Versatile agricultural land, contrary to Core Strategy policy CP1 and section 15 of the NPPF.

6. Impact on Main River Watercourse

Part of a main river runs along the southern boundary and insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate that the proposed development will not adversely impact on flood risk or the watercourse, contrary to policy CC10 of the MDD Local Plan, CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy, AD4 of the Arborfield and Barkham Neighbourhood Plan and section 14 of the NPPF.

7. In the absence of a planning obligation to secure suitable avoidance and mitigation measures and access management monitoring arrangements, in terms that are satisfactory to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), the LPA is unable to satisfy itself that the proposals include adequate mitigation measures to prevent the proposed development from having an adverse effect on the integrity of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA, in line with the requirements of Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as amended and Article 6(3) of Directive 92/43/EEC. The proposal would be contrary to Policy NRM6 of the South East Plan, Policies CP8 and CP4 of the Core Strategy.

8. In the absence of a completed legal agreement, the proposal fails to secure opportunities for training, apprenticeships and other vocational initiatives to develop local employability skills contrary to MDD Policy TB12.

9. In the absence of a completed Legal Agreement, the scheme fails to make adequate provision for affordable housing, contrary to policy CP5 of the Core Strategy and Section 5 of the NPPF.

10. In the absence of a completed Legal Agreement, the proposed development fails to make adequate contributions to sport and recreational facilities, contrary to MDD Local Plan policy TB08, Core Strategy policy CP4 and sections 4 and 8 of the NPPF.

Informatives

1. This decision is in respect of the drawings and plans numbered:

Proposed Site Access Plan No. 147.0017.0001 Rev P07

Site Location Plan No. 052403-DAN-LOC01

Illustrative Masterplan No. 052403-DAN-MP01

Indicative Land Use Plan No. 052403-DAN-ILUP

Topographical Survey No. 052403-DAN-TOPO01

Received by the Local Planning Authority.

2. The Council engages with all applicants in a positive and proactive way through specific pre-application enquiries and the detailed advice available on the Council's website. On this particular application, pre-application advice was sought and advice was given regarding the proposal being unacceptable. Discussion took place in trying to find a solution, but no solution was possible.

Recommendation and conditions/reasons agreed:



Date: 20.05.25

REMEMBER - The earliest date for a decision on this application is: **12 January 2025**