



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of the **PLANNING COMMITTEE** will be held
David Hicks 1 - Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40
1BN on **WEDNESDAY 9 OCTOBER 2024 AT 7.00 PM**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan Parsonage', with a long, sweeping tail stroke.

Susan Parsonage
Chief Executive
Published on 1 October 2024

Note: Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting or participate in the meeting virtually, in accordance with the Council's Constitution. If you wish to participate either in person or virtually via Microsoft Teams please contact Democratic Services: Democratic.services@wokingham.gov.uk

The meeting can also be watched live using the following link:
<https://www.youtube.com/live/IW6rZLs9Eh4?feature=shared>

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Our Vision
<i>A great place to live, learn, work and grow and a great place to do business</i>
Enriching Lives
• Champion excellent education and enable our children and young people to achieve their full potential, regardless of their background. • Support our residents to lead happy, healthy lives and provide access to good leisure facilities to enable healthy choices for everyone. • Engage and empower our communities through arts and culture and create a sense of identity for the Borough which people feel part of. • Support growth in our local economy and help to build business.
Providing Safe and Strong Communities
• Protect and safeguard our children, young and vulnerable people. • Offer quality care and support, at the right time, to reduce the need for long term care. • Nurture our communities: enabling them to thrive and families to flourish. • Ensure our Borough and communities remain safe for all.
Enjoying a Clean and Green Borough
• Play as full a role as possible to achieve a carbon neutral Borough, sustainable for the future. • Protect our Borough, keep it clean and enhance our green areas for people to enjoy. • Reduce our waste, promote re-use, increase recycling and improve biodiversity. • Connect our parks and open spaces with green cycleways.
Delivering the Right Homes in the Right Places
• Offer quality, affordable, sustainable homes fit for the future. • Ensure the right infrastructure is in place, early, to support and enable our Borough to grow. • Protect our unique places and preserve our natural environment. • Help with your housing needs and support people, where it is needed most, to live independently in their own homes.
Keeping the Borough Moving
• Maintain and improve our roads, footpaths and cycleways. • Tackle traffic congestion and minimise delays and disruptions. • Enable safe and sustainable travel around the Borough with good transport infrastructure. • Promote healthy alternative travel options and support our partners in offering affordable, accessible public transport with good transport links.
Changing the Way We Work for You
• Be relentlessly customer focussed. • Work with our partners to provide efficient, effective, joined up services which are focussed around our customers. • Communicate better with customers, owning issues, updating on progress and responding appropriately as well as promoting what is happening in our Borough. • Drive innovative, digital ways of working that will connect our communities, businesses and customers to our services in a way that suits their needs.
Be the Best We Can Be
• Be an organisation that values and invests in all our colleagues and is seen as an employer of choice. • Embed a culture that supports ambition, promotes empowerment and develops new ways of working. • Use our governance and scrutiny structures to support a learning and continuous improvement approach to the way we do business. • Be a commercial council that is innovative, whilst being inclusive, in its approach with a clear focus on being financially resilient. • Maximise opportunities to secure funding and investment for the Borough. • Establish a renewed vision for the Borough with clear aspirations.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Councillors

Carol Jewell (Chair)
Stuart Munro
Greg Bello

Martijn Andrea (Vice-Chair)
Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey
Moses Iyengunmwena

Wayne Smith
Sam Akhtar
Andy Ng Siu-hong

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
23.		APOLOGIES To receive any apologies for absence.	
24.		MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 September 2024	7 - 14
25.		DECLARATION OF INTEREST To receive any declaration of interest	
26.		APPLICATIONS TO BE DEFERRED AND WITHDRAWN ITEMS To consider any recommendations to defer applications from the schedule and to note any applications that may have been withdrawn.	
27.	Finchampstead	APPLICATION NO 240803 HILLSIDE, LOWER WOKINGHAM ROAD, CROWTHORNE, WOKINGHAM, RG45 6BX RECOMMENDATION: Conditional Approval subject to a legal agreement CASE OFFICER: Adriana Gonzalez	15 - 86
28.	Twyford, Ruscombe and Hurst	APPLICATION NO 240990 LAND WEST OF NEW ROAD, RUSCOMBE, RG10 9LN RECOMMENDATION: Conditional Approval subject to a legal agreement CASE OFFICER: Benjamin Hindle	87 - 182

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent

A Supplementary Agenda will be issued by the Chief Executive if there are any other items to consider under this heading.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The following abbreviations were used in the above Index and in reports.

C/A	Conditional Approval (grant planning permission)
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
R	Refuse (planning permission)
LB	(application for) Listed Building Consent
S106	Section 106 legal agreement between Council and applicant in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990
F	(application for) Full Planning Permission
MU	Members' Update circulated at the meeting
RM	Reserved Matters not approved when Outline Permission previously granted
VAR	Variation of a condition/conditions attached to a previous approval
PS	Performance Statistic Code for the Planning Application
Category	

CONTACT OFFICER

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Application Number	Expiry Date	Parish	Ward
240803	11/10/2024	Finchampstead	Finchampstead;

Applicant	Mr and Mrs Cole
Site Address	Hillside, Lower Wokingham Road, Crowthorne, Wokingham, RG45 6BX
Proposal	Outline application with all matters reserved for the proposed erection of up to 18 no. dwellings following demolition of the existing dwelling and outbuilding.
Type	Outline
Officer	Adriana Gonzalez
Reason for determination by committee	- Major application. - Listed by Councillor Charles Margetts due to concerns over site sustainability; design; access; wildlife; development levels and drainage/ flooding.

FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Planning Committee on Wednesday, 9 October 2024
REPORT PREPARED BY	Assistant Director – Place and Growth
RECOMMENDATION	i) APPROVAL subject to conditions and informatives outlined in Appendix 1 of this report and the completion of a S106 legal agreement to secure the following: Affordable Housing – 40% on site affordable housing (Cascade mechanism) Employment and Skills Plan – Employment and Skills Plan or in lieu contribution to be provided – this is determined by floorspace and so will be calculated at Reserved Matters Thames Basin Heaths SPA – Contribution to be calculated following Reserved Matters as it is dependent on number of bed spaces per dwelling Biodiversity Net Gain - 10% Biodiversity Net Gain plan to be submitted with details of on-site provision or off-site off-setting Roads – Details of road status – either to remain as private or to be adopted by the Council and to be built to adoptable standards Establishment of Management Company – to be responsible for drainage, roads (the latter if not adopted by the Council) OR

	ii) That the committee authorise the Head of Development Management to REFUSE full planning permission if the legal agreement is not completed within six months of the date of this resolution (unless officers on behalf of the Head of Development Management agree to a later date for completion of the legal agreement).
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SUMMARY

Hillside (previously known as Jovike) is a 0.79Ha site located on Lower Wokingham Road, and comprising of a single bungalow dwelling house plus outbuildings with amenity space. The site, as outline in red on the location plan, is split between the dwelling and its amenity land, and the adjoining strip of land to the north. The total area of these two parcels is approximately 1Ha.

The proposal seeks to demolish the existing bungalow and associated garage outbuilding, and erect up to 18 dwellinghouses across the site.

Outline permission has been applied for, with only the principle of development being formally considered under this application. Access, appearance, layout, scale and landscaping are all reserved matters for future consideration. Therefore, the layout, including housing mix, as shown under this application, is indicative.

The site is located outside of settlement limits in the Wokingham countryside; however, it is on the edge/ adjacent to the Modest Development Location of Crowthorne (Pinewood) which has access to some facilities and services. Notwithstanding this, part of the site (without the northern strip of land) is allocated within the Wokingham Local Plan Update (LPU) Revised Growth Strategy for 15 (net) dwellings under Policy H2. Section 5.3 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan also notes and supports the proposed allocation within RGS located within the Parish. This includes the proposed allocation of Hillside (formerly Jovike).

Whilst the LPU is at a consultative stage of preparation, and therefore holds limited weight in the planning balance, the borough does not have a 5-year housing land supply (nor a transitional 4-year supply as required by the NPPF) meaning paragraph 11(d)(ii) of the NPPF is engaged. This states that where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless the *“adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”*

The principle of developing this site for residential purposes is contrary to the Spatial Strategy of the adopted Local plan. However, this has already been considered in the plan making process and whilst the LPU itself holds limited weight, this needs to be considered alongside the current identified shortfall in housing delivery and any identified benefits of the scheme. Namely these include the opportunity to create a development that would satisfactorily integrate into the surrounding area, one that would protect and enhance the natural environment, and bring about the creation of 18 new homes alongside the provision of much needed onsite affordable housing in this part of the borough.

The proposal has been deemed acceptable by Officers in relation to the existing countryside and landscape, albeit with the access, layout, scale, appearance and landscaping still to be formally considered at a later date. It is considered that suitable dwelling types, mix and standards have the potential to be achieved and 18 dwellings is an appropriate density on the settlement edge. It has also been demonstrated that the proposal, in principle has suitable access provision to and from Lower Wokingham Road and can be accommodated in the existing highway network. It is recognised that opportunities for sustainable modes of transport in this location are lacking, but not to a sufficient degree that the site would be at odds with the existing settlement of Crowthorne.

Overall, in applying the tempered tilted balance required by Paragraph 11d (ii) of the NPPF and when taking all matters into consideration, there are no identified adverse impacts associated with the proposals that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits and there are no other material planning considerations of significant weight that would dictate that the application should be refused. As such, Officers recommend the application be approved, subject to the conditions and informatives listed and legal obligations set out in this report.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
152088	Outline application for the demolition of existing dwelling, garage and associated outbuildings and the replacement with 9no new residential dwellings (7 x 4 bed & 2 x 5 Bed). (All matters reserved)	Refused 22/10/2015
050996	Outline application for residential redevelopment of site and demolition of existing dwelling. Access only to be considered.	Refused 18/01/2006
020149	Outline application for the proposed erection of 3 dwellings and demolition of existing dwelling	Refused 08/05/2002 Appeal Dismissed 11/11/2002
<i>The site has an extensive planning history prior to 2000.</i>		

DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION

Site Area	Approximately 1Ha
Proposed units	Up to 18
Proposed density - dwellings/hectare	18 DPH (approx.) to be determined at RM stage
Number of affordable units proposed	7 (40%); all on site
Previous land use	Residential (C3 use)
Existing parking spaces	No number formalised
Proposed parking spaces	42 total (including allocated, unallocated & visitors)
CONSTRAINTS	Countryside Flood Zone 1 Bat roost habitat suitability

Great Crested Newts consultation zone (Red Zone)
 Local Plan Update – Submitted Site
 Affordable Housing Thresholds
 Farnborough aerodrome consultation zone
 Tree Preservation Orders
 Thames Basin Heaths SPA – 5Km
 Green Route – Lower Wokingham Road
 Landscape Character Assessment Area – Finchampstead Forested and Settled Sands

CONSULTATION RESPONSES	
WBC Planning Policy	No objection
WBC Environmental Health	No objection subject to conditions
WBC Drainage	No objection subject to conditions
WBC Enforcement	No comments received
WBC Highways	No objection subject to conditions
WBC Trees & Landscape	Objection (details below)
WBC Ecology	No objection subject to condition/obligation
NatureSpace	No objection subject to condition
WBC Property Services	No comments received
WBC Sports Development	No comments received
WBC Housing (Affordable Housing)	No objection subject to obligation
WBC Employment and Skills	No objection subject to obligation
WBC Green Infrastructure	No comments received
WBC Health and Wellbeing	No comments received
WBC Energy Manager	No comments received
WBC Community Safety	No comments received
WBC Education (School Places)	No comments received
WBC Cleaner and Greener	No comments received
Southern Gas Networks	Refer to standard advice
SSE Power Distribution	Refer to standard advice
Thames Water Utilities Ltd	No objection
Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust	No comments received
Berkshire Archaeology	No objection subject to conditions
Crime Prevention Design Advisor	No comments received
South East Water	No comments received
Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue	Refer to standard advice
NHS Wokingham CCG	No comments received
WBC Developers Contribution	Outline applications are not CIL liable. CIL liability will be calculated at Reserved Matters stage

REPRESENTATIONS

During the course of the application, the indicative site layout was amended and revisions to technical documentation made.

The original consultation ran between 3 April 2024 to 1 May 2024.

The second consultation ran between 22 July 2024 to 12 August 2024.

COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE ORIGINAL SCHEME

Town/Parish Council: Finchampstead Parish Council raised objection on the following grounds:

- Overdevelopment
- Out of keeping with the street scene
- Site included in the draft Local Plan Update for up to 15 dwellings

(Officer's comments: the above issues will be addressed in the report.)

Local Members: Councillor Charles Margetts raised objection on the following grounds:

- Unsustainable location
- Local services (i.e. schools, GP) are at full capacity
- Proposal design is out of character with the area
- Overdevelopment
- Overlooking to properties to the back of the site (facing Little Fryth) due to the difference in ground levels
- Highway safety due to increase in traffic levels
- Impact on wildlife
- Development levels
- Potential drainage and flooding issues

(Officer's comments: the above issues will be addressed in the report.)

Neighbours: 53 letters of objections from neighbours were received (some of which included duplicate comments) on the following grounds:

- Immediate neighbours opposite Lower Wokingham Road and on Ashdale Park were not consulted
- Applicant has not engaged with neighbours to discuss the proposals

(Officer's comments: The Council records show that all neighbours that were statutorily required to be notified were done so via letter and in addition, site notices were displayed and the applications advertised within the local newspaper. The Council encourages applicants to engage with local residents prior to submission of the applications, however, cannot force applicants to do so.)

- Additional vehicular traffic on Lower Wokingham Road
- Existing access points to the site have poor visibility
- Road infrastructure cannot cope with additional development
- Lack of neighbourhood infrastructure (i.e. GP, schools)
- Increase noise and air pollution
- Highway safety – Lower Wokingham Road has a 40mph speed limit
- Loss of wildlife and landscaping
- Overdevelopment
- Inappropriate layout and density
- Proposal is out of keeping with the character of the area
- Proposal will set a precedent for future development within the area

- Previous application on this site was refused for less density
- Excessive encroachment of countryside and expansion of development
- Proposal is contrary to the NPPF and local plan policies and neighbourhood plan
- Site is part of green wedge land
- Unsustainable location
- Loss of privacy and daylight to properties to the back of the site (facing Little Fryth)
- Drainage, flooding and subsidence issues to the rear of the site
- Lack of recreational facilities nearby
- Impact on local services (i.e. refuse and garden waste collection)
- New access road will run immediately next to the rear gardens of properties in Ashdale Park increasing noise and pollution from vehicles
- Proposed terraced houses out of keeping with existing detached dwellings
- Owner has cleared all trees within the site

(Officer's comments: the above issues will be addressed in the report.)

- Proposal will bring down the value of the area

(Officer's comments: These is not a material planning consideration.)

COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING SECOND CONSULTATION PERIOD

Town/Parish Council: Finchampstead Parish Council raised objection on the following grounds:

- Overdevelopment
- Out of keeping with the street scene
- Site included in the draft Local Plan Update for up to 15 dwellings
- Requests that resident's comments in relation to drainage are given due consideration

(Officer's comments: the above issues will be addressed in the report.)

Local Members: No comments received

Neighbours: 33 letters of objections from neighbours were received (some of which included duplicate comments) on the following grounds:

- Revised layout does not address previous concerns raised in the original consultation
- Overdevelopment of the site
- Increase in traffic levels
- Out of keeping with the local character
- Proposed density is inappropriate
- Highway safety
- Previous application on this site was refused for less density
- Lack of neighbourhood infrastructure and services (i.e. GP, dentist, schools)
- Proposal is contrary to the local plan policies and the FNDP
- Inappropriate backland development
- Impact on wildlife
- Unsustainable location
- Proposal does not meet with new Government's plans to build affordable housing near workplaces

- The draft local plan doesn't allocate this site to housing
- Clearance of trees on site ahead of the planning application
- Proposal will create a precedent for other site owners to do the same
- No garages are shown on the plans
- Loss of privacy to properties to the back of the site (facing Little Fryth)
- Increase to flooding and drainage issues
- The new access road will open new views into site which is out of keeping with existing frontage development
- Limited areas of planting available to soften views of the proposed dwellings
- Lack of suitable parking on site
- Proposed rear gardens for the houses on the rear boundary are substandard due to the severe ground slope

(Officer's comments: the above issues will be addressed in the report.)

- Original layout has been revised with zero interaction from neighbours
- Applicant has not directly engaged with neighbours
- Ashdale Park neighbours not consulted

(Officer's comments: The Council records show that all neighbours that were statutorily required to be notified were done so via notification letter. Following revised information and plans, all relevant neighbours including those who had initially commented on the application were re-consulted. Notification letters/ emails were sent on 22 July 2024.)

PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Design Guide
National Planning Practice Guidance

Core Strategy (CS)

CP1 – Sustainable Development
 CP2 – Inclusive Communities
 CP3 – General Principles for Development
 CP4 – Infrastructure Requirements
 CP5 – Housing Mix, Density and Affordability
 CP6 – Managing Travel Demand
 CP7 – Biodiversity
 CP8 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area
 CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
 CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits (Inc Countryside)
 CP17 – Housing Delivery

MDD Local Plan (MDD)

CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
 CC02 – Development Limits
 CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping
 CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction
 CC05 – Renewable Energy and Decentralised Energy Networks
 CC06 – Noise

CC07 – Parking
 CC08 – Safeguarding alignments of the Strategic Transport Network & Road Infrastructure
 CC09 – Development and Flood Risk
 CC10 – Sustainable Drainage
 TB05 – Housing Mix
 TB06 – Development of Private Residential Gardens
 TB07 – Internal Space Standards
 TB08 – Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Standards
 TB12 – Employment Skills Plan
 TB21 – Landscape Character
 TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
 TB25 – Archaeology

Joint Minerals and Waste Plan

DM1 – Sustainable Development
 DM2 – Climate Change – Mitigation and Adaptation
 DM3 – Protection of Habitats and Species
 DM9 – Protecting Health, Safety and Amenity
 DM10 – Flood Risk
 DM15 – Site History

Other

Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document
 CIL Guidance + 123 List
 Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document
 Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document
 Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan (2023)

PLANNING ISSUES

Description of Development:

1. The proposal involves the demolition of the existing dwelling and associated outbuilding on the site and erection of up to 18 dwellings. Outline permission is sought with all matters (i.e. layout, appearance, landscaping, scale and access) reserved for consideration under a subsequent reserved matters application(s) pursuant to the development parameters provided within this Outline planning application. However, an indicative site layout plan with a mix of house sizes and types has been provided. On the indicative plan, it shows:
 - 7 affordable units
 - 4 x 3-bed detached dwellings
 - 2 x 3-bed semi-detached dwellings
 - 6 x 4-bed detached dwellings
 - 6 x 5-bed detached dwellings
 - 34 allocated parking spaces
 - 9 unallocated/ visitor parking spaces

2. Access to the site would be provided fairly centrally within the plot via a central spine road. Plots 2 & 3 would utilise one of the existing accesses (southern access) to Hillside.
3. Members should note that access, layout, scale, appearance and landscaping are all reserved for future consideration and therefore, the site layout as shown is not final or confirmed. Likewise, the proposal is for up to 18 dwellings however this number is not final or confirmed.

Site and its Surroundings:

4. Hillside, formerly known as Jovike, is a rectangular plot of land of approximately 0.79 Ha, located on the western side of Lower Wokingham Road. It is presently occupied by a large single dwelling and detached domestic outbuilding, with a large enclosed residential garden to the back of the house, with additional area of grassland beyond the garden fence. The site proposed for development encompasses Hillside and a strip of land to the north of the plot which is also within the applicant's ownership. Together, these two parcels of land are approximately 1Ha.



Fig. 1: Aerial view of the site (outlined red) with adjoining buildings and trees (Google Maps 2024).

5. The topography of the site overall is gently sloping, with the natural fall of the land from front to rear (east to west) with a level difference of circa 3m along the western boundary. The level difference from NE corner to SE corner is approximately 1.5m and from NW corner to SW corner is approximately 1m. From east to west the level change (excluding the ditch) is roughly levelled. Mature tree planting occupy the north, south and western boundaries, giving the site an enclosed setting. Lower Wokingham Road is a designated Green Route under policy CC03, and the existing mature vegetation contribute to its verdant character.
6. The site is located within the borough's countryside but well contained with residential development of large detached dwellings occupying the eastern side across Lower Wokingham Road. Residential properties part of the Ashdale Park development occupy the northern side of the site, as well as properties facing Little Fryth are located to the western side, whilst to the south is a single dwelling known as

Woodpeckers. The eastern side of Lower Wokingham Road is characterised by a linear form of development with a mix of dwelling types and designs, but the scale is predominantly two-storey with a relatively strong building line. Mature trees and front boundary vegetation are characteristics of the street and contribute to the Green Route designation.

7. The application site is currently accessed via three access points from Lower Wokingham Road, which has a speed limit of 40mph. There are footpaths on both sides of Lower Wokingham Road.

Principle of Development:

Principle of development under the development plan

8. The site is situated within the designated countryside, outside of but right adjacent to the settlement boundary of Crowthorne (Pinewood) which is a Modest Development Location. The site constitutes previously developed land.

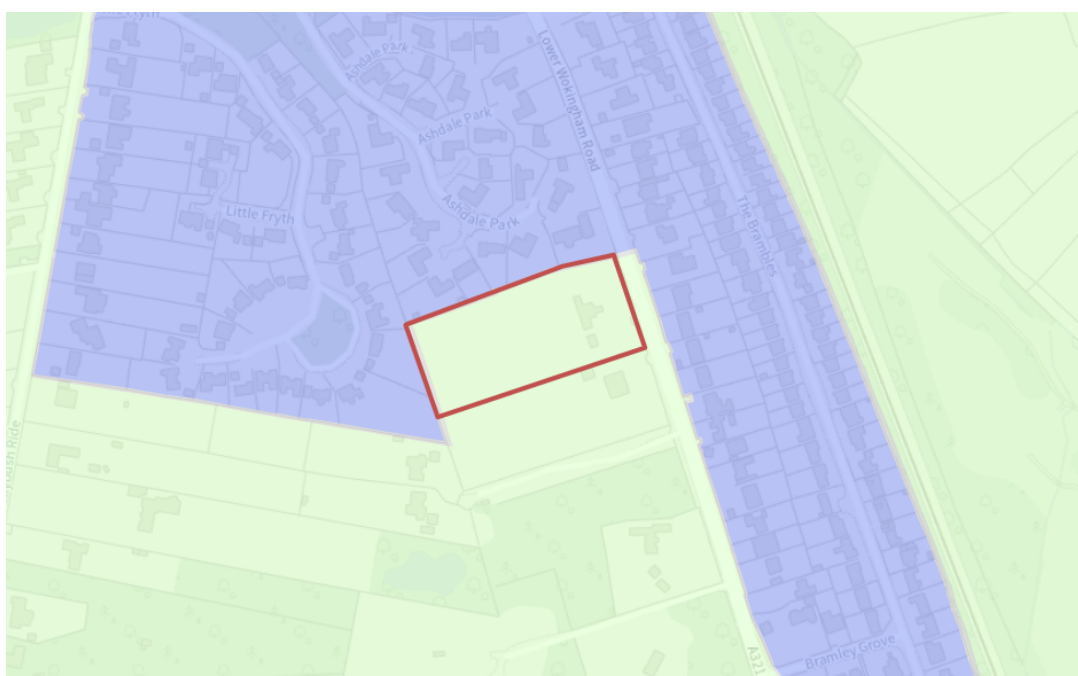


Fig. 2: Crowthorne settlement defined in purple with the site outlined in red and countryside shaded green (WBC constraints map)

9. Core Strategy Policy CP9 (Scale and location of development proposals) directs development to locations within development limits and states that *“The scale of development proposals in Wokingham borough must reflect the existing or proposed levels of facilities and services at or in the location, together with their accessibility”*.
10. Supporting paragraph 4.52 states that Modest Development Locations *“are those with access to some facilities and services either within them or through good public transport services to major development locations or centres in neighbouring areas e.g. Bracknell, Crowthorne and Reading. It is within the development limits of these settlements where modest development would be acceptable.”*

11. Whilst the specific location of the proposal should allow future residents to reasonably utilise the services and infrastructure present in Crowthorne and higher order settlements via public transport, the site is not located within development limits and therefore the proposal is contrary to Policy CP9.
12. Development proposals in the designated countryside should be assessed against Core Strategy Policy CP11 (Proposals outside Development Limits). Policy CP11 states that development proposals will not normally be permitted in the countryside except where one or more of the specified exceptions apply:
- 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.*
 - 6) *Essential community facilities cannot be accommodated within development limits or through the re-use/replacement of an existing building;*
 - 7) *Affordable housing on rural exception sites in line with CP9.*
13. The application proposal does not meet any of these specified exceptions and is therefore contrary to Policy CP11.
14. Turning to the overall aim of policy CP11, this is to protect the separate identity of settlements and to maintain the quality of the environment. Regarding the former, the application site is right adjacent to the settlement boundary of Crowthorne and effectively encloses on three sides by private residential developments, with the Ashdale Park development to the north, Little Fyrth development to the west, a single residential dwelling (Woodpeckers) to the south, and a continuing row of large residential dwellings to the east opposite Lower Wokingham Road. It is therefore fair to conclude that this development would not result in any greater level of physical coalescence with the nearest settlement, Finchampstead North further to the north-west. Whilst in conflict due to failure to meet the necessary criteria, the proposal is not considered to undermine the intended purpose of policy CP11. Matters concerning the quality of the environment will be discussed in later sections.

Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan (FNDP)

15. The application site is located within the parish of Finchampstead and therefore the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan (FNDP) – formally adopted at Council on 21 September 2023, forms part of the development plan for the area.
16. The FNDP contains a number of policies on issues including housing; settlement separation; the natural and historic environment; retail facilities; business and

commercial development; transport; and design. These inter-relate with other material considerations which are to be discussed.

17. Section 5.3 of the FNDP notes and supports the proposed allocations within RGS (discussed below) located within the parish. This includes the proposed allocation of Hillside (formerly Jovike) for 15 dwellings.

Emerging/consultative Local Plan Update

18. The Local Plan Update (LPU), the plan which will supersede the adopted Core Strategy and MDD local plans, is at the consultative stage of preparation. To date, the Council has consulted on two draft strategies: the Draft Plan (2020) and the Revised Growth Strategy (RGS) (2021).
19. The Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) (2021) published alongside the RGS provides an assessment of the application site (ref. 5FI024) which covers the application site excluding the strip of land to the north.
20. The assessment concludes that the site is potentially suitable for development, indicating 15 dwellings, having a satisfactory relationship with the existing settlement pattern (as concluded in the section of this report) and performing well in respect of highways and accessibility.
21. Concerns have been raised that the proposal will see the amount of dwellings exceeding the site allocation. It is acknowledged that the proposal is for up to 18 dwellings which is a slightly higher number of dwellings. However, the red line includes an additional strip of land to the north so that the overall site is slightly larger than that assessed under the HELAA. Furthermore, like all local plans, dwelling capacities in the RGS are 'indicative' minimums and do not represent a fixed requirement for each site. Any proposal seeking a greater scale of development would need to provide evidence through the planning application process that the impacts remain acceptable and that it achieves quality placemaking. This design-led approach should not be unnecessarily constrained by the indicative figure and supported by National Policy in making the most effective use of available land. This matter will be further discussed later in the report.
22. Notwithstanding the above, given the LPU is at a consultative stage, the draft strategy and related draft policies have limited weight in determining planning applications. However, it must also be recognised that the assessment of land in the HELAA is high level with the purpose of informing options within the plan-making process, and is therefore useful in providing an understanding as to how the site is viewed in the context of plan-making and its anticipated role and contribution towards meeting the boroughs identified housing needs over the future plan period.

Regulation 19

23. This LPU including the site's draft allocation was brought to full Council on the 19th of September 2024 under the Regulation 19 process, which was accepted by Members with 30 votes for, and 19 against.
24. In considering the weight to be given to Wokingham Borough Council's emerging Local Plan Update (LPU), it is necessary to refer to Paragraphs 48-50 of the National

Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2023), Paragraph 48 states that decision-makers may give weight to emerging policies according to:

- i The stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- ii The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given);
- iii The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan with the NPPF (the closer the policies are to the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).

25. To consider these points in more detail:

- i *Stage of Preparation* - The LPU is still at an early stage of its preparation. Submission to the Secretary of State is anticipated to be in December, with Stage 1 of the examination scheduled for Spring 2025 and Stage 2 later in the Summer of 2025. The Inspector's post-hearing letter is anticipated in Winter 2025, with the consultation on modifications planned for early 2026, and adoption is not projected until Spring/Summer 2026.

As seen in High Court judgements, even when an emerging plan is at an advanced stage, it may still attract limited weight if further consultation and modifications are required, and the Inspector has yet to issue a final report. Wokingham's LPU has several stages yet to be completed, including the examination hearings and main modifications stages, which restricts the weight that can currently be afforded.

- ii *Unresolved Objections* - Given the timeline noted above, the extent and significance of unresolved objections cannot yet be fully ascertained. However, the LPU will propose a development strategy to 2040, which will result in significant interest from stakeholders, including developers, residents and statutory consultees. It is therefore highly likely that one of the primary areas of contention and potentially objection, will be the spatial strategy for development and the location of land proposed for development to help meet future development needs. How far such objections are capable of being resolved will only become clear at later stages of plan making.
- iii *Consistency with the NPPF* - Although Officers are confident that the emerging LPU, and its policies align with the NPPF, the degree of consistency has not yet been tested through examination and cannot be guaranteed. As per other cases, consistency with the NPPF is only one factor, and its relative importance depends on the extent to which the LPU impacts the planning balance in decision-making.

26. Using these tests and drawing on the conclusions of the High Court judgments, it is appropriate to conclude that only 'limited weight' can be attributed to Wokingham Borough Council's emerging LPU at this time.

27. In summary, while the emerging LPU is a significant piece of work, its stage of development and the uncertainties surrounding unresolved objections and examination outcomes mean that only limited weight can be given to it at this time. It is therefore necessary for the committee to make decisions in accordance with the current Development Plan and have due regard to any other material considerations until such time as the LPU has progressed further.

Housing land supply position and the ‘tilted balance’

28. The latest published assessment of housing land supply concluded a deliverable supply of 3.2 years as of 31st March 2023.

29. The NPPF states under paragraph 11 that where a local authority is unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, the most important policies relating to the application may be viewed as being out of date. It continues to advise that unless there are specific policies in the NPPF protecting the land subject to the application, that permission should be granted unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF as a whole.

30. The December 2023 NPPF introduced a revised approach to housing land supply, to better reflect progress made with local plans:

“From the date of publication of this revision of the Framework, for decision-making purposes only, certain local planning authorities will only be required to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of four years’ worth of housing (with a buffer, if applicable, as set out in paragraph 77) against the housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old, instead of a minimum of five years as set out in paragraph 77 of this Framework.”

31. This applies to authorities which have an emerging local plan that has either been submitted for examination or has reached Regulation 18 or Regulation 19, including both a policies map and proposed allocations towards meeting housing need. These arrangements apply for a period of two years from the publication date of this revision of the Framework.’ (NPPF: 226)

32. The council published a Draft Local Plan for consultation in 2020, including proposed housing allocations and a policies map. This meets the criteria set out in the NPPF that would require a lower 4-year housing land supply. Nonetheless, the council’s HLS remains below 4 years.

33. This presumption in favour of sustainable development outlined in paragraph 11 of the NPPF is commonly referred to as the ‘tilted balance’. It should be noted that the application of paragraph 11 of the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. This is set out clearly in paragraph 12 of the NPPF and is a matter of law.

34. Material to decisions on planning applications involving housing is the underlying reasons for the shortfall (whether 5 or 4 years) in deliverable housing sites. The shortfall is not as a result of non-delivery of housing but due to the significant over delivery in recent years reducing the bank of land with extant planning permissions.

35. All evidence and assessments show that whether the housing target is defined through the requirement set out in the Core Strategy or the outcome of the standard method set out in national Planning Practice Guidance, delivery has significantly exceeded the target. If over delivery were taken into account over the whole Core Strategy plan period or since the introduction of the standard method, there would be no shortfall over the coming five years with over delivery significantly exceeding the shortfall.
36. In this context, the weight to be attached to the benefits of additional housing under paragraph 11 of the NPPF should be tempered. This reflects the approach set out in a number of recent appeal decisions.
37. Taking the Inspector's conclusions from these appeal decisions into consideration, it would indicate that whilst the tilted balance is engaged, this tilt is tempered due to past over delivery for those reasons outline above. It is however relevant that the Inspectors have given substantial weight to the provision of open market and affordable housing.
38. As discussed above, paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged due to the Council being unable to deliver a 4-year housing land supply. Within paragraph 14 of the NPPF it acknowledges the relationship between paragraph 11(d) and those areas that have an adopted Neighbourhood Plan, which is the case in Finchampstead. It states:
- 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*
39. In this instance, paragraph 14 of the NPPF is not engaged as whilst the Neighbourhood Plan became part of the Wokingham development plan within the last five years, the neighbourhood plan does not explicitly contain allocations to meet an identified housing requirement. Rather it notes and supports, at section 5.3, the proposed allocations located in Finchampstead Parish contained within the emerging LPU (as per the most recent consultation, being the RGS) which includes Hillside (former Jovike) site.
40. As such, para 14 of the NPPF is not engaged and therefore any harm identified with the proposal will not be weighted to 'significantly and demonstrably' outweigh the benefits' as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan. However, a full assessment taking paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF into account will be made.
41. Finally, paragraph 84 of the NPPF seeks to avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances such as a rural worker's dwelling, optimal viable use of a heritage asset, reuse of redundant or disused buildings, and subdivision of an existing building or if the building is of exceptional design. The site

is located adjacent to settlement limits, including large amounts of residential dwellings on previously developed land. As such, the proposal will not result in isolated new dwellings and will comply with paragraph 84 of the NPPF.

Loss of the existing dwellinghouse and residential garden

42. The single dwelling and outbuilding which would be demolished are of little architectural value and therefore its demolition as a result of the proposal is not resisted in principle. Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy notes that loss of dwellings will not be supported, however in this case there would be a net gain of 17 dwellings.

43. Policy TB06 of the MDD states that development of private residential gardens will be accepted where:

a) The proposal makes a positive contribution to the character of the area in terms of:

- i. The relationship of the existing built form and spaces around buildings within the surrounding area;*
- ii. A layout which integrates with the surrounding area with regard to the built up coverage of each plot, building line(s), rhythm of plot frontages, parking areas, and*
- iii. Existing pattern of openings and boundary treatments on the site frontage*
- iv. Providing appropriate hard and soft landscaping, particularly at site boundaries*
- v. Compatibility with the general building height within the surrounding area*
- vi. The materials and elevational detail are of high quality, and where appropriate distinctive and/ or complementary*

b) The application site provides a site of adequate size and dimensions to accommodate the development proposed in terms of the setting and spacing around buildings, amenity space, landscaping and space for access roads and parking

c) The proposal includes access, which meets appropriate highway standards

d) The proposal does not lead to unacceptable tandem development

e) The design and layout minimises exposure of existing private boundaries to public areas and avoids the need for additional physical security measures

44. Many of the above matters relate to other material considerations that will be discussed later in this report. Additionally, many of the above matters will also be required to be assessed more thoroughly at Reserved Matters stage where details are finalised. However, the existence of Policy TB06 inherently supports the development of private residential gardens in principle, subject to these wider criteria being met. This is echoed by policy D3 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan.

Conclusion of principle of development

45. The application proposal is located within the designated countryside, but adjacent to the development limits of Crowthorne. The proposed development does not satisfy any of the exceptions set out in Policy CP11 concerning development beyond development limits in countryside locations. The application is thereby contrary to these aspects of the development plan.

46. By virtue of the council's current housing land supply position, the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the NPPF at paragraph 11 is now engaged in the decision-making process, whereas paragraph 14 is not. Accordingly, an assessment will need to be made of whether any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole (the tilted balance).
47. This balancing exercise will be undertaken in context of past over supply, which acts to temper the weight to be attached to the benefits of additional housing in the tilted balance.
48. It is noted that the proposed development is situated where future occupiers would have a degree of access to services and facilities within a modest development location and higher order settlements via public transport. The application site encompasses the promoted site 5FI024, which was assessed in the HELAA as potentially suitable for development and has been proposed as a housing allocation in the emerging LPU. The tempered tilted balance will be returned to in the planning balance section of this report.

Affordable Housing:

49. MDD Local Plan policy TB05 (Housing Mix) requires that residential development should provide an appropriate density and mix of accommodation reflecting the character of the area assessed on a site-by-site basis and reflecting the Council's Housing Strategy and Affordable Housing SPD. The MDD Local Plan and Affordable Housing SPD suggest a guide mix, to be considered in conjunction with the latest information from the Housing Register.
50. The housing mix has been indicatively demonstrated on the proposed Site layout however this is subject to change at reserved matters. At present, the following mix is shown in Table 1 below, with a mixture of semi-detached and detached dwellings which is an adequate range of dwelling types. Paragraph 5.2 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan highlights that Finchampstead is predominantly an area that attracts people wanting to buy family homes.

Housing Type	Quantity (Market Housing)	Quantity (Affordable Housing)
3 bedroom (semi-detached)	0	2
3 bedroom (detached)	4	1
4 bedroom (detached)	2	3
5 bedroom (detached)	5	1
TOTAL	11	7

Table 1: Proposed Housing Mix

51. It is also noted that the Council's most up-to-date Local Housing Needs Assessment (November 2023) shows a marked shift in identified market housing need towards larger units. In this case the proposal would be providing 3, 4 and 5 bedroom units for which there is an identified need. As such, for the purposes of this outline application, the indicative mix of dwelling types and sizes is accepted with a mix of

three, four and five bedroom homes. However, this is subject to full Reserved Matters layout which may alter size and typology.

52. Policy CP5 of the Core Strategy states that affordable housing must reflect the sizes and types that meet the proven needs of people who are not able to compete in the general housing market. It also states that the threshold for affordable housing is 5 dwellings or more for residential sites of 0.16 hectares or larger. The site exceeds this threshold and therefore there is a requirement for the provision of affordable housing.
53. To meet the requirements of Policy CP5 of the Core Strategy, a minimum of 40% of the total number of units (net) should be provided as affordable housing. This equates to 7 dwellings of the proposed additional 18 dwellings. As can be seen in the above table 1, a policy compliant Affordable Housing contribution is proposed.
54. The Council's preference is for onsite affordable housing in the first instance, with a 70:25:5 Social Rent: First Homes: Shared Ownership housing tenure split in line with our policy. Therefore, it is expected to see a tenure split of 5 x Social Rent, 1 x First Homes and 1 x Shared Ownership.
55. The applicant is proposing 3 x 3-bed, 3 x 4-bed and 1 x 5-bed as affordable housing. This is accepted by the Council's Housing Team.
56. All affordable housing units will need to be built in accordance with the standards requirements and latest guidance issued by Homes England and/ or the Regulator of Social Housing, meet the national space standards and conform to building regulation M4(2) (or any other applicable regulation) to ensure the provision of lifetime homes which are adaptable to varying needs.
57. The affordable units should be transferred to the Council's Local Housing Company (Wokingham Housing Limited) or one of the Council's preferred Registered Provider (RP) partners for a price that will enable the RP or Local Housing Company to deliver the affordable housing without the need for public subsidy.
58. The Affordable Housing requirements, as outlined above, will be secured via a S106 obligation. It will secure 7 dwellings as Affordable Housing, with the final mix to be determined following Reserved Matters when dwelling types and sizes are fixed. Subject to delivery of these affordable units, the proposal will offer a variety of housing options, mix of dwelling and affordable housing, and therefore comply with the above local policy and national planning guidance. This material social benefit is afforded significant weight in the overall planning balance.

Impact on Landscape/ Countryside

59. Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP3 require a high quality design that respects its context. This requirement is amplified by MDDL Policies CC03 and TB21 which require development proposals to protect and enhance the Borough's Green Infrastructure, retaining existing trees, hedges and other landscape features wherever possible and incorporating high quality - ideally native – planting as an integral part of any scheme, within the context of the Council's Landscape Character Assessment. Core Strategy policy CP11 criteria 2 states that proposals should not lead to 'excessive encroachment' within the countryside and policy TB21 of the MDD

requires that proposals shall retain or enhance the condition, character and features that contribute to the landscape.

60. Policy CC02 of the MDD states that planning permission for proposals at the edge of settlements will only be granted where they can demonstrate that the development, including boundary treatments, is within development limits and respects the transition between the built-up area and the open countryside by taking account of the character of the adjacent countryside and landscape.
61. Policy D2 of the FNDP states that proposals should be located and designed to maintain the separation of settlements and to complement the characteristics of the landscape in the immediate locality.
62. The majority of the site is located within landscape character area (LCA) M1 'Finchampstead Forested and Settled Sands' which is a high quality landscape with moderate sensitivity and a low capacity for change. The character area stretches from Crowthorne in the east and to Rooks Nest POS in the west. The M1 LCA is characterised by large swathes of interconnected forestry and woodland which dominates the area over farmland, and includes lakes such as Kings Mere.
63. Lower Wokingham Road is arguably one of the 'rides' which are a distinctive feature of the M1 character area that were created through the Royal Forest of Windsor in the 18th C. The rides impart a strong linear character to the landscape and have provided the framework for a strong settlement character of low density, mostly detached dwellings lining the rides and within the settlement area and some areas of more post-war suburban development of unremarkable character.
64. The M1 LCA is accessible for recreation with parks and open spaces connected by a network of footpaths and bridleways. The landscape is highly enclosed except for views along the rides that are framed by mature Oak trees, many of which are protected and highly valued in the landscape and includes some Veteran trees. The landscape character of the rides extends along Wokingham Road and includes the site where there are several woodland, area, and single protected trees including Oak, Birch, Scots Pine and other non-native conifers.
65. The settlement pattern of the rides is generally low density dwellings in modest to large plots where there are occasional wooded gaps between areas of settlement. A sense of tranquillity and remoteness are noted as a 'Valuable Landscape Attributes' of the M1 LCA, and are relevant to the site, being highly influenced by large areas of woodland.
66. The key issues affecting the M1 LCA pertinent to the site include woodland management, pressure for new residential development inside and outside the area that impact the landscape character. Continued pressure for settlement expansion, infill and densification within the existing settlements leading to habitat loss, increase of traffic affecting the tranquillity of the area.
67. The Landscape Strategy for the M1 LCA is to conserve and enhance existing character. In terms of development, the aim is to conserve and enhance the rural setting and gaps between settlements and maintain the low density domestic character of development.

68. The Landscape Guidelines for the M1 LCA relevant to this site include;

*Conserve and enhance the integration of urban edges through wooded boundaries and large-species trees and maintain the important vistas along rides.
Enhance sense of place through careful planning and design (including siting, massing, scale, materials and landscape – and sensitive lighting to retain dark skies at night).*

69. The WBC Trees & Landscape Officer is not in support of the proposals, however it is noted their comments are focused on the proposed site layout and design which in their view do not create a sense of place with minimal landscape enhancements within the layout, and as result does not integrate adequately within the landscape character of the area. As previously mentioned, the Landscape Strategy for M1 LCA is to conserve and enhance the existing character such as forestry and woodland, the rural setting and gaps between settlements. The Officer view is that the proposal is on a brownfield site with an existing landscape framework to most of the boundaries that creates a sense of enclosure. These treelined boundaries are shown to be retained and enhanced, particularly noting all the trees are off-site and most of them protected by TPO. The main visual receptors are identified as being users of the footpath on Lower Wokingham Road and road users in the vicinity and surrounding properties, and the development could suitably integrate within the wider landscape, and not be detrimental to it, given its containment, with the provision and securing of additional landscaping to contribute and enhance the visual landscape character of the area. A detailed landscape strategy including boundary treatment would be secured via condition and discussed at Reserved Matters stage.

70. Furthermore, the site is in close proximity to the settlement, forming the settlement edge, surrounded by residential development on all sides, and therefore the impact on the countryside is reduced and would not be an unusual or uncommon development within the immediate residential landscape, despite its current countryside designation.

71. In addition, as this site is allocated in the RGS, it was envisaged, and accepted through the HELAA exercise, that a residential development on this site has the opportunity to broadly conform with the existing settlement form and landscape character. It would also not lead to the physical or perceived coalescence, or unduly compromise the separate identity of settlements.

Design and Site Layout

72. Policy TB06 of the MDD Local Plan seeks to avoid inappropriate development of residential gardens where there is harm to the local area. Permission would only be granted where there is a positive contribution to the built form and surrounding spaces, integration with the layout of the surrounding area, appropriate hard and soft landscaping, amenity space, building separation and compatibility with the general building height.

73. Policy D1 and D3 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan echoes a number of the above.

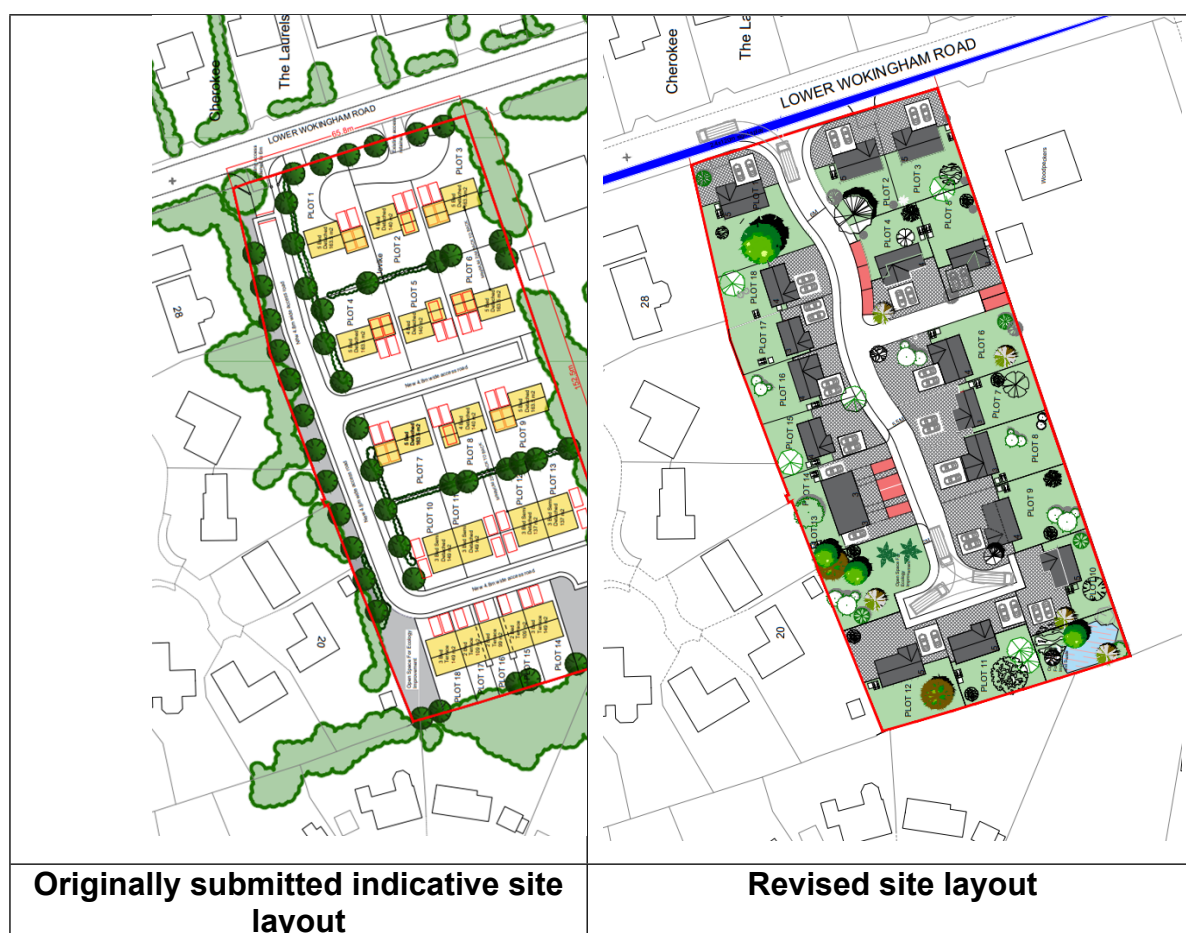
74. Policy CP3 states that development are of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area together with a high quality of design.

75. This outline planning application is accompanied by an indicative site layout. It is noted that this is an outline application with all matters reserved for future consideration, including layout, and so it is subject to change. As such, whilst comments can be made on this indicative layout, this may not be the final layout.

76. During the course of the application, the scheme has been amended in line with feedback received following consultation. The following points were raised:

- Access should be repositioned away from the northern boundary to mitigate impact on neighbouring properties
- Reduce the proposed level of roads within the site
- Proposed terraced dwellings backing onto Little Fryth appear cramped and do not reflect existing pattern of development
- Overall improvement to the layout to reflect the local character

77. For comparison, the original layout and proposed layout are below:



78. The revised proposed site layout for 18 dwellings indicates that a single access cul-de-sac road, fairly central within the site, would run east to west across the site, with a smaller secondary road emanating from this to give access to plots 4 & 5, and with the majority of rear gardens backing or side onto the northern and southern boundaries. Dwellings are generally shown to be oriented so that they would address

and provide frontages to the streets and would face out towards the boundaries. Moreover, when looking at the development in the context of the Lower Wokingham Road street scene, dwellings on plots 1-3 have been orientated to face the main street. This is in keeping with other dwellings elsewhere on Lower Wokingham Road which face the public highway. Dwellings are also indicated to be set back from the frontage to allow for appropriate landscaping, particularly towards the eastern side facing the main road, which will contribute to retain the verdant character of Lower Wokingham Road.

79. It is noted that the WBC Trees & Landscape Officer has raised objection to the proposal, which can be summarised in that they are of the opinion the scheme does not create a sense of place in the design layout, with minimal landscape enhancements, and no space made available to create a sense of place where swales, drainage pond, ecological enhancement areas and on site landscaping that is an essential part of placemaking.
80. Officers disagree, noting that within the site layout which is only indicative at this stage, there are opportunities for landscape buffers between the dwellings and the roads and within rear gardens of dwellings adjoining rear gardens of neighbouring properties. There is also an area towards the north-west proposed as an open space for ecology improvements, which again provides additional landscape and contributes to break areas of hardstanding within the site. It is also noted that at present, the site is mainly made up of either hardstanding surfaces or grassland; conversely, the proposal would seek opportunities to enhance the local context through the provision of landscape/ verdant areas. This is a positive aspect of the scheme.
81. Notwithstanding the above and despite the objections raised by the Council's Landscape Officer on the proposal, the layout of the of the housing element of the proposal and landscape strategy are indicative at Outline Application and therefore do not require further consideration at this stage.
82. The proposal constitutes development of part of a residential garden although this does not imply that the site is defined as greenfield land. The grain of development of this section of Lower Wokingham Road comprises of detached houses on medium to large plots. The proposed development is considered to maintain this underlying grain due to the proposed size of the plots which fairly reflects those directly opposite the site and further east along The Brambles. The indicative layout also demonstrates adequate separation distances from neighbouring properties and would have an overall building height commensurate with surrounding properties. Overall, the proposal is considered to not be in conflict with the aims of policy TB06.
83. Policy CC02 of the MDD Local Plan states that development at the edge of settlements is acceptable where it is demonstrated that it is within development limits and respects the transition between the built-up area and the open countryside by taking account of the character of the adjacent countryside and landscape.
84. The site is located within the countryside but adjoins the settlement boundary to the north, east and west (see Figure 2 above). Officers are mindful that a suitable density is expected to highlight a natural transition from built form to rural landscape. R10 of the Borough Design Guide states that an assessment of an appropriate density must

be design-led as well as considering the number of units per hectare to ensure that the development relate well to local character.

85. In this regard, when looking at surrounding residential development, on the northern boundary of the site is Ashdale Park development which equates to 11 dwellings per hectare; to the west is the development of Little Fryth with 11 dwellings per hectare. To the east, dwellings along Lower Wokingham Road equate to 12 dwellings/hectare; those along The Brambles equate to approximately 25 dwellings per hectare and the residential neighbourhood of Bramley Grove further south equates to 14.6dph (all densities are approximate).
86. The proposed density of the scheme would equate to 18 dwellings per hectare which, albeit higher than some of the above neighbourhood developments, it is still comparable to those residential developments to the east of the site and which extend all along these two parallel arteries (Lower Wokingham Road & The Brambles), and so would not see the introduction of a materially greater or inappropriate density on the edge of the countryside. Furthermore, it should be noted that this is an outline proposal where the number of dwellings (up to 18) and layout are only indicative at this stage and subject to change once all details of the proposal are finalised. Officers are of the view that the proposal would reflect a suitably density which would be appropriate for this site, especially given that the mature landscape around the site boundaries which is mainly off-site would be retained, thereby providing instant visual screening to the proposal. This density is also comparable with other edge of settlement or countryside development sites elsewhere in the borough.
87. Many objections have been received owing to density of the development, which is a calculation made based on site area and number of dwelling, however this should not be confused with the quantum of dwellings, which is the amount of dwellings proposed. The above analysis demonstrates that the proposed density is commensurate with those of surrounding developments. Additionally, concerns have been raised that the proposal will see the amount of dwellings exceeding the site allocation which is a separate matter and have already been discussed above in the report.
88. Additionally, the location of the site is also important in providing a transition or edge of settlement character in line with policy CC02. However, as previously discussed and can be seen in Figure 2 above, whilst in the countryside, the southern and western sides of the application site include existing residential development of Hollybush Ride and Woodpeckers house and as such, do not represent open countryside. Consequently, the importance of the site as a transitional edge is reduced.
89. Overall, the indicative site layout demonstrates that a development of up to 18 dwellings could be suitably accommodated on site and a layout that is compatible with surroundings and would be suitable on the settlement edge, in line with MDD policies CC02 and TB06. Full consideration of these matters would be made at the time a Reserved Matters application is brought forward.

Scale

90. Policy TB06 of the MDD states development should have compatibility with the general building height within the surrounding area. This is echoed by policy CP3 of

the Core Strategy. Furthermore, in the FNDP, policy D1 states that building heights should reflect the character and appearance of the parish and 3 storey development housing will only be supported within the area of Strategic Development Location (SDL). As this site is not within the SDL, building heights should be two storey. Officers will consider this when assessing any Reserved Matter for scale.

91. Whilst no details have been provided at this stage regarding the design/scale of the proposed dwellings as this would form part of the subsequent reserved matters application, the Indicative Site Layout suggests that the site would comprise of two storey dwellings given the number of bedrooms proposed. Given the location of the site outside of the settlement boundary and in the countryside, it is considered that careful consideration will need to be paid to the scale and bulk of the buildings that will come forward on this site, including the proposed heights particularly taking into consideration the topography of the site which slopes down towards the back (west) of the site and the visibility of the dwellings from the adjacent Little Fryth development. Whilst this matter is not for consideration at this stage, it is fully expected that any future reserved matters application will have given due consideration to this in the design of the houses that would come forward and will be carefully scrutinised at that stage.

Appearance

92. Whilst no details have been provided at this stage regarding the appearance of the proposed dwellings and this is not for consideration at this outline stage, it is expected that any future reserved matters application provides a character analysis of the characteristics of the surrounding built form including key design features, so that the proposal brought forward is of high quality building design that is compatible with and complimentary to the character of the local area. This is of particular importance in this countryside location, where careful attention will need to be paid to the design and materials used on the buildings. Whilst elements of local detail and character may be appropriate in the future designs of the dwellings, it will be important to have due regard to the countryside location of the site and it will be expected that the design of the dwellings will be sympathetic in this respect.
93. A condition requiring the submission of material details for dwellings and hardstanding areas (parking areas and roads) will also be included to ensure that those chosen will be suitable and complementary to both the countryside setting and adjacent settlement.

Boundary Treatment

94. Policy CC03 of the MDD states that development should make a positive contribution in terms of boundary treatment on site frontages. Policy D2 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan focuses on appropriate and traditional boundary treatments being incorporated into development to complement the characteristics of the landscape.
95. Appropriate boundary treatment is essential on all elevations in this countryside location, along with the benefit of protecting neighbours on the northern, western and southern elevations. Boundary treatment details will be secured via condition and will also form part of reserved matters details.

Amenity of Future Occupiers:

96. The submitted Indicative Site Layout demonstrates that all proposed dwellings could accord with the separation distances advocated within the Council's Borough Design Guide, e.g. back-to-back, side-to-flank and front-to-front arrangements. The Indicative Site Layout plan demonstrates that the proposed dwellings could also be provided with a suitable private rear garden of 11m in depth in accordance with the Council's standards. It is noted that plots 13-15 and plot 10 are shown indicatively as having substandard garden depths. However, all these plots have excessive space to their frontage so they could easily be relocated to allow for the 11m minimum garden depths, and in any case, this is an outline application where the Proposed Site Layout is indicative only, and final separation and garden distances will be required to be defined in detailed plans to be assessed in full at the reserved matters stage.
97. Moreover, all proposed dwellings would be required to meet, or exceed, the minimum size standards set out in the National Space Standards. Again, this will need to be demonstrated at the detailed reserved matters stage but the submitted Indicative Site Layout plan does not indicate any problems in this respect. Hence, the proposal is in accordance with Core Strategy policy CP3 and with guidance contained within the Council's Borough Design Guide with regards the amenity of future occupiers in respect of the above issues.
98. A condition will be applied ensuring that all dwellings shall meet internal space standards outlined in the Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standards (2015) when plans are submitted for Reserved Matters to ensure dwellings would be of a suitable size for future occupiers.

Neighbouring Amenity:

99. Core Strategy policy CP3 requires that new development should be of a high quality of design that does not cause detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users. Separation distance standards for new residential development are set out in section 4.7 of the Council's Borough Design Guide. These include a requirement for a minimum back-to-back distance of 22m; front-to-front 10m; flank-to-boundary 1m; and flank-to-rear 12m; to maintain privacy and limit the sense of enclosure.
100. The application site is surrounded by residential dwellings to the north, south and west. To the north there are dwellings part of the Ashdale Park development. The back-to-back relationship between plots 13-18 and these dwellings is approximately 24-31m, whereas the flank-to-rear separation distance (plots 1 & 12) is in excess of 12m and thus compliant with the requirements of the BDG.
101. The closest neighbouring property to the south is Woodpeckers, and the flank-to-boundary relationship (plots 3 & 5 with Woodpeckers) is in excess of 1m and there are circa 13-14m flank-to-flank separation distance, which whilst not specified in the Borough Design Guide, is considered an adequate separation to mitigate any potential impact upon these neighbouring amenities.
102. To the west there are dwellings facing Little Fryth. The back-to-back separation distances between plots 11-12 and these dwellings is circa 24-38m, well in excess of the minimum 22m set out in the Borough Design Guide.

103. These adequate separation distances combined with suitable landscaping and screening/ boundary treatments to be secured by conditions, will ensure that the proposed development will not result in a detrimental loss of light, overbearing or overlooking impacts upon the living conditions of adjoining properties. Notwithstanding, full consideration of neighbouring impacts will be made at Reserved Matters.
104. Officers also have to be mindful that dwellings within the site itself also need to be acceptable in relation to one another, and this has been already addressed in the previous section of this report. In addition, from the indicative site plan, most dwellings would have the similar rear and front building lines meaning that development will not extend beyond one another to compromise access to natural light or create a sense of enclosure among them.
105. Overall, in principle, development could suitably relate to one another and to neighbouring properties in terms of separation distances and not having adverse overbearing and privacy or light implications to a harmful degree. However, this would be more thoroughly assessed at reserved matters stage where the site layout is finalised.
106. Measures for protecting nearby residents during the demolition and construction phases are detailed within the Environmental Health section of the report.

Disabled Access:

107. In determining this application, the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, or belief.
108. Policy CP2 of the Core Strategy also seeks to ensure that new development contributes to the provision of sustainable and inclusive communities, including for aged persons, children and the disabled. 10–20% of all dwellings should be to Lifetime Homes standards in accordance with Policy CP5 of the Core Strategy and Policy TB05 of the MDD Local Plan.
109. In this case it equates to 2-3 dwellings. Although the Lifetime Homes standards has been replaced by the new National Technical Housing standards, the need to design and build accessible and adaptable accommodation remains integral to future neighbourhood planning. It will be conditioned that this percentage of dwellings are in line with M4(2) of Building Regulations which replaced the Lifetime Homes standard.

Access and Movement:

Vehicle and Cycle Parking

110. Policy CC07 and Appendix 2 of the MDD Local Plan stipulates minimum off street car parking standards, including provision for charging facilities.

111. Even though this is an outline application, highways requested that the parking calculator be submitted based on an indicative masterplan and housing mix. This assessment has resulted in 34 allocated spaces and 9 visitor/ unallocated spaces. This is in line with parking standards. All parking spaces meet minimum dimension of 5m x 2.5m which is welcomed.
112. There are some concerns raised regarding the 2 unallocated spaces by plot 5 and questions whether they would be utilised due to their location, and with the access to parking spaces for plots 2 & 3. However, overall the Officer is content with the level of parking based on the indicative layout and it demonstrates that a policy compliant level of car parking can be achieved on the site for 18 dwellings. Additional details can be further assessed as part of the Reserved Matters application should this application is approved. A condition will be attached requiring details for car and motorcycling parking alongside the reserved matters application along with a parking management plan.
113. It should be noted that each dwelling would also be equipped with an electric vehicle charging point. However, this is not required to be secured via condition as electric vehicle charging provision is now covered by Building Control Regulations Approved Document S. Notwithstanding, the applicant has agreed to follow these requirements.
114. It is proposed that cycle parking will be provided in storage sheds in rear gardens with direct access which is welcomed. As part of reserved matters, the cycle store sizes will need to be in line with the Borough standards. Final details will be secured via condition.

Traffic Generation/ Impact

115. Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP6 require consideration of the travel impacts of development, emphasising the importance of reducing the need to travel, particularly by private car indicating that new residential development should mitigate any adverse effects on the existing highway network by providing for alternative, sustainable forms of transport.
116. The application is accompanied by a Highways Statement which has been submitted within the application process to respond comments from WBC Highways Officer.
117. The WBC Highways Officer has indicated that for this proposal of up to 18 dwellings, it is expected that there would be a two-way total of 10 vehicles in the AM peak hour and 9 vehicles in the PM peak hour. This would generate a two-way trip every 6min. It is therefore considered that there would be little impact on the highway network caused by the proposed level of trips from the development, and no concerns are raised by the WBC Highways Officer in this respect.

Access, Visibility and Internal Site Roads

118. There are currently 3 points of access to the site. The existing southern access is proposed to be maintained to provide access to plots 2 & 3. The other two accesses are proposed to be stopped up (which will be secured via condition).

119. A new access to the site is proposed approximately 10m to the north of the existing southern access. The new access would measure 6m in width, narrowing down to 5.5m. The new road would have a 2m wide pavements on both sides and connecting to Lower Wokingham Road. Dropped kerbs and tactile paving would need to be included, however this would be part of the detailed design and will be secured via condition. Pavement is introduced all along the northern side of the road and in front of plots 2 & 4.
120. A drawing showing visibility splays of 2.4m x 120m has been provided for the proposed access which is acceptable for the speed limit of the road (40mph). Any landscaping in the visibility splays must be maintained to be less than 0.6m. This will be secured by planning condition. Pedestrian visibility splays (2m x 2m) for private driveways would need to be included in any reserve matters application. This will be secured by planning condition.
121. A S106 legal obligation will be secured to ensure that internal site roads are properly managed. The roads will be required to be built to Council adoptable standards. If the site road is to remain private, the legal agreement will secure details of management company set up to look after the maintenance of the road, level of money set aside for maintenance, alongside the Borough's inspection fee and the APC bond.
122. If the site roads are to be adopted, these would need to be delivered through s38 agreement with the Borough. The Borough would also require agreement on inspection fees and commuted sums. The adoption plans, fees and commuted sums would need to be included in the s106 agreement.
123. Overall, the principle of the accesses to serve a residential development of up to 18 dwellings is accepted in the proposed locations, and no further concerns are raised by WBC Highways Officer. Nonetheless, a condition requiring more detailed design will be secured via condition.

Site Sustainability

124. Paragraph 109 of the NPPF acknowledges that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas.
125. Policy CP6 of the Core Strategy states that planning permission will be granted for schemes that:
- a) Provide for sustainable forms of transport to allow choice;
 - b) Are located where there are or will be at the time of development choices in the mode of transport available and which minimise the distance people need to travel;
 - c) Improve the existing infrastructure network, including road, rail and public transport, enhance facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, including provision for those with reduced mobility, and other users;
126. The Borough Design Guide SPD states 'if places are to be sustainable then the aim should be to create: Walkable neighbourhoods, with a range of facilities within 10 minutes walking distance of residential areas, which encourage people to travel on foot or by bicycle.' Walkable neighbourhoods are defined in Manual for Streets

(MfS) as those typically characterised by having a range of facilities within 10 minutes walking distance from residential areas. MfS clarifies that 10 minutes walking distance is approximately 800 metres.

127. The Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) document 'providing for journeys on foot' advises that 400 metres is a desirable walking distance outside of city centres; 800 metres is stated as acceptable, and 1,200 metres is the preferred maximum. The document clarifies that the suggested walking distances are for pedestrians without mobility impairment. These distances are also cited in the Wokingham Highways guidance Living Streets.

Walking

128. There is a pedestrian footway on both sides of Lower Wokingham Road, which provides a link to the centre of Crowthorne to the south and is well lit and is directly linking the site to the Crowthorne station, which is approximately 1.2Km walking distance from the site and considered an acceptable walking distance. There is a parade of shops and services on Dukes Ride near to Crowthorne station which would fall within acceptable walking distance (average 1.2Km) including post office, pharmacy and coffee/take away shops. California Crossroads local centre is approximately 2.2Km walking distance from the site.

129. It is acknowledged that the majority of the local services are outside of an acceptable walking distance (above 10min walk), however there are still some services within accessible walking distance which means the site is not wholly unsustainable for walking to nearby facilities. Furthermore, the site would be no less sustainable in this regard than other peripheral parts of the Modest Development Location, including those immediately adjacent to the site along Lower Wokingham Road.

Buses

130. The supporting text to policy CP6 of the Core Strategy sets out the requirement of a good bus service: a) At least a thirty-minute service frequency during peak times (7:00 to 9:00 and 16:00 to 19:00 Monday to Saturday); and b) At least an hourly service frequency during off-peak hours (9:00 to 16:00 and 19:00 to 22:00 Monday to Saturday and between 7:00 and 22:00 on Sundays).

131. The nearest bus stops are located on Nine Mile Ride (at Kings Mere), approximately 650m walking distance from the site, which serves buses number 125, 125A & 125B between Wokingham Town Centre and Crowthorne with an extended Saturday service to The Meadows. There is typically an hourly service during weekdays and Saturdays with no services running on a Sunday and Bank Holidays.

132. It is acknowledged that the bus service does not meet the criteria set out above and cannot be considered as a 'good service'. There is no 30-minute frequency during peak there are no services on Sundays. Notwithstanding, as previously mentioned the Crowthorne station is within an acceptable walking distance from the site and providing access to London and Reading.

Cycling

133. Lower Wokingham Road is a relatively straight road and therefore is deemed suitable for the principle of cycling. A walking and cycling strategy will be secured via condition that will secure measures within the development and to improve footway and cycle routes that connect the development with local services and amenities.

Summary on Sustainability

134. There are day-to-day facilities and services within proximity of the site. While some alternative transport modes are not optimal and below standards at present, it would offer some realistic options to some residents of the proposed development, especially commuting via train and through appropriate conditions, the sustainability of the site would improve.
135. The above conclusion is consistent with the HELAA assessment that acknowledges the site has a reasonable access to a range of services and facilities. However, public transport facilities are limited. Notwithstanding this, there were other factors that resulted in the site being part of the draft allocation. The Council's Highways department are content with the proposal in terms of site sustainability.

Other Highway Matters

136. Highway lighting will be secured via condition when final layouts are known. However, the applicant will have to be mindful of any ecological implications lighting would have on the environment.
137. A construction management plan will be secured via condition to ensure that the development itself does not cause any unacceptable disturbance on the surrounding area during the construction phase.

Impact on Trees:

138. Policy CC03 of the MDD seeks to protect existing trees and promote opportunities for new soft landscaping.
139. Policy IRS6 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan states that development proposals should seek to retain mature or important trees, groups of trees or woodland on site. If trees are to be removed, a similar replacement should be provided in terms of local species and keeping with the character of the area.
140. The application is accompanied by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment including Tree Constraint Plan (Andrew Day Arboricultural Consultancy Ltd, Ref: AD22723, dated 12/12/2023). It shows that trees around the site are mostly confined to the site boundaries, and they are all off-site except for a Red Maple (T16).
141. Dense tree planting is present to the south and western boundaries which are within the adjacent neighbouring plots but influence the application site. These areas of trees are protected to the south by a woodland Tree Preservation Order (TPO-1149/2006) which consists of a mix of evergreens and deciduous broad trees such as Hemlock, Oak, Scots Pine, Birch. These trees are growing along the boundary and labelled G2 in the Tree Survey. They are 15m in height. Adjacent to the western

site boundary are mature trees protected by woodland TPO0325/1987 consisting of Scots Pine and Birch labelled at G1 which are 14m in height and consist of Birch, Bay laurel, Oak and Pine. To the north of the site an Area TPO 90/1975 extends along the adjacent eastern plot boundary facing Lower Wokingham Road and extends into the site including to include just 1 'B' quality Oak tree.

142. It is not clear from the Indicative Site Layout whether the red maple tree to the front of the site would have to be removed to facilitate the proposals. Notwithstanding, it is noted that this tree is adjacent to the existing southern access which is proposed to be retained for access to plots 2 & 3, and so its retention can be achieved within the detailed site layout to be finalised at Reserved Matters.

143. The WBC Trees & Landscape Officer has reviewed the submitted Arboricultural information and raises no objections in principle to the indicative layout (in terms of impact on trees) which shows a development of up to 18 dwellings can be accommodated in relation to trees on or immediately adjacent to the site. However, revised tree reports and surveys are required in relation to the final layout and drainage details (to ensure drainage will not implicate impact on the root protection areas of protected trees), including tree protection. This will be secured via condition.

144. The WBC Trees & Landscape Officer also points out that the trees along the southern boundary will overshadow the site and particularly the rear gardens of plots proposed towards this boundary, therefore it will be important to include a shading diagram for the purposes of the site layout. This will be required at Reserved Matters as part of the detailed design and will be secured via condition.

Ecology:

145. Policy TB23 of the MDD Local Plan requires the incorporation of new biodiversity features, buffers between habitats and species of importance and integration with the wider green infrastructure network. Policy CP7 of the Core Strategy states that sites designated as of importance for nature conservation at an international or national level will be conserved and enhanced and inappropriate development will be resisted.

146. The application is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, ref: R3621/c, December 2023), and a Bat Activity Assessment (ACJ ecology, September 2024). The application site itself is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory ecological designations.

Protected Species

147. The submitted ecological reports include survey results relating to a number of protected species including bats, birds, badgers, and reptiles. Accordingly, a number of recommendations and measures are set out in regard to these species, with mitigation strategies and compensatory measures identified. The WBC Ecology Officer recommends that these mitigation measures are worked up in detail and their implementation secured as part of a condition relating to site specific construction environmental management plan (CEMP). The applicant's ecologist has also made recommendations about lighting for light sensitive species, particularly in relation to the boundaries of the site. As this is an outline application it is reasonable to resolve

these details via condition. The WBC Ecology Officer is satisfied that subject to the inclusion of the recommended conditions, the proposed development will maintain the local favourable conservation status for protected species in line with local policies CP7 and TB23.

148. Biodiversity enhancements for each dwelling, such as bird and bat boxes will be secured via condition. Despite neighbouring concerns, there is no evidence before Officers that the development would have a harmful impact on wildlife and this has not been a concern raised by the WBC Ecology Officer.
149. Likewise, there is also the potential for species enhancements within the site and as such, a condition will be imposed relating to species specific enhancements and ecological permeability in line with policy TB23 of the MDD Local Plan and the NPPF.
150. With regard to reptiles, these are unlikely to be affected due to work only being planned to take place within amenity grassland and hardstanding.
151. With regard to bats, the Bat Activity Assessment report comprising two emergence bat activity surveys, concludes that no bats were recorded emerging from the buildings or trees on site, therefore it is highly unlikely that a bat roost is present on site, and so the proposed works are highly unlikely to have a negative impact on bats.
152. With regard to badgers, the Ecological report confirmed no records of badgers on the site. The neutral grassland which covers the majority of the site is of low ecological value. It is noted the concerns raised from local residents with respect to badgers presence being recorded within adjacent sites (i.e. no. 20 Ashdale Park). However, this in itself does not confirm the presence of badgers (or their setts) within the application site boundaries.

Great Crested Newts

153. The NatureSpace Ecologist, the statutory consultee for Great Crested Newts, confirmed that the preliminary ecological appraisal (JohnWenman Ecological consultancy, Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Hillside (formerly Jovike), December 2023) and the subsequent negative eDNA result for the nearest pond to the site has adequately assessed the potential impacts to great crested newts and their habitats. Notwithstanding, in the red impact zone there is potentially suitable habitat and a likelihood of great crested newt presence, with records found in the surrounding landscape. Therefore, it is recommended that some basic reasonable avoidance measures are followed and submitted for approval in the form of a precautionary working method statement which will be secured via a pre-commencement condition and will further reduce the risk of impacting Great Crested Newts and their habitats should they be present in the area.

Biodiversity Net Gain

154. Policy TB23 of the MDD states that development proposals should result in an overall net gain but does not specify an amount. The Council's Climate Change Interim Policy Position Statement (2022) updates the Council's sustainability policies in light of the Council's declared climate emergency. It should be noted that the

statement is not policy, or part of the statutory development plan, however its purpose is to emphasise that climate change is a material planning consideration. In this document, it states that developments will be expected to investigate opportunities to provide a 10% biodiversity net gain. Policy IRS5 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan also states that developments should provide a biodiversity net gain of at least 10%. Furthermore, it should be noted that a mandatory 10% biodiversity net gain is a requirement of major applications from 12th February 2024.

155. A Revised Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain metric calculation (calculation iteration Ver 2, 22/07/2024) alongside a revised Biodiversity Net Gain Design Stage Report (Southern Ecological Solutions, revision B, dated 22 July 2024) have been submitted to support this outline application, and has been reviewed by the WBC Ecology Officer. Based on the indicative site layout, it has not been demonstrated that the proposals will result in a net gain.
156. Based on the details provided, the WBC Ecology Officer agrees that the baseline habitat and hedgerow assessment provided is a fair reflection of the condition of the site at the point of application, and that it is unlikely that the site has been degraded in biodiversity value in recent years.
157. The applicant has provided a post-development scenario within the metric. The WBC Ecology Officer indicates that it is reasonable for the local planning authority to conclude that the applicant intends to satisfy the general biodiversity net gain condition through a mixture of on-site and off-site delivery with at least some of the on-site delivery being via creation of medium distinctiveness habitats in public space. The Officer remains concerned that delivery and maintenance of the on-site medium distinctiveness habitats is high risk. Given the significance of this element to satisfy the general biodiversity net gain condition, it is recommended that monitoring of on-site delivery and maintenance throughout the 30 year period is secured via a planning obligation. This will be needed to ensure compliance with an approved habitat management and monitoring plan (HMMP).
158. Subject to the above being secured, the WBC Ecology Officer raises no objection to the application.

Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBH SPA)

159. Policy CP8 of the Core Strategy states that where development is likely to have an effect on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBH SPA), it is required to demonstrate that adequate measures to avoid and mitigate any potential adverse effects are delivered.
160. The site is located within the 5km zone from the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBH SPA). The proposal will result in the net increase of 17 dwellings on site. Policy CP8 states that where there is a net increase in dwellings within 5km of the SPA, an Appropriate Assessment is required to be undertaken to ensure that development would not have an adverse impact on the TBH SPA. The Council, as the competent authority, has to ensure that the Appropriate Assessment is passed before a development is permitted.
161. A monetary contribution towards Suitable Alternative Green Space (SANG) is required per dwelling and this is dependent on the number of bedrooms in each

dwelling. Each dwelling will also have to pay a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) contribution. The rate per dwelling is contained within the Appropriate Assessment and is dependent on the number of bedrooms per dwelling. Whilst Officers have an initial indication of the dwelling mix, this will not be confirmed until Reserved Matters are approved relating to layout and scale.

162. As such, the total contribution is not known at this stage, but rather is indicative. A S106 obligation will secure the mechanism for calculating the SANG and SAMM contribution which means the development passes the Appropriate Assessment/ Habitat Regulations Assessment. The proposal therefore accords with policies CP3 and CP8 of the Core Strategy.

Flood Risk and Drainage:

163. The NPPF and its supporting Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) on 'Flood Risk and Coastal Change' provide guidance on how flood risk should be considered within the planning application process and encourages the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). The NPPF also requires applications to be subject to a Sequential Test, to guide development to areas at the lowest risk of flooding.
164. In addition, Core Strategy Policy CP1 and MDD Local Plan Policies CC09 and CC10 are relevant and establish that new development should avoid increasing and where possible reduce flood risk (from all sources) by first developing in areas with lowest flood risk, carrying out a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) where required, and managing surface water in a sustainable manner. Applications are also required to demonstrate how they have used the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) to determine the suitability of the proposal.
165. The whole of the application site falls within Flood Zone 1 where the risk of flooding is low and whilst the proposed end use for residential dwellings is classified in the NPPF a 'more vulnerable' development, such a use is considered appropriate within Flood Zone 1 without the need for either the Sequential or Exception test to be undertaken.
166. Notwithstanding, as the site area is greater than 1 ha, a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is required, despite the site being located in Flood Zone 1. The application is therefore accompanied by a FRA and Drainage Assessment (TMA, dated January 2024), which concludes that the site is at low risk of flooding from all sources including fluvial, surface water and ground water. Furthermore, the site is allocated within the Local Plan Update (5FI024) and as such, site assessments have been carried out within the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). Overall, the proposal is accepted in principle in terms of flood risk.

Surface Water Drainage Strategy

167. Whilst the application is outline in nature, a drainage strategy accompanies the application and advises that surface water management is proposed through the use of separate soakaways or similar infiltration systems designed according to Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) principles, with each property having its own system. The WBC Flood Risk and Drainage Engineer has requested the submission

of a detailed water drainage strategy which will be secured via a pre-commencement condition.

168. As the final layout of the proposal is not known, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) details are also not yet finalised. However, the submitted Drainage report also outlines a number of potential SuDS measures that could be incorporated into the final layout such as a swale or drainage pond and permeable surfaces for roads, paths, patios etc. These measures are considered satisfactory in principle and would be expected to factor into the proposed scheme. Full SuDS measures will be secured via condition.

169. Many objections have been raised with regard to the difference in site levels between the site and properties facing Little Fryth (circa 3m) and how this could potentially result in drainage and flooding issues for these properties. It is noted that the submitted flood risk and drainage assessment has catered for this difference in site levels. The site is entirely within Flood Zone 1 where the probability of flooding is low, and Thames water has confirmed that there is network infrastructure capacity for both Foul Water and Surface Water from the site. Furthermore, the proposal is for a low density scheme and since all the roads and paths will have permeable surfaces, the houses will be the primary contributor to any water run-off. The indicative site layout indicates an area for a 'swale' as part of a SuDS in order that the future detailed scheme will not be limited by a lack of suitable space.

170. Surface water flooding typically arises following periods of intense rainfall, often of short duration, that is unable to soak into the ground or enter drainage systems. It can run quickly off land and result in localised flooding. The Environment Agency's Flood Map for Surface Water (FMfSW) indicates that the site has a 'very low' risk of surface water flooding (flooding occurring as a result of rainfall) with less than 0.1% AEP. The Wokingham Strategic Flood Risk Assessment similarly indicates a very low potential for surface water flooding. This low potential arises from the geology of the site; the British Geological Survey indicates that the site is underlain by silty fine sands so that water will drain easily into the soil rather than running off. Further clarification has been sought from the applicant who has indicated that from trial pits, and the applicants' own experience on the site, it is clear that the soil across the site is indeed silty and sandy. The earlier trial pits show no evidence of shallow ground water on the site with no water found above 1.5m which was the depth of the trial pits dug.

171. In principle, the development is deemed acceptable from a flooding and drainage perspective. However, a full updated drainage assessment and any required earthworks will be provided at detailed design stage as part of Reserved Matters when the layout is known and this will be secured via condition.

Heritage – Archaeology:

172. Policy TB25 of the MDD states that Where development is likely to affect an area of high archaeological potential or an area which 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.

173. Paragraph 211 of the NPPF (2023) which states that local planning authorities should *'require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible'*.
174. There are potential archaeological implications with this proposed development as demonstrated by Berkshire Archaeology's Historic Environment Record and as highlighted in previous applications for this site (152088, O/2005/6375). The development site lies in an area where few previous archaeological investigations have taken place, however, there is potential in this area stemming from wider landscape prehistoric activity, its proximity to the course of the Devils Highway Roman Road, and to the Medieval origins of Bigshott Rayles. A number of records from the wider area evidence the presence of prehistoric flint tools and Roman artefacts indicating occupation or utilisation of the landscape. A possible prehistoric enclosure to the north of Silverstock Bog and a Bronze Age Barrow to the west, although slightly further afield, indicate that the area has been occupied during these periods. The Devils Highway runs east-west, c.440m to the south of the development, and it is known that Romano-British settlements and activity existed adjacent to this route elsewhere, and therefore should be considered a possibility here. The Bigshott Rayles c.220m to the east at Ravenswood, is shown in mapping as early as 1607 and is believed to have Medieval origins, whilst the original house and deer park are 16th century.
175. Overall the application site falls within an area of archaeological significance and archaeological remains may be damaged by ground disturbance for the proposed development. Berkshire Archaeology has therefore recommended that the following condition is applied to a programme of work including a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), should permission be granted, in order to mitigate the impacts of development. With this included, the principle of development complies with Policy TB25 of the MDD and the final layout of the scheme will need to be informed and compatible with any archaeological remains on site.

Environmental Health:

176. Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy states that development should minimise the emission of pollutants into the wider environment. Pollutants could be in the form of, but not limited to, air pollution, noise pollution and ground contamination. Policy CC06 of the MDD specifically concerns noise impacts of a development.
177. Policy GA1 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan states that development proposals should demonstrate effective planning to mitigate noise and air pollution from traffic.

Contaminated Land

178. There is no indication of historic land contamination within the site. However, the WBC Environmental Health Officer has recommended that an unexpected land contamination condition is applied as a safety measure given the extent of residential development proposed.

Noise

179. No concerns were raised from the Environmental Health Officer regarding noise impacts arising from the proposed development on the existing environment. The nearest significant noise source is the rail line which is over 150m from the proposal site. It is considered that noise levels would be comparable to existing residential areas. Notwithstanding, it is important that future occupiers have a suitable standard of accommodation (as discussed previously), and part of this includes not be subjected to a harmful level of noise, such as road noise. A condition will be applied requesting a noise assessment to be carried out prior to development commencing and a condition will be applied ensuring that noise insulation is installed in dwellings to protect future occupiers from harmful noise levels.
180. It is noted that the Planning, Design and Access Statement refers on page 8 that it is assumed that the proposed dwellings will incorporate air source heat pumps and photovoltaic panels. A condition has therefore been recommended in relation to plant attenuation noise being capped. This is considered necessary given air source heat pumps could be proposed as decentralised energy sources at a later date and could have the potential to result in noise disturbance if not restricted.
181. External lighting will also be conditioned so as not to result in uncapped glare to nearby residents.
182. To protect nearby occupiers from noise disturbance and other environmental health hazards during construction, an hours of work condition will be applied and a construction method statement detailing how the emission of noise, dirt and dust will be controlled during the development, waste/ recycling provision and an asbestos survey owing to the demolition of the existing house on site. With these stringent measures in place, impact on neighbours during the construction phase would be minimised.

Air Quality

183. The site is not located within a designated Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). However, the principles of Policy GA1 in the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan apply which specifically require mitigation from air pollution. As such, based on GA1 of the Neighbourhood Plan, an air quality assessment will be secured via condition to ensure the development does not result in harmfully adverse impacts in terms of air quality and pollution.

Waste Provision:

184. Policy CC04 of the MDD Local Plan requires development to incorporate suitable waste management facilities, including on-site recycling. Green waste provision should also be provided for, although this is an optional facility for individual households.
185. Each dwelling will be responsible for their own waste provision and presenting waste for collection at the appropriate time. However, the development should provide enough capacity within the houses to allow storage of receptacles within their houses on non-collection day. This could be through a bin store in each garden, or in

garages. These details and general management for waste and recycling would be secured via planning condition.

186. It is not conclusively known at this outline stage if the road would be adopted by the Council. The Wokingham Borough Council 'Waste collection advise for developers' does not state that the Council's refuse team will only enter adopted roads, and no comments have been received by the WBC Cleaner and Greener team with information to the contrary. Furthermore, there are examples of developments within the borough that have private roads that are served by refuse lorries. Therefore, it is important to ensure that developments now that are proposing not to offer the roads up for adoption are at least built to adoptable standards which is the case here and so would benefit from waste collection.

187. Based on the above, the proposal is in principle acceptable in relation to waste provision and collection, subject to condition for further waste provision details.

Housing Sustainability:

188. Core Strategy Policy CP1 requires development to contribute towards the goal of achieving zero carbon development by including on-site renewable energy features and minimising energy and water consumption. This is amplified by MDD Local Plan policies CC04: Sustainable design and construction and CC05: Renewable energy and decentralised energy networks and the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (May 2010). As the proposal is for residential of over 1000sqm, Policy CC05 also advises that planning permission will only be granted for such proposals that deliver a minimum 10% reduction in carbon emissions through renewable energy or low carbon technology.

189. Policy ES1 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan outlines environmental standards for residential development. It specifies that major residential development should be designed to achieve carbon neutral homes where this is both practical and viable. It also makes a provision for electric vehicle charging points.

190. It should be noted that the above policies (aside from the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan) are out of date and were written before the Council's declared Climate Emergency. For this reason, the Council produced a Climate Change Interim Policy Position Statement (CCIPPS) (2022) which outlines what is expected of development proposals in light of the climate emergency.

191. In relation to policy requirements outlined in CC04, it should be noted that the Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 has now been withdrawn, and now applicants must meet the interim Future Homes Standard (as required by Building Regulations) of a minimum 31% reduction in emissions, in line with the CCIPPS. This will be secured via condition.

192. Paragraph 164 of the NPPF states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should give significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements through installation of heat pumps and solar panels.

193. To comply with policy CC05 and para 164 of the NPPF, the applicant notes on page 8 of the Planning, Design and Access Statement that decentralised energy

sources will be factored into the development in the form of air source heat pumps and photovoltaic panels. However, full details of decentralised sources are not known at this stage and will be subject to condition. It will be conditioned that the development achieves a 10% energy reduction through renewable technologies is expected to be achieved in addition to the uplifted emissions improvements required through Building Regulations. CC05 makes clear, in the supporting text, that *“the relevant standards in the assessment are those set by Building Regulations at the time of submission of a planning application”*. The uplifted building regulations introduced in June 2022 are the mandatory starting point.

194. Electric vehicle charging points are required as standard by Building Regulations and cycle storage has been shown on the Indicative Site Layout for each dwelling and will be conditioned to promote more sustainable transport choices.
195. It is noted that policy ES1 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan seeks to achieve carbon neutral homes for major development where practical and viable. Whilst this environmental standard is not replicated at local and national level at this present time, the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan is a material consideration and therefore this standard should not be disregarded. As such, a condition will be attached requiring the developer to demonstrate if it is practical or viable to achieve carbon neutral homes. If this is the case, then such measures to achieve this standard will need to be implemented. If it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that it is not practical or viable, measures to help get closer to the target should be explored and implemented alongside other sustainability conditions attached to the permission.
196. In light of the above assessment, it is recognised that the proposal accords with Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy and CC04 and CC05 of the MDD Local Plan and ES1 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan, and contributes to the Council's climate change goals and fulfils the national sustainability objectives, subject to conditions.

Employment and Skills Plan:

197. Policy TB12 of the MDD Local Plan requires an employment skills plan (ESP) for this development. ESP uses the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) benchmark based on the value of construction.
198. As the proposal is indicative at this outline stage and the final floor space of the development is not known, the value of construction (to inform ESP outcomes) cannot be calculated as it is calculated by multiplying the interior floor space by £1025 which is the cost of construction per square metre as set out by Building Cost Information Service of RICS.
199. As the CITB benchmarks are not known at this stage, the Employment Skills Plan and its content cannot be established at this stage. As such, a S106 obligation will include the mechanism for securing an ESP once the final floor space is known. From there, the contents of the ESP can be drawn up, and the amount required in lieu of an ESP calculated. The ESP or contribution will be required prior to commencement of the development.
200. This is a benefit of this development proposal that should be afforded weight in the planning balance.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):

201. When planning permission is granted for a development that is CIL liable, the Council will issue a liability notice as soon as practicable after the day on which the planning permission first permits development. Completing the assumption of liability notice is a statutory requirement to be completed for all CIL liable applications.
202. It should be noted that the delivery of CIL receipts sits outside of the planning system so a sites liability itself is not a consideration for the tilted balance assessment of this application.

Other Issues:

203. A number of public objections received have raised concerns regarding the lack of existing infrastructure within Finchampstead and that existing local services and amenities (i.e. roads, schools, doctors/dentist surgeries, etc.) would not be able to accommodate the increase in population. It is worth noting that the scheme would be liable to pay CIL contributions charge of £536.93/m², which will be used to cover the cost of infrastructure it will rely upon, such as roads, schools and healthcare. Town and Parish Councils will also receive a meaningful proportion of the money raised. This can be up to 25 percent of receipts in areas with an adopted Neighbourhood Plan, such as Finchampstead. Individual parish websites can be checked in order to see the parishes individual annual CIL statement setting out the amount of CIL received, how much was spent and what it was spent on. As such, through the payment of CIL, the development will contribute to local services/amenities. Furthermore, the future occupants of the 18 dwellings would pay council tax which would fund public services.

Planning Balance:

204. The Council cannot demonstrate either a 5 or 4 year housing supply and therefore the development must be assessed in line with Paragraph 11d(ii) and against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole. The three overarching objectives contained within paragraph 8 of the Framework seek to balance growth and local community needs against protection of the natural, built and historic environment. The benefits and disbenefits are therefore considered against these three broad topic areas below.
205. Whilst the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date by virtue of the absence of a temporary 4-year housing land supply, that does not mean the policies carry no weight. The weight attached to the development plan policies is a matter for the decision maker(s). The conflict with the spatial strategy of the plan still weighs against the application in principle. Furthermore, whilst the Local Plan Update holds limited weight due to its consultative stage, the site is allocated for residential development within this document.

Economic:

206. As with all major housing development of this scale in this location, the proposal would result in notable economic benefits. This is broadly set to arise from the short-term economic contribution of the construction of 18 dwellings via

construction industry jobs that would facilitate enhancements in employments skills to be secured via the ESP. In the longer term, future residents of 18 dwellings will contribute to the viability and vitality of businesses in Crowthorne and the wider Finchampstead area and nearby towns. Although these are not unique to this scheme, the size of the development means these benefits are not insignificant and the development is therefore considered to perform a positive economic role in this part of the borough.

207. In addition, CIL payments and New Homes Bonus would also be an economic benefit of the proposal falling outside of the planning balance associated with the scheme.

Social:

208. The provision of up to 18 new dwellings, including 7 affordable dwellings in this part of the borough would positively assist in furthering the social objective of sustainable development as required by the NPPF at a time where there remains an acute need for affordable homes within the borough. The provision of an adequate range of dwelling sizes and policy compliant on-site affordable housing provision will ensure this site materially contributes to the identified general and affordable housing need over the local plan period. It would see a development that forms an extension to the existing settlement, as opposed to an isolated countryside development. It will provide the opportunity for existing residents of Crowthorne and the wider Finchampstead area to maintain and reinforce existing social ties and family connections, either through an opportunity to upsize or downsize locally. Infrastructure contributions will also off-set any pressure on local services which may arise from the development. Overall, the proposal is therefore considered to perform a positive social role.

Environmental:

209. There would inevitably be a degree of visual harm to the immediate character and appearance of the land as the proposal would see an increase in the quantum of built form and development within a relatively empty site. However, whilst designated countryside, the site is not publicly accessible nor within productive agriculture. Rather, it is a large private residential garden that is largely physically and visually enclosed from its immediate surroundings. As such, it is not of high amenity value nor makes a substantial contribution to the intrinsic rural character of the wider landscape. By virtue of appropriate boundary screening, the visual impact of the development on the surrounding area is not considered to be substantially harmful or as visually intrusive in the medium to long term as other such countryside locations.
210. In addition, the site will also not adversely impact protected species and conditions/ obligations are able to secure biodiversity mitigation and protection, including provisions towards a 10% biodiversity net gain. Furthermore, conditions will be secured to ensure that the environmental standards of new dwellings would meet local policy requirements in light of the Council's declared Climate Emergency. Overall, the development is considered to perform a positive environmental role.

Conclusion:

211. The most important policies for determining the application are out of date by virtue of the absence of a 4-year housing land supply. Paragraph 11 of the Framework therefore states that permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole, or there are specific policies in the Framework which indicate that development should be restricted. In this regard the tilted balance is engaged, albeit tempered due to past over-delivery.
212. As outlined above, the proposal would provide several material benefits that weigh in favour of the application. The provision of new housing and affordable homes weighs substantially in favour of the scheme. Whilst past over-delivery is relevant, it is also pertinent that the current housing land supply shortfall will likely remain until the new LPU is adopted, enabling new planned development to come forward, and that the site is identified within the LPU for residential development. Those less than desirable impacts of the development, namely loss of the openness of the land and inevitable limited degree of visual harm to the landscape character, and traffic impacts are considered to be adequately dealt with via conditions and careful management of the construction phase.
213. In light of all matters raised, the adverse impacts of the proposed development would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework, including the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan, when taken as a whole and when tempered for past over delivery. The application is therefore recommended for approval subject to the conditions and legal agreement set out in this report.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010)
<i>In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application and there would be no significant adverse impacts upon protected groups as a result of the development.</i>

APPENDIX 1 - Conditions / Informatives

APPROVAL subject to the following conditions and informatives:

Conditions:

1. Outline permission – timescales:

- a) No development shall commence until details of the access, appearance, landscaping, layout, and scale (hereinafter called "the reserved matters", as well as any outstanding conditions set out below) of the development, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- b) The first application for the approval of reserved matters referred to in a) above shall be made within a period of 3 years from the date of this permission. All subsequent reserved matters applications shall be submitted no later than 3 years from the date of the approval of the first reserved matters application.
- c) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 2 years from the final approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved.

Reason: To comply with Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. Approved details:

This permission is in respect of the submitted application plans and drawings outlined below, received by the local planning authority on 28/03/2024 & 17/07/2024. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Location Plan - TMA/1002 /03;

Indicative Site Layout - TMA/1002/21; and

Indicative Block Plan - TMA/1002/22

Reason: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

3. Materials:

Pursuant to the approval of the 'Appearance' reserved matter, no development shall commence until details and schedules of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the surrounding area in accordance with Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy.

4. Development Mix:

The detailed designs for the approved development shall accord with the following residential mix for market and affordable housing, or as otherwise may be agreed through the approval of reserved matters:

Housing Type	Quantity (Market Housing)	Quantity (Affordable Housing)
3 bedroom (semi-detached)	0	2
3 bedroom (detached)	4	1
4 bedroom (detached)	2	3
5 bedroom (detached)	5	1
TOTAL	11	7

Reason: This reflects the application submission and the Local Planning Authority would wish to properly consider any mix that does not reflect this submitted mix to ensure housing needs are adequately met, in accordance with CP5 of the Core Strategy.

5. Site Levels:

Prior to the commencement of development, details of levels, including finished floor levels for all buildings, proposed levels of public open space areas and any attenuation pond/swale, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall only proceed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the development takes appropriate account of any level changes across the site.

6. Hours of Operation:

No work relating to the development hereby approved, including works of demolition or preparation prior to building operations, shall take place other than between the hours of 08:00 and 18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 to 13:00 Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Bank or National Holidays.

Reason: To protect the occupiers of neighbouring properties from noise and disturbance outside the permitted hours during the construction period. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC06.

7. External Lighting:

Prior to occupation of any dwelling hereby permitted, details of external lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The details shall include location, height, type and direction of light sources and intensity of illumination for all external lighting strategies including details of lighting for all highways, footpaths and public areas. No further external lighting shall be installed without the written approval of the local planning authority.

Reason: To limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on nature conservation and in the interests of highway safety in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP3, CP6 and CP7 and MDD policy TB23.

8. Access:

Prior to commencement of the development, details of the proposed vehicular access on to Lower Wokingham Road to include visibility splays of 2.4m by 120m shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The accesses shall be formed as so approved and the visibility splays shall be cleared of any obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height prior to the occupation of the development. The accesses shall be retained in accordance with the approved details and used for no other purpose and the land within the visibility splays shall be maintained clear of any visual obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height at all times.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

9. Stopping Up Access:

The existing two northern vehicular access to the site shall be stopped up and abandoned, and the footway and/or verge crossings shall be re-instated within one month of the completion of the new access(es) in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

10. Walking Strategy:

Prior to the commencement of development, details of the internal pedestrian infrastructure and connections from the development to improve footway routes that connect the development with Crowthorne Station, bus stops and local shops shall be submitted for approval by the local planning authority. The measures shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to occupation of the first dwelling.

Reason: In the interests of sustainable travel, convenience and highway safety in accordance with Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP6.

11. Details of car and motorcycle parking:

The reserved matters application for the development shall include details of car, motorcycle parking and electric vehicle charging spaces in accordance with the Council's policies and which are to be approved in writing by the Council. No dwelling shall be occupied until the vehicular accesses, driveways, parking and turning areas to serve it including any unallocated space have been provided in accordance with the approved details and the provision shall be retained thereafter. The vehicle parking shall not be used for any other purposes other than parking and the turning spaces shall not be used for any other purposes than turning.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience in accordance with Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP6, CC07 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (Feb 2014), the Parking Standards Study within the Borough Design Guide 2010, and the North Wokingham Development Location Supplementary Planning Document (October 2011).

12. Cycle parking:

The reserved matters application(s) for the development shall include details of secure and covered bicycle storage/parking facilities serving that dwelling for the occupants of, and visitors to the development. The cycle storage/parking shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details before occupation of the development hereby permitted and shall be permanently retained in the approved form for the parking of bicycles and used for no other purpose.

Reason: In order to ensure the development contributes towards achieving a sustainable transport system and to provide parking for cycles in accordance with Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP6, the Parking Standards Study within the Borough Design Guide 2010 and CC07 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan.

13. Parking Management Strategy:

Prior to the first occupation of the development, a Parking Management Strategy for the management of the on-site parking arrangements shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The management of the parking within the site shall be in accordance with the approved details thereafter.

Reason: to ensure satisfactory development in the interests of amenity and highway safety in accordance with Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Policies CP1, CP6 and CP21.

14. Highway Construction details:

Prior to the commencement of development, full details of the construction of roads, cycleways and footways, including levels, widths, construction materials, depths of construction, surface water drainage and lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Each dwelling shall not be occupied until the vehicle access to serve that dwelling has been constructed in accordance with the approved details to road base level and the final wearing course will be provided within 3 months of first occupation, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that roads and footpaths are constructed to a standard that would be suitable for adoption as publicly maintainable highway, in the interests of providing a functional, accessible and safe development. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

15. Construction Method Statement:

No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to, and approved in writing by,

the local planning authority. The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Statement shall provide for:

- i) the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors,
- ii) loading and unloading of plant and materials,
- iii) wheel washing facilities,
- iv) storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development,
- v) the erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate,
- vi) measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction, vii) a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety & convenience and neighbour amenities.

Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

16. Waste storage:

The reserved matters application(s) shall include details of bin storage, which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The bin storage area and facilities shall be permanently so retained and used for no purpose other than the temporary storage of refuse, recyclable and compost materials.

Reason: In the interests of visual and neighbouring amenities and functional development. Relevant policy: Core Strategy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC04.

17. Protection of Trees:

- a) Prior to the determination of any reserved matters applications dealing with 'Access' and 'Layout', an updated Tree Survey, Tree Protection Plan, Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Arboricultural Method Statement which provides for the retention and protection of trees, shrubs and hedges growing on or adjacent the site in accordance with BS5837: 2012 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority (the Approved Scheme). The Arboricultural Impact Assessment shall ensure development proposals including SuDS requirements have been fully considered in relation to the tree constraints.
- b) The tree protection measures approved shall be implemented in complete accordance with the Approved Scheme for the duration of the development (including, unless otherwise provided by the Approved Scheme) demolition, all site preparation work, tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery.
- c) No development (including any tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery) shall commence until the local planning authority has been provided (by way of a written notice) with a period of no less than 7 working days to inspect the implementation of the measures identified in the Approved Scheme on-site.
- d) No excavations for services, storage of materials or machinery, parking of vehicles, deposit or excavation of soil or rubble, lighting of fires or disposal of

liquids shall take place within an area designated as being fenced off or otherwise protected in the Approved Scheme.

- e) The fencing or other works which are part of the Approved Scheme shall not be moved or removed, temporarily or otherwise, until all works including external works have been completed and all equipment, machinery and surplus materials removed from the site, unless the prior approval of the local planning authority has first been sought and obtained.

Reason: To secure the protection throughout the time that the development is being carried out of trees shrubs or hedges growing within or adjacent to the site which are of amenity value to the area, and to allow for verification by the local planning authority that the necessary measures are in place before development and other works commence. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21.

18. Retention of trees and shrubs:

No trees, shrubs or hedges within the site which are shown as being retained on the approved plans shall be felled, uprooted wilfully damaged or destroyed, cut back in any way or removed without previous written consent of the local planning authority; any trees, shrubs or hedges removed without consent or dying or being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within 5 years from the completion of the development hereby permitted shall be replaced with trees, shrubs or hedge plants of similar size and species unless the local planning authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To secure the protection throughout the time that development is being carried out, of trees, shrubs and hedges growing within the site which are of amenity value to the area. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21.

19. Detailed Landscaping:

The reserved matters application for 'Landscaping' shall include full details or both hard and soft landscape proposals. Landscape details shall include:

- a) Planting plans
- b) Proposed levels and contours
- c) Written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment).
- d) Schedules of plants and trees, to include large canopy, native and wildlife friendly species, and species likely to prove adaptable to climate change, noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers / densities,
- e) Details of tree pits
- f) Detailed design of SuDS features in accordance with the SuDS Strategy, demonstrating how they will be integrated into the wider landscape
- g) Implementation timetables
- h) Specifications for fencing demonstrating how hedgehogs and other wildlife will be able to continue to travel across the site (e.g. fences slightly raised above ground level)

- i) Above and below ground service routes and existing functional services above and below ground including foul and surface water drainage, soakaways and SUDs details, power, communications cables and water and gas supply pipelines, including access points (ensuring they do not conflict with new or existing planting)
- j) Permeable hard surfaces
- k) Car parking layouts, other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas
- l) measures required for ecological mitigation and biodiversity net gain

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and to a reasonable standard in accordance with the relevant recommendations of appropriate British Standards or other recognised Codes of Good Practice. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with the timetable agreed with the Local Planning Authority. Any trees or plants that, within a period of five years after planting, are removed, die or become, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, seriously damaged or defective, shall be replaced as soon as is reasonably practicable with others of species, size and number as originally approved.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to ensure the provision of amenity, and biodiversity enhancements, afforded by appropriate landscape design. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3, CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03, TB21 & TB23.

20. Boundary Treatment:

The reserved matters application for 'Landscaping' shall include a plan indicating the positions, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected/ planted. Where appropriate, the boundary treatment shall include consideration of ecological permeability such as the provision of mammal gaps. The boundary treatment shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plan before the development is occupied.

Reason: In order to protect the privacy of adjoining and future occupiers and in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and local wildlife in accordance with Policy CP3 and CP7 of the Core Strategy.

21. Landscape Management Plan:

Prior to the commencement of the development a landscape management plan, including long term design objectives, management responsibilities, timescales and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas, other than privately owned, domestic gardens, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The landscape management plan shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details and for the period specified.

Reason: In order to ensure that provision is made to allow satisfactory maintenance of the landscaping hereby approved in accordance with Policy CC03 of the MDD.

22. On-site Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan:

Prior to commencement of the development, a habitat management and monitoring plan (HMMP) for all public space on-site shall be submitted to, and be approved in

writing by, the local planning authority. The content of the HMMP shall include the following:

- a) Description and evaluation of features to be managed.
- b) Ecological trends and constraints on site that might influence management.
- c) Aims and objectives of management.
- d) Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives.
- e) Prescriptions for management actions.
- f) Preparation of a work schedule (including an annual work plan capable of being rolled forward over a five-year period).
- g) Details of the body or organization responsible for implementation of the plan.
- h) Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures.

The HMMP shall also include details of the legal and funding mechanism(s) by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured by the developer with the management body(ies) responsible for its delivery. The plan shall also set out (where the results from monitoring show that conservation aims and objectives of the HMMP are not being met) how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the originally approved scheme. The approved plan shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To secure the on-site elements making a significant contribution to satisfying the general biodiversity gain condition.

23. Construction Environmental Management Plan:

No development shall take place (including demolition, ground works, vegetation clearance) until a construction environmental management plan (CEMP: Biodiversity) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEMP (Biodiversity) shall include the following:

- a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.
- b) Identification of “biodiversity protection zones”.
- c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements).
- d) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.
- e) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.
- f) Responsible persons and lines of communication.
- g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.
- h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.

The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure mitigation measures for protected species are secured and implemented during construction, and to minimise impacts on biodiversity in accordance with CP7 of the Core Strategy and TB23 of the MDD.

24. Lighting for Light Sensitive Species:

Prior to commencement, a “lighting design strategy for biodiversity” for the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall:

- a) identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for nocturnal species and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places or along important routes used to access key areas of their territory, for example, for foraging; and
- b) show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places. All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the strategy, and these shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with the strategy. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority.

Reason: To mitigate the impact of the development on protected species and retain ecological permeability of commuting and foraging routes as per Core Strategy policy CP7 and MDD Local Plan policy TB23.

25. Species Specific Enhancements and Ecological Permeability:

Prior to commencement, a strategy for ecological permeability and species specific enhancements to the site in line with section 10.6 of the submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, ref: R3621/c, December 2023) shall be provided to the local authority for its approval. This strategy shall be prepared by a suitably qualified ecologist and appropriate to the local ecological context. Once approved the strategy shall be implemented in full unless otherwise agreed by the local authority in writing.

Reason: to ensure that the proposal is in accordance with Section 41 NERC Act re. UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Species (Species of Principal Importance), and complies with planning policies for wildlife including CP7 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (2010) and TB23 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (2014).

26. Great Crested Newts:

Prior to the commencement of the development a Great Crested Newts precautionary working method statement shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include details of reasonable avoidance measures for great crested newts. The development shall proceed in accordance with the approved measures, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To further reduce the risk of impacting Great Crested Newts should they be present in the area, in accordance with CP7 of the Core Strategy and TB23 of the MDD.

27. Archaeology:

A) No development shall take place/commence until a programme of archaeological work including a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been submitted to, and approved by, the local planning authority in writing. The WSI shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:

1. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording
2. The programme for post investigation assessment
3. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording
4. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation
5. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation
6. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the WSI.

B) The Development shall take place in accordance with the WSI approved under condition (A), prior to the determination of any reserved matters applications dealing with layout.

The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI approved under condition (A) and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured.

Reason: To ensure that any archaeological remains within the site are adequately investigated and recorded in order to advance our understanding of the significance of any buried remains to be lost and in the interest of protecting the archaeological heritage of the Borough in accordance with TB25 of the MDD.

28. Unexpected Land Contamination:

If land contamination is found at any time during site clearance, groundwork, and construction, the discovery shall be reported as soon as possible to the local planning authority. A full contamination risk assessment shall be carried out and if found to be necessary, a 'remediation method statement' shall be submitted to the local planning authority for written approval.

Reason: To ensure that any contamination of the site is identified at the outset to allow remediation to protect existing/proposed occupants of property on the site and/or adjacent land. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 15 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment) and Core Strategy policies CP1 & CP3.

29. Noise Assessment:

Prior to commencement of development, a full noise impact assessment shall be conducted, the noise assessment shall be carried out by a suitably qualified acoustic consultant/engineer and shall consider the provisions of BS4142 and BS8233. The assessment shall identify all sources of noise including heat pumps, plant or machinery. This should be submitted to the local authority for approval. This can inform the design to achieve best practice. The report is to identify a clear scheme of

recommended works, or such other steps as may be necessary to minimize the effects of noise associated with the proposed development, both on nearby noise sensitive receptors and on future occupants of the development.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the area and to ensure that premises are protected from noise nuisance and disturbance, in accordance with Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Policy CP1, the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy CC06 and Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan Policy GA1.

30. Noise Insulation for Dwellings:

The dwellings hereby approved shall be designed and/or insulated to provide attenuation against externally generated noise, the design should ensure that all noise implications are mitigated so that internal ambient noise levels for dwellings meet the BS8233 sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings design range 'good' for living accommodation.

Reason: to protect the amenity of the area and to ensure that premises are protected from noise nuisance and disturbance, in accordance with Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Policy CP1, the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy CC06.

31. Plant/Machinery to be attenuated:

Any plant, machinery and equipment installed or operated in connection with the conducting of this permission shall be so enclosed and/or attenuated that noise therefrom does not exceed at any time a level of 5dB[A] below the existing background noise level [or 10dB[A] if there is a particular tonal quality] when measured at a point one metre external to the nearest residential or noise sensitive property. Any recommended noise mitigation measures should be retained and maintained thereafter for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure that no nuisance or disturbance is caused to the occupiers of properties. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC06.

32. Air Quality Assessment:

No development shall commence on site until a detailed Air Quality Assessment to determine whether mitigation is required to protect the residents from the effects of poor air quality is submitted to and approved in writing by Local Planning Authority. Where this Air Quality Assessment identifies that future residents will be exposed to poor air quality, an air quality mitigation scheme shall accompany this assessment demonstrating sufficient mitigation to protect the occupants. The scheme shall be implemented as approved prior to occupation of any part of the development and retained as approved at all times thereafter.

Reason: In order to protect the health of future occupants of the proposed development in accordance with Policy CC1 of the Core Strategy and Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan Policy GA1.

33. Surface Water Drainage Strategy:

Prior to the determination of any reserved matters applications dealing with 'Layout', full details of the drainage system for the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The details shall include:

1. BRE 365 test results demonstrating whether infiltration is achievable or not.
2. Full calculations demonstrating the performance of soakaways or capacity of attenuation features to cater for 1 in 100 year flood event with a 40% allowance for climate change and runoff controlled at Greenfield rates, or preferably better.
3. Calculations to show how surface water runoff rates will be constrained to existing rates across all of the relevant return periods, i.e. Qbar, Q1, Q30 and Q100 with climate change.
4. Separate drainage systems for any proposed adopted highways and residential dwellings.
5. Groundwater monitoring confirming seasonal high groundwater levels in the area.
6. A drainage strategy plan indicating the location and sizing of SuDS features, with the base of any SuDS features located at least 1m above the seasonal high water table level in case of proposed infiltration.
7. Full details of all components of the proposed drainage system including dimensions, locations, gradients, invert and cover levels, headwall details, planting (if necessary) and drawings as appropriate taking into account the groundwater table.
8. Details demonstrating how any SuDS for this development would be managed throughout the lifespan of the development and who will be responsible for maintenance.
9. Detailed calculations demonstrating the volume of surface water attenuation achievable through the proposed permeable roads, paths, swales, and potential retention basins. These calculations should specifically address peak rainfall events and confirm the total capacity of attenuation based on the site's 3m elevation difference.
10. Detailed grading plan and flow control strategy, illustrating how surface water will be directed to collection points such as French drains, storage areas, and attenuation systems.
11. Results of site-specific infiltration tests to confirm soil permeability and the suitability of proposed drainage systems.

The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development and shall be maintained in the approved form for as long as the development remains on the site.

Reason: To prevent increased flood risk from surface water run-off. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 10 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10.

34. Space Standards:

The Reserved Matters application for 'Scale' and 'Layout' shall ensure that all dwellings shall accord with the Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standard (2015) or those TB07 of the Wokingham Borough Council Managing Development Delivery (MDD) Local Plan 2014.

Reason: To ensure future occupiers of the development will have a suitable standard of living accommodation in accordance with CP3 of the Core Strategy and TB07 of the MDD.

35. Residential gardens:

The Reserved Matters application for 'Scale' and 'Layout' shall demonstrate that private residential gardens will have a garden depth of at least 11m and will be of an overall suitable size in relation to the size of dwellings.

Reason: To ensure future occupiers will have a suitable level of outdoor amenity space in accordance with Core Strategy policy CP3 and Borough Design Guide policy R16 of the Wokingham Borough Design Guide.

36. Future Homes Standard:

The dwellings hereby permitted shall meet the interim Future Homes Standard in accordance with the requirements of the Building Regulations. No dwelling shall be occupied until compliance has been confirmed by an accredited assessor certifying that a 31% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions has been achieved per the Standard.

Reason: To ensure developments contribute to sustainable development in accordance with the requirements of Part L of the Building Regulations and Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC04.

37. Sustainability and energy efficiency:

The reserved matters application(s) shall be accompanied by a scheme to be approved in writing by the local planning authority for achieving a 10% reduction in the predicted carbon emissions arising from operation of the development through the use of decentralised renewable and/or low carbon sources. The minimum 10% reduction shall be achieved in addition to the levels of reduction in carbon emissions required through the Building Regulations in force at the time of the submission of planning application. The approved scheme shall be implemented before the development is first occupied and shall remain operational for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure developments contribute to sustainable development in accordance with NPPF Section 14 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), WBC Climate Emergency Action Plan, Core Strategy policy CP1, MDDLPP policy CC05 & the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document.

38. Water consumption rates:

Prior to the commencement of development, details of how all dwellings shall meet internal potable water consumption targets of 110 litres or less per person per day. Thereafter, all dwellings shall be built in accordance with the measures to achieve this water consumption target and the measures maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure developments contribute to sustainable development. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 14 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), WBC Climate Emergency Action Plan, Core Strategy policy CP1, Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC05 & the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document.

39. Carbon Neutral Homes:

Prior to the approval of any reserved matters application, a statement/ report shall be provided to demonstrate whether the development is practicable and viable to provide carbon neutral homes; carbon neutral homes meaning a scenario in which greenhouse gas emissions arising from human activity are eliminated by minimising energy demands and meeting remaining energy demand with energy from renewable sources. This should take into account the sustainability measures required of the development in conditions 36, 37 and 38 of this permission. These measures shall be implemented prior to the occupation of the development. If it cannot be satisfactorily demonstrated that carbon neutral cannot be achieved as part of the development, measures to bring the development closer to this target shall be submitted to and agreed with the Local Planning Authority before the development commences. These shall be implemented and maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure developments contribute to sustainable development in accordance with the WBC Climate Emergency Action Plan, Core Strategy Policy CP1, Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC05, Policy ES1 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan, Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document and the Wokingham Council Climate Emergency Action Plan Fourth Progress Report (2023).

40. Access for All:

The reserved matters application for 'Layout', 'Scale' and 'Appearance', shall demonstrate that 10-20% of the dwellings as a minimum are accessible and adaptable in line with M4(2) of the Building Regulations.

Reason: To provide a variety of dwellings, catering to different needs, to support positive neighbourhood planning in accordance with Policy CP2 of the Core Strategy and TB05 of the MDD.

41. Communications Plan:

Development shall not commence until a Communications Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall specify methods for communicating with local residents, including the creation of a liaison group to meet in accordance with an agreed schedule. The Plan shall be carried out as approved until the final completion of the development.

Reason: In order to minimise disturbance to neighbours during construction works in accordance with CP3 of the Core Strategy (2010).

Informatives:

1. This permission should be read in conjunction with the legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act, the obligations in which relate to this development.
2. The applicant is reminded that this approval is granted subject to conditions which must be complied with prior to the development starting on site. Commencement of the development without complying with the pre-commencement requirements may be outside the terms of this permission and liable to enforcement action. The information required should be formally submitted to the Council for consideration with the relevant fee. Once the details have been approved in writing the development should be carried out only in accordance with those details.
3. The applicant is reminded that should there be any change from the approved drawings during the build of the development this may require a fresh planning application if the changes differ materially from the approved details. Non-material changes may be formalised by way of an application under s.96A Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
4. Adequate precautions shall be taken during the construction period to prevent the deposit of mud and similar debris on adjacent highways. For further information contact the Highway Authority on tel.: 0118 9746000.
5. Whilst it would appear from the application that the proposed development is to be entirely within the curtilage of the application site, the granting of planning permission does not authorise you to gain access or carry out any works on, over or under your neighbour's land or property without first obtaining their consent, and does not obviate the need for compliance with the requirements of the Party Wall etc. Act 1996.
6. The development hereby permitted is liable to pay the Community Infrastructure Levy. The Liability Notice issued by Wokingham Borough Council will state the current chargeable amount. A revised Liability Notice will be issued if this amount changes. Anyone can formally assume liability to pay, but if no one does so then liability will rest with the landowner. There are certain legal requirements that must be complied with. For instance, whoever will pay the levy must submit an Assumption of Liability form and a Commencement Notice to Wokingham Borough Council prior to commencement of development, failure to do this will result in penalty surcharges being added. For more information see the Council's website - Community Infrastructure Levy advice page. Please submit all CIL forms and enquiries to developer.contributions@wokingham.gov.uk.
7. The applicant is reminded that, under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it is an offence to (amongst other things): deliberately capture, disturb, injure, or kill great crested newts; damage or destroy a breeding or resting place; intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a resting or sheltering place. Planning permission for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation. Should great crested newts be found at any stage of the development works, then all works should cease, and a professional and/or suitably qualified and experienced ecologist (or Natural England) should be contacted for advice on any special precautions before continuing, including the need for a licence.

8. Fire service access should comply with B5 of ADB Volume 2 2019 with additional local requirements below under the Berkshire Act 1986: Fire service vehicles currently operated by Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service exceed the requirements stated in the current edition of Approved Document B. The applicant should be made aware of the following amendments: The minimum carrying capacity for a pumping appliance is 16 tonnes. The minimum carrying capacity for a high reach appliance is 26 tonnes. Structures such as bridges should have the full vehicle carrying capacity. Any structural fire precautions and all means of escape provision will have to satisfy Building Regulation requirement. These matters are administered by the local authority Building Control or approved inspectors, who you are advised to contact in this regard.
9. There are water mains crossing or close to your development. Thames Water do not permit the building over or construction within 3m of water mains. If you're planning significant works near Thames Water mains (within 3m) they will need to check that your development doesn't reduce capacity, limit repair or maintenance activities during and after construction, or inhibit the services we provide in any other way. The applicant is advised to read our guide working near or diverting our pipes. <https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.thameswater.co.uk%2Fdevelopers%2Flarger-scale-developments%2Fplanning-yourdevelopment%2Fworking-nearourpipes&data=05%7C01%7Cplanning.enquiries%40wokingham.gov.uk%7C92f84d1fef8949390d3d08dbe5bbe8f0%7C996ee15c0b3e4a6f8e65120a9a51821a%7C0%7C0%7C638356367458250210%7CUnkn own%7CTWfPbGZsb3d8eyJWljoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=2ZScP1cD%2BE7uE4sYqf%2Bqi6PcLP7539bi4ucA53ilMf0%3D&reserved=0>
10. The layout of the development site and the drainage system should be designed so that natural low lying areas and overland conveyance pathways are used to manage surface runoff, where appropriate, where they do not pose an unacceptable risk to the new developments or downstream areas/ elsewhere. Where run-off from off-site sources is drained together with the site run-off, the contributing catchment should be modelled as part of drainage system in order to take full account of additional flows.
11. The Corporate Head of Environment at the Council Offices, Shute End, Wokingham should be contacted for the approval of the access construction details before any work is carried out within the highway. This planning permission does NOT authorise the construction of such an access.
12. If it is the developer's intention to request the Council, as Local Highway Authority, to adopt the proposed access road etc. as highway maintainable at public expense, then full engineering details must be agreed with the Corporate Head of Environment at the Council Offices, Shute End, Wokingham. The developer is strongly advised not to commence development until such details have been approved in writing and a legal agreement is made with the Council under S38 of the Highways Act 1980.

13. The council advises that the developer produces a strategy to install superfast broadband infrastructure for future occupants of the site. The strategy should ensure that upon occupation of a dwelling the new home owner has access to a superfast broadband service through a site-wide network. It is also advised that the developer keeps occupants fully informed of any delays to superfast broadband connection in before they purchase/occupy their new homes.
14. Future occupants of the development should be provided with occupant information relating to the operation of any heating systems that serve it to ensure they are informed about the correct operation of the buildings and systems performance.
15. The applicant is advised that at the Reserved Matters stage, the LPA may consider restricting Permitted Development rights following its assessment of the site layout and the site sensitivities.
16. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

APPENDIX 2 – Appropriate Assessment

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 Screening Assessment and Appropriate Assessment

In the light of the “Sweetman Judgement” (People Over Wind and Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta, April 2018), the comments below comprise an Appropriate Assessment which includes advice on necessary avoidance and mitigation measures which is consistent with the advice provided to the Planning Inspectorate on such matters.

Summary of Response

WBC, in consultation with Natural England, has formed the view that any net increase in residential development between 400m and 5km straight-line distance from the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area (SPA) is likely to have a significant effect on the integrity of the SPA, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects. An Appropriate Assessment has been carried out which includes regard to mitigation requirements.

This site is located approximately **2.3 km** (measured from the access road to the application site) from the boundary of the SPA and therefore is likely to result in an adverse effect on the SPA, unless it is carried out together with appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures.

On commencement of the proposed development, a contribution (calculated on a per-bedroom basis) is to be paid to Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) towards the cost of measures to avoid and mitigate against the effect upon the Thames Basin Heaths SPA, as set out in WBC’s Infrastructure Delivery Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

The strategy is for relevant developments to make financial contributions towards the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGs) in perpetuity as an alternative recreational location to the SPA and financial contributions towards Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) measures.

In this instance, the proposed development would result in a net increase of up to 18 dwellings within 5km of the SPA.

The proposed development is required to make a contribution towards the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGs) which is calculated on a per bedroom basis. As the residential element of this application is in outline, the final dwelling mix will not be determined until the reserved matters stage. However, depending on the final dwelling mix, the SANG payments will be calculated as follows:

1 bedroom: £1,567.98
2 bedrooms: £2,049.59
3 bedrooms: £2,690.93
4 bedrooms: £3,546.86
5 bedrooms: £4,240.62

The proposed development is also required to make a contribution towards Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) which is also calculated on a per bedroom basis. As the residential element of this application is in outline, the final dwelling mix will not be determined until the reserved matters stage. However, depending on the final dwelling mix, the SAMM payments will be calculated as follows:

1 bedroom: £563.00
2 bedrooms: £784.00
3 bedrooms: £1,042.00

4 bedrooms: £1,225.00
5 bedrooms: £1,400.00

The total SPA related financial contribution for this proposal will be determined upon the approval of the reserved matters. The applicant **must agree** to enter into a S106/s111 agreement to secure this contribution prior to occupation of each dwelling. Subject to the completion of the S106 agreement, the proposal would not lead to an adverse effect on the integrity of the SPA and would comply with SEP Saved Policy NRM6, policy CP8 of the Core Strategy, and the NPPF.

1. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) as amended

In accordance with The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) as amended, Regulation 63, a competent authority (in this case Wokingham Borough Council (WBC)), before deciding to undertake, or give any consent, permission or other authorisation for, a plan or project which—

- a. is likely to have a significant effect on a European site...(either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), and
- b. is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of that site.

must make an appropriate assessment of the implications of the plan or project for that site in view of that site's conservation objectives.

A person applying for any such consent, permission or other authorisation must provide such information as WBC may reasonably require for the purposes of the assessment or to enable it to determine whether an appropriate assessment is required.

WBC must for the purposes of the assessment consult Natural England (NE) and have regard to any representations made by that body. It must also, if it considers it appropriate, take the opinion of the general public, and if it does so, it must take such steps for that purpose as it considers appropriate. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment, and subject to Regulation 64 (Considerations of overriding public interest), WBC may agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the European site.

In considering whether a plan or project will adversely affect the integrity of the site, WBC must have regard to the manner in which it is proposed to be carried out or to any conditions or restrictions subject to which it proposes that the consent, permission or other authorisation should be given.

2. Stage 1 Screening for Likely Significant Effects

WBC accepts that this proposal is a 'plan or project' which is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European Site. The Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) is a European designated site which affects the borough, and WBC must ensure that development does not result in an adverse impact on the SPA. The potential adverse effects on the integrity of the SPA include recreational activities from inside the SPA and air pollution from inside and outside the SPA.

At this stage WBC cannot rule out 'likely significance effects' on the SPA (alone or in combination with other plans or projects) because the proposal could undermine the Conservation Objectives of these sites. This is because the proposal lies within 5 km of the SPA and:

- represents a net increase in dwellings within 400m - 5km of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) which will lead to an increase in local population and a potential increase in recreational activity on the SPA

As the 'likely significance effects' cannot be ruled out at this stage an Appropriate Assessment must be undertaken.

3. Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment

Based on the information proposed by the applicant, WBC must decide whether or not an adverse effect on site integrity (alone or in combination with other plans or projects) can be ruled out. Mitigation may be able to be provided so that the proposal is altered to avoid or reduce impacts.

The following policies and guidance set out WBC's approach to relevant avoidance and mitigation measures which have been agreed with Natural England. For the majority of housing developments this will comprise the provision of (or contribution towards) Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and a contribution towards the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) Project. The financial contributions towards SANG would be either through an obligation in a s106 agreement that requires WBC to allocate an appropriate amount of the development CIL receipt towards the provision of SANG, or through an obligation in an agreement under s111 of the Local Government Act, that requires the developer to make an appropriate financial contribution towards the provision of SANG (to be used in the event that the developer successfully seeks CIL relief). Developers will be required to secure an appropriate financial contribution to the SAMM project through an obligation in a s106 agreement.

For SDL development (and occasionally some other larger non SDL developments) within 5km of the SPA, SANG is required at a minimum of 8 ha per 1,000 new residents, constructed and delivered to Natural England's quality and quantity standards and a contribution towards pan SPA access management and monitoring (as advised by the Thames Basin Heaths Joint Strategic Partnership Board). For SDL development (and occasionally some other larger non SDL developments) between 5 and 7km, the proposals will need to be individually assessed but it is likely that SANG will be required on site in line with Natural England's quality and quantity standards, although the exact requirement will be agreed having regard to evidence supplied.

a. Policies and Guidance

For this proposal the following guidance and policies apply:

- South East Plan (May 2009) Policy NRM6 (Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area) <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100528160926/http://www.gos.gov.uk/gose/planning/regionalPlanning/815640/>
- Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (2010) Policy CP8 (Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area) sets out the approach WBC will take in order to protect the TBH SPA <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/sites/wokingham/files/2023-06/Final%20adopted%20Core%20Strategy%20inc.%20cover.pdf>
- Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (2010) Policy CP7 (Biodiversity) sets out the approach WBC will take in order to protect national and international nature conservation sites <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/sites/wokingham/files/2023-06/Final%20adopted%20Core%20Strategy%20inc.%20cover.pdf>
- Wokingham Borough Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (2014) Policy TB23 (Biodiversity and Development) <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/sites/wokingham/files/2023-06/Adopted%20MDD.pdf>
- Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions SPD (2011) <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/sites/wokingham/files/2023-06/Adopted%20Infrastructure%20De~nd%20Contributions%20SPD.pdf>

The project as proposed would not adversely impact on the integrity of the SPA if avoidance and mitigation measures are provided as stipulated by these policies and guidance.

b. SPA Avoidance and Mitigation Measures

i) The provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and its ongoing maintenance in perpetuity.

In accordance with the development plan, the proposed development will be required to provide alternative land to attract new residents away from the SPA. The term given to this alternative land is Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG).

As this development is not part of an SDL, the developer may make a payment contribution towards strategic SANGs in line with schedule below (most likely this will be at Rooks Nest Wood SANG although it is subject to SANGs capacity in the right location within Wokingham borough). An occupation restriction will be included in the Section 106 Agreement in order to ensure that the contribution has been made prior to occupation of the dwellings. This gives the certainty required to satisfy the Habitats Regulations in accordance with South East Plan Policy NRM6 (iii) and Core Strategy Policy CP8.

ii. Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) Contribution

The proposed development will also be required to make a contribution towards Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM). This project funds strategic visitor access management measures on the SPA to mitigate the effects of new development on it.

From 1st April 2023 SAMM contributions have been updated across the 11 Local Authorities affected by the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area. Following engagement with Natural England, the Joint Strategic Partnership Board agreed this change is necessary to ensure sufficient income is raised to cover the costs of the SAMM project in perpetuity. Without this change the SAMM project would be at risk of being unable to deliver the objectives of the SAMM project, and therefore secure positive outcomes for the SPA

The level of contributions are calculated on a per bedroom basis. As the residential element of this application is outline, the final dwelling mix will not be determined until the reserved matters stage. However, depending on the final dwelling mix, the SAMM payments will be calculated as follows:

1 bedroom: £563.00
2 bedrooms: £784.00
3 bedrooms: £1,042.00
4 bedrooms: £1,225.00
5 bedrooms: £1,400.00

Prior to the permission being granted the applicant must enter into a Section 106 Agreement based upon the above measures.

4. Conclusion

An Appropriate Assessment has been carried out for this development in accordance with the Habitats Regulations 2017. Without any appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures the Appropriate Assessment concludes that the development is likely to have a significant effect upon the integrity of the SPA with the result that WBC would be required to refuse a planning application.

Provided that the applicant is prepared to make a financial contribution (see above) towards the costs of SPA avoidance and mitigation measures, the application will be in accordance with the SPA mitigation requirements as set out in the relevant policies above.

WBC is convinced, following consultation with Natural England, that the above measures will prevent an adverse effect on the integrity of the SPA. Pursuant to Article 6(3) of the Habitats

Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) and Regulation 63(5) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) as amended, and permission may be granted.

If the applicant does not agree with the above mitigation and does not enter into a Section 106 Agreement to secure the measures, then the application must be refused using the following reason for refusal.

5. Example Reason for Refusal

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.

Date:

Signed:

APPENDIX 3 - Parish Council Comments (Where relevant)

PLANNING REF : 240803
PROPERTY ADDRESS : FBC Centre
: Gorse Ride, Finchampstead, Wokingham
: RG40 4ES
SUBMITTED BY : Finchampstead Parish Council
DATE SUBMITTED : 24/04/2024

COMMENTS:

This site, previously known as Jovike, was included in the Draft Local Update Plan and supported by the FNDP for up to 15 dwellings. The Committee consider the outline proposals for 18 dwellings in the illustrative plans to be overdevelopment and out of keeping with the street scene.

PLANNING REF : 240803
PROPERTY ADDRESS : FBC Centre
: Gorse Ride, Finchampstead, Wokingham
: RG40 4ES
SUBMITTED BY : Finchampstead Parish Council
DATE SUBMITTED : 22/08/2024

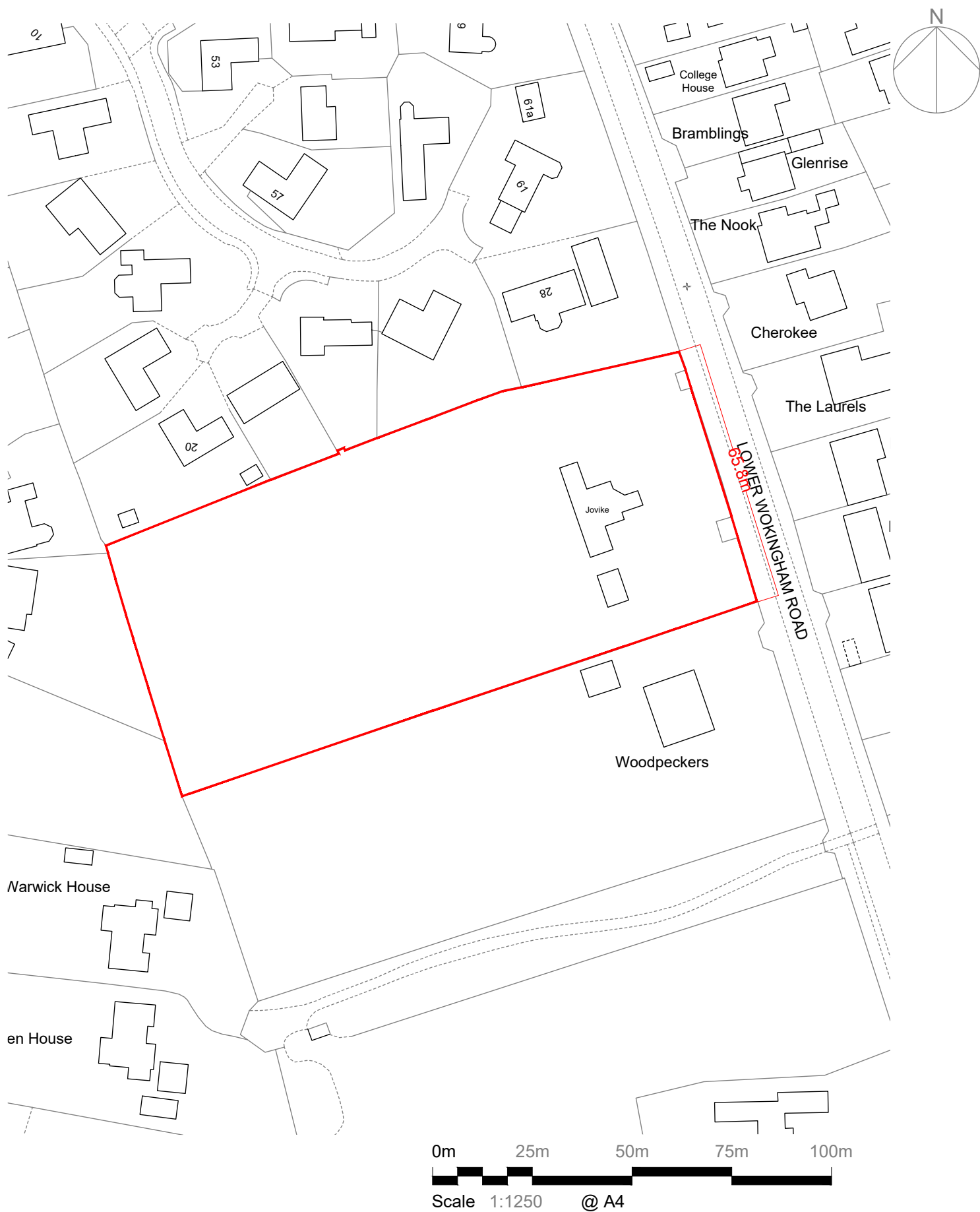
COMMENTS:

The Council's previous comments submitted in April still stand in relation to housing density (below):

This site, previously known as Jovike, was included in the Draft Local Update Plan and supported by the FNDP for up to 15 dwellings. The Committee consider the outline proposals for 18 dwellings in the illustrative plans to be overdevelopment and out of keeping with the street scene.

Additionally, the Council would like to draw attention to the resident's pertinent comments in relation to drainage and ask that this is given due consideration.

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drawing
PROPOSED LOCATION DRAWING

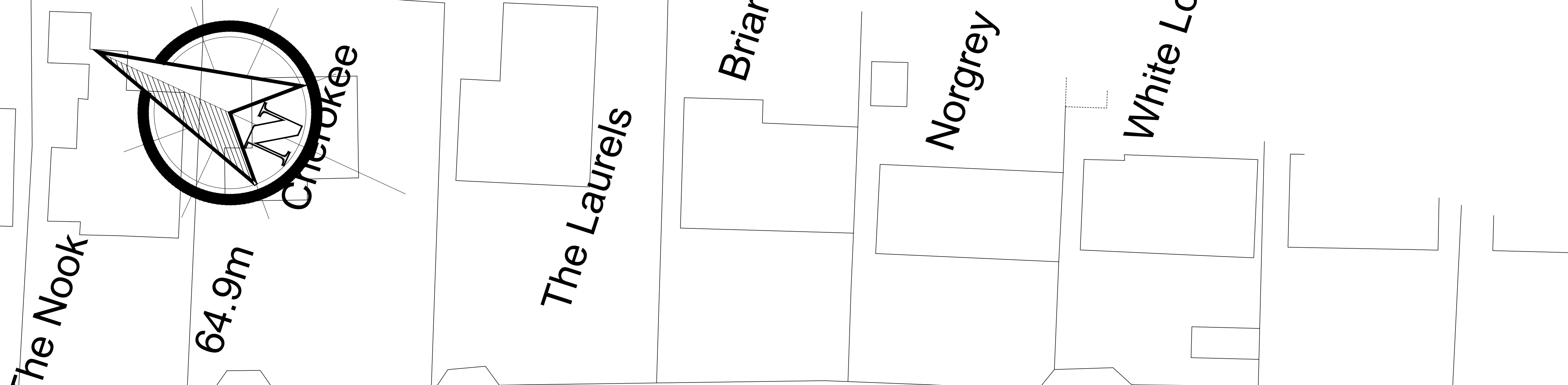
drawing no.
TMA/1002 /03

client / project / address

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
JOVIKE
LOWER WOKINGHAM ROAD
WOKINGHAM
BERKSHIRE

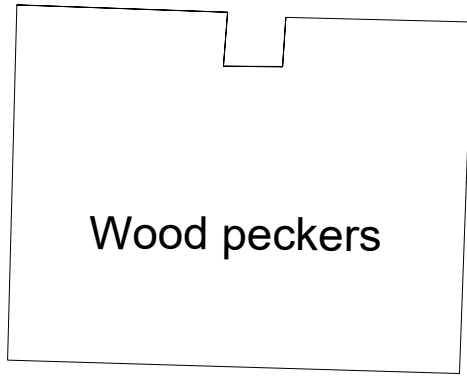
T | M | A
CHARTERED SURVEYORS - PROPERTY CONSULTANTS
THE GATEHOUSE 116-118 RAINSFORD ROAD
CHELMSFORD ESSEX CM1 2QL
TELEPHONE 01245 210060

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Lower Wokingham Rd

LOWER WOKINGHAM ROAD



Wood peckers



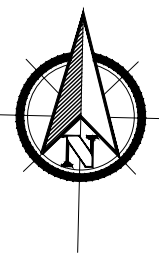
BAR SCALE 1-250

Unit No	Dwelling Category	Dwelling Size	
10	5 Bedroom	143 m2	Gross Int
13	3 Bedroom Semi	120 m2	Gross Int
14	3 Bedroom Semi	106 m2	Gross Int
15	4 Bedroom	122 m2	Gross Int
16	4 Bedroom	135 m2	Gross Int
17	3 Bedroom	109 m2	Gross Int
18	4 Bedroom	127 m2	Gross Int

Unit No	Dwelling Category	Dwelling Size	
1	5 Bedroom	170 m2	Gross Int
2	5 Bedroom	164 m2	Gross Int
3	5 Bedroom	165 m2	Gross Int
4	4 Bedroom	163 m2	Gross Int
5	3 Bedroom	114 m2	Gross Int
6	3 Bedroom	159 m2	Gross Int
7	3 Bedroom	113 m2	Gross Int
8	4 Bedroom	149 m2	Gross Int
9	3 Bedroom	163 m2	Gross Int
11	5 Bedroom	164 m2	Gross Int
12	5 Bedroom	164 m2	Gross Int

Rev		Notes
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DRAWING TITLE		
Indicative Block Plan		
		
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