

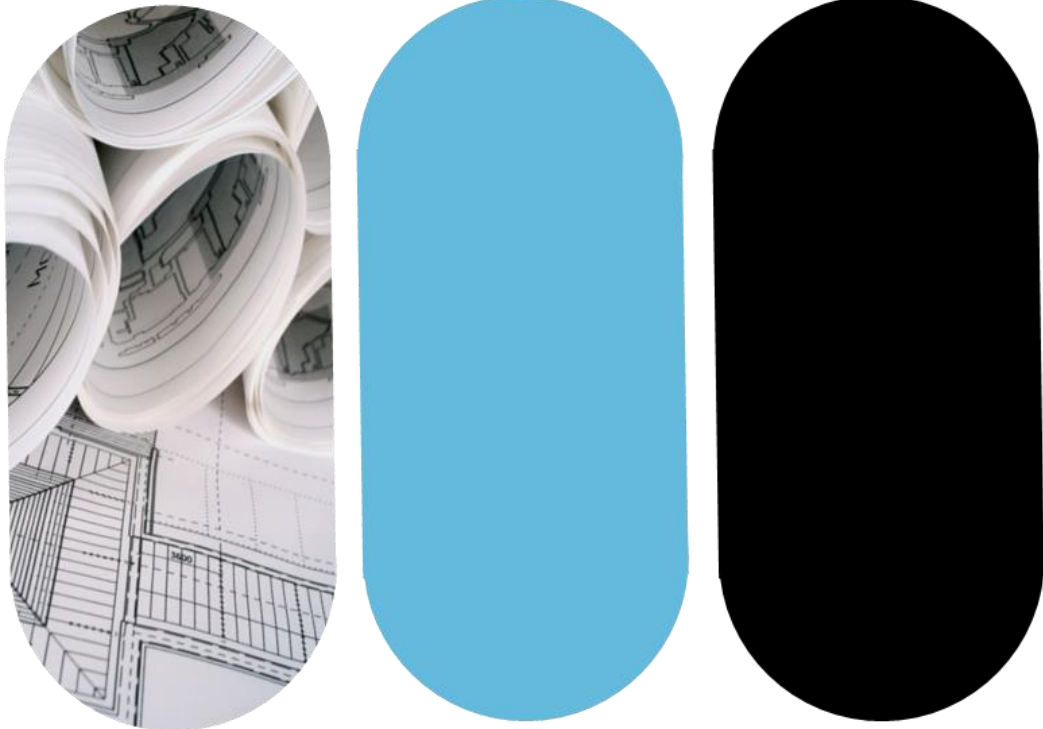


Richborough

Statement of Community Involvement

Land off Basingstoke Road, Spencers Wood.

February 2025



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been prepared by Marrons on behalf of Richborough (“the Applicant”), and forms part of their application for development at Body’s Farm, Land east of Basingstoke Road, Spencers Wood.
- 1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF” or “the Framework”) acknowledges there is no statutory requirement for developers to carry out consultation before submitting planning applications. Instead, paragraphs 40 onwards encourage pre-application engagement between developers, local authorities, the local community and statutory and non-statutory consultees, on a voluntary basis.
- 1.3 In particular, Paragraph 40 of the NPPF states, “Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.”
- 1.4 In addition, the Wokingham Borough Council Statement of Community Involvement, paragraph 2.7 stipulates that developers should engage early so that the views of residents and other stakeholders can be taken into account when deciding whether to proceed with a proposal, and if that is the decision, in the detail of the proposal itself. The purpose of the engagement should be made clear and highlight that this is prior to any planning application being submitted to the council.
- 1.5 The Applicant has proactively engaged with the local community and other stakeholders.
- 1.6 The consultation undertaken and associated feedback received to date has informed the proposed development.
- 1.7 The purpose of this SCI is to summarise the feedback received as part of the community consultation.

2. Community Consultation

- 2.1. The Applicant undertook a community consultation exercise during July 2024, with the emerging proposals presented at a community consultation event on Monday 8th July 2024 at the Spencers Wood Pavilion, Spencers Wood between 3.30pm and 7pm. The community consultation event provided local residents with the opportunity to ask the consultant team questions and comment on the proposal. In total 16 people completed the paper questionnaires at the consultation and 15 were received after the event.
- 2.2. A Consultation Leaflet was delivered to all homes within the immediate vicinity of the site on 20th & 21st June 2024 inviting residents to visit the drop-in community consultation. A copy of the Consultation Leaflet is contained in Appendix 1 of this report. In total 6,000 consultation leaflets were hand delivered to homes, on the following:
- Basingstoke Road
 - Back Lane
 - Beech Hill Road
 - Yew Tree Lane
 - White House Lane
 - Lambs Lane
 - Barracks Lane
 - Hyde End Road
 - Sussex Lane
 - Fullbrook Avenue
 - Appletree Lane
 - Croft Road
 - Clares Green Road
 - Albert Close
 - Benham Drive
- 2.3. Shinfield Parish Council shared the electronic version of the consultation leaflet on their social media account.
- 2.4. The consultation leaflet provided information on the following:
-

- The site and its context and;
- Details of the consultation event.

- 2.5. Comments were invited from the date that the consultation event was held, 8th July 2024. The deadline for comments was 22nd July 2024, allowing 2 weeks for local residents to provide comments. Any comments received following this date were still reviewed and have formed part of this report.
- 2.6. At the consultation event 8 information boards were presented for people to read and ask questions about. The detail contained on the boards can be seen in Appendix 2. At the consultation event 11 members of the client and consultant team were present to answer any questions regarding the proposed development.
- 2.7. Local residents were invited to answer questions and make comments at the consultation event using paper feedback forms. Residents were also invited to send their comments online via a dedicated website and email address. A copy of the feedback form can be found in Appendix 3.
- 2.8. Section 3 of this report reviews the feedback received during the consultation period and how the information captured will be used going forward.

3. SUMMARY OF THE FEEDBACK RECEIVED

3.1. In total, 31 individual feedback forms were received during the consultation period, these responses consisted of:

- 15 forms received by the website and email; and
- 16 paper responses.

3.2. Table 3.1 below provides a summary of the common themes and issues raised.

Table 3.1 – Summary of common themes

Theme/Issue	No of Respondents
Pressure on local amenities (Doctors, Dentists, Schools)	23
Traffic and Congestion	23
Concern about overdevelopment in the local area	17
Ecology/ Wildlife	10
Loss of Green Space	10
Concerns over AWE and the DEPZ	9
Alternative Land Use Suggestions	7
Drainage	7
Unsuitability of access off Basingstoke Road	5
Disruption during construction	5
Loss of Privacy	5
Housing Mix	5

3.3. The themes and issues outlined in Table 3.1 indicate that the most important issue is the impact of the development on local amenities, notably the heightened strain on the capacity of healthcare facilities, schools, and other essential facilities. Traffic and road congestion, and concerns of overdevelopment in the Spencers Wood, Shinfield and Three Mile Cross area are also of importance to local residents.

3.4. Table 3.2 below outlines each of the 3 questions in the questionnaire. A summary

of the responses received to each question is also given.

Table 3.2 – Summary of responses to each question

Question	Consultation responses
1. A development framework plan has been prepared to show how the site could be developed. Do you have any comments on the proposed plan, or any suggestions on how it could be improved?	Common responses: • Roads cannot cope with development. • Development is impractical for existing residents. • Improve access to the M4 motorway. • Development should include a swimming pool. • New Primary School is already planned on nearby Fulbrook Avenue, instead a Secondary School should be included. Other responses: • Provide local employment. • Improve public transport connections. • Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) should be located to the north of the site, to provide a margin to existing housing. • The development should include more smaller one, two-bedroom homes as well as apartments. • There is no need for another 3G pitch with one already being built at Ryeish Green Sports Hub. • Development should include emission reduction features, such as EV charging points, solar panels and heat pumps. • Development should not result in Spencers Wood and Swallowfield assimilating.
2. Using your local knowledge, what do you think are the key issues that will need to be considered?	Common responses: • Traffic, particularly on Basingstoke Road, is already an issue. More development will only worsen traffic problems. • Local services such as schools, doctors' surgeries etc. will not be able to handle an increased capacity. Residents request new services, with many requesting a new secondary school or an expansion to existing secondary schools. • Concerns related to the nearby AWE Burghfield facility. • The impacts of air, noise and light pollution caused by the development. • Development will replace local green space, wildlife and habitats. • Increased traffic on roads will result in increased danger to new and existing residents, pets and wildlife.

	Other responses: • New development, along with other local new developments, will diminish the village's identity. • Current infrastructure (sewage, electricity and gas) is old and at capacity. New infrastructure should be in place before housing. • Housing will be overpriced and unaffordable. • Bus routes are planned to change later in 2024. • No direct rail access nearby. • Buffer zone to adjacent application to a solar farm.
3. If you have any further comments, please detail them here:	Common responses: • Development should take place in other areas in the borough, not in Spencers Wood. Other responses: • Development will open floodgates for further development. • Further development will turn Spencers Wood into a commuter town for London. • Developer should aim to stick to promises which have been made, as previous development has been misleading. • Request for further detail on affordable housing.

3.5. Table 3.3. below lists the main comments made during the consultation period and provides a response to address concerns.

Table 3.3 – Consultation comments and responses

Consultation comment	Response
The development will result in an increase in road traffic in the local area, as well as increasing the frequency of accidents.	A Transport Assessment has been prepared and assesses the impact of additional vehicle movements on the road network. It has also researched previous accident records to identify highway safety issues locally.
Local services and infrastructure will be unable to cope with new development.	The proposed development includes a primary school, GP surgery, and local centre. Any residual impact of new residents on local services and infrastructure will be considered by the Council when it determines the application. If improvements are required, a contribution will be requested.
The development has been rejected by AWE Burghfield.	AWE Burghfield may comment on the planning application.
Development should take place in other areas of the district, not in Spencers Wood.	The Borough Local Plan considers Spencers Wood a suitable location for development given its range of services and facilities.

Pollution will impact new and existing residents in Spencers Wood.	An Air Quality Assessment has been prepared which confirms that pollutant concentrations are unlikely to exceed the relevant air quality objectives across the Site.
Local green space and wildlife will be negatively impacted.	The site is not publicly accessible and therefore there is no loss of local green space. However, the proposed development includes a Sustainable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG). A Biodiversity Impact Assessment has been prepared which demonstrates there will be a positive impact on wildlife.
Request for further clarity on affordable housing: definition, target purchasers.	The proposed development is for up to 420 dwellings, of which 40% will be affordable homes. The government defines affordable housing as “social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market”.

4. SHINFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

- 4.1. Richborough have also met twice with Shinfield Parish Council. Firstly, in February 2024, representatives of the Parish Council received a short presentation introducing the proposals for the site. Following the public consultation, Richborough attended a Parish Council meeting in November 2024 to provide feedback on the consultation and to advise of the work undertaken in addressing issues raised by the community. The sports consultant for Richborough has also engaged with the Parish Council in relation to the sports needs of the Parish.

Appendix 1 – Consultation Invitation Leaflet

 **Richborough**

PUBLIC CONSULTATION | JULY 2024

Proposals for a new development and local facilities
Body's Farm, Spencers Wood



We are seeking community feedback on proposals for a new development on land at Body's Farm, East of Basingstoke Road, Spencers Wood.

The development would be a mix of new homes, primary school, local shops, small business units, country park, and a 3G football pitch for the local community.

This leaflet sets out further details on how you can get involved.

www.bodysfarm-spencerswood.co.uk

 **Richborough**



www.bodysfarm-spencerswood.co.uk

WHAT IS PLANNED?

The key elements of the proposals are as follows:

- A range and mix of housing (up to 450 homes) including affordable homes to meet local needs;
- Small business units to provide local employment opportunities;
- Local shops and services within a local centre, including potential doctors surgery;
- Country Park;
- 3G football pitch and changing facilities;
- Primary school;
- Playing fields and play areas;
- Community pavillion;
- Pedestrian and cycle routes connecting to existing areas;
- Community orchard; and
- Areas for wildlife and flood storage.

Our landscape-led proposals will be designed sensitively to fit in with the character of the Area to provide a mix of uses that enhance the community. Development will also contribute to improvements to the local road network and routes for walking and cycling. The proposals have been informed by assessments and surveys of the land and local area.



www.bodysfarm-spencerswood.co.uk

East of Basingstoke Road,
Spencers Wood.

This leaflet sets out further details on
how you can get involved.

www.bodysfarm-spencerswood.co.uk

 Richborough



HAVE YOUR SAY

Your views are important to us, and will help to shape the final proposals. We want to know what you think, so this is an opportunity to have your say.

We will be holding a walk in consultation event to be held at:

Spencers Wood Pavilion,
Spencers Wood Recreation Ground,
Clares Green Road,
Spencers Wood,
Berkshire, RG7 1DY

Monday 8th July 2024
3.30pm to 7.00pm

If you cannot make the event, you will be able to view all of the details on our website at www.bodysfarm-spencerswood.co.uk from the 8th July.

You can also share your views on our website at
www.bodysfarm-spencerswood.co.uk
or by emailing bodysfarm@marrons.co.uk

All comments should be received by 22nd July 2024.



www.bodysfarm-spencerswood.co.uk

WHAT IS PLANNED?

Appendix 2 – Consultation Information Boards



The image shows a consultation information board for Richborough. At the top right is the Richborough logo. Below it, the text reads: 'PROPOSAL FOR NEW VILLAGE FACILITIES AND HOMES AT BODY'S FARM, SPENCERS WOOD'. The word 'Welcome' is prominently displayed in the center. A green banner at the top right of the board content area says 'PUBLIC CONSULTATION | JULY 2024'. The main text on the board states: 'Richborough is consulting the public on proposals for new village facilities and homes at Body's Farm, Land East of Basingstoke Road, Spencers Wood.' It then provides details about the consultation, including that it seeks local residents' views, that proposals are for a landscape-led, sensitively designed development, and that the emerging proposals have been informed by surveys and technical studies. It also asks the public to take time to look at the boards, speak to team members, complete a comments form, and drop it into a box before leaving the event. Finally, it states that after the event, Richborough will review all comments and use them to inform proposals before submitting a planning application later this year. At the bottom, it says 'Thank you for taking the time to come along.' and includes a 'SITE LOCATION PLAN' which is a map showing the development area outlined in red.

Richborough

PROPOSAL FOR NEW VILLAGE FACILITIES AND HOMES AT
BODY'S FARM, SPENCERS WOOD

Welcome

PUBLIC CONSULTATION | JULY 2024

Richborough is consulting the public on proposals for new village facilities and homes at Body's Farm, Land East of Basingstoke Road, Spencers Wood.

This consultation is seeking local resident's views on the key principles of the development proposals.

Richborough are developing proposals for a landscape-led, sensitively designed development reflecting the character of the area.

The emerging proposals have been informed by surveys and technical studies undertaken on the land.

Please take your time to look at the boards and speak to members of the team, who will be happy to discuss the proposals with you.

Please complete a comments form, let us know your views and drop it into the box before you leave the event.

After the event, Richborough will review all the comments made and use them to inform the proposals before submitting a planning application later this year.

Thank you for taking the time to come along.

SITE LOCATION PLAN



 Richborough

PROPOSAL FOR NEW VILLAGE FACILITIES AND HOMES AT
BODY'S FARM, SPENCERS WOOD

The proposals

The proposals are for a balance of uses and facilities that help meet the needs of the area. These are as follows:

- A range and mix of up to 450 homes. These will be a mix of house sizes that cater for different family sizes, including younger people seeking their first home. A significant proportion will also be affordable homes to meet local needs and for those who cannot afford market homes. Providing new homes is an important issue for younger generations.
- Small business units to provide local employment opportunities and space for existing businesses in the area to expand. Providing space for new and existing businesses is important in providing a balanced community of homes and jobs.
- Local shops and services within a local centre that could complement the existing shops on Basingstoke Road. There is also the potential for a new doctors surgery that would be more convenient for Spencers Wood residents.
- A new Country Park that could provide space for walking, cycling, playing, growing food, and wildlife. The Park could be designed by local people and make a big contribution to the health and wellbeing of local residents.
- A 3G football pitch and changing facilities for local sports teams who cannot find anywhere locally to play and train.
- A new primary school that could complement or replace Lambs Lane and provide improved access to education facilities for local children.
- The potential exists to incorporate a building within the primary school that is designed to provide a centre in the event of an emergency at AWE Burghfield.
- Playing fields and play areas at the heart of the new community providing opportunities for play and learning for all generations.
- Community pavilion that provides a hub for activities in this part of Spencers Wood and a space for residents to come together to meet and socialise.
- Pedestrian and cycle routes connecting to existing areas that make it easy for people to walk and cycle, and encourage a healthy lifestyle.
- Areas for wildlife that provide an improvement on the value of the land for wildlife today, and include space for planting, ponds, and wild areas.
- Areas for flood storage that control water run off from development and improve its quality.

ARTISTS IMPRESSION OF THE PROPOSALS





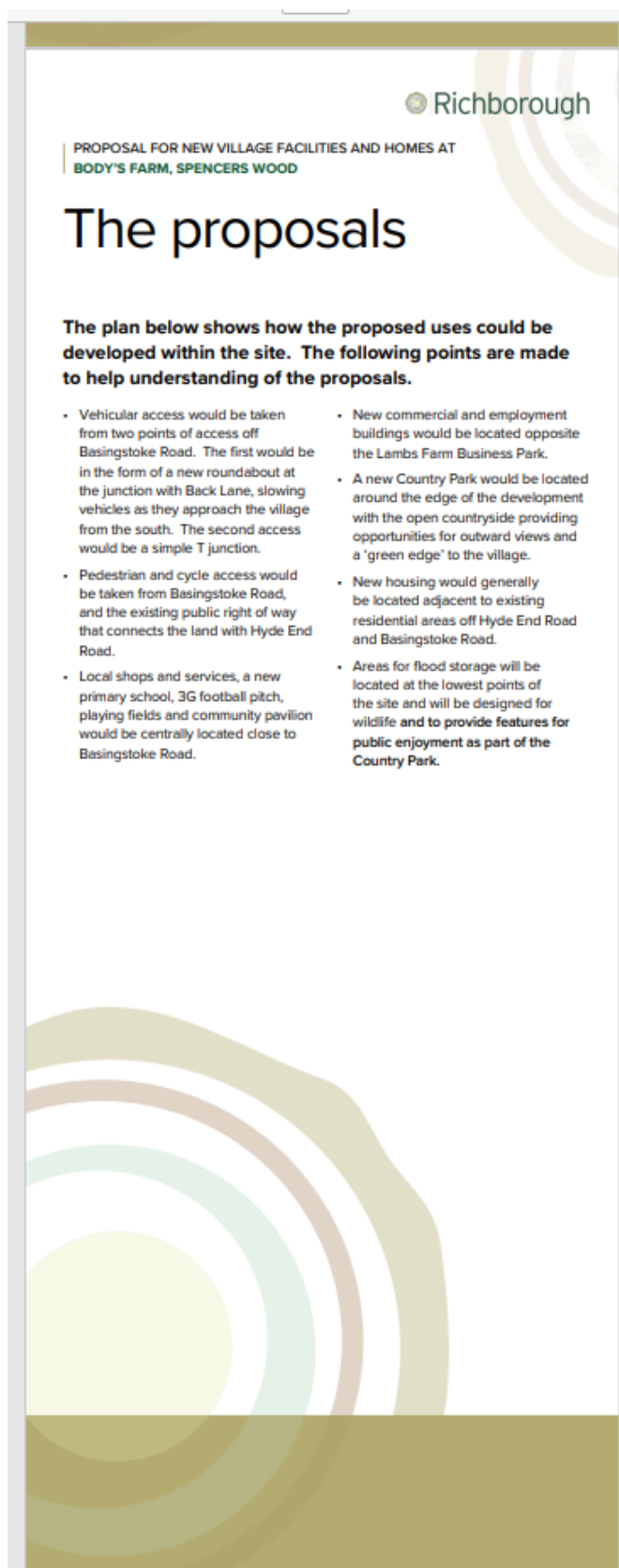
PROPOSAL FOR NEW VILLAGE FACILITIES AND HOMES AT
BODY'S FARM, SPENCERS WOOD

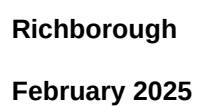
The site

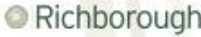
A number of surveys and assessments have been undertaken of the land to help inform the proposals. The following points are made to help understanding of the site.

- The site is located to the east of Basingstoke Road and immediately south and east of the village of Spencers Wood.
- The site is next to residential development to the north, residential/commercial development and Basingstoke Road (B3349) to the south and west, and agricultural land and a solar farm to the east.
- There are no public rights of way through the site, and the land is primarily used for agriculture.
- The site is dominated by crops, with some areas of scrub, grassland, hedgerows and trees.
- A pipeline runs east to west underground across the site.
- A Flood Risk Assessment has been undertaken and the land is within Flood Zone 1 which has the lowest risk of flooding, and a ditch runs along the site boundary.
- An Ecological Appraisal has been undertaken and found that the habitats on site were common and widespread with low overall ecological value with capacity to retain and enhance for biodiversity.
- Detailed species surveys have been undertaken on the land, including breeding birds and bats.
- The land is not designated for its landscape or heritage value and its character is influenced by existing housing within Spencers Wood and the solar farm to the east.
- A detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been undertaken.
- Traffic surveys have been undertaken on local roads and modelling of the impact of development is being undertaken.
- The site is not within an Air Quality Management Area, and pollutant levels on the site are likely to be acceptable for residential development.
- Noise levels within the site were low and related to vehicular traffic on Basingstoke Road and Hyde Road
- The land falls within the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone for AWE Burghfield. The actual risk of an incident is incredibly low.







 Richborough

PROPOSAL FOR NEW VILLAGE FACILITIES AND HOMES AT
BODY'S FARM, SPENCERS WOOD

The benefits

Key benefits of the proposals:

- New Country Park with over 12ha of public open space for the village;
- Fully circulatory cycle/pedestrian routes providing access to all areas of public open space for existing and future residents;
- Over 2km of walking routes within the new Country Park;
- Community Orchard, trim trail and other community spaces to support social inclusion;
- Landscaped Commons with equipped play areas;
- Wetland wildflower planting and heathland promoting bio-diversity and habitat creation;
- Meeting points for far reaching rural vistas and viewing corridors
- Series of themed greens and incidental green space providing natural play spaces.
- Opportunities for new and existing commercial businesses, and job creation within the village
- Homes for people unable to get on the housing ladder locally or those looking to downsize
- New primary school facilities for local children
- More shops within the village meaning less need to travel
- Space for a new doctors surgery to serve the village
- More opportunities for sport and recreation, including a 3G pitch for local football teams

PROPOSALS FOR NEW COUNTRY PARK



 Richborough

PROPOSAL FOR NEW VILLAGE FACILITIES AND HOMES AT
BODY'S FARM, SPENCERS WOOD

Have your say

Richborough would like to know your views on its proposals. We will consider all the comments we receive and take them into account as part of the preparation of the planning application.

All comments should be received by 22nd July 2024.

You can share your views by:

Visiting our website:

www.bodysfarm-spencerwood.co.uk

OR

Completing a form today and sharing it with us.



Thank you for attending and viewing our boards



PROPOSAL FOR NEW VILLAGE FACILITIES AND HOMES AT
BODY'S FARM, SPENCERS WOOD

Common Questions

Q1: How will local roads cope with additional traffic?

All development, large or small, has an impact on existing infrastructure. Large developments can better manage and minimise those impacts compared to smaller, piecemeal development. We will minimise the impact on local roads by providing facilities on-site to reduce the need to travel (such as shops, primary school, and jobs), whilst also delivering targeted off-site improvements, and promoting sustainable, alternative means of travel.

Q2: How will schools, shops, and the doctors cope with more local residents?

The proposals include a primary school, shops, and an approach has been made to the Integrated Care Board about the potential to accommodate a new doctors surgery within the development. In terms of secondary schools, new pupils could be accommodated at Oakbank School although improvements may be required to increase its capacity. It is important that new developments make provision for new infrastructure where it is needed.

Q3: Why do we need more houses?

The population of the Borough is expected to grow by 8.9% (14,867) by 2028 from 2018 (ONS 2020), and the Borough Council have estimated a need for over 13,000 new homes to be built before 2040. The consequence of not providing sufficient housing to meet demand is higher house prices, and the average price of a home in the Borough is £511,505 compared to a national average of £292,882 (UK House Price Index, Aug 2023). The Borough Council estimate a need for 6,689 new affordable homes to be built before 2040.

Q4: What will happen to the wildlife on the land?

Ecologists have undertaken surveys of the land to identify the presence of habitats and species. The habitats on site were common and widespread with low overall ecological value, and only small parts of hedgerows would need to be removed to enable access. The proposals have been designed to accommodate space for wildlife as shown on the plans, and any planning application will need to demonstrate how improvements can be delivered.

Q5: Will development make flooding worse?

Planning permission will only be granted if a flood risk assessment is undertaken and the results are shown to be satisfactory. That means the proposed development will not flood, will not cause the surrounding areas to flood and will not have a detrimental impact on the underlying situation. The proposals will demonstrate how we will deal with water, not only to manage flood risk but achieve betterment over the current situation.

Appendix 3 – Consultation feedback form

Body's Farm, Spencers Wood – Your Views

Thank you for taking the time to visit today's exhibition. This feedback form enables you to give us your views on the consultation material today. Your comments will be taken into account by Richborough, as they progress the proposals.

The display boards at today's consultation and the questions below can also be viewed and responded to at www.bodysfarm-spencerwood.co.uk

1. A development framework plan has been prepared to show how the site could be developed. Do you have any comments on the proposed plan, or any suggestions on how it could be improved?

2. Using your local knowledge, what do you think are the key issues that will need to be considered?

3. If you have any further comments, please detail them here:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this feedback form.

By submitting this form you agree to us using your information for the purposes of preparing the planning application in relation to Body's Farm. We will not share any personal information with third parties.

Please post this form into the comments box as you leave the exhibition, or alternatively, return your form to:

Marrons

Bridgeway House

Bridgeway

Stratford-upon-Avon

CV37 6YX

Or via email to bodysfarm@marrons.co.uk by Monday 22nd July 2024.

