



Land North of Arborfield Road, Shinfield

Planning Statement

On behalf of **Bellway Homes (Thames Valley) and The University of Reading**

Project Ref: 333101061 | Date: September 2024

Registered Office: Buckingham Court Kingsmead Business Park, London Road, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP11 1JU
Office Address: The Blade, Abbey Square, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 3BE
T: 0118 9430000

Document Control Sheet

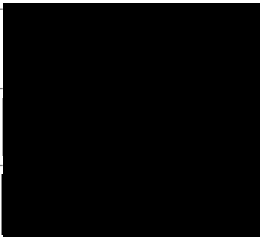
Project Name: Land North of Arborfield Road, Shinfield

Project Ref: 333101061

Report Title: Planning Statement

Doc Ref: 333101061/P1/A5

Date: September 2024

	Name	Position	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Caitlin Daly / Emily Everitt	Graduate Planner / Planning Associate		13/09/2024
Reviewed by:	Nick Paterson-Neild	Planning Director		13/09/2024
Approved by:	Nick Paterson-Neild	Planning Director		13/09/2024
For and on behalf of Stantec UK Limited				

Revision	Date	Description	Prepared	Reviewed	Approved
-	18/07/24	Draft	EE	NPN	NPN
a	29/08/2024	Updated draft	CD / EE	NPN	NPN
b	12/09/2024	Updated draft	CD	NPN	NPN
c	13/09/2024	Final	CD	NPN	NPN

This report has been prepared by Stantec UK Limited ('Stantec') on behalf of its client to whom this report is addressed ('Client') in connection with the project described in this report and takes into account the Client's particular instructions and requirements. This report was prepared in accordance with the professional services appointment under which Stantec was appointed by its Client. This report is not intended for and should not be relied on by any third party (i.e. parties other than the Client). Stantec accepts no duty or responsibility (including in negligence) to any party other than the Client and disclaims all liability of any nature whatsoever to any such party in respect of this report.

Contents

1 INTRODUCTION.....1

2 THE APPLICATION SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS3

3 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT6

4 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT10

5 ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT20

6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS32

Appendices

Appendix 1 – WBC Screening Opinion, dated 13th June 2024

This page is intentionally blank

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 Stantec is instructed by Bellway Homes (Thames Valley) and The University of Reading to prepare and submit a full application to Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) in relation to land north of Arborfield Road in Shinfield (hereafter referred to as 'the Site').
- 1.1.2 The Site is located within the South of M4 Strategic Development Location (SDL) designated in WBC's Core Strategy (adopted in 2010) and is identified in WBC's emerging Local Plan Update as an additional site allocation with capacity for 191 dwellings within the SDL.
- 1.1.3 The description of development for which full planning permission is sought is as follows:

"Full planning application for the erection of new dwellings, open space, landscaping, supporting infrastructure and associated works."

- 1.1.4 The application proposes the development of 191 dwellings alongside open space, landscaping and supporting infrastructure. The development would in effect form a second phase to the development currently being built out to the north of the Site on land south of Cutbush Lane by Bellway.

- 1.1.1 As set out in this Statement, the proposed development reflects the overall strategy set out in WBC's adopted and emerging planning policy. It is informed by the policy context as well as ongoing and completed development elsewhere in the SDL. The sensitivity of the landscape to development has also been considered, with the development proposals reflective of Site's residential setting.

- 1.1.2 In addition to this Statement, the application is supported by the plans detailed in the accompanying covering letter, as well as the following information:

- Planning Application Form and Certificates
- CIL Form
- Design and Access Statement
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Transport Assessment
- Flood Risk Assessment/Drainage Statement
- Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment
- Acoustic Assessment
- Ecological Impact Assessment
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment
- Tree Survey
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- Air Quality Assessment

- 1.1.3 This application has been prepared in consultation with the local community during the preparation of the application, as detailed further within the Statement of Community Involvement submitted within this application.
- 1.1.4 The application has also been prepared taking account of comments received from officers in response to the planning application immediately to the north of the Site and during the pre-application process which considered development proposals on the Site and land to the north prior to that application being submitted.
- 1.1.5 The application demonstrates that the Site is in a sustainable location and suitable for residential development, in line with the draft allocation for the Site as an additional location for residential

use identified in the emerging Local Plan Update. The application also demonstrates that high-quality buildings and spaces will be delivered.

- 1.1.6 The development will make an important contribution towards the provision of housing in Shinfield, reflecting the policy context in the area, including the draft allocation of the Site, and supporting the existing infrastructure and services associated with the wider SDL developments. The development will also contribute towards the delivery of infrastructure required to mitigate the impacts of the development.
- 1.1.7 The development accords with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and relevant policies contained within the adopted Development Plan as well as being consistent with the spatial strategy in the emerging Local Plan.

1.2 Structure of Planning Statement

- 1.2.1 **Section 2.0 (The Application Site and its Surroundings)** details the physical characteristics of the Site and its immediate surroundings. Chapter 2 also details the planning policy designations which are of relevance to the Site and the surrounding area.
- 1.2.2 **Section 3.0 (The Proposed Development)** provides details of the proposed development.
- 1.2.3 **Section 4.0 (Planning Policy Context)** refers to the relevant policies from the NPPF and Development Plan in addition to relevant SPDs.
- 1.2.4 **Section 5.0 (Assessment of the Proposed Development)** provides a response to the Development Plan policies and other guidance which relate to the Site and the development proposals. The chapter demonstrates that the proposals are in accordance with relevant national, regional and local planning policies and guidance.
- 1.2.5 **Section 6.0 (Summary and Conclusions)** sets out the conclusions of this Statement.

2 THE APPLICATION SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

2.1 Site Context

- 2.1.1 The Site extends to approximately 7ha and currently comprises agriculture land bordered by trees and hedgerows.
- 2.1.2 The Site is located on the eastern boundary of the village of Shinfield, south of Reading and to the west of Wokingham. It is bordered to the east by the A327 Eastern Relief Road, to the south by Arborfield Road, to the west by existing residential dwellings and to the north by residential development currently under construction by the Applicant.
- 2.1.3 According to the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning, the majority of the Site is located within Flood Zone 1, although the east of the Site is shown within Flood Zone 2 and the land along the eastern boundary is in Flood Zone 3, more detailed modelling by WBC, which considers the Eastern Relief Road, confirms that the entire Site is actually within Flood Zone 1. Additionally, the majority of the Site is at very low risk of surface water flooding, as detailed in the submitted Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy. The Site comprises Grade 3a agricultural land.
- 2.1.4 The Site is broadly flat, with land falling slightly from the high point in the north-west towards the south and east. The Eastern Relief Road which borders the Site to the east is sited above the level of the Site, with its bank running along the eastern site boundary.
- 2.1.5 There are no Listed buildings within the Site. The nearest Listed building is located in excess of 300m to the south-west of the Site at The School on Hyde End Road.

2.2 Planning History

- 2.2.1 A request for an EIA Screening Opinion was submitted in relation to the proposed development of the Site and land to the north for residential use in 2018 (WBC application reference 181606). A Screening Opinion was issued by WBC in June 2018 which concluded that due to the potential cumulative impacts of the proposal in respect to consented schemes and pending planning applications, together with the impact of the development on the Loddon River Valley, any planning application should be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).
- 2.2.2 To the north of the Site, a full planning application was submitted by the Applicant in 2018 (WBC application reference 181499). In line with the Screening Opinion referred to above, an EIA was submitted as part of the application. Full planning permission was granted at appeal for the erection of 249 dwellings, open space, landscaping, surface water attenuation, access and associated works in 2019. The permission is currently being built out by the Applicant.
- 2.2.3 Whilst the Site and proposed development was within the scope of the EIA submitted in 2018, a request for an EIA Screening Opinion relating to the proposed development was submitted to WBC in May 2024 (WBC application reference 241326). The Screening Opinion was issued on 13th June 2024 and concluded that due to the scale of the development, existing land use and context of the application site it was not considered, based on the information submitted, that an EIA should accompany any forthcoming planning application. A copy of the Screening Opinion is provided at Appendix 1.

2.3 Pre-Application Advice

- 2.3.1 The Applicant submitted a formal request to WBC for pre-application advice on 1st November 2016 for residential development of up to 425 dwellings on land to the south of Cutbush Lane, Shinfield. The development proposed at that time included the Site as part of a larger site area

and quantum of development including land to the north of the Site where development is now being built out in accordance with permission reference 181499.

- 2.3.2 The pre-application advice sought from WBC related to a total area of 16.25ha comprising two development parcels bisected by the permissive pathway and central hedgerow. It was proposed at that time that the northern parcel (Land South of Cutbush Lane) could accommodate 249 dwellings and the southern parcel (Land North of Arborfield Road) could accommodate approximately 174 dwellings.
- 2.3.3 A pre-application meeting took place between WBC officers and the Applicant on 5th January 2017 and a formal written response was received from WBC on 8th August 2017. The response acknowledged that whilst development of the site (both northern and southern parcels) had to date been restricted until March 2026 by the Unilateral Undertaking accompanying the Shinfield West planning permission (reference 0/20101432), the decision by WBC's Executive Committee on 27th July 2017 had effectively lifted that restriction allowing the site to come forward for development.
- 2.3.4 The pre-application response was generally positive in terms of the quantum of development and layout proposed but offered suggested revisions to the design and considerations to note in terms of the site's constraints. It is noted that this feedback was provided in the context of the adopted Core Strategy, with planning policy since having moved on and the Site more positively identified in the emerging Local Plan Update.
- 2.3.5 A revised pre-application submission covering both parcels of land was made to WBC on 19th January 2018, which was followed by a meeting between officers and the Applicant on 8th February 2018.
- 2.3.6 Following the pre-application meeting, the Applicant decided to progress the two parcels of land separately. As referred to above, the full planning application for 249 dwellings on the northern parcel was approved at appeal in 2019 (application reference 181499).
- 2.3.7 This application therefore relates to the southern parcel. The development proposals have been prepared as a second phase of the development, taking into account the approved plans on the northern parcel. This will ensure that, whilst built out as two individual developments, the completed development is read as a single site.

2.4 Community Engagement

- 2.4.1 A Statement of Community Involvement prepared by Instinctif is submitted within this planning application and details the community engagement undertaken as part of the preparation of the application.
- 2.4.2 Engagement has included briefing Shinfield Ward Members and Shinfield Parish Council on the proposals and seeking their feedback. The local MP, members of WBC's Planning Committee and Council leaders have also been contacted about the proposals and offered briefings on the proposals.
- 2.4.3 In addition, the project team have engaged with and sought feedback from local residents. The focus for engagement was ensuring that all local residents were provided with details of the proposals and given the opportunity to share feedback, regardless of what other demands they may have for their time. In this regard, it was decided that sending information directly to residents, for them to review at a time that suited them, was preferable to a physical exhibition which not all residents may have been able to attend as a result of having other commitments. As such, a leaflet providing details of the proposals was issued to in excess of 1,100 local addresses in July 2024. The leaflet provided contact details for the project team, enabling residents to provide feedback via email or telephone.

- 2.4.4 Limited feedback has been received in response to the engagement, however comments have been reviewed and, where appropriate, taken on board. Commentary on how feedback has been addressed is set out within the statement accompanying this application.

3 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1.1 This Chapter provides a description of the development. This application is seeking full planning permission for the development of the Site for residential use.

3.1.2 The description of development for which full planning permission is sought is as follows:

“Full planning application for the erection of new dwellings, open space, landscaping, parking and all associated engineering works.”

3.1.3 The proposed development has been designed as a second phase of the development currently being built out to the north of the Site on land south of Cutbush Lane by the Applicant.

3.1.4 The Design and Access Statement submitted with this application illustrates the proposals for how the Site would be developed. The application is also supported by the drawings and documents listed in Chapter 1 of this Statement.

3.2 Layout and Form

3.2.1 The layout of the proposed development is informed by and consistent with that of the adjoining scheme to the north. Built form is arranged in an equivalent urban grain format to the wider neighbourhood and the development will provide a sensitive and appropriate extension to the edge of Shinfield, integrating with the neighbouring pattern of development as well as responding to the relationship with the Loddon River Valley.

3.2.2 The layout provides for well defined streets and spaces which are connected and well overlooked. Perimeter blocks will have clearly defined public fronts with active frontages and gardens or areas of landscaping to the front, enlivening streets.

3.2.3 Careful consideration has been given to the site layout with regard to both access and the integration of the proposed development with the surrounding facilities and infrastructure in order to deliver a high level of connectivity for movements by all modes to and from the site.

3.2.4 Legible features will help people navigate around and through the development, including through the use of a simple street pattern which will allow destinations to be easily viewed. Clear differentiation between primary streets, secondary streets and private drives in design and character will also help people find their way around and greenspaces will serve as key landmarks within the site.

3.2.5 The legible, characterful layout will be reinforced by the height and scale of buildings. The majority will be 2 storeys, with buildings in prominent locations such as adjacent to the central open space up to three storeys in height.

3.3 Housing Mix, Density and Affordable Housing

3.3.1 A range of dwelling types is proposed including 1, 2, 3 and 4 bed properties and a mix of apartments and houses. The proposed mix is as follows:

	Private	Affordable	Total
1 bed		18	18
2 bed	6	22	28
3 bed	65	25	90
4 bed	53	2	55
Total	124	67	191

- 3.3.2 The proposed mix responds to local needs and will provide for homes for first time buyers, families and those downsizing.
- 3.3.3 11 homes have been designed so that they can be easily altered to make reasonable provision for a wheelchair user to live in the dwelling, in accordance with part M4(3)(2)(a) of the Building Regulations. The remainder of the homes have been designed to make reasonable provision for most people to access the dwelling, incorporating features that make it potentially suitable for a wide range of occupants, including older people, those with reduced mobility and some wheelchair users, in accordance with part M4(2) of the Building Regulations.
- 3.3.4 35% of homes will be affordable housing. Tenures are proposed to be distributed across the development in small integrated clusters. The design of homes and streets will be consistent irrespective of property tenure, using architecture, landscaping, and layout to foster an inclusive environment for everyone.
- 3.3.5 Access and Movement
- 3.3.6 The development is conveniently located within walking and cycling distance of various local services and facilities, aligning with both national and local policy goals. Consequently, there is potential for residents to undertake journeys using non-car modes of transport.
- 3.3.7 The primary vehicular access to the proposed development will be established via a new priority junction to the south on Arborfield Road. It is also proposed to connect to the existing spine road which routes through the Littlebrook and Long Acre residential estates which lie to the north of the site, thereby providing a second point of access which will deliver a through route between Arborfield Road and the Eastern Relief Road / Thames Valley Science Park roundabout.
- 3.3.8 Pedestrian and cycle access into the development will be delivered through connections onto the Arborfield Road frontage as well as a southerly continuation of the facilities being promoted along both sides of the spine road which routes through the Long Acre estate immediately to the north. The development will provide 2-metre footways on either side within the Site. Additionally, a 3-meter footway/cycleway along the eastern frontage will offer convenient and direct access for trips heading north-east. Future residents in the northern part of the Site will also be able to head west using the existing Public Right of Way (SHIN FP7), which connects to Oatlands Road.
- 3.3.9 The development will provide 398 cycle spaces. Cycle parking will be accommodated within the curtilage of each individual house, including within garages where these are provided. Secure cycle stores will be provided for each apartment building.
- 3.3.10 A total of 425 car parking spaces is proposed, including visitor spaces, allocated parking for new dwellings and garages. A design led approach has been adopted which seeks to provide parking that is well integrated and compliments, rather than dominates, the street scene. The objective is to provide an adequate level of parking and, importantly, to ensure that the spaces that are designed for parking are used for parking, and that places where parking will cause problems are not going to be used for that purpose. This approach will help to prevent the problems such as cars parked indiscriminately which obstruct pavements and restrict access along a street.

3.4 Open Space and Landscaping

- 3.4.1 The proposals aim to incorporate a robust landscape strategy that will provide structure to the proposed residential development and integrate seamlessly with the existing vegetation at the site's boundaries, both in the immediate context and wider setting. The development responds positively to the current landscape setting through a thoughtful and appropriate landscape-led design.

- 3.4.2 The proposed development will incorporate as many green areas as possible to provide attractive spaces for enjoyment, recreation and play and encourage interaction with the surrounding nature on a day to day basis. Key areas of open space include a central open space and open space along the eastern edge of the site.. In addition, the attenuation basin will contain strategically placed boulders which can be utilised for informal seating and play when the basin is dry. A connection point links the central open space to the eastern open space to provide a visual link and to ensure a movement corridor for wildlife is provided.
- 3.4.3 Areas of wildflower and wetland planting are included within the open space corridor along the eastern edge of the development to enhance biodiversity. Mown footpaths through the grassland are proposed to encourage all users, including younger children, to interact with nature and to encourage Biodiversity Net Gain within the design proposals.
- 3.4.4 The site boundaries will be strengthened by introducing a sensitively positioned native trees and shrubs. By enhancing these green corridors surrounding the development this will provide stronger natural habitat to the site and multifunctional environment.
- 3.4.5 New street tree planting is proposed as an integral part of the layout to ensure a high-quality residential scheme is created, allowing the built elements to be successfully integrated within the suburban setting. The tree species also assists in identifying legibility and highlighting the pedestrian routes or key nodal points.
- 3.4.6 SANG capacity for the development will be provided as an extension to Langley Mead SANG which is located immediately to the south of the Site. The addition to the SANG already benefits from planning permission.
- 3.4.7 Sports provision will also be provided off-site with the development supporting the delivery of additional provision within Shinfield, for the benefit of new and existing residents. Specifically, the development will support the delivery of sports provision at The Manor and Shinfield West where provision has already been consented and has capacity to serve this Site.

3.5 Flooding and Drainage

- 3.5.1 The proposed built development is located entirely on land which has been demonstrated by flood modelling to be at a low risk of fluvial flooding and have a low or very low risk of surface water flooding.
- 3.5.2 No specific flood risk mitigation measures are required and finished floor levels will be set an appropriate level above the surrounding ground level (minimum of 150mm).
- 3.5.3 The proposed surface water drainage strategy will manage the flood risk posed by uncontrolled surface water runoff from the site. Any increase in surface water run-off can be managed using SuDS source control techniques as well as attenuation features to provide storage in extreme storm events. All surface water drainage systems will be designed to restrict drainage discharge rates to QBAR runoff rates and store the balance of water for all events up to and including the 1 in 100 year event including allowance for a 40% increase in rainfall intensities as a result of climate change and urban creep.

3.6 Sustainability

- 3.6.1 The development will follow a fabric first approach to constructing energy efficient buildings, with insulation standards, thermal bridging and air leakage all improved beyond the minimum compliance levels within Building Regulations.
- 3.6.2 It is expected that all dwellings will be constructed beyond the implementation of the Future Homes Standard and will therefore meet a 75-80% reduction in CO₂ emissions compared with current regulatory standards.

3.6.3 Development will also incorporate low carbon and renewable technologies and a range of additional sustainability measures have been given consideration including reduction of both construction and household waste.

3.6.4 All dwellings will have electric vehicle charging infrastructure to ensure the development is adaptable in accommodating a future shift to electric vehicles for personal transportation.

3.7 Community Infrastructure Levy

3.7.1 The development will be liable for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) costs. WBC's CIL Charging Schedule (adopted February 2015) applies a rate of £300/sqm new residential floorspace within the South of M4 SDL (index linked). The indexed CIL rate for 2024 is £441.31/sqm. A completed CIL form is submitted with this application.

3.8 Section 106 Heads of Terms

3.8.1 Section 106 obligations will be discussed and agreed with WBC. This will ensure that the impacts of the development are appropriately mitigated, taking account of existing and planned provision of infrastructure and amenities in Shinfield including that associated with recent nearby developments.

3.8.2 At present, it is envisaged that the following Section 106 Heads of Terms may be necessary in respect of the proposed development:

- Affordable housing;
- Sports provision;
- SANG and SAMM; and
- Any off-site highway works.

4 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 4.1.1 This chapter of the Statement identifies the national and local planning policies and guidance considered to be of relevance to the determination of this application. The Applicant has sought to ensure that the development proposals accord with the planning policy guidance relating to the Application Site.
- 4.1.2 Section 38(5A) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023) states that for the purposes of any determination to be made under the planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan and any national development management policies. Section 38(5B) requires that the determination must be made in accordance with the development plan and any national development management policies, taken together, unless material considerations strongly indicate otherwise. At the time of writing there are no national development management policies.

4.2 Statutory Development Plan Policy

- 4.2.1 For the purposes of Section 38(5B) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Development Plan relevant to the Site comprises:
- Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (adopted 2010)
 - Managing Development Delivery Development Plan Document (adopted 2014)
 - Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan (adopted 2017)
 - South East Plan (adopted 2009, partially revoked in 2013)

Core Strategy

- 4.2.2 The Core Strategy was adopted in 2010. It sets out WBC's strategy for managing development until 2026 and includes policies and strategies to provide new housing, schools, roads and places to work and other services.
- 4.2.3 Policy CP1 (Sustainable Development) notes the need for development to maintain and enhance the high-quality environment; limit any adverse effects on water quality; ensure the provision of adequate drainage; provide attractive, functional, accessible, safe, secure and adaptable schemes; and reduce the need to travel particularly by car.
- 4.2.4 Policy CP2 (Inclusive Communities) ensures that development contributes to the provision of sustainable and inclusive communities including addressing the requirements of children, young people and families, people with special needs and an ageing population.
- 4.2.5 Policy CP3 (General Principles for Development) notes that planning permission will be granted for proposals that have no detrimental impact upon important ecological, heritage, landscape or geological features or water courses and maintain or enhance the ability of the site to support fauna and flora including protected species. Development proposals will be required to demonstrate how they have responded to the criteria of this policy through the submission of Design and Access Statements, clear and informative plans, elevations and street scenes and where required Masterplans, Development Briefs, Concept Statements and Design Code.
- 4.2.6 Policy CP4 (Infrastructure Requirements) states that planning permission will be granted unless appropriate arrangements for the improvement or provision of infrastructure, services, community and other facilities required for the development taking account of the cumulative impact of schemes are agreed. This shall be secured by planning obligations or condition if appropriate.
- 4.2.7 In relation to housing, policy CP5 (Housing Mix, Density and Affordability) notes planning permission will be granted for residential development providing:

“.....a mix and balance of densities, dwelling types, tenures and sizes.”

4.2.8 Policy CP5 states that affordable housing must reflect the sizes and types that meet the proven needs of people who are able to compete in the general housing market. It goes on to note that the minimum percentage of affordable housing sought on Strategic Development Locations is 35% on 5 dwellings or more or 0.16ha or larger.

4.2.9 From a transport perspective, policy CP6 (Managing Travel Demand) emphasises 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;
d) Provide appropriate vehicular parking, having regard to car ownership;
e) Mitigate any adverse effects upon the local and strategic transport network that arise from the development proposed;
f) Enhance road safety; and
g) Do not cause highway problems or lead to traffic related environmental problems.”**

4.2.10 Policy CP7 (Biodiversity) 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.

4.2.11 Policy CP8 (Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area) indicates that development which alone or in combination is likely to have significant effects on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area will be required to demonstrate that adequate measures to avoid and mitigate any potential adverse effects are delivered i.e. the creation of a SANG.

4.2.12 In relation to the Strategic Transport Network, policy CP10 (Improvements to the Strategic Transport Network) states that improvements to the Network will be:

“....provided to ameliorate major environmental or safety problems and to support new development....”

4.2.13 Such improvements include improvements to the Strategic Transport Network within the designated Strategic Development Locations.

4.2.14 Policy CP17 (Housing Delivery) states that at least 13,230 dwellings and associated development and infrastructure will be brought forward within the Borough for the Plan period (2006-2026).

4.2.15 Policy CP19 (South of the M4 Strategic Development Location) states that around 2,500 dwellings of this requirement will come forward within an area identified as a Strategic Development Location at South of the M4, including affordable homes in accordance with Policy CP5.

4.2.16 Within Appendix 7 of Wokingham's Core Strategy, additional guidance is provided for the development of Strategic Development Locations.

Managing Development Delivery Development Plan Document

- 4.2.17 The MDD DPD was adopted in February 2014 and adds extra detail to the policies within the Core Strategy. Together, these two documents set out how the Borough will develop up until 2026.
- 4.2.18 The document begins by setting out ten cross cutting policies. The first of these policies is Policy CC01 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development) which states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2.19 Relating specifically to the location of development, Policy CC02 (Development Limits) sets the development limits for each settlement (as defined on the Policies Map). Policy CC02 states that development proposals within the areas allocated as SDL will be permitted that are within the identified development limits unless an acceptable alternative has been agreed through the granting of planning permission. This will need to be accompanied by a deliverable SDL-wide:

“a. Comprehensive masterplan; and

b. Infrastructure Delivery Plan which:

i. Ensures that the applicant funds and delivers an appropriate share of the SDL infrastructure; and

ii. Does not prejudice the comprehensive delivery and implementation of the wider SDL.”

- 4.2.20 The delivery of the South of the M4 masterplan is largely complete, having been coordinated under a comprehensive masterplan and infrastructure delivery plan. This proposal has been specifically designed with regard to the new homes immediately to the north, ensuring access and sustainable connections to services and facilities in Shinfield. The foot and cycle way is a strategic element that promotes links to the local centre. The scheme is situated close to Langley Mead SANG and will contribute to its extension. The Site north of the site (phase 1) was designed with Land North of Arborfield Road (the Site) in consideration and therefore it has been planned within a wider coherent masterplan. The Design and Access Statement further exemplifies the design and its integration within the wider SDL.
- 4.2.21 Policy CC03 (Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping) notes that development proposals should provide new or protect and enhance the Borough's Green Infrastructure networks; promote accessibility, linkages and permeability between existing green corridors including public right of way such as footpaths, cycleways and bridleways; promote the integration of the scheme with any adjoining public open space or countryside; protect and retain existing trees, hedges and other landscape features; and incorporate high quality, ideally, native planting and landscaping.
- 4.2.22 Policy CC04 (Sustainable Design and Construction) notes that planning permission will only be granted for proposals that seek to deliver high quality sustainable design and construction.
- 4.2.23 Policy CC05 (Renewable Energy and Decentralised Energy Networks) notes that proposals of more than 10 dwellings will only be granted that deliver a minimum of 10% reduction in carbon emissions through renewable energy or low carbon technology. Furthermore, opportunities to contribute towards decentralised energy supply from renewable and low-carbon technologies will be encouraged.
- 4.2.24 Policy CC06 (Noise) states that proposal must demonstrate how they have addressed noise impacts to protect noise sensitive receptors (both existing and proposed).
- 4.2.25 Policy CC07 (Parking) states that planning permission will only be granted where the proposal demonstrates the proposed parking standards meet specified standards and that the new scheme retains an appropriate overall level of off-street parking.

- 4.2.26 Policy CC08 (Safeguarding Alignments of the Strategic Transport Network & Road Infrastructure) provides further detail to CP10 of Wokingham's Core Strategy, by stating that routes required for the improvement of the Strategic Transport Network will be protected and safeguarded, and any proposals which would compromise the implementation of these routes would not be supported.
- 4.2.27 Policy CC09 (Development and Flood Risk (from all sources)) notes that a Flood Risk Assessment is required for proposals of 1 hectare or greater in Flood Zone 1.
- 4.2.28 Policy CC10 (Sustainable Drainage) states that all developments must reproduce greenfield runoff characteristics and return run-off rates and volumes back to the original greenfield levels. The policy also emphasises that proposals must incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), where practicable, which meet the long term needs of the development and which achieve wider social and environmental benefits. In addition, the developer must provide clear details of how the proposed SuDS will be adopted and maintained.
- 4.2.29 Policy TB05 (Housing Mix) states that:

“Proposals for residential development shall provide for an appropriate housing mix which reflects a balance between the underlying character of the area and both the current and projected needs of households. Any scheme that requires the provision of affordable housing should provide an appropriate mix of accommodation on a site by site basis, which reflects the Council’s Housing Strategy and the Affordable Housing SPD.”

- 4.2.30 In addition, this policy states that a proportion of all dwellings must be built to Lifetime Home Standards, normally within the range of 10-20%.
- 4.2.31 Policy TB07 (Internal Space Standards) notes that proposal for new residential units should ensure that the internal layout and size are suitable to serve the amenity requirements of future occupiers.
- 4.2.32 Policy TB08 (Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Standards for Residential Development) states that proposals for residential development will need to demonstrate how they meet the specified standards
- 4.2.33 Policy TB21 (Landscape Character) states that proposals must demonstrate how they have addressed the requirements of the Council’s Landscape Character Assessment and must retain or enhance the condition, character and features that contribute to the landscape.
- 4.2.34 Policy TB23 (Biodiversity and Development) states that planning permission for development proposals will only be granted where they demonstrate how they:

“a) Provide opportunities, including through design, layout and landscaping to incorporate new biodiversity features or enhance existing

b) Provide appropriate buffer zones between development proposals and designated sites as well as habitats and species of principle importance for nature conservation

c) Ensure that all existing and new developments are ecologically permeable through the protection of existing and the provision of new continuous wildlife corridors, which shall be integrated and linked to the wider green infrastructure network.”

- 4.2.35 Policy TB25 (Archaeology) states that in areas of high archaeological potential, applicants will need to provide a detailed assessment of the impact on archaeological remains. Policy TB25 also states that appropriate measures shall be undertaken to protect remains by preservation in situ if a development is likely to affect an area of high archaeological potential.

Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan

- 4.2.36 The Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan became part of the Development Plan in February 2017. It covers the period 2016 to 2026.
- 4.2.37 Policy 1 (Location of Development) states that development within the development limits will be supported and that development adjacent to the Development Limits will only be supported where the benefits of the development outweigh its adverse impacts.
- 4.2.38 Policy 2 (General Design Principles) states that new residential developments, provision must be made to accommodate appropriate mix of size, built form and garden size which should also include style, design and character which represents local distinctiveness through layout, materials and landscaping.
- 4.2.39 Policy 3 (Sustainable Development) states that the Parish encourages renewable and low carbon technologies and developments must demonstrate that there is adequate capacity on the network for all utilities.
- 4.2.40 Policy 4 (Accessibility and Highways Safety) states that developments should ensure that advantage is taken of the existing public transport network, and efforts are made to restrict traffic speed. Accessibility should also be improved to walking and cycling routes and where possible additional pedestrian and cycle routes made available.
- 4.2.41 Policy 5 (Parking) states that Garages must meet the minimum requirements and facilities provide to accommodate cycle storage and mitigation measures must be demonstrated which deters inappropriate parking arrangements.
- 4.2.42 Policy 6 (Trees, hedgerows and Woodland) states that the new development must demonstrate through surveys that the appropriate mitigation has been undertaken ensure that there is adequate preservation.
- 4.2.43 Policy 7 (Biodiversity) states that where possible, the development should demonstrate biodiversity enhancements and this can be achieved through the creation of new habitats and supported with a maintenance and management recommendations.
- 4.2.44 Policy 8 (Flooding) states that where appropriate, new developments must incorporate the existing open watercourses, points and ditches within the development site, to lessen the risk of flooding to property, fields and roads.
- 4.2.45 The creation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in new developments should be promoted wherever practicable and should be incorporated into the site layout and landscape design, matching with the requirements of existing adjacent land and with regard to provision for fauna, flora and habitats.
- 4.2.46 Policy 10 (Community and Sports Facilities) states that all qualifying developments shall contribute towards formal and informal sports and leisure activities and recreation and social facilities within the parish, either through the provision of on-site or off-site facilities or through financial contributions towards sports, leisure and recreation projects, where they are required to mitigate the impact of the development.
- 4.2.47 Policy 12 (Broadband provision) states that there should be a continual improvement sought towards broadband and internet connections.

South East Plan

- 4.2.48 The Regional Strategy for the South East (The South East Plan) (RS) was adopted in May 2009 and established 'spatial' policies in respect of a number of issues, including the scale and distribution of new housing, priorities for new infrastructure, a strategy for protecting the countryside and for tackling climate change.
- 4.2.49 The South East Plan was formally revoked on 25 March 2013 under the Regional Strategy for the South East (Partial Revocation) Order 2013.
- 4.2.50 Two policies were retained and remain part of the Development Plan. One of these retained policies is of relevance to the proposed development, namely Policy NRM6 (Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area).
- 4.2.51 Policy NRM6 notes that new residential development which is likely to have a significant effect (within 5km) on the ecological integrity of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) will be required to demonstrate that adequate measures are put in place to avoid or mitigate any potential adverse effects in agreement with Natural England. Where mitigation takes the form of Suitable Accessible Natural Greenspace (SANG) this should be provided at a minimum of 8ha of SANG land per 1,000 new occupants.

4.3 Other Material Planning Considerations

- 4.3.1 For this application, the identified material considerations to be considered alongside the Development Plan include:
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
 - Supplementary guidance provided by the Government in the Planning Practice Guidance
 - National Design Code
 - Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) prepared by WBC
 - Emerging Wokingham Local Plan Update

The National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

- 4.3.2 The NPPF was originally published on 27th March 2012, however, has since been subsequently updated in 2018, 2019, 2021 and 2023. The NPPF sets out the Government's overarching policies and establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 4.3.3 Chapter 2 (Achieving sustainable development) states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and that this means the planning system has three overarching objectives, economic, social and environmental, which need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. The presumption in favour of sustainable development at the heart of the NPPF is outlined in paragraph 11. This states that for the purposes of decision-taking:
- c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
 - d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

- 4.3.4 Footnote 8 states that for applications involving the provision of housing, policies are out-of-date where the local authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply (or four supply if applicable based on the provisions of paragraph 226) of deliverable housing sites (with a buffer if applicable) and does not benefit from the provisions of paragraph 76 or where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was below 75% of the housing requirement over the previous three years.
- 4.3.5 Chapter 5 focuses on housing with paragraph 60 emphasising the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes and the importance of a sufficient amount and variety of land being able to come forward where it is needed. The importance of identifying a sufficient supply and mix of sites and of maintaining supply is emphasised.
- 4.3.6 Paragraph 74 outlines that the supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, including significant extensions to existing villages and towns, provided they are well located and designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities (including a genuine choice of transport modes).
- 4.3.7 Paragraph 77 sets out that local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide either a minimum of five years' worth of housing, or a minimum of four years' worth of housing if the provisions of paragraph 226 apply. The supply should be demonstrated against either the housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against the local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old. Paragraph 226 explains that the four year requirement applies to those authorities which have an emerging local plan that has either been submitted for examination or has reached Regulation 18 or Regulation 19 (Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012) stage, including both a policies map and proposed allocations towards meeting housing need. These arrangements will apply for a period of two years from the publication date of this revision of the Framework (December 2023). As WBC have undertaken a Regulation 18 consultation, a four year housing land supply requirement currently applies.
- 4.3.8 Chapter 8 is focused on promoting healthy, safer, and inclusive communities. Paragraph 102 outlines the importance of accessible and high-quality open space and recreational areas highlighting the importance this has for the health and well-being of communities.
- 4.3.9 Chapter 9 is focused on promoting sustainable transport including ensuring that appropriate opportunities exist to promote sustainable transport modes and ensuring that any significant impacts from the development on the transport network can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.
- 4.3.10 Chapter 11 (effective use of land) states that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in terms of meeting the needs for homes, whilst safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- 4.3.11 Chapter 12 is focused on achieving well-designed and beautiful places which is a key aspect of sustainable development, creating better places in which to live and work. Paragraph 131 states that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.
- 4.3.12 Chapter 14 is focused on meeting the challenges of climate change, flooding and coastal change.
- 4.3.13 Chapter 15 is focused on conserving and enhancing the natural environment and states at paragraph 180 that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment, including providing net gains for biodiversity. Paragraph 186 states that significant

harm to biodiversity resulting from a development must be adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for otherwise planning permission should be refused.

- 4.3.14 Consultation on revisions to the NPPF commenced on 30th July 2024 and is currently ongoing. The proposed revisions seek to deliver the Government's commitments to achieving economic growth and building 1.5 million homes over five years, including through amending the method by which housing need must be calculated with the proposed method resulting in increased housing need in many locations, including Wokingham Borough.

National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

- 4.3.15 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was first published online in 2014 and is supplementary to the NPPF. Guidance provided on various matters including Air Quality; Design; Noise; Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities, Public Rights of Way (PROW) and Green Space; and Climate Change should be read in conjunction with the NPPF.

National Design Guide

- 4.3.16 The National Design Guide sets out the fundamental principles for good design and demonstrates what good design means in practice, covering ten characteristics including identity, built form, movement, nature, public spaces, context, uses, homes and buildings, resources, and lifespan.

WBC Borough Design Guide SPD

- 4.3.17 The Borough Design Guide SPD was adopted in 2012. It is intended to help deliver the vision and objectives of the Borough, aiming to enhance the quality of development and make sure proposals are of the highest quality of design.

WBC Sustainable Design and Construction SPD

- 4.3.18 4.3.32 The Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and Companion Document, adopted in 2010, provide an up to date and comprehensive approach to considering sustainable design and construction in new development.

WBC Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions SPD

- 4.3.19 The SPD, adopted in 2011, was produced to update information on infrastructure delivery within the Strategic Development Locations.

WBC Highway Design SPG

- 4.3.20 The Highway Design SPG, adopted in 2019, outlines the key principles to follow when producing highways layouts for all types of development. It is intended to be read in conjunction with WBC's Design Guide

WBC Affordable Housing SPD

- 4.3.21 The SPD, adopted in 2013, amplifies policies within the Development Plan and provides further guidance on WBC's approach to securing affordable housing through the planning process.

South of the M4 Strategic Development Location SPD

- 4.3.22 The SPD, adopted in 2011, is intended to guide future development of the SDL and to establish WBC's expectations about the master planning and design quality for future applications. It builds on Policy CP19 of the Core Strategy.

Emerging Policy

- 4.3.23 WBC has recently published their proposed submission plan, Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update 2024-2040. The Local Plan Update is not expected to be adopted until 2026 according to the draft LDS.
- 4.3.24 The Local Plan which would plan up to 2040, and guide where and how growth will take place in the borough. The new Local Plan will plan for new housing, new employment, schools, roads, parks, shops and community facilities necessary to create places people want to live, work and do business.
- 4.3.25 Within the draft Reg 19 submission Local Plan, the site is proposed to be allocated under policy SS14 (Sites allocated for residential, including residential as part of mixed-use development) for 191 dwellings (ref: SS14.11). The proposed submission plan has not yet been consulted upon. At the time of writing, the Regulation 19 submission plan papers for the Council meeting to be held on 19th September have been published. The Council has yet to confirm the consultation dates, though this is expected to be confirmed shortly. A six-week consultation process is anticipated to start towards the end of September and end in November. We intend to provide an addendum to this planning statement to address the newly published planning policies following the Council's resolution to progress the Local Plan to statutory consultation.
- 4.3.26 There are a series of Development Guidelines in appendix E of Wokingham's Borough Local Plan Update 2023 – 2040 (Proposed Submission Plan) which includes:
- ***'New vehicular access preferred from Arborfield Road.***
 - ***Investigate secondary vehicular access from the development site immediately north.***
 - ***Opportunities to improve pedestrian access to Shinfield Road Centre.***
 - ***Opportunities to improve pedestrian and cycle access through the site.***
 - ***Retain, where possible, onsite mature and protected trees and provide appropriate new landscaping to contribute towards the character of Arborfield Road and Eastern Relief Road as green routes.***
 - ***That development is steered towards Flood Zone 1 and avoids areas potentially susceptible to reservoir flooding***
 - ***That surface water corridors within the site are left free of development.***
 - ***Demonstrate that safe access and egress is achievable during surface water flood events for both residents and emergency vehicles. This may include consideration of an access route through the development to the north.***
 - ***Undertake a desk based archaeological impact assessment to better understand the archaeological potential of the site.'***
- 4.3.27 All of these matters are comprehensively addressed in the proposed development and are articulated in section 5 of this planning statement.

- 4.3.28 Within the evidence base supporting the emerging Local Plan Update, the Site is included in WBC's HELAA 2021 (site reference: 5SH025) and is deemed '*potentially suitable*' for housing. The HELAA sets out that the proposed development offers an opportunity to extend existing strategic development in a manner that aligns with the current settlement form and landscape character. Additionally, the Site is within a reasonable walking distance of the School Green local centre. This development would increase the population within the centre's catchment area, thereby supporting its viability and vitality.
- 4.3.29 In considering whether the development of the site would be appropriate in the context of the existing development form, the HELAA advises that: '*The northern part of the proposed development is an adopted allocation with planning permission for 249 dwellings. The development forms a logical extension to and would be read in the context of the existing settlement. The unpermitted part of the site is framed by existing dwellings to the west, the permitted residential development to the north and the Eastern Relief Road to the east. The proposed development would not lead to the physical or perceived coalescence of settlements*'.
- 4.3.30 In conclusion, according to the HELAA 2021, the Site's suitability for development is as follows:
- '*The site would achieve a satisfactory relationship to the existing settlement pattern.*
 - '*The Site is considered to perform well in respect of highways and accessibility issues.*

5 ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1.1 In developing proposals for the Site, the Applicant has sought to ensure that the Development complies with all relevant national, regional, and local planning policies and has regard to the relevant guidance.
- 5.1.2 This Chapter of the Statement considers the main objectives identified in the relevant planning policies relating to the Site and demonstrates that the development is consistent with the aims, objectives and requirements of these policies.

5.2 The Principle of Development and Need for Housing

- 5.2.1 Development within Wokingham Borough is informed by the Council's Development Plan, which sets out the vision and framework for the delivery of future housing, employment, community facilities and local infrastructure. The principle of new housing on this Site is established by its location within the South of the M4 Strategic Development Location (SDL). The Site falls wholly within the South of the M4 SDL, within which Policy CP19 of the Core Strategy identifies there will be the phased deliver of around 2,500 dwellings.
- 5.2.2 It is noted that the location of development, whilst outside the development limits of Shinfield, is immediately adjacent to the settlement limit. The development limits (Policy CP11 of the Wokingham Core Strategy and Policy CC02 of the MDD DPD and depicted on the Proposals Map) were informed by the need to provide sufficient housing to meet the requirement set out in the Core Strategy.
- 5.2.3 That requirement, for 13,230 homes in the period 2006-2026, was identified more than 14 years ago and is now out-of-date. The local housing need figure for Wokingham is currently 795dpa, which equates to approximately 130dpa greater than the adopted requirement. This indicates a need for significant additional housing delivery within the Borough, and the consequent need to identify additional locations for development.
- 5.2.4 Moreover, proposed changes to the NPPF which are currently subject to consultation could introduce a new method for calculating housing need which would result in a substantially greater housing need in Wokingham Borough. The anticipated requirement for 1,308dpa would necessitate considerable additional housing sites.
- 5.2.5 It is noted that in the latest Written Ministerial Statement issued on July 30, 2024, Angela Rayner, Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, announced significant reforms to address the UK's housing crisis. The government is increasing housing targets from around 300,000 to approximately 370,000 homes per year which emphasises the need for housing. The government will make local housing targets mandatory, requiring local authorities to use a standardised method to determine housing needs. The Government recognises the importance of building more homes for economic growth, job creation, and improving living standards.
- 5.2.6 Based on the current level of need, WBC is currently unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of housing land. The published land supply position as at 31st March 2023 (the latest available information) is a 3.2 year supply. The introduction of the proposed new housing need calculation methodology would substantially worsen this housing supply position. This further demonstrates the need for additional development sites to be brought forward and emphasises the need for sites which can be delivered in a timely manner to provide a boost to the housing land supply position.
- 5.2.7 In terms of the Site as a potential location for growth to respond to this need, the Site is in a sustainable location adjacent to the existing settlement and benefits from good connectivity to amenities and facilities provided within Shinfield as well as connections to the wider area. This

includes significant new infrastructure provided and being provided as part of the South of M4 SDL including a new local centre within walking distance of the Site, new school provision, new sports facilities and community buildings and extensive SANG provision as well as improved bus services.

5.2.8 Given the relatively modest scale of development proposed and its ability to be delivered quickly with no significant off-site infrastructure improvements, the Site would also be able to provide a timely boost to housing supply.

5.2.9 The Site's location within the SDL makes it a location for growth consistent with the emerging spatial strategy as set out in the emerging Local Plan Update. Indeed, paragraph 4.9 of the Revised Growth Strategy consultation in late 2021 states that:

"In considering the new approach for the Revised Growth Strategy, our view is that our strategy for future growth should continue to be predominantly focussed on larger sites. This includes the completion of the existing SDLs, and their evolution to include new opportunities which are now available within and around them where they are consistent with the original visions."

5.2.10 The Site is one such new opportunity available within the SDL which is consistent with the original vision for the SDL.

5.2.11 In addition to this, Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan Policy 1 (Location of Development) states that development within the development limits will be supported and that development adjacent to the Development Limits will only be supported where the benefits of the development outweigh its adverse impacts. As set out in this Statement there are clear benefits arising from this proposal. As such, the development is in accordance with Policy 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

5.2.12 Moreover, planning applications on land outside of defined settlements but within SDLs have previously been approved at a local level and on appeal. This includes the Bell Farm residential application within the North Wokingham SDL (WBC reference 161839) approved at Planning Committee in October 2016 despite not being an allocated site. The Council concluded that the proposal was:

"...is a sustainable development that offers substantial public benefit in meeting the housing needs of the community and delivering on Wokingham's development aspirations for the North Wokingham SDL. There are no adverse impacts of granting planning permission that would outweigh those benefits and the NPPF presumption in favour of sustainable development is therefore met. The application will deliver high quality development, concentrated in the SDL in accordance with the Council's spatial strategy, and there are no other material planning considerations of significant weight that would dictate that the application should nevertheless be refused."

5.2.13 In addition, the Keephatch Beech application within North Wokingham SDL (Wokingham Borough Council reference O/2014/2435) was approved at Planning Committee in February 2015 for a residential led scheme on a site which is not allocated for housing development during the plan period up to 2026. The officers report concluded that SPDs must not be seen as a static document and do not preclude development coming forward in the SDLs providing it is sustainable and does not impact negatively on the locality. The officers report further acknowledged this approach had been accepted by the Secretary of State on the South of the M4 SDL which brought forward development which was not allocated but within the SDL boundary at Shinfield West.

- 5.2.14 More recently, development on Land at Parklands was approved on appeal in 2019 (reference 171737) with the Inspector finding at paragraph 55 that the development limits set out in the Core Strategy are out-of-date because they are based on an outdated housing requirement. On the basis that related policies were not fully up-to-date, conflict between them and development proposals was determined to not attract full weight.
- 5.2.15 Moreover, the emerging Local Plan Update specifically identifies the Site as an addition to the South of M4 SDL in Policy SS5. It is proposed for allocation for 191 dwellings and so this application is consistent with the emerging policy position.
- 5.2.16 Residential development at Ashridge Farm, a site which is identified as a proposed addition to the North Wokingham SDL in the emerging Local Plan Update, was approved in June 2021 (reference 201515). The committee report states that:

While the site is located within the North Wokingham SDL, it is located outside of the Core Strategy defined settlement boundaries and therefore, in policy terms, it is located within the countryside. It is noted that the site is proposed for allocation within the Draft Local Plan and in accordance with advice contained within the NPPF, refusing the application on grounds of prematurity would not be justified where it is considered that the proposed development is not so substantial in itself nor would it contribute to a cumulative effect that would undermine the plan-making process as is the case in this instance.

- 5.2.17 Similarly, in December 2022, planning permission for granted in December 2022 for residential development on land east of Toutley Depot, a further proposed addition to the North Wokingham SDL (reference 211777). Planning permission was also granted for residential development on land at Bridge Farm in Twyford (reference 212720) in July 2023 which is outside the current defined settlement boundary but proposed for allocation in the emerging Local Plan Update.
- 5.2.18 The precedent for planning permission being granted for sites identified as proposed allocations in the emerging Local Plan Update has therefore been established.
- 5.2.19 The principle of development on the Site is therefore established in the current and emerging spatial strategy, being within a location identified as a focus for growth and a site specifically identified for residential development in the emerging Local Plan Update.
- 5.2.20 Moreover, the development will provide construction jobs, boosting local employment and stimulating economic growth. Additionally, new residents will contribute to the economy through increased demand for goods and services, supporting local businesses and enhancing the overall economic vitality of the area.
- 5.2.21 The principle of development in this location is further supported by the technical work undertaken to support the development to the north of the Site which also assessed development of the Site akin to what is proposed in this application. This technical work, including an Environmental Statement, considered the potential for significant adverse impacts from the developments holistically and how any such impacts could be mitigated. The current development proposals are informed by this previous work and follow the same principles as the development to the north. With this previously having been considered and accepted, it is therefore clear that the Site can be sustainably developed.
- 5.2.22 It is also important to note that WBC invited the site to come forward for residential development through the decision of its Executive Committee on 27th July 2017. Previously, a restriction imposed by the Shinfield West Unilateral Undertaking had prevented development on the site (which also includes the parcel of land immediately to the north of the site) from coming forward before 2026.

- 5.2.23 Taking account of the above, it is considered that the principle of development has been robustly established for the proposed scheme.

5.3 Layout and Design

- 5.3.1 A Design and Access Statement has been prepared by DHA Architects which supports this planning application.
- 5.3.2 The Statement outlines the principles for development and how the proposals accord with them. The development is informed by and consistent with the adjoining scheme to the north, integrating with the neighbouring pattern of development as well as responding to the relationship with the Loddon River Valley.
- 5.3.3 The layout provides for well defined streets and spaces which are connected and well overlooked. Perimeter blocks will have clearly defined public fronts with active frontages and front gardens enlivening streets. Legible features will help people navigate around and through the development, including through the use of a simple street pattern which will allow destinations to be easily viewed. Clear differentiation between primary, secondary and tertiary streets in design and character will also help people find their way around and greenspaces will serve as key landmarks within the site.
- 5.3.4 The proposed development is of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area and is of a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users and their quality of life. It is therefore consistent with Policy CP3.
- 5.3.5 The majority of dwellings will be 2 storey in height up to a maximum of 3 storey, with higher buildings focused in the centre of the Site where they will serve as focal points. The overall density across the Site is 27dph. Building heights and density are consistent with that of the surrounding area and will create an attractive development whilst also making efficient use of land and enabling the Site to make a substantial contribution towards housing delivery in the Borough.
- 5.3.6 The standards relating to privacy, visual impact and amenity contained in the Wokingham Borough Design Guide (2012) relating to separation distances have also been adhered to within the layout.

5.4 Housing Mix and Affordable Housing

- 5.4.1 The proposal seeks provide for an inclusive community, consistent with Policy CP2, through the delivery of a range of housing styles and tenures. The proposal is capable of accommodating a range of house types which are both market and affordable in tenure. The proposal accommodates 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom homes dispersed evenly across the Site in accordance with Policies CP5 and TB05. The proposed mix is set out in detail in Section 2 of this Statement.
- 5.4.2 The layout has been designed such that internal space standards accord with the minimum space standards set out in Policy TB07.
- 5.4.3 In accordance with Policy CP5, 35% of the dwellings will be provided as affordable housing. Tenures will be distributed across the development in small integrated clusters. Homes and streets will make it difficult to determine the tenure of properties through architecture, landscape or layout to create an inclusive environment for all.

5.5 Access and Movement

- 5.5.1 A Transport Assessment has been prepared by ALP in support of this application.

- 5.5.2 The submitted Assessment concludes that the location of the proposed development is consistent with national, regional and local policy aspirations. There is a range of existing and planned jobs, schools, shops, community facilities and amenities, which are accessible within reasonable walking and cycling distance reducing the need to travel by private car. The proposed development is also well positioned relative to a wider range of major employment, commercial, retail and recreational facilities located in the town centres of Reading and Wokingham which are currently accessible by public transport. A significant proportion of journeys arising from the proposed development could therefore be undertaken by non-car modes in accordance with the transport policy aspirations articulated at all levels of government.
- 5.5.3 The proposed pedestrian and cycle provision has been designed to provide a permeable network within the site. Particular emphasis has been given to creating direct routes through the proposed development in response to the pedestrian and cyclist desire lines that are likely to be created between Shinfield village to the south-west and to northern destinations such as Thames Valley Science Park, Lower Earley and Reading.
- 5.5.4 This pedestrian and cycle connectivity, in addition to the good level of accessibility for bus services, will enable safe and easy access for all to surrounding areas in line with Policies CP1 and CP3. In doing so, the proposals encourage travel via non-private car means as advocated in Policy CP1.
- 5.5.5 Moreover, the development proposals include a carriageway of sufficient width to accommodate two-way buses routing through the Site in order to safeguard the ability for buses to travel through the development between Arborfield Road and the Shinfield Eastern Relief Road/Thames Valley Science Park roundabout.
- 5.5.6 Vehicular access at the southern frontage of the Site will be formed by way of a priority junction with a ghost island right turn lane onto Arborfield Road. At the north of the Site, the development will connect into Shepard Road. The internal streets with the development, including the access junction onto Arborfield Road, have been designed to accommodate large service and emergency vehicle movements throughout the development in a safe and satisfactory manner.
- 5.5.7 Vehicle parking will be provided in the form of on-street parking, front and rear courtyards, within streets and mews and on-plot driveways and garages. Parking provision is informed by WBC's parking calculator, with 78 visitor/unallocated spaces to be provided. Cycle parking is also to be provided in accordance with adopted standards.
- 5.5.8 The traffic impact of the proposed development was assessed using Wokingham Borough Council's Strategic Traffic Model. Information on access arrangements, development size, and peak hour vehicle trips was provided, allowing for a tailored model run. The analysis showed that the proposed site access junctions would operate within capacity with minimal queuing during peak hours for both 2032 and 2038 scenarios. The impact on nearby junctions and wider highway network traffic flows would be minimal, with increases in traffic beyond Shinfield village falling within normal daily variations. Therefore, the development at Arborfield Road is not expected to significantly impact the local highway network.
- 5.5.9 The proposed development aligns with all relevant transport and access policies of the adopted Wokingham Borough Local Plan, including CP1, CP4, CP6, CP10, and CP19. It also complies with policies in Wokingham Borough Council's Emerging Local Plan Update from November 2021.

5.6 Drainage

- 5.6.1 A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy prepared by ALP accompanies this application.

- 5.6.2 The Flood Risk Assessment sets out that while the Government's Flood Map for Planning identifies that the majority of the Site is located within Flood Zone 1, with some land in the east of the Site within Flood Zones 2 and 3, more detailed modelling undertaken by WBC which takes account of the Eastern Relief Road confirms that the Site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1.
- 5.6.3 The majority of the Site is at a very low risk of surface water flooding. In this context, no specific flood risk mitigation measures are required and finished floor levels will be set an appropriate level above the surrounding ground level (minimum of 150mm).
- 5.6.4 Paragraph 168 of the NPPF states that the aim of the sequential test is to steer new development to areas with the lowest risk of flooding from any source. As the Site has been demonstrated to be entirely within Flood Zone 1 and at a low or very low risk of surface water flooding, the proposed residential use is considered appropriate.
- 5.6.5 Moreover, notwithstanding that the Site has been demonstrated through modelling to be entirely within Flood Zone 1, development has been designed using a risk-based approach to its location within the Site, consistent with paragraph 167 of the NPPF, with built form located outside of areas identified in the Flood Map for Planning as being within Flood Zones 2 and 3.
- 5.6.6 The proposed surface water drainage strategy will manage the flood risk posed by uncontrolled surface water runoff from the site. Any increase in surface water run-off can be managed using SuDS source control techniques as well as attenuation features to provide storage in extreme storm events. All surface water drainage systems will be designed to restrict drainage discharge rates to QBAR runoff rates and store the balance of water for all events up to and including the 1 in 100 year event including allowance for a 40% increase in rainfall intensities as a result of climate change and urban creep.
- 5.6.7 The submitted report therefore demonstrates that the proposed development complies with national and local planning policy with respect to flood risk and drainage. The risk of flooding is adequately managed, and, with the implementation of a suitable surface water drainage strategy, the offsite flood risk is not increased.

5.7 Open Space and Landscaping

- 5.7.1 Aspect Landscape Planning have prepared a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment which accompanies this application. The submitted assessment appraises the site and surrounding area using historical map data, local policy and published character assessments. On-site field analysis is also detailed, with viewpoints identified, the landscape character and visual environment of the local area analysed and the extent and significance of any potential landscape and visual effects outlined.
- 5.7.2 The submitted report sets out that it is considered that whilst the Site is located outside the existing development limits of the village itself, it displays a stronger relationship with the adjacent housing developments than with the rural low-lying River Loddon valley landscape to the east as a result of the urbanising influence of the surrounding built form. The Eastern Relief Road has also redefined the built edge of Shinfield, forming a notable component in the localised setting that creates a defensible edge to the Site and has severed the connection between the Site and the undeveloped countryside beyond this road to the east. The recent Phase 1 development to the north has further provided a residential influence on the Site and the arable land use of the Site no longer relates well to the prevailing localised context.
- 5.7.3 The Site is considered to be further contained and enclosed from the localised landscape setting to the east by the existing vegetation structure along and by the eastern Site boundary, characterised by native shrub planting and native tree groups. Although gappy in places, this vegetation structure has further established a degree of separation from the adjoining rural landscape associated with the river floodplain as well as from the wider rural landscape to the east and south-east.

- 5.7.4 Overall, it is considered that the Site has become increasingly influenced by the surrounding components of the built-up area of Shinfield, which have exerted a strong settlement edge character on the Site itself. The connection between the Site and the rural landscape to the east has been severed by the A327 Eastern Relief Road which further ensures that the Site relates more closely to the settlement than to the countryside to the east.
- 5.7.5 In terms of the susceptibility of the landscape resource to accommodate change of the type proposed, it is considered that the presence of the existing settlement edge immediately to the north, south and west, alongside the Eastern Relief Road that has redefined the eastern boundary, reduces the susceptibility of the Site and its localised setting to change resulting from residential development. These findings are consistent with those reached in landscape and visual work undertaken in respect of development immediately to the north of the Site and the conclusions reached by the Inspector determining that appeal (as referred to in paragraph 9 of the 2020 appeal decision) Established vegetation also creates a robust external edge to the Site. The susceptibility of the Site is therefore considered to be low.
- 5.7.6 In terms of landscape value, the submitted report concludes that the Site would typically be of low to medium landscape value, being of low value in terms of natural heritage, cultural heritage, distinctiveness, associations and perceptions of wildness and tranquillity.
- 5.7.7 When the value and susceptibility of the landscape resource are considered together, the report outlines that the Site would typically be of low landscape sensitivity, and the landscape sensitivity of the wider landscape setting is medium to high.
- 5.7.8 Consistent with Policy TB21, the proposals have sought to maintain and enhance the well-established structural landscape along the eastern site boundary in order to maintain the amenity of the surroundings and to ensure that the proposals can be successfully integrated into the setting without significant adverse effects. Key landscape features around the Site will be retained, where possible, and mitigated for on-site where the loss of such features is considered unavoidable. The proposals have been informed by the detailed arboricultural assessment that accompanies the application.
- 5.7.9 The development of the Site has been informed by the landscape and visual assessment in order to ensure that a carefully considered and sensitive approach is achieved. The existing vegetation to the field boundaries and along the Eastern Relief Road creates established landscape features within and around the site. This existing vegetation will form the basis to new landscape structure and public open spaces and green infrastructure to integrate the new built elements. The layout includes areas of strategic planting along the Site boundaries, extensive open spaces, linear parks and a central open space, providing an enhanced degree of separation and robust green buffer from the wider countryside setting.
- 5.7.10 Key elements of the landscape strategy include key vegetation sensitively considered through the provision of appropriate development offsets, with outward-facing development establishing a positive development edge; Alexander Walk, an existing pedestrian and cycleway along the eastern edge of the Phase 1 development, to be extended through the proposed open space, providing a link between Cutbush Lane to the north and Arborfield Road and Langley Mead SANG to the south and retained native trees and scrub in the eastern extents of the Site to be enhanced with further native planting of local prevalence to highly contain the Site within the built form context and ensure a strong degree of separation from the landscape to the east. Replacement mixed native hedgerow planting and native tree planting to mitigate for the required vegetation loss along Arborfield Road. This will retain the vegetated character along the road corridor and protect the existing visual amenity of residential properties to the south. Species-rich wildflower grassland will be provided within open space areas to provide biodiversity enhancements and visual interest.
- 5.7.11 A central open space will form an inviting, multifunctional space for the community, offering a meeting point at the heart of the scheme in a space that is physically and visually connected to the linear open space in the eastern extents of the Site through the design layout.

- 5.7.12 The landscape strategy will not only contribute to the sustainability of the Site, but will also assist in generating a high-quality settlement edge development that improves connectivity within the localised setting. The use of an appropriate palette of native species around the Site will not only contribute positively to local biodiversity but also local landscape character. In this regard, the development proposals are consistent with Policies CP1 and TB21.
- 5.7.13 It is considered that the Proposed Development has been carefully designed with the planning policy context in mind and, as such, a sympathetic and appropriate development would be achieved on the eastern settlement edge of Shinfield, in line with Policy CP3.
- 5.7.14 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF seeks to promote sustainable development unless any harm significantly and demonstrably outweighs the benefits of the proposals. It is acknowledged that the proposed development would result in a degree of change albeit this would be mostly limited to the Site itself and effects would be highly localised and non-significant. This is not considered so great as to outweigh the benefits of the scheme significantly or demonstrably.
- 5.7.15 It is concluded within the report that the Site represents an appropriate location for development and that the proposed development would present social and environmental benefits, a high-quality design that is commensurate with the landscape setting and enhancements to the localised landscape character that favour the sustainability of this Site in policy terms.
- 5.7.16 It is therefore considered that the proposed development complies with all of the relevant landscape-related adopted policies and guidance of the adopted Wokingham Borough Local Plan, Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan (2017) and Supplementary Planning Documents including the South of the M4 – Strategic Development Location SPD (2011) and the Wokingham Borough Design Guide SPD (2012).

5.8 Heritage and Archaeology

- 5.8.1 An Archaeology and Heritage Assessment prepared by The Environmental Dimension Partnership is submitted as part of this application.
- 5.8.2 The submitted assessment concludes that the site does not contain any world heritage sites, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields or listed buildings nor is it within any conservation areas, and therefore there would be no direct impacts on designated heritage assets as a result of the site's development.
- 5.8.3 The designated heritage assets within the environs of the site solely comprise several listed buildings of varied grades. The assessment concludes that the proposed development of the site would not give rise to any loss of significance from any of the designated heritage assets which are located within its wider surroundings.
- 5.8.4 The site has been subject of a number of archaeological investigations, including several phases of geophysical survey and trial trenching, which have not detected any archaeological remains of any period. Based on the available evidence, this assessment has identified that the site has very low to no potential for the presence of any hitherto unidentified archaeological remains.
- 5.8.5 The submitted assessment therefore demonstrates how the proposed development of the site accords with current legislation, the planning policies contained within the NPPF and the policies of the Local Plan in respect of the historic environment.

5.9 Ecology

- 5.9.1 Ecological Planning & Research Ltd (EPR) was commissioned to conduct an Ecological Appraisal and targeted Phase 2 surveys for badgers, reptiles, and bats. This is in relation to a

proposed housing development at Land North of Arborfield Road, Shinfield. The development plans include residential dwellings, hardstanding areas, and green spaces.

- 5.9.2 To date, the following surveys have been completed: a badger walkover, breeding bird surveys, reptile surveys, bat emergence surveys, automated bat surveys from April to July 2024, and spring and summer bat night-time walkovers.
- 5.9.3 The site currently consists of an arable field used for crops during the growing season and grazed by sheep in the winter. It also contains two buildings, a natural watercourse, two constructed ditches, grassland, and scrub habitats. The ecological appraisal identified no significant ecological features, except for the potential of habitats to support protected species such as bats, breeding birds, and reptiles.
- 5.9.4 An internal and external bat building inspection assessed both buildings as having low suitability for roosting bats. No bats were observed emerging from or entering the buildings, suggesting that the site is unlikely to support roosting bats. A small number of bat passes were recorded during the dusk emergence survey, but there was no sustained activity such as foraging or commuting.
- 5.9.5 Reptile surveys conducted in 2024 did not record any reptiles. The habitats within the site boundary are considered sub-optimal for reptiles, although it is possible that grass snakes (Natrix natrix) may occasionally use the site. This species is relatively mobile and has been previously recorded on the land to the north. During a bat night-time walkover, a single male grass snake was observed at the site boundary.
- 5.9.6 Recommendations have been made to enhance the site's biodiversity in line with local and national planning policies. These include the provision of integral bat boxes, the creation of habitats, and the retention of the existing natural watercourse.
- 5.9.7 The Proposed Development aims to enhance biodiversity beyond the required measures to avoid, mitigate, or compensate for potential impacts. Key deliverables include creating grassland habitats, retaining and enhancing the natural watercourse, installing bat and bird boxes, and creating a Hedgehog Highway in line with Bellway's sustainability approach. The proposed development provides uplift of 4.47 habitat units (28.29%) Following the Proposed Development, 1.17 Hedgerow units (121.57%), and 0.6 watercourse units (10.62%).

5.10 Trees

- 5.10.1 The submitted arboriculture assessment report, prepared by Aspect Arboriculture, complies with BS5837:2012 standards. It records thirty-four individual trees, seventeen groups of trees, and four hedgerows on the Site.
- 5.10.2 The northern boundary features several high-quality trees that contribute positively to the area's amenity and are considered for future veteran status, warranting the highest classification (category A). A Veteran Tree Buffer has been applied as a precaution.
- 5.10.3 A notable False Acacia outside the western boundary also meets category A criteria due to its form and visual prominence. Seven English Oaks on the northern perimeter, while important, are classified as category B due to their secondary importance. Additionally, a Sycamore and Atlas Cedar outside the western boundary are recognised for their positive contribution.
- 5.10.4 The remaining trees are of low quality, in varying states of decline, and offer little individual merit. Background checks confirmed no Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) affect the site, but some trees on the northern boundary meet TPO criteria and have been treated as protected.
- 5.10.5 Tree removals are proposed where necessary for site development, focusing on low-quality trees that can be replaced with new plantings. It is advised that a detailed Arboriculture Method

Statement supported by 1:500 scale technical drawings should be prepared – it is envisaged that this would be secured by Condition.

- 5.10.6 In conclusion, the proposed development is deemed to appropriately address the arboricultural constraints. The plan ensures the retention and future protection of the Site's most significant arboricultural assets, aligning with the policies of WBC's Local Plan (Policies CP1, CP3, CC03, TB21) and Shinfield Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan (Policies 2 and 6) as well as the Framework. Consequently, the proposals are policy compliant from an arboricultural perspective.

5.11 Noise

- 5.11.1 Cass Allen have been appointed to undertake a Noise Assessment. This work is currently in progress and an update will be provided once work is complete. The assessment was conducted in line with relevant local and national planning guidance. A noise survey at the site identified road traffic noise from Arborfield Road and the Eastern Relief Road as the primary sources of noise.
- 5.11.2 A 3D noise model of the development was created using traffic data provided by the project transport consultants. This model included two scenarios: a baseline scenario in 2027 and a future worst-case scenario in 2042, which includes the proposed development. The model calculated road traffic noise levels at all facades of the development in the worst-case scenario.
- 5.11.3 The noise impact on the development was assessed according to ProPG guidance. The design is considered acceptable with the implementation of standard thermal double glazing, acoustically upgraded trickle ventilators, and acoustic screening around gardens. These measures can be further investigated during the detailed design stage.
- 5.11.4 Compliance with noise criteria in Building Regulations Part O was also evaluated. It was found that some bedrooms might need to be designed so that windows can remain closed at night without causing the rooms to overheat. This aspect can be further assessed in due course. In summary, the site is deemed suitable for development in terms of noise and vibration levels.

5.12 Air Quality

- 5.12.1 An Air Quality Assessment prepared by Cass Allen Consultants accompanies this application.
- 5.12.2 The risk assessment of construction dust impacts, conducted using IAQM dust guidance, indicates both high and low risks of dust impacts before mitigation and controls are implemented. Recommended best practice mitigation measures for the relevant risk levels have been suggested, and no significant residual air quality impacts are expected once these are taken into account.
- 5.12.3 A detailed atmospheric dispersion model was used to predict NO₂, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} concentrations at sensitive receptor locations within the study area during the operational phase. This followed Defra TG22 and EPUK & IAQM LUPDC guidance. The results show that pollutant concentrations at proposed sensitive receptors are expected to be below the relevant Air Quality Objectives (AQOs) during the operational phase. Additionally, no significant impacts on local air quality from development-generated traffic are anticipated. Based on the predicted population exposure to NO₂, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} impacts, the overall effect of the development on air quality is considered 'not significant,' with no need for additional mitigation.
- 5.12.4 In summary, the site is deemed suitable for development in terms of air quality, with no air quality constraints affecting planning consent. The proposals are therefore consistent with Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy.

5.13 Mineral Resource Assessment

- 5.13.1 A Mineral Resource Assessment (MRA) was undertaken by Heatons and accompanies this submission.
- 5.13.2 This assessment was conducted as a desk-based exercise, in line with policy advice on safeguarding. The Mineral Resource Assessment (MRA) utilised available geological and site setting information to evaluate the mineral resources present on the assessment site. This assessment considered the potential physical sterilisation of mineral reserves beneath the site and the potential for the proposed development to result in “proximal sterilisation” of existing or future mineral operations adjacent to the Site.
- 5.13.3 The assessment concludes that the implementation of the proposed development will make future extraction of sand and gravel within the Mineral Safeguarding Area on the land north of Arborfield Road impossible due to the permanent nature of the non-minerals development. However, given the limited size of the resource beneath the Site and the Site’s existing constraints, it would be inappropriate to extract minerals from that location.
- 5.13.4 Moreover, there are no sand and gravel quarries (either active or dormant) close enough to the application site that the proposed residential development would hinder potential future mineral extraction at any existing quarry. Additionally, no mineral allocations identified within the Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan are located near the Site.
- 5.13.5 It is concluded that as the land north of Arborfield Road is bordered on three sides by existing residential uses and is situated on the ‘inside’ of the A327 Shinfield Eastern Relief Road, in a predominantly residential setting, the proposed development would not further sterilise potential future off-site mineral extraction beyond the current status.
- 5.13.6 Therefore, the proposed development is in accordance with Policy M2 of the Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan.

5.14 Sustainability

- 5.14.1 An Energy Statement prepared by AES Sustainability Consultants is submitted as part of this application. The statement details the proposed approach to sustainable construction and sets out how the proposed development addresses relevant policies contained within the WBC development framework.
- 5.14.2 The development will follow a fabric first approach to constructing energy efficient buildings, with insulation standards, thermal bridging and air leakage all improved beyond the minimum compliance levels within Building Regulations. In doing so, the development proposals are consistent with Policy CP1.
- 5.14.3 It is expected that all dwellings will be constructed beyond the implementation of the Future Homes Standard and will therefore meet a 75-80% reduction in CO₂ emissions compared with current regulatory standards.
- 5.14.4 Development will also incorporate low carbon and renewable technologies and a range of additional sustainability measures have been given consideration including reduction of both construction and household waste.
- 5.14.5 All dwellings will have electric vehicle charging infrastructure to ensure the development is adaptable in accommodating a future shift to electric vehicles for personal transportation.

5.15 Overall Conclusions and Planning Balance

- 5.15.1 This planning application presents an opportunity to provide additional housing in a sustainable location which supports the existing infrastructure and services associated with the wider SDL developments.
- 5.15.2 The Site is identified as suitable for residential development in WBC's emerging Local Plan, forming an addition to the residential development delivered within the South of M4 SDL.
- 5.15.3 The proposed development has been designed as a complementary phase of development, informed by the development currently being built by the Applicant immediately to the north of the Site at Land South of Cutbush Lane.
- 5.15.4 The proposals have been informed by consideration of physical features and site influences. They will create a high-quality, sustainably-designed addition to Shinfield, consistent with the overall objectives and strategy set out in the Development Plan and the South of M4 SDL SPD.
- 5.15.5 There are a range of benefits which would be delivered by the proposed development, securing social, economic and environmental gains as described above and in the documentation supporting the application. Benefits to be delivered as part of the proposed development include much needed and high-quality market and affordable housing set within new public realm and a new landscaped edge to Shinfield. In addition, the Site will deliver improved connections to local amenities including SANG, schools and retail, for the benefit of existing and new residents. The Site will support the delivery of additional SANG at Langley Mead and sports facilities benefitting all local residents.
- 5.15.6 The contribution to housing delivery, including the provision of affordable housing, in a sustainable location supports the national ambition to significantly boost the supply of housing, as specified in the NPPF. It also assists in addressing the current housing land supply shortfall in Borough as acknowledged by WBC in the Five Year Housing Land Supply Statement published in January 2024. In the context of the current insufficient supply of housing, significant weight should be afforded to the benefits offered by the proposed development, most notably the delivery of new market and affordable dwellings. There is a clear need for sites identified by WBC for housing, such as the Site, to be brought forward in a timely manner in order to ensure that sufficient housing is delivered.
- 5.15.7 Overall, the proposed development accords with the NPPF and is consistent with the policies contained in the Development Plan when read as a whole. It should therefore be approved without delay, in accordance with paragraph 11 of the NPPF.

6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1.1 Stantec is instructed by the Applicant, Bellway Homes (Thames Valley) and The University of Reading, to submit a full planning application to WBC with respect to the proposed development of Land North of Arborfield Road, Shinfield.
- 6.1.2 The Site is located to the east of Shinfield, within the South of M4 SDL designated in WBC's adopted Development Plan. It is identified within the emerging Local Plan Update as an additional allocation within the SDL for 191 dwellings. The Site extends to 7ha and currently comprises grassland. It is located immediately to the south of development currently being built out by the Applicant at Land South of Cutbush Lane.
- 6.1.3 The description of development for which full planning permission is sought is as follows:
- “Full planning application for the erection of new dwellings, open space, landscaping, parking and all associated engineering works.”**
- 6.1.4 The Applicant considers the proposed development should be permitted for the reasons given in this Statement, the Design and Access Statement and the other supporting information.
- 6.1.5 The proposed development would deliver 191 new homes in a sustainable location to contribute towards the housing and affordable housing needs of Wokingham, as acknowledged by the proposed allocation of the Site for development in the emerging Development Plan. The Site benefits from being located immediately adjacent to the current built extent of Shinfield and in easy reach of amenities and public transport provided within the town.
- 6.1.6 The development would deliver a substantial contribution to housing land supply, helping to ensure anticipated housing supply in the Borough is delivered in a timely manner and therefore helping to address the current housing land supply shortfall.
- 6.1.7 The development would provide a mix of homes, in size, type and tenure including the provision of 35% affordable homes in accordance with WBC's policy requirements. As set out above, the development will make an important contribution to meeting the Borough's housing need. This factor and the contribution towards the social 'arm' of sustainable development should be afforded significant weight in determining the application, particularly given the current land supply shortfall.
- 6.1.8 In economic terms, the proposal would generate a number of jobs across all construction disciplines, from ground workers to construction management. The introduction of 191 additional households in the Borough would also bring consequential benefits of increased expenditure on a range of local convenience goods and additional comparison goods. The provision of more affordable and smaller housing typologies would also help to homes for young people working in Wokingham and the surrounding area. The development would therefore contribute positively to the economic 'arm' of sustainable development.
- 6.1.9 The development will include the provision of in-kind mitigation (including affordable housing) and will also secure financial contributions to mitigate the impact of development on strategic infrastructure, taking account of significant infrastructure already planned and delivered in Shinfield. Additional SANG and sports provision will be supported by the development, benefitting residents of new development as existing residents in the surrounding area.
- 6.1.10 The application is supported by a range of environmental surveys and assessments as listed in Chapter 1. These conclude that the Site is not subject to any environmental designations and that the development would not lead to any significant adverse impacts. The development incorporates the recommended mitigation measures set out in the reports in order to reduce or avoid adverse impacts. Indeed, the development would provide environmental benefits, such

as the provision of sustainable new buildings, the delivery of new public open space and landscaping and a biodiversity net gain. The development would therefore also contribute positively to the environmental 'arm' of sustainable development.

- 6.1.11 As illustrated by the submitted plans and drawings, a careful design exercise has been undertaken to develop the Site into an attractive development that responds to the site constraints and opportunities and reflects and responds to the existing character of the surrounding area. The layout of the Site has been carefully considered in the context of the wider South of M4 SDL development, including development immediately to the north and the proposed development will provide a high-quality, attractive residential development. The submitted plans demonstrate that the Site can be developed in accordance with the adopted development plan.
- 6.1.12 Overall, the proposed development reflects WBC's aspirations for the future of the Site and is consistent with the adopted Development Plan, save in respect of Policy CC02 where the Local Plan is out of date due to being based on outdated housing requirements. The proposal is also consistent with the Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan, including Policy 1 which supports development adjoining the settlement where benefits outweigh adverse impacts, which is the case with this proposal. Indeed, the development will provide much needed housing for Wokingham Borough and contribute to the delivery of a site that is proposed to be allocated for residential development in WBC's emerging Local Plan. Moreover, there are no significant adverse impacts of the development that would demonstrably outweigh the range of social, economic and environmental benefits that the development would deliver. The following outlines the key social, economic, and environmental benefits of the development:

Environmental

- **Sustainable New Buildings:** The development includes the construction of sustainable buildings.
- **New Public Open Space and Landscaping:** The development provides new public open spaces and landscaping, including a new landscaped edge to Shinfield.
- **Biodiversity Net Gain:** The project aims to enhance biodiversity and will achieve a Biodiversity Net Gain of 28.29% habitat units, 121.57% hedgerow units, and 10.62% watercourse units.
- **Positive Contribution to Sustainable Development:** Overall, the development supports the environmental aspect of sustainable development by incorporating mitigation measures to reduce or avoid adverse impacts.
- **Accessibility:** Improved connections to local amenities, including SANG.

Economic

- **Government Commitments:** The development supports the Government's aim to achieve economic growth and build 1.5 million homes over five years.
- **Contribution to housing delivery,** thereby supporting additional households in the Borough and consequential benefits for the local economy.
- **Provision of construction jobs.**
- **Provision of Infrastructure contributions as necessary to support the development.**

Social

- **Housing:** Provision of high-quality market housing, contribution towards the current housing land supply shortfall.
- **Provision of affordable housing,** consistent with policy and in a sustainable location.
- **Public Realm:** Enhanced public realm for community use.
- Improved access to schools and retail for existing and new residents.

- Support the provision of off-site open space and SANG for the benefit of new and existing residents.

- 6.1.13 The Core Strategy was adopted in 2010 and the housing requirement and settlement boundaries predicated on this requirement are out-of-date. In this context and taking account of the overriding need for new homes and lack of current ability to provide for needs in full, the proposed development is in accordance with the Development Plan.
- 6.1.14 Notwithstanding the above, in the event that the proposals are not considered to accord with the Development Plan, the current lack of sufficient housing supply and out-of-date Development Plan means that the tilted balance set out in paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF applies. In this regard, as there are no policies which disapply the presumption (in line with footnote 7) and there are no adverse impacts which significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposed development, planning permission should be granted in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 6.1.15 The proposal, therefore, represents sustainable development having regard to the NPPF, and accords with the Development Plan when read as a whole, including the Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan. Indeed, the Neighbourhood Plan specifically supports development adjoining the settlement where benefits outweigh adverse impacts (Policy 1) – given the Site adjoins the settlement and the development proposals have clear benefits, including the delivery of much needed housing, which outweigh any impacts, as demonstrated by this application, the proposals are consistent with the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.1.16 Irrespective of this, with the tilted balance engaged, the planning application should be approved without delay in accordance with the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Date: 13^h June 2024
Application: 241326



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Sean Cobb
Stantec
7 Soho Square
London
W1D 3QB

Development Management &
Compliance

P.O. Box 157

Shute End, Wokingham

Berkshire, RG40 1BN

Tel: (0118) 974 6000

Minicom No: (0118) 974 6991

Screening or Scoping Response Letter

Application Number: 241326

Site Address: Land North of Arborfield Road, Shinfield, Wokingham

Expiry Date: 14 June 2024

Proposal: Screening Opinion application for an Environmental Impact Assessment for the proposed 191 residential dwellings with landscaping and associated infrastructure. The buildings predominantly two storey houses. Some three storey buildings (apartment blocks) would be provided and the height does not exceed 13m above finished floor level. Including associated access from Arborfield Road to South side and via Phase 1 of the land South of Cutbush lane development.

Dear Sean Cobb

Thank you for your request for a Screening Opinion for up to 191 residential units associated landscaping and infrastructure for land north Arborfield Road, Shinfield. The application has been screened in accordance with Regulation 6 (2) of the EIA Regulations 2017 (Town and Country Planning Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2017) and the supporting Planning Practice Guidance and this is set out in Table 3 below.

In summary, due to the scale of the development. existing land use and context of the application site, it is not considered at this stage and based on the information submitted that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) should accompany any forthcoming planning application.

Site description and background information

The site relates to around 7ha of land to the east of the core centre of Shinfield. The land is bound on the northern and western boundary by residential development at Littlebrook and Oatlands Road respectively. To the south is the Arborfield Road which has a ribbon of development on the southern side of this route. An area of SANG also is also located to the

south – the Langley Mead Extension. The eastern boundary is defined by a couple of dwellings and the Eastern Relief Road with countryside beyond.

The site itself has been, and still remains, an arable field which forms part of the University of Reading's wider landholdings. The field itself does not contain any significant vegetation given the use of it but is bound by hedgerows forming a green perimeter around the site boundaries. The recently built and almost complete Hawthorne development lies to the north with an associated play area in the north eastern corner of the site. The landform has a slight slope that grades up from east to west which is part of the Loddon Valley.

From the submitted documents it is understood that the application can be described as the proposed erection of 191 residential dwellings with landscaping and associated infrastructure. The buildings predominantly would be two storey houses with some three storey buildings (apartment blocks) would be provided. The overall height of any unit would not exceed 13m above finished floor level. Access is also included from Arborfield Road from the south and via Shepherd Road from the north.

The site was included within the scope and submitted EIA in 2018 to support the application 181499 on the development parcel to the north (called Hawthorne). This focussed on Landscape, Transport and Access, and Water Resources and Flood Risk, and concluded that there were no significant residual effects from Phase 1 at the Littlebrook site or Phase 2 of the development which concerns the current site north of Arborfield Road. It should be noted that many of the development sites in the wider area have now been built out and are complete and as such, the cumulative impacts of this are lower than in 2018.

National PPG

Paragraphs 057 and 058 of the PPG provide guidance to help determine whether significant effects are likely. In general, the more environmentally sensitive the location, the lower the threshold will be at which significant effects are likely. Table 1 below sets out the indicative criteria, thresholds and key issues to be considered in determining whether a development is likely to be EIA development identified in the PPG.

Table 1: the indicative criteria, thresholds and key issues to be considered in determining whether a development is likely to be EIA development identified in the PPG.

Development type	Indicative criteria and threshold	Key issues to consider
(b) Urban development projects, including the construction of shopping centres and car parks, sports stadiums, leisure centres and multiplex cinemas;	Environmental Impact Assessment is unlikely to be required for the redevelopment of land unless the new development is on a significantly greater scale than the previous use, or the types of impact are of a markedly different nature or there is a high level of contamination. Sites which have not	Physical scale of such developments, potential increase in traffic, emissions and noise.

	previously been intensively developed: (i) area of the scheme is more than 5 hectares; or (ii) it would provide a total of more than 10,000 m² of new commercial floorspace; or (iii) the development would have significant urbanising effects in a previously non-urbanised area (e.g. a new development of more than 1,000 dwellings).	
--	--	--

Planning History

The planning history for the site and significant extant planning approvals / applications for the local area are summarised in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Cumulative consented applications for sites of significant scale yet to be completed (note: outline and full applications are shown in the black text, pending consents are in the red text)

Site/application ref	Description	Distance to planning unit
Shinfield West		
O/2010/1432	Outline application for a residential development of up to 1 200 dwellings a further 150 units of specialist housing (including sheltered housing) for elderly persons a local centre to include a foodstore (2 500 sqm) and other retail and office uses a community building proposed extension of existing primary schools erection of a new primary school public open space sports pavilion suitable alternative natural greenspace (SANG) and access and landscaping. – Appeal Approved 08/11/2012	400m to the west
VAR/2014/0624	Application to remove condition 48 of planning consent O/2010/1432 (the development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved Residential Travel Plan) – <i>Note this in effect becomes the outline consent for the above scheme</i> Approved 22/10/14	400m to the west

Site/Application ref	Description	Distance
231561	Full application for the proposed relocation of Workshop T4 (to become Workshop G).	700m to the north
231837	Full planning application for the proposed erection of a new Gateway building containing offices for creative industries (including film, television and ancillary support uses) and ancillary café with associated landscaping. Application is accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment and is a potential departure from the Local Plan.	1k to the north east
Thames Valley Science Park		
210210	Full application for the erection of TV Studio Building including studio space, workshop/storage area and production/office along with parking facilities	600m to the north
Natural History Museum		
232833	Full application for the proposed Construction of a Collections, Digitisation & Research Centre with associated infrastructure and external works including car parking, SUDS basin and landscaping. Application is a potential departure from the local plan.	1.2k to the north east
Natural History Museum Spine Road		
231995	Full planning permission for the construction of an extension to the Thames Valley Science Park spine road to provide access to a proposed new building for the Natural History Museum, landscaping, surface water attenuation and other associated works. Application is a potential departure from local plan.	1k to the north east

Site/Application ref	Description	Distance
British Museum		
182059	Hybrid planning application in respect to: 1) Full planning application for a 15,628sqm research and storage facility (Sui Generis Use for the British Museum); 80parking spaces; landscaping and surface water drainage. 2) Outline planning application for up to 15,000sqm research and storage facility (Sui Generis Use for the British Museum) all matters reserved. 3) Demolition of two existing residential dwellings.	700m to the north east
Cutbush Lane South		
181499	Full planning application for the erection of 249 dwellings, new public open space, landscaping, surface water attenuation, access and associated works at land to the south of Cutbush Lane Shinfield.	20m to the north
Land at Stanbury House		
143279	Outline application for the development of up to 57 new dwellings, to include new access from Basingstoke Road and provision of suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to be considered.	2.5k to the south west
Land at Kingfisher Grove		
201002	Outline application for the proposed erection of 49 dwelling, including 22 units of affordable housing, with new publicly accessible open space and access. (Access to be considered)	2.5km to the west
Dobbies Garden Centre		
212717	Full planning application for redevelopment of the site to provide a new garden centre retail development incorporating restaurant/cafe, food hall and veterinary practice with ancillary works including car parking, access, outdoor display areas and landscaping, following demolition of existing buildings.	1.4km to the south west
Arborfield Garrison and adjoining land, Arborfield		
140764	Outline permission for demolition of buildings and phased redevelopment of Arborfield Garrison and adjoining land for up to 2,000 new dwellings, district centre, employment space, secondary school, primary school, sports facilities, SANGs, open space and access.	4.2km to the south east
Hogwood Farm		
163547	Outline application for up to 1,500 new dwellings, employment space, neighbourhood centre, primary school, sports provision, open space, access and detailed application for SANG.	4km to the south east
Hogwood Park, Park Lane, RG404P		
163547	Outline application for up to 140 residential units open space, access and SANG.	4.5km to the south east

Table 3 below sets out the screening assessment for the site for the purpose of an EIA.

Table 3: Screening Assessment

A	Screening Criteria Question	B	Response to the Screening Criteria Question in Column A (Yes/No and explanation of reasons)	C	Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No and explanation of reasons (nb if the answer in Column B is 'No', Column C is not applicable))
			Briefly explain reasons and, if applicable and/or known, include name of feature(s) and proximity to site(s)		Is a significant effect likely, having regard particularly to the magnitude and spatial extent (including population size affected), nature, intensity and complexity, probability, expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact and the possibility to effectively reduce the impact? If the finding of no significant effect is reliant on specific features or measures of the project envisaged to avoid, or prevent what might otherwise have been, significant adverse effects on the environment these should be identified in bold .

A Screening Criteria Question	B Response to the Screening Criteria Question in Column A (Yes/No and explanation of reasons)	C Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No and explanation of reasons (nb if the answer in Column B is 'No', Column C is not applicable))
Natural resources		
1.1 Will construction, operation or decommissioning of the project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the topography of the area?	No The proposed development would require re-modelling of the site to accommodate the dwellings and introduce suitable drainage. These would be limited in extent and post development and the ground re-modelling in itself would not be significantly discernible. Surface runoff during the construction phase can be managed via the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) The proposed development would be permanent and therefore decommissioning is not expected in the short term.	N/A
1.2 Will construction or operation of the project use natural resources above or below ground such as land, soil, water, materials/minerals or energy which are non-renewable or in short supply?	Yes The construction phase would require natural resources but due to the scale of it the use of these would not be significant. Groundwork re-modelling will be required for the construction phase although the level of soil that would need to be removed from site is not expected to be significant with the majority likely be used to re-grade the site for drainage.	No The construction phase can be controlled by the Construction Environmental Management Plan. The dwellings would be expected to adhere to building regulations and would need to meet the sustainability objectives of the current and emerging development plan. These could be secured by condition and / or factored into the detailed design.
1.3 Are there any areas on/around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources which could be affected by the project, e.g. forestry, agriculture, water/coastal, fisheries, minerals?	No The site is an arable field circa 7ha. The soil is classified as 3 b which is not the best and most versatile. The southern section of the site has minerals identified under The Central and Eastern Berkshire Minerals and Waste Plan. The extent of this is limited to circa 1.3 ha and whilst the site area of 7ha means that it should be considered for prior extraction – set at 3ha, this should be tested under a Minerals Resource Assessment for any potential forthcoming application.	N A Minerals Resource Assessment should be submitted and given the limited extent of the resource; it is unlikely that prior extraction would be viable but this needs to be demonstrated by the applicant. The loss of the agricultural land is small in scale and given its classification, significant effects are not envisaged.
Waste		
2.1 Will the project produce solid wastes during construction	Yes The construction and post occupation of the buildings would	No A site waste management plan and CEMP will reduce waste levels and

A Screening Criteria Question	B Response to the Screening Criteria Question in Column A (Yes/No and explanation of reasons)	C Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No and explanation of reasons (nb if the answer in Column B is 'No', Column C is not applicable))
or operation or decommissioning?	generate waste but this is not significant and would be comparable to an urban development project.	can be secured by conditions. Construction and post occupational waste will be disposed of in line with local requirements.
Pollution and nuisances		
3.1 Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	Yes The construction phase and post occupational phase will generate vehicle movements and use of machinery on site that emit gases. Dust will be generated by the construction phase and to a lesser extent occupational phase. The end use should not generate a need for a significant amount of storage of onsite hazardous materials other than those normally stored within residential dwellings	No Pollution levels would be localised and not significant when compared to the baseline existing conditions. A Phase 1 Land Contamination Assessment will be expected to accompany any forthcoming planning application. The CEMP will control dust and HGV movements together with best practice for the operation of machinery. Post occupation, travel planning measures will be expected to reduce vehicle trips. Enhancements to public transport infrastructure would need to be identified at the planning application stage.
3.2 Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes The construction phase will generate noise but levels are not expected to be significant given the nature of the proposed development. Vibration may be caused by piling, if required, during the construction phase and earthworks may cause noise and disturbance. No significant impacts are envisaged in terms of heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation. Post occupation, no significant impacts are envisaged.	No The CEMP will control construction activities together with working hours agreed via planning condition.
3.3 Will the project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?	Yes There is the potential for pollutants to be released during the construction and post occupation phases of the development. Due to the nature of the project, these would be limited in their extent.	No A ground investigation study will accompany any forthcoming application. Any localised contamination during construction can be managed by the CEMP and hazardous materials will be stored in an appropriate location. This will ensure best practice for surface water runoff during the

A Screening Criteria Question	B Response to the Screening Criteria Question in Column A (Yes/No and explanation of reasons)	C Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No and explanation of reasons (nb if the answer in Column B is 'No', Column C is not applicable))
		construction phase. Standards for controlling hydrocarbon storage and water pollution will be required under the relevant legislation.
3.4 Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage, e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project?	No There is an Air Quality Management Area to the north of the site along the M4 motorway corridor. A Transport Assessment and Travel Plan will be expected to be submitted with any potential forthcoming planning application.	N/A
Population and human health		
4.1 Will there be any risk of major accidents (including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge) during construction, operation or decommissioning?	No The site is located within the 12km Zone for Atomic Weapon Establishment (AWE) Burghfield. The scale of the proposed development falls outside of any consultation criteria identified by the Office for Nuclear Responsibility. Construction activities will be managed by the CEMP and Health and Safety legislation requirements.	N/A
4.2 Will the project present a risk to the population (having regard to population density) and their human health during construction, operation or decommissioning (for example due to water contamination or air pollution)	No The site is located within the 12km Zone for Atomic Weapon Establishment (AWE) Burghfield. The scale of the proposed development falls outside of any consultation criteria identified by the Office for Nuclear Responsibility. Dust would be generated at the construction phase but it would be managed by the CEMP. Surface and foul water runoff will be managed during the construction phase and through the end use infrastructure. Upgrades may for foul water drainage may need to be required and consultation with Statutory Undertaker is encouraged.	No

A Screening Criteria Question	B Response to the Screening Criteria Question in Column A (Yes/No and explanation of reasons)	C Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No and explanation of reasons (nb if the answer in Column B is 'No', Column C is not applicable))
Water resources		
5.1 Are there any water resources including surface waters, e.g. rivers, lakes/ponds, coastal or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected by the project, particularly in terms of their volume and flood risk?	Yes The site is predominantly within floodzone 1 although the eastern part of the site lies within floodzone 2 and 3. Whilst the applicant states that WBC's 2017 model is the most relevant model, this has not been validated by the Environment Agency at this stage. Development parcels have not yet been submitted but it is noted that for the 2018 EIA assessment for application ref 181499 that the eastern boundary was shown as open space which might be an appropriate use within these areas (subject to detail). A Flood Risk Assessment will be expected for any forthcoming planning application which should inform the drainage strategy.	No Subject to detail design, at this stage an EIA will not be required. Should dwellings be placed in the areas as defined by the Environment Agency flood risk maps this would trigger a consultation with the EA. Drainage attenuation features should not be placed in floodzone 2 and 3. The requirement for an EIA on this matter may emerge as the detailed design is worked up together with the drainage strategy and Flood Risk Assessment.
Biodiversity (species and habitats)		
6.1 Are there any protected areas which are designated or classified for their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, or any non-designated / non-classified areas which are important or sensitive for reasons of their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, located on or around the location and which could be affected by the project? (e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other water-bodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, undesignated nature reserves or parks. (Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local)).	Yes Around half of the southern part of the site sits within 5km of the Bramshill SPA, the northern development parcel is within the 7km bufferzone. As identified in the applicants screening letter, the distances to the nearest protected areas are set out and these are accepted. There are veteran trees outside of the application site and these will need to be considered in the site layout in terms of the root protection areas etc.	No An arboricultural impact assessment is expected to accompany the application that will need to demonstrate that the development can be accommodated taking into account these constraints. Planning conditions can mitigate the impacts of construction on the trees The site will need to demonstrate that it can either deliver suitable SANG or secure this from other parties to offset the impact on the SPA. An Appropriate Assessment will need to be undertaken for any potential forthcoming planning application. An FRA and Drainage Strategy should provide measures to ensure that the water quality of the River Loddon is not adversely affected.
6.2 Could any protected, important or sensitive species of flora or fauna which use areas on or around the site, e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging,	Yes This proposed development falls in amber impact risk zone for great crested newts. Impact risk zones have been derived through advanced modelling to create a species	No Wildlife is protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and no works will be undertaken prior to the submission of an updated ecology report. Surveys will be

A Screening Criteria Question	B Response to the Screening Criteria Question in Column A (Yes/No and explanation of reasons)	C Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No and explanation of reasons (nb if the answer in Column B is 'No', Column C is not applicable))
resting, over-wintering, or migration, be affected by the project?	distribution map which predicts likely presence. In the amber impact zone, there is suitable habitat and a likelihood of great crested newt presence. The site is within the 5-7km zone for the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Zone. Mitigation will need to be provided to ensure that the development does not increase pressure on the use of the SPA site. The site is within the Bat Roost Suitably Model area. There are veteran trees outside of the application site and hedgerows within the site area. These will need to be considered in the site layout in terms of the root protection areas etc.	undertaken prior and during construction and mitigation for habitats can be provided within the built form or within suitable areas of the grounds. The site will need to demonstrate that it can either deliver suitable SANG or secure this from other parties to offset the impact on the SPA. An Appropriate Assessment will need to be undertaken for any potential forthcoming planning application. Lighting will be designed in accordance with best practice including Bat Conservation Trust guidance. Protected species licences will need to be obtained as necessary. An arboricultural impact assessment is expected to accompany the application that will need to demonstrate that the development can be accommodated taking into account these constraints. Planning conditions can mitigate the impacts of construction on the trees and hedgerows. Subject to planning conditions and measures for the detailed design of the project, no significant impacts are envisaged for Flora and Fauna.
Landscape and visual		
7.1 Are there any areas or features on or around the location which are protected for their landscape and scenic value, and/or any non-designated / non-classified areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the project? ¹ Where designated indicate level	Yes The site sits within an area identified as the 2019 Loddon Valley Landscape Character Assessment. The land rises gently along the valley from east to west broadly parallel to the Eastern Relief Road alignment.	No Whilst the site was included in the 2018 EIA only parameter plans were included at that stage. The context of the site has changed with the delivery of the Eastern Relief Road and wider development in the area. These mean that due to the size, scale and location of the development in the context of the existing settlement, significant landscape impacts are not

¹ See question 8.1 for consideration of impacts on heritage designations and receptors, including on views to, within and from designated areas.

A Screening Criteria Question	B Response to the Screening Criteria Question in Column A (Yes/No and explanation of reasons)	C Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No and explanation of reasons (nb if the answer in Column B is 'No', Column C is not applicable))
of designation (international, national, regional or local).		envisaged. The application will be submitted with a supporting Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). This will need to consider the River Loddon Valued Landscape area, the western area of which follows the Eastern Relief Road. and measures taken as part of the scheme design to mitigate adverse effects of the proposed development on this landscape.
7.2 Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people? (If so, from where, what direction, and what distance?)	Yes Footpaths 6 and 7 are located close to the site as are other footpaths and main roads. The development would also be visible from existing residential development predominantly within Shinfield but also the wider area..	No The site is visible from FP7, FP4, FP5 and FP6, and road users of Arborfield Road, Cutbush Lane and the Eastern Relief Road. The site is also visible from the Langley Mead SANG extension land. The LVIA will need to consider these receptors and identify key viewpoints to inform the layout and design of the proposed development. Mitigation can be made post development through landscaping and the implementation of a landscape management plan.
Cultural heritage/archaeology		
8.1 Are there any areas or features which are protected for their cultural heritage or archaeological value, or any non-designated / classified areas and/or features of cultural heritage or archaeological importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project (including potential impacts on setting, and views to, from and within)? Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local).	Yes Shinfield Infant and Junior School lies 280m to the south west of the site which is Grade II listed. Further listed buildings are located to the north at Cutbush Barn, Cutbush Manor, Oldhouse Farm, Lane End Farm which are over 550m from the application site. The Church of St Mary the Virgin lies 600m to the west together with Church Farmhouse / Annex and L' Ortolan. Two areas of special Character are located at School Green and Shinfield Church. These are located 600m and 190m from the site boundary respectively. Site of St Bartholmew's Church is a Scheduled Ancient Monument which is located 1.1km to the east of the site. There are further monuments within 5k of the application site but there is suitable separation to these. An Archaeological Sites Consultation	No Impacts of development on heritage assets can be managed by the CEMP. Given the scale of the development and the level of separation to the surrounding heritage assets, taking into account the setting of the site, it is expected that any adverse impacts can be mitigated by detailed design. In addition, a desk based Archaeological Assessment will need to be submitted.

A Screening Criteria Question	B Response to the Screening Criteria Question in Column A (Yes/No and explanation of reasons)	C Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No and explanation of reasons (nb if the answer in Column B is 'No', Column C is not applicable))
	Zone is located to the north of the site although from the plan submitted, this appears to be outside of the recline area.	

A Screening Criteria Question	B Response to the Screening Criteria Question in Column A (Yes/No and explanation of reasons)	C Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No and explanation of reasons (nb if the answer in Column B is 'No', Column C is not applicable))
Transport and Access		
9.1 Are there any routes on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities which could be affected by the project.	Yes The site is located adjacent to Arborfield Road and the Eastern Relief Road. Footpaths 6 and 7 are located to the east and west of the site respectively.	No The 2018 EIA scoped out impacts on traffic and no severe impacts were identified for both driver delay or pedestrian safety. Construction traffic can be managed by the CEMP.
9.2 Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project	Yes Construction traffic will increase local vehicle movements but this can be managed. Congestion would need to be tested through our strategic highway model and the study area agreed with the highway authority. Strategic junction modelling would be required on routes to the north and west of the site. There will be more vehicle movements post occupation.	No The CEMP and CTMP will manage delivery hours to the site and best practice for access. A Transport Assessment and Travel Plan will be required for the application. This will need to include modelling outputs which subject to the findings of these being acceptable, an EIA at this stage is not required. It is expected that there will be mitigation measures within this to promote sustainable travel including cycle storage.
Land use		
10.1 Are there existing land uses or community facilities on or around the location which could be affected by the project? E.g. housing, densely populated areas, industry / commerce, farm/agricultural holdings, forestry, tourism, mining, quarrying, facilities relating to health, education, places of worship, leisure /sports / recreation.	Yes The site is agricultural and green field with no existing land uses. There is residential development to the south, north and west. There are various village facilities located within Shinfield which includes a community church 170m to the west, nursery school on the south west corner of the site and junior school some 300m to the south and west..	No This will be further tested at the detailed design stage. Building heights should be informed by a Landscape and Visual Impact to demonstrate how it sits within the landscape from various receptors. The site is sensitive in terms of settlement coalescence. The detailed design will be assessed under any forthcoming application in accordance with the development plan and supplementary planning guidance.
10.2 Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	Yes The development sites in the local area are identified in Table 2	No Cumulative impacts are not envisaged given the nature of the land use surrounding the site. The level of separation the other sites is sufficient to limit any harm associated with overlapping projects. The CEMP will manage the construction process.

A Screening Criteria Question	B Response to the Screening Criteria Question in Column A (Yes/No and explanation of reasons)	C Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No and explanation of reasons (nb if the answer in Column B is 'No', Column C is not applicable))
Land stability and climate		
11.1 Is the location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, or extreme /adverse climatic conditions, e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?	No	N/A
Cumulative effects		
12.1 Could this project together with existing and/or approved development result in cumulation of impacts together during the construction/operation phase?	Yes Table 2 outlines the permitted developments for major sites within the local area. Two significant developments have been approved since the 2018 EIA which considered that there would be no significant impacts for the development. These are Shinfield Studios located some 500m to the north east of the site (211841) and Hogwood Park for 140 residential units located 4.5km to the south east. Potential impacts could be road traffic and noise but given the level of separation and nature of the schemes, these are unlikely to be significant.	No Potential impacts could be road traffic and noise but given the level of separation and nature of the schemes, these are unlikely to be significant. These can be mitigated by the CEMP and Traffic Management Measures. The development at Shinfield Studios is now largely complete so construction traffic levels to this have reduced. The 2018 Landscape Assessment Chapter for the Environmental Impact Assessment concluded that views would be filtered to the site through built form, vegetation and landform. The cumulative impacts of the development that has since been approved is not considered to have a significant impact on the landscape setting of the site.
Transboundary effects		
13.1 Is the project likely to lead to transboundary effects? ²	No	N/A

² The Regulations require consideration of the transboundary nature of the impact. Due to the England's geographical location the vast majority of TCPA cases are unlikely to result in transboundary impacts.

Requirement for an EIA

The proposal is considered to fall under category 10 b of Schedule 2 of the 2017 EIA regulations. The development includes more than 1 hectare of urban development and the development includes more than 150 dwellings, and the Site exceeds 5ha of land. As such, the application needs to be screened to determine whether EIA is required.

Indicative criteria provided as part of The Planning Practice Guidance states that Sites which have not previously been intensively developed will need to be considered for an EIA. This includes if the area of the scheme is more than 5 hectares in size which the proposed site meets this threshold.

For the reasons set out in Table 3 above, based on the submitted information and site background, the proposed development is not considered to be EIA development. This view is in accordance with Schedule 3 (Selection Criteria for Screening Schedule 2 Development) as well as the criteria provided in the Planning Practice Guidance.

Conclusion

In summary, due to the scale and nature of the proposed development and for the reasons set out above, it is not considered that an EIA should accompany any forthcoming application for the site. This opinion is subject to the outcomes of highway and transport modelling and the findings of other technical reports.

Yours sincerely,



Head of Strategic Development

Planning and Delivery