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APPLICATION FOR FULL PLANNING PERMISSION  
FOR THE ERECTION OF A DETACHED CHALET-  
STYLE SELF-BUILD DWELLING WITH ACCESS,  
PARKING AND AMENITY SPACE ON LAND TO  
THE REAR OF 16 AND 17 ARNSIDE CLOSE,  
TWYFORD, BERKSHIRE.

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## **PLANNING AND DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT**

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JANUARY 2026

## STRUCTURE

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## **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 This Statement has been prepared to accompany an application submitted to Wokingham Borough Council for full planning permission for the erection of a detached chalet-style self-build dwelling with access, parking and amenity space on land to the rear of 16 and 17 Arnside Close, Twyford, Berkshire.

1.2 The Statement is structured as follows;

- Section 2 – The Site and Surrounding Area
- Section 3 – Planning History
- Section 4 – The Proposals
- Section 5 - Planning Policy Context
- Section 6 – Planning Assessment
- Section 7 – Conclusions

## **2.0 The Site and Surrounding Area**

- 2.1 16 and 17 Arnside Close are located on the northern side of the junction of Arnside Close with Chaseside Avenue, with the existing dwellings fronting eastwards on to Arnside Close and with garden areas to the rear (west) extending parallel with Chaseside Avenue. These gardens fall away gradually from east to west. The application site comprises the rear (15.0m) section of both gardens to 16 and 17 Arnside Close, together with the land directly to the south leading up to Chaseside Avenue, and is a broadly rectangular section of land extending to an area of approximately 0.04 hectares. The site, which is generally fenced to the external boundaries, comprises typical residential garden land.
- 2.2 As noted, 16 and 17 Arnside Close are located to the east and are a pair of semi-detached single storey dwellings, with 17 Arnside Close benefitting from a detached single storey garage building located directly adjacent to the eastern site boundary and accessed off Chaseside Avenue. Directly to the west of the site is a single storey garage block that appears to serve 1 to 11 Chaseside Avenue, a terrace of two-storey dwellings that extend northwards of the site with private gardens to the rear (east) towards the northern part of the western site boundary. Development further to the west, on the northern side of Chaseside Avenue is generally two-storey in scale. Directly opposite the site, on the southern side of Chaseside Avenue, development comprises semi-detached single storey dwellings, albeit with two-storey development further to both the east and west.
- 2.3 The extent of the application site is shown outlined in red on the site location plan accompanying the planning application and, for planning policy purposes, is not subject to any specific designations.

### **3.0 Planning History**

3.1 There is no material planning history on the application site.

## 4.0 The Proposal

4.1 As noted, the application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a detached chalet-style self-build dwelling with access, parking and amenity space, full details of which are set out in the following plans and documents:

- RG109BS.01 Site Location Plan (1:1250)
- RG109BS.02 Existing and Proposed Site Plan and Section/Street Scene (1:200)
- RG109BS.03 Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations, together with details of bin and cycle stores (1:100)
- CIL Form 1

4.2 As shown on the site plan, the proposed dwelling would be set-back approximately 10.0m from Chaseside Avenue, with a built frontage to Chaseside Avenue of 10.3m, and retaining gaps of, on average, 1.0m to the eastern site boundary (with the gardens of 16 and 17 Arnside Close) and 4.0m from the western site boundary. The main part of the dwelling would have a predominantly rectangular plan form, extending through the site on an east-west axis, albeit with – on the front elevation – a two-storey gable projection that would extend marginally forward at the eastern end of the building. A single storey element is also proposed to the rear, projecting from the eastern side of the rear elevation.

4.3 The proposed dwelling, which would be of a chalet-style, would have an eaves height of approximately 3.6m and overall ridge height of 7.4m, and would be of predominantly brick construction (with feature detailing) under a pitched, tiled roof. Save for the gable projection noted, the first-floor accommodation would be lit by a series of split-eaves, lead-faced flat roof dormer windows. The dwelling would provide a range of living accommodation at ground floor level, with three bedrooms with bathroom facilities to the first floor.

4.4 Access to the proposed dwelling would be from the south, off Chaseside Avenue, via a driveway that would extend adjacent to the western site boundary and provide two (tandem) parking spaces. The garden area, which would be some 11.0m deep and with an overall area of approximately 150sqm, would be contained to the rear (north) of the dwelling.

## 5.0 Planning Policy Context

### *The Decision-Making Framework*

- 5.1 The statutory decision-making framework is set by Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. This States:

*'if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise'.*

- 5.2 That is, where the Development Plan is material to the determination of a planning application, the decision should be made in accordance with the terms of the Development Plan unless there are material considerations that would direct otherwise.
- 5.3 This statutory framework for decision-making is reinforced by paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework; 2024) which states that decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that development proposals should be approved where they accord with an up-to-date Development Plan. (Paragraph 11(c)).

### *Development Plan*

- 5.4 The Development Plan comprises a range of planning documents the most relevant of which are considered to be -
- Wokingham Borough Core Strategy DPD (2010);
  - Wokingham Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (2014); and
  - The Twyford Neighbourhood Plan.

### *Wokingham Borough Core Strategy DPD*

- 5.5 The Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Development Plan Document was adopted by the Council in January 2010 and provides the strategic planning policy framework for development in the Borough to 2026. The most relevant policies of the Core Strategy are considered to be:
- CP1 Sustainable Development

- CP3 General Principles for Development
- CP4 Infrastructure Requirements
- CP5 Housing Mix, Density and Affordability
- CP6 Managing Travel Demand
- CP7 Biodiversity
- CP9 Scale and Location of Development Proposals
- CP17 Housing Delivery

*Wokingham Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (2014)*

5.6 The Wokingham Managing Development Delivery Local Plan was adopted in February 2014 and provides a series of detailed policies that 'sit' alongside the strategic framework provided by the Core Strategy. The most relevant policies of the document are considered to be:

- CC01 Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development
- CC02 Development Limits
- CC03 Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping
- CC04 Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC06 Noise
- CC07 Parking
- CC09 Development and Flood Risk
- CC10 Sustainable Drainage
- TB05 Housing Mix
- TB06 Development of Private Residential Gardens
- TB07 Internal Space Standards
- TB21 Landscape Character
- TB23 Biodiversity and Development

*Twyford Neighbourhood Plan*

5.7 The Twyford Neighbourhood Plan (TNP) was formally 'made' in August 2023 with the most relevant policies of the document are considered to be:

- TW1 Encouraging Sustainable Travel
- TW7 Nature Recovery and Climate Change
- TW10 Water Infrastructure and Flood Risk
- TW11 New Homes – Tenure and Mix
- TW13 Design Codes

## **Other Material Planning Considerations**

### *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*

- 5.8 The NPPF was first published on 27 March 2012 and, with immediate effect, replaced a raft of advice and guidance contained in various Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPGs), and Planning Policy Statements (PPSs). In July 2018 a revised version of the NPPF was issued (NPPF2), followed by further revisions in February and June 2019 (NPPF3). In July 2021 a further set of revisions to the Framework were published (NPPF4), with further changes in September 2023 (NPPF5). Further revisions were published on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2023 (NPPF(6)), with the latest version (NPPF(7)) issued on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2024.
- 5.9 As with the original (2012) NPPF, sustainable development remains at the heart of the Framework, with three interdependent and overarching objectives – economic, social and environmental – driving the achievement of sustainable development. In order to ensure that sustainable development is pursued in a positive manner, the Framework embodies, in paragraph 11, a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 5.10 For decision-taking – in respect of applications for planning permission – the presumption in favour of sustainable development means (paragraph 11):
- (c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
  - (d) where there are no development plan policies or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date<sup>1</sup>, granting planning permission unless:
    - (i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas of 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, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing

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<sup>1</sup> With footnote 8 of the Framework stating: This includes, for applications involving the provision of housing, situations where: the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites (with the appropriate buffer as set out in paragraph 78); or where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was substantially below (less than 75% of) the housing requirement over the previous three years.

well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

- 5.11 Paragraph 39 advises that local planning authorities should approach decisions on development in a positive and creative way and *'work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible'*.

#### Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes

- 5.12 Paragraph 61 re-affirms that, in order to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, *'it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed...and that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are met'*. Moreover, *'the overall aim should be to meet an area's identified housing need, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community'* (Paragraph 61), with planning policies reflecting the needs of different groups in the community including those *'wishing to commission or build their own homes'* (Paragraph 62)
- 5.13 In contributing to wider housing delivery objectives, Paragraph 78 requires Local Planning Authorities to *'identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old'*. That supply should include either a 5% buffer or, where there has been a significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years, a 20% buffer. In maintaining supply, Paragraph 79 requires that *'local planning authorities should monitor progress in building out sites which have permission'*

#### Promoting Sustainable Transport

- 5.14 Insofar as it relates to matters of sustainable transport, paragraph 110 advises that significant development should be focused on locations that are, or can be made, sustainable. However, the Framework recognises that *'opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making'* (paragraph 110).

- 5.15 In consideration of applications for planning permission, paragraph 115 advises that it should be ensured that – (i) sustainable transport modes are prioritised taking account of the type of development and its location, (ii) safe and convenient access to the site can be achieved for all users, (iii) all transport elements of a scheme are appropriately designed, and (iv) any significant impacts of the development on the transport network, or highway safety, can be mitigated to an acceptable degree.
- 5.16 Furthermore, paragraph 116 advises that *'development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe'*.

#### Making Effective Use of Land

- 5.17 Paragraph 124 states that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses. In addition, development should make efficient use of land (Paragraph 129) taking account of a range of factors, including the need for different types of housing, and the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting.

#### Achieving Well-Designed Places

- 5.18 Paragraph 131 highlights that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development by creating better places in which to live and work, with paragraph 135 seeking developments that:
- will function well and add to the overall quality of the area;
  - are visually attractive as a result of good architecture;
  - are sympathetic to local character and history;
  - establish or maintain a strong sense of place;
  - optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development; and
  - create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

#### Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

- 5.19 Paragraph 170 advises that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk. Where development is proposed, local planning authorities (paragraph 181) should ensure that

flood risk is not increased elsewhere and that, as appropriate, development should be supported by a site-specific flood risk assessment

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

- 5.20 Paragraph 187 advises that planning policies and decisions should contribute to, and enhance, the natural and local environment by, *inter alia*, (a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, (b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and (d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity.

### *Other Matters*

#### *Supplementary Planning Documents*

- 5.21 The following Supplementary Planning Documents are also considered to be material to the proposals:
- The Borough Design Guide; and
  - The Sustainable Design and Construction SPD

#### *Design Guide*

- 5.22 In addition, the Twyford Design Guideline and Codes (2022) is of material weight in the consideration of the proposals.

#### *Proposed Revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework (2025)*

- 5.23 In December last year proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework were published for consultation. The proposed changes – now under the sub-title 'plan-making and national decision-making policies' – contains policies on a number of thematic issues that, unlike the current Framework, are separated in to policies for plan-making and policies for decision-making. Insofar as they are material to the scheme, the proposed changes include:

Policy S3 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development.

States that decisions on development should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and that Policy S4 should be applied when considering development proposals within settlements.

#### Policy S4 – Principle of development within settlements

States, in sub-paragraph 1, that development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects. Paragraph 2 sets out the circumstances (albeit not exhaustive) in which the benefits of approving development are likely to be substantially outweighed by adverse effects, none of which apply to the subject proposals.

#### Policy H07 – Meeting the need for homes

States that, in applying the policies of the Framework, substantial weight should be given to the benefits of providing accommodation that will contribute towards meeting the evidenced needs of the local community.

#### Policy L2 – Making Effective Use of Land

Details that substantial weight should be given to the benefits where a development proposal would, *inter alia*, create additional homes within settlements through development within existing residential curtilages.

#### Policy L3 – Achieving Appropriate Densities

Development within settlements should contribute to an increase in the density of the area in which they are situated, taking account of the existing character of the area.

## 6.0 Planning Assessment

6.1 This section of the Statement considers the principal planning issues associated with the proposed development having regard to the following factors:

- The Decision-Making Framework and Housing Land Supply
- Self/Custom-Build Housing
- The Principle of the Proposed Development
- Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area, including Designated Heritage Assets
- Effect on Neighbouring Amenity
- The Quality of Living Environment for Future Occupiers
- Existing and Proposed Landscaping
- Highways, Access and Parking
- Flood Risk
- Ecology and Biodiversity

6.2 These matters are considered in turn below.

### *The Decision-Making Framework and Housing Land Supply*

6.3 As detailed in the preceding Section, Paragraph 11(d) of the Framework states that where there are no development plan policies or the policies which are most important for determining an application are out-of-date, planning permission should be granted for that development (subject to the caveats in 11(d)(i) and (ii)).

6.4 The footnote to paragraph 11(d) elaborates on the circumstances when Development Plan policies may be considered out of date, and includes in situations where the Council are unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of housing land. In this case, the latest Five-Year Housing Land Supply Statement was issued by the Council in August (2025) covering the five-year period from 01/04/2025 to 31/03/2030. This details a requirement for 6,909 dwellings (including a 5% buffer) amounting to an annualised requirement for 1,382 dwellings.

6.5 The Statement details that the deliverable housing supply for the Borough across the relevant five-year period is 3,453 dwellings. That represents a substantial shortfall (against the five-year requirement) of 3,456 dwellings. In other words, the Council are only able to demonstrate a **2.5-year** supply of housing land. That being the case, the 'tilted planning balance' set out in Paragraph 11(d) of the Framework is engaged. This states that planning

permission should be granted unless *'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, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination'*.

- 6.6 Notwithstanding the fact that the 'tilted planning balance' is engaged, the starting point for the consideration of the proposals – given the legal framework set by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act – is the terms of the Development Plan. That being the case, the assessment below (in paragraphs 6.15 - 6.40) considers the conformity of the proposals with the Development Plan.

### *Self/Custom-Build Housing*

- 6.7 The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended; The Act) places two obligations/duties on the Council namely, (i) the *'duty as regards registers'*, and (ii) the *'duty to grant planning permission etc'*.
- 6.8 The *'duty as regards registers'* requires the Council to keep a register of individuals and associations of individuals who are seeking to acquire serviced plots of land in the authority's area for their own self-build and custom housing. The level of demand for such is established through the number of entries added to an authority's register during a base period. The first base period ended on 30 October 2016, with each subsequent base period being the 12-month period immediately after the end of the previous base period.
- 6.9 The *'duty to grant permission etc'* requires that *'relevant authorities must give suitable permission to enough serviced plots of land to meet the demand for self-build and custom housebuilding in their area. The level of demand is established by reference to the number of entries added to an authority's register during a base period.....at the end of each base period, the Authority then has three years in which to 'permission' an equivalent number of plots of land that are suitable for self-build and custom housebuilding, as there are entries for that base period'*. (Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph 023 Reference ID 57-023-201760728).
- 6.10 In this context, self-build and custom-build housing is defined in Annex 2 of the Framework as *'housing built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with them, to be occupiers by that individual. Such housing can be either market or affordable housing. A legal definition, for the purposes of applying the Self-building and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended) is contained in Section 1(A1) and (A2) of that Act'*. Government

- guidance confirms that legislation does not distinguish between self-build and custom housebuilding and sets out that *'in considering whether a home is a self-build or custom build home, relevant authorities must be satisfied that the initial owner of the home will have primary input into its final design and layout'* (Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph 016 Reference ID: 57-016-20170728). Indeed (A2) of the Act is quite specific in stating that self/custom-building housing *'does not include the building of a house on a plot acquired from a person who builds the house wholly or mainly to plans or specifications decided or offered by that person'*.
- 6.11 Legislative changes were introduced in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LURA) that effectively 'tightened' the framework for recording 'true' self/custom-build plots (see below) and, moreover, stated that under-delivery of permissioned 'plots' from previous base periods must be rolled-forward cumulatively to the next base period rather than 'dropping-off' after three years.
- 6.12 In accordance with the requirements of the LURA the Council submit self/custom-build returns to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. The latest of these published returns (up to the end of the ninth base period (30 October 2024)) details that there were 637 entries on the register, with the number of permissioned plots since the first base period being 267. This represents a significant shortfall of **370** plots/dwellings.
- 6.13 Notwithstanding that shortfall, the Council's Topic Paper (in connection with the emerging Local Plan) 'self-build and custom housebuilding' (September 2024) makes it clear (in paragraph 4.8) that the Council's monitoring of self/custom-build plots has – historically at least - been based on the number of CIL self-build exemptions that have been granted. However, it may well be the case that a party applies for, and secures, exemption from CIL as a self-build on the basis that they have purchased a plot with full/detailed planning permission from another party. That is quite legitimate for CIL exemption purposes. However, that type of 'plot' does not count for the purposes of self/custom-build monitoring on the basis it fails to comply with (A2) noted above, since it comprises *'the building of a house on a plot acquired from a person who [then] builds the house wholly or mainly to plans or specifications decided or offered by that person'*. Accordingly – and whilst that approach to monitoring permissions has been tightened by the LURA - the supply of permissioned plots in Wokingham Borough is likely to be significantly over-stated in the figures above. That is, the shortfall is likely be greater than what is already a substantial shortfall of **370** plots/dwellings as detailed in the published data
- 6.14 The weight to be attributed to a shortfall in the provision of self/custom-build permissions – whether in relation to a scheme that is Development Plan policy compliant or otherwise -

has been considered in a number of recent appeal decisions<sup>2</sup> where, in each case, a proposal that goes some way to addressing a shortfall has been attributed **substantial weight** in the overall planning balance. That is the case here, and the substantial weight to be afforded to the provision of four self/custom-build plots is a matter assessed further in the paragraphs below when considering the overall planning balance.

#### *The Principle of the Proposed Development*

- 6.15 The site is located within the Development Limits of Twyford (as defined in the Proposals Map) wherein the principle of additional residential development is acceptable in accordance with Policy CP9 of the Core Strategy and CC02 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (2014). Accordingly, and in the absence of any policies in the Neighbourhood Plan that direct otherwise, the principle of the proposed development is considered to be acceptable.

#### *Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area,*

- 6.16 As detailed in Section 2.0, the site is located in a predominantly residential area characterised by a mixture of single and two-storey dwellings, many of which have been extended and altered. Taken with the varied dwelling types, the area has a mixed character, as a consequence of which there are no overriding features with which new development should conform in order to appropriately respect the prevailing character of the area.
- 6.17 As shown on the site plan, the proposed dwelling would be set back approximately 10.0m from Chaseside Avenue, with the front elevation set marginally (1.0m) forward of the flank (south) elevation of 17 Arnside Close, but set-back approximately 3.6m behind the existing block of garages to the west and the single garage serving 17 Arnside Close to the east. Given that the buildings on the northern side of Chaseside Avenue follow a staggered alignment, with 13 and 15 Chaseside Avenue (to the west) having a comparable relationship to the road as the proposed dwelling, but with 17 and 35 Chaseside Avenue (further to the west) sited much closer to the road, the position of the dwelling on the plot would – in these respects – follow the established rhythm and pattern of development in the area. Moreover, the (relatively significant) gaps retained to the surrounding buildings also ensures that the proposals would respect the grain of development in the area.

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<sup>2</sup> APP/Z3825/W/21/3282823; APP/N1920/W/23/3314268; APP/B1930/W/20/3265925; APP/B1930/W/20/3265926; APP/F2415/W/22/3296353; APP/F2415/W/22/3300240 and APP/H1840/W/20/3255350

- 6.18 In terms of scale the site, as noted previously, slopes down from east to west, such that the dwelling would be positioned on land approximately 2.0m lower than 16 and 17 Arnside Close. In this context, topographic data has been obtained that, in addition to identifying site levels, also provides eaves and ridge heights for the adjacent buildings. These details are graphically shown on the proposed east-west section. This indicates that the proposed dwelling – with a finished floor level of circa 42.8 AoD(N) – would have a ridge height of some 50.18 AoD(N). This would place the ridge height some 0.14m below the ridge level (50.32 AoD(N) of 17 Arnside Close, and approximately 0.09m above the highest ridge level of the stepped terrace of dwellings to the west. That being the case, the proposals would deliver (and maintain) a stepped arrangement in terms of building height that would be consistent with the natural topography and changes in levels across Chaseside Avenue. This approach, combined with the significant gap retained to the dwellings to the east and west, ensures that the scale of the building would be comfortably integrated in to the site and wider street scene.
- 6.19 The surrounding area comprises dwellings from the latter half of the last century that, whilst creating an attractive/pleasant residential environment, are – in design terms – of limited architectural merit. In this context, the proposed chalet-style dwelling would adopt a simple aesthetic, incorporating well-ordered/proportioned elements, and a brick external finish under a pitched, tiled roof, that would integrate comfortably with the wider built context. Furthermore, other elements of the scheme – including the location of the garden area (to the rear) and parking/access arrangements (to the side) – would reflect the design, layout and general form/character of development in the area.
- 6.20 In combination, therefore, it is considered that the proposals would – in terms of layout, scale and design – integrate with the immediate context, represent high-quality design, and respect the character and appearance area, all in accordance with the requirements of Development Plan policy and advice in the Design Guide SPD

#### *Effect on Neighbouring Amenity*

- 6.21 As detailed on the site plan, the proposed dwelling would be located within the rear gardens of 16 and 17 Arnside Close such that these properties, together with 15 Arnside Close to the north and 1 and 3 Chaseside Avenue to the west, represent those with the greatest potential to be affected by the proposed development.
- 6.22 In terms of the impact on 16 and 17 Arnside Close, the proposed dwelling would be located in the rearmost part of the existing gardens of these properties, on land which is approximately 2.0m lower than both of these dwellings. Although the proposals would reduce the length of the gardens of these dwellings, they would remain approximately

14.0m deep and sufficient for the scale of each existing dwelling. Moreover, the flank (east) elevation of the proposed dwelling would – at its nearest – be some 15.0m from the rear of 16/17 Arnside Close. That distance, combined with the limited depth of the proposed dwelling, the reduced eaves height, and the differential in site levels ensures that, from the rear of No 16/17, the proposals would not have an unacceptably adverse impact on light/outlook.

- 6.23 Furthermore, whilst it is acknowledged that the proposed dwelling would be clearly evident/apparent from the gardens of both properties, the distance of the proposed dwelling from the boundary with these gardens (1.0m) and the distance between the rear elevation of the existing dwellings and flank of that proposed (15.0m) both meets and exceeds the guidelines set out in Figure 4.25 of the Design Guide SPD (that, in the case of the latter, sets a minimum of 12.0m). That being the case, the physical presence of the proposed dwelling from these gardens would not have an unacceptable impact.
- 6.24 In addition, no windows are proposed at first floor level in the facing (east) elevation of the proposed dwelling with those at ground floor – although screened by a typical 2.0m high close-boarded fence – being obscurely glazed. That being the case – and recognising that the main habitable room windows would be to the front (south) and rear (north) – the proposals would not impact adversely on the amenities of the occupiers of 16/17 Arnside Close with respect to matters of privacy.
- 6.25 15 Arnside Close is located to the north of the site, with the rear garden of the property contiguous with the northern boundary of the site. For similar reasons to those set out in the preceding paragraphs, the physical relationship and juxtaposition between the proposed dwelling and 15 Arnside Close is such that the proposals would not have an adverse impact on matters of light/outlook. Furthermore, the rear elevation of the main part of the dwelling would be positioned approximately 11.0m from the northern site boundary. That being the case, the relationship between the first-floor openings and the rearmost part of the garden of 15 Arnside Close would not result in an unacceptable level of overlooking (noting that the 11.0m depth of garden is consistent with the advice in the Design Guide SPD regarding an acceptable rear-to-rear privacy distance of 22.0m). Accordingly, the proposals would not have an unacceptable impact on the amenities of the occupiers of 15 Arnside Close.
- 6.26 1 and 3 Chaseside Avenue are located to the west of the site, with rear elevations facing towards the site and separated therefrom by the gardens to each dwelling together with a rear access path. As a consequence, there is a distance of approximately 12.6m between the rear elevation of 1 and 3 Chaseside Avenue and the western site boundary.

As shown on the site plan, the rear elevation of the proposed dwelling would align with the southern (flank) elevation of 1 Chaseside Avenue, such that the proposed dwelling 'steps forward' of these existing properties. That being the case, the physical presence of the proposed dwelling – which would be positioned a further 4.0m off the western boundary – is such that there would be no adverse impact on light/outlook.

- 6.27 Furthermore, no windows are proposed in the first-floor west elevation of the dwelling, with the resultant arrangement of window openings (which are generally contained to the front (south) and rear (north) elevations) such that there would be no unacceptable overlooking or privacy impacts.
- 6.28 Given that other dwellings in the area have a more distant relationship to the proposed dwelling than those considered above, it follows that no other properties would be adversely affected. For these reasons, therefore, the proposals would be fully compliant with Development Plan policy and advice in the Design Guide SPD in terms of the impact on neighbouring residential amenity.

#### *The Quality of Living Environment for Future Occupiers*

- 6.29 For similar reasons to those set out in the preceding section, the relationship between existing buildings/uses and the proposed dwelling is such that these existing buildings and uses would not impact adversely on the amenities of future occupiers with reference to matters of light, outlook or privacy.
- 6.30 In addition, the proposed dwelling would have a gross internal area of approximately 148.5sqm. This would comfortably exceed the minimum standard for a three-bedroom property as set-out in the Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard and, in combination with the factors above, would contribute to the delivery of a high-quality living environment.
- 6.31 In terms of amenity space, the Design Guide SPD states that *'the Council's minimum garden length of 11m is a generally accepted guideline for private garden space, provided the space is usable'*. In this case, the proposed dwelling would benefit from a garden depth of 11.0m, with the garden also some 15.0m wide. The garden area – which would be level and free from excessive shading – would also be sufficiently distant from neighbouring properties that it would be private and useable.
- 6.32 On this basis, it is considered that a high-quality of amenity/living environment would be provided for future occupiers of the proposed dwelling.

### Highways, Access and Parking

- 6.33 As shown on the site plan, a new access is proposed off Chaseside Area, in the south-western corner of the site, which would lead directly to a (tandem) parking area adjacent to the western flank of the proposed dwelling. This access (which would be used for both vehicular and pedestrian purposes) would benefit from appropriate levels of visibility (east and west) on to Chaseside Avenue and would secure safe and convenient access in to the site.
- 6.34 In terms of parking, the proposed dwelling would benefit from two on-plot parking spaces – a level of provision that would meet the relevant parking standard for the size of the dwelling. Moreover, whilst it is acknowledged that access to the parking area would necessitate vehicles either reversing in to the site, or reversing out on to Chaseside Avenue, that arrangement is not uncommon in the area. Indeed, the relatively straight alignment of Chaseside Avenue at this point, together with good visibility from the access, ensures that such movements would not compromise pedestrian or highway safety.
- 6.35 Furthermore, a secure cycle store is proposed directly to the rear (north) of the proposed parking area (that would deliver appropriate cycle parking arrangements) with bin store to the front allowing ease of waste collection.
- 6.36 Accordingly, the proposed highways, access and parking arrangements are considered to be acceptable.

### Flood Risk

- 6.37 Data held by the Environment Agency (EA) indicates that the site – for fluvial flooding purposes - is located in Flood Zone 1 and, therefore, suitable as a matter of principle for the proposed development. Furthermore, the EA evidence details that the site is not subject to surface water flooding, nor flooding from any other source (natural or artificial). Accordingly, flooding matters are not considered to represent a constraint or limitation to the proposed development.

### Ecology and Biodiversity

- 6.38 As noted previously, the site consists of well-established residential gardens with no buildings proposed to be removed in order to facilitate the new dwelling. Given such, and the fact that the site is otherwise located centrally within a relatively large residential

development, there is not considered to be a reasonable likelihood of protected species either being present on the site or affected by the proposed development.

- 6.39 Furthermore, the proposals are not subject to the Biodiversity Gain Condition (that would otherwise be required by virtue of Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) on the basis that the works fall within the 'Self-Build' exemption.
- 6.40 Accordingly, there are not considered to be any constraints to the proposed development in terms of either ecology or biodiversity.

## 7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 This Statement has been prepared to accompany an application submitted to Wokingham Borough Council for full planning permission for the erection of a detached chalet-style self-build dwelling with access, parking and amenity space on land to the rear of 16 and 17 Arnside Close, Twyford, Berkshire.
- 7.2 The Statement demonstrates that the Council are currently only able to demonstrate a circa **2.5-year** supply of housing land and that, in accordance with the terms of the Framework, the 'tilted planning balance' (as set out in paragraph 11(d) of the Framework) is engaged. This states that planning permission should be granted unless *'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, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination'*.
- 7.3 Moreover, the Statement details that the Council have a significant under-supply (of **370** plots) in the provision of permissioned plots for self/custom-build such that the delivery of an additional self-build plot is, as per the noted appeal decisions, a matter to be attributed substantial positive weight in the overall planning balance.
- 7.4 Notwithstanding the significant of the planning context noted above, the Statement nevertheless demonstrates that the proposals would conform with the requirements of the Development Plan given:
- That the principle of the proposed development is acceptable, and would make effective and efficient use of land in a highly sustainable location;
  - That the layout, scale, design and form of the proposed dwelling would respect and preserve the character and appearance of the area;
  - That there would be no adverse impact on neighbouring residential amenity;
  - That an appropriate and high-quality living environment would be created for future occupiers of the development;

- That the proposed dwelling would be served by a safe and convenient access, with sufficient parking provided, and appropriate arrangements made for bin and cycle storage;
  - That the proposals are compliant with flood risk policy; and
  - There are no ecological or biodiversity constraints or limitations to the proposed development.
- 7.5 Accordingly, it is concluded that planning permission should be granted for the proposed development.