

6 Harvest Place, Wargrave, Berkshire

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

for
Mr and Mrs Jackson

Planning | April 2026

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The Landscape Partnership Ltd is a practice of Chartered Landscape Architects, Chartered Ecologists and Chartered Environmentalists, registered with the Landscape Institute and a member of the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment and the Arboricultural Association.

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1 Introduction

Overview

1.1 The Landscape Partnership has been commissioned by JDS Limited to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal to accompany a Planning in Principle (PiP) application for the proposed residential development of land south of Harvest Place (hereafter referred to as the 'Site'). The Site lies within the parish of Wargrave, within the administrative area of Wokingham Borough Council.

Location and Site description

- 1.2 The Site is located to the south-east of Wargrave, at the settlement edge where existing residential development transitions into open agricultural land. It lies approximately 0.6km from the historic village core and currently forms a transitional space between built form to the north and arable farmland to the south.
- 1.3 The Site is enclosed by Mumbery Hill to the south, School Hill to the west, and Harvest Place to the north. To the east lies a semi-private playing field associated with the nearby primary school, beyond which is Mumbery Hill Nature Reserve. Wargrave Chalk Pit Local Wildlife Site is located approximately 70m to the west. Residential development borders the Site to the north, while open agricultural land extends to the south.
- 1.4 The Site is approximately 0.45 hectares and comprises open grassland. It is generally level, at around 56m AOD. The northern boundary is defined by No. 6 Harvest Place (within the applicant's ownership), enclosed by an approximately 4m high coniferous hedgerow. The eastern boundary comprises a native, tree-lined hedgerow of approximately 3.5m in height.
- 1.5 To the south, the boundary consists of a timber fence set within a substantial woodland belt approximately 10m wide and up to 10m in height, comprising mixed native and coniferous species. This belt extends towards School Hill and provides effective visual containment, particularly in views from the south-west. A line of mature poplar trees along Mumbery Hill forms a strong linear landscape feature marking the southern edge of the village.
- 1.6 Mumbery Hill is a key route into Wargrave, connecting to the A4 (New Bath Road), with the Site located on the right-hand side when approaching the village. The Site is not publicly accessible. Public rights of way in the vicinity include Bridleway Wargrave No. 2 to the south, terminating at Mumbery Hill, and Footpath Wargrave No. 3 to the south-west, which connects to the High Street and historic village core.

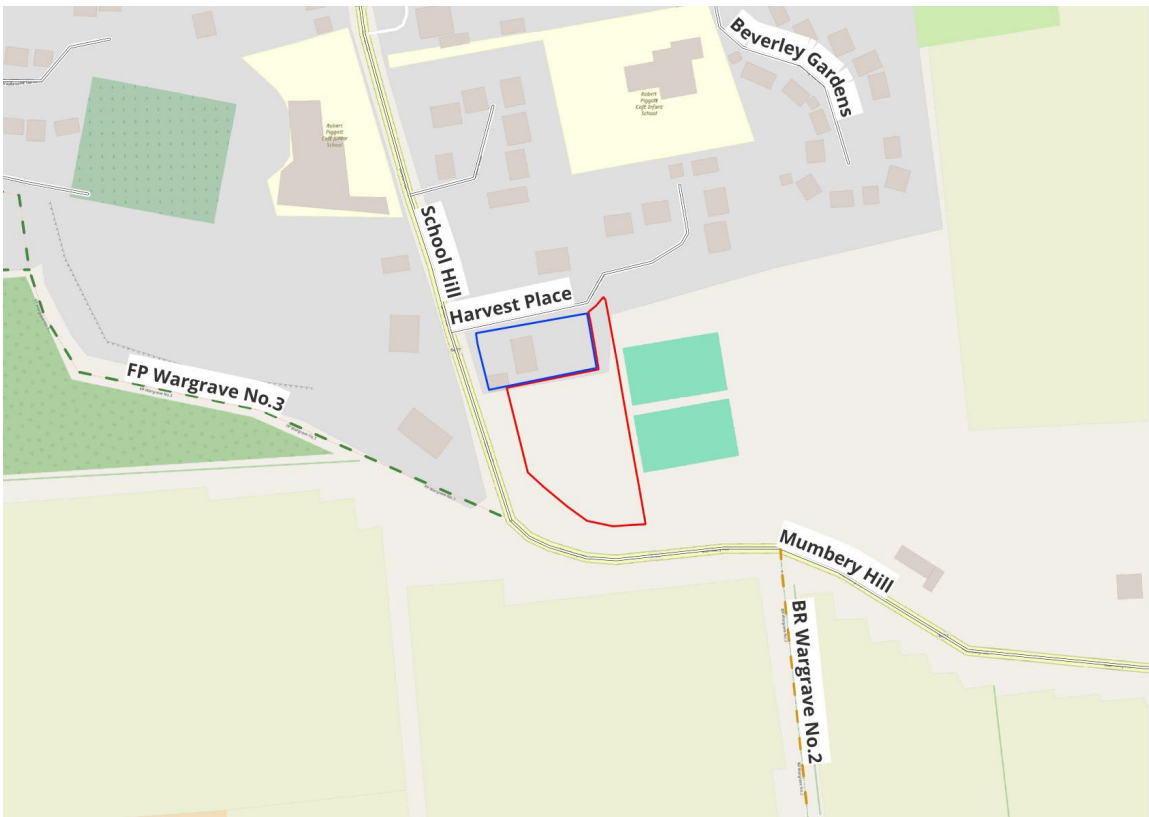


Figure 01: Location Plan



Figure 02: Aerial Image

Proposed development

- 1.7
- The proposals comprise between two and three 2 storey dwellings, accessed from Harvest Place. The boundary of No. 6 Harvest Place would be set back by approximately 10m to accommodate a new access road and associated planting.
- 1.8
- The access would follow the eastern boundary hedgerow, leading to a turning head and SuDS feature. The dwellings would be set back broadly in alignment with No. 6 Harvest Place and reflect the scale, architectural style, and materials of the adjacent properties, maintaining a similar spacing and density to the detached dwellings along Harvest Place.
- 1.9
- Rear garden boundaries would be located outside the existing woodland belt along the southern and western edges. Additional native hedgerow and tree planting are anticipated to be provided within the site to soften the development and enhance habitat connectivity. This would be agreed at Technical Details Consent stage. The proposed dwellings would incorporate car ports, at approximately 1.5 storeys in height.

2 Landscape and Visual Considerations

- 2.1
- TLP undertook a site visit on 18th March 2026. The following observations and recommendations are based on the preliminary site visit, supported by desktop research.

Landscape Attributes

Landscape elements

- 2.2
- The Site comprises open grassland of limited ecological and landscape value. It is generally level, with a gentle fall from approximately 59m AOD at the northern boundary to 56m AOD at the south-western edge.
- 2.3
- Given the Site’s relatively flat topography, the proposed development can be accommodated without the need for cut and fill or alteration to the existing landform. While the proposals would introduce built form to a currently undeveloped site, this represents a logical and contained extension of the existing settlement edge.
- 2.4
- The change in land use is considered appropriate in context and provides opportunities for biodiversity enhancement, without resulting in the loss of a high-value landscape.

Landscape character

- 2.5
- Effects on landscape character can be both direct, i.e. on the character area/landscape type that the Site is located within, and indirect, i.e. changes to characteristics or perceptions of character that occur beyond the

boundary of a character area/landscape type. In addition, effects on landscape character may be positive or negative, i.e. strengthening/enhancing the characteristic patterns and features, or eroding and losing features that contribute to landscape character.

- At a national scale, the Site falls within NCA 110: Chilterns. The Chilterns is a 660-square-mile chalk escarpment stretching from Oxfordshire to Bedfordshire, characterized by a steep northwestern edge, gentle southeastern dip slopes, and extensive beech woodlands. It is a historically rich, largely rural landscape with chalk streams, farmland, and historic villages. The Site is located in the south-western area of the NCA.
- At a district scale, The Wokingham Landscape Character Assessment (2019) identifies that the Site is located within LCA H1: Wargrave–Twyford Arable Chalk Lowlands.

- 2.6
- Key characteristics of LCA include:

- A distinctly flat to gently shelving landform
- Intensive working arable farmland dominates with extensive areas of horticultural polytunnels
- Extensive field units of no apparent pattern and with no obvious boundary divisions
- Enclave of plant nurseries with associated car parks
- Settlement is concentrated in the riverside towns of Twyford and Wargrave
- Linear road and rail transport corridors
- Sense of remoteness due to the largely undeveloped character
- Strong sense of openness and homogeneity
- Open views across the flat landscape
- The wooded knolls at Bowsey Hill create a sense of distant visual enclosure

- 2.7
- Valuable landscape attributes of the LCA include:

- Rural character and sense of openness** - of the lowland landscape due to the homogenous land use in large amalgamated fields, flat topography and lack of trees.
- Rural buffer and sense of separation** provided by the farmed landscape to the settlements of Twyford and Wargrave.
- Historic settlements with vernacular interest** designated as Conservation Areas with distinctive riverside settings which provide a cultural record of the past.

- **Borrowed character from adjacent landscape character areas** which imparts a sense of place.
- **Views across the arable landscape to surrounding character areas**, particularly across the river valleys to the west and wooded hills to the north east which provide a degree of distant visual enclosure.

2.8 The Wargrave-Twyford Arable Chalk Lowlands (H1) is judged to have a moderate quality overall. The moderate character results from the range of characteristics - the distinct flat shelving landform and the presence of settlements with vernacular interest for example. The landscape does however ‘borrow’ much of its character from the adjacent landscape character areas as opposed to having a strong, ‘intrinsic’ sense of place. Views to surrounding character areas are also important. The condition of the Wargrave Twyford Arable Chalk Lowlands (H1) is judged to be moderate, with scope for improvement, particularly in relation to the field boundaries (scrubby margins) and intensively farmed arable land.

2.9 The strategy and guidelines for managing change for LCA is to enhance landscape character. The relevant guidelines include:

- **Reinstate or repair remaining hedgerows with native species** where there are opportunities to do so, particularly where they have been lost from highly visible locations e.g. along roadsides.
- **Conserve the rural character of the farmed landscape** between adjacent historic towns and villages to protect the individual identity of settlements and retain their sense of physical and visual separation. In particular protect the sensitive areas of open land between Wargrave and Twyford and avoid linear development between Hare Hatch and Twyford along the A4. Prevent encroachment into the Thames/Loddon Valleys.
- **Conserve and enhance the integration of urban edges through hedges**, new wooded boundaries and large-species tree planting to provide visual screening and to enhance landscape character, while conserving significant views to landmark features.
- **Increase the limited extent of native deciduous woodland** using locally occurring native species linking to existing BAP priority habitat woodland sites in adjacent character areas.
- **Enhance sense of place through careful design** (including siting, massing, scale, materials and landscape – and sensitive lighting to retain dark skies at night) to minimise the impacts of any potential new development on valuable attributes.
- **Use appropriate tree and hedgerow planting** to help integrate existing and proposed roads. Minimise visual impact of large agricultural buildings, expansion of agricultural polytunnels and Solar Photovoltaic

(PV) panels on the open landscape through careful siting and design. These developments and associated shelterbelts have the potential to be highly visible in this open landscape.

- **Reduce and prevent further noise and light pollution** through the sensitive siting of any new development, especially any proposed night-time lighting.
- 2.10 LCA G1: Hare Hatch Farmed Chalk Slopes lies approximately 1.25km to the east of the Site, and LCA A1: Thames River Valley lies approximately 0.6km to the west. Given the distance from the Site and the limited intervisibility, effects on these Landscape Character Areas arising from the proposed development would be negligible. As such, they have not been considered further within this assessment.

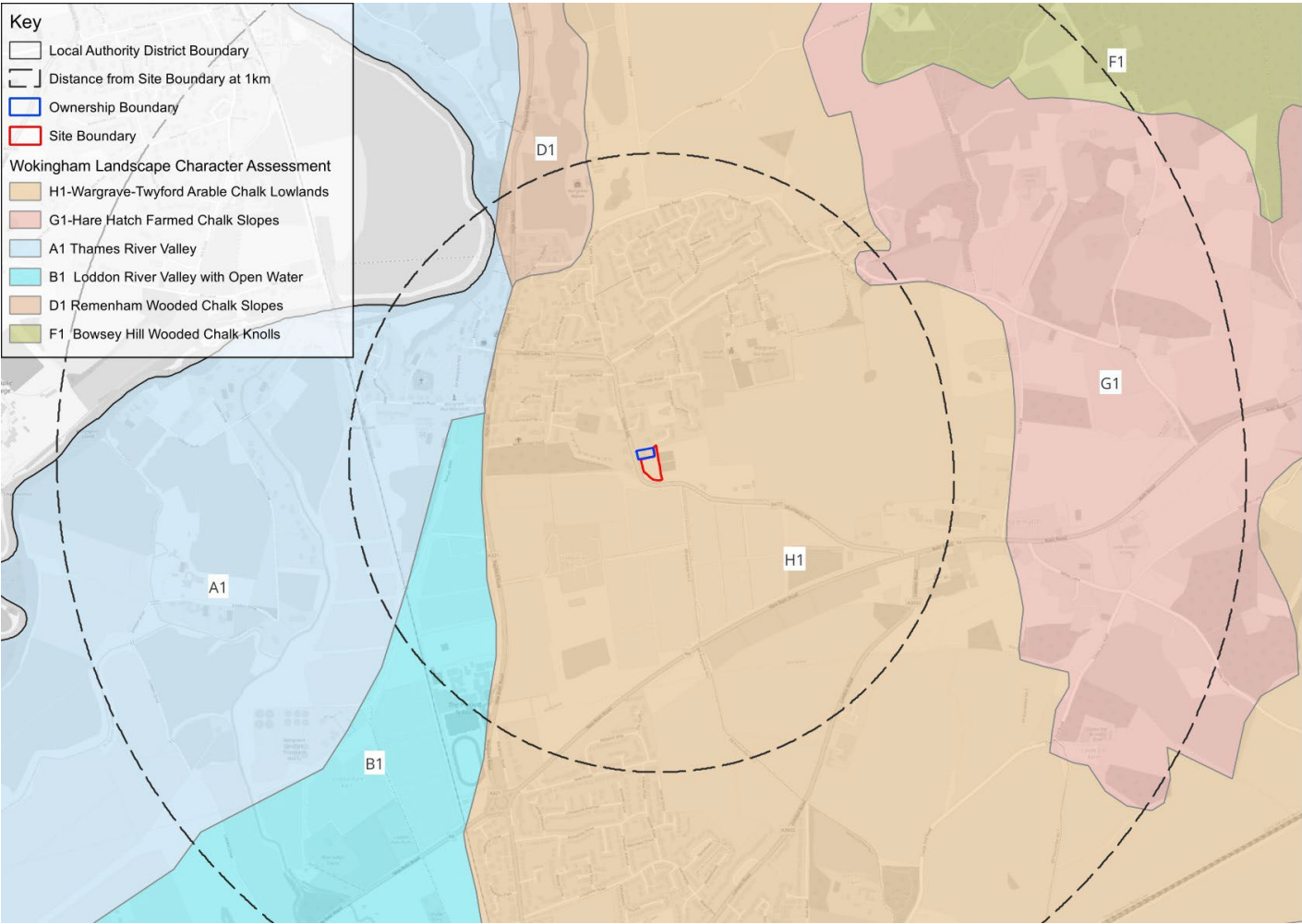


Figure 03: Landscape Character Areas

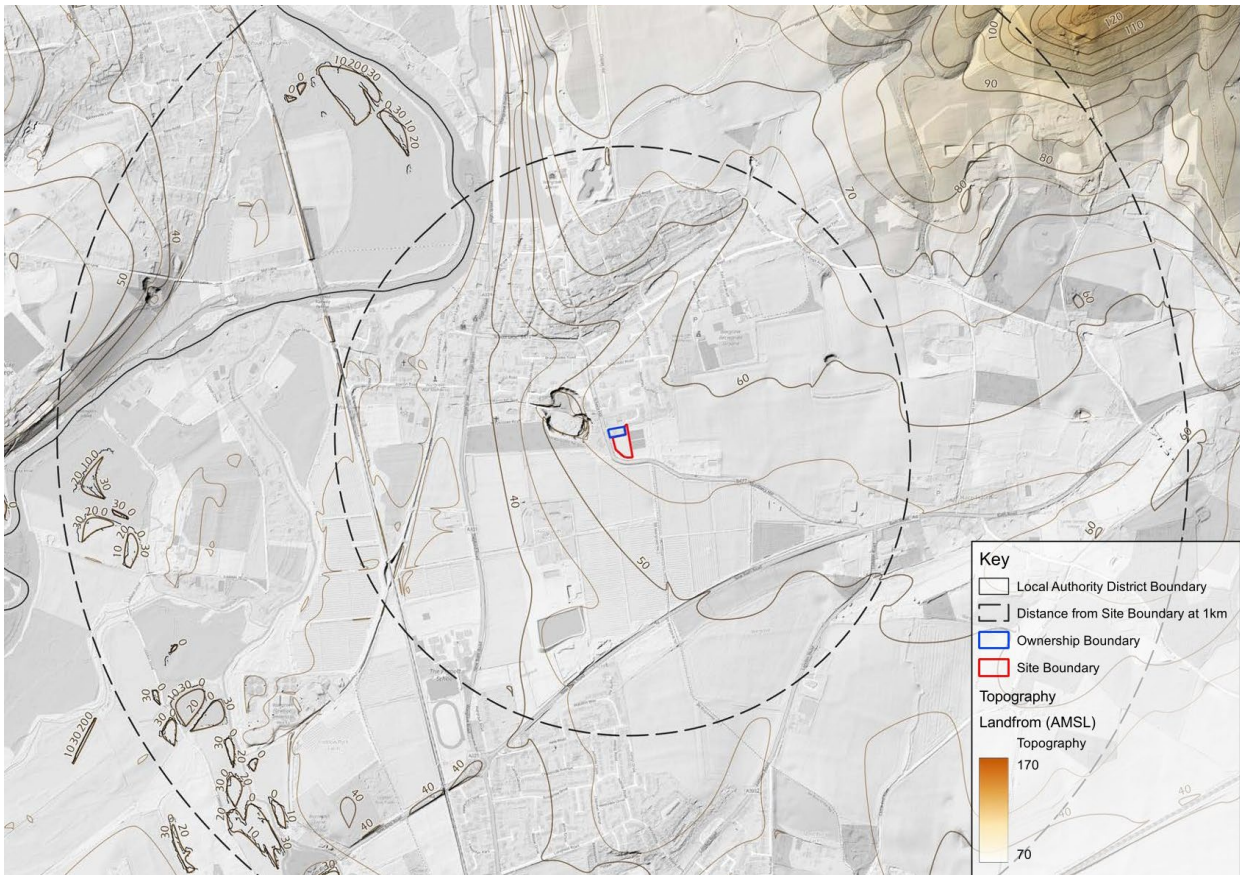


Figure 04: Topography

2.11 The Site is generally flat, situated at approximately 56m AOD, reflecting the characteristics of the local landscape. The surrounding landform is also predominantly level, consistent with the wider Landscape Character Area. Land rises to the north-east towards Knowl Hill Woods (approximately 2.3km from the Site), while to the west it falls towards the River Thames and its associated floodplain (approximately 1km away).

Landscape Designations

- 2.12 **Listed Buildings:** There are a number of listed buildings in the area, largely located around the centre of Wargrave, with the nearest being located approximately 0.48km northwest of the site. Given the distance, intervening development, and small scale of the proposals, there would be no material effects on nearby listed buildings.
- 2.13 **Conservation area:** Wargrave Conservation Area lies approximately 450m to the west of the Site. Its character is defined by the historic High Street and a varied mix of tightly arranged building styles creating an intimate townscape, particularly at the junction of Church Street and High Street. Due to distance, intervening development, and the limited scale of the proposed development, there would be no material effects on the character or setting of the Conservation Area.

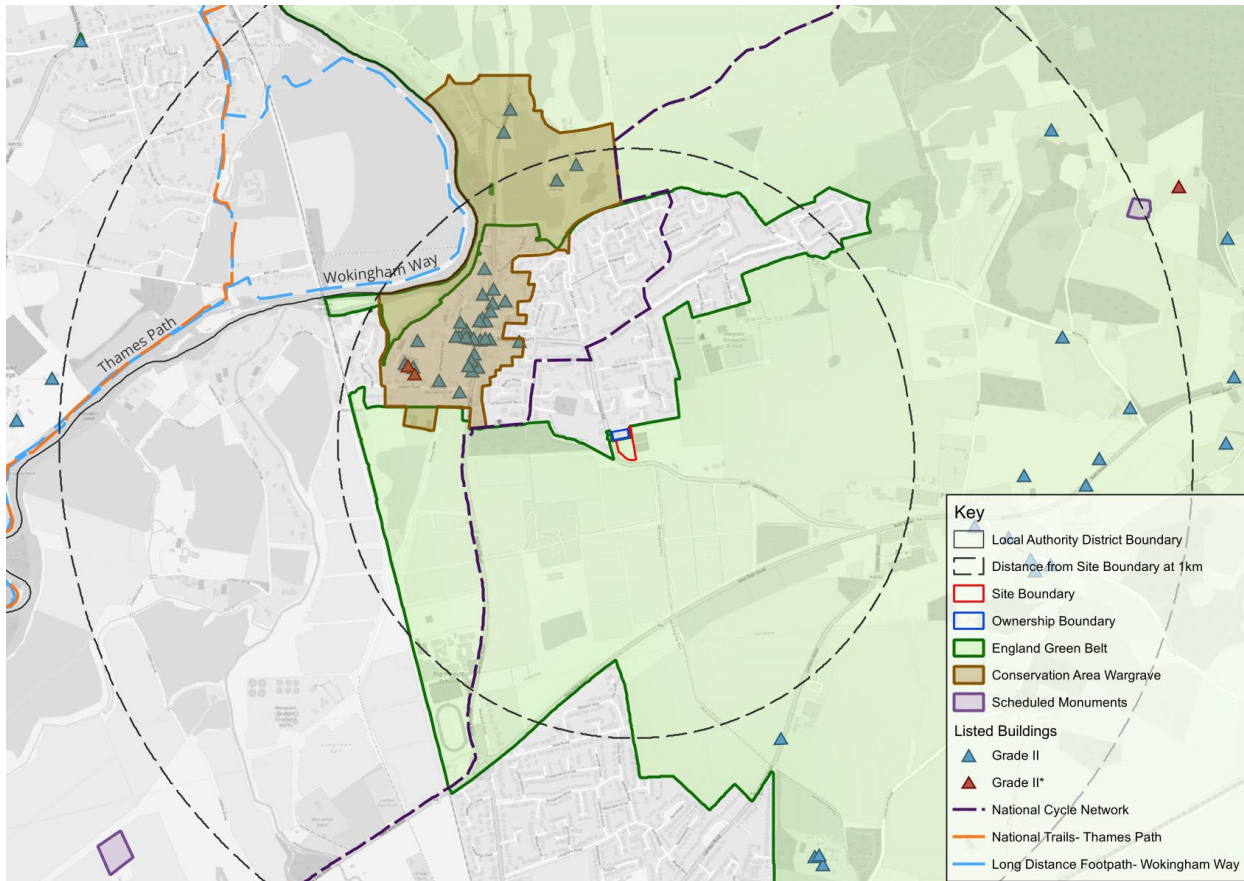


Figure 05: Designations

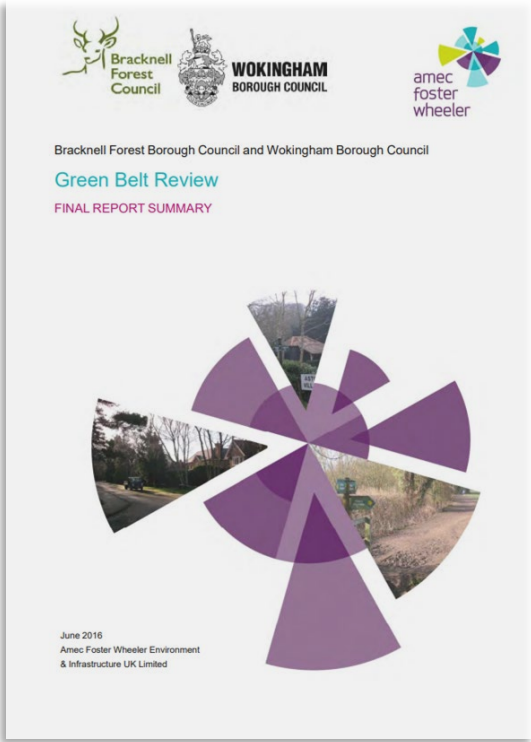
- 2.14 **Green Belt:** The Site lies partially within the Green Belt, with the northern extent (including No. 6 Harvest Place) located outside it. The Green Belt Review (Bracknell Forest Borough Council and Wokingham Borough Council, 2016) identifies the parcel as making a contribution to Green Belt purposes, with release needing to be balanced against material planning considerations. The proposed development would result in a limited encroachment into the Green Belt. However, the Site is well contained by existing development to the north and west, and by strong vegetation to the south and east. The proposals would retain almost all of the existing boundary vegetation, maintaining a clear and defensible settlement edge. Whilst there would be a minor adverse effect through the introduction of built form, this would be localised and would not undermine the wider purposes of the Green Belt, including preventing urban sprawl. The scale and nature of the development are considered proportionate and consistent with a contained edge-of-settlement extension.
- 2.15 Public rights of way in the vicinity include Bridleway Wargrave No. 2 to the south, terminating at Mumbery Hill, and Footpath Wargrave No. 3 to the south-west, which connects to the High Street and historic village core.

Relevant Local Policy and Guidance

- 2.16 Relevant planning policy is set out within the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy, the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan, the Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment (2019), and the Bracknell Forest and Wokingham Borough Councils Green Belt Review (2016). At a national level, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides overarching guidance. There is currently no adopted Neighbourhood Plan for Wargrave, although plans prepared for nearby areas, such as Twyford, provide additional context regarding local character and settlement form.
- 2.17 These documents emphasise the importance of conserving landscape character, respecting local distinctiveness, and ensuring that development responds appropriately to its surroundings. The Landscape Character Assessment identifies the need to maintain the openness and rural qualities of the Wargrave–Twyford Arable Chalk Lowlands, while also recognising opportunities to enhance landscape condition and structure.
- 2.18 Green Belt policy seeks to prevent urban sprawl, safeguard the countryside from encroachment, and maintain separation between settlements. The Green Belt Review (2016) indicates that this parcel makes a contribution to these purposes, although not at the highest level.

Response to Policy Context

- 2.19 In relation to the Green Belt purposes, highlighted in The Green Belt Review (2016), the Site performs a limited role. It does not lie between settlements or contribute to their separation, and development of the type proposed would not result in coalescence or the merging of towns. The Site is influenced by existing urbanising features, including adjacent residential development at Harvest Place, and is well contained by strong, defensible boundaries. It does not make a meaningful contribution to the setting of the historic core of Wargrave and has limited association with the wider open countryside.
- 2.20 In this context, the Site’s location at the settlement edge, combined with its visual containment and limited contribution to wider landscape character and Green Belt purposes, indicates that the proposed development aligns with the broad objectives of planning policy. The proposals also provide opportunities for landscape enhancement and improved integration with the surrounding environment.



3 Views and Visual Receptors

3.1 The Site is well enclosed, resulting in limited visibility from the surrounding area with only limited and filtered views available, primarily from the east.

Road Users:

3.2 Road users are typically of low to moderate sensitivity, as attention is primarily focused on driving.

3.3 From Harvest Place to the north, views into the Site are limited and filtered by existing vegetation along the eastern boundary. Users would experience partial views of the proposed access, with limited glimpses of the development beyond.

3.4 From Mumbery Hill and School Hill to the south and west, the Site is well screened by the existing woodland belt. Any views of the proposed development would be brief and glimpsed in nature, further reduced during summer months when vegetation is in leaf.

Public Rights of Way:

3.5 Users of Public Rights of Way are generally of higher sensitivity, as appreciation of the landscape contributes to their experience.

3.6 From Bridleway Wargrave No. 2 to the south-east, there are views across the adjacent playing fields, with limited visibility of the existing settlement edge, including the roofline of No. 6 Harvest Place above the eastern boundary hedgerow. The proposed development would be seen in this context, with views largely restricted to rooftops and filtered by vegetation.

3.7 From the south-west and west, including Footpath Wargrave No. 3, visibility is limited to occasional glimpsed views through dense boundary vegetation. Further west, built form and vegetation associated with No. 6 Harvest Place further restricts views from this direction. During summer months, leaf cover would reduce visibility further.

Leisure Receptors

3.8 Users of leisure facilities are typically of low to moderate sensitivity, as their focus is on the activity being undertaken.

3.9 From the playing fields and Mumbery Hill Nature Reserve to the east, there are partial and filtered views of the Site through the existing approximately 3.5m high hedgerow. The proposed dwellings would be visible above this boundary in some locations, particularly in winter months, although typically limited to upper elements such as rooftops.

3.10 The development would be viewed in the context of the existing settlement edge, including No. 6 Harvest Place and the wider cul-de-sac beyond. Existing vegetation within the Nature Reserve provides additional screening, and as proposed planting establishes, the development would become increasingly integrated into its surroundings.

Residential Receptors

3.11 Residential receptors are typically of higher sensitivity, particularly from ground floor habitable rooms.

3.12 From properties along Harvest Place, views of the proposed access would be apparent, with limited and filtered views of the dwellings through existing and proposed vegetation. These views would be experienced within the context of the existing residential setting and would not appear out of character.

3.13 Upper floor views may allow greater visibility; however, these are already influenced by the settlement edge context and are not characterised by uninterrupted rural views. Retention of existing vegetation and proposed planting would further filter views and assist in integrating the development.

Summary

3.14 Overall, the Site’s contained nature and existing vegetation ensure that visual effects would be limited and localised. Receptors to the east may experience partial, filtered views at close range, while views from other directions would remain largely screened.



4 Recommendations

- 4.1 This LVA provides an appraisal of the suitability of the Site for up to three dwellings with access road and associated landscape features. Following the assessment of the landscape and visual considerations, a number of recommendations for the Technical Details Consent stage can be made as outlined below:
- The existing woodland belt along the southern and western boundaries should be retained and protected in accordance with BS 5837:2012. The eastern tree-lined hedgerow should also be retained, with only limited removal of the northern coniferous hedgerow required to facilitate access.
 - Proposed dwellings should be limited to two storeys and reflect the scale, materials, and spacing of properties along Harvest Place, maintaining the existing settlement pattern.
 - SuDS features should be sensitively integrated into the design, incorporating features such as shallow basins to provide both drainage and biodiversity benefits.
 - Careful detailing of site access should be undertaken to minimise vegetation loss
 - Native tree and hedgerow planting should be implemented to enhance screening and biodiversity, with a long-term management plan to ensure successful establishment. Any planting failures, particularly along the southern and western boundaries, should be replaced.
 - Boundary treatments should incorporate habitat gaps (e.g. for hedgehogs) to support wildlife movement.
 - Existing easements should be further investigated to identify any underground constraints prior to development.

- 4.2 In conclusion, the proposed development would be well contained within the Site and largely screened by existing vegetation. The majority of views would be limited, particularly from the south, west, and north, with more open views primarily from the east across the adjacent playing fields and Mumbery Hill Nature Reserve. Where visible, the development would be perceived within the context of the existing settlement edge and would reflect the scale and character of surrounding residential properties.
- 4.3 The proposals also provide an opportunity to introduce green infrastructure to a Site currently of limited ecological value, enhancing biodiversity and potentially strengthening connections between nearby habitats, including Wargrave Chalk Pit and Mumbery Hill Nature Reserve.