

PERMISSION IN PRINCIPLE **DRAFT DECISION NOTICE**



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Expiry Date: 27 March 2026

Application Number: 260200

Location: Brookfield Farm, Old Wokingham Road, Crowthorne, Berkshire, RG40 3BU

Proposal: Permission in principle application for the proposed erection of up to 9no. dwellings.

Recommendation: Refused

Reasons

1. The site is not sustainable in transport terms with regards to its location and access to day-to-day services and facilities. Future residents of the development would also not have access to a good standard of bus service and would not have access to practical or attractive walking or cycling routes/environments when outside the site, including footways, street lighting and safe routes. The proposal will therefore result in high dependence on private vehicle use and represents an unsustainable development, contrary to policies CP1, CP3 and CP6 of the Core Strategy and policy CC01, paragraphs 110 and 115 of the NPPF

2. The proposal represents inappropriate development within designated countryside. By virtue of the amount of development proposed, the development would fail to integrate with the rural pattern of development along Old Wokingham Road and would harm the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies CP1, CP3, CP9 and CP11 of the Core Strategy, policies CC01 and TB21 of the MDD, the Borough Design Guide and the NPPF.

3. The applicant has failed to undertake the Sequential Test; therefore, it has not been demonstrated that there are no reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower risk of flooding (paragraph 174 of the NPPF). The proposal therefore fails to adopt a sequential, risk-based approach to flood risk, contrary to Section 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) and policies CC09 and CC10 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (2014).

4. The application site lies within Flood Zone 2 and within an area at risk from flooding from groundwater and surface water. As no site-specific Flood Risk Assessment has been produced, it has not been demonstrated that the proposal would not increase flood risk elsewhere and that the development would be safe for its lifetime. The proposal therefore fails to adopt a risk-based approach to flood risk, contrary to Section 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) and policies CC09 and CC10 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (2014).

5. In accordance with Article 5B of the Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) Order 2017 (as amended) and the National Planning Policy Guidance, Permission in Principle must not be granted for development which constitutes 'habitats development'. The application site lies approximately 1.7km from the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA), which is a qualifying European site. In the absence of any mechanism at the permission in principle stage to secure the avoidance and mitigation measures required to ensure that the development would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the SPA, the proposal is classed as habitats development and cannot lawfully be approved. Consequently, the LPA is unable to conclude as required by Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and Article 6(3) of Directive 92/43/EEC, that the development would not harm the Thames Basin Heaths SPA. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy NRM6 of the South East Plan, Policies CP8 and CP4 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy.

Informatives

1. In reaching its decision, the LPA considered the following

submitted plans and documents:

Planning Statement

Comparative Sustainability Spreadsheet - Brookfield Farm

PiP Officer Report - Nyahlands Farm, Copthorne Bank, Copthorne, Crawley, Surrey

Appeal Decision - Land adjacent to Blagrove Lane, Wokingham

Application Form

Site Location Plan

Proposed Site Layout

Received 27th January 2026

2. The Council engages with all applicants in a positive and proactive way through specific pre-application enquiries and the detailed advice available on the Council's website. On this particular application, no pre-application advice was sought before the application was submitted. As the proposal was clearly contrary to the provisions of the Development Plan, it was considered that further discussions would be unnecessary and costly for all parties.



Recommendation and conditions/reasons agreed:

Date: 19/03/26

REMEMBER - The earliest date for a decision on this application is: **11 February 2026**