

MEMORANDUM

From:	Úna Haran, Lead Sustainability Planning Officer		
Service	WBC Sustainability	App No:	251310
Address:	Land at Blackcroft Farm, Reading Road, Arborfield.		
Proposal:	Screening Opinion application for an Environmental Impact Assessment for the proposed residential development comprising of Retirement village comprising 200 specialist homes, including a community leisure complex and a care home; erection of 450 residential dwellings including 40% affordable homes; local centre; expansion of Blackcroft Farm Industrial Estate; primary vehicular access onto Reading Road, consisting of a new 4-arm roundabout junction; landscaped public open space, and Sustainable Urban Drainage System and wildlife enhancements.		
Type of Development:			
Site Visit Made:	No		

Summary Of Recommendations

- ☐ No comment
- ☐ No objection
- ☐ No objection subject to conditions (and reasons) **stated below**
- ☐ Request further information before determination as **stated below**
- ☐ Objection due to the reason(s) **stated below**

Comments On Proposal

1. The proposed development scale is 450 homes, local centre and associated infrastructure.
2. Since the development includes more than 150 dwellings and the overall area of the development is approximately 38.7 hectares, the development is Schedule 2 development under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.
3. The development is not wholly or partially within, or in the immediate vicinity of a Sensitive Area as defined by Section 2(1) of the regulations, therefore the proposal is subject to EIA screening under Regulation 6.
4. Following consideration of the characteristics of development in accordance with Schedule 3 of the regulations, the development is considered likely to have significant effects on the following factors:
 - 4.1. Water

- 4.1.1. Reason: the Borough of Wokingham is in an area classified by the Environment Agency as under serious water stress.¹
- 4.1.2. As such, the optional higher standard for water efficiency of 110 L per person per day under Approved Document G has been adopted by the LPA in Planning Policy.²
- 4.1.3. Development of 450 homes and associated infrastructure would result in both significant water consumption during construction (embodied water impacts) and significant, ongoing demand for water to serve the buildings once in use (operational water impacts).
- 4.1.4. Due to the development being in an area of significant water stress, it is considered that EIA with water impacts scoped in is likely to be required.
- 4.2. Climate, including greenhouse gas emissions
- 4.2.1. Reason: the Borough of Wokingham is committed to carbon neutrality by 2030. This is in alignment with the UK's net zero trajectory. The impacts of constructing and operating new development include significant greenhouse gas emissions.
- 4.2.2. EIA will allow for appropriate assessment of these impacts, including setting an emissions baseline. This information can then be used to identify and inform mitigation measures which will in turn inform the design of the development.
5. For the reasons outlined above, it is recommended that EIA is carried out with the factors of water and climate (including greenhouse gas emissions) scoped in.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

N/A

Date:

19/06/2025

Signed:



Úna Haran
Lead Sustainability Planning
Officer
BSc MArch

¹ Environment Agency, Water stressed areas – final classification v1.0, July 2021

² Wokingham Borough Council, Climate Change Interim Policy Position Statement, December 2022. P.16