

Planning Statement

**Jardine Meadows, Croft Lane,
Spencers Wood, Berks RG2 9EY**

Prepared For
Calcot Developments

3444
May 2025



bell cornwell

CHARTERED TOWN PLANNERS

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared to accompany an application made by Calcot Developments to Wokingham Borough Council for the following development proposal:

“The construction of 2 x 4 bed detached dwellings, access and associated landscaping”

- 1.2 The following section provides relevant background to the application, including a description of the application site and the development proposal. The report then goes on to consider the proposal against the development plan and any relevant material planning considerations.

THE APPLICATION SITE

- 1.3 The application site is in the settlement of Spencers Wood on land to the North of Croft Road, accessed via Jardine Meadows, which is a small cul-de-sac serving a small modern development of houses. The proposed development is to be located on the parcel of land to the east of this existing group of housing. This is within the settlement boundary defined within the Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.4 The local area is mostly residential in character, including housing development that is part of the ‘South of the M4’ Strategic Development Location (SDL). As a result of the expansion of the urban area, housing can be found surrounding the site. It does however benefit from a group of trees that are predominantly contained along its eastern edge, albeit mostly outside the red line site area. There is also a public footpath that leads off Hyde End Lane, which has become closed off to vehicular traffic, which is easily accessible from the site and provides pedestrian access to the countryside.
- 1.5 Due to the large amount of recent development in the area, this has strongly influenced the local character which is now mostly suburban. Other matters of note that influence the development site include the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Burghfield. This is located approximately 4km to the West, placing the site within the



planning consultation zone (see further details below). The Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area, which is important for its nature conservation/habitat value is then located 4.2km to the South.

- 1.6 The site is not in a high-risk flood zone (is it Flood Zone 1) and is in a low risk area for surface water flooding. It is, however, in an area identified as having critical drainage problems. It is not within a Conservation Area, and no listed buildings are close by.
- 1.7 The application follows the refusal of planning permission 233039 which was also for the construction of 2 x 4 bedroom dwellings and access. We provide a copy of the decision notice as **Appendix 1**. This raised no objection to the proposal design or proposed access arrangements, but did raise the following matters:
- 1) The removal of existing trees.
 - 2) Insufficient information to consider the possibility of Great Crested Newts being on the site.
 - 3) Potential impacts on biodiversity.
 - 4) The safe operation of the Off-Site Emergency Plan (OSEP) for the Atomic Weapons Establishment Site at Burghfield.
 - 5) The absence of a planning obligation to secure mitigation to prevent the proposed development from having an adverse effect on the integrity of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA.
 - 6) The provision of affordable housing.
- 1.8 These matters are addressed within this application.
- 1.9 In addition to the above, a search of the planning history on the Council's online planning register reveals that planning permission has since been granted for 1 x four bedroom house and car port (LPA Ref: 232333) on the 'Land east of Croft House'. This neighbours the site and so similar planning considerations would have existed.



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- An architectural elevation drawing of two houses, labeled 'PLOT 1' and 'PLOT 2'. Both houses are single-story with gabled roofs. Plot 1 has a chimney on the left side and a small porch area. Plot 2 has a chimney on the right side and a small porch area. The houses are surrounded by trees and shrubs. The drawing is in black and white line art style.

1.11 Each of the dwellings will benefit from front and rear gardens, with the rear gardens measuring at least 17m in depth. These will also be landscaped with patio around the dwellings and block paving for the driveways. The boundary treatments will include close boarded and ranch style fencing.

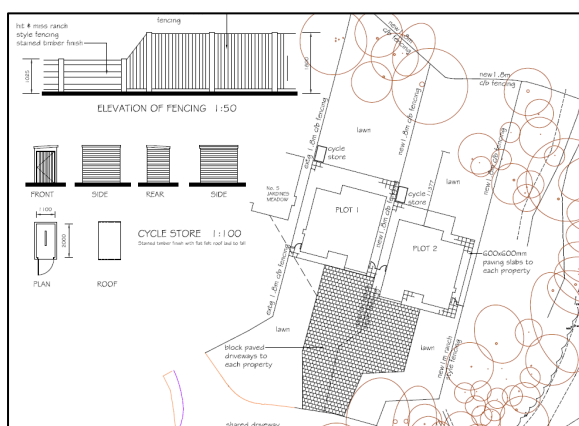


Figure 2. Hard Landscaping Plan (Drawing by Phillip Shell Architectural Services)



- 1.12 Access to the public highway will be gained via the existing shared driveway (Jardine Meadows) which is already used by the properties on The Mead. Parking will be provided on site with ample space on the drives and both houses include a garage. Cycle storage will also be provided.



2 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT AND ASSESSMENT

2.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

2.2 For the purposes of this application, the following Development Plan documents are most relevant:

- Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document - January 2010 (CS)
- Wokingham Borough Development Plan Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan – February 2014 (MDD)
- South East Plan Policy - NRM6 (Natural Resource Management 6)
- Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan – February 2017

2.3 Regard is also given to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which sets out the Government's planning policy aims and objectives. It sits outside of the statutory development plan but is a weighty material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications.

PROVISION OF NEW HOMES

2.4 The NPPF makes clear that 'significantly boosting the supply of homes' is a main objective of the Government and that *"...it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed..."*. This has been reinforced by the Ministerial Statement by Angela Rayner MP (Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government) which makes plain that *"We are in the middle of the most acute housing crisis in living memory"*. Indeed, the Government has committed to deliver 1.5 million homes within this parliament (i.e. between July 2024 and 2029).



- 2.5 The NPPF also states that *“Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built-out relatively quickly”*. The need for new homes is of course more acute where a local planning authority is not meeting the mandated identification of a 5 year housing land supply. According to its latest position statement, Wokingham Council is only to demonstrate a 1.7 year supply. The presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF should therefore be implemented.
- 2.6 Notably, in its consideration of the planning permission at ‘Land East of Croft House’ (LPA Ref: 232333), the Council set out that:
- “The substantive reason for such an identified shortfall is due to significant over delivery of housing in recent years. This has inevitably reduced the bank of planning permissions that remain and therefore the short-term deliverable housing land supply. The shortfall is not a result of past under delivery, but past over delivery.”*
- 2.7 At the time of that application the Council had a 3.2 year supply, but given the above, they concluded that the application of the tilted balance set out in paragraph 11 of the NPPF should be tempered. Whilst it was still determined in the overall planning balance that the proposal was acceptable, the housing land supply position has now dropped to a lower level and the updated NPPF makes clear that the tilted balance applies where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites **or** where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was substantially below the housing requirement over the previous three years. Accordingly, the full weight of the tilted balance applies regardless of delivery rates.
- 2.8 Notwithstanding the above, and regardless of the housing land supply position, the Core Strategy Policy CP17 states that *“Provision will be made for the development of at least 13,230 dwellings and associated development and infrastructure in the Borough in the period 2006- 2026 for which substantial investment in infrastructure will be required”*.



- 2.9 Of these, the policy states that 2500 are to be met from the ‘South of the M4 SDL’, which is where the site is located and so has already been identified as an appropriate place for new development in the Borough wide Development Plan. The Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan also identifies the site as being in an area for future residential development and within the settlement limit identified under its figure 2.



Figure 3. Extract from Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan
(red line depicts development limits)

- 2.10 This position has been accepted in their consideration of the application at ‘Land East of Croft House, and so the consistent approach would also be to find the application site a suitable location for the proposed development.

ATOMIC WEAPONS ESTABLISHMENT (AWE) BURGHFIELD

- 2.11 As the site lies within 4km of the AWE facility at Burghfield, MDD Policy TB04 identifies it as being within the consultation zone for new development. Since the adoption of the MDD, the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) has been expanded and now includes the whole of Spencers Wood.
- 2.12 For proposals within the DEPZ, the policy states that *“Development will only be permitted where the applicant demonstrates that the increase in the number of people living, working, shopping and/or visiting the proposal (including at different times of the day) can be safely accommodated having regard to the needs of “Blue light”*



services and the emergency off-site plan for the Atomic Weapons Establishment site at Burghfield”.

- 2.13 Whilst evidence was provided under the previous planning application for the site, the proximity to AWE resulted in the following reason for refusal:

“The proposal fails to demonstrate how the location of the proposed development can be safely accommodated having regard to the needs of Blue Light services and the Off-Site Emergency Plan (OSEP) for the Atomic Weapons Establishment Site at Burghfield. This is contrary to Policy TB04 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014, policy CP3 of the Core Strategy and the NPPF”

- 2.14 Notwithstanding the above, since that refusal was issued, the same issue was considered for the adjacent site at ‘Land East of Croft House’ with the Officer’s Report for that application remarking that:

“The Emergency Planners concluded that this proposal would be unlikely to have an adverse impact on the OSEP in the event of an incident at AWE Burghfield. Given these conclusions were reached by authorities responsible for the preparation of the OSEP, it is not appropriate for the LPA to challenge their findings. These conclusions were shared with the Office for Nuclear Regulation, a statutory consultee for development around nuclear sites, who considered that sufficient assurances have been provided that the proposal can be accommodated within the OSEP arrangements.”

- 2.15 Reference is also made to an appeal decision at the Hollies Nursing Home in Burghfield Common (APP/W0340/W/22/3312261), which is located approximately 1.3km from Burghfield AWE. A significant aspect of the appeal, which came after the refusal of the previous application at Jardines Meadows, was that the decision of an Inquiry in 2023 was subsequently quashed by the High Court on the grounds that the reasons for disagreeing with the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) (as statutory consultee) in relation to the off-site emergency plan were not legally adequate. Consequently, the matter was referred back to the Planning Inspectorate to be redetermined.



- 2.16 In having regard to the High Court decision, the appeal was nevertheless re-allowed, having determined that on balance that the benefits of the proposal outweighed the small risks associated with the facility at AWE Burghfield.
- 2.17 To assess the likely impact of this application proposal, Mike Thorne and Associates Ltd were commissioned to prepare a Radiological Impact Assessment (RIA) of the Construction of Two Houses. This establishes that the application site lies within the DEPZ only because of logistic considerations and not because of the projected radiological impact of potential accidents on residents.
- 2.18 It also demonstrates that *“Although the construction of small numbers of properties in the DEPZ could in principle have an impact on the off-site emergency plan, the discussion in Section 6 of this report demonstrates that because the proposed development is both small and located close to the outer boundary of a DEPZ that has been expanded beyond what is required by the consequences analysis, **there is no significant impact on responders under the emergency plan; and no adverse impact on the access of emergency services to the AWE Burghfield site**”*. [our emphasis]
- 2.19 It also considers whether the proposed development would place an additional burden on first responders and carers in respect of dealing with medical emergencies and addressing the needs of vulnerable individuals. It concludes that in most cases sheltering would either not be required at the location of the proposed development or would only be required for between a few hours and two days. Therefore, even if visits were banned during the sheltering phase, this would be only a short hiatus.
- 2.20 It goes on to say *“However, the assessed effective doses are so low that visiting during the period of sheltering should be acceptable if it was considered necessary for the well-being of a resident. In this context, it would be important to emphasise to carers that entry into areas with low levels of radioactive contamination would not pose a threat to their health. This is a general aspect of their training and does not have any specific implications for the acceptability of the application proposal”*.



- 2.21 It then finds that *“Overall, whilst the application site’s location within the DEPZ of AWE Burghfield is a material planning consideration, the arguments presented in this report show that it is a consideration that should be given little weight when determining the overall planning balance in respect of the application proposal”.*
- 2.22 In digesting the information provided in the RIA, it is considered that the evidence is compelling that the proposed development will not conflict with the aims of policy TB04. Indeed, in approving the application on ‘Land East of Croft House’ the consistent position is that the proposal would not adversely impact on public safety.

DESIGN AND LAYOUT

- 2.23 CS Policy CP3 sets out general principles relating to design, function and amenity of development proposals. The Neighbourhood Plan also seeks to support well designed development proposals.
- 2.24 When looking at design, the Borough Design Guide recommends that the existing built form should be used to inform the design. In this case, the local area is heavily influenced by the modern housing estate to the north and the modern housing on The Mead. The chosen design is therefore reflective of these developments, but also provides some variation to these, to provide interest and some sense of local distinctiveness.
- 2.25 The layout also responds to the local area, by continuing the existing line of development. The proposed houses are therefore set back in the plots with parking and some garden in front and the main garden area to the rear. This allows for a separation to No. 5 The Mead of 2.9m and a rear garden of at least 17m in depth for each dwelling. This arrangement prevents any risk of unacceptable overlooking and ensures that each property will enjoy sufficient private amenity space.
- 2.26 Regard is also given to Nationally Described Space Standards which requires 4 bed (6 persons) 2 storey dwellings to be at least 106sqm (GIA). Both dwellings have been designed to exceed this standard and will provide 162sqm (GIA) of floor area, so is more than proficient in this regard.



- 2.27 Each house will also be landscaped with a block paved driveway, 2m close boarded fencing on the shared boundaries and 1m ranch style fencing on the east boundary. The gardens will be laid out as grass.
- 2.28 The Council previously accepted that *“the proposed design and plot layouts of the proposed dwellings would not result in harm to the character [of the local area]”*. There is no reason to think that should change for this application.

HOUSING MIX

- 2.29 MDD Policy TB05 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.”

- 2.30 The supporting text goes on to suggest an appropriate mix including 15% of four bed houses. This has however been updated by the Berkshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (February 2016), which recommends a mix that includes 25% of four bed houses. For a scheme of two dwellings, it is of course more difficult to reflect a range of house sizes. By providing two four beds, this reflects the increase in requirement for this size home and is also reflective of the street.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- 2.31 Core Strategy Policy CP5 states that

“All residential proposals of at least 5 dwellings (net) or covering a net site area of at least 0.16 ha will provide up to 50% [reduced to 35% in Major Development Locations] of the net additional units proposed as affordable dwellings, where viable. The Council will negotiate the tenure, size and type of affordable units on a site by site basis having regard to housing needs, site specifics and other factors” [Our addition]

- 2.32 In their assessment of application 233039 the Council determined that the proposal triggered the need for affordable housing provision on the basis that the site measured approximately 0.17 hectares. It therefore formed a reason for refusal.



2.33 However, the reason was based on an incorrect measurement, as the site area is only 0.15 hectares. Consequently, the proposal does not meet the policy threshold in either site area or by number of dwellings.

2.34 Notwithstanding the above, the policy requirement pre-dates the NPPF (published 2024) that states (Paragraph 65) that:

“Provision of affordable housing should not be sought for residential developments that are not major developments, other than in designated rural areas (where policies may set out a lower threshold of 5 units or fewer)”.

2.35 Given the inconsistency with the NPPF and combined with the Council’s Local Plan being out of date, the need for affordable housing should only be sought on major development.

2.36 No affordable housing should therefore be sought in relation to the proposal.

TREES AND LANDSCAPING

2.37 Policy CC03 of the MDD Local Plan states that proposals should provide new or protect and enhance the Borough’s Green infrastructure networks and that they should protect and retain existing trees, hedges, and landscape features.

2.38 In the Council consideration of the previous application, they placed the following reason for refusal on the decision:

“By virtue of the proposal requiring the removal of existing trees, most of which has already occurred and insufficient replanting and landscaping, the proposal would result in significant harm to the character of the surrounding landscape and would thereby fails to retain or enhance existing green infrastructure. As such, the proposal would be contrary to Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy, Policies CC03 and TB21 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014 and the NPPF.”

2.39 A key matter identified was the assertion that some of the removed trees were protected under arboricultural planning condition (no. 12) of planning permission ref:



181843. This related to the development of three houses on the neighbouring land on Jardine Meadows. The above reason has been considered within the submitted 'Arboricultural Implications Report' (AIR). This confirms that none of the trees that were previously removed were protected under the condition, with confirmation provided by Wokingham Council Planning Officer, Marcus Hillman. As such, it would be unreasonable for the Council's previous assessment to be drawn on in assessing this proposal.

- 2.40 The AIR details a comprehensive assessment of the trees within the site and within the adjoining 'blue line' land, concluding that there are five category 'U' trees (which are unsuitable for retention), no category 'A' or 'B' trees and twenty four category 'C' trees (which are of low value). In total 11 individual trees and two group of trees are to be removed. All the trees that constitute the main arboricultural features of the site and which make the greatest contribution to the character and appearance of the local landscape, to amenity or to biodiversity will be retained.
- 2.41 The relationship of the trees with the proposed dwellings has also been assessed with the AIM finding that *"Neither of the proposed dwellings or amenity spaces are likely to be shaded by retained trees to the extent that this will interfere with their reasonable use or enjoyment by incoming occupiers, which might otherwise lead to pressure on the Local Planning Authority to permit felling or severe pruning that it could not reasonably resist"*.
- 2.42 Overall, it is concluded that the arboricultural impact of this scheme is of low magnitude.

BIODIVERSITY AND GREAT CRESTED NEWTS

- 2.43 In their consideration of the previous application, the absence of sufficient ecological information relating to the possibility of Great Crested Newts Reason being affected was given as a reason for refusal. In all other respects the Council agreed with the findings of the Ecological Assessment that was provided at the time. To address the reason for refusal, a new Preliminary Ecological Assessment has been undertaken and includes an assessment in relation to Great Crested Newts.



- 2.44 This sets out measures to ensure that the development does not lead to unacceptable impacts to protected species, including Great Crested Newts, albeit noting that the area of grassland where development is proposed offers negligible cover and poor habitat for Newts.
- 2.45 Since the refusal, the Government has also brought in a statutory requirement for new developments to achieve Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) of at least 10%. An assessment is also provided within the ecology report. This includes the area adjacent to the site, but in the same ownership, as an additional planning gain. It also takes into consideration the previous condition of the site.
- 2.46 The findings of the BNG assessment have found some scope for enhancement, although some offsite credits will also be required. These can be secured by condition.

THAMES BASIN HEATHS SPA

- 2.47 The Local Plan Policies Map places the site within 5km of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBHSPA), which is designated under the European Birds Directive in March 2005 because it represents a mixture of heathland, scrub and woodland habitat that support important breeding populations of nightjar, woodlark and Dartford Warbler.
- 2.48 When considering the effects of development on the TBHSPA, CS Policy CP8 states that:
- “Development which alone or in combination is likely to have a significant effect 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.”*
- 2.49 For sites that are between 400m and 5km of the TBHSPA boundary (the application site is 4.2km to the north), the Council has adopted a delivery framework of measures to mitigate harm to the SPA arising from new housing development. These measures include the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) measures.



- 2.50 The need for mitigation was also acknowledged in application 233039. However, a legal agreement for securing the linked contributions was not provided, because the Council had indicated that they were to refuse the applications for other reasons. This can be addressed through this application, thereby resolving the associated reason for refusal.
- 2.51 At the time of writing, the Council's website set out that the following contributions will be sought for each 4 bedroom dwelling:
- SANG Contribution = £3,546.86
 - SAMM Tariff = £1,267.00
- 2.52 By securing the above mitigation, the proposal would not have an adverse effect on the TBHSPA.

HIGHWAYS

- 2.53 CS Policy CP6 relates to managing travel demand and is a permissive policy towards 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.

- 2.54 In this case the proposed development is for two four bedroom dwellings which under the Council's car parking standards necessitate at least 2 car parking spaces per dwelling. This is met but will also amount to low movements to and from the site on a day to day basis.
- 2.55 The location is also reasonably well served by public transport with bus routes along Fullbrook Avenue, with the nearest bus stop around 120m from the site. This serves the 600 Park & Ride service, operated by Reading Buses, which goes between Reading and Wokingham Town Centres with 1 to 2 buses per hour.
- 2.56 In terms of the access, this would be via a shared driveway that already serve the existing homes on Jardine Meadows and The Mead. This was found to be acceptable for The Mead development, approved in 2018 (LPA Ref:171537) which has been constructed next door.
- 2.57 No Highways reason for refusal was given for application 233039.

DRAINAGE

- 2.58 MDD Policy CC10, which relates to 'Sustainable Drainage' states that *"All development proposals must ensure surface water arising from the proposed development including taking into account climate change is managed in a sustainable manner"*.
- 2.59 In this case it is known that the site is not in a high risk area for flooding but is identified as a critical drainage area. The proposal will therefore incorporate Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) measures as the means of surface water disposal, details of which can be secured by a suitably worded planning condition.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

- 2.60 CIL is a tax on development designed to pay for infrastructure improvements. The Council's adopted charging schedule sets out the local rates that CIL is payable. For residential development in the 'South of M4 SDL' a rate of £300 per square metre is



applied. This will be collected prior to commencement of the development. The relevant CIL forms have been provided with the application.



3 CONCLUSION

- 3.1 The proposal follows the refusal of planning application 233039, which was also for the construction of 2 x 4 bedroom dwellings and access and addresses the reasons for refusal.
- 3.2 In considering the principle of development, the application site is located within the settlement boundary as defined in the Neighbourhood Plan. It also forms part of the 'South of M4 SDL' which has been identified in the Core Strategy as being suitable for the delivery of at least 2500 new homes. This is apparent from the amount of positive growth in the local area which has resulted in new homes to the north, west and south of the site.
- 3.3 In addition, the Council has been unable to meet the Government requirement of demonstrating a deliverable five year housing land supply. The consequence of this is that a presumption in favour of sustainable development is applied (the so called tilted balance), meaning granting planning permission development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay.
- 3.4 The principle of additional housing on the site is therefore established through both means.
- 3.5 The area is otherwise affected by being with the DEPZ for the AWE facility at Burghfield. However, it is demonstrated through the inclusion of an RIA that the addition of two further dwellings can be safely accommodated having regard to the needs of "Blue light" services and the emergency off-site plan.
- 3.6 In terms of design the proposal has been developed with the local character in mind and as such the proposed homes will have a similar architectural style as the neighbouring dwellings on The Mead. The new houses will also exceed Nationally Described Spaces Standards and will enjoy generous sized gardens, providing a good level of private amenity space. They are also designed so not to have an acceptable impact on neighbouring amenity.



- 3.7 Whilst the Council's policies require for a mix of dwelling types and sizes, this is not as easily achieved for small scale proposals. In this case, two four bedroom houses are proposed, which is consistent with that which has already been permitted in recent times on Jardine Meadows at The Mead (2 x four beds). It is also consistent with the Berkshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (February 2016), which recommends a mix of at least 25% four bed houses in terms of total provision.
- 3.8 In respect of other matters, the proposal will comply with the Council's parking standards and utilises an existing access to the public highway that is already in use for houses and therefore is considered to be acceptable. Despite the previous reason for refusal relating to great Crested Newts, no ecological matters have arisen from onsite surveys that would prevent the development coming forward. In addition, mitigation can be secured for the TBHSPA via a legal agreement. It has also been demonstrated that the presences of trees do not prevent the development, which addresses a further reason for refusal.
- 3.9 Overall, the proposal is compliant with the aims of the Council's Development Plan policies and the NPPF. Notwithstanding, the Council's housing land supply means that the tilted balance in favour of approving sustainable development applies. In this case, the proposal will provide a social benefit by make a small but relevant contribution to housing numbers, during the construction stage it will create jobs for the construction industry and the new occupants will also contribute to the local economy. As such it also has an economic benefit.
- 3.10 The proposal is therefore compliant with the aims of the Development Plan and the NPPF so is acceptable in planning terms.



APPENDIX 1 – DECISION FOR APPLICATION REFERENCE 233039



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACTS

**TOWN AND COUNTRY
PLANNING (ENGLAND) 1990**

Mr Jonathan Jarman
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NOTIFICATION OF REFUSAL OF PLANNING PERMISSION

Application Number: 233039
Applicant Name: Michael Ward
Site Address: Jardine Meadows, Croft Road, Spencers Wood,
Wokingham, RG2 9EY
Proposal: Full application for the proposed erection of 2 x 4
bed detached dwellings, access and associated
landscaping.
Date of Decision: 28 February 2024

Wokingham Borough Council in pursuance of its powers under the above Acts and Regulations hereby **refuses permission** for carrying out the above development as stated in the application and the accompanying plans submitted to the Council for the reason(s) specified hereunder.

Reasons

1. By virtue of the proposal requiring the removal of existing trees, most of which has already occurred and insufficient replanting and landscaping, the proposal would result in significant harm to the character of the surrounding landscape and would thereby fails to retain or enhance existing green infrastructure. As such, the proposal would be contrary to Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy, Policies CC03 and TB21 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014 and the NPPF.
2. In the absence of sufficient ecological information, the proposal fails to demonstrate how it has taken into account the possibility of Great Crested Newts, a protected species, being on the site and how the impact on them could be mitigation. This is contrary to Section 15 of the NPPF, Paragraphs 98 and 99 of Circular 06/2005, Policies CP3 and CP7 of the Core Strategy and Policy TB23 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014.
3. By virtue of the clearance of trees and vegetation on site, the proposal fails to demonstrate how it would not result in significant harm to biodiversity and no reasonable justification for the woodland loss nor adequate mitigation and

compensation measures have been provided. As such, the proposal would be contrary to Policies CP3 and CP7 of the Core Strategy, Policy TB23 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014 and the NPPF.

4. The proposal fails to demonstrate how the location of the proposed development can be safely accommodated having regard to the needs of Blue Light services and the Off-Site Emergency Plan (OSEP) for the Atomic Weapons Establishment Site at Burghfield. This is contrary to Policy TB04 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014, policy CP3 of the Core Strategy and the NPPF.

5. In the absence of a planning obligation to secure suitable avoidance and mitigation measures and access management monitoring arrangements, in terms that are satisfactory to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), the LPA is unable to satisfy itself that the proposals include adequate mitigation measures to prevent the proposed development from having an adverse effect on the integrity of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA, in line with the requirements of Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as amended and Article 6(3) of Directive 92/43/EEC. The proposal would be contrary to Policy NRM6 of the South-East Plan and Policies CP8 and CP4 of the Core Strategy.

6. In the absence of a planning obligation, the proposal does not demonstrate how it could facilitate the required level of affordable housing. This is contrary to Policy CP5 of the Core Strategy and Section 5 of the NPPF.

Informatives

1. If you intend to submit an appeal to be considered as a Public Inquiry you must notify the Local Planning Authority (**planning.appeals@wokingham.gov.uk**) and Planning Inspectorate (**inquiryappeals@planninginspectorate.gov.uk**) at least 10 days before you submit the appeal.

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.

3. This decision is in relation to the plans and drawings

numbered/labelled 'Location Plan 231515/01 A' 'Block Plan - 231515/02 A', 'Proposed Site Plan - 231515/03 A', 'Proposed Plans and Elevations (Plot 1) 231515/04', 'Proposed Plans and Elevations (Plot 2) 23151/05', 'Landscaping Plan 231515/06 A', 'Proposed Street Scene 231515/07 A', 'Baseline Habitat (Proposal Overlay) BC23004/2' and 'Topographic Survey 10638/01', which were received by the Local Planning Authority on 8 December 2023.

Signed

MHead

Marcia Head

Head of Development Management - Place & Growth

Date: 28 February 2024

PLEASE READ THE NOTES ISSUED WITH THIS DECISION NOTICE BELOW