EX SYSTEMS LTD
SOUTHPORT U.K. Tel.01704-26866 Fax.01704-25814
LONDON OFFICE Tel.0171-377-1777 Fax.0171-247-6181

APPLICATION NO:
O/2001/5362

LOCATION:
Land Rear Of 6 Johnson Drive, Finchampstead Wokingham.

APPLICANT:
Cala Homes South Ltd C/O Chancellors Town Planning

PROPOSAL:
Outline application for the redevelopment of car storage land for residential development of 50 dwellings

EARLIEST DATE FOR DECISION: **31/12/2001**

APPLICATION WILL HAVE EXPIRED ON:
28/01/2002

CASE OFFICER: **Angela Odell**

DI 6

Green line is as for 4418 & 5276

21.NOV.2001 * 5276

03.DEC.2001 * 5302



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Development Control Section, Environmental Services, Wokingham District Council.

21 November 2001

Scale: 1 : 2500

N W E S

(AO)

WOKINGHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACTS

Notification of Refusal of Permission

Cala Homes South Ltd
C/O Chancellors Town Planning
45 High Street
Odiham
Hook
Hants
RG29 1LF

Application Number: O/2001/5362

Parish: **FINCHAMPSTEAD**

Location: **Land rear of 6 Johnson Drive, Finchampstead, Wokingham.**

Proposal: **Outline application for the redevelopment of car storage land for residential development of 50 dwellings**

The Wokingham District Council in pursuance of their powers under the above Acts and Regulations hereby **Refuse Permission** for carrying out the above development in accordance with the application and the accompanying plans submitted to the Council, the reasons for which are specified hereunder.

Reason
1. The proposal is unacceptable in principle as it is for residential development of a site outside a settlement boundary and in a green wedge. It would have a harmful and urbanising effect on the character and appearance of the area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan policies C2 and C6, South East Area Local Plan policies STV2 and SC1, to Wokingham District Local Plan (Deposit Draft) policies WOS2, WCC1 and WCC2 and to Planning Policy Guidance Note Nos. 3 and 7.

Reason
2. The proposal does not include appropriate contributions to services and infrastructure needs which would result from the proposed development. The proposal is therefore contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan Policies LD6 and R5, South East Area Local Plan Policies SPS1 and SR2 and to policies WOS4 and WR7 of the Wokingham District Local Plan (Deposit Draft).

Reason
3. The site represents a significant residential development which is not in a sustainable location which would minimise the need for travel as it is not well

located in relation to necessary services, infrastructure and destinations and is not well served by public transport. The proposal is therefore contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan Policies OS1 and H4, Wokingham District Local Plan Policy WOS3 and to PPGs 3 and 13.

Reason

4. From the information available, the Local Planning Authority is not satisfied that the proposed development would not cause unacceptable damage to protected species or their habitat. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan policy EN8, South East Area Local Plan policy SC10 and to Wokingham District Local Plan Policy WNC4.

Reason

5. The proposal would not allow sufficient space for restocking of trees that have been removed, and would also result in the actual loss of a tree at the access junction to the site, which enhance (and did enhance) the visual amenity of the area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan policy C9, South East Area Local Plan policy SBE9 and to Wokingham District Local Plan Policy WBE11.

Informative

1. You are advised, in compliance with The Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2000, that the following policies and/or proposals in the development plan are relevant to this decision:

Berkshire Structure Plan Policies OS1, C2, C6, C9, H4, H9, LD5, LD6, EN8 and R5.
South East Area Local Plan Policies STV2, SC1, SC10, SBE9, SH8, ST3, SPS1 and SR2.
Deposit Draft Wokingham District Local Plan Policies WOS2, WOS3, WCC1, WCC2, WNC5, WBE11, WH6, WT7, WOS4 and WR7.

Anna Cronin
Head of Planning & Transportation
Date: 09/01/2002

Notice checked by: _____

If this notice grants permission to proceed with the proposal the applicant is reminded that it relates to planning permission only and does not constitute approval under any other legislation including Building Regulations.

Wokingham District Council
Planning Application

Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 – Notice under Article 8

AND/OR

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990 and Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Application No: 2001/5362

Proposal:
Outline application for the redevelopment of car storage land for residential development of 50 dwellings

Location:
Land Rear Of 6 Johnson Drive Finchampstead Wokingham

This application is being advertised in the Wokingham Times newspaper on the 12/12/2001 for the following reason(s);

PROPOSAL IS A MAJOR DEVELOPMENT AND IS CONTRARY TO THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The application can be inspected at Wokingham District Council's offices during the following times:

PLANNING DEPARTMENT, SHUTE END, WOKINGHAM TEL (0118) 974 6428
8.30 - 5.00 Monday - Thursday & 8.30 - 4.00 Friday

WOODLEY LIBRARY HEADLEY ROAD WOODLEY (9.30am - 7.00pm Mon, Thurs & Fri. 9.30am - 5.00pm Tues, 9.30am - 1.00pm Saturday. closed all day Wednesday)

Comments should be sent in writing QUOTING THE APPLICATION NUMBER to the Case Officer P.O. Box 157 Council Offices, Shute End, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 1WR to arrive before **02/01/2002**. Written comments submitted will become available for public inspection.

In view of the very large number of planning applications and letters of comment received, it will not be possible for an individual reply to observations made. However any comments will be taken into account when the application is determined and you will be notified of the decision.

Date: 12/12/2001

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 9TH JANUARY 2002 FROM 7.00 PM TO 11.05 PM

Present: Mr KA Malvern (Chairman), Mrs JA Lissaman (Vice-Chairman), Mrs DC Beatty Mr SR Conway, Mr RH Cundy, Mr TP Dredge, Mrs MA Long, Mrs M Robertson, Mr ND Rose and Mrs C Smith.

Also present Mrs P Bray, Frank Browne, Mr JL Earnshaw, Mrs T Marinos and Mr D Swindells.

PART I

152. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 5th December 2001 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendments:-

1) Minute No. 137 page 1738, resolution 1) reference should be made to the terraced block, rather than the whole development being out of character.

2) Minute No. 137 page 1738, resolution 3) the deletion of the word "due".

153. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted from Mr MJ Bryant and Mr AJ Ross.

161. APPLICATION NO: 2001/5362, OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF 50 DWELLINGS, (INCLUDING A PROPORTION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING) DEMOLITION OF EXISTING DWELLING AND CEASING CAR STORAGE USE, 6 JOHNSON DRIVE, FINCHAMPSTEAD FOR CALA HOMES SOUTH LTD

The Committee considered a report about the application set out on Agenda pages 1842 to 1853.

Members were informed that there were eleven additional letters of objection and Finchampstead Parish Council had submitted their objections to the proposal.

RESOLVED: That Application No. 2001/5362 be refused on the grounds set out on Agenda pages 1849 to 1850.

Development Control Ref No:	Received	Parish
O/2001/5362	03.12.01	Finchampstead

Applicant: Cala Homes South Ltd.
Location: 6 Johnson Drive, Finchampstead
Proposal: Outline application for the erection of 50 dwellings (including a proportion of affordable housing), demolition of existing dwelling and ceasing car storage use.

REPORT PREPARED FOR: DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

REPORT PREPARED BY: Head of Planning and Transportation & Angela Odell

SUMMARY:

1. Planning History - On this 1.76 ha. site is an existing bungalow with large garden. There are existing residential properties on the west and south sides of the site, with woodland adjacent to the eastern and part of the north western boundaries. Most of the south boundary and part of the west is screened by leylandii growing within the site.

   On the northern part of the site there is a certificate of lawful use No. CLU(E)105 for the storage of cars on part of the area, which was allowed on appeal. Application 30127(O) for residential development of the site was refused permission 14 June 1988, and the subsequent appeal was dismissed.

   Outline Application No. O/2001/4418 for the erection of 30 dwellings on the site is now at appeal on non-determination grounds. At the Development Control Committee meeting on 14 November 2001 members resolved that:

   (a) Had the appeal against non-determination not been lodged at the Planning Inspectorate, that the application would have been refused planning permission for the reasons set out below.

   (b) Authorise Officers to negotiate Services and Infrastructure contributions.

   (c) Authorise officers to inform the Planning Inspectorate and the appellants of the above resolutions.

   Deemed reasons for refusal of application O/2001/4418

   1. The proposal is unacceptable in principle as it is for residential development of a site outside a settlement boundary and in a green wedge. It would have a harmful and urbanising effect on the character and appearance of the area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan policies C2 and C6, South East Area Local Plan policies STV2 and SC1, to Wokingham District

Local Plan (Deposit Draft) policies WOS2, WCC1 and WCC2 and to Planning Policy Guidance Note Nos. 3 and 7.

2. As the proposed density would be significantly below the minimum required by Planning Policy Guidance Note No. 3, it would fail to make the best use of land to be developed, and would not minimise the amount of greenfield land being taken for development. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Planning Policy Guidance Note No. 3 and the Local Planning Authority's proposed density policy for the Wokingham District Local Plan.

3. The proposal fails to incorporate an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes to meet local need in that too high a proportion of large dwellings and too low a proportion of small dwellings are proposed. The proposal would be contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan policy H9, South East Area Local Plan policy SH8 and to Wokingham District Local Plan (Deposit Draft) policy WH6.

4. The proposal does not include appropriate contributions to services and infrastructure needs, including provision of on-site Public Open Space and play area, which would result from the proposed development. The proposal is therefore contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan Policies LD6 and R5, South East Area Local Plan Policies SPS1 and SR2 and to policies WOS4 and WR7 of the Wokingham District Local Plan (Deposit Draft).

5. The proposal would result in the actual and potential loss of trees on the site which at present enhance the visual amenity of the area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan policy EN1, South East Area Local Plan policy SBE9 and to Wokingham District Local Plan Policy WBE11.

2. **Proposal** – The proposal is in outline with only the means of access to be determined. The indicative layout shows 8 x 1 bedroom, 23 x 2 bedroom, 11 x 3 bedroom houses and 8 x 4 bedroom dwellings. 0.5 ha. of Public Open Space including a children's play area is also proposed. The existing buildings on the site would be removed and car storage use cease.

   The applicants' consultant has explained that the current application has been submitted to consider a scheme that better respects the characteristics of the site and the Local Authority's requirements on large housing sites.

RECOMMENDATION: REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION

Background Papers

Held by: Planning Reception
Division: Development Control
Dept: Environmental Services

Contact No: 0118 974 6428/ 6429
E Mail: development.control@wokingham.gov.uk

NB: All reports seek to identify environmental, community safety and equal opportunities implications. Consultation with residents and organisations which has or is about to take place, will also be reported.

BACKGROUND

3. **Consultations** -

- ***Finchampstead Parish Council :*** "Objection on the grounds that the proposal would constitute back land development in a Green Gap location. The additional traffic that would be generated from this development would mean additional movement (in excess of 50 cars) onto and from the already busy and overloaded Nine Mile Ride and would create a hazard at its junction with Johnson Drive".
- ***6 letters of objection received on the following grounds :***
  - Proposed development would be contrary to policies as the site is on land designated as countryside and for separation of settlements in the local plan.
  - Previous application on the site for housing was dismissed on appeal.
  - Allowing the application would set a precedent for other sites nearby.
  - Overdevelopment of the site – number of dwellings is excessive, and out of proportion and character to the site area.
  - Overlooking of existing houses, loss of outlook and amenity. Disturbance, noise and pollution from extra traffic.
  - Extra traffic generated will exacerbate existing congestion and safety problems. The latter particularly affects the junction of Johnson Drive onto Nine Mile Ride due to a large, preserved oak tree.
  - Would result in loss of trees (some have recently been felled) and disturbance to wildlife.
  - Would add pressure to already overstretched services and infrastructure.
  - Water pressure is inadequate to take the extra dwellings, sewerage is by private pumping station and surface water drainage problems.
- ***Council for the Protection of Rural England :*** Recommend refusal as contrary to countryside and gap/green wedge local plan policies.
- ***Environment Agency :*** Comments not yet received, but previously advised no objection subject to a condition covering surface water control measures.
- ***Crime Prevention Design Adviser :*** Comments not yet received, but previously advised that the outline application did not create any significant additional crime risk as a result of the layout or content of the proposal.
- ***Environmental Health Officer :*** No objection subject to conditions covering potential ground contamination and hours of construction work.
- ***Highway Officer :*** No objection in principle subject to a satisfactory financial contribution towards local road safety measures and safer routes to school, and advice on internal road layout.
- ***Leisure & Recreation Officer :*** Advises that the proposed area of Public Open Space and play area are satisfactory, subject to laying out of the Public Open Space, provision of equipped play area and satisfactory commuted sums for maintenance. (Notes the play area shown would need to be larger than shown on the illustrative plan.) Also would require some teenage facilities to be provided on site.
- ***Tree Officer :*** Notes that over most of the trees that would have needed to have been removed to make way for these proposals have been felled. This was not

legal as a licence had not been obtained from the Forestry Commission who are investigating the matter and if appropriate will prosecute and can insist on restocking. The proposed layout shows insufficient space for this and therefore recommends refusal. However, if the Forestry Commission decide not to prosecute then they cannot serve a Restocking notice and this reason for refusal would need to be withdrawn. Considers there is also room for improvement in designing a better site layout in relation to some of the trees that still remain on the site. Also notes the oak tree at the junction of Nine Mile Ride and Johnson Drive is shown to be within the visibility splays, and objects to its removal.

- ***Ecologist :*** Advise that an ecological survey should be submitted and assessed before any planning permission is granted. The area is one where protected species such as bats, badgers and reptiles such as slow worms may be found.

4. **Appraisal** – Main issues are:

   A. Principle of residential development and effect on the character and appearance of the area. (Berkshire Structure Plan policies C2, C6 and C9, South East Area Local Plan policies STV2, SC1 and SBE9; Wokingham District Local Plan (Deposit Draft) policies WOS2, WOS5, WCC1, WCC2 and WBE11; Planning Policy Guidance Note Nos. 3 and 7).

   B. Density. (Council's density policy and Planning Policy Guidance Note 3).

   C. Housing mix. (Berkshire Structure Plan policy H9; South East Area Local Plan policy SH8; Wokingham District Local Plan (Deposit Draft) policy WH6; Planning Policy Guidance Note No. 3).

   D. Effect on neighbouring properties. (South East Area Local Plan policy SBE2; Wokingham District Local Plan (Deposit Draft) policy WBE1).

   E. Highways and transportation. (Berkshire Structure Plan policy LD5; South East Area Local Plan policy ST3; Wokingham District Local Plan policy WT7; Planning Policy Guidance Note No. 13).

   F. Services & Infrastructure. (Berkshire Structure Plan policies LD6 and R5; South East Area Local Plan policies SPS1 and SR2; Wokingham District Local Plan policies WOS4 and WR7).

   G. Ecology. (Berkshire Structure Plan policy EN8, South East Area Local Plan policy SC10, Wokingham District Local Plan policy WNC5).

   H. Comments of the Parish Council and local residents.

   I. Inspector's Report on Part Two of the Wokingham District Local Plan (including sustainability - Berkshire Structure Plan Policies OS1 and H4, Wokingham District Local Plan policy WOS3, PPG3 and PPG13).

A. Principle of Proposal

The site is outside a settlement boundary and in a green wedge between two sections of Finchampstead North. The site is part-developed by a bungalow with large garden and areas of authorised and unauthorised car storage.

Policy WCC1 only allows development outside settlement boundaries in exceptional circumstances. These include proposals for redevelopment in the countryside, but only if it is appropriate in scale, form, design and character to its location in the countryside, and is consistent with other policies in the Plan. The proposal is for redevelopment for 50 dwellings, but would only remove one dwelling, sheds and open car storage on grass. It is therefore essentially unbalanced in use, scale and impact of proposed development.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 on Housing gives preference to re-using previously developed land within urban areas to the development of greenfield sites. Annex C explains that 'previously-developed' land is that which is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excluding agricultural buildings) and associated fixed infrastructure. The definition covers the curtilage of the development, but Annex C footnote 2 explains that this does not mean that the whole area of the curtilage should be redeveloped. For example, where the footprint of a building only occupies a proportion of a site of which the remainder is open land, the whole site should not normally be developed. It then advises that the Local Planning Authority should make a judgement about site layout in this context, bearing in mind other planning considerations, including policies for the protection of the countryside, etc.

The proposal is for the erection of 50 dwellings. This would be out of all proportion and impact to the existing lawful development of the site. Residential development of the site would result in an urbanising appearance and would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. It would also consolidate and intensify existing development in the green wedge and significantly erode its effectiveness in separating parts of Finchampstead North. It would be inappropriate to permit development of land outside the settlement, contrary to Local Plan policies and PPG3. Allowing the proposal could also set an unfortunate precedent for the development of other sparsely developed land on the edge of the settlement nearby. The proposal is therefore considered to be unacceptable in principle and contrary to countryside and green wedge policies.

The proposal is also considered unacceptable on grounds of loss of trees on the site and potential pressure on trees shown to be retained. This includes the oak tree on the corner of Nine Mile Ride and Johnson Drive which would need to be removed to provide a satisfactory visibility splay.

B. Density

The net density of the proposed development should be calculated using the definitions in Annex C of PPG3. If the boundary trees to be retained are excluded from the net developable area, this reduces to 1.64 ha. The net density would therefore be 30.5 dwellings per ha. As this now accords with the minimum density requirement inn PPG3, the proposed density is now considered to be acceptable and therefore is no longer recommended as a reason for refusal

C. Housing Mix

The proposed housing mix is as follows:

No. of bedrooms	Proposed development	%	Mix required by Policy WH6
1 & 2	31	62%	At least 45%
3	11	22%	30%
4+	8	16%	Not more than 25
Total	50	100%	

The proposed dwelling mix is considered acceptable under Policy WH6 as it would provide a high proportion of smaller dwellings.

D. Effect on Neighbouring Properties

The proposed layout plan is indicative only, but nevertheless shows how the proposed number and dwelling size mix could be accommodated on the site, and the information given below is based on the indicative plan.

There would be at least 18m between the existing first floor rear elevations of Nos. 14-18 Tomlinson Drive and the sides of the proposed houses on plots 5 and 12. There would be at least 32m between the existing and proposed first floor rear elevations of Nos. 20 and 22 Tomlinson Drive, and about 40m between the side elevation of the proposed house on plot 50 and the existing adjacent dwelling at 287a Nine Mile Ride. The front elevation of the proposed dwelling on plot 50 would be about 31 m. from the rear elevation of No. 4 Johnson Drive in a slightly oblique relationship. These distances are considered acceptable, but it would be important to retain existing boundary trees to assist privacy and outlook from existing properties. It is therefore considered that the site is capable of development at the proposed mix and density without having an unacceptable impact on existing neighbouring properties.

E. Highways & Transportation

The Highway Officer raises no objection in principle to the proposed access, subject to a satisfactory financial contribution towards local road safety measures (including a pedestrian crossing across Nine Mile Ride) and safer routes to school.

F. Service, Amenity and Infrastructure Requirements

If the proposed development were considered acceptable in principle, provision of/contributions towards infrastructure, services and amenities would be required under Policy WOS4 and the Council's planning guideline A9. The applicants offer that at least 25% of the net increase in number of dwellings are to be affordable housing and the proposed area of public open space and play area (if larger in size) are considered acceptable. Financial contributions towards education, local road safety measures (including a pedestrian crossing of Nine Mile Ride) and safer routes to school and recreation provision for teenagers on site would also be appropriate. These contributions have been being requested but not yet agreed. Therefore, until satisfactory contributions are agreed, the proposal does not meet the requirements of Berkshire Structure Plan Policy LD6,

South East Area Local Plan Policy SPS1, Wokingham District Local Plan (Deposit Draft) as amended Policy WOS4 in respect of road safety measures, safer routes to school and education contributions.

G. Ecology
As an ecological survey has been requested but not yet received, the Local Planning Authority is not satisfied that damage to protected species or their habitats would not result from the proposed development. This should therefore be included as a reason for refusal.

H. Comments of the Parish Council and Local Residents
These have been noted and addressed above. The proposed density would be significantly higher than nearby existing local residential developments. However, the site is reasonably well contained without a street scene frontage onto an existing road, and therefore it is considered that in this case the aims of PPG3 should be met in order to make the best use of land.

I. Inspector's Report on Part Two of the Wokingham District Local Plan
The Inspector's recommendations are a material consideration in the determination of applications. He has recommended against housing development on this site, expressing concern that it would have a detrimental effect on the form and character of Finchampstead North. He was also not convinced that replacement of the vehicle storage area with housing would represent any significant improvement.

Policy WOS2: The Inspector recommends that for transportation sustainability reasons, the identified settlements should be divided into categories A and B. Category A settlements are relatively sustainable and Category B settlements less so. All the sites he allocates for housing development are in, or adjoining, Category A settlements. Finchampstead North is a Category B settlement in which he recommends that only limited infilling and small windfall development will be permitted.
Comment: As the application site is outside the settlement boundary it is not acceptable 'limited infilling' and its scale cannot be considered to be a 'small windfall'. For this reason the Inspector's comments add weight to the Council's recommended refusal reason below. In the light of the Inspector's recommendations, it is considered that a sustainability reason for refusal should also now be added.

Policy WCC1: No recommended change to the settlement boundary for Finchampstead North. No recommended changes to the wording of Policy WCC1 that would be material to the consideration of this application.

Policy WCC2: Recommended alterations to the wording of Policy WCC2 but retains the essential concept of gaps/green wedges.

Policy WBE11: The Inspector recommends replacement of this policy.
Comment: The Inspector recommends amendment of the policy to take into account the Council's powers of control. However, he still recommends that the effect on existing trees and areas of woodland be taken into account when considering proposals for development.

5. **Conclusion** – The proposed development is considered unacceptable in principle as it is for a substantial residential development on an existing site that is only sparsely developed and is outside a settlement boundary, in a green wedge, and not allocated for residential development in the Wokingham District Local Plan. The proposal would have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the area. Whilst the proposal would remove the existing inappropriate open storage use of part of the site, this is not sufficient to outweigh the above objections. The proposed density and housing size mix are now considered acceptable. However, the effect on trees is still considered unacceptable and a reason for refusal on Services & Infrastructure should still be included, as provisions and contributions have not yet all been agreed.

6. **Recommendation** – REFUSE planning permission for the following reasons:

1. The proposal is unacceptable in principle as it is for residential development of a site outside a settlement boundary and in a green wedge. It would have a harmful and urbanising effect on the character and appearance of the area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan policies C2 and C6, South East Area Local Plan policies STV2 and SC1, to Wokingham District Local Plan (Deposit Draft) policies WOS2, WCC1 and WCC2 and to Planning Policy Guidance Note Nos. 3 and 7.

2. The proposal does not include appropriate contributions to services and infrastructure needs which would result from the proposed development. The proposal is therefore contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan Policies LD6 and R5, South East Area Local Plan Policies SPS1 and SR2 and to policies WOS4 and WR7 of the Wokingham District Local Plan (Deposit Draft).

3. The site represents a significant residential development which is not in a sustainable location which would minimise the need for travel as it is not well located in relation to necessary services, infrastructure and destinations and is not well served by public transport. The proposal is therefore contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan Policies OS1 and H4, Wokingham District Local Plan Policy WOS3 and to PPGs 3 and 13.

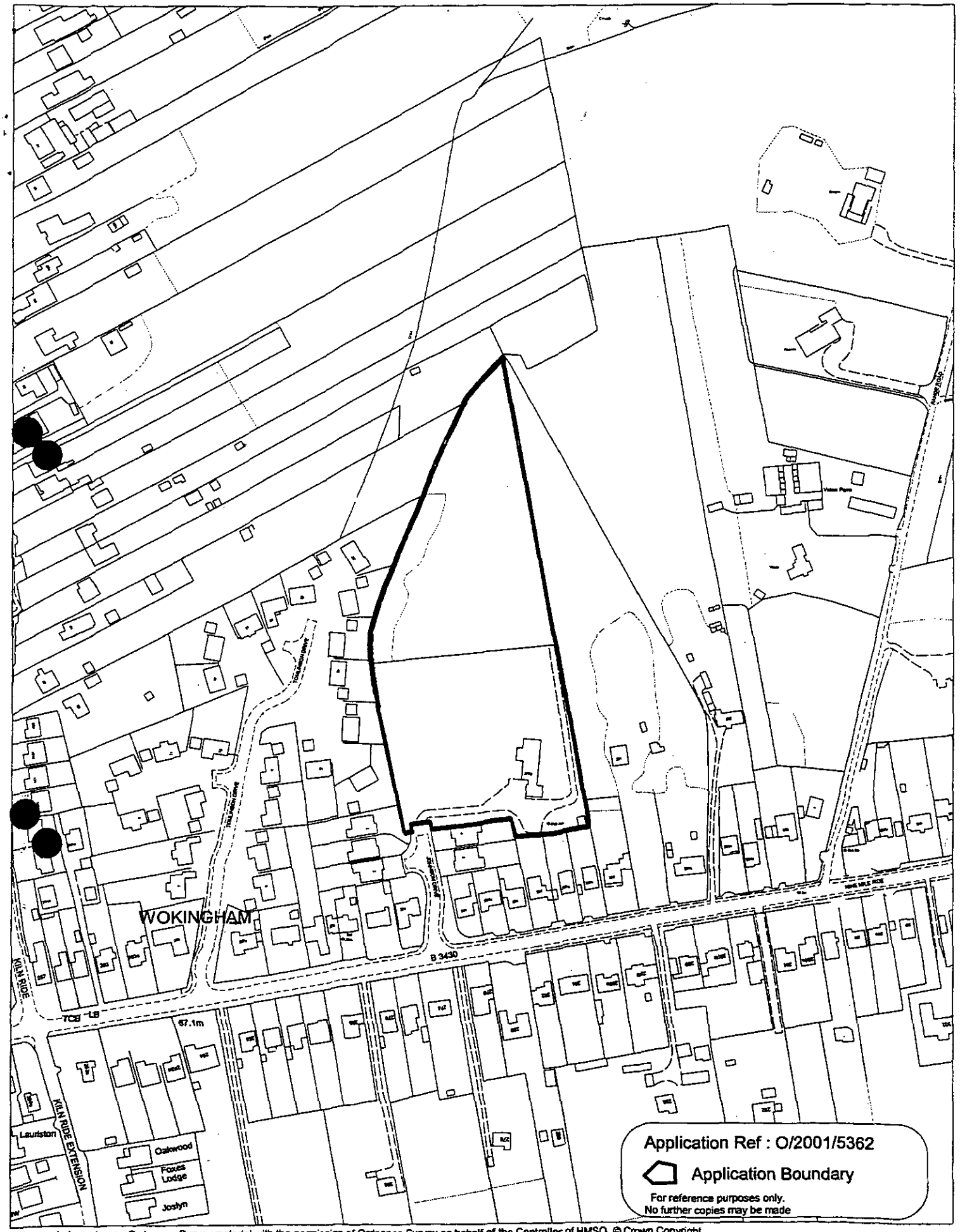
4. From the information available, the Local Planning Authority is not satisfied that the proposed development would not cause unacceptable damage to protected species or their habitat. The proposal would therefore be contrary to contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan policyEN8, South East Area Local Plan policy SC10 and to Wokingham District Local Plan Policy WNC4.

5. The proposal would not allow sufficient space for restocking of trees that have been removed, and would also result in the actual loss of a tree at the access junction to the site, which enhance (and did enhance) the visual amenity of the area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan policy C9, South East Area Local Plan policy SBE9 and to Wokingham District Local Plan Policy WBE11.

Informatives

1. You are advised, in compliance with The Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2000, that the following policies and/or proposals in the development plan are relevant to this decision:

   Berkshire Structure Plan Policies OS1, C2, C6, C9, H4, H9, LD5, LD6, EN8 and R5.
   South East Area Local Plan Policies STV2, SC1, SC10, SBE9, SH8, ST3, SPS1 and SR2.
   Deposit Draft Wokingham District Local Plan Policies WOS2, WOS3, WCC1, WCC2, WNC5, WBE11, WH6, WT7, WOS4 and WR7.



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Development Control Section, Environmental Services, Wokingham District Council.
9 January 2002

Scale: 1 : 2500

N
W E
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CURRENT PROPOSAL

CALA

HOMES

CALA HOMES (SOUTH) Ltd.,
BURGHAM HOUSE, THE CAUSEWAY,
STAINES,
MIDDLESEX TW18 3PB
Telephone: 01784 460000 Fax: 01784 464636
E-mail: CALA.Staines.South@cala.co.uk

REVISIONS

A Site Layout amended 20-11-01 CHK'D

JOB TITLE

JOHNSON DRIVE
Nine Mile Ride
Wokingham

DRAWING TITLE

Outline Illustrative
Planning Layout

SCALE 1 : 500 DATE NOV. 2001

DRAWN BY HARRIS
CHECKED BY

SITE McCORMICK VAR MOD DRG No. OUT. 2 REV A PLOT

JOHNSON DRIVE
TOMLINSON DRIVE
NINE MILE RIDE
4.5 x 120m sight lines
feature elevations to P.O.S.
P.O.S.
childrens play area

Schedule of Accommodation.

8 no. 1 Bedroom Apartments & Houses	6%
23 no. 2 Bedroom Apartments and Houses	
11 no. 3 Bedroom Houses	22%
8 no. 4 Bedroom Houses	16%

50 UNITS IN TOTAL

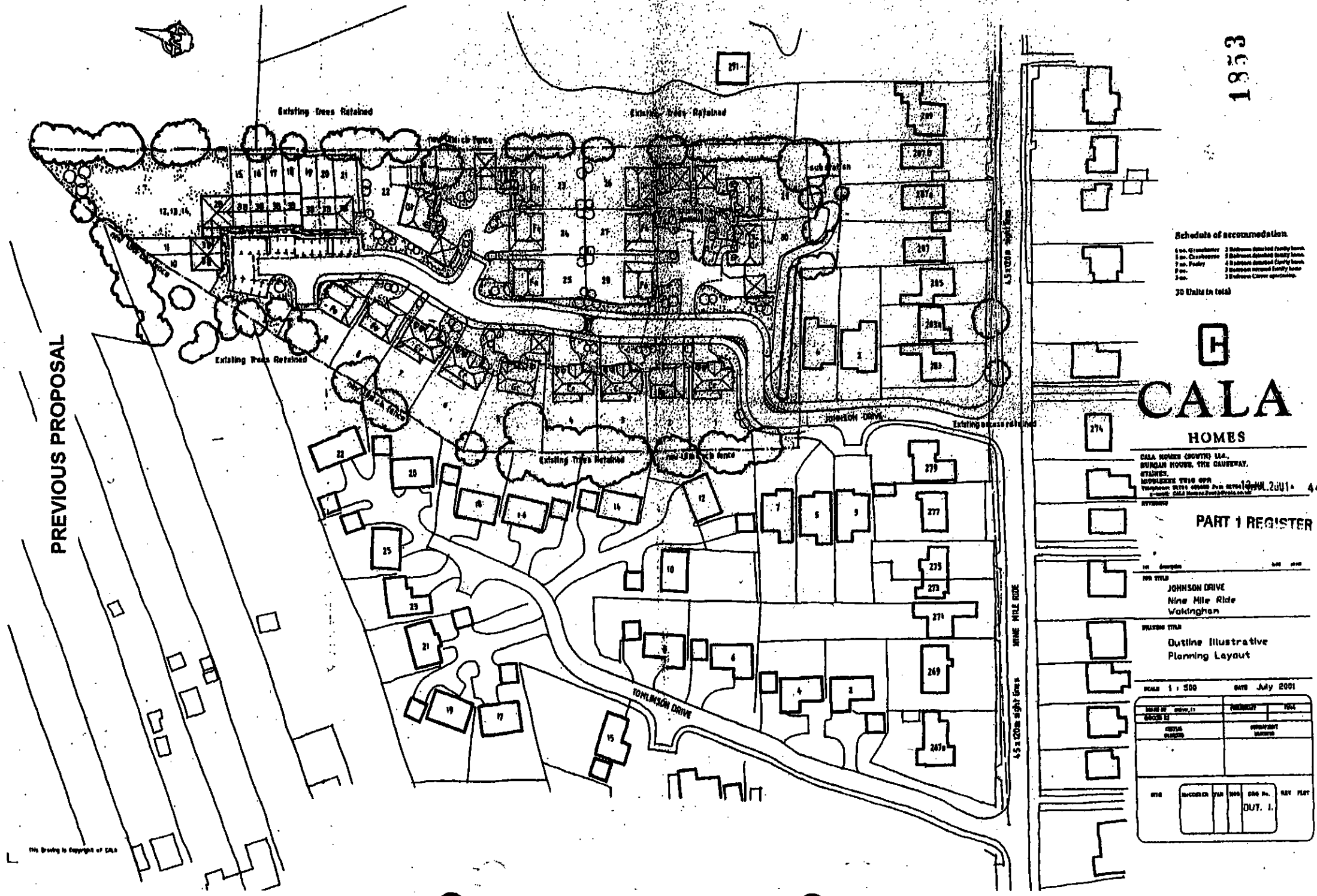
TOTAL SITE AREA	1.76 Hectares
NET DEVELOPABLE AREA	1.64 Hectares
AREA OF POS	0.50 Hectares
DENSITY	30.1 units per hectare

Trees for retention

Trees for removal

PLANNING SERVICES OPT
09 NOV 2001
ADC
PLAN

1832


PREVIOUS PROPOSAL
Existing Trees Retained
Existing Trees Retained
Existing Trees Retained
Existing Trees Retained
Existing access retained
JOHNSON DRIVE
TOWLINSON DRIVE
NINE MILE RIDE
45 x 120m sight lines
Schedule of accommodation
30 Units in total
CALA
HOMES
CALA HOMES (SOUTH) Ltd.,
BURGAN HOUSE, THE CAUSEWAY,
STAINES,
MIDDLESEX TW18 6PR
PART 1 REGISTER
JOHNSON DRIVE
Nine Mile Ride
Wokingham
Outline Illustrative
Planning Layout
SCALE 1 : 500
DATE July 2001
OUT. 1.
This Drawing is Copyright of CALA

1853

WOKINGHAM UNITARY
Aiming for Excellence

Applicationo	Name & Address
O/2001/5362	Mr R Owens 5 Tomlinson Drive FINCHAMPSTEAD RG40 3NZ
O/2001/5362	J. M. Hill Wilmington 16 Tomlinson Drive FINCHAMPSTGEAD RG40 3NZ
O/2001/5362	Mr Maurice B Sandom Mrs Henriette M Sandom 5 Johnson Drive FINCHAMPSTEAD RG40 3NW
O/2001/5362	E & S Ekert 1 Johnson Drive WOKINGHAM. RG40 3NW
O/2001/5362	I A Griffin 4 Johnson Drive FINCHAMPSTEAD RG40 3NW
O/2001/5362	C.A. Hanwood 272 Nine Mile Ride FINCHAMPSTEAD RG40 3NT
O/2001/5362	Mr & Mrs J H Manns Cherrywood 294 Nine Mile Ride FINICHAMPSTEAD RG40 3NT
O/2001/5362	Malcolm Maclean 12 tomlinson Drive FINCHAMPSTEAD RG40 3NZ
O/2001/5362	Dr S P Wilford Chairman Wokinhgam CPRE 17 Copse Drive WOKINGHAM. RG41 1NA
O/2001/5362	Mr Keith Greaves Mrs Jean Greaves 266 Nine Mile Ride FINCHAMPSTEAD RG40 3NT

WOKINGHAM UNITARY
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O/2001/5362 Brian Lyness and Petitioners
18 Tomlinson Drive
FINCHAMPSTEAD
RG40 3NZ

O/2001/5362 Anne & Svante Stenbom
25 Tomlinson Drive
FINCHAMPSTEAD
RG40 3NZ

O/2001/5362 Jenny Brett Phare
Mayfield
Lower Sandhurst Road
FINCHAMPSTEAD
RG40 3TH

O/2001/5362 Dr Mark C Lee
20 Tomlinson Drive
FINCHAMPSTEAD
RG40 3NZ

O/2001/5362 Mike & Sue Lewis
Verandah Cottage
289 Nine Mile Ride
WOKINGHAM.
RG40 3NS

O/2001/5362 P M & B J HARRALL
14 Tomlinson Drive
WOKINGHAM.
RG40 3NZ

O/2001/5362 Mr & Mrs M E Allan
22 Tomlinson Drive
FINCHAMPSTEAD
RG40 3NZ

O/2001/5362 Gary & Sally Levy
Gresham Mill
7 Johnson Drive
FINCHAMSPTEAD
RG40 3NW

O/2001/5362 Andrew Heath
Sylvia Heath
2 Johnson Drive
WOKINGHAM.
RG40 3NW

O/2001/5362 Mr P J Wooldridge
Mrs J D Wooldridge
86 Kiln Ride
FINCHAMPSTEAD
RG40 3PH

O/2001/5362

David & Angela Jones
Flint Cottage
99a Kiln Ride
FINCHAMPSTEAD
RG40 3PD

WOKINGHAM UNITARY
Aiming for Excellence

Committee letters sent 03/01/02

Date: 03 January 2002

Your Ref:

My Ref: **Angela Odell - O/2001/5362**

Cala Homes South Ltd
C/O Chancellors Town Planning
45 High Street
Odiham
Hook
Hants
RG29 1LF

WOKINGHAM UNITARY
Environmental Services Department
Planning Services
Aiming for Excellence
P.O. Box 157
Shute End, Wokingham
Berkshire RG40 1WR
Tel: (0118) 974 6000
Fax: (0118) 974 6484
Minicom No: (0118) 974 6991
DX: 33506 – Wokingham

Dear Sir/Madam

Application Number: O/2001/5362

Site Address: Land Rear Of 6, Johnson Drive, Finchampstead, Wokingham.

Proposal: Outline application for the redevelopment of car storage land for residential development of 50 dwellings.

Your application is to be determined at the Development Control Sub-Committee meeting on the 09.01.02 and will start at 7.00pm. The application has been recommended for refusal and you can see a copy of the committee report at the Environmental Services Department, Council Offices, Shute End, Wokingham, or at your local library.

You may attend the Committee meeting and speak if you wish. A leaflet explaining the process is enclosed.

IF YOU WISH TO ARRANGE TO SPEAK contact Kevin Jacob in the Policy & Members' Services Section on (0118) 974 6058 no later than 5.00pm on the last working day (Tuesday) prior to the meeting.

IF YOU WISH TO DISCUSS THE APPLICATION contact the Development Control Section on (0118) 974 6446 or (0118) 974 6453 quoting the application number at the head of this letter and ask for the case officer dealing with the proposal.

Yours faithfully,

Anna Cronin

Head of Planning & Transportation

Tel. 0118 974 6445 (Direct Line)
E-mail: Angela.Odell@wokingham.gov.uk
Date. 11 December, 2001
My ref. AO/O/2001/5362
Your ref. DCB/LS

Chancellors Town Planning
45 High Street
Odiham
Hook
Hants
RG29 1LF

Environmental Services Department
Planning Services
P.O. Box 157
Shute End, Wokingham
Berkshire RG40 1WR
Tel: (0118) 974 6000
Fax: (0118) 974 6484
Minicom No: (0118) 977 8909
DX: 33506 – Wokingham

Dear Mr Bond

PLANNING APPLICATION O/2001/5362
OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR THE DEMOLITION OF EXISTING DWELLING AND REDEVELOPMENT OF SITE FROM CAR STORAGE TO PROVIDE 50 DWELLINGS INCLUDING A PROPORTION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING AT 6 JOHNSON DRIVE, FINCHAMPSTEAD

I have received advice on the above application from our ecologist Andy Glencross. He advises that as the site is currently partly wooded it may hold some ecological interest and an ecological assessment should be provided. The consultant used should be a member of the institute of Ecological and Environmental Managers. The survey needs to address the following issues:

- General habitat assessment/comments
- Assessment of existing trees with regard to potential for hibernating bats.
- The area in and around Finchampstead is particularly good for reptiles such as slow worms, adders and common lizards which must be removed from a site prior to development taking place.
- Finchampstead has a high density of badger setts and they may be using this site for foraging.
- The survey for bats and badgers would need to take place prior to outline planning permission being granted, the others could be granted as a condition and carried out at the appropriate season (summer).

In view of the above, the application seem now unlikely to go to Committee on 9 January. However, I advise you that the above is in relation to ecology matters only, as you are aware the application is considered unacceptable in principle.

I trust the above is clear, but if you wish to discuss the matter further please contact either Andy Glencross on 0118 934 2016 or me.

Yours sincerely

AO

MRS A ODELL
Senior Planner

cc: Andy Glencross, Mike Evans

Anco OBL

PLANNING SERVICES	HPT
POL	TLS
DC	SNT
APP	
CS	

10 DEC 2001

COPIES TO:	ACK
	FILE

17, Copse Drive,
Wokingham,
Berks. RG41 1NA

6 December, 2001

The Chief Planning Officer,
Environmental Services Dept.
Wokingham District Council,
Council Offices,
Shute End,
Wokingham.

Dear Sir,

APPLICATION NO.O/2001/5276 - PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF 48 HOUSES ON LAND AT 6 JOHNSON DRIVE, FINCHAMPSTEAD.

The land involved in this application is classified as Green Gap/ Wedge in the draft Wokingham District Plan(1997) and as Separation of Settlements/Setting of Settlements in the South East Area Local Plan(SEALP). The development proposed is contrary to Policy WCC2 of the draft Wokingham District Plan(1997) and to Policies SC1 and SC2 of the SEALP.

Wokingham District CPRE therefore ask the District Council to refuse the above application.

Yours faithfully,

Dr.S.P.Wilford(Chairman, Wokingham District CPRE)

Angela Odell

From: Andy Glencross
Sent: 11 December 2001 14:53
To: Angela Odell
Subject: RE: Planning Application O/2001/5276 6 Johnson Drive Finchampstead

Hi Angela

I have had a chat with Mike and he has advised that we ask them to provide a survey of the site with regard to bats (tree roost potential) and the use of the site by badgers. Both these are protected species and we need to ensure that we have sufficient information with which to determine the application.

Cheers

Andy

-----Original Message-----
From: Angela Odell
Sent: 10 December 2001 07:39
To: Andy Glencross
Cc: Mike Evans
Subject: RE: Planning Application O/2001/5276 6 Johnson Drive Finchampstead
Importance: High

Hi!

This is another one where in this case we recently took it to Committee with a 'deemed' refusal (following submission of a non-determination appeal). It is also going to Committee on 9 Jan. and must do so otherwise we will only get another non-determination appeal. There were no ecological objections or advice that a survey was needed. The applicants are trying to reduce the reaosn for refusal and intend the current aplication to go to the same public inquiry - probably in March. Therfore if you really do want a survey etc. we will have to have a 'holding' reaon for refusal, and you amy bneed to give evidence at the subsequent public inquiry. Suggest you talk to Mike Evans urgently, who is doing the P.I. and one of you let me know the outcome of your discussions. The draft Committee report is due tomorrow, for agenda planning on Friday. Copy of previous Committee report attached. << File: 4418.1.doc >>

-----Original Message-----
From: Andy Glencross
Sent: 07 December 2001 15:35
To: Angela Odell
Subject: Planning Application O/2001/5276 6 Johnson Drive Finchampstead

Hi Angela

My views on the above are as follows.

The site is currently partly wooded and may hold some ecological interest.

I feel that prior to granting outline permission we should ask for an ecological assessment of the site from the developer. The consultant used should be a member of the Institute of Ecological and Environmental Managers (IEEM). The survey needs to address the following issues

General habitat assessment/comments

Assessment of existing trees with regard to potential for hibernating bats

The area in around Finchampstead is particularly good for reptiles such as slow worms adders and common lizards which must be removed from a site prior to development taking place.

Finchampstead has a high density of badger setts and they may be using this site for foraging. I feel that the above ecological survey should

The surveys for bats and badgers will need to take place prior to outline planning permission being granted, the others could be attached as a condition, and carried out at the appropriate season (summer).

I have not visited the site.

Cheers

Andy Glencross
Countryside Officer (Biodiversity)
Wokingham District Council Countryside Service
Dinton Pastures Country Park
Davis Street
Hurst
Berkshire RG10 0TH
Tel: 0118 9342016

HIGHWAYS CONSULTATION SHEET

From: Angela Odell **Date:** 07 December 2001

Application Number: O/2001/5362 — TOM .

Proposal: Outline application for the redevelopment of car storage land for residential development of 50 dwellings

Parish: FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH

Site Address:
Land Rear Of 6, Johnson Drive, Finchampstead, Wokingham.

Applicant:
Cala Homes South Ltd C/O Chancellors Town Planning.

Your observations are required in respect of this application within **7 days** of the above date.

✓ below as applicable;

1) ☐ Recommend refusal for the reason(s) **stated below**;
2) ☐ Recommend approval but with condition(s) & reason(s) **stated below**;
3) ☐ Recommend approval with **no** condition(s) or reason(s).

As Per comm report dated 9th JAN 02.

TR
9th JAN 02.

Signed: _____ **Print name:** _____

Angela Odell

From: Neil Etherington
Sent: 13 December 2001 07:37
To: Angela Odell
Subject: RE: O/2001/5362 - 6 Johnson Drive

Angela

All of the trees which would have been under threat as a result of these proposals were felled last weekend. This is a contravention of the felling licence regulations which the Forestry Commission are now investigating. We need to be careful how we handle things to ensure that the chances of getting a successful prosecution are not jeopodised.

I will have a look at the current application and try to give you some comments on both for tomorrow. I think the members will be interested to know what has happened, why and what is being done about it!

Thanks.

Neil

-----Original Message-----
From: Angela Odell
Sent: 10 December 2001 09:59
To: Neil Etherington; Lisa Jarvis; Steve Auton
Cc: Mike Evans
Subject: O/2001/5362 - 6 Johnson Drive
Importance: High

Please see attached draft report and check your relevant sections, and advise me a.s.a.p. if O.K. or any alterations to make by 20 Dec. at latest. The application needs to go to Committee on 9 January due to the appeal timetable - agenda planning this Friday 15/12.

Neil - I have had 2 phone calls this a.m. from local residents who say that all the trees on the site except the boundary trees have been removed. Please can you check the situation and advise whether you still want a tree reason for refusal.

<< File: 5276.doc >>

TO: **DEVELOPMENT CONTROL**
Angela Odell

FROM: Environmental Design

DATE: 6th November 2001

Location: 6 Johnson Drive, Finchampstead.

Proposal: Outline application for 30 dwellings.

Application Number: O/2001/4418

In response to your consultation dated for the above application, the arboricultural comments are as follows:

Most of the good boundary trees are shown to be retained. However the relationship between proposed development and some of these trees is not ideal and this may lead to future problems for property owners.

No trees within the site are shown to be retained, although a number of these trees are good quality specimens and if kept would enhance any proposed development. Whilst this is an outline application I am not convinced that an alternate site layout for this number of dwellings could be designed which would allow these trees to be kept.

The Oak tree at the front of 283 Nine Mile Ride is included in Tree Preservation Order No. 520/1990. This tree is shown as being within the visibility splay.

In view of the above I would support refusing planning permission due to the loss of trees (Policy WBE11 of the Wokingham District Local Plan Deposit Draft).

Angie.
Following the felling of trees on 8/9th December I am happy that this application is refused as per my comments on O/2001/5362 and 5276

Thanks
Neil

Neil Etherington
Senior Arboriculturist

TO: **DEVELOPMENT CONTROL**
Angela Odell

FROM: Environmental Design

DATE: 17th December 2001

Location: 6 Johnson Drive, Finchampstead.

Proposal: Outline application for the redevelopment of the site from car storage to provide 48 dwellings including proportion of affordable housing.

Application Number: O/2001/5276 (Layout Drawing: OUT.2)

In response to your consultation dated 22nd November 2001 for the above application, the arboricultural comments are as follows:

Over the weekend of the 8th and 9th December most of the trees that would have needed to have been removed to make way for these proposals were felled. As a felling licence is required to fell more than 5 cubic metres of timber growing outside of a garden this felling was illegal. The Forestry Commission is investigating this matter and if appropriate will prosecute the perpetrators.

Had these trees not been felled I would have recommended refusing planning permission due to the loss of trees. However, the situation has unfortunately changed somewhat!

Where trees are illegally felled the Forestry Commission can insist that restocking (new planting) take place. On this site 17 mature trees were illegally felled. If prosecuted and found guilty a Restocking Notice will be served requiring that up to 5 trees are planted for each one felled. The proposed site layout allows insufficient space for this to happen and I would therefore recommend that planning permission be refused (Policy WLL7 of the Wokingham District Local Plan Deposit Draft With Amendments).

If for any reason the Forestry Commission decide not to prosecute then they can not serve a Restocking Notice and we will need to withdraw this reason for refusal.

There is also room for improvement in designing a better site layout in relation to some of the trees that still remain on the site.

Neil Etherington
Senior Arboriculturist

Policy and Plans Consultation

Date: 17/12/01
Case Officer: Angela Odell
Location: 6 Johnson Drive, Finchampstead, Wokingham
Proposal: Outline application for the redevelopment of the site from car storage to provide 50 dwellings including proportion of affordable housing.
Application Number: O/2001/5362
Applicant: Cala Homes South Ltd C/O Chancellors Town Planning

---

The Policy and Plans comments on the previous applications on this site (O/2001/4418 & O/2001/5276) are relevant to the current application. Please find attached a copy for your information.

Debra Hammond

Policy and Plans Consultation

Date: 23rd July 2001
Case Officer: Angela Odell
Location: 6 Johnson Drive, Finchampstead, Wokingham
Proposal: Outline application for the redevelopment of site from car storage to provide 30 dwellings including proportion of affordable.
Application Number: O/2001/4418
Applicant: Cala Homes South Ltd C/O Chancellors Town Planning

---

Relevant policies in the WDLPDD applicable to this application:

WCC1 - Development in the Countryside (outside the metropolitan green belt)
WCC2 - Green Gaps and Wedges (outside the metropolitan green belt)
WOS1 - Sustainable Development
WOS2 - General Development Principles
WOS5 - Environmental Improvements
WBE11 - Protection of Trees and Woodland

This application conflicts with Policies WOS2 and WCC1 since the site is located outside an identified settlement and within the countryside, where there is a presumption against development. However, it could be argued that the application is acceptable in principle as it forms a redevelopment proposal in the countryside, subject to its consistency with other policies in the plan. Policy WCC2 states that in seeking to maintain a separation of settlements, development will not be permitted in Green Gaps/Wedges that would detract from their open or countryside appearance and character.

The site in question was submitted as a possible housing site at the Local Plan Inquiry (Housing Site Ref: FI06). The District Council considered the site inappropriate for housing for the following reasons:

"..the site is part of the gap between Wokingham and Crowthorne, and in an area where there is a high risk of coalescence between Finchampstead North, Pinewood (Crowthorne) and Wokingham."

"The settlement boundary has been drawn around the edge of the existing built up area in order to maintain the identity of the settlement. The site is located outside the identified settlement as it has a much more open and countryside appearance than the identified settlement, despite being on the urban fringe."

Although the proposal appears to conform with Policies WOS1(i) and WOS5(a) which encourage development on brownfield sites in preference to greenfield sites, it is the Council's belief that, notwithstanding the use of part of the site for car storage, the site is essentially countryside in character. Only a small proportion of the site can be considered as previously developed. Therefore, development would have a larger impact on the area and be more visually prominent in the landscape.

The proposal should be tested against Policy WBE11 to ensure that it would not result in the loss or damage to the trees protected by Preservation Orders along the western boundary.

It is also important to consider PPG3 (2000), which stresses the importance of sustainable development by maximising the re-use of previously developed land

within the urban area. Paragraph 30 of PPG3 also stresses that in identifying sites for allocation, local authorities should *'follow a sequence, starting with the re-use of previously-developed land and buildings within urban areas identified by the urban housing capacity study, then urban extensions, and finally new development around nodes in good public transport corridors'.* As this proposal is outside of the urban area it should only be considered following the re-use of previously developed land within the urban area.

In conclusion, there are several policy objections to this application which are not outweighed by any exceptional circumstances. Until the Inspector's Report is released at the end of the year, the above proposal should be assessed under the current local plan policies.

(A copy of the written representation on this site can be found at G:\Andrew\WRITTENREP1)

Debra Hammond
Policy and Plans
23rd July 2001

F.A.O Angela Odell
- Development Control -

Policy and Plans Consultation

PLANNING SERVICES	HPT
IROL	TLS
DC	ENF
APP	
GS	

17 DEC 2001

COPIES TO:	ACK:
	FILE:

Date: 17/12/01
Case Officer: Angela Odell
Location: 6 Johnson Drive, Finchampstead, Wokingham
Proposal: Outline application for the redevelopment of the site from car storage to provide 48 dwellings including proportion of affordable housing.
Application Number: O/2001/5276
Applicant: Cala Homes South Ltd C/O Chancellors Town Planning

---

The Policy and Plans comments on the previous application on this site (O/2001/4418) are relevant to the current application. Please find attached a copy for your information. The following comments are additional in light of the Inspectors report.

The Local Plan Inspector has identified Finchampstead North as one of the settlements in which only limited infilling and small windfall development should be permitted as it possesses a low range of basic services (a 'Category B' settlement). The Inspector recommends that such settlements should only be considered for development after: (1) previously developed land in Category A settlements has been exhausted, and then; (2) extensions on the edge of Category A settlements have been exhausted. As the site in question is located within Finchampstead North, the Inspector has recommended against housing development on this site.

The Inspector has also expressed concern that housing development on this site would have a detrimental effect on the form and character of Finchampstead North. In addition, the Inspector is not convinced that the replacement of the vehicle storage area with housing would represent any significant improvement.

N.b. The Inspector's comments on this site can be found on page 5-159 in the Local Plan Inspectors Reports.

Debra Hammond

WOKINGHAM UNITARY
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PLANNING SERVICES

Fax Cover Sheet

DATE: 10. 1. 02

TO: Douglas Bond.

FROM: Angela Odell **Planning Services.**

NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING THIS HEADER SHEET: 2

RECIPIENT FAX NUMBER: 01256 703142.

OUR FAX NUMBER: (0118) 974 6484

SUBJECT: 6 Johnson Drive. O/2001/5362

NOTES: Refused last night as per agenda.
Please see attached for negotiations on services & infrastructure.

The existing public transport and cycle facilities would require improving if the development was to go ahead. Contributions would need to be sought towards revenue support of the Finchampstead bus service network as well improving waiting facilities in the vicinity of the site. Similarly contributions should be sought towards developing the cycle network in the area including connecting the site to the nearby Round Berkshire Route.

To allow for easy pedestrian and cycle access the site would be improved with a pedestrian/cycle link into the northern part of Tomlinson Drive. Each residential unit should also provide easily accessible covered secure cycle storage.

I attached additional comments made by Patrick Lingwood regarding cycle and pedestrian friendly junction details.

Stephen Kempka
Senior Transport Planner
Ext. 6488

Angela Odell

From: Tim.Charlesworth@Thameswater.CO.UK
Sent: 06 December 2001 16:37
To: Keith Greaves
Cc: angela.odell@wokingham.gov.uk
Subject: Re: Outline Planning Application - 6 Johnson Drive, Finchampstead [Virus Checked]

Planning app O.2001.5276.doc

Dear Keith

Many thanks for the copy of your letter. You may be assured that I am completely opposed to the application for 48 houses on this site, and you have my full support on this matter, as previously.

Whilst, I am opposed to the appeal on the previous application, I am sure that you appreciate the matter is out of our hands once it goes to appeal. Our planning professionals will present the Council's case to the planning inspector (who is employed by the DEFRA), but we cannot do anything else to influence this decision. Nonetheless, I am reasonably confident that the appeal will be rejected.

best regards

Tim Charlesworth

"Keith Greaves" <Keith.Greaves1@btinternet.com> 04/12/2001 09:33

To: <timc@exec99.net>
cc:
Subject: Outline Planning Application - 6 Johnson Drive, Finchampstead [Virus Checked]

I am sure you are aware that another application for outline planning permission has been received for the above site, this time it is for 48 houses. Attached, for your information, is a copy of our letter opposing this application.

I understand that the previous application for 30 houses is about to go to appeal, I hope that we can count on your support in getting this and the new application refused.

Keith & Jean Greaves
(See attached file: Planning app O.2001.5276.doc)

Thames Water Plc., Registered Office 14 Cavendish Place, London W1G 9NU.
Registered No. 2366623
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www.thames-water.com

HIGHWAYS CONSULTATION SHEET

From: Angela Odell **Date:** 19 July 2001

Application Number: O/2001/4418

Proposal: Outline application for the redevelopment of site from car storage to provide 30 dwellings including proportion of affordable housing.

Parish: FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH

Site Address:
6, Johnson Drive, Finchampstead, Wokingham.

Applicant:
Cala Homes South Ltd C/O Chancellors Town Planning.

Your observations are required in respect of this application within **7 days** of the above date.

✓ below as applicable;

1) ☐ Recommend refusal for the reason(s) **stated below**;
2) ☐ Recommend approval but with condition(s) & reason(s) **stated below**;
3) ☐ Recommend approval with **no** condition(s) or reason(s).

Comments As Per Case Report 14th Nov. 01.

Signed: _____ **Print name:** _____

999/104/001.002

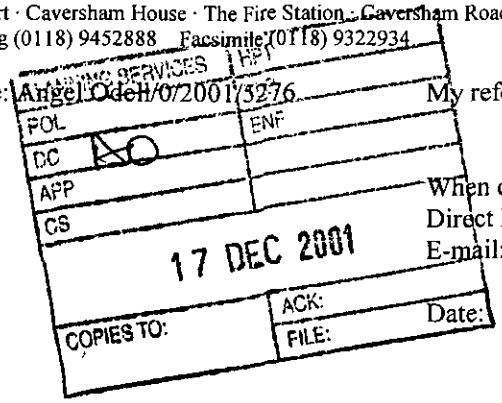
ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE



50988

Operations Support · Caversham House · The Fire Station · Caversham Road · Reading · Berkshire · RG1 8AA
Telephone Reading (0118) 9452888 Facsimile (0118) 9322934



Your reference: Angel Odell/07/2001/3276

My reference: OSO/JI/Wat 99
(please quote on all correspondence)

When calling ask for: Mr P Banks
Direct Line: (0118) 932 2937
E-mail: banksp@rbfrs.co.uk

Date: 12 December 2001

Dear Madam

6 Johnson Drive, Finchampstead, Wokingham

I can confirm the site layout does not show compliance with the Building Regulations 1991 Approved Document B, B5 Access and Facilities for the Fire Service.

I also confirm that fire hydrants, probably only one, will need to be provided, possibly as a developers contribution within this proposed development. Detailed locations will be confirmed under consultation, required by Section 16 of the Fire Service Act 1947, with the water undertaking.

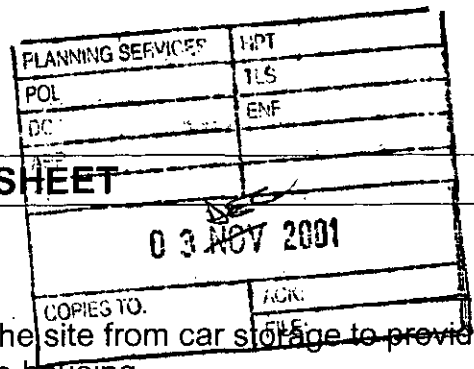
Yours faithfully

P Banks
Operations Support Officer

Ms A Odell
Development Control Officer
Woking District Council
Planning Department
PO Box 157
Shute End
Wokingham
Berkshire
RG40 1WR

FROM: Angela Odell

DATE: 22 November 2001



FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH CONSULTATION SHEET

Application Number: O/2001/5276

Proposal: Outline application for the redevelopment of the site from car storage to provide 48 dwellings inlcuding proportion of affordable housing..

Site Address: 6, Johnson Drive, Finchampstead, Wokingham.

Applicant: Cala Homes South Ltd C/O Chancellors Town Planning.

Your observations are required in respect of this application **by 16/12/2001** .

Objection on the grounds that the proposal would constitute backland development in a Green Gap location. The additional traffic that would be generated from this development would mean additional movement (in excess of 48 cars) onto and from the already busy and over loaded Nine Mile Ride and would create a hazard at its junction with Johnson Drive.

SIGNED: C.S. Clk DATE: 30-11-01

Clerk To Finchampstead Parish/Town Council.

HIGHWAYS CONSULTATION SHEET

From: Angela Odell **Date:** 22 November 2001

Application Number: O/2001/5276

Proposal: Outline application for the redevelopment of the site from car storage to provide 48 dwellings inlcuding proportion of affordable housing.

Parish: FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH

Site Address:
6, Johnson Drive, Finchampstead, Wokingham.

Applicant:
Cala Homes South Ltd C/O Chancellors Town Planning.

Your observations are required in respect of this application within **7 days** of the above date.

✓ below as applicable;

1) ☐ Recommend refusal for the reason(s) **stated below**;
2) ☑ Recommend approval but with condition(s) & reason(s) **stated below**;
3) ☐ Recommend approval with **no** condition(s) or reason(s).

Comments as previously

Layout

- There is to be no access off the outside of the speed control bends.
- Access to plots 5.6.11.+12. is to be by means of a vehicle crossover, not specific junction.

S.J. Alton 10.12.01

Received by Wokingham District Council

Application No: O/2001/5362

Proposal:
Outline application for the redevelopment of car storage land for residential development of 50 dwellings

Location:
Land Rear Of 6, Johnson Drive, Finchampstead, Wokingham.

The application is available for inspection at Wokingham District Council's offices during the following times:

PLANNING DEPARTMENT, SHUTE END, WOKINGHAM TEL (0118) 974 6428
8.30 - 5.00 Monday - Thursday & 8.30 - 4.00 Friday

WOODLEY LIBRARY HEADLEY ROAD WOODLEY 9.30am - 7.00pm Mon, Thurs & Fri. 9.30am - 5.00pm Tues, 9.30am - 1.00pm Saturday and 1.00pm - 4.00pm Sunday. Library closed all day Wednesday. If you intend to view this application at Woodley Library please allow 4 days from the date of this letter for delivery of plans and remember to quote application number O/2001/5362 to enable the library staff to locate the correct information.

Comments should be sent in writing QUOTING THE APPLICATION NUMBER to the Case Officer Angela Odell P.O. Box 157 Council Offices, Shute End, Wokingham Berkshire, RG40 1WR to arrive on or before 31/12/2001. Written comments submitted will become available for public inspection.

In view of the very large number of planning applications and letters of comment received, it will not be possible for an individual reply to be issued to observations made. However any comments will be taken into account when the application is determined and you will be notified of the decision.

Head Planning and Transportation

07 December 2001

WOKINGHAM UNITARY
Aiming for Excellence

Applicationo	Name & Address
O/2001/5362	Mr R Owens 5 Tomlinson Drive FINCHAMPSTEAD RG40 3NZ
O/2001/5362	J. M. Hill Wilmington 16 Tomlinson Drive FINCHAMPSTGEAD RG40 3NZ
O/2001/5362	Mr Maurice B Sandom Mrs Henriette M Sandom 5 Johnson Drive FINCHAMPSTEAD RG40 3NW
O/2001/5362	E & S Ekert 1 Johnson Drive WOKINGHAM. RG40 3NW
O/2001/5362	I A Griffin 4 Johnson Drive FINCHAMPSTEAD RG40 3NW
O/2001/5362	C.A. Hanwood 272 Nine Mile Ride FINCHAMPSTEAD RG40 3NT
O/2001/5362	Mr & Mrs J H Manns Cherrywood 294 Nine Mile Ride FINICHAMPSTEAD RG40 3NT
O/2001/5362	Malcolm Maclean 12 Tomlinson Drive FINCHAMPSTEAD RG40 3NZ
O/2001/5362	Dr S P Wilford Chairman Wokinhgam CPRE 17 Copse Drive WOKINGHAM. RG41 1NA
O/2001/5362	Mr Keith Greaves Mrs Jean Greaves 266 Nine Mile Ride FINCHAMPSTEAD RG40 3NT

WOKINGHAM UNITARY
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O/2001/5362	Brian Lyness and Petitioners 18 Tomlinson Drive FINCHAMPSTEAD RG40 3NZ
O/2001/5362	Anne & Svante Stenbom 25 Tomlinson Drive FINCHAMPSTEAD RG40 3NZ
O/2001/5362	Jenny Brett Phare Mayfield Lower Sandhurst Road FINCHAMPSTEAD RG40 3TH
O/2001/5362	Dr Mark C Lee 20 Tomlinson Drive FINCHAMPSTEAD RG40 3NZ
O/2001/5362	Mike & Sue Lewis Verandah Cottage 289 Nine Mile Ride WOKINGHAM. RG40 3NS
O/2001/5362	P M & B J Harrall 14 Tomlinson Drive WOKINGHAM. RG40 3NZ
O/2001/5362	Mr & Mrs M E Allan 22 Tomlinson Drive FINCHAMPSTEAD RG40 3NZ
O/2001/5362	Gary & Sally Levy Gresham Mill 7 Johnson Drive FINCHAMSPTEAD RG40 3NW
O/2001/5362	Andrew Heath Sylvia Heath 2 Johnson Drive WOKINGHAM. RG40 3NW
O/2001/5362	Mr P J Wooldridge Mrs J D Wooldridge 86 Kiln Ride FINCHAMPSTEAD RG40 3PH

WOKINGHAM UNITARY
Aiming for Excellence

O/2001/5362

David & Angela Jones
Flint Cottage
99a Kiln Ride
FINCHAMPSTEAD
RG40 3PD

Committee letters
sent 03/01/02

O/2001/5362

Nick & Joanna Henry
3 Johnson Drive
FINCHAMPSTEAD
RG40 3NW

O/2001/5362

Mrs Linda Baker
287b Nine Mile Ride
FINCHAMPSTEAD
Wokingham.
RG40 3NS

App refused letter
sent 16/01/02

WORK SHEET FOR : Angela Odell

Application Number : O/2001/5362

Applicant : Cala Homes South Ltd C/O Chancellors Town Planning.

Location : Land Rear Of 6, Johnson Drive, Finchampstead, Wokingham.

Proposal : Outline application for the redevelopment of car storage land for residential development of 50 dwellings

Site Notice Displayed ? :

YES	NO	DATE

Date of Neighbour Notifications : .....

Date of Site Visit : .....

Date Registered : 03/12/2001

Earliest Date for Decision : 31/12/2001

Latest Consultation Date/Site Notice Expiry Date : 31/12/2001

This application will have expired on: 28/01/2002. You need to make a decision 1 day prior to this date for this application to count as determined in less than 8 weeks.

Consultation Responses :

Planning Issues :

Application Number: O/2001/5362

Appraisal :

Recomendation : Approval: ☐ **Refusal:** ☑
(tick appropriate box)

At Committee 09.01.02

Application Number O/2001/5362
Conditions/Reasons for Refusal

No	Std Con	Std Reas	Non Std Conditions / Reasons for Refusal

1. The proposal is unacceptable in principle as it is for residential development of a site outside a settlement boundary and in a green wedge. It would have a harmful and urbanising effect on the character and appearance of the area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan policies C2 and C6, South East Area Local Plan policies STV2 and SC1, to Wokingham District Local Plan (Deposit Draft) policies WOS2, WCC1 and WCC2 and to Planning Policy Guidance Note Nos. 3 and 7.

2. The proposal does not include appropriate contributions to services and infrastructure needs which would result from the proposed development. The proposal is therefore contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan Policies LD6 and R5, South East Area Local Plan Policies SPS1 and SR2 and to policies WOS4 and WR7 of the Wokingham District Local Plan (Deposit Draft).

3. The site represents a significant residential development which is not in a sustainable location which would minimise the need for travel as it is not well located in relation to necessary services, infrastructure and destinations and is not well served by public transport. The proposal is therefore contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan Policies OS1 and H4, Wokingham District Local Plan Policy WOS3 and to PPGs 3 and 13.

4. From the information available, the Local Planning Authority is not satisfied that the proposed development would not cause unacceptable damage to protected species or their habitat. The proposal would therefore be contrary to contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan policyEN8, South East Area Local Plan policy SC10 and to Wokingham District Local Plan Policy WNC4.

5. The proposal would not allow sufficient space for restocking of trees that have been removed, and would also result in the actual loss of a tree at the access junction to the site, which enhance (and did enhance) the visual amenity of the area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan policy C9, South East Area Local Plan policy SBE9 and to Wokingham District Local Plan Policy WBE11.

Informatives

1. You are advised, in compliance with The Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2000, that the following policies and/or proposals in the development plan are relevant to this decision:

   Berkshire Structure Plan Policies OS1, C2, C6, C9, H4, H9, LD5, LD6, EN8 and R5.

   South East Area Local Plan Policies STV2, SC1, SC10, SBE9, SH8, ST3, SPS1 and SR2.

   Deposit Draft Wokingham District Local Plan Policies WOS2, WOS3, WCC1, WCC2, WNC5, WBE11, WH6, WT7, WOS4 and WR7.

RECORD OF SITE VISIT

SITE ADDRESS: Land Rear Of 6 Johnson Drive Finchampstead Wokingham.

APPLICATION NUMBER: O/2001/5362

OFFICER: Angela Odell

DATE OF SITE VISIT:.....

1 SITE/STATUTORY NOTICE DISPLAYED ?

2. DESCRIPTION OF SURROUNDINGS

3. DESCRIPTION OF SITE/BUILDING

4. RELATIONSHIP TO ADJOINING PROPERTIES

5. SITE CONSTRAINTS

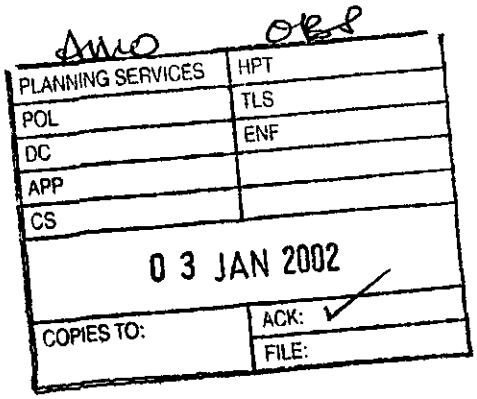
TREES

ACCESS/PARKING

LEVELS

BOUNDARY TREATMENT

OTHERS



Ms A. Odell
Planning Services
PO Box 157
Shute End
Wokingham
RG40 1BN

3 Johnson Drive
Finchampstead
Berkshire
RG40 3NW

18 December 2001

Planning Application Reference: O/2001/5362 – Land to the rear of 6 Johnson Drive

Dear Ms Odell,

We are writing this letter to again register strong objection to the latest proposed housing development in Johnson Drive, planning reference: O/2001/5362.

The main points of our objection are as follows:

1. **Separation of Settlement:** As we understand the current Council policy, the land to the rear of 6 Johnson Drive falls into an area categorised as 'separation of settlement' and so approval for this planning application would be in conflict with the Council Plan.
2. **Road Safety within Johnson Drive:** The proposed plan contains 30 additional dwellings. This means that a minimum of 60 additional vehicles will pass up and down Johnson Drive, daily. There are young children already resident in Johnson Drive (ours included) and we believe that the additional traffic would represent a significant safety hazard for these children. We would like to note that Finchampstead is not supported by extensive public transport services and as a consequence, an estimate of 60 additional cars is an absolute minimum.
3. **Road Safety on Nine Mile Ride:** Access into and out of Johnson Drive currently represents a safety hazard due to a number of factors;
    a. Visibility up and down Nine Mile Ride is restricted due to many protected trees and at certain times, cars overflowing from the car park of Cedar House Surgery
    b. Speed and density of existing traffic on Nine Mile Ride means that access onto Nine Mile Ride from all side turnings represents a challenge. Increasing traffic levels through Johnson Drive will only increase the risk of accidents, particularly at peak commuting times as people are pressured with time constraints and queuing traffic behind them. We believe that the

Council has already acknowledged this to be a problem with the recent work carried out at the junction of Nine Mile Ride and Kiln Ride.

4. **Increased Traffic Congestion:** There already exist severe problems with congestion along Nine Mile Ride during commuting times. Further housing will exacerbate this problem.
5. **Number & Style of Houses**: We believe that the number & style of housing proposed is inconsistent with housing within the surrounding area. Property prices for the Finchampstead area do not typically provide for 'affordable housing' regardless of the size of property so we believe that this development will not support the Council's requirements for further affordable housing.
6. **Parking capacity**: We do not believe that adequate parking has been provided for 30 new dwellings within the scope of this planning proposal. As previously indicated, anywhere between 60 and 90 additional vehicles will be resident in the new development. We believe that cars will regularly be parked kerbside around the existing part of Johnson Drive and it is quite likely that parking will spill out onto Nine Mile Ride.
7. **Loss of Landscape:** The land to the rear of 6 Johnson Drive provides a beautiful woodland view and environment for trees, plants and wildlife. We believe that it would be detrimental to the environment of the general area is this land is re-developed for housing. In particular, it will degrade the outlook from the existing houses in Johnson Drive.
8. **Environmental issues:** The increased traffic and population created as a result of this development will generate significant increases in noise and pollution for existing residents.

In addition, the Planning Committee has recently rejected a previous application against this site (Ref: O/2001/4116) and cited five main reasons for this decision. This revised planning application does not mitigate the continued validity of these five rejection points.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on this planning application.

Yours sincerely

Nick & Joanna Henry

Amo OBS

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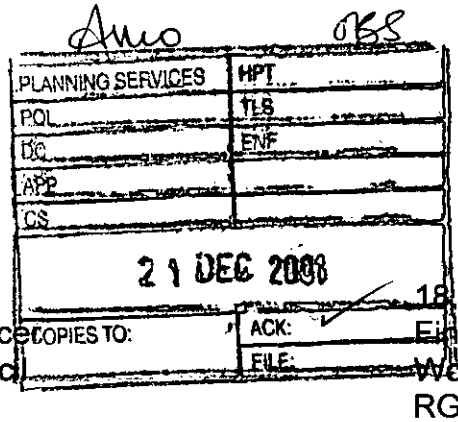

21 December 2001

Ms Angela Odell
Development Control Officer
Wokingham District Council
PO 157
Shute End
Wokingham
RG40 1WR

18 Tomlinson Drive
Finchampstead
Wokingham
RG40 3NZ

Dear Ms Odell

Planning Application Number: 0/2001/5362
Site Address: 6 Johnson Drive, Finchampstead, Wokingham
Proposal: Outline planning permission for the development of site from car storage to provide 50 dwellings including a proportion of affordable housing.

We the Lyness family are vehemently opposed to this development for the following reasons:

- This land is not scheduled for development in the Wokingham District Development Plan and is intended as a green gap between settlements.

- The site is not used for car storage. The impression given by the planning application is that this site is 'brown land'. This is patently not the case. A large proportion of this land comprises a single dwelling with extensive grounds. The owner has obtained permission to store cars in a small designated area, having being able to prove continuous use of this designated area for the purpose. As you are aware, the owner is in ongoing dispute with the District Council regarding the illegal storage of cars outside the designated area and the illegal storage of building materials.

- This site is **green** land, it is home to a wide variety of woodland birds, some quite rare such as the Tree Creeper, and other species. We and our neighbours have seen wild deer grazing and badgers also visit our garden and therefore there must be a badger sett on this land 'used for car storage', should we not be working to protect their habitat rather than destroying it? We have also seen slow worms from this site in our garden.

- If this proposal is allowed it may well set a precedent for the future development of green sites in the Finchampstead area. We are aware of the pressure on the council to meet its housing development targets but we believe that there are many more alternatives to the development of **green** land.

- In an already over developed area this increased development will have a detrimental effect on the natural beauty of the area.

- The proposed development is a monstrous over development and the applicant is using the obvious ploy of providing 'affordable' housing to gain favour with the District Council who are currently under pressure to provide suitable accommodation for key workers such as teachers, nurses, firemen and police e.t.c.

- The development proposes 50 dwellings most of which will have double garages and be owned by two-car families. It is our experience that in this area, the smaller dwellings proposed will also be occupied by two car owners. This will mean somewhere in the region of 120 to 130 additional cars entering and leaving the site by Johnson Drive at peak times. The entrance to Johnson Drive is very narrow and was not designed to take this volume of traffic. This extra traffic will also put intolerable pressure on Nine Mile Ride, which is extremely busy already at peak periods. The nearby Kiln Ride/Kiln Ride Extension crossroads is already extremely dangerous at peak times in the mornings with traffic, schoolchildren waiting for buses and crossing the road and buses stopping. The added danger for schoolchildren catching school buses in this area may well lead to a fatality.

- People from the proposed development working in Wokingham will be turning right into Kiln Ride at this dangerous junction and eventually find there way onto Finchampstead Road, one of the busiest roads in Wokingham, which is at almost gridlocked at peak times. Those person working in Reading or further afield will use the Waterloo Road, Rances Lane/Priest Avenue 'rat run' to gain access to the A329 M and M4, putting more undue pressure on these residential roads.

The owner of 6 Johnson Drive should not be allowed to manipulate the planning rules, by giving the impression that this site is brown land or be seen to profit from this.

Yours sincerely,

Brian Lyness, Caroline Lyness, Alexander Lyness, Mark Lyness

c.c. Andrew McKay MP
Finchampstead Parish Council

Ian Jordan

PLANNING SERVICES	HPT
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18 DEC 2001	
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	FILE:

From: WebComments@wokingham.gov.uk
Sent: 17 December 2001 15:41
To: ian.jordan@wokingham.gov.uk
Subject: Comments on Planning Applications

****

NatureofEmail: Object
ApplicationNumber: 0/2001/5362
Correspondent_FullName: MRS J E FITCH
Correspondent_StreetAddress: 105 KILN RIDE
Correspondent_Address2: FINCHAMPSTEAD
Correspondent_Town: WOKINGHAM,
Correspondent_County: BERKS
Correspondent_PostCode: RG40 3PD
Correspondent_Telephone:
Correspondent_Email:

Comments:

50 DWELLINGS BEHIND JOHNSON DRIVE.

I CANNOT BELIEVE THAT WOKINGHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL WOULD EVEN CONSIDER THE BUILDING APPLICATION FOR 50 DWELLINGS.

AS YOU WILL KNOW I HAVE WRITTEN ON SEVERAL OCCASION REGARDING THE AMOUNT OF BUILDING WORK GOING ON IN THE SURROUNDING AREA.

THERE HAS JUST BEEN THREE HOUSES COMPLETED IN KILN RIDE AND THROUGHOUT THE MONTHS WHILE THESE PROPERTIES WERE BEING BUILT IT WAS A NIGHTMARE. ON SOME DAYS BECAUSE OF DELIVERING OF MATERIALS AND MACHINERY KILN RIDE WAS BROUGHT TO A STANDSTILL. OK YOU MAY SAY THAT THE BUILDERS HAVE TO HAVE THINGS DELIVERED - BUT ITS A BIT BAD WHEN YOU CAN'T GET OUT OF YOUR DRIVE TO GO TO WORK BECAUSE THE ROAD WAS BLOCK AND ALSO THE AMOUNT OF MUD AND CONTRACTORS VANS PARK ALL ALONG KILN RIDE.

THERE HAS ALSO BEEN A HOUSE RECENTLY BUILT ON THE NILE MILE RIDE YET AGAIN THE ROAD WAS AT A STANDSTILL.

THIS IS ONLY 3 HOUSES IN KILN RIDE AND ONE ON THE NINE MILE RIDE.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE NILE MILE RIDE IF YOU AGREE TO THIS PLANNING IT WILL COME TO A STANDSTILL AS THIS ROAD IS VERY BUSY AT THE BEST OF TIMES.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF YOU AGREE TO 50 HOUSES, MATERIALS AND MACHINERY AND CONTRACTORS FOR THIS AMOUNT OF HOUSING IS ABSOLUTE CRAZY.

RECENTLY YOU DID ALL THE PAVEMENTS IN KILN RIDE, HAS SOMEONE DRIVEN DOWN KILN RIDE BECAUSE THE ROAD IS AN ABSOLUTE DISGRACE - BUT MOST OF THIS IS CAUSE BY MORE HOUSES BEING BUILT WHICH OBVIOUSLY MEANS MORE CARS.

AS I HAVE SAID TIME AND TIME AGAIN KILN RIDE AND THE SURROUNDING AREA USE TO BE LOVELY IT WAS A PLEASURE TO LIVE IN THE AREA, BUT ALL WE HAVE NOW IS MORE BUILDINGS, MORE CARS, BROKEN GLASS ON THE PAVEMENTS ETC.

I URGE YOU TO SERIOUSLY CONSIDER THE REFUSAL ON THIS PLANNING APPLICATION.

NOT ALOT ELSE I CAN SAY ON THE MATTER.

WOKINGHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND HOUSING

MEMORANDUM

To: Angela Odell
Development Control

Your Ref: O/2001/5362

From: John Mullaney
Environmental Heath

My Ref:

Date. December 18, 2001

PROPOSED: DEVELOPMENT OF 50 DWELLINGS

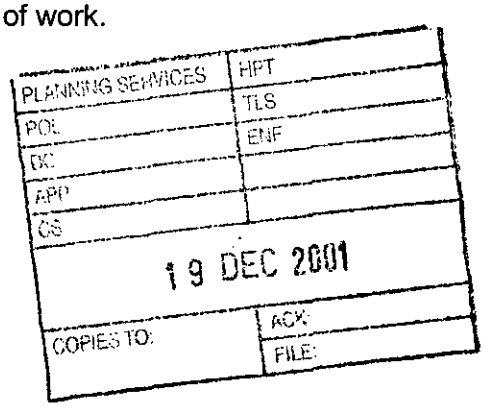
LOCATION: 6 JOHNSON DRIVE, FINCHAMPSTEAD

These proposals have been evaluated and I have no environmental health objections to the application but would recommend the following conditions be attached should planning consent be granted:

(i) The ground conditions on the site must be subject to a detailed investigation to establish their suitability for the proposed end use. A historical investigation, sampling and analysis of current soils, site assessment and method statement to remedy any contamination must be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and carried out prior to the commencement of any other works in relation to any development on the site. The Local Planning Authority is to be consulted at all key stages in this investigation process.

(ii) Standard planning condition C070 regarding hours of work.

JOHN MULLANEY
SENIOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND HOUSING



Education and Cultural Services Memorandum

To: Angela Odell **From:** Lisa Jarvis

Re: O/2001/5362 **Date:** 14 December 2001

6 Johnson Drive, Finchampstead

Following your memorandum on the above site please find our observations below.

The development proposes a total of 50 units. The standards adopted by the Council require that a development of this size should provide 0.53 ha of open space on site.

The outline illustrative planning layout indicates that 0.50 ha of open space is proposed. This figure is acceptable, but we would require the figure to be included within any section 106 agreement so that it is fixed prior to a detailed application. The agreement would also require the developers to lay out the open space, maintain for a period of 12 months, prior to transfer and provide a commuted sum for maintenance.

For a development of this size we would also require the provision of a LEAP (Local Equipped Area for Play) on site, particularly if there is no existing provision within the area to serve the development, which is the case for this site.

The illustrative layout does propose a children's play area. However this does not currently meet our adopted standards. The play area needs to be a minimum of 400m2 and to be at least 20m away from the boundaries of the nearest residential properties. The plan needs to be amended accordingly and these requirements also included within a section 106 agreement linked to the outline planning permission.

The developers should procure the play area to Wokingham District Council approved specifications. A commuted sum for maintenance will need to be provided when transferred to WDC.

We would also require some teenage facilities to be provided on site by the developers.

Please keep us updated on the progress of the application.

Lisa

FROM: Angela Odell

DATE: 07 December 2001

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0 3 JAN 2002

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FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH CONSULTATION SHEET

Application Number: O/2001/5362

Proposal: Outline application for the redevelopment of car storage land for residential development of 50 dwellings.

Site Address: Land Rear Of 6, Johnson Drive, Finchampstead, Wokingham.

Applicant: Cala Homes South Ltd C/O Chancellors Town Planning.

Your observations are required in respect of this application **by 31/12/2001** .

Objection on the grounds that the proposal would constitute backland development in a Green Gap location. The additional traffic that would be generated from this development would mean additional movement onto and from the already busy and overloaded Nine Mile Ride and would create a hazard at its junction with Johnson Drive. This site has been recommended by the Planning Inspectorate in the Draft Local Plan, as one of the sites in Finchampstead that should remain undeveloped.

SIGNED: C.S. Cla DATE: 28-12-01

Clerk To Finchampstead Parish/Town Council.

5 Johnson Drive
Finchamstead
Berkshire
RG40 3NW

Tel/Fax. 0118 9328717

12th December 2001

For attention Angela Odell - Planning Officer

Re: Application Number : 0/2001/5362

AMO OBJ
PLANNING SERVICES | HPT
POL | TLS
DC | ENF
APP |
CS |
19 DEC 2001
COPIES TO: | ACK: ✓
FILE:

Site Address : 6 Johnson Drive, Finchamstead
Proposal : Development of site from car storage land for residential development of 50 dwellings.

We, Mr Maurice B Sandom and Mrs Henriette Sandom , who reside at 5 Johnson Drive, Finchamstead are firmly against the application to construct 50 dwellings at 6 Johnson Drive, for the following reasons :

The number of houses is excessive for the area and location
These houses would cause overlooking of existing housing and the overlook from existing houses would deteriorate

Nine Mile Ride and surrounding roads are already congested in peak periods and the uncontrolled speed limit on Nine Mile Ride is a potential accident black spot which would be further aggravated by increased traffic volumes entering and exiting Nine Mile Ride which this development would cause

There presently exists a severe safety hazard when exiting Johnson Drive for entry onto Nine Mile Ride resulting from a large tree on the left corner of Johnson Drive which obscures visibility of approaching fast moving traffic

Severe peak traffic congestion and long term noise and pollution would increase

Water utility provision would be inadequate as the water pressure in Johnson Drive is already low and variable to poor

We also understand that this development would breach the "separation of settlements" for the local plan

We object even more strongly against this application than against applications 0/2001/4418 and 0/2001/5276 because the increased density of dwellings would now even further exasperate our points of objection listed as above.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Maurice B Sandom

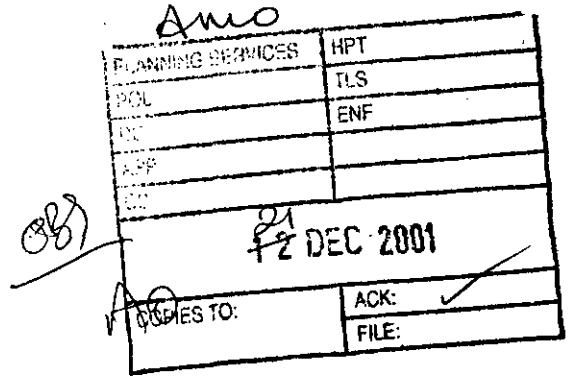
Mrs Henriette M Sandom

Copies to:

Steve Auton - Highways Officer
Ann Ballard - Tree Officer

Ian Jordan

From: WebComments@wokingham.gov.uk
Sent: 21 December 2001 00:37
To: ian.jordan@wokingham.gov.uk
Subject: Comments on Planning Applications



****

NatureofEmail: Object
ApplicationNumber: O/2001/5362
Correspondent_FullName: Anne & Svante Stenbom
Correspondent_StreetAddress: 25 Tomlinson Drive
Correspondent_Address2: Finchampstead
Correspondent_Town: Wokingham
Correspondent_County: Berks
Correspondent_PostCode: RG40 3NZ
Correspondent_Telephone:
Correspondent_Email: anne.stenbom@siemens.co.uk

Comments:

We strongly object to the proposed development at 6 Johnson Drive for the following reasons:

Density:
The number of dwellings planned is by far in excess of any sensible limits in a residential area which is green and peaceful and part of the rural community for which Finchampstead is (still) reknowned.

Traffic:
The density of the proposed development will impact local traffic safety. An additional 50 dwellings would mean a devastating increase to volume on Nine Mile Ride, where capacity has long surpassed safe and acceptable level at peak times.

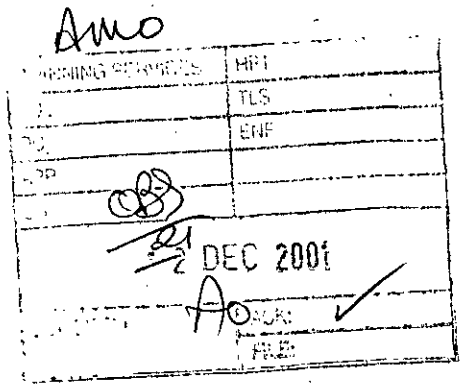
Noise, disturbance, loss of privacy:
In addition, the effect on the environment in terms of air pollution and noise would be considerable. The residents of numbers 12 to 22 Tomlinson Drive would be particularly affected. Any development would cause loss of privacy and great disturbance from the noise of traffic entering and exiting site.

Enforcement of Planning Decisions
As we are informed by our neighbours whose property abuts the proposed site for development, there have been difficulties with the landowner for a number of years. Car storage was never permitted to the extent that has been practised, and enforcement has been lacking. We fear that whatever is decided in the long term, plans will go ahead regardless, as has been the case in the past and the council should take a firm stand to prevent this happening.

Conclusion
Whilst we appreciate that there is ever increasing pressure upon WDC to provide additional housing, particularly in established residential areas such as this, we strongly oppose the proposed development on this site which would severely change the peaceful rural nature of our immediate environment.

In addition we would like to comment on the procedure taken for this application, now the third for the same site within a short space of time. We protest strongly that this repetitive action involves a waste of time and resources for all concerned dealing with it, and opposing it! In spite of this we would like it to be known that we will continue to oppose for as long as is necessary!

Ian Jordan



From: WebComments@wokingham.gov.uk
Sent: 21 December 2001 00:39
To: ian.jordan@wokingham.gov.uk
Subject: Comments on Planning Applications

****

NatureofEmail: Object
ApplicationNumber: O/2001/5362
Correspondent_FullName: Jenny Brett Phare
Correspondent_StreetAddress: Mayfield
Correspondent_Address2: Lower Sandhurst Rd.
Correspondent_Town: Finchampstead
Correspondent_County: Berks
Correspondent_PostCode: RG40 3TH
Correspondent_Telephone:
Correspondent_Email:

Comments:

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In addition we would like to comment on the procedure taken for this application, now the third for the same site within a short space of time. We protest strongly that this repetitive action involves a waste of time and resources for all concerned dealing with it, and opposing it! In spite of this we would like it to be known that we will continue to oppose for as long as is necessary!

TO: **DEVELOPMENT CONTROL**
Angela Odell

FROM: Environmental Design

DATE: 17th December 2001

Location: 6 Johnson Drive, Finchampstead.

Proposal: Outline application for the redevelopment of the site from car storage to provide 50 dwellings including proportion of affordable housing.

Application Number: O/2001/5362 (Layout Drawing: OUT.2A)

In response to your consultation dated 22nd November 2001 for the above application, the arboricultural comments are as follows:

Over the weekend of the 8th and 9th December most of the trees that would have needed to have been removed to make way for these proposals were felled. As a felling licence is required to fell more than 5 cubic metres of timber growing outside of a garden this felling was illegal. The Forestry Commission is investigating this matter and if appropriate will prosecute the perpetrators.

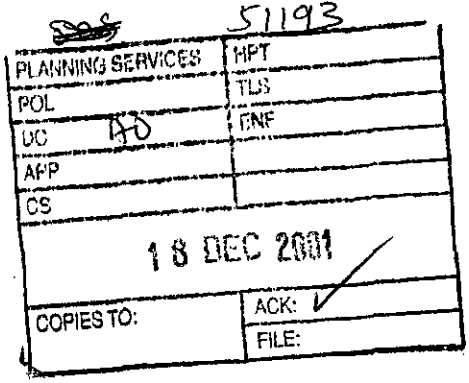
Had these trees not been felled I would have recommended refusing planning permission due to the loss of trees. However, the situation has unfortunately changed somewhat!

Where trees are illegally felled the Forestry Commission can insist that restocking (new planting) take place. On this site 17 mature trees were illegally felled. If prosecuted and found guilty a Restocking Notice will be served requiring that up to 5 trees are planted for each one felled. The proposed site layout allows insufficient space for this to happen and I would therefore recommend that planning permission be refused (Policy WLL7 of the Wokingham District Local Plan Deposit Draft With Amendments).

If for any reason the Forestry Commission decide not to prosecute then they can not serve a Restocking Notice and we will need to withdraw this reason for refusal.

There is also room for improvement in designing a better site layout in relation to some of the trees that still remain on the site.

Neil Etherington
Senior Arboriculturist



17,Copse Drive,
Wokingham,
Berks. RG41 1NA

14 December,2001.

The Chief Planning Officer,
Environmental Services Dept.,
Wokingham District Council,
Council Offices,
Shute End,
Wokingham.

Dear Sir,

APPLICATION NO.O/2001/5362 - PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF 50 HOUSES ON LAND AT 6 JOHNSON DRIVE,FINCHAMPSTEAD.

The land involved in the above application is classified as Green Gap/Wedge in the draft Wokingham District Plan(1997) and as Separation of Settlements/Setting of Settlements in the South East Area local Plan(SEALP). The development proposed is contrary to Policy WCC2 of the draft Wokingham District Plan(1997) and to Policies SC1 and SC2 of the SEALP.

Wokingham District CPRE therefore ask the District Council to refuse this application.

Yours faithfully,

Dr.S.P.Wilford(Chairman,Wokingham District CPRE)

AMO 065

PI	
PDI	LS
DC	ENF
APP	
CS	
07 JAN 2002	
COPIES TO:	✓

Carol Hurst

From: Ian Jordan
Sent: 07 January 2002 09:28
To: Carol Hurst
Subject: FW: Comments on Planning Applications

From: WebComments@wokingham.gov.uk[SMTP:WEBCOMMENTS@WOKINGHAM.GOV.UK]
Sent: Monday, January 07, 2002 9:36:01 AM
To: ian.jordan@wokingham.gov.uk
Subject: Comments on Planning Applications
Auto forwarded by a Rule

****

NatureofEmail: Object
ApplicationNumber: O/2001/5362
Correspondent_FullName: Mrs. Linda Baker
Correspondent_StreetAddress: 287B Nine Mile Ride
Correspondent_Address2: Finchampstead
Correspondent_Town: Wokingham
Correspondent_County: Berks.
Correspondent_PostCode: RG40 3NS
Correspondent_Telephone:
Correspondent_Email:

Comments:

1. This is the 3rd planning application received in the last few months for building on land at the rear of 6 Johnson Drive and each time, the number of proposed houses to be built has increased.

2. The previous objections still apply: the proposed number in this application of 50 houses is objected to because the inevitable increase in cars would exacerbate an already overloaded area. Access onto the Nine Mile Ride is already difficult, and the increase would only make the situation worse.

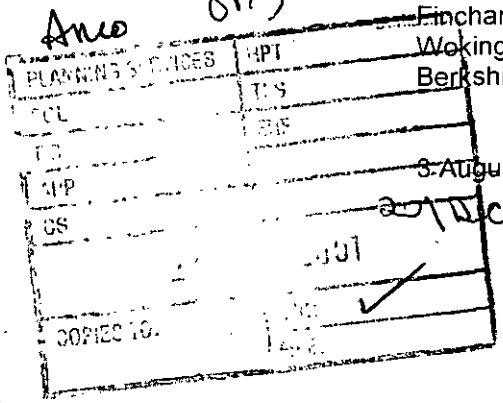
3. The local environment would be adversely affected by the noise and disruption from 50 homes in an area (land rear of 6 Johnson Drive) which has, up to now, only had one household.

4. More pressure would be put on local schools and services and these are already stretched.

Tel: 0118 973 2394

79 Kiln Ride
Finchampstead
Wokingham
Berkshire RG40 3PJ

Anco BNS



8 August 2001
20th December

Angela Odell
Planning Officer
Wokingham District Council
Environmental Services Department
Planning Services
PO Box 157
Shute End
Wokingham Berkshire RG40 1WR

Dear Ms Odell,

Application Number: 0/2001/4418 + 0/2001/5362 + 0/2001/5276 & any more applications
Site Address: 6, Johnson Drive, Finchampstead, Wokingham.
Proposal: Outline application for the redevelopment of site from car storage to provide 30 dwellings including proportion of affordable housing.

Further to a letter dated 19 July from Mr John Mitchell, Development Control Manager regarding the above application I would like to tender my comments and objections to the redevelopment of this site.

Having lived in Kiln Ride for many years now I have become appalled at the amount of rural land in the proximity of Finchampstead disappearing as more and more new houses are being fitted in to whatever small space is left. This is resulting in putting a burden on the infrastructure of the area, which was not originally planned for and is now making the area less desirable to live in for the original inhabitants. In addition, as a result of my property coming into closer proximity to a large housing development I feel that this will have a detrimental effect on its value for which if plans go ahead as outlined I would expect significant recompensation.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs J Lenihan

WOKINGHAM UNITARY
Aiming for Excellence

PLANNING SERVICES

01784
225301

Fax Cover Sheet

DATE: 27.12.01

TO: Douglas Bond.

FROM: Angela Odell **Planning Services.**

NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING THIS HEADER SHEET: 2

RECIPIENT FAX NUMBER: 01784 225301

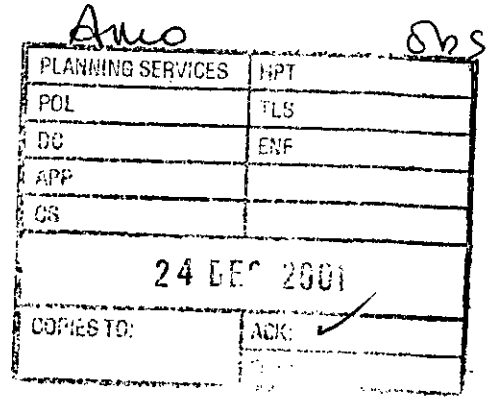
OUR FAX NUMBER: (0118) 974 6484

SUBJECT: 6 Johnson Drive

NOTES:

Dr Mark C. Lee **MB ChB DOccMed DRCOG**

20, Tomlinson Drive, Finchampstead, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 3NZ
Tel: (0118) 973-1965 Fax: (0118) 973-5038 Email: LeeFamUK@aol.com



20 December 2001

Angela Odell
Planning Services
Wokingham District Council
PO Box 157
Shute End, Wokingham
Berkshire
RG40 1WR

Dear Ms. Odell,

Application number O/2001/5362 Site Address 6, Johnson drive

I wish to register my objection to this development on the following grounds:

- It would constitute back land development in a Green Gap location.
- The proposed housing density of the site is excessive
- Some of the proposed housing would be out of keeping with the rest of the housing in the immediate vicinity.
- There would be a loss of amenity to householders living adjacent to the proposed development.
- The considerable extra traffic generated would exacerbate the existing congestion and safety problems in this area

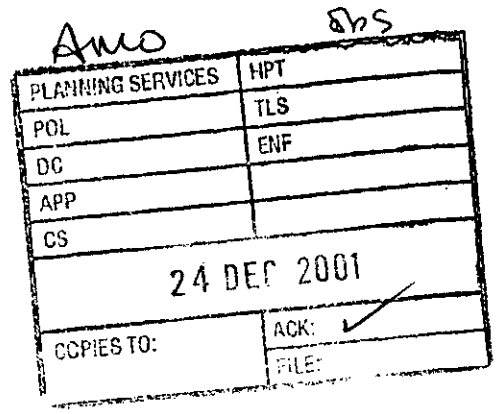
Yours sincerely,

Mark Lee

Mark C. Lee

Dr Mark C. Lee **MB ChB DOccMed DRCOG**

20, Tomlinson Drive, Finchampstead, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 3NZ
Tel: (0118) 973-1965 Fax: (0118) 973-5038 Email: LeeFamUK@aol.com



20 December 2001

Angela Odell
Planning Services
Wokingham District Council
PO Box 157
Shute End, Wokingham
Berkshire
RG40 1WR

Dear Ms. Odell,

Application number O/2001/5276 Site Address 6, Johnson drive

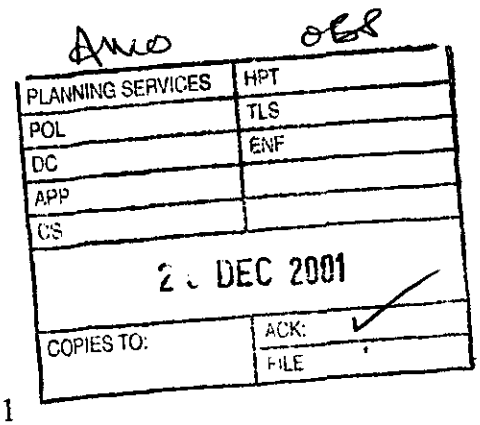
I wish to register my objection to this development on the following grounds:

- It would constitute back land development in a Green Gap location.
- The proposed housing density of the site is excessive
- Some of the proposed housing would be out of keeping with the rest of the housing in the immediate vicinity.
- There would be a loss of amenity to householders living adjacent to the proposed development.
- The considerable extra traffic generated would exacerbate the existing congestion and safety problems in this area

Yours sincerely,

Mark Lee

Mark C. Lee



266 Nine Mile Ride
Finchampstead
Wokingham
Berkshire RG40 3NT

17th December 2001

Ref: Angela O'Dell
O/2001/5362

Dear Ms. O'Dell

Application Number: O/2001/5362
Site Address: 6 Johnson Drive, Finchampstead, Wokingham
Proposal: Outline application for the redevelopment of car storage land for residential development of 50 dwellings

Thank you for your letter dated 7th December concerning yet another outline planning application for the above site, this time showing a 66% increase in the volume of houses applied for in the original application No O/2001/4418.

We strongly oppose this application for the following reasons: -

- The application seems to be outside the structure plan and will only increase the urbanisation of what is largely a rural area. Although the site is currently used for car storage it is still technically a green field site.

- From the plans the development of the site off Johnson Drive would appear to be the thin end of the wedge, and will only create a precedent for further development eastwards towards Range Road and beyond. Something, which the local eco-structure is unable to support.

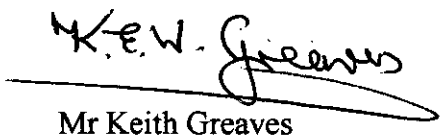
- The section of Nine Mile Ride between California Crossroads and Kingsmere Roundabout is a very busy and dangerous length of road. Drivers frequently ignore the 40 mph speed limit and there have been several accidents around the Kiln Ride junction. Road safety measures to deal with this are long overdue. Any increase in the number of houses would mean an increase in the number of vehicles already using this road and public transport is so poor in this area that it does not provide an alternative solution.

- Schools in Finchampstead are already overcrowded and an increase in the number of children "bussed" to Secondary schools in Wokingham, which are also overcrowded, will only aggravate the already congested roads.

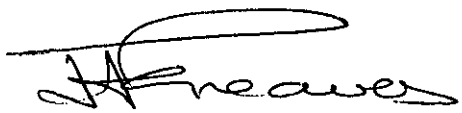
- The amount of open land is disappearing very quickly and this can only serve to destroy the quality of life in Finchampstead.

We hope you will consider these comments and reject the application.

Yours sincerely



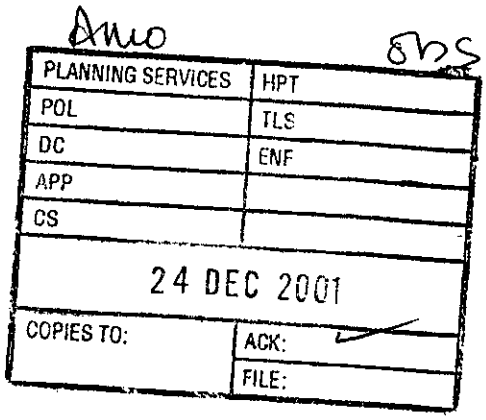
Mr Keith Greaves



Mrs Jean Greaves

Ms A O'Dell
Development Control Officer
Environmental Services Department
Planning Services
P.O. Box 157
Shute End
Wokingham,
Berkshire RG40 1WR

14 Tomlinson Drive
WOKINGHAM
Berks. RG40 3NZ



PMH/BJH
20 December 2001

Angela O'Dell
Planning Department
Wokingham District Council
Council Offices
Shute End
WOKINGHAM
Berks.

Dear Ms. O'Dell

APPLICATION No. 0/2001/5362

We wish to object to the proposed development.

Whilst we appreciate that the application is only outline, this is surely the opening gambit to the overall development.

We are concerned that the proposed development will further increase the amount of traffic onto an already very busy Nine Mile Ride. Furthermore, there would be further congestion in the area and in particular the 'rush hour' in the immediate vicinity and roads into Wokingham and Bracknell.

We are also concerned that should such a development be approved, it would open the flood gates by creating a precedent for further developments off Nine Mile Ride and Kiln Ride as there are several properties in the area which would be ripe for development in a similar nature .

Having viewed the proposals we would also like to make the following comments. The proposed density is too high and affordable housing in this area would not be appropriate. There were many substantial trees on the site but on Saturday 8 December the majority of these trees were felled. Either the present owner or Cala Homes had arranged to have these trees removed pending planning consent. There now being no trees they cannot be preserved. We trust that this does not mean that the Local Authority has 'done a deal' on this site. We are at present screened by Leylandii trees and would ask that these be retained.

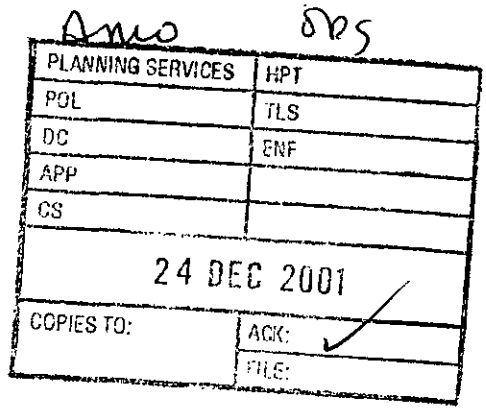
Additionally, we understand that there may be a badgers sett on this ground and as such, being a protected species this should also be borne in mind when considering the application.

Our property backs onto 6 Johnson Drive and as such we are concerned at the proposed closeness of the proposed houses to our boundary. We did not purchase our house on the basis that one day we would have 48 houses in our back garden and we are sure that such a development would have a detrimental affect on our property's visual amenity and market value.

Yours sincerely,

P.M. & B.J. HARRALL

22 TOMLINSON DRIVE, FINCHAMPSTEAD
WOKINGHAM, BERKSHIRE RG40 3NZ



20 December 2001

Your ref: Angela Odell/O/2001/5362

Environmental Services Department
Planning Services
Wokingham District Council
Shute End
Wokingham
RG40 1WR

Dear Sir/Madam

Application Number: O/2001/5362
Site Address: 6 Johnson Drive, Finchampstead, Wokingham
Outline application for 50 dwellings

Further to the Council's letter dated 22 November 2001, we object to the above application and have the following comments to make:-

1. We understand that this site is outside a settlement boundary and in a green wedge, any development on this land would have a harmful and urbanising affect on the character and appearance of the area. An outstanding outline application for 30 houses on the same site was objected to by, amongst others, Finchampstead Parish Council and the Council for the Protection of Rural England, we would ask the Council to refuse this application in order to preserve our green areas, trees, foliage and wild life. We also understand that a recent report excludes Finchampstead North as an area to be considered for new housing.

2. Only a small area of the site has Certificate of Lawful Use, the remainder has an Enforcement Order placed upon it, which was upheld at Appeal.

3. If allowed, this could add in excess of 70-80 vehicles to a heavily congested area, and is in close proximity to the Nine Mile Ride/Kiln Ride accident blackspot.

4. If development of this site were permitted, it could encourage an influx of similar applications, as there are many such sites in the surrounding area.

5. The site has a large drainage ditch running directly behind the rear of our property and numbers 20, 18, 16, 14 and 12 Tomlinson Drive. The water from this ditch drains directly into a pond on land next door to us belonging to a property on Kiln Ride. We frequently suffer flooding to our rear garden from this pond, and as the land owner of 6 Johnson Drive has in recent times raised the level of his land in an area directly behind the pond, with no retaining wall to contain the earth, we are very concerned that not only could the flooding problems become much more severe, but also that some sort of landslip could occur after periods of heavy rainfall.

With regard to the inference that part of this development consists of "affordable housing" we enclose a copy of an advertising feature from the local Property Paper showing "affordable" accommodation with prices starting at £152,500 for a two bedroom flat in a cheaper area than Finchampstead, so the word "affordable" is very misleading.

We would also like it to be noted that tree fellers set to work in typical 'cowboy builder' style on a Saturday when council action would not be possible, and felled several beautiful very large, old trees from the site.

As the owners of the site have clearly been breaking planning regulations for many years, and the Planning Department are well aware of this, it would seem most unjust that they be allowed to profiteer from their actions, and allowing this application to go ahead would encourage others to do the same.

A further matter to be taken into consideration is that a planning application to build 5 properties on an adjoining site to this one was recently refused on Appeal, one of the reason being that it was partly to be built on a 'green area'.

We would be grateful if our objections could be taken into consideration.

Yours faithfully

M & E Allan

M & E Allan (Mr & Mrs)

floor with an en-suite to the master, a (01276) 609500.

Affordable living in Bracknell

AT LAST some reasonably priced property within a stone's throw of Bracknell.

Wokingham estate agency Connell is marketing Braeside, which is situated in Binfield and within a short distance of The Coppice Beech Hotel.

It is a Key Properties Ltd development of 30 apartments and duplexes designed with a European concept in mind.

The construction details are drawn from many European countries and each property consists of carefully planned space, fitted kitchens and stylish bathrooms.

They have been built by using efficient energy saving low maintenance products and materials throughout.

There is a choice of one or two-bedroom accommodation and prices, as an example, for a ground floor two-bedroom apartment start at £152,500.

A visit to the on-site sales office will give you more idea of the choice on offer.

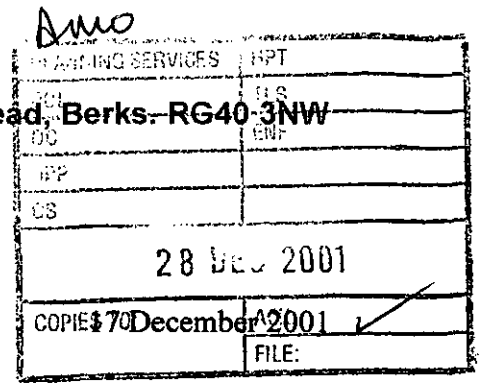
● The sales office is open from 10am to 5pm, seven days a week. Alternatively, call Gill Wilson on (01344) 307740, or Connell Estate Agents on (01344) 301911.

VFD 58,337 January-June 2001 ABC 12,471 further copies distributed through the Wokingham Times series. An additional 4,000 distributed to Estate Agents.

www.richard-worth.

Property Paper 22/1/2001

Gary & Sally Levy
Gresham Mill, 7 Johnson Drive, Finchampstead, Berks. RG40 3NW
Tel: 0118 973 0253



Ms Angela Odell
Environmental Services Department
Planning Services
PO Box 157, Shute End
Wokingham
Berks. RG40 1WR

Application Number: **0/2001/5362**
Site Address: **6, Johnson Drive, Finchampstead, Wokingham**
Proposal: **Outline application for the redevelopment of site from car storage to provide 50 dwellings.**

Dear Ms Odell

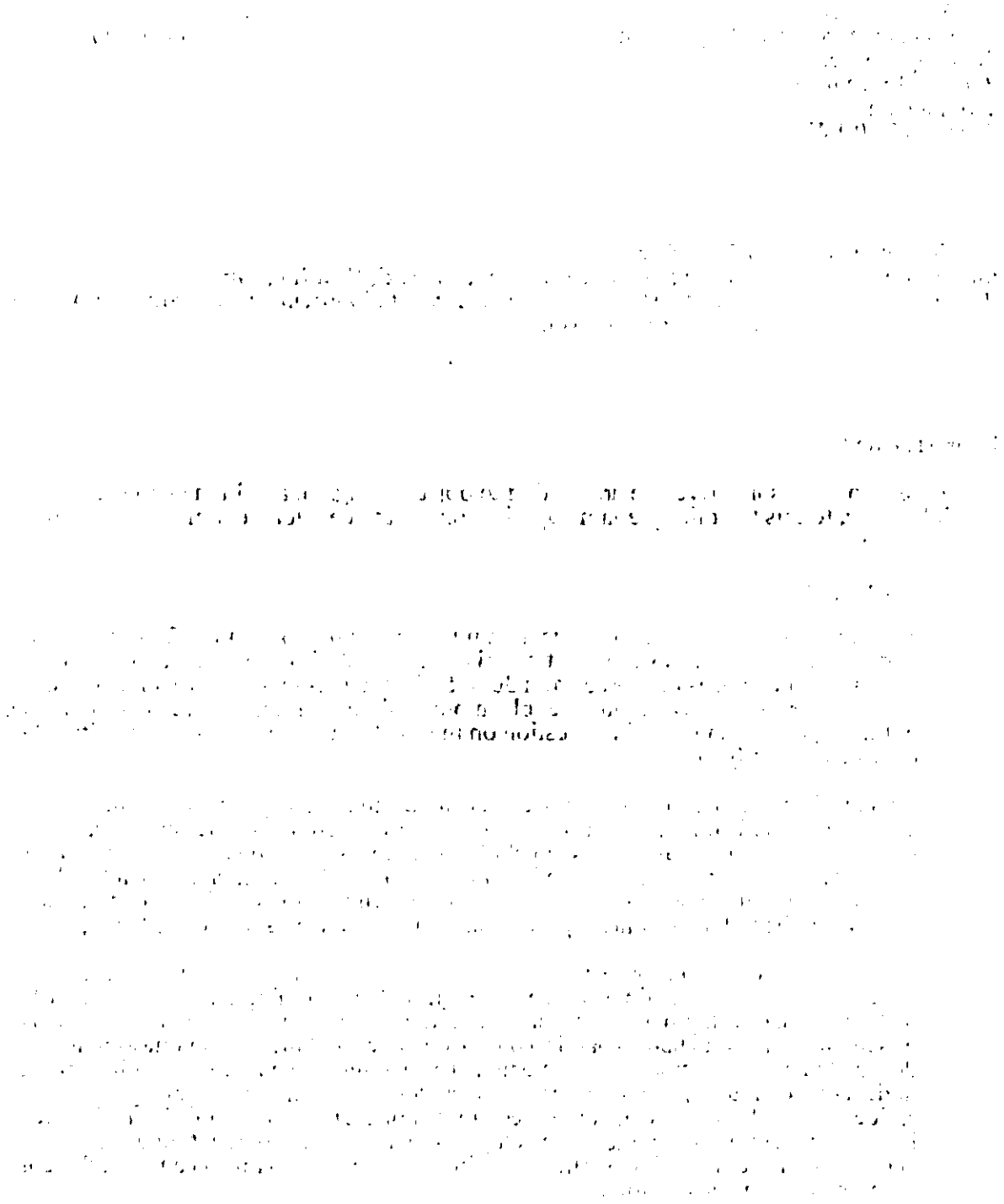
As residents of Johnson Drive, we are writing to object yet again, and in the strongest possible terms, to this the third planning application for the development of the land at 6 Johnson Drive.

The following points apply:

- The objections made against application number 0/2001/4418 and 0/2001/5276 are underlined here. Any development on this land is undesirable and unlawful and increasing the houses proposed from 30 to 50 just makes matters far worse: more housing means more cars, more people, more strain on services, more noise and other pollution, more danger and congestion on the roads, more loss of rural amenity. All of which is totally unacceptable.

- This third application for an increased density of housing is patently a cynical attempt to benefit financially from the wish to have more less-expensive housing in the Wokingham area. But this is not Wokingham, it is not a town and deserves to be treated with the respect deserved of a semi-rural area. If not, Finchampstead and Wokingham will become one large built-up area with no town / village distinction. This would be to the detriment of everyone who lives, works and visits here.

- When we purchased our property 5 years ago, there were applications made to develop this land at that time. These were rejected and nothing has changed to justify making more development in this area acceptable. Quite simply, the outer boundary of settlement for Finchampstead is Tomlinson Drive and the land in question is designated as 'separation of settlements'. This should mean that its amenity value as undeveloped land is secured; otherwise such designation has no meaning. As residents we rely on the Council to keep to its policies. It was on this basis that we invested heavily in our homes here. Why designate an area to be left undeveloped and then consider planning applications for that area? To do this means that there is no purpose to the designation.



Gary & Sally Levy
Gresham Mill, 7 Johnson Drive, Finchampstead, Berks. RG40 3NW
Tel: 0118 973 0253

- The land in question was pastoral land when it was purchased. It has already been unlawfully developed for commercial use and allowing it to deteriorate further is unfair, unreasonable and unlawful. The idea of 'green belt' land, land designated as 'separation of settlements' as we believe it is now termed, had a purpose – to protect our country from over development. This application represents potential blatant over-development and it would be ruinous to whole the area to allow any further development to take place here. Presumably this is not under dispute given the designation of the land, so the point is raised again as to why the application is even being considered.

- The application refers to the replacement of car storage with housing which is misleading given the size of the proposed development and the area of land legally allowed to be used for car storage. This supports our concern that there is a cynical intention to turn this land into an industrial area by stealth, presumably thus increasing its value as potential building land.

- The house types and density of housing proposed would be totally out of keeping with the rest of the housing in the immediate vicinity. What is currently a pleasant semi-rural area would become built-up and urban in feel.

- Additional housing would cause overlooking of existing homes and negatively affect the outlook from our homes.

- Nine Mile Ride is an already busy and fast road (despite the speed limits) and putting even more traffic on this road will be detrimental to the area and all the houses along the road, most of which are family homes.

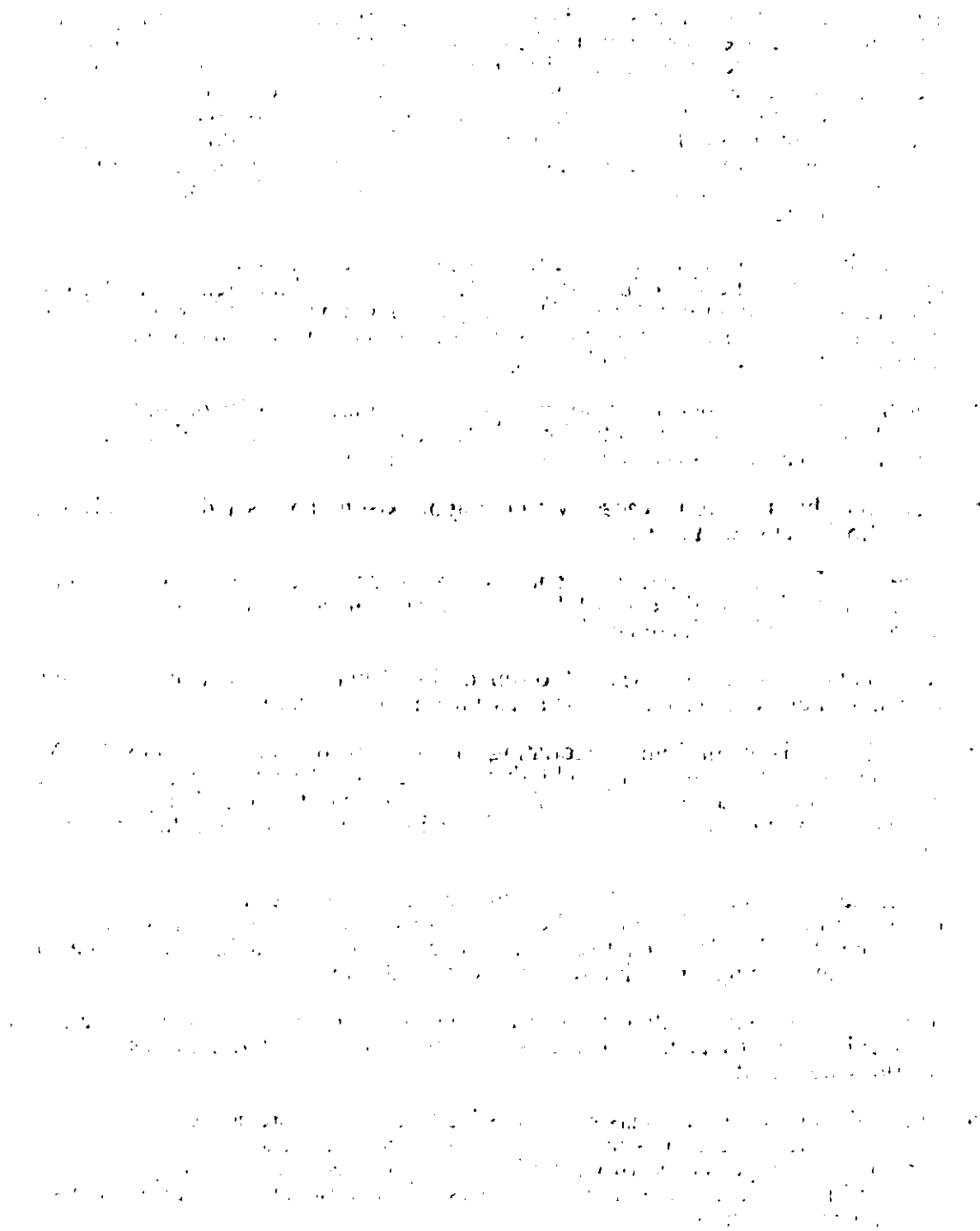
- Johnson Drive is a cul-de-sac built to support just 6 houses; it is patently unsuitable for a large number of properties to use as a main thoroughfare.

- There is an existing difficulty negotiating an exit from Johnson Drive onto Nine Mile Ride, particularly when turning right, due to a preserved Oak Tree on the left at the exit and, at times, parked cars alongside the tree. More traffic negotiating this, especially given the speed of traffic on Nine Mile Ride, would make this an accident black spot.

- Increased traffic on Johnson Drive would cause unreasonable and unacceptable queuing problems; particularly in the mornings as people leave to go to work. This would be of further detriment to the immediate vicinity and would be aggravated by the difficulty joining Nine Mile Ride as mentioned above.

- More housing would result in an unacceptable level of disturbance, pollution and loss of amenity to all residents in the area and a loss of privacy to those houses overlooking the site.

- The utility provision for Johnson Drive is inadequate for more houses:
  - The current water pressure would not support greater usage.
  - The sewerage is handled via a private pump owned and paid for by the residents of Johnson Drive, and dispersal for additional houses through this pump is not an option.



Gary & Sally Levy
Gresham Mill, 7 Johnson Drive, Finchampstead, Berks. RG40 3NW
Tel: 0118 973 0253

- In order to build houses, very many trees will be cleared, some of which are protected (or should be), resulting in a loss of amenity and a further erosion of England's green and pleasant land. We note that there is a concern over this and further note that trees have been felled from this land within the last few days, we believe without the necessary permission. This adds weight to the cynical approach being taken concerning this application - the trees may be a problem so cut them down and risk the consequences. Once cut, well-established trees cannot be readily replaced so the damage is done and the objection no longer valid.

- There will be a considerable danger to wildlife, such as deer and badgers, which would no longer be free to roam the area.

- Building on this land would set an unwelcome precedent for additional building in Finchampstead and greatly detract from the appeal of the area as a place in which people choose to reside and currently enjoy living. We understand that Finchampstead is regarded as being as developed as is reasonable, so further development should not be considered. If this application were to be allowed and the separation of settlements therefore breached, the rot will have been allowed to set in.

In summary we object most strongly to the building of any new houses on the land adjacent to Johnson Drive and Tomlinson Drive believing it would set undesirable and unwelcome precedents, put increased pressure and danger on local roads, over stretch the provision of utilities and totally destroy what is currently a very pleasant area of Finchampstead. An area assumed by those who chose to live here to be protected by the council as guardians of the separation of settlements policy.

Yours sincerely



GARY & SALLY LEVY

2 JOHNSON DRIVE
WOKINGHAM
BERKSHIRE
RG40 3NW

Amo 088

PLANNING SERVICES	IPF
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APP	
CS	
28 DEC 2001	
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22nd December 2001

Angela Odell
Wokingham District Council
Environmental Services Department - Planning Services
P.O. Box 157
Shute End, Wokingham
Berkshire, RG40 1WR

Dear Ms Odell,

RE PLANNING APPLICATION O/2001/5362

With reference to the above planning application, we are registering our dis-agreement with this application on the following grounds:

1. The application is for 50 dwellings. We consider this excessive considering the amount of land available. In addition the style of planned properties is completely out character with the existing properties that already exist in Johnson Drive and the Nine Mile Ride environs. There is also inadequate provision for vehicle parking; inevitably this will cause an overspill into the existing part of Johnson Drive, creating a safety hazard due to the limited width of the road and making emergency access difficult.

2. Johnson Drive has a single road access point to the Nine Mile Ride. Nine Mile Ride already has to cope with an excessive amount of commuter traffic during rush hour periods. This road has a 40 M.P.H. speed limit; in practice due to it's straight nature at this point many vehicles travel in excess of the speed limit making the exit from Johnson Drive already something of a challenge. This situation is exacerbated by the restricted visibility due to a large tree on the Nine Mile Ride. In particular exiting right by motor vehicle into Nine Mile Ride from Johnson Drive can take 3 to 5 minutes during busy periods. If one imagines the proposed development going ahead this would introduce up to an additional 80 + vehicles into this scenario. Inevitably significant traffic queues in Johnson Drive are likely to occur, encouraging motorists to take risks, resulting in a greatly increased risk of a road traffic accident occurring

3. As a consequence of the level of increased of road traffic and queuing that will be caused by this proposed development the expected levels of pollution and noise are likely to rise to unacceptable levels, particularly in the winter time.

4. When purchasing my property in Johnson Drive, we sought professional advice on the likelihood of future developments in the close proximity. We were advised that further developments should not be permitted as the land is designated as 'Separation of Settlements'. We believe therefore that this proposed application is in breach of this designation. In addition there is precedent from a previous planning application for housing development which was rejected.

5. In addition we have noted that tree felling / land clearance seems to have already commenced on the Land at 6 Johnson Drive as evidenced by the noise of chainsaws and smoke from the burning materials produced. Presumably they perceived that the planning process is a mere formality.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Heath

Sylvia Heath

TLS
ENF
28 DEC 2001
COPIES TO:
ACK:
FILE:

David & Angela Jones
Flint Cottage
99A Kiln Ride
Finchampstead
Wokingham
Berkshire
RG40 3PD

24th December 2001

Angela Odell
Development Control Officer
Environmental Services Department
Planning Services
PO Box 157
Shute End
Wokingham, RG40 1WR

Dear Angela

Re: Application Number: O/2001/5362

Please see my earlier objection to application 0/2001/5276 (copy of my letter to your office dated 4th December 2001 attached). The addition of a further 2 houses, which I assume is a rouge to get round the housing density calculation, only reinforces my objection to the above planning application.

I object on all of the grounds mention in my previous communication.

Commonsense must prevail!. The North Finchampstead area is already heavily populated given its rural nature and busy road network. The development identified above will compound what is a growing problem for local residents. I therefore strongly object to the proposed development and ask that the application be rejected.

Yours sincerely

David Jones

David & Angela Jones
Flint Cottage
99A Kiln Ride
Finchampstead
Wokingham
Berkshire
RG40 3PD

4th December 2001

Angela Odell
Development Control Officer
Environmental Services Department
Planning Services
PO Box 157
Shute End
Wokingham, RG40 1WR

Dear Angela

Re: Application Number: O/2001/5276

Following a review of the plans at your Wokingham Office I would like to register my concern regarding approval of the above application on the following grounds:

- The development appears to be situated on land 'not approved' for new building according to the local plan. How can anyone think that 48 dwellings can be accommodated on this plot!. What about the impact it will have on the local community?.
- The damage to existing trees, shrubs and hedges would be considerable. Such a development would markedly change the nature of the local environment.
- The development is not in keeping with existing homes and properties in the immediate and surrounding area. Such intensity of homes detracts from the rural nature for which North Finchamsptead is renowned.
- Are local amenities really able to cope with such an increase in the populous?. I believe that North Finchampstead is already overcrowded and that such high-density housing schemes only compound what is already a serious problem.
- Ninemile Ride is already an extremely busy road. Access to the proposed estate from Ninemile Ride will increase the likelihood of a serious accident.
- Increased levels of traffic will also cause increased vehicle congestion, noise and a greater risk of accidents.
- Such extensive building work will also cause considerable disruption to local residents e.g. noise, increased traffic, dust and debris etc.

Commonsense must prevail!. The North Finchampstead area is already heavily populated given its rural nature and busy road network. The development identified above will compound what is a growing problem for local residents. I therefore strongly object to the proposed development and ask that the application be rejected.

Yours sincerely

David Jones

AMO OBS

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28 DEC 2001	
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	FILE:

Carol Hurst

From: Ian Jordan
Sent: 24 December 2001 12:11
To: Carol Hurst
Subject: FW: Comments on Planning Applications

From: WebComments@wokingham.gov.uk[SMTP:WEBCOMMENTS@WOKINGHAM.GOV.UK]
Sent: Monday, December 24, 2001 12:17:36 PM
To: ian.jordan@wokingham.gov.uk
Subject: Comments on Planning Applications
Auto forwarded by a Rule

****

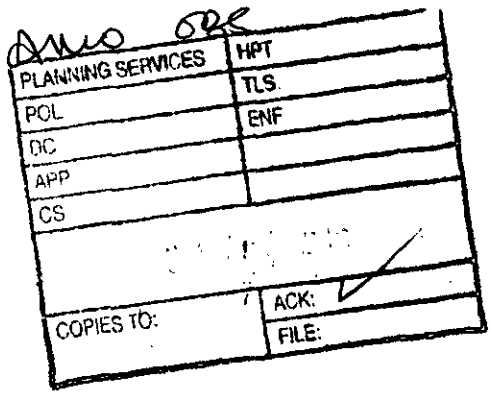
NatureofEmail: Object
ApplicationNumber: O/2001/5362
Correspondent_FullName: MIKE & SUE LEWIS
Correspondent_StreetAddress: Verandah Cottage
Correspondent_Address2: 289 Nine Mile Ride
Correspondent_Town: Wokingham
Correspondent_County: Berks
Correspondent_PostCode: RG40 3NS
Correspondent_Telephone: 0118 973 2664
Correspondent_Email: mikelewisagencie@aol.com

Comments:

We have strong misgivings about this redevelopment.
1. The Safety aspect of yet another road opening onto the Nine Mile Ride. - In peak times it can already take 5 minutes to get off our drive, and between 35 - 40 minutes to drive the 3 miles into Wokingham.
2. Schools - There are no secondary schools in the vicinity, all children between 11 - 16 years have to be bused at council expense to the otherside of Wokingham or Crowthorne.
3. Public Transport is very sparse, one bus per hour during the day, Ownership of private cars is essential.
4. Doctors / Dentists - All surgeries are already packed.
5. Where will this development end. This proposal and the alternative one for the same site - O/2001/5276 leave openings for them to be extended when additional land becomes available.

So our main objection is that the area does not have the infrastructure to cope with a further 75 - 100 cars and up to 100 children.

Please re-consider this development carefully.



86 Kiln Ride
Finchampstead
Wokingham
Berks
RG40 3PH
31.12.01

REF: APPLICATION N0: 2001/5362

Dear Sirs,

I refer to the recent application for 50 dwellings under the above reference at land at the rear of 6 Johnson Drive to which I wish to make objection.

My main cause of objection is the extra number of vehicles, which will be using the already heavily congested Nine Mile Ride during the rush hour both in the morning, and at the end of the day. There have been several recent accidents just down the road at the junction of Nine Mile Ride and Kiln Ride and I am sure this heavy extra influx of expected traffic can only increase the risk of further accidents.

I would also like to point out that the doctor's patient list (which is close by) is already rather full and an extra 150 people (say) would only denigrate the service they currently provide.

I trust you will seriously consider these points when the Council deliberates on this application and trust you will give serious thought to turning it down.

Yours faithfully

Mr P. J. Wooldridge & Mrs J.D. Wooldridge

Angela O'Dell
Wokingham District Council
P.O. Box 157
Shute End, Wokingham
Berks RG40 1 WR

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CS |
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Wilmington
16 Tomlinson Drive
Finchampstead
Wokingham
Berks
RG40 3NZ
Tel : 0118 973 1776
Fax : 0118 973 6894

A Odell, Development Control Manager
Wokingham District Council
Environmental Services Department
Planning Services
PO Box 157, Shute End
Wokingham Berks RG40 1WR

11th November 2001

Your Ref : 0/2001/5362

Dear Ms Odell

Application No: 0/2001/5362 - 6 Johnson Drive, Finchampstead
Outline application for 50 dwellings

I wish to lodge an objection to the above application on the following basis :

1. I understand this area of land is designated to remain green land to provide a break between areas of housing. How this was allowed to be used for commercial purposes seems very strange.
2. Access on to Nine Mile Ride, which is currently very difficult especially in the twice daily rush hours, will be increasingly difficult should this development go ahead with potentially another say, 100 cars trying to emerge on to Nine Mile Ride.
3. Trees have already been felled in this area, despite earlier applications stating they would be preserved, although some do have TPO's on them. This area should therefore be protected from further tree clearance. In addition there are three very large trees at the rear of our property which are subject to TPO's and if these are disturbed during building there is a danger of these becoming unstable.
4. In Tomlinson Drive surface water is currently carried away through a large underground drain built under the front gardens of houses on the right hand side of the road in the newer part of this close. This has to deal with a

substantial volume of water from Nine Mile Ride as Tomlinson Drive joins Nine Mile Ride at a dip in the latter. This is made worse in the winter when drains on Nine Mile Ride get blocked up with leaves. This drain in Tomlinson Drive discharges into an area of land at the rear of No.22. My concern is that if this discharge area is interfered with in any way or surface water from the new development also has to find an outlet in the same area we may experience flooding problems.

5. There will naturally be an increase in noise in this area from a further 50 properties.
6. One of the attractions of this house when we purchased it was that we were not overlooked at the rear. This will change if the development is allowed to go ahead.
7. There is an increasing trend in this area for back-land development and this is putting an ever increasing strain on the local infrastructure.
8. Stating affordable housing will be included is just a sop to planning authorities as in this area, even these houses, if they are ever built, will be out of the financial reach of anyone earning less than say £40,000 unless they can raise a substantial deposit.

Please consider these matters in determining the outcome of this application.

Yours sincerely

J M Hill

Amo 0058

4 Johnson Drive
Finchampstead
Berkshire
RG40 3NW

11 December 2001

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Environmental Services Department
Planning Services
PO Box 157
Shute End
Wokingham
RG40 1WR
Attention Angela Odell

Dear Mrs. Odell

Re: Application Number: 0/2001/5362, Development of 6, Johnson Drive.

I am writing to again object to the proposed development of the land to the rear of Johnson Drive (6 Johnson Drive). The main reasons supporting my objection as previously stated are, as follows (not listed in any specific order):

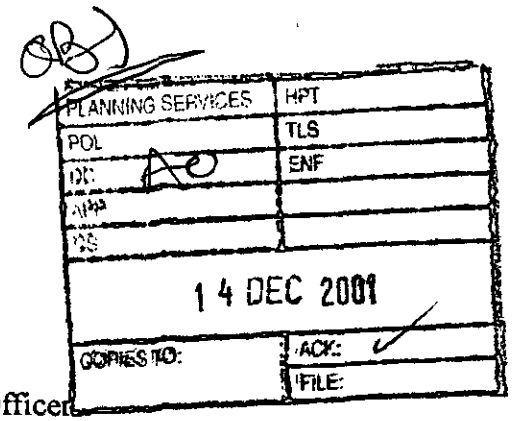
1) The numbers of houses proposed are excessive for this area in Finchampstead.
2) The land is designated as Separation of Settlement only and should not be changed.
3) The Nine-Mile Ride and immediate surrounding area is already far to busy and this new development if accepted by the Wokingham planning office, will create further and unacceptable environmental damage to Finchampstead.
4) There is also danger and difficulty when exiting Johnson Drive at present, the increased volume of traffic and uncontrolled vehicle speeds can only make this bad situation worse.
5) The increase in possible accident risk due to the speed of traffic travelling on the Nine-Mile Ride will increase to unacceptable proportions.
6) The so far pleasant outlook from existing houses overlooking the proposed development will deteriorate.
7) The proposed housing types are way out of character with the area.
8) The existing utility provision is inadequate to support large numbers of further housing.
9) Sewerage disposal through Johnson Drive can not be permitted, as the residents Association legally own the drain and pump.
10) Many trees that may be protected will be removed from the site.
11) This proposed development would set an unwelcome and unacceptable precedent for additional building in the area of Finchampstead.
12) There will also be unacceptable levels of noise and pollution created during and after development completion if the Wokingham planning office grants permission to proceed with this development.

In conclusion, the proposed development of land to the rear of 6 Johnson Drive is not acceptable to the residents of this immediate area of Finchampstead for sound and valid reasons. We expect the Wokingham planning office to reject this and any further proposals to develop this designated settlement separation land.

Yours faithfully



I.A. Griffin



1 Johnson Drive
Wokingham
Berkshire RG40 3NW

Planning Officer
Wokingham District Council
P O Box 157
Shute End
Wokingham RG40 1WR

13th December 2001

Dear Madam

Application No: O/2001/5362
Site Address: 6 Johnson Drive, Finchampstead, Wokingham

We refer to the above planning application for the redevelopment of the above site from car storage to provide 50 dwellings including proportion of affordable housing. We were surprised to see yet another application for an increased number of dwellings especially since the previous application for 48 dwellings had been withdrawn. However, we would like to register our objections to this proposal as follows:

1. We had always understood that this land is designated countryside and for separation of settlement and not for settlement itself.

2. We believe that the number of proposed houses is totally out of proportion to the site area. We are currently in a small, quiet cul de sac of just six detached houses and the number and type of houses proposed would not be in keeping with the existing character of the area. Any development of this size would also seriously deteriorate the outlook we currently enjoy.

3. The amenities, e.g. water, sewage, electricity are already overstretched in our area. We regularly have power cuts and water pressure is low and unpredictable. Sewage would also be a problem since the drain and pump for the existing houses in Johnson Drive is owned and managed by the residents and its capacity is only for those houses.

4. Traffic – we feel that Nine Mile Ride and the surrounding roads are already very heavily used. Trying to exit from Johnson Drive especially during peak times is increasingly problematic with traffic on Nine Mile Ride frequently ignoring speed limits. We would in addition have great difficulty in exiting our own property since to do so currently we have to stop in Johnson Drive in order to close our gates. We are just six houses in Johnson Drive but if the proposed development went ahead this would make it quite dangerous to exit our property and even more so to exit onto Nine Mile Ride. We feel that

5. Johnson Drive would be unable to cope with the extra vehicles that this development could attract once complete which could number from say 50-80 vehicles.

6. We believe that the noise, disturbance and air pollution that this type of development would create would seriously impinge on the amenity and privacy we currently enjoy at our property.

7. Last, but by no means least, we understand that the policy is to preserve trees in this area, a policy we are in favour of. To allow a development of this size and nature would presumably mean that trees would have to be felled which would diminish the attractive woodland that currently surrounds us.

We very much hope that our above comments can be taken into consideration prior to determining the application.

Yours faithfully,

R & S Eckert

c.c. The Highways Officer

Area 03

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12 DEC 2001

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272 Nine Mile Ride
Finchampstead
Wokingham
Berks. RG40 3NT

11th December, 2001

Angela Odell
Wokingham District Council
Environmental Services Dept.,
Planning Services, PO Box 157,
Shute End, Wokingham,
Berks. RG40 1WR

RE: Application Number : 0/2001/5362

Once again, it is quite unbelievable that this request is even receiving consideration.

The original application was bad enough - 30 new houses I believe - now it's 50! I have heard from local headmasters/mistresses that the local schools are already over subscribed. Another 50 new houses means approx., 75 - 100 more cars using the busy local roads. Once again, you must be aware that the traffic congestion down Nine Mile Ride is already horrendous during rush hour so adding to this problem will create even more frustration and pollution.

We have been waiting years for a sensible crossing to be installed along our particular stretch of Nine Mile Ride, especially as this is where the school buses pick up and drop off children. To have more cars turning left or right out of Johnson Drive will make this an even more hazardous situation for any pedestrian but more importantly, those children. Inevitably more accidents will occur.

If you visit the local Tesco store in Wokingham you can see how even their spacious car park is constantly full (too many households already). The motto seems to be 'see a space, build on it' where will you draw the line?

C. A. Hamwood.

0118 9328717

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	FILE:

5 Johnson Drive
Finchamstead
Berkshire
RG40 3NW

Tel/Fax: 0118 9328717

12th December 2001

For attention Angela Odell - Planning Officer

Re: Application Number : 0/2001/5362

Site Address : 6 Johnson Drive, Finchamstead
Proposal : Development of site from car storage land for reside

We, Mr Maurice B Sandom and Mrs Henriette Sandom , who resid Finchamstead are firmly against the application to construct 50 dw following reasons :

The number of houses is excessive for the area and location These houses would cause overlooking of existing housing a houses would deteriorate

Nine Mile Ride and surrounding roads are already congested uncontrolled speed limit on Nine Mile Ride is a potential acc further aggravated by increased traffic volumes entering and development would cause

There presently exists a severe safety hazard when exiting Jo Mile Ride resulting from a large tree on the left corner of Jo visibility of approaching fast moving traffic

Severe peak traffic congestion and long term noise and pollu

Water utility provision would be inadequate as the water pre low and variable to poor

We also understand that this development would breach the "[illegible] of settlements" for the local plan

We object even more strongly against this application than against 0/2001/5276 because the increased density of dwellings would no[illegible] further exasperate our points of objection listed as above.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Maurice B Sandom

Mrs Henriette M Sandom

Copies to:

Steve Auton - Highways Officer
Ann Ballard - Tree Officer

AMO OBS

PLANNING SERVICES	HPT
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	FILE:

12 Tomlinson Drive
Finchampstead
Wokingham
Berkshire
RG40 3NZ

14th December 2001

Ms Angela Odell
Planning Officer
Environmental Services Department
Planning Services
PO Box 157
Shute End
Wokingham
Berkshire RG40 1WR

Dear Ms Odell,

Application Number: **O/2001/5362**
Site Address: **6 Johnson Drive, Finchampstead, Wokingham**

I object to the above application for the following reasons.

1. The proposed number of houses is excessive and they would be totally out of keeping with the area.
2. Johnson Drive is too narrow to provide adequate access to the proposed houses.
3. Johnson Drive, Tomlinson Drive, Kiln Ride and Kiln Ride Extension all feed onto Nile Mile Ride over a 500m distance and this is already very dangerous at peak traffic times. A serious accident occurred at the intersection of Kiln Ride and Nine Nile Ride around 15 months ago. The increased traffic from 50 houses would make this situation even more dangerous.
4. We already suffer considerable traffic noise and this would increase considerably as the access to the proposed houses will run alongside our rear garden.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

M Maclean.

Malcolm Maclean

Application Number : ~~NEW~~/2001/5362	Map No : 91
Case Officer : AD.	Site Area : 1.74
Valid Date : 3.12.01	Received Date: 03/12/2001

Level : D C Sub-Committee

Description : Outline application for the redevelopment of car storage land for residential development of 50 dwellings

Location : Land Rear Of 6, Johnson Drive, Finchampstead, Wokingham.

Parish : FI Ward : FINorth. 3.12.01 JB.

Applicant : Cala Homes South Ltd C/O Chancellors.

Fee Required: £0 Fee Received: £0 Resubmission 01/2001/5276 w/drawn

Additional: ..... or Refund: .....

Enforcement Section to be notified ☐ (tick if required)

Additional information required for validation;

REASON	NOTES	DATE REQ	DATE RECD
LOCATION PLANS	Scale?		
BLOCK PLANS			
FORMS UNSIGNED			
S.66 MISSING/INCORRECT/ UNSIGNED			
ELEVATION PLANS			
FLOOR PLANS			
NO SCALE OR SCALE IS IMPERIAL			
ENCROACHMENT LETTER REQUIRED			
OTHER			

Is the site in a Conservation Area: ☐ Yes ☑ No If "Yes" which one _____

Is the site a Listed Building: ☐ Yes ☑ No

Is a Statutory Advertisement required: ☑ Yes ☐ No

03.DEC.2001* 5362

CD + XX 03.DEC.2001* 5362

INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

7.12.01. JB.

Building Control

Heritage (Harold Sanders)

Landscape

Trees

Environmental Health

Housing

Leisure & Cultural Services

Public Rights of Way Officer

Property

Policy & Plans

Joint Strategic Planning Unit

Archaeological Officer (BABTIE)

Education

Social Services

Highways

EXTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

Adjacent DPA : _____

Adjacent Parish : _____

SEB

British Gas

Oil pipeline

Transco

Environment Agency

Railtrack

Police Arch Officer

HERITAGE BODIES

The Georgian Group
Ancient Monuments Society
Council for British Arch
RCHME
NRPB (Telecommunications)
Sport England

NEIGHBOURS

S/N + see map (note: no address pt for 291 Nine Mile Ride)

+ all people who sent letters of obj re 0/2001/4418 (as attached)

+ Mr & Mrs K. Brant, Rosewells, Johnson Drive, Nine Mile Ride, Wokingham (= site inside red line)

OTHERS

- CPRE
- R. Barks Fire & Rescue Service (major dev.
- Dinton Pastures

NO PRE APPS

(Green Gap & Wedges Rural Area Countryside)

21.NOV.2001* 5276

Applicationo	Name & Address
O/2001/4418	J E Fitch 105 Kiln Ride Finchhampstead Wokingham Berks RG40 3PD
O/2001/4418	Jason Longley Rose Cottage, 261A Nine Mile Ride, Finchampstead Wokingham Berks RG40 3NS
O/2001/4418	John Dennis 270 Nine Mile Ride Finchampstead Wokingham Berks RG40 3NT
O/2001/4418	Miss Barnes Suntop 290B Nine Mile Ride Wokingham Berks RG40 3NT
O/2001/4418	Owner/Occupier 272 Nine Mile Ride Finchampstead Wokingham Berks RG40 3NT
O/2001/4418	Anne and Svante Stenbom 25 Tomlinson Drive FINCHAMPSTEAD Wokingham Berks RG40 3NZ
O/2001/4418	Owner / Occupier 275 Nine Mile Ride Finchampstead Berks RG40 3NS

03.DEC.2001* ~~5362~~

03.DEC.2001* 5362

O/2001/4418	The Lyness Family 18 Tomlinson drive Finchampstead Wokingham Berks RG40 3NZ
O/2001/4418	Timothy Craig 67 Kiln Ride Wokingham Berks RG40 3PJ
O/2001/4418	Malcolm Maclean 12 Tomlinson Drive Finchampstead Wokingham Berks RG40 3NZ
O/2001/4418	Mrs J Lenihan 79 Kiln Ride Finchampstead Wokingham Berks RG40 3PJ
O/2001/4418	Mr and Mrs M Allan 22 Tomlinson Drive Finchampstead Wokingham Berks RG40 3NZ
O/2001/4418	Alexis and Peter Fraatz Little Acorns 299a Nine Mile Ride Finchampstead Berks RG40 3NL
O/2001/4418	Mr R Owens 5 Tomlinson Drive Finchampstead Wokingham Berks RG40 3NZ
O/2001/4418	Mr/Ms Barnardo 287a Nine Mile Ride Finchampstead Wokingham Berks RG40 3NS

O/2001/4418	Mr and Mrs Greaves 266 Nine Mile Ride Finchampstead Wokingham Berks RG40 3NT
O/2001/4418	Dr Mark Lee 20 Tomlinson Drive Finchampstead Wokingham Berks RG40 3NZ
O/2001/4418	Andrew Heath 2 Johnson Drive Wokingham Berks RG40 3NW
O/2001/4418	Mr & Mrs M Sandom 5 Johnson Drive Finchampstead Berks RG40 3NW
O/2001/4418	J M Hill Wilmington 16 Tomlinson Drive Finchampstead Wokingham Berks RG40 3NZ
O/2001/4418	P M and B J Harrall 14 Tomlinson Drive Wokingham Berks RG40 3NZ
O/2001/4418	Linda Baker 287B Nine Mile Ride Finchampstead Wokingham Berks RG40 3NS
O/2001/4418	Gary and Sally Levy Gresham Mill 7 Johnson Drive Finchampstead Berks RG40 3NW

O/2001/4418

R and S Eckert
1 Johnson Drive
Wokingham
Berks
RG40 3NW

O/2001/4418

Probir Dutt
Bramley cottage
Kiln Ride
FINCHAMPSTEAD
BERKS
RG40 3PD

0/2001/4418

Nick and Joanna Henry
3 Johnson Drive
Finchampstead
Berks
RG40 3NW

03.DEC.2001* 5362

CHANCELLORS

CHARTERED TOWN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

Our ref: DCB/LS

30th November 2001

Wokingham District Council,
Civic Offices,
Shute End,
WOKINGHAM,
Berkshire,
RG40 1BN

Dear Sirs,

LAND AT 6, JOHNSONS DRIVE, FINCHAMSTEAD NORTH
PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Our client's, CALA Homes (South) Ltd have submitted a further outline planning application for residential development at the above site following the recent submission of an appeal on the grounds of non-determination. The reasoning behind this application is to consider a scheme that better respects the characteristics of the site and the Local Authority's requirements on large housing sites.

The planning application is in outline form with all matters reserved except access.

Characteristics of Site

The application site extends to 1.76 hectares and lies on the edge of Finchamstead North. The defined built-up area boundary with residential development abuts the site to the south and west. The site is contained by mature extensive woodland to the north and east. In contrast the site is more open in character and relates very much to the existing built-up area to the south and west. This relationship is also reinforced by the land uses on the site.

The site itself comprises three distinct areas. The southern half consists of the residential curtilage of No. 6 Johnsons Drive (formerly No. 279A Nine Mile Ride). This area extends to 0.87 hectares. The central part of the site has a lawful use (granted by a Certificate of Lawful Use or Development) for the unlimited storage of motor cars. This area extends to 0.49 hectares. The remaining part of the site lies to the north. This triangular area is open and unused in lawful use terms.

01256 703090
45 High Street, Odiham,
Hook, Hampshire RG29 1LF
01256 703142
chancellors.planning@dial.pipex.com

J. C. Woolf MA DipTP MRTPI D. C. B. Bond BA MRTPI M. Chrystal DipTP MRTPI
Chancellors is a trading name of Chancellors Associates. Registered Office: 3 Worcester Street, Oxford OX1 2PZ. Registered in England No. 2114427

The site has direct access onto Johnsons Drive which in turn leads to an appropriate junction with acceptable visibility onto Nine Mile Ride (B3430).

The southern and central parts of the site constitute previously developed land having regard to the definition in PPG3, Annex A.

The site lies within 400 metres of bus stops, 800 metres of a defined Local Shopping Centre and 1.1km of a local school.

Proposed Development

The proposed redevelopment will extinguish a non-conforming lawful use which will enhance the overall visual appearance of the site and surrounding area. The proposed development is limited to the southern and central parts of the site. It is these areas that are characterised by previously developed land. Development confined to this area will not extend housing any further north than that existing to the immediate west in Tomlinson Drive.

Added to this the natural containment of the site will ensure that the proposed development does not impact on the gap between Finchamstead North and outlying settlements to the north and east in either a physical or visual sense. Similarly by confining the proposed development to the previously developed areas of the site the character and appearance of the countryside and the policies that seek to protect it for its own sake will not be harmed.

The proposed development will provide a compatible land use with the surrounding area.

Development Scheme

The proposed development has had regard to the recent guidance published by Wokingham District Council for large sites. In particular:

- A net density of 30 dwellings to the hectare is proposed, consistent with advice in PPG3. This has been achieved in a way that does not compromise the quality of the residential environment of the surrounding area. In particular the proposed layout will not create a harsh change in intensity of development with the Tomlinson Drive scheme to the west. The proposed scheme will create a high quality living environment, yet still make efficient use of the site.

- The proposed development illustrated comprises a mix of 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom units. The proposed mix accords with the Local Planning Authority's Guidance. In particular 1 and 2 bed units comprise 62% of a scheme, against a requirement of at least 45%. The 3 bed units amount to 22%, similar to the requirement for 25%, whilst the 4 bed units equate to 16%, against a requirement for 30%.

- The proposed relationship of the dwellings illustrated on the indicative layout respects the amenities of existing dwellings adjoining the site, in particular those to the south and west.

- In terms of impact on trees, the important trees on the site boundaries are retained within the scheme.

- Discussions have taken place with the recreation and Open Space Officer. The proposal incorporates a 0.5-hectare area of Public Open Space. This meets your Council's requirement for on-site Public Open Space of 4.3 hectares per 1000 population calculated at 2.5 persons per household. This area also incorporates a fully equipped children's play area (400m2). From discussions with Lisa Jarvis of your Recreation Department this level of provision meets the Council's Open Space requirements, whilst in some respects, in particular the children's play area, provides an additional benefit to the existing resident population.

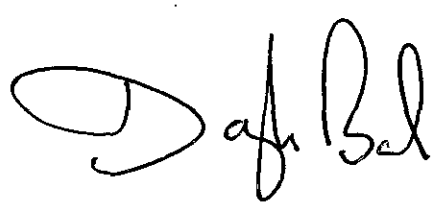
- The applicant's confirm that they are prepared to enter into a Section 106 agreement to secure at least 25% of the net increase in dwellings for affordable housing.

- Similarly the applicant confirms that they are prepared to enter into a Section 106 agreement to pay a financial contribution towards education provision in the district.

To conclude the characteristics of the site, the exceptional circumstances and benefits arising from the redevelopment of this brownfield site and the merits of the proposed development itself confirms that this scheme is acceptable such that planning permission can be granted.

I am happy to discuss any issue arising and if needs be meet your Officers to agree any outstanding issues. In this regard I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours faithfully,



Douglas Bond, BA(Hons), MRTPI

c.c. Chris Law – CALA Homes (South) Ltd.

03.DEC.2001* 5362

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CALA
HOMES

CALA Homes (South) Ltd
Burgan House The Causeway
Staines Middlesex TW18 3PR
Telephone 01784 225300
Facsimile 01784 225301
www.cala.co.uk

CL/lr/569

30th November 2001

Mr M Thorpe
Planning Department
Wokingham District Council
PO Box 157
Shute End
Wokingham
Berkshire
RG11 1WR

Ref: Land at Rosewells, Johnson Drive, Nine Mile Ride, Wokingham

Dear Sirs

Following the withdrawal of application No. 0/2001/5276 please find enclosed our outline application for residential development at Rosewells, Johnson Drive, Nine Mile Ride, Wokingham.

This includes:

6 x Application forms and Certificates B
6 x Indicative layout OUT 2 Rev A, including location plan
6 x copies of supporting letter from Chancellors

I trust these details are all acceptable.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Law.

Christopher Law RIBA
CHIEF ARCHITECT
For and on behalf of CALA Homes (South) Ltd

Encs

ADDRESS 6 JOHNSON DRIVE PARISH FINCHAMPSTEAD

PLOT No. X 279A NINE MILE RIDE ORD. SHEET No. SU 8065 (99)

BUILDER

Plan No.	Applicant	Description of Development	Date of Decision	Decision
103/70	ORBIT PROPERTIES	BUNGALOW & GARAGE	29.10.70	APP CIA
1161/71	"	"	28.10.71	CIA
0.3100	MR. K. BRANT	"	7.8.75	CIA
BR 3260	"	"	1.9.75	APP
96/64687/TP	"	R/O STORAGE OF NEW CARS	10.02.97	REF
CLU(E)105		"	1.10.98	REFUSED
TP/2001/3383	"	temp. change of use of land for storage of motor veh. (Retro)	05.04.01	Ref.
CLE/2001/3818				
O/2001/4418	Calathomes	Re-dev of site 30 dwells		

MINISTRY DECISION CLU(E)105 - APPEAL ALLOWED 10/11/99

SPECIAL ORDERS

1769A

03.DEC.2001 * 05362

PLANNING APPLICATION PART I

Please answer all questions in CAPITAL letters. If any question is not applicable, put N/A in the space.
Please submit 6 copies of the completed form and your plans to:- Planning Dept., Wokingham District Council, PO Box No. 157, Shute End, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG11 1WR.
If you are a new applicant, notes to help you fill in the form are attached.
If you still have any questions about the form, please call Ian Jordan on 0734 778763.

WOKINGHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL

For office use only
Application No.

1.	YOUR NAME	CALA HOMES SOUTH LTD
	ADDRESS	BURGAN HOUSE, THE CAUSEWAY
		STAINES, MIDDLESEX
	POST CODE	TW18 3PR Tel. No. 01784 225300
2. If you have an agent and want all correspondence to be sent to them.	AGENT'S NAME	CHANCELLORS TOWN PLANNING
	ADDRESS	45 HIGH STREET, ODIHAM
		HOOK, HANTS
	POST CODE	RG29 1LF Tel. No 01256 703090
3. On the plans outline the whole site in RED. Any OTHER land in your ownership or control outline in BLUE.	SITE LOCATION	ROSEWELLS, JOHNSON DRIVE
		NINE MILE RIDE
		WOKINGHAM, BERKSHIRE
4. Give the area of the application site in hectares, if appropriate, or part of a hectare	SITE AREA	1.76H
5. Give brief details of the proposal.	ABOUT THE APPLICATION	REMOVAL OF OPEN CAR STORAGE USE
		& REDEVELOPMENT OF SITE FOR
		RESIDENTIAL
6. What is your interest in the application site, e.g. owner, prospective purchaser, a tenant with a lease.	OWNERSHIP	PROSPECTIVE PURCHASER

7. We need plans to be able to assess the application. Please list the plans and drawings you have submitted. — PLANS/DRAWINGS

1:25000 Location Plan	☑	1:100 Floor Plan	☐
1:500 Block Plan	☑	Other	
ILLUSTRATIVE LAYOUT			
1:100 Elevations	☐		

8. Does the application involve any of the following

Please tick relevant boxes. If you tick OTHER, please explain on this form.

CHANGE OF USE	☑	ALTERATION or EXTENSION	☐
CONSTRUCTION OF NEW BUILDING	☑	DEMOLITION	☑
OTHER			

9. What type of Planning application are you applying for?

RESERVED MATTERS	☐	Go to Question 10.
OUTLINE PERMISSION	☑	State relevant outline permission No. Go to Question 10.
FULL PERMISSION	☐	Go to Question 11.
TEMPORARY PERMISSION	☐	State period required. Go to Question 11.
RENEWAL OF TEMPORARY PERMISSION	☐	State previous permission No. Go to Question 11.
VARIATION/RELAXATION OF CONDITIONS	☐	State relevant application No. Details of conditions to be relaxed. Go to Question 11.

10. IF THIS IS AN OUTLINE APPLICATION OR FOR THE APPROVAL OF RESERVED MATTERS, which details, if any, do you wish to be considered as part of your application.

EXTERNAL APPEARANCE	☐	SITING	☐
MEANS OF ACCESS	☑	DESIGN	☐
		LANDSCAPING	☐

17698

11. WHAT IS THE EXISTING USE OF THE LAND AND/OR BUILDINGS ON THE APPLICATION SITE, e.g. residential, industrial, etc. If the site is vacant say so, and if possible give last known use.
RESIDENTIAL & OPEN CAR STORAGE

12. ARE THERE ANY TREES ON THE SITE?
If YES, please show their positions, spread, and species of the trees on the plans. Indicate any which are to be felled.
YES / ~~NO~~

13. PLEASE LIST THE EXTERNAL MATERIALS TO BE USED.
TO BE PROVIDED LATER

14. WILL SURFACE WATER BE DRAINED INTO THE EXISTING DRAINAGE SYSTEM?
If NO, please give details of any new system to be constructed.
~~YES~~ / NO — SOAKAWAYS

15. WILL FOUL SEWAGE BE DISPOSED OF INTO THE EXISTING SEWAGE SYSTEM?
If NO, please give details of any new system to be constructed.
YES / ~~NO~~

16. WILL PEDESTRIANS/VEHICLES ACCESS THE SITE?
Please show details of the existing access and any proposed changes on the plans.
YES / ~~NO~~

17. WILL THE CAR PARKING PROVISION AT THIS SITE BE CHANGED?
If YES, please show details of any changes on the plans.
YES / ~~NO~~

18. DOES A PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY TOUCH OR CROSS THE SITE?
If YES, please show the route and any proposed alternative on the plans.
~~YES~~ / NO

19. DOES THE PROPOSAL INVOLVE NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OR THE LOSS OF RESIDENTIAL UNITS? If YES, please complete the following table.
YES / ~~NO~~

	No. of Bedrooms	Dwellings
Proposed new development	1	8
	2	23
	3	11
	4	8
	5 or more	
	TOTAL	50
Nos. of residential units lost through demolition or conversion		1
	NET CHANGE	49

20. HAS PROVISION BEEN MADE FOR THE DISABLED?
If YES, please show on the submitted plans what is to be provided.
YES / ~~NO~~

21. DOES THE PROPOSAL INVOLVE ANY NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT?
If YES, please complete PART 2 of the form.
~~YES~~ / NO

22. DOES THE PROPOSAL INVOLVE THE WINNING, WORKING OR PROCESSING OF MINERALS; THE DISPOSAL OF MINERAL WASTE, OR THE DEPOSIT OR PROCESSING OF REFUSE AND WASTE MATERIALS (INCLUDING SCRAP YARDS)?
If YES, complete PART 3 of the form and submit whole application to Berkshire County Council.
~~YES~~ / NO

23. THE FEE ENCLOSED IS £ 3,420 – 00 18 x £190
The current scale of fees is attached. If you believe a reduced fee or no fee is payable please say why below.

SIGNED Christopher Law RIBA ON BEHALF OF CALA HOMES SOUTH LTD DATE 30.11.01.

Before submitting this application check that you have answered all the relevant questions and that the site boundary and the new work are clearly edged in red on the plans. Every application must be accompanied by the appropriate certificate and fee.

1000

CERTIFICATE A(a)

OWNERSHIP CERTIFICATE (APPLICANT SOLE OWNER OF SITE)

Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1988

CERTIFICATE UNDER ARTICLE 12A

I certify that:

on the day 21 days before the date of the accompanying application/appeal* nobody, except the applicant/appellant*, was the owner(b) of any part of the land to which the application/appeal* relates.

Signed .....

*On behalf of .....

Date .....

CERTIFICATE B(a)

OWNERSHIP CERTIFICATE (APPLICANT NOT OWNER OF SITE/WHOLE SITE)

Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1988

CERTIFICATE UNDER ARTICLE 12A

I certify that:

I have/The applicant has/The appellant has* given the requisite notice to everyone else who, on the day 21 days before the date of the accompanying application/appeal*, was the owner(b) of any part of the land to which the application/appeal* relates, as listed below.

Owner's(b) name	Address at which notice was served	Date on which notice was served
MR & MRS. K. BRANT	ROSEWELLS JOHNSON DRIVE NINE MILE RIDE WOKINGHAM	30.11.01

Signed Christopher Law RIBA

*On behalf of CALA HOMES SOUTH LTD

Date 30.11.01

*delete where inappropriate

(a) This Certificate is for use with applications and appeals for planning permission (articles 12A and 12C(1) of the Order). One of Certificates A, B, C or D (or the appropriate certificate in the case of certain minerals applications) must be completed, together with the Agricultural Holdings Certificate (see overleaf)

(b) "owner" means a person having a freehold interest or a leasehold interest the unexpired term of which is not less than 7 years, or, in the case of development consisting of the winning and working of minerals, a person entitled to an interest in a mineral in the land (other than oil, gas, coal, gold or silver)

Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1988

CERTIFICATE UNDER ARTICLE 12A

Agricultural Holdings Certificate *(a)*

Whichever is appropriate of the following alternatives must form part of Certificates A, B, C or D. If the applicant is the sole agricultural tenant he or she must delete the first alternative and insert "not applicable" as the information required by the second alternative.

• None of the land to which the application/appeal relates is, or is part of, an agricultural holding.

or

• I have/The applicant has/The appellant has given the requisite notice to every person other then my/him/her* self who, on the day 21 days before the date of the application/appeal*, was a tenant of an agricultural holding on all or part of the land to which the application/appeal* relates, as follows:

Tenant's name	Address at which notice was served	Date on which notice was served

Signed Christopher Law RIBA

*On behalf of CALA HOMES SOUTH LTD

Date 30.11.01

* delete where inappropriate

(a) This Certificate is for use with applications and appeals for planning permission (articles 12A and 12C(1) of the Order). One of Certificates A, B, C or D (or the appropriate certificate in the case of certain minerals applications) must be completed together with the Agricultural Holdings Certificate.

Roswells
Johnson Drive
Finchampstead
Wokingham

Report in Response to the Council's Arboricultural Evidence

March 2002

By R D D Grainger
Dip Arb (RFS) F Arbor A

A/F Technical Services Ref: 00048N.RDG
DTLR Ref: APP/X0360/A/01/1076780
LA Ref: 0/2001/4418 & 0/2001/5362

A/F TECHNICAL SERVICES
Arboricultural Consultancy Service

A/F Technical Services • 21 Burpham Lane • Guildford • Surrey • GU4 7LN • Tel: 01483 532786 • Fax: 01483 534836

1 Instructions

1.1 I comment on the proof of evidence of Neil Etherington, the Principal Arboriculturist of Wokingham District Council, which was received on 5 March 2002. A number of the matters referred to by Mr Etherington have already been dealt with in my report of February 2002, which is appended to the evidence of Mr Douglas Bond. For reference, the paragraph numbers of Mr Etherington's proof are shown in ().

1.2 **Appended Documents**:

RG1 Forest Mensuration Handbook (extract)

RG2 Replacement Planting Plan – Drg. OUT.1 - Rev A

RG3 Replacement Planting Plan – Drg OUT.2 – Rev B

RG4 Photographs

2 Tree Preservation Order

2.1 Tree Preservation Order (TPO) No. 361:1988 is referred to in (3.02) and appears to schedule some of the trees adjacent to the west garden boundary of Roswells. I note this paragraph attempts to relate the scheduled trees to those included in my tree survey. However, the First Schedule of the TPO does not detail each tree's situation and the scheduled trees cannot be accurately identified from the TPO plan. For example, my tree survey identifies 10 oak trees adjacent to this boundary but the TPO schedules 7 oak trees. Without accurate reference in the TPO First Schedule and plan it is therefore difficult to identify the individual oak trees included in this order.

2.2 However, both appeal plans show all the trees adjacent to this part of the boundary to be retained.

2.3 TPO NO. 520:1990 schedules one oak tree as tree T1 (3.03). This tree is immediately adjacent to the back edge of the public footway and appears to be outside the fenced garden of 283 Nine Mile Ride. Although this tree is the

subject of a TPO I understand it may be a highway tree and therefore the responsibility of the Highway Authority.

3 Felling of Trees

3.1 Some of the 12 trees removed within the vehicle storage area (4.02) have been incorrectly identified against my tree survey schedule. Trees 46 and 22 have not been removed but 48 and 92 have been removed. Tree 4 is not within the vehicle storage area but in the garden of Roswells.

3.2 The reference to trees that fork below 1.3 metres above ground level being treated as two trees (4.03) is misleading with regard to the number of trees felled. The convention for measuring the volume of timber in trees is described in The Forest Mensuration Handbook (Forestry Commission Booklet No. 39), an extract of which is appended as **RG1**. It is entirely logical that where an individual tree forks below breast height diameter (dbh), which is measured at 1.3 metres above ground level, the two stems are measured separately. This would be the case in estimating the standing or the felled volume of single trees and would also apply to multi-stemmed trees of timber size. However, where trees are growing from a single root system this convention of forest mensuration should not be used to inflate the number of trees growing on site. Indeed, when making a TPO, if this rule were applied, a twin stemmed tree would need to be scheduled twice and a multi-stemmed tree according to the number of stems. Furthermore, if a twin-stemmed tree were only covered by one TPO and one of the stems were to be removed without the Council's consent, this would not be illegal pruning but the removal of an unscheduled tree. In view of this, it is clear that only 12 trees have been felled within the car storage area and builders yard.

3.3 The matter of a restocking order is covered in my earlier report.

4 Proposed Development

4.1 All the retained trees are adjacent to the boundaries of the site (6.01/7.01) and some are scheduled under a TPO. In my assessment, these trees are sufficient distance from the proposed properties not to unreasonably shade the proposed gardens or dwellings. The trees have been surveyed with regard to their safety and suitability for retention, which should allay any fears that future residents may have regarding tree safety. Some tree surgery work will be necessary but the degree of tree works required would not reduce the height or amenity value of any of the retained trees. Trees in residential areas normally require maintenance from time to time but, with regard to mature trees, I would not expect them to increase dramatically in size.

4.2 The matter of a Forest Authority Restocking Notice is dealt with in my earlier report but I am satisfied that both schemes would allow sufficient new planting in the area of the builders yard and vehicle storage to compensate for the 12 trees that were removed (6.03/7.02). The trees removed in this area were 5 common oaks, 1 turkey oak, 5 silver birches and 1 Scots pine. The oaks and Scots pine would normally be regarded as large growing trees and the Silver birches as medium sized trees.

4.3 Appended, as **RG2** (Drg. OUT.1 – Rev A) and **RG3** (Drg. OUT.2 – Rev B) are extracts of the two appeal plans showing the trees removed, outlined in red, and new planting. The trees coloured green represent large growing trees and those coloured brown represent medium sized trees.

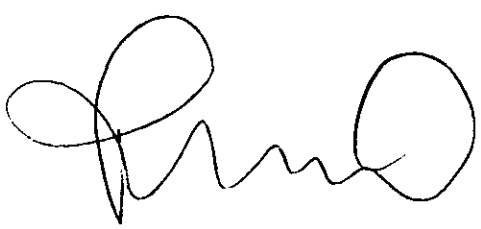
4.4 Plan **RG2** demonstrates that 14 large and 24 medium sized trees could be accommodated within the proposed layout, 18 of which would not be adjacent to the boundary. This would provide a total of 38 trees to replace the 12 trees that were removed.

4.5 Plan **RG3** shows 16 large and 34 medium sized trees. Of these 30 would not be adjacent to the boundary. This would provide 50 new trees to replace the 12 that were removed.

4.6 In addition to the large and medium sized trees, there is space to plant smaller ornamental trees in both front and rear gardens of the proposed properties.

4.7 I would recommend planting trees in the standard and extra heavy standard categories, which would be up to 3.5 metres in height. The choice of species and siting would normally be a matter of condition to be agreed by the local authority. In my view the proposed new planting would provide more than adequate replacements for the 12 trees that were removed. More importantly, the proposed new planting would provide a balance of tree age classes thereby securing long-term tree cover and enhancing the character of in the local area.

4.8 The scheduled oak tree at the junction of Johnson Drive and Nine Mile Ride (6.04/7/04) is shown to be retained on both appeal plans. This tree is 16 metres in height with a trunk diameter of 67cm and a mean crown spread radius of 7.5 metres. The single trunk divides into three main stems at 3.3 metres above ground level. These have been previously pollarded at 8 metres above ground level. The crown height is 2 metres on the north side of the tree and 5 metres on the south side over the public highway. Photographs of this tree are appended as **RG4**.



R D D Grainger
14 March 2002

Appendix RG1

A/F Technical Services

(iii) **Felled Timber**

A choice of methods is indicated for sawlogs and for timber destined for fragmentation (pulpwood, chipwood, woodwool):

a. Sawlogs. The mid-diameter and length method (Procedure 1) is the most accurate and is the standard method by which others are judged. It is most appropriate for small lots, for particularly valuable produce, and for long log lengths.

The top diameter (underbark) and length method (Procedure 2) is less accurate because a standard rate of taper has to be assumed. Average taper may be expected to vary from stand to stand, and within a given stand significant variation around the mean taper is usual. The method is more suitable for shorter, uniform log lengths already stacked, eg at roadside, where the cost of measurement is less than by the first method.

Weight measurement is very much cheaper than other methods for large quantities of material, and is the preferred method in these situations. As the labour content in weight measurement is low, increases in labour cost can be expected to lead to an increased use of weight measurement.

b. Pulp, chipwood, woodwool etc. Timber which is to be fragmented tends to be of small diameter, shorter length and often of less value than other products. These features imply cheaper measurement and the alternatives given are stack or weight measurement. Assuming in either case the objective is an estimate of the solid *volume* of the timber, weight measurement tends to be more efficient, in terms of precision achieved per unit cost, for large quantities, and has the further advantage of being the more objective method of the two. For more moderate quantities however, stack measure can produce greater precision per unit cost where billets are uniform, straight and properly stacked. Poor stacking, poor quality and very varied sizes lead to precision of a significantly lower level.

PART II MEASUREMENT CONVENTIONS

1. The measurement conventions listed below are those currently established as standard in British forestry. In certain measurement procedures, conventions other than standard may be required. These are considered under the appropriate paragraphs which follow. Conventions employed in research applications are not included here.

Diameter

2. Tree and log diameters will normally be measured overbark by girthing tape, rounding down to the nearest whole centimetre. Rounding down is achieved automatically with the classifying tapes of the type used by the Forestry Commission. (The zero point in these tapes is the extreme edge of the brass rectangle or the point of the hook, according to the fitment, as shown in Figure 5. In cases where the zero point is found to fall on the dividing line between two diameter classes, the higher diameter class is read).

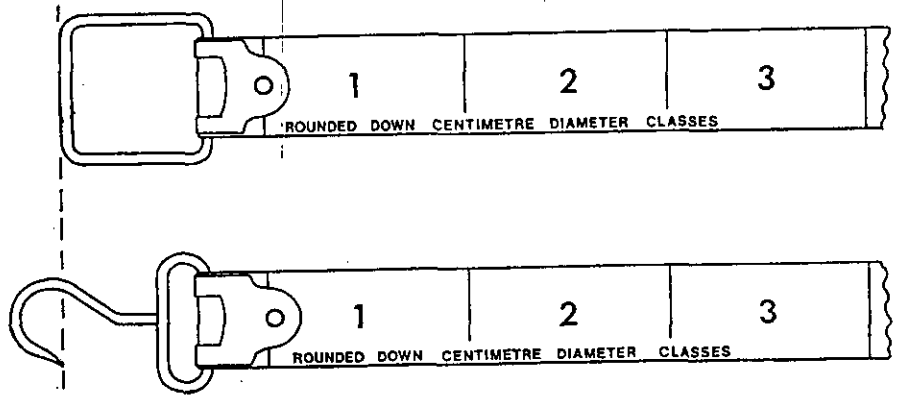


Figure 5

a. Diameter at Breast Height (dbh)

(i) Always ensure that trees are girthed at a point on the tree 1·3 m above ground level, which is the *breast height point.*

(ii) The diameter tape must be taut and at right-angles to the stem.

(iii) On *sloping ground* always measure the diameter at 1·3 m from ground level on the upper side of the tree.

(iv) On *leaning trees* (on level ground) always measure the diameter at 1·3 m from ground level on the under-side of the tree, parallel to the axis of the stem.

(v) Where trees are planted on *turfed or ploughed ground*, the diameter should be measured 1·3 m from the root collar or present ground level, whichever is the higher.

(vi) Where a *swelling* occurs at 1·3 m above ground level, measure the diameter below the swelling or deformity, at the point where the diameter is smallest.

(vii) Where the stem *forks* below 1·3 m treat each limb as a separate tree. Where a stem is forked at 1·3 m, treat the stem as one tree and measure the diameter below the fork at the point where it is smallest.

(viii) *Coppice* crops should be girthed at 1·3 m from ground level, not from stool level.

(ix) Trees of less than 7 cm dbh are considered to have no measurable volume.

b. Mid-sectional Diameter

(i) The diameter is measured at the mid point of the rounded down length section (see 3 (iii) and 3 (iv)).

(ii) If the mid-diameter falls on a whorl or swelling the diameter should be measured immediately above it (ie towards the small end).

(iii) If the mid-diameter of a timber length falls below the breast height point of the standing tree, the dbh should be regarded as the mid-diameter.

c. Top Diameter

(i) The timber point is the point furthest from the butt at which the overbark diameter is not less than 7 cm. (Using a rounded down centimetre class tape as in Fig 5, the 7 cm point is the dividing line between the 6 and 7 cm classes.)

(ii) Where top diameter (the diameter at the small end) is measured on pitwood or smallwood, a rule should be used in preference to a girthing tape. The diameter is rounded down to the nearest whole centimetre.

(iii) Where top diameter (underbark) is required for sawlog measurement (by Procedure 2) the diameter should be measured across the smallest diameter.

Length

3. (i) Length measurement will not normally include material beyond the timber point (7 cm diameter), or beyond the point at which no main stem is distinguishable.

(ii) The minimum timber length to 7 cm top diameter which is considered to have measurable volume is 1·3 m.

(iii) Lengths, measured from the butt-end, should be rounded down to the nearest 0·1 m for lengths up to 10 m and to the nearest whole metre for lengths greater than 10 m.

(iv) Where the rounded down length exceeds 20 m it should be measured in two sections for volume assessment. Measured from the butt end, the butt section will be the rounded down length divided by two but rounded down to the nearest whole metre. The top section will be the remaining length.

Example:

Timber length 25 m (rounded down)

Butt section $\frac{25}{2} = 12$ m (rounded down)

Top section $25 - 12 = 13$ m

(v) Special length conventions apply to pitwood (see Procedure 4, page 25).

(vi) On curved stems, lengths will be measured along the curvature and not in a direct line from end to end.

Volume

4. (i) The conventional top diameter limit for volume is 7 cm overbark, or the point at which no main stem is distinguishable, whichever comes first.

(ii) The smallest timber length to 7 cm top diameter considered to have measurable volume is 1·3 m.

(iii) The minimum dbh of a tree considered to have measurable volume is 7 cm.

(iv) Where trees are forked at or above breast height, the butt will be measured as one log. The volume of each stem of the fork will also be measured separately and may be added to that of the butt to give the volume of the tree.

(v) Where trees are forked below breast height each limb is treated as a separate tree and will be girthed as such. The volume of the tree is therefore the volume of the appropriate limb. The volume of the butt piece will be ignored, its length being excluded in determining the volume of the tree.

Appendix RG2

A/F Technical Services

Existing Trees Retained

Existin

new 1.8m cb fence

15 16 17 18 19 20 21

22

23 26

24 27

25 28

12,13,14,

2B 3B 3B 3B 3B 3B 3B 3B

11

10

3B 3B

Gr Gr Gr

Fo Fo Fo Fo Fo

new 1.8m c.b. fence

Existing Trees Retained

9 8 7 6 5

new 1.8m c.b. fence

22 20 18 16

25

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

0 2 3

RG 2

A/F Technical Services

Johnson Drive – Illustrative Layout (extract)
Drg. OUT.1 - Rev.A

Trees removed ×

New Planting

Large trees

Medium trees

Small trees

RDG – March 2002

Scale 1:500

Appendix RG3

A/F Technical Services

DRIVE

25

16

22

4B

12

5

6

18

13

14

15

16

17

7

8

9

10

11

2B

1B

3B

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

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41

42

43

44

Feature elevations to P.O.S.

P.O.S.

childrens play area

RG3

A/F Technical Services

Johnson Drive – Illustrative Layout (extract)
Drg. OUT.2 - Rev.B

Trees removed

New Planting

Large trees

Medium trees

Small trees

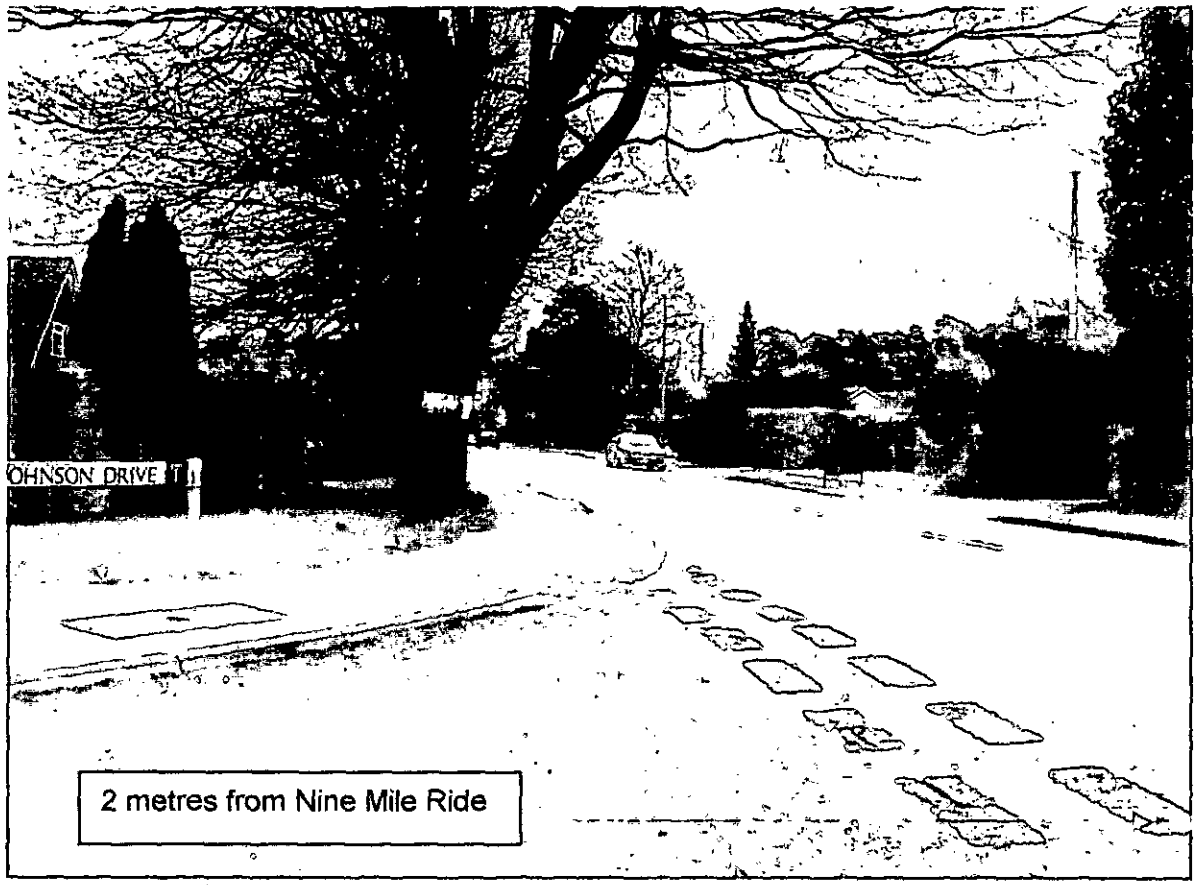
RDG – March 2002

Scale 1:500

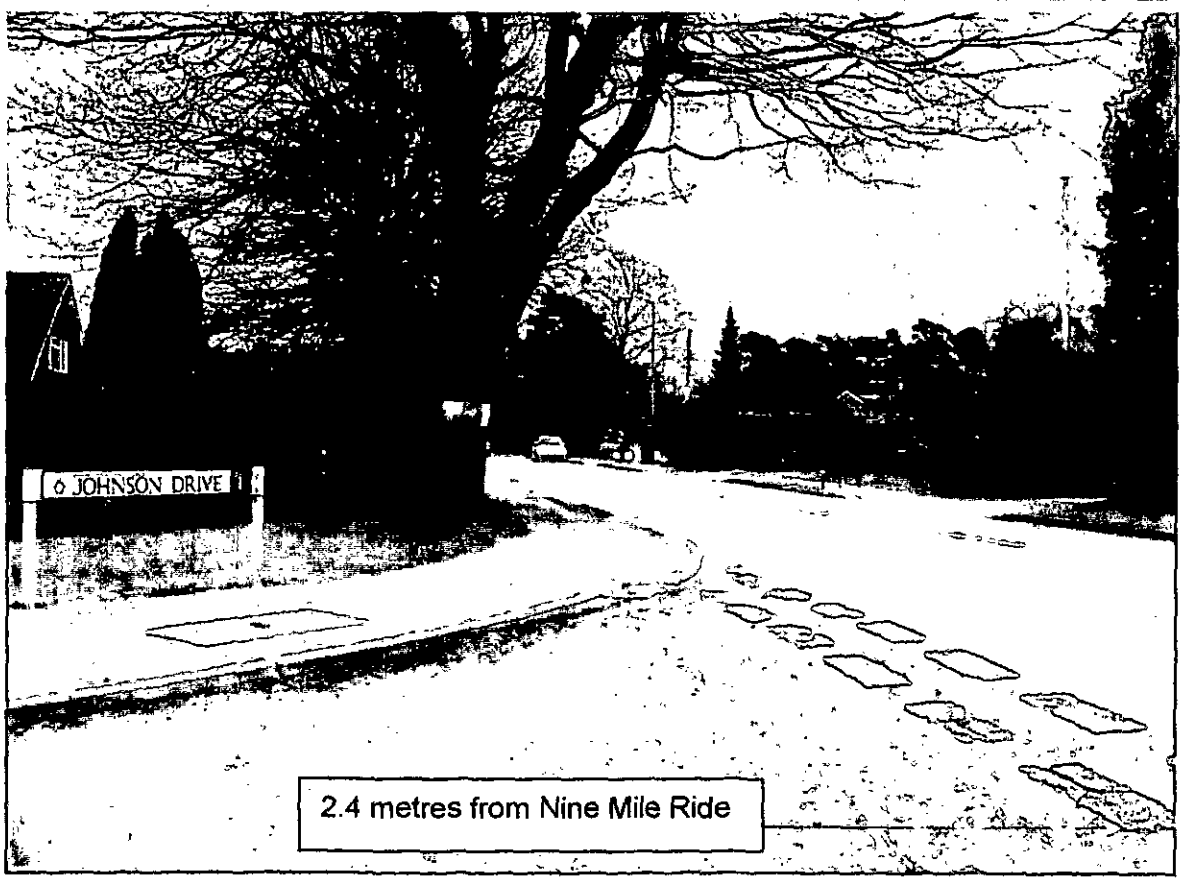
Schedule of Accommodation.

Appendix RG4

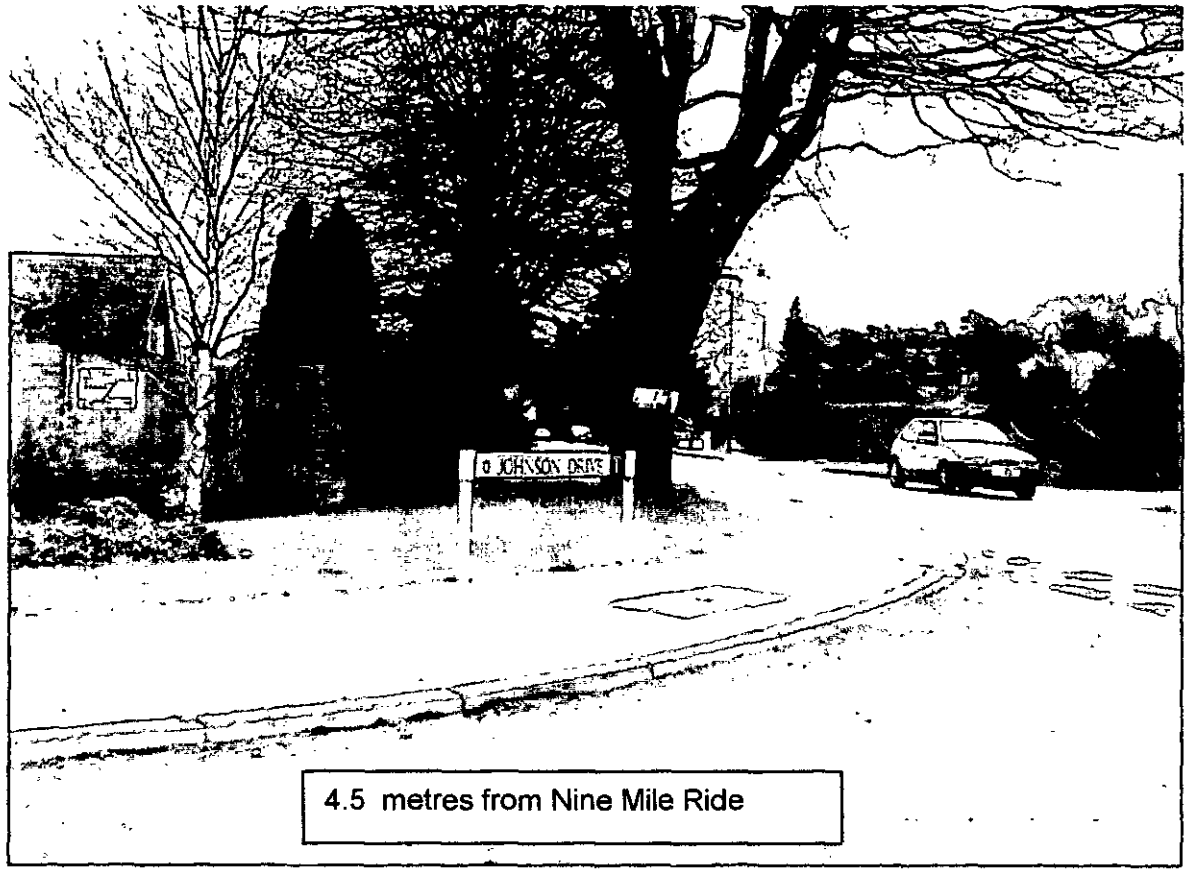
A/F Technical Services



2 metres from Nine Mile Ride



2.4 metres from Nine Mile Ride



4.5 metres from Nine Mile Ride



6 metres from Nine Mile Ride


Johnson Drive

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
SECTION 78

APPEALS BY

CALA HOMES (SOUTH) LTD

CONCERNING RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AT 6, JOHNSONS DRIVE, NINE MILE RIDE, FINCHAMSTEAD NORTH, WOKINGHAM, BERKSHIRE

EVIDENCE BY

DOUGLAS C.B. BOND
BA(HONS), MRTPI

CHANCELLORS,
CHARTERED TOWN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

PLANNING INSPECTORATE REF:
APP/X0360/A/01/1070708
APP/X0360/A/02/1081441
LPA REF: 0/2001/4418
0/2001/5362

CHANCELLORS REF: C/2073/01

FEBRUARY 2002

CHANCELLORS
CHARTERED TOWN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

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DOCUMENTS

1. APPEAL A ILLUSTRATIVE SITE LAYOUT PLAN (NO. OUT 1) - 30 UNITS AND PLANNING OFFICERS REPORT DATED 14/11/01

2. APPEAL B – ILLUSTRATIVE SITE LAYOUT PLAN (NO. OUT 2A) – 50 UNITS AND PLANNING OFFICERS REPORT DATED 09/01/01

3. POPULATION DATA FOR WOKINGHAM DISTRICT BY PARISH/WARD AT 2001.

4. CERTIFICATE OF LAWFUL USE FOR CAR STORAGE ON THE APPEAL SITE AND ASSOCIATED APPEAL DECISION DATED 10/11/99.

5. CERTIFICATE OF LAWFUL USE FOR BUILDERS YARD ON THE APPEAL SITE DATED 12/2/02.

6. RELEVANT EXTRACTS FROM THE APPROVED BERKSHIRE STRUCTURE PLAN 1991-2006, AUGUST 1997.

7. RELEVANT EXTRACTS FROM THE ADOPTED SOUTH EAST AREA LOCAL PLAN, APRIL 1994.

8. RELEVANT EXTRACTS FROM THE DEPOSIT DRAFT WOKINGHAM DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN, 1996-2006, FEBRUARY 2000.

9. RELEVANT EXTRACT FROM 1997 DEPOSIT DRAFT WOKINGHAM DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN

10. RELEVANT EXTRACTS FROM THE PART 2 LOCAL PLAN INSPECTORS REPORT, DECEMBER 2001.

11. SECRETARY OF STATE APPEAL DECISION DATED 8/7/96 AND APPEAL DECISION DATED 24/9/97.

12. RELEVANT EXTRACT FROM WOKINGHAM DISTRICT'S EVIDENCE TO SOUTH EAST AREA LOCAL PLAN INQUIRY AND SOUTH EAST AREA LOCAL PLAN INSPECTOR'S REPORT.

13. EXTRACT FROM PLANNING COMMITMENTS FOR HOUSING 2001.

14. WOKINGHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORT DATED 7/7/01 AN INITIAL FINDING FOR URBAN CAPACITY STUDY.

15. RELEVANT EXTRACTS FROM DAVID COUTTIE ASSOCIATES HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY, 1997.

16. RELEVANT EXTRACTS FROM WOKINGHAM'S HOUSING STRATEGY 2001-2004, JANUARY 2002.

17. ADOPTED SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING, WOKINGHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL, JANUARY 2002.

18. LETTER FROM NO. 16 TOMLINSON DRIVE DATED 27/7/99.

19. SITE PLAN ILLUSTRATING TREES REMOVED FROM SITE.

20. PLANS ILLUSTRATING NEW, ADDITIONAL PLANTING.

21. POLICY AND PLANS CONSULTATION RESPONSES ON APPEAL APPLICATIONS.

22. DEPOSIT DRAFT WOKINGHAM DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN – STATEMENT OF CONFORMITY WITH APPROVED BERKSHIRE STRUCTURE PLAN.

23. ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL DATED FEBRUARY 2002.

24. ARBORICULTURAL REPORT PREPARED BY MR. D. GRAINGER – A/F TECHNICAL SERVICES REGARDING TREES ON THE APPEAL SITE DATED FEBRUARY 2002.

25. SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE FROM BERKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL.

26. COPY OF WRITTEN REPRESENTATION LOCAL PLAN OBJECTION CONCERNING THE APPEAL SITE

Douglas Charles Berner Bond will say:

I hold a Bachelor of Arts in Town and Country Planning and I am a Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute. I am a Director of Chancellors – Chartered Town Planning Consultants. I have been engaged in town planning work for the last 17 years as a private consultant acting for the House-Builders Federation, major house building and development companies. In addition, I have been instructed by various Public Bodies including Government Departments, statutory undertakers, District Councils and Parish Councils together with Resident Associations and individuals.

I have visited the appeal site and its surroundings and have examined the relevant plans and documents for the purpose of the Inquiry.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The purpose of this evidence is to address the town planning issues arising from the appeals by CALA Homes (South) Ltd concerning land at Rosewells, 6, Johnsons Drive, Finchamstead North, Wokingham. The appeals relate to 2 No. applications as follows:

A. Removal of open car storage use and redevelopment of site to provide 30 No. dwellings including a proportion of affordable housing (Application Reference: 0/2001/4418, Planning Inspectorate Reference: APP/X0360/A/01/1076708) – Appeal A.

B. Removal of open car storage use and redevelopment of site to provide 50 No. dwellings including a proportion of affordable housing (Application No. 0/2001/5362, Planning Inspectorate Reference: APP/X0360/A/02/1081441) – Appeal B.

1.2. Both applications are in outline form with all matters reserved for subsequent approval except means of access. Both applications are supported by Illustrative Site Layout Plans.

1.3. The evidence is arranged as follows:

A. The appeal applications and their consideration by Wokingham District Council.

B. Description of the appeal site and surrounding area.

C. Description of the appeal proposals.

D. Consideration of relevant planning policy context.

E. Consideration of relevant National Government advice.

F. Analysis of main issues.

G. Conclusions.

1.4. In addition to my evidence separate evidence is given by Dermot McCaffrey of Buchanan Consulting Engineers concerning highways and sustainability issues. CPM and Mr. D. Grainger of A/F Technical Services may also give evidence in relation to Documents 23 and 24 appended to this Proof.

1.5. A summary of this Proof is produced as a separate document.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE APPEAL APPLICATIONS AND THEIR CONSIDERATION BY WOKINGHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL

2.1. The first application the subject of these appeals was submitted to Wokingham District Council on 13.7.2001. It took the form of an outline application with all matters reserved accept means of access and proposed removal of open car storage use and redevelopment of site to provide 30 No. dwellings including a proportion of affordable housing.

2.2. The application included an Illustrative Layout Plan No. OUT 1 (Document 1). The application was appealed on the grounds of non-determination dated 30.10.01 – Appeal A. At the 14th November 2001 Development Control Committee Meeting the Council resolved that had they been in a position to determine the application the Local Authority would have refused the application for the following reasons:

> **"1. The proposal is unacceptable in principle as it is for residential development of a site outside a settlement boundary and in a green wedge. It would have a harmful and urbanising effect on the character and appearance of the area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan policies C2 and C6, South East Area Local Plan policies STV2 and SC1, to Wokingham District Local Plan (Deposit Draft) policies WOS2, WCC1 and WCC2 and to Planning Policy Guidance Note Nos. 3 and 7."**
>
> **2. As the proposed density would be significantly below the minimum required by Planning Policy Guidance Note No. 3, it would fail to make the best use of land to be developed, and would not minimise the amount of greenfield land being taken for development. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Planning Policy Guidance Note No. 3 and the Local Planning Authority's proposed density**

policy for the Wokingham District Local Plan.

3. **The proposal fails to incorporate an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes to meet local need in that too a high a proportion of large dwellings and too low a proportion of small dwellings are proposed. The proposal would be contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan Policy H9, South East Area Local Plan policy SH8 and to Wokingham District Local Plan (Deposit Draft) policy WH6.**

4. **The proposal does not include appropriate contributions to services and infrastructure needs, including provision of on-site Public Open Space and play area, which would result from the proposed development. The proposal is therefore contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan Policies LD6 and R5, South East Area Local Plan Policies SPS1 and SR2 and to Policies WOS4 and WR7 of the Wokingham District Local Plan (Deposit Draft).**

5. **The proposal would result in the actual and potential loss of trees on the site which at present enhance the visual amenity of the area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan Policy EN1, South East Area Local Plan Policy SBE9 and to Wokingham District Local Plan Policy WBE11.**

2.3. A copy of the 14th November 2001 Committee Report is attached as part of Document 1.

2.4. A further application was submitted to Wokingham District Council in order to resolve some of the issues arising from the Local Planning Authority's consideration of the first application. This application was also in outline with all matters reserved accept means of access and was accompanied by an Illustrative Site Layout Plan No. OUT2A (Document 2) and proposed removal of open car storage use and

redevelopment of site to provide 50 No. dwellings including a proportion of affordable housing.

2.5. The Local Planning Authority reported the application to the Development Control Committee on the 9th January 2002 and resolved to refuse the application for the following reasons:

"1. **The proposal is unacceptable in principle as it is for residential development of a site outside a settlement boundary and in a green wedge. It would have a harmful and urbanising effect on the character and appearance of the area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan Policies C2 and C6, South East Area Local Plan Policies STV2 and SC1, to Wokingham District Local Plan (Deposit Draft) Policies WOS2, WCC1 and WCC2 and to Planning Policy Guidance Note Nos. 3 and 7.**

2. **The proposal does not include appropriate contributions to services and infrastructure needs which would result from the proposed development. The proposal is therefore contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan Policies LD6 and R5, South East Area Local Plan Policies SPS1 and SR2 and to Policies WOS4 and WR7 of the Wokingham District Local Plan (Deposit Draft).**

3. **The site represents a significant residential development which is not in a sustainable location which would minimise the need for travel as it is not well located in relation to necessary services, infrastructure and destinations and is not well served by public transport. The proposal is therefore contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan Policies OS1 and H4, Wokingham District Local Plan Policy WOS3 and to PPGs 3 and 13.**

4. **From the information available, the Local Planning Authority is not satisfied that the proposed development would not cause**

unacceptable damage to protected species or their habitat. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan Policy EN8, South East Area Local Plan Policy SC10 and to Wokingham District Local Plan Policy WNC4.

5. **The proposal would not allow sufficient space for restocking of trees that have been removed, and would also result in the actual loss of a tree at the access junction to the site, which enhance (and did enhance) the visual amenity of the area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Berkshire Structure Plan Policy C9, South East Area Local Plan Policy SBE9 and to Wokingham District Local Plan Policy WBE11."**

2.6 A copy of the Committee Report is attached as part of Document 2. The difference between the two applications relate to:

- An increase in the number of dwellings from 30 to 50.
- An increase in net density from 17 to 30.8 dwellings per hectare.
- Change in housing mix.
- Change in location of development on the site.
- Introduction of public open space on the site.

2.7. The second application resolved deemed reasons for refusal Nos. 2 (housing density) and 3 (housing mix) associated with the first application in order to refine the differences between the appellants and the Local Planning Authority. Despite this the Local Planning Authority have introduced new issues when considering the second application relating to:

- Sustainability

- Restocking of trees on site and loss of a tree at the Johnson Drive/Nine Mile Ride junction
- Nature Conservation

An appeal was lodged against this refusal dated 10.1.02 – Appeal B.

2.8. Discussions have taken place with the Local Planning Authority in the meantime in order to resolve deemed Reason for Refusal No. 4 (appropriate contributions to services and infrastructure needs) and the equivalent Reason for Refusal No. 2 on the 2nd scheme. In this regard a Unilateral Undertaking is in the process of being completed dealing, inter alia, with the appropriate contributions for service and infrastructure requirements arising from the proposed developments.

2.9. The submission of a Nature Conservation Report Document 23 deals with Reason for Refusal No. 4 concerning impact on protected species or their habitat.

2.10. As a result of dialogue between the Local Planning Authority and the appellants the remaining issues arising from the reasons for refusal are now confined to:

- Principle of residential development of a commercial site outside but contiguous with a settlement boundary notated as countryside and gap between settlements.
- Sustainable location of the site.
- Restocking of trees on site and loss of a tree at the access junction to the site.

2.11. My evidence will deal with the first matter in addition to other relevant considerations. Mr McCaffrey's evidence will deal with the sustainability issues arising from the proposed development and access matters. Mr. Grainger's Report (Document 24) deals with matters concerning trees.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE APPEAL SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

Location

3.1. The appeal site is the same for both appeals. It is coloured red on Mr. McCaffrey's Figure 3 and extends to 1.76 hectares gross. The appeal site lies in Wokingham District, part of the area historically known as Central Berkshire. It is an area characterised by strong market demand and need for housing. Wokingham District is one of the least environmentally constrained areas of the County lying beyond the Metropolitan Green Belt to the east and the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the west.

3.2. Over the last three decades housing has been concentrated in this Central Area of Berkshire in order to meet the needs of the County in a more sustainable way. This locational strategy has been implemented in order to reduce the extent of net in commuting to the high concentration of employment in this area of Berkshire. Despite this the area is still characterised by a large number of people commuting into the district to work. One contributory reason for this is the lack of affordable housing.

3.3. Figure 3 to Mr. McCaffrey's evidence illustrates the appeal site and its immediate surroundings. The appeal site lies on the edge of Finchamstead North. The Parish centred on the settlement is located immediately south of Wokingham and comprises the fifth largest concentration of population in the District after Wokingham, Woodley, Earley and Winnersh with a population of 12,147 (Document 3). It is located between the large settlements of Crowthorne to the south east, Bracknell to the east and Wokingham to the north. These settlements in particular Bracknell and Wokingham are principal Centres. Reading acts as a Regional Centre.

3.4. Finchamstead North has evolved along Nine Mile Ride to which the appeal site has direct access onto via Johnsons Drive. Mr. McCaffrey has produced Figure 3 highlighting key facilities in Finchamstead North in relation to the appeal site. These facilities include:

- Local newsagent at No. 257 Nine Mile Ride (260m distance from the appeal site).
- Doctor's Surgery
- Local Centre comprises Restaurants, a Pharmacy, a Bathroom Shop, a General Store, a Post Office, a Garage, a Convenience Store and Off License, a Fish and Chip Shop and a Community Hall (930m distance from the appeal site).
- Public transport facilities in the form of bus stops within 200 metres westbound and 370 meters eastbound of the appeal site.
- Proposed cycle routes into Wokingham.
- Railway station at Crowthorne 2.6 km. This is a relatively close distance in the context of Wokingham District
- Secondary school in Wokingham (3.8 km) served by buses and proposed cycle routes along Nine Mile Ride and Finchamstead Road.
- Major employment opportunities at Molly Millar's Lane Industrial Estate (4.4 km) and Wokingham town centre (6 km) with access gained via existing bus routes and proposed cycle routes along Finchamstead Road.

3.5. Mr. McCaffrey's evidence comments on the significance of these distances in his assessment of the sustainable location of the site. Furthermore the appellants proposed infrastructure contributions agreed with the Local Planning Authority will improve the relationship between the appeal site and these facilities/destinations.

Site

3.6. The appeal site itself extends to 1.76 hectares and is triangular in shape and level in topography. It lies to the north of frontage and

backland development served off Johnsons Drive, an adopted road, which in turn accesses directly onto the B3430 Nine Mile Ride.

3.7. The area surrounding the appeal site is characterised by modern residential development off Johnsons Drive abutting the site to the south. A residential estate off Tomlinson Drive lies to the west with development directly overlooking the appeal site along the majority of its western boundary. Beyond this to the north west and north lie the end of overlong plots associated with residential dwellings that front onto Kiln Ride to the north west. Mature undeveloped woodland lies to the east and provides a strong defendable boundary to the site.

3.8. The site is characterised by its containment. This is formed by mature evergreen trees along the southern boundary and a mature deciduous tree belt along the western boundary of the site. The containment of the site is completed by extensive mature woodland of considerable depth to the north and east.

3.9. The site itself can be sub-divided into three areas. Firstly the southern half comprises No. 6 Johnsons Drive, a substantial residential bungalow and its associated curtilage. This area extends to 0.87 hectares. The drive serving the house is directed along the southern and western boundaries of the site providing access to the central area of the site. Off this drive, close to the southern boundary lies a long established outbuilding used for storage of plant machinery to maintain the car storage and builders yard areas.

3.10. The central area extends to 0.49 hectares and comprises two parts. Firstly an area of external car storage, granted by a Certificate of Lawful Use (Document 4). The Certificate of Lawful Use provides no limitation on the number, size and type of car storage on site or the hours or days of operation. In short it is an unfettered commercial use that can operate 356 days a year. The use dominates the central part of the site. As evident from Plan No. U722-05 attached to Mr.

McCaffery's evidence this area has capacity for up to 281 cars. Owing to the demands for car storage in the area this represents an intensive and dominant use of the site

3.11. To the east of this area the site is characterised by 7 No. buildings and external storage areas associated with a builders yard used by 3 No. separate Builders/Contractors. These have been in existence since 1975. An application under Section 191(1)(a) of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act has been approved by the Local Planning Authority (Document 5).

3.12. The western boundary of this central area is characterised by a belt of mature trees.

3.13. Finally the northern section of the appeal site is triangular in shape and lies beyond the Tomlinson Drive development to the west and the area of lawful car storage use to the south. Part of the established builders yard business extends into this area along the eastern side. The remainder of this area is open and undeveloped land. A number of cars have been stored in this area. The Certificate of Lawful Use did not include this area owing to insufficient evidence on the period of use being adduced at that time.

3.14. It is evident that the majority of the site is "developed" and comprises previously developed land (brownfield land) immediately adjoining the defined built-up edge of a large settlement.

3.15. The extent and nature of the uses on the site have a significant and adverse impact on the character and visual perception of the site. This is reinforced by the unfettered nature of the uses, the proximity and visibility from residential development immediately to the west. Moreover the uses are audible from these adjacent properties impacting on the enjoyment of their gardens. The impact of the uses on the site have a harmful urban effect representing an incongruous

form of development on the site that prejudices the setting and amenities of adjacent residential development. The opportunity arises to extinguish these non-conforming and bad neighbour uses and design a scheme compatible with and enhancing adjoining land uses.

3.16. The site is not in agriculture or forestry use and serves no public open space or public amenity function. Due to the character and extensive nature of the woodland to the north and east, the site relates more to the built-up area of Finchamstead North than the undeveloped land to the north and east. It is not "rural" or "countryside" in character. The uses of the site further reinforces this point. In my view the appeal site is an appropriate one for residential development.

4. DESCRIPITON OF THE APPEAL PROPOSALS

4.1. The appeals relate to two alternative schemes on the same site. Both applications are in outline form with all matters reserved except means of access. The means of access for both applications are identical, namely an extension of Johnsons Drive northwards into the site with access onto Nine Mile Ride.

4.2. The difference between the applications relate to the number of dwellings proposed. Appeal A relates to a 30-unit scheme whilst Appeal B proposes 50 No. units. Whilst the applications are in outline form Site Layout Plans for illustrative purposes only were submitted.

30-Unit Scheme – Appeal A

4.3. The 30-unit scheme as illustrated on Plan No. OUT1 indicates a form of development that reflects the characteristics of the adjacent Tomlinson Drive development to the west.

4.4. The proposal has a density of 17 dwellings to the hectare and proposes a mix of 3 No. 2-bed dwellings (10%), 9 No. 3-bed dwellings (30%) and 18 No. 4-bed dwellings (60%). The Unilateral Agreement will secure 25% of these units for affordable housing together with appropriate contributions for open space and infrastructure and service provision.

4.5. There are no highway objections to the proposed scheme as confirmed in the Planning Officer's Report at paragraph 5.20 (Document 1).

4.6. The Planning Officer's Report also acknowledges that the proposed development would be in character with existing local residential development (Document 1 – paragraph 5.16) and would have an acceptable effect on neighbouring properties (Document 1 – paragraph 5.19).

4.7. The scheme is put forward as a lower density development without prejudice to the 50-unit proposal, if it is considered that a lower density redevelopment scheme would be more appropriate on this site, given its current location on the edge of the settlement irrespective of the need to make more efficient use of the site for residential development and provide a larger number of smaller dwellings.

50-unit Scheme – Appeal B

4.8. The 50-unit is illustrated in indicative form on Plan No. OUT2A and proposes a density of 30 dwellings to the hectare, consistent with the advice in PPG3 on making more efficient use of land. The resulting dwelling mix comprises 31 No. 1/2-bed units (62%), 11 No. 3-bed units (22%) and 8 No. 4-bed units (16%). The mix exceeds the Council's requirements on the need for smaller dwellings in the district.

4.9. The indicative layout locates development on the areas already characterised by development, namely the residential curtilage of No. 6 Johnsons Drive, the area of lawful car storage and builders yard. The northern area of the site, beyond the lawful car storage area, will be laid out as public open space, including an equipped children's play area.

4.10. As confirmed by the Planning Officer's Report (Document 2 - paragraph 4.d) the site is capable of development at the proposed mix and density without having an unacceptable impact on existing neighbouring properties.

4.11. The Local Planning Authority have no highway objection to the proposed access (Document 2 – paragraph 4.e)

4.12. The proposal makes provision for on-site open space including an equipped children's play area.

4.13. A Unilateral Undertaking confirms that the proposal will include 50% of affordable housing. The proposed mix of affordable units accords with the Local Authority Housing Department's specific requirements.

4.14. The Unilateral Undertaking also confirms appropriate financial contributions towards service and infrastructure requirements consistent with the Local Planning Authority's policies.

4.15. The proposed scheme represents a sensitive redevelopment of the appeal site that meets particular housing needs of the district, is compliant with PPG3 in terms of making efficient use of previously developed land and respects the character of the site itself and that of the surrounding area.

4.16. The appellants preferred proposal is the 50-unit scheme.

4.17. Common to both proposals will be the loss of the lawful car storage and builders yard uses on the site. These are operated independently of each other and have unfettered use rights that currently detract from the character and appearance of the site and the amenities of neighbouring residential properties. The extent of these uses are illustrated on Mr. McCaffrey's Figure 5. These give the site a developed appearance and contradict its description as open countryside.

4.18. The proposed redevelopment schemes will replace these incongruous bad neighbour uses whilst materially enhancing the affect on neighbouring properties (a point accepted by the two Planning Officer's Report on the appeals schemes (Documents 1 and 2)). The proposed land use will complement, not contrast with, adjacent properties. With appropriately designed and sited dwellings and boundary treatments the proposed redevelopment schemes will result in an improvement on the character and visual amenities of the site and surrounding area.

4.19. The amenities (both visually and aesthetically) of adjacent properties will be enhanced. The current intensive and extensive car storage use is open to view from first floor windows whilst the continuous comings and goings, engine warming, car alarms etc associated with the car storage use can only detract from the residential amenities of adjacent properties.

4.20. The loss of these uses and their replacement by either redevelopment scheme should enhance the character and setting of Finchamstead North at this point whilst also enhancing the amenities of adjacent residents and meeting important housing community related needs.

5. CONSIDERATION OF RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1. Relevant Policy Documents for this appeal are:

i. Approved Berkshire Structure Plan 1991-2006, August 1997 (Document 6).

ii. Adopted South East Area Local Plan, April 1994 (Document 7).

iii. Deposit Draft Wokingham District Local Plan, 1996-2006, February 2000 (Document 8).

The Development Plan

5.2. The Development Plans for the purpose of these appeals are the Approved Berkshire Structure Plan 1991-2006 and the Adopted South East Area Local Plan, 1994. The Local Plan however runs to 31st March 1996 and is therefore out of date. Whilst some of its general policies may have some applicability it is no longer helpful. It was prepared within the context of the 1988 Replacement Structure Plan for Berkshire and does not accommodate the new housing requirements of the Approved Berkshire Structure Plan or define various policy notations and settlement boundaries in light of those requirements. The Adopted Local Plan is no longer up to date such that it should not be determinative in the consideration of the appeals and only has limited weight. The Approved Structure Plan remains the only up to date Development Plan.

Other Material Considerations

5.3. The appeal schemes should be considered in accordance with the Development Plan. The Deposit Draft District Local Plan will eventually replace the South East Area Local Plan. This was first published in October 1997. A number of amendments were made to the Deposit Draft in April 1999, September 1999 and February 2000 prior to a two part Local Plan Inquiry. The Part 1 Report published in October 2000 related to a new settlement proposal south of the M4 at Reading. The

Inspector recommended that the new settlement proposal and the policies relating to it be deleted from the Deposit Draft Local Plan. The Local Planning Authority have considered this recommendation and accepted it. The Part 2 Report was received in October 2001 and published in December 2001 (Document 10). The Report was prepared in the knowledge of the Local Planning Authority's consideration of the Part 1 Report. The Authority have yet to consider any of the Part 2 Local Plan Inspector's recommendations.. At the time of preparing this evidence there is no indication of when Wokingham District will consider the Inspector's recommendations, what their response will be and the timing of the remainder of the Local Plan process. For instance there could be a case for a Modifications Inquiry if new sites are to be included in the Plan. At present given the uncertainties with the contents of the Plan and the nature and extent of some of the policy notations only limited weight can be applied to the emerging Local Plan at this stage.

5.4. Overall the Berkshire Structure Plan is the most up to date Development Plan for the purposes of these appeals. There is a presumption that the appeals be determined in accordance with this Plan under Section 54A unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. The significant shift in National Policy described in the March 2000 revision of PPG3 is, as paragraph 38 indicates, one such material consideration that can supersede the policies of the Development Plan, more so when the Development Plan was prepared before March 2000. Less weight should be attached to the Adopted South East Area Local Plan and the Deposit Draft District Wide Local Plan.

I now consider each Plan in turn below having regard to the above.

i. **The Approved Berkshire Structure Plan, August 1997**

5.5. The Berkshire Structure Plan was originally approved by the County Council in November 1995 and an Alteration in 1997 relating to Green Belt issues at Slough. The Plan covers the period 1991-2006.

Overall Strategy/Location of Development

5.6. The overall strategy of the Plan, as expressed in Structure Plan Policy OS1, is to seek sustainable development and improve to the quality of life in Berkshire by pursuing a number of objectives, which are set out in the Policy.

5.7. The first seeks to restrain developments to levels that respect the limits set by environmental, infrastructure and other constraints upon development land. The characteristics of the appeal site being largely previously developed land, the level of development proposed and the infrastructure requirements arising from it being accommodated will respect the environmental infrastructure capacity of the district and the County as a whole.

5.8. Second, the nature of the proposed development, in particular the 50-unit scheme by reason of the mix of proposed dwellings and the significant proportion of affordable housing proposed (50%), will be consistent with the stated priority of meeting Berkshire's economic and social needs, including the provision of low cost housing.

5.9. Third, the redevelopment of a non-conforming use that has an acknowledged detrimental effect upon the rural area to meet the social needs highlighted in OS1(ii) will protect and enhance the character and quality of Berkshire's landscape, environment and heritage. The development of this previously developed site in place of emerging greenfield sites will also fulfil this stated policy objective.

5.10. As confirmed in Mr. McCaffrey's evidence the appeal site is located where the need for travel is minimised having regard to the proximity of a number of facilities and the availability of alternative modes of public transport to and from the site. Whilst the Local Planning Authority refer to this aspect of the Policy in the reason for refusal on the 50-unit scheme, this is only one of a number of complementary objectives that need to be considered collectively in the round.

5.11. Fourth, the overall strategy of the Structure Plan seeks to conserve natural resources. The redevelopment of this brownfield site achieves this. The alternative is the loss of agricultural land (greenfield sites), thereby conserving these natural resources.

5.12. Fifth, the proposal will extinguish an existing car storage and builders yard uses that generate noise pollution through alarms and vehicle movements. The net difference will be less than development associated with an undeveloped site with no existing associated vehicle movements. The form of development will therefore meet the local needs of the area in a way that also minimises pollution having regard to the net difference between the proposed and existing site environment by comparison to a greenfield site.

5.13. Sixth, the appellants, through a Unilateral Undertaking, are committed to making appropriate infrastructure and service contributions to enable improvements to be made to the fabric of the district in order to accommodate the needs arising from the proposed development. The on-site public open space proposal related to the 50-unit scheme will also benefit the local area and therefore the amenity of the settlement.

5.14. Finally the overall strategy refers to developing an integrated transport strategy. The appellants Unilateral Undertaking includes a package of measures that not only enhances the sustainable location of the site

but also the relationship of the site with a non-car integrated transport strategy/network.

5.15. It is evident that the proposals accord with the wide-ranging objectives of Policy OS1 in seeking to create an overall sustainable development and improve the quality of life in Berkshire. The Local Planning Authority's focus on one particular aspect is misleading and ignores the other equally legitimate objectives that collectively assist in creating a sustainable environment, which also includes meeting the needs of the community.

Housing

5.16. Policy H1 sets out the total housing provision for the County, 40,000 dwellings between 1991-2006. Policy H2 distributes this total in phased provision to the Districts. As far as Wokingham is concerned the position is as follows:

	1991-1996	1996-2001	2001-2006	Total
Wokingham	2,550	2,250	2,950	7,750

5.17. Policy H4 provides guidance on the acceptability of development proposals. It states:

> **"WITHIN THE PROVISIONS SPECIFIED IN POLICY H2, LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITIES SHOULD ENSURE THAT PROPOSALS FOR NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ARE IN LOCATIONS WHICH ARE CLOSE AND HAVE GOOD ACCESS, PARTICULARLY BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT, TO EXISTING AND PROPOSED EMPLOYMENT SITES/AREAS AND SHOPPING AND SERVICE FACILITIES. IN ADDITION, THEY SHOULD ENSURE THAT PROPOSALS TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF LOCAL NEEDS AND DEMANDS."** (My emphasis)

5.18. Mr. McCaffrey's evidence notes the acceptable location of the appeal site in respect of its proximity and access to employment areas in Wokingham, via existing public transport routes, and the proximity of shopping and service facilities in Finchamstead North. The appeal site is also located in an area where local needs and demands are high, in particular in relation to affordable housing needs, a matter I touch on later in my evidence.

5.19. Policy H5 provides guidance for part of the provision for housing development set out in Policy H1. It states:

Development Within Settlements and Redevelopment/change of Use

> **"PART OF THE PROVISION FOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT SPECIFIED IN POLICY H1 WILL BE ACHIEVED BY:**
>
> **(i) ...**
>
> **(ii) REDEVELOPMENT OR ADAPTION OF AN EXISTING BUILDING OR SET OF BUILDINGS.**
>
> **(iii) ...**
>
> **IN ADDITION, IF FURTHER LAND RELEASES ARE REQUIRED TO MEET THE PROVISIONS OF POLICIES H1 AND H2, THESE SHOULD NORMALLY BE MADE THROUGH THE DEFINITION OF SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES AS PART OF THE LOCAL PLAN PROCESS."** (My emphasis).

5.20. The Policy does not preclude the release of sites outside the Local Plan process on land beyond defined built-up areas as either redevelopment proposals or as exceptions to the norm. The exceptions in this case include:

- Redevelopment and extinguishment of bad neighbour uses.
- Redevelopment without compromising countryside objectives.
- The lack of landscape impact arising from the proposals.

- Affordable housing needs.
- Rounding off.

5.21. The Structure Plan and the Explanatory Text acknowledge the undisputed fact that in order to meet the housing provision figures in Policies H1 and H2 land will be required through the delineation of new settlement boundaries.

5.22. Policy H5 unlike Policy H3 in the earlier 1988 Replacement Structure Plan for Berkshire does not include detailed guidance on the form of "Rounding-off" that may be appropriate. This reflects Government guidance at the time of approving the Structure Plan (paragraph 5.6.6 of PPG12) that detailed development control policies are more appropriate in Local Plans.

5.23. Paragraph 7.41 of the Structure Plan states:

> **"However, until such time as local plan policies are in place the original Structure Plan Policy (H3) remains as supplementary planning guidance."**

5.24. The District Wide Local Plan has yet to be adopted. In this regard "the original Structure Plan Policy H3" remains as Supplementary Planning Guidance (Document 25). This defines "Rounding-off" and states:

> **"(ii) "Rounding-off" – the development of land within or on the edge of the existing built-up area of a settlement. Such development may involve more than one individual site and the construction of new means of access. The scale and character of rounding-off development will be such that it does not harm the physical or visual character of the settlement (or, in the urban areas, the neighbourhood) or the relationship between the settlement and the surrounding landscape".** (My emphasis).

5.25. In terms of paragraph 7.41 of Explanatory Text and Policy H3 (ii) of the Replacement Structure Plan for Berkshire (Supplementary Planning Guidance) the appeal site lies "on the edge of a built-up area of a settlement". It is proposed to be served by the "construction of a new means of access". In view of the comparatively limited size of the site to the whole of Finchamstead North (0.60%) and the developed characteristics of the site itself, the proposed development will not harm the physical or visual character of the settlement. Given the firm defensible boundaries of the site, its natural containment and relationship with the existing built-up area to the south and west the proposed development will not harm the "physical and visual character of the settlement or the relationship between the settlement and the surrounding landscape". More so the position will be enhanced given the current developed state of the site which positively harms the physical and visual character of the settlement and relationship between the settlement and surrounding landscape. The proposals would thus accord with the provisions of this Supplementary Planning Guidance.

5.26. In summary the levels of housing required by the approved Structure Plan and the level of affordable housing need necessitate the release of appropriate housing sites on the edge of settlements. The Structure Plan indicates the need for the delineation of new settlement boundaries to accommodate the required level of housing provision. It permits redevelopment schemes and also allows as exceptions to the norm for releases outside the Local Plan process. Accordingly the provision of development outside, albeit on the edge of a defined settlement boundary should not be disputed in Development Plan terms.

5.27. Policy H7 relates to the provision of low cost housing. The Policy states:

"TO HELP MEET ANTICIPATED NEEDS ACROSS THE COUNTY, AN APPROPRIATE PROPORTION OF EACH DISTRICT'S HOUSING PROVISION IN POLICY H2 SHOULD BE LOW-COST HOUSING OF VARIOUS TENURES TO MEET THE LOCAL HOUSING NEEDS OF THOSE WHOSE INCOMES DO NOT PERMIT THEM TO OBTAIN ACCOMMODATION ON THE OPEN MARKET."

5.28. The proposal has been specifically targeted by virtue of the mix of dwellings proposed to meet identified local housing needs in the district.

5.29. The Explanatory Text to Policy H7 (paragraph 7.52) defines local needs. The proceeding paragraph 7.51 indicates that a provision of at least 20% of all dwellings granted planning permission should be for low cost housing.

5.30. The appeal proposals are for 25% and 50% affordable housing within the 30 and 50-unit appeal schemes respectively. The latter represents a significant increase above the County Council's stated figure. This amounts to a material consideration in favour of the scheme.

5.31. Policy H8 relates to low cost housing to meet local needs in rural areas. Where small-scale schemes are solely for low cost housing to meet proven needs, permission may be granted on the periphery of rural settlements outside the Green Belt.

5.32. The provision of 50% affordable housing in the 50-unit scheme, against a Structure Plan stated level of provision of 20% represents a hybrid Policy H8 site, where a significant proportion of affordable is provided.

5.33. Policy H9 notes that within the provisions specified in Policy H2, favourable consideration will be given to proposals for residential development which add to the range of dwelling types and sizes with specific emphasis being given to the provision of smaller dwellings and other identified local needs.

5.34. The 50-unit appeal scheme is designed to ensure that this important policy objective is secured.

Countryside Policies

5.35. Policy C2 of the approved Structure Plan seeks to control development outside built-up areas and settlement boundaries defined in Local Plans. Policy C2 states:

> **"DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE BUILT-UP AREAS AND SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES DEFINED IN LOCAL PLANS (AND NOT WITHIN THE METROPOLITAN GREEN BELT – SEE POLICY C4) WILL BE STRICTLY CONTROLLED, AND PERMITTED ONLY:**
>
> **(i) WHERE IT IS REQUIRED FOR AGRICULTURE OR FORESTRY; OR**
>
> **(ii) FOR THE RE-USE, ADAPTATION OR REDEVELOPMENT OF EXISTING BUILDINGS, PARTICULARLY TO ASSIST THE DIVERSIFICATION OF THE RURAL ECONOMY AND TO MAINTAIN OR ENHANCE THE RURAL ENVIRONMENT; OR**
>
> **(iii) OTHER DEVELOPMENT FOR WHICH A RURAL LOCATION IS ESSENTIAL;**
>
> **PROVIDED IT IS BOTH APPROPRIATE IN SCALE, FORM, IMPACT, CHARACTER AND SITING TO ITS LOCATION IN THE COUNTRYSIDE AND IS ACCEPTABLE IN TERMS OF OTHER POLICIES IN THE STRUCTURE PLAN".** (My emphasis).

5.36. Consistent with Policy H5 development will be permitted for redevelopment of existing buildings, particularly to maintain or enhance the rural environment. The proposal to redevelop the site by replacing the existing uses, including buildings, will secure this objective, whilst remaining appropriate in scale, form, impact, character and setting to its

location on the edge of Finchamstead North. This matter is elaborated further at paragraph 5.9 of the supporting text, which notes:

> **"Even where development may be acceptable in principle in the countryside the acceptability of a particular proposal will depend on its suitability for the proposed site; on the impact of any related activity; and on the adequacy of any measures to integrate the proposal into the surroundings."**

5.37. The particular characteristics of the appeal site, including the current lawful uses on it, the natural containment of the site and the form and layout of the proposed developments ensure that these criteria are met. The principle of the proposed development and the form of development on the appeal site will not compromise countryside objectives thereby conforming with the Development Plan Policy relating to countryside. This matter is further confirmed by the Authority's Policy and Plans consultation response on the appeal applications (Document 21).

5.38. Policy C6 seeks to protect important open areas which are of special significance as green gaps or wedges because they provide physical or visual separation of settlements. The Explanatory Text (paragraph 5.27) notes that green wedges and gaps will be defined in Local Plans where these areas are considered "essential" to the separation of settlements and communities.

5.39. The appeal site does not comprise an important open area of land that is an essential area to the separation of settlements and communities in providing either physical or visual separation between distinct settlements or communities. I will elaborate on this further later in my evidence.

Transport

5.40. The Local Planning Authority's Reason for Refusal No. 3 concerns sustainability and referred to the proposal representing a "significant" residential development. Policy LD5 of the Structure Plan notes that "major development" proposals should normally be located in areas which can be well served by public transport. Paragraph 4.9 (I) confirms that major developments in terms of housing relates to proposals for 100 or more dwellings. It is not necessary to apply the sustainable location principles for smaller scale proposals. ← where does it say that?!

Summary

5.41. The key points to note from my analysis of the approved Structure Plan are that appeal schemes accord with this Development Plan having regard to:

- The application of Policy H5 which allows, as an exception, for the release of land on the edge of settlements outside the Local Plan process.
- The proposals accord with extant Supplementary Planning Guidance on Rounding-off development on the edge of the existing built-up area of a settlement.
- The Countryside Policy seeks to strictly control development, but also accepts redevelopment of land within the countryside. The proposals will not conflict with this Policy or the Policy objectives of maintaining a clear physical and visual separation of settlements.
- The 50-unit proposal accords more with the need for affordable housing and appropriate dwelling mix.
- The proposals represent small-scale schemes in transport terms.

ii. **Adopted South East Area Local Plan**

5.42. The South East Area Local Plan is one of three Local Plans that cover Wokingham District. It is relevant here because the appeal site lies within its area. The other two Plans are the 1985 Green Belt Local Plan which covers the Green Belt parts of Wokingham District (North Eastern) and the Loddon Area Local Plan that covers the western half of the District.

5.43. The South East Area and Loddon Area Local Plans were prepared concurrently in line with the 1988 Replacement Berkshire Structure Plan. They were first prepared in 1989, placed on Deposit in June 1990 and adopted in April 1994 and May 1995 respectively. The two Plans had very short time horizons with an end date of 31st March 1996. Given the need to maintain a five year supply of land after 1996 the Housing Policies of the Plan made provision up to 31st March 1998 (the five year period from 1993-1998). The Local Plan does not identify any land for the period beyond 1998.

5.44. It is clear that the Local Plan is no longer up to date and little weight can be applied to its provision. Indeed the Secretary of State in an appeal decision dated 8/7/96 proposing 150 units (Document 11) concluded at paragraph 3 that:

> **"Although the Loddon Area Local Plan** (South East Area Local Plan **has been adopted comparatively recent as it was prepared in the context of the Replacement Berkshire Structure Plan, the Secretary of state agrees with the Inspector that, in terms of housing provision, it is no longer helpful."**

5.45. A later housing appeal (Document 11) dated 24/9/97 noted at paragraph 7 that:

> **"The Development Plan for the area comprises the approved Berkshire Structure Plan (SP) 1991-2006. The adopted Loddon Area Local Plan (LP) formed part of the Development Plan (DP) until it time expired on 31 March 1996. Although the Council approved the continuance of non-time based policies within the LP for development control purposes, no application for a statutory extension of the Plan was sought. As the housing provision policies were clearly out of date, the Council recognised that even informal continuance could not relate to these elements."**

5.46. The Local Planning Authority Reasons for Refusal refer to South East Area Local Plan Policies STV2 (Development in Rural Areas) and SC1 (Gaps Between Settlements).

5.47. Before assessing these policies it is relevant to note that their application and definition were for the lifetime of the Plan – March 1996. This is evident from the Local Planning Authority's evidence to the Local Plan Inquiry where their Proof of Evidence C/103 (Document 12) noted at paragraphs 1.04, 1.05 and 1.06 that:

> **"1.04 Paragraph 3 of the pre-inquiry statement refers to foreseeable future development requirements and argues that these should be taken into account in defining policies for the protection of the countryside and containment of urban growth. As is explained in Core Proof C/INT the Council had dealt with the future development requirements in the period to 1996 and the countryside policies are drawn in the context of the level of growth anticipated within that period. What the District Council has not done, and could not do, is to presume the extent and location of land required for development after 1996. That is a matter initially for the roll forward of the Structure Plan and subsequently for a future Local Plan."**

> **1.05 Whilst many of the general policies will be rolled forward in the District Wide Local Plan they will clearly need to be reviewed in light of the new strategic guidance. The Council accepts that there will be a need for some further development after 1996 and that this will involve amendment to policies included in these Local Plans.**
>
> **1.06 What the Local Plans do is to establish the importance of a variety of considerations in light of the current allocations for development. When looking at sites for development in the future both the County and District Councils will need to consider the implications of identifying land which is subject to special policies such as LC1 and LC2** (gaps between settlements). **The presence of the policies do not prevent them from considering these areas and it will be necessary to balance the importance of existing policies against identified development needs in reaching conclusions as to the appropriate development pattern. It follows that areas which merit inclusion in the separation and setting of settlement policies should not be discounted now because of identified and unidentifiable future demands which may mean that some of them are not able to be maintained in perpetuity."** (My emphasis).

5.48. The reporting first Local Plan Inspector (Document 12) concluded at paragraph 4.145 of his Report on this issue that:

> **"It is accepted that the constraint policies will not only have to be reviewed but also some may have to be amended once the development requirements of the roll forward Replacement Structure Plan for Berkshire are known, nonetheless, I consider that it would be wrong to attempt to anticipate in these local plans with their short remaining time scale, the likely locations where changes may be necessary."**

5.49. It is clear from the above that the definition of settlement boundaries, countryside and gap between settlement notations have been defined with a short time scale in mind and are now out of date. The need to accommodate the housing requirements of the current Structure Plan and local needs identified beyond 1998 means that the policies cannot now be used to defeat an otherwise acceptable development proposal.

5.50. Policy STV2 referred in Reason for Refusal No. 1 concerns development in rural areas, with the objective of limiting development outside identified settlements defined to accommodate development up to 1996. The Policy states:

> **"ALL LAND OUTSIDE THE IDENTIFIED SETTLEMENTS, AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP IS CONSIDERED TO BE RURAL AREA WITHIN WHICH DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT NORMALLY BE ALLOWED. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REPLACEMENT STRUCTURE PLAN EXCEPTIONS MAY BE MADE FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES WHICH ARE NOT SPECIFICALLY DEALT WITH BY OTHER POLICIES IN THIS LOCAL PLAN.**
>
> **(A) DEVELOPMENT FOR HOUSING PURPOSES OF SITES NOT EXCEEDING 0.4 HECTARE ON THE EDGE OF SETTLEMENTS IN THE FORM OF ROUNDING OFF OR REDEVELOPMENT.**
>
> **(B) ..... (H)**
>
> **THE ACCEPTABILITY OF ALL PROPOSALS WILL ALSO BE JUDGED AGAINST THE PROVISIONS OF OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES CONTAINED IN THIS PLAN. FOR THE AVOIDANCE OF DOUBT THE AREAS OF SPORADIC DEVELOPMENT IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP ARE INCLUDED WITHIN THE RURAL AREAS."**

5.51. The Policy delineates now out of date rural areas. The application and extent of the policy notation should not be determinative. Limited weight should be applied to this time expired Policy. The more recent

approved Structure Plan remains the up to date Development Plan where Policy H5 and related Supplementary Planning Guidance still apply.

5.52. Similar to the countryside designation, Policy SC1, Separation of Settlements, has been defined on the basis of the level of housing requirements to 1998. The Policy seeks to maintain a clear separation of settlements within the Plan area. Development will not be permitted in the areas, which would either detract from the undeveloped appearance or intensify existing sporadic development. The areas defined are of special significance because they are essential to the maintenance of a physical and visual separation between distinct settlements.

5.53. I will explain later in my evidence why the development of the appeal site will not impact upon the objectives of this Policy in maintaining a clear separation of settlements.

Summary

5.54. The South East Area Local Plan is now out of date. The quantity of housing included in the Plan and any enabling policies are insufficient to meet the more recent approved Structure Plan requirement that post date the Local Plan. The definition of settlement boundaries and the extent of countryside and gaps between settlements notations do not allow for the level of housing that needs to be provided. The Local Planning Authority has acknowledged that these policy notations will need to be reviewed in light of new housing provision figures. The weight to be attached to these policies is therefore limited and should not be determinative in the consideration of these appeals.

iii. **Deposit Draft District Wide Local Plan, 1996-2006**

5.55. The District Wide Local Plan covers the period up to 2006. It seeks to implement the provision of the Approved 1997 Berkshire Structure Plan. A number of Pre Local Plan Inquiry Changes were made to the Deposit Draft Plan in the period up to February 2000, the start of the Local Plan Inquiry. These are reflected in the extracts attached as Document 8.

5.56. A two part Local Plan Inquiry was conducted during 2000. Part 1 of the Inspector's Report related to a new settlement proposed to the South of Reading. This proposal was overtaken by the publication of PPG3 in March 2000. The Part 1 Local Plan Inspector recommended that the 2,500 house proposal be deleted from the Local Plan. The Local Planning Authority have subsequently accepted this recommendation.

5.57. In recognition of the deletion of the 2,500 unit new settlement from the Local Plan the Part 2 Inspector's Report has recommended a strategy of dispersal of sites across the district in order to meet the housing requirements of the Approved Structure Plan to 2006 (Document 10, paragraph 12). Having regard to commitments, windfall predictions and availability of sites at the time of the Local Plan Inquiry he has identified a need for some 2,270 units on edge of settlement sites. Appendix 1 to Mr. McCaffrey's evidence identifies some of these sites in relation to sustainability issues. These are greenfield sites. The Inspector also categorises identified settlements. In Finchampstead North the Inspector suggests that only limited infilling and small-scale windfall development will be permitted. Because of this initial finding sites considered on the edge of Finchamstead North were rejected without further detailed consideration. Relevant extracts of the Report are attached as Document 10. The Local Planning Authority have yet to consider the recommendations of the Local Plan Inspector.

Urban Capacity Study

5.58. The Council are currently in the process of finalising an Urban Capacity Study for Wokingham District. Subject to the amount of capacity identified and the number of dwellings likely to be available within the Plan period a proportion of the 2,270 units identified by the Local Plan Inspector will come forward to meet the total housing requirement.

5.59. The Urban Capacity Study is seeking to identify opportunities on previously developed sites throughout the whole district, including the rural settlements. The Local Planning Authority's Publication – Planning Commitments for Housing, March 2001, (Document 13) defines previously developed land at paragraph 1.04 which states:

> **"Brownfield sites have been classified according to the definition of previously developed land given PPG3. According to the definition used, redevelopment of, or development within the curtilage of existing dwellings is considered as brownfield development").** (My emphasis).

5.60. Greenfield sites are defined as:

> **"Land that has not previously been developed or has been occupied by agricultural buildings or where the remains of structures have blended into the landscape."**

5.61. The Council's most recent assessment of urban capacity (Document 14) relies to a large extent on development in residential gardens on all sites regardless of size. This component alone comprises 76% of the initial identified urban capacity (Document 14 – Table 2). The southern part of the appeal site has identical characteristics to this source of land albeit under one control. Given the multiple ownership of some of these sites it is unclear what proportion of the theoretical capacity identified will come forward in the Plan period up to 2006, in particular when the sites identified could have come forward in the intervening period. Since July 2000 when the interim findings of the Urban Capacity Study

were published, I believed the District have refined the Study to only include medium/large sites (sites greater than 10 units) and therefore avoid double counting with the Authority's small site estimate. The initial range of 2164 - 1781 dwellings will therefore be reduced. I comment on this and other related matters later in my evidence. The Study looks at areas within 400/800m distances from defined centres in Local Plans. These are regarded, by Wokingham District, as the more sustainable areas for higher density development. (Wokingham District Council 7th 2001 Urban Study Report - Document 14, paragraph .09). The appeal site lies at approximately 800m from North Finchamstead District Centre. Consistent with the Local Authority's approach to the consideration of urban capacity the site lies within a sustainable location. This, together with its previous developed status, renders the site an appropriate one for residential development.

Policies

5.62. Similar to the Adopted South East Area Local Plan the Deposit Draft Plan shows the appeal site on the outside edge of the Defined Built-up Area Boundary and is designated as countryside and included in a gap between settlements.

General Principals

5.63. Policy WOS1 refers to sustainable development. The Deposit Draft Policy is set out in full in Document 8. The Policy sets out a number of objectives which include:

A) To continue to slow down the rate of development within the Plan area to ensure that the best of the existing environment is conserved whilst providing appropriate development which meet local needs.

B) Give priority within a) to meeting the District's economic and social needs, including the provision of low-cost housing and a wider range of employment opportunities.

D) To provide for employment, housing, shopping and services in places that minimise the need for travel by private car.

E) That new development makes a positive contribution to the character, environment, landscape, and heritage within the plan area.

G) To seek improvements to infrastructure, services and amenities.

I) To develop brownfield sites in preference to greenfield sites.

5.64. The nature of the site and the scope to enhance its environment, the opportunity to meet important affordable housing need, its sustainable location in relation to the local transport network, services and amenities (open space proposals) and the use of a brownfield site ensure that the proposals accord with this Policy.

5.65. The Local Plan Inspectors recommended changes to the Policy are set out in Document 10 (Report pages 1-4 – 1-6). The Inspector at Paragraph 1.13 of his report re-emphasises the need to maximise the "use of buildings and land and exploit the potential of previously developed land within identified settlements before using the sequential approach and building upon greenfield land in the countryside". At

paragraph 1.14 the Inspector notes that the use of contaminated sites for new development that are beyond the settlement boundaries should be determined upon their merits as exceptions to the plan.

5.66. Both statements suggest that the appeal scheme has merit and needs to be considered on its merits before developing greenfield land in the countryside.

5.67. Policy WOS2 – General Development Principles relates to other policies noting that outside defined settlements development will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances. I believe such circumstances, consistent with Section 54A of the Town and Country Planning Act, apply in this case.

5.68. The Local Plan Inspector has recommended that the Policy be deleted and replaced by a Housing Development Principles Policy that sets out a sequential approach to new housing development whereby:

A. Previously developed land and buildings within the boundaries of Category A settlements will be developed first;

B. Secondly land and buildings on the edge of Category A settlements that are served by good public transport corridors will be considered;

C. Lastly, development proposals for land and buildings in Category B settlements will only consist of limited infilling and small windfall developments.

5.69. This approach, in particular the acceptance of greenfield sites on the edge of Category A settlements coming forward before previously developed sites within Category B settlements is contrary to the approach set out in PPG3 (paragraph 32) and may in any event prove controversial with Wokingham District Council. Furthermore the approach recommended contrasts with the approach adopted by Wokingham and the other District Council's in Berkshire in their Urban Capacity Studies (see Document 14).

5.70. The recommended policy lacks the flexibility to accommodate appropriate sites, with particular merit on the edge of sizeable settlements with defined local service centres and schools, in sustainable locations that can come forward to meet local needs. Such exceptions need to be considered, consistent with Section 54A of the Town and Country Planning Act. Furthermore the recommended approach also conflicts with PPG3, paragraph 70.

Countryside Policies

5.71. The Policy concerning development in the countryside, WCC1, referred to in the reason for refusal, will only permit development outside settlement boundaries in exceptional circumstances. The Policy in part states:

> **DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE SETTLEMENT *BOUNDARIES DEFINED IN THIS PLAN (AND NOT* WITHIN THE METROPOLITAN GREEN BELT) WILL ONLY BE ALLOWED IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND WILL BE STRICTLY CONTROLLED THROUGH THE APPLICATION OF DETAILED POLICIES AND PROVISIONS OF THIS PLAN.**
>
> **DEVELOPMENT WILL ONLY BE ACCEPTABLE IN *PRINCIPLE WHERE THE PROPOSAL FALLS* WITHIN AT LEAST ONE OF THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES:**
>
> **A....B**
>
> **C) LOCAL COMMUNITY FACILITIES WHICH CANNOT BE LOCATED ELSEWHERE.**
>
> **F) REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL IN THE COUNTRYSIDE**
>
> **G...H**
>
> **WHERE DEVELOPMENT IS ACCEPTABLE IN PRINCIPLE, IT WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IF IT IS APPROPRIATE IN SCALE, FORM, MATERIALS, DESIGN, CHARACTER, TO ITS**

> **LOCATION IN THE COUNTRYSIDE AND BE CONSISTENT WITH OTHER POLICIES IN THIS PLAN (SUCH AS THOSE RELATING TO GREEN GAPS, LANDSCAPE AND [A1] NATURE CONSERVATION) AND ANY SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE."** (My emphasis).

5.72. One of the categories of permissible development within the countryside is "redevelopment".

5.73. The Policy and Plans consultation on the appeal applications (Document 21) confirms in relation to Policy WCC1 that:

> **"It could be argued that the application is acceptable in principle as it forms a redevelopment proposal in the countryside".**

5.74. This finding also confirms the conformity of the proposals with Approved Structure Plan Policy C2ii.

5.75. The Local Plan Inspector's consideration of the Countryside Policy is set against the background that the Council should have reviewed its countryside (and therefore settlement boundaries) in a thorough and comprehensive manner throughout the District rather than just carrying them forward from previous plans. PPG7 makes it clear that Local Authorities should rigorously consider the function and justification of existing designations. (Document 10, paragraphs 16, 1.38 and 5.89).

5.76. Given the establishment of the lawful car storage and builders yard uses on the site since the adoption of the 1994 South East Area Local Plan, whether or not any such rigorous examination is carried out the site is not manifestly part of the countryside. The weight to be attached to the proposed countryside designation needs to reflect the current characteristics of the site.

5.77. The Local Plan Inspector's consideration of Policy WCC1 itself makes reference to the clause concerning redevelopment proposals

(Document 10, paragraph 2.57). He notes that there may be existing sites in rural areas that offer the opportunity for redevelopment without compromising countryside objectives. These could include contaminated or derelict sites and may offer the opportunity for environmental improvements. However the Inspector felt that such sites may be located away from services and facilities and be poorly served by public transport. The Local Plan Inspector notes that each case would need to be judged on its merits as an exception to the Plan. Given that the appeal site is well related to services and facilities, has good public transport options, and results in environmental improvements an exception would be applicable here and consistent with Section 54A of the Town and Country Planning Act which makes it clear that other material considerations should also be taken into account when considering individual proposals for development.

5.78. The Local Plan Inspector (Document 10, paragraph 2.58) considered that developments resulting in significant benefit to the community should also be considered as an exception, consistent with Section 54A of the Town and Country Planning Act. The need for affordable rural housing was considered as an exception by the Local Plan Inspector.

5.79. Whilst the Inspector is recommending that the Countryside Policy omit reference to redevelopment proposals, these should still be considered on their merits and if needs be permitted as exceptions to the Policy. This approach would be consistent with Approved Structure Plan Policies H5 and C2ii.

5.80. Over and above the redevelopment clause the reference to "exceptional circumstances" is recognition of some new development occurring in the countryside in certain situations. The particular characteristics of the appeal site, its lawful uses, location, containment, prospects of environmental enhancement and the opportunity to meet important affordable housing needs constitute "exceptional circumstances".

These circumstance either individual or combined represent exceptional situations in Wokingham District.

5.81. The acknowledgement of exceptions to the norm is consistent with Approved Structure Plan Policy H5 and (the associated Supplementary Planning Guidance) which do allow the release of sites on the outside edge of settlements. Deposit Draft Policy WCC1 was considered to be in conformity with the Approved Structure Plan (Document 23).

5.82. The Deposit Draft Local Plan includes a Policy relating to Environmental Improvements, Policy WOS5. The Policy states:

> **"WHEN CONSIDERING PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT, PPORTUNITIES WILL BE SOUGHT TO SECURE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS, BOTH ON AND OFF-SITE. THESE MAY FOR EXAMPLE INCLUDE:**
>
> **A) THE USE OF BROWNFIELD SITES IN PREFERENCE TO GREENFIELD SITES**
>
> **B) LANDSCAPING, ONCLUDING MAJOR STRUCTURAL LANDSCAPING ON SENSITIVE AND EXPOSED SITES**
>
> **C) PROVISION OF RECYCLING FACILIITES**
>
> **D) RE-USE AND REFURBISHMENT OF EXISTING BUILDINGS IN PREFERENCE TO REDEVELOPMENT**
>
> **E) UPGRADING OF THE EXISTING URBAN FABRIC**
>
> **F) THE RELOCATION OF BAD NEIGHBOUR TYPE USES AND REDEVELOPMENT FOR MORE APPROPRIATE USES."**

5.83. In relation to this Policy the Policy and Plans consultation on the appeal applications (Document 21) notes:

"Although the proposal appears to conform with Policies WOS1(l) and WOS5(a) which encourage development on brownfield sites in preference to greenfield. Sites...."

5.84. It is acknowledged by the Local Planning Authority that the site represents a "brownfield site". This notwithstanding the Consultation Note continues stating that the site is essentially countryside in character. I do not agree that the extent, nature and impact of the lawful uses on the site amount to characteristics associated with countryside. This remark is made on the superficial strength of the Local Plan Countryside Policy notation including the appeal site which I have noted has not been critically re-examined by the Local Authority when preparing the District Wide Local Plan.

5.85. The introduction of additional landscaping and extinguishment of a bad neighbour use that causes detrimental impact also ensure that the proposals accord with Policy WOS5(b) and (f).

5.86. Compliance with draft Local Plan Policy WOS5 is a further material consideration in support of the proposed developments and reinforces the conformity with Approved Structure Plan Policy C2ii.

Gap Policies

5.87. Similar to the South East Area Local Plan the appeal site is covered by the green gap and wedge policy notation (WCC2). The Policy seeks to maintain a clear separation of settlements by not permitting development that would affect or detract from their open or countryside appearance and character. The areas defined on the Proposals Map are regarded as of special significance because they are essential to the maintenance of a physical and visual separation between distinct settlements.

5.88. The Local Plan Inspector's Report (Document 10, paragraphs 2.88 – 1.101 deals with the Policy and recommended that it be deleted and replaced by:

> **"DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT BE PERMITTED WITHIN IMPORTANT OPEN AREAS, DEFINED AS GREEN WEDGES AND GAPS ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, THAT WOULD THREATEN THEIR ESSENTIAL FUNCTION IN THE PHYSICAL AND VISUAL SEPARATION OF SETTLEMENTS THAT ARE CLOSE TOGETHER."**

5.89. In the Local Plan Inspector's conclusions (Document 10, paragraph 2.90) reference is made to advice in PPG7, paragraph 4.16, which notes that when Development Plans are reviewed the function and justification for existing local countryside designations should be rigorously considered. In light of this advice the Local Plan Inspector notes that for the most part the gap designations have been uncritically carried forward from the Loddon Area and South East Area Local Plans and wedges have been based on little rigorous analysis. This is particularly so given the characteristic of the uses on the appeal site which have become lawful after the South East Area Local Plan was adopted.

5.90. The Local Plan Inspector continues at paragraph 2.90 noting:

> **"Consequently, I believe that in many cases gaps and wedges have been too widely drawn and that this undermines their credibility by including land that is not essential in terms of separation function."**

5.91. It is clear that the policy notations have been drawn too extensively. Given the purpose of the Policy, the Local Plan Inspector's conclusion and the location, character and relationship of the appeal site with Finchamstead North and other outlying settlements, limited weight should be applied to its application on the appeal site. This matter is further confirmed when the Local Plan Inspector notes at paragraph

2.91 of his Report that land should only be designated if it is considered essential to the separation function. The Local Plan Inspector continues noting in respect of wedges that:

> **"Wedges, in particular, often compromise land on the edge of a settlement that may also be considered as a sustainable location for an urban extension. In consequence, these local designations should have greater flexibility and not be expected to display the same degree of permanence for example, as a green belt. However, this also means that it is not sufficient to merely carry forward the gaps and wedges policy from one plan to the next without critical reassessment."**

5.92. This approach and circumstances apply to the appeal site. Not only does the existing uses on the site and its contrast and containment from the undeveloped land to the north and east confirm the inappropriate inclusion of the site within the gap/wedge notation, but sustainable opportunities arising from the redevelopment of the site in the manner proposed would be prejudiced by a prescriptive application of this Policy.

5.93. In this regard the Local Plan Inspector recalls at paragraph 2.97 that the Local Authority's approach of applying guideline distances of between 1 and 2km as a starting point in defining gaps between settlements has been used rigidly without taking account of other factors. The Inspector refers to local topography and vegetation that may also justify a reduction in this distance being applied.

5.94. In respect of the appeal site the extensive mature woodland to the east of the site, some of which is a Designated Wildlife Heritage Site, ensures that there is no prospect of visual or physical coalescence between the appeal site and Pinewood/Crowthorne to the south east or the integrity of the wedge separating different parts of Finchampstead North being prejudiced.

Local Plan Inspector's Consideration of the Appeal Site

5.95. The Local Plan Inspector considered a written representations objection submitted on behalf of the landowner. A copy of the written representation is attached as Document 26. There was no duly made objection relating to the separation of Settlement/Green Wedge Policy and its application to the appeal site.

5.96. The Local Plan Inspector's consideration of the site was based on limited evidence before him. In particular:

- No illustrative schemes were presented to the Local Plan Inquiry on how the site could be redeveloped and materially enhanced.
- No sustainability evidence was placed before the Local Plan Inspector relating to this site.
- The detailed service and infrastructure contributions is now agreed with the Local Planning Authority and forming part of the appeal proposals have sustainability benefits not only for the appeal site but also for the settlement as a whole. These matters were not before the Local Plan Inquiry.
- The affordable housing proposals represent material considerations. These were not before the Local Plan Inquiry.
- Operational evidence and impact relating to the lawful car storage and builders yard uses was not before the Local Plan Inquiry.

5.97. Had the Local Plan Inquiry had the detailed evidence for the Section 78 appeals he may have come to a different conclusion.

5.98. As to the Inspector's remarks, Mr. McCaffrey's evidence confirms that Finchamstead North as a settlement contains a good range of shops and services and is accessibly by public transport. The appeal site is well related to these facilities and represents a sustainable location for development, enhanced by a number of related improvements that will not only benefit the appeal site residents but also the whole settlement,

which comprises the 4th largest concentration of population in the District.

5.99. Despite the size of Finchamstead North, the extent of affordable housing need here relative to other settlements in the District, the desire to disperse the housing requirements around the District and the brownfield status of these sites the Local Plan Inspector's global conclusion on Finchamstead North as a settlement for further growth appears to have overridden consideration of the suitability of the site itself where, in the Inspector's view, a housing scheme would not be any less incongruous or represent any significant improvement. Whilst I do not agree with these findings the relative impact as perceived by the Local Plan Inspector could be described as neutral to the current situation. This compares with a greenfield development where the impact would not be neutral but negative.

5.100. The appeal scheme should be considered on its merits having regard to the detailed evidence before this Inquiry which is materially different to that before the Local Plan Inspector. In this regard the Local Plan Inspector's consideration should not be determinative or critical to these more specific and detailed proposals.

Summary

5.101. The emerging District Wide Local Plan remains at an evolving stage prior to the Authority's consideration of the Local Plan Inspector's Report.

5.102. The Countryside Policies (WOS2 and WCC1) allow redevelopment proposals. The Local Planning Authority Plans and Policy Section confirm in their Consultation Response on the appeal applications that the proposals fall within this category, but conflict with the Gap Policy. My analysis of the Gap Policy and the Local Plan Inspector's comments on the Gap Policy confirm that limited weight should be applied to the

extent of the notation whilst in any event the proposed development will not impact on the visual or physical gap between any settlement or different parts of Finchamstead North. The Local Plan Inspector recommends that redevelopment proposals in the countryside should be considered on their merits, as an exception to Policy. The merits confirm that such a exception applies here. These merits include:

- Redevelopment of previously developed land that lacks any affinity with countryside.
- The site offers the opportunity for redevelopment without compromising countryside objectives.
- Opportunity to enhance the character and appearance of the site and its relationship with adjoining uses.
- The ability of the appeal site to absorb the proposals without impacting on the character of the surrounding area.
- Opportunity to extinguish bad neighbour uses that prejudice the visual and residential amenities of neighbouring properties.
- The ability to meet acute affordable housing needs.

6. CONSIDERATION OF RELEVANT NATIONAL GOVERNMENT ADVICE

6.1. Government advice is well known and established in various Circulars and Planning Policy Guidance Notes. For the purpose of this evidence I address only those matters of particular relevance to these appeals.

6.2. Firstly with reference to PPG1 and Section 54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 applications or appeals should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan. Where there are other material considerations, the Development Plan should be the starting point, and the other material considerations weighed in reaching a decision.

6.3. There are a number of other material considerations that arise in the determination of these appeals that need to be considered which reinforce the case for the grant of planning permission.

PPG3

6.4. The advice in PPG3 represents a significant shift in National Policy towards housing development. A number of salient points arise in relation to these appeals.

6.5. First PPG3 is a material consideration which may supersede the Policies in Development Plans, in particular those which were prepared before the revision to PPG3 in March 2000 (paragraph 38).

6.6. Second the Guidance sets out a sequence for the release of housing land in accordance with criteria set out in paragraph 31. The presumption will be that previously developed sites should be developed before greenfield sites. The exception to this principle will be where previously developed sites performed so poorly in relation to

the criteria set out in paragraph 31 as to preclude their use for housing before a particular greenfield site (paragraph 32).

6.7. Three, PPG3 sets out the Government's housing objectives which are clearly stated at paragraph 1. These note:

> **"The Government intends that everyone should have the opportunity of a decent home. They further intend that there should be greater choice of housing and that housing should not reinforce social distinctions. The housing needs of all in the community should be recognised, including those in need of affordable or special housing in both urban and rural areas."**

6.8. As part of this objective the PPG states that authorities should plan to meet the housing requirements of the whole community, including those in need of affordable housing. It also notes that it is important to provide wider housing opportunity and choice and a better mix in the size, type and location of housing than is currently available and seek to create mixed communities (paragraph 2).

6.9. These objectives are reiterated at paragraph 10 of PPG3 where the Government believes that it is important to help create mixed and inclusive communities, which offer a choice of housing and lifestyle.

6.10. PPG3 at paragraph 14 confirms:

> **" A community's need for a mix of housing types, including affordable housing, is a material consideration which should be taken into account in formulating development plan policies and in deciding planning applications involving housing."**

6.11. The appeal schemes, in particular the 50-unit proposal, seeks to meet these aspirations. As material considerations these need to be balanced against other planning policies that may be precluding such objectives being fulfilled.

6.12. Finally, PPG3 at paragraphs 69 – 71 set out the circumstances and merits arising from development adjoining existing rural settlements, in particular to meet local housing requirements. The appeal schemes accord with this advice which further reinforces the aspirations of helping to create mixed and inclusive communities.

7. ANALYSIS OF MAIN ISSUES

7.1. I have described the appeal site and its surroundings and assessed the relevant planning policy background. In my view the appeal site is suitable for residential development. The Structure Plan policies support its location and the nature of the proposed development. However the Local Planning Authority cite reasons for refusals from a now out of date Local Plan. The emerging District Wide Local Plan is at an evolving stage and like the now out of time expired Adopted Plan fails to identify sufficient land to meet the housing needs/Structure Plan requirements of the district. Accordingly the Proposed Settlement Boundaries and Countryside Policy Notations have been drawn too tightly. Furthermore the proposed settlement boundary/countryside notation has been carried forward from the South East Area Local Plan to the Deposit Draft District Wide Local Plan without critical reassessment. The changes in circumstances to the site since the adoption of the South East Area Local Plan (establishment of lawful uses on the site and the intensity of the use now that it is lawful) confirm the function and character of the site, as perceived on the ground, now represents the extent of the built-up area.

7.2. The Structure Plan does not preclude the release of land for housing outside the Local Plan process. In this case a number of material considerations point to the need for the release of the site now. These are:

1. Local housing need considerations.
2. Housing land supply considerations.
3. Suitability of the appeal site for residential development.
4. Consideration of the appeal site in light of relevant national advice and Local Plan policy notations.

7.3. I deal with each of these in turn below.

1. LOCAL HOUSING NEED CONSIDERATIONS

In dealing with this issue I examine:

A) Extent of affordable housing need in Wokingham District.

B) Wokingham District's progress in meeting affordable housing needs since 1997.

   i) Reliance on Housing Association Programme.
   ii) Use of Development Plan Policies.

C) Other affordable housing issues.

   i) Affordability.
   ii) Wokingham District's Housing stock.

D) Local Plan Inspector's assessment of the affordable housing situation in Wokingham District.

E) Affordable housing needs in Finchamstead North.

F) Merits of appeal proposal in addressing these needs.

A) Extent of Need in Wokingham District

7.4. The Local Authority carried out a Housing Need Survey in 1997. Relevant extracts are attached as Document 15. This remains the most up to date Survey. A new Housing Need Survey is currently being prepared by the District. The David Couttie Associates analysis of the local needs in 1997 and their projections to 2006 remain the most up to date data. The position can be summarised in tabular form as follows:

Table 1

Affordable Housing Demand (1997- 2006).			Chancellors Amended figures
Priority Waiting List		925	
Homeless Households (per annum)	(100 x 5)	500	
Concealed Households emerging 1996-2002	3900		
less 6.2% on needs register	240		
	3660		
less two person household (20.5% x 0.5)	375		
	3285		
less those earning > £17,500 (40.1%)	1320		
Affordable concealed need	1,965	1,965	
AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEED (1997-2002)		**3,390**	
Affordable Housing Supply			
Stock Re-lets (100 x 5)	500		
Empty Homes (30 x 5)	150 *1*		
HA Programme (rental/LCHO) (75 x 5)	375 *2*		(337)
Total	1,025	1,025	
TOTAL NET HOUSING NEED AT APRIL 2002		**2,365**	**(2,403)**
Future Need Projection – (2002 – 2006)			
Unmet need at 1st April 2002		2,365	(2,403)
Demographic growth to 2006	1,693		
Less market households (50 %)	850		
	843	843	
		3,208	(3,246)
Homeless households (100 x 4)	400	400	
Need		**3,608**	**(3,692)**
Annualised need 2002 – 2006		923 pa	
Residual Structure Plan requirement @ 1.4.01		1,466	
Annualised Structure Plan requirement @ 1.4.01		293 pa	
Supply	400		
Estimated (at 1997) supply from Re-lets (100 x 4)	420		
	820	820	
HA programme (rental/ LCHO) (105 x 4)			
UNMET AFFORDABLE NEED AT APRIL 2006		**2,788**	**(2,872)**

Notes:
When calculating the affordable housing need the Consultants excluded 1000 households planning to leave the district by 2002 because of a lack of affordable housing.

I have updated the Table (figures in brackets) having regard to events that have occurred since 1997. *This is explained in the Notes below.*

Note 1

Wokingham Housing Department confirmed that the empty homes programme has not achieved the projected 30 units per annum. Whilst there is no figure to quantify this the 150 figure noted is likely to be optimistic.

Note 2 – Housing Association Programme
Since 1997 the Housing Association Programme achieved 337 units, against a target of 375.
Source: Wokingham District Council Housing Strategy 2001-2004, page 15 (Document 16).

The extent of need is reinforced by the Need's Survey finding that 1,000 households are planning to leave the District (between 1997 – 2002) because of a lack of affordable housing. As confirmed at paragraph 2.2.14 of the Report (Document 15) this is the highest figure the consultants have recorded and is "very signficiant".

(B) **Wokingham District's progress in meeting Affordable Housing needs since 1997**

7.5. The Local Authority have relied upon two principal sources for affordable housing. Firstly the Housing Association Programme and secondly, and more recently, the application of Development Plan Policy. I deal with each of these in turn below.

(i) Housing Association Programmes

7.6. The Local Authority's Housing Association Programme was designed to provide accommodation for those in need of affordable housing in the district.

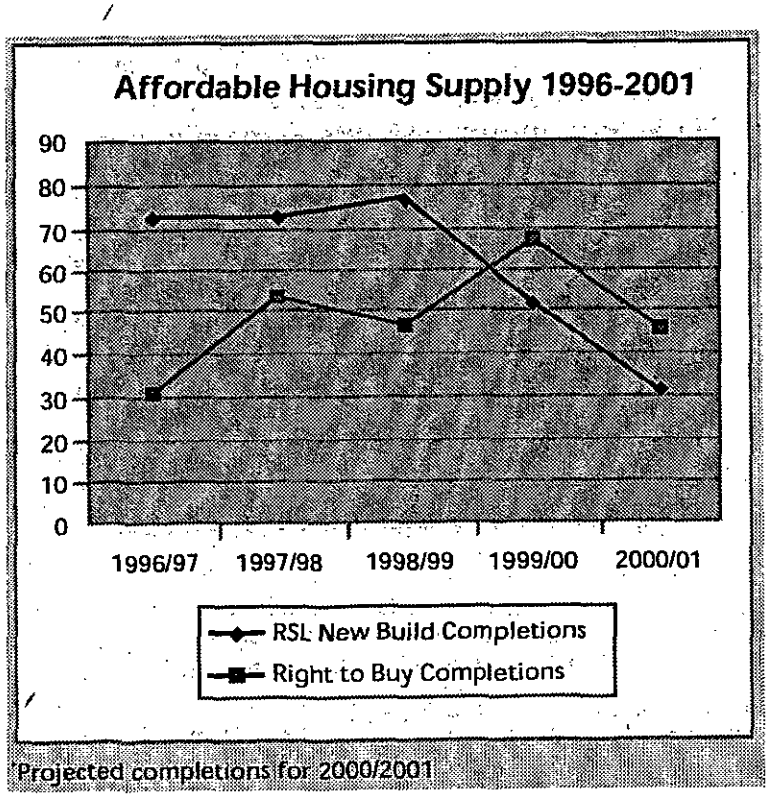
7.7. The David Couttie Associates Survey assumed on the basis that the Council had been able to invest a considerable amount of its own resources in providing new affordable homes that a programme of 75 units per annum would be realistic and would maintain a 75 unit per annum development during the first 5 year period to 2002. Table 2 below illustrates the Housing Association achievements over the last 5 years.

Table 2

1996/7	1997/8	1998/9	1999/00	2001/01	Total
73	73	77	52	62	337

The level achieved equates to an average of 67 units per annum, 38 short of what was assumed in 1997. The reasons for the reduction in supply is confirmed in the Council's more recent Housing Strategy paper 2001 – 2004 (Document 16) which notes:

> **"The sources to sustain the "75 homes" programme were anticipated from the proposed transfer of the Council's housing stock to RSL. However, when tenants voted to remain with the Council in September 1998, the anticipated £9 million for housing projects were no longer available. The impact of these diminished resources is evident in the falling number of new affordable homes being completed, as illustrated in the following graph."**



It is relevant to note that the reason behind the reduction in the Housing Association Programme stems from a problem that arose over 3 years ago. Despite this no compensatory measures were introduced by the Council.

ii) Application of Development Plan Policy

7.8. At the time of the Needs Survey in 1997 the residual Structure Plan housing requirement to 2006 was 3,200 dwellings. This required an annualised provision rate of 350 units. The Council were planning at the time a new build Housing Association Programme of rented and low cost home ownership totalling 105 units a year over the next 5 years. This represented 30% of the projected annualised Structure Plan housing requirement (350 per annum) to 2006.

7.9. The David Couttie Survey (Document 15) confirmed at paragraph 6.6.8 that:

> **"Some of this development will be undertaken on Council owned land but as this supply is running out, future subsidy through land provision will need to be negotiated with private landowners and developers in the provision of planning permissions."**

7.10. The David Couttie Report recommended that 950 units (derived from the 105 units per annum figure) should be the target provision for new affordable housing in Wokingham District. This equated to a 30% level of affordable housing on large new development sites. The Report qualified this recommendation in the second half of paragraph 6.6.8 stating:

> **"Our recommendation would be that 950 units, 105 per annum should be supplied which, even if achieved, would result in increased levels of affordable housing need of 2788 at 2006. This is three times the scale of the current Housing**

> **Needs Register and it is very clear that, even at what we recommend as the maximum level of 30% of affordable housing within larger new development sites, the level of housing need to be addressed during the next 9 years will be massively under supplied.**" (My emphasis).

7.11. Despite the level of housing need being "massively under supplied" and the recommendation of 30% provision from larger new development sites, the Council continued to adopt only a 20% level of affordable housing from large site developments (reference Policy WH7 Document 9). This approach, coupled with the reduced yield from the Housing Association Programme, the reduction in existing stock through the Right to Buy Policy and the inability to implement the Empty Homes Policy effectively as originally planned has resulted in a reduction in the supply of affordable housing in the district against a background of increasing need. This situation has only exacerbated the affordable housing situation in the district.

7.12. Table 1 above not only illustrates the extent of unmet affordable housing need in the district (3,692 units) but also the severity of the deficit compared to the up to date residual Structure Plan housing requirement which is largely private sector (75-80%) orientated. The affordable housing need requirement equates to 923 units per annum to 2006. This far exceeds the comparable annualised Structure Plan requirement to 2006 of only 293 units per annum. Accordingly the prospects of making any inroads into this increasing deficit is remote.

7.13. The Local Planning Authority's most recent statement on Affordable Housing Policy is set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance on Affordable Housing adopted in January 2002. (Document 17). This refers to an affordable housing yield of up to 25% from developments of 25 or more dwellings or sites of 1.0 hectare or more in settlements of more than 3,000 population and in settlements of 3,000 population or less (hardly any in Wokingham District) from developments of 15 or

more dwellings on sites of 0.5 hectares or more. The 25% yield is proposed despite the 1997 Need Survey recommendation of 30% and the acknowledged deterioration of the situation since then.

The 950 "Target"

7.14. The 1997 Survey identifies an affordable housing target provision figure of 950 units, irrespective of the underlying need for nearly three times this amount.

7.15. In terms of even meeting this insufficient and now out of date target between the years 1996/97 – 2005/06, the Planning Commitments for Housing Documents include the following completions data (including conversions) of public sector units over the first 5 years of this period.

Table 3 – Public Sector Completions between 96/97 and 2000/2001

1996/7	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2001/01	Total
25	92	66	54	50	287

Source: Wokingham District Council Planning Commitments for Housing 1996/97 - 2001

7.16. The public sector completions average 57 units per annum against an overall target figure of 105 units per annum. The rate of completion is 54% down on the requirement. This represents a substantial shortfall.

7.17. The residual target of 663 units (950-287) over the next 5 years to 31st March 2006 equates to an annualised rate of 133 units per annum, representing a 133% increase over the rate achieved to date.

7.18. Over and above the completions to 31st March 2001, there are also 171 public sector units categorised as commitments that have yet to be completed. These may come forward over the next 5 years. These together with the completions (171+287) total 458 units, leaving a total

residual affordable housing requirement of 492 units in order to meet the 950 target, irrespective of the 2,788 need figure required by 2006. Even this figure looks in doubt which adds further to the affordable housing problem in Wokingham District.

C) **Other Affordable Housing Need Issues**

7.19. Over and above quantifying the level of affordable housing need in the district the 1997 Survey identified two additional but related issues for the district which compound the problem further. These relate to:

i) Affordability
ii) Wokingham's Housing Stock

i) Affordability

7.20. Wokingham District Council's latest Housing Strategy (Document 16) notes that the position relating to affordability has exacerbated since 1997. The updated Housing Strategy document confirms on page 19 that house prices in Wokingham District have been subject to significant inflation over the past 2 years. The average house prices have risen 28%, terraced houses, traditionally the 1st time buyer's route into owner occupation, have risen in price by 39%.

7.21. It is estimated that public sector salaries have risen by 3% per year over the same period. The Strategy Document notes that as values have risen, so have the real cost of the deposit required by prospective purchasers. The Strategy indicates in relation to house prices that they are now so high that buying is actually beyond the reach of many people, especially those employed in the public sector. The position is illustrated by the following facts as set out in the Strategy Document.

- **"The average price of a property in Wokingham is now £182,299 (source: Land Registry, Quarter 1 200/01).**

- **The average price of a terraced house in Wokingham is now £162,995 (source: Land Registry, Quarter 1 200/01).**

- **The single person would need to earn in the region of £43,000 - £61,000 to secure a 95% mortgage. This assumes mortgages at 3 x single salary (source: local lender).**

- **The combined cost of a 5% deposit, fees and charges would total in excess of £9,000 (source: local lender).**

- **An example of WDC key worker earning £17,500 could raise a mortgage (on a single salary) of £52,500.**

- **The cheapest properties advertised within the district in September 2000 were:**

  - **2 bed mobile home for £67,500**
  - **3 bed ex-council house for £95,500**
  - **2 bed terrace property for £121,950 (source: local market information)".**

ii) Wokingham's Housing Stock

7.22. This matter is exacerbated by the housing stock profile of the district. The Housing Strategy document confirms that the housing stock is characterised by a lack of smaller properties which further hampers 1st time buyers. The affordability gap generated by the trends in house prices and the relationship of the maximum mortgage available to a typical key worker indicates an increasing gap between the available mortgage and property values both generally and in relation to smaller dwellings.

7.21. The Housing Strategy notes at page 20 that:

> **"Housing costs have a significant impact on labour supply as many perspective 1st buyers, who are essential to the local economy, move away from the district to find both alternative homes and employment. These employees are**

> **either lost to local employers (a wasted resource) or will travel into the district to work and add to traffic congestion. The treatment and retention of staff is now a major issue not only for public services but also for private businesses."** (My emphasis).

7.22. It is clear that the affordability issue is now creating major social and economic problems for the functioning of the district with sustainability implications arising.

7.23. The Housing Strategy document also reiterates the 1997 Housing Needs Survey findings concerning the nature of the housing stock in Wokingham. Housing within the district is mainly owner occupied, with over 89% of households own their own homes. 76% of the housing stock consists of houses and bungalows. This compares to the national average of 53%. 46% of houses are detached compared to the national average of 20% and only 14% of houses within the district are terraced properties.

7.24. The lack of terraced/smaller homes and their prohibitively high costs prevents many 1st time buyers from purchasing a home within the district. Consequently much local housing need is concealed to those who cannot afford to buy remain living with friends and relatives, or more away from the district to more affordable areas. I have already noted that 1,000 households plan to leave the district between 1997-2002 (200 per annum) because of a lack of affordable housing. (1997 Needs Survey paragraph 2.2.14 Document 15).

D) **Local Plan Inspector's Consideration of Affordable Housing Need Position in Wokingham District**

7.25. The Local Plan Inspector (Document 10) considered the affordable housing position in Wokingham District and made the following finding of facts:

- The 1997 Housing Need Survey together with the then Draft Housing Strategy and the Local Planning Authority's Proof of Evidence provides an appropriate in depth assessment of the current nature of housing need in Wokingham. The need for additional affordable housing in the district is clear and that demand is likely to increase. The increased need for affordable housing in the district arises from the value of the housing market in Wokingham, coupled with the nature of its housing stock and the patterns of demands placed upon it by the local population.

- A major issue revealed by the Housing Need Survey is that home ownership was beyond the reach of around 50/60% of new households, even when low cost market housing was available.

- Berkshire was ranked the 4th most expensive area out of 62 in the UK. Average property prices in Wokingham District Council was even higher than the Berkshire average resulting in a significant number of people unable to resolve the housing needs in the general housing market because of the relationship between housing costs and income.

- 1,359 households are on the Housing Waiting List at March 1999 (1,497 are on the Council's Housing Register at 1st April 2000).

- The Inspector highlights the point noted in the study that between 1997-2001 over 1,000 households were planning to leave the district because of a shortage of affordable housing.

- Wokingham District Council has one of the largest proportions of owner occupied housing in the country (85%). The proportions of Local Authority dwellings (7%), those under Registered Social Landowners (RSL) controlled (1%) and those in the rented private sector (7%) are among the lowest in the country.

- The Local Plan Inspector concluded that:

> **"If this situation continues** (which looks likely) **it is likely that the social cohesion of the district will be threatened and the labour supply constrained."** (Paragraph 5.1024).

- The Local Planning Authority can no longer rely upon the 500 affordable houses that would have been provided at the New Settlement Proposal south of the M4 at Reading (20% of 2,500).

- There is a high level of need coupled with a limited amount of land available, pressure on brownfield land and an imbalance in the type and tenure of existing housing stock.

- The Inspector concluded that the need is "acute" (paragraph 5.1026) and that:

> ***"If local people need affordable homes, they need them quickly and not in several years time."***

- Finally the Inspector intimates at paragraph 5.1038 that the prospects of meeting the 950 unit target are uncertain stating:

> ***"That every practical opportunity must be taken if the Council is to reach anything like the level needed in the district."***

- The Inspector believes that the Council faces exceptional constraints in the provision of affordable housing (paragraph 5.1026).

E) **Affordable Housing Needs in Finchamstead North**

7.26. The 1997 David Couttie Report contained a breakdown of housing need by sub-area. The Table on page 70 of the Survey (Document 15)

provides an estimate of those requiring affordable housing in each area of the district. The Table is reproduced in part below having regard to the extent of need in each of the top 11 (of 17) sub-areas of the district. I have added the population figures for each area for information

Location	Population (1998 projection to2001)	Affordable Households	Percentage
Anywhere in the district		1571	27.9
1. Wokingham	30,209	1015	18
2. Woodley	26,118	806	14.2
3. Earley	30,133	635	11.3
4. Winnersh	7,660	261	4.5
5. Finchamstead	12,147	230	4.1
6. Twyford	6,454	218	3.8
7. Hurst	1,852	170	3.0
8. Crowthorne	6,791	141	2.5
9. Barkham	3,094	121	2.2
10. Walgrave	3,797	117	1.8
11. Shinfield (includes Spencers Wood and Three Mile Cross)	7,635	97	1.7

Source: 1997 Needs Survey Page 70 and Wokingham District Council (Document 3).

7.27. It is evident that Finchamstead represents the 4th largest ward in the district by population with the 5th highest need for affordable housing.

7.28. Analysis of the Housing Commitment Data since 1996/1997 confirm that despite Finchampstead being one of the largest areas of population in the district with a high level of need for affordable housing no new affordable housing units have come forward in the settlement to date.

7.29. The Local Plan Inspector's recommended housing strategy elevates Shinfield (incorporating Spencers Wood and Three Mile Cross), Pinewood (Crowthorne) and Twyford above Finchamstead in terms of accommodating new development despite the fact that the need for affordable housing in these locations is less by comparison to Finchamstead.

F) **Conclusions on Affordable Housing Needs in Wokingham**

7.30. The above considerations indicate the following:

- An acute need exists for more affordable housing in Wokingham District.
- The extent of need has probably increased since the 1997 Survey.
- The development control process/housing association programmes have failed to keep up with the growth in the need for affordable housing, let alone reduce the extent of need.
- Finchamstead represents the 4th largest concentration of population in the district with the 5th highest level of affordable housing need.
- Despite this since the 1997 Survey no new affordable housing units have come forward in this area. The emerging Strategy in the Deposit Draft Local Plan, as recommended by the Local Plan Inspector, is likely to perpetuate this unacceptable situation.
- Level of housing required to meet the Structure Plan housing requirements to 2006 is insufficient in itself to meet the affordable housing needs of the district, let alone a small proportion of it.

- Affordability in the housing market has exacerbated since 1997 coupled with a lack of smaller dwellings in the district's housing stock and an increase in the deficit in meeting affordable housing needs creates undesirable consequences including:

  Social exclusion

  Labour/public service provision supply problems

  Longer journey to work patterns from outside the district

G) **Merits of the Appeal Scheme in Addressing these Needs**

7.31. The 50-unit scheme provides 50% affordable housing. That is double the Local Planning Authority's current requirements for affordable housing (SPG January 2002 Document 17, paragraph A.3.2) on a site located in the 4th largest area of population with the 5th highest area of affordable housing need relative to other settlements in the District where no such provision has been made to date or anticipated for the remainder of the Plan period to 2006. The 25 units in the 50-unit scheme would represent a significant proportion (23.8%) of the Council's current new build target of 105 units per annum. This represents a significant and substantial proportion given the completion rates to date have only produced an average of 57 units per annum.

7.32. The 50-unit appeal scheme incorporates a disproportionately high concentration of 1 and 2 bedroom accommodation (62%) against the Local Planning Authority requirement of 45%.

7.33. The higher proportion of smaller accommodation will help redress the unsustainable high concentration of detached housing in the district. Moreover the Finchamstead area (Parish) has the 5th lowest proportion of 1 and 2 bed units of accommodation to population in the district and the 3rd lowest proportion of 2 bedroom units to population.

- The Local Plan Inspector has highlighted the need for rented accommodation and not low cost housing to purchase (Document 10, paragraph 14). The Unilateral Undertakings ensure that this aspect of need is met.

- The 50-unit scheme will not only address the quantifiable affordable housing needs in the district/local area but also the qualitative aspects of provision concerning the nature and form of accommodation proposed.

- The site is available to come forward immediately in order to meet these needs, consistent with the Local Plan Inspector's comments that local people need affordable housing quickly, not in several years time.

- The larger proportion of smaller units in the 50-unit scheme, over and above the affordable housing units, will also assist in maintaining key worker personnel in the district, thereby assisting in creating a more sustainable pattern of development by meeting the indigenous needs within the district as opposed to them having to live outside the district and travel greater distances to work.

7.34. The proposal will assist in meeting fundamental planning/sustainability objectives of providing everyone with the opportunity of a decent home and that the needs of all in the community are recognised, including those in need of affordable housing consistent with the advice in PPG3, paragraph 1. PPG3 also highlights the importance of helping to create mixed and inclusive communities which offer a choice of housing and lifestyles. The performance of the Local Planning Authority to date has not fulfilled this objective. As a consequence even the minimal (now out of date) target of 950 units , let alone closing the overall affordable housing need gap is unlikely to be met.

7.35. These, consistent with paragraph 14 of PPG3, represent material planning considerations. Given the extent and nature of the affordable housing needs in Wokingham, the failure of the district to meet these needs, and the undesirable implications arising mean that considerable weight needs to be attached to such considerations. This matter is also recognised in the Deposit Draft District Wide Local Plan at paragraph 5.5 (Document 8) which states:

> **"The Council recognises that it may sometimes be necessary to allow exceptions to restraint policies in rural areas, in order to facilitate schemes for low cost housing to meet specific local needs."**

7.36. Against this background the provision of 25 units (50% provision) on the site represents a significant and substantial contribution to addressing the affordable housing needs of the district. The level of provision is much higher than anything so far achieved by the Council on private sector sites, as well as being far greater than the level of contribution that it could realistically seek to negotiate. This is a compelling material consideration in support of the proposal.

2. HOUSING LAND SUPPLY CONSIDERATIONS

7.37. The latest information on housing land supply was published by the Local Planning Authority in a document "Planning Commitments for Housing", March 2001, published in July 2001 (Document 13). This remains the most up to date housing land supply data for the purpose of this Inquiry. The document does not however represent a joint study with the HBF.

Table 4

	LPA	CHANCELLORS
Structure Plan requirement 1991-2006	7,750	7,750
Completions 1991-2001 (net)	4,801	4,801
Requirement		
Residual requirement 2001-2006 (5 years)	2,949	2,949
Annualised requirement	589.8	589.8
Supply		
i. Large/medium sites with planning permission	779	779
ii .Local Plan sites	243	243
iii. Soft commitments	26	26
(-10% flexibility allowance on i, ii, iii)	0	-105
Small site estimate	435	395
Total supply	1,483	1,338
Deficit	-1,466	-1,611
Years supply	2.51	2.27

7.37. The Council in the process of finalising an Urban Capacity Study in order to identify urban sites to meet a proportion of this deficit. The shortfall will then be made up edge of settlement greenfield sites recommended by the Local Plan Inspector. The timing of when these sites come forward and their ability to be completed in order to meet the 31/3/2006 Structure Plan requirement remains uncertain.

7.38. At present the Local Plan fails to identify a 5-year supply on the Local Plan Proposals Map including a proportion of unidentified sites, as required by PPG3, paragraph 34.

7.39. Over the last 5 years the Local Planning Authority have achieved an annual completion rate of 454 dwellings per annum. In order to meet the Structure Plan requirements to 2006 this needs to increase to 590 units per annum (a 30% increase). The prospects of achieving this

increase in completions rates remain uncertain, in particular if the Local Authority are to rely upon a large proportion of currently unidentified sites through an Urban Capacity Study. In this regard the need for additional housing outside the currently defined built-up areas, irrespective of the affordable housing need issues highlighted above, continue in order to be certain of meeting the District's Structure Plan housing requirements to 2006.

(3) **SUITABILITY OF SITE FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**

7.40. The appeal site has a number of advantages in development terms that confirm its suitability for residential development. These include:

1. The appeal site constitutes a previously developed site comprising a residential curtilage, car storage area and builders yard. These areas cover the majority of the site (73%) as illustrated on Plan Mr. McCaffrey's Figure 5. The nature and extent of these lawful uses have no affiliation with "countryside". The site can no longer be described as open and of a visual character worthy preserving for its own sake. The site in terms of use and function now relate more to the built-up area of Finchamstead North than an undeveloped area of land in the countryside.

   The site, unlike the majority of edge of settlement sites, is developed. The permanence of the cars on the site, together with the nature of the other uses on it confirm the previously developed status of the appeal site. Moreover the characteristics of the site corresponds with the Council's definition of brownfield/greenfield sites (see Document 13, pages vi and vii) and the Policy and Plans consideration of the applications (Document 21). These matters are further confirmed by the Planning Officer's Report into the 50-unit appeal scheme (Document 2) where the appeal site is described

as "part developed" (paragraph 4A bottom of page 4 of the Report).

The use of the site for car storage has attracted complaints from neighbouring properties (Document 18). The collection of uses beyond the residential curtilage in the central part of the site and along the eastern boundary detract from the setting of Finchamstead North and the adjacent nearby residential properties.

The 50-unit scheme respects the previously developed characteristics of the site by confining the residential development to those parts of the site already "developed". In this regard the proposal is well related to the scale and location of development on the appeal site itself.

The proposed development, in contrast to the current uses on the site, will be more compatible with residential developments that abut the site to the west and south. This is particularly so when one considers the levels of traffic generated by the current lawful uses (see Mr. McCaffrey's evidence).

2. Visual/environmental benefit to surrounding houses will materialise through the loss of the bad neighbour uses.

3. The appeal site is characterised by its containment due to its enclosure by residential development to the west and south and mature woodland to the north and east. The proposed scheme ensures that all the mature trees on the boundaries are retained, whilst the boundaries can be supplemented further if needs be. These characteristics ensure that there are no clear public views of the site and proposed development from the surrounding area. Indeed the Planning Officer's Report into the 30-unit

scheme (Document 1) notes at paragraph 5.16 that the "site is reasonably well contained".

4. The site is well related in scale and location to existing development beyond the site and would be well integrated with the existing pattern of settlement and land use. The enclosed nature of the appeal site on the eastern and northern sides is reinforced by the visual relationship with existing development to the west. The proposed development represents a logical self-contained rounding-off to this part of Finchamstead North.

5. The northern and eastern boundaries provide logical, defendable and recognisable limits to the proposed development reinforced by the current developed nature of the site itself that contrasts with the land beyond to the north and east. These characteristics reinforce the containment of the appeal site. This is confirmed by the inward looking nature of the site. As a result it has a far greater physical and visual affinity with the settlement than the open, undeveloped, countryside beyond.

6. The existence of the mature tree belt boundaries around the appeal site ensures that the setting and visual perception of this part of Finchamstead North will not materially change as a result of the proposed development. The improvement on the site and limited impact off the site of the proposed development further confirms its suitability for residential development.

7. Owing to the containment of the site, its physical and visual relationship with residential development to the south and west, the sensitive redevelopment of the previously developed parts of the site ensure that it will not have a detrimental impact on the surrounding open undeveloped countryside that lies beyond. The ability of the existing tree belts on the site boundaries and

beyond to screen the new development ensures that it will not intrude into the adjoining countryside or prejudice the maintenance of the rural character of adjacent land. By the retention of the mature trees on the boundaries of the appeal site the proposed development will preserve existing landscape features, which helps to define, soften and screen the built-up area.

8. Subsequent investigations by the appellants ecologists (Document 23) confirm that there are no protected species on the appeal site that would inhibit the proposed residential development.

9. The site is not visible from footpaths or other public rights of way. Accordingly it does not contribute significantly to the visual amenities of the wider area.

10. The scale of the proposed development will not be out of character with Finchamstead North, representing a small-scale 0.60%) extension by comparison to the overall size of the settlement.

11. In terms of sustainability, Mr. McCaffrey's evidence confirms that the site is well located.

7.43. The above matters confirm the suitability of the appeal site for residential development in the manner proposed.

4. CONSIDERATION OF THE APPEAL SITE IN LIGHT OF RELEVANT NATIONAL ADVICE AND PLANNING POLICY NOTATIONS

PPG3: Housing

7.44 Consistent with PPG3, paragraph 38, in considering applications for housing development before development plans have been reviewed the Authority should have regard to the Policy contained in PPG3 as material considerations that may supersede the Policies in the Development Plan.

7.45. In this regard PPG3 advocates a sequential approach for housing (paragraph 21) starting with previously developed land within urban areas (paragraphs 2, 30, 32 and 33) before releasing greenfield sites.

7.46. The appeal site comprises previously developed land. This finding is consistent with the Authority's Policy and Plans comments on the appeal site (Document 21), the Authority's definition of "brownfield" and "greenfield" (Document 13) and the lawful uses on the site (residential curtilage, car storage and builders yard). In this regard the site is not a greenfield site and should be considered, consistent with the sequence set out in PPG3, after previously developed sites within built-up areas but before greenfield sites on the edge of settlements.

7.47. The exception to this sequence will be where previously developed sites perform "so poorly" in relation to the criteria listed in paragraph 31 as to preclude their use for housing before a particular greenfield site.

7.48. Two issues arise. First, the capacity of previously developed sites within built-up areas within the District and second, whether the site performs so poorly in relation to the remainder of the criteria listed in paragraph 31 of PPG3. I deal with each in turn below.

i. Capacity of the Built-up Area

7.49. The Local Planning Authority's Current Assessment of Urban Capacity (Document 14) indicates a total capacity (regardless of size of site) of between 2,164 and 1,781 units depending on what level of discount is applied. The Authority have acknowledged in discussions that these initial figures include small sites. An estimate of these have already been included in the Local Planning Authority's Small Site Estimate (435/395 units – see my Table 4 above). These would need to be deducted from the capacity figures in order to avoid double counting.

7.50. The discounts used are derived from the DETR Tapping the Potential – Assessing Urban Housing Capacity: Towards Better Practice. The lower (70%) and upper (85%) discount rates used originate from Table 3 in the DETR document. An earlier paragraph notes that the lower level of discount will vary based on the approach of the Study. A lower discount rate will be required on estimates based on broad density assumptions to a given area yield with no specific design led exercises on sites judged. Accordingly the lower discounted figure would appear to be the more appropriate in this instance

7.51. Furthermore the identified capacities are required to be permitted and completed by 31st March 2006, the end date of the Approved Berkshire Structure Plan and Emerging District Wide Local Plan. Most Urban Capacity Studies identify capacity for at least 5 years or more. The discount rate would need to take into account the limited period left for these sites to come forward and be completed.

7.52. These matters point to a lower discount rate being used with a commensurate reduction in the available capacity identified.

7.53. As to the nature of capacity identified the figures rely heavily (76%) on the use of infill sites (e.g. backland garden areas). In either discounted

assessments, the Local Planning Authority are currently assuming between 418 to 344 units per annum from this source alone over the next 4 years (March 2002 – March 2006). This is against a total previous completion rate of 480 units on all sites over the last 10 years. Similar sites. Furthermore there remains a continued resistance to such sites coming forward at the planning application stage by the Local Planning Authority's Development Control Committees. This will further delay such proposals from coming forward in the remaining period of the Plan.

7.54. These factors point to a strong likelihood that the eventual Urban Capacity will fall short of the residual housing requirement to 2006 identified in Table 4 above (1466 or 1611) thereby establishing a need for sites outside the currently Defined Settlement Areas to come forward.

7.55. The appeal site, consistent with PPG3, comprises previously developed land and should therefore come forward before greenfield sites unless it performs so poorly in relation to the other criteria listed in paragraph 31. I deal with these criteria now.

ii. Site Suitability

- Location and accessibility

7.56. Mr. McCaffrey's evidence confirms that the site is appropriately located in terms of jobs, shops and services by modes other than the car and that the proposal includes potential for improving such accessibility. Moreover the location of the site compares favourably with some of the recommended greenfield sites recommended by the Local Plan Inspector whilst the settlement of Finchamstead North itself is of a significant scale to support the proposed development.

- Capacity of existing and potential infrastructure/ability to build communities

7.57. The proposed Unilateral Undertaking ensures that the needs arising from the proposed development are met satisfactorily. Furthermore the provision of public open space facilities on the site will meet needs arising from the surrounding neighbourhood thereby enhancing the community of North Finchamstead. In addition the injection of new development, in particular affordable housing units, will create a stronger more inclusive community as well as helping to sustain appropriate local services and facilities. The proposed development will also provide the catalyst and/or bring forward infrastructure improvements to Finchamstead North that will benefit the whole of the community which otherwise would not be possible. This matter is elaborated on further in Mr. McCaffery'

- Physical and environmental constraints on development of land

7.58. There are no physical and environmental constraints to the proposed development of the appeal site.

Rural settlement expansion

7.59. Over and above these considerations PPG3 (paragraph 69) makes it clear that some proposals for additional housing in the form of peripheral expansion of rural settlements (such as Finchamstead North as recommend by the Local Plan Inspector) will be acceptable. Paragraph 70 of PPG3 notes that villages will be suitable locations for accommodating "significant" additional housing where:

- Additional housing will support local services, such as schools or shops, which could become un-viable without some modest growth. This may particularly be the case where the village has been identified as a Local Service Centre in the Development Plan.

In this regard Finchamstead North has an identified Local Service Centre in the District Wide Local Plan. The local food store is under increasing pressure from the out of town stores in Wokingham and would, together with other shops and services in Finchamstead North in particular in the eastern half, would benefit from some modest increase in growth. No other development is planned for the settlement, despite its large size relative to all but 4 other settlements in the district.

- Additional houses are needed to meet local needs, such as affordable housing, which will help secure a mixed and balanced community.

  My evidence on affordable housing needs in the district and in Finchamstead North in particular confirm that such circumstances exist. The proposal will help ensure that a mixed and balanced community exists.

- The development can be designed sympathetically and laid out in keeping with the character of the village.

  The proposed development is well related to existing development to the south and west. It will replace existing development on the site that currently detracts from the area and yet respect the limits of development and defendable boundaries to the north and east.

7.60. PPG3 at paragraph 71 continues stating:

> **"The Government is concerned, however, that there should be adequate housing provision in rural areas to meet the needs of local people. The Local Planning Authority should therefore make sufficient land available either within or adjoining existing villages to enable these local requirements to be met."** (My emphasis).

7.61. The Local Planning Authority fail to comply with this advice. This will be particularly so if the Local Plan Inspector's recommendations are endorsed. This is despite the size of Finchamstead North relative to all but 4 settlements in the district, the identified needs for affordable housing in the settlement, the lack of any such provision since 1997 or planned provision to 2006. The implications arising from an effectual monotorium on new development at Finchamstead North by the Local Plan Inspector's recommendations will prevent such local needs and

therefore the objective of securing a mixed and balanced community being met. The proposed modest schemes will meet these important objectives consistent with this advice in PPG3.

PPG3 Conclusions

7.62. The appeal site comprises an appropriately located previously developed site. The site should come forward after previously developed sites in built-up areas but before edge of settlement greenfield sites. The Authority's Urban Capacity Study will not identify sufficient sites to meet the housing requirement to 2006. Having regard to the sequence of sites, the appeal site should be considered before greenfield alternatives. This is confirmed when assessing the site against the criteria listed in paragraph 31. The release of the site will therefore be consistent with the sequential approach advocated in PPG3. Moreover the nature of the proposals, in particular the 50-unit scheme, will respect the scale and locational characteristics of the previously developed parts of the site itself whilst meeting an acute community need. The proposals also meets a number of other important planning objectives highlighted in PPG3 which represents material planning considerations. One of these, over and above meeting the affordable housing needs of the district, is the ability to meet it in a particular part of the district identified by the Housing Needs Survey as an area of high need. This too is a further material consideration in favour of the proposed development. This is reinforced by the acknowledgement in PPG3 that some development adjoining rural settlements should come forward to meet local needs. These matters confirm that the appeal schemes accord with the advice and approach advocated in PPG3. A balanced judgement needs to be made in the consideration of these issues against other matters.

Weight to be attached to Local Development Plan Policies

7.63. Having addressed the approached advocated in PPG3 which supersedes Policies in the Development Plan it is now necessary to consider the appeal site in relation to relevant Development Plan Policy notations that the Local Planning Authority believe apply to the site:

Countryside
Gap between settlements

7.64. Before doing so I address the weight of each Plan in relation to these Policy notations in turn below.

Adopted 1996 South East Area Local Plan

7.65. The Adopted Local Plan is now time expired. The settlement boundaries and therefore corresponding countryside and other rural policy notations have been defined in the context of the level of development anticipated up to 1996, the end date of that Plan. As evident from the more recent Berkshire Structure Plan, housing requirements continue after this date that require amendments to the definition and extent of these policies in order to meet current needs. The Plan has had no regard to the more recent advice in PPG3 (2000). Only limited weight, if any, should be applied to the Adopted Local Plan such that it should not be determinative in the consideration of these proposals.

Approved 1997 Berkshire Structure Plan

7.66. The Approved 1997 Berkshire Structure Plan remains the only up to date Development Plan for the purposes of these appeals. The Structure Plan is the determinative plan in the consideration of these appeals.

Deposit Draft District Wide Local Plan

7.67. In respect of the current Deposit Draft District Wide Local Plan this remains at an evolving stage where only limited weight can be attached to the emerging policies. In particular the Local Plan Inspector was critical of the Authority carrying forward the settlement boundary, countryside and Gap/Green Wedge Policy notations without reviewing the function and justification for such notations around settlements. The weight therefore to these policies is reduced.

7.68. This is reinforced by housing need issues and the advice in PPG1 and 3 in terms of planning for communities as a whole.

7.69. The nature of the various Policies are also still in an evolving state prior to the consideration of the Local Plan Inspector's recommendations. Until then the current Draft District Wide Local Plan does not supersede or outweigh the approved Development Plan (Berkshire Structure Plan) or advice in PPG3.

7.70. Against this background I now assess the contribution of the appeal site to the countryside and gap between settlement Policy Notations identified by the Local Planning Authority in their Reasons for Refusal.

Countryside

7.71. I have noted the need to review the extent of the Countryside Notation and therefore settlement boundaries in order to meet the housing requirements of the district and in my view contribute towards the "acute" affordable housing needs of the district and Finchamstead North itself. In so doing it is necessary to strike an appropriate balance between the protection of the countryside and meeting important development needs. This would also be consistent with advice in PPG3, paragraph 14. Furthermore the Local Plan Inspector has been critical of the Local Planning Authority in not rigorously reviewing the

Countryside Policy notation when preparing the District Wide Local Plan.

7.72. The appeal site comprises previously developed land set in an enclosed landscape characterised by mature tree belts on the western and southern boundaries with mature woodland to the north and east. The area proposed for development within this natural framework is already developed, a point accepted by the Local Authority (Documents 2 and 21), and has no significant qualities worthy of preserving for its own sake. Moreover the nature and extent of the lawful uses on the site already compromise the countryside status of the site. That said proposed redevelopment scheme will not only comply with a form of development permissible by the Countryside Policies but will also enhance the visual appearance, character and function of this already developed site. Given the containment of the site and the current lawful uses on it, the site can absorb the proposed development without prejudicing the characteristics of the surrounding area.

7.73. The redevelopment of the appeal site, owing primarily to its containment and previously developed characteristics will not adversely affect the particular character of the wider landscape and therefore conflict with the objectives of safeguarding countryside for its own sake.

7.74. The redevelopment of the appeal site will not conflict with the intention of maintaining a clear distinction between built-up areas and the countryside. The developed and contained nature of the appeal site, the retention of boundary trees and other vegetation will ensure that the identity of the settlement and the character of the land on its edge and beyond is preserved.

7.75. One of the merits of the appeal schemes is to make more efficient use (to varying degrees) of previously developed land whilst maintaining a

clear, definable and defensible settlement boundary in the form of mature trees and woodland that contain the site on the northern and eastern sides. These features will define and contain the appeal site to provide an established soft edge to the settlement of Finchamstead North.

7.76. The nature and extent of the lawful uses on the appeal site have no characteristics associated with "countryside". The site is more urban fringe than "countryside". In this regard the Local Plan Countryside notation is misleading. The lawful uses detract from the visual appearance of the site and the setting of the settlement at this point. A unique opportunity exists to enhance the appearance of the site by the proposed redevelopment without comprising countryside objectives consistent with advice in PPG7 at paragraph 3.24. The sensitive redevelopment scheme respects the edge of settlement location of the site, the juxtaposition with adjoining land uses and the open undeveloped countryside beyond. The redevelopment schemes will be more appropriate than the current use and layout of the site.

7.77. The proposals represent redevelopment schemes that will enhance the rural environment, consistent with the objectives of approved Structure Plan Policy C2ii, Deposit Draft Local Plan Policy WCC1 (Countryside) and WOS5 (A and F) Environmental Improvements.

7.78. The proposed form of development (redevelopment) is a category acceptable in principle in countryside locations. Owing to its lawful use and containment the site relates more to the built-up area than the undeveloped open countryside that lies beyond the site to the north and east. The site should be considered in the context of its location adjoining the settlement, rather than as part of the surrounding countryside. In this context the redevelopment proposal will not adversely affect the character and appearance of the area. The site should not be regarded as open countryside in the general accepted sense, but an area that is both visually, physically and functionally

more closely associated with the settlement of Finchamstead North. The proposed development would not therefore compromise the protection of the countryside for its own sake. These findings confirm that the proposals comply with the final sections of Structure Plan Policy C2 or the District Wide Local Plan Policy WCC1. In the alternative and in any event the current use and character of the site compromises the countryside status of the site. In reality the site is no longer countryside. Against this background if any breach in policy is perceived the overall impact of the redevelopment scheme is one of enhancement. The level of harm is therefore significantly less than the current situation. This amounts to exceptional circumstances, reinforced by the opportunity to make a significant and substantial contribution to addressing the acute need for affordable housing in this locality. This matter alone constitutes a material consideration (PPG3, paragraphs 14 and 71).

Gaps between Settlements/Wedges

7.79. I have set out the objectives of the Gap/Green Wedge Policies and the Local Plan Inspector's comments on the emerging Local Plan Policy earlier in my evidence. The proposed redevelopment of the appeal site will not harm the stated objectives of the policies in maintaining a visual and physical gap between settlements.

7.80. The appeal site is characterised by its developed state, its containment and relationship with adjoining development. The proposed schemes will not extend beyond the clear limits of development on the site or beyond development that already exists to north west and east. For instance the illustrative 50-unit scheme confirms it is possible to confine the residential development to parts of the site already characterised by lawful development. Furthermore this scheme does not extend development beyond the northern limit of the Tomlinson Drive estate to the west and north west.

7.81. In this regard the proposal will not close in either a visual or physical sense the gap between different parts of Finchamstead North or the gap, if perceived as such, between Finchamstead North and Crowthorne that lies further to the south east.

7.82. The visual perception of the gap between separate settlements and the green wedge between different parts of Finchamstead North will not change as a result of the proposed development reinforces the lack of conflict with the Policy and its objectives.

7.83. These matters apart the Local Plan Inspector has noted that the extent of the Gap Policy notation should only apply to land if it is considered essential to the separation function. The Inspector notes that the term "essential" is relative and needs to be balanced with other competing demands for the land resource from one Plan period to the next (Document 10, paragraph 2.91).

7.84. I have highlighted the need for affordable housing in Finchamstead North and the appropriateness of the site to accommodate residential development to meet these needs. This important matter needs to be balanced with the degree of "essentiality" of the site's function in maintaining a visual and physical gap between built-up areas.

7.85. The Local Plan Inspector notes that gaps comprise countryside areas. Whilst such areas can include buildings and uses the Inspector commented that the areas need to have an overall sense of openness and a generally undeveloped appearance in order that the separation function can be satisfactorily performed (Document 10, paragraph 2.94). The 229 - 281 No. car park, builders yard and associated outside storage areas as illustrated on Figure 5 of Mr. McCaffrey's evidence confirms that the character of the site is anything but generally undeveloped in appearance and open in character.

7.86. These characteristics further confirm the inappropriateness of the gap notation and the application of the Policy on the appeal site. The Local Plan Inspector has suggested that the extent of the gap notation be critically reviewed confirms that limited weight should be applied to the application of the Policy as far as it is applicable to the appeal site in the determination of these appeals.

8. CONCLUSIONS

8.1. I can conclude my evidence as follows:

1. The appeal site comprises previously developed land (Documents 2, 13 and 21).

2. The proposed redevelopment of the site is a form of development acceptable in Development Plan policy terms (Document 21 and Structure Plan Policy C2 and Deposit Draft District Wide Local Plan Policy WCC1).

3. The proposed redevelopment schemes in terms of scale, form, impact, character and siting to its location are acceptable. No harm will arise to the character and appearance of the countryside or objectives in maintaining a physical and visual gap between settlements or communities.

4. Use of previously developed lands accords with the principles of PPG3, which as a form of guidance represents a material consideration in the determination of the appeals.

5. The proposed redevelopment scheme results in additional benefits, in particular the redevelopment and extinguishment of unattractive lawful uses on the site. The visual environment of the site and surrounding area will be enhanced. This amounts to a material consideration in favour of the proposals.

6. The proposals, in particular the 50-unit scheme will make a significant contribution to the affordable housing needs of the district. The nature and extent of the affordable housing need in the district, the inability of the Local Planning Authority to meet it and the scale of provision proposed on the appeal site results in a compelling material consideration in favour of the scheme.

8.2. For all these reasons the Inspector is respectfully requested to allow these appeals.