

Barkham Square, Arborfield Green, Wokingham

Health Impact Assessment

On behalf of Crest Nicholson Operations Ltd. (Chiltern Division)

April 2026

Our Ref: 22-01931



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Quality Assurance

This report has been prepared within the quality system operated at Rapleys LLP according to British Standard ISO 9001:2015.

We confirm that the undersigned is an appropriately qualified and experienced Chartered Planner experienced in the commercial property sector.

Created by: John Cocking MRTPI (Associate) & Ben Larcombe MRTPI (Partner)

Checked by: Michael Orr MRTPI (Partner)

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Health Impact Assessment has been prepared by Rapleys LLP (Rapleys) on behalf of Crest Nicholson Strategic Properties (Crest). It supports a planning application (Outline) seeking planning permission for the development of 660 homes which would act as an extension to the existing Arborfield Green SDL on land at Barkham Square (the site).

1.2 The formal description of development is as follows:

Outline application (with all matters reserved except for access) for residential development (Class C3) plus elderly care dwellings (Class C2/C3), associated open space, allotments, green and blue infrastructure including the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and other associated works.

Overview

1.3 A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is required by Wokingham Borough Council. Policy HC1: Promoting healthy communities within the Wokingham Local Plan Update (submitted for examination on the 28th February 2025) requires that '*Residential development proposals of 10 dwellings or more, or non-residential development proposals of 1,000 m² or greater gross internal area must include a Health Impact Assessment (HIA).*' The purpose of the assessment is to identify and optimise the health and wellbeing impacts that the proposed development would bring to the local community and the wider Wokingham Borough.

1.4 HIAs are a useful tool that can help to identify the likely health impacts of development proposals and set out measures to improve health outcomes and address negative effects and inequalities. The scope of a HIA will vary depending on the size and location of the development. HIAs for developments of 100 homes or more should include details of the engagement undertaken with relevant local health and community stakeholders. Information gathered through this engagement will help to identify, address and mitigate any impacts.

1.5 The assessment not only provides valuable information regarding the potential health impacts of proposed development, but also on how to manage them. This report seeks to identify how the implementation of the proposed scheme will promote healthy lifestyles whilst reducing ill-health in the community, resulting in beneficial health impacts for individuals and the wider economy such as longer-term savings to health and social care budgets.

1.6 There is no single definition or interpretation of what constitutes a HIA, however a common description used is provided by the World Health Organization, who define it as:

"a combination of procedures, methods and tools by which a policy, programme or project may be judged as to its potential effects on the health of a population, and the distribution of these effects within the population".

The World Health Organisation's (WHO's) Health 2020

1.7 Health 2020 is a European policy framework and strategy for the 21st century. It aims to significantly improve the health and well-being of populations, reduce health inequalities,

strengthen public health and ensure sustainable people-centred health systems that are universal, equitable, sustainable and of high quality.

1.8 The Health 2020 policy is based on four priority areas:

- Investing in health through a life-course approach and empowering people;
- Tackling the region's major health challenges of non-communicable and communicable diseases;
- Strengthening people-centred health systems, public health capacity and emergency preparedness, surveillance and response; and
- Creating resilient communities and supportive environments.

1.9 Health 2020 sets the international policy context for public health.

About Crest

1.10 With over 50 years of experience, Crest Nicholson is an established leading housebuilder that has designed and built high-quality and aesthetically pleasing developments across the country. Crest Nicholson's aim for the present and future is to improve the quality of life for communities and individuals by creating inviting landscaped public realms, extensive green infrastructure and appropriate community facilities. As the lead developer of the Arborfield Green development, Crest Nicholson is well placed to deliver the proposed development at Barkham Square.

1.11 Crest recognises that successful development must go 'hand-in-hand' with adequate infrastructure provision. Crest is therefore committed to working closely with the Council and stakeholders to ensure that the necessary infrastructure is delivered. The proposals will include contributions towards local services and infrastructure improvements, where appropriate, ensuring that the development integrates with the existing community, and the Arborfield Green Development directly south of the site.

Aims and Objectives of the HIA

1.12 The aims and objectives underpinning this HIA are to:

- Set out an existing health and wellbeing baseline, drawing on policy and guidance, and national datasets, to identify local health priorities, including identifying health inequalities;
- Provide an assessment of how the Proposed Development could directly and indirectly impact on health and wellbeing and its determinants; and
- Identify measures to enhance the positive impacts and mitigate the negative effects of the Proposed Development on health and wellbeing.
- Reflecting the breadth of potential influences on health and wellbeing and their determinants, the assessment draws on elements of the design, technical assessments and mitigation measures set out across the wider planning application, as referred to in the relevant sections below.

Limitations of this assessment

- 1.13 This assessment is based on publicly available statistics and evidence sources. No new primary research or bespoke analysis of non-public National Health Service (NHS) data has been undertaken for the assessment.

Report Structure

- 1.14 This HIA structure is as follows:

- Section 2 provides a description of the existing site and its surrounding context.
- Section 3 outlines the proposed development.
- Section 4 outlines the assessment methodology.
- Section 5 outlines the national and local planning policy context relevant to the site and proposed development.
- Section 6 presents existing health and wellbeing baseline conditions.
- Section 7 presents an assessment of the effects of the proposed development on health and wellbeing.
- Section 8 provides a summary of conclusions and recommendations.

2 THE EXISTING SITE CONTEXT

- 2.1 The Site extends to 41.8 hectares and currently comprises agricultural land. It is located to the west of Wokingham town centre, within the administrative boundary of Wokingham Borough Council.
- 2.2 To the immediate south, the Site adjoins Arborfield Green, a major development area of approximately 167 hectares, which forms part of the wider Strategic Development Location (SDL) allocated in the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (2010).



Figure 1: Aerial Plan within immediate site context.

- 2.3 Other nearby settlements include Barkham Village 1 km to the south-west, Arborfield Cross to the north west and Finchampstead to the south east. Wokingham is located around 2 km to the north-east, while Reading is approximately 13 km to the north, equating to a 20-minute drive. The Site is situated in the county of Berkshire, to the west of Greater London.
- 2.4 The Site comprises agricultural grassland interspersed with mature trees, including veteran trees and parcels of ancient woodland. It also features native hedgerows, ditches, existing ponds, and the Barkham Brook, which runs through the centre of the Site adjacent to a parcel of ancient woodland.
- 2.5 There are no listed buildings or Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) within the Site, and it does not fall within a conservation area.

- 2.6 The Site is not subject to any landscape or ecological designations.

Access, Transport and Parking

- 2.7 The Site is well connected, with direct access from Commonfield Lane to the east. It lies approximately 10 km north of Junction 10 of the M4 and 16 km south of Junction 4a of the M3. Wokingham Railway Station is located around 4 km to the north-east, a 7-minute drive via Barkham Road.
- 2.8 A network of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) runs to the north, west, and east of the Site, enhancing local connectivity.

Topography, Trees and Green Infrastructure

- 2.9 The Site lies within proximity to nationally designated landscapes, including the Chilterns National Landscape to the north and the North Wessex Downs National Landscape to the east. It is also located approximately 3.45 km from the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA).
- 2.10 There is sporadic mature tree coverage across the Site, including veteran trees and ancient woodland. Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) are present along the southern boundary (individual trees) and on the northern boundary of the western part of the Site (woodland TPO).
- 2.11 The Site's topography is undulating, generally sloping towards the Barkham Brook, which bisects the Site in a northeast to southwest orientation. The landscape includes shallow wooded valleys, open water bodies, ditches, and the brook itself, contributing to the Site's green infrastructure and ecological value.

3 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Overview

- 3.1 Barkham Square provides the opportunity to create a high-quality, sustainable development that will serve as an extension to the existing SDL of Arborfield Green, located to the south of the site. The Proposed Development aims to secure outline permission for its delivery.
- 3.2 The proposed development seeks to create a vibrant and attractive living environment that integrates seamlessly with its surroundings. The vision focuses on enhancing permeability across the site while offering high quality housing, elderly care accommodation and green spaces that benefit both new and existing residents.
- 3.3 The general arrangement of the Proposed Development is outlined in the suite of submitted parameter plans which illustrates how the following provisions will be provided:
- Up to 660 residential dwellings (Class C3)
 - Elderly care dwellings (Class C2/C3)
 - Open space (including play provision and allotments)
 - Green and blue infrastructure
 - On-site Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG)
 - Access from Langley Common Road and Commonfield Lane (allotments/SANG only)

Design Principles

- 3.4 The suite of Parameter Plans are guided by the following principles;
- The existing ancient woodland blocks, mature trees, hedgerows, brook and pond network will be conserved and enhanced.
 - Provide connections to the site boundary with Arborfield Green and extend the multifunctional Linear Park centred on the Barkham Brook corridor and associated wetland and woodland habitats, which provide important ecological networks and greater recreational opportunities.
 - Create a new vehicular gateway entrance into the development from Langley Common Road.
 - Provide new landscape screening in key locations to help minimise visual impact from adjacent properties and landscape areas, providing an attractive setting for new development.
 - A network of focal points, connected by a new green spine at the heart of the development, will provide safe and accessible hubs with opportunities to learn, play and grow food.
 - Create safe active travel streets with new and improved pedestrian and cycle links that connect with Langley Common Road and Commonfield Lane.
 - Integrate elderly care into the development.

- Define residential parcels with varied but cohesive character that responds to their location and specific nature of the Site, with landmark buildings to form key vistas aiding with legibility throughout the development.

3.5 The proposed development is based upon the identification of parameters to ensure there is sufficient flexibility for the scheme to evolve as development proceeds.

3.6 The following parameter plans are submitted for formal consideration as part of the planning application:

- BMD.23.0016.DR.P005.J - Land Use Parameter Plan
- BMD.23.0016.DR.P006.K - Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan
- BMD.23.0016.DR.P007.J - Access and Movement Parameter Plan
- BMD.23.0016.DR.P008.I - Building Heights Parameter Plan

Market and Affordable Housing

3.7 Adopted in July 2013, this SPD builds on Policy CP5 of the CS in terms of securing affordable housing through the planning process. The CS includes expected percentages, thresholds and indicative tenure mix for the provision of new affordable housing.

3.8 The proposed development provides affordable housing in line Policy H3.

3.9 Distributed across a range of 1, 2, 3 and 4-bedroom properties, this aligns with the latest housing market assessment evidence to create a sustainable, inclusive community that meets the local housing need in the Arborfield and Barkham area.

3.10 The precise mix for the market housing and affordable housing will be determined through future Reserved Matters applications.

Access, Transport s Parking

3.11 The main vehicular access is provided from Langley Common Road in the west. A secondary vehicle access is also provided to the east from Commonfield Lane – however this is limited to accessing the proposed allotments and SANG.

3.12 The site is well located to enable journeys to be undertaken by sustainable modes of travel. There is also a well-used network of public rights of way (PRoW) routes to the north, west and east of the site. These routes offer further walking and cycling connections to the wider area, including Wokingham to the northeast, Finchampstead to the south and towards Shinfield to the northwest.

3.13 The bus route for Arborfield Green will include two bus stops located in proximity of the site to the south. These stops will be within a short walk from the site and will provide access to key local destinations including Reading, Wokingham and Bracknell. Wokingham railway station is accessible by bus and within cycling distance, facilitating longer distance journeys to Reading and London Waterloo.

Sustainable Drainage

- 3.14 Existing and future surface water runoff rates will be assessed and managed through a formal drainage network and attenuation storage. The site's existing hydrology will be replicated as far as is practicable by the use of source control and infiltration SuDS techniques following intrusive geo-environmental investigations during the detailed design stage.
- 3.15 The proposed drainage strategy regime will consider utilising strategic swales and lined detention basins to provide surface water attenuation, before discharging flows to the watercourse at a controlled rate. In addition to the above, it is anticipated that the use of tanked permeable paving, within parking courts and shared surfaces will also provide some attenuation for surface water runoff as well as water quality benefits.
- 3.16 All drainage features will be located outside the fluvial and surface water flood extent.

Ecology

- 3.17 The proposals at Barkham Square include a range of measures which aim to enhance local Biodiversity and ecological value.
- 3.18 Suitable buffers will be maintained between developable areas and existing vegetation, particularly around the mature / ancient woodland on the southern boundary and along the Barkham Brook corridor
- 3.19 The woodland along the Brook that bisects the site provides an excellent opportunity for wildlife corridors and ecological enhancements, contributing to a broader Green Infrastructure network.
- 3.20 The development will strengthen hedgerows and boundaries with native planting. The sustainable Urban Drainage Systems will be designed to benefit wildlife, alongside bat and bird boxes on new buildings.
- 3.21 A SANG will be provided in accordance with local guidelines, ensuring a positive biodiversity net gain and lasting benefits for both wildlife and residents.

Sustainability

- 3.22 The site lies in an accessible location and is capable of being integrated with existing pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, facilitating healthy, low-carbon transport to local facilities. Crest Nicholson is committed to delivering new homes that minimise carbon emissions in line with the Future Homes Standard 2025, reducing carbon emissions by 70-80% compared to current standards. This will be considered in detail at the 'reserved matters' planning stage, having regard to the building regulations in place at that time.
- 3.23 It is anticipated that the proposed homes will include
- Low carbon heating and hot water systems such as air source heat pumps or ground source heat pumps.
 - Solar Panels
 - Improved insulation levels, enhanced airtightness and thermal bridge reduction.

- Electric vehicle charging points, or the necessary cabling to allow them to be installed in future.
- Energy efficient ventilation, without compromising the building's air tightness.

3.24 Crest Nicholson is the first UK house builder to have its net-zero targets validated by the Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi). The SBTi helps businesses align their targets in reducing emissions with latest climate science, and is focused on enabling companies to halve emissions before 2030 and reach net-zero emissions by 2050. The validation of these targets demonstrates Crest's commitment to reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

4 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Health determinants

- 4.1 The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”. As such, public health encompasses general wellbeing, not just the absence of illness.
- 4.2 The assessment also uses the World Health Organisation (WHO) definition for mental health as a “state in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community”.
- 4.3 The health and wellbeing of individuals is determined by a broad range of individual constitutional and behavioral factors, as well as broader environmental, social and economic factors. Some effects are direct and obvious, others are indirect, while some may be synergistic, with different types of impact acting in combination.
- 4.4 The ‘wider determinants of health’ model is used to conceptualise how population health spans environmental, social, and economic aspects. This is illustrated in Figure 3 and 4, which sets out an adapted version of this model showing issues that may be of particular relevance in Wokingham Borough, for example the figure highlights lifestyle choices, the built environment and public services.
- 4.5 Influences that result in a change of determinants have the potential to cause beneficial or adverse effects on health, either directly or indirectly. The degree to which these determinants influence health varies, given the degree of personal choice, location, mobility, and exposure.



Methodology

- 4.6 As set out above the factors contributing to individual health and wellbeing are broad, and the health of existing and new residents will be largely determined by individual age, constitutional factors including hereditary predispositions and physiological characteristics, and lifestyle factors unrelated to the Development.

- 4.7 NHS London Healthy Urban Development Unit (HUDU) have created a checklist aimed to promote healthy urban planning by ensuring that the health and wellbeing implications of major planning applications are consistently taken into account.
- 4.8 The checklist was originally developed in 2012 by representatives from the six London Olympic and Paralympic Host Boroughs, the local NHS, the NHS London Healthy Urban Development Unit, Greater London Authority and Groundwork London. The third edition was fully updated to be consistent with The London Plan, the Spatial Development Strategy for London consolidated with alterations since 2011, published in March 2016. It is important to note that although a new London Plan (2021) has been adopted, the 2017 third edition HUDU checklist remains the most recent version.
- 4.9 The checklist is designed to be used by developers to screen and scope the health impacts of development proposals. In the absence of a Council specific checklist, it has been used in the screening of this development proposal. The completed checklist has been appended to this report for reference.
- 4.10 By factoring in these considerations, this Health Impact Assessment (HIA) adopts the evaluation framework established by the NHS London Healthy Urban Development Unit (HUDU), specifically using the Planning for Health Rapid HIA Tool from October 2019. The aim is to analyse how the Proposed Development might impact the health and well-being of the proposed campus workforce, the existing and new local residents in the neighbouring vicinity, and visitors to the upcoming campus. This includes assessing its potential influence on health disparities. Notably, the rapid assessment tool used in this HIA draws inspiration from the World Health Organization's publication titled "Healthy Urban Planning" authored by Hugh Barton and Catherine Tsourou in 2000.
- 4.11 The tool is designed to assess the likely health impacts of development plans and proposals. It identifies determinants of health which are likely to be influenced by a specific development proposal. It does not identify all issues related to health and wellbeing but focuses on the built environment and issues directly or indirectly influenced by planning decisions.
- 4.12 The HUDU rapid assessment tool employs existing evidence to evaluate the effects of the proposed development, thereby suggesting strategies to counteract adverse outcomes and optimize health advantages. New developments generally introduce a range of positive impacts, but they can also give rise to unintended consequences that might positively or negatively impact individuals' health. The tool's design aims to bring attention to pertinent matters and facilitate constructive discussions.
- 4.13 This assessment tool is designed as a general framework and has been adapted for a specific purpose—the proposed development in this case. It has been supplemented with additional information such as policies and community input. The HUDU assessment tool identifies eleven
- 4.14 can be altered through design and management approaches. These determinants serve as a basis for evaluating the potential impacts of new developments. They are outlined in Table 1, along with the primary potential health implications associated with each determinant. Not all assessment

criteria are equally relevant, and specific actions that concentrate on pivotal impacts have been given priority.

Health Determinant	Potential Health Impacts	Relevant to the proposed development
Housing Quality and Design	Access to decent and adequate housing is critically important for health and wellbeing, especially for the very young and very old. Environmental factors, overcrowding and sanitation in buildings as well as unhealthy urban spaces have been widely recognised as causing illness since urban planning was formally introduced. Post-construction management also has impact on community welfare, cohesion and mental wellbeing.	Yes
Access to healthcare services and other social infrastructure	Strong, vibrant, sustainable and cohesive communities require good quality, accessible public services and infrastructure. Access to social infrastructure and other services is a key component of Lifetime Neighbourhoods. Encouraging the use of local services is influenced by accessibility, in terms of transport and access into a building, and the range and quality of services offered. Access to good quality health and social care, education (primary, secondary and post-19) and community facilities has a direct positive effect on human health. Opportunities for the community to participate in the planning of these services has the potential to impact positively on mental health and wellbeing and can lead to greater community cohesion.	Yes
Access to open space and nature	Providing secure, convenient and attractive open/green space can lead to more physical activity and reduce levels of heart disease, strokes and other ill-health problems that are associated with both sedentary occupations and stressful lifestyles. There is growing evidence that access to parks and open spaces and nature can help to maintain or improve mental health. The patterns of physical activity established in childhood are perceived to be a key determinant of adult behaviour; a growing number of children are missing out on regular exercise, and an increasing number of children are being diagnosed as obese. Access to play spaces, community or sport facilities such as sport pitches can encourage physical activity. There is a strong correlation between the quality of open space and the frequency of use for physical activity, social interaction or relaxation.	Yes
Air quality, noise and neighbourhood amenity	The quality of the local environment can have a significant impact on physical and mental health. Pollution caused by construction, traffic and commercial activity can result in poor air quality, noise nuisance and vibration. Poor air quality is linked to incidence of chronic lung disease (chronic bronchitis or emphysema) and heart conditions and asthma levels of among children. Noise pollution can have a detrimental impact on health resulting in sleep disturbance, cardiovascular and psycho-physiological effects. Good design and the separation of land uses can lessen noise impacts.	Yes
Accessibility and active travel	Convenient access to a range of services and facilities minimises the need to travel and provides greater opportunities for social interaction. Buildings and spaces that are easily accessible and safe also encourage all groups, including older people and people with a disability, to use them. Discouraging car use and providing opportunities for walking and cycling can increase physical activity and help prevent chronic diseases, reduce risk of premature death and improve mental health.	Yes
Accessibility and active travel	Convenient access to a range of services and facilities minimises the need to travel and provides greater opportunities for social interaction. Buildings and spaces that are easily accessible and safe also encourage all groups, including older people and people with a disability, to use them. Discouraging car use and providing opportunities for walking and cycling can increase physical activity and help prevent chronic	Yes

Health Determinant	Potential Health Impacts	Relevant to the proposed development
Crime reduction and community safety	diseases, reduce risk of premature death and improve mental health. Thoughtful planning and urban design that promotes natural surveillance and social interaction can help to reduce crime and the “fear of crime”, both of which impacts on the mental wellbeing of residents. As well as the immediate physical and psychological impact of being a victim of crime, people can also suffer indirect long-term health consequences including disability, victimisation and isolation because of fear. Community engagement in development proposals can lessen fears and concerns.	Yes
Access to healthy food	Access to healthy and nutritious food can improve diet and prevent chronic diseases related to obesity. People on low incomes, including young families, older people are the least able to eat well because of lack of access to nutritious food. They are more likely to have access to food that is high in salt, oil, energy-dense fat and sugar. Opportunities to grow and purchase local healthy food and limiting concentrations of hot food takeaways can change eating behaviour and improve physical and mental health.	Yes
Access to work and training	Employment and income are a key determinant of health and wellbeing. Unemployment generally leads to poverty, illness and a reduction in personal and social esteem. Works aids recovery from physical and mental illnesses.	Yes
Social cohesion and inclusive design	Friendship and supportive networks in a community can help to reduce depression and levels of chronic illness as well as speed recovery after illness and improve wellbeing. Fragmentation of social structures can lead to communities demarcated by socio-economic status, age and/or ethnicity, which can lead to isolation, insecurity and a lack of cohesion. Voluntary and community groups, properly supported, can help to build up networks for people who are isolated and disconnected, and to provide meaningful interaction to improve mental wellbeing. Principles of inclusive design encourage planners to help create environments that people of all ages and abilities can access and enjoy, and to facilitate communities that people can participate in, interact with and feel safe.	Yes
Minimising the use of resources	Reducing or minimising waste including disposal, processes for construction as well as encouraging recycling at all levels can improve human health directly and indirectly by minimising environmental impact, such as air pollution.	Yes
Climate change	There is a clear link between climate change and health. The Marmot Review is clear that local areas should prioritise policies and interventions that “reduce both health inequalities and mitigate climate change” because of the likelihood that people with the poorest health would be hit hardest by the impacts of climate change. Planning is at the forefront of both trying to reduce carbon emissions and to adapt urban environments to cope with higher temperatures, more uncertain rainfall, and more extreme weather events and their impacts such as flooding. Poorly designed homes can lead to fuel poverty in winter and overheating in summer contributing to excess winter and summer deaths. Developments that take advantage of sunlight, tree planting and accessible green/brown roofs also have the potential to contribute towards the mental wellbeing of residents.	Yes

4.15 Utilising the aforementioned matrix and integrating published data and guidance, the subsequent sections of this report outline the existing health baseline conditions, succeeded by an evaluation

of the health impacts stemming from the Proposed Development, both during its construction phase and its operational period.

- 4.16 The scope of the impacts assessed within this HIA varies based on the nature of the effects and the parties involved. Effects will be considered during both the construction phase and after the project is completed and occupied.

Introduction

5.1 This section highlights strategic policy objectives and requirements that relate to health and well-being. The levels of policy that are considered are:

- National Planning Policy and Guidance (2024)
- Wokingham Borough Council Core Strategy (2010)
- Emerging Wokingham Borough Council Local Plan Update 2023-2040 (Submitted 2024)

National Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024

5.2 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they should be applied. The most recent version was published and adopted in 12th December 2024.

5.3 The NPPF places an emphasis on the role health, social and cultural wellbeing can contribute towards achieving sustainable development. Paragraph 8 sets out three overarching objectives, including a social objective (8b) which seeks to 'support strong, vibrant and healthy communities' and 'fosters a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being'.

5.4 The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Placing emphasis on the role of health, social and cultural wellbeing can contribute towards achieving sustainable development. The United Kingdom has agreed to pursue the 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development in the period to 2030¹. These goals address social progress, economic wellbeing and environmental protection.

5.5 Three interdependent overarching objectives for the planning system are identified – economic, social and environmental (paragraph 8). Under the social objective, the planning system should

support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being

5.6 Chapter 8 sets out further detail on the role for planning in 'Promoting healthy and safe communities'.

5.7 Chapter 12 and Chapter 15, set out further guidance on 'Achieving well-designed places' and 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.' And how this can support health and wellbeing:

¹ National Planning Policy Framework - Paragraph 7

- Paragraph 96 states planning should aim to achieve healthy inclusive and safe places which: “promote social interaction”; “are safe and accessible”; and “support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and wellbeing needs”.
- Paragraph 98 sets out planning decisions should “take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;” and “ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.”
- Paragraph 103 highlights the importance of access to open space and the opportunities for physical activity to the health and wellbeing of communities.
- Paragraph 110 sets out how the promotion of sustainable transport modes, support the health and well-being of the community by reducing congestion and emissions and improving air quality and public health.
- Paragraph 135 (f) sets out planning should aim to “create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”
- Paragraph 187 sets out that planning should take into account the likely effects of pollution on health, and air, noise and light pollution should be minimised.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) 2021

- 5.8 The National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) is an online resource that went live in 2014 and is updated as required. It provides technical guidance and further detail on NPPF policies, including guidance on health and wellbeing.
- 5.9 Paragraphs 53-001-20190722 to 53-012-20190722 set out how the design and use of the built and natural environment are major determinants of health and wellbeing, and how in turn positive planning can contribute to healthier communities by creating environments that support and encourage healthy lifestyles, and, where relevant, securing healthcare facilities to meet needs:
- "A healthy place is one which supports and promotes healthy behaviours and environments and a reduction in health inequalities for people of all ages. It will provide the community with opportunities to improve their physical and mental health, and support community engagement and wellbeing. It is a place which is inclusive and promotes social interaction... It meets the needs of children and young people to grow and develop, as well as being adaptable to the needs of an increasingly elderly population and those with dementia and other sensory or mobility impairments."*
- 5.10 Specific guidance is set out regarding creating healthy food environments and preventing crime through design.

PHE Strategy 2020-2025, 2019

- 5.11 The PHE Strategy 2020 to 2025 sets out how PHE will work to improve public health over the next five years. It includes a number of measures to promote place-based approaches to improving health outcomes including through creating “connected, resilient, more cohesive communities”.

PHE: Using the planning system to promote healthy weight environments, 2020

- 5.12 PHE’s guidance ‘Using the planning system to promote healthy weight environments’ provides guidance for planning for healthy weight environments, including enabling people to access to healthier food and creating active environments.

A Green Future: 25 Year Plan to Improve our Environment, 2018²

- 5.13 The Government’s 25-year Plan to Improve the Environment outlines proposed action to protect the environment and economy simultaneously. Chapter 3 focuses on government plans to improve the connection between people and the environment in order to promote health and wellbeing. This includes the following objectives:

- “Helping people to improve their health and wellbeing by using green spaces” – there will be a renewed reliance on green spaces to help address issues such as isolationism and loneliness something which is becoming increasingly prevalent with an aging population and increased reliance on technology. It will also help to tackle obesity and act as a preventative and therapeutic approach to mental health.
- Encouraging children to be close to nature, in and out of school, with a focus on disadvantaged areas.
- “Greening” our towns and cities by creating green infrastructure and by planting one million urban trees.

Local Planning Policy Context

Wokingham Borough Council Core Strategy

- 5.14 The Wokingham Borough Council Core Strategy sets out the local planning context. The expectations set by this local level policy context are of particular relevance to the assessment of health effects. The local policy applies the broader national and international policy objectives to the local context. By having appropriate regard to HIA methods, this chapter meets policy requirements in relation to health and wellbeing and works towards achieving what the overall core strategy aims to do, one of these priorities being

Maintain and enhance all the infrastructure, including roads, railways, schools, healthcare and open space provision through new development, taking account of the health and well being of residents;

² HM Government, (2018), A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment.

Wokingham Borough Council Local Plan Update

- 5.15 Wokingham Borough Council has been preparing a new local plan – the Local Plan Update. The new local plan, once completed, will set the framework to guide the growth of the borough addressing needs and opportunities for housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure, as well as the basis for conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment, mitigating and adapting to climate change, and achieving well designed places.
- 5.16 The emerging Wokingham Borough Council Local Plan Update sets out local planning Policy context, the development is an allocation within policy SS11 of the LPU. Its policies are pertinent to the proposal and this Health Impact Assessment. The local policy applies broader national and international policy objectives to the local context. By having appropriate regard to HIA methods this chapter meets the policy requirements in relation to HIA.
- 5.17 The emerging Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update is proposed to have a plan period ranging 2023-2040. The draft has not been formally adopted as of yet, with the current available draft being the plan being the 'submission version'.
- 5.18 A key objective of the Local Plan update is to
- Improve health and wellbeing by enabling independence, encouraging healthy lifestyles, facilitating social interaction and creating inclusive and safe communities.*
- 5.19 Policy HC1 under the Healthy and Safe Communities theme within the LPU is pertinent to this HIA.

Policy HC1: Promoting healthy communities

1. Vibrant, healthy and safe communities will be promoted through a high-quality environment with local services to support health, social and cultural wellbeing and help contribute to reducing deprivation and inequalities in the borough.
2. Development proposals should consider impacts on the health and wellbeing of new and existing residents, by including measures that contribute to healthier communities and reduce inequalities. This includes the creation of high quality, active, safe and accessible places.
3. Development proposals will be supported where they:
 - a) Contribute to the health and wellbeing priorities of the borough, including those outlined in the Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Wokingham Health and Wellbeing Strategy (and any other successor or associated document);
 - b) Support the provision of new or improved health facilities, in consultation with the borough's Health and Wellbeing Board, Integration Partnership, the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West (BOB) Integrated Care Board and NHS England; and
 - c) Protect existing health facilities in line with Policy HC2: Community Facilities.
4. Residential development proposals of 10 dwellings or more, or non-residential development proposals of 1,000 m² or greater gross internal area must include a Health Impact Assessment (HIA).

- 5.20 Policy HC1 aims to

To promote healthier lifestyles and to reduce the dominance of private cars in terms of traffic and congestion, the Local Plan Update spatial strategy promotes a sustainable pattern of development which maximises opportunities for undertaking trips by active

means, (including walking, cycling, and wheeling) and by public transport, within the wider context and qualities of the borough.

5.21 Furthermore it states that

Consideration must be given to the priorities and actions identified in the Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Wokingham's Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and any other successor or associated document. Information and data in the Wokingham Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and borough profiles can provide a starting point. 13.6 Health Impact Assessments (HIA) are a useful tool that can help to identify the likely health impacts of development proposals and set out measures to improve health outcomes and address negative effects and inequalities. The scope of a HIA will vary depending on the size and location of the development. HIAs for developments of 100 homes or more should include details of the engagement undertaken with relevant local health and community stakeholders. Information gathered through this engagement will help to identify, address and mitigate any impacts.

5.22 It is noted that significant weight is given to these policies given the allocation of the site within the submitted plan, although the plan has not formally been adopted as of yet.

Local Plan Update Health Impact Assessment

5.23 The table in Appendix 1 of the LPU HIA outlines whether the policies in the draft Local plan would have an impact on health in relation to the key priorities set out in the council's current Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the overall strategic objectives of the local plan. Additional commentary on the impacts of the policy is also provided. An excerpt from the plan is shown below.

Policy SS11: Arborfield Strategic Development Location

		DOES THE POLICY HAVE AN IMPACT ON HEALTH AND WELL-BEING IN RELATION TO THE HEALTH IMPACT INDICATORS? POSITIVE (+), NEUTRAL (0), NEGATIVE (-)				
Policy	Health Impact indicators					Comments
	Reduce the differences in health between different groups of people.	Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes to live healthy lives.	Help children and families in early years.	Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people / adults	Physically active communities	
Policy SS11: Arborfield Strategic Development Location	0	+	+	+	+	This is an existing allocation in the Core Strategy to deliver around 3,500 homes. The policy recognises the continued delivery of the Arborfield Green Strategic Development Location to create a sustainable, mixed-use development with new employment, retail facilities and transport, social and physical infrastructure. Key requirements outlined in the policy that have a potential positive impact across the indicators, include: • 35% affordable homes • A new 2-form entry primary school including appropriate onsite early years provision and space for integrated teaching of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities • Specialist accommodation, including for older persons • New and improved off-site connections for cyclists and pedestrian providing safe, suitable and convenient access to services and facilities and local employment opportunities • Maximise connectivity to Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) The policy is supported by the council's existing Arborfield Garrison SDL Supplementary Planning Document which provides additional detail and guidance when making decisions on proposals.

Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Wokingham's Health and Wellbeing Strategy

- 5.24 The strategy sets out how professionals across health and social care will work together to improve the health of the population.
- 5.25 It covers the Reading, Wokingham and West Berkshire local authority areas. Each of the three local authority areas have their own delivery plan describing how the strategy will be implemented in each area.
- 5.26 The strategy has been developed through a process of data analysis, stakeholder engagement, prioritisation, and public engagement and consultation.
- 5.27 The new strategy is based around five health and wellbeing priorities:
1. Reduce the differences in health between different groups of people
 2. Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes to live healthy lives
 3. Help families and children in early years
 4. Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people
 5. Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all adults

5.28

6 DATA GATHERING METHODOLOGY

Study area

- 6.1 Study areas for the assessment are defined in relation to population groups. A population is all members of a group defined by the presence of a common characteristic (in this case, geographical).
- 6.2 Three population groups have been selected based on a geographical zone of influence (ZoI):
- The population of Barkham (Site specific)
 - The population of Wokingham Borough Council (Local Authority)
 - The population of the South East of England (Regional)
 - The population of England (National)
- 6.3 The designated study areas don't inherently delimit the scopes of potential health impacts. Specifically, effects on mental health and wellbeing are nuanced and might transcend the confines outlined in connection with specific benchmarks (such as air quality or noise thresholds). In light of this, this evaluation employs study areas primarily to broadly characterise representative population clusters rather than to establish limits on the scope of possible effects.

Desk Study

- 6.4 A summary of the sources from which publicly available data has been drawn, together with the nature of the data as follows:
- Public Health England (PHE)
 - Health profiles
 - Health assets profile
 - Wider determinants of health
 - WBC
 - Wokingham Observatory
 - Wokingham Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
 - Wokingham Borough Council Local Plan Update Health Impact Assessment
 - Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy
 - UK Government Official Statistics
 - English Indices of Deprivation
 - Official National Statistics and Nomis Official Labour Market Statistics
 - Census 2021 data
 - Annual Population Survey
 - Health index

7 CURRENT BASELINE

Introduction

- 7.1 The following section sets out the local health baseline, against which the potential health effects of the proposed development are assessed.

Study area

- 7.2 Baseline data is presented for Barkham (Site specific), Wokingham (Local), South East England (Regional) compared to England (National). Most of the data used to produce the baseline is taken from the 2021 National Census.

- England
- South East
- Wokingham
- Barkham Parish

Population

- 7.3 Based on data from the 2021 Census by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), the population of Barkham is 4,300 people. Wokingham has witnessed a population growth of 15%. This increase is notable as the population rose from approximately 154,400 in 2011 to around 177,500 in 2021. This indicates that Wokingham's population saw the third largest increase in the South East. The population of the South East increased by 7.5%, while the population of England rose by 6.6%. The area of Wokingham was among the 45% most densely populated English Local Authority areas at the last census.
- 7.4 An aging trend within the population has persisted. Throughout England, 18.4% of the population were aged 65 and older on Census Day in 2021, marking an unprecedented high percentage. Comparatively, during the 2011 census, the most prevalent age bracket in the South East and Wokingham was individuals aged 35 – 49 years. Conversely, the 2021 Census revealed a shift, with the largest age cohort in the South East being 50-64 years and in Wokingham still being 35- 49 years but the percentage decreasing from 23.8% to 22.3%.
- 7.5 In England as a whole, there has been a rise of 20.1% in the population aged 65 and above, a growth of 3.6% in individuals aged 15 to 64, and an increase of 5% in the population under the age of 15. Contrasting these figures Wokingham has experienced the number of people aged 50 to 64 years rising by just under 4,600 (an increase of 15.3%), while the number of residents aged 4 years and under falling by around 200 (1.8% decrease).
- 7.6 According to WBC Observatory, the most prevalent age bracket is 45-49 years at 8.2% followed by 10-14 years at 7.9%. Comparatively both these age brackets are higher than the national average for the age cohort which is 6.4% for those aged 45-49 and 6% for those aged 10-14.

Life Expectancy

- 7.7 According to ONS data concerning Wokingham, the life expectancy for males stands at 69.7 years, in contrast to 60.6 for the average median in all local authorities. Similarly, the life expectancy for females in Wokingham is 70.8 years, while the average median across all local authorities is 70.8 years.

Health Profile and Outcomes

General Health Classification

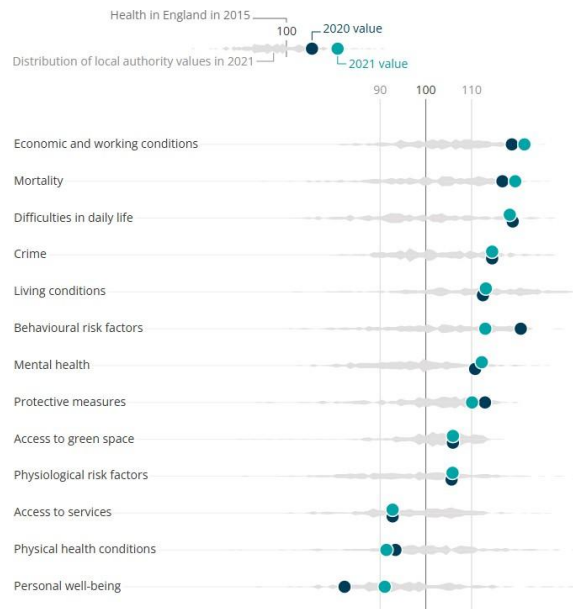
- 7.8 Based on the most recent Census data in 2021, which is available at ward level, an indicator of self-assessed health status is provided. This involves individuals categorising their overall health from 'very bad' to 'very good'. Across all geographical areas, the majority of residents indicated that their health falls within the 'good' to 'very good' range. In Barkham around 62% of the population perceived themselves to be in 'very good' health and 30% in 'good' health, 92% overall across the 'very good' to 'good' health range. The overall percentage across 'very good' and 'good' health range is higher compared to the figures for Wokingham were (88.2%), South East (84%) and England (82.2%).
- 7.9 Notably, the proportion of Barkham's population reporting their health as 'bad' or 'very bad' (1.6%) is lower than the percentages for Wokingham (2.7%), the South East (4.2%), and the entire of England (5.2%).

Long Term Disability or illness

- 7.10 According to the 2021 Census, the latest data available for this indicator at Parish level, Barkham has a relatively lower percentage of residents who experience limitations to their daily activities in some way due to a long-term health problem or disability (9.6%), lower than Wokingham (12.5%), the South East (16.1%) and England as a whole (17.3%).

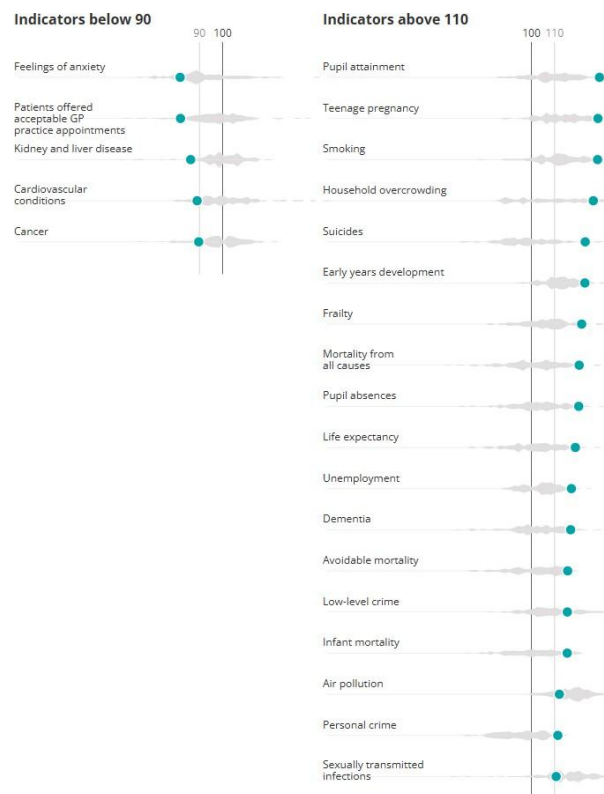
Health Index Score

- 7.11 The ONS furnishes data indicating alterations in health trends across England between 2015 and 2021, as per the Health Index. Each region within England possesses an annual health score, composed of various metrics within distinct categories referred to as domains and subdomains. These metrics encompass both mental and physical health indicators.
- 7.12 In Wokingham, the overall Health Index stands at 118.6, demonstrating a rise of 0.5 points in comparison to the preceding year. A score of 100 denotes the average health levels in England during 2015. A higher number always means better health. Wokingham ranked in the top 10% of Local Authority areas in England for health in 2021.
- 7.13 The health status in Wokingham is most robust in relation to measures pertaining to the "economic and working conditions" subdomain. This subdomain evaluates aspects like child poverty, job-related training, unemployment, and workplace safety. Refer to Figure X below for a representation of Health Index values corresponding to each subdomain in Wokingham for the year 2021.



7.14 The second highest subdomain is "Mortality" Wokingham's score for health relating to "mortality" is better than the score for England as a whole. Health Index values for the "mortality" subdomain in England and across local authority areas in the South East, 2020 and 2021. Wokingham has a Health Index score of 119.5 for "mortality". The score for the South East is 107.1, while England has a score of 99.8. "Mortality" addresses avoidable mortality, infant mortality, life expectancy, and mortality from all causes. Wokingham's worst score is for "Personal well-being".

7.15 Figure xx below shows the health index values for each indicator below 90 or above 110. Wokingham's lowest score is for feelings of anxiety and its highest score is for pupil attainment.



Health Profiles

- 7.16 Each year Public Health England releases health profiles for Local Authorities, providing information on health outcomes across 34 distinct indicators. In general, Wokingham exhibits a higher level of health in comparison to the entirety of England.
- 7.17 The table below offers an overview of the essential health profile indicators for Wokingham Borough Council when contrasted with the averages for the South East region and England as a whole:

● Better 95% ● Similar ● Worse 95% □ Not applicable □ Quintiles: Best □ Worst □ Not applicable

Recent trends: → Could not be calculated → No significant change → Increasing & getting worse → Increasing & getting better → Decreasing & getting worse → Decreasing & getting better

Indicator	Period	Wokingham		South East		England		Range	Best
		Recent Trend	Count	Value	Value	Value	Worst		
Life expectancy and causes of death									
Life expectancy at birth (Male, 3 year range)	2021 - 23	→	-	82.5	80.3	79.1	73.1		82.5
Life expectancy at birth (Male, 1 year range)	2023	→	-	82.2	80.5	79.3	73.4		82.7
Life expectancy at birth (Female, 3 year range)	2021 - 23	→	-	85.6	84.1	83.1	78.9		86.5
Life expectancy at birth (Female, 1 year range)	2023	→	-	85.6	84.3	83.2	78.2		86.8
Under 75 mortality rate from all causes	2023	→	359	239.5	295.5	341.6	622.1		220.9
Under 75 mortality rate from cardiovascular disease	2023	→	76	51.2	62.1	77.4	136.2		45.9
Under 75 mortality rate from cancer	2023	→	153	102.4	111.7	120.8	182.1		81.9
Suicide rate (Persons, 10+ yrs)	2021 - 23	→	34	7.3	10.4	10.7	19.6		4.2
Injuries and ill health									
Killed and seriously injured (KSI) casualties on England's roads	2023	→	51	51.7*	89.8*	91.9*	588.8		21.9
Emergency Hospital Admissions for Intentional Self-Harm	2023/24	→	95	52.2	125.4	117.0	342.5		36.1
Hip fractures in people aged 65 and over	2023/24	→	145	418	536	547	849		362
Percentage of cancers diagnosed at stages 1 and 2	2021	→	376	57.3%	56.2%	54.4%	46.5%		61.2%
Estimated diabetes diagnosis rate	2018	→	-	67.7%	75.2%	78.0%	54.3%		97.5%
Estimated dementia diagnosis rate (aged 65 and older)	2024	→	1,306	66.4	62.9	64.8	51.3		90.5
Behavioural risk factors									
Admission episodes for alcohol-specific conditions - Under 18s	2021/22 - 23/24	→	19	15.0*	24.5*	22.6	61.7		3.8
Admission episodes for alcohol-related conditions (Narrow)	2023/24	→	417	240	429	504	890		240
Smoking Prevalence in adults (aged 18 and over) - current smokers (APS)	2023	→	-	6.2%	10.6%	11.6%	22.3%		4.6%
Percentage of physically active adults (19+ yrs)	2022/23	→	-	71.9%	70.2%	67.1%	51.4%		80.5%
Overweight (including obesity) prevalence in adults, (using adjusted self-reported height and weight) (18+ yrs)	2022/23	→	-	65.6%	62.8%	64.0%	77.7%		45.8%
Child health									
Under 18s conception rate / 1,000	2021	→	19	5.9	10.7	13.1	31.5		1.1
Smoking status at time of delivery	2023/24	→	88	5.9%	6.8%	7.4%	17.5%		2.8%
Baby's first feed breastmilk (previous method)	2018/19	→	1,095	80.2%	72.7%	67.4%	43.6%		98.7%
Infant mortality rate	2021 - 23	→	13	2.5*	3.3	4.1	8.4		1.7
Year 6 prevalence of obesity (including severe obesity) (10-11 yrs)	2023/24	→	315	14.0%	19.2%	22.1%	31.0%		13.3%
Inequalities									
Deprivation score (IMD 2019)	2019	→	-	5.8	15.5	21.7	45.0		5.8
Smoking prevalence in adults in routine and manual occupations (aged 18 to 64) - current smokers (APS)	2023	→	-	18.7%*	18.4%	19.5%	50.8%		5.0%
Inequality in life expectancy at birth (Male)	2018 - 20	→	-	6.1	7.9	9.7	17.0		2.6
Inequality in life expectancy at birth (Female)	2018 - 20	→	-	4.5	6.0	7.9	13.9		1.2
Wider determinants of health									
Children in relative low income families (under 16s)	2022/23	→	2,556	6.8%	13.1%	19.8%	42.2%		5.2%
Children in absolute low income families (under 16s)	2022/23	→	2,083	5.5%	10.6%	15.6%	35.7%		4.2%
Average Attainment 8 score	2022/23	→	-	55.0	47.3	46.2	36.1		58.4
Percentage of people in employment	2023/24	→	78,000	78.0%	79.6%	75.7%	61.6%		87.6%
Homelessness: households owed a duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act	2023/24	→	576	8.3	11.3	13.4	30.6		3.6
Violent crime - hospital admissions for violence (including sexual violence)	2021/22 - 23/24	→	65	12.6*	24.1*	34.2	170.5		12.0
Health protection									
Winter mortality index	Aug 2021 - Jul 2022	→	40	9.5%	8.6%	8.1%	30.1%		6.8%
New STI diagnoses (excluding chlamydia aged under 25) per 100,000	2023	→	423	234	369	520	3,304		182
TB incidence (three year average)	2021 - 23	→	38	7.0	5.7	8.0	40.7		1.0

Deprivation

- 7.18 The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), established by the government, assigns a comprehensive deprivation score to individual small areas (known as Lower Super Output Areas or LSOAs) across England. This composite score is formulated from various domains and subdomains, collectively offering an assessment of overall deprivation. Each LSOA is positioned in a ranking based on its score, and the index allows for a gauge of comparative deprivation across all regions.
- 7.19 As per the latest 2019 IMD data, In Wokingham, 4.4% of the population was income-deprived in 2019. Of the 316 local authorities in England (excluding the Isles of Scilly), Wokingham is ranked 315th most income-deprived.

Employment and Skills

Economic Activity

- 7.20 According to the ONS, Wokingham exhibited an economic inactivity rate of 20%. This figure denotes that a lower proportion of the population is engaged in economic activities compared to the South East (18.3%). However, in comparison it is a higher proportion of the population than England (20%).
- 7.21 The ONS further denotes that Barkham has an economically active population of 70.5%. Wokingham exhibited an employment rate of 78.6%. This figure denotes a slightly lower proportion of the population is engaged in economic activities in comparison to the South East of England (79.3%) and a higher population than the entirety of England which is 76%.
- 7.22 The working age population (individuals aged 16 to 64 years) in Wokingham constitutes approximately 61.5% of the total population, which is broadly consistent with national averages. This demographic is critical to the local economy and the success of new development proposals, as it represents the primary labour force and consumer base.
- 7.23 The proposed development is expected to contribute positively to local economic activity by creating temporary construction jobs and longer-term employment opportunities through associated services and infrastructure. This may include retail, education, healthcare, and community facilities, depending on the final scheme composition.
- 7.24 In addition, the development may support economic resilience by providing housing that enables local workers to live closer to employment centres, thereby reducing commuting times and improving work-life balance. This can have indirect health benefits, including reduced stress and improved mental wellbeing.
- 7.25 The inclusion of affordable housing and mixed-tenure options may also help address barriers to economic participation, particularly for younger adults, single-parent households, and lower-income groups who may otherwise be excluded from the local housing market.
- 7.26 Overall, the development has the potential to enhance economic activity in Barkham and the wider Wokingham area, supporting inclusive growth and contributing to the long-term sustainability of the local economy.

Qualifications

- 7.27 Based on data from the 2021 Census, 53.3% of Wokingham's working-age residents (aged 16 and over) possessed qualifications at NVQ Level 4 or higher. This figure surpasses that of the wider South East region (35.8%) and the entirety of England (33.8%). This indicates a highly educated local population, which can positively influence employment prospects, income levels, and overall health outcomes. [censusdata.uk], [ons.gov.uk]
- 7.28 Conversely, the proportion of working-age residents in Wokingham without any formal qualifications was 11.2%, which is notably lower than the South East average of 15.4% and the

national average of 18.2%. This suggests that educational deprivation is less prevalent in the area, although targeted support may still be needed for specific groups.

Healthcare

- 7.29 A ratio of 1,800 patients per one full-time General Practitioner (GP) is considered standard by the NHS London Healthy Urban Development Unit (HUDU), based on guidance from the Royal College of General Practitioners. This benchmark is widely accepted and applicable nationwide.
- 7.30 Based on HUDU guidance, five full-time GPs are required to serve a population of approximately 9,000 people, which equates to around 3,800 homes, assuming the average UK household size of 2.4 people.
- 7.31 The demand for local GP services will vary depending on the type and size of housing delivered. Larger homes, such as family-sized dwellings, typically accommodate more residents and may generate higher demand for healthcare services. Specialist housing, such as retirement villages or supported living schemes, may also result in disproportionately high demand due to age-related health needs. The government monitors national trends in patient-to-staff ratios to inform service planning.
- 7.32 Within the NHS Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (BOB ICB), the average number of patients per practice is 3,250 which is significantly above the HUDU standard. This suggests that existing GP practices may already be operating under pressure, and further population growth could exacerbate capacity issues.

Accessibility and Transport

- 7.33 A Transport Assessment has been prepared by iTransport to support the planning application. It provides a summary of feasible site access options, opportunities for sustainable travel and potential highways impacts associated with the development.
- 7.34 Full details are set out in the accompanying Highways Note. A summary is provided in section 8 below.

Air Quality

- 7.35 An Air Quality Assessment has been prepared by Create to support the planning application. It provides a summary of the baseline air quality conditions at the existing site.
- 7.36 Full details are set out in the Air Quality Assessment. A summary is provided in section 8 below.

Noise and Neighbourhood Amenity

- 7.37 A Noise Assessment has been prepared by Create to support the planning application. The report sets out the findings of baseline noise monitoring undertaken to establish the existing noise climate at the site and nearby sensitive receptors.
- 7.38 Full details are set out in the Noise Assessment. A summary is provided in section 8 below.

Future Baseline

- 7.39 Data on the health of a population provides a snapshot captured at a specific moment, such as during the 2021 Census or the Annual Population Survey. However, population health is dynamic and continually shaped by a range of influences at both individual and community levels. These influences include environmental factors—such as seasonal fluctuations in wellbeing, air quality, and the spread of communicable diseases—as well as socio-economic aspects like migration patterns, housing affordability, and employment opportunities.
- 7.40 Over the long term, trends and interventions in population health can significantly impact the foundation for future health standards. National and local initiatives led by the NHS, social care systems, public health campaigns, and government policies aim to reduce health inequalities and improve overall quality of life. While many of these interventions have historically been successful, their effectiveness is increasingly challenged by broader demographic and lifestyle shifts. These include an ageing population, rising rates of obesity and diabetes, mental health pressures, and service capacity and public behaviour.
- 7.41 The present benchmark utilised in this assessment integrates relevant health indicators to reflect the types of health outcomes likely to affect the future population. These indicators include age distribution, prevalence of chronic conditions, access to healthcare, and socio-economic vulnerability. This approach aligns with the strategic objectives set out in the draft Local Plan and the Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy, both of which emphasise preventative care, integrated service delivery, and the creation of healthy environments through planning and infrastructure.
- 7.42 The proposed development has the potential to influence future health outcomes positively or negatively, depending on how it addresses key determinants of health. These include:
- Access to green space and active travel infrastructure, which can support physical activity and mental wellbeing.
 - Housing quality and affordability, which affect respiratory health, stress levels, and social stability.
 - Connectivity to healthcare and community services, which is essential for early intervention and long-term care.
 - Design for inclusivity and ageing, ensuring that homes and public spaces are accessible to all age groups and abilities.
- 7.43 In conclusion, the future health baseline must be considered not only in terms of current statistics but also in relation to projected demographic shifts, policy direction, and the capacity of local infrastructure to adapt. The development should be designed to support long-term health resilience, reduce inequalities, and contribute to a healthier built environment.

Healthcare Facilities

- 7.44 The Health and Wellbeing Board for Wokingham works both alongside and within the Berkshire West Integrated Care Partnership (BWICP), enabling collaboration between health and social care organisations to improve services for local residents. Established in April 2019, the BWICP brings together seven public sector organisations responsible for the health and social care of Reading, West Berkshire, and Wokingham. These include:
- Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group (BWCCG)
 - Reading Borough Council
 - West Berkshire Council
 - Wokingham Borough Council
 - Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
 - Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust
 - South-Central Ambulance Foundation Trust
- 7.45 This integrated system ensures residents can access care across multiple settings, facilitating smooth transitions between institutions and support services.
- 7.46 GP surgeries have been identified within a 3-mile radius of the site using the MyWokingham interactive map. Research on individual surgery websites confirms that all six practices are currently accepting new patients:

		Accepting new patients
Wokingham Medical Centre	23 Rose Street, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 1XS	Currently accepting new patients
Burma Hills Practice	Ashridge Road, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 1PH	Currently accepting new patients
Woosehill Practice	Fernlea Drive, Woosehill, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG41 3DR	Currently accepting new patients
Finchampstead Practice	474 Finchampstead Rd, Finchampstead, Wokingham RG40 3RG	Currently accepting new patients
Brookside Group Practice	Brookside Close, Earley, Berkshire, RG6 7HG	Currently accepting new patients
Woodley Practice	6 Headley Rd, Woodley, Reading RG5 4JA	Currently accepting new patients

- 7.47 While the NHS website provides limited detail on GP services, local mapping tools and practice websites offer more accurate and up-to-date information regarding patient registration and service availability.

Urgent and Emergency Care Facilities

- 7.48 The closest hospital for children under 16 is Wokingham Hospital, located approximately 1.8 miles from the site at 41 Barkham Road, RG41 2RE. For general emergency care, the nearest full-service hospital is Royal Berkshire Hospital, located in Reading, approximately 5 miles away. Additional hospitals within a 10-mile radius include:

- Circle Reading Hospital (7.3 miles)
- Heatherwood Hospital, Ascot (7.6 miles)
- Frimley Park Hospital, Camberley (10.2 miles)
- Spire Dunedin Hospital, Reading (7.2 miles)
- Berkshire Independent Hospital, Reading (7.2 miles)

- 7.49 These facilities provide a range of services including A&E, outpatient care, diagnostics, and specialist treatments.

Sports and Fitness

- 7.50 Within a 1-mile radius of the site, there are several sports and fitness centres, including:

- Zoe's Pilates & Nutrition – Specialist Pilates and nutrition coaching
- Equilibrio Pilates – Focused on core strength and flexibility
- Arborfield Green Leisure Centre – Health club near Bohunt School, Barkham

- 7.51 Slightly further afield, the following are also available:

- Wokingham Leisure Centre @ Carnival Hub - Wellington Road, RG40 2AF (1.8 miles)
- Energie Fitness Wokingham - 4 Denmark Street, RG40 2LD (1.8 miles)
- Studio 9 Fitness - Unit 9, Anglo Trade Park, RG41 2AN (2.1 miles)
- ARC Gym - Ltd 136 Reading Road, RG41 1HB (2.0 miles)
- Bell Fit Training - Stokes Farm, Binfield Road, RG40 5PR (2.3 miles)

- 7.52 In addition, nearby green spaces such as Howard Palmer Gardens and Cantley Park provide opportunities for outdoor recreation, walking, and informal sports.

Opticians and Dentists

- 7.53 A range of opticians are located within close proximity to Barkham Square, offering comprehensive eye care services, hearing assessments, and eyewear options. These include:

- Specsavers Opticians and Audiologists – Wokingham – approx. 1.8 miles from Barkham Square
Offers eye tests, contact lenses, hearing services, and home visits.

- Leightons Opticians & Hearing Care- Wokingham– approx. 1.8 miles Provides advanced eye exams, hearing tests, ear wax removal, and tinnitus management.
- Vision Express Opticians – Wokingham -approx. 1.8 miles. Offers advanced eye tests, contact lenses, and designer eyewear.
- The Eye People – Wokingham – approx. 1.8 miles. Independent opticians offering personalised service and NHS eye exams.

7.54 Several dental practices are also located within a short distance of Barkham Square, offering NHS and private services including general dentistry, cosmetic treatments, orthodontics, and emergency care. These include:

- Beechcroft Dental Practice - 32 Station Road, RG40 2AE – approx. 1.7 miles. Offers hygiene therapy, cosmetic dentistry, and complete smile makeovers.
- Peach Dental Care - 38 Market Place, RG40 1AT – approx. 1.8 miles. Provides general dentistry, Invisalign, and facial aesthetics.
- Bean Oak Dental Care - 95 Bean Oak Road, RG40 1RJ – approx. 2.1 miles. Offers NHS and private care, including Denplan options.
- Perfect Smile Dental Practice - 56 Easthampstead Road, RG40 2EE – approx. 1.6 miles. Provides routine exams, emergency care, cosmetic treatments, and Invisalign.
- Smile Rooms Wokingham- 3 Old Row Court, Rose Street, RG40 1XZ – approx. 1.8 miles. Offers general and aesthetic dentistry in a modern clinic.
- Smile2o Dental Practice - 20 Denton Road, RG40 2DX – approx. 1.7 miles. Private practice offering general and specialist care in a relaxed setting.

Specialist Advice and Stakeholder Engagement

7.55 Various pre-application meetings have been undertaken with the local authority officers.

7.56 As part of the formal pre-application process, a number of key stakeholders sent feedback to proposal summaries. Whilst the feedback was mostly positive, a few comments were highlighted in relation to health as shown below:

8 ASSESSMENT OF HEALTH AND WELLBEING EFFECTS

- 8.1 Employing the evaluation framework provided in the HUDU Rapid HIA Tool, this section evaluates the anticipated consequences of the proposed development on health and well-being, encompassing both its construction phase and the subsequent operational phase.
- 8.2 This HIA is designed to be qualitative rather than quantitative, given the broad spectrum of factors contributing to health determinants and outcomes that are under consideration. Although this HIA delineates the potential qualitative impacts on health, quantifying the severity or extent of these effects isn't feasible. Hence, the potential health repercussions during both construction and operation are characterised as positive, neutral, negative, or uncertain, as illustrated in Table X provided below.

Impact Category	Impact Symbol	Description
Positive	+	A beneficial impact is identified
Neutral	0	No or negligible discernible health impact is identified
Negative	-	An adverse impact is identified
Uncertain	?	Where uncertainty exists as to the overall impact

- 8.3 Where negative impacts have been identified, potential mitigation measures and recommendations that could be reasonable be undertaken are proposed to ensure any negative impacts are minimised and opportunities for the proposed development to enhance health benefits are maximised. It should be noted that in many cases, mitigation to reduce impacts and measures to enhance certain benefits already form part of the proposed development. Further details are set out below.

Housing Design and Affordability

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal seek to meet all 16 design criteria of the Lifetime Homes Standard or meet Building Regulation requirement M4 (2)?	Yes	The outline proposals are committed to meeting Building Regulation requirement M4(2) for accessible and adaptable dwellings, in line with emerging policy. While the scheme does not explicitly confirm compliance with the Lifetime Homes Standard, it does commit to M4(2) standards for general housing, which are broadly aligned with the principles of Lifetime Homes in terms of adaptability and accessibility. Further detail is provided within the accompanying Planning Statement under the assessment of Policy H1 (Housing Mix, Density and Standards). Further detail is provided within the accompanying Planning Statement under the assessment of Policy H1 (Housing Mix, Density and Standards).	N/A during construction + during operation	None required.
Does the proposal address the housing needs of older people, ie extra care housing, sheltered housing, lifetime homes and wheelchair accessible homes?	Yes	The scheme includes a dedicated provision of elderly care accommodation (Use Class C2/C3), which is intended to meet the needs of older residents requiring varying levels of support. This accommodation is recognised by Wokingham Borough Council as sheltered housing, and the appropriate CIL charging rate has been applied accordingly. In terms of accessibility, the proposal commits to delivering homes in accordance with Building Regulation M4(2) for accessible and adaptable dwellings. Furthermore, in line with emerging Local Plan Policy H1, at least 25% of the elderly care housing will be designed to meet M4(3) standards for wheelchair accessible and adaptable homes. This ensures that the development will provide suitable accommodation for residents with	N/A during construction + during operation	None required.

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal include homes that can be adapted to support independent living for older and disabled people?	Yes	mobility impairments or other specific needs. All general housing will be designed to meet Building Regulation M4(2) standards, ensuring that homes are accessible and adaptable for a wide range of needs. This means that the dwellings will be capable of being modified over time to support independent living, including features such as step- free access, wider doorways, and adaptable bathroom layouts. In addition, in line with emerging Local Plan Policy H1, at least 5% of the general housing and 25% of the elderly care housing will be built to M4(3) standards, making them fully wheelchair accessible and suitable for residents with more significant mobility needs. These commitments ensure that the development will provide a mix of housing that supports independent living for older people and those with disabilities, both now and in the future.	N/A during construction + during operation	None required.
Does the proposal promote good design through layout and orientation, meeting internal space standards?	Yes	The outline masterplan has been developed the masterplan for Barkham Square with a clear focus on placemaking, accessibility, and quality of living. The layout has been carefully structured to respond to the site's natural features, including the Barkham Brook corridor and surrounding woodland. The design incorporates a network of green corridors, focal points, and character areas that support legibility, community interaction, and safe movement. Building heights and densities have been sensitively arranged to minimise visual impact and respect the surrounding landscape and settlement edges. In terms of internal space, all new dwellings will be designed to meet the nationally described space standards, ensuring that homes	N/A during construction. + during operation.	None required.

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
		provide sufficient living space for future occupants. This includes appropriate room sizes, storage provision, and layouts that support flexibility and comfort. Overall, the proposal reflects a high standard of urban design, with a clear emphasis on functionality, sustainability, and resident wellbeing.		
Does the proposal include a range of housing types and sizes, including affordable housing responding to local housing needs?	Yes	The proposal includes a range of housing types and sizes, including affordable housing, which responds directly to local housing needs. As the applicant, we confirm that the scheme will deliver up to 660 residential dwellings, comprising a mix of market and affordable homes that is compliant with prevailing planning policy. . In addition to affordable housing, the proposal includes elderly care accommodation, wheelchair accessible homes, and a variety of dwelling sizes and types across the site, ensuring that the development supports a diverse and inclusive community.	N/A during construction. + during operation.	None required.
Does the proposal contain homes that are highly energy efficient (eg a high SAP rating)?	Yes	The proposals are committed to delivering new homes at Barkham Square that meet and exceed current energy performance standards. All dwellings will be designed in line with the Future Homes Standard 2025, which aims to reduce carbon emissions by 70–80% compared to current Building Regulations. The homes will incorporate a range of energy-efficient features, including: - Low-carbon heating systems, such as air source or ground source heat pumps - Solar panels to generate renewable electricity	N/A during construction. + during operation.	None required.

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
		- Enhanced insulation and airtightness to reduce heat loss - Energy-efficient ventilation systems - Electric vehicle charging infrastructure or cabling for future installation These measures will contribute to high SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure) ratings, ensuring that the homes are thermally efficient, cost-effective to run, and environmentally responsible. Full details of the energy strategy will be confirmed at the reserved matters stage, but the outline proposals demonstrate a clear commitment to sustainability and energy performance.		

Access to Health and Social Care Services and Other Social Infrastructure

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal retain or re-provide existing social infrastructure?	N/A	There is currently no existing social infrastructure on site	N/A	N/A
Does the proposal assess the impact on health and social care services and has local NHS organisations been contacted regarding existing and planned healthcare capacity?	No	Policy HC1 of the emerging Wokingham Local Plan requires residential developments of 10 or more dwellings to be supported by a Health Impact Assessment (HIA). While a HIA has been submitted as part of the application, it does not explicitly reference engagement with NHS bodies or provide evidence of consultation regarding healthcare infrastructure. However, we remain committed to working collaboratively with Wokingham Borough Council and relevant health stakeholders to ensure that any necessary mitigation or contributions towards local health services are appropriately considered and secured through the planning	N/A during construction. - during operation.	Should the Council or NHS Integrated Care Board identify specific capacity concerns, the applicant is open to further dialogue to ensure the development supports a healthy and sustainable community.

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
		process, including via Section 106 obligations if required.		
Does the proposal include the provision, or replacement of a healthcare facility and does the facility meet NHS requirements?	No	The proposal does not include the provision or replacement of a healthcare facility, and there is no indication that a new facility is being delivered as part of the development. As the applicant, we acknowledge that the scheme does not currently propose any on-site healthcare infrastructure.	N/A during construction - during operation	The applicant remains open to discussions with Wokingham Borough Council and local NHS bodies should there be a need to explore healthcare provision or contributions through planning obligations. Any future requirement for healthcare infrastructure can be considered as part of the Section 106 negotiations or through reserved matters applications, if deemed necessary by the relevant authorities.
Does the proposal assess the capacity, location and accessibility of other social infrastructure, eg primary, secondary and post 19 education needs and community facilities?	Yes	The proposal includes an assessment of the capacity, location, and accessibility of surrounding social infrastructure, with particular attention to education and community facilities. As part of the design process, the availability of primary, secondary, and post-19 education provision in the local area has been reviewed. The Planning Statement and Masterplan Framework Document confirm that: - Farley Hill Primary School is located within a 5-minute walk of the site. - Bohunt School, offering secondary and sixth form education, is within a 22-minute walk. - Additional schools and colleges in Wokingham and Reading are accessible via public transport and cycling routes. The proposal also considers community infrastructure, noting the proximity of: - A village hall, place of worship, and public house in Barkham Village (within 20 minutes' walk).	N/A during construction 0 during operation	If required, contributions towards education or community infrastructure can be secured through planning obligations as part of the Section 106 agreement.

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
		- A leisure centre, sports pavilion, and playing fields in Arborfield Green. - Convenience stores, a pharmacy, GP surgery, and dental practice within walking or cycling distance. The development is designed to integrate with existing infrastructure and includes new allotments, play areas, and green space to support community wellbeing. While no new education or healthcare facilities are proposed on-site, the scheme benefits from existing provision and is supported by a transport strategy that enhances accessibility to these services.		
Does the proposal explore opportunities for shared community use and co-location of services?	Yes	While the scheme includes new community infrastructure such as allotments, play areas, and green space, it does not propose any dedicated buildings or facilities designed for multi-use or shared service delivery. There is no indication of co-located services such as health, education, or community support being integrated into the development. However, the site benefits from proximity to existing community assets—including a village hall, leisure centre, and places of worship—which are accessible by walking and cycling. The development is designed to integrate with these facilities through improved connectivity and active travel routes.	N/A during construction ? during operation.	The applicant remains open to exploring opportunities for shared use or co-location of services at the reserved matters stage, should this be identified as a priority by Wokingham Borough Council or local stakeholders.

Access to Open Space and Nature

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal retain and enhance existing	Yes	The proposal retains and enhances existing open and	N/A during construction + during operation	None required.

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
open and natural spaces?		natural spaces as part of its overall design strategy. A strong emphasis has been placed on integrating the development with the site's natural features. The masterplan protects and enhances key ecological assets, including ancient woodland blocks, mature trees, native hedgerows, and the Barkham Brook corridor, which runs through the site. These elements are preserved and buffered from built development to maintain their ecological and visual value. In addition, the scheme includes the creation of a large area of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), which will be publicly accessible and designed to support recreation, biodiversity, and landscape character. The SANG will feature walking routes, planting schemes, and habitat enhancements, effectively transforming part of the site into a country park. The development also incorporates new green corridors, play areas, and allotments, contributing to a network of open spaces that support community wellbeing, ecological connectivity, and visual amenity. Overall, the proposal demonstrates a clear commitment to retaining and enhancing open and natural spaces, in line with both adopted and emerging planning policy.		
In areas of deficiency, does the proposal provide new open or natural space, or improve access to existing spaces?	Yes	The proposal retains and enhances existing open and natural spaces as a core part of its design approach. These features are preserved within the masterplan and buffered from development to maintain their ecological, landscape, and visual value. The scheme also introduces a substantial area of Suitable	N/A during construction + during operation	None required.

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
		Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), designed to support recreation, biodiversity, and landscape character. This new publicly accessible space will include walking routes, habitat enhancements, and planting schemes. In addition, the development incorporates green corridors, play areas, and allotments, creating a connected network of open spaces that promote community wellbeing, ecological connectivity, and visual amenity.		
Does the proposal provide a range of play spaces for children and young people?	Yes	The proposal provides a range of play spaces for children and young people. A comprehensive suite of play facilities has been incorporated into the masterplan. The development includes formal play areas designed to accommodate different age groups and play needs, including: - Local Areas for Play (LAPs) - Locally Equipped Areas for Play (LEAPs) - Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs) - Linear Landscaped Areas for Play (LLAPs) These facilities are distributed across the site, with two main play areas located at either end of the central green corridor. This layout ensures that play spaces are accessible, safe, and well-integrated into the wider landscape and movement network. In addition to formal play areas, the scheme includes informal green spaces, walking routes, and natural features that support outdoor activity and exploration, contributing to a child-friendly and inclusive environment.	N/A during construction +during operation	None required.

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal provide links between open and natural spaces and the public realm?	Yes	The proposal provides strong links between open and natural spaces and the public realm. The masterplan connects green spaces—such as the central green corridor, play areas, and the Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG)—directly to residential areas and pedestrian routes. These spaces are designed to be accessible, well-integrated, and connected to the wider landscape and movement network, encouraging recreation, biodiversity, and community interaction.	N/A during construction + during operation	None required.
Are the open and natural spaces welcoming and safe and accessible for all?	Yes	The open and natural spaces in the proposal are designed to be welcoming, safe, and accessible to everyone. The layout includes clear pedestrian and cycle routes, natural surveillance from nearby homes, and well-connected green corridors. Play areas and open spaces are designed for all age groups and abilities, with features that support inclusive access and safe use. The overall design encourages outdoor activity, community interaction, and enjoyment of nature for all residents.	N/A during construction +during operation	None required.
Does the proposal set out how new open space will be managed and maintained?	Yes	The proposal sets out how new open spaces will be managed and maintained. A management strategy will be secured through planning conditions or Section 106 agreements, with responsibility likely to be passed to a management company or other suitable organisation. This will ensure that spaces like the SANG, play areas, and landscaped corridors remain safe, accessible, and well-maintained for residents and the wider community.	N/A during construction +during operation	Long-term management of shared open and amenity spaces.

Air Quality and Neighbourhood Amenity

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal minimise construction impacts such as dust, noise, vibration and odours?	Yes	The proposal includes measures to minimise construction impacts such as dust, noise, vibration, and odours. The applicant has submitted a Noise Impact Assessment and committed to preparing a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) prior to the start of works. This plan will set out how construction activities will be managed to reduce disruption to nearby residents and the environment. Mitigation measures will include: - Controlling dust through damping down and wheel washing - Managing noise and vibration through restricted working hours and appropriate equipment - Minimising odours through careful handling of materials and waste - Monitoring and responding to any complaints or issues during the construction phase These steps will ensure that construction impacts are kept to a minimum and comply with relevant planning and environmental standards.	- during construction + during operation	Implementation of best practice construction management measures to minimise dust, noise, vibration and odours during the demolition and construction works. Mitigation measures include development of an Air Quality Dust Management Plan, undertaking daily dust inspections and spraying water to suppress dust.
Does the proposal minimise air pollution caused by traffic and energy facilities?	Yes	The proposed development has been designed to minimise air pollution from both traffic and energy sources through a combination of sustainable transport planning, low-carbon energy strategies, and green infrastructure. This includes the following measures: Sustainable transport: The site is well connected to walking and cycling routes, including links to Arborfield Green and nearby public rights of way. A regular bus	0 during construction 0 during operation	The proposal also provides reduced levels of car parking and travel plans which encourage the use of public transport, cycling and walking will result in better local environmental conditions.

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
		service will serve the area, and new stops are planned nearby. This encourages residents to use active and public transport instead of private cars. Electric vehicles: All homes will include EV charging points or be fitted with cabling to allow future installation, supporting the shift to low-emission vehicles. Low-carbon energy: Homes will be built to meet the Future Homes Standard 2025, using air or ground source heat pumps, solar panels, and high levels of insulation to reduce energy use and emissions.		
Does the proposal minimise noise pollution caused by traffic and commercial uses?	Yes	The proposal includes measures to minimise noise pollution caused by traffic and any potential commercial uses. As the applicant, we have submitted a Noise Impact Assessment which confirms that the site is generally subject to low background noise levels. For areas close to Langley Common Road, appropriate mitigation—such as acoustic glazing or boundary treatments—will be used to ensure acceptable internal and external noise levels. During construction, noise will be managed through a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), which will include restrictions on working hours and the use of quieter equipment where necessary. Overall, the proposal ensures that noise impacts are effectively controlled, both during construction and in the long-term operation of the development.	0 during construction 0 during operation	None required.

Accessibility and Active Travel

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal address the ten Healthy Streets indicators?	Yes	The proposed development has been designed with health and wellbeing in mind and aligns well with the Ten Healthy streets Indicators. Full details and evidence of this is provided within the accompanying Barkham Square Masterplan Framework.	N/A during construction + during operation	None required.
Does the proposal prioritise and encourage walking, for example through the use of shared spaces?	Yes	The scheme prioritises active travel and will provide a connection to the site's boundary with Arborfield Green.	N/A during construction + during operation	Preparation of Travel Plan and sustainable travel measures.
Does the proposal prioritise and encourage cycling, for example by providing secure cycle parking, showers and cycle lanes?	Yes	The Barkham Square development encourages cycling through several key measures: Cycle routes: The layout includes safe, well-connected cycle paths and shared surfaces, linking to Arborfield Green and the wider local network. Cycle parking: Secure cycle parking will be provided in line with Wokingham Borough Council standards. Details will be confirmed at the Reserved Matters stage. Wider connections: The site links to the Round Berkshire Cycle Route and local Public Rights of Way, making cycling a practical option for commuting and leisure. Travel planning: A Travel Plan will promote cycling through resident information and potential incentives.	N/A construction + during operation	None required.
Does the proposal connect public realm and internal routes to local and strategic cycle and walking networks?	Yes	As evidenced above.	-during construction + during operation	None required.
Does the proposal include traffic management and	Yes	The development includes several design features that help manage traffic and improve safety:	- During construction	Preparation and implementation of CEMP, walking & cycling infrastructure, Travel Plan

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
calming measures to help reduce and minimise road injuries?		Street hierarchy: The layout uses a clear hierarchy of streets, with lower-speed roads and shared surfaces in residential areas to naturally calm traffic. Limited through-traffic: The design discourages cut-through driving by restricting vehicle access to local traffic only, helping to reduce volumes and speeds. Pedestrian and cycle priority: Streets are designed to prioritise walking and cycling, with safe crossings and traffic-calming layouts that reduce conflict between users. Natural surveillance: Homes are positioned to overlook streets and public spaces, improving visibility and safety for all users.	+ during operation	measures and off-site highways improvements.
Is the proposal well connected to public transport, local services and facilities?	Yes	The site benefits from good access to public transport and a wide range of local services. Regular bus services, including the Leopard 3 route to Wokingham and a planned service to Bracknell, run close to the site, with stops within walking distance. Wokingham railway station is approximately 4km away, offering direct connections to Reading and London. Local amenities such as schools, shops, healthcare, and leisure facilities are all accessible by walking, cycling or short public transport journeys. A connection to the site's boundary with Arborfield Green is proposed.		Implementation of the proposed Travel Plan & other measures.
Does the proposal seek to reduce car use by reducing car parking provision, supported by the controlled parking zones, car clubs and travel plans measures?	Yes	The proposal encourages reduced car use through a package of sustainable transport measures, rather than through reduced parking provision or formal controlled zones.	N/A during construction + during operation	None required.

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
		A Travel Plan has been prepared to promote walking, cycling and public transport use. The site benefits from good access to existing bus services, with new stops proposed nearby, and is within cycling distance of Wokingham railway station. The masterplan includes safe pedestrian and cycle routes linking to Arborfield Green and the wider network. Parking provision will meet local standards and be addressed at the Reserved Matters stage. Electric vehicle charging infrastructure is proposed to support the transition to low-emission transport. While car parking is not being actively reduced, the design prioritises active travel and public transport, helping to reduce reliance on private vehicles over time.		
Does the proposal allow people with mobility problems or a disability to access buildings and places?	Yes	All public spaces, footpaths and key routes within the development will be designed to be level, well-lit and navigable, with appropriate gradients and surface treatments. The masterplan includes safe pedestrian routes, accessible play areas, and connections to local facilities, with natural surveillance and clear wayfinding. At the Reserved Matters stage, all buildings will be required to comply with relevant accessibility standards, including Building Regulations Part M. This will ensure that homes are adaptable, and entrances are step-free where required. The development also includes elderly care accommodation (Use Class C2/C3), which will be designed to meet enhanced accessibility needs, supporting independent living and inclusive community integration.	N/A during construction +during operation	Disabled car parking spaces to be provided in accordance with policy standards.

Crime Reduction and Community Safety

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal incorporate elements to help design out crime?	Yes	The proposal includes design measures to help reduce the risk of crime and promote a safe environment. Public spaces and pedestrian routes are well-connected and overlooked by surrounding homes, supporting natural surveillance. Clear boundaries between public and private areas are defined through landscaping, planting and layout. Lighting and wayfinding will be considered at the detailed design stage to support safe movement. These principles follow Secured by Design guidance and will be developed further at the Reserved Matters stage.	0 during construction 0 during operation	Seek to ensure features which will help to design out crime and promote perceptions of safety and security are reflected in the design of the Proposed Development.
Does the proposal incorporate design techniques to help people feel secure and avoid creating 'gated communities'?	Yes	The layout has been designed to promote openness, safety and community integration. Streets and public spaces are well-connected and overlooked by homes, supporting natural surveillance. Boundaries between public and private areas are clearly defined but not enclosed. There are no gates or barriers separating parts of the development, ensuring it remains accessible and inclusive. These design choices help people feel secure without creating a gated or isolated environment.	N/A during construction + during operation	None required.
Does the proposal include attractive, multi-use public spaces and buildings?	Yes	The proposal includes a range of well-designed public spaces that support recreation, social interaction and community use. Key features include a central green corridor with play areas, walking and cycling routes, and seating. The development also provides a large area of natural open space (SANG), allotments, and landscaped areas that connect to the wider green infrastructure network.	N/A during construction 0 during operation	None required.

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
		These spaces are designed to be accessible, safe and inclusive, offering benefits for residents of all ages. No multi-use public buildings are currently proposed.		
Has engagement and consultation been carried out with the local community and voluntary sector?	Yes	The applicant has undertaken public consultation to inform and involve the local community. A public exhibition was held in December 2024 at Arborfield Green Community Centre, with invitations sent to over 3,000 nearby households. Local councillors, parish councils and stakeholders were also invited to a preview session. A dedicated project website, phone line and email address were provided to support wider engagement. Feedback received during the consultation helped shape the proposals, and further details are set out in the accompanying Statement of Community Involvement.	+ during construction + during operation	None required.

Access to Healthy Food

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal facilitate the supply of local food, for example allotments, community farms and farmers' markets?	Yes	The proposal includes a dedicated area for community allotments, located in the southeast corner of the site and accessible from Commonfield Lane. These allotments will provide opportunities for residents to grow their own food, supporting healthy lifestyles, social interaction and local food production. The space will include orchard planting and informal seating, helping to create a productive and inclusive community space.	N/A during construction + during operation	None required.
Is there a range of retail uses, including food stores and smaller	No	No retail uses are proposed within the Barkham Square site itself. However, the development is located within walking and cycling	N/A during construction	None required.

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
affordable shops for social enterprises?		distance of several existing facilities, including convenience stores, cafés and community services at Arborfield Green and nearby villages. The site is also well connected to public transport, allowing easy access to larger retail centres in Wokingham and Bracknell.	- During operation	
Does the proposal avoid contributing towards an over-concentration of hot food takeaways in the local area?	Yes	The proposal does not include any hot food takeaway uses. The development is residential-led and focuses on providing homes, open space, and community infrastructure. This avoids adding to any existing concentration of takeaway outlets in the local area.	N/A during construction + during operation	None required.

Access to Work and Training

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal provide access to local employment and training opportunities, including temporary construction and permanent 'end-use' jobs?	Yes	The proposal will generate employment during the construction phase, including opportunities for local contractors and suppliers. In the longer term, permanent jobs will be created through the management of open spaces, allotments, and care provision within the elderly accommodation.	+ during construction + during operation	The applicant is committed to working with the Council to support employment and skills initiatives, in line with local policy.
Does the proposal provide childcare facilities?	No	No formal childcare facilities are proposed within the Barkham Square development. However, the site is located within walking distance of existing nurseries and primary schools in Arborfield Green and the surrounding area, which offer childcare and early years provision.	N/A during construction - During operation	If required, contributions towards education or community infrastructure can be secured through planning obligations as part of the Section 106 agreement. Alternatively, potential to include a commitment to review childcare demand following early phases of occupation, with potential to trigger a contribution if needed.
Does the proposal include managed and affordable workspace for local businesses?	No	No managed or affordable workspace is proposed within the Barkham Square development. The scheme is residential-led and	N/A during construction	The site is well connected to nearby employment areas, and the applicant is committed to supporting local employment

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
		focuses on housing, open space and community infrastructure.	- During operation	and skills through construction-phase opportunities and ongoing site management roles.
Does the proposal include opportunities for work for local people via local procurement arrangements?	Yes	The proposal will create jobs during construction and in long-term site management. The applicant is committed to supporting local employment through procurement, with opportunities for local contractors, suppliers and service providers.	+ during construction + during operation	Enhancement actions may include a Section 106 Employment and Skills Plan, setting out targets for local labour, apprenticeships and training during construction and operation.

Social Cohesion and Inclusive Design

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal consider health inequalities by addressing local needs through community engagement?	Yes	The applicant has engaged with the local community to help shape the proposal and understand local needs. As noted, a public exhibition was held in December 2024, with invitations sent to over 3,000 households and local stakeholders. Feedback was collected in person and online, and a dedicated website, phone line and email address were provided to support wider engagement. This process helped inform the design and ensure the development responds to local priorities, supporting inclusive and health-conscious planning.	N/A during construction. + during operation.	None required.
Does the proposal connect with existing communities, ie layout and movement which avoids physical barriers and severance and land uses and spaces which encourage social interaction?	Yes	The proposal has been designed to integrate with surrounding communities and encourage social interaction. The layout includes well-connected pedestrian and cycle routes linking to Arborfield Green and nearby public rights of way. There are no physical barriers or gated areas, ensuring open access throughout the site. Public spaces such as the central green corridor, play areas, and allotments are designed to be	N/A during construction + during operation	None required.

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
		inclusive and encourage community use.		
Does the proposal include a mix of uses and a range of community facilities?	?	The proposal includes a mix of residential uses and a range of community amenity facilities as outlined above.	N/A during construction + during operation	None required.
Does the proposal provide opportunities for the voluntary and community sectors?	Yes	While the Barkham Square proposal does not explicitly reference the voluntary and community sectors, the scheme includes several features that could support their involvement: Community green and allotments: These spaces offer potential for local groups to lead or participate in community gardening, wellbeing initiatives, and educational activities. Extensive public open space and SANG: These areas could be used by voluntary organisations for nature-based activities, health programmes, or stewardship. Pedestrian and cycle connectivity: The scheme improves access to nearby facilities, enabling collaboration with local groups and enhancing social inclusion. Consultation and engagement: The applicant has already engaged with the community and remains open to future partnerships that support local needs.	N/A during construction + operation	The applicant welcome further dialogue with Wokingham Borough Council and local stakeholders to explore how these spaces could be used or managed in collaboration with voluntary and community organisations as the scheme progresses.
Does the proposal take into account issues and principles of inclusive and age-friendly design?	Yes	The proposal supports inclusive and age-friendly design through accessible public spaces, safe pedestrian routes, and adaptable homes. The masterplan includes level footpaths, seating areas, and clear wayfinding to support people of all ages and abilities. Elderly care accommodation is included and will be designed to meet enhanced accessibility needs. All homes will meet relevant accessibility standards at the detailed design stage.	N/A during construction + during operation	None required.

Minimising the Use of Resources

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal make best use of existing land?	Yes	The proposal makes efficient use of land by delivering up to 660 homes, including elderly care accommodation, on a site allocated in the emerging Local Plan. It forms a logical extension to Arborfield Green, making use of existing infrastructure and connections. The layout retains key natural features—such as ancient woodland and Barkham Brook—and integrates over 50% of the site as multifunctional open space, including SANG, allotments, and green corridors. This ensures the land is used effectively for housing, biodiversity, and community benefit.	N/A during construction + during operation	None required.
Does the proposal encourage recycling, including building materials?	Yes	The proposal supports sustainable construction practices, including the reuse and recycling of materials where feasible. Crest Nicholson is committed to minimising waste during construction and will explore opportunities to incorporate recycled or low-carbon materials in line with emerging policy requirements. A Circular Economy Strategy and Whole-Life Carbon Assessment will be prepared at the detailed design stage, in accordance with emerging Local Plan policies CE4 and CE5. These will set out how materials will be sourced, reused, and managed to reduce environmental impact and support long-term sustainability.	+ during construction + during operation	Details of recycling during the construction phase to be included in Site Waste Management Plan. Operational phase recycling facilities to be provided in line with policy standards.
Does the proposal incorporate sustainable design and construction techniques?	Yes	The proposal incorporates sustainable design and construction principles in line with the Future Homes Standard. The homes will include:	+ during construction + during operation	Full details of the sustainable design and construction techniques to minimise the impact on the environment during the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development will be set out in the accompanying

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
		- Low-carbon heating systems, such as air or ground source heat pumps - Solar panels and energy-efficient ventilation - Enhanced insulation and airtightness to reduce energy demand - EV charging infrastructure or cabling for future installation - Water-efficient fittings to reduce consumption These measures will be developed in detail at the Reserved Matters stage, ensuring compliance with Building Regulations and local sustainability policies. Crest Nicholson is committed to delivering a low-carbon, resilient development that supports long-term environmental goals.		Barkham Square Masterplan and Sustainability Statement.

Climate Change

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal incorporate renewable energy?	Yes	The proposal incorporates renewable energy measures in line with the Future Homes Standard. At Reserved Matters stage, homes will be designed to include: Air source or ground source heat pumps for low-carbon heating Solar panels where feasible Energy-efficient ventilation systems EV charging infrastructure or cabling for future installation These measures will help reduce carbon emissions and support Wokingham Borough Council's climate objectives. Crest Nicholson is committed to delivering a sustainable, low-carbon development.	+ during construction + during operation	None required.

Assessment Criteria	Relevant	Details/evidence	Potential impact	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal ensure that buildings and public spaces are designed to respond to winter and summer temperatures, for example ventilation, shading and landscaping?	Yes	The proposal includes measures to help buildings and public spaces respond to both winter and summer conditions. Homes will be designed with energy-efficient ventilation and insulation to maintain comfort year-round. Landscaping, including tree planting and green corridors, will provide natural shading and help reduce overheating in warmer months.	N/A during construction + during operation	None required.
Does the proposal maintain or enhance biodiversity?	Yes	The proposal maintains and enhances biodiversity. It includes: - A large area of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG). - Retention and enhancement of ancient woodland, hedgerows, and Barkham Brook. - A commitment to delivering at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain, in line with national and local policy. - Integrated green corridors and landscaping to support wildlife movement and habitat creation. These measures will be secured through the planning process and refined at the Reserved Matters stage.	- During construction + during operation	A detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be secured by way of planning condition for the proposed development, which will detail how airborne dust, run-off and construction materials will be managed during the construction activities. Controls will follow national standards and best practice to ensure that these risks are minimised and that they do not affect adjacent habitats and species or habitats and species beyond the site boundary as identified.
Does the proposal incorporate sustainable urban drainage techniques?	Yes	The drainage strategy includes a combination of swales, detention basins, permeable paving, and rain gardens. These features are designed to manage surface water runoff, reduce flood risk, and improve water quality, in line with best practice and local policy. All built development is located within Flood Zone 1, and SuDS measures will achieve greenfield runoff rates.	N/A during construction + during operation	None required.

9 ADDRESSING POLICY HC1: PROMOTING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

9.1 The Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update 2023-2040: Proposed Submission Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination on Friday 28 February 2025.

- 9.2 Policy HC1 of the Regulation 19 Plan focuses on creating healthy and safe places that support social interaction, physical activity, and protection from environmental harm. The proposed development at Barkham Square aligns with these objectives, as set out below.
- 1. Vibrant, healthy and safe communities will be promoted through a high-quality environment with local services to support health, social and cultural wellbeing and help contribute to reducing deprivation and inequalities in the borough.*
- 9.3 The proposal delivers a high-quality residential environment supported by extensive green infrastructure, including a large SANG, green corridors, and play spaces. These features promote physical activity, mental wellbeing, and social interaction. The development also integrates with existing infrastructure at Arborfield Green, helping to reduce inequalities and support inclusive communities.
- 2. Development proposals should consider impacts on the health and wellbeing of new and existing residents, by including measures that contribute to healthier communities and reduce inequalities. This includes the creation of high quality, active, safe and accessible places.*
- 9.4 The scheme includes measures to support healthier lifestyles, such as:
- Safe and accessible walking and cycling routes
 - Landscaped public spaces and play areas
 - Energy-efficient homes with good ventilation and insulation
 - Natural shading and cooling through tree planting and green corridors
- 9.5 These features contribute to a safe, active and inclusive environment for both new and existing residents.
- 3. Development proposals will be supported where they:*
- a) Contribute to the health and wellbeing priorities of the borough, including those outlined in the Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Wokingham Health and Wellbeing Strategy (and any other successor or associated document);*
- 9.6 The health and wellbeing priorities as set out in the current plan and the local plan update have been considered within both the application and the Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Wokingham Health and Wellbeing Strategy, as noted within this HIA and have been used to inform the conclusions reached within the matrix used to generate any conclusions or recommendations reached as a result.
- 9.7 The development has been informed by the Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Wokingham Health and Wellbeing Strategy. These documents have guided the Health Impact Assessment (HIA), including the HUDU matrix, which identifies potential health impacts and mitigation measures.

b) Support the provision of new or improved health facilities, in consultation with the borough's Health and Wellbeing Board, Integration Partnership, the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West (BOB) Integrated Care Board and NHS England; and

- 9.8 The applicant will liaise with relevant stakeholders through the application process to determine if there is any requirement to provide mitigation that arises directly as a result of the proposed development.

c) Protect existing health facilities in line with Policy HC2: Community Facilities.

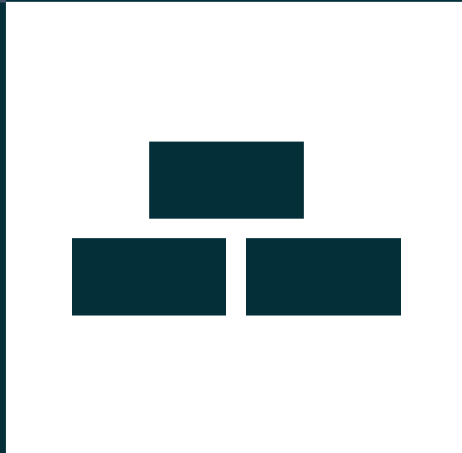
- 9.9 The proposal does not result in the loss of any existing health facilities and is therefore compliant with Policy HC2.

4. Residential development proposals of 10 dwellings or more, or non-residential development proposals of 1,000 m2 or greater gross internal area must include a Health Impact Assessment (HIA).

- 9.10 As the proposal exceeds 600 dwellings, a full Health Impact Assessment has been prepared in accordance with Policy HC1.
- 9.11 The scope of the HIA reflects the scale of the development and includes stakeholder engagement, assessment of health impacts, and recommendations for mitigation.
- 9.12 The HIA has used the HUDU matrix to assess the development's impact on health and wellbeing. This process has identified opportunities to enhance outcomes through design, infrastructure, and community engagement. Recommendations include strengthening active travel links, ensuring inclusive access to green space, and maintaining dialogue with local health providers as the scheme progresses.

10 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 10.1 Using the framework set out in the HUDU Health Impact Assessment Tool, this HIA has assessed the potential direct and indirect effects of the proposed development at Barkham Square on health and wellbeing determinants. It identifies measures to enhance positive impacts and mitigate any potential negative effects.
- 10.2 The proposed development will deliver up to 660 new homes, including affordable housing and with further elderly care accommodation, alongside extensive green infrastructure, open space, and active travel connections. The scheme has been designed to create a high-quality, inclusive environment that supports healthy lifestyles and integrates with the surrounding community.
- 10.3 The key health benefits arising from the proposed development include:
- Provision of safe and accessible walking and cycling routes, supporting active travel
 - Delivery of high-quality public open space, including a 13.23ha SANG, allotments, and play areas
 - Opportunities for physical activity and social interaction through green corridors and community spaces
 - Integration of energy-efficient homes with good ventilation, insulation, and low-carbon heating systems
 - Use of sustainable design and construction techniques to minimise environmental impacts
 - Implementation of SuDS to manage surface water and reduce flood risk
 - Enhancement of biodiversity through habitat creation and retention of ancient woodland and hedgerows
 - Improvements to local connectivity, including links to Arborfield Green and nearby services
 - Long-term management of open spaces to ensure continued quality and accessibility
- 10.4 In addition to the health and wellbeing benefits, the development will contribute to wider social and economic objectives, including:
- Supporting housing delivery in line with local and national targets
 - Providing a mix of housing types to meet identified needs
 - Creating inclusive, well-connected neighbourhoods
 - Supporting the local economy through construction and long-term population growth
- 10.5 Overall, the proposed development is expected to make a positive contribution to the health and wellbeing of new residents, existing communities, and the wider Wokingham Borough. It aligns with the aims of Policy HC1 and the broader vision of the Local Plan Update to create sustainable, healthy and inclusive places.



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0370 777 6292

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