

TECHCNIAL APPENDIX 10.7 - SCHEDULE OF LIKELY LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

BOROUGH		
Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment (2019) LCA J2 Arborfield Cross and Barkham Settled and Farmed Clay		
BASELINE	RECEPTORS AND THEIR SENSITIVITY (COMBINED JUDGEMENT ON VALUE AND SUSCEPTIBILITY)	SENSITIVITY
The Site is wholly located within LCA J2: Arborfield Cross and Barkham Settled and Farmed Clay, which is described as “a gently undulating landscape, principally in agricultural use”. Key characteristics, of relevance to the Site and this LVIA, include: - A gently undulating landscape between +50m and +65m AOD. Shallow wooded valleys follow the course of Barkham Brook. - Wooded context provided by characteristic mature hedgerow and in-field trees, combined with woodland belts and ancient woodland. - Arable farming dominates, with pasture on higher ground and horse paddocks near settlement. - A dense settled character influenced by modern development including the new garden village on the site of Arborfield Garrison (Arborfield Green). - Older scattered settlement of farms, hamlets and small nucleated villages at Barkham. - A network of busy local roads cross the area. They tend to be rural in character. - Public rights of way run between the settlements and provide access for recreation. The WB Landscape Character Assessment (2019) concludes that LCA J2 has a “modest capacity to accommodate change without detriment to character within an overall objective to enhance existing character. The key characteristics to be retained / respected in any change are the historic field system, habitats, rural lanes and wooded valleys”. The following landscape management objectives for the LCA are of relevance to the LVIA: - Conserve the scenic quality and naturalistic character of Barkham Brook. - Conserve woodlands, including ancient, BAP priority habitats and remnant standard trees. - Increase the extent of native deciduous woodland, using locally occurring native species. - Protect the individual identity of towns and villages and retain their sense of physical and visual separation. - Conserve and manage hedgerows with standard trees as important wildlife habitats and landscape features. - Conserve and enhance the integration of urban edges by wooded boundaries to provide visual screening. - Maintain and enhance the character of rural lanes, resisting unsympathetic highway improvements.	Value The Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) considers the landscape of LCA J2 to be overall of “<i>moderate condition due to the pattern of arable and pastoral fields, and remnant wetland influences associated with Barkham Brook</i>” and “<i>the hedgerow network is fragmented</i>”. The LCA is considered to have a moderate level of tranquillity, due to the network of busy roads (A327) and the strategic residential development site, Arborfield Green (the regeneration of the former Arborfield Garrison). The LCA notes, away from the settlements there is generally a rural character, enhanced by hedgerows and the large fields, which act as separation between settlements. There are a number of Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Area and Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) present within LCA J2. Overall, the landscape value is considered to be High.	Medium
	Susceptibility The Site is located directly adjacent to a strategic residential development site, Arborfield Green (the regeneration of the former Arborfield Garrison), with planning permission for circa 2,000 dwellings and associated infrastructure and facilities. Arborfield Green is partially complete with the remaining phases currently under construction. It is considered the landscape receptor has a high level of ability to accept the type of development proposed. WBC Local Plan policies do not generally support “<i>proposals outside of development limits</i>” and within “<i>countryside</i>” (policies CP11 and CP18). The wooded context from trees, woodland and hedgerow within LCA J2 provides a good level of containment around the Site and would assist with the assimilation of potential development into the existing landscape. The introduction of a residential development within Site Parcel A, would be in keeping with development on adjacent land in this area, therefore overall the landscape susceptibility of this receptor is considered to be Low.	
	MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT (SCALE, DEGREE OF CONTRAST, DISTANCE FROM RECEPTOR, EXTENT AND DURATION)	EFFECT
	Construction Phase During construction, there would be temporary limited alteration to the landscape resources of LCA J2 Arborfield Cross and Barkham Settled and Farmed Clay, with the majority of the existing boundary vegetation retained as part of the Proposed Development, with the exception of the access point from Langley Common Road and removal of a TPO tree and vegetation for access from Arborfield Green. Construction would introduce a temporary level of activity into the local area, which would only affect proportionally a very small part of the LCA, with the wider character area remaining unaffected. Therefore, the scale of change is considered low due to the minor loss and alteration of existing landscape features, with the landscape change restricted to and influencing the immediate setting of the Proposed Development, resulting in a negative effect that would be indiscernible to the wider landscape. Therefore, the magnitude of impact is considered Small Adverse.	Temporary Minor Adverse (within 500m of Site boundary) Neutral (beyond 500m of Site) (Not Significant)
	Operation Phase (Year 0) The Proposed Development would result in a small alteration to the host LCA, with permanent removal of agricultural land and small parts of boundary vegetation within Site Parcel A, replaced by residential led built form, extra care facility and new road access points, however this would not carry through to influence the wider LCA as a result of the Site’s enclosed nature, small size and separation provided by Barkham Brook in the east and Arborfield Green in the south. The Proposed Development would form an extension to the Arborfield Green settlement that already influences the areas of the LCA in the south. The scale of change is considered low, due to the minor loss and alteration of existing landscape features, restricted to the Site, resulting in a negative effect that would only influence the immediate setting of the Proposed Development – with the influence of built form perceptible in isolated parts of the LCA to the north and west (given the influence of the undulating topography), with similar development on the existing northern edge of Arborfield Green. Therefore, the magnitude of change, pre-mitigation, is considered Small Adverse.	Short Term Minor Adverse (within 500m of Site boundary) Neutral (beyond 500m of Site) (Not Significant)
	Operation Phase (Year 15) Mitigation and enhancement proposals for the Site are developed with the aim of protecting and enhancing landscape character and wider green infrastructure. The development has been designed to fit within the existing landscape structure and to enhance and contribute to the existing landscape framework. At year 15, the development provides mature and established planting and management of the existing landscape framework. The long term nature of change would be direct, affecting a very small proportion of LCA J2 in the immediate setting of the Site, with the wider LCA J2 remaining unaffected due to the Site’s high level of containment and adjacent residential built form, resulting in a barely perceptible degree of change. Therefore, the magnitude of change is considered Negligible Adverse.	Long Term Negligible Adverse (within 500m of Site boundary) Neutral (beyond 500m of Site) (Not Significant)

SITE LEVEL		
Landscape Character of Site - individual components of the physical landscape that are present in the Site		
BASELINE	RECEPTORS AND THEIR SENSITIVITY (COMBINED JUDGEMENT ON VALUE AND SUSCEPTIBILITY)	SENSITIVITY
Topography & Hydrology The Site lies in the Loddon Valley. The Site features a gently undulating landscape between circa 50 and 60m AOD. Within the Site, a shallow wooded valley follows the course of Barkham Brook and features open water bodies, resulting from the clay and loamy soil. Landscape Condition - The J2 'Arborfield Cross and Barkham Settled and Farmed Clay' Landscape Character Area lying to the south-west is described as being of moderate quality, moderate character and moderate condition. - Ancient woodland features along the Site's southern boundary and along the Barkham Brook corridor. - A review of the Woodland Trust Ancient Tree Inventory (Woodland Trust, 2024), highlighted several veteran trees located on the north eastern boundary and several 'notable' trees on the southern boundary of Site Parcel A. - The Wokingham Borough Tree Preservation Orders map, highlights there are a number of single trees covered by TPO - along the southern boundary of Site Parcel A, southern boundary of Site Parcel B and a woodland TPO on the northern boundary of Site Parcel A. - Barkham Brook and associated wetland provide important ecological habitats including wet meadow and BAP priority habitat wet woodland. Recreational There is currently no public access to the Site. The nearest Public Footpath (BARK FP 7/1) is located adjacent to the Site's northern boundary. Natural Heritage - Barkham Brook and associated wetland provide important ecological habitats including wet meadow and BAP priority habitat wet woodland. - Internally and on the field boundaries are BAP priority habitat hedgerows - The Barkham Brook corridor and associated ancient woodland within the Site are defined on the emerging Local Plan mapping for Wokingham Borough	Value The Site is not associated with any statutory ecological designations, but does feature landscape designations including Ancient Woodland, Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) trees and Bearwood and Barkham Valued Landscape Area, associated with the Barkham Brook corridor. The landscape has no amenity value and is not publicly accessible. The Site's existing poor-quality agricultural grassland is appraised as having a low landscape value. The presence of on-site Ancient Woodland, veteran and notable trees, TPO trees, Barkham Brook and hedgerow field boundaries are of high value, which collectively contribute to the local character. The condition of the landscape and its individual elements is good and is generally well maintained. Overall, the value of the landscape at Site level is considered to be Medium.	Medium
	Susceptibility There is existing reference to residential development with the adjacent Arborfield Green (the regeneration of the former Arborfield Garrison), with planning permission for circa 2,000 dwellings and associated infrastructure and facilities, currently partially built out. Emerging policies allocate the Site for the nature of development proposed. The existing on-site woodland, trees and boundary vegetation provides a high level of enclosure, resulting in a minor degree of interaction with the surrounding landscape. The ancient woodland, veteran and TPO trees are irreplaceable and provide a strong contextual relationship with the Site. The receptor has a high level of ability to accept the type of development proposed and there are good opportunities for mitigation and enhancement. Overall, the landscape susceptibility is considered to be Medium.	
	MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT (SCALE, DEGREE OF CONTRAST, DISTANCE FROM RECEPTOR, EXTENT AND DURATION)	EFFECT
	Construction Phase During construction, there would be a direct, permanent loss of the low value grassland within Site Parcel A to accommodate development platforms and construction activity. The Site access point from Langley Common Road would result in the direct, permanent loss of a linear stretch of hedgerow along this boundary. Protective fencing would be installed to all areas of retained woodland and trees prior to the onset of development. Where individual trees occur outside those fence lines, each tree would be protected by fencing (to be installed at the outer edge of the root protection area, as defined in an arboricultural report and Tree Protection Plan, in accordance with BS:5837 (2012)). The geographical extent of change would influence the immediate setting of the Proposed Development. There would be minor modification to the existing landform. Hoarding would be erected to provide another layer of containment. The construction traffic would also introduce temporary uncharacteristic features into the local landscape in close proximity. The size and scale of change is considered to be medium, due to the partial loss of a very small proportion of existing valued landscape features (albeit with the vast majority of valued features retained and protected), and the addition of uncharacteristic features and elements, primarily focused within Site Parcel A. Therefore, the magnitude of impact is considered to be Small-Medium Adverse.	Temporary Minor-Moderate Adverse (Not Significant)
	Operation Phase (Year 0) On completion of the works, there would be a direct, permanent loss of the low value grassland area within the Site, replaced with a high-quality residential development and new green infrastructure. The built form and residential land use would remain a proportionally small element in the whole Site, concentrated within Site Parcel A off Langley Common Road and to the west of Barkham Brook, set within a strong landscape framework - and would be accommodated with no impacts to the existing areas of Ancient Woodland, TPO trees and veteran trees within the Site, which would be retained, integrated and supplemented as part of the Proposed Development (aside from the removal of one TPO tree, to facilitate an access road from Arborfield Green, along the Site Parcel A southern boundary). At completion, mitigation and enhancement measures would have introduced extensive tree, shrub and hedgerow planting (albeit at an immature stage), internally, on the boundaries and in the area of SANG, using locally prevalent and native species that accord with relevant landscape guidance and in planting arrangements to reflect local character, helping to integrate the Proposed Development into the wider landscape setting. The scale of change would result in a Small Adverse magnitude of change at year 0.	Short Term Minor Adverse (Not Significant)
	Post Mitigation Establishment (Year 15) Landscape mitigation and enhancement proposals would have matured to provide adequate screening and softening for the new built form, helping to further assimilate the Proposed Development into the wider landscape. New tree planting would be well established, offering a stronger coverage to further enhance the local well wooded landscape character. Although there would be permanent presence of the new built form, the landscape proposals would provide a well-established landscape setting which complements and links to the adjacent Arborfield Green development. The existing areas of Ancient Woodland, TPO trees, veteran trees and Barkham Brook within the Site would be protected, conserved and enhanced as part of long term stewardship and management of the Green Infrastructure network and open spaces. The targeted green infrastructure enhancements within Site Parcel B, including the provision of the required SANG (with extensive woodland planting), public open space, community growing areas, access network and recreational facilities, are considered beneficial to the character of the Site and amenity value. Therefore, with the expansion of valuable landscape features across the Site, the magnitude of change is considered to be Small Beneficial.	Long Term Minor Beneficial (Not Significant)

Council, under Policy NE6 as a 'Valued Landscape', Bearwood and Barkham. Cultural Heritage Barkham Square Farmhouse (Grade II) and associated parkland setting are located to the north east of the Site, beyond intervening arable farmland north of Parcel B, with the wooded Barkham Brook corridor also providing separation from Parcel A. There are no heritage features on the Site itself. Associations Culturally this landscape is important, being on the edge of the historic Royal Forest of Windsor between Bigshotte Walke and Bishop's Bear Wood Chase. The Site and area of 'Valued Landscape' Bearwood Barkham have early associations with the Bishops of Salisbury and with Monarchs from Elizabeth I to the enclosures of the Royal Forest in the early 19th Century (reigns of George III, George. IV, William. IV and Victoria), the landscape has associations to a number of individuals with national and local importance. Whilst they are not household names now, John de Maltravers, a regicide of the despised Edward II, held land in Barkham much to the annoyance of local residents. Distinctiveness The Barkham Brook corridor and associated ancient woodland within the Site are defined on the emerging Local Plan mapping for Wokingham Borough Council, under Policy NE6 as a 'Valued Landscape', Bearwood and Barkham. The emerging policy states these areas <i>"are designated as valued landscapes in recognition of their distinctive character to the borough's landscape"</i>. Perceptual The Site is well wooded internally along Barkham Brook and on its boundaries, reducing intervisibility between the Site and the wider landscape. Function The Site extends to circa 41.8ha and comprised of poor-quality agricultural grassland which is currently grazed by livestock, with a DEFRA Agricultural Land Classification Grade 4.		
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