

MEMORANDUM

From:	Catherine Brimble Senior Landscape Officer		
Service	WBC Landscape and Trees	App No:	260200
Address:	Brookfield Farm, Old Wokingham Road, Crowthorne, Berkshire, RG40 3BU.		
Proposal:	Permission in principle application for the proposed erection of up to 9no. dwellings.		
Type of Development:	Minor Dwellings (1-9) PiP		
Site Visit Made:	Yes/No		

Summary Of Recommendations

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

Comments On Proposal

I cannot support an application for Permission in Principle for up to 9 dwellings, for the reasons given below:

- The site is located within the countryside and therefore is contrary to Core Strategy Policy CP11 which states that development outside the settlement boundary would NOT normally be permitted except in specific circumstances. None of the exemptions listed in points 1 – 7 of this policy relates to the proposed development on this site.
- Due to the very minimal information provided with this application we cannot assess the proposals in relation to Core Strategy policies CP1 or CP3 which is especially important to understand as the site is outside any settlement boundary within the countryside.
- Paragraphs 187(a) and (b) of the NPPF state that development should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
 - Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
 - Recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the

economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.

A number of Valued Landscapes within Wokingham Borough were initially identified through a Topic Paper on Valued Landscapes by WBC dated January 2020 to respond to paragraph 187 (a) of the NPPF and prepared as part of the evidence base for the Emerging Local Plan Update and associated Policy NE6. Further work has recently been undertaken to make refinements to the boundaries of the valued landscape areas to update the assessment and this has now been published in the Valued Landscapes Assessment dated September 2024 as part of the evidence studies produced for the current consultation related to the Local Plan Update: Proposed Submission Plan (Regulation 19).

It is noted that the southern part of the application site falls within the Forest and Rides Valued Landscape. The NPPF indicates that these landscapes will need to be protected and enhanced, so therefore we will need to understand how the proposed development on this site can address this aspect. No information has been provided to this regard and therefore the application does not accord with the requirements of NPPF paragraph 187 (a).

4. Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment (WBLCA), dated November 2019, identifies a number of different landscape character areas (LCA's) across the Borough and provides key information regarding each of the LCA's. This site falls within the Holme Green Pastoral Sandy Lowland landscape character area. In order to understand the effects of the proposed development on the surrounding landscape character, the application will need to be accompanied by a landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) to support new development within the countryside as required by Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21. The LVIA will need to fully consider how the proposals address the key characteristics of this landscape character area and specifically how the impacts of the development can be reduced and mitigated by sympathetic and appropriate design principles. No information has been provided with the application to assess landscape character and therefore the application is contrary to Local Plan policy TB21.
5. No information has been provided with regard to the existing tree resource adjacent to Old Wokingham Road as required by MDD Local Plan Policy CC03. A tree survey and arboricultural impact assessment to BS 5837:2012 will need to be provided to identify the tree resource within and adjacent to the site and to help inform design and layout of the site in relation to RPA's of trees.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

N/A

Date:	12 th March 2026	Signed:	C. Brimble
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