

LVIA Addendum

Land off Maidensfield, Winnersh, May 2025

This LVIA Addendum has been prepared by CSA Environmental on behalf of Taylor Wimpey in relation to Land off Maidensfield, Winnersh (hereafter referred to as 'the Site'). It should be read alongside the detailed landscape drawings prepared by CSA Environmental, including the Landscape Masterplan and Soft Landscaping Proposals.

1.0 Planning Context

- 1.1 The Site was subject to an outline planning application for up to 234 dwellings (ref: 230208) which was refused by Wokingham Borough Council in August 2023 and subsequently allowed at appeal in March 2024.
- 1.2 The outline planning application was accompanied by a full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) which was produced by CSA Environmental. That assessment was based on the Parameters Plan (produced by ECE Architecture), as well as the illustrative Landscape Strategy Plan (produced by CSA).
- 1.3 The Inspector's Appeal Decision sets out a number of recommendations to the illustrative layout of development proposals, which are set out in full within the accompanying Design and Access Statement. The Inspector stated within paragraph 65 of their decision, '*I am satisfied a scheme could come forward which could successfully integrate with the townscape and settlement pattern of Winnersh by being suburban with a leafy settlement edge character*'. They also stated in relation to landscape harm in paragraph 55 that '*the urban context, contained visual impact and scope for some mitigation through design, including a large open space and further planting, means the overall effect would not be of a high order. The impact would be moderate adverse.*'
- 1.4 In relation to visual impact, the Inspector states in paragraph 52, "*The view from the gate at the end of Maidensfield (Viewpoint 3 in the LVIA) down towards the Emm Brook is a pleasant vista the appeal scheme would adversely effect. However, the indicative layout shows that an area of open space could be retained close to the access into the site. This would provide a softening effect. It could also be enlarged by removing the cluster of six homes currently shown on the illustrative masterplan (along the northern boundary of the appeal site) dividing the two areas of open space. With such an amendment, a sense of the*

existing view down towards the Emm Brook and adjoining woodland could be retained."

- 1.5 They go on to say in paragraph 53 that, *"The street into the development could also be tree lined and generous front gardens provided to ensure a visual sense of transition between the built-up area and countryside beyond. The interface with the countryside could also be carefully designed with houses to face east over the open space as shown on the indicative layout."*
- 1.6 Lastly, in relation to views from the M4 slip road to the south east, the Inspector states in paragraph 54, *"there is scope for significant structural landscaping to soften the impact of the development. Feature trees could also be planted within the scheme to break up the roof scape",* going on to say that, *"Significantly, the view from the motorway is one where the receptors would be traveling in vehicles at speed and are therefore of lower sensitivity. Moreover, in the wider context there is development along the motorway corridor including fencing and visible housing estates. In this respect, the proposal would not appear significantly out of place"*.
- 1.7 These points in particular have been key to informing the design of the two reserved matters proposals, as detailed below.

2.0 Reserved Matters Proposals

- 2.1 Reserved matters (RM) applications are now being proposed, for residential development together with ancillary structures, internal roads, car parking, landscaping and public open space, drainage features, and associated works. There are several key changes to the RM proposals which address the Inspector's commentary set out above and have been developed through pre-application dialogue with the Planning Officer. The key landscape and visual matters are as follows:
- Removal of the cluster of proposed built form in the north of the Site, adjacent to the Grovelands Park Caravan, maintaining existing vistas from Maidensfield looking east towards mature vegetation along the Emm Brook, reaffirming a strong sense of space and the countryside edge location (responding directly to the Inspector's comments).
 - Increase in the quantum of street trees throughout the Site, in line with the NPPF requirements, helping to break up the roofscape of new dwellings where visible and provide a transition to the countryside to the east of the Site (in response to the Inspector's comments).
 - Provision of an informal 'village green' in the centre of the Site, connecting to the wider open space in the east, in place of the formal pocket park proposed at outline stage (responding to pre-application discussions with officers).
 - Increased structural landscape proposals in the south east of the Site, to soften the visual impact of development from this direction,

including from the M4 slip road (in response to comments raised by the Inspector).

2.2 Aside from the above design changes, the RM proposals retain the key landscape and visual principles that were established within the outline application proposals, including the following:

- Retention and protection of existing trees and hedgerows. Retention of the group of oak trees in the north western part of the Site within an area of open space;
- Proposals include appropriate offset distances from veteran trees and Ancient Woodland.
- Retention of the Emm Brook and the Ancient Woodland to the northeast of the Site within a significant landscaped corridor along the eastern Site boundary.
- The majority of the new development will be up to 2 storeys, with some 2.5 and 3 storey buildings located centrally within the Site (an approach agreed with the Planning Officer through pre-application discussions).
- Proposals to include a policy-compliant and comprehensive play and recreation strategy. The space will include a Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play ('NEAP') in the open space to the east, a Locally Equipped Area for Play ('LEAP') in the open space to the north, and a Local Area for Play ('LAP') within the village green.

3.0 Landscape and Visual Effects

- 3.1 The landscape and visual effects arising from the two RM proposals are assessed as being inline with the judgements set out with the LVIA which accompanied the outline application. Whilst there have been a number of design changes (as set out above) these are largely focused around the interior of the Site and whilst beneficial to the surrounding context, including the local landscape character and visual amenity, would not alter the level of effects at either year 1 or year 15 from that of the original LVIA assessment. Furthermore, the overall quantum of proposed development remains the same as at outline stage, as do the proposed storey heights.
- 3.2 In terms of landscape effects, the level of harm to the landscape character of the Site will be initially *moderate adverse*, reducing to *slight adverse* as mitigation planting throughout the Site matures. Given the containment of the Site and its relationship to the existing settlement pattern, there would be a *negligible adverse* effect on the surrounding landscape, reducing to *neutral* as mitigation planting matures.
- 3.3 In terms of visual effects, these will generally range from *slight – negligible adverse* initially, reducing as mitigation planting matures. There will be a *moderate – slight adverse* effect on a number of residents within the Grovelands Caravan Park and a *moderate adverse* effect on several

residents at Eastbury Park and Maidensfield. In both cases these would reduce to *slight adverse* once mitigation planting to the northern and western Site boundaries has matured.

- 3.4 As concluded within the outline LVIA, there would be no significant effects on views from the surrounding area, nor would the proposals materially impact on the setting of the wider landscape or the perceived separation between Winnersh and Wokingham.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 The two reserved matters proposals largely follow the illustrative layout which accompanied the approved outline application, with the exception of several key design changes which respond directly to comments made by the Inspector in the appeal decision and to comments made through the pre-application discussions with the case officer.
- 4.2 The landscape led approach to the scheme will be continued through the RM submission, with the vast majority of existing structural vegetation being retained as part of the proposals, including the mature oak trees in the north west of the Site. Veteran trees and Ancient Woodland along the boundaries of the Site would be retained and respected with appropriate offset distances, and a significant landscaped corridor will be provided along the eastern Site boundary.
- 4.3 The overall level of landscape and visual effects resulting from the RM proposals will not differ from the judgements reached within the outline LVIA. In summary there would be no significant effects on views from the surrounding area, nor would the proposals materially impact on the setting of the wider landscape or the perceived separation between Winnersh and Wokingham.