

ET Planning

Planning Statement

Client:

Mrs Jean Wenman

Land Rear of Langley Common and South of School Road

Outline application for the phased development of up to 27 dwellings including 1 self-build plot (full description of development on application form) (all matters reserved except access into the site).

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is produced by ET Planning on behalf of Jean Wenman (hereafter referred to as 'The Applicant') to support a planning application for the development of Land Rear of Langley Common and South of School Road, Barkham (hereafter referred to as 'The Site').
- 1.2 This statement is produced to support an outline planning application for the following:

'Outline application for the phased development of up to 27 dwellings including 1 self-build plot, new access onto School Road and new pedestrian link/ emergency access onto Langley Common Road, landscaping, infrastructure, and overflow parking (with all matters reserved except access into the site)'
- 1.3 Whilst the layout, scale and appearance of the proposed development are reserved matters, illustrative drawings have been included within this submission demonstrating how the Site is capable of accommodating up to 27 dwellings. It is intended that the development would be phased, and a Phasing Plan will be submitted at reserved matters stage.
- 1.4 This planning statement will cover the background to the application and provide the necessary information to enable its determination by officers at the Council. It will consider the proposal in light of relevant planning policies and other material considerations.
- 1.5 The conclusion reached is that key material considerations and the wider objectives of National and Local Planning Policy support the grant of permission.

- 1.6 In addition to this planning statement, the application is accompanied by the appropriate planning application forms and ownership certificate, duly signed and completed.
- 1.7 The relevant application fee will be submitted by the applicant separately.
- 1.8 The remainder of this planning statement is structured as follows:
 - Site Location and Description
 - Planning History
 - Development Proposal
 - Statement of Community Involvement
 - Planning Policy Context and Policy Assessment
 - Planning Balance
 - Conclusion

2. Site Location and Description

2.1 The Site is approximately 2.85 hectares and is situated along Langley Common Road and School Road, within the Arborfield and Barkham Neighbourhood Plan Area. The Site Location Plan is shown below.

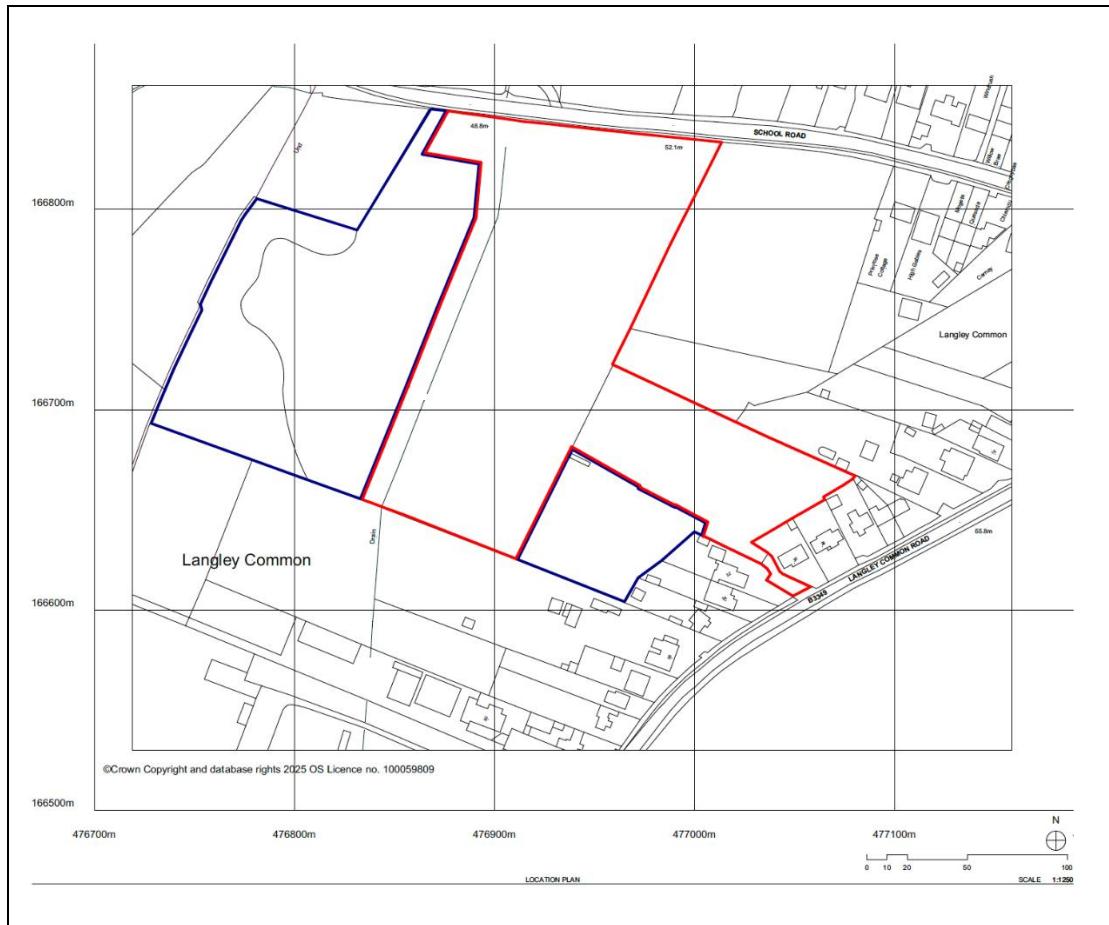


Figure 1: Site Location Plan (drawing ref: 2901 001P5)

2.2 The Site comprises a substantial parcel of land, historically used for the grazing of horses. To the north, east and south of the Site is existing residential development located along School Road and Langley Common Road. To the west of the Site is agricultural fields, with The Coombes C of E Primary School and Arborfield Cross located beyond.

2.3 The Site is located approximately 750m from the village of Arborfield Cross and 500m from the Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development

Location (SDL), which is allocated in the adopted Core Strategy for 3,500 dwellings.

2.4 The Site is located in a sustainable location, in close proximity to a the services and facilities of Langley Common, Arborfield Cross and Arborfield Garrison SDL, including The Coombes C of E Primary School and a number of local shops and bus stops.

2.5 A summary of nearby facilities is provided below.

Facilities	Distance from Site
Primary school (The Coombes C Of E Primary School)	400m
Primary school (Farley Hill Primary School)	500m
GP surgery	750m
Bus stop (Langley Common)	275m
Small supermarket (Co-op)	900m
Small supermarket (Londis)	700m
Wokingham Town Centre	4.5km
Wokingham Train Station	4km
St James Church Barkham	1.3km

2.6 In terms of adjacent neighbouring uses to the Site, there are a number of residential properties. School Road is characterised by detached dwellings of 3-5 bedrooms extending across 2.5 storeys.

3. Planning History

3.1 **Application Reference 152998** - Outline application for the erection of two detached dwellings, appearance, landscaping and layout to be considered. Refused on 31st December 2015.

3.2 **Application Reference 172165** - Outline application for the erection of 70 Dwellings (access to be considered and all other matters reserved) was submitted in July 2017 under application reference 172165. This application was refused on 24th April 2019.



Figure 2: Refused application ref 172165 - Indicative Site Layout (drawing ref. PP (01) 01)

3.3 The refusal reasons relating to this application is as follows:

'1. The proposed development would result in an unsustainable pattern of development by reason of the creation of a new unplanned large housing estate in the countryside which is unconnected and unrelated to any existing defined settlements and is located in a'

settlement separation area, substantially eroding the physical and visual gap between existing villages. The proposal is contrary to spatial objectives of the development plan and policies CP1, CP2, CP3, CP6, CP9, CP11, CP17 and CP18 of the Core Strategy, CC01, CC02 and TB21 of the MDD Local Plan, the Borough Design Guide SPD, Barkham Village Design Statement and sections 2, 4, 8, 12 and 15 of the NPPF.

2. The proposed development will have a detrimental and urbanising impact on the landscape and the character and appearance of the area by reason of the size and scale of the proposal; the rural setting; the erosion of the separation between existing settlements and removal of important landscape features, contrary to policies CP1, CP3, CP9, CP11 and CP18 of the Core Strategy, CC01, CC02, CC03 and TB21 of the MDD Local Plan, the Borough Design Guide SPD, Barkham Village Design Statement, WBC Landscape Character Assessment and section 12 & 15 of the NPPF.

3. The proposal fails to demonstrate the quantum of development is achievable on the site by reason of the uncharacteristic and urbanising grain and layout of the indicative plans which would be contrary to the character and appearance of the locality and the removal or impediment of important landscape and ecological features that include mature protected trees, areas of woodland, native hedge rows and a drainage ditch/stream. The development is contrary to policies CP1, CP3, CP9 and CP11 of the Core Strategy, CC01, CC02, CC03, TB08 and TB21 of the MDD Local Plan, the Borough Design Guide SPD, Barkham Village Design Statement and section 12 & 15 of the NPPF.

4. The application site is within an unsustainable location that would not encourage a modal shift towards sustainable modes of transport, by reason of the countryside location outside and unconnected to

settlement limits, distances to facilities and services, limited public transport links and poor quality of the walking/cycling environment, contrary to policies CP1, CP2, CP3, CP6 and CP11 of the Core Strategy, CC01 and CC02 of the MDD Local Plan, the Borough Design Guide SPD and section 8 & 9 of the NPPF.

5. The proposed development will have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area by reason of the felling of protected trees & woodland and other landscape features which have a positive contribution to the area. The quantum of development proposed will leave inadequate space to incorporate effective landscaping and will result in residential plots being in close proximity to mature trees and hedgerows which will result in pressure to fell or heavily prune the trees. The proposed development is contrary to Core Strategy policy CP1 and CP3, MDD Local Plan policy CC01, CC02, CC03 and TB21, The Borough Design Guide SPD, WBC Landscape Character Assessment, The British Standard 5837:2012, sections 7, 12 and 15 of the NPPF and section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act.

6. The proposed development will have a detrimental impact on the ecological and biodiversity of the site by reason of the removal of habitat areas and providing insufficient information, contrary to policy CP1, CP3 and CP7 of the Core Strategy, CC01, CC03 and TB23 of the MDD Local Plan and the core planning principles and section 15 of the NPPF.

7. Insufficient information has been submitted and it has not been demonstrated that the proposed development would have a safe vehicular access onto School Road; adequate manoeuvrability on site or an adequate level of parking for the proposed quantum of development, contrary to MDD Local Plan policies CC01 and CC07;

Core Strategy policies CP1, CP2, CP3 and CP6; the Borough Design Guide and section 9 of the NPPF.

8. The proposed development would be located within 5km of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection and the residential development would put unnecessary recreational pressure on the SPA by reason of the site not being allocated for development, outside of settlement limits and the council demonstrating a robust 5 year housing land supply, contrary to the priority of policy NRM6 in the South East Plan to avoid potential impacts without the need for mitigation and section 15 of the NPPF. The application fails to provide SPA satisfactory mitigations measures for the adverse effect on the integrity of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area. Accordingly, since the Planning Authority is not satisfied that regulation 61(5) of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) applies in this case, it must refuse permission in accordance with regulation 49 of the 2010 Regulations and Article 6(3) of Directive 92/43/EEC. As such, the proposal conflicts with Policy CP8 of the Core Strategy and NRM6 of the South East Plan Adopted (May 2009).

9. In the absence of a completed legal agreement, the proposal fails to secure opportunities for training, apprenticeships and other vocational initiatives to develop local employability skills contrary to Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP4 and MDD policy TB12.

10. In the absence of a completed Legal Agreement, the scheme fails to make adequate provision for affordable housing, contrary to policy CP5 of the Core Strategy and sections 3 and 5 of the NPPF.

11. In the absence of any information regarding contamination/pollution on site, it has not been demonstrated that the residential development would have an acceptable impact on to

future receptors/residents, contrary to policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy, CC01 of the MDD Local Plan and section 15 of the NPPF.'

- 3.4 We have taken account of these refusal reasons and considered them within this scheme, aiming to address any issues which may arise or be of potential concern in this particular application.
- 3.5 In particular, the Officers Report (page 18) highlighted the need to incorporate "*woodland planting and open space at the settlement edge...[to] assist in the positive integration of urban and rural landscapes.*" This request has been incorporated into the proposed scheme within this planning application.
- 3.6 In addition to the previous planning applications, the Site has been submitted to the Council previously and was assessed as part of the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) in September 2024. The site was submitted under reference 5BA014 and 5BA015. Both sites were removed at stage 2a Initial Sustainability Sift as they were considered detached from settlement and did not meet any of the exception criteria.

4. Development Proposals

4.1 The proposal seeks outline planning permission for includes the erection of 27 dwellings (comprising of both market and 52% affordable housing) including 1 self-build plot, new access onto School Road and new pedestrian link/ emergency access onto Langley Common Road, landscaping, infrastructure, and overflow parking (with all matters reserved except access into the site). It is intended that the development would be phased, and a Phasing Plan will be submitted at reserved matters stage.

4.2 The Site is located between School Road and Langley Common Road with the proposed vehicular access off School Road. A proposed pedestrian/emergency access is also located off Langley Common Road. An Indicative Site Layout Plan is provided below.



Figure 3: Indicative Site Layout (drawing ref. 2901 005P5)

4.3 As this application is submitted in outline form, layout and detailed design is a reserved matter. However, it is necessary to assess the quantum of development at the Site for up to 27 dwellings. In order to inform the scheme design, landscape, highways, drainage, arboricultural, ecological and topographical technical work has been undertaken to map the constraints of the Site and feed into the design evolution process. A Site Constraints Plan is shown in Figure 4 below and this served as the foundation to the scheme design process.

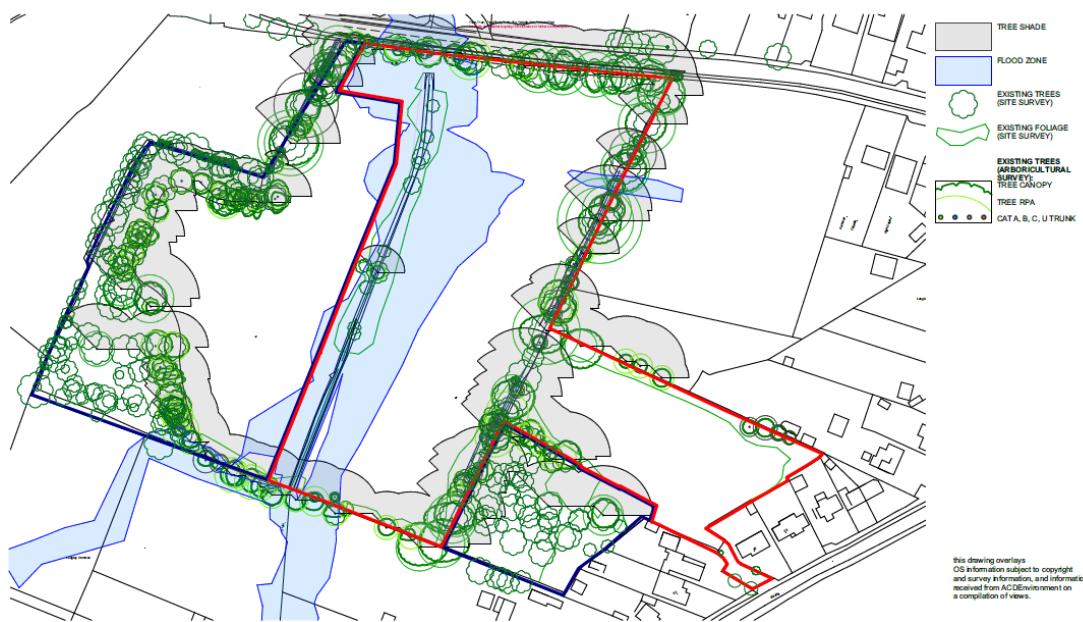


Figure 4: Site Constraints Plan (drawing ref. 2901 003P7)

4.4 Being submitted in outline form with all matters reserved except means of access, allows for flexibility and adaptability in the design process. Notwithstanding the above, given the technical feedback received from the various consultants, a Parameter Plan (Figure 5) has been produced to outline the developable and non-developable areas for a future reserved matters scheme. It is considered that the Parameter Plan would be an approved document on the Decision Notice.



Figure 5: Parameter Plan (drawing ref. 2901 006P6)

4.5 Consideration in the Indicative Site Layout has been given to factors such as the positioning of the residential dwellings to optimise sunlight exposure and privacy, as well as creating a cohesive and visually appealing neighbourhood. The proposed layout also incorporates necessary infrastructure, such as footpaths, cycle lanes, and green spaces, to promote a healthy and sustainable living environment. An Illustrative Landscape Masterplan has been prepared which shows how the final scheme could look at the detailed design stage (see Figure 3 below).



Figure 6: Illustrative Landscape Masterplan (drawing ref. 25-01-PL-201 Rev D)

4.6 It is therefore clear that the proposals have been landscape-led, in order to respond to the Officers Report (page 18) request on the refused application which highlighted the need to incorporate "*woodland planting and open space at the settlement edge...[to] assist in the positive integration of urban and rural landscapes.*" Further information is provided on the Illustrative Landscape Masterplan, as well as in the submitted Design and Access Statement.

4.7 By seeking outline planning permission, the applicant is taking a responsible and strategic approach to the development. This allows the local planning authority to evaluate the principles of the proposal and its compatibility with the surrounding area before detailed plans are submitted. The applicant has also taken the opportunity for public consultation and engagement, allowing the community to express their views and concerns, which where possible have been addressed

through the outline and further design detailed can be added during the subsequent detailed reserved matters stage.

- 4.8 Overall, the proposal submitted in outline form with all matters reserved except means of access, demonstrates a thoughtful and considerate approach to development. The proposal aims to create a well-designed and sustainable development that will benefit both residents and the local community.

5. Statement of Community Involvement

- 5.1 As part of the preparation of this application, the applicant undertook public consultation, which informed and helped shape this planning application.
- 5.2 This section documents how the applicant has engaged with the local community, neighbouring residents and other key stakeholders, whilst also providing a summary of the key issues that have emerged to date and how these issues have been taken on board as part of the design.

Policy Guidance and Best Practice

- 5.3 *Best Practice:* The public consultation is an essential element of the planning and development process. It is about engaging with local communities with the aim of shaping a proposal so that the subsequent application takes into account, as far as is appropriate and possible, local views and opinions. The quality of the consultation undertaken is seen as increasingly important. The approach adopted for this consultation builds on best practice.
- 5.4 *National Guidance:* The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) seeks to encourage developers to engage with the local community at an early stage in the development process. Paragraph 40 advises that prior engagement “enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community”.
- 5.5 In addition, the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) notes that ‘*Pre-application engagement by prospective applicants offers significant potential to improve both the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system and improve the quality of planning applications and their likelihood of success.*’ (Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 20-001-20190315).

5.6 The Localism Act 2011 sets out three additions to the 1990 Planning Act (S.61W, S.61X and S.61Y of the Localism Act 2011) on consultation, namely:

- A duty to consult: There is a new requirement for developers to carry out pre-submission consultation for planning applications where the proposal is of a description in a specified development order.
- A duty to respond: The Act outlines the duty of the person carrying out the consultation to take into account any responses it generates.
- Power to make supplementary provisions: Sets out further provisions which could be made through development orders- these would create a stronger requirement to consult, to respond to comments received and to prepare a statement detailing how consultation has been completed.

5.7 The Department for Communities and Local Government's 'A plain English guide to the Localism Act' describes the main measures of the Localism Act. Page 13 states:

"To further strengthen the role of local communities in planning, the Act introduces a new requirement for developers to consult local communities before submitting planning applications for certain developments. This gives local people a chance to comment when there is still genuine scope to make changes to proposals."

5.8 *Local Guidance*: The Council has published their own Statement of Community Involvement, dated March 2019. This SCI sets out how the Council will engage when planning applications are submitted and provides a steer on engagement that developers could undertake before submitting a planning application to the Council.

5.9 The Council's SCI states in paragraph 7.12 that "*we encourage site promoters to be open about their proposals and to engage with the local community*".

Developing an Approach

5.10 Building on best practice and national and local policy guidance, an inclusive approach to pre-application community consultation was developed.

5.11 As outlined below, an appropriate consultation exercise has been undertaken in connection with this application, relevant to the size and scope of the proposals. This consultation exercise has which sought to engage inclusively with the local community, and build on the engagement carried out as part of the outline planning application.

5.12 The consultation exercise consisted of a leaflet drop to 71 households that were within the site's catchment i.e. those with the potential to be most affected by the new development (see Figure 7 below).

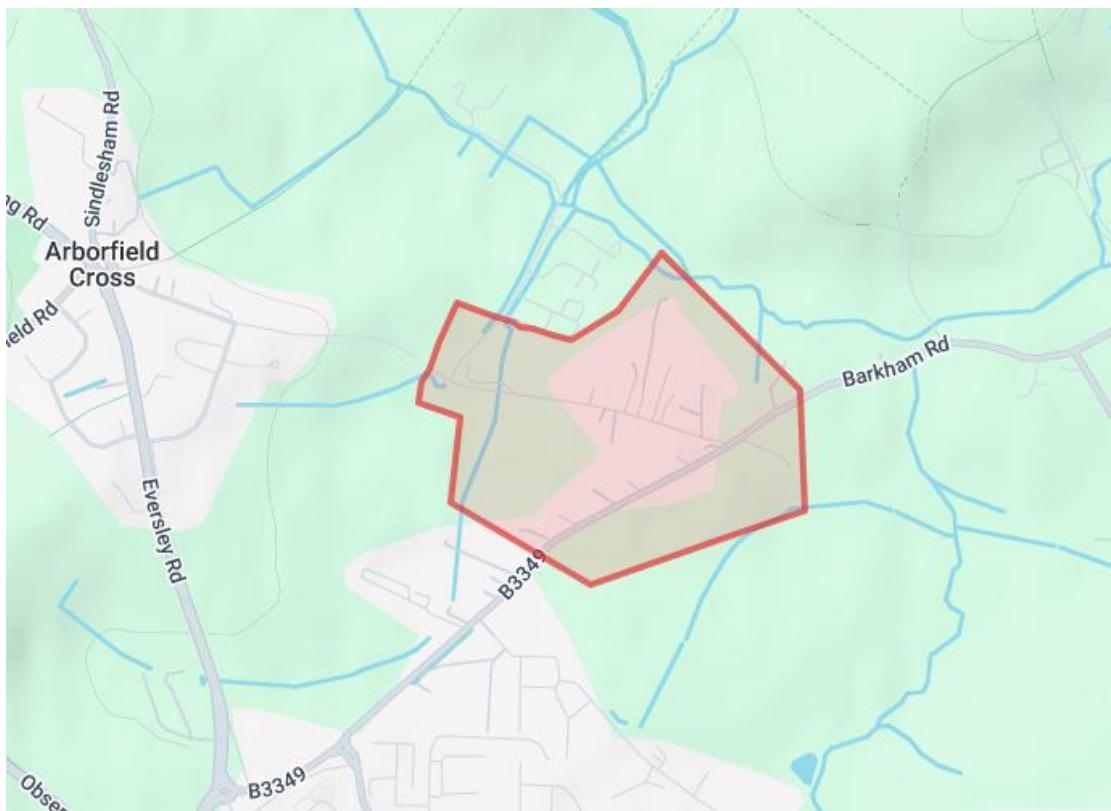


Figure 7: Catchment for Leaflet Consultation

5.13 The leaflet was sent to the addresses on 7th August 2025, with feedback requested by 29th August 2025. This leaflet (**Appendix 1**) included an earlier iteration of the Indicative Masterplan which comprised a development of 32 homes. The leaflet also provided an overview of the proposed development, highlighting its potential benefits and asked for feedback from the public on the proposals for the site. Any comments on the leaflet could be provided by email and by post.

5.14 As a result of the consultation feedback received, the proposed scheme has been revised to reduce the overall quantum of development to up to 27 dwellings, in order to create a more landscape-led and sympathetic design to the existing character of the area.

Conclusion

5.15 The approach to pre-submission public engagement has been both transparent and inclusive, as evidenced within this section. The leaflet consultation to local residents was an essential communication tool to reach out to key stakeholders and ensure their engagement in the planning process. The responses received as a result of the pre-application consultation have been considered and used to inform the submission to create a more positive, inclusive, meaningful and beneficial to the development to the local area.

6. Planning Policy Context and Policy Assessment

6.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires that applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Development Plan

6.2 Wokingham Borough Council ('WBC') adopted their Core Strategy (CS) in January 2010, and Managing Development Delivery (MDD) was adopted in February 2014. The site is located in Arborfield and Barkham Neighbourhood Plan Area. The Arborfield and Barkham Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2036 was 'made' on April 2020. Therefore, alongside the Neighbourhood Plan, the Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery Documents comprise the Development Plan for the Borough.

6.3 At a national level, the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') constitutes guidance which the Local Planning Authority must have regard to.

6.4 A number of Supplementary Planning Documents ('SPDs') have also been created which link to specific policies within the Development Plan and provide additional detail.

6.5 The Council have also decided to review and update their existing Local Plan. The most recent '*The Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update 2023-2040: Proposed Submission Plan*' was submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination by an independent Planning Inspector on Friday 28 February 2025. WBC Local Development Scheme 2024-2027 (published September 2024) states they

anticipate adoption of their new Local Plan in May 2026. Therefore, at this stage we have afforded the emerging policies limited weight.

Five Year Housing Supply

- 6.6 The NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities to maintain a five-year housing land supply position.
- 6.7 The adopted Core Strategy was adopted in 2010 and the Managing Development Delivery was adopted in 2014. As a result, the NPPF requires calculations of housing land supply to be measured against Local Housing Need using the Standard Method. Paragraph 24 of the NPPF requires Local Plans to be updated every five years in order to stay up-to-date.
- 6.8 It is also important to note that at present Wokingham Borough Council are unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. Wokingham Borough Council published their Five-Year Housing Land Supply Statement in August 2025 which states that they are only able to demonstrate a 2.5 supply of deliverable housing sites.
- 6.9 Prior to the publication of the five-year supply statement, the lack of five year supply had been confirmed through several recent appeal decisions. In particular, is an appeal at Blagrave Lane¹, Wokingham, where the Inspector concluded that they "*consider CS Policies CP9, CP11, CP17 and MDD Policy CC02 frustrate the delivery of housing at the level that is required. They are therefore inconsistent with the Framework's objective to meet an area's identified need*".
- 6.10 It is therefore clear that the titled balance would be engaged, in line with paragraph 11 (d) of the NPPF. Accordingly, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and granting planning permission, where 'the policies which are most important

¹ Appeal Reference APP/X0360/W/24/3354667

for determining the application are out-of- date' (as specified by footnote 8 of the NPPF) and are afforded reduced weight.

- 6.11 The above confirms that the presumption of sustainable development should therefore apply in any planning application that comes forward.
- 6.12 **National Guidance:** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a relevant material consideration to the application.
- 6.13 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 39 of the NPPF states that "*Local planning authorities should approach decision on proposed development in a positive and creative way*" and "*at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible*". Paragraph 124 of the NPPF comments that planning should "*make effective use of land*" in "*meeting the need for homes and other uses, whilst safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions*".
- 6.14 Paragraph 60 confirms the Government's objective to boost the supply of housing, and paragraph 8 identifies the three objectives of sustainable development, as economic, environmental and social. Whilst, paragraph 78 of the NPPF confirms that "*Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area*".
- 6.15 Paragraph 131 identifies that "*Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities*".

6.16 The National Design Guide builds on the above and clarifies that "*well-designed neighbourhoods need to include an integrated mix of tenures and housing types that reflect local housing need and market demand. They are designed to be inclusive and to meet the changing needs of people of different ages and abilities. New development reinforces existing places by enhancing local transport, facilities and community services, and maximising their potential use*" (para 109).

6.17 **Relevant Development Plan Policies:** The relevant Development Plan documents are:

- Core Strategy (CS) adopted in January 2010;
- Managing Development Delivery (MDD) adopted in February 2014; and
- Arborfield and Barkham Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2036 ('made' April 2020).

6.18 It is considered that the following policies of the Core Strategy are relevant to this proposal, although some aspects may be conditioned and considered in more detail at the Reserved Matters stage:

- Policy CP1 – Sustainable Development
- Policy CP2 – Inclusive communities
- Policy CP3 – General Principles for Development
- Policy CP4 – Infrastructure Requirements
- Policy CP5 – Housing mix, density and affordability
- Policy CP6 – Managing Travel Demand
- Policy CP7 – Biodiversity

- Policy CP8 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area
- Policy CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
- Policy CP11 – Proposals outside Development Limits (including countryside)
- Policy CP17 – Housing Delivery

6.19 It is considered that the following policies of the Managing Delivery Local Plan are relevant to this proposal, although some aspects may be conditioned and considered in more detail at the Reserved Matters stage:

- Policy CC01- Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy CC02 – Development Limits
- Policy CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping
- Policy CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction
- Policy CC05 – Renewable Energy and Decentralised Energy Networks
- Policy CC07 – Parking
- Policy CC09 – Development and Flood Risk (from all sources)
- Policy CC10 – Sustainable Drainage
- Policy TB05 – Housing Mix
- Policy TB07 – Internal Space Standards
- Policy TB08 – Open space, sport and recreational facilities standards for residential development
- Policy TB21 – Landscape character

- Policy TB23 – Biodiversity and Development

6.20 The following policies of the Arborfield & Barkham Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2036 are considered relevant to this proposal:

- Policy IRS1: Preservation of separation of settlements
- Policy IRS2: Recognise, respect and preserve identity and rural setting of settlements
- Policy IRS3: Protection and enhancement of the natural environment and green spaces
- Policy IRS4: Protection and enhancement of the historic character of the area
- Policy AD2: Prioritise housing for local needs
- Policy AD3: High quality development with generous open space, properly landscaped
- Policy AD4: Address local flood risk management

6.21 **Principle of Development:** The NPPF's underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development is carried through to the Development Plan, whose fundamental spatial objective is to steer new development to the sustainable defined limits and ensure that the scale of development reflects the size of the settlement and the services within it.

6.22 Policies CP6 and CP9 of the Core Strategy permit development where it is based on sustainable credentials in terms of access to local facilities and services and the promotion of sustainable transport. The site offers good links and it is within walking distance of public transport and services and facilities and is considered to be in a

sustainable location, this is discussed in more detail in the Transport section.

- 6.23 Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy lists general principles for acceptable development and states that development proposals will be required to demonstrate how they have responded to the criteria listed.
- 6.24 It is clear that the Site is located approximately 300m from Arborfield Green, which is a Modest Development Location. The emerging Local Plan Update also proposes an extension of 600 dwellings to the north of Arborfield Garrison SDL (known as Barkham Square) in the direction of the Site, which emphasises the suitability of this location for development.
- 6.25 There are also a number of education facilities in close proximity to the Site including Farley Hill Primary School, Bohunt School Wokingham and The Coombes C of E Primary School.
- 6.26 It is evident that WBC, at their 9 July 2025 Planning Committee, recommended approval for the development of 70 dwellings at Land to the north of School Road, subject to completion of the s106 (application ref. 250735). This site is located in very close proximity to the Site, therefore highlighting that this location is suitable for further housing development in order to meet local housing needs. The Illustrative Masterplan is shown in Figure 8 below with the Site denoted by the red circle.



Figure 8 – Illustrative Masterplan for Land to the north of School Road (application ref. 250735). Site denoted by red circle.

- 6.27 To conclude, the location of the Site within the countryside is not considered to be a constraint to development given the most important policies related to the delivery of housing should be regarded as out-of-date and the precedent set by recent planning decisions in the area.
- 6.28 **Landscape Character and Appearance:** Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development must be appropriate in terms of its scale, mass, layout, built form, height and character of the area and must be of high-quality design.
- 6.29 CS Policy CP1 requires amongst other things that development maintains or enhances the high quality of the environment (criterion 1). MDD Policy CC03 at criterion 2 states that development proposals should demonstrate how they have considered and achieved the following criteria within scheme proposals:

- Provide new or protect and enhance the Borough's Green Infrastructure networks, including the need to mitigate potential impacts of new development.
- Promote accessibility, linkages and permeability between and within existing green corridors including public rights of way such as footpaths, cycleways and bridleways.
- Promote the integration of the scheme with any adjoining public open space or countryside.
- Protect and retain existing trees, hedges and other landscape features.
- Incorporate high quality, ideally, native planting and landscaping as an integral part of the scheme.

6.30 MDD Policy TB21 requires proposals to 1) address the requirements of the Council's Landscape Character Assessment and 2) retain or enhance the condition, character and features. Policy IRS2 of the Neighbourhood Plan is also relevant in this regard.

6.31 The appearance of the proposed development is a reserved matter, however indicative drawings and an indicative masterplan have been included within this application submission which demonstrates how the appearance of the development may look. The Design and Access Statement also provides analysis of the site, its context and locality, constraints and design character areas which show how the scheme could be developed.

6.32 The Borough Design Guide SPD provides more detail on design expectations and outlines similar guidelines:

- NR1 states development should respond to key characteristics and features.

- NR2 states that proposals should improve the area.
- NR3 requires a positive arrival impression for all modes of transport.
- NR4 requires that buildings address the street.
- NR9 states that large floorplates must be designed to minimise potential impact upon the character of the area.
- NR10 states that car parking is to be unobtrusive and landscaped.
- NR11 requires that servicing be screened.
- P2 aims to ensure that parking is provided in a manner that is compatible with the local character.

6.33 NR5 of the Borough Design Guide SPD notes that height, bulk, and massing should respond to the local context and the prevailing heights in the area.

6.34 The Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) which accompanies this planning application has assessed the Site in landscape terms. In summary, the LVA concludes that the site is situated within Arborfield Cross and Barkham Settled and Farmed Clay Landscape Character Area (LCA). Whilst the area adjoining and surrounding the Site is not designated as being of national, regional or local significance it is nevertheless an attractive landscape with some valued elements (the mature oak trees along the field boundaries). The attractive qualities of the landscape are recognised and highlighted in the Neighbourhood Plan and the value of two views along School Road (views 2.2 & 2.2) contribute to the setting of Langley Common. However the site and its surroundings are not identified as being within a Valued Landscape in WBC's Valued Landscapes Assessment (2024). In light of the above, the Site is considered to be of medium landscape value.

- 6.35 As a result of surrounding built form, local topography and mature trees and hedgerows in the landscape to the north and west, the LVA concludes that the Site has a surprisingly limited zone of influence.
- 6.36 In addition, the development approach has been led by landscape considerations which have carefully positioned the entrance road and route through the Site so as to minimise tree loss and to provide the attractive boundary trees with an overlooked aspect. The trees lost to enable the access into the Site and between the eastern and western parcels would be offset by tree planting. The proposals also include the adjoining field north of the watercourse as land set aside for biodiversity net gain and for informal amenity/recreational uses.
- 6.37 In conclusion, the landscape harm of the proposed development would not extend out into the wider landscape. The management of the field north of the stream would provide an attractive edge, buffer and interface between the houses and the landscape to the north. The development would bring forward management plans that would safeguard this interface and ensure the landscape continues to provide an attractive and respectful interface with its surroundings.
- 6.38 To proposals is therefore considered to comply with the relevant Development Plan policies and will be sensitively designed at reserved matters stage to accord with the character of the wider landscape.
- 6.39 **Type and Mix of Dwellings (including Affordable Housing):** Housing mix and typologies will be a matter reserved for the detailed design stage. Notwithstanding this, the Design and Access Statement and Illustrative Site Layout Plan shows an indicative mix which could come forward at detailed design stage.
- 6.40 Notably, Policy CP5 of the Core Strategy requires an appropriate mix of dwelling types, tenures and sizes so that the housing needs of the

community are met. Policy TB05 of the MDD Local Plan requires an appropriate housing mix which reflects a balance between the underlying character of the area and both the current and projected needs of households.

6.41 Policy CP5 of the Core Strategy and Policy TB05 of the MDD Local Plan require an appropriate dwelling density. In addition, R10 of the Borough Design Guide SPD seeks to ensure that developments achieve an appropriate density in relation to local character, whilst Policy AD2 of the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to prioritise housing for local needs.

6.42 The Berkshire (including South Bucks) Strategic Housing Market Assessment (February 2016) identified future housing need for the Wokingham Borough. Table 107 (on page 295) identifies the following, the Site would deliver up to 27 dwellings, with an indicative housing mix set out below:

	Number of bedrooms				Total
	1	2	3	4+	
Affordable (%)	2 (14%)	6 (43%)	4 (29%)	2 (14%)	14
Market (%)	- (0%)	2 (15%)	6 (46%)	5 (38%)	13
Total	2	8	10	7	27
Percentage of Total Housing Mix	7%	30%	37%	26%	100%
SHMA Requirement	7.2%	27.1%	43.5%	22.2%	100%

Table 1: Indicative Housing Mix

6.43 Although not in strict accordance with the SHMA percentage split detailed above, the applicants have sought to align the housing mix

with the SHMA as closely as possible by providing a viable range of housing. The mix also reflects Policy H1 of the draft Local Plan Update, which provides a preferred mix for the Borough, as set out in Table 7 of the draft LPU and informed by WBC's 2023 Local Housing Needs Assessment (extract below).

Table 7: Indicative housing mix

Number of bedrooms	Affordable Housing	Total Market Housing
1 bedroom	17%	5%
2 bedrooms	38%	13%
3 bedrooms	33%	47%
4+ bedrooms	12%	36%

6.44 In addition, 10–20% of all dwellings should be to Lifetime Homes standards (or equivalent) in accordance with Policy CP5 of the Core Strategy and Policy TB05 of the MDD Local Plan. In this case, it equates to between 2 and 4 units. It is noted that the Lifetime Homes standard has been replaced by the new national technical housing standards, and all dwellings would be provided in accordance with the relevant technical housing standards.

6.45 It is envisaged that the Site would include a mix of housing but would be designed to include an increased number of family homes of 2/3 bedrooms or more which is considered to be in alignment with the population trends and reflects the sites' location adjacent to the primary school. This is considered to meet the aims of Neighbourhood Plan Policy AD2.

6.46 In terms of affordable housing provision above the adopted policy requirement of 40%, WBC's Affordable Housing Topic Paper (Sept 2024) informing the emerging Local Plan Update confirms at paragraph 4.8 that 1,160 people are on the WBC's housing register. These are people who need a home now and are at the extreme end of the spectrum for critical housing need – they also represent only a

fraction of the affordable need across the Borough. It is clear based on planned delivery trajectories (the emerging Local Plan requires annual housing delivery of 751 dwellings per annum) that it would take at least 2-years to clear the waiting list based on planned delivery rates in the Borough. This highlights the critical level of housing need, which should be being met now, but with no immediate or clear remedy. The proposals would deliver 52% affordable housing across the Site as a whole and in turn, contribute significantly to the affordable housing shortfall in the Borough.

- 6.47 Although housing mix and types are a matter for detailed design, the evidence provided in this application seeks to prove that the scheme would comply with the relevant policies of the Development Plan in order to achieve a mix which meets local housing needs.
- 6.48 **Public Open Space:** Policy TB08 of the MDD Local Plan relates to the provision of onsite open space, sport and recreational facilities within residential development. The policy requires that open space, indoor or outdoor play and sport and recreational facilities should be provided on-site. The policy then sets out that proposals for residential development will need to demonstrate how they meet the standards (ha per 1,000 population) of the relevant standards.
- 6.49 Although detailed design is a reserved matter, the Indicative Site Layout Plan shows how each dwelling could have their own dedicated garden, which would have at least 11m depth which is noted as the Council's minimum accepted garden length in accordance with the Borough Design Guide SPD (2012).
- 6.50 With regards to outdoor and amenity space, the proposed standards (hectares per 1,000 population) are outlined below:
 - Parks/public garden – 1.1

- Natural/semi-natural green space – 2.84
- Amenity greenspace – 0.98
- Play provision – 0.25
- Outdoor sports facilities – 1.66

6.51 A scheme of up to 27 dwellings would provide an estimated population increase of 68 people (assuming on average 2.5 person per dwelling). The revised open space requirements (provided in sqm) for a scheme of 27 dwellings is provided below:

- Parks/public garden – 750sqm
- Natural/semi-natural green space – 1,900sqm
- Amenity greenspace – 6,700sqm
- Play provision – 170sqm
- Outdoor sports facilities – 1,100sqm

6.52 Page 21 of the Design and Access Statement provides a breakdown of where the scheme proposes to meet the different open space typologies across the Site. This is shown in Figure 9 below.



Figure 9 – Indicative Open Space Typologies

6.53 In summary, the colour coding of Figure 8 relates to:

- Blue: Park and Public Garden – 1,441sqm
- Light green: Amenity Green Space – 3,090sqm
- Dark green: Natural/Semi-Natural Green Space – 9,283 sqm
- Pink: Area of Play – 347sqm

6.54 It is considered that discussions can take place with WBC during the course of the application to determine appropriate use of open space across the Site as a whole. Due to the size of the scheme, it is considered that some forms of open space would be more suited to being provided as an planning obligation and commuted sum.

6.55 Given the above, it is considered the proposal would comply with Policy TB08.

6.56 **Transport and Car and Cycle Parking:** Core Strategy Policy CP6 aims to manage and reduce the demand for travel in a sustainable way. The policy confirms that development schemes that want planning permission should seek to provide sustainable forms of transport, such as public transport, walking, or cycling. The location of the scheme should have existing or planned transport choices available to minimise travel distances.

6.57 The scheme should also enhance infrastructure, facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, and other users, and provide appropriate vehicular parking. The adverse effects on local and strategic transport networks should be mitigated, and the scheme should not cause any road safety or traffic-related environmental problems. The overall goal is to encourage sustainable transportation, improve infrastructure, and minimise the negative impacts of development on transportation and the environment.

6.58 P2 of the Borough Design Guide SPD also requires that parking is compatible with the local character and NR10 requires that it is to be unobtrusive and landscaped.

6.59 As the application is in outline, the detailed design of all the internal roads, car and cycle parking will be subject to the requirements of Wokingham Borough Council's design guide 'Living Streets' and will be established post planning through appropriate agreements. A Transport Assessment to accompany this application has however been prepared by Evoke, with particular focus on the access arrangements to the Site.

6.60 In summary, the Transport Assessment concludes that, in line with the Paragraph 110 of the NPPF and Policy CP6 of the Wokingham Core

Strategy, the Site provides access to a range of local amenities, which are accessible by sustainable modes of transport choices and which could cater for future end-users and visitors to and from the Site.

6.61 As part of the Proposed Development, the below measures are also proposed which will also support sustainable travel:

- Active travel link (and emergency access) to Langley Common Road, reducing the travel distance to the bus stops located along Langley Common Road and to Arborfield Green and its amenities;
- A segregated footway around the site, providing off-road routes for pedestrians;
- 2m footway provided from School Road access and through the site as alternative route;
- Provision of a parking area for the benefit of the local community;
- Provision of sheltered and secure cycle parking;
- Provision of charging facilities for e-bikes and cars; and,
- Provision of home offices to limit the need to travel.

6.62 The Transport Assessment has also set out the access proposals, with two new all mode accesses proposed off School Road to serve the residential element of the Site and the proposed car park for the local community and an emergency access / active travel link from Langley Common Road, which combined will improve permeability and journey times between School Road and Langley Common Road for pedestrian and cyclists.

6.63 Visibility splays associated with both surveyed speeds (from the ATC) and with the speed limit (30mph) have been shown as being achievable for both the School Road access locations, as have the relevant vehicle manoeuvres through swept path analysis.

6.64 In accordance with the NPPF, it has been demonstrated that the Site can achieve a safe, suitable and satisfactory access for the quantum of the development.

6.65 To conclude, that the proposals accord with national and local transport policies and can be accommodated without detriment to the safety or operating capacity of the local highway network. As such, it is considered there is no reason why the proposals should be resisted on traffic or transportation grounds and the development proposals would be in compliance with policy CP6.

6.66 **Drainage and SuDS:** Policy CP1 states that planning permission will be granted for schemes that in criterion 4) ensure the provision of adequate drainage.

6.67 Policy CC09 states the guidelines for considering flood risk in the planning application process. It states that all sources of flood risk should be taken into account and that proposals should align with the guidance provided. Development proposals in Flood Zones 2 or 3 should consider the vulnerability of the proposed development. The sequential approach should be used to guide development to areas with the lowest flood risk, unless certain exceptions apply. In exceptional circumstances, development in areas of flood risk may be supported if it provides wider sustainability benefits and incorporates flood resilient measures. Planning applications may require a Flood Risk Assessment if there is evidence of a risk from flooding.

6.68 A Flood Risk Assessment and Sustainable Drainage Strategy has been undertaken by GeoSmart to accompany the application submission. The Site is located within Flood Zone 1, however there is a small risk of surface water flooding surrounding the existing ditch located on the Site. The extent of the surface water flood risk on the Site Constraints Plan (shown in Figure 4).

6.69 The proposed Drainage Strategy confirms that surface water from the proposed dwellings would be conveyed into the rainwater harvesting butts and lined permeable paving for discharge to the on-Site drainage ditch at a controlled rate. This is shown on Figure 1 of the submitted Drainage Strategy.

6.70 The proposed drainage mitigation also includes permeable paving, which covers a large area. Additional storage, such as an attenuation tank, could also be considered at the outflow to the ditch to ensure sufficient storage is provided within the system. This can be considered in detail once a scheme is fixed at the detailed design stage.

6.71 Notably, paragraph 027 of the PPG² indicates that, where surface water flood risk is sufficiently mitigated for both present day conditions and with allowance for climate change, the Sequential Test is not required. The drainage strategy and the recommendations within the Flood Risk Assessment are considered to be sufficient to preclude this requirement.

6.72 To conclude, the proposed drainage strategy has capacity to accommodate at least the 1 in 30 year event and to manage the 1 in 100 year event without flooding on-site. All runoff would be managed for the 1 in 100 year event, accounting for the maximum impacts of climate change to ensure flood risk is not increased to third-parties.

² Reference ID: 7-027-20220825

6.73 The proposal is therefore considered to comply with policy CP1 and CC09 and will not cause any additional flood risk within the Site or the surrounding area.

6.74 **Ecology and Trees:** Policy CC03 of the MDD Local Plan aims to protect green infrastructure networks, retain existing trees, and establish appropriate landscaping. Policy CP7 of the Core Strategy relates to biodiversity and seeks to conserve and enhance sites designated as of importance for nature conservation at an international or national level. It also seeks to protect biodiversity, habitats and other species.

6.75 Policy TB23 of the MDD Local Plan requires the incorporation of new biodiversity features, buffers between habitats and species of importance and integration with the wider green infrastructure network.

6.76 Paragraph 174(d) and 179(b) of the National Planning Policy Framework seek to ensure that development delivers a net gain in biodiversity. The Environment Act 2021 sets out that biodiversity net gain should be 10% of the baseline. The Environment Act 2021 has now passed, and it is mandatory for major sites to be able to provide 10% biodiversity net gain.

6.77 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), Biodiversity Assessment (and accompanying BNG metric) has been undertaken by Gavia Environmental Ltd to support this planning application. In addition, an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA), Tree Survey and Tree Constraints Plan has been prepared by ACD Environmental.

6.78 The PEA concludes that the Site was found to be characterised by moderate ecological value Holcus-juncus neutral grassland and other neutral grassland and high value other lowland mixed deciduous woodland. The surveys revealed trees with suitable bat roosting

features and further surveys have been undertaken for trees (in particular T142) that will be removed/ impacted as a result of the Proposed Development. This further survey concluded that there are no bats present within T142.

- 6.79 The surveys also found all ponds and ditches in the wider area to be of poor suitability for Great Crested Newts. Other priority habitats and species were also not discovered, however the PEA did recommend further reptile and badger surveys (due to the potential suitability of habitats) which are currently underway.
- 6.80 The accompanying Biodiversity Assessment confirms, with the use of the land to the west (outlined blue on the plans) to be used for BNG/ nature conservation, coupled with the proposals to enhance the existing ditch, that the development would meet the requirements for hedgerow units. The proposed BNG enhancements are shown on the Illustrative Landscape Masterplan (see Figure 6 above).
- 6.81 The Biodiversity Assessment however notes that the scheme does not meet the 10% requirement for habitat and watercourse units. In terms of achieving the 10% BNG requirement for habitat and watercourse units, a s106 will need to be entered into to secure these offsite credits.
- 6.82 In relation to trees, it is noted that trees on and immediately adjacent to the site are the subject of TPO reference No: 1515/2016. The TPO comprises four separate groups and two woodland compartments (shown in the extract below). No Veteran tree indicators were recorded by ACD.

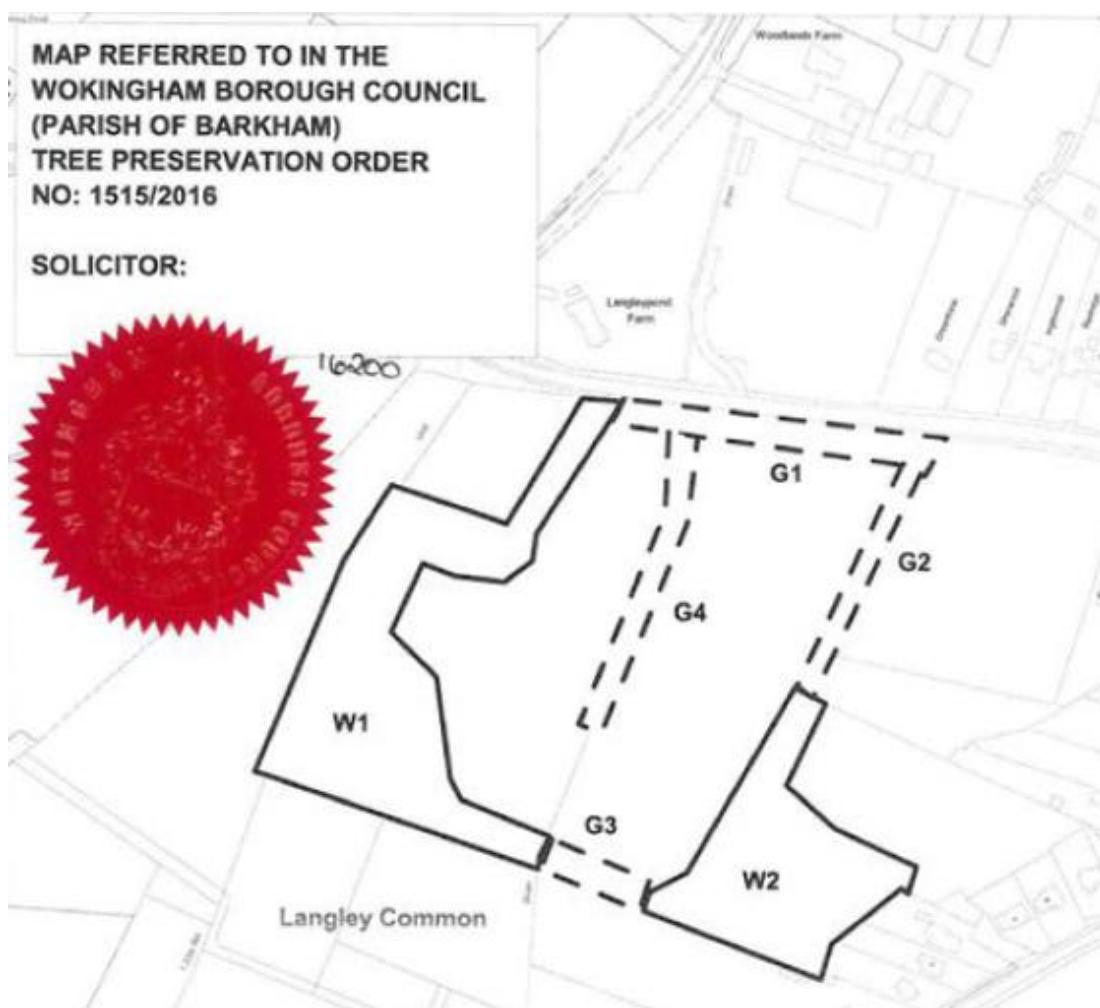


Figure 10 – Group TPOs

6.83 The proposed scheme has been designed in a way to minimise any impacts on the TPO trees. Trees numbered T141 (English elm ~ category 'U' irreversible decline) and T142 (Common oak ~ category 'B') are required to be removed to implement the access roadway infrastructure from School Road into the Site. This access point was considered the most appropriate to avoid unacceptable impacts to adjacent category 'A' trees, whilst ensuring a compliant access arrangement.

6.84 Although the internal access arrangements are a matter for detailed design, the Indicative Layout Plan does include a internal road connection through W2. Tree number T28 (Common oak ~ category

'B') is to be removed to implement the internal access roadway infrastructure. To avoid impact to the RPAs of adjacent category 'A' trees, the access gap has been designed to be equidistant between both trees. In addition the footpath has been accommodated on northern edge to avoid RPAs. From an arboricultural perspective, T28 has an excessive buttress flare consistent with historic reduction in levels. At the eastern side from base to 1.5m there is a cavity with significant tissue dysfunction and incipient decay. This tree is therefore considered unsuitable for retention in an urban environment.

- 6.85 In terms of the rest of the proposed development, the tree constraints on the Site has formed the foundation to the Parameter Plan, with the majority of development to be located outside the root protection areas of existing trees. Some excavation works will be required within the RPAs of trees nos. T131 ~ T133 to match the existing levels of School Road with the proposed 'no-dig' access point surfacing.
- 6.86 It is considered, through appropriate mitigation for protected species informed by further surveys and the purchase of off-site BNG credits, the proposal would comply with Policies CP7, CC03, TB01 and TB23.
- 6.87 **Special Protection Area:** The Site falls within 5 km of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBHSPA). Residential development will be required to provide avoidance and mitigation measures, in accordance with Policy CP8 of the Core Strategy (2010).
- 6.88 WBC require proposed developments to provide new SANG at a minimum of 8ha per 1,000 new residents for any dwellings within 5km from the TBHSPA.
- 6.89 It is understood WBC commonly use a persons per dwelling multiplier of 2.4. Financial contributions towards offsite SANG/ SAMM mitigation

would need to be entered into at the S106 stage in order to satisfy the requirements of Policy CP8.

6.90 **Contamination:** A Phase 1 Contamination Assessment has been undertaken by GeoSmart and confirms that the risks posed by in situ land quality are likely to be low. As such, no further work is required.

6.91 **Community Infrastructure Levy:** The proposal would involve the creation of new dwellings and is therefore CIL liable. The appropriate forms have been submitted within the submission of this planning application.

7. Planning Balance

7.1 **Context:** Policies CP1, CP9, CP11 of the Core strategy and Policies CC01 and CC02 of the Managing Development Delivery are relevant to this application. Given the fact that the adopted Local Plan is out-of-date, the NPPF is also a relevant material consideration of significant weighting.

7.2 Notwithstanding, the above it should be noted that Policy CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development (of the MDD) states that:

“Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:

- a) Any adverse impacts of planning permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) taken as a whole; or*
- b) Specific policies in the National Planning Policy Framework indicate that development should be restricted”.*

7.3 In the case of the above it should be noted that Policies CP9 and CP11 were created to deliver a housing target of 13,230 dwellings (CP17) between 2006 – 2026. This figure no longer represents the Local Housing Need of Wokingham Borough, being more than 5 years old (as per paragraphs 34, 78 and 232 of the NPPF) and the increase in the Standard Method. As such, the settlement boundaries and policies that influence the delivery of development within and outside them can no longer be considered to be in date for the purposes of decision making.

7.4 This approach is consistent Richborough v Cheshire East Supreme Court case (UKSC/2016/0078) which confirmed that: "*Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.*" Wokingham can only deliver a 2.5 year supply of housing sites.

7.5 It is also clear that the adopted Core Strategy was adopted prior to the first publication of the Framework in 2012, which introduced a shift in approach to boost significantly the supply of housing.

7.6 Furthermore, in a recent appeal decision in Blagrave Lane, Wokingham, the Inspector concluded that they "*consider CS Policies CP9, CP11, CP17 and MDD Policy CC02 frustrate the delivery of housing at the level that is required. They are therefore inconsistent with the Framework's objective to meet an area's identified need*".

7.7 The Development Plan's approach to the delivery of housing therefore does not follow the Framework's method, and it has not been reviewed since it was adopted. For the purposes of this application, the policies relating to housing delivery and the spatial strategy are therefore considered to be out-of-date and inconsistent with the Framework when taken as a whole.

7.8 For the purposes of establishing the principle of development for this application, paragraph 11d of the NPPF therefore sets the precedent for the presumption in favour of sustainable development and tilted balance exercise.

7.9 Paragraph 11d states:

"where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance **provides a strong reason for refusing the development** proposed; or
- ii. **any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits**, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination" [emphasis added].

7.10 Part i) of paragraph 11d relates to protected assets set out in footnote 7 of the NPPF. The proposed development would not be located within any of the assets listed under footnote 7 and therefore part i) does not apply. Therefore, footnote 7 is not engaged and the tilted balance applies.

7.11 Part ii) of paragraph 11d assesses the impact of the proposed development against the Framework as a whole and confirms that the tilted balance is only disengaged if "*any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits*". It is clear that a scheme could be designed to sensitively respond to the site constraints and that the delivery of housing on this site would be a benefit that would attribute substantial weight. The harms would therefore clearly not "*significantly and demonstrably*" outweigh the benefits.

7.12 The tilted balance under paragraph 11d of the NPPF therefore applies.

7.13 **Planning Balance:** It is considered the proposed development would comply with the Development Plan in principle, however for the sake of completeness relevant material considerations and a planning balance has been undertaken below.

7.14 As previously mentioned, it is noted that Policy CP17 of the Core Strategy seeks to deliver 13,260 dwellings and this provision does not include any sites in the countryside. Specifically, the policy currently seeks to deliver 623 dwellings per annum.

7.15 The targets set within Policy CP17 were created with the intention of achieving development within the settlement boundaries defined by Policy CP9 and development outside of limits set out under Policy CP11.

7.16 The Local Plan therefore seeks to deliver a lesser need when compared to the current Standard Method calculation of 1,334 dwellings per annum. Therefore, the spatial strategy (the settlement boundaries designed to guide development in terms of scale and distribution, and the area of countryside which CP11 applies to) is out-of-date. Should the Council consider any non-compliance with Policy CP11 exists, this should only be afforded **limited weight against the development.**

7.17 Notwithstanding, the above, when using the new Standard Method figure the Council is only able to demonstrate a housing land supply of **2.5 years.**

7.18 As the Council are currently unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply position, the presumption in favour of sustainable development (and the tilted balance) as per paragraph 11d of the NPPF (and Policy CC01) applies.

7.19 In relation to part ii) of paragraph 11d, paragraphs 110 and 115 of the NPPF confirm that development in rural locations have differing opportunities for sustainable transport modes. The Transport Assessment concludes that, in accordance with paragraphs 110 and 115 of the NPPF, the Site is within a sustainable location. As such, it

is considered the proposed development would comply with paragraphs 110 and 115.

7.20 As such, the adverse impacts of the development would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits and the tilted balance under paragraph 11d is engaged. It is considered this would attract **very significant weight in favour of the development**.

7.21 In terms of the proposal specific benefits of the scheme it is considered the provision of up to 27 dwellings would attract **significant weight** in favour of the development in the context of the LPAs shortfall of supply. In addition, the overprovision of affordable housing (c52%) should be granted **very significant weight in favour of the development**.

7.22 Furthermore, the development is considered to make an important contribution towards meeting the housing requirements in the area. As per paragraph 73 of the NPPF, this seeks to support the development of windfall sites through acknowledging they can be built out relatively quickly. In the context of the Wokingham's housing needs and the emerging Local Plan Update not being adopted in the short term, it is considered that the ability of a small site to be built-out relatively quickly should attract **significant weight**.

7.23 Paragraph 124 of the NPPF states that decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses and goes on to state that strategic policies should make as much use of previously developed land as possible. Likewise, paragraph 125d seeks to promote and support the development of 'under-utilised' land especially where it helps to meet identified needs for housing. As such, the optimisation to deliver dwellings across the Site should attract **moderate weight in favour of the development**.

7.24 The proposed landscaping benefits and areas of open space are considered to attract **moderate weight in favour of the development**. The area of parking for the benefit of local residents wishing to either access The Coombes wildlife area or the Primary School is considered to **attract moderate weight in favour of development**.

7.25 Lastly, the proposed development would have economic benefits in terms of temporary construction jobs however; the LPA will also receive monies for contribution to the Community Infrastructure Levy and Council Tax receipts in the long term. However, being a development of up to 27 dwellings, this could only attract **limited weight in favour of development**.

8. Conclusion

8.1 Outline planning permission is being sought in respect of the following proposal:

'Outline application for the phased development of up to 27 dwellings including 1 self-build plot, new access onto School Road and new pedestrian link/ emergency access onto Langley Common Road, landscaping, infrastructure, and overflow parking (with all matters reserved except access into the site)'.

8.2 As demonstrated within this Planning Statement, and the Design and Access Statement which also accompanies this application, the proposed development will provide a sustainable development which sensitively responds to the surrounding context of the Site.

8.3 The range of technical work that have been undertaken to support this planning application are all summarised in this Statement. These demonstrate that a high-quality development could be achieved at the Site, and that there are no environmental, technical or other reasons why planning permission should not be granted.

8.4 Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposed development does not strictly comply with Core Strategy Policy CP11, this policy is considered to be out of date and the proposed development is considered to comply with the Development Plan when read as a whole. This Statement has demonstrated that the proposed development is acceptable in principle and makes efficient use of land.

8.5 Material planning considerations have been carefully considered and analysed, as evidenced in Section 6 of this Statement and the supporting plans and documents. It is considered the proposed development would contribute an appropriate windfall site to the

Borough's housing supply, without adverse effect on the character of the area or the amenity of neighbouring residents.

- 8.6 A comprehensive planning balance exercise has been diligently undertaken for the proposed development, revealing numerous benefits that the proposal offers. These benefits include but are not limited to affordable housing, public open space, enhanced infrastructure provisions, improved accessibility, job creation opportunities, and sustainable development practices. Moreover, the proposal is expected to contribute positively to the local economy and also social benefits, including those notably to the adjacent School.
- 8.7 It is considered that the proposed scheme complies with relevant Development Plan Policies and is further supported by National Guidance. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.

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Appendix 1: Engagement Leaflet

Introducing the Scheme

The landowner is exploring the opportunity to provide much needed housing (with a large proportion of affordable housing) on a vacant site in Wokingham.

The proposed scheme will consist of a mixture of 2, 3, 4 and 5 bedroom homes, including a self-build plot, as well as a policy-compliant provision of 40% affordable housing. Vehicular access to the site will be via School Road, with emergency and pedestrian access provided off Langley Common Road.

The landowner is also looking to provide overflow parking for the benefit of the local area, including The Coombes C of E Primary School. The western portion of the site will remain undeveloped with the exception of the overflow parking area.

Why have I received this leaflet?

As part of this consultation prior to submitting a planning application, we invite you to provide feedback on the following questions:

Q1. If the scheme were to provide over 40% affordable housing, would you support the approach to provide above a policy-compliant level?

Q2. Would you support the provision of overflow parking for the surrounding area to ease the pressure of unallocated parking along School Road?

Q3. Do you have any other comments?

Please provide answers by **5pm on Friday 29th August 2025** by either emailing: **PublicEngagement@etplanning.co.uk** or posting comments to: **ET Planning, 200 Dukes Ride, Crowthorne, RG45 6DS**

Development of 32 homes at **Land Rear of Langley Common and South of School Road, Barkham**



Figure 1: Indicative Masterplan showing the development of 32 homes

This leaflet has been sent by ET Planning on behalf of the landowner, to seek your views and to help inform a future planning application on this potential housing site.

Design Rationale

The following principles have underpinned the design rationale for residential development at the site:

- A landscape-led approach to development, including strengthening the existing tree buffers to the adjoining land and neighbouring properties and opening up the site for public access through the provision of attractive footpath links;
- A community benefit of providing overflow parking for surrounding area, including for The Coombes C Of E Primary School, to ease the pressure of unallocated parking on School Road;
- Enhancements and improvements to the biodiversity value of the stream and western portion of the site, in order to provide a diverse range of natural flora and fauna;
- An attractive mix and range of properties to meet local needs (2-5 beds);
- Policy-compliant level of affordable housing against Wokingham Borough Council's policy requirements (40%); and
- Provision of a range of housing styles, including provision of a self-build plot, to offer a varied mix of housing to meet growing demand.

Where is the Site?

The Site is located to the north of Arborfield Green and is in close proximity to the existing residential development located along School Road and Langley Common Road.

The Site comprises open green space and is bound by further green space to the south and west, School Road to the north and by gardens to the east, with Langley Common Road located beyond this. The Coombes C Of E Primary School is located to the west of the site.



Figure 2: Location of the Development Site



| CIL
| Enforcement
| Land Promotion
| Planning
| Sequential Tests
| Viability

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