



RIDGEWAY
HERITAGE CONSULTANCY

Land North of Broadwater Lane and West of Hogmoor Lane, Hurst

An Appeal Statement for Heritage



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Client: Dr & Mrs J Lade

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An Appeal Statement for Heritage

RHC Project No. 2026-40

Date: June, 2026

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Report front cover: oblique aerial image of the Broadwater Lane site and surrounding residential development

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1. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- 1.1. This Appeal Statement has been prepared by Dr Richard Massey, in his capacity as Director of Ridgeway Heritage Consultancy. The Statement has been commissioned by Dr and Mrs J. Lade, as objectors to the proposed scheme.
- 1.1 Dr Richard Massey has over 28 years' experience as a heritage consultant, working in both the curatorial and commercial sectors, and advising on archaeological and heritage management for a wide range of commercial and residential developments. He has widespread experience of providing heritage advice and advising on planning and consent applications for clients, in both private and public sectors, both as a commercial consultant, and as a former Inspector of Ancient Monuments at English Heritage (now Historic England). This has included high-level planning advice on all aspects of the management of the historic environment, and the mitigation of impacts to urban areas and heritage settings.
- 1.2 I was a local resident for the last 40 years, until 2024, and have a detailed knowledge of, and interest in, the historic environment of the Wokingham area. My work as former project manager at Cotswold Archaeology has included work for local authorities and private clients regarding a wide range of heritage assets across southern England, including both rural and Conservation Area settings. Since establishing an independent consultancy practice in 2020, I have undertaken project work within a wide variety of planning contexts, including at Southampton, Gosport, Portsmouth, Reading, Oxford, Cheltenham, Richmond, London SW1, Edgbaston, Birmingham, Milton Keynes, Windsor, Henley on Thames, Bristol, Whitchurch, Christchurch, Frome and Pewsey. A current CV is submitted as an appendix to this Written Representation.
- 1.3 I have extensive experience of planning appeals, at both Written Representation and Public Inquiry level. Amongst others, this has included appearance as expert witness at Inquiry for Fort Gilkicker, Gosport (2009), Llanvapley, Monmouthshire (2014), Saxonvale, Frome (2016) Wisley, Surrey MDA (2017), and the Minchens Lane, Bramley Solar Scheme (2023). Recent Appeals by Written Representation have included those at Pinks Hill, Fareham, Reading and Great Bedwyn, Wiltshire.
- 1.4 The evidence I have prepared and provided in this Written Representation is true, and has been prepared and given in accordance with the guidance of my professional institutions, the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA), of which I am a full member, and the Society of Antiquaries, of which I was elected a fellow in 2020.

2. THE STRUCTURE OF THIS APPEAL STATEMENT

2.1 I am instructed to present an Appeal Statement in respect of heritage matters in relation to this Planning Appeal. My evidence will deal with the nature of the Appeal Site to the north of Broadwater Lane and west of Hogmoor Lane, the proposed development, the built and landscape context of the Appeal Site and its visual relationship with heritage assets, and the conformity of the proposed development with local and national planning policies. My Appeal Statement is structured as follows:

- Section 3: a description of the Appeal Site, and its heritage context;
- Section 4: provides a description of the currently proposed Appeal Scheme;
- Section 5 summarises the planning history of the Appeal site;
- Section 6: summarises the Planning Policy context for heritage in relation to the Appeal Site;
- Section 6: summarises the key planning issues to be considered by this Appeal Statement;
- Section 7: addresses the key planning issues for heritage to be considered by this Appeal Statement;
- Section 8 assesses the heritage impacts of the Appeal Scheme;
- Section 9 addresses the Appellant's case for heritage;
- Section 10: provides a summary and conclusion to this Appeal Statement, and a rebuttal of the claims made on heritage grounds by the Appellant; and
- Section 11: provides a list of references used in the compilation of this Appeal Statement.

3. A DESCRIPTION OF THE APPEAL SITE

- 3.1 The Appeal Site comprises an irregularly shaped parcel of land, of 0.96ha in area, which is bordered by mature vegetation, agricultural land to the north and north-east, and by residential properties along Broadwater Lane and Hogmoor Lane (Fig. 1 and report front cover). That part of Hurst village represented by Wards Cross mostly comprises modern residential dwellings located along a network of minor roads leading off Broadwater Lane, School Road and Orchard Road, which are interspersed with a number of historic buildings. The plan and extent of the Appeal Site is partly determined by existing land boundaries and properties, which form the backdrop to views from Broadwater Lane and Hogmoor Lane. The wider surrounding landscape to the north and north-east of the Appeal Site comprises a mix of arable and pastoral fields of irregular size and plan, incorporating a number of historic hedgerow boundaries (report front cover and Figs. 11, 12 and 13).

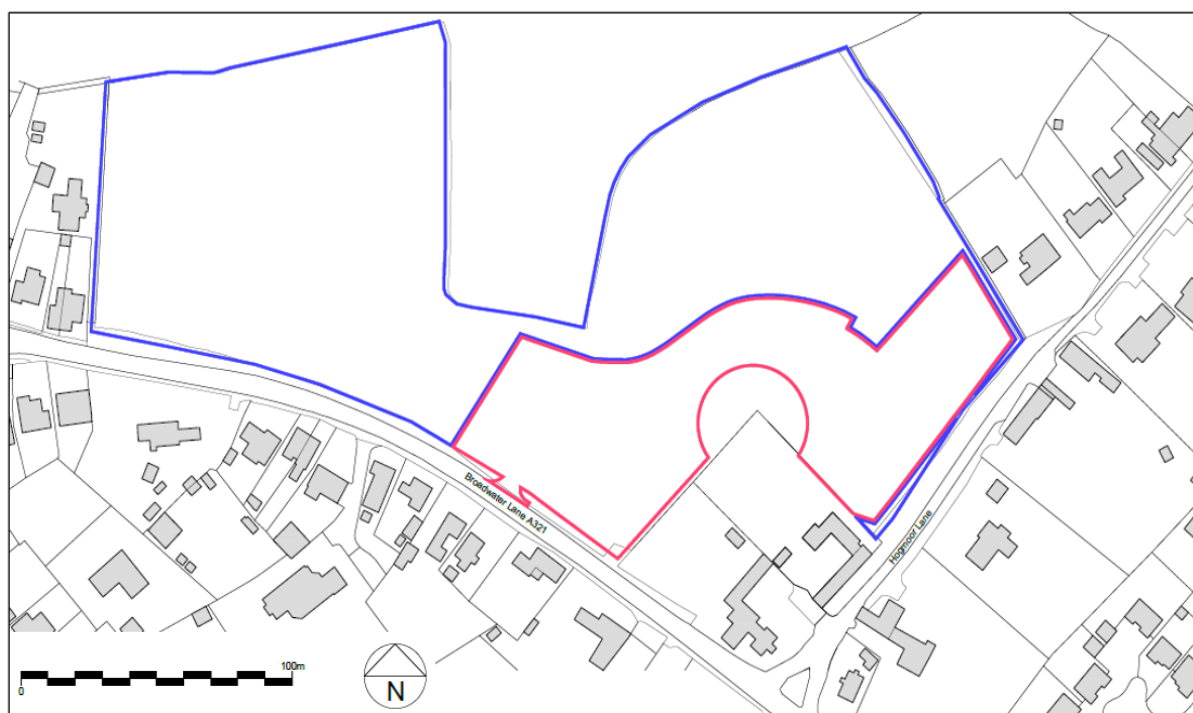


Fig. 1: Proposed site plan for the revised scheme with field boundary outlined in blue (Radley House Partnership).

- 3.2 The Appeal Site, of 0.96ha, consists of two distinct development areas, with that to the west, comprising Plots 1-3, facing onto Broadwater Lane, and that to the east, comprising Plots 4-7, facing onto Hogmoor Lane (Figs. 1 and 7). The two development areas would each be linked by an internal access roadway, with an access-points off Broadwater Lane. The western development

area would effectively represent the eastern third of the 2025 Appeal Site. The land comprising the current Appeal Site is largely level, and managed as pasture (Figs. 11, 12 and 13). On its south-western side, bordering Broadwater Lane, the Site is bounded by a tree-lined grass verge. The eastern boundary of the western part of the Site is formed by the rear boundaries of Grade II-listed Wards Cross House and adjoining, and locally-listed, Long Barn, with the northern boundary largely following an existing field boundary with mature trees and hedgerows (Figs. 1 and 3). This boundary continues eastward, unmarked by any visible features, to enclose the larger, eastern element of the Appeal Site. This element is bounded on the eastern side by Hogmoor Lane, with the southern boundary formed by the plot containing Long Barn (Figs. 1 and 8). The western boundary at this point is formed by the plot boundary of Apple Tree Cottage, on Hogmoor Lane.

Historic Landscape Character

- 3.3 The area surrounding Hurst village is broadly characterised as one of reorganised fields of post-medieval date, with hedged boundaries. These include fields created from Enclosure in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. All of these were registered as agricultural land in *c.* 1761, the date of Rocque's map (Fig. 4). While the East Berkshire Historic Landscape Character study (Lödöen and MacDonald 2019) claims limited evidence for early field systems in this area, the evidence of aerial photography and Lidar (not illustrated) provides clear indications of neighbouring ridge and furrow cultivation and historic land boundaries, demonstrating that a number of medieval open fields were enclosed and amalgamated in the post-medieval period. There is also a high incidence of later parkland and designed landscapes, including those of Whistley Park, located 600m to the south-west, and Haines Hill to the north.
- 3.4 Rural settlement in this area is dispersed, and historically has comprised scattered farmsteads and small village settlements. In the eighteenth century, Whistley Green was dominated by dispersed farms and dwellings, many of which were of medieval origin. Formerly extensive areas of unimproved land, principally marshland, but including smaller areas of open heath, were converted to farmland in the early modern period (Lödöen and MacDonald 2019, 215). Woodland is dispersed, and mostly comprises small, isolated areas of broadleaf copse. Areas of woodland to the north and east of the Appeal Site include planted woodland belts surrounding Haines Hill Farm. There are no neighbouring areas of ancient or ancient replanted woodland (Lödöen and MacDonald 2019, 274).

Heritage Constraints of the Appeal Site

- 3.5 The Appeal Site is located at a distance of 1.2km from the Hurst Conservation Area, but is adjacent to a part of the village designated as an Area of Special Character (AOSC) (Fig. 2). The Application Site therefore has no visual or other associations with the Conservation Area, which is centred on St Nicholas' Church and adjacent buildings, which form a localised historic core within a wider area of dispersed settlement. The Appeal Site itself contains no known heritage assets, but is partly included with an area associated with recorded archaeological remains of several periods. The Appeal Site is closely adjacent to, and within the settings of, four Grade II-listed buildings on the south-western side of Broadwater Lane, and two Grade II-listed buildings located on Hogmoor Lane, together with two non-designated buildings of historic interest. The Appeal Site is also situated within a part of the open rural hinterland of Hurst village, which historically has comprised part of its associated farmland, and which comprises an important aspect of its historic context and setting.

The Hurst Area of Special Character

- 3.6 The Appeal Site is located directly adjacent to the Hurst Area of Special Character (AOSC), as identified by Policy TB26 of the adopted Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (Fig. 2). All parts of the Appeal Site are located outside the AOSC, with the exception of the proposed vehicle access bellmouth on Broadwater Lane. This designation covers those settlement areas which, while not meriting formal designation as Conservation Areas, retain aspects of historical or traditional character. The designated Area of Special Character runs along Broadwater Lane, and includes historic buildings, both listed and non-listed, on both the south-eastern and south-western sides of the revised Appeal Site. These include the plot boundaries of Wards Cross House and Long Barn to the south-east (Fig. 2), with the south-eastern course of the AOSC boundary including Grade II-listed The Old Post House on the south-eastern side of Hogmoor Lane (Figs. 1, 2 and 7).
- 3.7 The primary heritage interest of the AOSC derives from its component listed and non-listed historic buildings, which comprise a significant and coherent group, and are importantly illustrative of the post-medieval development of the village. In addition, some integral elements of nineteenth and twentieth-century infill development are not without merit, and are illustrative of later historical development. Collectively, the form, layout and historic character of these buildings contribute importantly to local character and sense of place. A previous heritage statement report submitted by the appellant stated that the AOSC has 'some', but not 'special' architectural and/or

historic interest, which has been disputed. Notwithstanding the elements of nineteenth and twentieth-century infill development, the individual component historic buildings would intrinsically be of sufficient interest to merit inclusion in a Conservation Area.

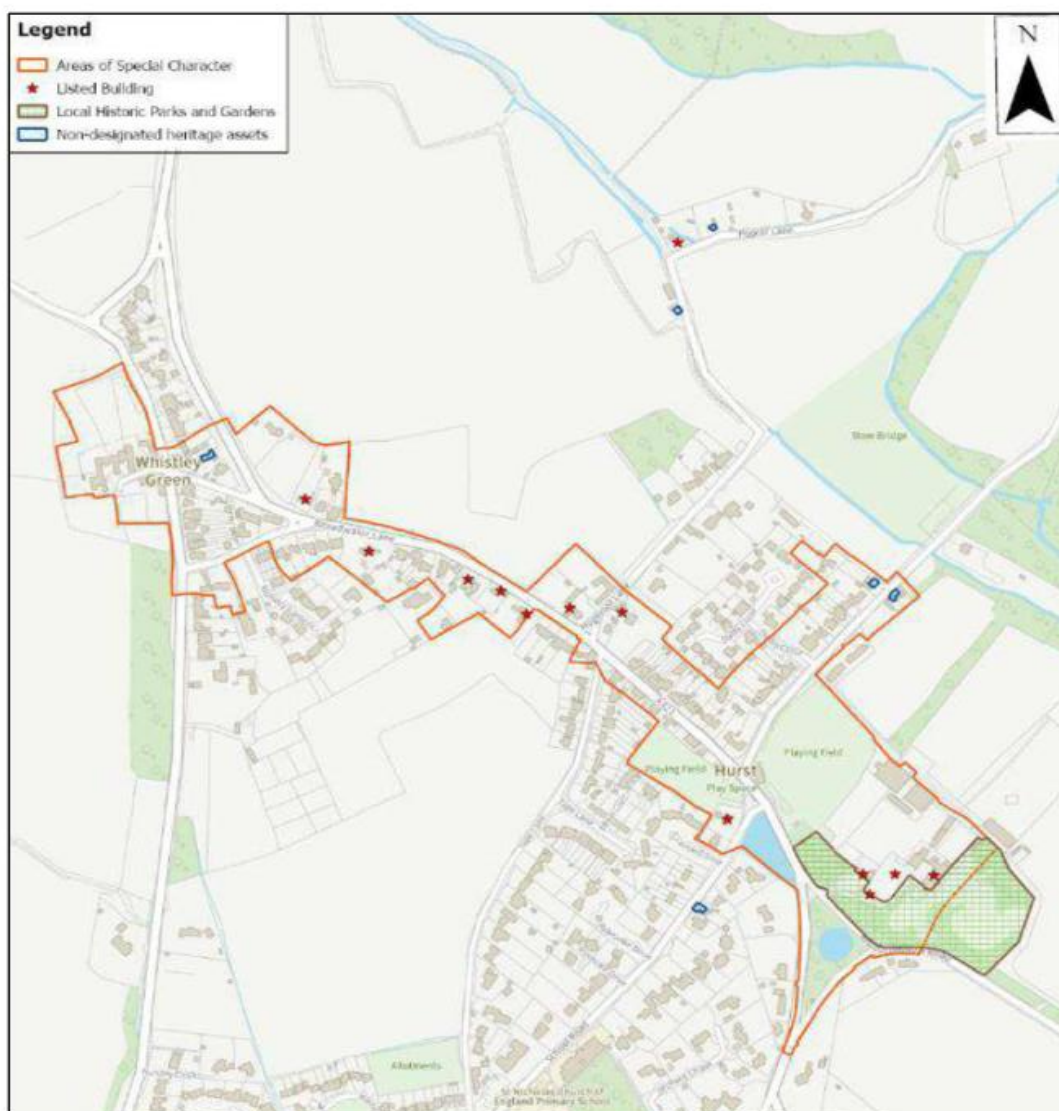


Fig. 2: Plan of the Hurst Area of Special Character (AOSC). The locations of listed buildings are indicated by red dots (Wokingham Borough Council).

3.8 While the Appeal Site does not actually lie within the AOSC, it directly abuts it, together with the plots of some of its most significant heritage assets. As part of a surrounding area of undeveloped farmland which has retained much of its historic character, the Appeal Site is located within the immediate setting of the AOSC, and within an aspect of setting which both complements, and contributes importantly to, the significance of the AOSC and its component historic buildings. The Inspector at the previous Appeal observed that the Appeal Site and surrounding fields formed a

backdrop to the AOSC and, by implication, comprised a significant element of the historic setting of the AOSC and a number of the heritage assets within it.

- 3.9 Direct westward and north-westward views are possible across the Appeal Site from Hogmoor Lane, where overgrown borders on the north-western side of the Lane have since been cleared, thus offering unrestricted views (Figs. 9 and 11). The Appeal Site forms an immediate backdrop to both Grade II-listed Wards Cross House and the locally-listed buildings of Long Barn and Munfin House, and is located within the wider settings of Grade II-listed The Old Posting House and the group of buildings along Broadwater Lane (Figs. 2 and 3). Proposed development along the frontage of Hogmoor Lane would wholly alter its rural character, and affect the setting of the AOSC. Existing westward views from Hogmoor Lane incorporate the open fieldscape which forms the historic setting of surrounding heritage assets, and emphasises its rural character (Figs. 9, 10 11 and 12).

Listed Buildings

- 3.10 The Area of Special Character includes the listed buildings associated with Broadwater and Hogmoor Lanes, together with parts of Whistley Green, to the north-west (Figs. 2 and 3). The majority of the listed buildings within the environs of the Appeal Site, on Broadwater Lane and Hogmoor Lane, are attested on earlier historic mapping (Figs. 4-6). These include Elder Cottage, Parker's Cottage, Bower Cottage, Buttercups, Ward's Cross House and The Old Posting House. With the exception of Parker's Cottage (1979), these buildings were all added to the National List in October, 1983 (Fig. 3). In addition to these designated heritage assets, the eastern element of the revised Application Site directly borders two non-listed buildings of historic interest, namely Long Barn (Fig. 3, No. 6) and Munfin House (Fig. 3, No. 8). The significance of these listed and non-listed buildings derives principally from their built form and historic fabric, as surviving vernacular buildings of post-medieval and later date. Their largely extensive plots, which comprise aspects of primary setting, have been subject to a number of historic changes, although their wider setting and rural context remains largely unchanged, and contributes importantly to their significance. In addition to individual significances, the historic buildings within the AOSC and along Broadwater and Hogmoor Lanes display a degree of contemporaneity and, collectively, have important group value.

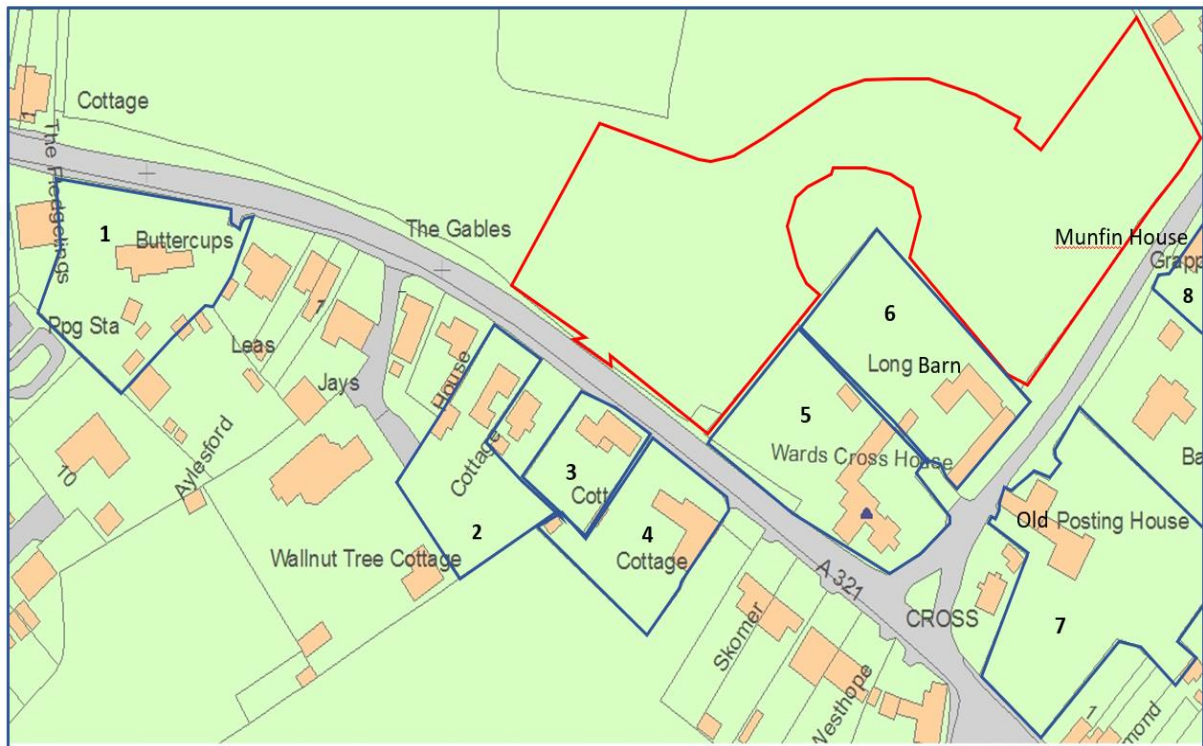


Fig. 3: Plan of the Appeal Site, with locations (Nos. 1-8) of historic buildings assessed for setting impact. Munfin House is located at the right-hand edge of the plan.

The Historical Development of the Appeal Site

- 3.11 Recorded medieval evidence within areas surrounding the Appeal Site indicates that these were integral to the development of Hurst village, with scattered settlements, including elements of a shrunken village, and a wide agricultural hinterland. Continuing clearance of the neighbouring Windsor Forest in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries enabled the formation of a number of new manors, including that of Broad Hinton which included much of the land to the north and east of Hurst.
- 3.12 Historic mapping from the mid-eighteenth century onwards provides evidence of long-term continuity of land use and settlement around the Appeal Site, which appears to have remained broadly unchanged from the early post-medieval period. Rocque's map of 1761 depicts buildings along Hogmoor Lane, including the present Wards Cross House and Old Posting House, together with buildings along the southern side of Broadwater Lane, most if not all of which represent the existing structures on this side (Fig. 4).



Fig 4: Extract from John Rocque's *Map of Berkshire*, of 1761 (Royal Collections Trust).

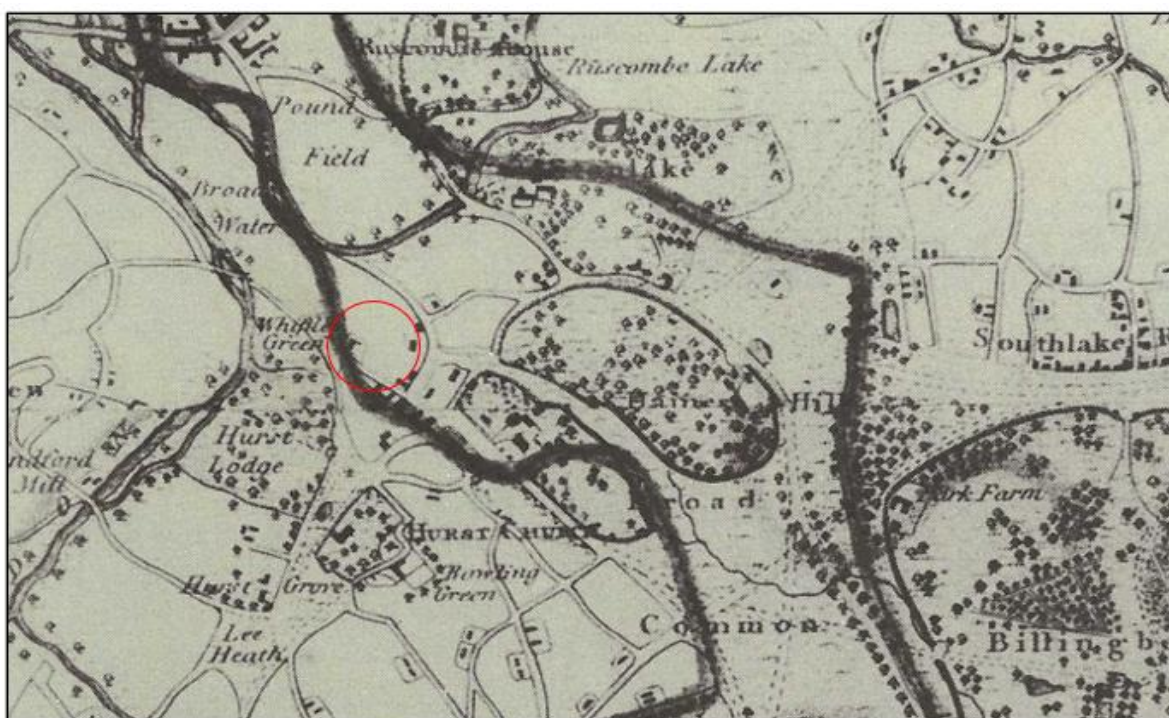


Fig 5: Extract from Thomas Pride's *Map of Ten Miles Around Reading*, of 1790 (Reading Library).

3.13 Rocque's map, and that of Thomas Pride, of 1790 (Fig. 5), confirm a basic rural layout which has remained largely unchanged since that time. Greater detail is provided by the larger-scale Hurst Tithe Map, of 1842 (Fig. 6). This continues to depict the Appeal Site as open agricultural land, with hedged boundaries which conform to those of the present. This distinctly-shaped field has clearly survived in the modern landscape and confirms this field boundary, along with the paddock on the north-western side of Wards Cross House, as historic features. Both maps depict Wards Cross House, together with properties on the southern side of Broadwater Lane, which must at least include Elder Cottage, Parker's Cottage and Buttercups, with Huntsman's Cottage on the northern side of the Lane, to the west of the Appeal Site. Both maps therefore represent a detailed record of the layout of properties and farmland divisions on this side of the village from the post-medieval period onwards. Many of the principal landscape features depicted on this historic mapping record, including individual dwellings, boundaries, roadways and patterns of land use, have remained largely unchanged since the time of their creation, despite the presence of later infill developments.

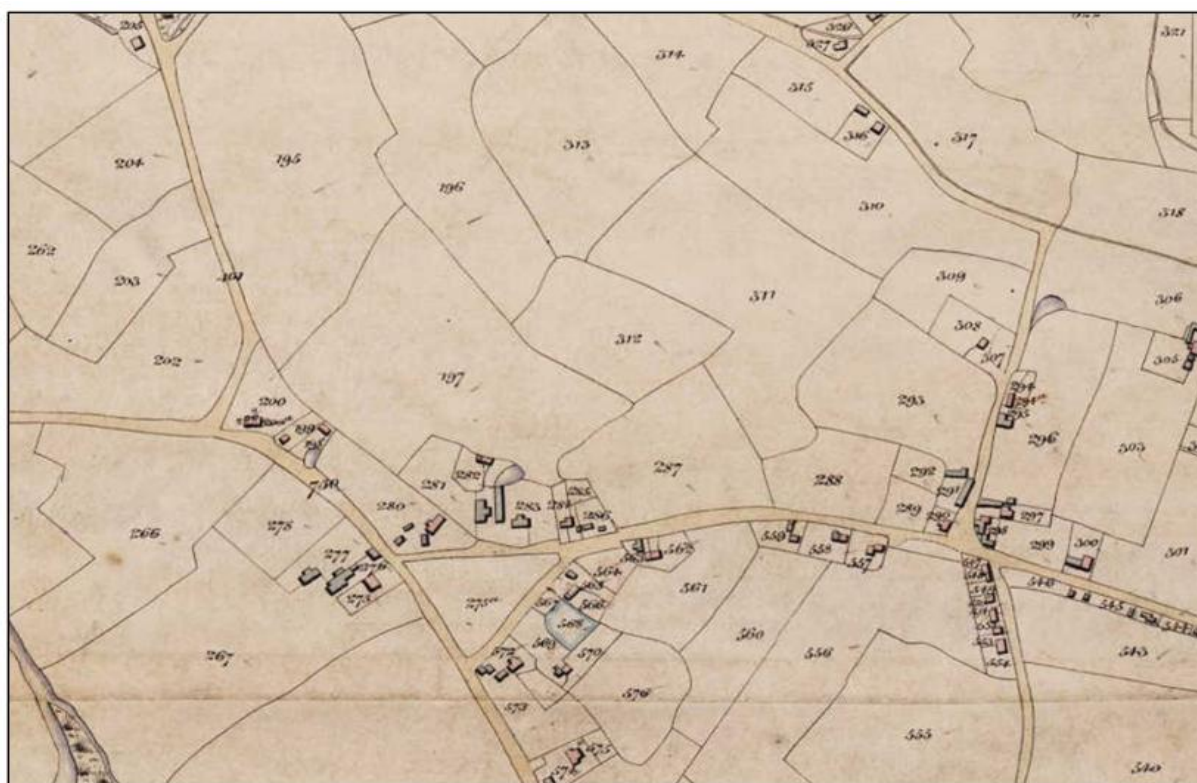


Fig. 6: Extract from the *Hurst Tithe Map*, of 1842 (Berkshire Record Office).

3.14 Tithing records (Berkshire Records Office) indicate that, in 1842, neighbouring landholdings (ie. Plots 289-293; Fig. 6) had remained in the same ownership as shown on the earlier enclosure map

(not illustrated). This included the house and gardens at Wards Cross House and the Long Barn, on Hogmoor Lane. Plots 289 and 292 respectively comprised an orchard and pasture, while Plots 197, 311 and 312, to the north and north-west, were owned by John Leveson and Lady Eyre since 1812. These Plots and Plot 293 were apparently all under arable cultivation at this time. The larger-scale Ordnance Survey maps of the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries depict few subsequent changes in the layout of buildings and land boundaries.

4. THE APPEAL SCHEME

- 4.1 A Permission in Principle application was submitted by Shorewood Homes on February 9th, 2025, for 'the proposed erection of a maximum of 7 no. dwellings (or a minimum of 5 no. dwellings), including formation of an access from Broadwater Lane' (ref. 260353) (Fig. 7). This application represented a revision of the 2024 Application and 2025 Appeal sites, with a partial redistribution of built form from the Broadwater Lane frontage to Hogmoor Lane. The revised proposals sought to address the reasons given by the planning inspector for dismissing the earlier Appeal, and concluded that the earlier proposed scheme would result in less than substantial harm to the settings of the Grade II-listed buildings on the south side of Broadwater Lane. However, this application was refused by Wokingham Borough Council on March 30th, 2026.



Fig. 7: Proposed Appeal Site Plan (Radley House Partnership).

- 4.2 The Appeal Site occupies an area of 0.96ha, and comprises two distinct development areas, to be linked by an internal access road (Fig. 19). The western area, on Broadwater Lane, would comprise Plots 1-3, and the eastern, facing onto Hogmoor Lane, would comprise Plots 4-7. The western area on Broadwater Lane would represent approximately one third of the footprint of the 2025 Appeal

Site, with an undeveloped roadside area to the north-west remaining as open land. On its southern side, the western part of the Appeal Site is proposed to be bounded by a tree-lined grass verge and the carriageway of Broadwater Lane. The eastern boundary of this development area is formed by the fenced rear plot boundaries of Grade II-listed Wards Cross House, and non-listed Long Barn (Figs. 1, 3 and 7). The northern boundary of the Appeal Site partly follows an existing field boundary, before continuing to enclose its larger eastern element. This eastern area is bounded on the eastern side by Hogmoor Lane, with its southern extent delimited by the plot boundary of locally-listed Long Barn. The northern boundary is formed by the plot of Apple Tree Cottage, on Hogmoor Lane.

- 4.3 The revised application included no specifications for building form, scale or design detail, which in the circumstances would have comprised reserved matters. However, it may be assumed from the supplied block plan (Fig. 7) that Plots 1-3 on Broadwater Lane would contain substantial detached dwellings of two-storey height, with conventional gabled roof-forms. These would each be associated with single or double garages, and recessed from the Broadwater Lane frontage by a four-metre strip containing hedgerow and tree plantings. A wide bellmouth opening on the Broadwater Lane frontage would provide an entrance for the internal access road, which would curve round to the east, to connect with the eastern development area. This internal road would open onto the distribution road leading to the four houses on the Hogmoor Lane frontage, but would offer no direct access to the Lane (Fig. 7). Plots 4-7, would include detached dwellings and plots closely comparable with those of Plots 1-3, which would face more directly onto Hogmoor Lane, although the existing roadside verge and ditch would be retained. All individual plots would include spacious gardens, with separate garages, which would over time accumulate ancillary structures and domestic paraphernalia. Proposed dwellings would be assumed to feature a mix of hipped and gabled roof forms, with contrasting detailing and material palettes.

5. THE PLANNING HISTORY OF THE APPEAL SITE

- 5.1 Since February 2024, the current Appeal Site has had a complex planning history, which has included two separate planning applications. The current Appeal, in respect of the revised, and refused, 2026 application, is the second to be made for this site.

The 2024 Outline Planning Application

- 5.2 An original outline application submitted by Shorewood Homes in 2024 (ref. 240583) was for: ‘The Construction of nine detached dwellings of Broadwater Lane, with three access points off the Lane.’

This 0.92ha Application Site was located within designated countryside adjacent to both Broadwater Lane and Hogmoor Lane, and situated outside, but bordering, the settlement limits of Hurst village. The Application Site was bounded on the southern, north-western and south-eastern sides by the Hurst Area of Special Character (AOSC).

- 5.3 The application was refused under delated powers on 29th November, 2024. Refusal Reason 5 of the Decision Notice (CD 3.1) stated that:

‘The proposal would result in the loss of the historic settlement gap between Hurst Village and Whistley Green, replacing this with suburban linear development which detrimentally harms the edge and setting of the Hurst Area of Special Character. Due to the loss of an open green field, which is an important rural characteristic of the setting of the Special Character Area. This is contrary to TB26 of the Managing Delivery Document (2014) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).’

- 5.4 The Delegated Officer’s Report of November 29th, 2024 stated the position of the Local Planning Authority with regard to a number of relevant planning policies and criteria expressed within them:

Built Heritage:

‘The site is located on the border of (but affecting) Hurst’s Village Centre Area of Special Character, and near to Buttercups, a Grade II-listed building, Bower Cottage, a Grade II-listed building, Parkers Cottage, a Grade II-listed building, Elder Cottage, a Grade II-listed building, Ward Cross House, a grade II listed building and Long Barn, a non-designated heritage asset. Therefore, the proposals are subject to assessment under policies TB24 and TB26 of the MDD Local Plan. From historic Ordnance Survey mapping of 1873 it appears the application site has been unchanged over all that time.

Designated heritage assets:

- 5.5 Policy TB24 of the MDD Local Plan seeks to conserve and enhance designated heritage assets in the Borough and their settings by:
- a. Requiring works to or affecting heritage assets, or their setting, to demonstrate that the proposals would at least conserve and, where possible enhance the important character and special architectural or historic interest of the building, Conservation Area, monument or park and garden including its setting and views.
 - b. Supporting development proposals or other initiatives that will conserve and, where possible, enhance the local character, setting, management and historic significance of designated heritage assets, with particular support for initiatives that would improve any assets that are recognised as being in poor condition or at risk.

Area of Special Character (non-designated Heritage assets):

- 5.6 Policy TB26 of the MDD Local Plan seeks to protect and enhance Areas of Special Character. The policy states:
1. Planning permission will only be granted for proposals to or affecting Buildings of Traditional Local Character and Areas of Special Character where they demonstrate that they retain and enhance the traditional, historical, local and special character of the building or area and its setting. Paragraph 209 of the NPPF (now Paragraph 216) states that “The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.” Paragraph 214 of the NPPF (now Paragraph 221) states that “Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.” The southern boundary of the application site falls within Hurst’s Area of Special Character (“AOSC”), and strongly correlates to its northern limit in providing a valuable setting for the wider AOSC. The site is also bound by the AOSC to the east and west.
- 5.7 While settlement limits often combine historic settlements to acknowledge existing built form, this does not detract away from retained historic separate identity. The site represents an area of open land that provides both a historic and visual sense of separation between the historic community

of Whistley Green and the part of Hurst that initially developed around the historic Hurst Lodge and the former farmhouse of Ward's Cross, at the junction with Hogmoor Lane. Historically, the green gap on the southside of Broadwater Lane between Whistley Green and Hurst Village has been subject to incremental infill development, with the dwellings directly adjacent to the application site (to the south) being constructed as late as the later 20th century. These two communities have been identified by the Council as an area of special character, in part due to the listed buildings and on the merits of those late nineteenth /early twentieth-century developments, including infill development, which in part define the character of the area.

Landscape Character and Valued Landscape:

5.8 Policy TB21 of the MDD Local Plan states that "Proposals shall retain or enhance the condition, character and features that contribute to the landscape." The Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment 2019 (WDLCA) shows the site sits within the C2 Hurst River Terrace Landscape Character Area. The WDLCA lists the following Valuable Landscape Attributes for the C2 Hurst River Terrace LCA:

- Peaceful and open character of the undeveloped arable and pastoral landscape when removed from the intrusion of major roads to the south, which provides an escape in close proximity to the urban population.
- Rural settlement pattern of small villages with historic cores and farmsteads unified by the cohesive use of redbrick which provides a cultural record of the past and adds local distinctiveness.
- A network of narrow rural lanes with characteristic roadside ditches which contribute to scenic quality.
- Small wetland habitats, including drainage channels and numerous farm ponds which are valued for flora and fauna.
- Gently undulating terrace landform provides open and clear views to the wooded backdrop of the adjacent Loddon Valley. T

5.9 The built edge of Broadwater Lane is characterised by gaps in the settlement pattern to the northern edge. This is a special feature of the Area of Special Character. The same is true of the east side of Hogmoor Lane which is characterised by a gap between the few dwellings, and provides a clear view of the eastern edge of the site and the mature hedgerow field boundary that extends south across the field toward the southern edge of the Appeal Site. The landscape attributes applicable to the proposal is the need to retain the settlement pattern (which the site as an existing, undeveloped, greenfield site contribute towards), peaceful character of the undeveloped arable and

pastoral landscape, roadside ditches and small wetland habitats. Therefore, residential development within this location would result in the inevitable loss of these features, contrary to the established character of the Hurst River Terrace C2 Landscape Character Area (LCA), and TB21 of the MDD Local Plan.

- 5.10 This application was refused under delegated powers on 29th November, 2024, and was subsequently appealed in August 2025.

The outcome of the 2025 Appeal

- 5.11 The comments of the Inspector's report, of October 17th, 2025 (ref. APP/X0360/W/25/ 3359898) with respect to heritage and landscape matters are reproduced below:

The Listed Buildings

24. 'I note that the site is separated from these properties by Broadwater Lane, and accept that the evidence does not indicate associative links between the listed buildings and the Appeal Site. I also note that the setting of the listed buildings has suffered some erosion through the introduction of more modern infill development on this side of Broadwater Lane'.
25. 'However, from Broadwater Lane, these buildings are currently experienced and perceived within a largely quiet, open and rural environment because of the character and appearance of the appeal site. There is nothing to indicate any history of development on the appeal site and it is likely that these buildings will have always been set against that backdrop. This relationship can be appreciated both from within the appeal site and from Broadwater Lane'.
26. 'The attributes of the site contribute positively to the setting and therefore the significance of the four listed buildings. Historic England guidance on the setting of Heritage Assets advises that settings of heritage assets which closely resemble the setting at the time the asset was constructed are likely to contribute particularly strongly to significance'.
27. 'That positive contribution would be significantly undermined through increased noise and activity on the site as well as the physical presence of nine well-sized houses. This would be the case even if some dwellings were to be set back from Broadwater Lane and even if a scheme of landscaping were to be implemented'.
28. 'The proposal would cause harm to the setting of Buttercups, Bower Cottage, Parkers Cottage and Elder Cottage. The arising harm to the significance of the assets would be less than substantial'.
29. 'The harm would be towards the higher end within the less than substantial category for Bower Cottage and Parkers Cottage, given they are fully opposite the Appeal Site, and

have a close relationship with it and because of the forward positioning of Plots 6 and 7. The harm would be at the lower end within the less than substantial category for Buttercups, given the development would be set further back at this end of the Site, and this would also be the case for Elder Cottage given its positioning slightly further along on Broadwater Lane not fully fronting the site’.

30. ‘Overall, there would be conflict with Policy TB24 of the MDLP which amongst other things states that the Council will conserve and seek the enhancement of designated heritage assets in the Borough and their settings by requiring works to or affecting the setting of heritage assets to demonstrate that the proposals would at least conserve the important character and special architectural or historic interest of the building, including its setting’.

31. ‘I must give considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings. Harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme’.

The Hurst Area of Special Character (AOSC)

- 5.12 32. The AOSC, a non-designated heritage asset, encompasses part of Whistley Green and Hurst. Its significance in part sits with its buildings which are of a variety of ages, designs and materials including buildings and features that are designated and non-designated heritage assets in their own rights.

33. However, the AOSC also includes the land immediately on the boundary of the site adjacent to Broadwater Lane. Whilst the Appeal Site is not referred to as a component of the AOSC setting, details within the Historic Environment Topic Paper, where referring to this particular AOSC summarise amongst other things that Broadwater Lane is heavily vegetated on the stretch of road between Hurst Village and Whistley Green, with many mature trees and open fields on the northern side of the street. It can therefore be reasonably concluded that the planting on the boundary of the site including T14 and T16 makes a positive contribution to the significance of the AOSC as a backdrop which frames the buildings within it.

34. Whilst I note that the proposal would likely see the provision of substantial landscaping to the boundary as part of any approval, given the risk of deterioration associated with the proposal to T14 and T16 on that boundary, and the importance of those trees within the boundary planting, the proposal would subsequently cause moderate harm to the significance of the AOSC. The proposal would therefore conflict with Policy TB26 of the MDLP which amongst other things states that planning permission will only be granted for proposals affecting Areas of Special Character where they demonstrate that they retain and enhance the traditional, historical, local and special character of the area.

Landscape Impact

- 5.13 35. The Appeal Site and the wider countryside beyond make for a pleasant backdrop to Broadwater Lane. The residential development on the opposite side of Broadwater Lane is

largely continuous, linking Hurst and Whistley Green. This makes it difficult to assess when on the ground on this part of Broadwater Lane where these respective settlements begin and end, meaning that there is no obvious gap between the two settlements in this particular location. The importance of maintaining this 'green gap' was emphasised in the Planning Inspector's comments in relation to the 1999 Appeal.

36. The Hurst River Terrace Landscape Character Area (HRTLCA) within which the site sits encompasses land from the A329 (M) to the south incorporating land a short distance to the north of Whistley Green.
37. Its key characteristics amongst other things include being a simple agricultural landscape of mainly arable farmland, with pasture enclosed in relatively large straight-sided fields as well as being a rural and tranquil area. Its valuable landscape attributes amongst other things include the peaceful and open character of the undeveloped pastoral landscape. Amongst the key issues is demand for residential development increasing linear development along rural lanes and continuing to push towards the amalgamation of close settlements Whistley Green and Hurst, impacting rural character.
38. The Landscape guidelines include amongst other things conserving the open and rural qualities of the landscape and maintaining the sparse settlement pattern of villages and dispersed farms through control of new development, avoiding further linear spread of development.
39. Considering the key characteristics, valuable attributes, key issues and guidelines of the HRTLCA against the characteristics of the site as described above, I consider that the proposals could be integrated into the landscape setting without any significant adverse landscape effects.
40. Whilst the Appeal Site is not currently within an area designated as a valued landscape, the Council has intentions to extend the Haines Hill valued landscape such that it would include the Appeal Site.
41. However, when referring to the Haines Hill Valued Landscape Narrative and a map which includes the appeal site, the Council's Valued Landscapes Assessment does not refer to the HRTLCA within which the Appeal Site sits despite referring to other landscape character areas. Whilst I note the site-specific reassessment supplied by the Council, on that basis, I am not confident that the appeal site should be considered as part of a valued landscape based on current evidence.
42. Overall, in conclusion on this main issue there would be no significant adverse impact on the landscape. There would subsequently be no conflict with Policy TB21 of the MDLP which states that proposals must demonstrate how they have addressed the requirements of the landscape character assessment and shall at a minimum retain the condition, character and features that contribute to the landscape. Given my conclusions with regard

to valued landscapes there would be no conflict with paragraph 187 which requires that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by amongst other things protecting and enhancing valued landscapes.

5.14 A Permission in Principle application was submitted by Shorewood Homes on February 9th, 2026, for ‘the proposed erection of a maximum of 7 no. dwellings (or a minimum of 5 no. dwellings), including formation of an access from Broadwater Lane’ (ref. 260353). The current application represents a revision of the 2024 Application and 2025 Appeal sites, with a partial redistribution of built form from the Broadwater Lane frontage to Hogmoor Lane. The revised proposals have sought to address the reasons given by the planning inspector for dismissing the Appeal. The application for Permission in Principle was refused on March 30th, 2026, with the following reasons given for refusal:

1. The proposal, by virtue of its location, represents unacceptable unplanned development outside of development limits within the designated countryside which is contrary to the spatial objectives of the development plan. This is contrary to policies CP1, CP9 and CP11 of the Core Strategy, along with the NPPF.
2. The proposal, by virtue of its location and amount of development, would fail to suitably assimilate into the established landscape and character of the surrounding area, and would fail to retain and enhance the traditional, historical, local and special character of the Village Centre (Hurst) Area of Special Character. This is contrary to policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy and policies TB21 and TB26 of the MDD, along with the Wokingham Council Borough Design Guide SPD (2012), Landscape Character Area Assessment (2019) and NPPF.
3. The proposal, by virtue of its location, would fail to conserve or enhance the setting of four designated heritage assets in the form of Grade II Listed Buildings (Bower Cottage, Parkers Cottage, Elder Cottage and Wards Cross House). This is contrary to policy TB24 of the MDD and the NPPF.

6. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT FOR HERITAGE IN RELATION TO THE APPEAL SITE

6.1 The relevant adopted National and Local Planning Documents for the purposes of this Appeal Statement comprise the following:

- The Wokingham Borough Council MDD Local Plan, 2016-2036, adopted in 2014;
- The Wokingham Borough Council Core Strategy Policy CP3;
- Berkshire Structure Plan: Policy EN4: Historic Environment;
- The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990;
- National Planning Policy and Planning Policy Guidance; and
- Wokingham Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents.

6.2 For the determination of this Appeal, the following policies of the Wokingham Borough Council Local Plan and the Berkshire Structure Plan are relevant to this Appeal Statement:

- WBC Policy TB21: Relating to Landscape Character;
- WBC Policy TB24: Relating to Designated Heritage Assets;
- WBC Policy TB 26: Relating to Buildings of Traditional Character and Areas of Special Character;
- WBC Policy CP3: Relating to General Principles of Development; and
- BSP Policy EN4: Historic Environment.

6.3 Relevant sections of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (rev. December, 2024, amended February 2025) comprise:

- Section 16 - Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment.

6.4 Attention is drawn to the most recent amendments, of February, 2025, to NPPF, which include provision for increased protection for non-designated heritage assets (footnotes 7 and 8; Paras. 2002, 203 and 207). Further provision is contained in PPG (Historic Environment) (2019), Paragraph 039. These enhanced policy provisions have significantly strengthened the status of non-designated heritage assets (NDHAs) by giving them clearer policy footing, requiring earlier identification through Local Plans, and elevating the weight given to their conservation in decision-making. These amendments represent a material increase in protection, compared with those stated in the 2021/2023 NPPF, and have important implications for the settings of affected non-designated heritage assets in this case, which include the buildings of Long Barn and Munfin

House, and the wider Area of Special Character (AOSC) which directly adjoins the Appeal Site.

- 6.5 Relevant sections of The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990 comprise:
- Sections 66 and 72.

Wokingham Borough Council Local Plan

- 6.6 Policy TB24 of the Wokingham Local Plan (adopted 2014) relates to Designated Heritage Assets: The Borough Council will conserve and seek the enhancement of designated heritage assets in the Borough, and their settings, by:
- (a) Requiring works to, or affecting heritage assets, or their settings, to demonstrate that the proposals would at least conserve, and where possible enhance, the important character and special architectural or historic interest of the building;
 - (b) Support development proposals or other initiatives which will conserve, and where possible enhance, the local character, setting, management and historic significance of designated heritage assets.
- Development proposals shall include sufficient information to convey the exact nature of the proposals and their impacts on the significance of the existing buildings, including plans, elevations and sections.

Wokingham Borough Council Core Strategy Policy CP3: General Principles for Development

- 6.7 Planning permission will be granted for proposals that:
- are of appropriate scale, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area, together with a high quality of design;
 - have no detrimental impact on important ecological, heritage, landscape or geological features or water courses; and
 - contribute to a sense of place in the buildings and spaces themselves, and the way in which they integrate with their surroundings.

Berkshire Structure Plan: Policy EN4: Historic Environment (2001-2016)

- 6.8 Relevant sections of Berkshire Structure Plan Policy EN4 include the following:
1. Historic features and areas of historic importance and their settings will be conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced. [The Councils] will only permit development if it has no adverse impact on features or areas of historic importance.

2. Proposals will be expected to have regard for the wider historic environment, and will only be permitted when they would conserve or enhance the character or setting of Berkshire's historic landscape and built environment.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Wokingham Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2012)

- 6.9 This guidance “seeks to ensure that development is of a high standard of design that can integrate with the character of the area, and is important in achieving sustainable development within the Borough”. The Design Guide extends previous guidance, in accordance with the Adopted Core Strategy for the Borough. The overall aim of the Guide is to enhance the quality of development, and ensure that proposal embody the highest standards of design. The following objectives stated within the Guide are considered to be relevant in this case:

- RD1: New development and associated landscape should retain, incorporate and enhance features that contribute towards the landscape character and biodiversity of the area.
- RD5: New development in the rural area should respond to the typical forms of buildings in the village or locality.
- RD6: The elevations of new buildings must be well composed, well-proportioned and well detailed.
- RD7: New buildings should respond to the materials, details and colours that may be distinctive to a locality.
- RD11: The form, or massing of a replacement dwelling should relate well to its context and to local character. The relationship between the form of the building, the topography and landscape, will be of particular importance.

7. KEY PLANNING ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED BY THIS APPEAL STATEMENT

- 7.1 The Permission in Principle application submitted by Shorewood Homes (ref. 260353) was for:
‘The proposed erection of 7 No. dwellings (or a maximum of 5 No. dwellings, including the formation of access from Broadwater Lane.

The 0.96ha Appeal Site is located within designated countryside adjacent to both Broadwater Lane and Hogmoor Lane, and is situated outside, but immediately adjacent to, the settlement limits of Hurst village (Figs. 1 and 7). The Application Site is bounded on the southern, north-western and south-eastern sides by the Hurst Area of Special Character (AOSC) (Fig. 2.

- 7.2 This application was refused on 30th March, 2026, for the reasons cited above in para 5.14, namely that the proposed scheme would be contrary to the spatial objectives of the Development Plan, would fail to retain and enhance the Hurst AOSC, and would harm the setting and significance of surrounding heritage assets. The Delegated Officer’s Report of November 29, 2024, in respect of the original 2024 planning application, has articulated the Local Planning Authority’s position with regard to a number of relevant planning policies and criteria expressed within them:

Built Heritage:

- 7.3 ‘The Appeal Site is located on the border of (but affecting) the Hurst’s Village Centre Area of Special Character (AOSC), and near to the Grade II-listed buildings of Bower Cottage, Parkers Cottage, Elder Cottage, and Wards Cross House. The locally-listed heritage assets of Munfin House and Long Barn are also located in close proximity, while the Grade II-listed buildings of Buttercups and Hunters Cottage are located at greater distance, to the west of the Appeal Site. Therefore, the current proposals are subject to assessment under policies TB24 and TB26 of the MDD Local Plan, and National Planning Policy. The evidence of historic mapping indicates that the Appeal Site and its rural surroundings have remained unchanged since at least the mid-eighteenth century, and no doubt much earlier.

Designated heritage assets:

- 7.4 ‘Policy TB24 of the MDD Local Plan seeks to conserve and enhance designated heritage assets in the Borough and their settings by:
- a. Requiring works to or affecting heritage assets, or their setting, to demonstrate that the proposals would at least conserve and, where possible enhance the important character and special

architectural or historic interest of the building, Conservation Area, monument or park and garden including its setting and views.

b. Supporting development proposals or other initiatives that will conserve and, where possible, enhance the local character, setting, management and historic significance of designated heritage assets, with particular support for initiatives that would improve any assets that are recognised as being in poor condition or at risk.

Area of Special Character (non-designated Heritage assets):

7.5 Policy TB26 of the MDD Local Plan seeks to protect and enhance Areas of Special Character. The policy states:

1. Planning permission will only be granted for proposals to or affecting Buildings of Traditional Local Character and Areas of Special Character where they demonstrate that they retain and enhance the traditional, historical, local and special character of the building or area and its setting. Paragraph 209 of the NPPF (now Paragraph 216) states that “The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.” Paragraph 214 of the NPPF (now Paragraph 221) states that “Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.” The southern boundary of the Appeal Site falls within Hurst’s Area of Special Character (“AOSC”), and strongly correlates to its northern limit in providing a valuable setting for the wider AOSC. The site is also bound by the AOSC to the east and west.

7.6 While settlement limits often combine historic settlements to acknowledge existing built form, this does not detract from retained historic separate identity. The site represents an area of open land that provides both a historic and visual sense of separation between the historic community of Whistley Green and that part of Hurst which initially developed around the historic Hurst Lodge and the former farmhouse of Ward’s Cross, at the junction with Hogmoor Lane. Historically, the green gap on the southside of Broadwater Lane between Whistley Green and Hurst Village has been subject to some incremental infill development, with the dwellings directly adjacent to the application site (to the south) being constructed as late as the later 20th century. These two

communities have been identified by the Council as an Area of Special Character, in part due to the listed buildings and on the merits of those late nineteenth/early twentieth-century infill developments, which in part define the character of the area.

Landscape Character and Valued Landscape:

7.7 Policy TB21 of the MDD Local Plan states that “Proposals shall retain or enhance the condition, character and features that contribute to the landscape.” The Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment 2019 (WDLCA) shows the Appeal Site sits within the C2 Hurst River Terrace Landscape Character Area. The WDLCA lists the following Valuable Landscape Attributes for the C2 Hurst River Terrace LCA as:

- Peaceful and open character of the undeveloped arable and pastoral landscape;
- Rural settlement pattern of small villages and farmsteads;
- A network of narrow rural lanes;
- Small wetland habitats, including drainage channels and farm ponds;
- Gently undulating, terraced landforms, with open views and wooded backdrops;
- Gaps in the settlement pattern on the northern edge of Broadwater Lane, and on the western edge of Hogmoor Lane.

7.8 The landscape attributes applicable to the Appeal Site and its surroundings indicate the need to retain an existing, undeveloped, greenfield site which contributes to the peaceful character of the pastoral traditional landscape and to the settings of surrounding heritage assets and the AOSC., Residential development within the Appeal Site would result in the inevitable loss of this rural character, and would be contrary to the established character of the Hurst River Terrace C2 Landscape Character Area (LCA), and TB21 of the MDD Local Plan.

7.9 On the basis of the reasons for dismissal of the previous Appeal, and the reasons for refusal of the 2026 Permission in Principle application, the following matters in respect of heritage are in dispute:

- whether the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the settings of heritage assets, both designated and non-designated;
- whether the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the adjacent Area of Special Interest;

- whether the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the historic rural landscape setting of Hurst village, and its spatial distinction from neighbouring settlements;
- whether the proposed development would be contrary to the spatial objectives of the WBC Development Plan in maintaining a clear historic distinction between village settlements;
- whether the proposed development would accord with the requirements of national planning policy and with Policies TB21, TB24 and TB26 of the MDD Local Plan; and
- whether the harm resulting from the proposed development would be outweighed by public, or other benefit.

7.10 This Appeal Statement for heritage therefore addresses the Matters in Dispute described above. This will consider the character and historic development of the Appeal Site to the north of Broadwater Lane and west of Hogmoor Lane, and will assess its built and landscape context, together with its visual and spatial relationship with the Area of Special Interest and a number of individual heritage assets.

7.11 This Appeal Statement follows our submission, in March, 2024, of a Heritage Statement report (Ridgeway Heritage Consultancy 2024), which considered the potential heritage and landscape impacts of the refused 2024 scheme North of Broadwater Lane. The Heritage Statement included detailed supporting information regarding the archaeological and historical evidence for landscape development around this part of Hurst village. It also provided a detailed assessment of the visual and contextual relationship between the proposed Site and neighbouring heritage assets, and of the potential effect of the scheme on those assets through change to their settings and historic landscape context. An Appeal Statement was subsequently prepared in June, 2025, to support objections to the appealed 2024 scheme (Ridgeway Heritage Consultancy 2025), and a further planning rebuttal document was prepared in February, 2026, in response to the revised, 2026 application. This current Appeal Statement does not repeat or duplicate the contents of the earlier documents, but will reference these, as necessary. In view of the character and location of the Appeal Site, it is accepted that there exists a close correspondence between heritage and landscape issues in this case.

7.12 The initial planning application submitted by the Appellant was supported by a heritage statement report prepared by Asset Heritage Consulting (2024). This report formed the basis of a supporting Appeal Statement prepared by the same consultant (2025), although the current Appeal is supported by a new Statement, produced by Forum Heritage Services (2026). The points expressed below in Section 9 of this Appeal Statement are intended as a response to, and rebuttal of, the Appellant's position in respect of heritage matters.

8. ASSESSING THE HERITAGE IMPACTS OF THE APPEAL SCHEME

- 8.1 A justification of the proposed Appeal scheme, and of its effect on the historic environment, is contained within the supporting Appeal Statement produced by Forum Heritage Services (2026). This section of the objectors' Appeal Statement will assess the potential heritage impacts arising from the proposed scheme, and the resulting levels of harm. Section 9 of this Statement will critique the claims and justifications made in the appellant's supporting Appeal Statement.

Heritage Settings

- 8.2 The Appeal scheme would entail an overall reduction in built form and massing on Broadwater Lane, where it would represent approximately one third of the road frontage occupied by the 2024 application, with a reduction in the proposed number of dwellings from nine to three (Fig. 7). The three dwellings in Plots 1-3 would be set further back from the road frontage than those previously proposed. While this reduction in proposed built form on Broadwater Lane is acknowledged, and the resulting level of impact on some heritage settings reduced to a limited degree, the earlier heritage statement (Asset Heritage Consulting 2025) produced in support of the revised 2025 scheme considerably underestimated the effect of the reduced level of development in this location on both heritage settings and the AOSC.
- 8.3 While the layout of the Appeal scheme would include a substantial landscape buffer on the northern side of Broadwater Lane, the important spatial division between settlements, and its role as historic landscape context, would be substantially reduced by the substantial dwellings in Plots 1-3. Perceptions of the spatial importance and historic significance of the open spaces to the north of Broadwater Lane would be irrevocably altered (Figs. 9, 10, 11 and 14). The existing northward views across open land from Broadwater Lane would be confined to an altogether narrower compass, with the quality of such views compromised by the proximity of a conspicuous modern housing development.
- 8.4 While the potential value of a landscaped buffer-strip on the roadside frontage of partly recessed Plots 1-3 has been acknowledged, this in itself would not be sufficient to effectively screen the proposed Plots 1-3 in northward and westward views from Grade II-listed buildings along Broadwater Lane (Figs. 13 and 14). Such a strip would not alter perceptions of an intrusive modern development, particularly in view of the proposed creation of a prominent bellmouth opening for the proposed internal access road on this side (Fig. 7). This newly created aperture would enable

clear through-views of the interior of the development from neighbouring locations on Broadwater Lane, and would also introduce additional traffic-flow which would have a further deleterious effect on settings and historic character. Notwithstanding the proposals to soften or limit the visual impact of the proposed scheme on Broadwater Lane, this would still be apparent as a development of distinctly suburban aspect, which would conflict with recognised settlement limits, and with surrounding built character and heritage settings.



Fig. 8: View, looking south-west, of Long Barn, with adjoining part of the Appeal Site visible from Hogmoor Lane.

- 8.5 In his report following the 2025 Appeal, the Inspector noted that ‘any contribution made to the setting of surrounding listed buildings by the earlier, 2024 Scheme would be sufficiently undermined through ‘increased noise and activity, as well as the presence of nine well-sized houses’. It is argued that such would substantially remain the case for the current Appeal scheme, notwithstanding the proposed more limited built form along Broadwater Lane. In the case of the quieter, more rural aspect of Hogmoor Lane, the effect of the Appeal scheme would be altogether more marked.



Fig. 9: View, looking north from Hogmoor Lane and Munfin House across the eastern section of the Appeal Site.



Fig. 10: View, looking south across the western part of the Appeal Site, towards Broadwater Lane.

- 8.6 While no development is now proposed within the area directly opposite Grade II-listed Buttercups, on Broadwater Lane, it cannot be accepted that the retention of open ground opposite this location would automatically remove any impacts to setting. The two-storey dwellings in Plots 1-3 would remain entirely visible from this part of Broadwater Lane in eastward views, and perceptions of the historically open setting of this listed building on its northern side would be irrevocably altered by the proposed quantum of development. The degree of setting impact, and resulting harm, would be more limited than in the case of the 2024 scheme, but not altogether removed. In this sense, it is not accepted that the revised scheme would result in no impact to the setting and significance of Buttercups (Figs. 3 and 4). It is also disputed that the effects of substantial dwellings on the northern side of Broadwater Lane would be significantly reduced, or that any resulting noise or activity would be ‘minimal’ in effect, or not affect the ambience or setting of neighbouring listed buildings.
- 8.7 The same considerations must apply to Grade II-listed Elder Cottage (Figs. 3 and 5). While this building would not be directly confronted by substantial modern dwellings within the revised scheme, the three dwellings and associated structures within Plots 1-3 would remain plainly visible in eastward views from this location on Broadwater Lane, and perceptions of an open farmland setting on the northern side would be irrevocably altered. While the section of land directly opposite Elder Cottage would remain undeveloped and open, the quality of northward views and this aspect of the historic setting of the building would be altogether more limited and confined. The level of resulting harm to the significance of Elder Cottage would remain largely unchanged, and would be towards the lower end of less than substantial.
- 8.8 Following the 2025 Appeal of the 2024 scheme, the Inspector’s report identified higher levels of less than substantial harm to the significance of Parker’s Cottage and Bower Cottage, in view of the close proximity of elements of the earlier scheme. These two Grade II-listed buildings would remain closely adjacent to Plots 1-3 of the current Appeal scheme, and the same degree of setting impact would apply as for the previously proposed scheme, notwithstanding the introduction of an intervening landscaped strip (Fig. 7). Setting impact in this case would also be exacerbated by the prominent bellmouth roadway opening onto Broadwater Lane, and by resulting additional traffic movements and activity. It is therefore confidently asserted that a comparably high level of less than substantial harm to the setting and significance of these two listed buildings would apply to the current Appeal scheme. In this case, it should be acknowledged that these, and the other

Grade II-listed buildings on Broadwater Lane, exhibit a degree of group value, and are collectively significant in terms of the historical development of the village and its settlement landscape. In this sense, such setting impacts should be assessed holistically and collectively, ie. within a wider historic landscape context.

- 8.9 The effect of the refused 2024 scheme on the setting of Grade II-listed Wards Cross House was a notable omission of the 2025 Inspector's report, particularly as this heritage asset adjoined the proposed 2024 Site on its eastern side (Figs. 3 and 7). This building and its plot would be closely adjoined by Plot 3 of the current Appeal scheme, with a substantial modern dwelling directly visible from the listed building, with no intervening screening (Fig. 14). This would remove an important visual connection between Wards Cross House and the farmland with which it was historically associated, and would completely remove an aspect of the open, fieldscape setting which contributes importantly to the significance of this building. The proposed Plots 4-7 of the current Appeal scheme, together with the proposed access road, would result in a comparable level of impact to the setting and historic landscape context of locally-listed Long Barn, immediately to the north-east of Wards Cross House (Fig. 8), and that of locally-listed Munfin House, further to the north-east (Fig. 9).
- 8.10 Consideration should also be given to the wider setting of Grade II-listed The Old Posting House, located on the eastern side of Hogmoor Lane, although this building is recessed from the road frontage and is partly screened by boundary vegetation and built form (Fig. 3). This enjoys some limited views across Hogmoor Lane and the open ground beyond, which would be irrevocably altered by the revised scheme. The proposed buildings in Plots 4-7 would be fully visible from Hogmoor Lane, and would diminish the quality of views within this thoroughfare, together with its currently quiet and essentially rural character (Fig. 9). Such impacts would include the setting of locally-listed Munfin House, which includes views of open farmland to the west, which would be irrevocably altered (Fig. 13). Previous claims made by the appellant, that the proposed development on the western side of Hogmoor Lane would result in no impacts to heritage settings, or that the two non-listed buildings concerned were of notably limited significance, are strongly disputed.

The Opinion of the Local Planning Authority

8.11 In a consultation response to the revised 2025 application, and by implication, to the subsequent Appeal, Wokingham Borough Council officers have made the following comments in respect of setting impacts to neighbouring heritage assets:

- the development of the Appeal Site would have an impact, to varying extents, on the setting and context of nearby listed buildings and how they are perceived.
- Those listed buildings in close proximity to the application site are held to derive their significance, as designated heritage assets, from their early date and survival of early fabric, with the grounds in which they lie today being considered to be primary to their setting.
- The Planning Inspector in the previous Appeal summary for the earlier proposed scheme on Broadwater Lane noted ‘that the setting of the listed buildings has suffered some erosion through the introduction of more modern infill development on this side of Broadwater Lane.’
- The Planning Inspector, in their decision notice for the 2025 Appeal, made the point that Historic England guidance on the setting of Heritage Assets has advised that the settings of heritage assets which closely resemble that setting at the time the asset was constructed are likely to contribute particularly strongly to significance.’ The Inspector concluded that there was no evidence show the Appeal Site has ever previously been developed, and as such has always been the vista that the listed buildings looked out onto.
- The Appeal Site is closely adjacent to a number of listed buildings and non-designated buildings of historic interest, and is ‘also situated within a part of the open rural hinterland of Hurst village, which historically has comprised part of its associated farmland, and which comprises an important aspect of its historic context and setting.’
- The listed property known as Buttercup is, under this current proposal, more than 90 metres west of the Appeal Site and retains much of its existing wider setting in northward views which are not considered overall to be adversely affected.
- Those listed buildings adjacent to and/or directly opposite the current Appeal Site, which include Wards Cross House, along with Elder, Parkers and Bower Cottages on the southern boundary of Broadwater Lane are the designated heritage assets which would be affected by the current proposals. In terms of the intended layout of the Broadwater Lane part of the Appeal Site, the concerns raised by the Planning Inspector in their earlier Appeal decision statement would equally pertain here in relation to the northern side of Broadwater Lane.
- The assessed impact of the Appeal scheme on the settings of Bower Cottage, Parkers Cottage and Elder Cottage would result in less than substantial harm, although Bowers and Parkers

Cottages are located directly opposite the Appeal Site, and in these cases the resulting harm would be towards the higher end of the less than substantial category.

- The current Appeal scheme would be closer to the western boundary of Wards Cross House than the 2024 scheme, and would extend around to Hogmoor Lane. In doing so, the Appeal scheme would have an adverse impact to the setting of Wards Cross House.
- That section of the current Appeal Scheme which faces onto Hogmoor Lane would adversely affect the settings and historic landscape context of both Long Barn and Minfin House, both of which comprise non-listed buildings of historic interest. Attention is drawn to the higher levels of protection for non-listed or locally-listed heritage assets contained in the 2025 amendments to the National Planning Policy Framework.
- Despite the proposed reduction in the quantum of development on Broadwater Lane, around Wards Cross, there would be little, if any, change to the level of impact to the settings of Bower Cottage and Parker's Cottage, compared that associated with the refused 2024 scheme. In respect of the 2025 Appeal, the Planning Inspector considered that the level of harm to the significance of these two heritage assets to be at the higher end of less than substantial.

Landscape Setting and the AOSC

- 8.12 It is recognised that the current Appeal Site contributes to setting and character of the AOSC. While much of Hogmoor Lane lies outside the boundary of the AOSC, those westward views from this lane which incorporate open fields comprise an important part of the setting and historic landscape context of the AOSC (Figs. 9, 11 and 12). It is acknowledged that, while WBC Policy TB26 does not preclude development within the setting of an AOSC, it is made clear that such development should protect the special character of the Area, with special regard given to historical context, outbuildings, scale, form, massing and materials. Such development should also retain key architectural features and detailing which contribute to character. While the current Appeal scheme would introduce dwellings of a scale and form broadly appropriate to that of built form within the immediately surrounding area, it would fail to comply with the special character or historical landscape context of the AOSC, and would therefore be inappropriate in this location.



Fig. 11: View, looking south-west across the Appeal Site, from a location on Hogmoor Lane, June 2026. Long Barn is just to the left, out of the picture.



Fig. 12: View, looking north along the Appeal Site, from the garden of Long Barn, with Munfin House to the right.

- 8.13 While the AOSC principally concerns an area of built townscape interest, this cannot be divorced from its wider landscape context, and the relationship between its built form and wider rural setting, which is of some historic interest. Such visual and contextual relationships are particularly significant at the margins of a village settlement, as must be the case here. The current Application Site comprises part of an open rural landscape which directly borders the AOSC, but is not part of it. This juxtaposition offers both a contrast and complement to built form within the AOSC, which is part of an historic rural settlement which has always been enclosed, and defined by, areas of open farmland. The open area of surrounding farmland comprises a dominant feature in such a relationship. Any partial replacement of this aspect of historic setting, by what could be described as an enclosing development of suburban character, would be directly visible within outward views from the AOSC, and would considerably detract from its character, and the contribution made by such views to significance. It is therefore argued, further to the point made in Para 8.11 above, that the current Appeal scheme would be contrary to Policies TB21 and TB26 of the MDD Local Plan.
- 8.14 The Appeal Site indisputably comprises part of a significant and historic settlement gap between Hurst village and Whistley Green, to the north. This gap of open countryside is significant in that it represents a clear, open distinction between two neighbouring village settlements (report front cover). This is important in an increasingly developed area which is otherwise characterised by extensive twentieth-century village expansion and connecting ribbon developments. The proposed development on the Broadwater Lane side would partly erode the spatial distinction between adjoining villages, and leave a reduced strip which would be vulnerable to future infill development. Such spatial distinction would be further eroded by development on the western side of Hogmoor Lane. The distinctive, and spatially distinct, rural character of Hurst village contrasts with the extensive modern developments surrounding the neighbouring settlements of Twyford, Winnersh and Wokingham, and such surviving character should be preserved. The importance of maintaining this 'green gap' was emphasised in the Planning Inspector's comments in relation to the 1999 Appeal.
- 8.14 The current Appeal scheme would visually separate this part of Hurst village, and the AOSC, from their open landscape setting to the north, and would erode the significant spatial distinction between Hurst and Whistley Green. The proposed layout would continue to impact the quality of northward views from some heritage assets on Broadwater Lane, and of westward view from Hogmoor Lane, and would not avoid a degree of setting impact to Grade II-listed Buttercups and

Elder Cottage. The greater level of setting impact to Grade II-listed Bower Cottage and Parkers Cottage would not be mitigated by the current Appeal scheme.

The Opinion of the Local Planning Authority

8.16 In a consultation response to the revised 2025 application, and by implication, to the subsequent Appeal, Wokingham Borough Council officers have made the following comments in respect of impacts to the landscape context of the Appeal Site and the Area of Special Character:

- With the current Appeal scheme, the undeveloped visual gap on the northern side of Broadwater Lane would be largely retained, albeit away from the higher concentration of historic buildings grouped around the Wards Cross junction of Broadwater Lane with Hogmoor Lane. As such, the historic visual gap would be maintained, but in a degraded form.
- The proposed development would result in a more built-up and urbanised environment, resulting in change to the character and appearance of that part of Hurst centred on Wards Cross and the historic farm now represented by the residentially converted Long Barn on the western side of Hogmoor Lane.
- With respect to the open connecting land, between the two areas of development of the Appeal Site, there is concern regarding the visibility the proposed internal access road, which may be detrimental to those in views into, and out of, the Area of Special Character.

8.17 The Appeal scheme would divorce a number of listed and non-listed historic buildings from their historic landscape context. This includes the effects on available views north-westward from Wards Cross House, and Long Barn (Figs. 11, 12 and 14). Hurst village has retained a distinct historic and spatial identity, with an unchanged landscape setting on its north-western side which contributes importantly to the setting and significance of historic buildings, and to the setting and rural context of the AOSC.

8.18 The Appeal scheme would result in unacceptably adverse effects to the wider landscape settings of a number of designated and non-designated historic buildings, and of the Hurst Area of Special Character. It would also substantially erode an area of open farmland on the margins of the village which is an important and largely unchanged historic survival. While not formally designated as such, this surviving fieldscape is integral to its historic plan and landscape context of the village, and forms an important settlement gap. While the overall level of harm to heritage assets and landscape resulting from the revised scheme is assessed as being in the middle range of less than substantial, this would extend to the higher range of less than substantial in the case of some

individual heritage assets. This Appeal Statement for heritage therefore endorses many of the assessments and opinions expressed in an earlier Planning Rebuttal report (RHC 2026). The revised scheme would conflict with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies TB21, TB24 and TB26 of the WBC MDD Local Plan.

8.19 The Appeal Site and its surroundings have been assessed against the relevant criteria of the GLVIA 3: *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (2013), and are found to demonstrate all relevant landscape qualities, including scenic quality, rarity, conservation interest and associations. WBC has therefore established that the Appeal Site and surrounding landscape contain numerous and significant visual landscape attributes, which include:

- The **landscape condition** is assessed as moderate across the whole of the LCA, although the physical landscape, rural settlement pattern and openness of the rural landscape is intact. The landscape around the Appeal Site is of a higher quality.
- There is **scenic quality** in views along Broadwater Lane to the east and west, of the backdrop of the Appeal Site, and the land to the west of the Appeal Site which provides the setting of the AOSC, and importantly the views from Hogmoor Lane, through the gap between Long Barn and Apple Tree Cottage, which are important to the recreational routes from Hogmoor Lane such as PRoW STNH9.
- The Appeal Site and the wider area of pastoral fields to the west, are **rare** in that they have Veteran trees identified on the ATI, which are located in the field boundary hedgerows which themselves are a rare feature, thus elevating the rarity and landscape value of the Appeal Site and its setting.
- The Appeal Site and immediate setting are **representative** of the Valuable Landscape Attributes described in Character Area 2 of the Landscape Character Assessment.

8.20 The 2025 Planning Inspector did not appear to acknowledge the landscape value attributed to the Appeal Site and its surroundings. However, the landscape assessment undertaken by Wokingham Borough Council against relevant criteria of the GLVIA (2013), and summarised in paragraph 8.19 above, has demonstrated conclusively that the Appeal Site is associated with important landscape values, and that these should be a material consideration in any Appeal decision.



Fig. 13: View, looking north from Parker's Cottage and across Broadwater Lane, of the proposed western section of the Appeal Site.



Fig. 14: View, of June, 2026, looking north-west across the proposed western section of the Appeal Site, from the garden of Wards Cross House.

9. ADDRESSING THE APPELLANT'S CASE FOR HERITAGE

- 9.1 The Appellant's case for heritage is expressed in two documents. Of these, the most detailed is Appeal Statement prepared by Forum Heritage Services (2026), with the principal points and conclusions summarised in the Planning Appeal Statement prepared by Shorewood Homes (2026). The respective case made in both documents is addressed separately below.

Forum Heritage Services' Appeal Statement

- 9.2 The comparatively brief Appeal Statement prepared by Forum Heritage Services is not structured in the manner of a conventional Written Representation, and principally comprises an assessment of impacts to the settings of heritage assets on Broadwater Lane. This assessment rehearses many of the points and conclusions of the earlier heritage statements produced by Asset Heritage Services (2024 and 2025) but, remarkably, does not address the heritage impacts associated with that part of the Appeal Site facing Hogmoor Lane. For this reason, and in view of the complete lack of supporting photographs and plans, it is unclear whether the author has visited the Site, or has any first-hand knowledge of its topography or visual relationships. This Appeal Statement also wholly fails to consider the Area of Special Character (AOSC), or the broader implications of the Appeal Site for the historic landscape context of Hurst village which contained within the current proposals.

The Listed Buildings along Broadwater Lane

- 9.3 The Appellant's Appeal Statement principally addresses Reason for Refusal 3 of the 2025 planning application, ie.

'The proposals, by virtue of its location, would fail to conserve the setting of four designated heritage assets in the form of Grade II-listed buildings (Bower Cottage, Parkers Cottage, Elder Cottage and Wards Cross House). This is contrary to Policy TB24 of the MDD Plan and NPPF'.

- 9.4 Bower and Parkers Cottages are identified as small, timber-framed vernacular buildings of seventeenth and eighteenth-century date. Historically, it is argued that these are likely to have comprised the modest dwellings of smallholders or labourers. The author implies that the apparently modest historical status of these buildings in some way detracts from their current significance as heritage assets. However, as important surviving examples of vernacular construction, and as Grade II-listed heritage assets, such cannot be the case.

- 9.5 The author asserts in Paragraph 4.3 of the Appeal Statement that, ‘beyond the domestic curtilage of these cottages, the principal aspect of setting which contributes to the significance of these listed buildings is their relationship to Broadwater Lane.’ While, historically, this will have comprised an important relationship, the character of Broadwater Lane, as the busy modern thoroughfare of the A321 has undergone considerable change, so that it now does not contribute positively to the setting or significance of the listed buildings concerned. It is strongly argued that the broader agricultural landscape beyond Broadwater Lane comprises a more important aspect of wider setting, and provides an historical context for these listed buildings which has remained unchanged since the time of their construction. Moreover, the intervening Broadwater Lane does not represent a visual barrier between the listed buildings and the open land to the north. The Appellant’s Appeal Statement has failed to recognise this important relationship.
- 9.6 In Paragraph 4.2, the author observes that Bower and Elder Cottage have substantial boundary treatments at their frontages, which partly screen these buildings in views from Broadwater Lane, and thus restrict their visibility at street level. However, such temporary modern boundary features do not wholly obscure visual connections between these buildings and the open land to the north. In any case, such features would not be considered by current setting guidance to preclude setting impact. In any case, the open land to the north of Broadwater Lane is set at a slightly higher elevation than the intervening roadway, and inter-visibility is not impeded by any boundary hedgerows. In addition, the higher elevations and roof-lines of the proposed dwellings would render these conspicuous in any views from the southern side of Broadwater Lane.
- 9.7 In Paragraph 4.3 of the Appeal Statement, the author observes that the Grade II-listed buildings exhibit a degree of group value which contributes to the settings of the buildings concerned and enhances their individual and collective significance. However, it is argued that, as an historically coherent group, the historic farmland to the north of Broadwater Lane, including the Appeal Site, comprises part of a wider surrounding historic landscape and therefore represents an even more significant aspect of setting.
- 9.8 Despite the evident relationship described above, the author observed that there is no evidence of an historical association between the listed buildings and the Appeal Site which might contribute to their significance. However, such an apparent lack of documentary evidence cannot in itself demonstrate that such a relationship did not exist. More broadly, it is reasonable to argue that the

post-medieval inhabitants of these dwellings, plausibly identified as probable smallholders or labourers, will have been directly or indirectly engaged in agriculture, and that the very proximity of the land in question would certainly imply that such a working association existed. More generally, we might assume a close working and tenorial connection between the historic village and its farming hinterland, of which the Appeal Site and surrounding open land will have formed a part. An implied close historical association between these listed buildings and surrounding farmland is therefore entirely reasonable. More specifically, documentary evidence does exist for a direct historical relationship between Wards Cross House and surrounding land and, by implication, similar relationships may well have existed for surrounding historic buildings.

- 9.9 In paragraph 4.5 the Appellant's Appeal Statement acknowledges that Grade II-listed Parkers Cottage has direct visual linkage with the Appeal Site. Elder Cottage is described as being partly screened by a fence on its frontage but directly addressing the curtilage of Wards Cross House across Broadwater Lane. The settings of these two Grade II-listed buildings would arguably be the most affected by the proposed development, as confirmed by the opinion of the 2025 Planning Inspector. On this basis, the Appellant's case is further weakened by current Historic England guidance on setting:

'The settings of heritage assets which closely resembles the setting at the time the asset was constructed or formed are likely to contribute particularly strongly to significance, but settings which have changed may also enhance significance'.

The Appeal Site and surrounding open area north of Broadwater Lane have remained historically unchanged, and therefore comprise a significant historic landscape survival. The Appeal Site therefore comprises an important aspect of setting, and one which contributes strongly to the significance of Parkers and Elder Cottages, and other surrounding heritage assets. This is particularly true of Wards Cross House, which, despite modern additions, has a close spatial and visual relationship with the Appeal Site.

- 9.10 In paragraph 4.7 the Appellant's Appeal Statement asserts that:

'Whilst the Site's use as agricultural land is likely to have been in use [*sic*] as such when the cottages were built, this does not mean that the level of visibility across this area of landscape was as there is today. It is likely that the fields were bounded by hedges, possibly substantial hedges, that would have completely screened this landscape from view [*sic*] from the road'.

This tendentious speculation suggests that the Appeal Site may not have been visible from the listed buildings on the southern side of Broadwater Lane. No such hedgerows exist today, and the historic mapping evidence for field boundaries surrounding the Appeal Site suggests that no such intervening hedgerows would have existed since at least the mid-eighteenth century, and no doubt much earlier. An earlier historic landscape study undertaken by Ridgeway Heritage Consultancy included a detailed assessment of Lidar and aerial photographic data within and surrounding the Appeal Site, which included no evidence of former ‘substantial hedges’. The fieldscape surrounding the Appeal Site does include an historic hedgerow boundary on its northern side, but otherwise appears to have been open since the medieval period.

- 9.11 There is broad agreement with the claim made in paragraph 4.8 of the Appellants Appeal Statement, that the ‘Site’s historic land use (agriculture) existed before the (listed) buildings were constructed, and forms part of their setting’. This point is largely irrelevant, however. The Site and surrounding open area comprise a surviving rural landscape which both served and defined the medieval and post-medieval village, and was integral to its economy and function. In broader terms, it therefore forms an important surviving element of the historic context and setting of the entire village, and of the neighbouring AOSC.

Wards Cross House

- 9.12 In paragraph 4.12 of the Appellant’s Appeal Statement, Wards Cross House is acknowledged to have an historical tenurial association with its surrounding farmland, although it is understood that this relationship has long since ceased to apply and that this house no longer has any functional relationship with the former farm buildings which used to lie within its curtilage. However, these continue to form an important aspect of setting. The open farmland immediately to the west of Wards Cross House comprises an unaltered aspect of the rural setting of the former farmhouse, which continues to contribute importantly to its significance (Fig. 14). Wards Cross House also addresses Hogmoor Lane on its eastern side, although the historical importance of this relationship remains unclear. Despite later and modern boundary treatments, the Appeal Site remains visible in westward views from Wards Cross House, within which the first floors and roof-lines of proposed new dwellings would be conspicuous. This would inevitably result in substantial impact to the setting and significance of the Grade II-listed building. The Appellants’ assertion, in Paragraph 4.12 that; ‘the land along Broadwater Lane makes no meaningful contribution to the special interest of the heritage asset’ is therefore strongly disputed. Since the seventeenth century, the Appeal Site has

comprised an unaltered and closely associated part of this setting, and one which contributes importantly to understandings of its historical development and function.

- 9.13 The case of Wards Cross House exemplifies the manner in which the Appellant's case rests solely on assessments of existing visual relationships with the Appeal Site, and not on relationships with the Appeal Site *as a completed development*. This is a critically important distinction. The Appellant's case is considerably weakened by the absence of any detailed supporting proposals for the scale, massing, elevation design or materials of proposed dwellings, although it must be recognised that the proposed dwellings on both Broadwater and Hogmoor Lanes would display a roof-ridge heights of not less than 8-9m, so that these would be highly conspicuous in shorter and long-range views. Setting and landscape impact assessments should therefore relate to the Appeal Site *as developed*, and not to its currently open state.

Hogmoor Lane

- 9.14 Remarkably, the Appellant's Appeal Statement only assesses the effect of that part of the Appeal Site which borders Broadwater Lane, and includes no assessment of that eastern element which faces onto Hogmoor Lane (Figs. 9, 11 and 12). This aspect of the proposed development has important implications for the settings of two non-listed historic buildings, namely Long Barn and Munfin House, and for the quality of westward views from Hogmoor Lane. These emphasise the essentially rural character of the village margins along Hogmoor Lane, and contribute importantly to the AOSC. In view of current NPPF provisions for non-designated heritage assts, these are important considerations.

The Area of Special Character (AOSC)

- 9.15 Equally remarkably, the Appellant's Appeal Statement makes no reference to the AOSC, or to the potential effects of the proposed development upon it. The detailed assessment made above in this Statement will not be repeated here, although it is emphasised that the unchanged rural character of the directly adjoining Appeal Site and surrounding land comprises an important aspect of the landscape context and setting of the AOSC, and that the Appeal scheme would result in a measurable degree of harm to the AOSC (Figs. 9, 11 and 12). The Permission in Principle application was refused partly because the proposed scheme would be contrary to Policy TB26 of the MDD local Plan, and would fail to retain and enhance the Hurst AOSC, and would harm the setting and significance of surrounding heritage assets.

Historic Landscape Character

- 9.16 The Appellant's Appeal Statement includes no assessment of historic landscape character, or of the spatial importance of the Appeal Site and surrounding area. The proposed development would substantially erode an area of open farmland on the margins of the village which is an important and largely unchanged historic survival. This would leave any surviving open area to the north of Broadwater Lane vulnerable to future infill development. While not formally designated as such, this surviving fieldscape is integral to the historic plan and landscape context of the village, and forms an important green settlement gap between Hurst and Whistley Green. The Appeal Site and its surroundings have been assessed against the relevant criteria of the GLVIA 3: *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (2013), and are found to demonstrate all relevant landscape qualities, including scenic quality, rarity, conservation interest and associations. WBC has therefore established that the Appeal Site and surrounding landscape contain numerous and significant visual landscape attributes.

Levels of Harm to the Significance of Heritage Assets

- 9.17 The Appellant's Appeal Statement includes assessment of the various levels of harm to the significance of affected heritage assets resulting from changes to their settings. These assessments differ from those made by the 2025 Planning Inspector and Local Planning Authority Officers. The case of Buttercups, and possibly that of Grade II-listed Hunters Cottage, have not been considered in the Appellant's assessment. However, while the Appeal Scheme would undoubtedly result in a lower degree of setting impact to these heritage assets than that resulting from the 2024 scheme, the level of harm would still be within the lower range of less than substantial.
- 9.18 In the case of Bower Cottage, while the 2024 scheme would have extended further along Broadwater Lane, the Appeal Scheme would have a lower degree of visibility from the frontage of this set-back heritage asset, with the level of resulting harm assessed in the lower range of less than substantial. However, in the case of Parkers Cottage and Elder Cottage, the spatial and visual relationship with the Appeal Site would remain essentially unchanged. While the proposed development would be partly set back from the road frontage on this side, a substantial degree of visibility and setting impact would remain, particularly in view of the likely scale and massing of proposed dwellings and the conspicuous bellmouth opening onto Broadwater Lane. Despite the Appellant's claims, the resulting level of harm to the setting and significance of these Grade II-listed buildings would remain at the higher end of less than substantial, as confirmed by the 2025

Planning Inspector. In this respect, the Appeal Scheme would offer no advantages to the 2024 scheme.

- 9.19 While the earlier Asset Heritage Consulting assessment unaccountably asserted that the 2025 scheme would result in no harm to the setting and significance of Wards Cross House, the Local Planning Authority assessed the level of resulting harm to be in the higher range of less than substantial. As westward views from the rear of this Grade II-listed property would include closely located new dwelling units, it is simply not credible to assert, as in paragraph 5.12 of the Appellant's Appeal Statement, that the Appeal Scheme 'is unlikely to have any inter-visibility between Wards Cross House and the proposed development'. There would in fact be considerable inter-visibility between the two, and any impact on the unchanged historic setting of this building would be considerable, resulting in a degree of harm which would remain in the higher range of less than substantial. The Appellant's Appeal Statement has not considered any levels of harm resulting from impacts to the settings of the non-designated heritage assets along Hogmoor Lane, and the level of resulting harm to these is assessed to be in the middle range of less than substantial.

The Appellant's Planning Statement

- 9.20 The Appellant's Appeal Statement for Planning asserts that, 'Whilst the Council alleges a high level of less than substantial harm to three listed buildings, there would be no harm to Elder Cottage and Wards Cross House'. For the reasons stated above, such is manifestly not the case. While the earlier Planning Inspector did not attribute harm to Wards Cross House, the Local Planning Authority has credibly identified such harm at the higher end of less than substantial.
- 9.21 The Appellant's Planning Statement claims that any harm to Bower Cottage and Parkers Cottage would be at the very lowest, or lower, end of the less than substantial harm spectrum. The fact that these buildings have front boundary features, or have been subject to later extensions and alterations is irrelevant, and claims of historical screening hedgerows on the Appeal Site cannot be sustained. Despite the reductions in scale of the Appeal scheme, the degree of setting impact and resulting levels of harm to these heritage assets would not significantly differ from that of the 2024 scheme.
- 9.22 Contrary to the claims of the Appellant, the Local Planning Authority's conclusions regarding the AOSC have not overstated the likely effects of the Appeal scheme on the AOSC. While it is acknowledged that previous concerns regarding veteran trees have no relationship to current

proposals, the Appellant has wholly failed to acknowledge the importance of the unaltered landscape setting and context of the AOSC and its importance as an aspect of historic setting, and as a strategic gap between settlements. The Appeal scheme would introduce a linear form of development along the *northern* side of Broadwater Lane and the western side of Hogmoor Lane, which would result in harm to the historic context, setting and significance of the AOSC.

- 9.23 We are in agreement with WBC officers, that the proposed internal road within the Appeal Site would result in an inappropriate and overly urban contrast with the surrounding area, resulting in harm to landscape character and extending to the setting of the AOSC. We are in agreement with WBC officers, that the level of attributed harm to this non-designated heritage asset would be in the moderate to high range of less than substantial. While the proposed development is claimed to be reflect the linear pattern of development along Broadwater Lane, such development applies only to the *southern* side of the Lane, and not to the open northern side.
- 9.24 While the proposed internal access road linking Broadwater Lane with Hogmoor Lane would not be readily perceptible from Broadwater Lane, other than a glimpsed transient view, the Appellant has failed to recognise the wider visibility of substantial detached dwellings from both Broadwater and Hogmoor Lanes. The Appellant's case is not supported by any proposed elevation designs or visual impact assessments for the completed development.
- 9.25 Despite the more limited separation distance with Buttercups proposed in the Appeal scheme, it is asserted that a residual degree of setting impact would exist for this heritage asset. For the detailed reasons given above, the Appellant's claims of a very low level of harm to the settings and significance of Bower Cottage and Parkers Cottage cannot be sustained. Equally, the claims of no harm to the significance of Elder Cottage and Wards Cross House are comprehensively dismissed, despite limited changes to respective separation distances.
- 9.26 It is acknowledged that the Appeal Site proposal include a set-back from the Broadwater Lane frontage, with some intervening landscaping. However, any beneficial effects of this in terms of reduced impacts to heritage settings, would be limited by the effect of the proposed and conspicuous bellmouth opening on this side, together with the massing and scale of proposed dwelling units. The Local Planning Authority is correct in attributing comparable levels of setting impact and harm as for the 2024 scheme.

10. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

1. The Appeal Site would have no effect on the distant Hurst Conservation Area, but would directly adjoin the Hurst Area of Special Character (AOSC). The Appeal Site itself contains no heritage assets.
2. An application for Permission in Principle has been submitted for three detached dwellings on the northern side of Broadwater Lane, and four similar dwellings on the south-eastern frontage of Hogmoor Lane (ref. 260353). The two elements of the revised Application Site would be linked by an access roadway leading off Broadwater Lane, with a prominent bellmouth turning apron. The proposed dwellings on the Broadwater Lane side would be set back from the road frontage, behind a landscaped strip. The elevation design of the proposed dwellings would necessarily be a reserved matter, although their scale, massing detailing and material palette are assumed to broadly accord with that of local built form. This application was dismissed in March 2016, and is now the subject of the current Appeal.
3. A previous application, for nine detached dwellings to occupy the currently open frontage on the northern side of Broadwater Lane, was dismissed at Appeal, in October, 2025. In relation to heritage and landscape matters, the Inspector established the following points:
 - The attributes of the Site contribute positively to the settings of surrounding listed buildings;
 - This contribution would be significantly undermined by the proposed development, and would cause harm to the settings of surrounding listed buildings;
 - The level of resulting harm would be towards the higher end of less than substantial, which would be contrary to Policy TB26 of the MDLP, which requires that considerable weight be given to the preservation of the settings of listed buildings;
 - The landscape attributes of the Site include the peaceful and undeveloped character of a pastoral landscape. While not an intrinsically valuable or designated landscape, this contributes positively to the settings of listed building and the AOSC; and
 - Policy TB26 of the MDLP states that planning permission should only be granted for proposals affecting AOSCs when they demonstrably enhance the traditional, historical, local and special character of the Area.

4. While the proposed reduction in development on the Broadwater Lane frontage would partly, but not entirely, reduce the level of setting impact on Grade II-listed Buttercups and Bower Cottage, this development would remain visible from these two properties, and views of the reduced open landscape setting to their north would be narrowed and compromised. Notwithstanding the proposed offsetting of dwellings behind a roadside strip along Broadwater Lane, there would be little or no change in the high degree of impact to the settings of Grade II-listed Elder Cottage, Parker's Cottage and Wards Cross House. The Appellant's Appeal Statement has considerably overestimated any beneficial effects, of reduced levels and offsetting of development on Broadwater Lane, on both heritage settings and the AOSC.
5. Adverse setting impacts in these cases would be exacerbated by the prominent bellmouth opening onto Broadwater Lane, and by resulting additional traffic movements and activity. High levels of less than substantial harm, comparable to those resulting from the 2024 scheme, would relate to the setting and significance of Parker's and Elder Cottages, and of Wards Cross House, would apply equally to the revised scheme.
6. The proposed four dwellings within the eastern element of the Site would face onto Hogmoor Lane, and would considerably detract from the quiet rural aspect of this road and the direct views of open countryside on its north-western side. The Appellant's Appeal Statement has not included any assessment of the effects on Hogmoor Lane, or its constituent heritage assets. The westward views from Hogmoor Lane, and its open rural surroundings, contribute importantly to the settings and significance of non-listed Long Barn and Munfin House, both of which are of historic interest. Such development might also have a more limited effect on the wider rural setting of adjacent Grade II-listed The Old Posting House, on the south-eastern side of Hogmoor Lane.
7. The revised Application Site directly abuts the AOSC, and would be included within an important part of its rural setting and context, and one which is closely related to the historic development and character of Hurst village. The proposed development would therefore fail to comply with the special character and historic landscape context of the AOSC, and would conflict with Policies TB21 and TB26 of the MDLP. The proposed development and its essentially suburban character, would be directly visible from neighboring parts of the AOSC and its component historic buildings, and would greatly detract from the quality of such views and perceptions of the historic landscape setting and context of the wider village. The Appellant's Appeal Statement has not included any

assessment of historic landscape character or value, or of the spatial and historical important of the open land north of Broadwater Lane which includes the Appeal Site.

8. The area of open farmland to the north of Broadwater Lane comprises a significant historic settlement gap, which identifies Hurst as a spatially distinct village settlement. Any erosion of this existing gap would render the balance of undeveloped land vulnerable to future infill development, with the risk of ribbon development completely removing the existing open rural distinction between Hurst village and Whistley Green.
9. Far from ameliorating adverse effects on heritage settings and the AOSC, the Appeal scheme would simply displace an element of proposed development footprint to the north-east, with little, if any, reduction in aggregate setting impact. The Appellant's Appeal and Planning Statements have failed to accurately assess the degree of heritage setting impact associated with the proposed development, and have failed to acknowledge the resulting levels of harm to the settings of affected heritage assets, together with the contribution made to the AOSC by its existing rural landscape context.
10. Contrary to the views expressed within the Appellant's Appeal Statement, the proposed scheme would result in unacceptable adverse effects to the wider landscape settings of a number of designated and non-designated historic buildings, and of the Hurst Area of Special Character. It would also erode an area of open farmland on the margins of the village which is integral to its historic landscape context, and which forms an important settlement gap between Hurst and an adjoining village. The overall level of harm to heritage assets and landscape resulting from the Appeal scheme is assessed as being towards the higher end of less than substantial. This Appeal Statement therefore strongly endorses the assessments and opinions expressed in earlier assessments (RHC 2026), and the earlier comments and observations made in the Planning Inspector's report of October, 2025. The revised scheme would also conflict with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies TB21, TB24 and TB26 of the Wokingham Borough MDDL.

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APPENDIX A: CURRICULUM VITAE FOR DR RICHARD MASSEY

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

A widely experienced archaeologist and heritage professional, with a strong academic background and proven track-record, in both commercial and curatorial sectors, in the successful management of change in the historic environment.

WORK HISTORY

Ridgeway Heritage Consultancy (October 2020 – present)

I have established an independent consultancy practice, offering bespoke heritage and archaeological advice to a growing client base, with a wide range of projects, including area assessments for archaeology and cultural heritage, historic buildings, setting assessments, urban landscapes and conservation areas, Conservation Management Plans and archaeological fieldwork.

Key recent projects have included:

- Key view impact assessments for Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew World Heritage Site;
- Conservation Area and urban character impact assessments for Eaton Terrace SW1.
- Conservation plans and conservation area assessments for three sites in Cheltenham;
- Conservation Area impact assessments for RORC, Cowes, IoW;
- Setting and urban landscape and archaeology assessments for a major development in central Southampton;
- Historic landscape study and pre-demolition recording of a building in Nettlebed, Oxon;
- Historic landscape study and impact assessment for a listed barn at Chedworth, Glos;
- Historic landscape study and impact assessment at Twickenham, Middx.
- Historic landscape study and heritage impact assessment at Middle Littleton, Worcs.
- Conservation Area and urban character impact assessment for Petersfield, Hants.
- Historic landscape and cultural heritage study for Boars Hill, Oxon.

Cotswold Archaeology (November 2013 – October 2020)

Senior Heritage Consultant and Post-Excavation Manager

Engaged in advising wide range of local authority, national agency and commercial clients, and in archaeology project management. Project work has included EIAs, impact assessments, landscape surveys, urban area assessments, statutory consents, archaeological mitigation strategies, appeals and detailed pre- and post-application planning support. Effective project management and delivery within demanding time and cost constraints.

Key achievements have included:

- Archaeology/heritage mitigation strategies and survey for former Wisley Airfield MDA, Surrey;
- Fort Gilkicker, Gosport, 2016-2017. Residential conversion of a scheduled 19th-century fort.
- Bicester Gateway, Oxon 2016-2017. Archaeological management for major mixed-use site.
- Temple Quay, Bristol, 2015-16. Planning support and assessment for major mixed development;
- Finzel's Reach, Redcliffe, Bristol, 2015. 'Constructive Conservation' repair and re-purposing of historic industrial buildings on margins of inner-city conservation areas.
- Fraser Range Development, Eastney, Portsmouth, 2016-20. Major re-development of 20th-century defence site, including impacts on archaeology and setting of Fort Cumberland.
- Archaeological survey and management plans for Three National Trust Estates;
- Heritage management and consents for major renewable energy schemes.
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English Heritage SE Region (June 2005 — November 2013)

Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Hampshire, Surrey, West Sussex and Isle of Wight

Provision of statutory planning advice and consents for a wide variety of applications affecting scheduled monuments, archaeological areas and the wider historic environment. Scope of work included detailed pre-application advice, project scoping, designations, heritage at risk, heritage crime investigations, maritime and forestry management plans, national park and partnership agency liaison, repair and conversion of historic structures and archaeological management plans.

Key achievements included:

- Archaeological management of HLF-funded Guildford and Farnham Castle projects and Fernhurst Furnace, West Sussex;
- DERA Chobham, and other MoD disposal sites;
- Portsmouth Battery 2012-13, and Spitbank Fort, Portsmouth, 2007-12. Regeneration projects for repair and conversion of scheduled coastal defences to retail/craft units and hotel.
- Fort Nelson, Portsmouth "Voice of the Guns" HLF-funded project for integration of historic fort structures with modern visitor facilities and display spaces.
- New Mary Rose Museum in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, 2007-2012. Conversion of scheduled historic dock and assessment of non-physical setting impacts for new museum.
- New Forest and South Downs National Parks Lidar survey and interpretation 2009-12.
- Southampton West Quay III projects, 2006-2012 and Lower High Street regeneration scheme.

English Heritage SE Region (January 1997 — May 2005)

Historic Environment Field Advisor: SE Counties

Repair/management agreements and grant aid for repair. Monitoring of recording briefs associated with monument consent. Correlation of Heritage at Risk data and prioritisation of sites and monuments for conservation. Working with local authorities and partnership agencies in developing common SAM management strategies. Key achievements include: English Heritage regional Heritage at Risk projects, 2004-2012, and DEFRA Management of Arable Landscapes Project 2002-3.

SKILLS

- Good IT skills, including use of MS Office and GIS applications;
- Familiarity with planning process, consent procedures and heritage policies and guidance;
- Effective project management and familiarity with decision-making processes in archaeology;
- Lidar and aerial photography: mapping and interpretation.
- Good report writing and presentation skills, with excellent written and oral communication;
- Wide archaeological/heritage knowledge, including architectural history, and comprehensive experience of heritage assets and historic environments;
- Current driving licence.

EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

Chartered Institute for Archaeology

2006 MCIfA: Full member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

University of Reading

PhD: Archaeology (06/2006)

‘The Formation of the Atrebatian kingdoms: settlement change and social formation in the Late Iron Age of Central-Southern Britain’

University of Bristol (02/2000)

MA: Landscape Archaeology (Distinction)

Society of Antiquaries

Elected Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries (FSA), December 2020.

Oxford University Department of Continuing Education

Undergraduate and Weekly Course Tutor in Archaeology (2009-present).



RIDGEWAY

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