

Land at
old forest road
Wokingham

Design & Access Statement
June 2025



contents

Providing the information required by:

THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2015, SECTION 9: "DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENTS" [\[LINK\]](#).

NATIONAL PLANNING PRACTICE GUIDANCE: MAKING AN APPLICATION, PARAGRAPH 031 (2014): "DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT" [\[LINK\]](#).

BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE (2020) (BHL) [\[LINK\]](#). [NB some BHL responses are in 2 parts - indicated by brackets].

THE NATIONAL DESIGN GUIDE (2021) [\[LINK\]](#).



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introduction

Our Vision:

“A spacious development with emphasis on landscape led space, providing frontage to Toutley Road, in response to a visually sensitive site”



Elstree Land is seeking Full Planning Permission, from Wokingham Borough Council, for a residential development of 53 homes located at Old Forest Road, Wokingham.

“Erection of 53no. dwellings with associated landscaping, parking, drainage, open space and other associated works”

This application has been prepared by a comprehensive Professional Team across a range of disciplines, including the following contributors to this Design and Access Statement:

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Urban Design & Architecture: | DHA Architecture |
| Landscape & Ecology: | Aspect |
| Arboriculture: | GDA |
| Planning: | Savills |
| Transport & Highways: | Stuart Michael Associates |

In developing this site, Elstree Land is seeking to create a new environment which enhances both the landscape and the built character of the neighbourhood, delivering sustainable development for Wokingham.

In the following chapters we illustrate our design principles and concepts for the new development: the memorable, legible masterplan, safe and accessible movement network, characterful landscaping, and distinctive, contextual architectural language and materials palette.

Elstree Land is proud of these high-quality proposals and is committed to carrying out this exemplar development.





A total of
53
new
homes...

...including
21
affordable
homes

Retaining existing high quality mature trees as part of the greenspace setting and character of the development

Attractive landscaped open space for enjoyment and play

Promoting pedestrian, cycle and public transport modes: direct, inviting and safe routes which dovetail with existing services

Sustainable drainage: designed and landscaped as part of the character of the public greenspaces

Vehicular entrance to the new neighbourhood as agreed with the Highways department

National Design Guide

bringing our vision to life

Identity

Attractive and distinctive

Built Form

A coherent pattern of development

Movement

Accessible and easy to move around

Nature

Enhanced and optimised

Public spaces

Safe, social and inclusive

... creating an accessible, compact, walkable neighbourhood
... with streets & spaces designed with trees & soft landscaping as part of their character

... providing a legible, connected movement network through & beyond the development

... with a connected network of natural landscaped amenity and social spaces
... preserving & reinforcing existing landscape features, environments & trees

... including places designed for play, socialising & community activities for all ages
... with a high quality public realm with good surveillance



bringing our vision to life

... with distinctive placemaking to establish a strong sense of ownership
... using traditional materials for a long maintenance-free lifespan

... inspired by Wokingham's unique characteristics
... designed to become an established part of the town

... with a welcoming character & identity
... and a considered, contextual design response to this unique site

Lifespan

Made to last

Context

Enhances the surroundings

Identity

Attractive and distinctive

Built Form

A coherent pattern of development

Movement

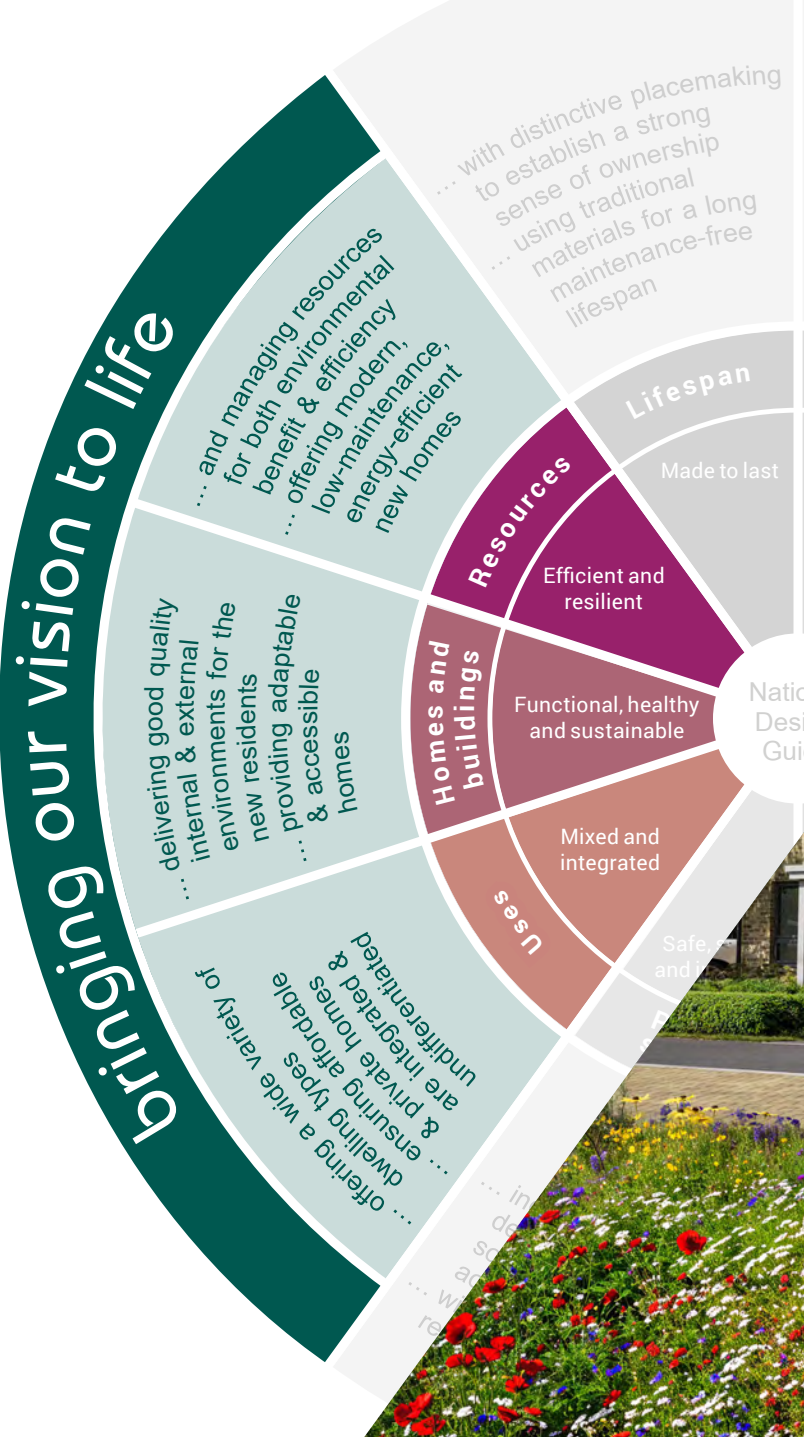
Accessible and easy to move around

National Design Guide

... creating an accessible, compact, walkable neighbourhood
... with streets & spaces designed with trees & soft landscaping as part of their character

... providing a legible, connected movement network through & beyond the development

ref.3 CGI showing housing addressing Toutley Road



ref.4: CGI showing a mixed townscape in the body of the site

context of the development

“The steps taken to appraise the context of the development, and how the design of the development takes that context into account”

The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 para. 9.(3)(b)



wider setting of the application site

Prepared by Stuart Michael Associates

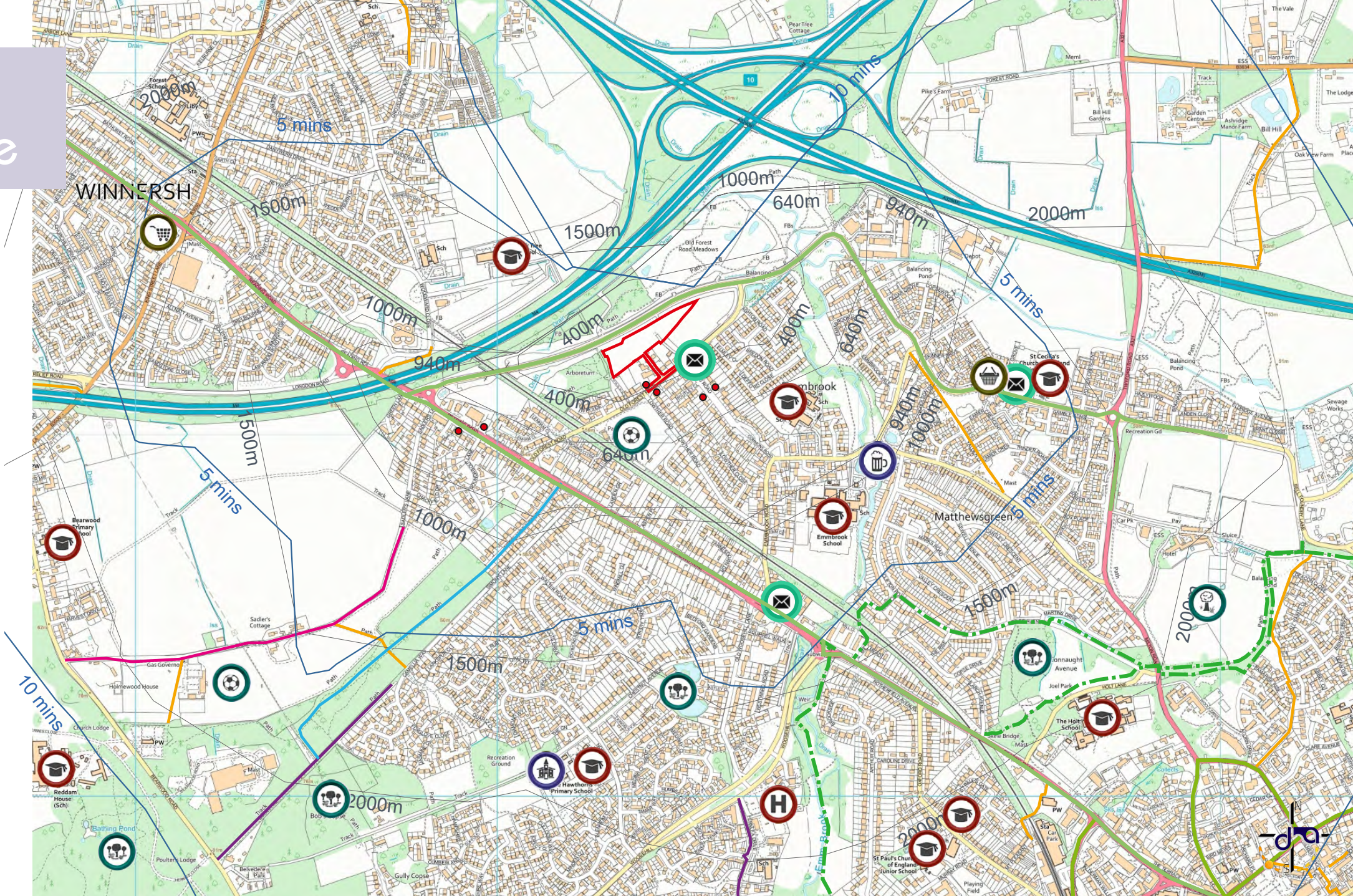


Walking, Cycling & Public Transport

...being the attractive choices for short trips -
improving physical health and the local
environment, reducing congestion, pollution and
carbon emissions.

Routes and destinations within an accessible three mile radius:

- KEY**
 Site Location
 Bus Stop
 Restricted Byway
 By-way open to all traffic
 Bridleway
 Footpath
 Walking Isochrones
 Cycling Isochrones
 Greenway Routes
 LCWIP Routes
 Royal Mail Postal Facility
- Sports Facility
 Supermarket
 Semi-Natural/ Natural Open Space
 Recreation/Public Space
 Medical Facilities
 Local Retail Centre
 Place of Worship
 Public House
 Schools/Educational Facilities



ref.5:
Wokingham's
Townscape Context



The Inspiring Local Townscape Context

We are committed to creating a new built environment which will be distinctively “of Wokingham”.

- ☞ This part of Wokingham does not have a strong overarching character - but in the local streets can be found some sources of inspiration and stimulus to deliver a design solution for this development which reflects and responds to what is particularly characterful and recognisable about this neighbourhood.
- ☞ These inspiring streets, spaces, buildings and materials are illustrated overleaf.



ref.6: Old Forest Road - Adjacent Buildings

Urban Form: More rural, low density development on generous plots found on the fringe of a suburban area. Detached and semi detached homes, located on a secluded sector of road away from primary routes, creating a quiet and safe environment. Garages and outbuildings are prominent, further emphasising the expansive plot sizing.

Design & Materials: The houses reflect traditional yet individualised designs. The first house shown utilises brick and timber, and features a steeply pitched roof with dormer windows. The second house features a white render finish and bay windows, with a more gently sloping slate hip roof. Though differing in style, they remain contextually appropriate and consistent with the local vernacular

Landscape & Open Space: Greenery and mature vegetation dominate the setting. Hedges, lawns, and trees contribute to a secluded feel, with foliage clearly defining boundaries between properties. The proposed development site to the north is currently open green space

Car Parking: Entirely off-street provision, due to the continuous, large nature of the driveways. The use of informal surfacing such as gravel helps soften the impact of parking in this rural setting





ref.7: Old Forest Road

Urban Form: Low to mid density suburban development comprising mainly two storey detached and semi-detached houses, with some three storey housing also present. Homes are spaced generously apart and set back from the road, reflecting a spacious and quiet residential layout.

Design & Materials: The buildings use a mix of red brickwork and render finishes, paired with pitched, tiled roofs in darker tones. Many houses have dormer windows and gable features such as roofs and porches, giving them a traditional British suburban appearance. Some portions of the facades incorporate cladding elements, adding depth to the building form. Symmetry in design helps to create a visually cohesive street identity

Landscape & Open Space: The area includes mature vegetation and maintained private front gardens enhance the sense of privacy, with hedges and soft landscaping helping to define property boundaries. Emmbrook sports club to the south of the road is an example of nearby open space.

Car Parking: Off-street parking is most common, with driveways and integrated garages in most properties. Parking is accommodated comfortably within each plot, avoiding on-street clutter.



ref.8: Ashton Road

Urban Form: Mid-density suburban development, typical of late 20th-century residential planning. The homes are a mix of detached or semi-detached units, with most properties enjoying a spacious frontage and driveway space. The street itself is quiet due to its nature as a cul-de-sac, enhancing safety due to the reduced traffic.

Design & Materials: The houses are built with traditional red brick exteriors, pitched tile roofs and white framed windows. Architectural features include gabled roofs, box dormers, and garage integrations under the main roofline.

Landscape & Open Space: Each property features modestly landscaped front gardens, with a mix of shrubs, small trees, and grassed areas - these are however quite limited, with concrete elements being often more predominant. Open space is provided nearby - through Emm Brook walk to the east.

Car Parking: Predominantly off-street, with most houses featuring driveways and built-in garages. The driveways are surfaced with block paving or concrete, allowing space for multiple vehicles. This approach helps reduce street congestion





ref.9: Toutley Road & Queens Road

Urban Form: A mid density modern suburban layout. Buildings are predominantly three storey flats along the main road, with two storey housing scattered around this. Building spacing allows for ample roadways, paths, and green buffers. The arrangement promotes a sense of openness and residential calmness, with a focus on walkability and family living, with streets that are wide and gently curved, which slows traffic and enhances pedestrian safety.

Design & Materials: The architecture features a mainly modern aesthetic, with some traditional influences. Brickwork is prominent, often in red or brown hues, sometimes paired with cladding of varied colours. Roofs are typically pitched with red or grey tiles, and many homes include balconies, designed with a contemporary approach. The neighbourhood design is cohesive and coordinated throughout, through its use of consistent design principles.

Landscape & Open Space: Greenery is particularly well integrated into the urban environment here. Trees line the roads, and there are large green buffers, landscaped verges, hedges, and small front gardens that soften the built form. Eamer Park is an example of open green space found just off of Queens Road to the south.

Car Parking: Primarily off-street and integrated into the housing layout, often to the rear of flats, or on small driveways in front of houses, preserving the walkable nature of the area.



ref.10: Reading Road

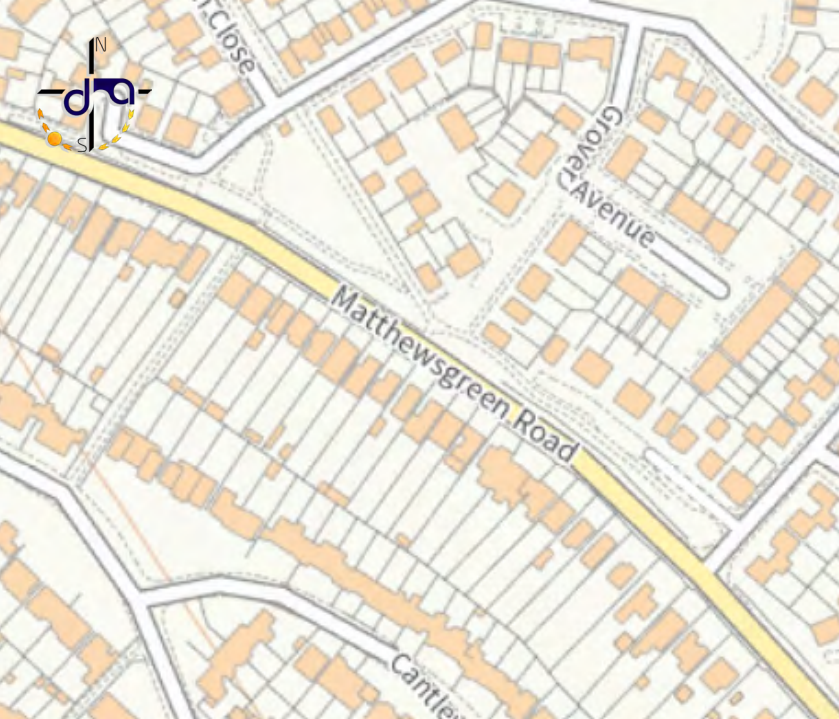
Urban Form: Mostly low-density development, characterized by detached houses with moderate spacing between them, as well as some semi detached properties. The layout reflects a suburban setting with an emphasis on privacy demonstrated through individual property boundaries clearly marked by fences and hedges. Houses are aligned in a linear formation due to the straight, extended nature of the road - creating a stuctured and neatly arranged composition of built elements.

Design & Materials: A mix of traditional English residential architectural styles are utilised. The choice of materiality and forms reflect a blend of post-war and early 20th-century design influences. The combination of red brickwork for the lower levels and detailing, and white render for the upper is evident accross some of these buildings - whilst some use either one of these in isolation. Roofs are pitched and tiled, contributing to a cohesive, classic suburban aesthetic.

Landscape & Open Space: Well-maintained hedges, private front gardens, and mature trees dominate the visual environment, enhancing the areas suburban, yet somewhat rural feel.

Car Parking: Expansive driveways and garages visible in front or to the side of the houses, providing residents with a surplus of spaces. This has likely been done to reduce on street parking - as the road is an A road.





ref.11: Matthews Green Road

Urban Form: Mid density suburban development, composed of mostly detached housing with tighter gaps between units, as well as some semi detached properties. The development is quite linear, yet retains an organic feel due to variance in plot sizes, spacing and forms.

Design & Materials: There is a relative blend of architectural styles, whilst retaining some level of consistency in terms of building scale. Newer homes feature contemporary interpretations of traditional forms, with clean lines and modern detailing, while older houses retain more classic styles with arched entrances and gable roofs, with some hip roofs also utilised. Materials include red and brown bricks, white render, and occasional use of timber or tile cladding - giving the street a sense of visual variety yet remaining harmonious.

Landscape & Open Space: Limited landscaping, with some small front gardens and hedgerows separating properties, through in many instances this is replaced by paved or gravel driveways. The opposite side of the street features a continuous mature hedgerow, as opposed to additional housing - adding ecological value and softening the landscape.

Car Parking: Off street parking is prioritised by driveways, which often accommodate multiple cars - necessary due to the narrow nature of the street. Garages are limited due to the smaller nature of the plots.



The Inspiring Local Landscape Context

We are committed to creating green and blue infrastructure which will be distinctively “of Wokingham”.

- Wokingham's character is also embodied by its open spaces and landscape characteristics.
- The proposed green infrastructure strategy is rooted in the distinctive identity of Wokingham and aims to reinforce the town's unique landscape character. Wokingham is defined in by its position within the gently undulating Thames Basin Heaths, featuring a mix of lowland farmland, ancient woodland, and remnant heathland. The area combines traditional agricultural fields bounded by hedgerows with semi-natural habitats like those in California Country Park, while also reflecting historic parklands and estate landscapes. Suburban expansion is softened by green corridors and woodland buffers, creating a transitional zone between town and countryside. The design approach responds to this context by preserving key landscape features such as mature trees and hedgerow connectivity to field boundaries.
- New planting will prioritise native and locally appropriate species to enhance biodiversity and reflect the local vernacular. Sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS), including an accessible drainage basin to the north east of the site, will be integrated as visible, multifunctional landscape elements. Overall, the landscape strategy aims to create a coherent, resilient, and characterful environment that is distinctively “of Wokingham,” supporting community wellbeing and long-term environmental sustainability.



The Inspiration:

The design is directly inspired by the natural relationship between the existing vegetation structure and surrounding areas of woodland to the west.

In keeping with the sensitive interface between new development and the surrounding setting, the landscape strategy includes a well-integrated edge treatment with the addition of tree and shrub planting to enhance the existing structure. This planting structure softens the transition between town and countryside, with landscape vegetation feathering naturally into the settlement fabric with the retention of existing trees centrally to the development creating a canopy structure leading toward Commons Road. The approach reinforces ecological connectivity, visual screening, and a sense of enclosure.



particular characteristics of the application site

... and identifying, understanding and responding to the opportunities and the constraints

... through which the development will make the most of the site's green and blue assets, topography, views and connections



Making the Most of What's There & Natural Green Connections:

Visual connection through site, west to east



Visual connection to SANG (Old Forest Meadows)



Existing neighbours to which the development must be sensitive - to the south of the application site



Vehicular access point from Old Forest Road



High quality trees and hedges to retain and integrate within new greenspace



Low quality trees and hedges - opportunity to remove to enable development



Trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order to be retained as an integral part of the new proposals



Potential Noise from Toutley Road, and M4 beyond this



ref.14:

Making the Most
of What's There &
Green Connections

Walking, Cycling, Public Transport, & Natural [Travel] Connections:

Potential pedestrian routes through site



Potential vehicular route through site



Main pedestrian and vehicular access point into the development from Old Forest Road



Bus stops along Old Forest Road and Commons Road



Secondary pedestrian access point and potential future connection to Old Forest Road



Existing footpath connecting Old Forest Road to local SANG



Facilities & Services:

Pedestrian and Vehicular routes towards Winnersh and Wokingham via Reading Road, as well as local sport provision/football club



Route to Emmbrook Primary School



ref.15:

Connections, Travel
Routes, Facilities
& Services



context of the development

how the design takes this context into account

... to establish development parameters
... and to formulate the design approach

Most of the dwellings enjoy
greenspace views, whilst providing
surveillance and a sensitive backdrop

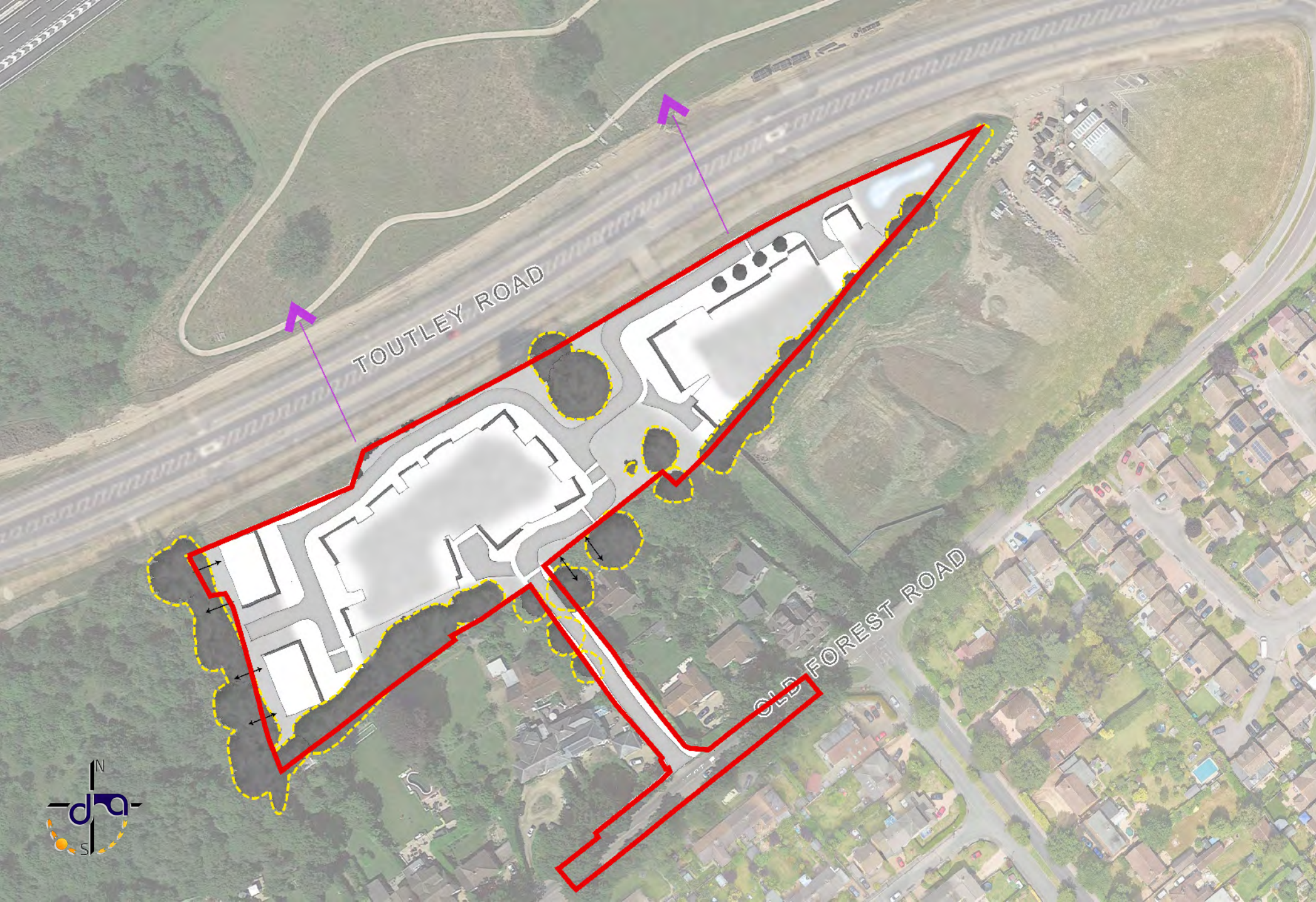
Pedestrian and cycle connections
to Old Forest Road

Tree lined path connecting
entrance to west of site

Flats located along the western edge of
the development, adjacent to woodland

Proposed vehicular access
to Old Forest Road





Making the Most of What's There

...and evolving our shared vision that celebrates the existing assets on and beyond the site.

Opportunities to integrate existing features of value - natural or manmade, on or beyond the site:

-  Visual connections out and beyond the site to SANG to the north.
-  High quality trees and hedges to retain and integrate within new greenspace.
-  Existing habitats/ecological corridors to be protected & enhanced.
-  Characteristic local building form which the development can be inspired by and reinforce - mid density detached/semi-detached
-  Characteristic local landscape which the development can be inspired by and reinforce - attractive landscaped green space

Understanding the opportunities and constraints:

-  Managed landscaped privacy buffer to neighbouring dwellings.
-  Sustainable drainage/water to also enhance greenspace character, biodiversity, and improve wellbeing

These considerations drawn together to create the street, block and open space structure shown on the framework plan.

