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Development Management
Wokingham Borough Council
Civic Offices, Shute End
Wokingham
RG40 1BN

2 March 2026

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Outline Planning Application at Land adjacent to Keepers Cottage, 39 Hyde End Road, Shinfield, Reading, RG2 9EP

I act on behalf of the University of Reading (*'the Applicant'*) and am instructed to submit an outline planning application to Wokingham Borough Council (*'the Council'*) for the erection of a single residential dwelling (Use Class C3) on Land adjacent to Keepers Cottage, 39 Hyde End Road, Shinfield, Reading, RG2 9EP. This application is submitted with all matters reserved.

This Statement describes the site and the proposal before assessing the development against the relevant policies within the Development Plan and other material considerations. It should be read alongside the following documents submitted in support of this application:

- a. The Relevant Application Form, signed and dated;
- b. Site Location Plan;
- c. Block Plan, dwg ref. A027 B 0038;
- d. Proposed Layout Plan, dwg ref. 220089/A001;
- e. Proposed Floor Plans, dwg ref. 220089/A002;
- f. Proposed Elevations, dwg ref. 220089/A003;
- g. BNG Report and metric calculations;
- h. Statement of Community Involvement (SCI);
- i. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Form, signed and dated; and
- j. Draft Unilateral Undertaking and SPA Mitigation Heads of Terms.

Please note that the relevant planning application fee has been paid separately via the Planning Portal. We would be grateful if you could take into account the contents of this letter in your consideration of the application.

The Site

The application site is located in the southern area of Shinfield, on the southern side of Hyde End Road (B3349) within a predominantly residential area.

The site comprises land adjacent to Keepers Cottage, a detached two storey three-bedroom residential dwelling with separate garage within a generous plot. 39 Hyde End Road has been divided and the land adjacent is now a separate plot comprising the application site. North of the site, a private road allows access to the 1st Shinfield Scouts headquarter building located to the rear of the site.



Fig 1. Keepers Cottage



Fig 2. The Application Site, land adjacent to 39 Hyde End Road

Shinfield village benefits from extensive amenities and includes facilities such as superstores, a petrol station, takeaways, and restaurants. Shinfield is particularly attractive to commuters due to its convenient access to major transport routes, including the M4, A33, and A329(M). While the local shops provide for day-to-day needs, larger shopping expeditions can be made to Wokingham or Reading, with Reading's Oracle Shopping Centre offering a wide variety of retail options.

The village is well-served by public transport, with railway stations in Winnersh, Wokingham, and Reading providing routes to London and the West Country. Additionally, Junction 11 of the M4 offers easy access to Heathrow Airport, Central London, the West Country, and the M25, making Shinfield a strategic location for both local living and broader travel.

The site is located within Flood Zone 1, in an area with a low probability of flooding, thus suitable for residential development.

The wider area is characterised by residential development of varying styles. However, the properties surrounding the site are predominantly detached and semidetached red brick two storey dwellings with habitable roof space. Landscaping in the vicinity is characterised by low boundary brick walls with planting/hedging and car parking fronting dwellings, with generous rear gardens. Images of dwellings in the immediate vicinity are shown at Figure 3 and 4 below.



Fig 3. Residential properties north of the site



Fig 4. Residential properties south of the site

The site is located within the development boundaries of Shinfield and within the 5km zone of influence of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA (TBHSPA).

Planning History

A review of the site's planning history has been undertaken using Wokingham's Council online database. Most recently, a planning in principle application for the proposed erection of one dwelling (LPA ref: 250636) was validated on 18 March 2025 and withdrawn on 15 April 2025.

In the assessment of this application, the Case Officer confirmed that, following a review of the site and proposal, the Council accepted the principle of residential development on the land. However, it was highlighted that a planning obligation concerning the Thames Basin Heaths mitigation cannot be secured via a Permission in Principle. Consequently, the Local Planning Authority advised that an outline application is the appropriate procedural route; this submission has been prepared accordingly.

The Proposal

The proposal is for the erection of a single detached residential dwelling on the application site, land adjacent to Keepers Cottage, 39 Hyde End Road.

This is an outline application with all matters reserved; accordingly, the accompanying plans are submitted for illustrative purposes only to demonstrate the development potential that could be achieved on the site.

Planning Policy

To the extent the Development Plan policies are material to an application for planning permission, the decision must be taken in accordance with the Development Plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise (Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning Compulsory Act 2004).

The policy framework relevant to the determination of this application consists of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) (NPPF), the Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework which comprises of the Core Strategy (adopted January 2010), the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (adopted February 2014) and the Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan (adopted January 2017). Within the proposals map, the site falls within the development boundaries of Shinfield and within the Thames Basin Heath SPA Mitigation Zone.

National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated in December 2024, with subsequent minor technical revisions and corrections issued in 2025. It remains the

primary guidance for local planning authorities and decision-takers and constitutes a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Section 4 of the NPPF advises authorities to approach decisions on applications, in a positive and creative way and that applications for sustainable development should be approved where possible. This section also highlights the importance of early engagement, suggesting that it has the potential to improve the efficiency of the planning process for both applicant and Council and result in a better outcome for the community (Paragraph 40).

The NPPF reinforces the Government's objective to significantly boost the supply of housing and is intended to prompt a shift in delivery to address the national housing crisis. The emphasis on the delivery of housing in sustainable locations remains a central pillar of the framework.

Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework

The policies relevant to the determination of the application are set out in Table 1 below.

Document	Policy	Description
Wokingham Core Strategy	CP1	Sustainable Development
	CP2	Inclusive Communities
	CP3	General Principles for Development
	CP5	Housing mix, density and affordability
	CP6	Managing Travel Demand
	CP7	Biodiversity
	CP8	Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area
	CP9	Scale and Location of Development Proposals
	CP17	Housing Delivery
Wokingham Managing Development Delivery	CC01	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
	CC02	Development Limits
	CC03	Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping
	CC04	Sustainable Design and Construction
	CC06	Noise
	CC07	Parking
	CC09	Development and Flood Risk
	CC10	Sustainable Drainage
	TB05	Housing Mix
	TB06	Development of Private Residential gardens
	TB21	Landscape Character
	TB23	Biodiversity and Development

	SAL05	Delivery of avoidance measures for Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area
Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan (SNP)	Policy 1	Location of Development
	Policy 3	Sustainable Development
	Policy 4	Accessibility and Highways Safety
	Policy 5	Parking
	Policy 6	Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland
	Policy 7	Biodiversity
	Policy 8	Flooding

Table 1. Wokingham Local Development Plan Policies relevant to the Application

Planning Assessment

This application seeks outline planning permission for a single residential dwelling with all matters reserved. The following planning matters have been identified as relevant to the determination of this application.

Principle of Development

The National Planning Policy Framework has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan. Policy CC01 states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

This application seeks the erection of a single dwelling in a previously developed site within the settlement limits of Shinfield. The proposal represents sustainable development in an urban area, in line with the NPPF, Core Strategy Policy CP9, and Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan (SNP) Policy 1. The proposal would introduce a residential use into an area that is almost exclusively residential; as such, the land use would accord with the established pattern and character of the surrounding area.

In accordance with MDD Policy TBO6 (Development of Private Residential Gardens), the proposal is considered appropriate as it relates to the existing settlement pattern and maintains the character of the surrounding area. The indicative layout demonstrates that a single dwelling can be accommodated while providing a satisfactory building line and ensuring a sense of enclosure. Furthermore, as supported by the submitted Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, the development will protect the site's significant ecological features and maintain a high standard of amenity for both existing and future users, thereby satisfying the criteria for garden development.

Policies CP1 and CP6 of the Core Strategy require that development be sustainable, in terms of enhancing the quality of the environment and achieving zero carbon developments with a reduction in the need for travel and the promotion of sustainable transport. Policy CP9 identifies Shinfield as a "major development location" reflecting the good levels of facilities and services at this location together with their accessibility.

In this context, the application site is within a sustainable location and is acceptable in terms of principles stated in the Core Strategy.

There is overwhelming policy evidence in support of new housing, both within the Borough and in a wider context. The NPPF prioritises sustainable development, encouraging the use of underutilised land and buildings, particularly for housing where land is scarce. To maximise housing delivery, especially in areas with shortages, the NPPF emphasises efficient site use and discourages low-density developments.

The Core Strategy at table 3.1 identifies that the housing need for Wokingham Borough is to deliver 13,232 new homes for the plan period, this number includes a shortfall in provision from the former Structure Plan. The Council's most recent Five-Year Housing Land Supply Statement (31 March 2025) confirms a supply of only 2.5 years. As the Council cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, the presumption in favour of sustainable development as outlined in Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF applies.

Given the substantial deficit in both past housing delivery and projected future supply, a demonstrable unmet need for the proposed type of development exists. The proposal will provide a single dwelling, representing a contribution to the supply of housing within the Borough and would make efficient use of previously developed land in a sustainable location, thereby representing sustainable development complying with the housing growth objectives and policies of the development plan for Wokingham.

Overall, the proposal would see a net increase in residential accommodation, contributing to the Borough's housing land supply deficit. Furthermore, it delivers sustainable development through the reuse of previously developed land within an established urban area, benefiting from good access to essential services and amenities. Consequently, the application represents sustainable development, and there is a presumption in favour of a positive determination.

Amount of Development and Design Standards

Paragraph 117 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes whilst safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring, healthy living conditions.

The application seeks the erection of a single residential dwelling. This amount of development is considered appropriate to the site's constraints and in line with the character of the surrounding area. The details of the proposed dwelling are to be secured in a second "reserved matters application", however, it is intended that the proposal would match the dwellings surrounding the site in terms of mass, layout, built form, height and materials to ensure that the character of the area is protected.

The new dwelling will comply with nationally described space standard requirements, provide suitable private outdoor amenity space, adequate car and cycle parking and

a suitable bin store. Accordingly, the proposal represents an appropriate level of development for the application site.

The application is accompanied by a proposed layout plan and a set of indicative floor plans and elevations. These are intended to demonstrate what could be achieved on the site, as this application seeks agreement on the principle of development, with a reserved matters application forthcoming to secure the final details of access, layout, scale, design, and landscaping.

Residential Amenity

As this is an outline application with matters of layout, scale, and appearance reserved for future consideration, a detailed assessment of the direct impact on neighbouring properties cannot be fully undertaken at this stage. However, the indicative layout and floor plans demonstrate that a single dwelling can be accommodated within the site boundaries while maintaining appropriate separation distances from adjacent properties.

The proposal is intended to match the established pattern of development, ensuring that the eventual scale and positioning of the dwelling will prevent any unacceptable overshadowing, loss of light, or overbearing impact on neighbouring occupiers. Furthermore, the internal layout and window placement—to be finalised at the reserved matters stage—will be designed to safeguard the privacy of both existing residents and future occupiers.

Consequently, it is considered that the principle of a single dwelling on this site is acceptable and that a high standard of amenity can be secured through sensitive design at the detailed stage, in accordance with the requirements for healthy living conditions set out in Paragraph 117 of the NPPF.

Impact on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area

The application site lies within 5km of Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area, which is a qualifying European site. To address the requirements for mitigating the impact on the SPA, we acknowledge the necessity of providing avoidance measures. This is achieved through financial contributions towards Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) and the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), specifically the approved strategic site at Rooks Nest Wood.

As this application seeks outline permission for a single residential dwelling without specifying the number of bedrooms, the precise calculation and payment of the SANG and SAMM contributions will be addressed at the subsequent Reserved Matters stage. This approach ensures full compliance with the requirements for mitigating any potential adverse effects on the integrity of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA.

The Applicant has submitted a Draft Unilateral Undertaking (UU) with this application to provide the necessary legal framework. This legal mechanism secures the commitment to pay the required tariffs prior to the commencement of development.

Consequently, the proposal provides a robust framework to mitigate any potential adverse effects on the integrity of the SPA. The development therefore complies with Core Strategy Policy CP8, MDD Policy SAL05, and the requirements of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) requires all applicable developments to have a positive impact ('net gain') on biodiversity.

Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain, subject to some exceptions, every grant of planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition that the biodiversity gain objective is met ("the biodiversity gain condition").

This objective is for development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat.

The application site is currently grassed, with hedges along its northern, southern, and western boundaries. While this application is accompanied by a proposed layout plan and a set of indicative floor plans and elevations, these are provided for illustrative purposes only to demonstrate how a dwelling could be accommodated on the site. The final details of the dwelling's design, scale, and appearance will be secured via a subsequent reserved matters application, though it is expected to follow the established development pattern of the adjacent properties. The proposal will result in the loss of a small area of modified grassland and potentially a section of hedging to facilitate separate pedestrian and vehicular access; accordingly, the development will be subject to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements.

The application is supported by a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (January 2026) which establishes the ecological baseline for the site. The site visit conducted in July 2025 confirmed that the area consists primarily of species-poor modified grassland in "poor" condition, along with a native hedgerow and a single ash tree. The assessment establishes a baseline biodiversity value for the site of 0.29 habitat units and 0.15 hedgerow units.

The illustrative layout indicates that development would likely result in the loss of the modified grassland and a section of the hedgerow to facilitate access. While the specific unit change may fluctuate depending on the final design at the reserved matters stage, the preliminary assessment based on the indicative three-bedroom dwelling shows a deficit of -0.05 habitat units and -0.03 hedgerow units.

Given the site's limited size, there is no viable scope for significant on-site habitat creation or enhancement. Therefore, the applicant has committed to a strategy of purchasing off-site biodiversity units to satisfy the mandatory 10% net gain requirement and meet the necessary trading rules. This approach ensures that the development will be compliant with the Environment Act 2021 regardless of the final scale and layout of the dwelling.

Flood Risk

According to the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning, the application site is situated within Flood Zone 1. This zone is defined as having a low probability of flooding from fluvial or tidal sources (less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability). In accordance with the NPPF, Flood Zone 1 is considered the most appropriate location for residential development, as it satisfies the requirements of the Sequential Test.

Furthermore, a review of the Environment Agency's Long Term Flood Risk mapping confirms that the site is at a very low risk of flooding from surface water.

While the application is in outline form, it is anticipated that the development will incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to ensure that surface water runoff is managed effectively on-site. The indicative layout demonstrates that there is sufficient space within the plot to accommodate measures such as permeable paving for the driveway and soakaways for roof water drainage. These measures will ensure that the development does not increase the risk of flooding on-site or to the surrounding area, maintaining the greenfield runoff rates in accordance with local and national policy requirements.

Detailed specifications for the final drainage strategy will be provided at the reserved matters stage or secured via a suitably worded planning condition in accordance with MDD Policies CC09 and CC10, and Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan Policy 8.

Conclusions

The proposed development seeks outline permission for a single dwelling within the established settlement limits of Shinfield. The proposal represents the sustainable reuse of land in a major development location, satisfying the core principles of the Wokingham Core Strategy and the Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan.

As the Council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged. In this context, the provision of an additional dwelling provides a clear public benefit by contributing to the Borough's housing delivery targets.

The proposal has been assessed against MDD Policy TBO6, and it has been demonstrated that a dwelling can be accommodated on this site without harming the local character, settlement pattern, or the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

The proposal offers significant benefits, including:

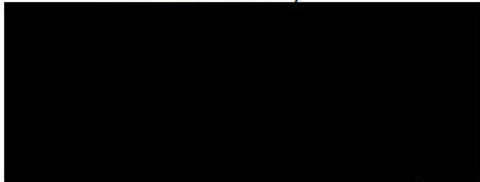
- Housing delivery to assist with the existing local housing land supply shortfall.
- Employment generation during the construction phase.
- Increased consumer spend to support local businesses and the national economy.
- A robust mitigation strategy for the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area through a commitment to SANG and SAMM contributions.
- A guaranteed 10% Biodiversity Net Gain through a strategy of off-site unit credits, ensuring an ecological enhancement regardless of the final layout.
- Efficient use of land within a sustainable urban area with excellent access to essential services and amenities.

While specific technical details regarding final design, drainage, and energy performance will be finalised at the Reserved Matters stage, it has been demonstrated that there are no technical or policy constraints that would preclude the principle of development.

Having regard to the above, the proposal constitutes sustainable development, and we respectfully request that outline planning permission is granted without delay.

I trust you find the enclosed submission in order. Should you have any queries regarding the attached or enclosed, please do not hesitate to contact me on 7896294785 or pamela@jmsplanning.com.

Yours sincerely



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