

ET Planning

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Client: **C Dutton**

Tintagel Farm,

Sandhurst Road, Wokingham, RG40 3JD

Outline application for a phased development to include - i) the demolition of 2 no residential units (Units 1 and 2), 1 no. commercial unit (The Studio), the commercial storage area (to north of Unit 1), sheds and removal of container and caravan - and ii) the erection of up to 4 no. houses (3 market houses and 1 no. self-build). Permission is also sought for the stopping up of the existing access spur and the creation of a new access spur to this parcel (the main site access onto Sandhurst Road remains unchanged)

Gareth Jones **BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

www.etplanning.co.uk

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

Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Site Location and Description	2
3.	Planning History	3
4.	Promotion History	3
5.	Development Proposals	4
6.	Policy Assessment	5
7.	Conclusion and Planning Balance	28

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is produced to support an outline application at Tintagel Farm, Sandhurst Road, Wokingham, RG40 3JD (henceforth referred to as 'the Site') on behalf of Mr Dutton ('the Applicant') for:

"Outline application for a phased development to include - i) the demolition of 2 no residential units (Units 1 and 2), 1 no. commercial unit (The Studio), the commercial storage area (to north of Unit 1), sheds and removal of container and caravan - and ii) the erection of up to 4 no. houses (3 market houses and 1 no. self-build). Permission is also sought for the stopping up of the existing access spur and the creation of a new access spur to this parcel (the main site access onto Sandhurst Road remains unchanged)"

(henceforth referred to as 'the Proposed Development')

- 1.2 This planning statement will cover the background to the application and provide the necessary information to enable its determination by officers at the Council. It will consider the proposal in light of relevant planning policies and other material considerations. The conclusion reached is that key material considerations and the wider objectives of National and Local planning policy support the grant of permission.
- 1.3 In addition to this planning statement, the application is accompanied by the appropriate planning application forms and ownership certificate, duly signed and completed, and the following documents prepared by Colony Architects Ltd, Arbtech, Duckworth Trees, Geosmart and Nick Culhane Transport:
- Phasing Plan
 - Open Space Typologies Plan
 - Parameters Plan

- Proposed Block Plan
- Existing Block
- Design and Access Statement
- Transport Note
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment
- Drainage Assessment

1.4 The relevant application fee will be submitted by the applicant separately.

2. Site Location and Description

2.1 Tintagel Farm is located on the north-eastern side of Sandhurst Road (A321) within Finchampstead. The site lies approximately 2.2km south of Wokingham town centre, with a wider area characterised by predominantly residential dwellings, mixed between detached and semi-detached.

2.2 The site lies on the edge of the settlement, within the countryside. Residential development is located to the west and south-west of the site, including dwellings around Sandhurst Road, Tintagel Road and the smaller driveways within the area. Mature trees and vegetation occupy the site, filtering views from the wider public realm and contributing to the semi-rural character of the locality.

3. Planning History

- 3.1 Application Ref 251663: Application for a certificate of existing lawful development for the use of Unit 3 as a self-contained residential dwellinghouse and the use of land for residential purposes in connection with Unit 3. Approved (6th August 2025).
- 3.2 Application Ref 241227: Application for a certificate of existing lawful development for the incidental residential use of land within the curtilage of 'Unit 3' (also known as 'The Old Stables'). Refused (17th July 2024).
- 3.3 Application ref. 232220: Application for a certificate of existing lawful development for use of the building as a self-contained dwelling. – Approved – 07.11.23
- 3.4 Application Ref 141175: Without planning permission: the unauthorised material change of use of the Land from a lawful mixed use consisting of woodland and the stationing of one mobile home for human habitation to an unlawful mixed use consisting of the aforementioned uses and in addition, , residential, business and storage uses and the stationing of two further mobile homes for human habitation ("The Unauthorised Use"). Appeal Allowed (20th November 2014).
- 3.5 Application Ref 072973: Application for a certificate of lawful existing use for the siting of mobile home as living accommodation. Refused (23rd March 2007).

4. Promotion History

- 4.1 As part of an earlier consultation of the emerging Local Plan, the wider site was proposed as an allocation for up to five Gypsy and

Traveller pitches (this proposed allocation has now been deleted at the applicants request due to his inability to make such provision).

- 4.2 This does however provide a fallback position as to the capacity of the site, such as highways capacity.

5. Development Proposals

- 5.1 The proposal involves the phased residential redevelopment at Tintagel Farm for outline application for a phased development to include - i) the demolition of 2 no residential units (Units 1 and 2), 1 no. commercial unit (The Studio), the commercial storage area (to north of Unit 1), sheds and removal of container and caravan - and ii) the erection of up to 4 no. houses (3 market houses and 1 no. self-build). Permission is also sought for the stopping up of the existing access spur and the creation of a new access spur to this parcel (the main site access onto Sandhurst Road remains unchanged).
- 5.2 The outline application is accompanied by an illustrative Masterplan to help show how the site could potentially be developed in the future, in accordance with the known constraints, and that can it satisfactorily yield the quantum of development proposed. It should be noted that this plan is for illustrative purposes only and should not be used for determination of the planning application. Whilst this plan is submitted for illustration only at this outline stage, it shows that there is sufficient land available within the site to deliver a well-designed and sustainable residential development. The parameter plan and phasing plan are the plans which we would expect the outline consent to be conditioned against.

6. Policy Assessment

- 6.1 **National Guidance:** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a relevant material consideration to the application.
- 6.2 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 39 of the NPPF states that “Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way” and “at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible”. Paragraph 124 of the NPPF comments that planning should “promote an effective use of land” in “meeting the need for homes and other uses, whilst safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions”.
- 6.3 Paragraph 61 confirms the Government’s objective to boost the supply of housing, and paragraph 8 identifies the three objectives of sustainable development, as economic, environmental and social.
- 6.4 Paragraph 131 identifies that “Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities”, whilst paragraph 139 states that significant weight should be given to “outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.”
- 6.5 The National Design Guide builds on the above, and clarifies that “well-designed neighbourhoods need to include an integrated mix of tenures and housing types that reflect local housing need and market

demand. They are designed to be inclusive and to meet the changing needs of people of different ages and abilities. New development reinforces existing places by enhancing local transport, facilities and community services, and maximising their potential use" (para 109).

6.6 **Principle of Development (including Sustainable Development):** Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is material planning consideration in all planning applications. In this instance, the relevant development plan documents includes:

- Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (2014) (**MDD**)
- Adopted Core Strategy (2010) (**CS**)
- Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan (2023) (**FNP**)

6.7 The site's countryside location is a key consideration when looking at the application.

General approach to Countryside policies

6.8 CS Policy CP11 is the relevant policy in this regard. This states that in order to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment, proposals outside of the development limits will not normally be permitted except where they accord with a number of exceptions.

6.9 Of relevance to this application is Point 2 which states that proposals will be permitted where it does not lead to excessive encroachment away or expansion of development away from the original buildings.

- 6.10 It is considered that given this area of the site is already occupied by residential dwellings and other associated built form including commercial units etc, the development does not encroach away from existing built form.
- 6.11 FNP Policy GS1 is also of relevance when considering the principle of development. This identifies key local gaps and green wedges. The aim of this policy is to prevent coalescence, mirroring that of CS Policy CP11.
- 6.12 As can be seen from the map below, the application site is not within a key local gap and as such, can be considered to not contribute to the coalescence of settlements.
- 6.13 As such, the relevant test is whether the Proposed Development detracts from the quality of the environment (CS CP11). As will be discussed elsewhere in this statement – the proposed development is considered to be a sensitive residential development that assimilate well with the design language of the surrounding area.
- 6.14 FNP Policy GS1 Proposals Map showing key local gaps and green wedges (red star showing approximate location of site):

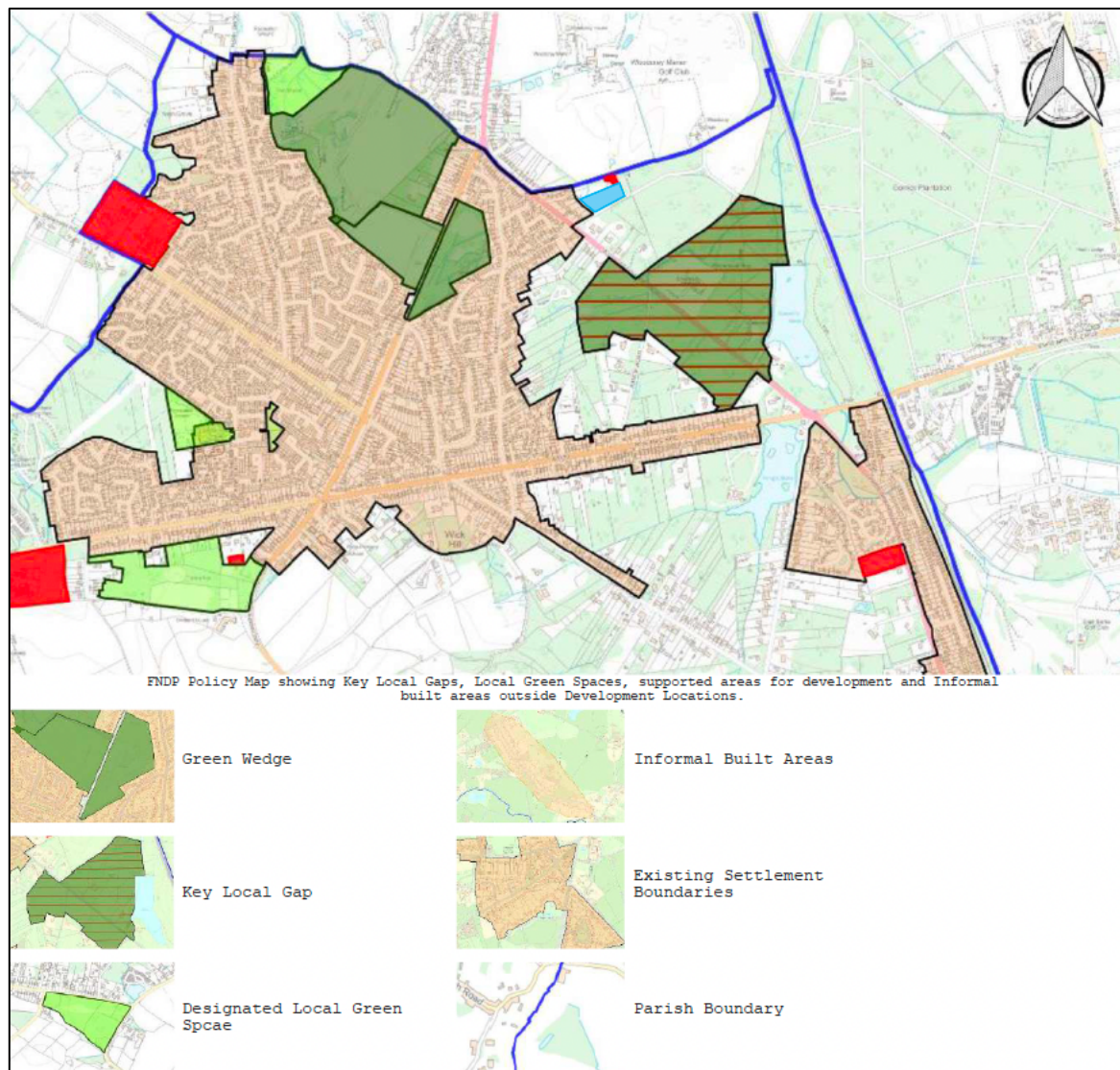


Figure 1 – Finchampstead Neighbourhood development plan with site outlined in blue

6.15 Whilst it does introduce new built form, the scheme is within the wider visual envelope of the Tintagel Farm and is directly adjacent to the settlement boundary.

6.16 Due to this, direct relevance is also drawn between the proposed development site and appeal scheme in application ref. APP/X0360/W/20/3251601 (**Appendix 1**). This details the conclusions of an allowed appeal for the creation of 1 no. new dwelling in nearby Finchampstead.

6.17 The Inspector notes at Paragraph 3 that *'the site is located within the countryside. Despite this, and as a previous Inspector found, the situation on the ground does not fully reflect this designation. Instead, the site is located between development and is physically separated from the open countryside.'*

6.18 Finally, the emerging local plan proposes a valued landscape designation for the site, alongside much of the boroughs countryside. Only limited weight is applied to this policy given that the Inspectors Report is yet to be received. In any case, as will be discussed later in the settlement, the Proposed Development will lead to betterment in terms of design and will be in character with surrounding built form - with features of the landscape character retained (trees to be retained).

2 no replacement dwellings in the countryside

6.19 There are 2 lawful residential units within the site (both with lawful curtilages), which have been confirmed with certificate applications as detailed above.

6.20 2 of the proposed dwellings should therefore be assessed as replacement dwellings. The character impact of the proposal will be discussed in more detail in the character section of this report below and in the interests of brevity will not be repeated here. However, The Borough Design Guide (2012) sets out guidance for what may be appropriate for a replacement dwelling (ie. 50% limit) however the Council have previously approved schemes within the Borough that, when on spacious plots, are considerably over the 50% limit and as such, the proposal should be allowed.

6.21 Given the large spacious plot, an increase in volume of this scale would not appear incongruous or an overdevelopment of the site.

1 no self build dwelling in the countryside

- 6.22 It is envisaged that Plots 1-3 will be open market housing and that Plot 4 will be a self-build dwelling.
- 6.23 NPPF Paragraph 73 states that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites, local planning authorities should consider a number of points. Of most relevance to this application is NPPF Paragraph 73.b).
- 6.24 This states that the Council should seek opportunities, through policies and decisions, to support small sites to come forward for community led development for housing and **self-build and custom build housing** [emphasis added].

1 no market dwelling in the countryside

- 6.25 On 31st July 2025 the Council published its latest 5 Year Housing Land Supply. This concludes that the Council are unable to demonstrate a 5-Year Housing Land Supply with current supply standing at 2.5 years.
- 6.26 Paragraph 11.d) of the NPPF sets out that where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, then permission shall be granted unless either:
- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

- 6.27 This is colloquially known as the ‘tilted balance’. As the tilted balance has been engaged, the judgement of the Court of Appeal in *Gladman Developments Ltd v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government* [2021] EWCA Civ 104 (03 February 2021) is highly relevant. The judgement sets out that in the exercise of planning judgement, the Council is under a duty to carry out a complete assessment, in which adverse impacts and benefits are to be fully weighted and considered, taking account of the Framework as a whole in addition to the relevant policies of the Development Plan.
- 6.28 Planning case law, such as *Hallam Land Management Ltd v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government* [2018] EWCA Civ 1808 (para. 47) (*‘Hallam’*) (CD5.16), has established that the extent of the housing shortfall has direct relevance to the degree of weight to be given within the tilted balance to the lack of housing supply in favour of granting permission. In this case, the shortfall is 1,403 dwellings.
- 6.29 Footnote 8 of the NPPF clarifies that the definition of out-of-date policies include those for applications involving the provision of housing where the Council cannot demonstrate a five-year housing supply.
- 6.30 As a consequence of the Council failing to demonstrate 5 year’s supply of housing, the tilted balance is triggered within the assessment of this application.
- 6.31 Whilst it is considered as per the remainder of this Statement that the development is acceptable under an ‘orthodox’ planning balance,

under the tilted balance it is therefore considered that inevitably the proposal gains further support.

- 6.32 It is therefore also pertinent to note the recent Planning outcomes for residential development outside of defined settlement within the Borough.
- 6.33 A significant number of dwellings have been allowed at appeal within designated countryside. This is not presented as any criticism of the Local Planning Authority, but simply an observation that the Housing Supply shortfall of the Council is a major factor in the determination of applications, as is the approach to CS Policy CP11.
- 6.34 Neither is it the purpose of this Statement to list every relevant decision in detail, but rather to highlight key findings of relevance to this particular application.
- 6.35 Appeal decision APP/X0360/X/24/3342812 (**Appendix 2**), permitting 23 dwellings et al. in a countryside location, concluded similar findings to the application of Policy CP11 as stated in paragraph 5.15 above. The appeal decision at paragraph 8 onwards that despite none of the circumstances of Policy CP11 applying to the appeal proposal, the overarching aim of the Policy was nonetheless fulfilled by the proposal. It is presented that the same applies to this application site – the proposal would not in any material way affect the separate identify of settlements nor diminish the quality of the environment.
- 6.36 **Appendix 2** also went on to note that consideration and assessment of individual sites are required to be undertaken beyond a rigid adherence to what can sometimes be arbitrarily drawn boundaries for what defines a settlement (see **Appendix 2** paragraphs 12 & 13).
- 6.37 Appeal decision APP/X0360/W/24/3350170 (**Appendix 3**), whilst relating to 240 dwellings and being outline, is of relevance in terms

of overarching approach to the suitability for locating new residential development. It is noted that a key matter of consideration and of common ground was not so much the overall principle of development being in countryside, but of the more nuanced considerations of whether the site was in a sustainable location and whether it preserved the separation between settlements. This aligns with the matters and approach presented throughout this submission.

6.38 Paragraphs 61 and 62 of **Appendix 3** also reinforce the fact that, whilst previous oversupply of housing is a material consideration, it is reasonable and appropriate to give this consideration lesser weight compared to the immediate housing needs established in the formal Housing Supply position.

6.39 It is also important to consider the findings of appeal ref. APP/H1705/W/25/3365525 (**Appendix 4**) which related to 1 no. house in Basingstoke. There are a number of similarities between the two sites. Firstly, both sites are located within the countryside, and both Councils are unable to demonstrate a 5-Year Housing Land Supply.

6.40 Paragraph's 11 and 12 are of direct relevance to this application. They state:

*The Council is unable to demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites in accordance with Paragraph 72 of the Framework. **The Council is only able to demonstrate a 4.2-year supply which represents a significant undersupply.***

Paragraph 11 d) of the Framework indicates that, in such circumstances where the requisite housing land supply cannot be shown, the Policies which are important for determining the application should be deemed out-of-date and permission should be

granted unless any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the Policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

The proposed development would contribute to the supply of new homes in a situation where there is a shortfall. This attracts significant weight in favour of the proposed development. *The proposal would also support the creation of jobs directly and indirectly during construction and result in future occupiers spending in the locality. [ET Planning Emphasis added].*

- 6.41 The proposal will result in 4 no houses (2 new net) and will come forward on a smaller site that could be built out relatively quickly – benefitting the Council’s housing land supply.
- 6.42 It is important to note that during the course of the Council’s new local plan consultation – the site was initially allocated for gypsy pitches with a capacity of 5 no. pitches. This is an important material consideration in the determination of this application given the proposed development would bring forward less residential units on this site than was previously deemed acceptable by the Council (with highway betterments etc which will be discussed further below).
- 6.43 Additionally, given x2 of dwellings will effectively be replacement dwellings due to application ref. 23220 and 251663 which granted lawfulness for existing buildings on site to be used as residential dwellings, the actual uplift in terms of residential dwellings is only 2 net.
- 6.44 Given the existing uses on site, the proposed development is also considered to constitute Previously Developed Land (PDL). PDL is defined in the NPPF as *‘land which has been lawfully developed and is or was occupied by a permanent structure and any fixed surface infrastructure associated with it, including the curtilage of the*

developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed). It also includes land comprising large areas of fixed surface infrastructure such as large areas of hardstanding which have been lawfully developed. Previously developed land excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape.'

- 6.45 NPPF Paragraph 89 states that planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.
- 6.46 Given the Council's lack of a 5-Year Housing Land Supply, it is considered that this paragraph is of direct relevance to this proposal and the provision of housing is an identified community need. As has been detailed elsewhere in this proposal, the site is located adjacent to the existing settlement boundary of Finchampstead and as will be

discussed further below in the transport section of this report, will not have an unacceptable impact on the surrounding highways network.

- 6.47 It should also be noted that the Government is currently considering the consultation in relation to the new NPPF which is due to be adopted in “Summer 2026” according to the Chief Planner’s March Newsletter. Whilst this document provides limited weight in the decision-making process at present, it is nonetheless is a relevant material consideration, showing the wider direction of travel for planning policy from both Local and Central Government.
- 6.48 Of particular relevance to this proposal is Policy S5 which states that only certain forms of development should be approved outside settlements, as set out in the following list. These should be approved, unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework. The policy then goes on to outline a number of circumstances that would be acceptable. Policy S5(d) states that the redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed-use including residential) is acceptable. Given CP11 is currently silent on the re-development of PDL, the position of currently adopted national and emerging national policy are an important material consideration.
- 6.49 NPPF Paragraph 8 outlines the three interdependent aims of the planning system. Paragraph 8a outlines the economic objectives of the planning system and states that the planning system should look to bring forward the right type of land in the right places at the right time. Given the Council’s lack of a 5-Year Housing Land Supply, the proposed development will accord with this aim.

- 6.50 NPPF Paragraph 8.b) outlines the social objectives of the planning system. The proposed development will bring forward 4 new houses (2 net) – the social role of housing should not be understated being a key vehicle for social mobility and intergenerational wealth.
- 6.51 NPPF Paragraph 8.c) outlines the environmental objectives of the planning system. The site utilises PDL reducing pressure to re-development greenfield sites elsewhere in the Borough.
- 6.52 For the reasons outlined above, the proposed development is considered acceptable in principle.
- 6.53 **Character and Appearance of the Area:** The application site is located off Sandhurst Road on the northern edge of Finchampstead, within an established residential area characterised by large, detached dwellings set within generous plots and extensive mature landscaping. The surrounding area exhibits a low-density suburban form where buildings are generally subordinate to the landscape, with mature trees, woodland belts and substantial garden spaces forming the defining elements of local character.
- 6.54 A notable characteristic of Sandhurst Road is the prevalence of private drives serving small clusters of detached dwellings set back from the public highway. Development is arranged informally rather than following a rigid street pattern, creating an organic settlement form that has evolved incrementally over time. Tintagel Farm itself is accessed via an established private drive which reflects this established pattern of development.
- 6.55 The DAS identifies that properties on the northern side of Sandhurst Road, where the site is located, are generally situated within larger plots with lower levels of site coverage. Analysis undertaken by the applicant demonstrates an average plot coverage of approximately 14.44% on the northern side of Sandhurst Road, reinforcing the

spacious and landscape-led character of the area. Mature vegetation, substantial separation distances and generous private gardens are identified as the principal characteristics which define local distinctiveness. A data table for the existing development vs the proposed development is outlined as follows:

<u>Existing Buildings</u>				
			GIA m2	Volume m3
Unit 01			43.5	142.29
Unit 02			38.6	124.48
Unit 02 Sheds			6.2	12.88
Studio			20.9	63.61
Container			28.8	75.34
Caravan			11	21
Log Shed			4.2	9.32
shed			9.2	19.12
Unit 01 Covered area			50	119.5
Unit 02 Covered area			18.5	44.215
TOTAL EXISTING			230.9	631.755
<u>Proposed Buildings</u>				
Plot 1			200	1036.3
Plot 2			200	1036.3
Plot 3			175	906.7
Plot 4			195	992.4
Plot 1 Garage			36	112
Plot 2 Garage			36	112
Plot 3 garage			36	112
Plot 4 garage			36	112
Plot 4 shed			22	80
TOTAL PROPOSED			936	4499.7
Percentage Increase			405.37%	712.25%

Figure 2 – Existing vs proposed data table

- 6.56 The Borough Design Guide (2012) sets out guidance for what may be appropriate. For a replacement dwelling, up to a 50% increase in volume is acceptable when compared to the original dwelling. The proposal being presented as part of this application package does go above this.
- 6.57 Notwithstanding this, the Council have previously approved schemes within the Borough that, when on spacious plots, are considerably over the 50% limit and as such, the proposal should be allowed.
- 6.58 Given the large spacious plot, an increase in volume of this scale would not appear incongruous or an overdevelopment of the site.
- 6.59 A material consideration is the application for a replacement dwelling at Kalevala, Hollybush Ride planning reference 181232 approved 17/09/2018. The approved replacement dwelling represented an increase in volume of 197% and footprint increase of 83%. The Officer Report noted that the proposal would be 'commensurate in scale to some of the larger properties in the locality... taking the set back from the road and the tree screening into consideration, the replacement dwelling would not be a prominent feature in the landscape.'
- 6.60 A replacement dwelling of a significantly larger volume (300% increase) within a similar setting has also been approved by the Local Planning Authority at Mistletoe Cottage, The Devils Highway Riseley ref 191963, approved 10/10/2019. The Officer Report noted the large, detached dwellings of similar character within the immediate neighbourhood but concluded that it would not have significant adverse impacts on the character of surrounding countryside.

- 6.61 Another application, ref. 211773 was approved by the local planning authority on 06/08/21 at Brackenwood, Hollybush Ride, Finchampstead, RG40 3QP. The Officer's report for this application discusses how the total volume increase was 116% but that once outbuildings had been removed, the proposed volume increase was 71%. Notwithstanding this, both figures are above the 50% limit usually deemed acceptable by the Council for dwellings in the Countryside.
- 6.62 The scale and siting of the scheme is therefore demonstrated to be acceptable in line with the relevant character considerations.
- 6.63 The wider area displays a varied architectural character, comprising predominantly detached family dwellings of two to two-and-a-half storeys. Whilst individual buildings vary in age, style and appearance, common features include pitched roofs, gables, chimneys and traditional materials such as brickwork, render and clay roof tiles. The planning history of the area demonstrates a pattern of incremental change and adaptation, resulting in a varied townscape whilst retaining its overarching low-density residential character.
- 6.64 The site occupies a transitional position between the built form of Sandhurst Road and the open countryside beyond. Mature woodland and tree belts surrounding the site create a strong landscape framework and provide visual containment, contributing to the semi-rural character experienced within the locality. The Parameters Plan identifies extensive areas of retained green infrastructure around the site, reinforcing the importance of landscape as the dominant characteristic of the area.
- 6.65 The identified character accords with the objectives of Core Strategy Policy CP3, which seeks high quality development that responds positively to local context and reinforces local distinctiveness.

- 6.66 The emphasis on spacious plots, mature landscaping and low-density development is also consistent with the requirements of Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan Policies TB02 and TB04, which seek development that respects local character, landscape setting and the established pattern of development.
- 6.67 The proposal has therefore been designed as a landscape-led form of development which retains substantial green infrastructure, reflects the prevailing pattern of detached housing and maintains the spacious and verdant character that defines this part of Sandhurst Road.
- 6.68 For the reasons detailed above the proposed development is considered acceptable in character terms.
- 6.69 **Residential Amenity:** The proposed development has been carefully designed to ensure that a high standard of amenity is provided for both future occupiers and neighbouring residents. The layout has been informed by the site's landscape constraints, existing vegetation and the location of surrounding dwellings, with the design process seeking to minimise opportunities for overlooking, overshadowing and overbearing impacts.
- 6.70 The site occupies a substantial plot and benefits from significant separation from neighbouring properties. Existing dwellings are located primarily to the west and south-west of the site and are screened by mature trees, woodland planting and established landscape buffers.
- 6.71 The site has been specifically arranged to protect privacy and maintain appropriate separation distances between properties both within the development and the surrounding area.

- 6.72 The proposed dwellings are arranged around a shared access road in an informal layout which reflects the prevailing pattern of development in the area. The buildings are set within generous plots and are separated by substantial areas of landscaping and private garden space.
- 6.73 The proposed site layout demonstrates that significant areas of mature vegetation will be retained around the perimeter of the site, particularly along boundaries shared with neighbouring residential properties. These retained landscape buffers will continue to provide effective visual screening and reinforce the sense of separation between the proposed dwellings and existing residential development. The proposal also retains extensive areas of open space and green infrastructure, helping to preserve the spacious character of the site and surrounding area.
- 6.74 Future occupiers will benefit from generous private garden areas, outlook over retained landscaping and woodland, and a high-quality living environment consistent with the character of the locality.
- 6.75 The level of private amenity space significantly exceeds typical suburban standards and reflects the spacious residential character that defines this part of Sandhurst Road.
- 6.76 Accordingly, the proposal accords with Core Strategy Policy CP3 and Policy TB05 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan, which require development to protect the amenities of neighbouring occupiers and provide a high standard of living environment for future residents. The development is therefore considered acceptable in residential amenity terms.
- 6.77 **Trees and Landscaping:** A Tree Survey and AIA by Duckworth Trees will be submitted alongside this application and will detail how the arboricultural impacts of the proposal are acceptable and that

mitigation can be secured by condition in the event of a grant of planning permission. This will allow the proposal to accord with CC03.

- 6.78 **Transport and Parking:** A Highway Technical Note has been prepared by Nick Culhane Highway Consultant Ltd in support of the application. The report assesses the accessibility of the site, the suitability of the proposed access arrangements, parking and servicing provision, and the likely transport impacts arising from the development. The assessment concludes that the proposal is acceptable in highways and transport terms and that safe and suitable access can be achieved.
- 6.79 The proposed development will utilise the existing established access from Sandhurst Road (A321), with the submitted access arrangement demonstrating visibility splays of 2.4m x 120m in both directions. The Highway Technical Note confirms that these visibility splays are appropriate for the recorded highway environment, are consistent with Manual for Streets principles and provide safe and suitable access for all users.
- 6.80 The proposal comprises only four dwellings and therefore represents a very modest form of residential development. Importantly, the site already contains lawful residential accommodation, and the development would result in only a net increase of two dwellings. As set out within the Highway Technical Note, the resulting uplift in vehicle movements would therefore be limited and would not give rise to any material impact on the operation or safety of the surrounding highway network.
- 6.81 The site fronts Sandhurst Road, an established local distributor route linking Wokingham, Finchampstead and Crowthorne. The surrounding highway network is already characterised by detached residential development served from private accesses and shared

drives. In this context, the proposed development is entirely consistent with the prevailing pattern of development in highway and transport terms.

- 6.82 The Highway Technical Note also notes that as part of an earlier consultation of the emerging Local Plan, the site wider site was proposed as an allocation for up to five Gypsy and Traveller pitches (this proposed allocation has now been deleted at the applicants request due to his inability to make such provision). By comparison, a new increase of two detached dwellings would generate materially lower operational demands in terms of vehicle size, manoeuvrability requirements, frequency of atypical vehicle movements and servicing complexity. The proposed development therefore represents a less intensive and more conventional use of the access arrangement than that previously contemplated by the Council.
- 6.83 Adequate parking, turning and servicing arrangements are provided within the site, and the proposal can be accommodated whilst retaining the majority of the established tree cover and woodland setting. The development will not prejudice highway safety, nor will it result in a severe impact on the local highway network.
- 6.84 Accordingly, the proposal accords with Policy CP6 (Managing Travel Demand) of the Wokingham Core Strategy and Policy CC07 (Parking) of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan. The development provides safe and suitable access arrangements, adequate visibility splays, and sufficient on-site parking and turning provision in accordance with the Council's adopted standards.
- 6.85 The scale of development is modest, resulting in only a limited increase in vehicle movements that would not prejudice highway safety or the efficient operation of the local highway network. The proposal therefore provides appropriate access and parking provision

whilst avoiding unacceptable impacts on the surrounding highway network, consistent with the objectives of the Development Plan.

- 6.86 **Drainage and SuDS:** A Sustainable Drainage Assessment has been prepared by GeoSmart Information Ltd in support of the application.
- 6.87 The assessment confirms that the site is at very low risk of fluvial flooding, has a negligible risk of groundwater flooding and that the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water flooding.
- 6.88 The report identifies infiltration as the preferred drainage solution, with the site benefiting from high infiltration potential associated with the underlying Bagshot Formation sands. A sustainable drainage strategy is proposed incorporating rainwater harvesting, permeable paving and soakaways to manage surface water runoff.
- 6.89 The drainage system has been designed to accommodate the 1 in 100-year storm event including a 40% climate change allowance and a 10% urban creep allowance, ensuring that runoff is appropriately attenuated and managed on site.
- 6.90 The assessment concludes that approximately 50m³ of attenuation can be provided through the proposed SuDS measures, ensuring that the development will not increase flood risk on or off site. A secondary strategy is also identified should infiltration prove unsuitable following detailed site investigations, demonstrating that an alternative drainage solution can be achieved through controlled discharge to the adjacent watercourse.
- 6.91 Accordingly, the proposal accords with the objectives of the NPPF, Wokingham Borough Council's SuDS Strategy and Policies CC09 and CC10 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan, which seek to ensure that development appropriately manages surface water runoff, incorporates sustainable drainage measures and does not

increase flood risk elsewhere. The drainage impacts of the development are therefore considered acceptable.

- 6.92 **Ecology:** A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment have been undertaken by Arbtech in support of the application. The surveys confirm that the site comprises a range of habitats including vegetated garden, scattered trees, a tree belt, woodland and a seasonal ditch. Whilst these habitats provide value for local wildlife, no habitats of principal importance are present within the application site and the ecological value of the site is generally local in nature.
- 6.93 The ecological assessment concludes that the proposed development can be accommodated without unacceptable ecological impacts, subject to the implementation of appropriate mitigation and enhancement measures. The retention of significant areas of existing vegetation, together with additional habitat creation and landscape enhancements, will ensure that biodiversity interests are protected and enhanced as part of the development.
- 6.94 The accompanying Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment demonstrates that the scheme will deliver measurable biodiversity improvements, including a net gain of 13.86% in area-based habitat units, 16.31% in linear habitat units and 86.72% in watercourse units. The assessment confirms that the development is capable of achieving the statutory requirement for a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain, subject to the provision of additional replacement tree units to satisfy biodiversity trading rules.
- 6.95 Accordingly, the proposal is consistent with the environmental objectives of the NPPF and accords with Core Strategy Policy CP7, which seeks to conserve and enhance biodiversity, together with Policy TB23 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan, which

requires development to protect ecological interests and secure biodiversity enhancements. Subject to the recommended mitigation, enhancement and biodiversity net gain measures, the ecological impacts of the proposal are therefore considered acceptable.

- 6.96 **Special Protection Area:** The site is located within the 5KM Buffer of the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area and as such, mitigation should be required in line with CS Policy CP8. This can be secured by legal agreement in the event of a grant of planning permission.
- 6.97 **Affordable Housing:** The 2 no replacement dwellings do not give rise to an affordable housing requirement, and nor does the 1 no proposed self build property. The 1 no proposed market dwelling is liable for affordable housing, however, does not exceed the thresholds of Policy CP5. In addition to this each plot is under 0.16 ha in size.
- 6.98 The proposed development falls within the “*Any – outside development location – 5 dwellings (net) or more or larger than 0.16ha (net or larger)*” category. The 1 no proposed market dwelling falls within an area less than 0.16ha and as such no affordable housing is required by policy for this development.
- 6.99 This approach is consistent with other applications such as application ref. 241617 – which was for 1 no. house that exceed the plot size threshold. However, in line with the guidance in the NPPF on when affordable housing contributions should be sought, no liability was due.
- 6.100 **Community Infrastructure Levy:** The relevant forms have been submitted in support of this application.

7. Conclusion and Planning Balance

7.1 This statement has demonstrated that the proposed development is acceptable in principle and makes an efficient use of land.

7.2 Material planning considerations have been carefully considered and analysed, as evidenced in section 5 of this statement and the supporting plans and documents. It is considered the proposed development would contribute an appropriate windfall site to the Borough's housing supply without adverse effect on the character of the area or the amenity of neighbouring residents. Should the Council not agree that the proposal accords with the relevant development plan documents, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2006 states that all planning applications should be determined in accordance with the relevant development plan documents **unless material considerations indicate otherwise.**

7.3 The following weightings have been adopted in the planning balance exercise:

- Significant
- Moderate
- Little to no
- Neutral

7.4 The harms identified are as follows:

Harm	Significant	Moderate	Limited	Neutral
Impact on countryside and landscape		x		

Removal of trees			x	
------------------	--	--	---	--

7.5 Due to the variety of matters, it is important to consider the benefits of the scheme:

Benefit	Significant	Moderate	Limited	Neutral
Provision of housing	x			
Provision of Self Build Housing	x			
Use of Previously Developed Land		x		
Provision of Biodiversity Net Gain		x		
Character Betterment		x		
Social		x		
Economic		x		
Environmental		x		

7.6 The identified harms are in respect of the countryside/landscape and the tree removal that will be required in order to provide the new access.

7.7 Considering the former firstly, the proposed development will result in 4 no. larger properties coming forward on the site compared to the current fallback position. However, the proposed properties will be well screened from the surrounding area reducing their overall visual impact.

- 7.8 Tintagel farm itself is also somewhat of a transitional space between the countryside and the built settlement. The proposed development would lead to betterment in design terms.
- 7.9 Tree removal will be required as part of the proposal in order to bring forward a new access spur, in order to develop the site in the most efficient way. The optimum location has been selected to minimise tree loss and replacement planting can be secured to mitigate against any loss.
- 7.10 Turning to the benefits, the proposed development will bring forward 2 no. net new houses in an area where there is an identified need, contributing to the Government's aim to deliver more houses.
- 7.11 1 no. of the plots will be brought forward as a self-build dwelling, enabling a local resident to continue to live in their local area in a property of high quality – national policy also provides additional weight for self-build dwellings to be supported strongly.
- 7.12 Policy supports the redevelopment of PDL sites, such as this, and positive weighting should be applied. In addition to this, the proposed development is well related to the existing settlement.
- 7.13 Biodiversity Net Gain is a statutory requirement highlighting the weight that Government place in its provision. The development will deliver a 10% BNG, details of which will be provided at the RM stage.
- 7.14 The existing properties on site and associated residential paraphernalia are limited in their architectural form given they were adapted stable buildings.
- 7.15 The proposed development would bring forward 4 no. high quality dwellings, purpose built for residential occupancy and would be built in a sympathetic design language to the surrounding area. This is

considered to represent a character betterment over the existing situation.

- 7.16 As outlined elsewhere in this statement, the economic benefits of the proposal would ensure that the right type of land is brought forward at the right time and in the right locations. Given the Council's lack of a 5YHLS – this proposal helps to address this need. Additionally, the applicant would use local construction firms for the build.
- 7.17 Given the importance of construction to the UK's economy and the difficult economic headwinds currently being experienced nationally and globally, it is important that local firms have sufficient prescheduled work in to allow them to overcome difficult financial periods and lay the foundation for success when the economy improves.
- 7.18 The proposed development will bring forward 4 new houses (2 net) – the social role of housing should not be understated being a key vehicle for social mobility and intergenerational wealth.
- 7.19 The site utilises PDL reducing pressure to re-development greenfield sites elsewhere in the Borough. The proposed properties would also be built from 21st century building materials ensuring they are environmentally friendly and thermally efficient.
- 7.20 Alongside the other measures proposed as part of the scheme, the benefits of the proposal are considered to significantly and demonstrably outweigh any harm.
- 7.21 As such, it is the Applicant's view that both mechanisms of granting permission as outlined under Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2006 are available to the scheme.
- 7.22 Therefore, it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.

Gareth Jones BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

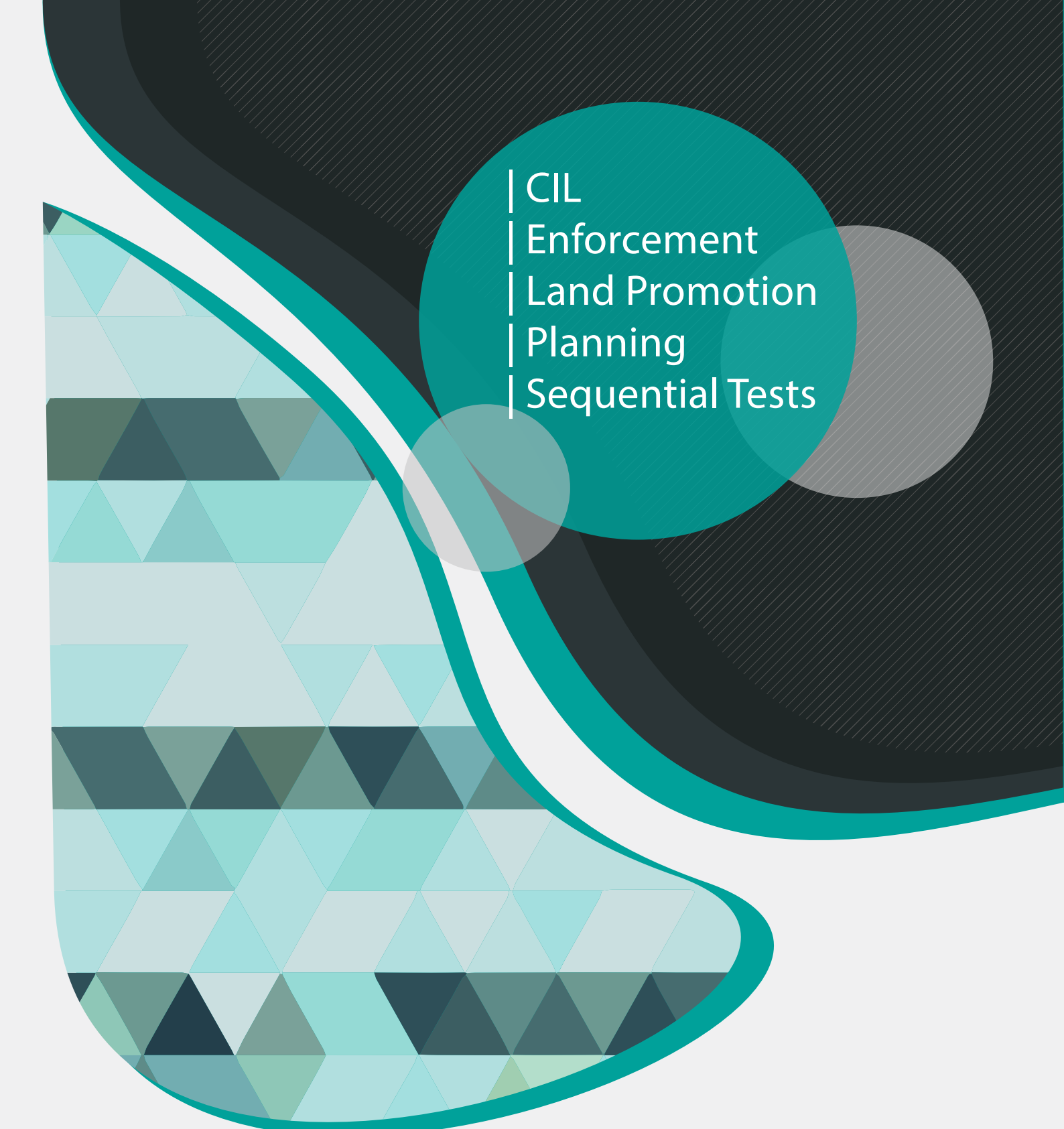
Principal Planner | ET Planning

David Wetherill BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

Associate Director | ET Planning

This statement has been prepared with assistance from AI tools for research, information gathering and document drafting. All planning judgement, professional opinion and conclusions drawn are the original work of the named author, who has independently verified factual content,

reviewed the document in full, and takes full professional responsibility for its accuracy and the positions advanced within it.



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

Contact

Address

200 Dukes Ride RG45 6DS

Phone

01344 508048
01865 507265
01483 363950
01743 612043
01392 691384

Web & Mail

Email: office@etplanning.co.uk
ET Planning Ltd | 10646740

Web: www.etplanning.co.uk