



Planning

Planning Statement

Client:

Sam Claughton

354 Barkham Road

Wokingham, RG41 4DE

Erection of two detached residential dwellings to rear of 354 Barkham Road, together with associated access, landscaping and parking

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is produced to support a planning application for the erection of 2no. detached dwellinghouses with garden space, detached carport and associated hardstanding at the rear of 354 Barkham Road, Wokingham.
- 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 plans prepared by Architectural Services.
- 1.4 The relevant application fee will be submitted by the applicant separately.

2. Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The application site comprises garden land of a single storey detached dwellinghouse (the dwelling itself sited within the blue line of the submitted application), situated on the Southern side of Barkham Road. The existing dwellinghouse is situated on a sizeable plot with access provided by a gated driveway. The no.2 proposed dwellinghouses are to be situated circa 39m Southeast of the rear elevation of the existing dwellinghouse. Adjacent to the existing dwellinghouse, is a side road that will provide access to the proposed dwellings. The surrounding character of the area is predominantly residential, consisting of detached dwellinghouses that vary in architectural style, age and built form.
- 2.2 The majority of the application site is located within the limited development location of Barkham Hill, with the Southern section of the red line falling into designated countryside, thus resulting in a site that is located on the 'edge of settlement'.
- 2.3 The land further to the southeast of the immediate application site, also denoted by a blue line, comprises woodland which forms part of the overall ownership of no.354.
- 2.4 The site is not situated in the Green Belt, nor is it located within a National Landscape (formally AONB), Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) or a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The site is also situated within Flood Zone 1 which carries the lowest probability of flooding from rivers.

3. Planning History

- 3.1 Application Ref 232063 – *“Application for works to protected tree(s) tpo-1169-2007 (T8) T8, Oak (T8 on TPO) Tree Removal (Fell) Reason for works: Main reason for the removal of this tree is due to its size and condition as the tree has been shutting down for some time and when doing so it has lost several large limbs forming a scaffold defect within the crown. This has led to other limbs failing, leaving tears and large worms within the main stem. There are already several weak attachments at 6m from the ground and throughout the tree, leading to more problems such as opening the tree to infection fungus and rotting. This is in turn affecting the structure and integrity of the tree, especially where the main union begins forming a multi-step system, which has several cavities and inclusive bark. Signs of stress also present.”* Tree consent granted with conditions 29/09/2023.
- 3.2 It must be noted that this application follows a pre-app, ref 240269, that proposed a total of no.3 dwellings at the site following the demolition of the existing dwellinghouse. The response concluded that subject to necessary amendments, the proposal could represent an acceptable back land development, resulting in a residential net-gain of 2 dwellings. This submission addresses the aforementioned points and proposes a scheme that provides no.2 additional dwellings, whilst conforming to the development plan as detailed in Section 5 below.
- 3.3 The applicant is seeking to retain the existing dwelling, and this is subject to a separate application for enlargements.

4. Development Proposals

- 4.1 The National Design Guide (2019) identifies that “well-designed homes and buildings are functional, accessible and sustainable. They provide internal environments and associated external spaces that support the health and well-being of their users and all who experience them. They meet the needs of a diverse range of users, taking into account factors such as the ageing population and cultural differences. They are adequate in size, fit for purpose and are adaptable to the changing needs of their occupants over time” (para 120-121).
- 4.2 Regarding the requirements of NPPG Paragraph: 029 Reference ID: 14-029-20140306 in respect of Design and Access Statements, the proposal is described as follows:
- 4.3 **Use and Amount:** The proposed use is for the erection of 2no, 2.5 storey (i.e. two storey with accommodation in the roof), detached dwellinghouses and a single storey car port to allow for the secure parking of 4no. vehicles, in addition to driveway space. The proposed dwellings and car port are to be situated to the land at the rear of 354 Barkham Road, accessed via an existing unclassified road off the Southern side of Barkham Road.
- 4.4 **Layout and Scale:** The proposed dwellinghouses are to be a mirror image of one another, consisting of 2.5 storeys of residential accommodation. On the ground floor each dwelling will benefit from appropriate internal amenity areas comprising a large kitchen, lounge, dining area, WC, utility room and garage. On the first-floor 3no. double bedrooms are to be located, two of which are ensuite, with a family bathroom and study. On the third floor, the master bedroom will be located with ensuite and wardrobe. The third-floor

room will be provided with ample natural light from no.6 skylight windows.

- 4.5 **Scale Height & Mass:** The proposed car port will have an external width of 11m, an external depth of 5.5m and will comprise of a hipped roof, with a ridge height of c4.4m.
- 4.6 The proposed dwellinghouses will have a total GIA of 348sqm per dwelling, comprising 130sqm for the ground floor, 130sqm for the first floor and 88sqm for the second floor. The dwellings will have a ridge height of c11.04m.
- 4.7 **Landscaping:** The application site benefits from a sizeable rear garden which is large enough to award each proposed dwelling a proportionate rear garden. The majority of the existing trees at the site will also be retained and protected during the construction phase. New planting can be accommodated within the curtilage of the site via condition. An Arboricultural Implications Report accompanies this submission and is detailed further in Section 5 of this statement.
- 4.8 **Appearance:** The proposed development has been designed to integrate with the surrounding area by introducing a contemporary design that conforms with the varied character of the area. The proposed dwellings and car port are moderate in terms of scale and footprint and commensurate with the built form, massing and footprint of the existing and neighbouring dwellings at the site. The proposal will consist of materials that result in a high architectural finish, comprising brick walls and slate roof tiles which will result in dwellings that are aesthetically pleasing.
- 4.9 **Access & Parking:** Access will be awarded via the unclassified road off the Southern side of Barkham Road. Each dwelling will be awarded no.3 parking spaces (two within the proposed car port and one in the internal garage).

5. Policy Assessment

- 5.1 **National Guidance:** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a relevant material consideration to the application.
- 5.2 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 decision on proposed development in a positive and creative way” and “at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible”. Paragraph 124 of the NPPF comments that planning should “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”.
- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 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.”
- 5.5 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).

- 5.6 **Principle of 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.
- 5.7 All planning applications should be dealt with in accordance with the relevant development plan policies unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is a material planning consideration in all planning applications. In this instance, the relevant development plan documents include:
- Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (2014) (MDD)
 - Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan (2010) (CS)
- 5.8 The majority of the site is located within the limited development location of Barkham Hill, with the Southern section of the site falling into designated countryside, thus resulting in a site that is located on the ‘edge of settlement’.
- 5.9 **CS Policy CP1: Sustainable development** states that development proposals will be permitted provided they meet with a range of criteria, including the requirement to maintain the high quality of the environment, the need to limit any adverse effects on water quality and proposals must provide attractive, functional, accessible and safe schemes.
- 5.10 Given the location of the proposed dwellings MDD **Policy TB06: Development of private residential gardens** is of relevance. This policy outlines proposals for new residential development that

includes land within the curtilage, or the former curtilage of private residential gardens will only be granted planning permission where, amongst other criteria, the proposal makes a positive contribution to the character of the area in terms of the relationship of the existing built form and spaces around buildings within the surrounding area. The proposal is of a respectful size and scale in comparison to neighbouring dwellings, that would meet highway standards, whilst providing a site of adequate size and dimensions to accommodate the development proposed in terms of the setting and spacing around buildings, amenity space, landscaping and space for access roads and parking. As such the proposal is compliant with MDD Policy TB06.

- 5.11 CS **Policy CP3: General principles for development** outlines criteria in which development must adhere to, including but not limited to the requirement for proposals to be of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area together with a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life.
- 5.12 The built form of the dwellinghouses would lie within the defined settlement, with the rear elevation of Plot 2 being flush with the settlement boundary. Consequently, the rear garden space of the proposed site is situated outside development limits, within the countryside, and so policy CP11 is of relevance.
- 5.13 Policy CP11 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (Adopted 2010) controls development within the designated countryside. Policy CP11 states that in order to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment, proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted except where it contributes to diverse and sustainable rural enterprises, or in the case of other countryside-based enterprises and activities it

contributes and/or promotes recreation in and enjoyment of the countryside.

- 5.14 Policy CP11 criterion 2 states that the proposal should not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from original buildings. There is no strict definition as to what 'excessive encroachment or expansion' means; rather this is a matter of planning judgement which includes in the context of the particulars of the location.
- 5.15 The overarching objective of CS Policy CP11 is not to seek a blanket ban on development in the countryside, even where it would not fall into one of the list of exceptions. Instead, the key test is to ensure development preserves the separate identity of settlements and maintains the quality of the environment. This approach is supported by paragraph 9 of appeal decision APP/X0360/W/21/3288075 (Appendix 1).
- 5.16 When viewing the cumulative development pattern, back land development is commonplace within the site vicinity such as the dwellings located to the rear of 352 Barkham Road. As a result of these dwellings, there is a lack of a recognised building line on land to the South of Barkham Road. The proposed dwellings that form this application, would attempt to establish a building line with plots 1 and 350b Barkham Road which will in turn have a positive effect on the character of the area.
- 5.17 The surrounding dwellings to the application site vary in architectural style giving the area a varied character identity. As a result, the proposal would therefore align with the objectives of CS Policy CP11. Further assessment is provided within the 'Character of the Area' section of the statement below.

- 5.18 NPPF Paragraph 84 establishes that planning decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside (unless under certain circumstances). The proposal is not considered to constitute an isolated home given the buildings themselves lie within the defined settlement.
- 5.19 NPPF paragraph 187.b) sets out that planning decisions should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. The proposal would not be considered to detract from the intrinsic countryside for the aforementioned reasons.
- 5.20 CS **Policy CP9: Scale and location of development proposals** outlines the scale of development proposals in Wokingham borough must reflect the existing or proposed levels of facilities and services at or in the location, together with their accessibility. The dwellings themselves lie within a 'limited development location' as per Policy CP9, which recognises that this location is both defined settlement and has sustainability merits to support additional dwellings, though of a lesser extent to more major development locations. Given the scale of the proposal combined with the Housing Supply position (see below), this is considered a highly appropriate location for an increase of two dwellings.
- 5.21 **Housing Supply:** On 31 March 2024 the Council published its latest 5 Year Housing Land Supply. The statement concludes that the Councils can demonstrate a deliverable supply of 2,321 dwellings over the next 5 years, which equates to a housing land supply of 1.7 years.
- 5.22 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.

5.23 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.

5.24 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.

5.25 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.

5.26 As a consequence of the Council failing to demonstrate a 5 years’ supply of housing, the tilted balance is triggered within the assessment of this application.

- 5.27 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.
- 5.28 It is therefore also pertinent to note the recent Planning outcomes for residential development outside of defined settlement within the Borough. Whilst these have reduced relation to the proposal given that again the dwellings themselves lie in the defined settlement, there is nonetheless relevance in terms of the garden space being beyond the defined settlement.
- 5.29 A significant number of dwellings have been allowed at appeal within areas outside of the defined settlement within the past approximate 12 months. 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.
- 5.30 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.
- 5.31 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.

- 5.32 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). The particular character of area considerations are explored further in the Statement below.
- 5.33 Appeal decision APP/X0360/W/24/330170 (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.
- 5.34 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.
- 5.35 To conclude, the Council's Housing Supply shortfall is a significant factor in the approach to countryside residential development, noting also the provisions of the tilted balance. To apply the above to the application site, it is presented that the appropriate planning tests for examining the impact of the garden land as part of the overall residential development is primarily in the context of preserving the separation of settlements, as well as site specific character of area considerations, with the sustainability of the location established under Policy CP9.

- 5.36 **Character and Appearance of the Area:** CS **Policy CP3: General Principles for Development** outline at point a, that development must be of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area together with a high quality of design.
- 5.37 R1 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires that development contribute positively towards and be compatible with the historic or underlying character and quality of the local area. The proposal matches a similar layout to development directly adjoining it and is considered compatible with the underlying character of the area. The pre-app response, reference 240269, confirms this. The Officer as part of this pre-app response expressed a desire for the dwellings to be *"relocated further North to comply with the back land building line"*. This desire is acknowledged however in balancing this with making an efficient use of the site (as also required by Planning Policy) combined with the site layout (including importantly existing trees) and needing to preserve residential amenity and garden space to the retained dwelling, the proposal is considered to be the most efficient layout.
- 5.38 Point 2 of the Barkham Village Design Statement states that *"developments should be in sympathy with the surrounding properties and setting. Specifically new developments should blend with the character, size and main architectural styles of nearby properties"* As above, R1 of the Borough Design Guide SPD bolsters this, requiring that development contribute positively towards and be compatible with the historic or underlying character and quality of the local area and R11 of the design statement requires a coherent street character, including in terms of scale, rhythm, proportion and height.
- 5.39 The proposed dwellings and car port are moderate in terms of scale, footprint and built form within the context of the neighbouring

dwelling. The dwellings will make use of an underutilised portion of the curtilage of 354 Barkham Road and provide much needed residential dwellings. The dwellings would establish a building line with other back land developments to the East, thus creating a more uniform aerial appearance to the area which in turn would have a positive impact on the character of the area.

- 5.40 The proposal is considered to be of high-quality design that will enhance the architectural merit of the local area whilst being a scale and density that is in keeping with the existing character of the area. Along the Southern boundary of the site, mature tree cover serves as physical delineation that screens the proposed dwellings. As the proposed dwellings are to be situated to the rear of the existing dwelling, with the proposed dwellings accessed via a side road, the streetscene will remain unaltered as a result of this development.
- 5.41 As confirmed within the pe-app response, there is a wide range of vernacular along Barkham Road, and therefore no fixed design/character however, dwelling bulk, mass and height is relatively consistent at this stretch of the road. The proposed dwellings adhere to this bulk, mass and height and is therefore compliant in this regard.
- 5.42 It is not considered that the proposal would detract from the woodland character to the rear of the site, with clear separation between the proposed built form and the boundary of this woodland.
- 5.43 The proposed dwellings and car port will be of materials similar to that of the neighbouring dwellings with a brick exterior and slate roof, ensuring the proposal integrates with the existing character of the site. As a result, the proposed extensions are considered to be compliant with CS Policy CP3 and the Borough Design Guide SPD

- 5.44 **Residential Amenity:** CS **Policy CP3: General Principles for Development** point a, ensures that the proposals would not have a detrimental impact on the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life.
- 5.45 MDD **Policy TB07: Internal Space Standards** and R17 of the SPD require adequate internal space to ensure the layout and size achieves good internal amenity. With regards to external amenity, R16 of the SPD requires a minimum depth of 11m for rear gardens and a 1m setback from the site boundary to allow access thereto. It should receive direct sunlight and be capable of accommodating play, clothes drying and storage. The proposed dwellinghouses comfortably comply with an GIA of 348sqm per dwelling, with rear garden of Plot 2 meeting 11m in depth, and the garden of Plot 1 exceeding this.
- 5.46 The proposed dwellings would consequently result in a proportionate degree of private outdoor amenity space, commensurate with the size of the dwelling. The proposal would also enable generous garden space to be retained for 354 Barkham Road as well as provide ample external amenity space for occupiers of the proposed dwellings to ensure they have adequate space for outdoor seating and recreation. As per paragraph 5.37 above, the extent of the retained garden to no.354 is done in sympathy to the tree constraints.
- 5.47 Furthermore, the proposed dwellings maintains a respectful separation distance to any neighbouring dwellings and are therefore considered not to harm the amenity of neighbouring residents due to the vast separation distances.
- 5.48 The proposed dwellinghouses and car port are of a scale and size that would not adversely impact the neighbouring dwellings with respect to loss of light, overshadowing or overlooking and is therefore

considered to be policy compliant. This has been confirmed in the pre-app response.

5.49 **Trees and Landscaping:** Policy CC03 of the MDD Local Plan aims to protect green infrastructure networks, promote linkages between public open space and the countryside, retain existing trees and establish appropriate landscaping. The site falls within a designated green route, which seeks to retain a consistent 'flow' of green infrastructure along its path, for amenity, ecology and historic purposes.

5.50 MDD Policy TB21 requires consideration of the landscape character. The site falls within the J2 Arborfield Cross and Barkham Settled and Farmed Clay Landscape Character Area. This is landscape of moderate quality and condition.

5.51 An Arboricultural Implications Report, prepared by SJA Trees, accompanies this planning application. Their assessment of the impacts of the proposals on the existing trees concludes that no mature trees, no category 'A' or 'B' trees, and no trees of high landscape or biodiversity value are to be removed. None of the main arboricultural features of the property are to be removed. The proposed removal of three individuals will represent a minor alteration to the main arboricultural features of the property, and to the overall arboricultural character of the property and will not have a significant adverse impact on the arboricultural character and appearance of the local landscape. As such the proposal is considered to comply with CS Policy CC03 and TB21 of the MDD.

5.52 **Transport and Parking:** Paragraph 115 of the NPPF sets out the test that a determining authority should apply when determining the suitability of a planning application in terms of transport and highways stating that; *'Development should only be prevented or*

refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.'

- 5.53 Each dwelling will benefit from ample off-street parking opportunities in the form of the car port for 2no. vehicles per dwelling and an internal garage in each dwelling for a third space.
- 5.54 A highway report, prepared by Nick Culhane accompanies this submission. This Highway Technical Note supports a proposal for 2no. detached dwellings on land to the rear of 354 Barkham Road. Access to the site is to be taken from an unclassified private road where traffic speeds and volumes are low and adequate visibility is provided commensurate with vehicle speeds.
- 5.55 Using TRICS Data it has been shown that the site will generate very little additional traffic which will not have any adverse effect to the safe operation of the private road or the wider public highway.
- 5.56 Car and cycle parking is provided in accordance with adopted standards and adequate on-site turning provision is being made for the most frequent service vehicles that will visit the site.
- 5.57 The highway implications of the development are therefore considered to be acceptable.
- 5.58 **Drainage and SuDS:** The site falls within Flood Zone 1 and is not considered to be at risk of flooding. It is noted that land within the blue line involving the rear woodland is subject to potential surface water flooding, however this lies beyond the application site.
- 5.59 **Sustainability and Energy:** Paragraph 8 of the NPPF supports the transition of development to a low carbon future. The national Code for Sustainable Homes has now been abolished, however it is proposed that the development would conform to Part L of the

Building Regulations which as of 2022 requires a 30% reduction than current standards. By way of contributing to the reduction in carbon, the proposal would also achieve current building construction standards with added sustainability measures through;

- A. The limitation of the amount of inherent material, structure and embodied energy through the employment of good building standards to create an excellent SAP rating;
- B. Use of locally sourced, recycled materials and labour where practicable;
- C. Secure cycle provision to encourage sustainable modes of transport;
- D. 'A' rated electrical appliances and energy saving light fittings;
- E. 'A' rated double glazed windows with natural cross ventilation provision;
- F. Recycling of waste construction materials where practicable;
- G. Permeable driveway/parking spaces to avoid increase in surface water runoff;

5.60 The proposal is therefore considered to comply with sustainability objectives in this respect.

5.61 **Ecology:** A Preliminary Ecological Assessment has been submitted, which confirms that the existing site is not likely to contain protected species. Reasonable mitigation and avoidance measures are set out within the Assessment.

5.62 Within the same document a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment has been undertaken. This confirms that the development would result in

a loss of biodiversity value on site, and therefore off-site provision is required to achieve the mandatory 10% gain.

- 5.63 The off-site provision could potentially be secured with a third party provider via purchasing biodiversity credits. Alternatively, enhancements could be provided to the woodland to the rear, which also falls under the applicant's ownership.
- 5.64 **Special Protection Area (SPA):** Policy CP8 of the Core Strategy states that where development is likely to have an effect on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBH SPA), it is required to demonstrate that adequate measures to avoid and mitigate any potential adverse effects are delivered.
- 5.65 The subject application includes a net increase of 2 dwellings on a site that is within 7km of the TBH SPA. Policy CP8 states that where there is a net increase in dwellings within 5km of the SPA, an Appropriate Assessment is required to be undertaken. The proposal by virtue of location within the 7km zone does not require a contribution to offset impacts on the Thames Basin Heath SPA. This is confirmed in the pre-app response.
- 5.66 **Archaeology:** The site is not known to be in a location that is of particular archaeological sensitivity. Pre-application advice from the Council did not raise any concerns on this subject. However, if necessary, any matters which arise could be addressed within the application or via planning condition.
- 5.67 **Affordable Housing:** As per CS **Policy CP5: Housing mix, density and affordability**, as the site is smaller than 0.16ha in size and proposed no.2 dwellings, it is therefore not liable for a contribution towards affordable housing.

- 5.68 **Community Infrastructure Levy:** The relevant CIL forms have been submitted alongside this application.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 This statement has demonstrated that the proposed development is acceptable in principle and makes an efficient use of land.
- 6.2 The proposed built form would be sited within defined settlement, with the rear garden technically lying within countryside. As has been presented within this Statement, it is considered that the appropriate application of CS Policy CP11 is to ensure its overall goals of preventing the coalescence of settlements and to maintain the quality of the environment. The proposal is considered to achieve these.
- 6.3 Furthermore, while it is considered that the proposal is acceptable within an 'orthodox' planning balance, the tilted balance nonetheless applies given the Council's Housing Supply. Under such a balance the proposal only gains further significant support.
- 6.4 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 2no. dwellings and car port would not cause any adverse effect on the character of the area or the amenity of neighbouring residents, and is sited within an appropriately sustainable location for this scale of development as per CS Policy CP9.
- 6.5 It is considered that the proposed scheme complies with relevant Development Plan Policies and is further supported by National Guidance. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.

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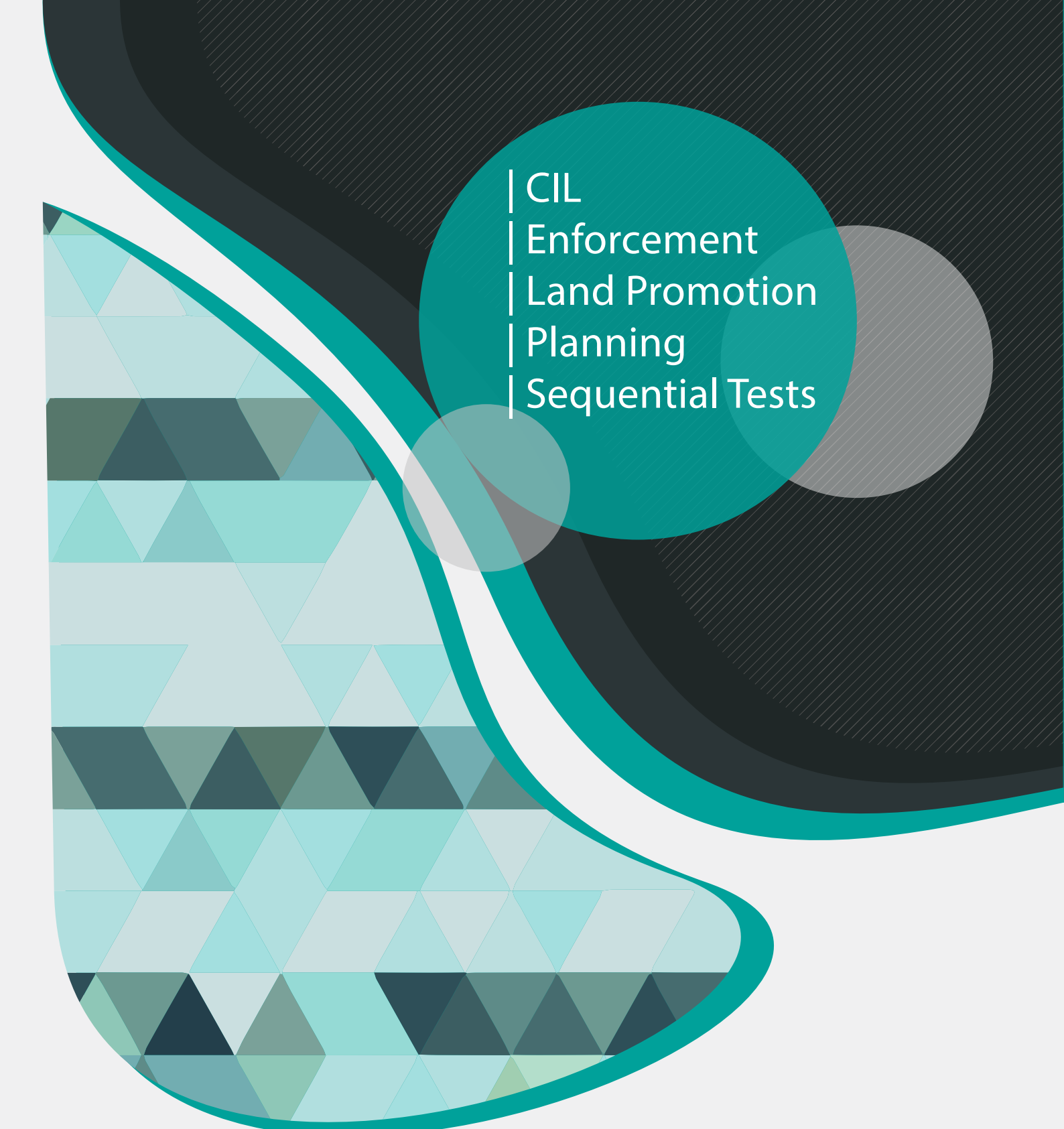
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