

LAND AT STANBURY HOUSE

BASINGSTOKE ROAD, SPENCERS WOOD

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

**OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR UP TO 63 NEW DWELLING
(INCLUDING 50% AFFORDABLE HOMES)**

MARCH 2025

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement is prepared in support of an outline planning application with all matters reserved other than site access, proposing the construction of up to 63 new dwellings (50% of which would be affordable homes) on land at Stanbury House, Spencers Wood. The proposed housing would adjoin and benefit from access to 9.7 hectares of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) which is in the process of being created on land directly adjoining the western boundary.
- 1.2 Although submitted in outline it is necessary to provide sufficient information, plans and technical documentation to demonstrate how the site can appropriately accommodate the scale of development that is proposed.
- 1.3 This statement therefore describes the application site, the constraints and opportunities which it presents in design terms and the indicative proposals which have been developed to demonstrate how a high quality residential environment can be created.
- 1.4 The Statement comprises the following sections:

Section 2.0	:	Site Analysis – Opportunities and Constraints
Section 3.0	:	Key Design Principles
Section 4.0	:	Design & Access Statement
Section 5.0	:	Proposed Development Parameters
Section 6.0	:	Summary & Conclusions

2.0 SITE ANALYSIS – OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

Settlement Form

- 2.1 The application site lies to the west side of the Basingstoke Road in Spencers Wood (very broadly outlined in blue below).
- 2.2 The existing settlement has grown up largely along two main thoroughfares, Basingstoke Road which runs north / south and Hyde End Road which runs out to the east away from Basingstoke Road to Shinfield.
- 2.3 The majority of built form (residential and commercial) lies to the east side of Basingstoke Road.
- 2.4 However, there are a number of smaller pockets of development which have come forward to the west. These include the residential developments at Grazeley Road, Sevenoaks Drive, Pursers Farm, Stanbury Gate, Wellington Court and Clements Close and most recently the 57 new homes directly east of this application site at Stanbury House. These elements are outlined in red on the aerial photograph opposite.
- 2.5 Most recently permission was granted for a further 49 new homes off Kingfisher Grove as outlined in yellow. This will further add to the pattern of residential development to the west side of Basingstoke Road.



Aerial photograph showing settlement form west of Basingstoke Road

The Stanbury House Site

- 2.6 The application site comprises general grazing land and which is contained between the residential development taking place to the east (57 dwellings) and the SANG land which is being developed to the west.
- 2.7 There are no buildings within the site which is largely grassed and open save for boundary hedges and some mature trees within the site and around the boundaries.
- 2.8 The site is accessed from Basingstoke Road through the existing 57 dwelling site. There are not currently any public rights of way which cross the site.

Ecology:

- 2.9 As set out in the Aspect Ecology Report, the main body of the site comprises semi-improved grassland of low ecological value along with other habitats of equally low value including the house and garage, areas of hardstand, amenity grassland and planting. The site hedgerows and a number of the trees have some ecological potential as does the pond to the south west corner. The majority of the site provides limited opportunities for faunal species. The Aspect report makes recommendations regarding habitat improvement where relevant but confirms that there are no ecological constraints to development of the land.

Flood Risk & Drainage

- 2.10 The site lies within Flood Zone 1 and so is not a location which is at risk from flooding. Subject to the provision of a suitably designed sustainable urban drainage system (SUDS) (please see report prepared by Stantec) to ensure that greenfield run-off rates are maintained there would be no impact from development upon local water courses or surface water drainage systems.

Contamination

- 2.11 As demonstrated in the accompanying site investigation statement, the site is not contaminated with any risk to human health arising being categorised as negligible.

Archaeology

- 2.12 The site lies in an area with some archaeological potential. However, records of excavation works in the vicinity of the site have produced no finds of any significance leading the appointed archaeological consultants to describe the sites potential as very low. A scheme of invasive archaeological investigation will take place prior to any development commencing on site.

Landscape

- 2.13 A comprehensive landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) of the site has been undertaken by Indigo Landscape. This advises that as a result of the nature of surrounding vegetation and built form, the Zone of Visual Influence of the Application Site is contained within a very small area of the surrounding countryside / townscape where public access is extremely limited. More distant views are prevented by a combination of topography and vegetation.

Neighbouring properties

- 2.15 The nearest existing residential properties are a pair of cottages located just to the south of the sites southern boundary. These are well screened from the site by substantial boundary trees and a small triangular wooded area.
- 2.16 There are also a number of houses fronting Basingstoke Road including South Lodge, Glenamoy House, Pentire, Ravensmere, Ithaca and Highland Cottage. These have rear garden boundaries which adjoin the eastern boundary of the existing 57 dwelling site. These houses are well screened from the 57 dwelling site by existing mature landscaping and so the additional housing proposed by this application would have no impacts on these existing residents.

Trees & Other Site Vegetation

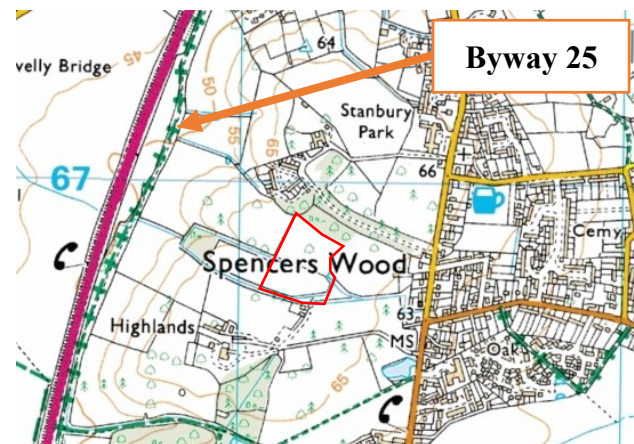
- 2.17 A full tree survey has been undertaken as part of the preparation of this application. The survey considered both individual trees and also the larger groups which lie towards the edges of the site.
- 2.18 The survey defines the root protection areas associated with the site trees with reference to the relevant British Standards.

Connectivity

- 2.19 The site benefits from a physical connection with Basingstoke Road at its eastern frontage. As demonstrated within the WSP Highways report this enables connectivity between the site and the local highway network.
- 2.20 At the present time the site is not crossed or accessible by any public rights of way. However, Woodcock Lane (Shinfield Byway 25) runs to the west of the application site as shown opposite

Topography

- 2.21 A topographical survey of the site is provided with the application. This demonstrates the levels across the site.
- 2.22 In general terms the land levels rise across the existing 57 dwelling site and then within this application site begin to fall away toward the west down to the public byway noted above and the A33. The site's topography is considered in some detail in the supporting Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment report.



Map showing the site and Byway 25

The Character of Built Development in the Area

- 2.23 Section 7 of the 'Vision for our Villages' Character Statement notes that the residential buildings within Spencers Wood are of a variety of ages and also of styles. However, typically houses are two storey, with pitched roofs, and generally detached or semi-detached. Terraces are rare and normally short, of no more than four properties.
- 2.24 Development within 'The Square' which was carried out in the late 1990's with its mix of semi-detached and detached houses and matching two-tone brickwork is highlighted as a positive example of modern housing reflecting the local character in a high quality manner.



Modern development in The Square



Hyde End Road



Basingstoke Road adjacent to the site frontage

Key Constraints

- 2.25 In preparing the indicative layout the application has had regard to the following site constraints:

- *Existing Site Features* – As described above the site benefits from a number of existing trees both around the property boundary and within the main body of the site. These have been fully considered in the preparation of the indicative layout. This has extended beyond simply avoiding harm to the trees themselves but also in terms of the sheltering effect that they could have upon the proposed new dwellings particularly to the south and east of the site.
- *Proximity of existing Residential Properties* – The layout ensures minimal visual intrusion for existing properties through retention and strengthening of the landscaping.
- *Local Character and Densities* – Although the site is well contained and screened such that it would not be viewed readily alongside existing development it is considered appropriate to seek to ensure that local character is fully recognised and reflected in the design proposals. In this regard key elements are the two storey scale of the residential development with Spencers Wood, the relatively low densities, the use of traditional pitched roofs with red / brown brick act as constraints and guides to the form of development that should be brought forward at the site.

Key Opportunities

2.26 As a result of the analysis of the site the following opportunities are highlighted:

- The existing mature trees, whilst also a constraint, offer an opportunity to provide a residential environment with an instantly mature feel which reflects the local character of the area.
- The site screening and topography provide the opportunity to deliver two storey development with minimal visual / landscape impact.

- The development of an on-site sustainable drainage system with some standing water combined with the provision of the adjacent SANG offers opportunities for biodiversity enhancement not currently evident at the site due to the agricultural management which occurs.

3.0 KEY DESIGN PRINCIPLES

3.1 The following principles have been set and utilised in the development of the indicative proposals:

1. The loss of existing site trees is minimised wherever possible. All boundary trees and hedges will be retained.
2. Existing mature trees and hedges within the site should be utilised as features and incorporated within public area where possible. These also assist in providing a mature feel to the development and mitigate any visual impacts.
3. A safe and convenient access should be delivered.
4. All new housing should be a maximum of two storeys and reflect local character in terms of pitched roofs, red / brown brickwork and be primarily arranged within semi-detached and detached groups. Small terraces of three, maximum four properties may be appropriate as set out in the Village Design Guide.
5. All properties should benefit from generous spacing, private garden areas and appropriate space for refuse and recycling storage.
6. Appropriate levels of private in curtilage and also on street visitor parking should be provided.
7. The layout and orientation of the development should respect the likely shading effect from the trees / wooded areas to the south of the site.
8. 50% of the houses will be affordable homes. The design of the affordable homes should be indistinguishable from the private market housing and of an appropriate mix to be agreed through reserved matters submissions.

4.0 **DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT**

- 4.1 Based upon the site analysis and the review of the opportunities and constraints which have enabled the formulation of the key principles listed in the previous section, an indicative layout has been prepared in support of this outline application.
- 4.2 The indicative layout and the related supporting information contained within this statement and the other supporting documents which have been submitted provide an indication of the likely layout, density, heights and architectural approach which is considered appropriate for the site. This provides a framework which would be used to guide the design approach at the reserved matters stage. The following are the key elements.

Use

- 4.3 It is proposed that the site be developed to provide up to 63 new residential properties and rely upon capacity contained within the adjoining 9.7 hectares of associated SANG. The site lies centrally to the modest development location of Spencers Wood, a settlement acknowledged as a sustainable location for new housing.
- 4.4 The acceptability of the use of the site for residential development has been established through the grant of consent for the existing 57 units. That consent was granted twice following two public inquiries. Both Inspectors considered the principle of residential use in this location to accord generally with the Council's Spatial Strategy, to relate well to the existing settlement and its facilities and that it can be accommodated without detriment to neighbouring properties.
- 4.5 In addition and as discussed in greater detail in the accompanying planning statement, this proposal follows application reference 192883 which sought outline permission for 120 new homes on the 57 dwelling site and this application site combined.

- 4.6 This 120 dwelling proposal, was initially supported by Officers and was to receive approval but for a last minute change to the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) associated with AWE Burghfield.
- 4.7 The acceptability of this site and general location for residential development is therefore clearly established.

Amount

- 4.8 As noted above, in 2021, the Council refused planning permission for application 192883 which sought outline permission for 120 new homes on the 57 dwelling site and this application site combined due to issues arising with the DEPZ. At that time the Council was happy that the site as a whole could accommodate 120 dwellings. This application site represents the same area of land that was considered in 2021 minus the eastern portion which is being developed for 57 houses. In principle therefore the Council has already accepted that 63 dwellings is an appropriate amount of development for this part of the site. The officers delegated report states:

*“Aspects such as layout, scale and appearance are reserved at this stage and would be considered in detail through subsequent applications. Nonetheless, it is expected that the dwellings would follow a typical residential design which would respect design elements found in the locality. Additionally, the scale of the buildings would again be expected to respect the local character but indeed could be conditioned at this stage to not exceed two storeys as per the prevailing character. With regard to specific layout elements, **the indicative layout shows 120 dwellings could be accommodated with appropriate parking provision as well as green spaces, drainage ponds and landscaping buffers to the edge of the site.** Some relationships between the dwellings (i.e. those perpendicular to the main group of dwellings to the ‘rear’ of the site) could be improved and indeed whilst the garden depths meet the recommendation set out in the Borough Design Guide, some garden sizes are irregular. **However, it is considered that these issues could be addressed at the reserved matters stage when the layout is considered in detail and, as such, it is considered that the indicative layout adequately demonstrates that 120 dwellings could be accommodated on the site.**”*

- 4.9 Given that this application site is effectively the same as that considered by the Council in 2021 it is respectfully submitted that the same analysis is again valid in this case i.e. 63 dwellings is the correct amount for the site.

- 4.10 In assessing the right amount of development for the site an analysis of the site's opportunities and constraints has been carried out in consultation with the appointed ecological, landscape and sustainable drainage consultants. This has focussed on:
- A desire to retain existing mature boundary trees and as far as possible all trees of reasonable quality within the site combined with potential shadowing to the south and east of the site as a result of the height of these trees.
 - The need to have regard to the character and density of residential development in Spencers Wood and the site's edge of settlement location.
 - The objective to provide appropriate garden sizes, wildlife and amenity areas designed as part of a comprehensive sustainable drainage package.
- 4.11 Whilst the layout is indicative it is considered that it demonstrates clearly that the site could comfortably accommodate the amount of development proposed whilst providing a spacious, mature, green residential environment.

Scale

- 4.12 The character of Spencers Wood is of traditional two storey development. Given this established character and the desire to minimize any visual and landscape impacts from the development, the proposed new houses would be two storey only. For the avoidance of doubt there would be no two and a half or three storey units.
- 4.13 The scale of the individual buildings would be such that they would therefore sit comfortably within the site and be largely screened by the mature boundary trees to the north south and east.
- 4.14 To the west, new boundary planting would be provided to screen the proposed houses from the SANG and views from the west.

- 4.15 However, as is highlighted in the Indigo Landscape submission, as a result of the site's topography by retaining the built form at a two storey scale the houses would in any event be screened by the topography and so would not be seen from the Woodcock Lane public byway.
- 4.16 In addition to storey heights, the apparent scale is also influenced by the depth and width of built form proposed. The design parameters section covers these elements. However, in summary the indicative proposals include only semi-detached and detached buildings set in spacious plots and small terraces of no more than three houses. No overly wide or deep buildings are proposed.

Appearance

- 4.17 As described in Section 2, the existing development within Spencers Wood whilst varied is of essentially traditional two storey red / brown brick construction with pitched roofs. The proposed new dwellings would follow this general approach ensuring that the character and local distinctiveness of Spencers Wood is maintained.
- 4.18 Windows and doors would be traditional in style, and balanced within the composition of the elevation. Porches, brick detailing and robust cills and lintels would be utilised to provide a quality feel to the elevations similar to the development in 'The Square', adjacent to the application site and the houses approved on the adjoining 57 dwelling site to the east.

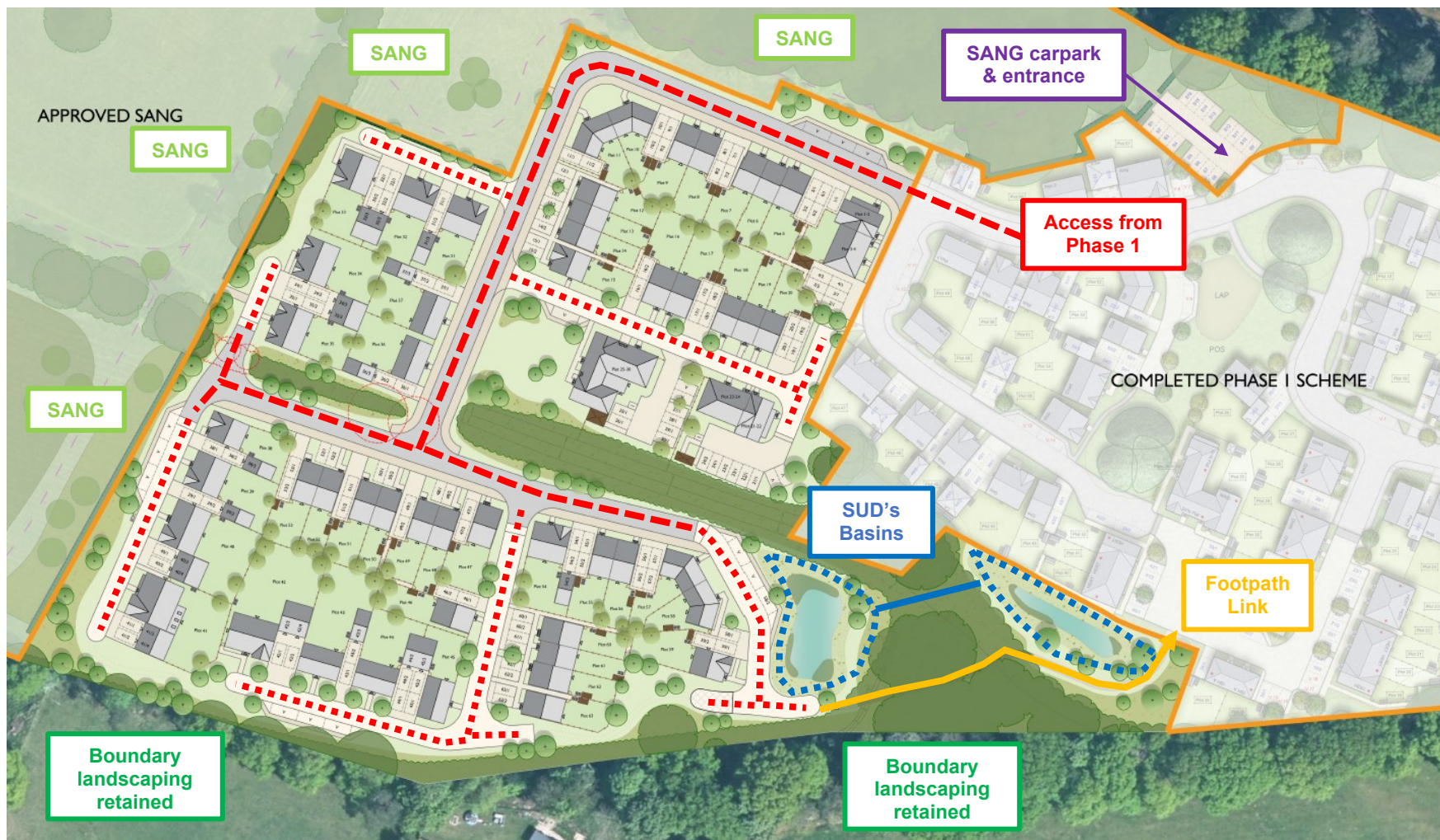


Example of the appearance of the dwellings within 'The Square'

- 4.19 Detached dwellings would be appropriately proportioned to create a sense of scale within the streetscape, but are also to be interspersed with semi-detached and short terraces. Whilst all benefiting from two storeys varied ridge height would be utilised to add interest in the street scene.

Layout

- 4.20 As shown on the following page, the indicative layout has been developed having regard to and ensuring an appropriate interface with the existing 57 dwelling scheme and the layout previously acknowledged to be broadly acceptable through consideration of the 120 units application albeit indicative with all matters reserved other than access.
- 4.21 The layout retains individual trees wherever possible and all boundary landscaping. The location of three SuD's basins have been carefully considered and utilise the existing ditch which runs alongside and existing east / west hedgerow to provide above ground water transference between them. These features have also been designed to designed to retain standing water and so enhance site biodiversity.
- 4.22 These areas would also be linked by new pathways to enable use by future residents and also provide access from the sites south eastern corner back into the 57 dwelling site to aid permeability.
- 4.22 All dwellings shown meet or exceed minimum national space standards and appropriate separation distances between existing and proposed dwellings have been provided as well as car parking, garden spaces and turning for delivery vehicles.
- 4.23 Whilst indicative only at this stage the layout demonstrates how the site could appropriately accommodate up to 63 new homes whilst meeting relevant standards and guidelines



Indicative site layout

- 4.24 The site main access road from Basingstoke Road run in a westerly direction through the Phase 1, 57 dwelling approved site layout and enters the application site toward the north eastern corner before running west toward the western boundary and then south to provide access to the land south of the existing hedge line which broadly divides the site into northern and southern halves.
- 4.25 The road layout takes account of the larger mature trees along the sites southern boundary and has the effect of setting the proposed houses back from this boundary thereby minimising the potential shadowing from the larger trees. The arboricultural assessment provided with the application confirms that the layout ensures no overshadowing of garden areas or the properties themselves.



Indicative Plan extract showing separation from southern boundary planting to ensure no overshadowing of windows and garden areas

- 4.26 The SuD's areas are overlooked by the proposed housing and linked by footpaths such that residents to the south west of the development could walk directly through to Phase 1 and onto Basingstoke Road without the need to follow the main road layout.

Access

- 4.27 The technical aspects of the access, its width, junction radii and visibility splays are discussed within the accompanying WSP Highways Statement.
- 4.28 In broad terms the layout utilises the existing approved access point from Basingstoke Road through the Phase 1 layout into the proposed development at the north east corner.
- 4.29 The indicative layout provides for appropriate turning for Wokingham Borough Council's larger refuse collection vehicles as highlighted below. Refuse collection points would be provided and are shown at the head of the smaller cul-de-sac's.
- 4.30 Pedestrian footpaths are shown to both sides of the main access entering from the Phase 1 area. This reduces down to a footpath on one side further into the site with some shared surfaces within the smaller cul-de-sac's.

Landscaping & Open Space

- 4.31 As described in this statement, the site already benefits from a mature landscaped setting. It is proposed that the existing trees and boundary hedges are largely maintained and utilised as part of the development.
- 4.32 As shown on the indicative plan there are three key landscape principles:
- Retention and where appropriate enhancement of all boundary landscape screening, especially that to the rear of the existing frontage residential properties.

- Retention and incorporation of the central hedge line.
- Provision of new wildlife areas as a part of the SuD's scheme which will also be linked to provide informal walks and further general amenity for future residents.

4.33 The associated SANG will also deliver a significant amenity for the future residents effectively providing a 9.7 hectare country park adjoining the houses for their recreational use.

4.34 A full and detailed landscaping proposal would be secured by way of planning condition.

5.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS

Numbers & Density

- Up to 63 new dwellings.
- 22 dwellings per hectare

Building Heights

Maximum of two storeys

- Up to 8.5 metre ridge heights

Building Depths & Widths

- Widths 6 – 10 metres
- Depths 7 – 8.5 metres

Access

- Main access from Phase 1
- Secondary estate roads
- Shared surfaces
- Additional pedestrian routes

Character & Materials

- Traditional pitched roofs
- Red / Brown brick
- Painted timber doors and windows
- Use of brick detailing, cills and lintels



Separation

- All minimum standards adhered to
- 11 metre minimum garden depths

Landscaping

- All site landscaping retained
- New buffer planting

Car Parking

- To Council Standards
- Mix of on and off plot parking

Dwelling Types

- Detached and Semi Detached
- No terraces over 3 dwellings long

6.0 SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 This statement and indicative layout and parameters, when read in conjunction with the supporting technical documents relating to highways, landscape, ecological, arboricultural, drainage and archaeological matters demonstrate that the application site can be comfortably and appropriately developed to provide up to 63 new homes and that a high quality environment could be provided for future residents.
- 6.2 It has been demonstrated that the proposals would be of an appropriate scale, and density and would reflect the character and appearance of local development considered to enhance the settlement.
- 6.3 There are no technical constraints to the development of the site and there would be no material impact upon any neighbouring land or property.