

Land off Basingstoke Road

Spencers Wood



March 2025

Design.

ABOUT PEGASUS DESIGN

Pegasus Group’s experience embraces all types of projects within the development industry from large scale urban extensions and strategies for area regeneration to renewable energy and residential schemes.

Our work supports planning applications and we have an exceptional understanding of the development control process and planning policy requirements in relation to design. Our design team is well regarded and is increasingly involved in expert design review and witness work.



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ABOUT RICHBOROUGH

Richborough is a specialist land promotion business which supplies the housebuilding community with consented ‘oven ready’ land to accelerate the delivery of their new homes. It is a Founder Member of The Land Promoters & Developers Federation (LPDF) which is a collection of the UK’s leading land promotion and development businesses.

It takes a considered and professional approach to land promotion at every stage of the process, giving confidence in both the technical work and the engagement taking place.

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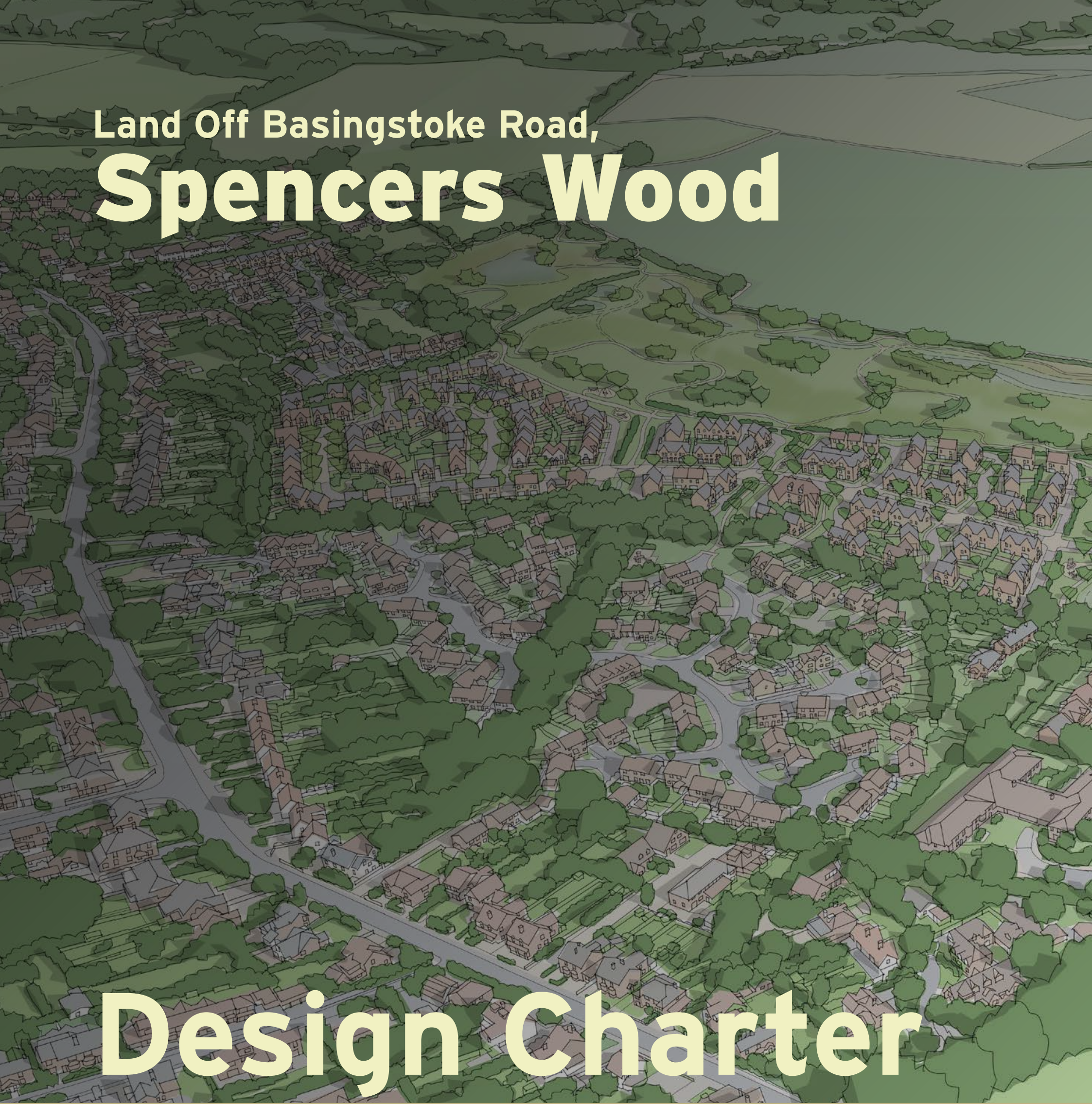
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This document is designed to be viewed as A3 double sided

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Land Off Basingstoke Road, **Spencers Wood**

Design Charter

Community Facilities and Amenities

Integrating with its surrounding context, the new mixed-use neighbourhood will provide a variety of enjoyable places providing significant benefits, including: a village green at the heart of the development with a Local Centre and school (emergency shelter/recovery centre); a Country Park (SANG); play spaces; football pitches; and orchards, to create destination points across the development.

A Connected Community to Promote Active Travel

The development will deliver a choice of new homes, community hub and employment opportunities linked through a series of connected high quality spaces and generous green infrastructure.

Enhance Local Distinctiveness

The proposed new buildings and architecture will provide a sympathetic addition to Spencers Wood, with its own identity inspired by local vernacular and landscape character.



The proposals includes:

- Up to 420 new homes in a range of types, sizes and tenures;
- A new local centre, community hub and GP surgery;
- A new primary school which will also double as a Recovery Centre facility;
- 80 bedroom care home;
- Land for employment use;
- Retention of existing mature vegetation and the creation of a strong new green infrastructure framework;
- Extensive public open space, including a new country park for the benefit of new and existing residents of Spencers Wood;
- A range of play areas and playing fields;
- Sports pitch and changing facilities;
- Community orchards;
- Cycle and pedestrian routes, connecting new development with the existing settlement of Spencers Wood;
- Areas for wildlife including space for planting, ponds and wildflower areas;
- Active and passive recreation, including trim trials, walking routes and opportunities and spaces for adventure play; and
- Sustainable drainage.

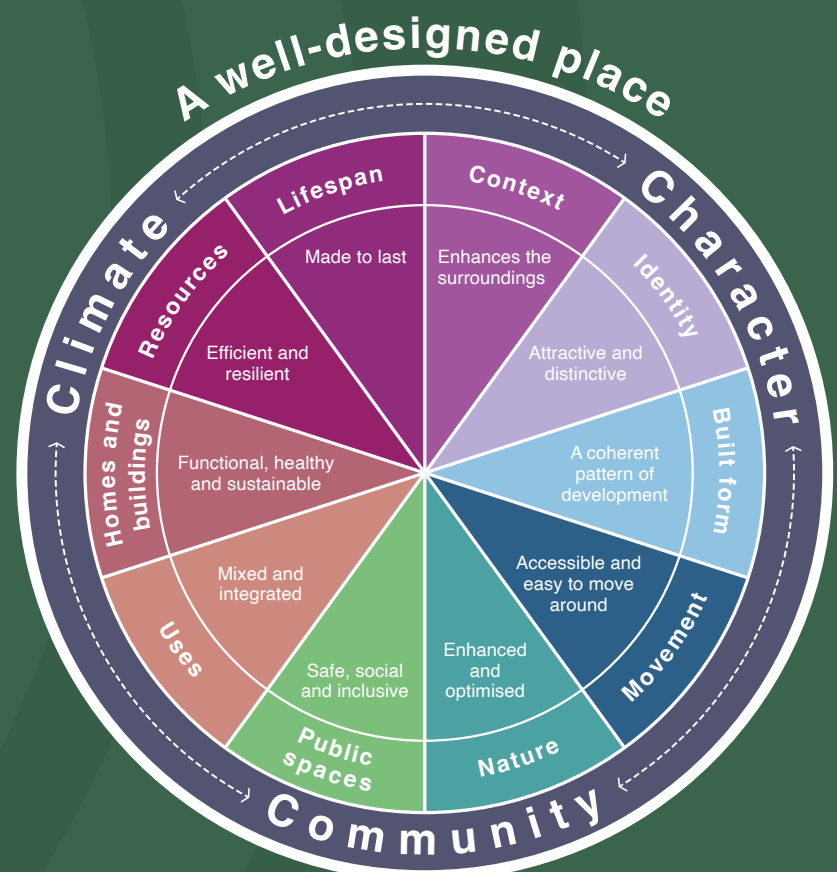
INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

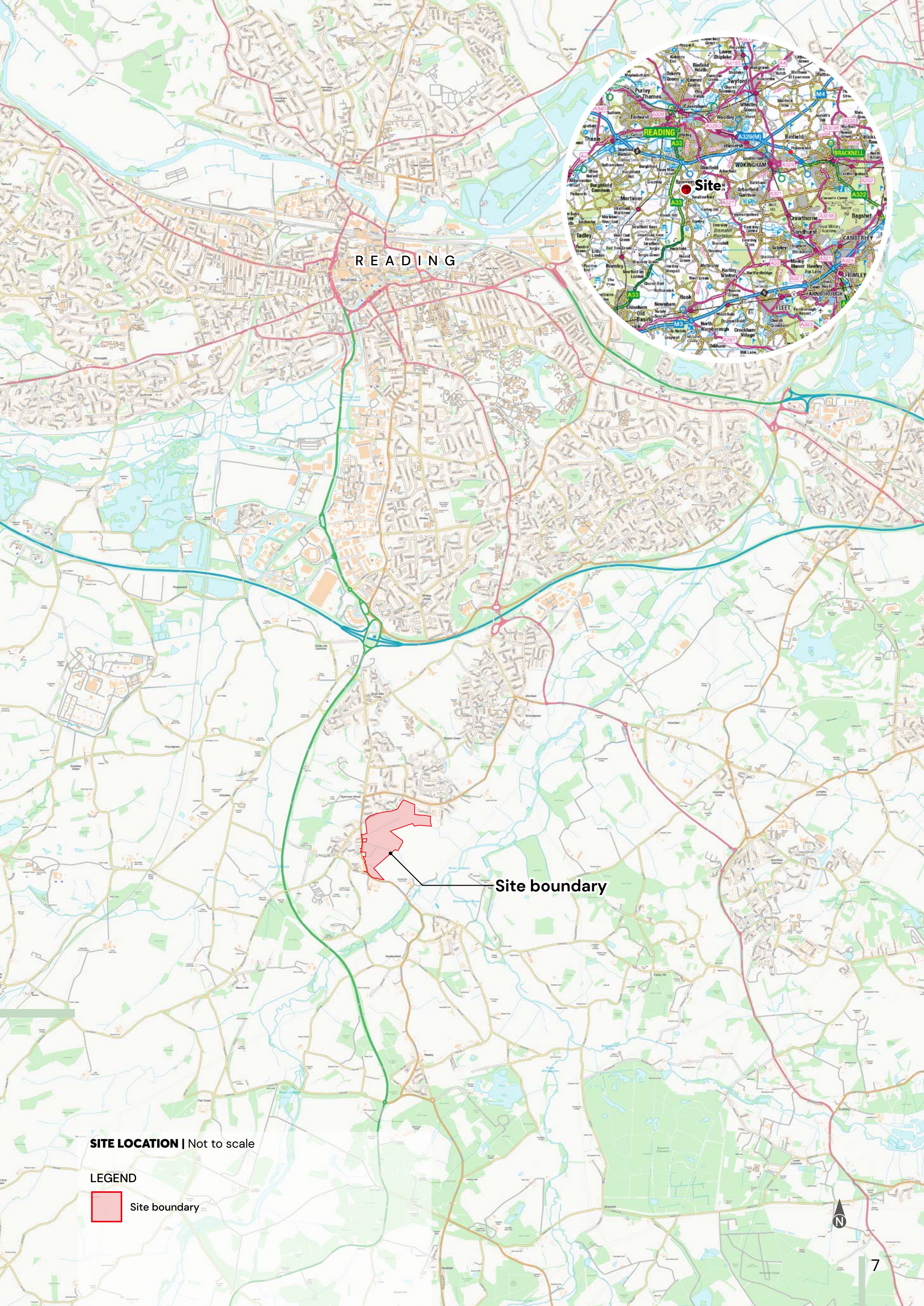
- 1.1 This document has been prepared by Pegasus Group on behalf of Richborough to accompany the Outline Planning Application for the mixed use development of Land off Basingstoke Road, Spencers Wood, including details of layout, scale, appearance and landscaping with the proposed development comprising of the following:
- "Outline planning permission is sought with all matters reserved for future determination, save for the means of access via Basingstoke Road, for: up to 420 dwellings (Use Class C3), an 80 bed care home (Use Class C2), 1ha of employment land (Use Class E(g), primary school (Use Class F1), local centre (Use Classes E(a), (b), (c), (f)), GP Surgery (Use Class E(e)), sports pitch and changing facility, public open space, SANG provision and associated infrastructure."*
- 1.2 This statement has been prepared in accordance with Article 9 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (DMPO), which requires certain applications to be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement.
- 1.3 The DMPO also states the following requirements:
- "(2) An application for planning permission to which this paragraph applies must, except where paragraph (4) applies, be accompanied by a statement ("a design and access statement") about:*
- (a) the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development; and*
- (b) how issues relating to access to the development have been dealt with.*
- (3) A design and access statement must:*
- (a) explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development;*
- (b) demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the development and how the design of the development takes that context into account;*
- (c) explain the policy adopted as to access, and how policies relating to access in relevant local development documents have been taken into account;*
- (d) state what, if any, consultation has been undertaken on issues relating to access to the development and what account has been taken of the outcome of any such consultation; and*
- (e) explain how specific issues which might affect access to the development have been addressed."*

PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

- 1.4 The purpose of this Design and Access Statement with Design Coding is:
- "...to explain how the proposed development is a suitable response to the site and its setting, and demonstrate that it can be adequately accessed by prospective users."*
- (Para. 029, PPG, Reference ID: 14-029-20140306)
- 1.5 This document achieves this within the following sections:
- **Section 1: Introduction.** Outlines the purpose of this document;
 - **Section 2: Planning Policy.** Presentation of the key Planning Policy requirements, derived from a combination of Local Authority and National Government Policy;
 - **Section 3: Assessing the Context.** Considers the surroundings in terms of the local physical, historical and social setting;
 - **Section 4: Assessing the Site.** Considers the site in terms of technical and physical Context;
 - **Section 5: Developing the Design Concept.** Presentation of the design principles that have been derived from a combination of Government Policy and site assessment outlines key stakeholder engagement undertaken, as well as its key findings and design evolution;
 - **Section 6: Design Proposals.** Presentation of the key design proposals including the **Uses; Movement; Built form; Homes and Buildings; Identity; Public Spaces; Nature; Resources** and, **Lifespan**;
 - **Section 7: Conclusion.**
- 1.6 This Design and Access Statement has been written to respond to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government National Design Guide (NDG) ten characteristics of well-designed places. The highlighted items above are the ten characteristics of well-designed places, as set out in the National Design Guide.
- 1.7 This statement should be read in conjunction with the Outline Application submission and its accompanying supporting documents.



The ten characteristics of a well-designed place
(National Design Guide)



READING

Site boundary

SITE LOCATION | Not to scale

LEGEND

 Site boundary



SITE LOCATION

- 1.8 Spencers Wood is a village in the Borough of Wokingham, Berkshire, located around 6.4km (4 miles) south of Reading.
- 1.9 Basingstoke Road, the historic road between Reading and Basingstoke, runs north–south through the village. The village is bypassed by the A33 to the east, and is well connected with easy access to the M4 motorway.
- 1.10 The village is a primarily residential settlement, but retains a semi-rural character with green spaces and farmland surrounding it.
- 1.11 The village is close to local amenities, including shops, schools and recreational facilities, whilst also being close to Reading for additional services and employment opportunities.

THE SITE

- 1.12 The site is located to the east of Basingstoke Road and immediate south and east of the settlement of Spencers Wood.
- 1.13 The site covers approximately 39.26 hectares / 97.01 acres and is formed by five agricultural field parcels, comprised of one large parcel to the north and three smaller parcels to the south.
- 1.14 Basingstoke Road adjoins part of the site's western boundary; existing residential properties border the site's northern and north-western boundary; the eastern and southern boundaries adjoin open countryside which is subject to a planning application for a solar farm. This has been recommended for approval, subject to a Section 106 Agreement.
- 1.15 The site's topography generally falls from the west to the eastern boundary, ranging from 57m AOD down to around 49m AOD.
- 1.16 The site is relatively clear of existing vegetation, with hedgerow planting along established field boundaries with hedgerow trees.
- 1.17 There are no public rights of way through the site.







01 View from Basingstoke Road on the western boundary looking towards the southern field parcels



02 View from western boundary looking along the internal hedgerow towards the southern residential edge of Spencers Wood



03 View from Blackwater Close looking south-west



04 View from the northern field parcel looking south-west towards Basingstoke Road



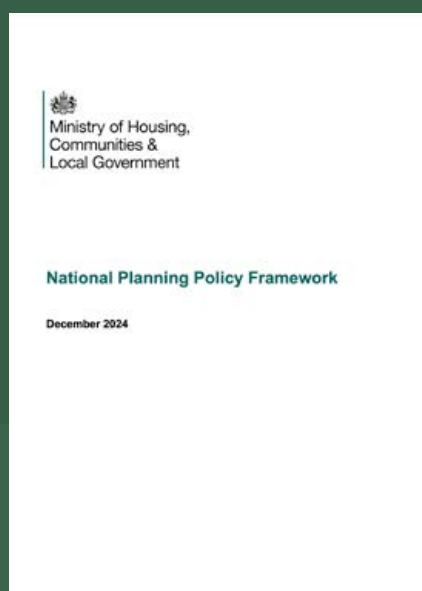
PLANNING POLICY

“Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:

- a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or*
- b) 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.”*

(Para. 139. NPPF 2024)

- 2.1 The development proposals will be formulated with due regard to the policies that make up the statutory Local Development Plan and Supplementary Planning Guidance, together with Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024), National Design Guide (published in 2019 and 2021) and the National Model Design Code (January 2021).



NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 2.2 Government guidance in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies and how these should be applied. The NPPF states at Paragraph 8 that the planning system has 3 interdependent key objectives, which when pursued in a mutually supportive way, can achieve sustainable development. The three key objectives are:
- An economic objective;
 - A social objective; and
 - An environmental objective.
- 2.3 There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out at Paragraph 11. Section 9: Promoting sustainable transport (para. 109) of the NPPF points to the role that design has to play in ensuring that transport issues are considered at the earliest stages of development proposals, and the role that design can play to ensure that development maximizes opportunities for sustainable transport options.
- “...patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places.”*
- (Para. 109(b) NPPF Dec 2024)
- 2.4 The Government also continues to place a high emphasis on design and the NPPF expands on the principles of good design, to define what is expected of well-designed places. It also explains how policies and decision-making processes should support the inclusion of good design, to achieve “high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places”. Detailed advice on how to achieve this objective is provided in Section 12: Achieving well-designed places. The contribution which good design makes to sustainable development is set out in paragraph 131, as follows:
- “The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. 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...”*
- (Para. 131, NPPF Dec 2024)
- 2.5 The NPPF is clear at paragraphs 132 and 133 that Development Plans should set out a clear design vision to provide certainty to applicants, and that design policies should be prepared in conjunction with local communities to reflect local aspirations.
- 2.6 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that with regard to design planning policy and decision making should ensure that developments;
- “a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- c) are sympathetic to the local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users, and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”*
- 2.7 Paragraph 136 reinforces the contribution that trees can make to new developments, including the need for streets that are tree lined and planting within new parks and community orchards.

PLANNING PRACTICE GUIDANCE

2.8 The NPPF is accompanied by the on-line Government resource Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). The Design: Process and Tools PPG provides guidance on the methods and processes available to both applicants and local authorities to ensure the delivery of well-designed and high-quality, long lasting places with considered design solutions, under the following headings:

- Planning for well-designed places;
- Making decisions about design;
- Tools for assessing and improving design quality; and
- Effective community engagement on design.

2.9 Paragraph 1 of the Design PPG reinforces the Government and NPPFs commitment to requiring the creation of well-designed places and the role that early engagement can play in this.

“Well-designed places can be achieved by taking a proactive and collaborative approach at all stages of the planning process, from policy and plan formulation through to the determination of planning applications and the post approval stage”

(para. 001, PPG, ID: 26-001-20191001, October 2019)

NATIONAL DESIGN GUIDE

2.10 The National Design Guide (NDG) published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in 2019 and updated in 2021 further reinforces the way in which the design process can be used to ensure the delivery of quality places:

“In a well-designed place, an integrated design process brings the ten characteristics together in a mutually supporting way. They interact to create an overall character of place.”

(Para. 13, NDG 2021)

2.11 The NDG outlines and illustrates the Governments priorities for well-designed place in the form of ten characteristics, based on national planning policy, planning guidance and objectives for good design.

2.12 The ten characteristics contribute towards the cross-discipline themes for good design set out in the NPPF and fall under three broad aims:

- To create physical **character**;
- To help to nurture and sustain a sense of **community**; and
- To positively addresses environmental issues affecting **climate**.



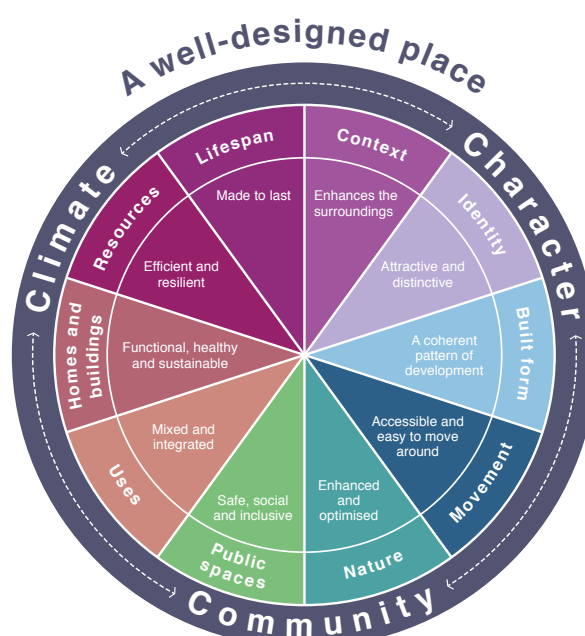
NATIONAL MODEL DESIGN CODE

2.13 The National Model Design Code (NMDC) was published in January 2021 by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. The purpose of this document is to:

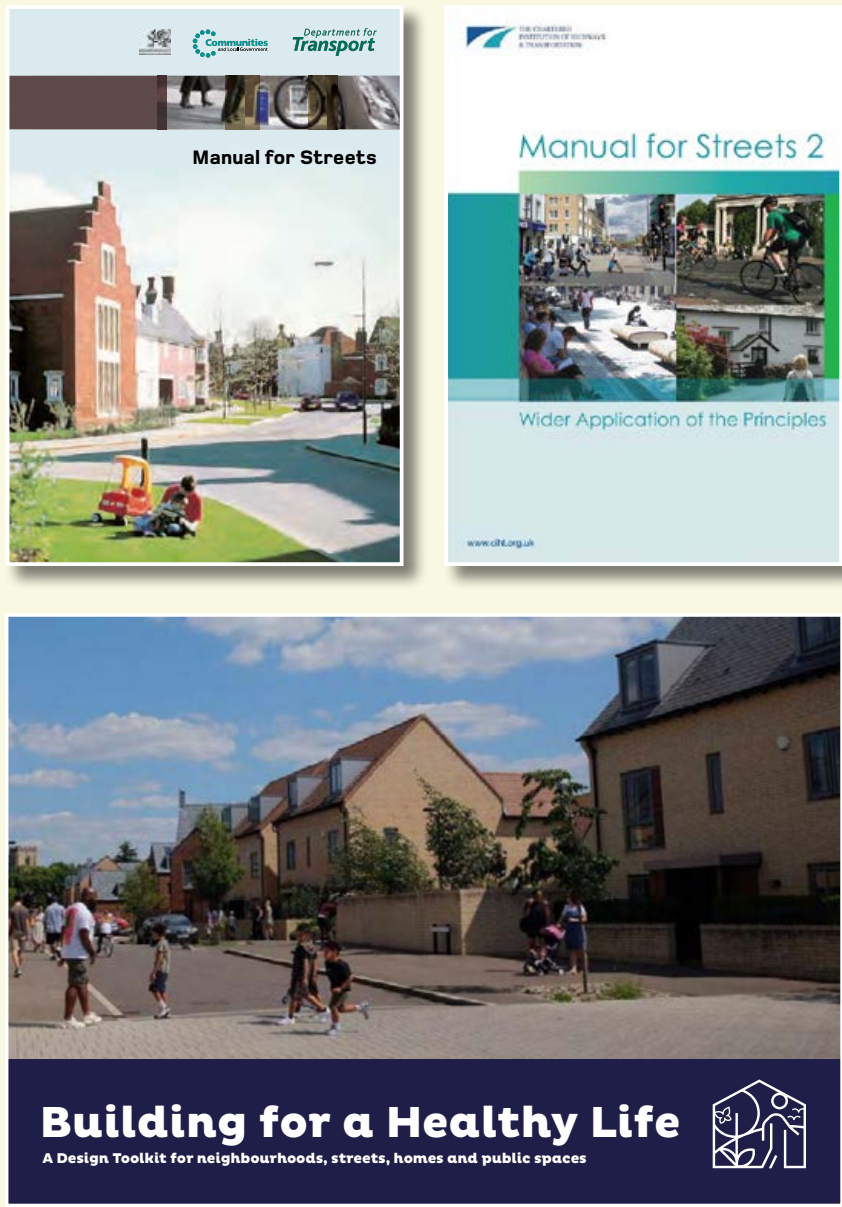
“... provide detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design. It expands on the ten characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide, which reflects the government’s priorities and provides a common overarching framework for design.”

(Para 1, National Design Code 2021)

2.14 The NMDC document draws upon the NPPF’s commitment to ensure that local planning authorities are utilising visual tools, such as design codes and guides, to inform development proposals, which will consequently provide a framework for creating high-quality places, with a consistent and high-quality standard of design.

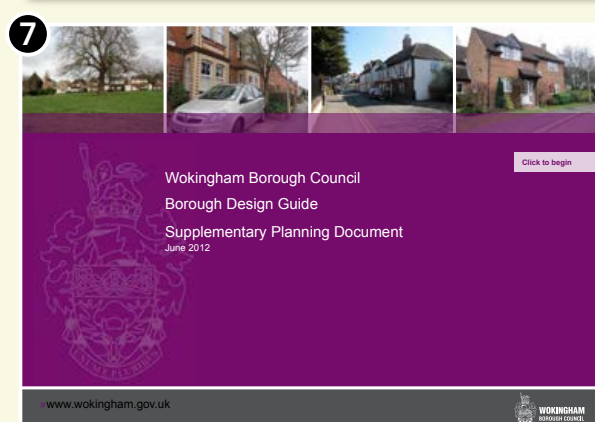
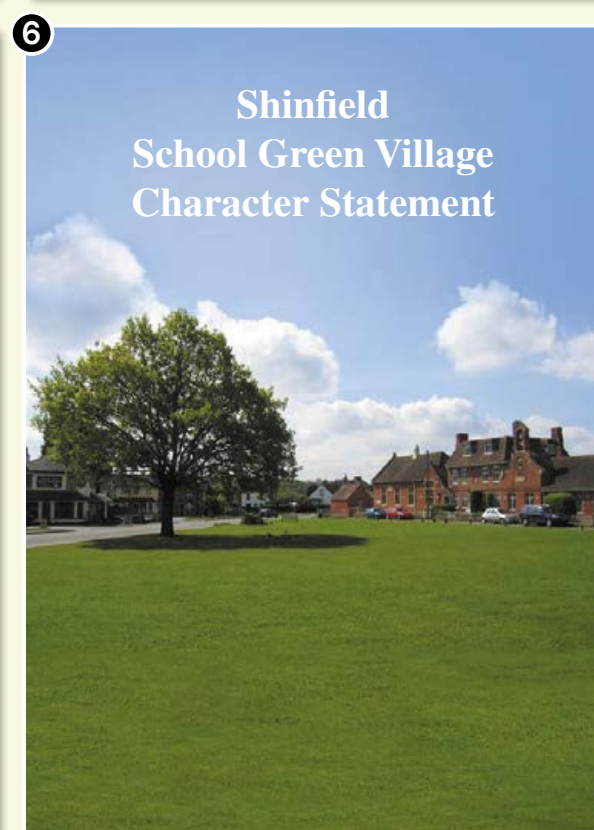
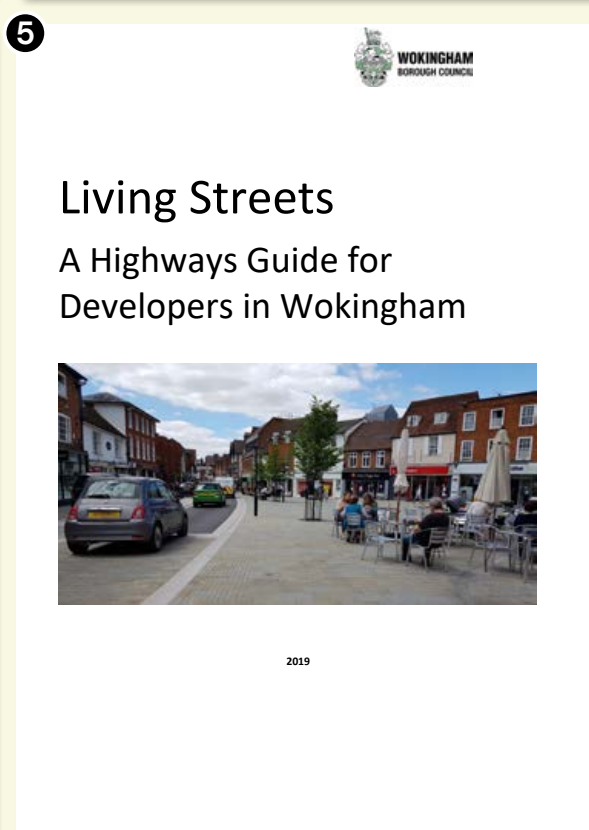
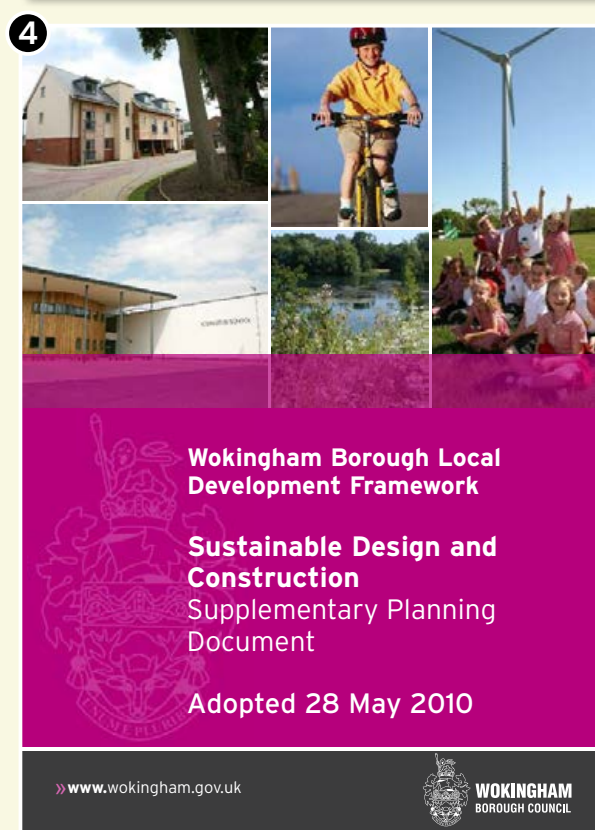
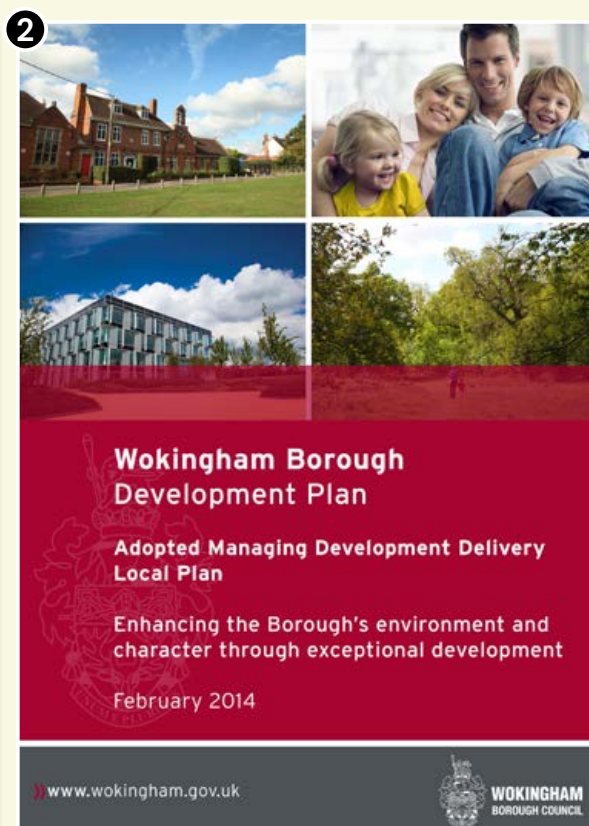
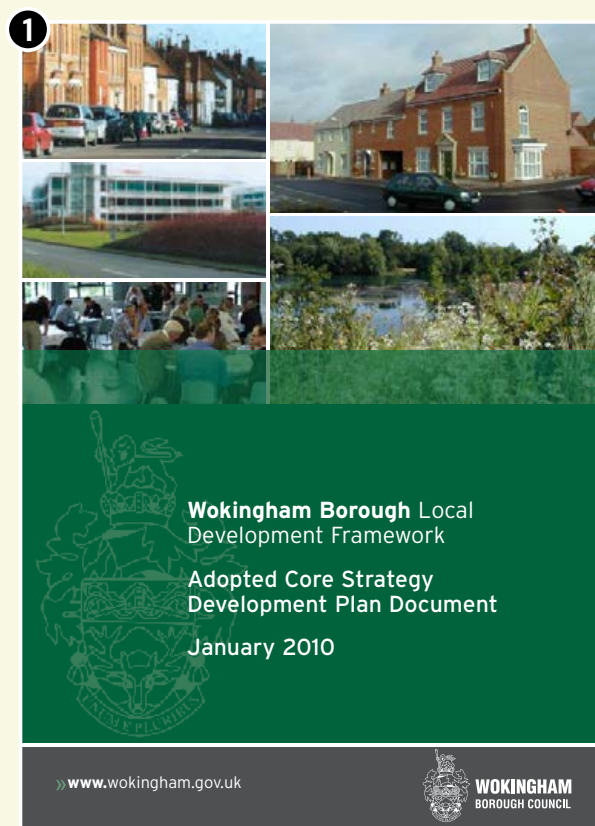


- 2.15 Whilst the NPPF, PPG, NDG and the NMDC are the primary points of reference, there are other well-regarded design guidance documents that are still relevant to creating good design including:
- Manual for Streets 1 & 2 (Department of Transport/Department for Communities and Local Government, 2007/2010); and
 - Building for a Healthy Life (Homes England, June 2020) is the latest edition, and new name for Building for Life 12 (BFL12) written in partnership with NHS England, NHS Improvement and MHCLG.



LOCAL PLANNING AND DESIGN GUIDANCE

- 2.16 The development proposals have been formulated having due regard to the Wokingham Borough adopted Development Plan comprising;
- Wokingham Borough Council Core Strategy, adopted January 2010;
 - Managing Development Delivery Local Plan, adopted February 2014;
 - Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan, made in January 2017;
 - The partially revoked South East Plan, where only policy NRM6 remains part of the Development Plan.
- 2.17 Other relevant material considerations include the emerging Local Plan although this carries limited weight given it is at an early stage.
- 2.18 Consideration has also been given to the following local planning and design guidance;
- Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2010)
 - Wokingham Borough Design Guide SPD (2012)
 - Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan (2017) Policy 2 (General Design Principles)
 - Shinfield Parish Village Character Statement.



- Wokingham Borough Council Planning Documents**
1. Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2010
 2. Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014
 3. Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2017
 4. Sustainable Design and Construction 2010
 5. Living Streets – A Highways Guide for Developers in Wokingham
 6. Shinfield School Green Village Character Statement
 7. Supplementary Planning Document – June 2012

ASSESSING THE CONTEXT



"An understanding of the context, history and the cultural characteristics of a site, neighbourhood and region influences the location, siting and design of new developments. It means they are well grounded in their locality and more likely to be acceptable to existing communities. Creating a positive sense of place helps to foster a sense of belonging and contributes to well-being, inclusion and community cohesion."

(Para. 39, NDG 2021)

- 3.1 This section provides a summary of the assessment of the site and its surroundings that has been undertaken.

STREET PATTERN AND CONNECTIVITY

- 3.2 The site is well connected to the surrounding village of Spencers Wood, and benefits from access to public transport and strategic highway links within close proximity of the site. The plan opposite illustrates the location of the site within the context of the local access and movement network.

Public Transport

- 3.3 The nearest bus stops to the site are located on Basingstoke Road, with additional stops on Hyde End Road north of the site, providing regular bus services to Reading.
- 3.4 The nearest railway station is Mortimer, around 5km south-west of the site. Reading railway station is located around 7.5km north of the site, providing direct national rail links to London, Cheltenham Spa, Basingstoke, Swansea and Cardiff. The Elizabeth Line also connects Reading directly with Central London via London Underground services.

Pedestrian and Cycle Connections

- 3.5 Local pedestrian and cyclist connections, include;
- Routes via the adjoining residential settlement to local amenities and destinations via Basingstoke Road and Hyde End Road.
 - A Public Rights of Way (PRoW) (ref: SHIN33) north of the site connecting to Hyde End Road.
 - A network of PRoWs cross the countryside around the site, but do not connect directly to the site, providing footways to surrounding villages and settlements.

Local Highway Network

- 3.6 The site has transport links to The M4 motorway, with junction 11 located around 2.3km north of the site and providing direct links to London, Swindon Bristol and Cardiff.
- 3.7 The is also close to the A33 which runs north-south around 1km west of the site, providing vehicular connections to Reading, Basingstoke and the M3 motorway.

PRoW (SHIN33) off Hyde End Road to the north of the site

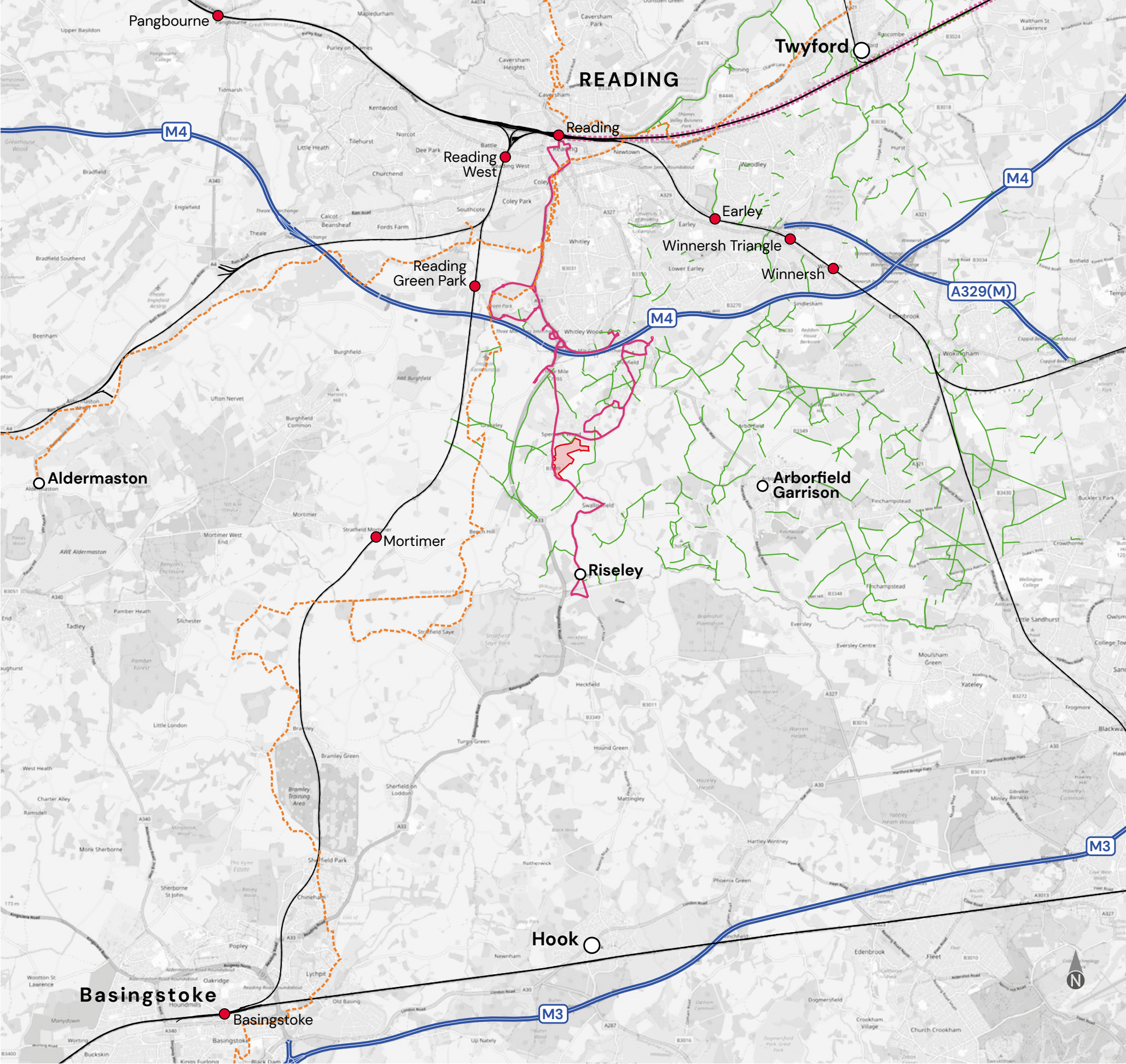
PRoW (SHIN33) where it crosses Larchside Close to the north of the site



Proposed access point from Basingstoke Road



WIDER CONNECTIVITY | 1:100,000



LEGEND

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
|  Site boundary |  Bus route Service number 600 |  Motorway |
|  National Cycle Network |  Railway line / station | |
|  Public right of way (including footpaths, bridleways and byways) |  Elizabeth Line | |



BUS STOPS ALONG BASINGSTOKE ROAD

Local Facilities

- 3.8 The existing Local Facilities and Services Plan (presented opposite) shows the location of key local facilities and services in relation to the site.
- 3.9 Spencers Wood provides a range of local shops and services, including a post office, convenience stores, library, public houses, schools, nurseries and a pharmacy.
- 3.10 Nearby villages and settlements, including Three Mile Cross, Shinfield, Swallowfield and Riseley, offer similar additional amenities and facilities.
- 3.11 Reading provides a wide range of amenities, including education, leisure, cultural, retail and entertainment facilities.



St Michael's & All Angels Church



Spencers Wood Village Hall



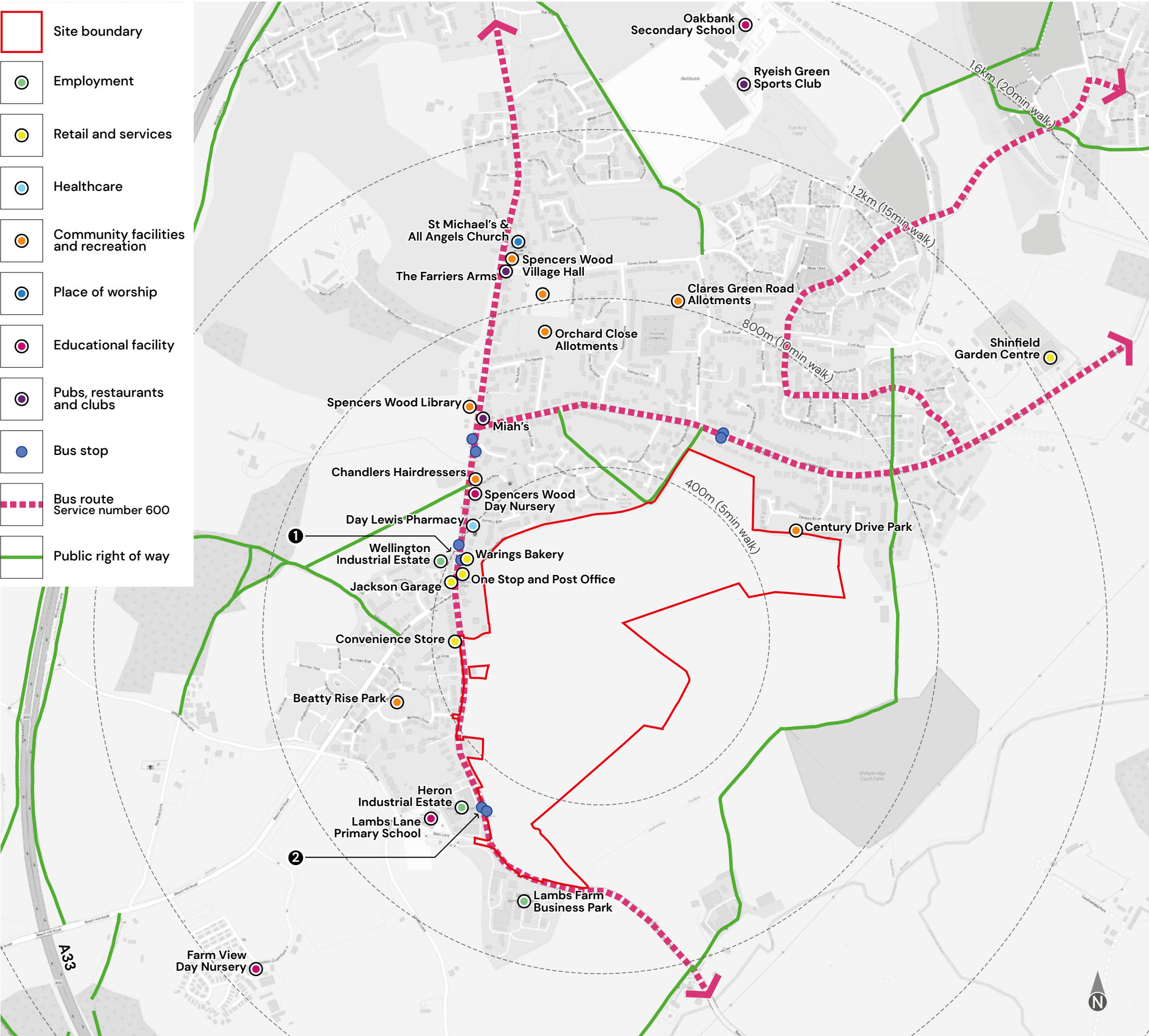
The Farriers Arms



Miah's



Local Facilities and Services | 1:10,000



Spencers Wood Day Nursery



Day Lewis Pharmacy



One Stop and Post Office



Warings Bakery



HISTORIC GROWTH

"When determining how a site may be developed, it is important to understand the history of how the place has evolved. The local sense of place and identity are shaped by local history, culture and heritage, and how these have influenced the built environment and wider landscape."

(Para. 46, NDG 2021)

Agricultural Roots

- 3.12 Spencers Wood, like many villages in England, began as an agricultural community. In early times, much of the area was likely forested or used for farming, with small hamlets and isolated farmsteads dotted around the region.

18th-19th Century: Development of Infrastructure

- 3.13 As the population grew and transportation links improved, Spencers Wood began to develop slowly. The construction of roads and the expansion of the railway system in the 19th Century increased connectivity to nearby towns like Reading and further afield to London. The opening of the Reading to Basingstoke railway line (which runs close to Spencers Wood) in the 19th Century increased accessibility and encouraging further settlement.

20th Century: Suburban Expansion

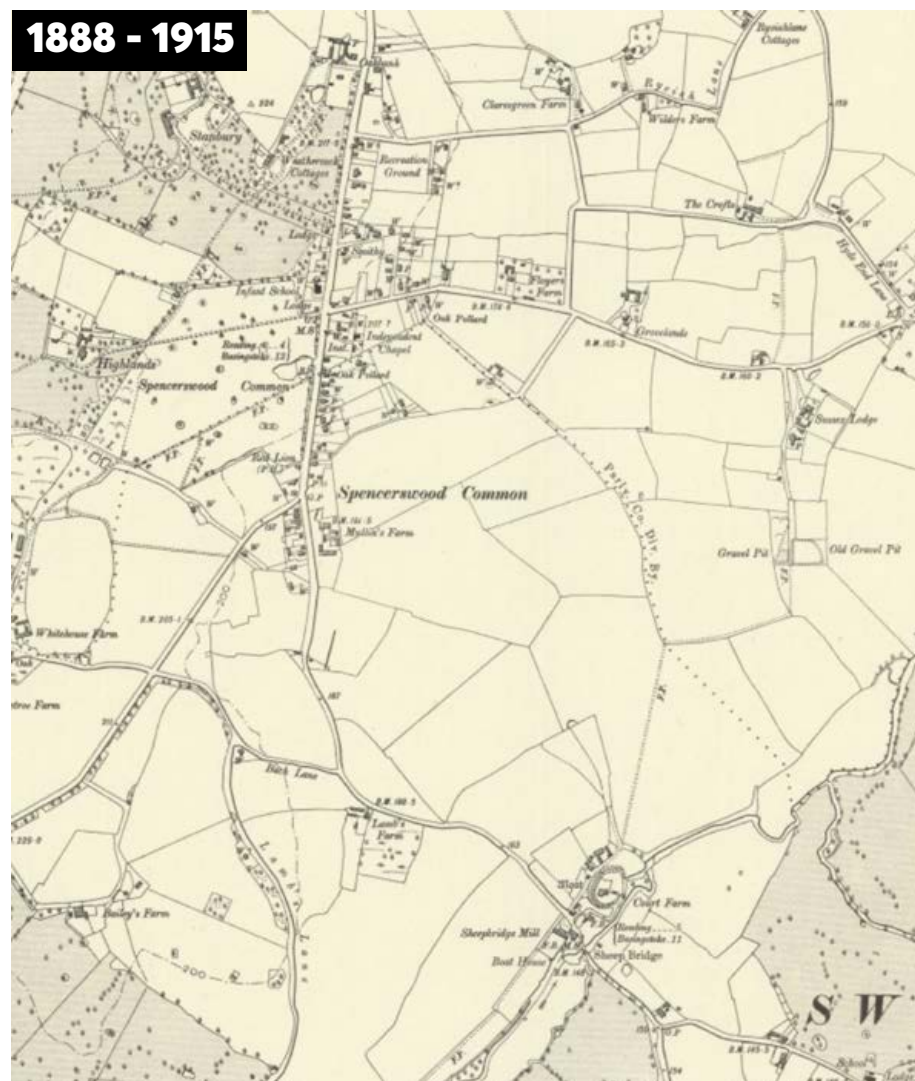
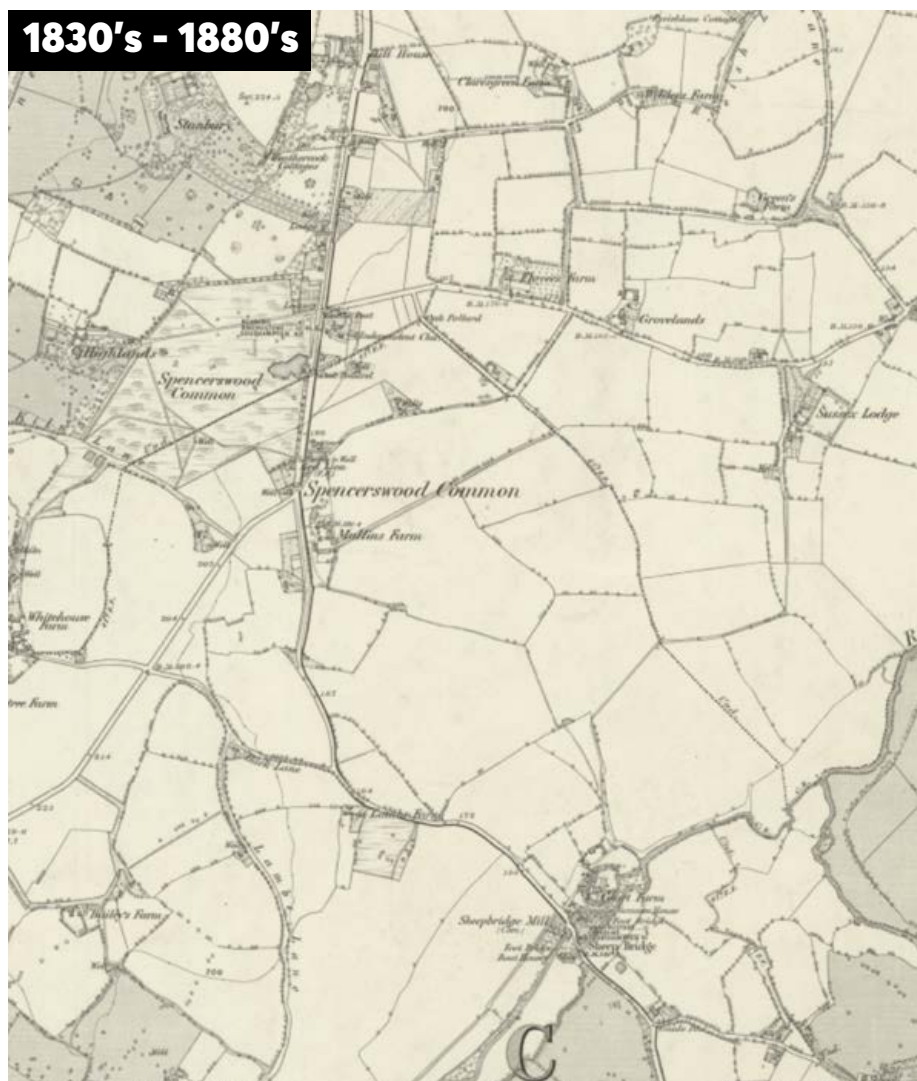
- 3.14 The 20th Century saw significant growth in Spencers Wood, particularly after World War II. The expansion of housing developments, schools, and other infrastructure made the village an attractive location for families to live while remaining close to larger urban centres.

Late 20th and Early 21st Century: Continued Urbanization

- 3.15 Spencers Wood continued to develop through the late 20th and early 21st Centuries, with more modern housing estates, retail facilities, and public services created.
- 3.16 The proximity to major towns like Reading, the increasing demand for housing in the area, and its location within the commuter belt contributed to the village's growth and appeal as a desirable place to live.

Modern Day

- 3.17 Today, Spencers Wood is a well-established village with a legible character. Its historical roots are still visible in some of the older buildings and structures, though modern developments dominate much of the villagescape.
- 3.18 While it has grown considerably, Spencers Wood retains elements of its village character, balancing modern development with rural elements.





Historic photo along Basingstoke Road
(image courtesy of Spencers Wood Local History Group)



Basingstoke Road today
(image courtesy of Google Streetview)

