



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of the **PLANNING COMMITTEE** will be held
David Hicks 1 - Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40
1BN on **WEDNESDAY 13 MARCH 2024 AT 7.00 PM**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan Parsonage', with a long, sweeping tail stroke.

Susan Parsonage
Chief Executive
Published on 5 March 2024

Note: Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting or participate in the meeting virtually, in accordance with the Council's Constitution. If you wish to participate either in person or virtually via Microsoft Teams, please contact Democratic Services: Democratic.services@wokingham.gov.uk

The meeting can also be watched live using the following link:
<https://www.youtube.com/live/iFSUvO6kxQk?feature=shared>

This meeting will be filmed for inclusion on the Council's website. Please note that other people may film, record, tweet or blog from this meeting. The use of these images or recordings is not under the Council's control.

Our Vision
<i>A great place to live, learn, work and grow and a great place to do business</i>
Enriching Lives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Champion excellent education and enable our children and young people to achieve their full potential, regardless of their background. • Support our residents to lead happy, healthy lives and provide access to good leisure facilities to enable healthy choices for everyone. • Engage and empower our communities through arts and culture and create a sense of identity for the Borough which people feel part of. • Support growth in our local economy and help to build business.
Providing Safe and Strong Communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and safeguard our children, young and vulnerable people. • Offer quality care and support, at the right time, to reduce the need for long term care. • Nurture our communities: enabling them to thrive and families to flourish. • Ensure our Borough and communities remain safe for all.
Enjoying a Clean and Green Borough
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play as full a role as possible to achieve a carbon neutral Borough, sustainable for the future. • Protect our Borough, keep it clean and enhance our green areas for people to enjoy. • Reduce our waste, promote re-use, increase recycling and improve biodiversity. • Connect our parks and open spaces with green cycleways.
Delivering the Right Homes in the Right Places
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer quality, affordable, sustainable homes fit for the future. • Ensure the right infrastructure is in place, early, to support and enable our Borough to grow. • Protect our unique places and preserve our natural environment. • Help with your housing needs and support people, where it is needed most, to live independently in their own homes.
Keeping the Borough Moving
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and improve our roads, footpaths and cycleways. • Tackle traffic congestion and minimise delays and disruptions. • Enable safe and sustainable travel around the Borough with good transport infrastructure. • Promote healthy alternative travel options and support our partners in offering affordable, accessible public transport with good transport links.
Changing the Way We Work for You
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be relentlessly customer focussed. • Work with our partners to provide efficient, effective, joined up services which are focussed around our customers. • Communicate better with customers, owning issues, updating on progress and responding appropriately as well as promoting what is happening in our Borough. • Drive innovative, digital ways of working that will connect our communities, businesses and customers to our services in a way that suits their needs.
Be the Best We Can Be
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be an organisation that values and invests in all our colleagues and is seen as an employer of choice. • Embed a culture that supports ambition, promotes empowerment and develops new ways of working. • Use our governance and scrutiny structures to support a learning and continuous improvement approach to the way we do business. • Be a commercial council that is innovative, whilst being inclusive, in its approach with a clear focus on being financially resilient. • Maximise opportunities to secure funding and investment for the Borough. • Establish a renewed vision for the Borough with clear aspirations.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Councillors

David Cornish (Chair)	Andrew Mickleburgh (Vice-Chair)	Alistair Neal
Wayne Smith	Michael Firmager	Stuart Munro
Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey	Tony Skuse	Bill Soane

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
70.		APOLOGIES To receive any apologies for absence.	
71.		MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 February 2024.	5 - 16
72.		DECLARATION OF INTEREST To receive any declaration of interest	
73.		APPLICATIONS TO BE DEFERRED AND WITHDRAWN ITEMS To consider any recommendations to defer applications from the schedule and to note any applications that may have been withdrawn.	
74.	Shinfield South	APPLICATION NO 232995 LAND SOUTH OF CUTBUSH LANE EAST, SHINFIELD. RG2 9AA RECOMMENDATION: Conditional Approval subject to a legal agreement. CASE OFFICER: Christopher Howard	17 - 68
75.	Shinfield South	APPLICATION NO 232833 LAND SOUTH OF CUTBUSH LANE EAST, SHINFIELD. RG2 9AA RECOMMENDATION: Conditional Approval subject to a legal agreement. CASE OFFICER: Christopher Howard	69 - 148
76.	Finchampstead North	APPLICATION NO 223528 33 BARKHAM RIDE FINCHAMPSTEAD WOKINGHAM RG40 4EX RECOMMENDATION: Conditional Approval CASE OFFICER: Connie Davis	149 - 234
77.	Swallowfield	APPLICATION NO 232560 WHITEHOUSE FARM, BEECH HILL ROAD, SPENCERS WOOD, WOKINGHAM, RG7 1HR RECOMMENDATION: Conditional Approval	235 - 296

CASE OFFICER: Andrew Chugg

78. Wescott;
Wokingham
Without

APPLICATION NOS 190914, 191068 & 192325
SOUTH WOKINGHAM STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT
LOCATION (SDL)

297 - 310

RECOMMENDATION: For Information Only
CASE OFFICER: Emy Circuit

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent

A Supplementary Agenda will be issued by the Chief Executive if there are any other items to consider under this heading.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The following abbreviations were used in the above Index and in reports.

C/A	Conditional Approval (grant planning permission)
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
R	Refuse (planning permission)
LB	(application for) Listed Building Consent
S106	Section 106 legal agreement between Council and applicant in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990
F	(application for) Full Planning Permission
MU	Members' Update circulated at the meeting
RM	Reserved Matters not approved when Outline Permission previously granted
VAR	Variation of a condition/conditions attached to a previous approval
PS	Performance Statistic Code for the Planning Application
Category	

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
PLANNING COMMITTEE
HELD ON 14 FEBRUARY 2024 FROM 7.00 PM TO 10.50 PM**

Committee Members Present

Councillors: David Cornish (Chair), Andrew Mickleburgh (Vice-Chair), Alistair Neal, Wayne Smith, Michael Firmager, Stuart Munro, Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey, Tony Skuse and Bill Soane

Councillors Present and Speaking

Councillors: Jane Ainslie and Sarah Kerr

Officers Present

Gordon Adam, Principal Highways Development Control Officer
Brian Conlon, Operational Lead - Development Management
Connor Corrigan, Head of Strategic Development
Vincent Healy, SDL Solicitor
Liam Oliff, Democratic and Electoral Services Specialist
Madeleine Shopland, Democratic and Electoral Services Specialist

Case Officers Present

Emy Circuit
Mark Croucher
Benjamin Hindle
Christopher Howard

62. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

63. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 10 January 2024 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

64. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Neal declared a personal interest in item 69 application 232475 on the grounds of being part of the Earley Town Council Planning Committee where the item was considered, but knowing that the item would come to Wokingham Borough Council Planning Committee, he took no part in that discussion.

Councillor Smith declared a personal interest in item 68 application 230074, he had read the report and would listen to the presentation, after which he would make up his own mind.

65. APPLICATIONS TO BE DEFERRED AND WITHDRAWN ITEMS

There were no items to be deferred or withdrawn.

**66. APPLICATION NO 230881 19-21 MARKET PLACE WOKINGHAM BERKSHIRE
RG40 1AP**

Proposal: Full application for the proposed erection of new mixed used development of 60no. dwellings plus Class E commercial floorspace, associated public and private amenity space, new pedestrian route, 36 car parking spaces, 1 loading bay and cycle

space for 115 bikes with 101 for residential in storage spaces. Following demolition of 19 & 20 Market Place and partial retention of 21 Market Place.

Applicant: Devonshire Metro Limited

The Committee considered a report on this application, set out in agenda pages 17 to 108.

The Committee were advised that updates contained within the Supplementary Planning Agenda included:

- Town Council and ward member comments
- Clarification regarding the extent of land in Council control

Louise Timlin, Wokingham Town Council, spoke in objection to the application. She understood that the site would provide a high-quality development. However, she objected to the height of the 4 storey part of the development and added that it was not in keeping with the character of the area. She referenced CP3 from the Council's planning policy and said that this development was contrary to policy on height and massing. She mentioned a negative impact on the community garden. She emphasised the lack of any affordable housing in the application as a negative.

Patricia Donkin, resident, spoke in objection to the application. She mentioned that Howard Road was a one track cul-de-sac, that was in poor condition and that the application would bring extra traffic to the road, which would have an adverse impact on the safety of young children and the elderly residents. She referenced the Council's vision which mentioned tackling traffic congestion but was of the view that this application would not support this aim. She explained that Wokingham's services are already overloaded, including health and school services. She added that there was a lack of quality affordable homes provided in the application.

Rosalind Graham, agent, spoke in favour of the application. She said that there had been 18 months of dialogue with officers, stakeholders, specialist consultants and the local community. She explained that the application was on an under used brownfield site and would attract diverse new business to the area. She mentioned that the design and scale of the application kept the character of the town centre and added that the apartments had generous access. The application was supported by the Highways officer. She explained that this was a regeneration of a key opportunity site in Wokingham Town Centre and would help meet local housing need with high quality homes.

Jane Ainslie, ward member, spoke in objection of the application. She spoke of safety issues on Howard Road if it was used as a cut through as well as the car parking plans, which would also contribute to safety concerns. She added that Cockpit Path had plenty of school children going to Primary School, whose safety could potentially be put at risk. She requested that if the application were to be approved that parking permits were made 24/7 to stop overflow parking into Howard Road. She added that there was no affordable housing and no infrastructure for new residents. She explained that residents were disappointed that Robert Dyas would be taken out of the town centre in the application.

Councillor Shepherd-Dubey opened the discussion and mentioned that this application needed affordable housing. She then asked how safety concerns on Sale Gardens would be addressed. Emy Circuit, case officer, explained that most of the safety concerns given by residents reflected the current situation and that the plans would not increase safety concerns significantly.

Councillor Mickleburgh asked why there was no deferred viability assessment for affordable housing. The case officer confirmed that within the recommendation there was a review mechanism in the S106 agreement so if the economic environment changed during the build period, there would be a review. Councillor Mickleburgh then asked for further information regarding the safety concerns on Howard Road and he also asked for clarity on whether a condition could be added to prevent residents of Market Place applying for parking permits on Howard Road. The case officer confirmed that residents would not be eligible to apply for parking permits in this area. She added that in terms of the safety concerns on Howard Road, that the access was considered as part of the Road Safety Assessment, and that this included Howard Road. Gordon Adam, Principal Highways Development Control Officer, added that there were four stages of safety audits, 1-2 were in the design process, 3 was during implementation, and 4 was once the site was open.

Councillor Firmager asked what information was available on Anti-Social Behaviour in the area. The case officer explained that this was an existing issue with the site, but that the application would improve the issue with there being a presence in the building increasing surveillance during the day and night. Councillor Firmager then questioned the lack of affordable housing in the application and asked why this was the case. The case officer responded that it was complex to develop in the town centre location, and there were also physical constraints on the site which pushed up construction costs. Councillor Firmager then referenced previous conversations regarding road safety audits and asked what each stage entailed. Gordon Adam explained that the audit looked at pedestrian safety, visibility and crossing points within the design of a scheme, he then added that the designer then must respond to the comments which then had to be approved by officers.

Councillor Smith questioned why there was no site visit for this application. Connor Corrigan, Head of Strategic Development, reminded Members that the site could be seen from public land and members had been encouraged to visit the site in their own time during the committee briefing relating to the site.

Councillor Cornish explained that the Committee was bound by Government Policy on affordable housing and that if the application was rejected on these grounds, then it might be overturned at appeal. He felt that 60 houses in a sustainable part of the borough was a big positive. Councillor Cornish added that the major concern for him was the highways safety aspect.

Councillor Soane asked for clarification on the loading and delivery bays on Cockpit Path, specifically questioning the viability of multiple delivery vehicles being in the area at once and questioned where loading bays were for the arcade. Gordon Adam confirmed that the loading bays for the arcade were on Market Place until 7pm when they became a taxi rank. Connor Corrigan explained that there was sufficient space for multiple deliveries and there was parking located adjacent.

Councillor Smith queried that delivery vehicles only used Market Place for deliveries until 7pm and asked what would happen after. Gordon Adam responded that the majority of deliveries to retail occurred during the day.

Councillor Mickleburgh asked that a deferred viability assessment be clearly stated as a condition if the application was accepted. The case officer explained that it was in the Heads of Terms in Section 16 in the report.

It was proposed by Councillor Mickleburgh and seconded by Councillor Neal that the application be approved.

RESOLVED: That Application 230881 be approved subject to

A) conditions & informatives as set out in Appendix 1; and

B) a S106 agreement to secure the infrastructure set out in Section 16.1 of the appraisal.

Should the S106 legal agreement not be completed within three months of the date of this resolution the Planning Committee authorise the Head of Development Management to refuse planning permission due to failure to secure the necessary infrastructure impact mitigation (unless a longer period is agreed by officers on behalf of the Assistant Director - Place and Growth and confirmed in writing by the Local Planning Authority)

67. APPLICATION NO 231351 171 EVENDONS LANE, WOKINGHAM, RG41 4EH

Proposal: Outline application with all matters reserved except for access, for the proposed erection of a 64 bed care home (Use Class C2) with site access, parking, hard and soft landscaping and other associated works following demolition of existing commercial buildings.

Applicant: Bewley Homes

The Committee considered a report on this application, set out in agenda pages 109 to 214.

The Committee were advised that updates contained within the Supplementary Planning Agenda included:

- Access at Blagrove Lane
- Revised Growth Strategy
- Future C3 Provision
- Wokingham Town Council Comments
- Briefing note prepared by the applicant shared with the Committee
- Correction p119 bullet point 4 '*Notwithstanding, on balance, the minor incursion into greenfield land does **not** outweigh the benefits the proposal presents*'

All members of the committee attended a site visit except Councillors Smith and Skuse.

Louise Timlin, Wokingham Town Council, spoke in objection to the application. She emphasised to the Committee that this application was in an unsustainable location and added that there were a lack of bus services for residents, staff and visitors. She explained that the access from Blagrove Lane could not take extra traffic, there were issues with a

lack of footpaths and narrow roads regarding the safety of residents, she referenced the loss of biodiversity as a negative.

Ian Andrews, resident, spoke in objection to the application. He noted that the application was only looking at access to the site and was surprised to see a report about the care home itself. He referenced policy CP4 and felt the entrance was in a dangerous location on a single-track road. He explained that traffic turning out of the new site would back up traffic to Evendons Lane. He explained that a recent sinkhole issue had backed up traffic along the road, increasing traffic on Blagrove Lane, and that this had been a disaster. He referenced another 30 bed care home and how he had heard of the 24/7 nature of that site with 60 cars per day at the site as well as visitors.

Peter Home, agent, spoke in favour of the application. He commented that due to the status of the Council's Local Plan and Housing Land Supply, the tilted balance applied, meaning that the application should be granted approval unless the impact of doing so significantly and demonstratively outweighed the benefits when assessed against policy. He mentioned that there was a significant unmet need for care within the Borough. He added that the site was previously developed. He stressed that the applicant's team had worked with officers to minimise harm and to fit the site into the existing landscape. He mentioned that the new access was safer than the current one and confirmed there would be a minibus for staff use. There had been no objections from statutory consultees. The site would provide 50 new jobs and there was a biodiversity net gain.

Sarah Kerr, ward member, spoke in objection to the application. She felt the negative aspects had been significantly down played in the officer report. She quoted the planning inspector's comments made in relation to previous applications, who had said that the site would encroach on urban land and was undeveloped. She commented that the application would have a massive visual impact. A lot of the land was farmland, and that this application would negatively affect the animals. Councillor Kerr questioned the sustainability of the site and explained that the residents would be forced to use cars as it was not safe for walking and cycling. Local facilities were some distance away. She added that the proposed level of parking was insufficient. She also mentioned that the application would put the Council in financial danger with a Social Care Reform Bill coming.

Councillor Shepherd-Dubey asked for comment on the viability of the access to the site as well as comment on the need in the Borough for care for dementia patients. Gordon Adam confirmed that the access went through the normal safety audit process, and it was considered within standards and safe, subject to the design which would be secured by condition. Benjamin Hindle, case officer added that with regards to previous applications, access had not formed part of the reason for refusal, and that the location of the access was safe. The case officer also provided the Committee with statistics relating to care need in the Borough and emphasised a large need for rooms for dementia patients in care homes. He highlighted the Planning Inspectors comments regarding the Council's needs figures.

Councillor Firmager asked about the speed limit on Evendons Lane. The case officer explained that the speed limit went up from 30mph to 60mph, 10 metres from the existing access to the site. This in part had formed the rationale behind the access on Blagrove Lane. A pedestrian crossing would act as natural traffic calming. Gordon Adam suggested that more people would access via Evendons Lane as it was more direct to Finchampstead Road.

Councillor Skuse asked if any assessment had been carried out through different times of day, to consider the primary school at the end of Evendons Lane, which increased traffic at drop off and pick up times as well as parking on the street. The case officer told the Committee that the school cannot prejudice planning considerations but that there was nothing stopping parents parking on the road as there were no parking restrictions in place. Gordon Adam explained that as part of the management plan deliveries, where possible, would be outside of school time.

Councillor Mickleburgh asked for clarity on the nature of the traffic using the site. It was outlined that many types of vehicles used the site, staff using cars, buses and minibuses as well as deliveries and visitors more infrequently. Councillor Mickleburgh questioned the current footprint of the site and what it would be with the new site. The case officer commented that the previous appeal decision related to a wider site and had included the part which had been fully designated for biodiversity net gain. The overall site area was significantly lower with the new site. He added that there was a biodiversity net gain due to the retention of a green space and this retention was tied down by 30 year legal agreement. Councillor Mickleburgh asked for clarity on whether the financial cost for the council was a material planning consideration. The case officer confirmed this was not a material planning consideration and did not hold any weight.

Councillor Soane asked why the existing access could not have a swept corner and what the difference in safety would be if this was the case. The case officer explained that if the access was widened it would require the built form to move northwards, which would encroach into the countryside. The Blagrove Lane access prevented an encroachment into the countryside. Councillor Soane also asked for data regarding accident records near the access to the site. Gordon Adam explained that the only accident records that were kept were casualty records and that there were none in the past 5 years.

Councillor Smith asked what the shortfall was in terms of care need. The case officer explained that the overall shortfall was 825 beds in the Borough. Councillor Smith also questioned why there was no trips data in the report. Gordon Adam stated that data around the existing and proposed was given in the comments on the application. Such data could be included in future reports to assist the Committee in their deliberations.

Councillor Neal asked if there were any plans to improve the road safety of the area. It was confirmed that Highways currently had no plans to make changes.

Councillor Cornish mentioned the idea of quiet roads and wanted quiet roads to be looked at as a concept in the areas surrounding the site, especially Evendons Lane and Blagrove Lane and referenced the Council's Active Travel scheme and how quiet roads would help in this respect. Councillor Cornish then asked whether it was possible to move the 30mph speed limit as far west as possible. Gordon Adam explained that this would have to be included in the Section 106 agreement as they would need a contribution from the developer. Councillor Cornish sought clarity on whether shifting the entrance would disturb the built form of the site. The case officer confirmed that shifting the entrance would have a bigger spacial impact. Councillor Cornish emphasised the difference between 60 dwellings and a 60 bed care home, the case officer added that 60 dwellings would be in contrary to CP6.

Councillor Smith asked if the trip movements would be higher or lower at the proposed site compared to the current site. It was confirmed that they would be lower.

Brian Conlon, Operational Lead – Development Management, sought clarity from the committee on whether the change to the speed limit was a formal recommendation.

Councillor Mickleburgh asked that Wokingham Borough Council engaged with the applicant to explore the possibility of funding changes of the speed limit as a part of the Section 106 agreement.

It was proposed by Councillor Skuse and seconded by Councillor Mickleburgh that the application be approved.

RESOLVED: That application 231531 be approved subject to

A) Completion of a legal agreement (S106) to secure the following HoT (Head of Terms):

- Framework Travel Plan (Including Minibus Provision)
- Off-site Pedestrian Crossing (Infrastructure Improvements)
- Biodiversity Net Gain
- Employment Skills Plan

B) Conditions and informatives as set out in Appendix 1 (subject to any additions and updates agreed with the Assistant Director – Place and Growth between the date of the resolution and the issue of the decision):

C) Alternative recommendation: That the committee authorise the Head of Development Management to refuse planning permission in the event of an S106 agreement not being completed to secure appropriate contributions within six months of the date of the committee resolution (unless a longer period is agreed by the Head of Development Management in consultation with the Chairman of Planning Committee) for the following reason:

1) In the absence of a planning obligation to secure suitable contributions / off site works for the following:

It has not been possible to secure the adequate mitigation put forward to justify development in an unsustainable location which fails to account for ecological enhancements. This is contrary to Core Strategy Policies CP1, CP3, CP6 and TB23.

68. APPLICATION NO 230074 LAND ADJACENT TO SCHOOL ROAD AND ORCHARD ROAD, HURST, READING

Proposal: Outline planning application for the proposed erection of 23 dwellings with associated access and 15 carparking spaces for the local Primary school. Access only to be considered (with Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale to be reserved) (amended description) REVISED PLANS.

Applicant: Helmsley Land Ltd

The Committee considered a report on this application, set out in agenda pages 215 to 318.

The Committee were advised that updates contained within the Supplementary Planning Agenda included:

- Conflicts with the spatial strategy
- Comments from Children's Services on school places
- List of nearby facilities
- Transport Statement
- Re-consultation
- Public rights of way

All councillors attended a site visit except Councillors Smith, Skuse and Cornish.

Councillor Cornish mentioned that the Council had received a number of Freedom of Information requests (FOIs) regarding the application and that he had looked into the decision to defer the item to a future committee if important information had been withheld. He confirmed that he was satisfied that nothing material had been withheld and that a deferral would miss the determination period so the item might be approved automatically.

Tony Robinson, Hurst Parish Council, spoke in objection of the application. He told the committee that Hurst Parish Council submitted 2 documents giving clear evidence for refusal. He referenced previous applications in Hurst and said that many applications on greenfield sites had been refused in the past. He refuted the applicant's view that important planning policies were outdated due to the lack of a 5 Year Housing Land Supply (5YHLS) and said this was not the Council's stance as they had refused a 3 dwelling application in Hurst in March 2023. He emphasised that new developments needed to be sustainable, and that Hurst was an unsustainable location. He mentioned the lack of facilities in Hurst such as narrow and inadequate pavements, having to cross the A321 twice to access the village shop, no street lighting, poor bus service and no cycle lanes meaning there was an overreliance on cars.

Jessica Lake, resident, spoke in objection to the application. She also referenced previous applications in Hurst and questioned why this application was any different. She cited a lack of green space in the new development and a harm to local nature with the loss of a wildlife corridor. She felt that the site would be highly visible from School Road and result in a loss of visual amenity. She mentioned that there was unmonitored parking and that there would not be enough spaces and said there would be 50 at school time which would also cause safety concerns. She argued that if Hurst had previously been considered unsustainable then the Committee should reject this application.

Douglas Bond, agent, spoke in favour of the application. He explained that all the issues with the application had been correctly addressed. He referenced the affordable homes within the application as a positive. He argued that this part of Hurst was sustainable, and that the application was in keeping with the size of Hurst. He explained that there had been no objections from the Highways team and the new car park provided would be a benefit to residents, he told the committee the spaces in the car park exceeded the 11-12 cars using School Road on average. He felt the landscape issues were minor.

Councillor Smith asked if the Council had exceeded the allowance of 100 dwellings in Limited Development Locations. Mark Croucher, case officer confirmed that this was the case. Councillor Smith asked if 33-37 of these were located in Hurst, and the case officer confirmed this to be true. Councillor Smith asked if the figures on trip movements were with the original plan of two entrances or with one access to the site. Gordon Adam said this was with the one entrance. Councillor Smith asked about the biodiversity impact of this application. The case officer confirmed that the biodiversity loss would be mitigated by an

offsite contribution and that it was in the legal agreement to make sure there was a biodiversity net gain. Councillor Smith made a number of other points regarding the local play area, distance to the nearest secondary school being over 3km, lack of local facilities, financial issues for the local bus company as well as drainage issues.

Councillor Munro was of the view that the site and Hurst were unsustainable. The case officer said previous applications had been different in scale and that this was a material factor. He also reminded the Committee that they needed to look at the application on its own merit and not compare to previous application.

Councillor Mickleburgh asked what weighting would be given to the exceedance of 100 homes in Limited Development Locations. The case officer explained that policy CP17 referred to the future allocation of sites and sites to be identified in the future and that Members should look at what the harm was of exceeding 100 homes. Councillor Mickleburgh added that he had not been convinced that the whole of Hurst was unsustainable when making the site visit and saw material differences between this application and previous ones in Hurst.

Councillor Neal asked whether removing parked cars from School Road would lead to increased incidents of speeding. Gordon Adam confirmed this could be the case. The case officer added that there was a 20mph limit at school times.

Councillor Cornish asked if Hurst had a Neighbourhood Plan or Local Green Space status. The case officer confirmed Hurst did not have either of these. Councillor Cornish asked if there had been any comment from Children's Services on school places at primary and secondary schools. The case officer explained that the site would increase demand for primary school places by 1.2 places per year. He added that it was rare in the Borough for someone to live both near a primary and secondary school. Councillor Cornish added that the Borough needed 12000 houses and that they need to go somewhere with space.

Councillor Skuse noted the amount of affordable housing in the application as a positive and mentioned the cost involved for the Council if the application did go to appeal.

At this point in the meeting 10.15pm it was proposed by Councillor Cornish and seconded by Councillor Firmager that the meeting be extended to 11pm in order for all items to be considered. Upon being put to the vote, this was agreed.

The case officer responded to Councillor Skuse's points by explaining that the committee could not refuse an application on financial fears considering former appeals, it had to be strictly on the grounds of planning reasons.

Councillor Smith referenced a previous planning inspector's comment which had called policies out of date because the Council couldn't demonstrate a 5YHLS and that policy promoted secure and sustainable development. The case officer clarified that there was diminished weight on the policies, not no weight. He added that sustainable development in paragraph 11 of the NPPF meant the planning system had three overarching objectives, which were independent and needed to be pursued in mutually supportive ways and stated an economic objective, a social objective, and an environmental objective.

Brian Conlon clarified that reference to other appeals did not make a site acceptable or not but did provide officers and councillors with an indication of what was or was not acceptable on a site. He added that a particular appeal result did not guarantee the same for another application. He also explained that the sustainability of Hurst itself was different to looking at the relationship between the site and the facilities in the village. He indicated

that the assessment concluded that the site was not wholly unsustainable in relation to what was in Hurst and that Hurst was a desirable and practical place to live.

Councillor Cornish noted that were the Committee to approve the application, then affordable housing had been given great weight.

Councillor Smith proposed that the committee refuse the application on the grounds of sustainability specifically related to travel and reliance on travel by car and the impact on the landscape setting. He confirmed that the conflict with the development plan and the absence of a section 106 agreement should also be reasons for refusal.

This proposal was seconded by Councillor Munro.

RESOLVED: That application 230074 be refused on the grounds of

1. The proposal represents unacceptable unplanned development outside of development limits, within the countryside and contrary to the spatial objectives of the development plan and to policies CP1, CP3, CP6, CP9, CP11 and CP17 of the Core Strategy, Policies CC01, CC02 and CC03 of the MDD Local Plan, the Borough Design Guide SPD and sections 2, 4, 9 and 15 of the NPPF.
2. The application site is within an unsustainable location that would result in future residents relying on private motor vehicles for day-to-day needs and would not encourage a modal shift towards sustainable modes of transport, by reason of the countryside location outside of settlement limits, the limited facilities within Hurst that would be within a safe and convenient walking distance, quality of the walking/cycling & environment and limited public transport links. The proposal is contrary to policies CP1, CP2, CP3, CP6 and CP11 of the Core Strategy, policies CC01 and CC02 of the MDD Local Plan, the Borough Design Guide SPD and section 8 & 9 of the NPPF.
3. The proposed development will have a negative and detrimental impact on the landscape and character & appearance of the area by reason of the loss of an open green field in the countryside which an important rural characteristic to the setting of the village of Hurst, contrary to policies CP1, CP3 and CP11 of the Core Strategy, Policies CC01, CC02, CC03 and TB21 of the MDD Local Plan, the Borough Design Guide SPD, the Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment and section 15 of the NPPF.
4. In the absence of a completed Legal Agreement, the proposed development fails to make adequate provision for affordable housing, contrary to policy CP5 of the Core Strategy and section 6 of the NPPF.
5. In the absence of a completed legal agreement, the proposed development fails to secure opportunities for training, apprenticeships and other vocational initiatives to develop local employability skills contrary to MDD policy Local Plan TB12.
6. In the absence of a completed Legal Agreement, the proposed development fails to make adequate contributions to civic and open spaces, allotments, sport and recreational facilities, contrary to MDD Local Plan policy TB08, Core Strategy policy CP4 and Sections 4 and 8 of the NPPF.
7. In the absence of a completed Legal Agreement, the development fails to secure a schedule off-site highway works to improve pedestrian & sustainable travel infrastructure and the management/adoption of internal estate roads, car park and

open spaces, contrary to Core Strategy policy CP1, CP3, CP4 and CP6 and MDD Local Plan policy CC03 and TB08 and sections 4, 8, 9 and 12 of the NPPF.

8. In the absence of a completed legal agreement, the proposed development fails to demonstrate and secure that there would be no biodiversity net loss as a result of the proposal by either on-site mitigation or off-site compensation, contrary to Core Strategy policy CP3 and CP7, MDD Local Plan Policy TB23 and section 15 of the NPPF.

69. APPLICATION NO 232475 TOB1, EARLEY GATE, UNIVERSITY OF READING, READING RG6 6EQ

Proposal: Full planning application for the erection of the headquarters building of European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECWMF) with access parking and landscaping, following demolition of existing buildings.

Applicant: Mace Group, on behalf of the Government Property Agency

The Committee considered a report on this application, set out in agenda pages 319 to 374.

The Committee were advised that updates contained within the Supplementary Planning Agenda included:

- An additional condition added to the recommendations set out in Appendix 1

All councillors attended a site visit except Councillors Smith and Skuse.

Nick Paterson-Neild, agent, spoke in favour of the application. He explained that the project would be funded by the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology and met industry leading net-zero Carbon standards. He told the Committee that the centre was built in Shinfield in 1979 but that the current site did not provide the space required for the long-term need. He added that the building was of high architectural design quality and was in a sustainable location with great transport links. He concluded by saying this application ensured the world's leading global weather prediction station remained in Wokingham Borough.

Councillor Smith asked whether Reading Borough Council refusing this application in full due to Highways safety was an issue. Gordon Adam reassured Members that the application wouldn't have a major impact on traffic levels.

Members noted that this was a fantastic application and that they fully supported keeping this station in the Borough.

It was proposed by Councillor Cornish and seconded by Councillor Skuse that the application be approved.

RESOLVED: That application 232475 be approved subject to

A) Completion of a S106 agreement and;

B) Conditions as set out in the report and amended in the members update (if required) and additional condition in the Members update;

C) Should the S106 agreement not be signed by the applicant by six months of the committee resolution, delegate to the Assistant Director of Planning to refuse the application unless a longer timeframe is agreed with the Chair of Planning Committee in consultation with the Assistant Director of Planning.

Agenda Item 74.

Application Number	Expiry Date	Parish	Ward
232995	EXT	Shinfield	Shinfield South

Applicant	University of Reading
Site Address	Land South of Cutbush Lane East, Shinfield. RG2 9AA.
Proposal	Full planning permission for the construction of an extension to the Thames Valley Science Park spine road to provide access to a proposed new building for the Natural History Museum, landscaping, surface water attenuation and other associated works. Application is a potential departure from local plan.
Type	Full
Officer	Christopher Howard
Reason for determination by committee	Major application

FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Planning Committee on 13/03/2024
REPORT PREPARED BY	Assistant Director – Place and Growth
RECOMMENDATION	APPROVAL Three tiered recommendation as fully set out in Appendix 1. Recommendation is subject to a section 106 agreement to secure the heads of terms below together with the conditions and informatives set out in Appendix 1

SUMMARY

The application is for a spine road that effectively extends the Thames Valley Park spine road / Cutbush Lane East to serve the proposed Natural History Museum site. There is a concurrent application which is under consideration for a new building to serve the Natural History Collection under planning reference 232833; and further detail is provided in the report for this item which will follow this application on the committee agenda. It should be noted that the road by itself would not be supported.

The Natural History Museum is required to relocate their sample storage facilities from their existing site in London and Tring. The site has been brought forward in partnership with the University of Reading. The site has been selected due to its proximity to London, being well connected to the motorway and Heathrow and the connection with the university. Essentially, the road would enable the delivery of a purpose built facility that would seek to safeguard around one third of the Natural History Collection. It will also enable research and development for the site since this incorporates laboratory space and an area for digitisation of the collection. The road infrastructure would support the delivery of this facility given the site does not have any existing access. By taking both applications into account, they will deliver significant benefits which are outlined in the planning balance section below.

The layout of the road has been well considered and it incorporates good facilities for the end user which includes a 3m wide pedestrian / cycle way. In addition, it includes a landscaping strip that is also 3m wide which provides segregation between vehicles and pedestrians and cyclists to provide a safe and attractive route. The drainage proposed also

incorporates SUDS into the design with a permanent wet pond that will give a focal point and provide ecological benefits as opposed to a closed drainage system.

In terms of access, the site would be accessed via the Eastern Relief Road / Thames Valley Science Park roundabout via South Avenue and onto Cutbush Lane East. The design incorporates a roundabout which will provide the main access point to the building. In addition, it will also serve as a turning circle given that the new route will effectively be a cul-de sac and could in the future provide a facility for buses should the number 3 and 600 route be extended to the site in future years.

The design of the road and submitted layout plan also safeguards land for potential expansion of the highway corridor if this is ever needed in future years. This means that the road would not prejudice any upgrades should they be required to facilitate further development at any point. The safeguarded corridor will be secured through the Section 106 agreement and would allow for further pedestrian and cycle facilities to be delivered on the northern side of the road. In addition, this limits the degree of disruption associated with any potential future upgrades. The road has been designed to be 7.3m wide which will easily accommodate HGV's serving the development, while works for further pedestrian and cycle infrastructure could potentially be undertaken outside of the carriageway. This represents a comprehensive and coordinated approach to infrastructure delivery.

The proposed pedestrian and cycle infrastructure on the south side of the road has also been designed to be in accordance with LTN 1/20 principles. This is a 3m wide corridor and given the scale of the intended use, this is acceptable.

It should also be noted that through safeguarding the corridor, this would link into the land reserved within the Shinfield Studio Section 106 agreement. In effect, this would allow for upgrades all the way from the edge of the application site through to the new M4 that was delivered in conjunction with the Eastern Relief Road should this be triggered. This would also link to footpath 39 towards Lower Earley. This represents a wholistic approach to the consideration of any required future upgrades and should negate the need for further disruptive highway works.

Whilst the proposed road and supporting infrastructure is located in the countryside contrary to some of the development plan policies, due to the economic, social and environmental benefits that would be delivered for the new Natural History Museum Collection building (which are summarised in the planning balance section below), the road is considered acceptable and necessary for the delivery of the Natural History Museum in this location.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Application ref	Description	Outcome
F/2008/1725	Proposed erection of 70 metre high anemometer mast for measuring the speed of wind for a period of 2 years.	Approved 25 September 2008
VAR/2010/1624	Application to vary condition 4 of planning permission F/2008/1725 to allow anemometer mast to be retained for a further 18 month period (until 07/06/12).	Refused 15 October 2010
F/2010/2266	The proposed erection of 25 year operation and subsequent decommissioning of a wind energy development comprising of the following elements: four wind turbines, each with a maximum overall height (to vertical blade tip) of up to 130 metres, together with new and upgraded access tracks, temporary works, hard standing areas, control and metering building, cabling, improved vehicular access from Cutbush Lane and the A327, an anemometry mast and compensatory flood storage.	Refused 28 April 2011

The applications that have enabled the parcel to come forward in terms of infrastructure delivery are summarised below:

Application ref	Description	Outcome
Science and innovation park		
O/2009/1027	Outline application for phase 1 development of Science & Innovation Park (Access to be considered) plus full application for the construction of access road foot and cycle ways M4 overbridge and associated works including landscaping and engineering works plus erection of boundary wall and fence adjoining Shinfield Road/Access Road. Part demolition and reformation of facade of Stable Buildings at Lane End Farm and demolition of existing farm buildings.	Approved 27/10/10
RM/2015/0630	Reserved Matters application pursuant to Outline Planning Consent O/2009/1027 for the development of phase 1A of proposed Thames Valley Science Park comprising the construction of a gateway building and all associated landscaping and ancillary works plus temporary car parking arrangements – Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale to be considered.	Approved 26/08/15

Application ref	Description	Outcome
Eastern Relief Road		
F/2010/1428	Full application for the construction of an Eastern Relief Road (Eastern Relief Road) to Shinfield including the construction of road foot and cycleways an M4 over-bridge. Re-grading of embankments landscaping utilities creation of flood compensation areas and associated works including engineering and other operations. Erection of replacement boundary wall and fence adjoining Shinfield Road/ Eastern Relief Road, part demolition of existing farm buildings at Lane End Farm and demolition/deconstruction of two poly tunnels south of Cutbush Lane. – Delivered and open	Appeal approved 03/06/11
British Museum		
182059	Hybrid planning application in respect to 1) Full planning application for a 15,628sqm research and storage facility (Sui Generis Use for the British Museum); 80parking spaces; landscaping and surface water drainage. 2) Outline planning application for up to 15,000sqm research and storage facility (Sui Generis Use for the British Museum) all matters reserved. 3) Demolition of two existing residential dwellings.	Approved 14/02/19

DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION	
Previous land use	Agricultural – arable farm land
Proposed land use	Road connection and supporting drainage infrastructure / landscaping to link the proposed Natural History Museum building under planning ref: 232833 to Cutbush Lane East
Site Area	3.84 ha
Road Length	400m
Construction jobs	Max 50 but generally 35 for an 18 month build programme
CONSTRAINTS	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located close to the Strategic Development Location (SDL) as identified on the Core Strategy (South of the M4 Strategic Development Location SPD) but outside the boundary • Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions SPD • Within 7km of the Special Protection Area (SPA) • Countryside • Potentially contaminated land consultation zone

- Gas pipe consultation zone
- Landscape character area
- Area of archaeological potential
- Listed buildings located to the south west 380m Oldhouse Farm and Cutbush Manor and Barn Grade 2 located 400m to the south west.
- Ancient woodland to the south west of the site – St Johns Copse
- Woodland to the north east of the site – New Covert (unclassified)
- Ordinary Watercourse
- Berkshire Habitat
- Berkshire Biodiversity Opportunity Zone
- Minerals consultation zone

Previous land use

Agricultural – arable farm land

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

WBC Economic Prosperity and Place (Community Infrastructure)	No objection requires Employment Skills Plan
WBC Drainage	No objection – requests conditions
WBC Environmental Health	No objection – requests conditions
WBC Highways	No objection – requests conditions
WBC Tree & Landscape	Comments on the landscaping plans and requests further information- <i>Officer note: these can be secured by condition which has been agreed with the Landscape Officer</i>
Forestry Commission	No objection
Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue	No objection
Thames Water	No comments received
WBC Biodiversity	No objection – requests conditions
Planning Policy	No objection
Berkshire Archaeology	No objection – requests condition
Active Travel England	No objection – requests planning obligation
Natural England	No objection
SGN	No comments received
SSEN	No comments received

REPRESENTATIONS

Town/Parish Council: No comments received

Local Members: No comments received

Neighbours:

In total, 626 neighbour notification letters were sent. From this and site notice together with newspaper publicity, when discounting any duplications on the web site a total of 4 letters were received. The breakdown of these were 2 letters of objection, 1 letter of comment and 1 letter of support. The planning related issues raised are summarised below:

Letters of objection / comment:

- Impact of construction traffic on Cutbush Lane East - *Officer note: Construction traffic will be managed by the Construction Environment Management Plan and vehicles will need to access the site via the Science Park entrance. Signage will be included and will be subject to a condition.*
- Site not identified in the Core Strategy for development / request delay until the local plan update process has been completed - *Officer note: Whilst this is noted, the local plan update process has been delayed primarily due to the hold up in the publication of the NPPF by central government. Sites such as this cannot always be accommodated for the timing of our Local Plan Update due to the need of the applicant to deliver the facility and the Local Planning Authority cannot dictate the timing of applications. Significant publication for the application has been undertaken both by the applicant and by the Local Planning Authority through neighbour notifications. Due to the reasons discussed in the report below, the proposed development is considered acceptable and would not prejudice the local plan update process.*
- Impacts on highway safety / vehicle speeding along route - *Officer note, the speed limit along the Science Park link road is an advisory 20mph limit (this road is not adopted) and Cutbush Lane East is 30mph. The application has been assessed by the highway officer who is satisfied that there would be no adverse impacts on highway safety. Whilst the request for a traffic light controlled crossing for Cutbush Lane East to Cutbush Lane West is noted over the Eastern Relief Road, the levels of traffic which will be generated means this is not triggered by the application. However, the road design includes a refuge at this point for pedestrians and cyclists. Note formal crossing may be delivered in future years if triggered.*
- Traffic surveys undertaken on a Sunday - *Officer note: these have been revisited and undertaken during the week. The highways officer is satisfied with the results from the updated surveys.*
- Impact on wider transport network – *Officer note: the application has been accompanied by a Transport Assessment which given the intensity of use, does not identify any significant impact to the wider highway network.*
- Land ownership was bequeathed to the University of Reading and they should not be able to profit from it - *Officer note: This is not a material planning consideration.*
- Impact on character / loss of countryside / overdevelopment of the area – *Officer note: please refer to report below, paragraphs 25-39*

Letter of support

- Supports the delivery of the Natural History Museum building

PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework National Design Guide National Planning Practice Guidance

Core Strategy (CS)

- CP1 – Sustainable Development
- CP2 – Inclusive Communities
- CP3 – General Principles for Development
- CP4 – Infrastructure Requirements
- CP5 – Housing Mix, Density and Affordability
- CP6 – Managing Travel Demand
- CP7 – Biodiversity
- CP8 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area
- CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
- CP10 - Improvements to the Strategic Transport Network.
- CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits (Inc Countryside)
- CP15 – Employment Development

MDD Local Plan (MDD)

- CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC02 – Development Limits
- CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping
- CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC05 – Renewable Energy and Decentralised Energy Networks
- CC06 – Noise
- CC07 – Parking
- CC08 – Safeguarding alignments of the Strategic Transport Network & Road Infrastructure
- CC09 – Development and Flood Risk
- CC10 – Sustainable Drainage
- TB11 – Core Employment Areas
- TB12 – Employment Skills Plan
- TB21 – Landscape Character
- TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
- TB24 – Designated Heritage Assets
- TB25 – Archaeology

Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan

- Policy 1 Location of Development
- Policy 2 General Design Principles
- Policy 3 Sustainable Development
- Policy 4 Accessibility and Highway Safety
- Policy 5 Parking
- Policy 6 Trees, Hedgerows and Woodlands
- Policy 7 Biodiversity
- Policy 8 Flooding

Policy 9	Community Assets
Policy 10	Community and Sports Facilities
Policy 11	Commercial Development
Policy 12	Broadband Provision

Berkshire Joint Minerals Plan

M2 – Mineral Resources

Other

Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document
 Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document
 Climate Change Interim Policy Position Statement
 A Vision for Our Villages: Ryeish Green, Spencers Wood, Three Mile Cross
 Riseley Village Design Statement
 Shinfield School Green Village Character Statement
 South of the M4 SPD – *officer note the site is outside of the SDL boundary but there are principles within this that are cross cutting for the wider area*
 Manual for Streets
 Gear Change
 Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20)
 Inclusive Mobility
 Active Design

PLANNING ISSUES

Site description

1. The application relates to land to the east of Cutbush Lane East and south of the M4 Motorway. The road would link broadly from the gate at Upperwood Farm on Cutbush Lane East, adjacent to the British Museum, to the proposed Natural History Museum facility. The building that it would serve is located between St Johns Copse to the south west and New Covert to the north east as highlighted in figure 1 below. The site is set within the Loddon Valley Landscape Character area and the land generally slopes gently to towards the river Loddon to the south east of the site. The current land use is agricultural and there are hedgerows dissecting the field boundaries. Upperwood Farm is located to the north west of the site.



Figure 1: Site location in context with existing landscape and physical features

2. In terms of the wider area, there has been significant changes to the landscape in recent years with the delivery of employment space. Works to deliver Shinfield Studios is well underway and will be completed on the main site in 2024. Prior to this, supporting infrastructure has also been delivered for the Gateway building at phase 1 of the Thames Valley Science Park. South Avenue serves this building together with the Studio site and British Museum. South Avenue provides a connection from these employment facilities onto the Eastern Relief Road.
3. More closely related to the site is the British Museum Archive which is located broadly to the south west. Phase one of this facility has now been delivered and there is outline planning permission to deliver a further phase should this be required to the rear (south) of the building. Work is currently underway to decant the archive from Blythe House in London to Shinfield.
4. The British Museum application enabled a series of highway upgrades to be delivered on Cutbush Lane East as shown in figure 2. These include restricting access for motor vehicles from the section of the Eastern Relief Road to Shinfield Grange which means that this section of Cutbush Lane East is effectively a cul-de-

sac. Access to the British Museum and Shinfield Studios is now diverted past the Gateway building via South Avenue onto Cutbush Lane East. This access strategy limits vehicles passing the existing cluster of houses that are located towards the Eastern Relief Road which includes the listed Cutbush Manor and Cutbush Barn. The delivery of the new link means that there are good links between Upperwood Farm and the Eastern Relief Road on roads that are capable of catering for large heavy goods vehicles as would be required by this scheme.



Figure 2: Links from the site to the Eastern Relief Road

5. Once you pass the employment sites, the main footpath connections that surround the site are towards Lower Earley via the pedestrian and cycle bridge. There are views into the site from the field gate that serves Upperwood Farm and in addition, wider views from the M4 pedestrian / cycle overbridge on footpath 39. Views over the Loddon Valley are evident from this viewpoint which has a rural appearance which is enhanced by the two copses and wider landscape features.

Description of development

6. The application is for a new link that would connect the proposed Natural History Museum Building to Cutbush Lane East and therefore ultimately the Eastern Relief Road. The main carriageway would run from east to west and would be around 500m in length. The road that would be at the minimum, 7.3m wide although this varies dependant on the supporting infrastructure and links. As mentioned, there is a concurrent application being considered under application ref: 232833 for the Natural History Museum Collection. The proposed layout is shown in figure 3 below.



Figure 3: Proposed layout / landscaping

7. In addition to the carriageway, the layout includes pedestrian and cycle connections on to the existing network. A 4m wide pedestrian and cycleway links the site to Cutbush Lane East on the northern side of the road. This extends from the exiting footpath on Cutbush Lane East and wraps around the northern side of the British Museum parcel. To the east of the British Museum site, a crossing point is proposed to a 3m wide pedestrian and cycle path on the southern side of the road which extends to the Natural History Museum development parcel. A 3m wide landscaping strip is proposed for both sides of the road and Drainage is included with SUDS ponds included and new ditches. These should be attractive focal points along the new route and will help promote biodiversity and ecology. A cross section of part of the road is shown in figure 4 below.

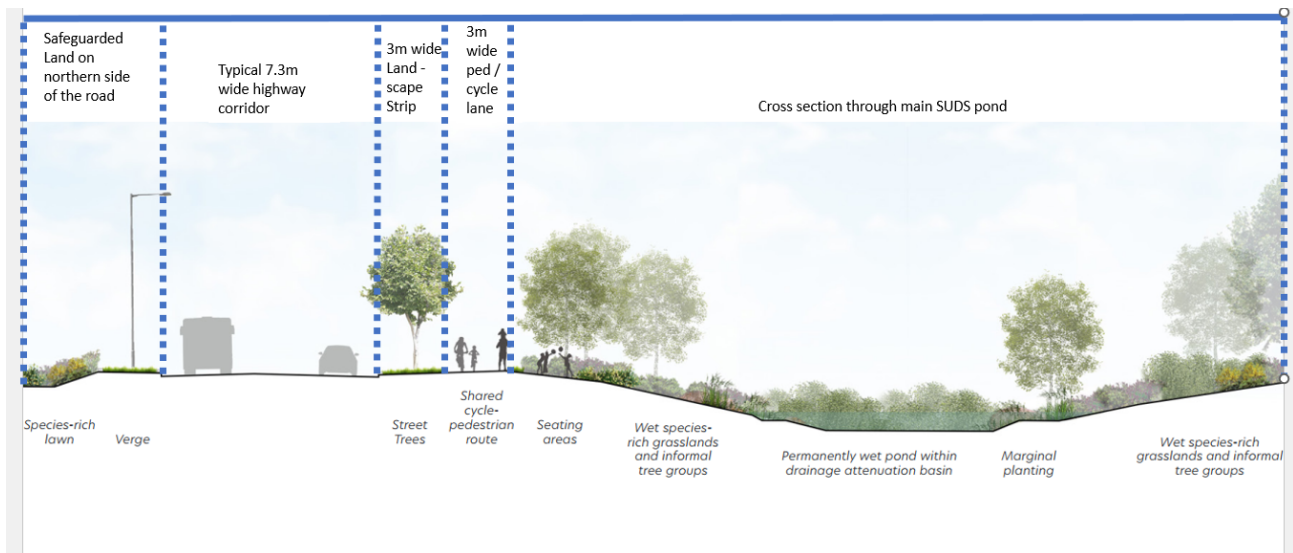


Figure 4: An indicative cross section of the road showing the proposed infrastructure. Please note that the width of the road varies depending on the highway requirements as shown on the layout plans (a larger drawing is included in the appendix)

8. A secondary road link which is 275m in length is proposed off the roundabout that would serve as the main access links to Natural History Museum car park and the service area to the rear. This includes a 3m wide footpath on the south western side of the road. Some ground remodelling is proposed for the new infrastructure to ensure surface water can be appropriately attenuated.

Background / need for the infrastructure

9. The road is essential infrastructure that would enable and facilitate the delivery of the Natural History Museum. The proposed location for the building is between the two areas of woodland which helps to limit the impact on the landscape. The site represents an extension to the existing employment facilities on Cutbush Lane East. The development will assist with clustering of uses with the British Museum archive having already been delivered and this will provide local economic benefits in addition to the housing of internationally significant artefacts and research. The site is also aligned to the University of Reading and there will be benefits with collaboration between the Natural History Museum and the Universities science departments.
10. The Natural History Museum hold one of the most extensive natural history collections globally that are used for science and research. Since its inception, the museum has built up a significant reputation within this field and internationally from visits to its exhibition space primarily in South Kennington, London. It holds over 80 million specimens spanning 4.6 million years some of which are displayed to the public within the existing museums at South Kensington and Tring in Hampshire. The specimens are in general unique, taken from time periods and places which mean that the collection cannot be reassembled. Such recent examples of this have recently received press attention such as the samples taken from the asteroid Bennu which is recognised as a pristine sample that may contribute towards our understanding of the origins of our planet. The collection therefore has a pivotal role in our comprehension of the evolution of the natural environment and is both nationally and internationally significant. In addition, research from this has a crucial

role in our understanding of current issues such as climate change and how might look to mitigate our impact.

11. A key objective for the Natural History Museum is to ensure that the collection is secure moving forward. The proposed road is required to connect the proposed facility to the nearest highway. This will enable the bespoke building to be delivered on the land, the facility incorporates the required technology and climatic conditions to best ensure that the collection is preserved for now and generations to come. It should be noted that around a third of the artifacts will be re-located here from the existing facilities which were never designed specifically to preserve the collection. This amounts to around 28 million samples. The building would also house significant library material and support the ongoing digitisation of the collection. These activities will secure the long term preservation of the artifacts and the road will provide the vital link to enable the building to be delivered.
12. There will be space within the building to support the digitisation process with imagery and molecular analysis laboratories. The dedicated space for these activities should help ensure the ongoing legacy provided by research by the Natural History Museum in particular for the climate emergency. The delivery of the road would allow for the building to free up further exhibition space within the South Kensington Museum.
13. Regionally and sub regionally the site is ideally located with excellent transport connections by road, rail and air. Locally, the site is located close to the British Museum Archive which will allow for a degree of collaboration between these institutions. In addition, it is only a 15 minute drive to Whiteknights campus which will allow for collaboration with the various science faculties operated by the University of Reading.
14. The development is also within a 30 minute drive to London Heathrow Airport which means that for specimens that need to be transported nationally or internationally, and for visiting scientists, the site is ideally located. This will allow for greater ease of international collaboration. There are also good public transport links to the site via rail with connections to the wider region via Reading station. The south of the M4 bus service connects into the station.
15. The road would generate jobs for the construction phase which equates to around 35 full time equivalent positions over the course of construction for an 18 month period. This will generate associated spending in the local economy which will deliver benefits during the course of the construction phase

Principle of development

16. The general thrust of the policies and supplementary planning guidance is that development within these parcels of land is not normally permitted unless the criteria within policy CP11 are met. The proposal does not fall specifically into these categories and therefore is in principle not strictly in accordance with planning policies CP11 together with the objectives of policies CP9, CC02, Shinfield Parish Policy 1 and paragraph 180 of the NPPF. As such, an assessment needs to be made as to whether special circumstances apply to the scheme and a planning balance made.

17. Whilst Core Strategy policy CP11 has a presumption against development in the countryside, which is echoed by CC02 of the MDD, these policies should not be read in isolation. Regard should also be made in respect to the objectives of the policies which are to maintain the separate identity of settlements through preventing urban sprawl and to protect the countryside. The proposal therefore needs to be considered on its merits and within the context of the development plan as a whole.
18. Policy 1 of Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan (which has been adopted since the Core Strategy and MDD) supports development within settlement limits and adjacent to these where the benefits of the development outweigh its adverse impacts. The proposed road would be located outside these limits together with the defined Strategic Development Location boundary as defined by the South of the M4 SPD. It should however be noted that consented development in the area has effectively extended the edge of the settlement beyond that defined in policy and the relationship to this should be taken into account.
19. The application should also be read in conjunction with national planning policy. Section 2 of the NPPF outlines three interdependent objectives regarding sustainable development and promotes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The objectives set out in paragraph 8 are:
 - a) *an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
 - b) *a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and*
 - c) *an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy*

These principles are broadly echoed by policy CP1 of the Core Strategy.

20. The NPPG Housing and economic needs assessment also places a high emphasis on policy support for different forms of employment use. This recommends clustering certain industries which include digital and creative industries to support collaboration, innovation, productivity and sustainability. It also recommends that there may be the need for: policy-making authorities will need to develop a clear understanding of such needs and how they might be addressed taking account of relevant evidence and policy within Local Industrial Strategies. For example, this might include the need for greater studio capacity, co-working spaces or research facilities. This is echoed in section 6 of the NPPF which states that significant

weight should be placed to support economic growth and productivity and refers to sectors that drive innovation. The delivery of the road would enable the Natural History Building which echoes the thrust of footnote 44 which refers to sectors to encourage growth for the future such as artificial intelligence and clean growth.

21. In addition to the above, Wokingham Borough Council recently updated the Community Vision for the borough is to be 'A great place to live, learn, work and grow and a great place to do business' and is underpinned by the Vision for Wokingham Borough as set out in the Core strategy. Whilst not planning policy, this therefore places a high emphasis on delivering employment within the borough.
22. The road on its own would not be supported, however, the proposed development would enable the delivery of the Natural History Museum Collection. The use of the site is closely related to the British Museum Building to the west of the site. The delivery of the Natural History Museum would also allow for collaboration with the science departments operated by the University of Reading. Clustering of facilities is important to long term research and their success.
23. In terms of the delivery of highway infrastructure, there is a general presumption that the development should deliver access for all users. It should also promote infrastructure that encourages alternative travel methods from the private motor vehicle. High quality design is encouraged for new streets and spaces. Sustainable travel is promoted within policy and supplementary guidance.

Principle of development conclusion

24. Whilst the proposal does not strictly accord with aspects of the development plan, regard needs to be made to the development plan as a whole together with the NPPF and NPPG. A judgement therefore needs to be made as to whether material considerations which support the proposals are sufficient to outweigh development plan conflict. In regard to this and adopted policies, further analysis is outlined below and in particular, the Planning Balance section of the report in paragraphs 80-100 below.

Layout, Design and Landscaping

25. Core Strategy Policies CP1, Sustainable Development and CP3, General Principles for Development requires high quality design that respects its context. This requirement is amplified by MDD LP Policies CC03, Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping and TB21, Landscape Character and South of the M4 SPD which requires development proposals to protect and enhance the Borough's Green Infrastructure, retaining existing trees, hedges and other landscape features and incorporating high quality - ideally native – planting as an integral part of any scheme, within the context of the Council's Landscape Character Assessment.
26. Core Strategy policy CP19 sets out the concept rational for the design parameters for the South of the M4 SDL and these are outlined in further detail in Appendix 7 of the Core Strategy. This states that:
 - a) *Development in a series of locations around the periphery of the three villages is required. This approach should consider the relationship between the current built areas and the open countryside. Opportunities to form new edges to the existing villages exist, allowing a managed transition between urban and rural.*

27. Policy 2 of Shinfield Parish Plan sets out general design principles and requires that development is complementary to the built environment surrounding the development site and layouts should acknowledge existing landscape constraints. Policy 6 is concerned with Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland in new development and sets out a landscape led design approach with retention and appropriate buffers to existing important vegetation.
28. The Borough Design Guide sets out overarching principles for development and sets out guidance in section 7 regarding non-residential development.
29. The design of the spine road has been informed by several design principles as set out in the Design and Access Statement. The space has been designed to futureproof the route should expansion ever be required in the future. This accommodates space for the provision of additional pedestrian and cycle facilities to be delivered in future years should there be further development in the area. The corridor will be secured through the Section 106 agreement.
30. In terms of the facilities proposed to link to the Natural History Museum, the plans show a shared pedestrian cycle way which would be 3 meters wide linking to Cutbush Lane East and the existing pedestrian infrastructure. Land has been safeguarded between Shinfield Studios and the Eastern Relief Road within the Section 106 for further upgrades to deliver cycle paths should they be required in future years.
31. The design approach for the southern pedestrian / cycleway connection is in accordance with LTN 1/20 standards which supports shared pedestrian and cycle facilities for areas that have low volumes of vehicle and pedestrian movements (less than 300 a day) and connections that link between settlements. The proposed corridor and safeguarding of land allows for the design to be revisited in the future if required. In addition, the short section of path opposite the Natural History Museum is 4m wide which can be continued through the safeguarded land.
32. The applicant has also considered the interaction of the pedestrian and cycle links with the main road. A 3m landscaping strip is proposed to be delivered on both sides of the road and this incorporates tree planting on the southern side. This would provide a safe and attractive route for pedestrians / cyclists. Should the facilities be required to be upgraded on the northern side, tree planting will be expected here but at this stage we would not like to see any abortive landscaping works
33. The proposed layout also considers drainage facilities that would be required for the link. This incorporates SUDS ponds and a ditch (which is currently being delivered as it serves the Studio development). Two SUDS basins are proposed one of which would retain a water level within it which would have a benefit to biodiversity and be aesthetically pleasing. Landscaping is proposed within and around these areas which provide a further buffer for the existing British Museum and the proposed Natural History Museum.
34. The secondary proposed road that links on the south western boundary of the Natural History Museum is not designed to be a main route through the site. At this point, the landscaping strip is not proposed adjacent to the pedestrian and cycle

path. The path is however designed to serve both pedestrian and cyclists and the 3m width is continued from the main spine road. On the north eastern side of the road, a landscaping strip of 3m would be provided by the Natural History Museum together with a footpath.

35. The incorporation of the roundabout into the design provides both better access to the site and a turning circle for any user, in particular HGVs, that might accidentally access the extension to Cutbush Lane East. Given that the road is effectively a cul-de-sac, a suitable turning area has to be provided. The activities that are undertaken at the Natural History Museum facility and security protocol means that this space cannot be accommodated in the site layout. The roundabout could also provide a turning circle for buses if the bus route is extended in future years from Thames Valley Science Park / Shinfield Studios. At the end of the cul-de-sac a further turning head is provided.
36. It is acknowledged that the delivery of the route would require re-profiling of the land to ensure that surface water run-off is managed to the drainage points. The extent of this varies according to the existing land profile but this is not considered to be excessive. Land would be graded down on either side of the road to allow the infrastructure to be incorporated to the wider landscape. This is considered acceptable.
37. In terms of the impact of the proposed infrastructure on the wider countryside and setting of the area, the applicant has provided a detailed Landscape and Visual Impact assessment which includes photomontages of the proposed development on the wider landscape. The most sensitive receptor in the area is the Loddon Valley as recognised by the Wokingham Landscape Character Assessment and in recognition to this, the photomontages include key viewpoints from this location. The main area that the road would be visible from public viewpoints is from the pedestrian and cycle link over the M4 / footpath 39.
38. From these vantage points, the road would be seen in the context of the delivery of the other buildings and supporting infrastructure on Cutbush Lane East. It therefore would not be inconsistent with the pattern of the wider development. The landscaping strips will also allow for tree planting together within the areas proposed for the SUDS basins. On this basis, whilst there would be some impact on the landscape when compared to the undeveloped land, the design and benefits of the road to facilitate the National History Museum are considered to overcome any significant harm together with a sound design approach.
39. In summary, the design approach is well articulated for all the elements of the facility and is in accordance advice provided by the NPPF, policies CP1 and CP3, Policy 2 of the Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan and is therefore acceptable.

Residential amenity: the impact upon existing neighbouring properties

40. Core Strategy policy CP3 requires that new development should be of a high quality of design that does not cause detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users. Policy 2 of the Shinfield Parish Plan seeks to ensure that new development does not harm existing residential amenity. Separation standards for new residential development are set out in section 4.7 of the Borough Design Guide.

41. The closest residential dwelling is Upperwood Farmhouse located over 140m from the closest point of the applications site. The layout would retain access for the bungalow and farm complex during the course of the build. With the level of separation, together with the scale and nature of the proposed road, no significant overlooking, loss of light or overbearing impacts associated with the road are envisaged. This also applies to the other dwellings in the wider area.
42. The road would require street lighting but this will be designed to best manage light spill and by virtue of this and the level of separation, it would not have any significant impacts to the occupants of any residential dwelling in the area.

Residential amenity – noise

43. With regards to noise associated with the construction of the infrastructure, construction activities would be temporary and can be controlled by hours restrictions together with a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) subject to condition. Construction traffic will be routed on established roads via the Science Park / South Avenue similar to the routes used for the British Museum and Shinfield Studios. No significant amenity impacts are envisaged.
44. Given the nature of the road and intended use together with the context of the site, principally background noise levels from the M4, it is not considered that the end use would lead to a high degree of noise and disruption to neighbouring sites.
45. On this basis and given the relationships outlined above, the construction phase and operational use of the site would not result in any significant harm to the amenity of the existing residents. This is in accordance with policies CP1 and CP3 and supplementary planning guidance.

Security of future users

46. The road should feel safe for pedestrian and cyclists when the Natural History Museum building is delivered. Passing traffic whilst sporadic, would provide surveillance to the sustainable transport infrastructure. In addition, the existing uses along Cutbush Lane East, studios and British Museum provide security along this route. There would be some perception of natural surveillance from the Natural History Museum building. Street lighting is also incorporated into the design.

Sustainable Design and Construction

47. Core Strategy Policy CP1 requires development to contribute towards the goal of achieving zero carbon development by including on-site renewable energy features and minimising energy and water consumption. MDD LP policies CC04, CC05 and the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (May 2010) also emphasise this. Policy 3 of the Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan also echoes these principles.
48. The applicant is accompanied by a Sustainability Statement which sets out the principles for the road. The incorporation of the pedestrian and cycle facilities should offer good alternatives to encourage sustainable travel to the site. As advised the design could incorporate a bus. This will also be secured by the reserved corridor for potential delivery of future development should this come forward.

49. The alignment of the road has also taken into account the existing landscape features and whilst there is loss of hedgerow, this has been kept to a minimum. The proposed planting strategy and SUDS will help support biodiversity when delivered.
50. The road will facilitate access to the proposed Natural History Museum which has been designed to be net carbon zero and includes above policy sustainable energy.

Access and movement

51. The NPPF seeks to encourage sustainable means of transport and a move away from the reliance of the private motor car. Core Strategy policies CP1, CP4, CP6 and CP10 broadly echo these principles and indicate that development should mitigate any adverse effects on the existing highway network. The application is accompanied by a Transport Assessment (TA) which assesses the impact of development in respect to the site itself and wider highway network.
52. Policy 4 of the Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan requires development to provide good accessibility by car, cycle and foot and ensure highway safety. Encouragement of use of public transport is also promoted.

Access and movement - impact on wider highway network

53. The application is accompanied by a Transport Assessment (TA). This has been assessed by the Highways Officer and further details in respect to highway impacts associated with the proposed use of the facility are outlined below.
54. In terms of background for the wider highway connections, the Science Park has delivered much of the key infrastructure together with the housing growth for the South of M4 SDL. This includes the Eastern Relief Road and M4 overbridge linking to the Black Boy Roundabout. The main access to the Science Park was also delivered with a roundabout connection on the Eastern Relief Road and South Avenue.
55. The local access routes were also revisited as part of the British Museum planning consent. This upgraded an emergency link to Cutbush Lane East to two way vehicle movements. The interventions now restrict access to Cutbush Lane East for the employment sites located between South Avenue and the M4 motorway. This means that the section of Cutbush Lane East that serves Shinfield Grange and the cluster of dwellings located towards the Eastern Relief Road is effectively a cul de sac with no through movements to the British Museum. Vehicles accessing the main employment sites now need to go through via the Eastern Relief Road / Science Park Roundabout and through South Avenue.
56. As part of the Shinfield Studio planning consent, land has also been safeguarded for a corridor for further improvements to the highway infrastructure serving Cutbush Lane East / Eastern Relief Road / South Avenue. These would deliver links to the Eastern Relief Road / M4 overbridge should these interventions be required and triggered by future development in the area. At this stage however, the scale and nature of the proposed use of the site for the Natural History Museum does not trigger any upgrades given the intensity of the proposed use.
57. For construction traffic, again this would be temporary and managed by the Construction Environmental Management Plan. The existing highway infrastructure has been shown to cope well with the construction traffic for the British Museum

and Shinfield Studios with no accidents recorded in the Transport Assessment. For Shinfield Studios, the construction process is winding down on the main site so there will not be any significant conflicts with the delivery of the Natural History Museum.

58. Traffic would therefore be accommodated within the proposed and previously delivered infrastructure and would not have a significant adverse impact on highway safety. This has been further demonstrated through analysis of the proposed trip rates and other committed developments in the area through the Wokingham Strategic Transport Model. This did not identify any further upgrades and as such, this element of the transport strategy is acceptable.

Access and movement – site access and layout

59. As advised, for vehicle movements, the road would be accessed via the Eastern Relief Road Science Park Roundabout via Thames Valley Science Park / Shinfield Studios on South Avenue then link into Cutbush Lane East. A new connection would be made at the north of the British Museum where there is an existing farm access for Upperwood Farm.
60. The site also has good pedestrian cycle permeability. It can be accessed via the above route which will connect into the existing pedestrian infrastructure. In addition, there is access via the M4 overbridge via footpath 39 towards Lower Earley. There are also connections into Shinfield via the restricted section of Cutbush Lane East which link to various links to the centre of the village. Enhancements are also being made to footpath 4 which will provide pedestrian and cycle connections to the wider area.

Access and movement - sustainable transport

61. The site is connected to existing public transport facilities at the Science Park and on Beeston Way in Lower Earley. Whilst these are located 925m and 725m from the proposed Natural History building, which is outside the typical 400m distance used, Manual for Streets recognise that 800m is normally a 10 minute walk. The road design and infrastructure allow for the extension of the 3 and 600 services in future years should the operator wish to extend this and patronage allow for it to be viable.
62. As advised, the road design has good pedestrian and cycle connectivity which should attract sustainable travel choices.

Flooding and Drainage

63. Core Strategy Policy CP1 and MDDL Policies CC09 and CC10 establish that new development should avoid increasing and where possible reduce flood risk (from all sources) by first developing in areas with lowest flood risk, carrying out a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) where required and managing surface water in a sustainable manner. Policy 8 of the Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan echoes these principles and looks to retain existing watercourses in new development.
64. The site is in Flood Zone 1 where the risk of flooding is low and all uses, including less vulnerable uses which the building is classified as for the purposes of the sequential test are appropriate.
65. The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessments which assess the impact of flooding on the application site. This identified flood risks across the whole site

and propose measures to manage surface water runoff including the 1 in 30 year and 1 in 100-year storm events (+40% for climate change).

66. To ensure that the increase in surface water runoff associated with the additional built form is managed, a strategic approach to drainage is proposed. Two SUDS ponds are proposed to attenuate the surface water runoff from the road and ditches will channel the water at a controlled rate.
67. The council's Drainage Officer has assessed the Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage. No objection has been raised to the proposed package of measures in terms of the impact of flood risk and the measures will be secured by condition 11.

Ecology

68. Core Strategy Policy CP7, carried forward by MDD LP Policy TB23, requires appropriate protection of species and habitats of conservation value. Policy 7 of the Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan seeks mitigation and measures to enhance biodiversity. A detailed Ecological Impact Assessment and addendum to this has been submitted and demonstrates that the site layout has considered impacts on ecological permeability.
69. In terms of existing vegetation, the applicant has demonstrated that there would be an adequate buffer zone from the proposed development to these features.
70. In terms of lighting, this will be controlled by condition and any required measures will be included for details to be submitted at a later date.
71. There are a package of ecology mitigation measures and on and off-site enhancements and the Biodiversity Officer has assessed the application and supports the approach. The delivery of the enhancements will be controlled by the Ecology conditions and Section 106, and this will deliver a biodiversity net gain of 20%.

Heritage

72. Policy TB24 of MDD LP policy seeks to ensure that development conserves and, where possible enhances the important character and special architectural or historic interest of listed buildings.
73. The nearest listed buildings to the development site are Oldhouse Farm, Cutbush Manor and Cutbush Barn which are around 380m from the extent of the red line of the application. The level of separation together with the scale and nature of the road and onsite relationships means that there would be no significant impacts on these listed buildings or any in the wider area.
74. For scheduled monuments, the closest site is the remains of Old St. Bartholomew's Church around 1k to the south of the site. The level of separation means that there are no adverse heritage impacts envisaged to this site.
75. Given the level of separation from the heritage assets and for the reasons set out in the planning balance section of the report, any harm is outweighed by the benefits that the proposal would deliver. It is therefore in accordance with the heritage considerations of the NPPF including paragraph 208 and Managing Development Delivery Document (Local Plan) 2014 Policy TB24 Designated Heritage Assets.

Archaeology

76. Core Strategy Policy CP3 and MDD LP Policy TB25 require the archaeological impact of development to be taken into consideration. The application includes an archaeological assessment which has been reviewed by the Archaeology Officer.
77. The Archaeology Officer has assessed the report submitted in respect to this and raises no objections subject to condition 18.

Community engagement

78. The application has been accompanied by a Statement of Community Involvement (SGI) which sets out the engagement process and feedback from the events undertaken. A community engagement event was held on the 27th of September 2023 between 15:00 and 19:00 together with press releases and other methods of outreach. Whilst attendance to the event was low with 4 people attending, there was another event two weeks prior for the Natural History Museum application which had greater attendance with 84 people attending. Since there is a high level of crossover between the two applications, the community engagement strategy is acceptable.

Minerals

79. Part of the application site sits within the Mineral Safeguarding Area towards the south of the planning unit. The area of land within this zone is around 0.75ha which is below the 3ha threshold required by the Joint Minerals Plan as being viable for prior extraction. Since the belt of minerals extends to the south of the site on land that has either got planning permission (British Museum phase 2) or runs into the floodplain, it is not considered that this application would represent a piecemeal approach for prior extraction given the extent of the resource. On this basis, together with the relationship of the site with St Johns Copse (which any prior extraction could have an adverse effect on hydrology for these sites) it is not considered that the site would require prior extraction. Any minerals would likely be reworked on site given the need to remodel the land or if viable, extracted at the waste stage.

Planning balance

80. In terms of the planning balance, the decision maker needs to take in to account the extent that development plan policies are material to an application for planning permission and the decision must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise. As advised above, the road on its own would not be considered acceptable and must be considered in the context of the Natural History Museum. In this respect there will be considerable benefits that will be delivered through the granting of the planning permission for both schemes as well as several adverse impacts. These are identified below and the degree of weight that should be applied is identified.

Benefits

81. The road would connect into an existing network of transport links that have been upgraded for the Science Park and South of the M4 SDL. The nature of the surrounding area has been transformed into a defined employment zone and as such the road would not be an alien feature on the landscape. The road can be delivered with minimal disruption to the local road network and therefore existing

residents. These together with connections to a variety of transport modes to the wider region and Heathrow Airport means that the site is well served in terms of access and therefore is a sustainable location. The sustainable nature of the site and existing transport infrastructure facilitating access is a significant benefit for delivery but this must be tempered with the fact that the site is entirely within countryside and there will be a visual impact. Therefore, taking these factors into consideration, limited weight can be afforded for sustainable location of the site.

82. The road will facilitate significant employment opportunities will be generated though the construction and delivery of the Museum facility which the road will serve. Construction for the road will also deliver further temporary employment opportunities as outlined in paragraph 15 above. Taken as a whole, the proposed development would provide considerable job opportunities for the local community and wider area. Moderate to substantial weight should be applied to the enabling benefits that the road will serve for retaining and securing long term employment at the Natural History Museum both through sustaining jobs and the wider economic benefits.
83. The road will support the delivery of the Natural History Museum building. This will secure the long term preservation of samples and the building will allow for purpose built and dedicated space for operations such as digitisation and artificial intelligence. This will allow for greater knowledge sharing nationally and internationally as the building will deliver greater efficiencies than the current facilities. The road is an essential piece of infrastructure to enable this and to support the ongoing work for the Natural History Museum in terms of research and development. This could deliver significant benefits to society, the environment and the economy. Since the road enables the delivery of the building, moderate to substantial weight should be afforded.
84. With respect to biodiversity, whilst the implementation of the planning permission would result in a loss of onsite habitats, the applicant has agreed to a series of measures to provide an overall 20% biodiversity net gain. Since they are exceeding the 10% requirement, moderate weight can be applied to the biodiversity net gains secured.
85. The location of the site would cluster a knowledge base with the British Museum and will reinforce the partnership with the University of Reading with scope for further collaboration with their science faculties. Clustering of employment sectors is supported both within the local planning policies for the Science Park (which although this site is located outside of, it is closely related) and is encouraged by section 6 of the NPPF. The road will enable the delivery of the Natural History Museum further facilitating clustering in the area. Moderate to substantial weight should be afforded to the potential benefits that clustering could bring for future knowledge sharing.
86. The applicant has agreed to allow safeguard land for a potential public rights of way. In future years, this could create a link between the service area access road to the south intersecting at footpath 4 close to Oldhouse Farm. The land can be safeguarded through the Section 106. This could potentially link into any future upgrade to the Boroughs Public Right of Way Improvement Plan. Very limited weight should be afforded to the commitment to reserve the land.

Impacts of the proposal

87. It is acknowledged that the development would be within land designated as countryside and the facility would result in the permanent loss of this. From the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, the level of visibility of the road would be limited to localised views from the M4 overbridge. The road is reasonably low profile in its form and appearance and although lighting would urbanise the area when compared to the baseline position, this just extends streetlighting from Cutbush Lane East. A considered landscape approach will help to soften the road together with the delivery of SUDS ponds.
88. Taken as a whole, whilst it is acknowledged that the proposed scale of the development will result in the loss of countryside and introduce highway infrastructure. the mitigating factors outlined above together with the proposed landscaping strategy will reduce the impact on the landscape to mostly localised views. On this basis moderate to significant harm is associated with the landscape impacts of the new road.
89. The proposal will result in the loss of productive agricultural land although this is classified as part sub 3a and 3b. It is acknowledged that soil classified as 3a is considered in the NPPF as being the best and most versatile, however the extent of the loss of this is not very significant. It is clear that the proposed Natural History Museum will deliver both social, environmental and the economic benefits locally, nationally and internationally. The benefits associated with these are considered to greatly exceed that of the cultivation of the land. On this basis, given that the road enables the delivery of the Natural History Museum, the level of harm associated with this is low and therefore limited weight should be applied in association with the loss of agricultural land.
90. For minerals, as identified above, the site is not located within a defined Minerals Resource Area The woodlands also limit the potential for any prior extraction due to the hydrological impacts which could adversely affect these features. Due to the extent of the minerals, there may be scope at the waste stage for any deposits to be separated and reworked for aggregates. This will be undertaken by any waste contractor should this be a viable process. As such, very limited weight is afforded to this aspect of the development.
91. In respect to trees and hedgerows, the road would result in the loss of some trees and hedgerows, these are minimal and limited to low or moderate quality trees and replacement planting will be secured. The proposed road layout responds well to the trees to be retained including St Johns Copse and New Covert with good buffer zones to retain these features. Given this strategy, limited weight should be given to the impact of the development on vegetation.
92. The implications for the impact of the development on the highway network have been outlined above and the use of the road for the Natural History Museum limits trip rates when compared with a normal storage and distribution form of use. The application should be seen in the context of the suite of highway improvements that have already been delivered. The Shinfield Studio planning consent has also safeguarded land for any potential future development in the area along Cutbush Lane East, the Eastern Relief Road and the Science Park link road. On this basis,

as the proposed road would plug in well with the existing highway infrastructure, limited weight should be given to the post occupation highway implications.

93. Similarly for construction traffic and noise associated with the delivery of the road, the activities associated with this would be temporary and can be managed by the CEMP (condition 7). Whilst lorries would route past existing residential development much of the journeys would be on the strategic transport network up to the Science Park. Once within the Science Park campus, disturbance would be limited to Cutbush Manor and the small cluster of dwellings on the south side of Cutbush Lane. These are however well set back from the Science Park link road and the noise associated with vehicle movements must be considered against the context of the noise associated with the M4 motorway.
94. The occupants of Upperwood Farmhouse stand to be more affected; this dwelling is located within a working farm and it has limited attenuation from the M4 motorway. Construction hours will however be conditioned and whilst there will be some additional noise, it is not to an extent that would justify refusal. For the purposes of the planning balance, given the onsite relationships and existing access arrangements and mitigation measures secured by condition, there would be limited harm arising from noise associated with the construction process or post occupation. Limited weight should therefore be afforded to any potential residential amenity impacts.
95. For the impact on Listed Buildings, as discussed above, the harm to these would be less than substantial and in the context of the NPPF and policy TB24, the public benefits are considered to outweigh any harm. On this basis very limited weight is afforded to this aspect of the development.
96. Finally in terms of biodiversity, the application would deliver a 20% biodiversity net gain as identified above. On this basis, whilst there would be the loss of limited on site habitats given the farmed nature of the land, this would be offset and enhanced offsite and very limited weight can be afforded to this aspect of the development.

Benefits / Impacts summary

97. Overall, as outlined above, in the planning balance there are benefits and impacts that are associated with the development. It is however considered that the benefits associated with the overall development would outweigh the harm to the countryside / settlement separation. The package of mitigation measures will deliver social and environmental enhancements and the facility itself will deliver economic benefits both through construction and upon occupation.

Having regard for the main thrust of policies CP9, CP11 and CC02, Policy 1 of Shinfield Parish Plan and NPPF paragraph 180, which in summary, seek to:

- a. maintain the separate identity of settlements - which *in this case is not considered to be significantly impacted* and
- b. to maintain the quality of the environment and landscape - *which as outlined above, the proposed development seeks to minimise and measures have been included to enhance this*
- c. Ensure fair share of infrastructure – *Supporting infrastructure for the development that could feed into the wider landholding will be secured via the concurrent 232833 application.*

d. Do not prejudice the comprehensive delivery and implementation of the wider SDL. *The applicant has submitted a highway land safeguarding plan which is secured through the Section 106. This retains suitable land should future development be brought forward for further growth in the area. The existing SDL is not impacted by the proposed development given that the delivery of the existing infrastructure has enabled this.*

98. Whilst it is acknowledged that the use of the land and the highway infrastructure is not strictly compliant with the policy, it could fall under a form of development which can be seen as an exception given that the text of policy CP11 includes the words 'normally permitted'.
99. This is reflected in the wording of policy 1 of Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan which states that development adjacent to Development Limits (which are informed by policy CC02) will only be supported where the benefits of the development outweigh the harm. Taken as a whole, the environmental, social and economic benefits in this case are demonstrable as outlined above. On this basis, the special circumstances associated with the planning benefits are considered a sustainable form of development as required by CP1 and NPPF.
100. For the reasons discussed above, on balance, it is considered in this case that material considerations outweigh the policy conflict and proposals would represent sustainable development in the context of the NPPF and the development plan as a whole.

Other Matters

101. The application, as advised, is not within an allocated site and consideration needs to be made in terms of whether it could prejudice the Local Plan update process. Given the location of the road it would not block access to any land that might be brought forward in the future. In addition, a corridor is safeguarded through the Section 106 for upgrades should this be needed in future years. This reflects the principles of the Section 106 for Shinfield Studios which also safeguards a corridor through Cutbush Lane East to the Eastern Relief Road. On this basis, and for the reasons discussed above the application is not considered to prejudice the Local Plan update process.
102. The application was advertised for being a potential departure from the Local Plan. When taking into account the above factors it is not considered to undermine the development plan as a whole. Whilst as discussed there is a policy conflict, significant benefits will be delivered as outlined which is in accordance with our local policies and the thrust of sustainable development as outlined in the NPPF.

Conclusion

When weighing up the overall impact of the use of the proposed road that is intended to serve the Natural History Museum, it is considered that the new route would bring substantial economic and social benefits given that it facilitates the delivery of this. The road would enable the planning benefits as outlined in the report for 232833 to be delivered and the building cannot be delivered with this key infrastructure. It should also be noted that the development will only be taken forward should the Natural History Museum be taken forward.

The applicant has carefully considered whether a future need to upgrade the pedestrian and cycle infrastructure is required and has agreed to enter into a section 106 agreement to safeguards these areas for highway use. This does not prejudice any future development in the area should this come forward – the merits of which will need to be considered should any forthcoming allocation or application be brought forward.

The design principles for the road represent good design and will deliver a high quality public realm for future users of the site. The landscaping has also been well considered.

Taking the application as a whole and given the circumstances, the proposed building would not have any material harm to the objectives of Policy 1 of Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan, policies CP9 and CP11 of the Core Strategy and policy CC02 of the MDD DPD together with the supplementary planning guidance.

The special circumstances that have been demonstrated for the delivery of the facility are secured through the Section 106 / conditions. Commencement of the road will be restricted until the Natural History Museum contract has been let. Since the road supports the use of the site for the Natural History Museum, this weighs heavily in favour of supporting the application.

The application can therefore be recommended for approval subject to the conditions and the planning obligations outlined in Appendix 1.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010)

In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application and there would be no significant adverse impacts upon protected groups as a result of the development.

Appendix 1: Recommendation and Conditions

That the committee authorise the GRANT OF PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the three tiered recommendation as set out below:

A. Completion of a legal agreement within 6 months of the committee resolution (unless a longer date is agreed by the Assistant Director of Planning and Chairman of Planning Committee) to:

- i. Employment Skills Plan contributions or delivery of a bespoke Employment Sills Plan
- ii. Biodiversity Net Gain of 20% either through on or off site provision or a combination of both on and off site provision
- iii. Pre development condition survey of Cutbush Lane East and delivery of any post construction remediation if required
- iv. Safeguarding the highway corridor land within the red line boundary (to be agreed on a safeguarding plan)
- v. Safeguarding of off site land for public rights of way improvements (to be agreed on a safeguarding plan)

Administrative clauses:

- vi. Section 106 Monitoring fee being the amount of reasonable fees in monitoring the performance and discharge of the Section 106 obligations,
- vii. The Council's reasonable legal fees in relation to the completion of the Section 106 agreement (whether or not the matter goes to completion),
- viii. Indexation (all contributions and payments to be index-linked from the date of the decision to grant planning permission to the date of which payment is made, using BCIS index).

B. Conditions and informatives:

Timeframe for implementation

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In pursuance of s.91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by s.51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

Approved details

2. This permission is in respect of the following submitted application plans, documents and drawings received by the Local Planning Authority.

Officer Note: Plan numbers being finalised to be included in the Supplementary Agenda

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless other minor variations are agreed in writing after the date of this permission and before implementation with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

Development commencement trigger

3. Development shall not commence until details of the award of tender for the design and build contract for the Natural History Museum Facility (subject to application ref: 232833) have been submitted to the Local Planning Authority. This shall outline a programme of works for the build programme for the facility for approval.

Reason: To ensure that the development is carried out in a coordinated approach for the infrastructure that will serve for access to the facility. Relevant policy CP6 of the Core Strategy.

Hours of work

4. No work relating to the development hereby approved, including works of demolition or preparation prior to building operations, shall take place other than between the hours of 07.30 and 18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 to 13:00 Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Bank or National Holidays.

Reason: To protect the occupiers of neighbouring properties from noise and disturbance outside the permitted hours during the construction period. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC06.

Highways

5. Prior to commencement of development (excluding enabling earthworks and tree protection works), details of the haul road to serve the site shall be submitted for approval by the local planning authority. The haul route shall be constructed in accordance with these details prior to the commencement of development of the road. Upon completion of the spine road, the haul road shall be removed from site within six months from completion together with any aggregates used for its construction and the land restored to its former condition unless the use of it is required for the construction process of the Natural History Museum. In which case a programme for the restoration of the land shall be submitted for approval by the Local Planning Authority. The haul road shall be removed in accordance with the timetable set out or upon the completion of the haul road trigger identified in this condition unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the haul route is constructed to a suitable standard, in the interests of providing a functional, accessible and safe development. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

6. Notwithstanding the details as set out within the approved Construction Environmental Management Plan, the applicant shall in consultation with the Highway Authority and University of Reading, undertake an audit of existing and proposed signage to the site. This shall include the entire Eastern Relief Road corridor and through the Science Park / Cutbush Lane East to the site to inform an access strategy for construction vehicles / contractors. The access strategy shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval prior to commencement of development and the approved measures implemented in accordance with an agreed timetable prior to any construction access for the main site. Any proposed

directional signs shall be fixed permanently to the ground for the duration of the build process until first public use of the road and not be temporary A frame forms of signage unless otherwise agreed in writing. The strategy shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and held under review for the entire construction process.

7. The main contractor, when appointed, will implement in full the approved Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) (Abley Letchford Partnership Ltd, Reference A392-R019/C dated 23rd January 2024) that was submitted with the application. The CEMP shall be reviewed and updated if necessary on an ongoing basis and any updated details shall be submitted for approval to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To minimise the environmental impacts of construction and to protect residential amenity. Relevant policy CP1 and CP3

8. Prior to the commencement of development, full details of the construction of roads and footways, including levels, widths, construction materials, depths of construction, surface water drainage, lighting and how it connects into Cutbush Lane East shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority for the proposed development. The roads and footways shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details and the final wearing course provided prior to first public use of the road unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that roads and footpaths are constructed to a standard that would be suitable for adoption as publicly maintainable highway, in the interests of providing a functional, accessible and safe development. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

9. Prior to commencement of development, a schedule for the detailed design and implementation of the accesses to the Natural History Museum facility from the highway shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No public use of the road shall be allowed until the accesses have been constructed in accordance with the approved details. The accesses shall be retained in accordance with the approved details and used for no other purpose and the land within the visibility splays shall be maintained clear of any visual obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height at all times.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

10. The secondary access to the Natural History Museum as labelled on indicative plan reference A392-IV-101 Rev P7 as being for 'Egress only from Natural History Museum' shall only be used for vehicles for exiting the Natural History Museum site. Any deviation from this will be limited to emergency purposes or under circumstances that have first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

Drainage

11. No development shall take place until full details of the drainage system for the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The details shall include:
1. Calculations indicating the Greenfield runoff rate from the site.
 2. Full calculations demonstrating the capacity of attenuation features to cater for 1 in 100-year flood event with a 40% allowance for climate change and runoff controlled at Greenfield rates, or preferably better.
 3. Separate drainage systems for any proposed adopted highways and residential dwellings.
 4. A drainage strategy plan indicating the location and sizing of SuDS features, with the base of any SuDS features located at least 1m above the seasonal high water table level.
 5. Details demonstrating how any SuDS for this development would be managed throughout the lifespan of the development and who will be responsible for maintenance.

The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to first public use of the road and shall be maintained in the approved form for as long as the development remains on the site.

Reason: This is to prevent increased flood risk from surface water run-off. Relevant policy: NPPF (2023) Section 14 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10.

Environmental Health

12. If land contamination is found at any time during site clearance, groundwork, and construction the discovery shall be reported as soon as possible to the local planning authority. A full contamination risk assessment shall be carried out and if found to be necessary, a 'remediation method statement' shall be submitted to the local planning authority for written approval.

Reason - To ensure that any contamination of the site is identified at the outset to allow remediation to protect existing/proposed occupants of property on the site and/or adjacent land. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 15 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment) and Core Strategy policies CP1 & CP3.

Landscape and trees

- 13.
- a. Protection of trees
No development or other operation shall commence on site until a scheme which provides for the retention and protection of trees, shrubs and hedges growing on or adjacent the site in accordance with BS5837: 2012 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority (the Approved Scheme); the tree protection measures approved shall be implemented in complete accordance with the Approved Scheme for the duration of the development (including, unless otherwise provided by the Approved Scheme) demolition, all site preparation work, tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or

- widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery.
- b. No development (including any tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery) shall commence until the local planning authority has been provided (by way of a written notice) with a period of no less than 7 working days to inspect the implementation of the measures identified in the Approved Scheme on-site.
 - c. No excavations for services, storage of materials or machinery, parking of vehicles, deposit or excavation of soil or rubble, lighting of fires or disposal of liquids shall take place within an area designated as being fenced off or otherwise protected in the Approved Scheme.
 - d. The fencing or other works which are part of the Approved Scheme shall not be moved or removed, temporarily or otherwise, until all works including external works have been completed and all equipment, machinery and surplus materials removed from the site, unless the prior approval of the local planning authority has first been sought and obtained.

Reason: To secure the protection throughout the time that the development is being carried out of trees shrubs or hedges growing within or adjacent to the site which are of amenity value to the area, and to allow for verification by the Local Planning Authority that the necessary measures are in place before development and other works commence Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

14. Notwithstanding the submitted plans and documents, prior to commencement of development, full details of the hard and soft landscaping / highway infrastructure within the landscaping strips / verges (as shown on plan ref: A392-IV1-701 P5 NHM Access Road Materials) shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. These shall show the details of the location for the filter drains, street lighting and tree planting and how the location of these features interact with the required sight lines for the vehicle, pedestrian and cycle crossings for the site to ensure a high level of street tree planting. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the green, blue and grey infrastructure are delivered in a coordinated manner and to ensure that there is sufficient space for tree planting within the highway verge / landscaping strips. Relevant Policies CP1, CP3, CP6, Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03, CC09, CC10 and TB21

15. No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscape works for the scheme have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and these works shall be carried out as approved. The details shall include, as appropriate:
 - a) scheme drawings;
 - b) proposed levels and contours;
 - c) detailed design of SuDS features in accordance with the SuDS Strategy, demonstrating how they will be integrated into the wider landscape, with attenuation basins having a natural shape and shallow profile (not requiring

- lifesaving equipment and fence barriers), allowing them to fulfil amenity, ecological and drainage functions;
 - d) soft landscaping details including planting plans, schedules of plants, noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate;
 - e) a Landscape Specification document covering soft landscaping (including site preparation, cultivation, plant handling and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment) and hard landscaping including all construction works such as paths, bridges and retaining walls;
 - f) details of the street tree planting pits in combination with the roadside swales/raingardens demonstrating that the trees have sufficient rooting volume to enable their successful retention long term health;
 - g) hard landscaping materials including samples;
 - h) specification for tree rooting systems and use of structural soils under paving or where rooting volumes are limited;
- ii) Details of quality control measures, including supervision of landscape contract(s) by a suitably qualified landscape specialist and annual landscape audits for the five-year period from completion of the landscaping for the Landscape Phase or until adoption (whichever is longer). The annual Landscape Audit shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for information prior to the next planting season and replacement planting undertaken in accordance with the landscape audit and iii) below.
- iii) Any trees or plants which, within a period of five years after planting, are removed, die or become seriously damaged or defective, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of species, size and number as originally approved and permanently retained.

Reason: In order to ensure that suitable provision is made for soft and hard landscaping and that these can become established for the site. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

16. Prior to the first public use of the road, a landscape management plan for entire site (as defined on the submitted application site boundary plan ref: A392-IV1-701 P5 NHM Access Road Materials), including long term design objectives, management responsibilities, timescales and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas, other than privately owned, domestic gardens, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The landscape management plan shall cover a period of no less than 30 years from the date of the approval and implementation of the plan. The landscape management plan shall set out an ongoing requirement for review for all species enhancements and ecological permeability measures and the landscape management plan shall be carried out as approved.

Reason: In order to ensure that provision is made to allow satisfactory maintenance of the landscaping hereby approved and to secure a biodiversity net gain. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

17. No trees, shrubs or hedges within the site which are shown as being retained on the approved plans shall be felled, uprooted wilfully damaged or destroyed, cut back in

any way or removed without previous written consent of the Local Planning Authority; any trees, shrubs or hedges removed without consent or dying or being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within 5 years from the completion of the development hereby permitted shall be replaced with trees, shrubs or hedge plants of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To secure the protection throughout the time that development is being carried out, of trees, shrubs and hedges growing within the site which are of amenity value to the area. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

Archaeology

18. No development shall take place/commence until a programme of archaeological work including a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been submitted to, and approved by, the local planning authority in writing. The WSI shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:

1. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording
2. The programme for post investigation assessment
3. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording
4. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation
5. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation
6. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the WSI

The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI approved under condition (A) and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured.

Reason: The site lies in an area of archaeological potential, particularly for, but not limited to, Romano-British remains. The potential impacts of the development can be mitigated through a programme of archaeological work. This is in accordance with national and local plan policy.

Ecology

19. Prior to commencement of development, a "lighting design strategy for biodiversity" shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall:

- a) Identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and badgers and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places or along important routes used to access key areas of their territory, for example for foraging; and
- b) Show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be

clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the strategy, and these shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with the strategy. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority.

Reason: In order to maintain the favourable conservation status of protected species and to meet the requirements of local policy CP7

Informatives

1. The applicant is advised that the Council seeks that employers or developers within the borough commit to using local labour / contractors where possible. This should include:

- Advertisement of jobs within local recruitment agencies / job centres;
- Recruitment and training of residents from the local area;
- Seek tender of local suppliers or contractors for work.

2. The applicant is advised that the planning approval should be read in conjunction with the S106 for the development hereby approved.

3. The applicant is informed that parking may need to be restricted along the main routes and on turning heads.

4. Work on Highway

The Corporate Head of Environment at the Council Offices, Shute End, Wokingham should be contacted for the approval of the access construction details before any work is carried out within the highway. This planning permission does NOT authorise the construction of such an access.

5. Mud on Road

Adequate precautions shall be taken during the construction period to prevent the deposit of mud and similar debris on adjacent highways. For further information contact Corporate Head of Environment on tel: 0118 974 6302.

6. Highway Adoption

If it is the developer's intention to request the Council, as local highway authority, to adopt the proposed access roads etc. as highway maintainable at public expense, then full engineering details must be agreed with the Corporate Head of Environment at the Council Offices, Shute End, Wokingham. The developer is strongly advised not to commence development until such details have been approved in writing and a legal agreement is made with the Council under S38 of the Highways Act 1980.

7. Highway Management

Any works/events carried out either by, or at the behest of, the developer, whether they are located on, or affecting a prospectively maintainable highway, as defined under Section 87 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, or on or affecting the public highway, shall be coordinated under the requirements of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 and the Traffic management Act 2004 and licensed

accordingly in order to secure the expeditious movement of traffic by minimising disruption to users of the highway network in Wokingham.

8. Utilities

Any such works or events commissioned by the developer and particularly those involving the connection of any utility to the site, shall be co-ordinated by them in liaison with Wokingham Borough Council's Street Works Team, (telephone 01189 746302). This must take place at least three month in advance of the works and particularly to ensure that statutory undertaker connections/supplies to the site are coordinated to take place wherever possible at the same time.

9. Noise

The attention of the applicant is drawn to the requirements of Section 60 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974 in respect of the minimisation of noise on construction and demolition sites. Application, under Section 61 of the Act, for prior consent to the works, can be made to the Environmental Health and Licensing Manager.

10. The applicant is advised that the development requires the submission and approval of a Traffic Regulation Order along with obtaining consent from the Local Highway Authority, to undertake the proposed works to the access junction from Cutbush Lane. This needs to be completed prior to the construction of the access and will need to be coordinated to allow for access for the facility. You are advised to speak with the Highways Authority with regards to obtaining the adequate licence agreements and approvals on this matter. In the event that the Traffic Regulation Order is not successful, an alternative highway access scheme will need to be submitted for consideration and approval by the Local Planning Authority.

11. The developer is advised that there is a high pressure pipeline within the vicinity of the site to contact Southern Gas Networks prior to the commencement of development. The applicant is further advised of the following guidance and restrictions:

- No mechanical excavation is allowed within 3 metres either side of pipeline.
- No plant or storage of equipment shall be made within any easement strip.
- If any metallic pipes or cables are being laid in proximity to gas pipelines then interference testing will be required, the cost of which to be borne by the promoter of the works. A minimum clearance of 600mm is required.
- All precautions stated in publication SGN/WI/SW/2 (Safe Working in the Vicinity of High Pressure Gas Pipelines) shall be fully complied with in all respects. Acceptance of SGN/WI/SW/2 shall be acknowledged by the responsible site person signing and returning the form
- Appendix A (back page) to the SGN representative contacted in (7).
- No thrust boring shall take place within 3 meters of the pipeline.
- All planting within the easement strip should comply with 'Notes for Guidance on Tree Proximity'.
- Before commencing work on site you must contact our Pipeline Maintenance Section on the number above at least seven days before work commences. A Southern Gas Networks representative will then contact you to arrange to visit site. Details of working near to high pressure gas pipelines can then be discussed.

- Pipeline sections that are planned and agreed by SGN to be permanently covered (i.e. by road surface) will require a coating survey. SGN
- will repair any indicated coating defects free of charge. The survey costs will be borne by the promoter of the works. Prior to any surface
- cover cathodic protection coupons and reference cells will require installation at no cost to SGN.
- This pipeline is cathodically protected and as such has test cables located in test posts, were these to be lost through this work we would
- look to you for remedial action at no cost to SGN.
- Intrusive construction methods will require an agreed method statement prior to work starting.
- Any extended period of SGN site supervision may incur charges to you. These will be charged based on visiting times, materials and
- occurrences. You will be informed when these come into effect and be invoiced direct.
- Any piling or boreholes within 15 metres of the pipeline may require vibration monitoring. No piling or boreholing must take place within 3
- metres of the pipeline

12. Safe digging practices in accordance with HSE publication HSG47 “Avoiding Danger from Underground Services” must be used to verify and establish the actual position of the mains, pipes, services and other apparatus on site before any mechanical plant is used. It is your responsibility to ensure that this information is provided to all relevant people (direct labour or contractors) working for you on or near gas pipes.

13. It must be stressed that both direct and consequential damage to gas plant can be dangerous for your employees and the general public and repairs to any such damage will incur a charge to you or the organisation carrying out work on your behalf. Your works should be carried out in such a manner that we are able to gain access to our apparatus throughout the duration of your operations.

14. There are public sewers crossing or close to your development. If you're planning significant work near our sewers, it's important that you minimize the risk of damage. We'll need to check that your development doesn't limit repair or maintenance activities, or inhibit the services we provide in any other way. The applicant is advised to read our guide working near or diverting our pipes.

<https://www.thameswater.co.uk/developers/larger-scale-developments/planning-your-development/working-near-our-pipes>

<https://www.thameswater.co.uk/developers/larger-scale-developments/sewers-and-wastewater/diverting-a-sewer>

15. Thames Water advise that a drainage strategy should contain the points of connection to the public sewerage system as well as the anticipated flows (including flow calculation method) into the proposed connection points. This data can then be used to determine the impact of the proposed development on the existing sewer system. If the drainage strategy is not acceptable Thames Water will request that an impact study be undertaken.

Archaeology

16. In view of the nature and scale of the development and the previous investigations having been undertaken, defined/agreed areas of excavation/strip and map would represent an appropriate mitigation phase. Berkshire Archaeology would be pleased to discuss the approach with the applicant, or their archaeological consultant, should permission be granted.

17. Please refer to the information provided by Last Mile Asset Management Limited. If a further copy is required, please contact Last Mile Asset Management Limited or the Local Planning Authority.

C) Alternative recommendation

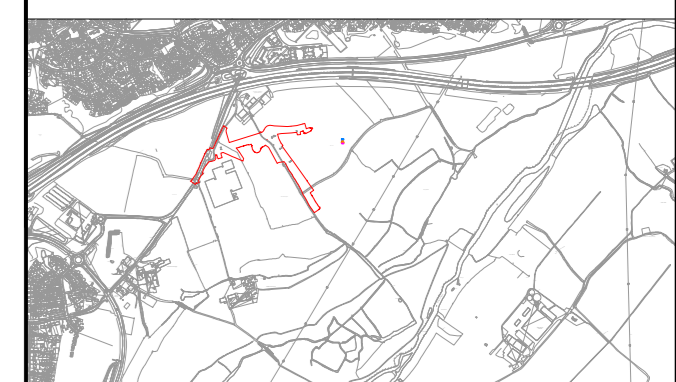
That the committee authorise the Head of Development Management to refuse planning permission in the event of an S106 agreement not being completed to secure the services and infrastructure within six months of the date of the committee resolution (unless a longer period is agreed by the Head of Development Management in consultation with the Chairman of Planning Committee) for the following reasons:

- 1) In the absence of a planning obligation to secure suitable contributions / on site and off works for the following:
 - i. Employment Skills Plan contributions or delivery of a bespoke Employment Sills Plan
 - ii. Biodiversity Net Gain of 20% either through on or off site provision or a combination of both on and off site provision
 - iii. Pre development condition survey of Cutbush Lane East and delivery of any post construction remediation if required
 - iv. Safeguarding the highway corridor land within the red line boundary (to be agreed on a safeguarding plan)
 - v. Safeguarding of off site land for public rights of way improvements (to be agreed on a safeguarding plan)

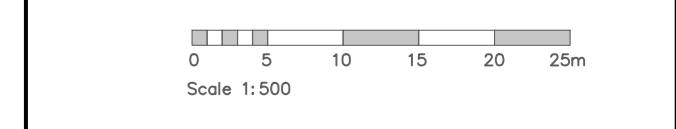
Administrative clauses:

- vi. Section 106 Monitoring fee being the amount of reasonable fees in monitoring the performance and discharge of the Section 106 obligations,
- vii. The Council's reasonable legal fees in relation to the completion of the Section 106 agreement (whether or not the matter goes to completion),
- viii. Indexation (all contributions and payments to be index-linked from the date of the decision to grant planning permission to the date of which payment is made, using BCIS index).

It has not been possible to secure the adequate mitigation put forward to justify the development and the proposal could have a detrimental impact on ecology. This is contrary to the principles of Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3, and CP6, MDD DPD policies TB12 and TB23 together with the NPPF and Environment Act 2021.



NOTES:
1. Do not scale.
2. Refer to all other Project Drawings and supporting notes.



P2	20/21	ACCESS ROAD EXTENDED AND BARRIERS UPDATED	KLW	LA
P1	19/20	FIRST ISSUE	KLW	LA

ABLE LETCHFORD PARTNERSHIP
Consultancy Engineers

3 Tealgate, Charnham Park
Hungerford, Berkshire RG17 0YT
www.alpce.co.uk Tel: 01488 684390

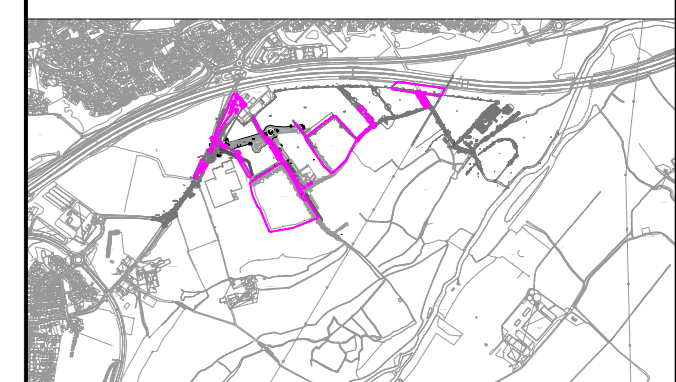
Client: **UNIVERSITY OF READING**

Project: **THAMES VALLEY SCIENCE PARK
PRIMARY INFRASTRUCTURE**

Title: **NHM ACCESS ROAD
RED LINE PLAN**

Scale	Date	Drawn	Checked
1:500 @ A0	SEPT 2023	KLW	LA
Drawing No:	A392-IV1-102		P2

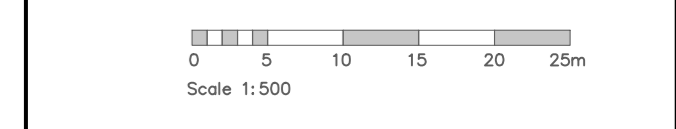
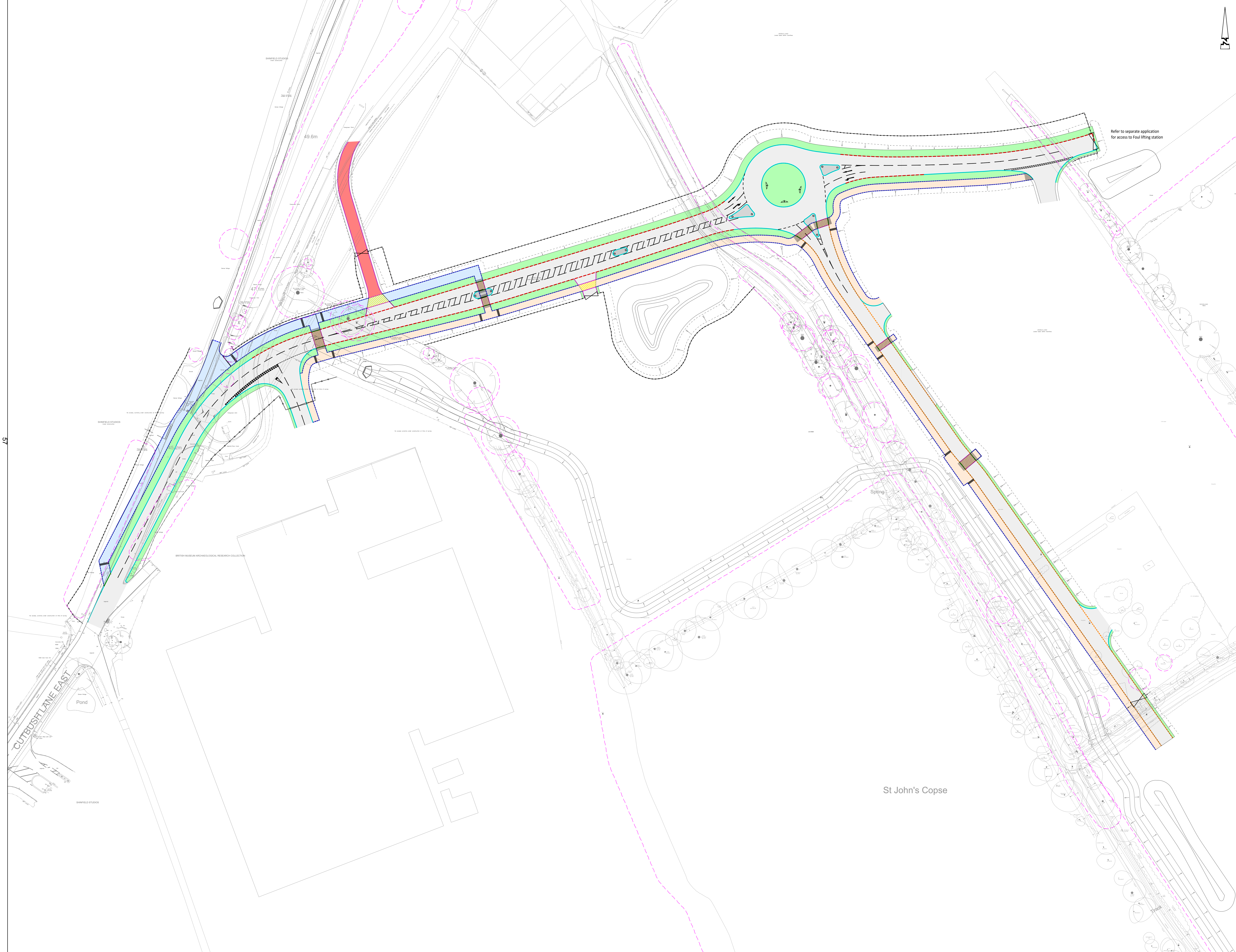
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GENERAL NOTES:
1. Do not scale.
2. Refer to all other Project Drawings and supporting notes.
3. Transition kerbs to be installed between all changes in kerb type.

- KEY:
- PROPOSED ASPHALT CARRIAGEWAY
 - PROPOSED ASPHALT FOOTWAY
 - PROPOSED ASPHALT CYCLEWAY
 - PROPOSED VERGE (LANDSCAPING AS PER LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS PLANS)
 - PROPOSED ACCESS TRACK CONSTRUCTION
 - CROSSOVER CONSTRUCTION
 - BLOCKED PAVED STRIP AT PEDESTRIAN CROSSING
 - PROPOSED TACTILE/COORDUROY PAVING
 - H&B KERBING WITH 125mm UPSTAND
 - FLUSH KERBING AT PEDESTRIAN CROSSING
 - FLUSH CS2 KERB ADJACENT TO FILTER DRAIN
 - FLUSH INVERTED H&B KERB
 - COMBINED KERB/DRAINAGE UNITS
 - FOOTWAY EDGING
 - POST AND 3 RAIL TIMBER FENCE
 - V MESH SECURITY FENCING TO MATCH EXISTING

Refer to separate application for access to Foul lifting station



PK 00/20	TACTILE/COORDUROY ASSESS TO KEY AND BLOCK PAVING ADDED TO PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS	KLW	LA
PK 01/20	MINOR AMENDMENTS	REW	LA
PK 02/20	MINOR CHANGES TO LAYOUT	REW	LA
PK 03/20	ACCESS ROAD EXTENDED AND BARRIERS UPDATED	KLW	LA
PK 04/20	FIRST ISSUE	REW	LA

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Client: **UNIVERSITY OF READING**

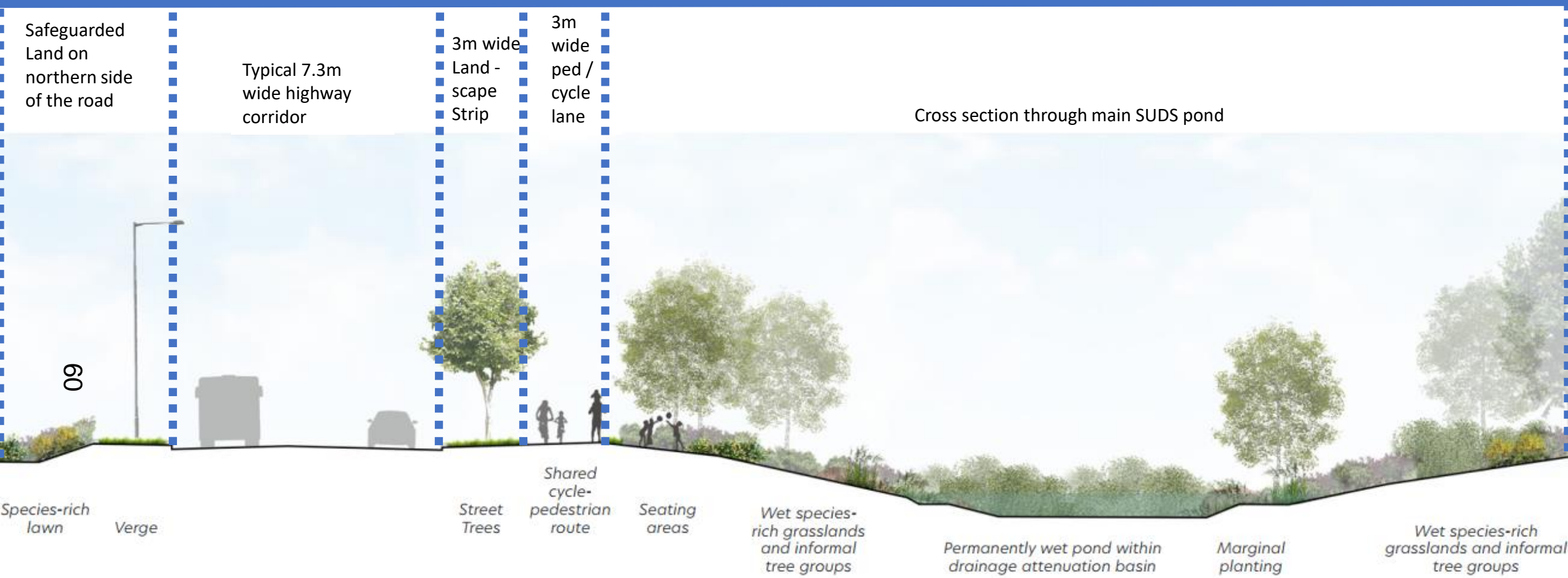
Project: **THAMES VALLEY SCIENCE PARK PRIMARY INFRASTRUCTURE**

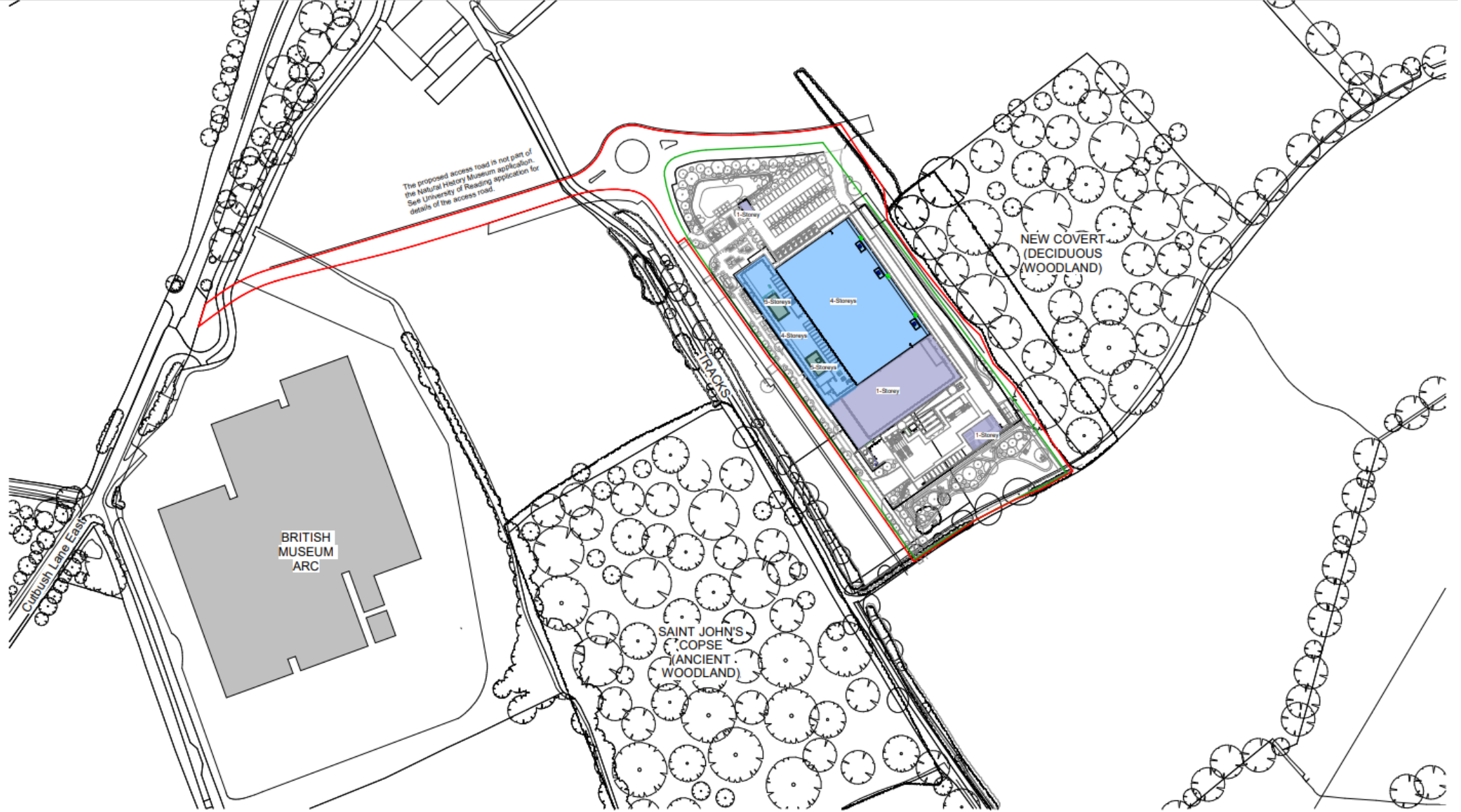
Site: **NHM ACCESS ROAD MATERIALS**

Scale	Date	Drawn	Checked
1:500 @ A0	SEPT 2023	KLW	LA
Drawing No.			
A392-IV1-701			P5

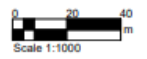
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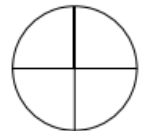
1 Proposed Site Plan
1 : 1000



- SITE KEY**
- Development Boundary
 - Planning Application Boundary

Note: OS Map augmented with information received from University of Reading.
OS Licence: 100007514

General Note:
Dimensions are not to be scaled from this drawing. All discrepancies in this drawing are to be reported to Felden Clegg Bradley Studios.
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Rev	Status
P01	S5 Issued for Planning Application

SUITABLE FOR PLANNING	
Date	15/11/2023
Job/Drawing No	RD001-FCB-XX-RF-DR-A-0102
NRM Unlocked, Thames Valley Science Park	
Proposed Site Plan	
Scale	As indicated@A1
Date	October 2023
Drawn	Group JC
Checked	Checker
FCBS project no	RD001
Do not scale All dimensions to be checked on site	

Revision
P01
S5

63

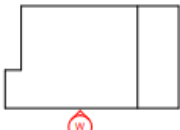


1 West Elevation
1 : 250
Scale 1:250

005	Linear Curtain Walling - Typical Façade Units - Bronze
006	Linear Curtain Walling - Typical Façade Units - Silver
007	Linear Façade Units - Typical Façade Units - Bronze
008	Linear Façade Units - Typical Façade Units - Silver
009	Linear Façade Units - Typical Façade Units - Bronze
010	Linear Façade Units - Typical Façade Units - Silver
011	Linear Façade Units - Typical Façade Units - Bronze
012	Linear Façade Units - Typical Façade Units - Silver
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014	Linear Façade Units - Typical Façade Units - Silver
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NOTE: The façade colours indicated remain under review and are subject to change. Colour and embossed motif TBC.

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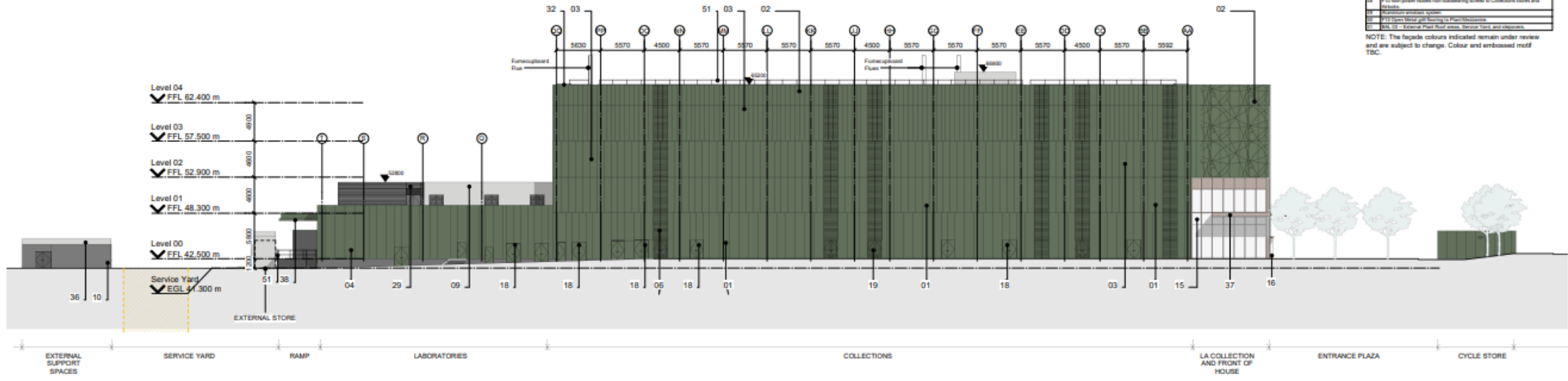


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Rev	Status	Date
P01	S5	15/11/2023
P02	S5	16/11/2023

SUITABLE FOR PLANNING			
Rev	Status	Date	Revision
P01	S5	15/11/2023	P02
P02	S5	16/11/2023	S5

Job/Drawing No: RD001-FCB-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0800
NHM Unlocked, Thames Valley Science Park
West Elevation
Scale: As indicated@A1
Date: October 2023
Status: S5
Group: JC
FCSB project no RD001
Do not scale. All dimensions to be checked on site.

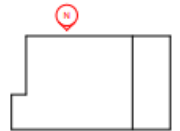


1 East Elevation
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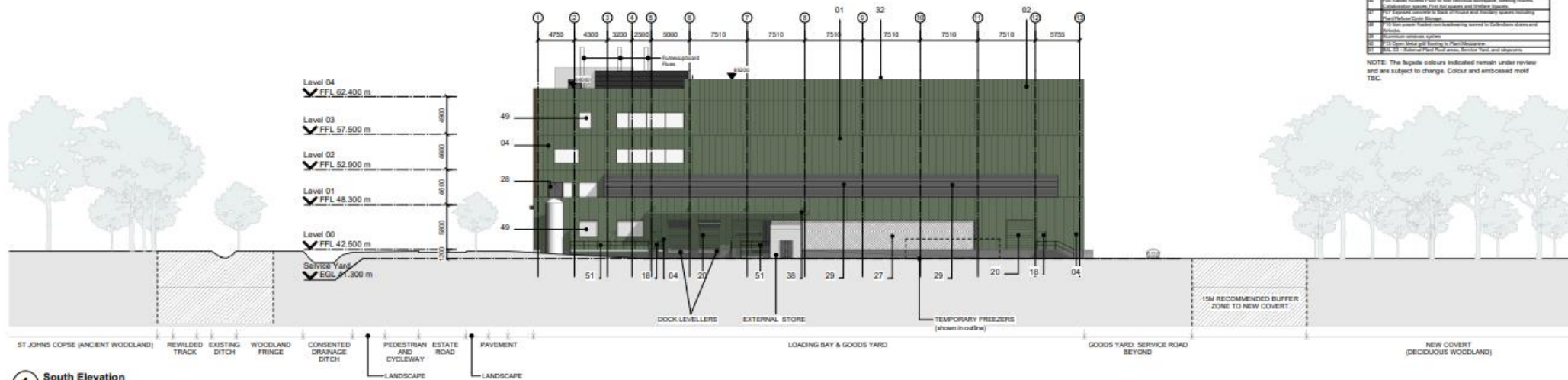
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Rev	Status	Date
P01	S5 Issued for Planning Application	15/1/2023
P02	S5 Issued for Planning Application	16/1/2023

SUITABLE FOR PLANNING

Job/Drawing No	Revision
RD001-FCB-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0802	P02
NHM Unlocked, Thames Valley Science Park	Status
East Elevation	S5

Scale As indicated@A1 Drawn Group:JC
 Date October 2023 Checked Group:JC
 Do not scale All dimensions to be checked on site



1 South Elevation
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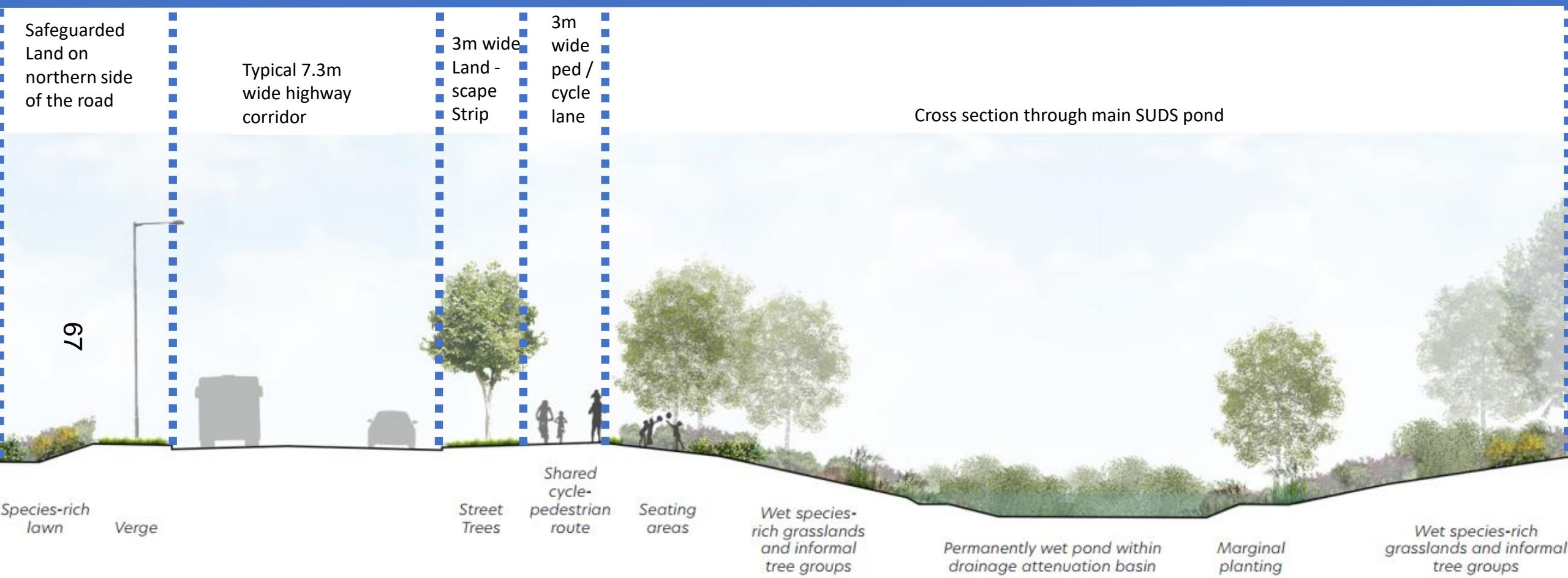
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Rev	Status	Date
P01	SS	15/11/2023
P02	SS	16/11/2023

SUITABLE FOR PLANNING
Job/Drawing No: RD001-FCB-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0803
Date: 15/11/2023
Revision: P02
NHM Unlocked, Thames Valley Science Park
South Elevation
Scale: As indicated@A1 Drawn: Group:JC
Date: October 2023 Checked: Group:JC
FCBS project no: RD001
Do not scale. All dimensions to be checked on site.





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Agenda Item 75.

Application Number	Expiry Date	Parish	Ward
232833	EXT	Shinfield	Shinfield South

Applicant	Natural History Museum
Site Address	Land South of Cutbush Lane East, Shinfield. RG2 9AA
Proposal	Full application for the proposed Construction of a Collections, Digitisation & Research Centre with associated infrastructure and external works including car parking, SUDS basin and landscaping. Application is a potential departure from the local plan.
Type	Full
Officer	Christopher Howard
Reason for determination by committee	Major application

FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Planning Committee on 13/03/2024
REPORT PREPARED BY	Assistant Director – Planning
RECOMMENDATION	APPROVAL Three tiered recommendation as fully set out in Appendix 1. Recommendation is subject to a section 106 agreement to secure the heads of terms below together with the conditions and informatives set out in Appendix 1

SUMMARY

The application is for a state of the art purpose built facility that would serve the Natural History Museum. The main purpose of the building would be for the storage of the collections and study that will help to ensure the specimens are preserved for future generations. The building would also have a critical function in terms of the recording of the collection as it incorporates space for digitisation. The south west facing wing will support laboratory space and offices for further analysis on samples to be undertaken.

The new building will not only help to preserve the specimens but will also allow for a greater level of circulation of the collection. Taken as a whole, the activities that the building will support are intended to enhance our knowledge of the natural environment, helping society to have a greater understanding on key issues such as biodiversity loss and climate change and identify ways to mitigate these impacts.

The Natural History Museum holds one of the worlds largest collections of specimens of our natural environment. Currently the activities that would be undertaken in the new facility are carried out in existing space in South Kensington and Tring. The building would provide a purpose built facility that will have environmental controls that will support the long-term preservation of the collection that the existing buildings were not specifically designed for. The importance of this cannot be understated given that each specimen is broadly unique in terms of the time in which it was collected and some of these are rare.

The location of the site is important as it will be well served by international transport links and closely related to the British Museum Archive and the Thames Valley Science Park on

Cutbush Lane East. This creates a cluster of similar uses which was an overarching principle for the Science Park. Clustering of uses such as these are recognised as a key component of the Governments objectives as outlined in the NPPF and NPPG. In addition, the site is closely linked to the University of Reading who have a science faculties and the facility will allow for greater collaboration with the University.

The building represents high quality design and will deliver above policy requirements in terms of sustainability and biodiversity net gain. A perspective of the site is provided in figure 1 below.



Figure 1: A perspective providing an impression of the front of the building taken from the Cutbush Lane East extension.

Whilst in principle the location of the site in the countryside means that there is a conflict with some of the development plan policies, for the reasons discussed in the planning balance section of the report, any adverse impacts on the countryside are outweighed by the economic, social and sustainable benefits that this important facility would deliver. The site would be served by an extension to Cutbush Lane East which is under consideration under planning application ref: 232995. Furthermore, it is well connected to the sub region and globally which will further enable national and international scientific collaboration for the collection.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Recent planning history for the site is set out below:

Application ref	Description	Outcome
F/2008/1725	Proposed erection of 70 metre high anemometer mast for measuring the speed of wind for a period of 2 years.	Approved 25 September 2008
VAR/2010/1624	Application to vary condition 4 of planning permission F/2008/1725 to allow anemometer mast to be retained for a further 18 month period (until 07/06/12).	Refused 15 October 2010
F/2010/2266	The proposed erection of 25 year operation and subsequent decommissioning of a wind energy development comprising of the following elements: four wind turbines, each with a maximum overall height (to vertical blade tip) of up to 130 metres, together with new and upgraded access tracks, temporary works, hard standing areas, control and metering building, cabling, improved vehicular access from Cutbush Lane and the A327, an anemometry mast and compensatory flood storage.]	Refused 28 April 2011

The applications that have enabled the parcel to come forward in terms of infrastructure delivery are summarised below:

Application ref	Description	Outcome
Science and innovation park		
O/2009/1027	Outline application for phase 1 development of Science & Innovation Park (Access to be considered) plus full application for the construction of access road foot and cycle ways M4 overbridge and associated works including landscaping and engineering works plus erection of boundary wall and fence adjoining Shinfield Road/Access Road. Part demolition and reformation of facade of Stable Buildings at Lane End Farm and demolition of existing farm buildings.	Approved 27/10/10
RM/2015/0630	Reserved Matters application pursuant to Outline Planning Consent O/2009/1027 for the development of phase 1A of proposed Thames Valley Science Park comprising the construction of a gateway building and all associated landscaping and ancillary works plus temporary car parking arrangements – Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale to be considered.	Approved 26/08/15
Eastern Relief Road		

Application ref	Description	Outcome
F/2010/1428	Full application for the construction of an Eastern Relief Road (ERR) to Shinfield including the construction of road foot and cycleways an M4 over-bridge. Re-grading of embankments landscaping utilities creation of flood compensation areas and associated works including engineering and other operations. Erection of replacement boundary wall and fence adjoining Shinfield Road/ ERR part demolition of existing farm buildings at Lane End Farm and demolition/deconstruction of two poly tunnels south of Cutbush Lane. – Delivered and open	Appeal approved 03/06/11
British Museum		
182059	Hybrid planning application in respect to: 1) Full planning application for a 15,628sqm research and storage facility (Sui Generis Use for the British Museum); 80parking spaces; landscaping and surface water drainage. 2) Outline planning application for up to 15,000sqm research and storage facility (Sui Generis Use for the British Museum) all matters reserved. 3) Demolition of two existing residential dwellings.	Approved 14/02/19

DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION	
Previous land use	Agricultural – arable farm land
Existing parking spaces	0
Proposed parking spaces	77, 10 of which are blue badge
Proposed cycle storage	34
Proposed floor space	25,424m ²
Construction jobs created (across a three year build phase)	326 – <i>Officer note: this represents employment across the supply chain and on site employment</i>
Number of direct jobs created / retained	11 posts would be created and 12 apprenticeships. The relocation of the building would retain 104 existing posts and therefore it would support 115 positions.
Indirect jobs created upon completion	83 jobs in the wider economy.
CONSTRAINTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circa 150m outside of the Strategic Development Location (SDL) as identified on the Core Strategy (South of the M4 Strategic Development Location SPD) • Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions SPD • Within 7km of the Special Protection Area (SPA) • Countryside

- Potentially contaminated land consultation zone
- Gas pipe consultation zone
- Landscape character area
- Area of archaeological potential
- Listed buildings located to the south west 475m Oldhouse Farm and Cutbush Manor and Barn Grade 2 located 500m to the south west.
- Ancient woodland to the south west of the site – St Johns Copse
- Woodland to the north east of the site – New Covert (unclassified)
- Ordinary Watercourse
- Part of site in floodzone 2
- Berkshire Habitat
- Berkshire Biodiversity Opportunity Zone

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

WBC Economic Prosperity and Place (Community Infrastructure)	No objection requires Employment Skills Plan
WBC Drainage	No objection – requests conditions
WBC Environmental Health	No objection – requests conditions
WBC Highways	No objection – requests conditions
WBC Tree & Landscape	Comments on the landscape impact of the proposed development / countryside impact and requests further information- <i>Officer note: please see report below paragraphs 37 - 40</i>
WBC Sustainability	Supports the energy strategy
Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue	No objection
Thames Water	No objection – requests conditions
WBC Biodiversity	No objection – requests conditions
Planning Policy	No objection
Berkshire Archaeology	No objection – requests conditions
Active Travel England	No objection – requests conditions
Natural England	No objection – requests conditions
West Berks Emergency Planner	No objection
SGN	SGN have raised an objection but subsequent they have submitted a letter to the applicant, as such we deem this to be removal of the object. Informatives will be included
SSEN	No objection

REPRESENTATIONS

Town/Parish Council: Shinfield Parish Council object to the development for the following reasons:

- Development being outside the Strategic Development Location (SDL) boundary and the application could provide a precedent for further development outside the SDL boundary.
Officer note: the site is located outside the SDL boundary and is not allocated and it is designated countryside. Each application however needs to be considered on its own merits. For the reasons discussed in the report and in particular paragraphs 90 – 114 below in this case the special circumstances linked to the use of the building are considered to outweigh any harm.
- The use of the site would not be acceptable for another operator.
Officer note: linked to the above, the special circumstances linked to the activities of the Natural History Museum are noted in the planning balance section of the report. The use of the building for this operator will be secured via the Section 106 for a personal permission for the Natural History Museum.
- Limited benefit for residents in the Parish to secure employment.
Officer note: This is understood and whilst at the beginning the relocation of the building will most likely disperse employees from the current site, over time it is likely that in general people will relocate to the local area and employment opportunities will be available to local residents who specialise in this field of study / work. In addition, due to the links to the University of Reading there will be opportunities for post graduate vocations at the facility as staff naturally turns over.

Approval should only be given if the following conditions are included:

- The Community Engagement Strategy referred to in Appendix B to the Planning Statement should result in a meaningful long-term programme of community outreach with a direct benefit to parish residents including physical access to information and exhibits.
Officer note: An updated engagement strategy has been submitted by the applicant in response to the concerns raised by Shinfield Parish Council. This provides a framework for a more detailed strategy which will be agreed under the requirements of condition 26. The recommended condition includes a requirement to engage with the parish and local residents to inform the community engagement strategy prior to the submission of this to the local planning authority and for this to be demonstrated within it. It is acknowledged at this early stage of the programme; limited work will have been done on the engagement strategy but this is expected to evolve over time once the museum has relocated to the site.
- While this may not be deliverable in the proposed building there should be some physical delivery within the parish both for students and the general population.
Officer note: Whilst this is noted, there is a need for a secure site given the nature of activities so this will be difficult to deliver. This could however feed into the community engagement strategy and existing buildings such as Gateway 1 at the Science Park may be more suitable for events rather than providing a bespoke building that may otherwise be underutilised.
- SPC would like to be directly engaged in the development of such a strategy/outreach programme.
Officer note: This is agreed and has been included in the recommended condition 26. The Council, Shinfield Parish and the Museum will be working together to develop this.
- There should be no occupation of the building until the strategy/outreach programme is in place.
Officer note: This is agreed and has been included in the recommended condition 26.

- Any approval must be alongside the approval of PA 232995 which is intended to improve access to the area including for pedestrians and cyclists.
Officer note: This is agreed and please see condition 3.
- Improving pedestrian and cycling paths/links with Lower Earley Way.
Officer note: There is good existing cycle infrastructure on the Lower Earley Way although it is noted that the lighting beyond the British Museum can be improved. This has been secured as part of the Shinfield Studio planning consent. It should also be noted that development cannot be required to mitigate existing issues where the development is not resulting in specific harm.
- A meaningful contribution towards the funding and sustainability of bus services 3 and 600
Officer note: A contribution has been sought for sustainable transport measures.
- Tight control over the construction traffic to the site and then the subsequent large number of vehicles necessary to transport artefacts to the site.
Officer note: This is agreed and the Construction Environmental Management Plan – condition 10 - will mitigate construction traffic. It is not anticipated that there would be significant HGV movements for decanting to the site given that this will be controlled by the number of loading bays and the logistics of unloading / subsequent storage. The Transport Assessment notes 5 which is broadly in line with the decanting process for the British Museum.
- The traffic management plan should ensure robust controls to keep the disruption to residents to a minimum and to ensure that safe access is maintained for pedestrians, cyclists and other users of the affected area.
Officer note: This is agreed and the Construction Environmental Management Plan will control – condition 10. An additional signage strategy is also required by condition 9.

Local Members: No comments received.

Neighbours:

In total, 1193 neighbour notification letters were sent and the proposal was advertised locally. From this, when accounting for any duplications, a total of 19 letters were received. The breakdown of these were 6 letters of objection, 6 letters of comment and 7 letters of support. The planning related issues raised are summarised below:

Letters of objection / comment:

- Impact on character / loss of countryside / overdevelopment of the area – *Officer note: please refer to report below, paragraphs 23-41.*
- Impact on wildlife / habitats / biodiversity - *Officer note: 20% Biodiversity net gain will be secured; please refer to report below, paragraphs 77-79.*
- Poor air quality - *Officer note: the site is located outside of an Air Quality Management Area and has been assessed by the Environmental Health Officer who is satisfied that the use would not have an adverse impact on health*
- Community engagement lacking pre and post development - *Officer note: A community engagement event was held – see report below paragraphs 86-87. Officers have requested a more robust community engagement strategy which has been submitted and this is acceptable subject to condition 26.*
- An area of the building should be reserved for a local museum - *Officer note: The building incorporates an area for public engagement which can be used as part of the community engagement strategy. However, the facility is not intended to be open to the wider public.*

- Public consultation event should have been held at the weekend- *Officer note: The community engagement drop in session was held on a Thursday between 15:30 and 16:45 together with 18:15 – 20:00 and 84 people attended. Further information for those who could not attend was signposted through the leaflets that were dropped to 1,500 residents. The community engagement strategy and timeframes for the events considered acceptable and regrettably, it will always be difficult to ensure that all can attend these sessions as weekends may present further challenges to residents. The applicant has fulfilled their responsibility to undertake consultation.*
- Impact on flooding - *Officer note: The development has been assessed by the drainage officer. It should be noted works are underway to improve drainage with a new ditch being constructed to the west of the application site (agreed as part of another application). This should manage surface water runoff for the wider area. The Flood Risk Officer supports the proposed drainage strategy subject to a condition.*
- Site not identified in the Core Strategy for development / request delay until the local plan update process has been completed - *Officer note: Whilst this is noted, the Local Planning Authority cannot dictate the timing of applications or delay decisions on this basis. Significant publication for the application has been undertaken both by the applicant and by the Local Planning Authority through neighbour notifications. Due to the reasons discussed in the report below, the proposed development is considered acceptable and would not prejudice the local plan update process*
- Impact of construction traffic on Cutbush Lane East - *Officer note: Construction traffic will be managed by the Construction Environment Management Plan and vehicles will need to access the site via the Science Park entrance. Signage will be included and will be subject to a condition.*
- Impact on highway safety / use of Cutbush Lane East by pedestrians and cyclists - *Officer note: The application has been assessed by the Highways Officer and they raise no objection in terms of highway safety. Improvements are being made for the Cutbush Lane East overbridge and lighting will be installed here which will make it more of an attractive route. A footpath on the north western side of Cutbush Lane East has also been installed from the Science Park link road to the British Museum. This is proposed to be extended under application 232995 connecting the current stub end of Cutbush Lane East into the overbridge. No evidence has been presented for the reduction of users although the route may have been more heavily used during Covid lockdowns. The package of enhancements and local upgrades to public footpaths 3 and 4 by Shinfield Studios should continue to make this a well-used link to the wider area.*
- Scale of access road - *Officer note: Not relevant to this application. The access road is being considered under another application, ref; 232995 but is referred to in the Committee Report for this.*
- Site not well linked by public transport- *Officer note: Whilst this is noted, the site is walkable to the wider public transport facilities albeit outside of the usual 400m catchment areas. The infrastructure has been designed to accommodate buses and the roundabout can serve as a turning circle for buses. There will however need to be a suitable level of critical mass to justify the extension of the bus route and agreement from the operator to justify extending this beyond the bus stops. Contributions are secured for future public transport improvements.*
- Loss of tenancy at Upperwood Farmhouse - *Officer note: Not a material planning consideration, it is a civil matter between the tenant and the University of Reading.*

- Impact on the climate / sustainability - *Officer note: The Sustainability strategy has been assessed by the Sustainability Officer and this is supported subject to conditions to ensure that the measures are implemented.*
- Lack of supporting infrastructure - *Officer note: Significant highway upgrades have been delivered in the area associated with the housing and employment growth including a new overbridge over the M4 motorway and Eastern Relief Road. More locally, upgrades have been secured via the British Museum planning consent including the new link road to Cutbush Lane East.*
- Land ownership was bequeathed to the University of Reading and they should not be able to profit from it - *Officer note: This is not a material planning consideration.*

Letters of support

- Support the purpose built facility and the location of it in Shinfield
- Request upgrades to signage - *Officer note: - Officer note: a condition for a signage strategy has been attached for the construction process.*

PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework

National Design Guide

National Planning Practice Guidance

Core Strategy (CS)

- CP1 – Sustainable Development
- CP2 – Inclusive Communities
- CP3 – General Principles for Development
- CP4 – Infrastructure Requirements
- CP5 – Housing Mix, Density and Affordability
- CP6 – Managing Travel Demand
- CP7 – Biodiversity
- CP8 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area
- CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
- CP10 - Improvements to the Strategic Transport Network.
- CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits (Inc Countryside)
- CP15 – Employment Development

MDD Local Plan (MDD)

- CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC02 – Development Limits
- CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping
- CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC05 – Renewable Energy and Decentralised Energy Networks
- CC06 – Noise
- CC07 – Parking
- CC08 – Safeguarding alignments of the Strategic Transport Network & Road Infrastructure
- CC09 – Development and Flood Risk
- CC10 – Sustainable Drainage
- TB11 – Core Employment Areas

TB12 – Employment Skills Plan
TB21 – Landscape Character
TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
TB24 – Designated Heritage Assets
TB25 – Archaeology

Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan

Policy 1 Location of Development
Policy 2 General Design Principles
Policy 3 Sustainable Development
Policy 4 Accessibility and Highway Safety
Policy 5 Parking
Policy 6 Trees, Hedgerows and Woodlands
Policy 7 Biodiversity
Policy 8 Flooding
Policy 9 Community Assets
Policy 10 Community and Sports Facilities
Policy 11 Commercial Development
Policy 12 Broadband Provision

Other

Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document
Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document
Climate Change Interim Policy Position Statement
A Vision for Our Villages: Ryeish Green, Spencers Wood, Three Mile Cross
Riseley Village Design Statement
Shinfield School Green Village Character Statement
Loddon Valley Landscape Character Assessment
South of the M4 SPD – *officer note the site is outside of the SDL boundary but there are principles within this that are cross cutting for the wider area*

PLANNING ISSUES

Site description

1. The application relates to land to the east of Cutbush Lane East and south of the M4 Motorway. The parcel of land is set between two woodlands – St Jons Copse to the south west which is a recognised ancient woodland and New Covert to the north east. The site is set within the Loddon Valley Landscape Character area and the land generally slopes gently to towards the river Loddon to the south east of the site. The current land use is agricultural and the field is closely related to Upperwood Farm which is located to the north west. An aerial photograph of the site is shown in Figure 2 below.



Figure 2: Aerial photograph of the site – the main site area is broadly outlined in red

2. In terms of the wider area, there has been significant changes to the landscape in recent years with the delivery of employment space. Works to deliver Shinfield Studios is well underway and will be completed early in 2024. Prior to this, supporting infrastructure has also been delivered for the phase 1 Science Park which includes the Eastern Relief Road and access to the Thames Valley Science Park via South Avenue.
3. More closely related to the site is the British Museum Archive which is located broadly to the south west. Phase one of this facility has now been delivered and there is outline planning permission to deliver a further phase should this be required to the rear of the building. Work is well underway to decant the archive from Blythe House in London to Shinfield at present.
4. The British Museum application enabled a series of highway upgrades to be delivered on Cutbush Lane East. These include restricting access for motor vehicles from the section of the Eastern Relief Road to Shinfield Grange which means that this section of Cutbush Lane East is effectively a cul-de-sac. Access to the British Museum and the southern facility of Shinfield Studios is now diverted past the Gateway Building on the Thames Valley Science Park campus through a new link road onto Cutbush Lane East – see figure 3. This limits vehicles passing the existing residential dwellings located towards the Eastern Relief Road. The delivery of the new link means that there are good links between Upperwood Farm

and the Eastern Relief Road on roads that are capable of catering for large heavy goods vehicles.



Figure 3: Links from the site to the Eastern Relief Road

5. Once you pass the employment sites, the main footpath connections that surround the site are towards the built up area of Lower Earley via the pedestrian and cycle bridge over the M4. There are glimpsed views of the site as you pass through the pedestrian and cycle link from Upperwood Farm to the overbridge. Once on the overbridge, the views to the site are more evident and given the landscape setting with the land gently falling away towards the River Loddon. Direct viewpoints from this location to the site have a rural feel given the backdrop to the landscape. Views are however read in the wider context, being closely related to the buildings that serve the employment space at Shinfield Studios and the British Museum and Lower Earley / the M4 Motorway.

Description of development

6. The application relates to 3 hectares of land and would contain a building of around 25,424m². The function of the building would predominantly serve as storage space for the Natural History Museum Collection and to a lesser extent supporting office / laboratory space for research and digitisation of the collection. Surrounding the building would be supporting infrastructure such as hard landscaping, a service area and parking bays together with soft landscaping which includes SUDS features and new planting. The building would be up to 5 stories although the office accommodation and Collections facility would be 4 floors in height. Plant space and a parapet wall sit above these. The maximum height of the building would be around 25m in height but this a very small area for an extractor. This means that the significant majority of the building would be around 23.5m in height, which is comparable to the some of the Shinfield Studio stage buildings. The land here is however lower than the studio site by around 15m at the heights point of the studio

site. The rear of the building is 1 storey towards the service yard and there is a couple of further ancillary 1 storey structures incorporated into the layout. The footprint of the building and storey heights are shown in figure 4.

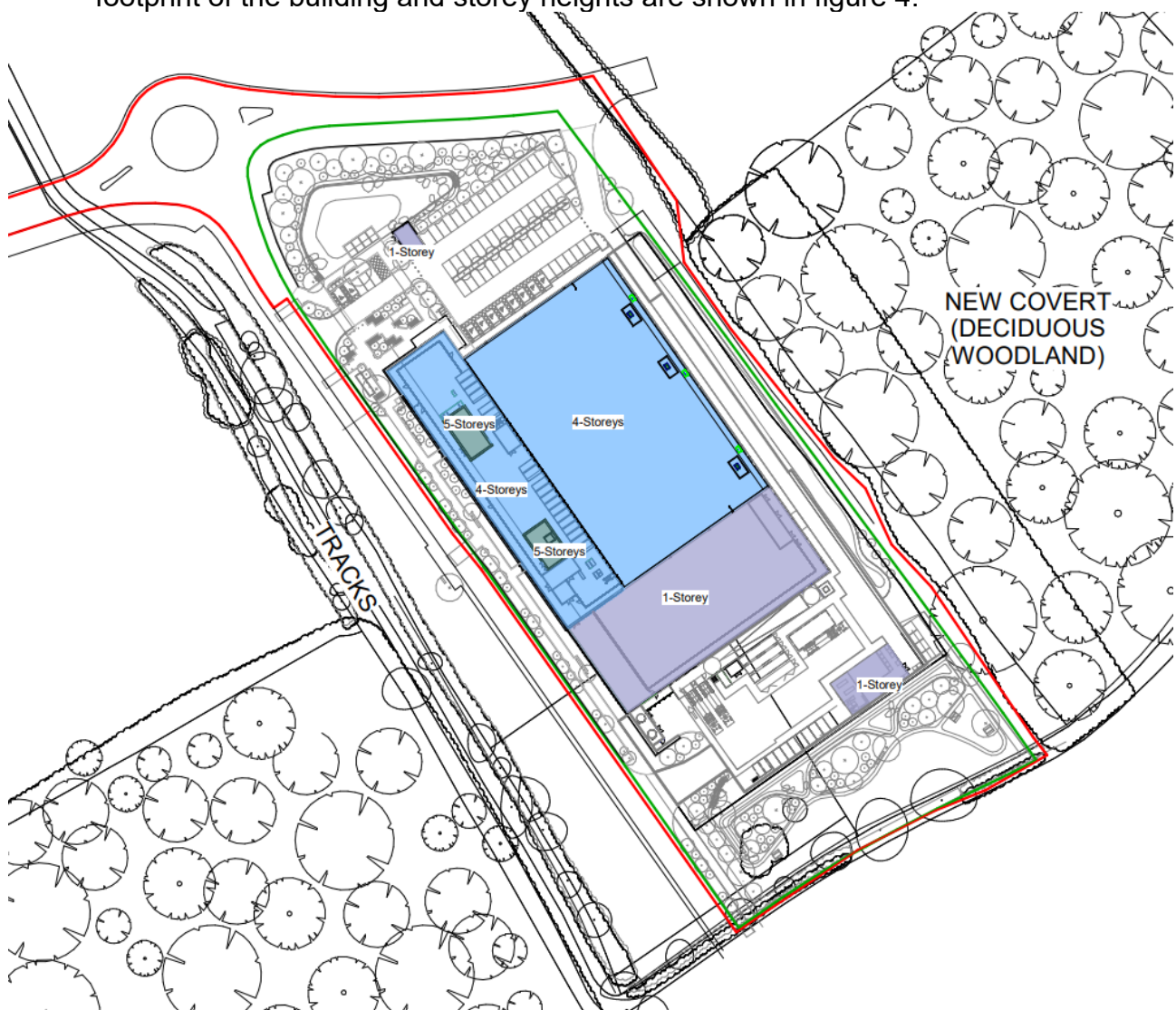


Figure 4: Site layout and storey levels

7. In terms of access, the site should be seen in context with a concurrent planning application for the spine road which would link it onto Cutbush Lane East as mentioned in the summary section above (ref: 232995). This road would create a new link from the north of the British Museum Archive to the Natural History Museum connecting via the South Avenue (past the Science Park) to the Eastern Relief Road.

Background to need for facility / Benefits

8. The Natural History Museum hold one of the most extensive natural history collections globally that are used for science and research. Since its inception the museum has built up a significant reputation within this field and internationally from visits to its exhibition space primarily in South Kennington, London. It holds over 80 million specimens spanning 4.6 million years some of which are displayed to the public within the existing museums at South Kensington and Tring in Hampshire. The specimens are in general unique, taken from time periods and places which mean that the collection cannot be reassembled. Such recent examples of this have recently received press attention such as the samples taken from the asteroid

Bennu which is recognised as a pristine sample that may contribute towards our understanding of the origins of our planet. The collection therefore has a pivotal role in our comprehension of the evolution of the natural environment. In addition, research from this has a crucial role in our understanding of current issues such as climate change and how might look to mitigate our impact.

9. A key objective for the Natural History Museum is to ensure that the collection is secure moving forward and the proposed facility will help to achieve this goal through delivering a bespoke building to house the collection. The building also incorporates the required technology and climatic conditions to best ensure that the collection is preserved for now and generations to come. Around a third of the artifacts will be re-located here from the existing facilities which were never designed specifically to preserve the collection. This amounts to around 28 million samples. The building would also house significant library material and support the ongoing digitisation of the collection. These activities will secure the long term preservation of the artifacts.
10. There will be space within the building to support the digitisation process with imagery and molecular analysis laboratories. The dedicated space for these activities should help ensure the ongoing legacy provided by research by the Natural History Museum in particular for the climate emergency. The delivery of the facility would allow for the building to free up further exhibition space within the South Kensington Museum.
11. Regionally and sub regionally the site is ideally located with excellent transport connections by road, rail and air. This is an important factor in choosing the location given the international status of the museum collection. Locally, the site is located close to the British Museum Archive which will allow for a degree of collaboration between these institutions. In addition, it is only a 15 minute drive to Whiteknights campus which will allow for collaboration with the various science faculties operated by the University of Reading.
12. The site is also within a 30 minute drive to London Heathrow Airport which means that for specimens that need to be transported nationally or internationally, the site is ideally located. The proximity is also important for providing access to the facility from professionals across the globe. This will allow for greater ease of international collaboration. There are also good public transport links to the site via rail with connections to the wider region via Reading station. The south of the M4 bus service connects into the station.
13. Similar to the British Museum, Shinfield Studios and Thames Valley Science Park, the site has an excellent network of connections to the wider area. The site will continue to support the clustering of research and development for the area and secure high quality employment space, which by virtue of the level of investment for the facilities, should be a legacy for future generations.
14. The facility would deliver employment for the area both for the operation of the building but also to the wider economy for secondary employment. 115 permanent positions would directly be employed by the operation of the building and there would be 83 supporting roles. Construction activities would also generate 326 jobs both on site and in the wider supply chain over a three year build phase. The

building would therefore deliver significant employment with associated spending for the local economy.

Principle of development

15. The general thrust of the policies and supplementary planning guidance is that development within these parcels of land is not normally permitted unless the criteria within policy CP11 are met. The proposal does not fall specifically into these categories and therefore is in principle not strictly in accordance with planning policies CP11 together with the objectives of policies CP9, CC02, Shinfield Parish Policy 1 and paragraph 180 of the NPPF. As such, an assessment needs to be made as to whether special circumstances apply to the scheme and a planning balance made.
16. Whilst Core Strategy policy CP11 has a presumption against development in the countryside, which is echoed by CC02 of the MDD, these policies should not be read in isolation. Regard should also be made in respect to the objectives of the policies which are to maintain the separate identity of settlements through preventing urban sprawl and to protect the countryside. The proposal therefore needs to be considered on its merits and within the context of the development plan as a whole.
17. Policy 1 of Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan (which has been adopted since the Core Strategy and MDD) supports development within settlement limits and adjacent to these where the benefits of the development outweigh its adverse impacts. The proposed building would be located outside these limits together with the defined Strategic Development Location boundary as defined by the South of the M4 SPD. It should however be noted that consented development in the area has effectively extended the edge of the settlement beyond that defined in policy and the relationship to this should be taken into account.
18. The application should also be read in conjunction with national planning policy. Section 2 of the NPPF outlines three interdependent objectives regarding sustainable development and promotes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The objectives set out in paragraph 8 are:
 - a) *an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
 - b) *a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and*
 - c) *an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and*

pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy

These principles are broadly echoed by policy CP1 of the Core Strategy.

19. The NPPG Housing and economic needs assessment also places a high emphasis on policy support for different forms of employment use. This recommends clustering certain industries which include digital and creative industries to support collaboration, innovation, productivity and sustainability. It also recommends that there may be the need for: policy-making authorities will need to develop a clear understanding of such needs and how they might be addressed taking account of relevant evidence and policy within Local Industrial Strategies. For example, this might include the need for greater studio capacity, co-working spaces or research facilities. This is echoed in section 6 of the NPPF which states that significant weight should be placed to support economic growth and productivity and refers to sectors that drive innovation. The delivery of the building would echo the thrust of footnote 44 which refers to sectors to encourage growth for the future such as artificial intelligence and clean growth.
20. In addition to the above, Wokingham Borough Council recently updated the Community Vision for the borough is to be 'A great place to live, learn, work and grow and a great place to do business' and is underpinned by the Vision for Wokingham Borough as set out in the Core strategy. Whilst not planning policy, this therefore places a high emphasis on delivering employment within the borough.
21. The proposed development would allow for clustering of nationally and international important facilities within the local area. The use of the site is closely related to the British Museum Building to the west of the site. The delivery of the Natural History Museum would also allow for collaboration with the science departments operated by the University of Reading.

Principle of development conclusion

22. Whilst the proposal does not strictly accord with aspects of the development plan, regard needs to be made to the development plan as a whole together with the NPPF and NPPG. A judgement therefore needs to be made as to whether material considerations which support the proposals are sufficient to outweigh development plan conflict. In regard to this and adopted policies, further analysis is outlined below and in particular, the Planning Balance section of the report in paragraphs 89-116 below.

Layout, Design and Landscaping

23. Core Strategy Policies CP1, *Sustainable Development* and CP3, *General Principles for Development* requires high quality design that respects its context. This requirement is amplified by MDD LP Policies CC03, *Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping* and TB21, *Landscape Character* requires development proposals to protect and enhance the Borough's Green Infrastructure, retaining existing trees, hedges and other landscape features and incorporating high quality - ideally native – planting as an integral part of any scheme, within the context of the Council's Landscape Character Assessment.
24. Although the site sits outside the South of the M4 Strategic Development Location, Core Strategy policy CP19 is still relevant and sets out the concept rational for the

design parameters for the South of the M4 SDL and these are outlined in further detail in Appendix 7 of the Core Strategy. This states that:

a) *Development in a series of locations around the periphery of the three villages is required. This approach should consider the relationship between the current built areas and the open countryside. Opportunities to form new edges to the existing villages exist, allowing a managed transition between urban and rural.*

25. The site is located outside of the SDL limits and as such policy CP19 is not directly relevant to it. The SPD does however provide some useful background to the aspirations for employment uses within the Science Park and landscape etc but again, since the site is not within or directly adjacent to the SDL, the policies are not considered to be relevant for the determination of the application.
26. Policy 2 of Shinfield Parish Plan sets out general design principles and requires that development is complementary to the built environment surrounding the development site and layouts should acknowledge existing landscape constraints. Policy 6 is concerned with Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland in new development and sets out a landscape led design approach with retention and appropriate buffers to existing important vegetation.
27. The Borough Design Guide sets out overarching principles for development and sets out guidance in section 7 regarding non-residential development.
28. The proposed layout of the site together with the detailed design of the building has taken into account the constraints of the immediate and wider landscape setting. The footprint of the building and supporting infrastructure would be sited between the two sensitive areas of woodland – St Johns Copse and New Covert. The applicant has paid a strong regard to these however and sought to ensure that there are sufficient buffer zones to these areas. These woodlands would also provide a degree of screening to the proposed building which gives a soft buffer. This is particularly evident for to the north east facing elevation which due to function of the Collections space, has a blank elevation without any windows to break up the massing. The applicant has however paid a great deal of consideration for the external appearance of the building for these sections through the use of cladding that has horizontal and vertical emphasis to this which helps to break up the massing.
29. For the other elevations, consideration has been made in terms of the layout internally and externally and relationship with the existing site constraints. A large, glazed section frames the south west facing elevation for the research space which in part, overlooks St Johns Copse. This part of the building will be more visible in the local area given the staggered position of the woodlands as shown in figure 4 above. The use of curtain glazing for this elevation, above the ground floor, breaks up the massing of the Collections storage space beyond the research and digitisation suite.
30. The design approach for the south west elevation will also help to provide natural surveillance towards the spine road that will serve the site given that this is a key outlook to this road. The outlook from the research space will also be beneficial for the employees when the building is in use as the views from the research space will

overlook the woodland and wider landscape beyond. An impression of this is provided in figure 5.

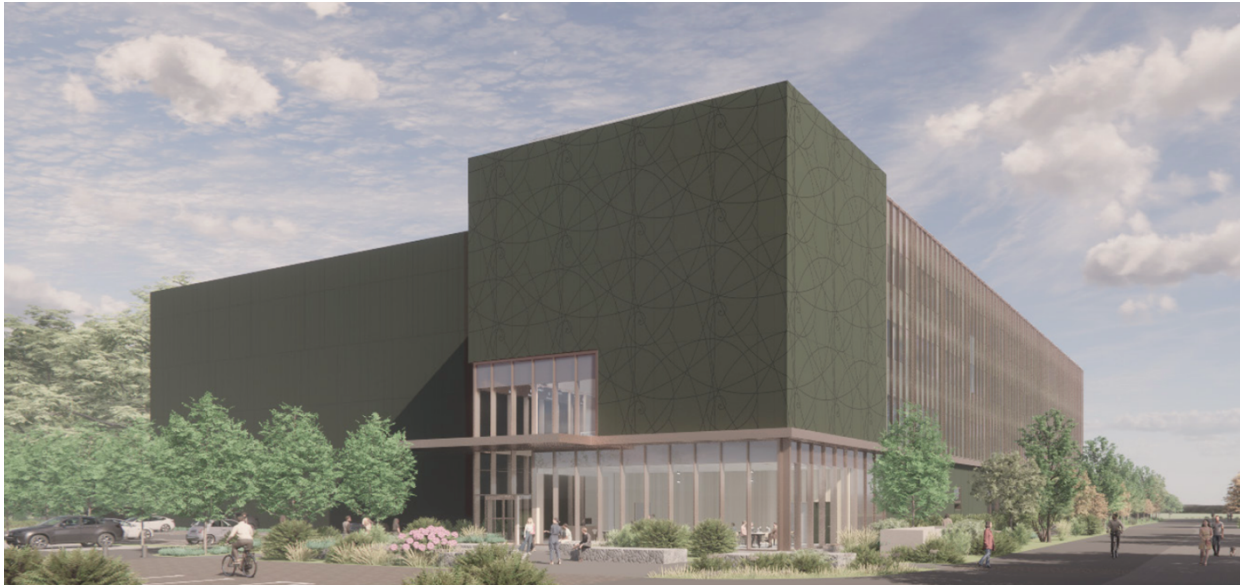


Figure 5: An impression of the building with the glazing facing towards St Johns Copse and providing surveillance towards the new spine road

31. The front elevation also pays regard for the need for some natural surveillance to the spine road. Following pre application feedback, the elevation has been revised to provide more glazing for the outcrop that serves the research area and the ground floor reception area as shown in figure 6. This also includes the car park area to the front of the building together with the landscaped section towards the spine road.



Figure 6: The entrance to the facility with glazing facilitating overlooking to the car park area

32. The outcrop to the front elevation of the building that serves as a reception area and research space above has also been designed to give the front elevation of the building more interest given its prominent relationship with the spine road. An impression of this is provided in figure 6 above with a motif shown on the front outcrop which also wraps around this element for the south west facing elevation. The final detailed design of the motif will be subject to condition. This will ensure that there is flexibility in terms of the appearance should there be minor amendments required for the build process. This is expressed in condition 6 which is more detailed than the standard materials condition given that this will be an important focal point for the facility.
33. For the rear elevation, this is slightly broken up on the south west corner due to the use of glazing as shown in figure 7. Much of the remaining area is for the Collection space which follows the textured cladding approach. This element is also broken up in part by the single storey service yard and ancillary buildings. Whilst this area is less visually attractive than the other elevations due to the functional need of the service area, landscaping is incorporated to screen and soften this space. A meadow area is proposed beyond the hardstanding to serve the service yard which incorporates outdoor recreational facilities including picnic benches which overlook the Loddon Valley. This provides a good buffer between the building and open farmland to the south east of the facility and a degree of transition between the open countryside and the built form together with space for people to linger.



Figure 7: A perspective of the rear elevation of the facility

34. In terms of the soft and hard landscaping approach beyond the meadow area, a secure perimeter is achieved around the service yard with gates set back from the service road which runs down the south west facing elevation. This forms one way loop for the secure line and vehicles will exit via the north east facing elevation with further gates towards the front of the building.
35. Careful consideration has been given to the front of the building in terms of the landscaping approach. A wet SUDS pond is proposed here (one that is designed for surface water attenuation but retains a water level for aesthetic and biodiversity purposes) which has a decked area and seating incorporated. This will be planted

with trees and with a strong consideration for the design of this space, will create a strong sense of arrival for the building. The space has been designed to be open to all users so there will be some community benefit associated with this. An impression of the SUDS space is shown in figure 8

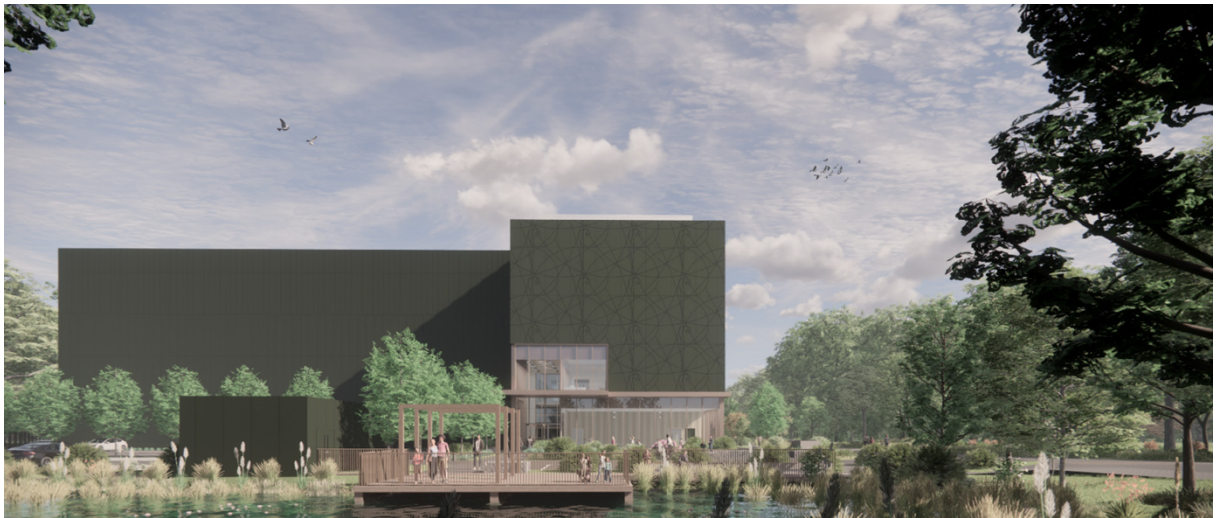


Figure 8: The SUDS pond at the front of the facility

36. Surface parking is located between the SUDS pond and the front of the facility which will be block paved. The space has functional hard landscaping such as seating dispersed within it which has a dual use to secure the front line of the building. Planting is also incorporated within this space which will soften the impact of both the building and parking apron.
37. In terms of the impact of the facility on the wider countryside and setting of the area, the applicant has provided a detailed Landscape and Visual Impact assessment. This includes photomontages of the proposed development on the wider landscape including views from the Cutbush Lane East pedestrian cycle M4 overbridge and the wider Loddon Valley /area. The most sensitive receptor in the area is the Loddon Valley as recognised by the Wokingham Landscape Character Assessment and in recognition to this, the photomontages include key viewpoints from this location. The photomontages show that generally due to the screening afforded by the Copses, wider landscape features and existing built form, the level of visibility to the proposed facility is low and as such is considered acceptable.
38. The site would however be mostly evident from the pedestrian / cycle bridge over the M4 motorway and ultimately the new spine road serving the site once delivered. From these vantage points, the site would be seen in the context of the delivery of the other buildings on Cutbush Lane East and therefore would not be inconsistent with the employment space delivered in the area in recent years. The design approach seeks to reduce the impact of the built form and attempts to break up the massing which is helped from this viewpoint by the glazing wrapping the south west elevation. The glazing will also reflect the adjacent trees thereby helping to mitigate the bulk of the building. On this basis, whilst as raised by the Landscape Officer that there would be impact on the landscape when compared to the undeveloped land, for the purpose of the planning balance, the benefits of the facility overcome any significant harm together with a sound design approach.

39. Whilst there would be some cut and fill in order to obtain a flat slab for the site and ensure the drainage works, the extent of this is not considered to be extensive and taken into context the building works, once completed would not be significantly visible in the public realm.

Layout, Design and Landscaping Conclusion

40. The applicant has carefully considered the impact of the development on the character of area and wider landscape through factors such as the detailed design of the building which has been informed by the constraints of the site and setting. Through taking this approach, the detailed design of the building has evolved to respond well to the environment that it would be located within. This is despite the required scale and massing of this for the end use. Being responsive to site constraints represents good design and it will deliver a high quality facility that should, in the main, be responded to well locally. In addition, it should create an attractive workspace that contributes towards the wellbeing of the future employees / users of the space.
41. In summary, the design and landscaping approach is well articulated for all the elements of the facility and is in accordance advice provided by the NPPF, policies CP1 and CP3, Policy 2 of the Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan and is therefore acceptable.

Residential amenity: the impact upon existing neighbouring properties

42. Core Strategy policy CP3 requires that new development should be of a high quality of design that does not cause detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users. Policy 2 of the Shinfield Parish Plan seeks to ensure that new development does not harm existing residential amenity. Separation standards for new residential development are set out in section 4.7 of the Borough Design Guide.
43. The closest residential dwelling is Upperwood Farmhouse located over 200m to the main building serving the facility. With this level of separation, there are no overlooking, loss of light or overbearing impacts associated with the new facility and to the occupants of this house or any residential dwelling in the area.

Residential amenity – noise

44. With regards to noise associated with the construction of the facility, construction activities would be temporary and can be controlled by hours restrictions together with a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) subject to condition. Construction traffic will be routed on established roads via the Science Park / South Avenue similar to the routes used for the British Museum and Shinfield Studios. No significant amenity impacts are envisaged.
45. Given the nature of the building and intended use, it is not considered that the end use of the building would lead to a high degree of noise and disruption to neighbouring sites.
46. Overall, the application has been assessed with regards to this aspect by the Environmental Health Officer who supports the approach. On this basis and given the relationships outlined above, it is considered that the during the construction phase and operational use of the site would not result in any significant harm to the amenity of the existing residents. This is in accordance with policies CP1 and CP3 and supplementary planning guidance.

Security

47. As advised above, the site takes into security into account. A secure line flanks the service area and north east side of the building which is controlled by fences and gates. The main parking area to the front of the building is open although rising bollards control entry to this. This approach is preferred in terms of delivering a high quality public realm at the front of the site. Security protocol within the building at the reception area will control entry to the facility at this point.

Sustainable Design and Construction

48. Core Strategy Policy CP1 requires development to contribute towards the goal of achieving zero carbon development by including on-site renewable energy features and minimising energy and water consumption. MDD LP policies CC04, CC05 and the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (May 2010) also emphasise this. Policy 3 of the Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan also echoes these principles.
49. The applicant is accompanied by an Energy Statement which predicts future energy uses and the potential for the facility to generate energy through renewable sources. Taken as a whole, the measures are above policy in terms of the aspirations and the building would achieve 21.2% carbon savings - these are achieved through measures that include air source heat pumps and ventilation units for heat recovery together with the design of the building. In addition to this, the applicant has looked at the roof to provide a photovoltaic array – this would produce 22% of the energy demand for the building.
50. The approach shows a strong commitment to sustainability above the standard approach and the building has been designed to be net carbon both in terms of operational and embodied carbon. This is a significant achievement; above policy requirements and the delivery of the sustainability measures will be controlled by conditions. The Sustainability Officer supports the approach.

Access and movement

51. The NPPF seeks to encourage sustainable means of transport and a move away from the reliance of the private motor car. Core Strategy policies CP1, CP4, CP6 and CP10 broadly echo these principles and indicate that development should mitigate any adverse effects on the existing highway network. The application is accompanied by a Transport Assessment (TA) which assesses the impact of development in respect to the site itself and wider highway network.
52. Policy 4 of the Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan requires development to provide good accessibility by car, cycle and foot and ensure highway safety. Encouragement of use of public transport is also promoted. Policy 5 of the Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan sets out parking standards. These should be in line with WBC standards and well set out with good surveillance to parking courts.

Access and movement - impact on wider highway network

53. The application is accompanied by a Transport Assessment (TA). This has been assessed by the Highways Officer and further details in respect to highway impacts associated with the proposed use of the facility are outlined below.

54. In terms of background for the wider highway connections, the Science Park has delivered much of the key infrastructure together with the housing growth for the South of M4 SDL. This includes the Eastern Relief Road and M4 overbridge linking to the Black Boy Roundabout. The main access to the Science Park was also delivered with a roundabout connection on the Eastern Relief Road and South Avenue.
55. The local access routes were also revisited as part of the British Museum planning consent. This upgraded an emergency link to Cutbush Lane East to two way vehicle movements. The interventions now restrict access to Cutbush Lane East for the employment sites located between South Avenue and the M4 motorway. This means that the section of Cutbush Lane East that serves Shinfield Grange and the cluster of dwellings located towards the Eastern Relief Road is effectively a cul de sac with no through movements to the British Museum. Vehicles accessing the main employment sites now need to go through via the Eastern Relief Road / Science Park Roundabout and through South Avenue.
56. As part of the Shinfield Studio planning consent, land has also been safeguarded for a corridor for further improvements to the highway infrastructure serving Cutbush Lane East / Eastern Relief Road / South Avenue. These would deliver links to the Eastern Relief Road / M4 overbridge should these interventions be required and triggered by future development in the area. At this stage however, the scale and nature of the proposed use of the site for the Natural History Museum does not trigger any upgrades given the intensity of the proposed use.
57. In terms of how the Natural History Museum would link into the wider site, a new route is proposed to the north of the British Museum and this is under consideration for planning application 232995. The new link would be around 400m long to access the facility and includes drainage infrastructure and soft landscaping. A resolution on the spine road application will be made ahead of the consideration of this item at Planning Committee. The redline of this application links onto Cutbush Lane East at the British Museum broadly along the alignment of the proposed route under 232995.
58. In terms of trip rates, the Transport Assessment has been informed by historic travel patterns by Natural History Museum employees to establish the modal share. For this application, 75% of trip rates by car has been applied which is at the upper end of the historic patterns. Given the context of the site, this is considered acceptable.
59. The level of traffic generated by this with the assumption of 65 each way movements in the peak hours is unlikely to be discernible when compared to the background traffic. No significant additional queuing is envisaged at any key junctions surrounding the facility and the car movements would quickly dissipate when joining the strategic transport network.
60. It is acknowledged that there would be a level of travel demand associated with the relocation of materials from the existing facility for the first four years of the operation of the building. This is however a temporary activity and will need to be coordinated by the Natural History Museum. The activities will be limited by the level of service facilities that serve the building. It is anticipated that no more than

five HGV and one car movement a day is expected for the decantation process. Again, this level of traffic would not be noticeable in the wider context.

61. For construction traffic, again this would be temporary and managed by the Construction Environmental Management Plan. The existing highway infrastructure has been shown to cope well with the construction traffic for the British Museum and Shinfield Studios with no accidents recorded in the Transport Assessment. For Shinfield Studios, the construction process is winding down for the main site so there will not be any significant conflicts with the delivery of the Natural History Museum.
62. The trip rates would therefore be accommodated within the proposed and previously delivered infrastructure and would not have a significant adverse impact on highway safety. This has been further demonstrated through analysis of the proposed trip rates and other committed developments in the area through the Wokingham Strategic Transport Model. This did not identify any further upgrades and as such, this element of the transport strategy is acceptable.

Access and movement – site access and layout

63. In terms of the internal layout of the site, the site would be accessed from a new roundabout for the Cutbush Lane East extension under consideration for application 232995. This includes a service road linking to the rear of the site on the south western boundary. A secondary access is also located to the north east of the planning unit – this will serve as an exit only route. In effect the site has a one way circulation loop around the building although the route for the south western boundary will be two way for the extent of this road.
64. The site access has been tracked and checked in terms of the proposed geometry both for service roads and parking etc for the range of vehicles that would be intended to use the various spaces. This has been checked by the Highway Officer and no objections are raised in terms of the proposed supporting highway infrastructure.

Access and movement – parking

65. The parking strategy has based the parking provision on the number of employers, expected visitors to the site and public access. This mirrors the approach used for the Natural History Museum to the south west of the site. In total there would be 77 parking spaces with 8 of these being laid out as blue badge spaces. The spaces include 14 spaces with active electric charging which exceeds the guidance.
66. Four spaces are provided for motorcycles / scooters and there is space provided for 2 minibuses on the south western access road within a bay. There are also 34 secure cycle spaces proposed at the front of the site within covered facilities.
67. The parking has been laid out with good consideration for the end user of the building and is well distributed. The main parking area would be to the front of the building however there is further car parking within the service yard at the rear for employers whose main duties might be focussed at this part of the site. A small space to the front of the building is set aside for visitors which includes blue badge parking before you enter the main parking space.

68. The parking provision, facilities and distribution has been assessed by the Highways Officer and these are considered to be acceptable for the facility.

Access and movement - sustainable transport

69. The site is connected to existing public transport facilities at the Science Park and on Beeston Way in Lower Earley. Whilst these are located 925m and 725m from the proposed Natural History Building, which is outside the typical 400m distance used, Manual for Streets recognise that 800m is normally a 10 minute walk. The associated 232995 application for the spine road and infrastructure allows for the extension of the Leopard service in future years should the operator wish to extend this given that the route has been designed to accommodate HGVs and in effect buses to serve the building. This could be subject to phasing and since the building will not be fully operational until 2031 there is some time to review this. The travel plan will ensure that this is monitored and kept under review.
70. In terms of the response form Active Travel, the Travel Plan advocates an initial headline target of 10% mode shift away from car use. This is considered an appropriate starting point since it builds upon the mode shift gains which have already been achieved at the earlier phases at the Thames Valley Science Park. The range of physical measures and incentives that are being promoted are all aimed at enabling this target to be surpassed. For example, the provision of cycle parking spaces would cater for a much more significant shift away from car travel to cycle use. As set out in the Travel Plan, the performance against the various targets will be continuously monitored over the Travel Plan period. Indeed, the monitoring mechanism includes periodic review by Wokingham Borough Council's Travel Planning team. If it transpires that the Travel Plan targets are being realised then opportunities will be identified and agreed with Wokingham Borough Council to establish how further mode shift can be achieved.

Flooding and Drainage

71. Core Strategy Policy CP1 and MDDL Policies CC09 and CC10 establish that new development should avoid increasing and where possible reduce flood risk (from all sources) by first developing in areas with lowest flood risk, carrying out a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) where required and managing surface water in a sustainable manner. Policy 8 of the Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan echoes these principles and looks to retain existing watercourses in new development.
72. The site is predominantly within flood zone 1 although a very small area of the site to the south west section is within flood zone 2. Areas within flood zone 1 are classified as where the risk of flooding is low and all uses, including less vulnerable uses which the building is classified as for the purposes of the sequential test are appropriate. For flood zone 2, these areas have a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 annual probability of river flooding.
73. To ensure that the increase in surface water runoff associated with the additional built form is managed, a strategic approach to drainage is proposed.
74. This includes ensuring that part of the building footprint would be located within floodzone 2 and the main access loop can avoid this area. Surface water attenuation has been factored into the design of the site through SUDS basins as has re-profiling to manage surface water.

75. The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessments which assess the impact of flooding on the application site. This identifies flood risks across the whole site and incorporates measures to manage surface water runoff including the 1 in 30 year and 1 in 100-year storm events (+40% for climate change).
76. The Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage strategy propose measures on site have been assessed by the council's Drainage Officer. They have raised no objection to the proposed package of measures in terms of the impact to existing neighbouring residents and future occupiers of the site. On this basis the proposals are considered acceptable subject to condition 19.

Ecology

77. Core Strategy Policy CP7, carried forward by MDD LP Policy TB23, requires appropriate protection of species and habitats of conservation value. Policy 7 of the Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan seeks mitigation and measures to enhance biodiversity. A detailed Ecological Impact Assessment and addendum to this has been submitted and demonstrates that the site layout has considered impacts on ecological permeability.
78. In terms of existing vegetation, the applicant has demonstrated that there would be an adequate buffer zone from the proposed development to these features.
79. There are a package of ecology mitigation measures and on and off-site enhancements and the Biodiversity Officer has assessed the application and supports the approach. The delivery of the enhancements will be controlled by the Ecology conditions and S106 and it is noted that the development will ultimately deliver a significant biodiversity uplift with a biodiversity net gain of 20%.

Heritage

80. Policy TB24 of MDD LP policy seeks to ensure that development conserves and, where possible enhances the important character and special architectural or historic interest of listed buildings.
81. The nearest listed buildings to the development site is Oldhouse Farm 475m and Cutbush Manor and Cutbush Barn which are around 500m from the extent of the red line of the application. The level of separation together with the scale and nature of the building and onsite relationships and screening afforded by St Johns Copse, other vegetation and existing development means that there would be no significant impacts on these listed buildings or any in the wider area.
82. For scheduled monuments, the closest site is the remains of Old St. Bartholomew's Church around 1k to the south of the site. The level of separation means that there are no adverse heritage impacts envisaged to this site.
83. Given the level of separation, it is not considered that there would be any significant harm to any heritage assets in the area or to the setting of these. For the reasons set out in the planning balance section of the report, any harm is outweighed by the benefits that the proposal would deliver. It is therefore in accordance with the heritage considerations of the NPPF including paragraph 208 and Managing Development Delivery Document (Local Plan) 2014 Policy TB24 Designated Heritage Assets.

Archaeology

84. Core Strategy Policy CP3 and MDD LP Policy TB25 require the archaeological impact of development to be taken into consideration. The application includes an archaeological assessment which has been reviewed by the Archaeology Officer.
85. The Archaeology Officer has assessed the report submitted in respect to this and raises no objections subject to condition 25.

Community engagement

86. The application has been accompanied by a Statement of Community Involvement which sets out the engagement process and feedback from the events undertaken. The applicant has reached out to 1,500 homes in the area by way of a leaflet drop which included details of a consultation event held on the 14th of September 2023 at Thames Valley Science Park. Issues that were raised at this were recorded and the applicants feedback is included within the Statement of Community Involvement.
87. It is noted that the Parish have raised concerns about the lack of a detailed engagement strategy as part of the application. However, the applicant is intending to work up an engagement strategy with the Council, Shinfield Parish and local schools which will benefit residents and groups directly. Given how early in the programme we are, the detailed strategy has not been worked through and it is envisaged this will be developed and evolve over time. As advised, this is covered under condition 26.

Minerals

88. The site is not within any recognised mineral safeguarding area and whilst there may be localised deposits, these will likely be potentially extracted off site by the waste contractor if this is viable.

Planning balance

89. In terms of the planning balance, the decision maker needs to take in to account the extent that development plan policies are material to an application for planning permission. The decision must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise. As advised above, there will be considerable benefits that will be delivered through the granting of the planning permission as well as several adverse impacts. These are identified below and the degree of weight that should be applied is identified.

Benefits

90. The site makes for a logical extension to the Science Park and associated employment that has grown in the locality over the years including Shinfield Studios and the British Museum. Significant improvements in the area have been delivered through the ERR, South of the M4 Public Transport Strategy and the internal access roads serving the existing Science Park. This means that the facility can be delivered with minimal disruption to the local road network, will support local public transport and therefore existing residents. These together with connections to a variety of transport modes to the wider region and Heathrow Airport means that the site is well served in terms of access and therefore is a sustainable location. The sustainable nature of the site and existing transport infrastructure facilitating access is a significant benefit for delivery but this must be tempered with the fact that the site is entirely within countryside and there will be a visual impact. Therefore, taking

these factors into consideration, limited weight can be afforded for sustainable location of the site.

91. The location of the site would cluster a knowledge base with the British Museum and will reinforce the partnership with the University of Reading with scope for further collaboration with their science faculties. Clustering of employment sectors is supported both within the local planning policies for the Science Park (which although this site is located outside of, it is closely related) and is encouraged by section 6 of the NPPF. Moderate to substantial weight should be afforded to the potential benefits that clustering could bring for future knowledge sharing.
92. The facility will support the ongoing work for the Natural History Museum in terms of research and development. This could benefit both society and the environment in many ways in particular relating to the climate crisis. Given the track record of the Natural History Museum for producing research, the building will help further develop this. The contribution that the Natural History Museum make to scientific research is significant. In 2023 alone, scientists contributed towards 722 research papers on topics such as biodiversity and The Darwin Tree of Life that aims to sequence the full genomes of all animals, plants and fungi within the British Isles. The collection also helps support international research and build on digitisation and artificial intelligence technologies which will give great scope for sharing. On this basis, moderate to substantial weight should be afforded to the potential scope of the building to help foster further research.
93. The facility will secure the long term preservation of samples which are taken at a point in time and cannot be replaced. This is a purpose built facility which will benefit generations to come. It will also allow for digitisation of the collection which can only potentially allow for greater distribution of the collection and more research to emerge. Moderate to substantial weight should be applied to this element of the proposal.
94. For the occupation phase, delivery of the facility will retain positions and it does generate a degree of additional employment. It is likely that over time, some of the existing employees will relocate to the area thereby contributing towards the local economy. In the long term, employment is likely to be drawn ever increasingly from the local population. The building would support 115 direct positions and a further 83 jobs in the wider economy.
95. Significant employment opportunities will also be generated through the construction of the facility. The applicant has submitted Socio Economics Statement and from the projected build costs there would be 326 jobs generated for the build phase. This relates not just to the site but the wider supply chain. The build process would be across three years so it would secure the jobs for several years. On this basis, limited weight can be afforded to the jobs associated with the delivery of the building across the construction and supply chain and delivery of the facility. With both the build phase and long term retention of jobs which will benefit the local economy, moderate to substantial weight can be afforded to the economic impacts.
96. With respect to biodiversity, whilst the implementation of the planning permission would result in a loss of onsite habitats, the applicant has agreed to a series of measures to provide an overall 20% biodiversity net gain. Since they are exceeding

the 10% requirement, moderate weight can be applied to the biodiversity net gains secured.

97. The use of the landscaped area to the front around the SUDs pond and rear of the site has been secured for a level of community use which could lend itself to a rest / picnic area. The use of this is controlled by condition 27 and very limited weight can be afforded to this element of the proposal.
98. The applicant has agreed to a condition for public art to be contained within the site boundary with the details of this to be submitted. This will add interest to the site and hopefully define it as a local landmark. Since the details are yet to emerge, limited weight should be given to this commitment at this stage.
99. In terms of sustainable energy, as outlined above in paragraphs 48-50, the applicant has agreed to secure above policy requirements in terms of renewable energy sources such as solar panels which should generate 22% of the energy need for the facility. In addition, the building has been designed to be net carbon zero and the facility should deliver 21.2% carbon reductions with the built in sustainability measures. This exceeds the 10% policy requirement by some margin and the approach should allow moderate to substantial weight to be applied to this aspect of the development.
100. The applicant has outlined their intent for community engagement within the Planning Statement and updated Engagement Strategy. This sets out goals for engaging with local education institutions, the parish and borough council. This will be developed in a phased manner and allow for flexibility for the building and post occupation phases. The community engagement strategy will be secured by condition 26 which allows for ongoing review. Given the ambition to engage with the local parish, local schools the University of Reading and stakeholders, moderate to substantial weight can be applied.

Impacts of the proposal

101. It is acknowledged that the development would be within land designated as countryside and the facility would result in the permanent loss of this. From the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, the level of visibility of the building would be limited to localised views. The position of the building between the two woodlands helps to provide screening which should last in perpetuity. Care and consideration have been taken in terms of the design approach to ensure the impact on the woodlands is minimal and that the form of the building is responsive to these. In addition, the site sits in a cluster of employment buildings of varying scale, as such, it would not be read as an isolated building in the countryside.
102. Taken as a whole, whilst it is acknowledged that the proposed scale of the development will result in the loss of countryside, introduce built form and associated infrastructure on the landscape within the Loddon Valley Landscape Character Area, the mitigating factors outlined above together with the proposed landscaping strategy will reduce the impact. Views as discussed will be mostly localised from the M4 overbridge. Given the relationship to the British Museum, film studios and TVSP together with the wider infrastructure, the level of harm is moderate to significant. However as stated the benefits are considered to outweigh any harm being caused.

103. The proposal will result in the loss of productive agricultural land although this is classified as part sub 3a and 3b. It is acknowledged that soil classified as 3a is considered in the NPPF as being the best and most versatile, however the extent of the loss of this is not very significant. It is clear that the proposed Natural History Museum will deliver both social, environmental and the economic benefits. The benefits associated with these are considered to greatly exceed that of the cultivation of the land. On this basis, the level of harm associated with this is low and therefore limited weight should be applied in association with the loss of agricultural land.
104. For minerals, as identified above, the site is not located within a defined Minerals Resource Area. The woodlands also limit the potential for any prior extraction due to the hydrological impacts which could adversely affect these features. Due to the extent of the minerals, there may be scope at the waste stage for any deposits to be separated and reworked for aggregates. This will be undertaken by any waste contractor should this be a viable process. As such, very limited weight is afforded to this aspect of the development.
105. In respect to trees and hedgerows, the main areas that have defined vegetation features is towards the rear of the site. Whilst there are some losses associated with the delivery of the facility, these are minimal and limited to low or moderate quality trees and these will be replaced through the proposed planting scheme. The proposed layout responds well to the trees to be retained including St Johns Copse and New Covert with good buffer zones to retain these features. Given this strategy, only limited weight should be given to the impact of the development on vegetation.
106. The implications for the impact of the development on the highway network have been outlined above and the use of the building for the Natural History Museum limits trip rates when compared with a normal storage and distribution form of use. The application should be seen in the context of the suite of highway improvements that have already been delivered. The Shinfield Studio planning consent has also safeguarded land for any potential future development in the area along Cutbush Lane East, the Eastern Relief Road and the Science Park link road. On this basis, as the proposed building would plug in well with the existing highway infrastructure, limited weight should be given to the post occupation highway implications.
107. Similarly for construction traffic and noise associated with the delivery of the facility, the activities associated with this would be temporary and can be managed by the CEMP (condition 10). Whilst lorries would route past existing residential development much of the journeys would be on the strategic transport network up to the Science Park. Once within the Science Park campus, disturbance would be limited to Cutbush Manor and the small cluster of dwellings on the south side of Cutbush Lane. These are however well set back from the Science Park link road and the noise associated with vehicle movements would be heard in the backdrop of the noise associated with the M4 motorway.
108. The occupants of Upperwood Farmhouse stand to be more affected; this dwelling is located within a working farm and it has limited attenuation from the M4 motorway. Construction hours will however be conditioned and whilst there will be some additional noise, it is not to an extent that would justify refusal. For the purposes of the planning balance, given the onsite and existing access arrangements and

mitigation measures secured by condition, there would be limited harm arising from noise associated with the construction process or post occupation. Limited weight should therefore be afforded to any potential residential amenity impacts.

109. For the impact on Listed Buildings, as discussed above, the harm to these would be less than substantial and in the context of the NPPF and policy TB24, the public benefits are considered to outweigh any harm. On this basis very limited weight is afforded to this aspect of the development.
110. Finally in terms of biodiversity, the application would deliver a 20% biodiversity net gain as identified above, which is significantly above the standard requirement. On this basis, whilst there would be the loss of limited on site habitats given the farmed nature of the land, this would be offset and enhanced offsite and very limited weight can be afforded to this aspect of the development.

Benefits / Impacts summary

111. Overall, as outlined above, in the planning balance there are benefits and impacts that are associated with the development. It is however considered that the benefits associated with the development would outweigh the harm to the countryside / settlement separation. The package of mitigation measures will deliver social and environmental enhancements and the facility itself will deliver economic benefits both through construction and upon occupation.

Having regard for the main thrust of policies CP9, CP11 and CC02, Policy 1 of Shinfield Parish Plan and NPPF paragraph 180, which in summary, seek to:

- a. maintain the separate identity of settlements - which *in this case is not considered to be significantly impacted* and
 - b. to maintain the quality of the environment and landscape - *which as outlined above, the proposed development seeks to minimise and measures have been included to enhance this*
 - c. Ensure fair share of infrastructure – *Supporting infrastructure for the development that could feed into the wider landholding has been secured. The development would contribute towards Sustainable Transport.*
 - d. Do not prejudice the comprehensive delivery and implementation of the wider SDL. *The concurrent application 232995 has submitted a highway land safeguarding plan which is secured through the S106. This retains suitable land should future development be brought forward for further growth in the area. The existing SDL is not impacted by the proposed development given that the delivery of the existing infrastructure has enabled this.*
112. Whilst it is acknowledged that the use of the land and structures is not strictly compliant with the policy, it could fall under a form of development which that can be seen as an exception given that the text of policy CP11 includes the words 'normally permitted'.
 113. This is reflected in the wording of policy 1 of Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan which states that development adjacent to Development Limits (which are informed by policy CC02) will only be supported where the benefits of the development outweigh the harm. Taken as a whole, the environmental, social and economic benefits in this

case are demonstrable as outlined above. On this basis, the special circumstances associated with the planning benefits are considered a sustainable form of development as required by CP1 and NPPF.

114. For the reasons discussed above, on balance, it is considered in this case that material considerations outweigh the policy conflict and proposals would represent sustainable development in the context of the NPPF and the development plan as a whole.

Other Matters

115. The application, as advised, is not within an allocated site and consideration needs to be made in terms of whether it could prejudice the Local Plan update process. Given the location of the facility, the building would not block access to any land that might be brought forward in the future. The road that will serve the facility under application reference 232995 will safeguard land should upgrades be required and has been designed to be adaptable should further development come forward. Similarly, the S106 for Shinfield Studios safeguards a corridor through Cutbush Lane East to the Eastern Relief Road. On this basis, and for the reasons discussed above the application is not considered to prejudice the Local Plan update process.
116. The application was advertised for being a potential departure from the Local Plan. When taking into account the above factors it is not considered to undermine the development plan as a whole. Whilst as discussed there is a policy conflict, significant benefits will be delivered as outlined which is in accordance with our local policies and the thrust of sustainable development as outlined in the NPPF.

Conclusion

When weighing up the overall impact of the use of the proposed Natural History Museum, it is considered that the facility will bring substantial economic and social benefits. In addition, the sustainability measures and ecological enhancements will assist in reducing the environmental impact of the development. This combined with supporting research that will have wider benefits for the natural environment which could be considerable. These factors together with a sound design approach will deliver a high quality building and will outweigh any significant harm to the countryside. Taking the application as a whole and given the circumstances, the proposed building would not have any material harm to the objectives of Policy 1 of Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan, policies CP9 and CP11 of the Core Strategy and policy CC02 of the MDD DPD together with the supplementary planning guidance.

The special circumstances that have been demonstrated by the applicant and will be secured through the S106 / conditions, together with an end user identified and ability to restrict the use of the building weighs heavily in favour of supporting the application.

The application can therefore be recommended for approval subject to the conditions and the planning obligations outlined in Appendix 1.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010)

In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application and there would be no significant adverse impacts upon protected groups as a result of the development.

APPENDIX 1 - Conditions / informatives or Reasons for refusal

Appendix 1: Recommendation and Conditions

That the committee authorise the **GRANT OF PLANNING PERMISSION** subject to the three tiered recommendation as set out below:

A. Completion of a legal agreement within 6 months of the committee resolution (unless a longer date is agreed by the Assistant Director of Planning and Chairman of Planning Committee) to:

- i. Personal permission for the Natural History Museum for the use of the facility (excluding any community areas)
- ii. Sustainable transport contributions
- iii. Employment Skills Plan contributions and / or delivery of a bespoke Employment Sills Plan
- iv. Biodiversity Net Gain of 20% either through on or off site provision or a combination of both on and off site provision
- v. Pre development condition survey of Cutbush Lane East and delivery of any post construction remediation if required
- vi. Safeguarding the highway corridor land within the red line boundary (to be agreed on a safeguarding plan)

Administrative clauses:

- vii. Section 106 Monitoring fee being the amount of reasonable fees in monitoring the performance and discharge of the Section 106 obligations,
- viii. The Council's reasonable legal fees in relation to the completion of the Section 106 agreement (whether or not the matter goes to completion),
- ix. Indexation (all contributions and payments to be index-linked from the date of the decision to grant planning permission to the date of which payment is made, using BCIS index).

B. Conditions and informatives:

Timeframe for implementation

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In pursuance of s.91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by s.51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

Approved details

2. This permission is in respect of the following submitted application plans, documents and drawings received by the Local Planning Authority

RD001-FCB-XX-XX-DR-A-0100 P01	Location Plan
RD001-FCB-XX-XX-DR-A-0101 P01	Existing Site Plan
RD001-FCB-XX-XX-DR-A-0102 P02	Proposed Site Plan
RD001-FCB-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0103 P01	Site Sections

RD001-FCB-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0104 P01	Service Yard Plan
RD001-FCB-XX-00-DR-A-0200 P01	GA Plan Level 00
RD001-FCB-XX-01-DR-A-0201 P01	GA Plan Level 01
RD001-FCB-XX-02-DR-A-0202 P01	GA Plan Level 02
RD001-FCB-XX-03-DR-A-0203 P01	GA Plan Level 03
RD001-FCB-XX-04-DR-A-0204 P01	GA Plan Level 04
RD001-FCB-XX-RF-DR-A-0205 P02	GA Plan Roof Level
RD001-FCB-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0700 P01	Section A-A
RD001-FCB-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0701 P01	Section B-B
RD001-FCB-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0702 P01	Section C-C
RD001-FCB-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0703 P01	Section D-D
RD001-FCB-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0704 P01	Section E-E
RD001-FCB-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0705 P01	Section F-F
RD001-FCB-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0800 P02	West Elevation
RD001-FCB-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0801 P02	North Elevation
RD001-FCB-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0802 P02	East Elevation
RD001-FCB-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0803 P02	South Elevation
RD001-FCB-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0850 P01	West Elevation Bay Study
RD001-FCB-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0851 P01	North Elevation Bay Study
RD001-FCB-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0852 P01	East Elevation Bay Study
RD001-FCB-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0853 P01	South Elevation Bay Study
RD001-GRA-XX-XX-DR-L-131 Rev 02	General Arrangement Section 1 & Section
2 - East & West boundary	
RD001-GRA-XX-XX-DR-L-132 Rev 02	General Arrangement Section 3 & Section
4 - North & South boundary	
2024-01-10	Circulation Plan
A418-014 P3	Proposed Access Arrangements
120-TVSP-DRW-TPP-FP Rev 01	Tree Protection Plan – Overview
120-TVSP-DRW-TPP-FP Rev 01	Tree Protection Plan – 1
120-TVSP-DRW-TPP-FP Rev 01	Tree Protection Plan – 2
120-TVSP-DRW-TPP-FP Rev 01	Tree Protection Plan – 3
120-TVSP-DRW-TPP-FP Rev 01	Tree Protection Plan – 4

Design and Access Statement, Rev 9. 12.2.24
Travel Plan, dated 23rd January 2024
Construction Environmental Management Plan, dated 23rd January 2024
Transport Assessment, dated 23rd January 2024
Drainage Strategy, Rev P04, 22nd January 2024
Sustainability Statement Rev 3.1, 19th January 2024
Energy Statement, Rev P01, 21st February 2024
Ecological Impact Assessment, 16th November 2023
Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Rev 2, 19th October 2023
Waste Strategy, June 2023

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless other minor variations are agreed in writing after the date of this permission with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

Development commencement trigger

3. Development shall not commence until details of the award of tender for the design and build contract for the spine road (subject to application ref: 232995) have been submitted to the Local Planning Authority. This shall outline a programme of works for the spine road for approval.

Reason: To ensure that the development is carried out in a coordinated approach for the infrastructure that will serve for access to the facility. Relevant policy CP6 of the Core Strategy.

Hours of work

4. No work relating to the development hereby approved, including works of demolition or preparation prior to building operations, shall take place other than between the hours of 07:30 and 18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 to 15:00 Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Bank or National Holidays.

Reason: To protect the occupiers of neighbouring properties from noise and disturbance outside the permitted hours during the construction period. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC06.

Materials

5. With the exception of earthworks to accommodate the main foundations for the building, / base course of the car parking areas and internal access roads, Prior to development above slab level, samples and details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building/s and the perimeter fencing / security gates shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the so-approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the building is satisfactory. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3.

6. Prior to the relevant cladding works taking place, details of the motif or form of detailing on the front outcrop of the building as identified on plan ref: RD001-FCB-XX-ZZ-SK-A-0384 -Elevations with artistic cladding pattern – Sketch shall be submitted for approval by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the so-approved.

Public Art

7. Prior to development above slab level the applicant shall submit for approval to the Local Planning Authority, a Consultation Strategy to inform a Public Art Strategy. The Consultation Strategy shall include details for community engagement to help inform the design of a public art commission to be located within the public realm of the building.

Within 3 months of the final community engagement event, the Public Art Strategy shall be submitted for approval to the Local Planning Authority. This shall include details of how the Consultation Strategy has informed the detailed design of the artwork commission. The Public Art Strategy shall include details of the following:

- a) The nature of the artwork
- b) Number of pieces
- c) Location of the public artwork to be defined on a plan
- d) Procurement and commissioning
- e) Phasing of delivery

The Public Art Strategy shall be implemented as approved and artwork installed prior to occupation of the facility and retained on site in perpetuity or for as long as the facility occupies the site, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority through further details to be submitted under this condition.

Reason: To support the character and appeal of the site. Relevant policy: Core Strategy CP1, Wokingham Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document.

Highways

8. Prior to commencement of development of the main building (excluding enabling earthworks and tree protection works), details of the haul road to serve the site shall be submitted for approval by the local planning authority. The haul route shall be constructed in accordance with these details prior to the development of the main building and shall be maintained to a suitable standard for the entire building phase. Within six months of the delivery of an alternative route to the site via the spine road or six months from first occupation of the building (whichever the sooner), the haul route shall be removed from site together with any aggregates used for its construction and the land shall be restored to its former condition unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the haul route is constructed to a suitable standard, in the interests of providing a functional, accessible and safe development. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

9. Notwithstanding the details as set out within the approved Construction Environmental Management Plan, the applicant shall in consultation with the Highway Authority and University of Reading, undertake and audit of existing and proposed signage to the site. This shall include the entire Eastern Relief Road corridor and through the Science Park / Cutbush Lane East to the site to inform an access signage strategy for construction vehicles / contractors. The access strategy shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval prior to commencement of development and the approved measures implemented in accordance with an agreed timetable prior to any construction access for the main site. Any proposed directional signs shall be fixed permanently to the ground for the duration of the build process until occupation and not be temporary A frame forms of signage unless otherwise agreed in writing. The strategy shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and held under review for the entire construction process.
10. The approved Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) (Abbey Letchford partnership Ltd, Reference A392-R004/E dated 22nd January 2024) that was submitted with the application shall be implemented in full. The CEMP shall be reviewed and updated if necessary on an ongoing basis and any updated details shall be submitted for approval to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To minimise the environmental impacts of construction and to protect residential amenity. Relevant policy CP1 and CP3

11. Prior to the commencement of development, full details of the construction of roads and footways, including levels, widths, construction materials, depths of construction and surface water drainage shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority for the proposed development. The roads and footways shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details and the final wearing course provided before first use of the building unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that roads and footpaths are constructed to a standard that would be suitable for adoption as publicly maintainable highway, in the interests of providing a functional, accessible and safe development. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

12. No part of any building(s) hereby permitted shall be occupied or used until the vehicle parking and turning space has been provided in accordance with the approved plans. The vehicle parking and turning space shall be retained and maintained in accordance with the approved details. The parking space shall remain available for the parking of vehicles at all times and the turning space shall not be used for any other purpose other than vehicle turning.

Reason: To provide adequate off-street vehicle parking and turning space and to allow vehicles to enter and leave the site in a forward gear in the interests of road safety and convenience and providing a functional, accessible and safe development and in the interests of amenity. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07.

13. No building shall be occupied until secure and covered parking for cycles has been provided in accordance with the approved drawing(s)/details. The cycle parking/storage shall be permanently so-retained for the parking of bicycles and used for no other purpose.

Reason: In order to ensure that secure weather-proof bicycle parking facilities are provided so as to encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 9 (Sustainable Transport) and Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 & CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07.

14. No building shall be occupied until the access has been constructed in accordance with the approved details. The accesses shall be retained in accordance with the approved details and used for no other purpose and the land within the visibility splays shall be maintained clear of any visual obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height at all times.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

15. The development shall not be occupied until a Delivery and Servicing Plan has been submitted and approved in writing by local planning authority for the Natural History Museum Facility. The Delivery and Servicing Plan will be implemented as approved and thereafter maintained

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

16. With the exception of groundworks, prior to commencement of development to set out the main car parking areas, hereby permitted, details for electric vehicle charging points serving the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The electric vehicle charging points shall be implemented in accordance with such details as may be approved before any part of development hereby permitted is first brought into use and shall be permanently retained in the approved form for the charging of electric vehicles and used for no other purpose.

Reason: To ensure that sufficient dedicated electric vehicle charging facilities are provided to encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel. In accordance with NPPF Section 9 (Promoting Sustainable Transport), WBC Climate Emergency Action Plan, WBC Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 & CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07.

17. The secondary access to the site on the eastern boundary as shown on plan reference RD001-FCB-XX-RF-DR-A-0102 Rev P02 shall only be used for vehicles exiting the Natural History Museum site. Any deviation from this will be limited to emergency purposes or under circumstances that have first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

18. No part of the development shall be occupied until the approved travel plan (ref Travel Plan (Abbey Letchford Partnership Ltd, Reference A418-R003/E dated 22nd January 2024) shall be implemented upon occupation of the building. The travel plan shall be maintained and reviewed as approved.

Reason: To encourage the use of all travel modes. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 9 (Sustainable Transport) and Core Strategy policy CP6.

Drainage

19. The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the Ramboll drainage strategy report 0001 P04 dated 22/01/2024. The measures shall be implemented and delivered in full prior to the first occupation of the development and shall be maintained in the approved form for as long as the development remains on the site.

Reason: This is to prevent increased flood risk from surface water run-off. Relevant policy: NPPF (2023) Section 14 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10.

Environmental Health

20. If land contamination is found at any time during site clearance, groundwork, and construction the discovery shall be reported as soon as possible to the local planning authority. A full contamination risk assessment shall be carried out and if

found to be necessary, a 'remediation method statement' shall be submitted to the local planning authority for written approval.

Reason - To ensure that any contamination of the site is identified at the outset to allow remediation to protect existing/proposed occupants of property on the site and/or adjacent land. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 15 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment) and Core Strategy policies CP1 & CP3.

Landscape and trees

21.

- a) No development or other operation shall commence on site until the tree protection measures approved within the approved Arboricultural Implications Report (dated: 11.10.23, ref:120-TVSP-DRW-AIP-FP Rev 01 and plan ref: 120-TVSP-DRW-TPP-FP Plan 1 - 4) shall be implemented in complete accordance with the Approved Scheme for the duration of the development (including, unless otherwise provided by the Approved Scheme) demolition, all site preparation work, tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery.
- b) No development (including any tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery) shall commence until the Local Planning Authority has been provided (by way of a written notice) with a period of no less than 7 working days to inspect the implementation of the measures identified in the Approved Scheme on-site.
- c) No excavations for services, storage of materials or machinery, parking of vehicles, deposit or excavation of soil or rubble, lighting of fires or disposal of liquids shall take place within an area designated as being fenced off or otherwise protected in the Approved Scheme.
- d) The fencing or other works which are part of the Approved Scheme shall not be moved or removed, temporarily or otherwise, until all works including external works have been completed and all equipment, machinery and surplus materials removed from the site, unless the prior approval of the Local Planning Authority has first been sought and obtained.

Reason: To secure the protection throughout the time that the development is being carried out of trees shrubs or hedges growing within or adjacent to the site which are of amenity value to the area, and to allow for verification by the Local Planning Authority that the necessary measures are in place before development and other works commence Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

22. Prior to occupation of the building full details of both hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and these works shall be carried out as approved. The details shall include, as appropriate:

- a) scheme drawings;

- b) proposed levels and contours;
 - c) detailed design of SuDS features in accordance with the SuDS Strategy, demonstrating how they will be integrated into the wider landscape, with attenuation basins having a natural shape and shallow profile (not requiring lifesaving equipment and fence barriers), allowing them to fulfil amenity, ecological and drainage functions;
 - d) soft landscaping details including planting plans, schedules of plants, noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate;
 - e) a Landscape Specification document covering soft landscaping (including site preparation, cultivation, plant handling and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment) and hard landscaping including all construction works such as paths, bridges and retaining walls;
 - f) hard landscaping materials including samples;
 - g) minor artefacts and structures (e.g. street furniture, refuse or other storage units, signs, external services) including specifications for the product and its installation;
 - h) specification for tree rooting systems and use of structural soils under paving or where rooting volumes are limited;
 - i) all boundary treatments, and other means of enclosure or controlling access such as gates, bollards and vehicle restraint systems, which shall include consideration of ecological permeability;
- ii) Any trees or plants which, within a period of five years after planting, are removed, die or become seriously damaged or defective, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of species, size and number as originally approved and permanently retained.

Reason: In order to ensure that suitable provision is made for soft and hard landscaping and that these can become established for the site. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

23. Prior to the occupation of the building hereby approved, a landscape management plan for entire site (as defined on the submitted application site plan ref: RD001-FCB-XX-XX-DR-A-0102 P02:), including long term design objectives, management responsibilities, timescales and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas, other than privately owned, domestic gardens, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The landscape management plan shall cover a period of no less than 30 years from the date of the approval and implementation of the plan. The landscape management plan shall set out an ongoing requirement for review for all species enhancements and ecological permeability measures and the landscape management plan shall be carried out as approved.

Reason: In order to ensure that provision is made to allow satisfactory maintenance of the landscaping hereby approved and to secure a biodiversity net gain. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

24. No trees, shrubs or hedges within the site which are shown as being retained on the approved plans shall be felled, uprooted wilfully damaged or destroyed, cut back in any way or removed without previous written consent of the Local Planning

Authority; any trees, shrubs or hedges removed without consent or dying or being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within 5 years from the completion of the development hereby permitted shall be replaced with trees, shrubs or hedge plants of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To secure the protection throughout the time that development is being carried out, of trees, shrubs and hedges growing within the site which are of amenity value to the area. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

Archaeology

25. A) No development shall commence until a programme of archaeological work including a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been submitted to, and approved by, the local planning authority in writing. The WSI shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:

1. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording
2. The programme for post investigation assessment
3. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording
4. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation
5. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation, and
6. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the WSI

B) The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI approved under Part A of this condition and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured.

Reason: The site lies in an area of archaeological potential, particularly for, but not limited to, Romano-British remains. The potential impacts of the development can be mitigated through a programme of archaeological work. This is in accordance with national and local plan policy.

Community engagement:

26. Prior to operation hereby approved, a Community Engagement Strategy reflecting the principles set out within the Planning Statement and amplified within doc ref: Community Engagement at Thames Valley Science Park January 2024 shall be submitted for approval by the Local Planning Authority. The Community Engagement Strategy shall include evidence of engagement with local schools, groups, Shinfield Parish Council and Wokingham Borough Council. The Strategy shall be reviewed and updated every five years.

Reason: The community benefits weigh strongly in favour of supporting the proposed development outside of developments limits which otherwise may be considered inappropriate and these need to be delivered. Relevant Planning Policy NPPF

Community use of amenity space

27. The use of the land to the front and rear of the building as depicted on plan ref RD001-GRA-XX-XX-DR-L-112 Rev 01 within the areas of land or adjacent to these defined as Natural Pond, Woodland Fruit Forrest and Meadow shall be available for use by the public everyday between the hours of 7 am and 7pm or dusk whichever is the earlier or any longer period as governed by the occupant of the building.

Reason: Some weight has been applied for the community use of these areas within the planning balance to justify the development in the countryside. In accordance with policies CP1 and CP11.

Sustainability

28. The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the principles outlined in the approved sustainability statement prepared by MACE Revision 3.1 dated 19th January 2024:.. The measures shall be installed and operational prior to the occupation of the building.

Reason: The sustainability objectives weigh in favour for supporting the development and to reduce the environmental impact of the facility. Relevant policy CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy CC05 and CCO4 of the MDD DPD and the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD

Ecology

29. Prior to development above slab level a “lighting design strategy for biodiversity” shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall:

- a) Identify those areas/features on site for that are particularly sensitive for bats and badgers and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places or along important routes used to access key areas of their territory, for example for foraging; and
- b) Show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) for so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the strategy, and these shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with the strategy. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority.

Reason: In order to maintain the favourable conservation status of protected species and to meet the requirements of local policy CP7

30. Prior to development above slab level, a badger mitigation strategy to include details of how badger access can be provided through the security fence, shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. The measures specified within the approved mitigation strategy shall be implemented in full unless otherwise agree by the local planning authority in writing.

Reason: In order to maintain the favourable conservation status of a protected species and to meet the requirements of local policy CP7

Thames Water

31. No development shall be occupied until confirmation has been provided that either:-

1. Foul water Capacity exists off site to serve the development, or
2. A development and infrastructure phasing plan has been agreed with the Local Authority in consultation with Thames Water. Where a development and infrastructure phasing plan is agreed, no occupation shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed development and infrastructure phasing plan, or
3. All Foul water network upgrades required to accommodate the additional flows from the development have been completed.

Reason: Network reinforcement works may be required to accommodate the proposed development. Any reinforcement works identified will be necessary in order to avoid sewage flooding and/or potential pollution incidents. Relevant Policy CP1, CP3 and CP4 of the Core Strategy.

32. No development shall be occupied until confirmation has been provided that either:
- all water network upgrades required to accommodate the additional demand to serve the development have been completed; or - a development and infrastructure phasing plan has been agreed with Thames Water to allow development to be occupied. Where a development and infrastructure phasing plan is agreed no occupation shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed development and infrastructure phasing plan.

Reason: The development may lead to no / low water pressure and network reinforcement works are anticipated to be necessary to ensure that sufficient capacity is made available to accommodate additional demand anticipated from the new development. Any reinforcement works identified will be necessary in order to avoid sewage flooding and/or potential pollution incidents. Relevant Policy CP1, CP3 and CP4 of the Core Strategy.

Informatives

1. The applicant is advised that the Council seeks that employers or developers within the borough commit to using local labour / contractors where possible. This should include:

- Advertisement of jobs within local recruitment agencies / job centres;
- Recruitment and training of residents from the local area;
- Seek tender of local suppliers or contractors for work.

2. The applicant is advised that the planning approval should be read in conjunction with the S106 for the development hereby approved.

3. The applicant is informed that parking may need to be restricted along the main routes and on turning heads.

4. Work on Highway

The Corporate Head of Environment at the Council Offices, Shute End, Wokingham should be contacted for the approval of the access construction details before any

work is carried out within the highway. This planning permission does NOT authorise the construction of such an access.

5. Mud on Road

Adequate precautions shall be taken during the construction period to prevent the deposit of mud and similar debris on adjacent highways. For further information contact Corporate Head of Environment on tel: 0118 974 6302.

6. Highway Adoption

If it is the developer's intention to request the Council, as local highway authority, to adopt the proposed access roads etc. as highway maintainable at public expense, then full engineering details must be agreed with the Corporate Head of Environment at the Council Offices, Shute End, Wokingham. The developer is strongly advised not to commence development until such details have been approved in writing and a legal agreement is made with the Council under S38 of the Highways Act 1980.

7. Highway Management

Any works/events carried out either by, or at the behest of, the developer, whether they are located on, or affecting a prospectively maintainable highway, as defined under Section 87 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, or on or affecting the public highway, shall be coordinated under the requirements of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 and the Traffic management Act 2004 and licensed accordingly in order to secure the expeditious movement of traffic by minimising disruption to users of the highway network in Wokingham.

8. Utilities

Any such works or events commissioned by the developer and particularly those involving the connection of any utility to the site, shall be co-ordinated by them in liaison with Wokingham Borough Council's Street Works Team, (telephone 01189 746302). This must take place at least three month in advance of the works and particularly to ensure that statutory undertaker connections/supplies to the site are coordinated to take place wherever possible at the same time.

9. Noise

The attention of the applicant is drawn to the requirements of Section 60 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974 in respect of the minimisation of noise on construction and demolition sites. Application, under Section 61 of the Act, for prior consent to the works, can be made to the Environmental Health and Licensing Manager.

10. Thames Water will aim to provide customers with a minimum pressure of 10m head (approx 1 bar) and a flow rate of 9 litres/minute at the point where it leaves Thames Waters pipes. The developer should take account of this minimum pressure in the design of the proposed development.

11. The developer is advised that there is a high pressure pipeline within the vicinity of the site and to contact Southern Gas Networks prior to the commencement of development as set out in the letter to the applicants planning agent dated 20th of February 2024. The applicant is further advised of the following guidance and restrictions:

- No mechanical excavation is allowed within 3 metres either side of pipeline.

- No plant or storage of equipment shall be made within any easement strip.
- If any metallic pipes or cables are being laid in proximity to gas pipelines then interference testing will be required, the cost of which to be borne by the promoter of the works. A minimum clearance of 600mm is required.
- All precautions stated in publication SGN/WI/SW/2 (Safe Working in the Vicinity of High Pressure Gas Pipelines) shall be fully complied with in all respects. Acceptance of SGN/WI/SW/2 shall be acknowledged by the responsible site person signing and returning the form Appendix A (back page) to the SGN representative contacted in (7).
- No thrust boring shall take place within 3 meters of the pipeline.
- All planting within the easement strip should comply with 'Notes for Guidance on Tree Proximity'.
- Before commencing work on site you must contact our Pipeline Maintenance Section on the number above at least seven days before work commences. A Southern Gas Networks representative will then contact you to arrange to visit site. Details of working near to high pressure gas pipelines can then be discussed.
- Pipeline sections that are planned and agreed by SGN to be permanently covered (i.e. by road surface) will require a coating survey. SGN will repair any indicated coating defects free of charge. The survey costs will be borne by the promoter of the works. Prior to any surface cover cathodic protection coupons and reference cells will require installation at no cost to SGN.
- This pipeline is cathodically protected and as such has test cables located in test posts, were these to be lost through this work we would look to you for remedial action at no cost to SGN.
- Intrusive construction methods will require an agreed method statement prior to work starting.
- Any extended period of SGN site supervision may incur charges to you. These will be charged based on visiting times, materials and occurrences. You will be informed when these come into effect and be invoiced direct.
- Any piling or boreholes within 15 metres of the pipeline may require vibration monitoring. No piling or boreholing must take place within 3 metres of the pipeline

12. Safe digging practices in accordance with HSE publication HSG47 "Avoiding Danger from Underground Services" must be used to verify and establish the actual position of the mains, pipes, services and other apparatus on site before any mechanical plant is used. It is your responsibility to ensure that this information is provided to all relevant people (direct labour or contractors) working for you on or near gas pipes.

13. It must be stressed that both direct and consequential damage to gas plant can be dangerous for your employees and the general public and repairs to any such damage will incur a charge to you or the organisation carrying out work on your behalf. Your works should be carried out in such a manner that we are able to gain access to our apparatus throughout the duration of your operations.

14. There are public sewers crossing or close to your development. If you're planning significant work near our sewers, it's important that you minimize the risk of damage. We'll need to check that your development doesn't limit repair or maintenance activities, or inhibit the services we provide in any other way. The applicant is advised to read our guide working near or diverting our pipes.

<https://www.thameswater.co.uk/developers/larger-scale-developments/planning-your-development/working-near-our-pipes>

<https://www.thameswater.co.uk/developers/larger-scale-developments/sewers-and-wastewater/diverting-a-sewer>

15. Thames Water advise that a drainage strategy should contain the points of connection to the public sewerage system as well as the anticipated flows (including flow calculation method) into the proposed connection points. This data can then be used to determine the impact of the proposed development on the existing sewer system. If the drainage strategy is not acceptable Thames Water will request that an impact study be undertaken.

Archaeology

16. In view of the nature and scale of the development and the previous investigations having been undertaken, defined/agreed areas of excavation/strip and map would represent an appropriate mitigation phase. Berkshire Archaeology would be pleased to discuss the approach with the applicant, or their archaeological consultant, should permission be granted.

Fire and rescue

17. Please refer to the information provided by Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue dated 8th December 2023. If a further copy is required, please contact Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue or the Local Planning Authority.

Utilities

18. Please refer to the information provided by Scottish and Southern Electric Networks dated 23rd November 2023. If a further copy is required, please contact the undertaker or the Local Planning Authority.

19. Please refer to the information provided by Last Mile Asset Management Limited. If a further copy is required, please contact Last Mile Asset Management Limited or the Local Planning Authority.

C) Alternative recommendation

That the committee authorise the Head of Development Management to refuse planning permission in the event of an S106 agreement not being completed to secure the services and infrastructure within six months of the date of the committee resolution (unless a longer period is agreed by the Head of Development Management in consultation with the Chairman of Planning Committee) for the following reasons:

- 1) In the absence of a planning obligation to secure suitable contributions / on site and off works for the following:
 - i. Personal permission for the Natural History Museum for the use of the facility (excluding any community areas)
 - ii. Sustainable transport contributions
 - iii. Employment Skills Plan contributions and / or delivery of a bespoke Employment Skills Plan

- iv. Biodiversity Net Gain of 20% either through on or off site provision or a combination of both on and off site provision
- v. Pre development condition survey of Cutbush Lane East and delivery of any post construction remediation if required
- vi. Safeguarding the highway corridor land within the red line boundary (to be agreed on a safeguarding plan)

Administrative clauses:

- vii. Section 106 Monitoring fee being the amount of reasonable fees in monitoring the performance and discharge of the Section 106 obligations,
- viii. The Council's reasonable legal fees in relation to the completion of the Section 106 agreement (whether or not the matter goes to completion),
- ix. Indexation (all contributions and payments to be index-linked from the date of the decision to grant planning permission to the date of which payment is made, using BCIS index).

It has not been possible to secure the adequate mitigation put forward to justify the development and the proposal could have a detrimental impact on ecology. This is contrary to the principles of Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3, and CP6, MDD DPD policies TB12 and TB23 together with the NPPF and Environment Act 2021.

APPENDIX 2 - Parish Council Comments

PLANNING REF : 232833
PROPERTY ADDRESS : School Green Centre
: School Green, Shinfield
: RG2 9EH
SUBMITTED BY : Bruce Winton
DATE SUBMITTED : 11/01/2024

COMMENTS:

potentially be seen as a precedent for further developments outside the SDL limits.

? The development was not compatible with SPC's Neighbourhood Development Plan as it involved building on an area of countryside
? If this building did not have the cachet of the National History Museum's name and reputation attached to it, it would be rejected as simply being a warehouse

? There was little apparent benefit to the parish in terms of employment opportunities (with any jobs tending to be for lower paid staff)

Approval should only be given if the following conditions are included

? The Community Engagement Strategy referred to in Appendix B to the Planning Statement should result in a meaningful long-term programme of community outreach with a direct benefit to parish residents including physical access to information and exhibits.

o While this may not be deliverable in the proposed building there should be some physical delivery within the parish both for students and the general population.

o SPC would like to be directly engaged in the development of such a strategy/outreach programme.

o There should be no occupation of the building until the strategy/outreach programme is in place

? Any approval must be alongside the approval of PA 232995 which is intended to improve access to the area including for pedestrians and cyclists.

? Approval of PA 232833 should include

o Improving pedestrian and cycling paths/links with Lower Earley Way

o A meaningful contribution towards the funding and sustainability of bus services 3 and 600

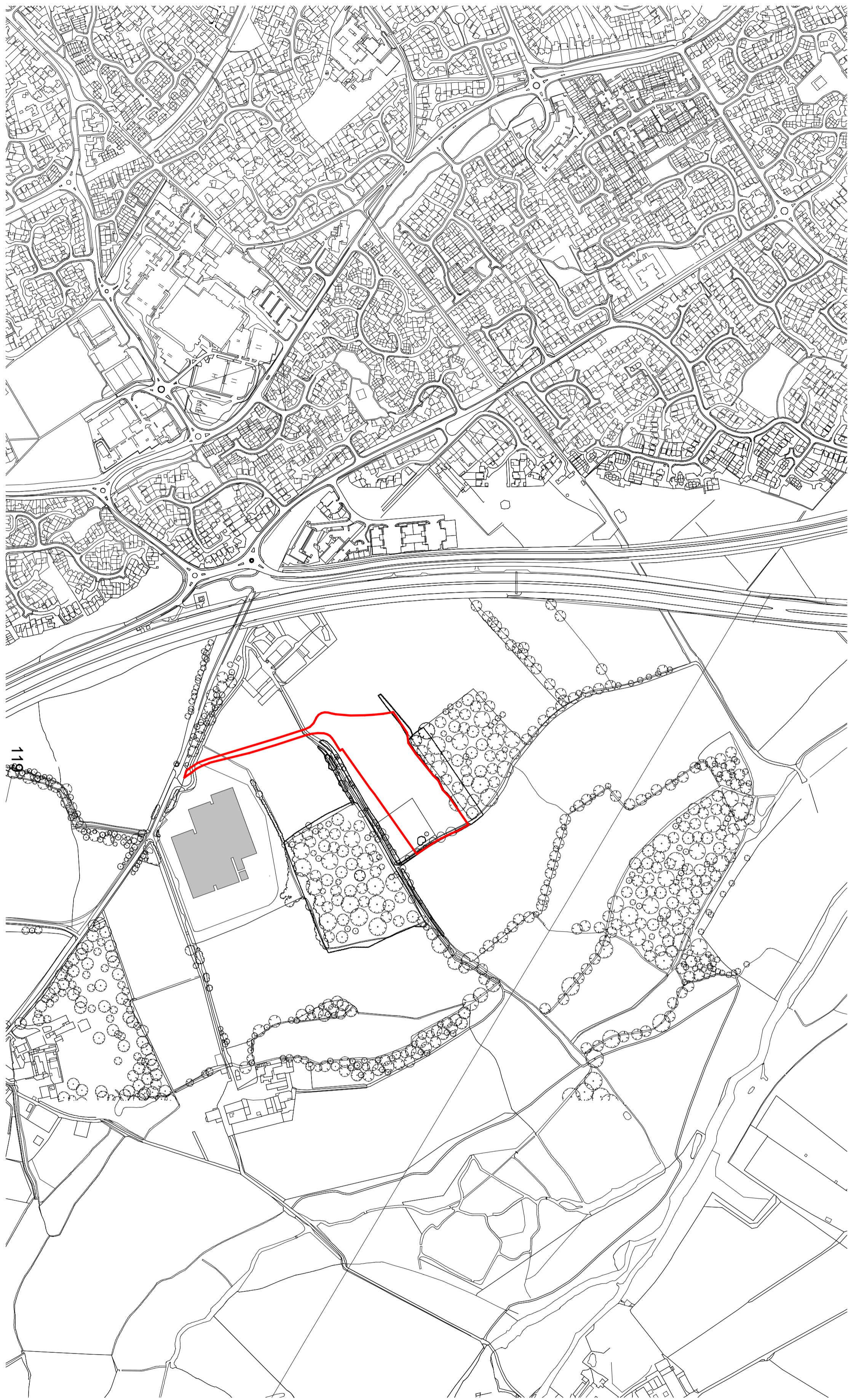
? Tight control over the construction traffic to the site and then the subsequent large number of vehicles necessary to transport artefacts to the site

o The traffic management plan should ensure robust controls to keep the disruption to residents to a minimum and to ensure that safe access is maintained for pedestrians, cyclists and other users of the affected area

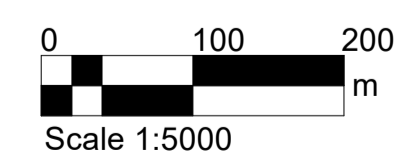
Submitted by the Clerk on behalf of Shinfield Parish Council
Shinfield Parish Council objects to this planning application for the following reasons:

? The development is outside the areas of the SDL. This could

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1 Site Location Wider Plan
1 : 5000

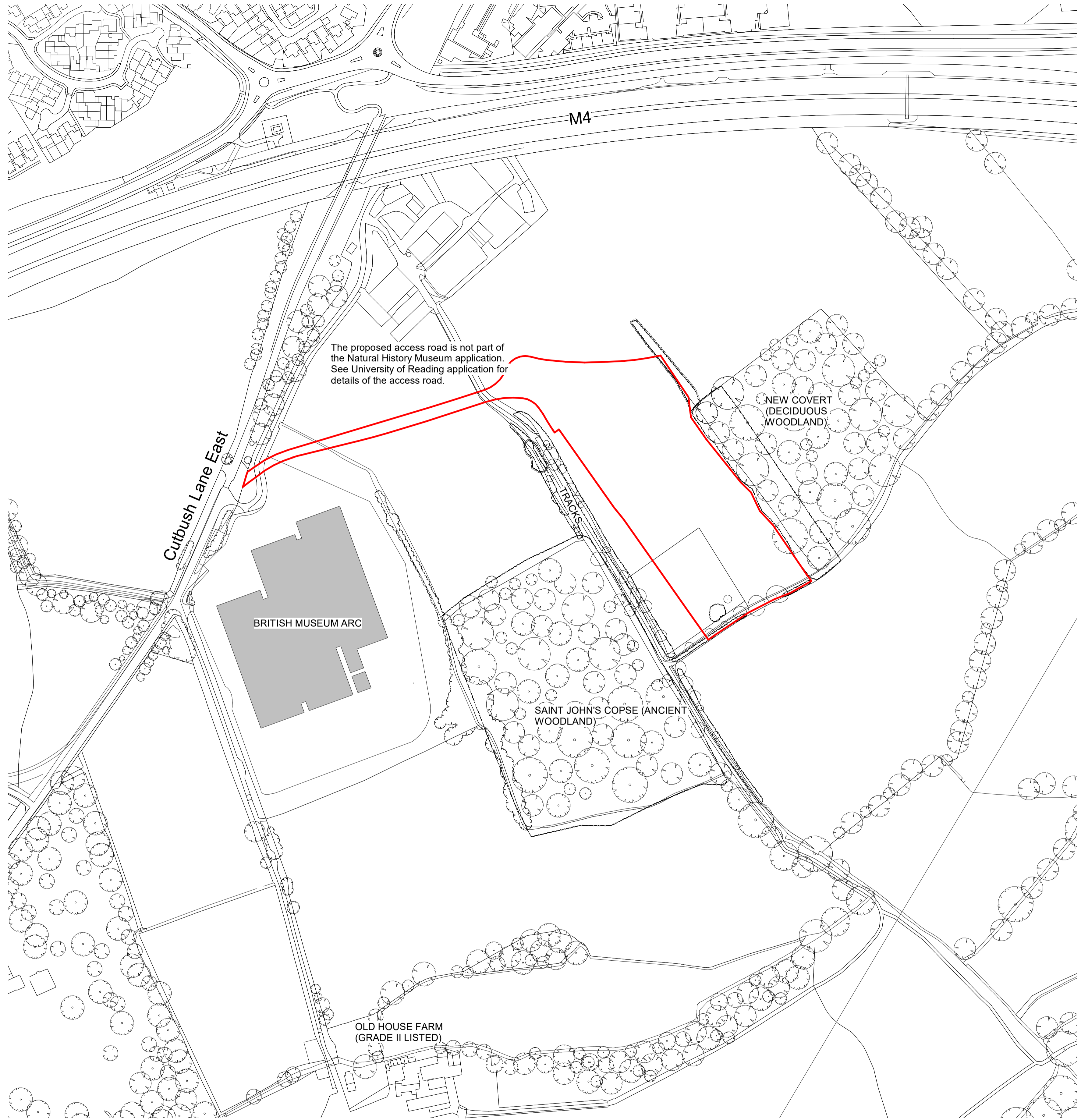


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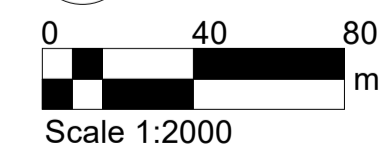
— Planning Application Boundary

Note: OS Map information augmented with information received from University of Reading.
OS Licence: 100007514

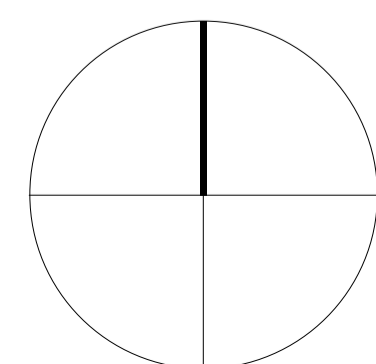
General Note:
Dimensions are not to be scaled from this drawing. All discrepancies in this drawing are to be reported to Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios.
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2 Site Location Plan
1 : 2000



Scale 1:2000



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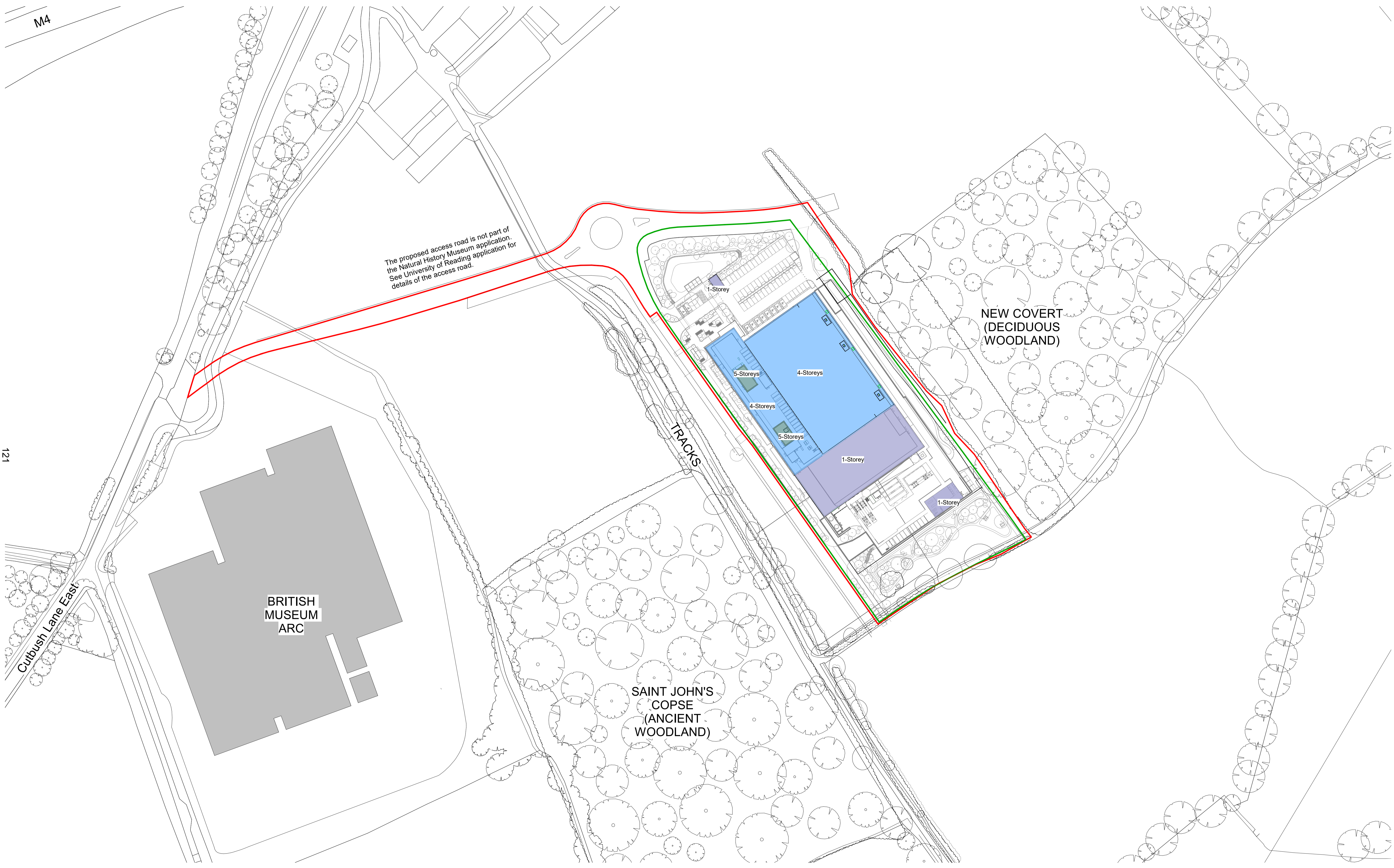
SUITABLE FOR PLANNING

Job/Drawing No	Revision
RD001-FCB-XX-XX-DR-A-0100	P01
NHM Unlocked, Thames Valley Science Park Location Plans	Status S5

Scale	Drawn	Group	Checked	Checker	FCBS project no
As indicated@A1		JC			RD001
Date	October 2023				

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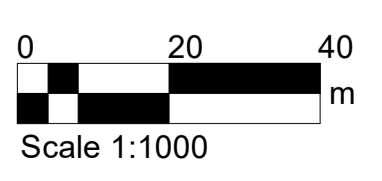


M4

121

Curbush Lane East

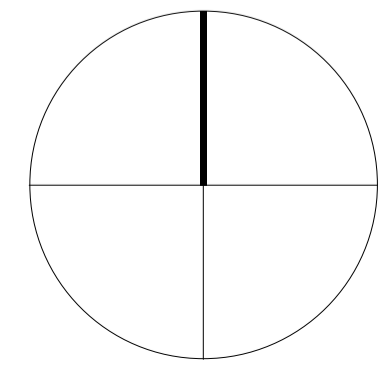
1 Proposed Site Plan
1 : 1000



- SITE KEY**
- Development Boundary
 - Planning Application Boundary

Note: OS Map augmented with information received from University of Reading.
OS Licence: 100007514

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Job/Drawing No
RD001-FCB-XX-RF-DR-A-0102

NHM Unlocked, Thames Valley Science Park
Proposed Site Plan

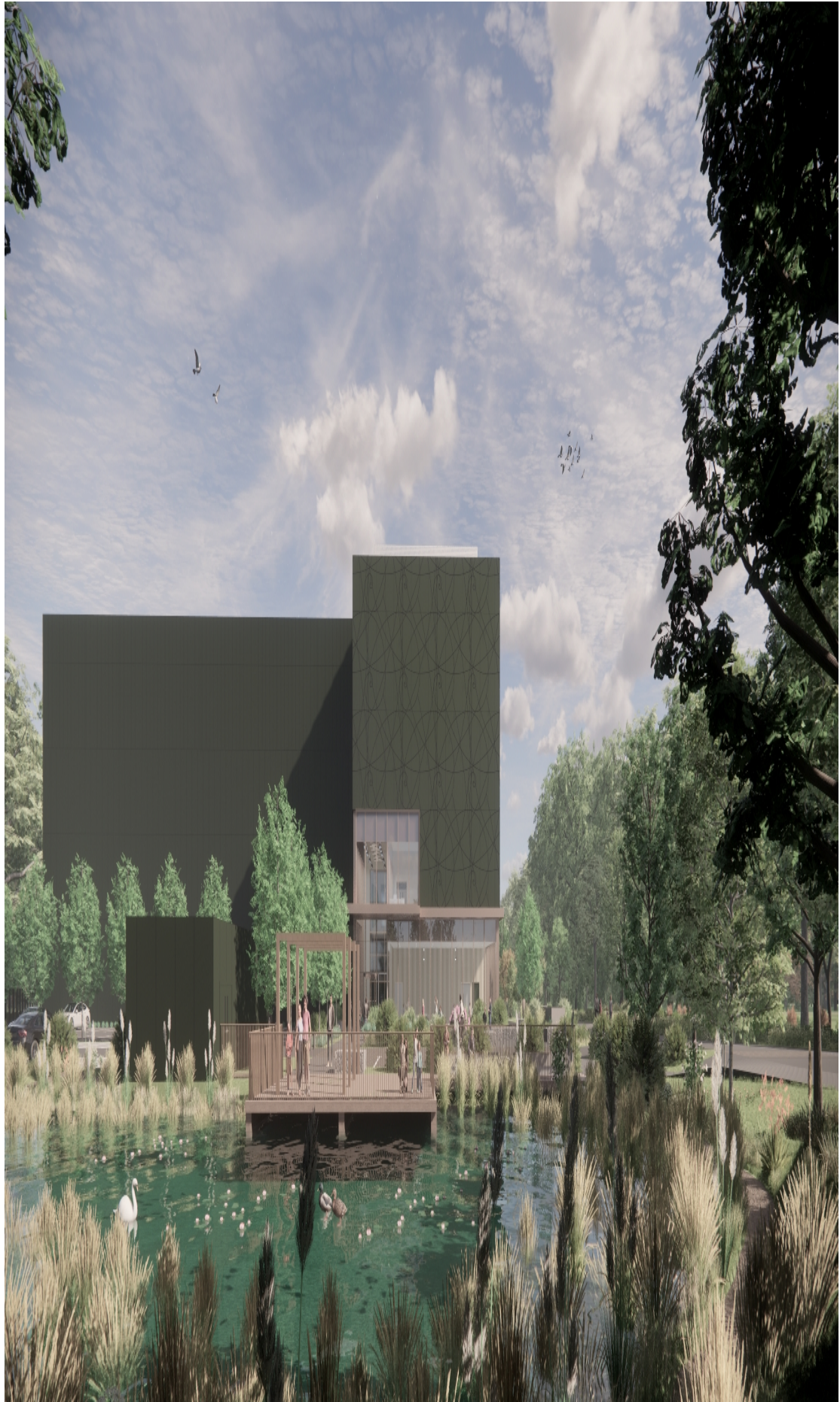
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Date October 2023

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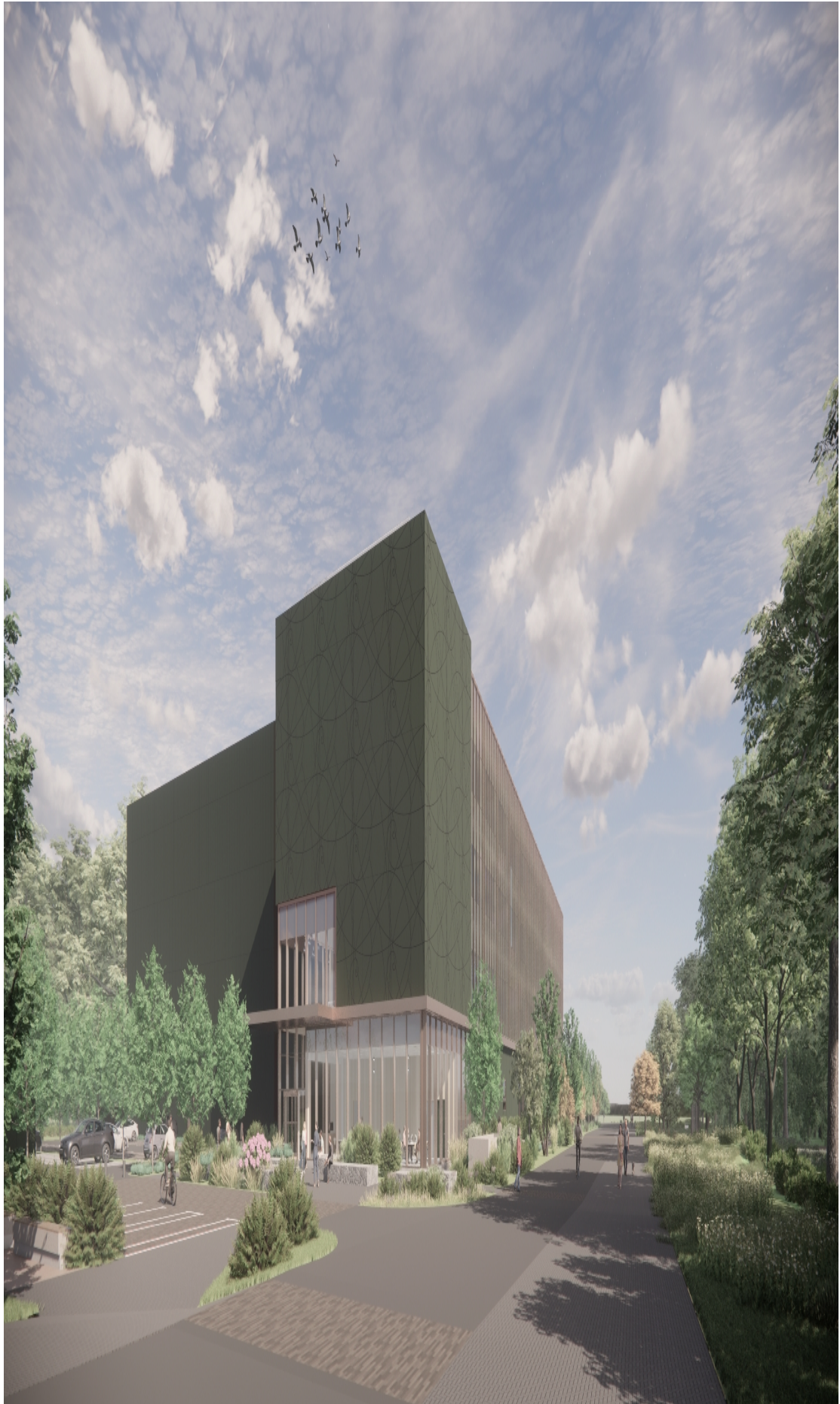
Revision
P01
Status
S5

Checked
Checked
FCBS project no RD001
All dimensions to be checked on site

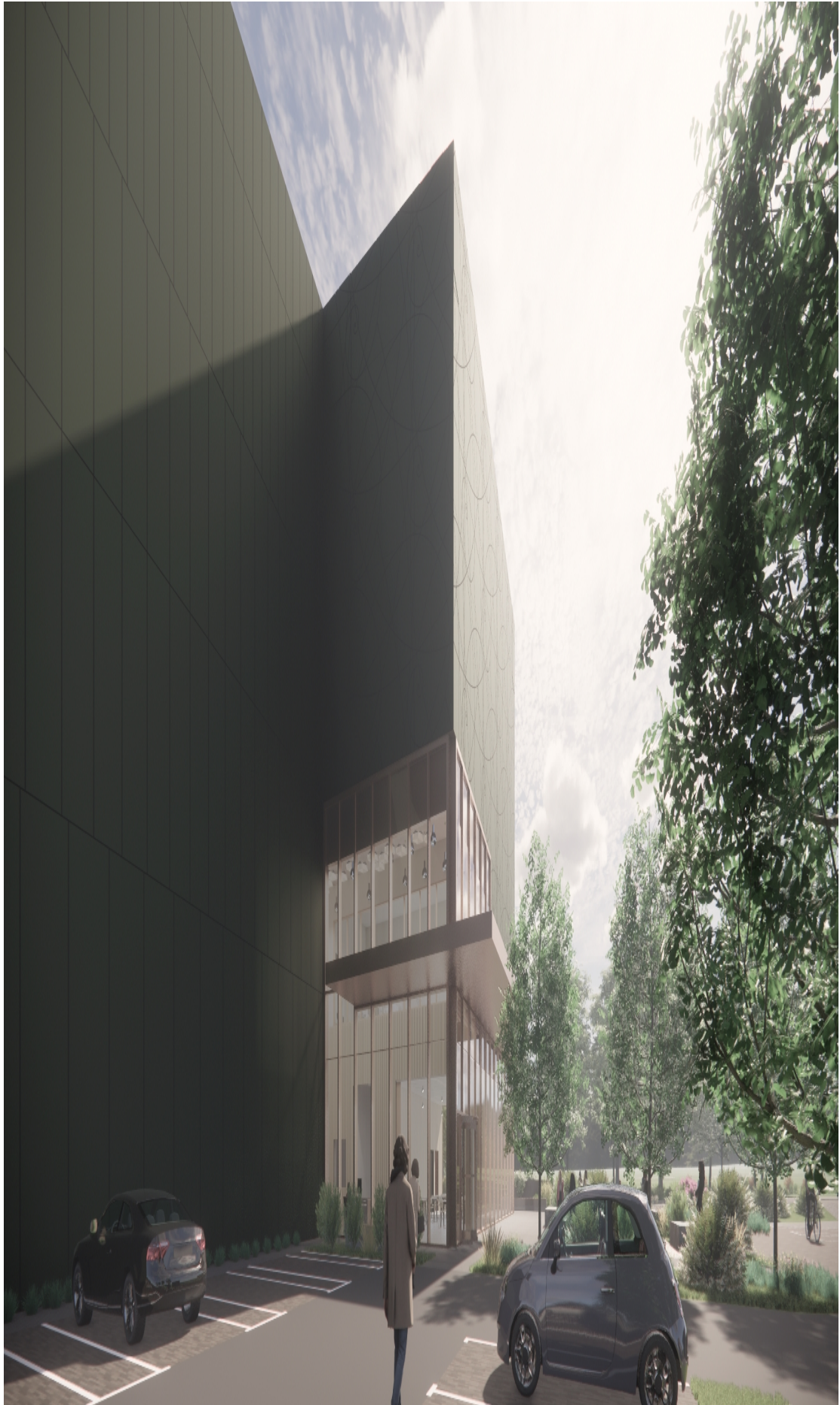
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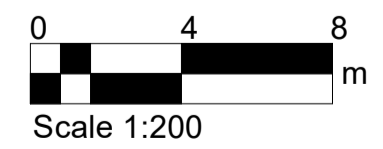
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KEY TO ROOM CODES

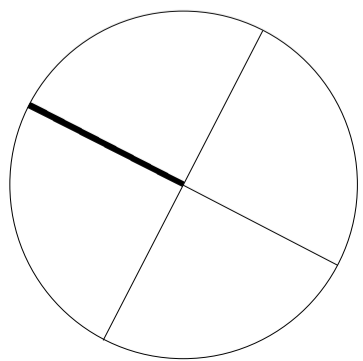
C	Collections
F	Front of House
L	Laboratories
O	Offices
P	Plant
S	Support
ST	Stores



1 GA 1-200-Level00
1 : 200



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Job/Drawing No	Revision
RD001-FCB-XX-00-DR-A-0200	P01
NHM Unlocked, Thames Valley Science Park	Status
GA Plan Level 00	S5

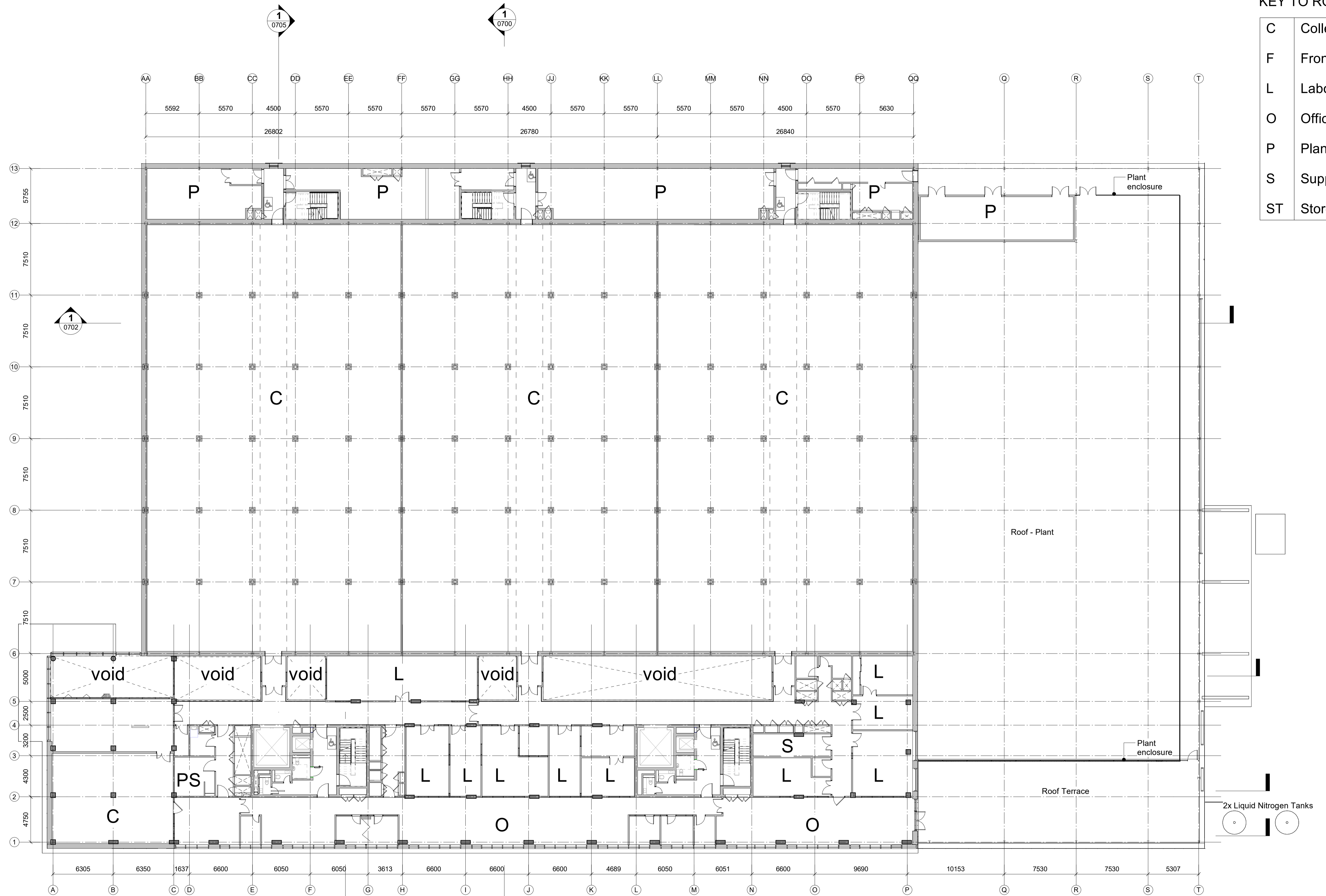
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As indicated@A1	Group JC	Group JC	Group JC	Group JC	RD001

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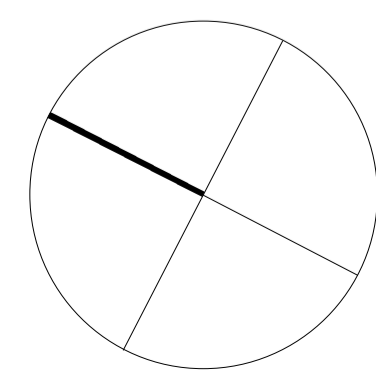
C	Collections
F	Front of House
L	Laboratories
O	Offices
P	Plant
S	Support
ST	Stores



133

1 GA 1-200-Level01
 1 : 200
 0 4 8 m
 Scale 1:200

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Job/Drawing No RD001-FCB-XX-01-DR-A-0201
 NHM Unlocked, Thames Valley Science Park
 GA Plan Level 01

Revision P01
 Status S5

Scale As indicated@A1
 Date October 2023
 Drawn Group JC
 Checked Group JC
 FCBS project no RD001

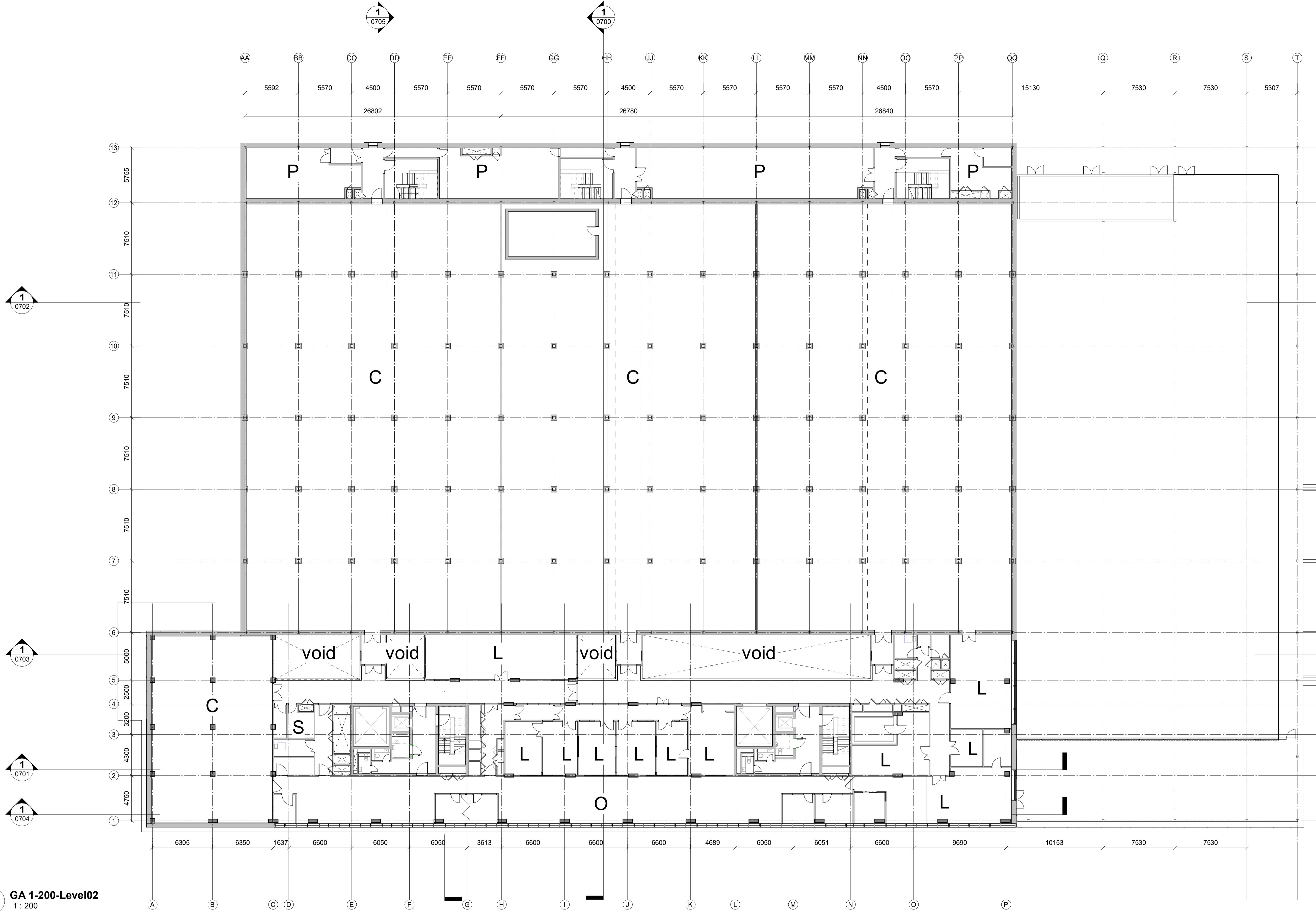
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KEY TO ROOM CODES

C	Collections
F	Front of House
L	Laboratories
O	Offices
P	Plant
S	Support
ST	Stores

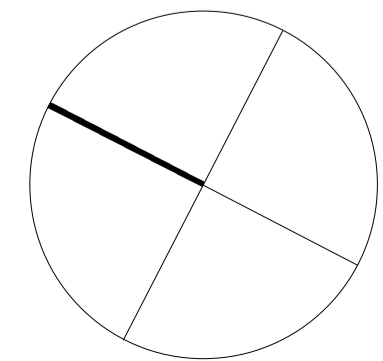
135



1 GA 1-200-Level02
 1 : 200

 Scale 1:200

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Job/Drawing No	Revision
RD001-FCB-XX-02-DR-A-0202	P01
NHM Unlocked, Thames Valley Science Park	Status
GA Plan Level 02	S5

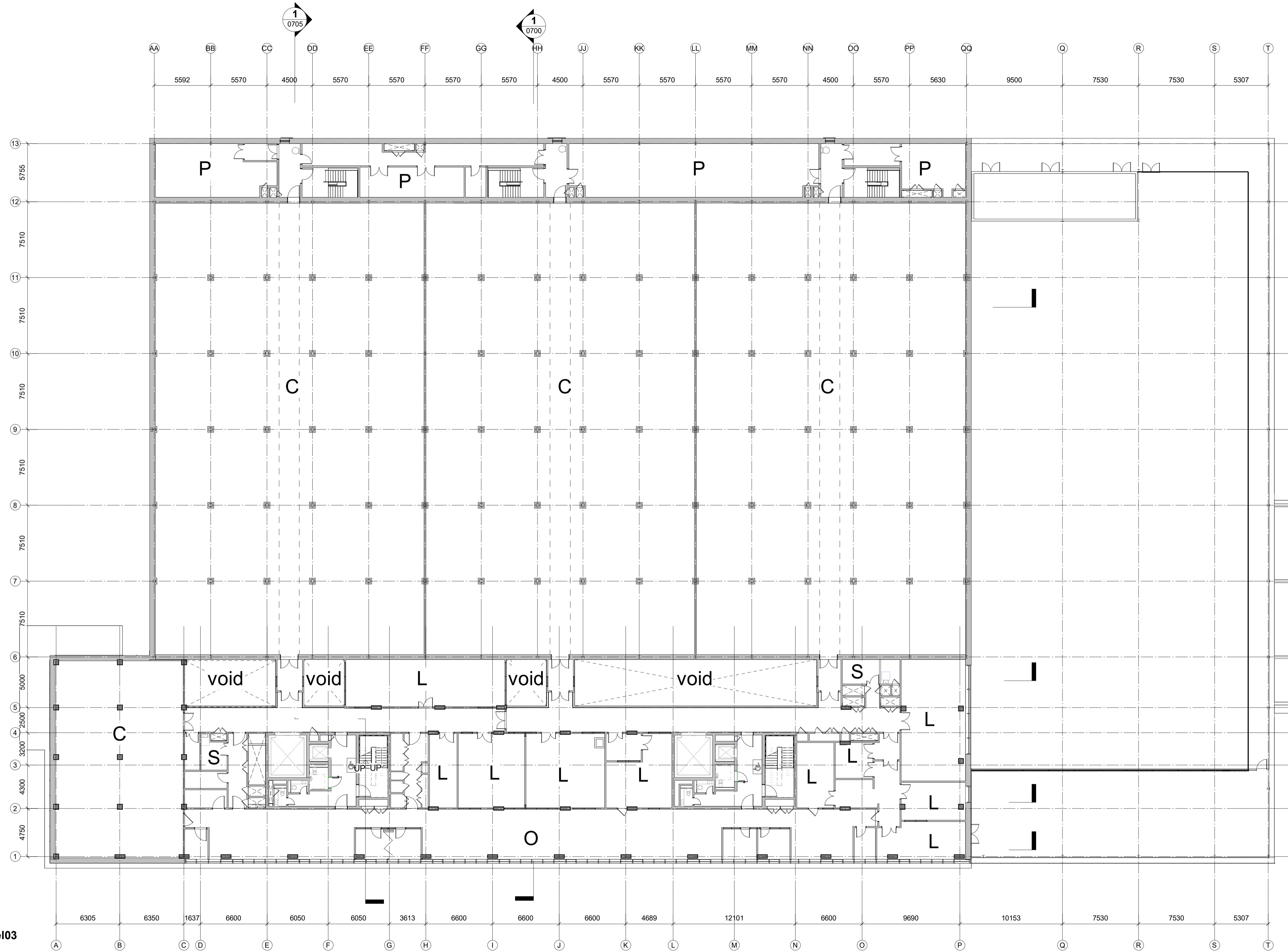
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As indicated@A1	Group JC	Group JC	Group JC	Group JC	RD001
Date	October 2023	Checked	Group JC	FCBS project no	RD001

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KEY TO ROOM CODES

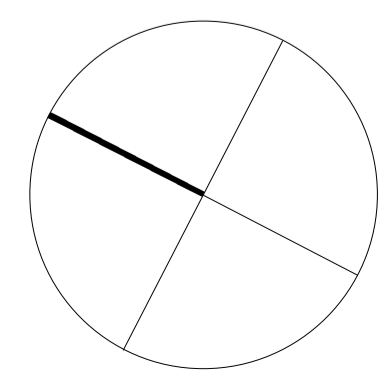
C	Collections
F	Front of House
L	Laboratories
O	Offices
P	Plant
S	Support
ST	Stores



137

1 GA 1-200-Level103
1 : 200
Scale 1:200

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Job/Drawing No	Revision
RD001-FCB-XX-03-DR-A-0203	P01
NHM Unlocked, Thames Valley Science Park	Status
GA Plan Level 03	S5

Scale	As indicated@A1	Drawn	Group JC
Date	October 2023	Checked	Group JC

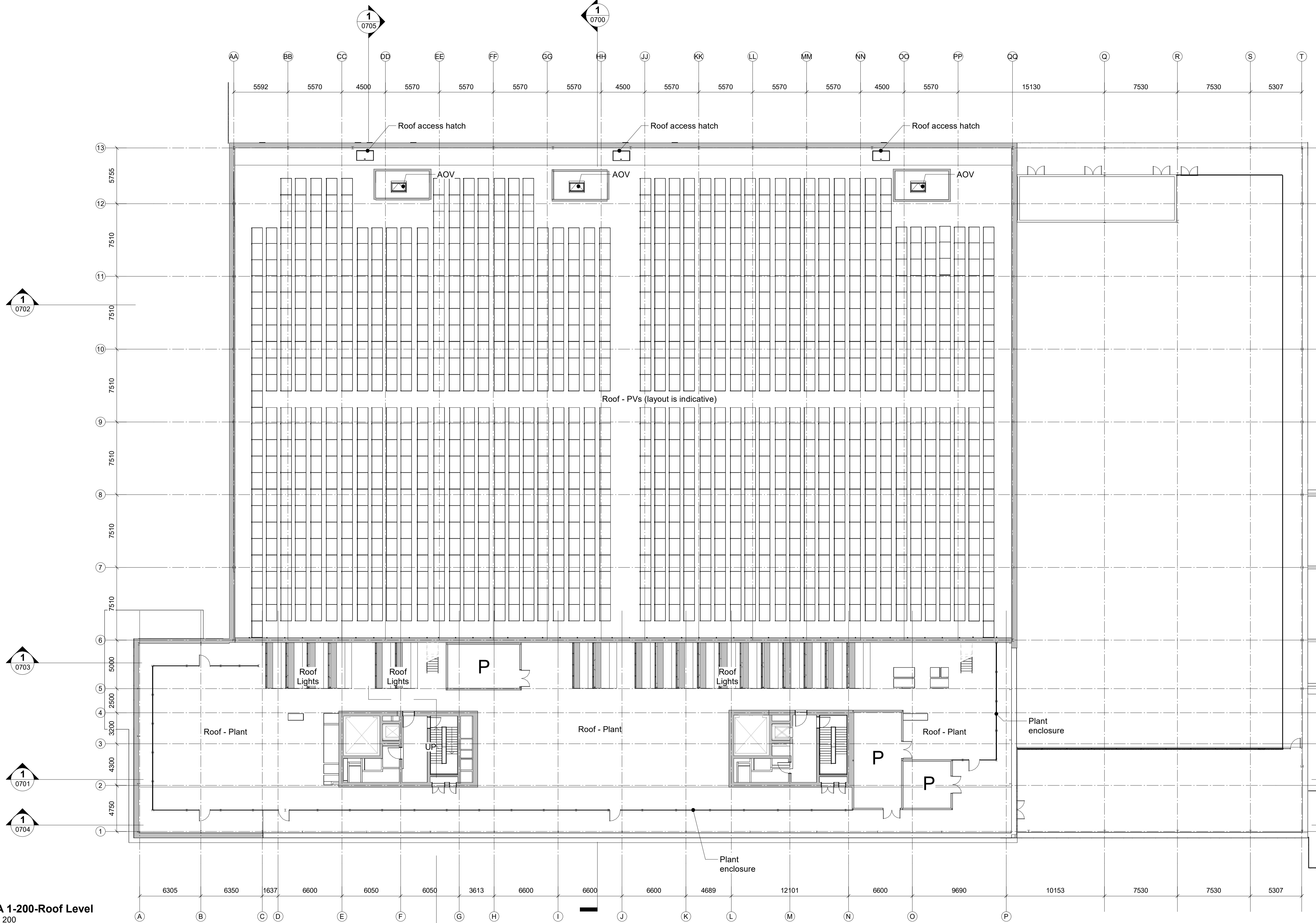
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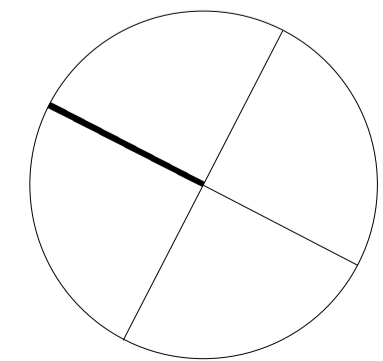
C	Collections
F	Front of House
L	Laboratories
O	Offices
P	Plant
S	Support
ST	Stores

139



1 GA 1-200-Roof Level
1:200
Scale 1:200

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Job/Drawing No
RD001-FCB-XX-04-DR-A-0204
Revision
P01

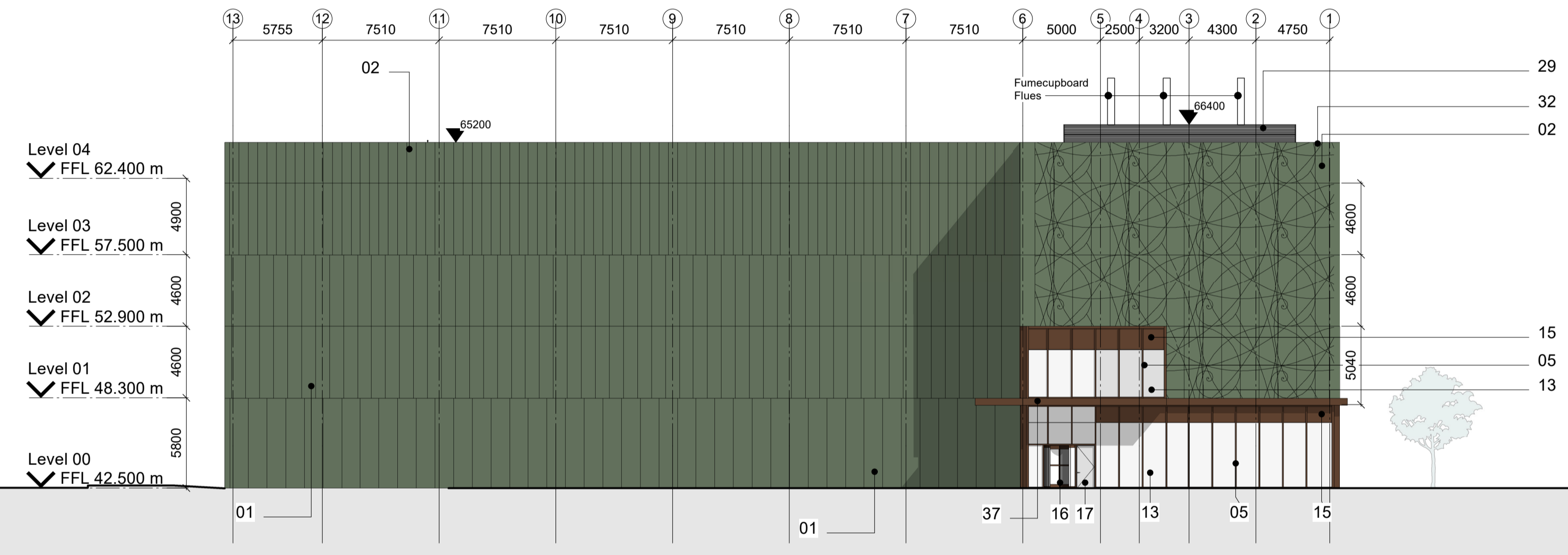
NHM Unlocked, Thames Valley Science Park
GA Plan Level 04
Scale As indicated@A1
Date October 2023
Checked Group JC
FCBS project no RD001
Status
S5
All dimensions to be checked on site

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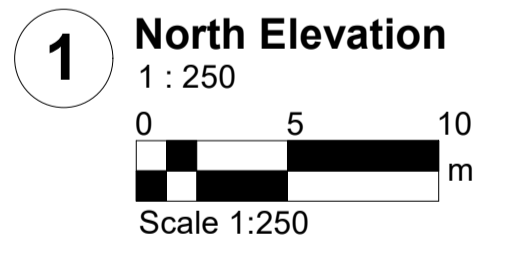
Facade Materials

01	FT01 Panelised Metal Facade System. Colour TBC
02	FT02 Embossed Panelised Metal Facade System. Colour and embossed motif TBC
03	FT03 Demountable Panelised Metal Facade System to Collections Plant Elevation Colour TBC
04	FT04 Panelised Metal Facade System to Non-Collection Building. Colour TBC.
05	FT05 Timber Curtain Walling System.
06	FT06 Louvered cladding to East plant areas. Colour TBC.
07	FT07- Panelised Metal Facade System to East Plant areas.
08	FT08 Mesh screen to external covered area.
09	FT09 Metal clad facade system to Rooftop and Level 01 areas Colour TBC.
10	FT10 Corrugated galvanised steel rain screen panels to external buildings in Service Yard.
11	Fire Stop
12	SSG Timber Curtain Walling – Typical Façade Metal spandrel panel.
13	SSG Timber Curtain Walling – Typical Façade glazing.
14	SSG Timber Curtain Walling – Typical Façade vents panels.
15	SSG Timber Curtain Walling – Typical Façade opaque fritted panel.
16	Main Entrance Revolving door.
17	Main Entrance powered assisted entrance door.
18	PPC aluminium framed external exit doors.
19	Louvered PPC aluminium framed external doors to Plant rooms.
20	Roller shutter.
21	RT 01 Main Roof to Collections, Collections Plant.
22	RT 02 Main Roof to Labs and People Space building.
23	RT 03 Single storey Labs Roof – Blue Roof01
24	RT 04 Rooftight to Lightwell in Non-Collections.
25	ST03 Acoustic and visual screen to external plant areas.
27	Metal Louvered External Plant screen.
28	External glazed door to Terrace
29	ST02 Metal Louvered screens to External plant areas.
30	Acoustic mullion covers to Meeting Rooms
31	Independent lining to Labs areas
32	RTC 02 Capping/ coping to Roof Plant Areas.
33	RTC 03 Capping/ coping to West facade curtain wall.
34	RTC 01 Capping/ coping to Level 01 Terrace.
36	RT 10 Canopy to Service Yard Ancillary Buildings.
37	RT 09 Canopy to Main Entrance.
38	RT 08 Canopy to Dock Levelers.
39	Blind Box
40	C01 Exposed concrete soffit, special finish.
41	C02 Collections stores and Airlocks, Equipment Storage spaces, Front of House Stair cores, Back of House and Ancillary spaces including Plant/Refuse/Cycle Storage.
42	C15 Ceiling to non technical work space
43	Panelised self-supported wall system to internal side of Collection Stores.
44	F00 Barrier Matting Entrances and Exits.
45	F01 Polished screed to Reception, Multifunctional space.
46	F06 Raised Access Floor to Non technical workspace, Meeting Rooms, Collaboration spaces, First Aid spaces and Welfare Spaces.
47	F07 Exposed concrete to Back of House and Ancillary spaces including Plant/Refuse/Cycle Storage.
48	F10 Non-power floated non-loadbearing screed to Collections stores and Airlocks.
49	Aluminium windows system
50	F13 Open Metal grill flooring to Plant Mezzanine.
51	BAL 03 – External Plant Roof areas, Service Yard, and stepovers.

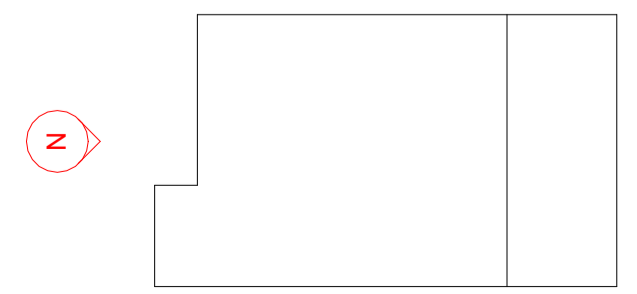
NOTE: The façade colours indicated remain under review and are subject to change. Colour and embossed motif TBC.



NEW COVERT (DECIDUOUS WOODLAND) PLANT AND ESCAPE STAIR COLLECTIONS LABORATORIES, OFFICES AND FRONT OF HOUSE ESTATE ROAD PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLEWAY JOHN'S COPSE (ANCIENT WOODLAND)



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P01	S5	15/11/2023
P02	S5	16/11/2023

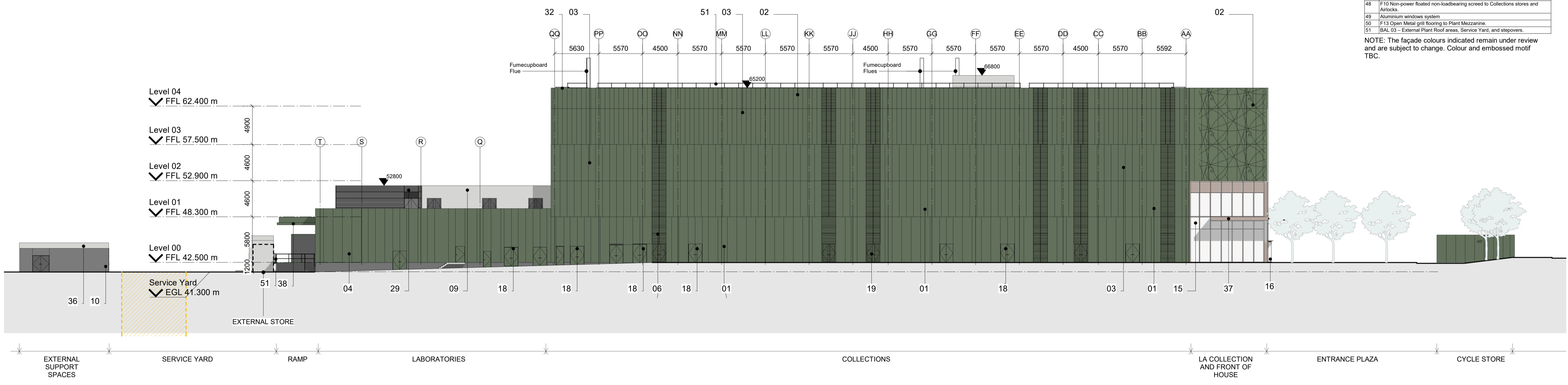
SUITABLE FOR PLANNING
Job/Drawing No RD001-FCB-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0801
Revision P02
Status S5
NHM Unlocked, Thames Valley Science Park
North Elevation
Scale As indicated@A1
Date October 2023
Checked Group JC
FCBS project no RD001
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Facade Materials	
01	FT01 Panelised Metal Facade System. Colour TBC
02	FT02 Embossed Panelised Metal Facade System. Colour and embossed motif TBC
03	FT03 Demountable Panelised Metal Facade System to Collections Plant Elevation Colour TBC
04	FT04 Panelised Metal Facade System to Non-Collection Building. Colour TBC.
05	FT05 Timber Curtain Walling System.
06	FT06 Louvered cladding to East plant areas. Colour TBC.
07	FT07- Panelised Metal Facade System to East Plant areas.
08	FT08 Mesh screen to external covered area.
09	FT09 Metal clad facade system to Rooftop and Level 01 areas. Colour TBC.
10	FT10 Corrugated galvanised steel rain screen panels to external buildings in Service Yard.
11	Fire Stop
12	SSG Timber Curtain Walling – Typical Facade Metal spandrel panel.
13	SSG Timber Curtain Walling – Typical Facade glazing.
14	SSG Timber Curtain Walling – Typical Facade vents panels.
15	SSG Timber Curtain Walling – Typical Facade opaque fritted panel.
16	Main Entrance Revolving door.
17	Main Entrance powered assisted entrance door.
18	PPC aluminium framed external exit doors.
19	Louvered PPC aluminium framed external doors to Plant rooms.
20	Roller shutter.
21	RT 01 Main Roof to Collections, Collections Plant.
22	RT 02 Main Roof to Labs and People Space building.
23	RT 03 Single storey Labs Roof – Blue Roof01
24	RT 04 Rooftight to Lightwell in Non-Collections.
25	ST03 Acoustic and visual screen to external plant areas.
27	Metal Louvered External Plant screen.
28	External glazed door to Terrace
29	ST02 Metal Louvered screens to External plant areas.
30	Acoustic mullion covers to Meeting Rooms
31	Independent lining to Labs areas
32	RTC 02 Capping/coping to Roof Plant Areas.
33	RTC 03 Capping/coping to West facade curtain wall.
34	RTC 01 Capping/ coping to Level 01 Terrace
36	RT 10 Canopy to Service Yard Ancillary Buildings.
37	RT 09 Canopy to Main Entrance.
38	RT 08 Canopy to Dock Levelers
39	Blind Box
40	C01 Exposed concrete soffit, special fins.
41	C02 Collections stores and Airlocks, Equipment Storage spaces, Front of House Stair cores, Back of House and Ancillary spaces including Plant/Refuse/Cycle Storage.
42	C15 Ceiling to non technical work space
43	Panelised self-supported wall system to internal side of Collection Stores.
44	F00 Barrier Matting Entrances and Exits
45	F01 Polished screed to Reception, Multifunctional space.
46	F06 Raised Access Floor to Non technical workspace, Meeting Rooms, Collaboration spaces, First Aid spaces and Welfare Spaces.
47	F07 Exposed concrete to Back of House and Ancillary spaces including Plant/Refuse/Cycle Storage.
48	F10 Non-power floated non-loadbearing screed to Collections stores and Airlocks.
49	Aluminum windows system
50	F13 Open Metal grill flooring to Plant Mezzanine.
51	BAL 03 – External Plant Roof areas, Service Yard, and stepovers.

NOTE: The facade colours indicated remain under review and are subject to change. Colour and embossed motif TBC.

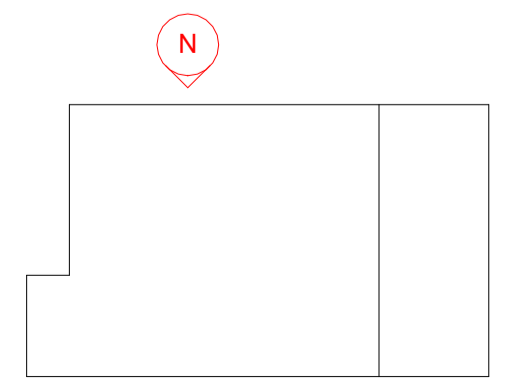
143



1 East Elevation
1 : 250

Scale 1:250

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P02	S5	16/11/2023

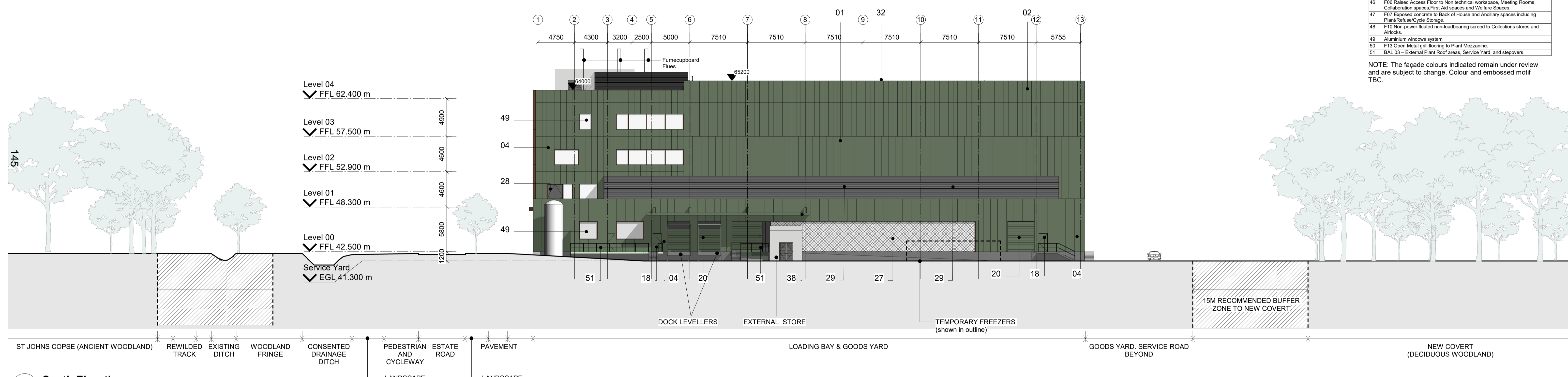
SUITABLE FOR PLANNING		
Job/Drawing No	Revision	Status
RD001-FCB-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0802	P02	S5
NHM Unlocked, Thames Valley Science Park		
East Elevation		
Scale As indicated@A1	Drawn Group JC	Checked Group JC
Date October 2023	FCBS project no RD001	
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Facade Materials

01	FT01 Panelised Metal Facade System. Colour TBC
02	FT02 Embossed Panelised Metal Facade System. Colour and embossed motif TBC
03	FT03 Demountable Panelised Metal Facade System to Collections Plant Elevation Colour TBC
04	FT04 Panelised Metal Facade System to Non-Collection Building. Colour TBC.
05	FT05 Timber Curtain Walling System.
06	FT06 Louvered cladding to East plant areas. Colour TBC.
07	FT07- Panelised Metal Facade System to East Plant areas.
08	FT08 Mesh screen to external covered area.
09	FT09 Metal clad facade system to Rooftop and Level 01 areas. Colour TBC.
10	FT10 Corrugated galvanised steel rain screen panels to external buildings in Service Yard.
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30	Acoustic mullion covers to Meeting Rooms
31	Independent lining to Labs areas.
32	RTC 02 Capping/coping to Roof Plant Areas.
33	RTC 03 Capping/coping to West facade curtain wall.
34	RTC 01 Capping/ coping to Level 01 Terrace.
36	RT 10 Canopy to Service Yard Ancillary Buildings.
37	RT 09 Canopy to Main Entrance.
38	RT 08 Canopy to Dock Levellers.
39	Blind Box
40	C01 Exposed concrete soffit, special finish.
41	C02 Collections stores and Airlocks, Equipment Storage spaces, Front of House Stair cores, Back of House and Ancillary spaces including Plant/Refuse/Cycle Storage.
42	C15 Ceiling to non technical work space
43	Panelised self-supported wall system to internal side of Collection Stores.
44	F00 Barrier Matting Entrances and Exits.
45	F01 Polished screed to Reception, Multifunctional space.
46	F06 Raised Access Floor to Non technical workspace, Meeting Rooms, Collaboration spaces, First Aid spaces and Welfare Spaces.
47	F07 Exposed concrete to Back of House and Ancillary spaces including Plant/Refuse/Cycle Storage.
48	F10 Non-power floated non-loadbearing screed to Collections stores and Airlocks.
49	Aluminum windows system
50	F13 Open Metal grill flooring to Plant Mezzanine.
51	BAL 03 – External Plant Roof areas, Service Yard, and stepovers.

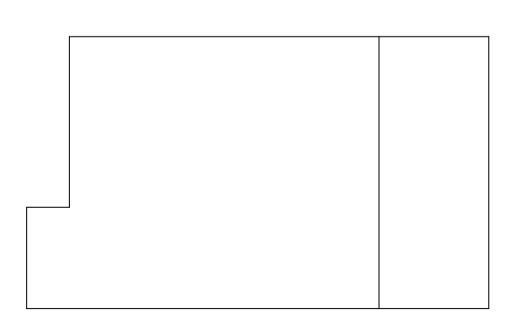
NOTE: The façade colours indicated remain under review and are subject to change. Colour and embossed motif TBC.



1 South Elevation
1 : 250

0 5 10 m
Scale 1:250

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SUITABLE FOR PLANNING

Job/Drawing No
RD001-FCB-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0803

NHM Unlocked, Thames Valley Science Park
South Elevation

Scale As indicated@A1
Date October 2023

Drawn Group JC
Checked Group JC

Revision
P02
Status
S5

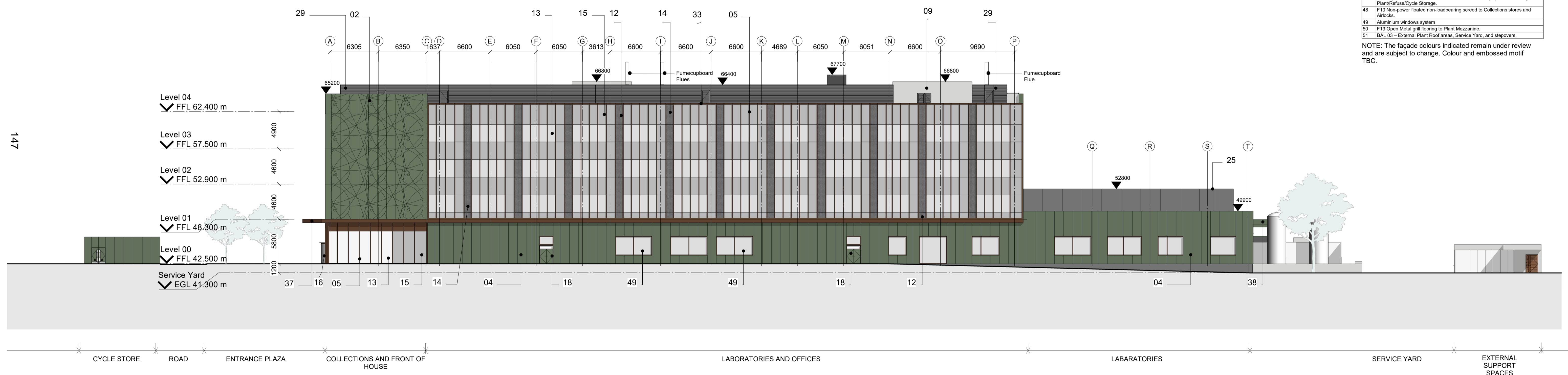
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Facade Materials

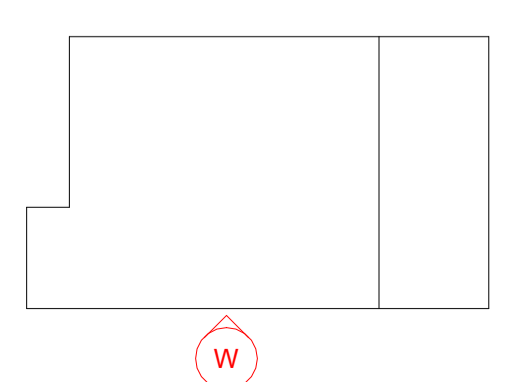
01	FT01 Panelised Metal Facade System. Colour TBC
02	FT02 Embossed Panelised Metal Facade System. Colour and embossed motif TBC
03	FT03 Demountable Panelised Metal Facade System to Collections Plant Elevation Colour TBC
04	FT04 Panelised Metal Facade System to Non-Collection Building. Colour TBC.
05	FT05 Timber Curtain Walling System.
06	FT06 Louvered cladding to East plant areas. Colour TBC.
07	FT07- Panelised Metal Facade System to East Plant areas.
08	FT08 Mesh screen to external covered area.
09	FT09 Metal clad facade system to Rooftop and Level 01 areas. Colour TBC.
10	FT10 Corrugated galvanised steel rain screen panels to external buildings in Service Yard.
11	Fire Stop
12	SSG Timber Curtain Walling – Typical Façade Metal spandrel panel.
13	SSG Timber Curtain Walling – Typical Façade glazing.
14	SSG Timber Curtain Walling – Typical Façade vents panels.
15	SSG Timber Curtain Walling – Typical Façade opaque fritted panel.
16	Main Entrance Revolving door.
17	Main Entrance powered assisted entrance door.
18	PPC aluminium framed external exit doors.
19	Louvered PPC aluminium framed external doors to Plant rooms.
20	Roller shutter.
21	RT 01 Main Roof to Collections, Collections Plant.
22	RT 02 Main Roof to Labs and People Space building.
23	RT 03 Single storey Labs Roof – Blue Roof01
24	RT 04 Rooftight to Lightwell in Non-Collections.
25	ST03 Acoustic and visual screen to external plant areas.
27	Metal Louvered External Plant screen.
28	External glazed door to Terrace
29	ST02 Metal Louvered screens to External plant areas.
30	Acoustic mullion covers to Meeting Rooms
31	Independent lining to Labs areas
32	RTC 02 Capping/coping to Roof Plant Areas.
33	RTC 03 Capping/coping to West facade curtain wall.
34	RTC 01 Capping/ coping to Level 01 Terrace
36	RT 10 Canopy to Service Yard Ancillary Buildings.
37	RT 09 Canopy to Main Entrance.
38	RT 08 Canopy to Dock Levelers
39	Blind Box
40	C01 Exposed concrete soffit, special fins.
41	C02 Collections stores and Airlocks, Equipment Storage spaces, Front of House Stair cores, Back of House and Ancillary spaces including Plant/Refuse/Cycle Storage.
42	C15 Ceiling to non technical work space
43	Panelised self-supported wall system to internal side of Collection Stores.
44	F00 Barrier Matting Entrances and Exits
45	F01 Polished screed to Reception, Multifunctional space.
46	F06 Raised Access Floor to Non technical workspace, Meeting Rooms, Collaboration spaces, First Aid spaces and Welfare Spaces.
47	F07 Exposed concrete to Back of House and Ancillary spaces including Plant/Refuse/Cycle Storage.
48	F10 Non-power floated non-loadbearing screed to Collections stores and Airlocks.
49	Aluminum windows system
50	F13 Open Metal grill flooring to Plant Mezzanine.
51	BAL 03 – External Plant Roof areas, Service Yard, and stepovers.

NOTE: The façade colours indicated remain under review and are subject to change. Colour and embossed motif TBC.



1 West Elevation
1 : 250
Scale 1:250

General Note:
Dimensions are not to be scaled from this drawing. All discrepancies in this drawing are to be reported to Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios.
Drawing only to be used for the purposes it was issued for. Do not modify any element of this CAD drawing. Landscape, public realm and neighbouring buildings shown indicatively. This drawing is copyright.



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Rev	Status	Date
P01	S5	15/11/2023
P02	S5	16/11/2023

SUITABLE FOR PLANNING

Job/Drawing No	Revision
RD001-FCB-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0800	P02
NHM Unlocked, Thames Valley Science Park	Status
West Elevation	S5

Scale As indicated@A1
Date October 2023
Drawn Group JC
Checked Group JC
FCBS project no RD001
Do not scale All dimensions to be checked on site

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Agenda Item 76.

Application Number	Expiry Date	Parish	Ward
223528	31 March 2024	Finchampstead North	Finchampstead North;

Applicant	Mr Nathan Craker
Site Address	33 Barkham Ride, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG40 4EX
Proposal	Outline application for the proposed erection of 56 residential dwellings with associated access, following demolition of the existing dwelling and outbuildings. Access only to be considered (with Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale to be reserved)
Type	Outline
Officer	Connie Davis
Reason for determination by committee	Listed by Councillor Margetts due to concerns over the site being an unsustainable location Major application

FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Planning Committee on Wednesday, 13 March 2024
REPORT PREPARED BY	Assistant Director – Place and Growth
RECOMMENDATION	<p>APPROVAL subject to conditions and the following obligations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Roads - Details of road status – either to remain as private or to be adopted by the Council 2. Affordable Housing - 40% on site affordable housing 3. My Journey/ Travel Plan - Contribution of £30,240 (£540 per dwelling) towards MyJourney or Travel Plan to be provided 4. Bus Services - Contribution of £ 72,688 (£1298 per dwelling) (indexed linked) to contribute towards the Arborfield bus strategy 5. SANG/ SAMM – Contribution to be calculated following Reserved Matters as it is dependant on number of bed spaces per dwelling 6. Employment and Skills Plan - Employment and Skills Plan or in lieu contribution to be provided – this is determined by floorspace and so will be calculated at Reserved Matters 7. Establishment of Management Company - to be responsible for open spaces, play equipment,

	<p>drainage, roads (the latter if not adopted by the Council)</p> <p>8. Public Open Space - Financial contribution towards public open space types (outdoor sports provision / allotments) if there is a shortfall on-site at Reserved Matters. If an off-site contribution is to be provided, £38,445.00 would be required for allotments and a contribution of £131,432 (£2,347 per dwelling) indexed linked to 2015 towards Outdoor Sports Provision.</p> <p>9. Biodiversity Net Gain - 10% Biodiversity Net Gain plan to be submitted with details of on-site provision or off-site off-setting</p>
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SUMMARY

33 Barkham Ride is a 2.9ha site comprising of a single large dwellinghouse with amenity space, workshop and office, along with various other outbuildings. The proposal seeks to demolish these buildings and erect 56 dwellinghouses. This number was reduced from 68 dwellings by the applicant during the application process. Outline permission has been applied for, with only the principle of development and access being formally considered under this application. Appearance, layout, scale and landscaping are reserved matters for future consideration. Therefore, the layout, including housing mix, as shown under this application, is indicative.

The site is located outside of settlement limits in the Wokingham countryside, however, it is on the edge/ adjacent to the Modest Development Location of Finchampstead North which has access to some facilities and services. Notwithstanding this, the site, along with 31 Barkham Ride, is allocated within the Wokingham Local Plan Update (LPU) Revised Growth Strategy for a combined 66 (net) dwellings under Policy H2. Section 5.3 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan notes and supports the proposed allocations within RGS located within the parish. This includes the proposed allocation of 31-33 Barkham Ride.

Whilst the LPU is at a consultative stage of preparation, and therefore holds limited weight in the planning balance, the borough does not have a 5 year housing land supply (nor a transitional 4 year supply as required by the NPPF) meaning paragraph 11(d)(ii) of the NPPF is engaged. This states that where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless the *“adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”*

The principle of developing this site for a more intense residential use has already been considered in the plan making process and whilst the LPU itself holds limited weight, this needs to be considered alongside the current identified shortfall in housing delivery and any identified benefits of the scheme. Namely these include the opportunity to create a development that would satisfactorily integrate into the surrounding area, one that would

protect and enhance the natural environment, and bring about the creation of 56 new homes alongside the provision of much needed onsite affordable housing in this part of the borough.,

The proposal has been deemed acceptable in principle in relation to the existing countryside and landscape, albeit with the layout, scale, appearance and landscaping still to be formally considered at a later date. Through the submitted parameters plan, areas of open space will be secured as part of the final layout which is appropriate in this current edge of settlement location. It is considered that suitable dwelling types, mix and standards have the potential to be achieved. It has also demonstrated that the proposal, in principle has suitable access provision to and from Barkham Ride and can be accommodated in the existing highway network. It is acknowledged that sustainable transport options are lacking, but not to a sufficient degree compared to the existing settlement of Finchamstead North. Notwithstanding, the proposal would secure measures to improve site sustainability.

Overall, in applying the tempered tilted balance required by Paragraph 11d (ii) of the NPPF and when taking all matters into consideration, the adverse impacts of the proposed development would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh those identified benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework when taken as a whole. The application is therefore recommended for approval subject to the conditions and legal obligations set out in this report.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Relevant planning history at the site

- 071164 - Application for certificate of lawful existing use for private dwelling/house, curtilage and paddocks to be used for residential purposes only – Approved 30th July 2007
- 011398 - Proposed two storey side extension to dwelling – Approved 10th August 2001

Relevant planning history nearby the site

31 Barkham Ride:

- 230791/OUT – 31 Barkham Ride – Currently under consideration by the Local Planning Authority

Victoria Gardens, 31 Barkhm Ride:

- 152851 – Application for a certificate of existing lawfulness for the continued use of land at 31 Barkham Ride as residential mobile home park plus commercial building and open yard storage area with parking for commercial vehicles – Split decision made 27th July 2016
- 162682 – Application for certificate of existing lawful development for the residential use of existing mobile homes Nos 7 and 8 – Approved 23rd December 2016

- 190416 – Proposed Lawful Development Certificate for the stationing of six additional mobile homes on existing mobile home park - Approved 29th April 2019
- 191809 – Full application for proposed change of use of commercial/open yard storage area to stationing of 6 mobile homes for residential purposes following the demolition of existing industrial unit – Approved 12th November 2019
- 193402 – Full planning application for the proposed use of land to stationing of 4 mobile homes for residential purposes following demolition of existing dwelling and outbuildings – Approved 15th May 2020
- 202587 – Full application for the proposed infilling of pond area and the erection of two bases for mobile homes. (Retrospective) Approved 1st February 2021
- 211937 - Full planning application for the proposed use of land for stationing of 8 no. mobile homes for residential purposes. (Revised layout further to the grant of planning permissions 191809 and 193402) – Approved 12th November 2021
- 230997 - Full application for the temporary stationing of a sales office for a period of one year. Renewal of 213928. (Retrospective) – Withdrawn 3rd July 2023

DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION	
Proposed units	56
Proposed density - dwellings/hectare	19.3
Number of affordable units proposed	22
Previous land use	Residential (C3 use)
Existing parking spaces	No number formalised
Proposed parking spaces	The indicative site plan shows 111 spaces plus 21 garage spaces
CONSTRAINTS	
	Countryside
	Contaminated Land Consultation Zone
	Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
	Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone (Amber Zone)
	Tree Preservation Order - TPO-1795-2021
	Local Plan Update – Submitted Site
	SSSI Impact Risk Zone
	Thames Basin Heath – 5km Zone
	Ordinary Watercourse
	Public Right of Way – BARK14

UP TO DATE CONSULTATION RESPONSES	
WBC Planning Policy	No objection
WBC Tress and Landscaping	No objection subject to conditions
WBC Ecology	No objection subject to condition and obligation
NatureSpace	No objection
WBC Drainage	No objection subject to condition
WBC Housing (Affordable Housing)	No objection subject to obligation
WBC Employment and Skills	No objection subject to obligation

Natural England	No objection subject to the application passing the Appropriate Assessment
Berkshire Archaeology	No objection subject to conditions
Berkshire Fire and Rescue	No objection – general guidance made
WBC Public Rights of Way	No objection
WBC Green Infrastructure Delivery	No objection subject to financial contribution if open space types are not provided on site
NHS Wokingham	No comments received
NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB)	Financial contribution towards primary healthcare requested
Thames Water	No objection subject to condition
WBC Highways	No objection subject to conditions and obligations
WBC Environmental Health	No objection subject to conditions
WBC Property Services	No comments received
WBC Sports Development	No comments received
Southern Gas	No comments received
Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust	No comments received
WBC Health and Wellbeing	No comments received
Crime Prevention Design Advisor	No comments received
WBC Cleaner and Greener	No comments received
WBC Community Safety	No comments received
WBC Developer Contributions	Outline applications are not CIL liable. CIL liability will be calculated on Reserved Matters application

REPRESENTATIONS

During the course of the application, the scheme was revised and reduced in dwelling numbers (from 68 to 56). At this point, a new consultation period commenced.

The original consultation period (for 68 dwellings) ran between 25th November 2022 – 16th December 2022 and the consultation on the revised scheme (for 56 dwellings) ran between 31st October 2023 – 21st November 2023.

The following comments were made in relation to the original submission and revised submission. Contents of representations have been divided into themes.

COMMENTS RECEIVED ON ORIGINAL SCHEME (68 DWELLINGS):

Town/ Parish Council:

Finchampstead Parish Council - Acknowledge the site is included in emerging FNDP. However have concerns over density, traffic and impact on local amenities and services

Barkham Parish Council– Concern over traffic due to Barkham ride being a narrow country lane

Local Members: *None formally submitted against the application. However Cllr Margetts requested the application to be listed to be determined by the planning committee and raised concern over the site sustainability.*

Neighbours: 67 objections from neighbours were received (some of which included duplicate comments). One comment was received from the British Horse Society.

Highway matters

- Infrastructure can't cope with additional traffic
- Would bring more cars to an already dangerous road
- No pedestrian pathways for locals to walk to nearby
- Already a high volume of traffic, especially when buses pull up, causing obstructions
- Not enough visitor parking spaces
- Concerns about construction traffic
- Cycling is dangerous from the site
- Local bus service is infrequent
- Traffic statement needs to be re-done as it was carried out in school holidays
- Should be traffic calming measures
- Road can't cope with the new school and solar farm too
- Cook Lane was a public route offering a bridleway. This should be re-instated as part of the proposal
- Not a sustainable location – ie not near shops of choice of transport modes
- Should extend the speed limit to 30mph to cover the access point to the new development

Impact on the countryside and surrounding area

- Destroy semi-rural peaceful setting
- Increased pollution for numbers of cars
- Affects the area's character and appearance – visually and in terms of pollution
- Would bring additional noise to the area
- The site is seen as a break between settlements which would be lost
- Proposal is excessive and building density is not in keeping with surrounding area
- 3 storey building is out of character with the surrounding area

Impact on infrastructure/ amenity

- Would have effect on environment and infrastructure (doctors, dentists, schools etc)

Impact on Trees and Ecology

- Will impact roosting bats
- There is a lot of wildlife at the site
- Boundary trees (facing Barkham Ride) should be protected to provide appropriate screening
- Tree survey is inaccurate – trees have not been included and just say wooded area
- Ecological survey has not included other species within the area, only bats and badgers
- Development would be too close to Rooks Nest Farm
- Concerned about trees behind 8-12 Garrett Road
- Disturbance to wildlife
- Request a TPO along all trees on frontage of 33 Barkham Ride

- Woodland reduced to enable development

Impact on Neighbours

- Invade the privacy of Victoria Gardens
- Removal of trees with increase in cars will affect surrounding residents quality of life
- Pond could increase mosquitos and water bourne flies which would then affect neighbouring gardens
- Ecology zone should be incorporated into back gardens to prevent inappropriate use (ie. anti-social behaviour in the area)

Drainage

- Existing pipes cannot take anymore – there have already been water outages
- Would impact existing drainage issues

Officer comment: *All the above will be covered within the report*

Other Matters

- Did not receive consultation letter (8 Victoria Gardens) (36 Barkham Ride)

Officer comment: *The Council's records confirm that these properties were sent a neighbour consultation letter on 25/11/22*

- No reference to ownership or maintenance of the ecology zone and fencing on the boundary

Officer comment: *A management company will be responsible for communal areas on the site*

- Cannot see plans and balance of cheap affordable housing

Officer comment: *Affordable housing provision is a requirement in line with policy CP5 of the Core Strategy*

- The area has already done their bit to provide housing

Officer comment: *An application for planning permission is assessed on its merits and based on planning policy and cannot be resisted for the reasoning above*

- Not sufficient open/ amenity space in the development
- Above site allocation in the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan

Officer comment: *Both of the above points will be discussed within the report*

COMMENTS RECEIVED ON REVISED SCHEME (56 DWELLINGS):

Town/ Parish:

Finchampstead Parish Council – Considers 31 and 33 should be considered together. Also raised concern over traffic given the amount of accesses that will be coming onto Barkham Ride

Barkham Parish Council – Objection – same as that for the original scheme

Local Members: – None

Neighbours: - 40 objections were received from neighbours (which includes some duplications) and an objection from the Barkham Village Residents Association

Highways

- Concern over volume of traffic
- Public transport is limited - Bus service is poor, no weekend services, no paths or cycleways
- Traffic survey done over a half term
- Concern students will be affected trying to cross the road from The Bohunt school
- Multiple exits on to Barkham Ride across various sites

Trees/ Ecology

- Existing trees on Barkham Ride should be retained for screening
- Impact on badgers due to development and cutting down of trees
- Trees have already been felled on site and this should be taken into account
- Concerns over impact on wildlife

Relationship with 31 Barkham Ride

- Combined, applications at 31 and 33 will exceed the agreed limit of 70 houses. Ensure both applications are reviewed together

Impact on surrounding area

- Erodes settlement gap
- Green space should be protected
- Not in keeping with surrounding properties
- Flats are out of keeping with the surrounding area
- Density is too high
- Change character of the neighbourhood

Impact on amenities

- Strain on local services
- Not suitable infrastructure

Impact on neighbouring amenity

- Victoria Gardens will have views onto a brick wall, residents of which bought into a peaceful way of life
- Flats would overlook Victoria Gardens

Drainage/ Water

- Unclear over infrastructure for waste and Thames Water capacity
- Concerns over surface water drainage strategy in close proximity to gardens and foul waste strategy affecting protected trees

Officer comment: All of the above will be covered within the report.

- Seen/ heard comments that WBC's lack of a local housing plan means developers can successfully appeal against declined applications. This must not be allowed to impact how planning officers view an application.

Officer comment: *The borough currently does not have a 5 year housing land supply meaning local planning policies are out of date. As such, Officers are required to apply the 'tilted balance' when assessing applications for residential schemes, as outlined in paragraph d(ii) of the NPPF (2023). This is discussed further in the report.*

PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework
National Design Guide
National Planning Practice Guidance

Core Strategy (CS)

CP1 – Sustainable Development
 CP2 – Inclusive Communities
 CP3 – General Principles for Development
 CP4 – Infrastructure Requirements
 CP5 – Housing Mix, Density and Affordability
 CP6 – Managing Travel Demand
 CP7 – Biodiversity
 CP8 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area
 CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
 CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits (Inc Countryside)
 CP17 – Housing Delivery

MDD Local Plan (MDD)

CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
 CC02 – Development Limits
 CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping
 CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction
 CC05 – Renewable Energy and Decentralised Energy Networks
 CC06 – Noise
 CC07 – Parking
 CC08 – Safeguarding alignments of the Strategic Transport Network & Road Infrastructure
 CC09 – Development and Flood Risk
 CC10 – Sustainable Drainage
 TB05 – Housing Mix
 TB06 – Development of Private Residential Gardens
 TB07 – Internal Space Standards
 TB08 – Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Standards
 TB12 – Employment Skills Plan
 TB21 – Landscape Character
 TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
 TB24 – Designated Heritage Assets
 TB25 – Archaeology

Other

Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

CIL Guidance + 123 List

Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document

Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document

Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan (2023)

PLANNING ISSUES

1.0 Description of Development

- 1.1 The proposal involves demolition of the existing dwelling and outbuildings on site and the erection of 56 dwellings.
- 1.2 Outline permission is sought for access only, however an indicative site layout plan provided. On the indicative plan, it shows:
- 22 Affordable units
 - 5 x 1 bedroom dwellings (flats)
 - 6 x 2 bedroom flats
 - 9 x two bedroom houses
 - 16 x 3 bedroom houses
 - 19 x 4 bedroom houses
 - 1 x 5 bedroom house
 - Areas of open space
 - 111 parking spaces with 21 garage spaces
- 1.3 Members should note that Layout, scale, appearance and landscaping are reserved for future consideration and therefore the site layout as shown is not final or confirmed. However, the number of dwellings would be fixed at a maximum of 56 for any future reserved matters application.

2.0 Site and its surroundings

- 2.1 33 Barkham Ride presently occupied by a large single dwelling with woodland and tree planting to the boundaries. To the west of the site is Victoria Gardens, a development of mobile homes (currently 26), and to the east is Woodside Close which a small development of single storey detached and semi-detached bungalows. The site falls from east to west. The highest point within the site boundary is 62.25 mAOD in the southeastern corner and 51.21 mAOD is the lowest point in the centre of the western boundary.
- 2.2 To the north is an area of two storey housing of mostly detached dwellings in modest plots. To the Northeast is 'Rooks Nest' SANG.
- 2.3 The site's perimeter is well defined by trees and hedgerow. As a result, the site is well contained, with the existing vegetation providing a significant barrier to the surrounding built form and Barkham Ride.



Fig 1. Aerial view of site (Yellow) with adjoining buildings and trees (Google Maps 2024)

2.4 The site is accessed from Barkham Ride to the south, which has a speed limit of 40mph, reducing to 30 at the eastern end of the site. There is a footpath on the northern side of Barkham Ride.

3.0 Principle of Development

a) Principle of development under the development plan

3.1 The site is situated within the designated countryside, outside of but adjacent to the settlement of Finchampstead North, which is a Modest Development Location. The site constitutes previously developed land, at least in part.



Fig 2. Finchampstead North settlement defined in blue with the site in red (Google Maps 2024)

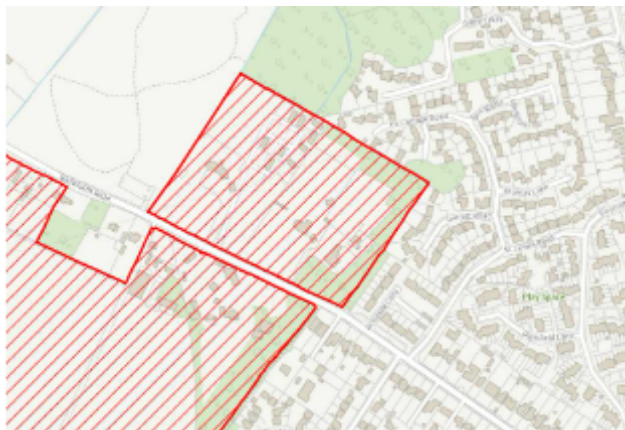
- 3.2 Core Strategy Policy CP9 (Scale and location of development proposals) directs development to locations within development limits and states that *“The scale of development proposals in Wokingham borough must reflect the existing or proposed levels of facilities and services at or in the location, together with their accessibility”*.
- 3.3 Supporting paragraph 4.52 states that Modest Development Locations *“are those with access to some facilities and services either within them or through good public transport services to major development locations or centres in neighbouring areas e.g. Bracknell, Crowthorne and Reading. It is within the development limits of these settlements where modest development would be acceptable.”*
- 3.4 Whilst the specific location of the proposal should allow future residents to reasonably utilise the services and infrastructure present in Finchampstead North and higher order settlements via public transport, the site is not located within development limits and therefore the proposal is contrary to Policy CP9.
- 3.5 Development proposals in the designated countryside should be assessed against Core Strategy Policy CP11 (Proposals outside Development Limits). Policy CP11 states that development proposals will not normally be permitted in the countryside except where one or more of the specified exceptions apply:
- 1) *It contributes to diverse and sustainable rural enterprises within the borough, or in the case of other countryside based enterprises and activities, it contributes and/or promotes recreation in, and enjoyment of, the countryside; and*
 - 2) *It does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings; and*
 - 3) *It is contained within suitably located buildings which are appropriate for conversion, or in the case of replacement buildings would bring about environmental improvement; or*
 - 4) *In the case of residential extensions, does not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building;*
 - 5) *In the case of replacement dwellings the proposal must:*
 - i) *Bring about environmental improvements; or*
 - ii) *Not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building.*
 - 6) *Essential community facilities cannot be accommodated within development limits or through the re-use/replacement of an existing building;*
 - 7) *Affordable housing on rural exception sites in line with CP9.*
- 3.6 The application proposal does not meet any of these specified exceptions and is therefore contrary to Policy CP11.
- 3.7 Turning to the overall aim of Policy CP11, this is to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment. Regarding the former, the application site is located between development limits to the east and dwellings at no.31 Barkham Ride to the west. It is not considered that development of the application site would lead to the physical or perceived coalescence, or unduly compromise the separate identity of settlements (Finchampstead North and Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location). This conclusion is supported by the Council’s Planning Policy team.

b) Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan (FNDP)

- 3.8 The application site is located within the parish of Finchampstead and therefore the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan (formally adopted at Council on 21 September 2023) forms part of the development plan for the area.
- 3.9 The FNDP contains a number of policies on issues including housing; settlement separation; the natural and historic environment; retail facilities; business and commercial development; transport; and design. These inter-relate with other material considerations which are to be discussed.
- 3.10 Section 5.3 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan notes and supports the proposed allocations within RGS (discussed below) located within the parish. This includes the proposed allocation of 31-33 Barkham Ride for 66 dwellings (net).

c) Principle of development under the emerging/consultative policy

- 3.11 The Local Plan Update (LPU), the plan which will supersede the adopted Core Strategy and MDD local plans, is at the consultative stage of preparation. To date the council has consulted on two draft strategies: the Draft Plan (2020) and the Revised Growth Strategy (RGS) (2021).
- 3.12 The Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) (2021) published alongside the RGS provides an assessment of the application site (ref. 5FI003 which covers a wider area incorporating both 33 and 31 Barkham Ride as illustrated below):



- 3.13 The assessment concludes that the whole site is potentially suitable for development, indicating 66 dwellings, having a satisfactory relationship with the existing settlement pattern and performing comparatively well in respect of highways and accessibility. Site 5FI003 was proposed as a housing allocation, being listed in Policy H2 of the Draft Plan. It is acknowledged that the site allocation is across both 31 and 33 Barkham Ride, however both of these sites are subject to separate outline planning permissions. This matter will be discussed later in the report.

3.14 Notwithstanding the above, given the LPU is at a consultative stage, the draft strategy and related draft policies have limited weight in determining planning applications. However, it must also be recognised that the assessment of land in the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) is high level with the purpose of informing options within the plan-making process and therefore nonetheless useful in providing an understanding as to how the site is viewed in context of plan-making and its anticipated role and contribution towards meeting the boroughs identified housing needs over the future plan period.

d) Housing land supply position and the ‘tilted balance’

3.15 The latest published assessment of housing land supply concluded a deliverable supply of 3.2 years as of 31st March 2023.

3.16 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states under paragraph 11 that where a local authority is unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, the most important policies relating to the application may be viewed as being out of date. It continues to advise that unless there are specific policies in the NPPF protecting the land subject to the application, that permission should be granted unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF as a whole.

3.17 The December 2023 NPPF introduced a revised approach to housing land supply, to better reflect progress made with local plans:

“From the date of publication of this revision of the Framework, for decision-making purposes only, certain local planning authorities will only be required to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of four years’ worth of housing (with a buffer, if applicable, as set out in paragraph 77) against the housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old, instead of a minimum of five years as set out in paragraph 77 of this Framework.”

3.18 This applies to authorities which have an emerging local plan that has either been submitted for examination or has reached Regulation 18 or Regulation 19, including both a policies map and proposed allocations towards meeting housing need. These arrangements apply for a period of two years from the publication date of this revision of the Framework.’ (NPPF: 226)

3.19 The council published a Draft Local Plan for consultation in 2020, including proposed housing allocations and a policies map. This meets the criteria set out in the NPPF that would require a lower 4-year housing land supply. Nonetheless, the councils HLS is below 4 years.

3.20 This presumption in favour of sustainable development outlined in paragraph 11 of the NPPF is commonly referred to as the ‘tilted balance’. It should be noted that the application of paragraph 11 of the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. This is set out clearly in paragraph 12 of the NPPF and is a matter of law.

- 3.21 Material to decisions on planning applications involving housing is the underlying reasons for the shortfall (whether 5 or 4 years) in deliverable housing sites. The shortfall is not as a result of non-delivery of housing but due to the significant over delivery in recent years reducing the bank of land with extant planning permissions.
- 3.22 All evidence and assessments show that whether the housing target is defined through the requirement set out in the Core Strategy or the outcome of the standard method set out in national Planning Practice Guidance, delivery has significantly exceeded the target. If over delivery were taken into account over the whole Core Strategy plan period or since the introduction of the standard method, there would be no shortfall over the coming five years with over delivery significantly exceeding the shortfall.
- 3.23 In this context, the weight to be attached to the benefits of additional housing under paragraph 11 of the NPPF should be tempered. This reflects the approach set out in the following appeals where the Inspectors only applied moderate weight to the provision of additional housing:
- Willow Tree House (Application ref 203560, Appeal ref APP/X0360/W/21/3275086)
 - Land at Baird Road (Application ref 202303, Appeal ref APP/X0360/W/21/3276169)
 - Land to the west of St Anne's Drive and south of London Road (Application ref 203544, Appeal ref APP/X0360/W/22/3297645)
- 3.24 As discussed above, paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged due to the Council being unable to deliver a 4 year housing land supply. Within paragraph 14 of the NPPF it acknowledges the relationship between paragraph 11(d) and those areas that have an adopted Neighbourhood Plan, which is the case in Finchampstead. It states:
- In situations where the presumption (at paragraph 11d) applies to applications involving the provision of housing, the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with the neighbourhood plan is likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, provided the following apply:*
- a) the neighbourhood plan became part of the development plan five years or less before the date on which the decision is made; and*
 - b) the neighbourhood plan contains policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement*
- 3.25 In this instance, paragraph 14 of the NPPF is not engaged as whilst the Neighbourhood Plan became part of the Wokingham development plan within the last five years, the neighbourhood plan does not explicitly contain allocations to meet an identified housing requirement. Rather it notes and supports, at section 5.3, the proposed allocations located in Finchampstead Parish contained within the emerging LPU (as per the most recent consultation, being the RGS) which includes 31-33 Barkham Ride-
- 3.26 As such, para 14 of the NPPF is not engaged in requiring any adverse impacts of the proposal, require an the application of para 14 of the NPPF, and any identified will not be weighted to 'significantly and demonstrably' outweigh the benefits' as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan. A full assessment taking paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF into account will be made.

3.27 Paragraph 84 of the NPPF seeks to avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances such as a rural worker's dwelling, optimal viable use of a heritage asset, reuse of redundant or disused buildings, and subdivision of an existing building or if the building is of exceptional design. The site is located adjacent to settlement limits, including large amounts of residential dwellings on partially previously developed land. As such, the proposal will not result in an isolated new dwellings and will comply with paragraph 84 of the NPPF.

e) Loss of the existing dwellinghouse, outbuildings and residential garden

3.28 The single dwelling which would be demolished is of little architectural value and therefore its demolition as a result of the proposal is not resisted in principle. Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy notes that loss of dwellings will not be supported, however in this case whilst there would be a net gain of 55 dwellings.

3.29 Policy TB06 of the MDD states that development of private residential gardens will be accepted where:

a) The proposal makes a positive contribution to the character of the area in terms of:

i. The relationship of the existing built form and spaces around buildings within the surrounding area; ii. A layout which integrates with the surrounding area with regard to the built up coverage of each plot, building line(s), rhythm of plot frontages, parking areas, and

*iii. Existing pattern of openings and boundary treatments on the site frontage
iv. Providing appropriate hard and soft landscaping, particularly at site boundaries
v. Compatibility with the general building height within the surrounding area
vi. The materials and elevational detail are of high quality, and where appropriate distinctive and/ or complementary*

b) The application site provides 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

c) The proposal includes access, which meets appropriate highway standards

d) The proposal does not lead to unacceptable tandem development

e) The design and layout minimises exposure of existing private boundaries to public areas and avoids the need for additional physical security measures

3.30 Many of the above matters relate to other material considerations that will be discussed later in this report. Additionally, many of the above matters will also be required to be assessed more thoroughly at Reserved Matters stage where details are finalised. However, the existence of Policy TB06 inherently supports the development of private residential gardens in principle, subject to these wider criteria. This is echoed by policy D3 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan.

f) Conclusion of principle of development

- 3.31 The application proposal is located within the designated countryside, adjacent to, but outside of, the development limits of Finchampstead North. The proposed development does not satisfy any of the exceptions set out in Policy CP11 concerning development beyond development limits in countryside locations. The application is thereby contrary to these aspects of the development plan.
- 3.32 By virtue of the council's current housing land supply position, the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the NPPF at paragraph 11 is now engaged in the decision-making process, whereas paragraph 14 is not. Accordingly, an assessment will need to be made of whether any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole (the tilted balance).
- 3.33 This balancing exercise will be undertaken in context of past over supply, which acts to temper the weight to be attached to the benefits of additional housing in the tilted balance.
- 3.34 It is noted that the proposed development is situated where future occupiers would have a degree of access to services and facilities within a modest development location and higher order settlements via public transport. The application site encompasses part of the promoted site 5FI003, which was assessed in the HELAA as potentially suitable for development and has been proposed as a housing allocation in the emerging LPU. The tempered tilted balance will be returned to in the planning balance section of this report.

4.0 Impact on Landscape/ Countryside

- 4.1 Policy TB21 of the MDD states that proposals must demonstrate how they have addressed the requirements of the Council's Landscape Character Assessment, including the landscape quality; landscape strategy; landscape sensitivity and key issues. In addition, proposals shall retain or enhance the condition, character and features that contribute to the landscape.
- 4.2 Policy CC02 of the MDD states that planning permission for proposals at the edge of settlements will only be granted where they can demonstrate that the development, including boundary treatments, is within development limits and respects the transition between the built-up area and the open countryside by taking account of the character of the adjacent countryside and landscape.
- 4.3 Policy D2 of the FNDP states that proposals should be located and designed to maintain the separation of settlements and to complement the characteristics of the landscape in the immediate locality.
- 4.4 The site is located in landscape character area (LCA) M1 Finchampstead Forested and Settled Sands which is a high-quality landscape with moderate sensitivity and a low capacity for change. The character area stretches from Crowthorne in the east and just beyond the site at Rooks Nest in the west. The M1 LCA is characterised by large swathes of interconnected forestry and woodland which dominates the area over farmland, although just beyond Rooks Nest the reverse is true and farmland of fields and hedgerow dominates.

- 4.5 The 'rides' are a distinctive feature of the M1 character being created through the Royal Forest of Windsor in the 18th century and impart a strong linear character to the landscape and have provided the framework for a strong settlement character of low density, mostly detached dwellings lining the rides and within the settlement area some areas of more post-war suburban development of unremarkable character.
- 4.6 The M1 LCA is accessible for recreation with parks and open spaces connected by a network of footpaths and bridleways. The landscape is highly enclosed except for views along the rides that are framed by mature Oak trees, many of which are protected and highly valued in the landscape and includes some Veteran trees.
- 4.7 The settlement pattern of low-density dwellings in large plots along the rides and notably occasional wooded gaps between areas of settlement, integration of development in the wooded landscape and absence of commercial or industrial buildings and structures, and a sense of tranquillity and remoteness are noted as a 'Valuable Landscape Attributes' of the M1 LCA.
- 4.8 The key issues affecting the M1 LCA include landscape issues affected by climate and woodland management. Development issues concern is pressure for new residential development inside and outside the area that impact the landscape character along with continued pressure for settlement expansion, infill and densification within the existing settlements leading to habitat loss. In addition, pressure for backland development, and the inevitable continued pressure for new roads and road improvement and resulting increase in traffic generated by increase in development affects the tranquillity of the area and impacts on the landscape to the south of Wokingham where the landscape provides tranquil and distinct gaps, and breathing spaces of rural character against settlement creep between increasing suburbanisation.
- 4.9 The Landscape Strategy for the M1 LCA is to conserve and enhance existing character. In terms of development, the aim is to conserve and enhance the rural setting and gaps between settlements and maintain the low-density domestic character of development.
- 4.10 The Landscape Guidelines for the M1 LCA include;
- Conserve and enhance the integration of urban edges through wooded boundaries and large-species trees and maintain the important vistas along rides.
Enhance sense of place through careful planning and design (including siting, massing, scale, materials and landscape – and sensitive lighting to retain dark skies at night) to minimise the impacts of any potential new development and particularly vertical elements on valuable landscape attributes.*

Submitted Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)

- 4.11 A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been submitted to support the application and assesses the impact of the development within the surrounding landscape. This has been reviewed in detail by the Council's Trees & Landscaping Officer. It should be noted that LVIA's are subjective assessments. The below summarises the findings of the assessment.

- 4.12 Within the LVIA, the Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment judged the M1 landscape to be of a high quality and high sensitivity with the lowest capacity for change. The M1 character area is judged overall to be in good condition.
- 4.13 The LVIA assess the effects of the development on landscape character. At the moment, it concludes the character of the site is limited as it is well enclosed by vegetation and has limited value due to its developed nature.
- 4.14 Effects on the landscape would be localised and therefore effects are very localised on landscape character outside of the site. As such, effects would be limited or neutral given the degree of enclosure and the characteristics of the site that already exist.
- 4.15 The effect on Landscape Character would be minor and adverse due to intensification of urban character but effects can be mitigated through mature landscaping. The wider Landscape Character Area would not be affected.
- 4.16 In terms of effects on visual amenity the proposed development will have some localised moderate and adverse effects on receptors on Barkham Ride. Disruption to the visual environment during construction will be experienced along the boundary with the road, directly through the building of the new housing and associated highway works, and the traffic movements on Barkham Ride associated with construction. These effects would be moderate and adverse. At completion, the applicant considers that development in this location would not be out of character on the settlement edge but acknowledges that the proposal would inevitably increase the density of urban development within the site compared to existing. Beyond the immediate setting of the site, medium to long distance views are curtailed by the mature landscape structure in and around the settlement and the gentle topography so that the changes to the site would not be visible and largely neutral in effect.
- 4.17 Overall, the LVIA concludes the magnitude of change on the Landscape Character area would be negligible and effects would be slight to no effect.

Review of Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

- 4.18 WBC Trees & Landscaping Officers concur that the sensitivity of the site is moderate, as outlined in the Landscape Character Assessment. However, considers the magnitude of change to be medium/ low based on the descriptors in the LVIA as a result of the development. This differs to the conclusion of the applicant which concludes the magnitude of change would be negligible. As noted, LVIA's are subjective with different levels and judgements of perceived impact on a landscape character being reached.
- 4.19 Whilst the opinion of the impact of development on the surroundings differs from that of the LVIA, WBC Trees & Landscaping ultimately raised no objection and were content with the principle of development for 56 dwellings on the provision that there would be a robust landscape scheme that pays particularly attention to new boundary tree planting, and landscaping along the road axis, it will be possible to include additional screening to the development to match that of the landscape screening typical of Barkham Ride and to enhance the setting not completely

screen development from view but to ensure that landscaping enhances the setting of the buildings and contributes to the high quality landscape character in accordance with Policies TB21 and CC03 of the Local Plan. This is secured by condition.

- 4.20 Ultimately this was also the conclusion made in the LVIA that the development could suitably integrate within the wider landscape, and not be detrimental to the wider landscape, given its containment, with the provision and securing of landscape buffering to reduce the prominence of the development but provide landscaping to contribute and enhance the surrounding countryside.
- 4.21 Furthermore, as the site is allocated in the RGS, it was envisaged, and accepted through the HELAA exercise, that a residential development on this site has the opportunity to broadly confirm with the existing settlement form and landscape character. It would also not lead to the physical or perceived coalescence, or unduly compromise the separate identity of settlements.
- 4.22 Objections have been raised over the loss of green space/ countryside. Commentary on the impact on the countryside has been made above. However, it should also be noted that whilst the site has a planning designation of countryside, in reality the site is not open or accessible countryside. Instead, it is a private residential garden. Therefore, the proposal would not result in the loss of publicly accessible countryside of high amenity value.

Indicative site Layout

- 4.23 Policy TB06 states that development within residential gardens should:
- a) *The proposal makes a positive contribution to the character of the area in terms of:*
 - i. *The relationship of the existing built form and spaces around buildings within the surrounding area;*
 - ii. *A layout which integrates with the surrounding area with regard to the built up coverage of each plot, building line(s), rhythm of plot frontages, parking areas, and*
 - iii. *Existing pattern of openings and boundary treatments on the site frontage*
 - iv. *Providing appropriate hard and soft landscaping, particularly at site boundaries*
 - v. *Compatibility with the general building height within the surrounding area*
 - vi. *The materials and elevational detail are of high quality, and where appropriate distinctive and/ or complementary*
 - b) *The application site provides 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*
 - c) *The proposal includes access, which meets appropriate highway standards*
 - d) *The proposal does not lead to unacceptable tandem development*
 - e) *The design and layout minimises exposure of existing private boundaries to public areas and avoids the need for additional physical security measures*

- 4.24 Policy D1 and D3 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan echoes a number of the above in that building heights should be reflective of the surrounding area and that development should make a positive contribution to the character of the local area through appropriate site layouts with existing built form, appropriate boundary treatments, landscaping, materials and arrangement of fenestration.
- 4.25 Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states development should 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.
- 4.26 The Wokingham Borough Design Guide (2012) contains an array of design policies. This outline planning application shows an indicative site layout. As this outline application is solely seeking approval for access only, layout is a reserved matter for future consideration and so is subject to change. As such, whilst comments can be made on this indicative layout, this may not be the final layout.
- 4.27 Where development is located within or adjacent to the countryside, reduced density of dwellings is expected to highlight a natural transition from built form to rural landscape. Policy R10 of the Borough Design Guide 2012 says that an assessment of an appropriate density must be design led as well as considering the number of units per hectare to ensure that the development related well to local character.
- 4.28 During the course of this application, the scheme has been amended in line with feedback from Officers, which interrelate with some neighbouring objections. The following points were raised:
- Density too high
 - Woodland to the north, which provides a backdrop to the semi-suburban character would be lost
 - Layout would not be an appropriate transition to the woodland at the rear would be lost behind rear gardens of dwellings
 - More incidental landscaping required
- 4.29 For comparison, the original layout (left) and proposed layout (right) are below:



- 4.30 Looking at the adjoining residential development on the eastern boundary of the site, the density of the dwellings in Garrett Way, is approximately 18 dwellings per hectare. At Woodside Close, adjacent to the site, the density is approx. 24 dwellings per hectare. To the north, dwellings in Fir Cottage Road equate to approximately 18 hectares per dwelling. To the west, the Victoria Gardens development equates to approx. 517 dwellings per hectare. The proposed development at adjacent 31 Barkham Ride presently equates to approximately 17.6 dwellings per ha.
- 4.31 In response to neighbouring residents' and Officers' concerns regarding density, the scheme has been revised to reduce the quantum of development from 68 to 56 dwellings. This equates to 19.3 dwellings per ha which is comparable to those residential developments referred to above.
- 4.32 As a result in the reduction in density a comparably more spacious development can be delivered at reserved matter stage, allowing more opportunity for incidental landscaping. It has also ensured the development is comparable to the density of its surroundings (excluding Victoria Gardens which has a much higher density) rather than being an out of keeping, overly dense development.
- 4.33 The indicative level of hard landscaping on site has also been amended to reduce the number of parking courts as this is characteristically an urban feature. It is acknowledged that one parking court is still shown on the layout, towards the front of the site, however this has to be balanced against parking requirements and would be more formally considered at reserved matters stage. The indicative layout and positioning of plots is of a reasonably simple layout around the internal site roads. This is reflective of surrounding roads (Victoria Gardens, Fir Cottage Road etc). There is some meandering of internal site roads, like these other developments and with dwellings facing outwards onto the roads. Given the site is/would be very self-contained, views into the development will be limited, as discussed earlier in the report when looking at the LVIA submitted. As such, the indicative layout does not appear conflict with an established pattern, positioning or rhythm of development outside the site.
- 4.34 The indicative layout has also seen re-orientation of dwellings heading northwards, closest to the Ecological area. This means that gardens would not be facing the woodland or enclose this space, but rather dwelling frontages which opens the Ecological area to the wider estate. Third party comments have stated that the ecology zone should be incorporated into back gardens to prevent inappropriate use in this space (such as it being used as a space to engage in anti-social behaviour). However, public open space is required on site and the inclusion of this is welcomed in landscaping terms. No comments were received by the Crime Design and Prevention Officer and it will fall to the management company to ensure appropriate management of the space is maintained.
- 4.35 A number of plots on the eastern side have also been re-orientated to avoid large trees in rear gardens and would enable a better connection to the Ecology Area and extend the open space facility. Likewise on the western side of the site, the density of development has been reduced, removing a series of terraced houses which had the appearance of being hemmed in. A footpath is also indicatively shown which travels alongside plot no. 53 and around the Ecological Area. A Local Area of Play (LAP) has also been included in the design meaning this space will have some designated recreational function, as well as providing a space for informal

recreation, alongside providing an open buffer against the woodland to create a transitional space between built form and the existing countryside (woodland). Despite this, the adjoining development at Victoria Gardens and the possibility of development at 31 Barkham Ride, effectively reduces the site's role as the final transition between built form and rural landscape. In this regard the indicative layout and density is supported.

- 4.36 Objectors have raised concern over management of the woodland area; this will be the responsibility of a management company and a S106 obligation for the establishment of a management company is recommended along with securing landscaping management details.
- 4.37 A parameters plan has been provided which indicates the general areas for development and public open space. It will be conditioned that future Reserved Matters applications accord with the parameters plan and respect the development and open space areas indicated when designing the final layout. This will ensure that the final development would have a good portion of open space on site protected from development.
- 4.38 When looking at the proposed development from Barkham Ride itself, the street facing dwellings to Barkham Ride reflect and complement the character of the wider street scene. They would be substantially set back and respect the settlement pattern with a deep landscape buffer, consequently reducing the visual intrusion of the development on Barkham Ride.
- 4.39 Overall, the revised layout is comparably more landscape led than the original submission and owing to the appropriate areas of public open space, indicative landscaping strategy and reduction in dwelling numbers meaning dwelling density is comparable to nearby developments, the indicative layout is accepted for the purposes of outline planning permission as it suitably demonstrates that in principle, the site can be developed for 56 dwellings which are of a suitable size and mix, without conflicting with nearby residential densities or harming the Barkham Ride street scene. As such, in principle the development accords with TB06 of the MDD, CP3 of the Core Strategy and Policy D3 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan. However, full consideration and assessment on layout will be made at Reserved Matters when the final layout is presented to Officers.

Detailed Design

- 4.40 As this is an outline application where scale and appearance are reserved for future consideration, no elevational drawings of dwellings have been provided at this stage. However, Officers consider it important to set parameters for future reserved matters applications pertaining to these topics. As mentioned in paragraph 4.36, a parameters plan was provided which indicates general development locations and those excluded and to be retained as open space.
- 4.41 In the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan, policy D1 states that building heights should reflect the character and appearance of the parish and 3 storey development housing will only be supported within the area of Strategic Development Location (SDL). As this site is not within the SDL, building heights should be two storey. Officers will be mindful of this when assessing any Reserved Matter for scale if the development.

- 4.42 A condition requiring the submission of material details for dwellings and hardstanding areas (parking areas and roads) will also be included to ensure that those chosen will be suitable and complementary to both the existing settlement and nearby countryside.

Boundary treatment

- 4.43 Policy CC03 of the MDD states that development should make a positive contribution in terms of boundary treatment on site frontages.
- 4.44 Policy D2 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan focuses on appropriate and traditional boundary treatments being incorporated into development to complement the characteristics of the landscape.
- 4.45 Appropriate boundary treatment is essential on all elevations in this countryside and ecologically sensitive location, along with for the benefit of protecting neighbours on the southern, eastern and western elevations.
- 4.46 An indicative landscaping strategy has been provided and indicates hedging/ soft landscaping on all boundaries. Full details on boundary treatment would be secured via condition and will also form part of reserved matters details and it will be expected that this is reflective of the wider countryside landscape (such as vegetated boundaries, post and rail fencing).

5.0 Public open space

- 5.1 Policy TB08 of the MDD outlines the public open space standards required for new residential development.
- 5.2 Whilst public open space is a factor in a landscape led scheme and design, public open space is required for designated recreation and other purposes.
- 5.3 The indicative site layout demonstrates that there is sufficient space on site to accord with the various required open space categories outlined in TB08 in principle, with the exception of outdoor sports facilities.
- 5.4 The parameters plan will secure the minimum level of open space that will be provided on site, and at reserved matters, a breakdown of the different open space types will be required, and this has been secured via condition.
- 5.5 A S106 obligation will be attached requiring a financial contribution in lieu of those open space types that are not being provided on site (which are outdoor sports facilities and potentially allotments). It will also require a management company to be established and to take responsibility for the areas of Public Open Space and play equipment, unless the play equipment can be provided to an adoptable standard.

6.0 Housing Mix

- 6.1 Policy CP5 of the Core Strategy states that Planning permission will be granted for residential development providing a mix and balance of densities, dwelling types, tenures and sizes.
- 6.2 Housing mix has indicatively been demonstrated on the proposed layout however this is subject to change at reserved matters. At present, the following mix is shown:

Housing Type	Quantity (Market Housing)	Quantity (Affordable Housing)
1 Bed Flat	0	5
2 Bed Flat	0	6
2 Bed House	7	2
3 Bed House	10	6
4 Bed House	16	3
5 Bed House	1	0
TOTAL	34	22

- 6.3 Dwellings would be a mixture of apartments, terraced, semi-detached, link-detached and detached dwellings which is a full range of dwelling types. Paragraph 5.2 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan highlights that Finchampstead is predominantly an area that attracts people wanting to by family homes.
- 6.4 For the purposes of this outline application, the indicative mix of dwelling types and sizes is accepted. However, this is subject to full Reserved Matters layout which may alter size and typology of dwellings, however through the use of condition, Officers will be able to secure an appropriate mix. Whilst objections have been raised that apartments are not characteristic of the area, Officers consider that it will be the design of any apartment building that will determine acceptability, and these will be carefully assessed in due course, rather than any in-principle objection to the provision of flats themselves. Subject to being of a suitable scale and height, there is no reason why such units would appear uncharacteristic whilst at the same time providing more variety of accommodation within the locality.
- 6.5 The indicative dwelling mix and tenure is acceptable in relation to CP5 of the Core Strategy.

7.0 Housing Affordability

- 7.1 Policy CP5 of the Core Strategy states that affordable housing must reflect the sizes and types that meet the proven needs of people who are not able to compete in the general housing market.
- 7.2 The threshold for affordable housing is 5 dwellings or more for residential sites of 0.16 hectares or larger. The site exceeds this threshold and therefore there is a requirement for the provision of affordable housing.
- 7.3 To meet the requirements of Policy CP5 of the Core Strategy, a minimum of 40% of the total number of units (net) should be provided as affordable housing. This equates to 22 dwellings of the proposed additional 56 dwellings. As can be seen in the above table, a policy compliant Affordable Housing contribution is proposed.

- 7.4 The Council's preference is for onsite affordable housing in the first instance, with a 70:25:5 Social Rent: First Homes: Shared Ownership housing tenure split in line with policy. Therefore, we would expect to see a tenure split of 16 x Social Rent, 5 x First Homes and 1 x Shared Ownership dwelling.
- 7.5 The indicative dwelling mix is largely acceptable as it is mostly in line with the policy outlined in the Affordable Housing SPD, albeit with an over-provision of 2-bed apartments. However, as there is an over-provision of 2-bed apartments at the expense of 2-bed houses the Council's Housing team consider this mix acceptable conditional on the basis that the larger 3 and 4 bed houses are prioritised for Social Rent and the apartments prioritised for First Homes reflective of need and considering deliverability of these tenures. Furthermore, the Housing team request that 2 of the 1- bed apartments are designated at Social Rents for Care Leavers.
- 7.6 All affordable housing units will need to be built in accordance with the standards requirements and latest guidance issued by Homes England and/ or the Regulator of Social Housing, meet the national space standards and conform to building regulation M4(2) (or any other applicable regulation) to ensure the provision of lifetime homes which are adaptable to varying needs.
- 7.7 The affordable units should be transferred to the Council's Local Housing Company (Wokingham Housing Limited) or one of the Council's preferred Registered Provider (RP) partners for a price that will enable the RP or Local Housing Company to deliver the affordable housing without the need for public subsidy.
- 7.8 The Affordable Housing requirements, as outlined above, will be secured via a S106 obligation. It will secure 22 dwellings as Affordable Housing, with the final mix to be determined following Reserved Matters when dwelling types and sizes are fixed.

8.0 Residential Amenity

- 8.1 Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development should not be of detriment to adjoining land users. Policies within the Borough Design Guide (BDG) concentrate on standards of accommodation for future occupiers of residential development.
- 8.2 It is important to note amenity requirements for future occupiers of the proposed development and existing neighbours near to a development site both need to be considered.

Internal amenity standards

- 8.3 Policy TB07 states that "*Proposals for new residential units, including change of use or conversions, should ensure that the internal layout and size are suitable to serve the amenity requirements of future occupiers.*" This is also echoed by Policy R17 of the Wokingham Borough Design Guide (2012).
- 8.4 R18 of the Borough Design Guide requires sufficient sunlight and daylight to new properties, with dwellings afforded a reasonable dual outlook and southern aspect. Section 12 of the NPPF seeks to promote development that has good architecture and layout with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users and Section

14 states that new development should take account of layout, orientation, and massing to minimise energy consumption.

- 8.5 No elevational drawings of dwellings or floorplans showing dwelling internal space standards have been provided under this outline application. However, the indicative site layout provides an accommodation schedule which shows the dwellings complying or exceeding minimum spaces standards. A condition will be applied ensuring that dwellings shall meet internal space standards outlined in the Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standard (2015) when plans are submitted for Reserved Matters to ensure dwellings would be of a suitable size for future occupiers.

External amenity space

- 8.6 R16 of the Borough Design Guide SPD stipulates that each dwelling should have access to some form of amenity space and it should retain and protect privacy, benefit from sunlight where possible and be able to accommodate 2–4 chairs and a small table. R16 of the Borough Design Guide states that new housing should have amenity space that has a depth of at least 11m.
- 8.7 On the indicative site plan, new dwellings would have a suitable rear amenity space complying with this depth, and flats would have access to amenity space around the building and within the areas of public open space.
- 8.8 Whilst the site layout is indicative, it demonstrates that 56 dwellings of a policy compliant internal size and garden depth could be accommodated on the site. Full layout, scale and appearance of the dwellings would be reserved for future consideration under a reserved matters application.

Existing neighbours

- 8.9 The closest neighbouring properties are located at Victoria Gardens to the west, Fir Cottage Road to the north and Woodside Close and Garrett Road to the east. Officers also have to be mindful that dwellings within the site itself also need to be acceptable in relation to one another.

Overlooking/ Privacy

- 8.10 Whilst no floorplans have been provided, as they are not required at this outline stage, Officers are confident that windows can be minimised, particularly on the western elevation (with Victoria Gardens) as this is where the closest relationship to neighbours sits. This indicatively appears the case owing to the location of site roads and garden spaces. Dwellings within the site themselves will also comply with relevant separation distances outlined in the Borough Design Guide for two storey buildings.
- 8.11 Any application for Reserved Matters will ensure that window positioning will be suitable to maintain privacy for dwellings.

Light

- 8.12 Policy R18 of the Borough Design Guide SPD aims to protect sunlight and daylight to existing properties, with no material impact on levels of daylight in the habitable rooms of adjoining properties.
- 8.13 From the indicative site plan, dwellings would have the same/ similar rear and front building lines meaning that development will not extend beyond one another to compromise access to natural light.
- 8.14 It is not envisaged that development would result in loss of light to existing neighbours outside of the application site owing to the landscaped buffers and suitable separation distances. However, full consideration of neighbouring impacts will be made at Reserved Matters.

Overbearing

- 8.15 R16 of the BDG outlines separation distances for new residential development to limit a sense of enclosure. It states that as a minimum, there should be a 22m back-to-back separation distance between 1-2 storey dwellings. Whilst dwelling heights are not known at this indicative stage, the Reserved Matter of scale will assess to ensure that building heights are reflective of the surrounding area and to not result in any overbearing impacts.
- 8.16 In terms of separation distances with properties outside of the site, the indicative site layout shows a separation distance of approximately 8.5m between two of the proposed dwellings (plots 12 and 17) and three homes at Victoria Gardens (flank-to-flank relationship). Within Policy R16 of the Borough Design Guide, there is no flank-to-flank minimum relationship distance. However given the provision of suitable boundary treatment, the gap of between 3m and 4m between the development and the western boundary, plus the three dwellings at Victoria Gardens being single storey, combined with an overall separation distance of over 8m, this is considered suitable so as not to result in an overbearing impact on these neighbours. Concerns were raised from Victoria Garden neighbours about looking onto a blank wall. It would appear that only one window from some of the mobile homes would face onto the application site. However, as mentioned it would be ensured that suitable boundary treatment would be in place at reserved matters stage. Owing to the mobile homes being single storey, their outlook is only at one level, and that would face boundary treatment; which would be finalised in due course and the separation distance being deemed acceptable to not appear overbearing. Other dwellings at Victoria Gardens will face on to an area of public open space.
- 8.17 The indicative site plan shows some dwellings would have their front elevation facing onto properties on Fir Cottage Road, however owing to the extensive vegetation screening the northern boundary, plus the separation distance of approx. 42m, there would be no concerns over loss of privacy or overbearing. Properties are also indicated to have a back-to-back relationship with properties on Woodside Close. However, again, the separation distance of approx. 52m would be well in excess of requirements outlined in R16 where the minimum is 22m.
- 8.18 Overall, in principle, development could suitably relate to neighbouring properties in terms of separation distances and not having adverse overbearing and light implications to a harmful degree. However, this would be more thoroughly assessed

at reserved matters stage where the site layout is finalised, with particular attention to ensure the final layout is suitable on the western boundary with Victoria Gardens.

- 8.19 Measures for protecting nearby residents during the demolition and construction phases are detailed within the Environmental Health section of the report.

9.0 Disabled access

- 9.1 In determining this application, the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, or belief.
- 9.2 Policy CP2 of the Core Strategy also seeks to ensure that new development contributes to the provision of sustainable and inclusive communities, including for aged persons, children and the disabled. 10–20% of all dwellings should be to Lifetime Homes standards in accordance with Policy CP5 of the Core Strategy and Policy TB05 of the MDD Local Plan.
- 9.3 In this case it equates to 6 - 12 dwellings. Although the Lifetime Homes standards has been replaced by the new National Technical Housing standards, the need to design and build accessible and adaptable accommodation remains integral to future neighbourhood planning. It will be conditioned that this percentage of dwellings are in line with M4(2) of Building Regulations which replaced the Lifetime Homes standard.

10. Highways

Vehicle and cycle parking

- 10.1 Policy CC07 and Appendix 2 of the MDD Local Plan stipulates minimum off street car parking standards, including provision for charging facilities.
- 10.2 Even though this is an outline application, highways requested that the parking calculator be submitted based on an indicative masterplan and housing mix. This assessment has resulted in 85 allocated spaces, 26 unallocated spaces (including visitor spaces) and 21 garages (9 single and 6 double). This is in line with parking standards.
- 10.3 A spot check has been undertaken and parking spaces meet minimum dimension of 5m x 2.5m and the parallel spaces meet minimum dimensions of 6m x 2.5. A spot check has been undertaken and the car ports meet minimum dimensions of 6m x 3m although any driveway that is beside a building or fence would need to be at least 3.1m wide to ensure doors can open. For the parking courts there is at least 6m behind the spaces for safe manoeuvring.
- 10.4 The internal dimensions of garages will need to be 7m x 3m (if cycle storage is included) or 6m x 3m if cycle storage is not included. Alternative cycle storage details are required if the smaller size garages are chosen.
- 10.5 All parking spaces in front of garages would need to be set back 0.5m from the garage doors to allow for door to open.

- 10.6 Highways is therefore content with the level of parking based on the indicative layout and it demonstrates that a policy compliant level of car parking can be achieved on the site for 56 dwellings. A condition will be attached requiring details for car and motorcycling parking alongside the reserved matters application along with a parking management plan.
- 10.7 It should be noted that each dwelling would also be equipped with an electric vehicle charging point. However, this is not required to be secured via condition as electric vehicle charging provision is covered by Building Control Regulations Approved Document S.
- 10.8 Turning to cycle parking, indicative submitted plans show each dwelling having storage for cycles and again, final details will be secured via condition.

Traffic generation/ impact

- 10.9 The submitted Transport Statement includes trip rates calculated from TRICS. WBC Highways Team have carried out a comparable assessment and the rates included in the Transport Assessment are only marginally less than the approved trip rates. Therefore, the two-way trips generated from the site would be 33 and 30 vehicle movements in the AM peak and PM peak hours respectively.
- 10.10 Based on the automatic traffic count data for Barkham Ride that was collected for a week in November 2022 within the Transport Statement, there would be an average of 830 two-way flows in the AM peak hour and 720 in the PM peak hour. Therefore, the proposed trips from this development would have little impact on the traffic on Barkham Ride.
- 10.11 Third party comments state that the submitted transport information was carried out during school holidays and therefore not accurate. Officer can confirm that the Road Safety Audit was carried out between 31st October and 7th November 2022, as stated in the submitted Transport Statement. This period was not a school holiday for schools operated by the Borough Council, and therefore the data is considered robust

Visibility

- 10.12 The access to the proposed development site lies just outside the 30mph limit on Barkham Ride within the 40mph limit. Within neighbouring comments, it has been stated that the speed limit of Barkham Ride should be adjusted, with the 30mph zone extended to cover the access to the site or traffic calming measures installed. The assessment that was carried out showed that the visibility splays for the speed of the road could be met and this was not raised in the safety audit.
- 10.13 A drawing showing visibility splays of 2.4m x 120m has been provided which is appropriate for the speed limit of the road. The Highways Team previously commented that a speed survey should have been undertaken and the visibility splays to be designed to the 85th percentile speed.

- 10.14 Traffic data has been provided which shows that the eastbound 85th percentile speed limit is 39mph and the westbound is 40mph. Therefore, the length of the splays is deemed acceptable.
- 10.15 The Road Safety Audit also highlighted that vegetation of the frontage facing Barkham Ride was needing to be removed and maintained to prevent growth encroaching into the visibility splay. However, a revised technical note, received 9th January 2024, demonstrates that visibility for drivers waiting to turn from the site access to Barkham Ride can be achieved without the removal of street trees. This was following additional measurements taken on site which show the setback of the tree from the edge of the carriageway is approximately 2m, and the diameter of the tree is 1m.
- 10.16 As such, the principle of the access to serve a residential development of 56 dwellings on site is accepted however a condition requiring more detailed design will be secured via condition. The Transport Assessment (including Road Safety Audit) and Highways Technical Note are publicly available to view on the Council's website.

Access and internal site roads

- 10.17 The existing access to 33 Barkham Ride is proposed to be stopped up (which will be secured via condition) and a new access to the site proposed approximately 20m to the west. This access would measure 5m in width and would be provided with 2m wide pavements on both sites. Dropped kerbs and tactile paving would need to be included, however WBC Highways is content that this would be part of detailed design and will be secured via condition.
- 10.18 The development will incorporate internal site roads. A swept path analysis has been provided which demonstrates that a large car can access the site when a refuse vehicle is at the give way line.
- 10.19 A S106 obligation will be secured to ensure that internal site roads are properly managed. The roads will be required to be built to Council adoptable standards. If the site road is to remain private, the legal agreement will secure details of management company set up to look after the maintenance of the road, level of money set aside for maintenance, alongside the Borough's inspection fee and the APC bond.
- 10.20 If the site roads are to be adopted, these would need to be delivered through s38 agreement with the Borough. The Borough would also require agreement on inspection fees and commuted sums. The adoption plans, fees and commuted sums would need to be included in the s106 agreement. Notwithstanding, it has been indicated by the applicant that roads will remain in private ownership.

Site Sustainability

- 10.21 Paragraph 109 of the NPPF acknowledges that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas.
- 10.22 Policy CP6 of the Core Strategy states that planning permission will be granted for schemes that:

- a) *Provide for sustainable forms of transport to allow choice;*
- b) *Are located where there are or will be at the time of development choices in the mode of transport available and which minimise the distance people need to travel;*
- c) *Improve the existing infrastructure network, including road, rail and public transport, enhance facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, including provision for those with reduced mobility, and other users;*

10.23 The appropriateness of the site for residential development in relation to key sustainable transport modes will now be assessed.

Walking

10.24 The Borough Design Guide SPD states ‘*if places are to be sustainable then the aim should be to create: Walkable neighbourhoods, with a range of facilities within 10 minutes walking distance of residential areas, which encourage people to travel on foot or by bicycle.*’ Walkable neighbourhoods are defined in Manual for Streets (MfS) as those typically characterised by having a range of facilities within 10 minutes walking distance from residential areas.

10.25 There is a pedestrian footway on the northern side of Barkham Ride adjacent to the site. The footway provides a link to the village centre of Finchampstead to the south, with a footway on the southern side also provided beyond the start of the 30mph speed limit.

10.26 There are several facilities that would fall within acceptable walking and cycling distances that have been provided by the applicant:

Facility	Approx. Distance	Approx. Walking Time	Approx. Cycling Time
St James Road bus stops	120m	2 minutes	<1 minute
One Stop Convenience Store	550m	7 minutes	2 minutes
FBC Community Centre	850m	11 minutes	3 minutes
Gorse Ride Junior School	950m	12 minutes	4 minutes
Co-operative Food	1300m	16 minutes	5 minutes
Pharmacy	1300m	16 minutes	5 minutes
Finchampstead Surgery	1500m	19 minutes	6 minutes
Nine Mile Ride Primary School	1500m	19 minutes	6 minutes

10.27 The above has been reviewed by WBC Highways. It is acknowledged that some of the walking times are above 10 minutes, however not considerably, and not to a degree that would mean the site is wholly unsustainable for walking to nearby facilities. Furthermore, the site would be no less sustainable in this regard than other peripheral parts of the Modest Development Location.

10.28 Within third party comments, concern was raised over students being affected trying to cross the road from Bohunt School, however this school is located approx. 2.2 miles to the south-west of the site. This is a sizeable distance and there is no highways information to support the notion that the road will be unsafe for crossing pedestrians related to the school.

10.29 The British Horse Society also commented and requested that Cook Lane should be re-instated as part of the proposal. Cook Lane, was assessed by the British Horse Society, as a historic route that is within the curtilage of 31 and 33 Barkham Ride. Whilst it is acknowledged that the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan policy GA2 that states that proposals should retain and, where practical, improve the Rights of Way network. However, no request from WBC Public Rights of Way or WBC Transport to re-instate this route on private land was required to make the development acceptable. Furthermore, it should be noted that Officers have not been advised by WBC Public Rights of Way that 'Cook Lane' is designated a Public Right of Way through a successful Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO).

Buses

10.30 The supporting text to policy CP6 of the Core Strategy sets out the requirement of a good bus service: a) At least a thirty-minute service frequency during peak times (7:00 to 9:00 and 16:00 to 19:00 Monday to Saturday); and b) At least an hourly service frequency during off-peak hours (9:00 to 16:00 and 19:00 to 22:00 Monday to Saturday and between 7:00 and 22:00 on Sundays).

10.31 Bus stops are located on the eastbound side of Barkham Ride, close to St. James Road and Woodside Close. The Number 3 Leopard service (part funded by Arborfield Bus Strategy) operates along Barkham Ride running between Reading, Arborfield and Wokingham. There is typically an hourly service during weekdays and Saturday with no services running to Wokingham on a Sunday and Bank Holidays.

10.32 It is acknowledged that the bus service does not meet the criteria set out above and cannot be considered as a 'good service'. There is no 30-minute frequency during peak there are no services on Sundays. However, the proposal will make a contribution towards improved bus services as part of Arborfield bus strategy at a contribution of £1298 per dwelling (indexed linked). This will be secured via a S106 obligation and will help improve the site's sustainability in terms of providing a greater provision of public transport.

Cycling

10.33 Barkham Ride is a relatively straight road and therefore is deemed suitable for the principle of cycling. It is noted that approximately 500m to the east, cyclists from the development would link to the established Cycle Network when travelling to Wokingham Town Centre. MyJourney, a borough wide sustainable travel campaign, has produced a Wokingham Borough cycle network. The junction of Gorse Ride North with Barkham Ride is the start of a 'Quiet Link' cycle route which can be taken to the town centre. Travelling west, the Cycle Network would be connected at Commonfield Lane, which again is considered a suitable distance from the site of approximately 933m. These distances are considered acceptable for cyclists to travel before they will be connected to established/ optimum routes.

10.34 A walking and cycling strategy will also be secured via condition that will secure measures within the development and to improve footway and cycle routes that connect the development with bus stops, Rooks Nest Country Park, Gorse Ride Schools and local shops. Furthermore, a contribution of £540 per dwelling towards My Journey will be secured unless a travel plan is provided. This will be secured via

a S106 obligation. A travel plan is a long-term strategy which aims to encourage people to use alternatives to private vehicle. My Journey is a Wokingham borough-wide active and sustainable travel campaign that aims to help Wokingham residents to travel by alternative more sustainable modes. Through the travel plan or contribution towards My Journey, this will help promote sustainable transport modes.

Summary on sustainability

- 10.35 There are day-to-day facilities and services within proximity of the site. While some alternative transport modes are not optimal and below standards at present, it would offer some realistic options to some residents of the proposed development and through conditions and contributions, the sustainability of the site would improve.
- 10.36 The above conclusion is consistent with the HELAA assessment that acknowledges the site has a reasonable access to a range of services and facilities. However public transport facilities are limited. Notwithstanding this, there were other factors that resulted in the site being part of the draft allocation. The Council's Highways department are content with the proposal in terms of site sustainability.

Other Highway matters:

- 10.37 External road lighting will be secured via condition when final layouts are known. However, the applicant will have to be mindful of any ecological implications lighting would have on the environment.
- 10.38 A construction management plan will be secured via condition to ensure that the development itself does not cause any unacceptable disturbance on the surrounding area during the construction phase.
- 10.39 Overall, the proposed indicative layout has demonstrated that the proposed access for the development is accepted and can be accommodated in the established highway network. Discussion over the cumulative transport impact of other planned developments in the vicinity of this site are discussed later in this report.

11.0 Impact on Trees

- 11.1 Trees on the site are mostly confined to the north, eastern and southern site boundaries, with some stretches of ornamental conifers and garden shrubs and small trees dotted within the site, that would be associated with domestic garden planting.



Fig 3. Site location and surrounding vegetation (Google Maps 2024)

- 11.2 Policy CC03 of the MDD seeks to protect existing trees and promote opportunities for new soft landscaping.
- 11.3 Policy IRS6 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan states that development proposals should seek to retain mature or important trees, groups of trees or woodland on site. If trees are to be removed, a similar replacement should be provided in terms of local species and keeping with the character of the area.
- 11.4 The site is covered by TPO 1795/2021 consists of an 'Area' A1 of trees to the front (southern site) boundary, and a Woodland W1 and W2 to the northern and eastern boundaries respectively. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) and Method Statement (AMS) has been submitted with the application. It identifies 41 trees and tree groups on or adjacent to the site of which 17 are proposed for removal. 2 of these trees are category 'U' trees are in such a poor condition that their removal is to occur as good practice, regardless of this development proposal. The rest of the trees to be removed are classified as 'C' which are trees generally of low quality. It is acknowledged that the woodland area to the north (W1) was not surveyed and described in the Tree Protection Plan as heavily overgrown. Third party comments have raised concern about the compatibility of the foul water drainage scheme and the protected trees on the site's northern boundary, which have not been surveyed. This is discussed in section 13 of this report. The WBC Tree Officer has not raised concern that the arboricultural documents did not survey woodland W2 for the purposes of this outline application, owing to no development being included in this area (which will be secured via the parameters plan) other than potential drainage infrastructure.
- 11.5 The species included on site are mostly Oak, Scots Pine, Sycamore, Sweet Chestnut, Willow, Holly. There are several 'A' quality Oak trees of A1 and A2 categories and are important landscape features. Five of the 'A' quality Oaks are along the front boundary and located within the verge outside of the site boundary and 2 of the largest are the sentinel Oaks at the current entrance to the site; T07 and T08. Oak T07 has a 1200mm girth and it is likely to be a veteran tree although classified as A2, rather than A3 which would accord it veteran status.

- 11.6 All of the trees along the southern boundary on the boundary with Barkham Ride are outside of the site, and under the jurisdiction of the highway, however these trees are fundamental to the character of the site as well as the Green Route and the site benefits from them. This is confirmed by their TPO status under TPO-1795-2021. All these trees are indicated to be retained with the exception of one that is within the boundary of the application site. Within the remainder of the site, trees are to be removed, but as discussed are all low quality 'C' or 'U' grade trees, which could be removed from the site at any time outside of the planning process as they are not protected by way of a Tree Preservation Order. Third party comments have commented on the fact that trees have already been felled on site and this should be taken into account. However, unless trees are protected by way of a Tree Protection Order (TPO), trees can be removed at any time. Officers are required to assess the site how it is at the time an application is determined. Whilst disappointing and unfortunate, the trees that have been felled cannot be considered, however it will be ensured that a suitable landscaping scheme is provided across the site as a whole through Reserved Matters and appropriate conditions.
- 11.7 The WBC Trees & Landscaping Officer has reviewed the submitted Arboricultural information and the trees to be removed are accepted, subject to replacement planting (which will be dealt with under the Reserved Matters application for landscaping). Furthermore, they are content that the indicative layout shows a development of 56 dwellings can be accommodated in relation to protected trees on the site in principle.
- 11.8 During the course of the application, and through iterations of the indicative layout, trees are, for the majority, kept outside of rear gardens of dwellings. This means that trees can be suitably maintained in the communal areas by a management company. Risk of damage to trees, or pressure on root protection areas through household paraphernalia is therefore reduced.
- 11.9 As such, the indicative plan indicates that a development of 56 dwellings is feasible in relation to trees, in principle. However revised tree reports and surveys are required in relation to the final layout and drainage details, and this will be secured via condition.

12.0 Ecology

- 12.1 Policy CP7 of the Core Strategy states sites designated as of importance for nature conservation at an international or national level will be conserved and enhanced and inappropriate development will be resisted.
- 12.2 Policy TB23 of the MDD states that development should protect existing wildlife and biodiversity.
- 12.3 The proposals are outline only and the layout is not fixed, however the indicative site layout plan appears to have taken into account the ecological constraints on the site namely the woodland to the north with an adequate buffer zone retained as public open space. As mentioned earlier in the report, a parameters plan has been provided which will ensure that development is contained to certain areas, with the

areas of the open space identified and would need to be respected when Reserved Matters for layout is submitted.

Habitats

- 12.4 The WBC Ecologist has confirmed that none of the habitats within the site are 'priority habitats' as defined in the NPPF (2023). As such their conversion to buildings, garden and associated public open space should not be a constraint to the proposals.
- 12.5 The applicant has submitted an ecological assessment which concludes that the proposals are unlikely to affect protected species if the recommendations in their report are followed and as such protected species are unlikely to be a constraint to the proposals, although condition requiring the submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan for Biodiversity will be secured. Bats and Newts are species that are focused on; third party representations raise concern over impact on badgers however this has not been raised by the Council's Ecologist. Furthermore, the site is not located in a Badger Consultation Zone according to the Council's records.

Bats

- 12.6 Four of the existing buildings on site (referenced B2, B3, B4 and B7) were assessed as having 'low' potential to host a bat roost (all other buildings were unsuitable) and surveys in carried out in 2021 concluded that bat roosts were absent from these buildings. The updated daytime inspection (September 2023) showed that the status of these buildings is unlikely to have changed. However, the report states that if works do not begin by September 2024, an update bat inspection and / or nocturnal surveys may be needed to update site conditions, under the guidance of a licensed bat ecologist. A condition will be set to ensure that this an updated bat survey is undertaken (and if the surveys show that a licence is required, such a licence be obtained).

Newts

- 12.7 The Ecological Appraisal submitted with the application (33 Barkham Ride, Finchampstead, Tetra Tech, October 2023) concludes that great crested newts are likely to be absent from the site, and that no measures are necessary for this species. The on-site pond as well as two other waterbodies within 250m had a negative eDNA survey result in 2021, indicating that great crested newts were highly unlikely to be present in the area. The pond located 140m west of the site was surveyed again in 2023 for a neighbouring planning application and had a negative eDNA survey again. Due to these negative survey results and the poor connectivity between the application site and suitable habitat in the landscape, it is considered that there is very little risk of great crested newt presence within the site. Given the above information, we agree with the Ecological Appraisal and consider that great crested newts are likely to be absent from the site and are therefore unlikely to be impacted by the proposed works.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 12.8 Policy TB23 of the MDD states that development proposals should result in an overall net gain but does not specify an amount. The Council's Climate Change Interim Policy Position Statement (2022) updates the Council's sustainability policies in light of the Council's declared climate emergency. It should be noted that the statement is not policy, or part of the statutory development plan, however its purpose is to emphasize that climate change is a material planning consideration. In this document, it states that developments will be expected to investigate opportunities to provide a 10% biodiversity net gain. Policy IRS5 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan also states that developments should provide a biodiversity net gain of at least 10%.
- 12.9 It should be noted that a mandatory 10% net gain is a requirement of major applications from 12th February 2024. However, this does not apply retrospectively. As such, this proposal is not required to provide a 10% net gain for the purposes of the Environment Act 2021, however the above local policy does need to be considered and applied.
- 12.10 A Biodiversity Net Gain calculation and associated report has been submitted to support this outline application and has been reviewed by the WBC Ecologist. The report and calculation has been undertaken to an appropriate standard and concludes that the indicative proposals will result in the loss of -1.68 Area Habitat Units which equates to a net loss of -12.43% and a net gain of 0.56 Hedgerow Units which equates to a net gain of 107.45%. The report concludes that: *"The Biodiversity Metric calculations for the proposed development forecast that the current post-development layout of the site will result in a net loss of biodiversity units. This will not meet the current target of achieving a measurable net gain post-development as outlined by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ministry of Housing Public Communities and Local Government, 2023) and the 10% target in the Environment Act 2021 that is expected to mandate this as of 2024."*
- 12.11 As such, should planning permission be issued a condition would need to be set to ensure that the developer purchases off site habitat units to offset the loss. An updated BNG calculation would need to be provided once the final layout and landscaping plans have been designed.
- 12.12 The Council's Ecologist has no objection to the application subject to the provision that a condition is attached requiring a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain Plan detailing how a 10% biodiversity net gain will be achieved on site or off-site habitat units to off-set the loss.

Other Ecological Matters

- 12.13 Within third party comments, there was concern that the proposed pond could increase mosquitos and water bourne flies which would then affect neighbouring gardens. It should be noted that the pond to be created is in fact an attenuation basin of little ecological value with not constant water within. The removal of the pond associated with the residential dwelling will also be lost, but this could be removed at any point.

Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBH SPA) and Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) provision

- 12.14 Policy CP8 of the Core Strategy states that development which alone or in combination is likely to have a significant effects on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area will be required to demonstrate that adequate measures to avoid and mitigate any potential adverse effects are delivered.
- 12.15 The site is located within the 5km zone from the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBH SPA). The Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area is an internationally important habitat that is home to 3 rare species of ground nesting birds - the Dartford Warbler, Nightjar, and Woodlark. To protect these, the government has designated the Thames Basin Heaths as a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the European Commission Birds Directive and placed mitigation zones around the heaths to lessen the impact of human activity on them. The Appropriate Assessment needs to be passed to ensure that development would not have adverse impact on the TBH SPA.
- 12.16 Natural England have no objection to the application subject to the Appropriate Assessment being passed. The Council, as the competent authority, has to ensure the Appropriate Assessment is passed before a development is permitted.
- 12.17 Mitigation proposed is for residential development (located within the 5km and 7km buffer zones) to contribute towards Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace which aims to direct residents away from the SPA and rather into the SANG, thereby reducing footfall and pressure on the SPA.
- 12.18 SANGs are new or existing open spaces designed to attract visitors away from the SPA by providing an enjoyable natural environment for recreation. The expectation is that by providing these alternative areas for outdoor recreation, there will not be an increase in recreation pressure on the SPA as new households can use the SANG instead of the protected heathland. SANGs are high quality open space that will remain in perpetuity.
- 12.19 A contribution towards SANG is required per dwelling and this is dependant on the number of bedrooms in each dwelling. Each dwelling will also have to pay a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) contribution. SAMM is a project delivered by Natural England to implement messages, wardening and education across the TBH SPA and promote the use of SANGs.
- 12.20 The borough's strategic SANG is Rooks Nest Wood which is located approximately 123m to the west of the site. Upon consultation with the Green Infrastructure Team, it was advised the development can be accommodated with the strategic SANG and therefore the applicant will be required to pay the required SANG and SAMM contributions. The rate per dwelling is contained within the Appropriate Assessment and is dependant on the number of bedrooms per dwelling. Whilst Officers have an initial indication of the dwelling mix, this will not be confirmed until Reserved Matters are approved relating to layout and scale. As such, the total contribution is not known at this stage, but rather is indicative. A S106 obligation will be secure the mechanism for calculating the SANG and SAMM contribution which means the development passes the Appropriate Assessment/ Habitat Regulations Assessment. The proposal therefore accords with policies CP3 and CP8 of the Core Strategy.

13.0 Flooding and Drainage

- 13.1 Policy CC09 of the MDD states that All sources of flood risk, including historic flooding, must be taken into account at all stages and to the appropriate degree at all levels in the planning application process to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding.
- 13.2 Policy CC10 of the MDD states that all development proposals must ensure surface water arising from the proposed development including taking into account climate change is managed in a sustainable manner. This must be demonstrated through a) A Flood Risk Assessment, or b) Through a Surface Water Drainage Strategy.
- 13.3 The site and access thereto is in Flood Zone 1 which is defined as land having a less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river flooding or tidal flooding in any given year meaning its probability of flooding is 'low'.

Sequential and Exception Test

- 13.4 As the site is in Flood Zone 1, a sequential test, demonstrating sequentially preferable sites in a lower risk of flooding, is not required. The development (a residential scheme) is classified as a 'More Vulnerable Development' according to Table 2 within the PPG (Flood Risk and Coastal Change section) and Annex 3 lists Flood Risk vulnerability. According to Table 2, 'More Vulnerable Development' is compatible in Flood Zone 1 and therefore an exception test is not required.

Flood Risk

- 13.5 As the site area is greater than 1 ha, a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is required, despite the site being located in Flood Zone 1.
- 13.6 A Flood Risk Assessment was carried out and concluded the different risks of flooding from different sources including fluvial, surface water, ground water, sewer, reservoir and canal were all medium, low, very low or no risk. The highest risk of flooding, rated medium, was from Groundwater. The site is allocated within the Local Plan Update (5FI003) and as such, site assessments have been carried out within the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). The site assessment for this location identifies a potential for groundwater flooding of property situated below ground level within the site. Due to the shallow depths of groundwater within the site and the historic incidents of groundwater flooding throughout the borough, the risk of flooding to the site can be considered medium. If basements were to be present the risk to basement levels would be high.

Flood Risk to and from the development

- 13.7 As mentioned above, there is a generally low risk from all sources of flooding with the exception of groundwater. The risk to the site from groundwater flooding was identified as high if there are below ground development. The proposed residential developments will not have basement dwellings and the finished floor levels will be raised to 58.65 m AOD, with effective level of 58.5 m AOD at ground level, therefore the risk of groundwater flooding to the development is considered to be mitigated.

- 13.8 The existing site is mostly greenfield and as such, this development will increase the impermeable area and increase runoff from the site. In accordance with the NPPF, Core Strategy surface water runoff will be managed on site to avoid increasing flood risk to areas elsewhere, see the surface water management plan in section 5.0. This is designed to attenuate volumes for the 1 in 100 year plus 40% climate change event thereby mitigating the risk arising from the development.

Drainage

Surface Water Drainage

- 13.9 The NPPG states that the aim should be to discharge surface water run-off as high up the drainage hierarchy as reasonably practicable. This is as follows:
- Discharge to the ground
 - Discharge to a surface water body;
 - Discharge to a surface water system, highway drain, or another drainage system, or;
 - To a combined sewer where there are absolutely no other options, and only where agreed in advance with the relevant sewerage undertaker.
- 13.10 Discharging to a surface water body has been sequentially determined through the applicant's drainage assessment. Discharging surface water to the ground is not possible as infiltration testing proved groundwater levels were high. As such, indicatively it is proposed to drainage surface water through the use of permeable paving and through an attenuation pond and swale at the north of the site which will eventually drain into a ditch (formally classified as an Ordinary Watercourse) on the northern boundary. To provide enough cover for the drainage run units on the eastern part of the site ground level need to be raised to 58.5 m AOD. Further details on the drainage features and required earthworks will be provided at detailed design stage and an updated drainage assessment will be secured via a pre-commencement condition when the final layout is established.
- 13.11 Third party comments note that this ditch is dry, shallow and unmanaged and would be unsuitable for the number of new dwellings given it is within 1m of neighbouring gardens at Fir Cottage Road. Consent to discharge water into this ditch, which is an 'Ordinary Watercourse' is granted by the Local Lead Flood Authority, and so therefore this consent will be required. WBC Drainage Officers did not raise objection to the principle of discharging surface water to the Ordinary Watercourse.

Foul Water Drainage

- 13.12 Within the submitted drainage strategy, it indicates that it is proposed to create a saddle connection to the existing drainage at the north west of the site to the sewer pipe between two Thames Water manholes. Third party comments have raised concern over this arrangement as there is concern the straddle connection will cut through protected trees on the northern boundary of the site. This has not been highlighted in the submitted drainage or arboricultural documents, however a condition will be attached requiring these documents to be re-carried out in relation to the final layout of the site and it should demonstrate how the foul drainage strategy will be carried out in relation to the trees. At this stage, only the principle of

the drainage strategy is being reviewed, and this was deemed acceptable to WBC Drainage Officers. WBC Tree Officers did not object on this basis.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

- 13.13 SuDS are environmentally efficient techniques designed to control surface water run off. The submitted Drainage report acknowledges the SuDS Management Train which sees series of techniques at the source, site and regional control. Table 5-4 within the Drainage report outlines a number of potential SuDS at all levels could be incorporated into the final layout. At the source control, water butts and rainwater harvesting techniques could be adopted at individual residential dwellings. At the site and regional level, swales and attenuation ponds are options.
- 13.14 As the final layout of the proposal is not known, SuDS details are also not yet finalised. However, the Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy outlines potential SuDS measures that are satisfactory in principle and would be expected to factor into the proposed scheme. Full SuDS measures will be secured via condition.
- 13.15 Finally, a third party comment was received raising concern over a lack of capacity of the development in relation to Thames Water infrastructure. Thames Water have advised of an inability of the existing water network infrastructure to accommodate the needs of the proposal. As such, a condition will be attached until confirmation has been provided that all water upgrades have been completed or a phasing plan has been agreed to allow the development to be occupied. This condition would be required to be discharged in consultation with Thames Water. Permission cannot be withheld on this basis as the Water Industries Act 1991 places a legal obligation on all Water utility companies, such as Thames Water, to provide developers with the right to connect to a public sewer regardless of capacity issues.
- 13.16 In principle, the development is deemed acceptable from a flooding and drainage perspective however a full drainage assessment will also be needed at Reserved Matters when the layout is known. The drainage strategy will need to be mindful of protected trees on site, as discussed.

14.0 Heritage – Archaeology

- 14.1 Policy TB25 of the MDD states that Where development is likely to affect an area of high archaeological potential or an area which is likely to contain archaeological remains, the presumption is that appropriate measures shall be taken to protect remains by preservation in situ. Where this is not practical, applicants shall provide for excavation, recording and archiving of the remains.
- 14.2 Paragraph 211 of the NPPF (2023) which states that local planning authorities should *'require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible'*.
- 14.3 The applicant has submitted an Archaeological Desk Based Assessment which has been reviewed by Berkshire Archaeology and concludes that the site has archaeological potential for remains from all periods, particularly the Iron Age, the

Early Medieval, and Medieval periods, and also that it contains a heritage asset in the form of a WWII air raid shelter (although this may not be in its original location).

- 14.4 The key indicators of archaeological potential come from the results of a watching brief on the creation of the car park for the country park just to the west of the site, where remains of possible Iron Age - Roman settlement and a possible Early Medieval earthwork were discovered. The excavators of those features suggested these may have been of some significance, and so it will need testing whether these features, or related remains, extend into the present site. Given the potential significance of these remains, it is recommended that the condition specifies that the archaeological evaluation should be conducted prior to the determination of Reserved Matters applications dealing with layout, so it can inform the layout, maintaining preservation in situ as a viable mitigation approach if remains are encountered whose significance, or expense to excavate, justifies their preservation.
- 14.5 Subject to a condition securing a scheme of archaeological evaluation works prior to the determination of any Reserved Matters application dealing with Layout and a condition to ensure the WWII air raid shelter is appropriately recorded, the principle of development complies with Policy TB25 of the MDD and the final layout of the scheme will need to be informed and compatible with any archaeological remains on site.

15.0 Environmental Health

- 15.1 Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy states that development should minimise the emission of pollutants into the wider environment. Pollutants could be in the form of, but not limited to, air pollution, noise pollution, ground contamination and noise. Policy CC06 of the MDD specifically concerns noise impacts of a development.
- 15.2 Policy GA1 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan states that development proposals should demonstrate effective planning to mitigate noise and air pollution from traffic.

Contaminated Land

- 15.3 The site is on potentially contaminated land. A contaminated land assessment will be secured via condition to ensure it can be satisfactorily managed and remediated so that it is suitable for the proposed end use and will not impact on the ground water environment, human health, buildings and the wider environment, during the demolition and construction phases as well as during the future use of the site.

Noise

- 15.4 No concerns were raised from the Environmental Health Officer regarding noise impacts arising from the proposed development on the existing environment. The surrounding area has examples of small residential communities, such as Victoria Gardens. Noise levels would be comparable to existing residential areas. However, it is important that future occupiers have a suitable standard of accommodation (as discussed previously), and part of this includes not be subjected to a harmful level of noise, such as road noise. A condition will be applied requesting a noise assessment to be carried out prior to development commencing and a condition will

be applied ensuring that noise insulation is installed in dwellings to protect future occupiers from harmful noise levels.

- 15.5 Conditions have also been recommended in relation to plant attenuation noise being capped. This is considered necessary given air source heat pumps could be proposed as decentralised energy sources at a later date (see further commentary on this later in the report) and could have the potential to result in noise disturbance if not restricted. External lighting will be conditioned so as not to result in uncapped glare to nearby residents.
- 15.6 To protect nearby occupiers from noise disturbance and other environmental health hazards during construction, an hours of work condition will be applied and a construction method statement detailing how the emission of noise, dirt and dust will be controlled during the development, waste/ recycling provision and an asbestos survey owing to the demolition of the existing house on site. With these stringent measures in place, impact on neighbours during the construction phase would be minimised.

Air Quality

- 15.7 Environmental Health Officers requested an Air Quality Assessment to be provided however provided little justification for this request given the site is not located within a designated Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Notwithstanding this, the principles of Policy GA1 in the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan apply which specifically require mitigation from air pollution. As such, based on GA1 of the Neighbourhood Plan, an air quality assessment will be secured via condition to ensure the development does not result in harmfully adverse impacts in terms of air quality and pollution.

16.0 Waste Provision

- 16.1 Policy CC04 of the MDD Local Plan requires development to incorporate suitable waste management facilities, including on-site recycling. Green waste provision should also be provided for, although this is an optional facility for individual households.
- 16.2 Each dwelling will be responsible for their own waste provision and presenting waste for collection at the appropriate time, this is with the exception of flatted development that would have a communal waste area. However, the development should provide enough capacity within the houses to allow storage of receptacles within their houses on non-collection day. This could be through a bin store in each garden, or in garages. These details and general management for waste and recycling would be secured via planning condition.
- 16.3 It is not conclusively known if the road would be adopted by the Council. The Wokingham Borough Council 'Waste collection advise for developers' does not state that the Council's refuse team will only enter adopted roads, and no comments have been received by the WBC Cleaner and Greener team with information to the contrary. However, upon consultation with WBC Highways, it was advised that the WBC refuse service on adopted roads. There are examples of developments within the borough that have private roads that are served by refuse lorries. Therefore, it is important to ensure that developments now that are

proposing not to offer the roads up for adoption are at least built to adoptable standards which is the case here and so would benefit from waste collection.

- 16.4 Based on the above, the proposal is in principle acceptable in relation to waste provision and collection, subject to condition for further waste provision details.

17.0 Housing Sustainability

- 17.1 Policy CC04 of the MDD Local Plan and the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD require sustainable design and conservation and R21 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires that new development contribute to environmental sustainability and the mitigation of climate change.
- 17.2 Policy CC04 outlines that in respect of new homes, the follow should be achieved:
a) Seeking to achieve the requirements of the full Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4;
b) Meet internal potable water consumption targets of 105 litres or less per person per day (as part of the requirement to meet full Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4).
- 17.3 Policy CC05 of the MDD Local Plan encourages renewable energy and decentralised energy networks, with encouragement of decentralised energy systems and a minimum 10% reduction in carbon emissions for developments of 10+ dwellings.
- 17.4 Policy ES1 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan outlines environmental standards for residential development. It specifies that major residential development should be designed to achieve carbon neutral homes where this is both practical and viable. It also makes a provision for electric vehicle charging points.
- 17.5 It should be noted that the above policies (aside from the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan) are out of date and were written before the Council's declared Climate Emergency. For this reason, the Council produced a Climate Change Interim Policy Position Statement (CCIPPS) (2022) which outlines what is expected of development proposals in light of the climate emergency.
- 17.6 In relation to policy requirements outlined in CC04, it should be noted that the Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 has now been withdrawn, and now applicants must meet the interim Future Homes Standard (as required by Building Regulations) of a minimum 31% reduction in emissions, in line with the CCIPPS. This will be secured via condition.
- 17.7 With regards to water consumption, internal water use for each dwelling at a standard of less than 110 litres per person per day has been shall be factored in to the final, detailed scheme. This water consumption standard to comply with the CCIPPS, which is a higher standard than that outlined in CC04. This is because Wokingham Borough is situated within part of the country classified as an area of serious water stress. This standard has been agreed by the applicant and will be conditioned.

- 17.8 To comply with policy CC05, the applicant notes that decentralised energy sources will be factored into the development in the form. However full details of decentralised sources are not known at this stage and will be subject to condition. It will be conditioned that the development achieves a 10% energy reduction through renewable technologies is expected to be achieved in addition to the uplifted emissions improvements required through Building Regulations. CC05 makes clear, in the supporting text, that *“the relevant standards in the assessment are those set by Building Regulations at the time of submission of a planning application”*. The uplifted building regulations introduced in June 2022 are the mandatory starting point.
- 17.9 Electric vehicle charging points are required as standard by Building Regulations and cycle storage will be conditioned to promote more sustainable transport choices. Furthermore, the site is located such that walking and use of public transport are alternatives to the private car.
- 17.20 It is noted that policy ES1 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan seeks to achieve carbon neutral homes for major development where practical and viable. Whilst this environmental standard is not replicated at local and national level at this present time, the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan is a material consideration and therefore this standard should not be disregarded. As such, a condition will be attached requiring the developer to demonstrate if it is practical or viable to achieve carbon neutral homes. If this is the case, then such measures to achieve this standard will need to be implemented. If it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that it is not practical or viable, measures to help get closer to the target should be explored and implemented alongside other sustainability conditions attached to the permission.
- 17.21 In light of the above assessment, the proposal accords with Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy and CC04 and CC05 of the MDD and ES1 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan.

18.0 Employment and Skills Plan

- 18.1 Policy TB12 of the MDD Local Plan requires an employment skills plan (ESP) for this development. ESP uses the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) benchmark based on the value of construction.
- 18.2 As the final floor space of the development is not known, the value of construction (to inform ESP outcomes) cannot be calculated as it is calculated by multiplying the interior floor space by £1025 which is the cost of construction per square metre as set out by Building Cost Information Service of RICS.
- 18.3 As the CITB benchmarks are not known at this stage, the Employment Skills Plan and its content cannot be established at this stage. As such, a S106 obligation will include the mechanism for securing an ESP once the final floor space is known. From there, the contents of the ESP can be drawn up, and the amount required in lieu of an ESP calculated. The ESP or contribution will be required prior to commencement of the development.

19.0 Infrastructure

- 19.1 A number of comments from third party comments have raised objection due to concern that existing local amenities would not be able to accommodate the increase in population. It is worth noting that the scheme would be liable to pay a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charge of £536.93/m². CIL contributions are used to cover the cost of infrastructure it will rely upon, such as roads, schools and healthcare. Town and Parish Councils will also receive a meaningful proportion of the money raised. This can be up to 25 percent of receipts in areas with an adopted Neighbourhood Plan, such as Finchampstead. Individual parish websites can be checked in order to see the parishes individual annual CIL statement setting out the amount of CIL received, how much was spent and what it was spent on. As such, through the payment of CIL, the development will contribute to local amenities.
- 19.2 It is noted that the NHS ICB have requested a financial contribution of to accommodate the development given that NHS services are already under pressure. Two letters of correspondence from the NHS have been received; the first stating that a contribution of £48,384 to support the Finchampstead Surgery. This would be the surgery primarily affected as a result of the development. However, within the information provided, it was not demonstrated that this development would result in the surgery becoming at over capacity. It stated that it had a capacity of 20,000, with a current patient list of 18,104. The NHS have advised that the contribution would be used to assist capital projects, however no details of these were provided.
- 19.3 Within the follow up consultation response, (following clarification on the above matters), the NHS' attention turned to the wider Wokingham South Primary Care Network (PCN) which comprises of four medical practices: Swallowfield Medical Practice, Shinfield Surgery, Arborfield Surgery and Finchampstead Practice. As a whole, the PCN is at over capacity. In an effort to help improve the Primary Care Network, a reconfiguration of the existing Arborfield Village Hall Surgery is deemed to be required which will cost £45,921.60. The NHS have advised a partial grant may be able to be claimed for the works. This means the contribution requested from the applicant is unknown at this stage. Furthermore, quotes for the works were made in March 2023 it is stated the quote was only valid for 60 days.
- 19.4 Whilst requested, Officers are still required to justify this contribution against local planning policy and against the tests for such obligations. In terms of local policy, there are no specific policies that relate to development and healthcare. Policy CP3 (h) discusses that proposals should contribute towards the provision of an appropriate sustainable network of community facilities of the Within the supporting text of Policy CP1 it states that *“Development within the borough should enhance the overall sustainability of the area through minimising impact on the environment, including access to facilities..”* As this development will result in increased pressure on this community health facility, the contribution is justified to make the scheme functional in that it will be self-sufficient in helping alleviate the pressure and therefore will not be detrimental to the health wellbeing of the existing community.

19.5 Turning to the Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010, it states that obligations can only be attached if complied with the following tests:

- necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- directly related to the development; and
- fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

19.6 Communications with the NHS have led to further information being supplied and in relation to various medical practices. The closest practice to the site is Finchampstead Surgery which, as discussed above was not at capacity and therefore the development would not be a tipping point. A request to help re-configure the Arborfield Surgery was then made, despite this not being the primary surgery in relation to the site. Across the whole Wokingham South PCN, there is an over-capacity. However, it is not the fault of this development, nor should this development be required to resolve a pre-existing issue of over-capacity.

19.7 As such, Officers do not consider the financial contribution would meet the above tests as there is not convincing and clear evidence before Officers to confirm that a contribution would be necessary to make this development acceptable, as it has not been demonstrated that the development would result in an over capacity of the Finchampstead Surgery. The request of a contribution to help re-configure Arborfield Surgery does not appear directly related to the development as this would not be the primary practice for residents of the development. The over-capacity across the South Wokingham PCN is a pre-existing issue and therefore does not appear to be fairly and reasonably related in scale to the proposal. There is no justification for this development alone to fund the re-configuration of Arborfield Surgery. Furthermore, the NHS are unable to stipulate an exact contribution from the developer which would be required, even if the contribution did meet the required tests. As such, Officers are unable to proceed with securing this financial contribution by way of a S106 obligation, but remain open to considering any new information which may accompany similar requests on other planning applications in the area

20.0 Relationship with other developments on Barkham Ride

20.1 A common theme in third party comments is the impact the proposal would have in relation to other planned developments on Barkham Ride. Officers note that a number of other developments exist/ have been approved or are pending consideration along this part of Barkham Ride. These are as follows, along with their status (at the time of writing):

- ***Barkham Ride Solar Farm*** – Approved under planning application 211081
- ***Covid Memorial Woodland as an extension to Calafornia Country Park*** – This was agreed by the Executive Committee in March 2023 and planting is expected in April 2024
- ***Rooks Nest Farm*** – Exists; adjacent to 31 Barkham Ride

- **SEND School** – No applications formally submitted for this development
- **31 Barkham Ride (application for 26 residential dwellings under application reference 230791)** – pending consideration

20.2 In nature, scale and location, the proposed development at 31 Barkham Ride is most relevant as the other developments are of limited built form and occupancy (other than the SEND schools). Whilst a separately submitted application for a residential scheme, and both 33 and 31 Barkham Ride must be assessed independently and on their own merits. Commentary on how both schemes would relate to one another is necessary given their close proximity and them originally being one site allocation in the RGS. There are considered two key areas in which to consider both of these outline applications; the number of dwellings and the associated impacts on the landscape and the highways implications of both schemes, should they both be approved and implemented.

Number of dwellings and impacts on the landscape

- 20.3 As raised in a number of objections to the scheme, 31 and 33 Barkham Ride were encompassed in one site allocation. Objectors consider these should be assessed together. As discussed, these are two separate submissions, are two separate sites with two separate applicants and landowners. The LPA has no power procedurally to insist that these applications are determined as one, or that one submission is made for the entirety of the site, nor that the applicants not following correct planning process.
- 20.4 A main concern in neighbouring comments is the overall density of the two sites and housing numbers exceeding that stipulated in the RGS. The indicative capacity is 66 dwellings (net). Across both applications, 82 dwellings are proposed, so there would be 16 dwellings more than stated in the RGS. Objectors also considered the dwellings at Victoria Gardens should be taken into account (currently there are 26 mobile homes).
- 20.5 Upon consultation with the Council's Planning Policy team about this matter, Officers were advised that the figure of 66 in the RGS was net additional dwellings over and above the Victoria Gardens commitment. Therefore, it was envisaged the 66 dwellings would be accommodated on the remainder of the site outside of Victoria Gardens.
- 20.6 The figure provided in the RGS was also an indicative minimum, so if a greater number could be acceptably accommodated without material harm then that would broadly be consistent with the emerging policy position. It should be noted that quantum of development alone is not a reason to resist a planning application, unless that quantum of development results in, or demonstrates, identifiable harm in relation to material considerations and planning policy.
- 20.7 The neighbouring application at 31 Barkham Ride is still under consideration and therefore discussion on this application cannot be made. However, based on the site areas of 31 and 33 Barkham Ride (totalling 4.38 ha – excluding Victoria Gardens), the number of dwellings in total (82) equates to approximately 18.7dph across the two sites, which is broadly comparable to nearby residential densities, as discussed in earlier in the report. Therefore, density alone is not considered an accurate indication of whether any harm is caused.

20.8 Policy CC02 of the MDD Local Plan states that development at the edge of settlements is acceptable where it is demonstrated that it is within development limits and respects the transition between the built up area and the open countryside by taking account of the character of the adjacent countryside and landscape. If approved, the development at 31 Barkham Ride would form the new settlement edge, adjacent to the Rooks Nest SANG. As such, it is appropriate that this site has a lower site capacity, in order to ensure where possible, dwelling numbers decrease moving from the current edge of settlement to the new.

Highways

20.9 Officers and members of the public alike note that Barkham Ride is subject to several developments which are at various stages of the planning process. It is therefore important to assess the cumulative impacts of the developments to ensure this proposal would not unduly affect the highway network.

20.10 An assessment of Highway impacts against the following developments are made:

- ***31 Barkham Ride (application for 26 residential dwellings under application reference 230791)*** – pending consideration by Officers
- ***Barkham Ride Solar Farm*** – Approved under planning application 211081

31 Barkham Ride

20.11 As part of the assessment for this application, traffic data was collected along Barkham Ride in November 2022 and reported that there were 830 and 720 two-way flow for the AM and PM peak flow.

20.12 For 26 residential dwellings proposed at 31 Barkham Ride, the level of two-way traffic would be 15 and 13 for AM and PM peak hour respectively. When added to the traffic for 33 Barkham Ride there would be 48 and 43 two-way flows for the AM and PM peak hour respectively. The increase in traffic from these two developments would be 6% and 5% for the AM and PM peak hours respectively. These would be less than the 10% acceptable daily variation and therefore would not be classed as having any traffic impact.

Barkham Solar Farm

20.13 For Barkham Ride Solar Farm, the level of traffic would be just for the construction period which is expected to last for around 10 months. Based on this programme of work the level of construction traffic would be around 600 two-way vehicles over the entire 10 month programme. Based on a 4-week month this would amount to around 15 two-way construction vehicles per day or 2 per hour. In addition, there would be expected to be around 40 contractors travelling to the site. The maximum number of contractor vehicles would be 42 in the peak hours.

20.14 When adding this additional traffic to the traffic from 31 and 33 Barkham Ride, this would result in a maximum total of 90 and 85 two-way traffic in the AM and PM peak hours respectively. However, this will only be for a temporary 10-month construction period and vary depending on the stage of construction and time of week.

- 20.15 Construction traffic for the solar farm will be managed under a Construction Traffic Management Plan which has been secured by planning condition which includes measures to effectively manage this traffic, the routing of this traffic and the times of delivery which would need to be wherever possible outside the peak hours. After construction is over, the level of traffic accessing this site would be reduced to the ad hoc maintenance vehicle and therefore be indiscernible.
- 20.16 Turning to other developments in the vicinity of the application site, and have been raised in neighbouring comments:
- Covid Memorial Woodland as an extension to California Country Park
 - Rooks Nest Farm
 - SEND School
- 20.17 The traffic for the Covid Memorial Woodland and Rooks Next Farm SANG are not considered to have an adverse impact on the highway network due to the low level of traffic travelling to and from these sites, and off-peak nature of such journeys.
- 20.18 For the proposed SEND schools, which are at an early inception stage and no application has been submitted at the time of writing, these will be assessed at the time and alongside any approved development in the vicinity. They will be expected to mitigate any traffic impacts they cause.

Wider coordination

- 20.19 Officers are aware that discussions have been held at the Council's Community Corporate and Overview Scrutiny Committee to explore ways to ensure effective oversight of council led projects along Barkham Ride, for example through a project board. Whilst the creation of any such project board falls outside the remit of this planning application, the council remains alert to the possible challenges faced by residents due to multiple developments in proximity to one another. It is therefore considered necessary and reasonable as part of this particular planning application to require a communication strategy is in place for the construction phase of this scheme via condition. This can, in future, feed into any wider council oversight or project board if necessary.

Procedure

- 20.20 It is also noted in third party comments the desire for both this application and that at 31 Barkham Ride be presented and considered together, owing to them being one site in the site allocation. However, they are two separate applications, applicants, sites, and are in separate ownership. Despite being one site in the RGS for residential development, they are not connected in planning terms (ie they are not one planning unit). For the above reasons, Officers cannot delay the consideration of one application for the other. If this is done, the Local Planning Authority are at risk of an applicant appealing the application for non-determination due to unnecessary delay.

21.0 Planning Balance

- 21.1 The Council cannot demonstrate either a 5 or 4 year housing supply and therefore the development must be assessed in line with Paragraph 11d(ii) and against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole. The three overarching objectives contained within paragraph 8 of the Framework seek to balance growth and local community needs against protection of the natural, built and historic environment. The benefits and disbenefits are therefore considered against these three broad topic areas below.
- 21.2 Whilst the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date by virtue of the absence of a temporary 4-year housing land supply, that does not mean the policies carry no weight. The weight attached to the development plan policies is a matter for the decision maker(s). The conflict with the spatial strategy of the plan still weighs against the application in principle. Furthermore, whilst the Local Plan Update holds limited weight due to its consultative stage, the site is allocated for residential development within this document.

Economic:

- 21.3 As with all housing development of this scale in this location, the proposal would result in notable economic benefits. This is broadly set to arise from the short-term economic contribution of the construction of 56 dwellings via construction industry jobs. In the longer term, future residents of up to 56 dwellings will contribute to the viability and vitality of businesses in Finchampstead and nearby towns. Although these are not unique to this scheme, the size of the development means these benefits are not insignificant and the development is therefore considered to perform a positive economic role in this part of the borough and is considered to hold moderate weight in the planning balance.

Social:

- 21.4 The provision of 56 new dwellings, including 22 affordable dwellings in this part of the borough would positively assist in furthering the social objective of sustainable development. The provision of an adequate range of dwelling sizes and policy compliant on-site affordable housing provision will ensure this site materially contributes to the identified general and affordable housing need over the local plan period. It would see a development that forms an extension to the existing settlement, as opposed to an isolated countryside development. It will provide the opportunity for existing residents of Finchampstead to maintain and reinforce existing social ties and family connections, either through an opportunity to upsize or downsize locally. Infrastructure contributions will also off-set any pressure on local services which may arise from the development. The social benefits are considered to hold substantial weight in the planning balance.

Environmental:

- 21.5 There would inevitably be a degree of visual harm to the immediate character and appearance of the land as the proposal would see the loss of a largely undeveloped site. However, whilst designated countryside, the site is not publicly accessible nor within productive agriculture. Rather, it is a large private residential garden that is physically and visually enclosed from its immediate surroundings. As such, it is not of high amenity value nor makes a substantial contribution to the intrinsic rural

character of the wider landscape. By virtue of appropriate boundary screening, the visual impact of the development on the surrounding area is not considered to be substantially harmful or as visually intrusive in the medium to long term as other such countryside locations.

- 21.6 The site will also not adversely impact protected species and conditions/ obligations are able to secure biodiversity mitigation and protection, including provisions towards a 10% biodiversity net gain. Furthermore, conditions will be secured to ensure that the environmental standards of new dwellings would meet local policy requirements in light of the Council's declared Climate Emergency. This environmental role is considered to have moderate weight in the overall planning balance.

22.0 Conclusion:

- 22.1 The most important policies for determining the application are out of date by virtue of the absence of a 4-year housing land supply. Paragraph 11 of the Framework therefore states that permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole, or there are specific policies in the Framework which indicate that development should be restricted. In this regard the tilted balance is engaged, all-be-it tempered due to past over-delivery.
- 22.2 As outlined above, the proposal would provide several material benefits that weigh in favour of the application. The provision of new housing and affordable homes weighs substantially in favour of the scheme. Whilst past over-delivery is relevant, it is also pertinent that the current housing land supply shortfall will likely remain until the new LPU is adopted, and that the site is identified within the LPU for residential development. Those less than desirable impacts of the development, namely loss of the openness of the land and traffic impacts are considered to be adequately dealt with via conditions and careful management of the construction phase.
- 22.3 In light of all matters raised, the adverse impacts of the proposed development would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework, including the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan, when taken as a whole and when tempered for past over delivery. The application is therefore recommended for approval subject to the conditions and legal agreement set out in this report.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010)

In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application and there would be no significant adverse impacts upon protected groups as a result of the development.

APPENDIX 1 - Conditions / informatives

APPROVAL subject to obligations and the following conditions and informatives:

Conditions

1. Time Limit and submission of reserved matters

The first application for the approval of Reserved Matters shall be made within a period of three years from the date of this permission. All subsequent Reserved Matters applications shall be submitted no later than 3 years from the date of the approval of the first reserved matters application.

Reason: To comply with Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004)

2. Time Limit for Commencement of Development

The development shall be begun no later than two years from the final approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved.

Reason: To comply with Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

3. Reserved Matters

No development shall commence until the layout, scale and appearance of the development, and the landscaping of the site (herein referred to as the reserved matters, as well as any outstanding conditions set out below), have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To comply with Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004)

4. Approved Plans

The Reserved matters shall fully accord with the following plans comprising:

Location Plan Revision A
Parameter Plan Revision A

Received 19th and 22nd January 2024

The Reserved Matters and means of access details shall be in accordance with the following plans subject to final approval of the details shown therein:

TTE-00-XX-SK-O-0008 Revision P01 – Swept Path Analysis
TTE-00-XX-SK-O-0002 Rev P02 – Access Arrangement & Visibility Splays

Received 9th January 2024

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and in line with other plans submitted which are subject to final approval in consultation with statutory consultees.

5. Materials

Pursuant to the approval of the 'Appearance' reserved matter, no development shall commence until details and schedules of the materials to be used in the

construction of the external surfaces of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the surrounding area in accordance with Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy.

6. Dwelling numbers and development Mix

The development hereby permitted shall not exceed 56 dwellings.

The detailed designs for the approved development shall accord with the following residential mix for market and affordable housing, or as otherwise may be agreed through the approval of reserved matters:

5 x 1 bedroom flats (as Affordable Housing)

6 x two bedroom flats (as Affordable Housing)

9 x 2 bedroom houses (2 of which to be Affordable Housing)

16 x 3 bedroom houses (6 of which to be Affordable Housing)

19 x 4 bedroom houses (3 of which to be Affordable Housing)

1 x 5 bedroom house

Reason: This reflects the application submission and the Local Planning Authority would wish to properly consider any mix that does not reflect this submitted mix to ensure housing needs are adequately met, in accordance with CP5 of the Core Strategy.

7. Site Levels

Prior to the commencement of development, details of levels, including finished floor levels for all buildings, proposed levels of public open space areas and any attenuation pond, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall only proceed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the development takes appropriate account of any level changes across the site.

8. Details of car and motorcycle parking

The reserved matters application(s) for the development shall include details of car, motorcycle parking and electric vehicle charging spaces in accordance with the Council's policies and which are to be approved in writing by the Council. No dwelling shall be occupied until the vehicular accesses, driveways, parking and turning areas to serve it including any unallocated space have been provided in accordance with the approved details and the provision shall be retained thereafter. The vehicle parking shall not be used for any other purposes other than parking and the turning spaces shall not be used for any other purposes than turning.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience in accordance with Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP6, CC07 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (Feb 2014), the Parking Standards Study within the Borough Design Guide 2010, and the North Wokingham Development Location Supplementary Planning Document (October 2011).

9. Garages to be retained

Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-

enacting that Order with or without modification), the garage accommodation on the site identified on the approved plans shall be kept available for the parking of vehicles ancillary to the residential use of the site at all times. It shall not be used for any business nor as habitable space.

Reason: To ensure that adequate parking space is available on the site, so as to reduce the likelihood of roadside parking, in the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07.

10. Cycle parking

The reserved matters application(s) for the development shall include details of secure and covered bicycle storage/parking facilities serving that dwelling for the occupants of, and visitors to the development. The cycle storage/parking shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details before occupation of the development hereby permitted and shall be permanently retained in the approved form for the parking of bicycles and used for no other purpose.

Reason: In order to ensure the development contributes towards achieving a sustainable transport system and to provide parking for cycles in accordance with Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP6, the Parking Standards Study within the Borough Design Guide 2010 and CC07 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan.

11. Access

Prior to commencement of the development, there shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, details of the proposed vehicular access on to Barkham Ride to include visibility splays of 2.4m by 120m. The access shall be formed as so approved, and the visibility splays shall be cleared of any obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height prior to the occupation of the development. The access shall be retained in accordance with the approved details and used for no other purpose and the land within the visibility splays shall be maintained clear of any visual obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height at all times.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

12. Stopping Up Access

Within one month of the completion of the new access in accordance with the details to be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, the existing vehicular access to the site shall be stopped up and abandoned, and the footway and/or verge crossings shall be re-instated.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP6.

13. Highway Construction Details

Prior to the commencement of development, full details of the construction of roads, cycleways and footways, including levels, widths, construction materials, depths of construction, surface water drainage and visibility splays shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Each dwelling shall not be occupied until the vehicle access to serve that dwelling has been constructed in accordance with the approved details to road base level and the final wearing course will be provided within 3 months of occupation, unless otherwise agreed in

writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that roads and footpaths are constructed to a standard that would be suitable for adoption as publicly maintainable highway, in the interests of providing a functional, accessible and safe development. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

14. Visibility Splays for private driveways

No dwelling hereby approved shall be occupied until visibility splays of 2.0 metres by 2.0 metres, have been provided at the intersection of the driveway and the adjacent footway. (Dimensions to be measured along the edge of the drive and the back of the footway from their point of intersection). The visibility splays shall thereafter be kept free of all obstructions to visibility above a height of 0.6 metres.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

15. Construction Method Statement

No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Statement shall provide for:

- i) the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors,
- ii) loading and unloading of plant and materials,
- iii) wheel washing facilities,
- iv) storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development,
- v) the erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate,
- vi) measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction,
- vii) a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety & convenience and neighbour amenities. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

16. External Lighting

Prior to occupation of any dwelling, details of external lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The details shall include:

- A layout plan with beam orientation
- A schedule of equipment
- Measures to avoid glare
- An isolux contour map showing light spillage to 1 lux
- Height and type of light sources
- Intensity of illumination

Lighting strategies should include details of lighting for all highways, cycleways, footpaths, public areas and on residential buildings/ in garden areas. The approved lighting plan shall thereafter be implemented as agreed.

No further external lighting shall be installed without the written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on nature conservation and in the interests of highway safety in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP3, CP6 and CP7 and MDD policy TB23.

17. Parking Management Strategy

Prior to the first occupation of any dwelling, a Parking Management Strategy for the management of the parking arrangements shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The submitted Parking Management Strategy shall include details of the management of all parking spaces.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory development in the interests of amenity and highway safety in accordance with Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Policies CP1, CP6, CP13 and CP21 and MDDL policies CC07 and TB20.

18. Walking and Cycling Strategy

Prior to the commencement of development, details of measures within the development to improve footway and cycleway routes that connect the development with bus stops, Rooks Nest Country Park, Gorse Ride Schools, and local shops shall be submitted for approval by the local planning authority. The measures shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of the first dwelling.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety & convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP6.

19. Hours of work

No work relating to the development hereby approved, including works of demolition or preparation prior to building operations, shall take place other than between the hours of 08:00 hours and 18:00 hours Mondays to Fridays and 08:00 hours to 13:00 hours on Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Bank or National Holidays.

Reason: To protect the occupiers of neighbouring properties from noise and disturbance outside the permitted hours during the construction period. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC06.

20. Waste storage

The reserved matters application(s) shall include details of bin storage, which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The bin storage area and facilities shall be permanently so-retained and used for no purpose other than the temporary storage of refuse, recyclable and compost materials.

Reason: In the interests of visual and neighbouring amenities and functional development. Relevant policy: Core Strategy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC04.

21. Protection of Trees

- a) Prior to the determination of any reserved matters applications dealing with 'Layout', a full Tree Survey, Tree Protection Plan, Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Arboricultural Method Statement which provides for the retention and protection of trees, shrubs and hedges growing on or adjacent the site in accordance with BS5837: 2012 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority (the Approved Scheme). The Arboricultural Impact Assessment shall ensure

development proposals including SuDS requirements have been fully considered in relation to the tree constraints.

The tree protection measures approved shall be implemented in complete accordance with the Approved Scheme for the duration of the development (including, unless otherwise provided by the Approved Scheme) demolition, all site preparation work, tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery.

No development (including any tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery) shall commence until the local planning authority has been provided (by way of a written notice) with a period of no less than 7 working days to inspect the implementation of the measures identified in the Approved Scheme on-site.

No excavations for services, storage of materials or machinery, parking of vehicles, deposit or excavation of soil or rubble, lighting of fires or disposal of liquids shall take place within an area designated as being fenced off or otherwise protected in the Approved Scheme.

The fencing or other works which are part of the Approved Scheme shall not be moved or removed, temporarily or otherwise, until all works including external works have been completed and all equipment, machinery and surplus materials removed from the site, unless the prior approval of the local planning authority has first been sought and obtained.

Reason: To secure the protection throughout the time that the development is being carried out of trees shrubs or hedges growing within or adjacent to the site which are of amenity value to the area, and to allow for verification by the local planning authority that the necessary measures are in place before development and other works commence Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21.

22. Retention of trees and shrubs

No trees, shrubs or hedges within the site which are shown as being retained on the approved plans shall be felled, uprooted wilfully damaged or destroyed, cut back in any way or removed without previous written consent of the local planning authority; any trees, shrubs or hedges removed without consent or dying or being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within 5 years from the completion of the development hereby permitted shall be replaced with trees, shrubs or hedge plants of similar size and species unless the local planning authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To secure the protection throughout the time that development is being carried out, of trees, shrubs and hedges growing within the site which are of amenity value to the area. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

23. Hard and soft landscaping

The reserved matters application for 'Landscaping' shall include full details or both hard and soft landscape proposals. Landscape details shall include:

- Planting plans
- Written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment).
- Schedules of plants and trees, to include large canopy, native and wildlife friendly species, and species likely to prove adaptable to climate change, noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers / densities,
- Details of tree pits
- Details of sustainable drainage and irrigation systems such as rain gardens, and temporary pools and swales
- Implementation timetables
- Specifications for fencing demonstrating how hedgehogs and other wildlife will be able to continue to travel across the site (e.g. fences slightly raised above ground level)
- Above and below ground service routes and existing functional services above and below ground including foul and surface water drainage, soakaways and SUDs details, power, communications cables and water and gas supply pipelines, including access points (ensuring they do not conflict with new or existing planting)
- Permeable hard surfaces

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and to a reasonable standard in accordance with the relevant recommendations of appropriate British Standards or other recognised Codes of Good Practice. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with the timetable agreed with the Local Planning Authority. Any trees or plants that, within a period of five years after planting, are removed, die or become, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, seriously damaged or defective, shall be replaced as soon as is reasonably practicable with others of species, size and number as originally approved.

Reason: To ensure the provision of amenity, and biodiversity enhancements, afforded by appropriate landscape design and to comply with local Core Strategy CP3 and CC03 of the MDD.

24. Boundary Treatment

The reserved matters application for 'Landscaping' shall include a plan indicating the positions, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected/planted, shall be submitted. Where appropriate the boundary treatment shall include the provision of mammal gaps. The boundary treatment shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plan before the development is occupied.

Reason: In order to protect the privacy of adjoining and future occupiers and in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and local wildlife in accordance with Policy CP3 and CP7 of the Core Strategy.

25. Landscape Management Plan

Prior to the commencement of the development a landscape management plan, including long term design objectives, management responsibilities, timescales and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas, including woodland area, attenuation pond and play areas, other than privately owned, domestic gardens,

shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The landscape management plan shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details and for the period specified.

Reason: In order to ensure that provision is made to allow satisfactory maintenance of the landscaping hereby approved in accordance with Policy CC03 of the MDD.

26. Ground work clearance

No development shall take place (including demolition, ground works, vegetation clearance) until a construction environmental management plan (CEMP: Biodiversity) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEMP (Biodiversity) shall include the following:

- a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities
- b) Identification of “biodiversity protection zones”
- c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements)
- d) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features
- e) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works
- f) Responsible persons and lines of communication
- g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person
- h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.

The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To minimise impacts on biodiversity in accordance with CP7 of the Core Strategy and TB23 of the MDD.

27. Biodiversity Net Gain

No development shall commence until a Biodiversity Net Gain Plan that details how habitats on the site will be created, established, managed or a period of 30 years from the day development is completed, and monitored (including details of the frequency of monitoring, in perpetuity), or off-site off-setting, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the council.

The Biodiversity Net Gain Plan shall demonstrate that there will be a minimum of a 10% uplift in biodiversity units using the most up to date DEFRA Metric. The Biodiversity Net Gain Plan shall thereafter be implemented. The results of the monitoring shall be submitted to the council and the local environmental records centre within 4 weeks of the end of each monitoring period.

Should the Biodiversity Net Gain Plan conclude that the development will not result in a 10% uplift in biodiversity units on site then the applicant is to submit details of how such an offset will be achieved off site.

Reason: To ensure that the development results in a Biodiversity Net Gain of at least 10% above baseline levels to support biodiversity in accordance with CP7 of the Core Strategy and TB23 of the MDD.

28. Biodiversity Enhancements

Prior to commencement of the development, details of biodiversity enhancements, to include integrated bird and bat box, tile or brick (or universal nest bricks) built into the new buildings (a minimum of one per dwelling) and native and wildlife friendly landscaping (including gaps at the bases of fences to allow hedgehogs to traverse through the gardens), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the council. The biodiversity enhancements shall thereafter be installed as approved.

Reason: To incorporate biodiversity in and around developments in accordance with CP7 of the Core Strategy and TB23 of the MDD.

29. Thames Water

No dwelling shall be occupied until confirmation has been provided that either:

- a) all water network upgrades required to accommodate the additional demand to serve the development have been completed; or
- b) a development and infrastructure phasing plan has been agreed with Thames Water to allow development to be occupied.

Where a development and infrastructure phasing plan is agreed no occupation shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed development and infrastructure phasing plan.

Reason: The development may lead to no / low water pressure and network reinforcement works are anticipated to be necessary to ensure that sufficient capacity is made available to accommodate additional demand anticipated from the new development to ensure that it is sustainable development in accordance with CP1 of the Core Strategy.

30. Archaeology

Prior to the determination of any reserved matters applications dealing with 'Layout', the applicant or their agents or successors in title shall have implemented a programme of archaeological work, beginning with a scheme of trial trench evaluation, in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the planning authority. The results of this evaluation will be used to inform any necessary mitigation strategy. The development shall only take place in accordance with the detailed scheme approved pursuant to this condition.

Reason: The site lies within an area of archaeological potential. The condition will ensure that any archaeological remains within the site are adequately investigated and recorded in order to advance our understanding of the significance of any buried remains to be lost and in the interest of protecting the archaeological heritage of the Borough in accordance with TB25 of the MDD.

31. Historical Recording Required

No development shall take place until the applicant, agent or successor in title has submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, a scheme for recording the World War II air raid shelter, in accordance with the methodology set

out in Historic England's 'Understanding Historic Building: A Guide to Good Practice' (2016). Details are to include a procedure for taking photographic record during the demolition phases. A copy of the final building recording document, once approved by the Local Planning Authority, is to be submitted to Berkshire Records Office's Heritage Environment Records department and the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to maintain a record of the features to be removed which form part of the historic development of the site in accordance with TB25 of the Managing Development Delivery Plan and section 16 of the NPPF (2023)

32. Land Contamination

Prior to commencement of development, an investigation and risk assessment should be completed in accordance with a scheme to assess the nature and extent of any contamination on the site, including radon gas, (whether it originates on the site or not). The investigation and risk assessment should be undertaken by competent persons and a written report of the findings produced. The written report would be subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. The report of the findings should include:

(i) a survey of the extent, scale, and nature of any contamination.

(ii) an assessment of the potential risks to:

- human health,
- property (existing or proposed) including buildings, crops, livestock, pets, woodland and service lines and pipes,
- adjoining land,
- groundwaters and surface waters,
- ecological systems,
- archaeological sites and ancient monuments.

(iii) an appraisal of remedial options, and proposal of the preferred option(s).

This must be conducted in accordance with DEFRA and the Environment Agency's 'Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination, CLR 11'.

Submission of Remediation Scheme (where required).

A detailed remediation scheme to bring the site to a condition suitable for the intended use by removing unacceptable risks to human health, buildings and other property and the natural and historical environment should be prepared and would be subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. The scheme should include all works to be undertaken, proposed remediation objectives and remediation criteria, timetable of works and site management procedures. The scheme should ensure that the site will not qualify as contaminated land under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in relation to the intended use of the land after remediation.

Reason: to ensure the development is suitable for its end use and the wider environment and does not create undue risks to occupiers of the site or surrounding areas in accordance with Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy.

33. Unexpected Land Contamination

If land contamination is found at any time during site clearance, groundwork, and construction the discovery shall be reported as soon as possible to the local planning authority. A full contamination risk assessment shall be carried out and if

found to be necessary, a 'remediation method statement' shall be submitted to the local planning authority for written approval.

Reason: To ensure that any contamination of the site is identified at the outset to allow remediation to protect existing/proposed occupants of property on the site and/or adjacent land. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 15 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment) and Core Strategy policies CP1 & CP3.

34. Noise Assessment

Prior to commencement of development, a full noise impact assessment shall be conducted, the noise assessment shall be carried out by a suitably qualified acoustic consultant/engineer and shall consider the provisions of BS4142 and BS8233. The assessment shall identify all sources of noise including plant or machinery. This should be submitted to the local authority for approval. This can inform the design to achieve best practice. The report is to identify a clear scheme of recommended works, or such other steps as may be necessary to minimize the effects of noise associated with the proposed development, both on nearby noise sensitive receptors and on future occupants of the development.

Reason: to protect the amenity of the area and to ensure that premises are protected from noise nuisance and disturbance, in accordance with Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Policy CP1, the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy CC06 and Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan Policy GA1.

35. Noise Insulation for Dwellings

The dwellings hereby approved shall be designed and/or insulated to provide attenuation against externally generated noise, the design should ensure that all noise implications are mitigated so that internal ambient noise levels for dwellings meet the BS8233 sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings design range 'good' for living accommodation.

Reason: to protect the amenity of the area and to ensure that premises are protected from noise nuisance and disturbance, in accordance with Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Policy CP1, the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy CC06.

36. Plant/Machinery to be attenuated

Any plant, machinery and equipment installed or operated in connection with the conducting of this permission shall be so enclosed and/or attenuated that noise therefrom does not exceed at any time a level of 5dB[A] below the existing background noise level [or 10dB[A] if there is a particular tonal quality] when measured at a point one metre external to the nearest residential or noise sensitive property. Any recommended noise mitigation measures should be retained and maintained thereafter for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure that no nuisance or disturbance is caused to the occupiers of properties. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC06.

37. Air Quality Assessment

No development shall commence on site until a detailed Air Quality Assessment to determine whether mitigation is required to protect the residents from the effects of poor air quality is submitted to and approved in writing by Local Planning Authority. Where this Air Quality Assessment identifies that future residents will be exposed to poor air quality, an air quality mitigation scheme shall accompany this assessment demonstrating sufficient mitigation to protect the occupants. The scheme shall be

implemented as approved prior to occupation of any part of the development and retained as approved at all times thereafter.

Reason: In order to protect the health of future occupants of the proposed development in accordance with Policy CC1 of the Core Strategy and Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan Policy GA1.

38. Parameters Plan

The Reserved Matters proposal for 'Layout' shall be in accordance with the principles outlined on the parameters plan which highlights areas for development and those to be retained for public open space.

Reason: To ensure that the reserved matter of 'Layout' will be in accordance with the principles established under the outline approval and to ensure open space is provided on site in accordance with policy TB08 of the MDD.

39. Drainage details

Prior to the determination of any reserved matters applications dealing with 'Layout', full details of the drainage system for the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The details shall include:

1. Full calculations demonstrating the capacity of attenuation features to cater for 1 in 100-year flood event with a 40% allowance for climate change and runoff controlled at 4.52l/s/ha.
2. Calculations demonstrating that there will be no flooding of pipes for events up to and including the 1 in 100-year flood event, with a 40% allowance for climate change, or how any flooding will be managed.
3. Separate drainage systems for any proposed adopted highways and residential dwellings.
4. Details of the proposed land raising
5. A drainage strategy plan indicating the location and sizing of SuDS features, with the base of any SuDS features located at least 1m above the seasonal high water table level. This should have due regard to a SuDS management train. Furthermore the plan shall include:
 - i. a timetable for its implementation, and
 - ii. a management and annual maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include the arrangements for adoption by any public body or statutory undertaker, or any other arrangements to secure the operation of the sustainable drainage scheme throughout its lifetime.

The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development and shall be maintained in the approved form for as long as the development remains on the site.

Reason: To prevent increased flood risk from surface water run-off in line with Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10.

40. Space Standards

The Reserved Matters application for 'Scale' and 'Layout' shall ensure that all dwellings shall accord with the Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standard (2015) or those TB07 of the Wokingham Borough Council Managing Development Delivery (MDD) Local Plan 2014.

Reason: To ensure future occupiers of the development will have a suitable standard of living accommodation in accordance with CP3 of the Core Strategy and TB07 of the MDD.

41. Residential gardens

The reserved matters application(s) shall demonstrate that private residential gardens will have a garden depth of at least 11m and will be of an overall suitable size in relation to the size of dwellings.

Reason: To ensure future occupiers will have a suitable level of outdoor amenity space in accordance with Core Strategy policy CP3 and Borough Design Guide policy R16 of the Wokingham Borough Design Guide.

42. Future Homes Standard

The dwellings hereby permitted shall meet the interim Future Homes Standard in accordance with the requirements of the Building Regulations. No dwelling shall be occupied until compliance has been confirmed by an accredited assessor certifying that a 31% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions has been achieved per the Standard.

Reason: To ensure developments contribute to sustainable development in accordance with the requirements of Part L of the Building Regulations and Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC04.

43. Decentralised Energy

Prior to the commencement of development, a scheme for achieving a 10% reduction in the predicted carbon emissions arising from operation of the development through the use of decentralised renewable and/or low carbon sources (as defined in the glossary of Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change (December 2007) or any subsequent version) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The minimum 10% reduction so required shall be achieved on top of the levels of reduction in carbon emissions required through the Building Regulations in force at the time of the submission of planning application. The approved scheme shall be implemented before the development is first occupied and shall remain operational for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure developments contribute to sustainable development in accordance with the WBC Climate Emergency Action Plan, Core Strategy Policy CP1, Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC05 and the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document.

44. Water consumption rates

Prior to the commencement of development, details of how all dwellings shall meet internal potable water consumption targets of 110 litres or less per person per day. Thereafter, all dwellings shall be built in accordance with the measures to achieve this water consumption target and the measures maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure developments contribute to sustainable development. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 14 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), WBC Climate Emergency Action Plan, Core Strategy policy CP1, Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC05 & the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document.

45. Carbon Neutral Homes

Prior to the approval of any reserved matters application, a statement/ report shall be provided to demonstrate whether the development is practicable and viable to provide carbon neutral homes; carbon neutral homes meaning a scenario in which greenhouse gas emissions arising from human activity are eliminated by minimising energy demands and meeting remaining energy demand with energy from renewable sources. This should take into account the sustainability measures required of the development in conditions 42, 43 and 44 of this permission. These measures shall be implemented prior to the occupation of the development. If it cannot be satisfactorily demonstrated that carbon neutral cannot be achieved as part of the development, measures to bring the development closer to this target shall be submitted to and agreed with the Local Planning Authority before the development commences. These shall be implemented and maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure developments contribute to sustainable development in accordance with the WBC Climate Emergency Action Plan, Core Strategy Policy CP1, Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC05, Policy ES1 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan, Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document and the Wokingham Council Climate Emergency Action Plan Fourth Progress Report (2023)

46. Disabled Access

Within the reserved matters application for 'Layout', 'Scale' and 'Apperance', it shall be demonstrated that 10-20% of the dwellings as a minimum accessible and adaptable in line with M4(2) of the Building Regulations.

Reason: To provide a variety of dwellings, catering to different needs, to support positive neighbourhood planning in accordance with Policy CP2 of the Core Strategy and TB05 of the MDD.

47. Open Space

The application for the Reserved Matter of 'Layout' should incorporate a plan showing a breakdown of the following minimum quantum and open space types on or off site (as indicated) in accordance with TB08 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (2014):

1. Parks and public gardens (1,493 sqm, on site)
2. Natural/semi natural green space (3,820 sqm, on site)
3. Amenity greenspace (1,320 sqm, on site)
4. Provision for children young people (Local Equipped Areas of Play (LEAP) and Local Areas of Play (LAP)) (336 sqm, on site)
5. Sports facilities (2220 sqm, off site)
6. Allotments (699 sqm, on or off site)

For the open space types that are to be provided off site, a plan detailing off-site provision shall be provided.

The open space shall be permanently maintained and kept as publicly accessible open space for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure that a suitable level of on-site public open space will be provided as part of the development in accordance with TB08 of the MDD.

48. Updated Bat Survey

If works do not commence before September 2024, an updated bat survey is to be undertaken and a report detailing the findings shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the development. If bats are found, an appropriate bat licence shall be obtained and submitted to the Local Planning Authority as evidence.

Reason: To ensure that biodiversity, protected and priority species are not adversely affected by the proposals in accordance with CP3 and CP7 of the Core Strategy (2010) and TB23 of the MDD (2014).

49. Communication Strategy for construction phase

No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, a Communications Plan. The Plan shall specify methods for communicating with local residents during the construction phase and shall provide contact details for those responsible for the construction of the development. The Plan shall be carried out as approved until the final completion of the development.

Reason: In order to minimise disturbance to neighbours during construction works in accordance with CP3 of the Core Strategy (2010)

Informatives:

1. This permission should be read in conjunction with the legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act, the obligations in which relate to this development.
2. The applicant is reminded that this approval is granted subject to conditions which must be complied with prior to the development starting on site. Commencement of the development without complying with the pre-commencement requirements may be outside the terms of this permission and liable to enforcement action. The information required should be formally submitted to the Council for consideration with the relevant fee. Once the details have been approved in writing the development should be carried out only in accordance with those details.
3. The applicant is reminded that should there be any change from the approved drawings during the build of the development this may require a fresh planning application if the changes differ materially from the approved details. Non-material changes may be formalised by way of an application under s.96A Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
4. Adequate precautions shall be taken during the construction period to prevent the deposit of mud and similar debris on adjacent highways. For further information contact the Highway Authority on tel.: 0118 9746000.
5. Whilst it would appear from the application that the proposed development is to be entirely within the curtilage of the application site, the granting of planning permission does not authorise you to gain access or carry out any works on, over or under your neighbour's land or property without first obtaining their consent, and does not obviate the need for compliance with the requirements of the Party Wall etc. Act 1996.

6. The development hereby permitted is liable to pay the Community Infrastructure Levy. The Liability Notice issued by Wokingham Borough Council will state the current chargeable amount. A revised Liability Notice will be issued if this amount changes. Anyone can formally assume liability to pay, but if no one does so then liability will rest with the landowner. There are certain legal requirements that must be complied with. For instance, whoever will pay the levy must submit an Assumption of Liability form and a Commencement Notice to Wokingham Borough Council prior to commencement of development, failure to do this will result in penalty surcharges being added. For more information see the Council's website - Community Infrastructure Levy advice page. Please submit all CIL forms and enquiries to developer.contributions@wokingham.gov.uk.

7. The applicant is reminded that, under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it is an offence to (amongst other things): deliberately capture, disturb, injure, or kill great crested newts; damage or destroy a breeding or resting place; intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a resting or sheltering place. Planning permission for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation. Should great crested newts be found at any stage of the development works, then all works should cease, and a professional and/or suitably qualified and experienced ecologist (or Natural England) should be contacted for advice on any special precautions before continuing, including the need for a licence.

8. Fire service access should comply with B5 of ADB Volume 2 2019 with additional local requirements below under the Berkshire Act 1986: Fire service vehicles currently operated by Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service exceed the requirements stated in the current edition of Approved Document B. The applicant should be made aware of the following amendments:- The minimum carrying capacity for a pumping appliance is 16 tonnes. The minimum carrying capacity for a high reach appliance is 26 tonnes. Structures such as bridges should have the full vehicle carrying capacity. Any structural fire precautions and all means of escape provision will have to satisfy Building Regulation requirement. These matters are administered by the local authority Building Control or approved inspectors, who you are advised to contact in this regard.

9. There are water mains crossing or close to your development. Thames Water do not permit the building over or construction within 3m of water mains. If you're planning significant works near Thames Water mains (within 3m) they will need to check that your development doesn't reduce capacity, limit repair or maintenance activities during and after construction, or inhibit the services we provide in any other way. The applicant is advised to read our guide working near or diverting our pipes.
<https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.thameswater.co.uk%2Fdevelopers%2Flarger-scale-developments%2Fplanning-your-development%2Fworking-near-ourpipes&data=05%7C01%7Cplanning.enquiries%40wokingham.gov.uk%7C92f84d1fef8949390d3d08db e5bbe8f0%7C996ee15c0b3e4a6f8e65120a9a51821a%7C0%7C0%7C638356367458250210%7CUnkn own%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljojMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6Ikl1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3>

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10. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

APPENDIX 2 - Parish Council Comments

Finchampstead Parish Council's latest comments (scheme for 56 dwellings)

PLANNING REF : 223528
PROPERTY ADDRESS : FBC Centre
: Gorse Ride, Finchampstead, Wokingham
: RG40 4ES
SUBMITTED BY : Finchampstead Parish Council
DATE SUBMITTED : 16/11/2023

COMMENTS:

The Council feel that the planning applications for 31 Barkham Ride (230791) and 33 Barkham Ride (223528) should be dealt with together as they were a single entity in the "call for sites" and have been treated as one site in the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan (FNDP)

This will be yet another access to Barkham Ride in an area where there are already several,
an access to 33 Barkham Ride,
an access to 31 Barkham Ride,
an access to Victoria Gardens,
an access to Rook's Nest Country Park car park.

The number of dwellings is an overdevelopment at this location leading to additional traffic problems on Barkham Ride. This is a narrow country lane which has major problems coping with existing traffic.

Barkham Parish Council's latest comments (scheme for 56 dwellings)

PLANNING REF : 223528
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Arborfield Green Community Centre
: Arborfield, Reading
: RG2 9ND
SUBMITTED BY : Barkham Parish Council
DATE SUBMITTED : 20/11/2023

COMMENTS:

Barkham Parish Council object to this application, and our previous comments still stand. Our comments as previously submitted are:

As stated in our response to the Local Plan Update in January 2022, the main problem with this proposal is traffic.

Any attempt to mitigate the increased traffic on Barkham Ride, a narrow country lane with a 6ft 6in width restriction, by widening the road will further impact the rural setting of the area contrary to the ABNP.

Further, such a move would not solve any problems but simply move them to Commonfield Lane, Barkham Street and the section of Barkham Ride that passes through Finchampstead.

Barkham Parish Council request this application be refused.

Finchampstead Parish Council's comments on original scheme for 68 dwellings:

PLANNING REF : 223528
PROPERTY ADDRESS : FBC Centre
: Gorse Ride, Finchampstead, Wokingham
: RG40 4ES
SUBMITTED BY : Finchampstead Parish Council
DATE SUBMITTED : 15/12/2022

COMMENTS:

The sites 31-33 Barkham Ride are included in the emerging Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan (FNDP). However, the Council have some concerns that the proposals in this outline planning application are not in accordance with the FNDP, and the planning statement suggests that it is, which is misleading.

The main issues with this application are as follows:

1. Housing density - The original development site was proposed as '31-33 Barkham Ride' for c 70 houses, but this application suggests 68 houses on No. 33 only. The application includes a number of three storey buildings which (outside of the SDLs or Gorse Ride) are not supported by the emerging FNDP, Policy D1, and further increase the density.
2. Traffic & safety - The proposed development will bring a significant increase in traffic onto Barkham Ride, and an additional access point to and from Barkham Ride in an area where there are several other access points including the recently created entrance to Victoria Gardens. Speeding is an issue on Barkham Ride which has a 40mph limit, and the road is dangerously narrow and already struggles with the volume of traffic and buses passing.
3. Infrastructure - Impact on local amenities and already over stretched services.

Barkham Parish Council's comments on original scheme for 68 dwellings:

PLANNING REF : 223528
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Arborfield Green Community Centre
: Arborfield, Reading
: RG2 9ND
SUBMITTED BY : Barkham Parish Council
DATE SUBMITTED : 15/12/2022

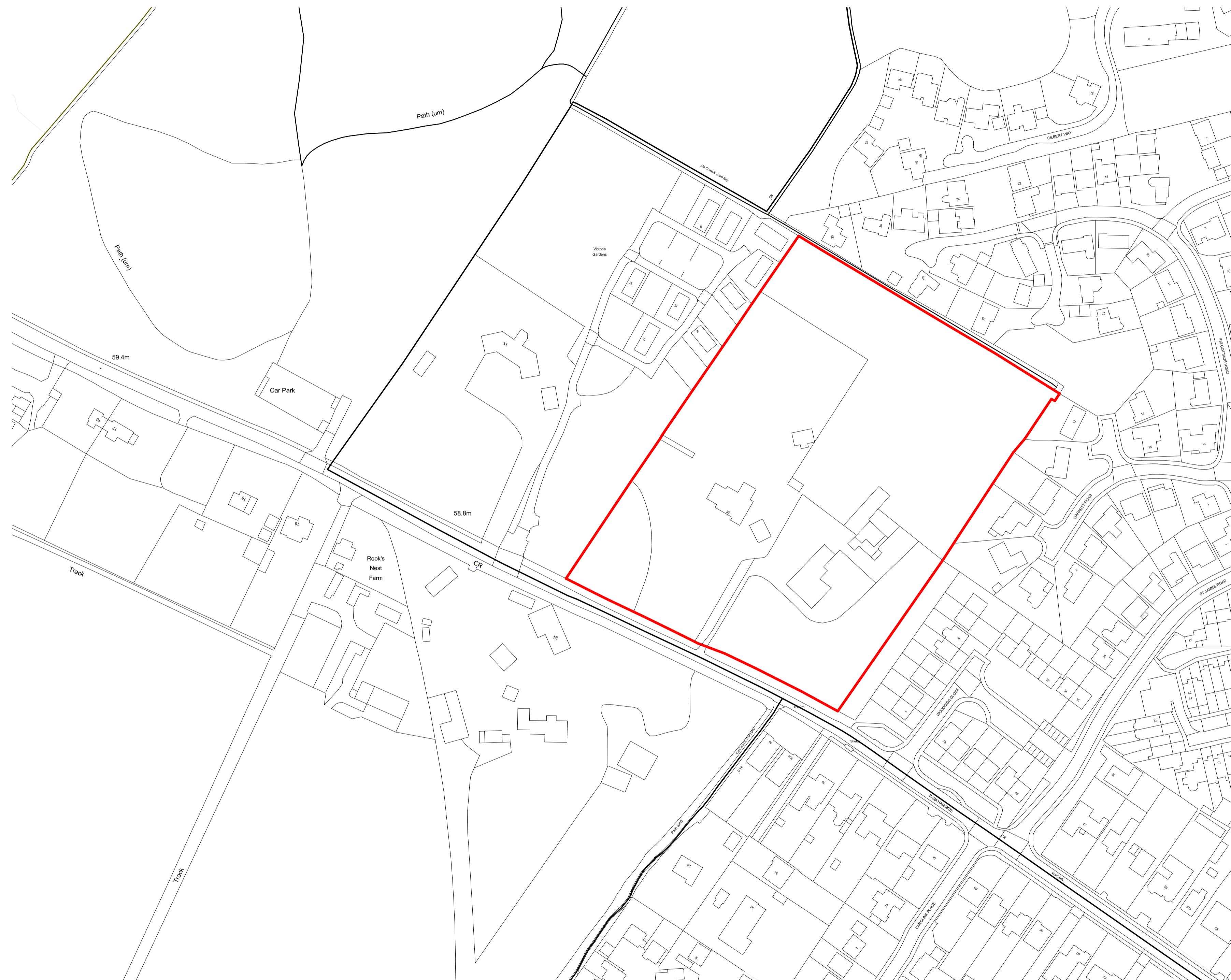
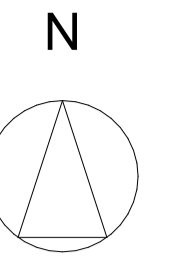
COMMENTS:

Barkham Parish Council object to this application.

As stated in our response to the Local Plan Update in January 2022, the main problem with this proposal is traffic.

Any attempt to mitigate the increased traffic on Barkham Ride, a narrow country lane with a 6ft 6in width restriction, by widening the road will further impact the rural setting of the area contrary to the ABNP. Further, such a move would not solve any problems but simply move them to Commonfield Lane, Barkham Street and the section of Barkham Ride that passes through Finchampstead.

Barkham Parish Council request this application be refused.



Location Plan [1:1250] Crown Copyright and Database Rights 2022 OS Licence no.AC000849896

221

REV	DESCRIPTION	DATE	AUTHOR	CHK'D	NOTES
A	Red line amended	17/01/24	CW	SL	

PROJECT
33 Barkham Ride, Finchampstead,
Proposed Residential
Development

CLIENTS
Elivia Homes & Knowles
Land Ltd

DRAWING
Location Plan

JOB NO.
B042599

SCALE @ A1
1:1250

DATE
November
2022

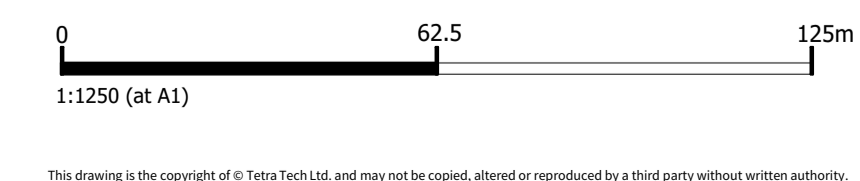
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101

AUTHOR/CHK'D
CW/SL

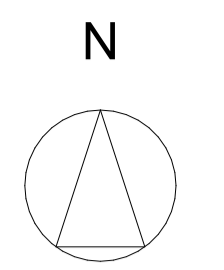
REVISION
A



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HEDGE END, SO30 2AF | 02382 022800 | TETRATECH.COM



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KEY

- Tree Root Protection Zones
- * Affordable units
- Bin Collection Points [BCP]
- Ecology Zone
- POS



Land for stationing of 8 mobile homes for residential purposes Wokingham Borough Council [planning ref:211937 approved]

223

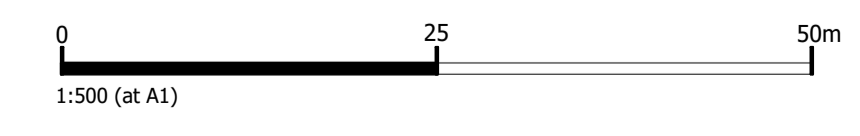
House Type	Style	Garage	Sqm	Sqft	No	Plot nos	Total Sqft
2 BED HOUSE	2BH [semi/terraced]		71	769	7	14, 15, 16, 30, 31, 36 & 37	5383
3 BED HOUSE	3BH [semi/terraced]	integral carport	115	1238	6	24, 25, 26, 27, 54 & 55	7428
4 BED HOUSE	4BS [link detached]	integral carport	138	1485	6	22, 23, 28, 29, 38 & 39	8910
3 BED HOUSE + st	E Type [detached]	single garage	147	1579	4	40, 44, 45 & 46	6316
4 BED HOUSE	4BC Type [detached]	integral garage	178	1918	5	41, 42, 43, 48 & 49	9590
4 BED HOUSE	4BA Type [detached]	double garage	226	2432	5	47, 50, 51, 53 & 56	12160
5 BED HOUSE	4BE Type [detached]	double garage	192	2070	1	52	2070
TOTALS					34		51857

House Type	Style	Sqm	Sqft	No	Total Sqft
1 BED FLAT	1BFAFF	50	538	5	2690
2 BED FLAT	2BFAFF	70	753	6	4518
2 BED HOUSE	2BHFAFF	79	850	2	1700
3 BED HOUSE	3BHFAFF	93	1001	6	6006
4 BED HOUSE	4BHFAFF	115	1237	3	3711
TOTALS				22	18625

COMBINED TOTAL				56	70482
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REV	DESCRIPTION	DATE	AUTHOR	CHK'D
0	Layout updated	08/01/2023	CW	SL
1	Layout updated	08/01/2023	CW	SL
2	Schedule updated	08/02/2023	CW	SL

NOTES



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PROJECT DESCRIPTION
33 Barkham Ride, Finchampstead,
Proposed Residential
Development
CLIENTS
Elivia Homes & Knowles
Land Ltd
DRAWING
Proposed Site Layout

JOB NO.
B042599
SCALE @ A1
1:500
DATE
April 2023

DRAWING NO.
103
AUTHOR/CHK'D
CW/SL
REVISION
Q



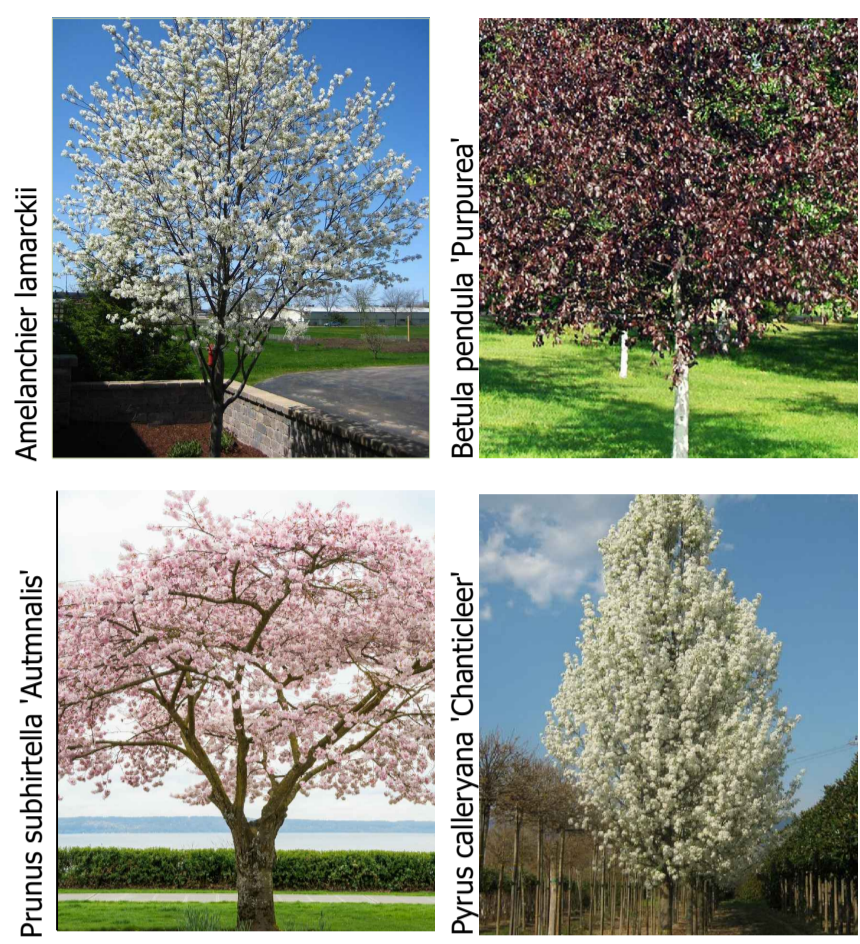
SOUTHAMPTON | BOTLEIGH GRANGE OFFICE CAMPUS
HEDGE END, SO30 2AF | 02382 022800 | TETRATECH.COM

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Proposed Landscape Strategy
 The landscape proposals provide a landscape of seasonal interest with colour, scale, texture, scent and movement throughout the scheme. Trees and feature specimen plants aim to create focal points and hedging will also create additional form throughout the site. Additional grassland and scrub management will enhance the surrounding natural elements.
 Note: Review of the design will be required once information existing and proposed services has been made available.

Examples of planting
Tree Planting



Shrub Planting



Bulb planting



Feature Planting



Habitat creation



Hedging



Key

- Red Line boundary
- Existing trees to be retained
- Existing trees root protection area
- Existing trees and vegetation to be removed
- Existing scrub vegetation to be retained
- Proposed Attenuation pond
- Proposed LAP Play space
- Proposed tree planting
Placement subject to location of services
- Proposed shrub planting
- Proposed native hedge planting
- Proposed property hedge planting
- Proposed bulb planting
- Proposed feature/specimen planting
- Proposed property grass areas
- Proposed neutral grassland with wildflower
- Hard landscaping**
Refer to Architects drawing B042599-102-Rev L
- Proposed main access road
- Proposed shared surfacing
- Proposed footway
- Proposed buildings

PRELIMINARY ISSUE

Rev	Description	Date	3m / 3m / App	DV	MP	EJ
P01	FIRST ISSUE	19.10.23				

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 47 Newport Road, Cardiff,
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 Tel: +44 (0)29 2082 9200
 www.tetratetecheurope.com



Client:
ELIVIA HOMES LIMITED

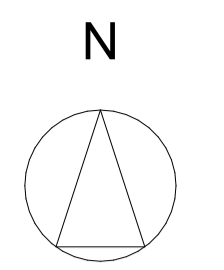
Project Name:
BARKHAM RIDE

Sheet Title:
LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

TTE Project Number	Drawn By	Date	Checked By	Date	Approved By	Date	Scale @ A1	Suitability
B054896	DV	Oct '23	MP	Oct '23	EJ	Oct '23	1:500	S3
Client Project Number	Originator	Volume/System	Level/Location	Type/Code	Role	Number	Revision	
-	TTE	- 00	- XX	- DR	- L	- 300	P01	

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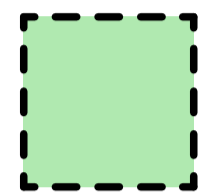
KEY



Tree Root Protection Zones



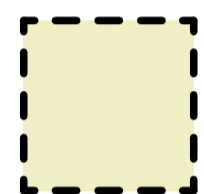
Enhanced Landscaping Along Boundary



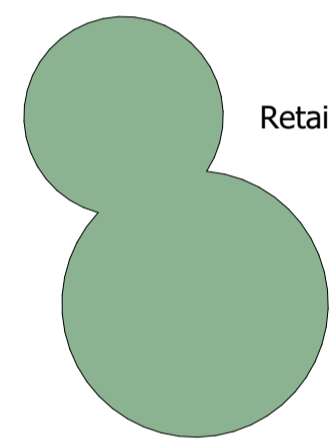
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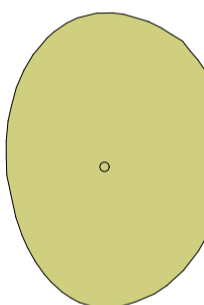
Ecology Zone



Developable Area



Retained Woodland



Retained Trees Along Site Frontage & Eastern Boundary



Proposed Site Access

227



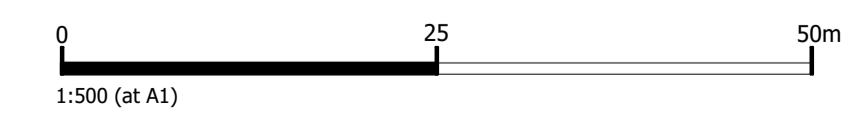
REV	DESCRIPTION	DATE	AUTHOR	CHK'D	NOTES
A	Layer updated	22/01/2023	CW	SL	

PROJECT
33 Barkham Ride, Finchampstead,
Proposed Residential
Development
CLIENTS
Elivia Homes & Knowles
Land Ltd
DRAWING
Parameter Plan

JOB NO.
B042599
DRAWING NO.
104
SCALE @ A1
1:500
AUTHOR/CHK'D
CW/SL
DATE
January 2024
REVISION
A



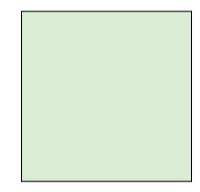
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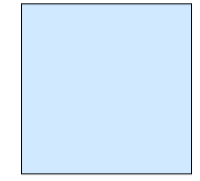
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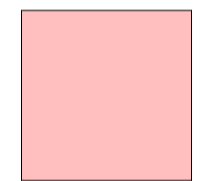
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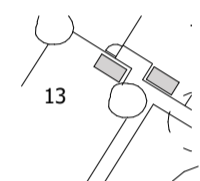
Allocated Parking Spaces



Un-Allocated Parking Spaces



Visitor Parking Spaces



Timber Shed - Cycle Storage to Rear Gardens
[Note: Cycle Storage will be provided within Garages where applicable, Plots 1-9 will have an integrated cycle store with the addition of 2no. cycle stands for visitors located near the main entrance] All storage to comply with Wokingham City Council's requirements.

Electrical Vehicle Charging Points



Active Electric Vehicle Charging Point

NOTE: Refer to Technical Note 1 by Tetra Tech for additional information on parking, access & visibility, swept paths, road safety audit and walking and cycling environment



REV	DESCRIPTION	DATE	AUTHOR	CHK'D	NOTES
A	EF's updated	30/08/2023	CW	SL	NOTES

PROJECT
33 Barkham Ride, Finchampstead,
Proposed Residential
Development

CLIENTS
Elivia Homes & Knowles
Land Ltd

DRAWING
Car and Cycle Parking
Strategy

JOB NO.
B042599

SCALE @ A1
1:500

DATE
August 2023

DRAWING NO.
103

AUTHOR/CHK'D
CW/SL

REVISION
A

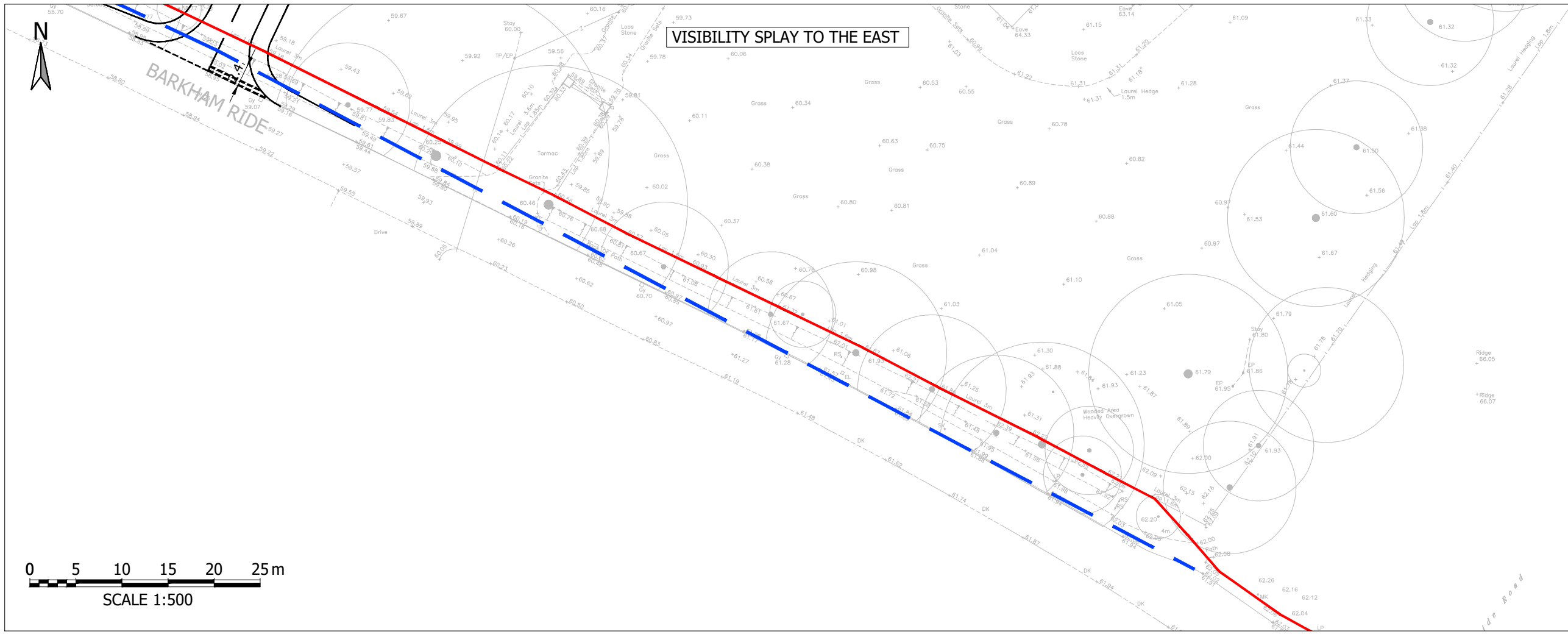
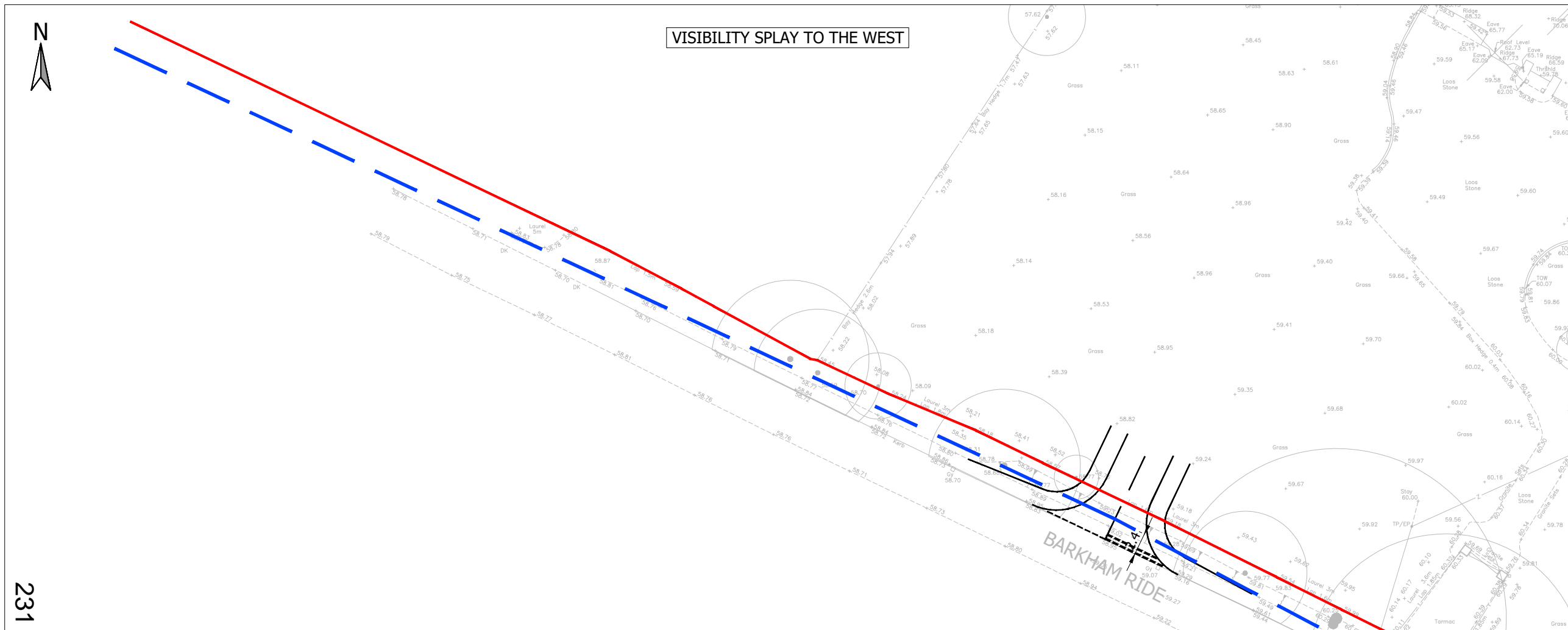


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\\London02.wyg.com\sba\X-Drive\Projects\A110000\A118501 - Barkham Ride, Finchampstead\50 Drawings\51 CAD\784-B042599 - SK0001-SK0003-P02.dwg



Notes:

- General**
1. Do not scale from drawing.
 2. All dimensions are in metres, unless stated otherwise.
 3. This drawing is to be read & printed in colour.
 4. This drawing is for illustrative purposes only.

- Disclaimer**
1. The information contained in this drawing is based on a combination of OS and data provided by others and Tetra Tech shall not be liable for any inaccuracies or deficiencies.

- KEY:**
- 2.4m x 120m visibility splay based on speed restriction of 40 mph
 - Highway boundary

PRELIMINARY ISSUE

Rev	Description	Date	Drn / Cbk / App
P02	AMENDMENTS TO TREE LOCATION	15.12.2023	SJR GS NW
P01	PRELIMINARY FIRST ISSUE	27.07.2023	SJR GS NW

Document Control

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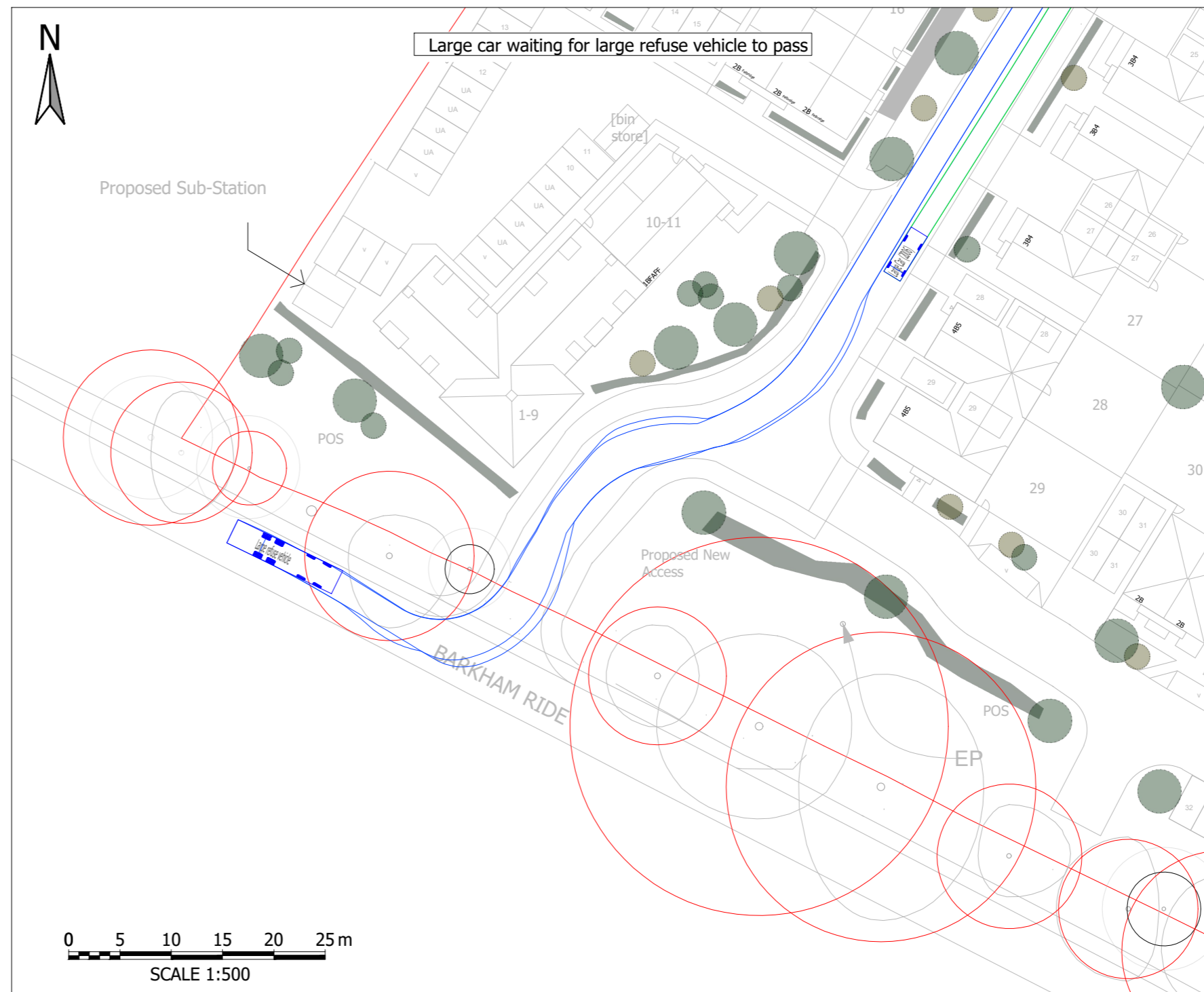
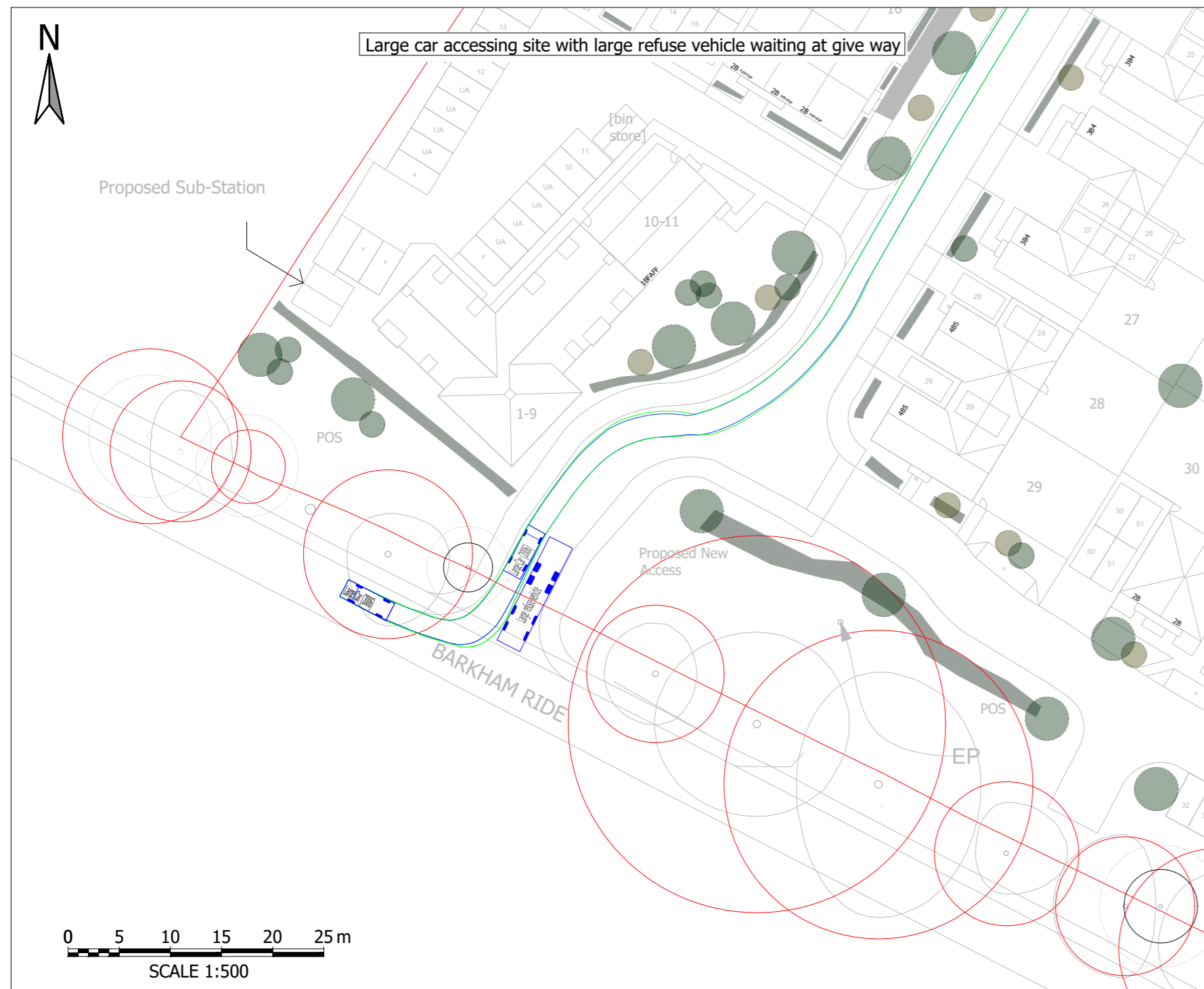
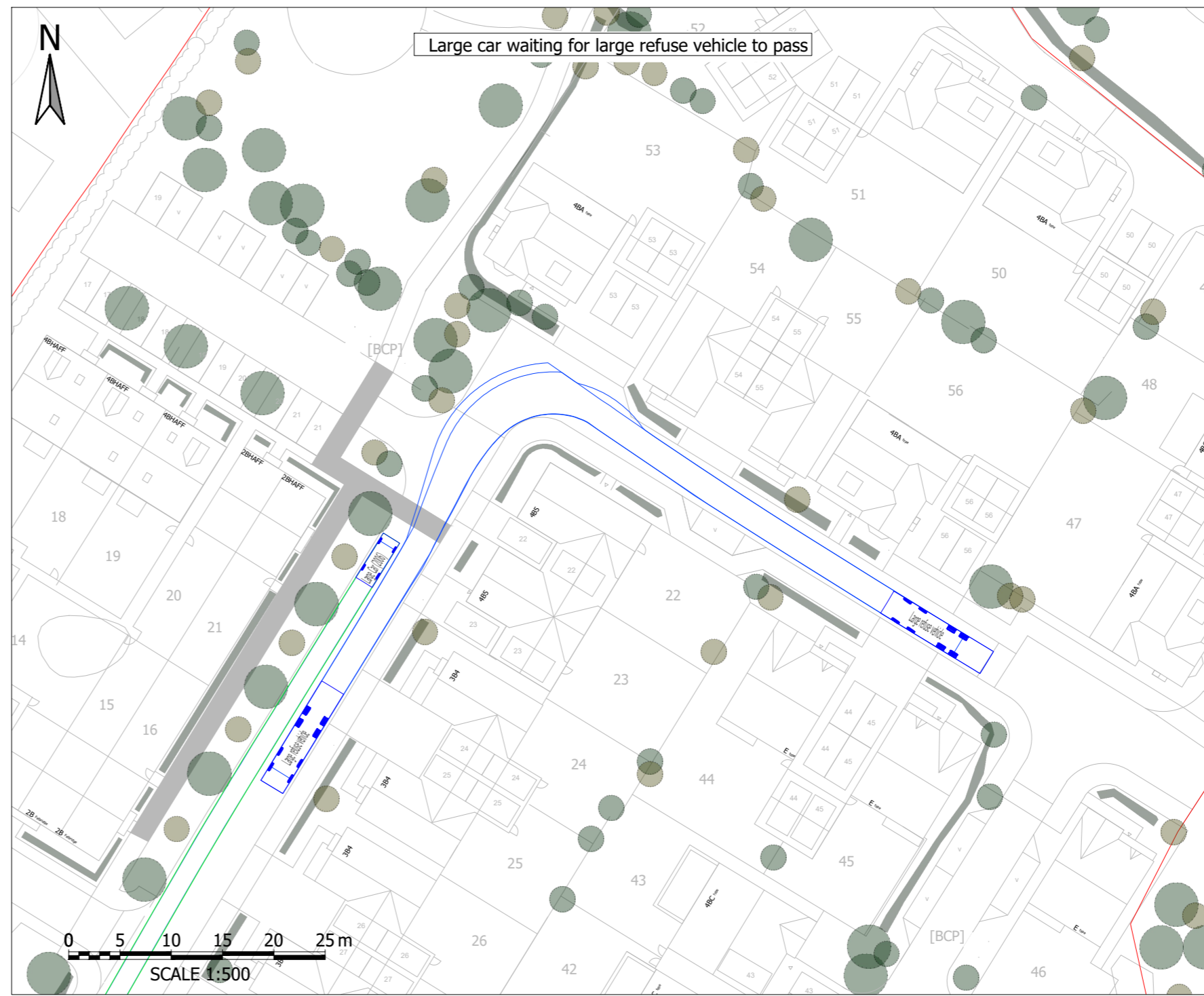
Client
ELIVIA HOMES

Project Name
**33 BARKHAM RIDE
FINCHAMPSTEAD**

Sheet Title
ACCESS ARRANGEMENT & VISIBILITY SPLAYS

TTE Project Number	Drawn By	Date	Checked By	Date	Approved By	Date	Scale @ A3	Suitability
B042599	SJR	JULY 23	GS	JULY 23	NW	JULY 23	1:250	S3
Client Project Number	Originator	Volume/System	Level/Location	Type/Code	Rate	Number	Revision	
- TTE - 00 - XX - SK - O - 0002							P02	

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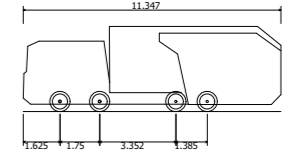
General

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2. All dimensions are in metres, unless stated otherwise.
3. This drawing is to be read & printed in colour.
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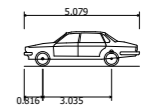
Disclaimer

1. The information contained in this drawing is based on a combination of OS and data provided by others and Tetra Tech shall not be liable for any inaccuracies or deficiencies.

Vehicle used:



Large refuse vehicle
 Overall Length 11.347m
 Overall Width 2.500m
 Overall Body Height 3.751m
 Min Body Ground Clearance 0.304m
 Track Width 2.500m
 Lock to lock time 6.00s
 Kerb to Kerb Turning Radius 11.330m



Large Car (2006)
 Overall Length 5.079m
 Overall Width 1.872m
 Overall Body Height 1.525m
 Min Body Ground Clearance 0.310m
 Max Track Width 1.831m
 Lock to lock time 4.00s
 Kerb to Kerb Turning Radius 5.900m

PRELIMINARY ISSUE

P01	PRELIMINARY FIRST ISSUE	13.12.2023	SJR	GS	NW
Rev	Description	Date	Drn	Chk	App

Issuing Office
Tetra Tech London
 11th Floor, 1 Angel Court, London,
 United Kingdom, EC2R 7JH
 Tel: +44 (0)20 7250 7500
 www.tetrateteurope.com



Client
ELIVIA HOMES

Project Name
**33 BARKHAM RIDE
 FINCHAMPSTEAD**

Sheet Title
SWEPT PATH ANALYSIS

TTE Project Number	Drawn By	Date	Checked By	Date	Approved By	Date	Scale @ A2	Suitability
B042599	SJR	Dec 23	GS	Dec 23	NW	Dec 23	As Shown	S3
Client Project Number	Originator	Volume/System	Level/Location	Type/Code	Role	Number	Revision	
- TTE - 00 - XX - SK - O - 0008							P01	

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Agenda Item 77.

Application Number	Expiry Date	Parish	Ward
232560	13 March 2024	Shinfield	Swallowfield;

Applicant	
Site Address	Whitehouse Farm, Beech Hill Road, Spencers Wood, Wokingham, RG7 1HR
Proposal	Full application for the change of use of land from Agricultural, residential, light industrial and storage to an Arboretum with ancillary support facilities to include storage, laboratory, offices and auditorium, re-location of poly tunnels and creation of irrigation pond, swale and attenuation pond, following demolition of hardstanding areas and various buildings including workshop, Mobile home, store, container, Nissan hut and sheds.
Type	Full
Officer	Andrew Chugg
Reason for determination by committee	Major application

FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Planning Committee on Wednesday, 13 March 2024
REPORT PREPARED BY	Assistant Director – Place and Growth
RECOMMENDATION	APPROVAL subject to conditions and informatives detailed at the end of this report.
SUMMARY	

The proposal represents a sustainable rural enterprise within designated countryside and is therefore acceptable in principle. The proposal would deliver a high-quality development that is compatible with its countryside location and would respect the rural woodland character of this site. It would help remediate and enhance previously despoiled land on parts of the application site, from previous non-conforming uses, that would otherwise risk having a more detrimental impact on the landscape and protected woodland areas.

The proposal would be acceptable in terms of its potential traffic impacts, car parking, flooding, drainage and mineral resource impacts. There would be no significant impact on neighbouring residential amenities. The proposal would facilitate a significant amount of new tree planting that would be comprehensively, and professionally, managed by the applicant and would introduce new wetland habitats that would help to secure at least a 30% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) across the application site.

The proposal would introduce a high-quality sustainable built form that would meet a minimum BREEAM rating of 'Excellent'. Adequate measures would be secured to ensure that the development can be accommodated within the Council's existing Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) Burghfield off-site emergency plan arrangements. The proposal would not result in the permanent loss of best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY		
Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
092140	Proposed erection of a two-storey side/rear extension, plus single storey front extension and erection of detached double garage.	APPROVED 16/04/12
080610	Proposed erection of two storey side/rear extension plus single storey front extension and erection of triple detached garage.	REFUSED 29/01/09
080419	Proposed erection of two storey and single storey side extension to dwelling with first floor dormer window extensions and erection of detached double garage.	REFUSED 20/08/08
950003	Application for a Certificate of Lawfulness (For An Existing Use) Relating To The Change Of Use Of Land for the siting of a mobile home.	APPROVED 20/06/99
141503 (CLE/2014/0400)	Application for a Certificate of Lawful existing use for retention as a scaffolding yard.	APPROVED 20/02/15

DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION	
Proposed units	Net loss of 1 dwelling
Proposed density - dwellings/hectare	n/a
Number of affordable units proposed	n/a
Previous land use	Agricultural, residential, light industrial
Existing parking spaces	5
Proposed parking spaces	15
CONSTRAINTS	Contaminated Land Consultation Zone Affordable Housing Thresholds Bat Roost Habitat Suitability Countryside Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone Tree Preservation Orders (TPO-1789-2021) Landfill Gas Consultation Zone Landscape Character Assessment Area SSSI Impact Risk Zones Thames Basin Heaths SPA Mitigation Zones JCEB Areas of Search for Sand and Gravel JCEB Mineral Safeguarding Areas AWE DEPZ consultation zone Grade 3 agricultural land

CONSULTATION RESPONSES	
Internal:	
WBC Environmental Health	No objection subject to conditions
WBC Drainage	No objection subject to conditions
WBC Highways	No objection subject to conditions
WBC Growth & Delivery (Planning Policy)	No objection subject to conditions
WBC Landscape and Trees	No objection subject to conditions

WBC Ecology	No objection subject to conditions
WBC Emergency Planning	No objection subject to conditions
WBC CIL	Development is not CIL liable
WBC Sustainability Officer	No objection subject to conditions
External:	
Forestry Commission	No response received
Office for Nuclear Regulation	No objection subject to conditions
West Berks Emergency Planning Officer	No objection subject to conditions
Nature Space	No objection subject to conditions
Natural England	No objection
Thames Water Utilities Ltd	No comment
Forestry Commission	No comment
Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue	No objection
Active Travel England	No comment
Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE)	No response received

REPRESENTATIONS

Shinfield Parish Council: No objection

Local Members: No comments received.

Neighbours: Three letters of support were received highlighting the following points:

- Proposal would protect Countryside, open spaces and trees.
- The proposal will bring immense benefits to the community.
- Heartening to see initiatives that prioritise our environment, sustainability, the well-being of our community and promote ecological awareness.
- Construction traffic should be directed along the main A33 to minimise damage to Beech Hill Road / Yew Tree Lane.
- Supportive of the application but disappointed that the arboretum will not be open to the public.
- A footpath along Beech Hill Road would have also been beneficial.
- Maintenance of verge and hedging around the site should occur to provide adequate highway visibility.

PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- Section 2: Achieving sustainable development
- Section 9: Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 12: Achieving well-designed places
- Section 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Section 17: Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals

National Design Guide

- Section I: Identity
- Section B: Built Form
- Section M: Movement

- Section N: Nature
- Section R: Resources
- Section L: Lifespan

National Planning Practice Guidance

National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)

- Climate Change
- Design: process and tools
- Light pollution
- Natural Environment
- Renewable and low carbon energy
- Use of planning conditions
- Water supply, wastewater and water quality

Core Strategy (CS)

CP1 – Sustainable Development

CP3 – General Principles for Development

CP6 – Managing Travel Demand

CP7 – Biodiversity

CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits

CP15 – Employment Development

MDD Local Plan (MDD)

CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CC02 – Development Limits

CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping

CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction

CC05 – Renewable Energy and Decentralised Energy Networks

CC06 – Noise

CC07 – Parking

CC10 – Sustainable Drainage

TB04 – Development in vicinity of Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE), Burghfield

TB12 – Employment Skills Plan

TB20 – Service Arrangements and Deliveries for Employment and Retail Use

TB21 – Landscape Character

TB23 – Biodiversity and Development

Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)

M2 – Safeguarding sand and gravel resources

Other

Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD

Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan

- General design principles
- Sustainable development
- Transport and access
- Accessibility and highway safety
- Parking provision
- Natural and historic environment
- Biodiversity
- Flooding

PLANNING ISSUES

Proposal

1. The application is for a change of use of existing agricultural, residential, light industrial and storage land to an arboretum with ancillary supporting facilities. The proposed arboretum would include storage facilities, laboratory, offices and an auditorium comprising a total of 786sqm (an increase of approximately 480sqm from existing built development to be replaced within the application site). The ancillary facilities are for the purpose of a private scientific research establishment based around the new arboretum. The applicant is a professional tree care specialist and carries out scientific research into the spread and treatment of pest and disease control on trees and shrubs.
2. The proposed business support facilities on site would include an auditorium, arrival space, research wing, office wing and maintenance wing (these are identified as grey buildings on the submitted Proposed Phase Block Plan – Refer to Figs. 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0 below). All these facilities form part of the overall proposal, although the applicant requires an option to construct the auditorium, arrival space and small group external area within the second phase of development (the southern-most area of proposed development). The 'core facilities' comprising of the offices, laboratory and maintenance building would be built out during the first phase of works.



Fig. 1.0: Extract of Proposed Phase Block Plan

3. The full phasing arrangement of the proposed development is outlined in the submitted phasing plan (refer to Fig.1.0 above) and accompanying drawing legend (refer to Fig.2.0 below), and in elevation form, it is also illustrated in the Fig. 3.0 below.

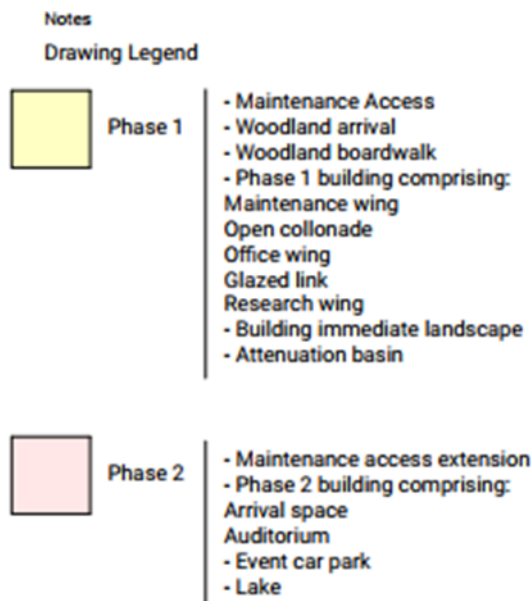


Fig. 2.0: Drawing Legend and labels for Proposed Block Phasing Plan (Fig 1.0)

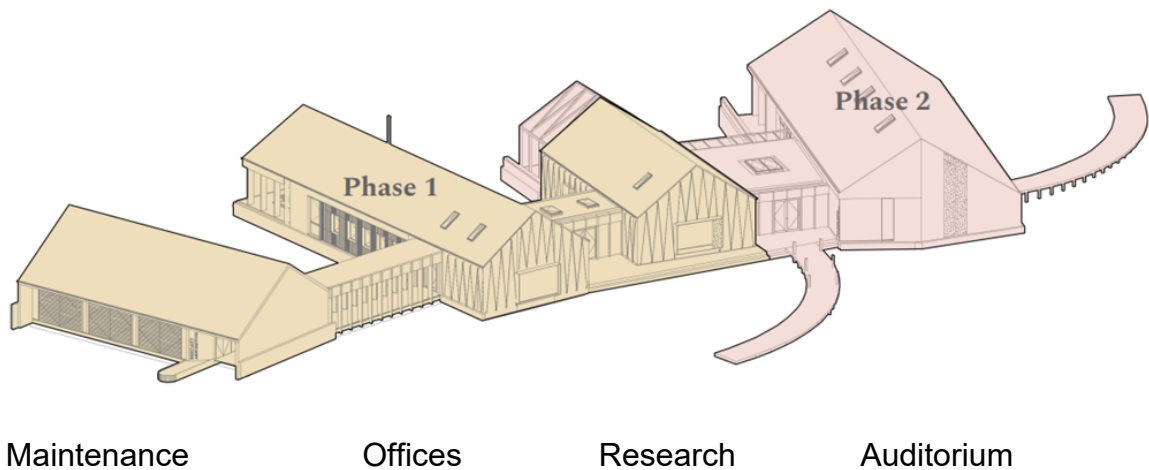


Fig. 3.0: Extract of Proposed Drawings Phasing Drawing - Phases 1 & 2

4. The proposed arboretum would be a private research centre and not open to the public. The applicant has advised that any external visits would be carefully supervised and by appointment only (via an external company). The applicant's expectation is that the site will initially accommodate existing research staff (4-5) although this would be reviewed once the arboretum becomes more established.

5. There are three existing access points into the site that would be used to facilitate the proposed development. These comprise of a maintenance access from White House Lane, a staff/visitor access and car park from Yew Tree Lane, and an event car park access, further south along Yew Tree Lane (refer to the proposed Block Phasing Plan at Appendix 3). The staff car parking area will contain 15 no. car parking spaces as well as EV charging facilities.

Site description

6. The application site covers approx. 10ha and is roughly triangular in shape, and bounded on three sides by Beech Hill Road, Yew Tree Lane and White House Lane. The site lies south-south-west of Spencers Wood and primarily comprises of open agricultural land plus light industrial and storage buildings and a mobile home in residential use as Deane Cottage located towards the northern boundary. The north-western corner of the site is a protected deciduous woodland (TPO-1789-2021). The existing White House Farm is outside of the application site but within the applicant's ownership (refer to Location Plan at Appendix 2).



Fig. 4.0: Aerial image of site (yellow) viewed from junction of Beech Hill Road and White Horse Lane (Google Maps 2024)

7. There are existing vehicular accesses from both White House Lane and Beech Hill Road. The area adjacent to the Beech Hill Road was previously being used as an unauthorised scaffolders yard until it was granted a lawful development certificate in 2015 (CLE/2014/0400 refers). The yard is currently unused and building detritus has already been removed from site.

Principle of development

8. The National Planning Policy Framework has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan. Policy CC01 of the MDD Local Plan states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
9. The site is located outside the settlement boundary within the designated countryside. Policy CP11 of the Core Strategy does not permit development outside of development limits unless it falls within various exemption criteria, the following of which are relevant for assessment against this proposal:
 1. *A sustainable rural or recreational enterprise, where it does not lead to excessive expansion away from the original building and is contained within a building suitable for conversion; and*
10. By virtue of the nature of the applicant's business, it is essential for the proposed use is located within the open countryside where there is sufficient open land to establish the proposed arboretum, ancillary buildings and research operations. Hence, the proposed use represents a sustainable rural enterprise and the principle of this development, in terms of its out-of-settlement location, is acceptable provided it does not lead to excessive expansion away from original buildings. This is discussed in more detail in the 'Character of the area' section of this report below.
11. Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that:
 - i) *Do not lead to a net loss of dwellings and other residential accommodation or land.*
12. In essence, the proposal is contrary to policy CP3 because the proposal would result in the net loss of a single dwellinghouse, Deane Cottage (refer to Pic. 1.0 below) which is presently dilapidated and disused. This dwelling was previously unauthorised in planning terms and only granted planning permission through the passage of time, via a certificate of lawfulness in 1999 (application 950003 refers). Its demolition as part of the proposal would reflect a more suitable use of this land with a sustainable rural enterprise.
13. Moreover, it is noted that this existing property is not brick-built but, rather, a mobile home that does not provide high quality residential accommodation. Nor is it within a surrounding residential environment close to essential domestic facilities and services. The quality of construction, location and status of this dwelling reduces its contribution to the borough housing stock.



Pic. 1.0 (Deane Cottage)

14. Hence, in this instance, the shortcomings of this existing dwelling in terms of its quality and location weigh modestly against the acceptability of the proposed development in principle. As such, the proposal is considered an acceptable sustainable rural enterprise suited to its countryside location in principle subject to the further consideration of relevant planning policies outlined below.

Character of the area

15. Core Strategy Policy CP3 states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that are of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character, 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. Core Strategy Policy CP1 requires developments to maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment. Core Strategy Policy CP11 requires this type of development not to lead to an excessive expansion away from the original buildings.
16. The NPPF states that *“planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by... recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland”* and by *“remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate”* (Para. 180).
17. The Borough Design Guide (BDG) indicates that:

- Development on the settlement edge create an edge and incorporate soft landscaping to integrate to the rural setting (RD9)
- Development contributes positively towards and be compatible with the historic or underlying character and quality of the local area (RD1)
- Materials, colours and details respond to the distinctive elements of the locality (RD7)
- Height, bulk and massing should respond to the local context and the prevailing heights in the area (R9 and NR5)
- Car parking should be positioned unobtrusively and well designed and landscaped (NR10)
- The impact of servicing areas upon the public realm should be minimised through locating them sensitively and screening (NR11)
- Boundary treatments should form an integral part of the design of proposals for non-residential development (NR12).

18. In terms of built form, the proposal comprises four distinct pitched roofed buildings (the auditorium, research wing, office wing and maintenance wing) which would be linked via interconnecting walkways and arranged in a curved form facing towards the main arriving point to west (refer to Fig. 5.0 below).

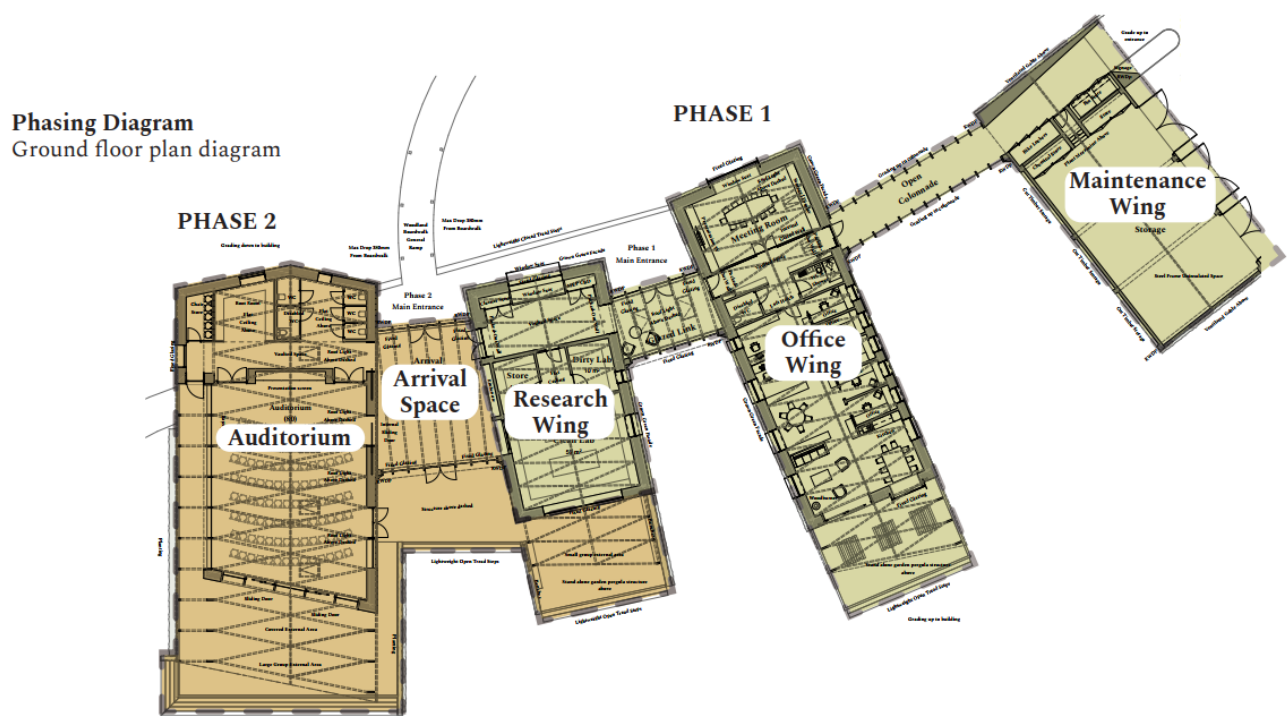


Fig. 5.0: Extract of Design & Access Statement (DAS) – Architectural Phasing

19. These buildings would form the central heart of the facility and would be located a minimum distance of 80m from the nearest public boundary on White Horse Lane, 90m from Yew Tree Lane and 125m from Beech Hill Road. At their maximum combined dimension, they would be approx. 80m wide (north to south), 30m deep (east to west) and 8.5m tall (the auditorium building). This separation distance from key boundaries and intervening mature vegetation would provide a substantial natural setting for the proposed building that would be more than adequate for a building of this size in the countryside.

20. The lightweight glazed links between each of the four buildings would distinguish these built forms as separate elements thereby limiting their overall bulk and mass in appearance terms. Importantly, this would allow for partial views into and through the building to the surrounding landscape thereby better integrating the building into its natural environment, in line with the applicant's business ethos.
21. This is evidenced within the submitted Design and Access Statement (DAS) which states that *"the arrival space and glazed links have been designed to allow for a high level of visual permeability through them to the two distinctive landscape areas. A critical part of their design has been to ensure that they retain a sense of elegance representing a counter point to the simple robust expression of the individual building wings. The structure to these spaces are also expressed running from the front to rear giving further emphasis to the perspective through the building"* (DAS 7.21), and by the applicant's contextual elevations provided at Appendix 7, an extract of which is provided at Fig. 6.0 below.



Fig. 6.0: Extract of proposed context elevations

22. The submitted (DAS) states that the proposal aims to create a *'woodland arrival experience'* by utilising the existing vehicular access into the woodland area on the western boundary. The applicant's aim would be to *"extend the existing woodland with complimentary tree species creating a woodland setting that envelops the building and gives a 'Sense of Discovery' when approaching the building through the trees"* DAS 7.29. This is a positive solution to limiting the amount of hardstanding required to access the site for the proposed use. It also highlights a significant improvement on the previous commercial use in this location, as a scaffolders yard, which was in stark contrast to the rural character and appearance of the site.
23. The gabled ends of the individual buildings would have an agricultural form which would be suitable for their location within the countryside, while also being of a higher-quality architectural design. For example, the DAS identifies that *"the project utilises a structural timber solution to showcase the applicant's expertise in trees, provide a sustainable means of construction and a biophilic rich interior aesthetic conducive with a centre of excellence for tree research. The internal timber structure has been expressed in an elegant tree form providing both lateral bracing and drawing a closer reference to the surrounding trees"* DAS 7.21. This is particularly well evidenced in the auditorium building, refer to Fig. 7.0 below.



Fig. 7.0: DAS Extract - Sectional Perspective – Auditorium (DAS 7.21)

24. Other high-quality architectural elements within the scheme include timber-lined entrances, integrated ventilation panels, integrated low-level backlit building signage and combined internal/external window seats (refer to Fig. 8.0 below).



Falling leaves motif - Ventilated screen Integrated signage Dual internal & external window seat

Fig. 8.0: DAS extract 7.26 – Architecture Tectonics

25. The submitted DAS also reiterates the building hierarchy approach to this development proposal whereby the buildings are tailored to their function by raising and lowering ridge heights and via the use of differing materials. The principal building will be the (Phase 2) auditorium building and have a slightly greater height than other adjacent buildings suitable for its key function. The core elements of the development will be the research and office buildings with the maintenance wing being the subservient as indicated in Fig. 3.0 above.

26. The applicant has advised that the proposed material pallet has been inspired by the natural tones and colours of the surrounding arboretum and to provide a contrast between Phase 1 and Phase 2 buildings. In addition to the glazed elements linking these buildings, this would include:

Phase 1:

Maintenance building - Agricultural green profiled roofing with agricultural proprietary perforated green cladding to the gable ends.

Office and Research buildings – Green metal cladding roofing and green facades to gable ends using vertical soft landscaping and climbers.

Phase 2:

Auditorium – Corten Metal (steel that has been subjected to controlled oxidization to give a stable rust-like appearance) roof and perforated metal gable ends (refer to visual example in Fig. 9.0 below).

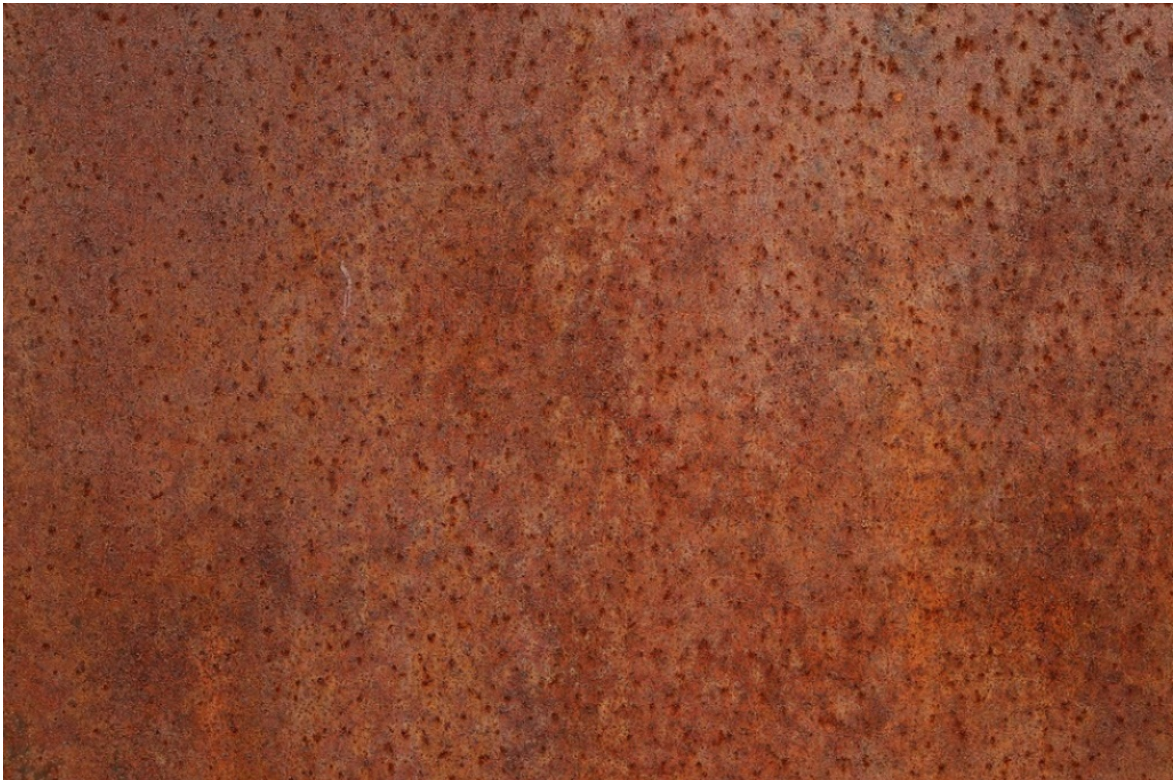


Fig. 9.0: Indicative image of Corten Metal

27. The proposed materials would reflect the unique characteristics of the applicant's business and would provide high-quality external finishes to the buildings that would be appropriate for their natural setting. Final details/specifications of the above proposed materials would be secured via condition.
28. The applicant has provided the illustrative drawing below to highlight the architectural hierarchy of the proposed buildings, their connecting arrangement with lightweight glazed links and a visual representation of the proposed materials palette (refer to Fig. 10.0).



Fig. 10.0: Indicative Illustrational Drawing - DAS 7.29 – Design Moves Summary

29. Overall, the proposal would provide a high-quality development that is compatible within the countryside and would respect the rural woodland character of this site. It would help remediate and enhance previously despoiled land on parts of the site and proposed significant additional tree planting and soft landscaping (as discussed in the following paragraphs) that would further enhance the character and appearance of site. The proposal therefore accords with the aims of Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 and CP11 and with guidance contained within the NPPF and the Council’s Borough Design Guide.

Landscaping and trees

30. 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 and Policy TB21 requires consideration of the landscape character.

31. Paragraph 180 of the NPPF states that development should:

“...contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by... protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan) and... recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services...”

32. In addition to its location within countryside, the application site is within Landscape Character Area J3 – Spencers Wood Settled and Farmed Clay as identified within the Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment (WBLCA). The site also falls within the Spencers Wood Southern Ridge Valued Landscape, as

documented in the draft Topic Paper on Valued Landscapes by WBC dated January 2020.

33. The application has been accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Appraisal and an Arboricultural Impact Assessment and the Council's Senior Landscape Officer has assessed the proposal and has had regard to this information and the submitted plans and elevations.

34. In terms of the submitted Design & Access Statement, the Council's Senior Landscape Officer has commented that:

"...the overall design of the site including location of buildings, research beds and wider arboretum is entirely appropriate for the site and relates to the landscape character of the area and features that are considered of higher landscape quality and identified in the Valued Landscape Topic Paper. The proposals also allow for the existing TPO woodland to be retained and enhanced, mitigating the detrimental impacts that have occurred over a number of years due to previous uses".

35. With regards to the submitted Landscape and Visual Appraisal they have also commented that the scale and type of the proposed development *"would only have a negligible visual impact and a minor / negligible character impact"*.

36. The submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment identifies three main areas where the tree protection and mitigation will be required in order to implement the scheme, these are as follows:

- i. The realigned maintenance access into the site,
- ii. Removal of Dene Cottage and creation of turning circle for maintenance vehicles, and
- iii. The woodland parking and boardwalk area.

37. The Council's Senior Landscape Officer raises no concerns with the management objectives proposed, however a more detailed management plan has been requested once the woodland survey work has been undertaken which then can form the basis of the work within the TPO woodland for a 10-year period. This is recommended to be secured via condition.

38. In addition, officers requested further information regarding future soft landscaping and tree planting. The applicant duly submitted a detailed Landscape Proposal and Planting Strategy that details the proposed planting measures in the three key areas:

- i. The boundary planting for the application site.
- ii. Planting around the new buildings to help integrate them into the wider landscape, and
- iii. Planting to supplement the TPO woodland.

39. The strategy identifies the proposed planting of 867 trees, 3237 plants and 20,760 bulbs in the above areas. Across the entire site, over 5,000 trees are intended to be planted over the initial 13 years of the proposed arboretum (refer to Fig. 11.0 below).

Phase	Location	Total trees	Notes
1-3	Perimeter	287	Based on two lines of trees spaced at 5m intervals
4-13	Inner arboretum	5296	Based on varying ratios of 5m and 15m spacings. With some areas allowing for no planting e.g. in phases where the pond is located.

Fig. 11.0: Extract from Design & Access Statement – Landscape Phasing

40. The Council’s Senior Landscape Officer is supportive of the submitted Proposal and Planting Strategy document. This is referred to in the recommended Landscaping condition which would secure a more detailed timetable for the proposed planting works across the whole site.
41. A number of wetland elements are proposed on the north-eastern side of the site where the land falls in this direction. These include an irrigation pond, swale and attenuation pond which are set within the arboretum. The location of these features appears to be entirely appropriate in landscape terms although more details will be required as to their depth and profile, so they have a naturalistic appearance. These could be secured via the recommended Landscaping condition.
42. The proposed development relates well to the surrounding landscape character of the area and hence complies with Core Strategy Policy CP1, CP3 & CP11 and Local Plan policies CC03 & TB21. The proposals also allow for the existing TPO woodland to be retained and enhanced, thereby mitigating the detrimental impacts that have occurred over previous years due to previous uses in accordance with Local Plan policy CC03.

Minerals resource

43. The Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (2023) Policy M2 seeks to protect minerals resources against unnecessary sterilisation by non-minerals development. Policy M2, states:

“1. Sharp sand and gravel and soft sand resources of economic importance, and around active mineral workings, are safeguarded against unnecessary sterilisation by non-minerals development.

2. Safeguarded mineral resources are defined by the Minerals Safeguarding Area (MSA) illustrated on the Policies Map.

3. Non-minerals development in the MSA may be permitted if it can be demonstrated through the preparation of a Mineral Resources Assessment, that the option of prior extraction has been fully considered as part of an application, and:

- a. *Prior extraction, where practical and environmentally feasible, is maximised, taking into account site constraints and phasing of development; or*
- b. *It can be demonstrated that the mineral resources will not be permanently sterilised; or*
- c. *It would be inappropriate to extract mineral resources in that location, with regard to other policies in the wider Local Plans.”*

44. The western part of the site (extending to slightly more than half of the overall site area) is located within an MSA. Supporting text to Policy M2, paragraph 6.40 states: *“A minimum plot size of 3 hectares will apply in the safeguarding process to avoid repeated consideration of prior extraction where this can be assumed to be uneconomic, due to the small size of the parcels of land involved.”* The safeguarded area covered by the application redline boundary is at least 5ha, and therefore is above this policy threshold.

45. The Joint Plan recognises that prior extraction is not likely to be feasible or desirable in all circumstances. It sets out that the mechanism for evidencing such a lack of feasibility is through a Minerals Resource Assessment (MRA).

46. Given the above policy context, officers requested that the application be supported by a MRA which was duly provided by the applicant.

47. The submitted MRA applies a ‘rule of thumb’ 100m buffer between the nearest sensitive human receptors in the event of a minerals extraction operation without providing any justification for why this is appropriate. This appears overly generous and would affect the amount of winnable minerals being referred to. In addition, there’s no evidence that mineral operators have been approached to better understand whether extraction would be viable.

48. The Council’s Planning Policy officer has assessed the submitted MRA and concluded that the proposal would not sterilise the minerals indefinitely given the limited amount of operational development proposed and the nature of the proposed use of the site as an arboretum. Overall, it is welcomed that the applicant has provided a MRA statement, including carrying out trial pit investigations etc. and therefore, in this instance, based on the nature of the proposals, the Council’s Planning Policy officer raises no objection to the proposed development on grounds of potential minerals sterilization.

49. However, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) condition is recommended to secure incidental extraction as part of this development to ensure that minerals are captured and recorded where possible and put to beneficial use in accordance with the relevant policies contained within the Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan.

Highways access and parking provision

50. MDD Policy CC07 and Appendix 2 of the MDD Local Plan stipulates minimum off street parking standards. Core Strategy Policy CP6 requires developments to

provide appropriate vehicular parking, having regard to car ownership. P3 of the Borough Design Guide SPD notes that parking spaces should be safe and convenient, close to the dwelling and sited to minimise impact upon safety. Visibility splays and swept path analysis are also required to be specified on the plans.

- 51. The proposal will provide three vehicular access points, the first located off White House Lane, in the form of a Bellmouth arrangement that will facilitate access for fire, refuse, delivery vehicles and 16.5m articulated vehicles. A secondary access point will be located off Yew Tree Lane and will be utilised by staff and visitors to the site, and the third access point will also be located off Yew Tree Lane and will be utilised as the event car park access and will therefore only be used approximately twice a year.
- 52. All vehicles visiting the site (approximately 1 -2 visitors per week) will be directed to the staff car park accessed off Yew Tree Lane (refer to Fig. 12.0 below) which would provide 15 car parking spaces, of which, 4 will be equipped with EV charging facilities and 1 will be a disabled space. In terms of cycle parking, there will be 4 bicycle lockers provide on site.

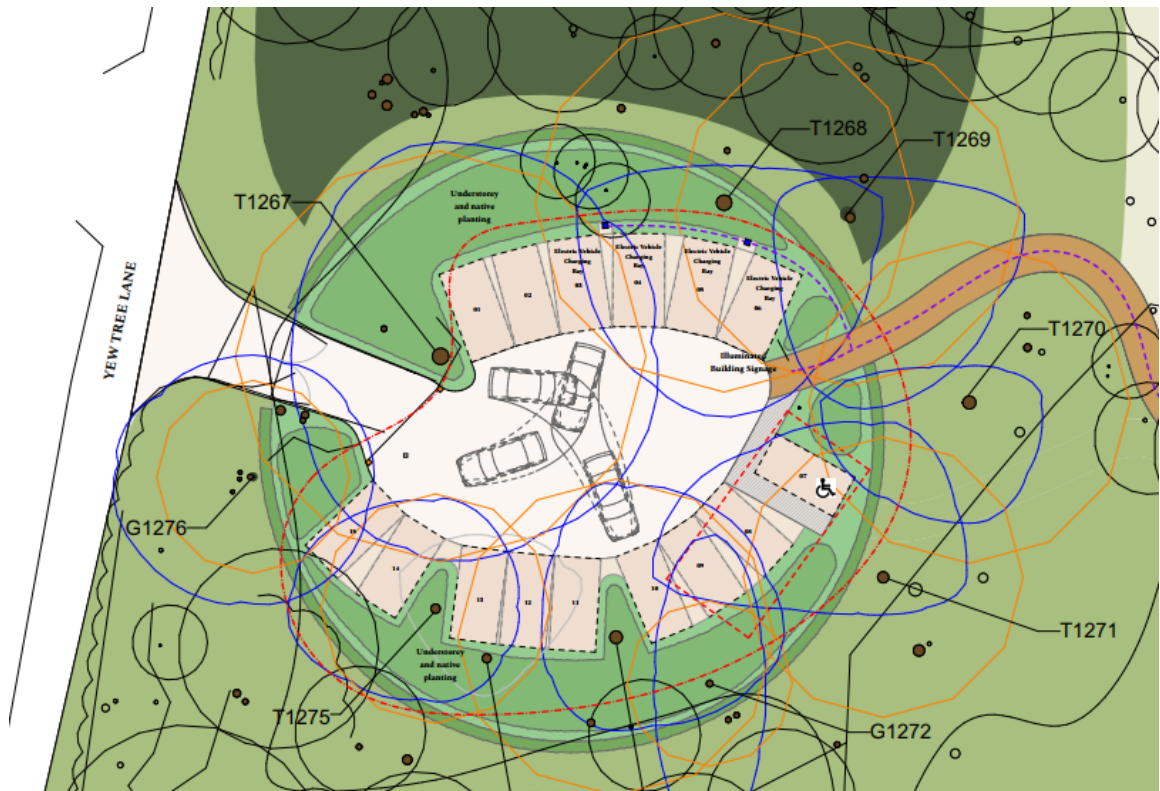


Fig. 12.0: Woodland arrival plan extract showing staff car parking area

- 53. This application has been assessed by the Council's Highways Officer who raised no objection to the proposal as adequate on-site car parking would be provided on site. In addition, appropriate swept-path technical plans for larger vehicles have been submitted to demonstrate that they could access the site without leading to overrun of the highway verges and to ensure they can turn adequately in car park areas.
- 54. In terms of trip generation, as a worst-case, if all staff drove to the site (5 arrivals and 5 departures) there would be 10 daily staff trips. Along with the potential for 3

delivery trips a day (3 arrivals and 3 departures), along with cleaners and visitors accessing the site twice a week (2 arrivals and 2 departures), there could be a total of 20 vehicle trips a day (10 arrivals and 10 departures). Over a weekly period, this would result in 88 two-way trips from the site. Hence, even utilising the worst-case, the impact upon the local road network will be negligible.

55. Subject to adherence with the highways-related conditions detailed at the end of this report, the proposal complies with the Council's parking standards and the aims of Core Strategy policy CP6 and with guidance contained within the Council's Borough Design Guide (BDG).

Neighbour amenity

56. Core Strategy Policy CP3 states that development proposals should not result in a detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life. The Council's BDG highlights that the impact of servicing areas upon the public realm should be minimised through locating them sensitively and screening (NR11).
57. The application site would be located approx. 30m south of the nearest residential properties located at Langford Avenue and the proposed buildings would approximately 130m away from these existing properties. Given these significant separation distances and significant additional tree planting and soft landscaping proposed, it is unlikely that any significant noise nuisance or disturbance would occur from the proposed development, its activities or vehicle movements.
58. Hence, the proposal would protect the residential amenities of the nearest residential properties in accordance with Core Strategy CP3 and guidance within the Council's Borough Design Guide (BDG).

Ecology

59. Core Strategy Policy CP7, carried forward by MDD LP Policy TB23, requires appropriate protection of species and habitats of conservation value.
60. The application is supported by a Biodiversity Metric using the Defra metric 4.0 and by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). The application is also supported by consultant reports in respect to flooding and drainage, trees and transport which all confirm that the proposals would not result in any material harm to trees on site. In the case of trees and ecology, there are clear significant benefits provided by the proposals.

Biodiversity net gain

61. The Council's Ecologist has assessed this application and supporting information and agrees that the baseline biodiversity assessment matches the habitats and condition identified in the Ecological Impact Assessment. Taking account of the revised post-development scenario in the submitted Defra metric, the Council's Ecologist estimates that the proposal would deliver a 38% net gain for habitat units and 26% net gain for hedgerow units. Therefore, the local planning authority can be confident that the proposal will generate a habitat enhancement in biodiversity terms.

62. A significant contribution to on-site biodiversity net gain would result from the enhancement of the existing woodland on site. Hence, the Council's Ecologist has recommended that the woodland management plan condition references the biodiversity net gain condition-score enhancement as an objective and details the measures required to satisfy the uplift.

Protected species

63. There are several ponds within 500m north of the application site, some of which have **Great Crested Newt** (GCN) records. Nature Space were consulted on this application and have assessed the submitted EclA which concludes that there is a low risk of great crested newt presence within the site and that the on-site habitats are generally of low suitability for GCN's.

64. Hence, Nature Space has advised that given the low suitability of the on-site habitats and the likelihood that the proposed works will improve the habitat within the site for great crested newts, it is considered that the precautionary measures are sufficient to address the potential impacts to great crested newts. They have recommended that a non-licensed method statement is submitted to the Council for approval prior to works beginning, such as in a CEMP or LEMP.

65. Two buildings on site have been identified as supporting **Bat roosts**. These are of Common Pipistrelle and are likely to be low status day roosts. The proposed development would result in the destruction of these roosts. The applicant's ecologist identifies that a derogation licence will be required from Natural England.

66. The Council's Ecologist has agreed that a licence will be required. Considering the proposed mitigation and compensation strategy outlined in the Ecological Impact Assessment, they also advise that a licence is not unlikely to be granted by Natural England. Consequently, as per BS42020:2013, a condition is recommended to secure submission of a copy of the licence prior to demolition of the buildings.

Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area

67. Natural England were also consulted on this application and advise that the proposed development would not have significant adverse impacts on statutorily protected nature conservation sites or landscapes, i.e. Thames Basin Heaths SPA.

68. Hence, the proposal complies with Core Strategy CP3 and with ecological enhancement guidance contained within the NPPF (Section 15) and the proposal is acceptable in this respect subject to adherence to the recommended conditions.

Building sustainability

69. Policy CC04 of the MDD LP Sustainable Design and Construction and the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD require that all new non-residential proposals of more than 100m² gross non-residential floorspace shall achieve at least the necessary BREEAM requirements or national equivalent. The interpretation to this policy, in light of the changes to Building Regulations, has been clarified in the WBC's Climate Change Interim Policy Statement (December 2022).

70. The Future Buildings Standard, which came into force on 15 June 2022, requires that new non-residential buildings achieve a 27% reduction in carbon emissions to secure compliance with Building Regulations. The appropriate BREEAM rating required under Policy CC04 of MDD LP is one that reflects the levels of reduction in carbon emissions stipulated in the Future Buildings Standard (i.e. the 27% reduction). The corresponding BREEAM rating, which seeks requires this minimum level of reduction in carbon emissions, is BREEAM 'Excellent' rating.
71. Therefore, the proposal needs to demonstrate that it will achieve the BREEAM rating 'Excellent' or higher. This interpretation to Policy CC04 is further supported by the Council's Climate Change Interim Policy Statement adopted by the Council in December 2022. It is proposed that the submission of the design and post-construction certificates demonstrating that the BREEAM rating 'Excellent' is achieved by the scheme is secured by condition.
72. The Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan positively encourages the use of:
- i) Renewable and low-carbon or zero carbon technologies.
 - ii) Techniques such as passive solar design, choice of construction materials and standard of construction, as well as aspect and orientation of layout, such as south-facing roof slopes to maximise the use of solar photovoltaic panels, to encourage energy efficiency.
 - iii) Steps to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport – including walking, cycling and public transport.
 - iv) Demonstrate how the development will facilitate the use of, and recycling of, all resources including water.
73. The submitted Sustainability Statement is supported by a BREEAM Pre-Assessment Report which indicates that 79.83% of available credits will be targeted for the BREEAM certification, including those credits mandatory for 'Excellent' rating.
74. The Council's Sustainability Officer has assessed this proposal and has commented that *"this is a positive indication that the development is likely to achieve 'Excellent' certification, being well over the minimum threshold for this rating. Due to the holistic nature of BREEAM assessment, which covers all aspects of development sustainability, the fact that 79.83% of available credits are being targeted, including key credits on energy, heat and passive design, means that this development is aiming for a high level of sustainable development in accordance with WBC planning policies"*.
75. Moreover, the applicant has advised that the head scientist for the proposed facility would live at White House Farm. While not a requirement for the principle of the proposed use, this would enhance the sustainability credentials of the overall scheme given its location within the countryside.
76. Hence, subject to adherence to a condition to secure the above Excellent BREEAM rating, the proposal would comply with MDD Local Plan policy CC04 and with guidance contained within The Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan.

Drainage and flooding

77. Policy CC09 of the MDD Local Plan requires consideration of flood risk from historic flooding. The site and access thereto is located within Flood Zone 1 and the proposal represents no additional flood risk or vulnerability. It is therefore acceptable in terms of Policy CC09.
78. The Council's Drainage Officer has reviewed the submitted flood risk assessment & drainage statement and noted that the underlying geology is London clay, with the eastern boundary experiencing low risk surface water flooding.
79. The development, as represented by drainage strategy proposes a package treatment plant for managing foul water with effluent discharge into an irrigation basin. The submitted micro-drainage calculations indicate that 137m³ of attenuation is required to cater for the 1 in 100-year storm event with a 40% allowance for climate change with discharge controlled at 2l/s, into the existing ditch. The development also proposes a swale and an attenuation basin and states that maintenance will be private.
80. The Council's Drainage Officer concludes that this is the correct approach for this proposal, although the drainage strategy drawing does not provide the full drainage details for the development. The connections from the hard standing areas have not been provided and as such a condition is recommended to secure these details.
81. Subject to compliance with the above recommended condition, the proposal meets the requirements of MDD Local Plan policy CC09 with regards to flooding and drainage issues.

Burghfield Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) - Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ)

82. The site lies within the AWE Burghfield Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ). Policy TB04 of the MDD allows development in the vicinity of the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Burghfield but only where the increase in density can be safely accommodated having regard to the needs of "Blue light" services and the emergency off-site plan for the Atomic Weapons Establishment site at Burghfield.
83. Both the Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) and West Berkshire District Council (WBDC) Emergency Planning officers were consulted on this application given its location within the DEPZ.
84. The application is supported by a draft 'end user' emergency plan and which is a positive first step on behalf of the applicant in attempting to mitigate any potential impact on implementation of the AWE off-site emergency plan (OSEP). However, in its current form, the submitted draft emergency plan it is not entirely acceptable as it does not satisfactorily cover the day-to-day operation of the site, nor if there were a number of visitors to the site.
85. WBC and WBDC Emergency Planners have also noted that the removal of single residential unit (in the form of a mobile home) forms part of this application. This

would be beneficial in terms of the Council's ability to implement the OSEP in the unlikely event of an incident at AWE Burghfield.

86. Hence, both WBC and WBDC Emergency Planners raise no objection to this proposal subject to conditions to secure that robust emergency plans are put in place for both the construction and end user phases of this development. The applicant has been advised to appoint an emergency planning expert to develop the emergency plans to meet the requirements of the recommended conditions should the application be approved.
87. The Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) have also been consulted on this application and have liaised with the Emergency Planning teams within WBC and WBDC who are responsible for the preparation of the Atomic Weapons Establishment Burghfield off-site emergency plan required by the Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations (REPPiR) 2019. The ONR have confirmed that the Emergency Planning teams have provided adequate assurance that the proposed development can be accommodated within the off-site emergency plan arrangements, with the proviso that robust emergency plans are put in place for approval in advance in relation to the construction and end user phases of the development.
88. The ONR has also confirmed that *"the proposed development does not present a significant external hazard to the safety of the nuclear site. Therefore, ONR does not advise against this development"*.
89. Subject to compliance with the above recommended conditions, the proposal meets the requirements of MDD Local Plan policy TB04 with regards to emergency planning and safety issues surrounding the Atomic Weapons Establishment Burghfield and is acceptable in this respect.

Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land

90. Policy CP1 states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that avoid areas of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land. BMV agricultural land is grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification. The NPPF (Section 15) states that planning decisions should recognise the wider benefits of best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land. Natural England's Guide to Assessing Development Proposals on Agricultural Land outlines that BMV land comprises land in grades 1 to 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification and that proposals to develop on such land should be made after considering Provisional Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) (England) mapping records.
91. Natural England ALC records show the application site (10 ha in size) to be Grade 3 agricultural land quality, although there is no information whether the land is 3a (good quality agricultural land) or 3b (moderate quality agricultural land). The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure (England) Order (DMPO) 2015 only requires planning authorities to consult Natural England on applications that would result in the loss of more than 20 hectares (ha) of BMV. Regardless, Natural England were consulted the site's size and location within the Thames Basin Heaths SPA. No objection has been raised by Natural England.

92. Moreover, the proposed built form on the site is relatively limited (less than 800sqm) and the majority of the site would remain undeveloped, albeit in the form of a planted arboretum (a quasi-agricultural use in itself), thereby potentially remaining available for agriculture in the long term. Hence, the proposal would not result in a significant permanent loss of any BMV land in accordance with the aims of policy CP1 of the Core Strategy and with guidance contained within Section 15 of the NPPF and as provided by Natural England.

Conclusion

93. The proposal would be sustainable rural enterprise within the countryside that would deliver a high-quality development and significantly enhance existing protected woodland areas while securing a significant Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). There are no other adverse impacts that cannot be mitigated by the proposed conditions (suitably phased where necessary) outlined at Appendix 1 of the report and, hence the proposal is recommended for approval.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010)

In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application and there would be no significant adverse impacts upon protected groups as a result of the development.

APPENDIX 1 – Recommended conditions and informatives

Conditions:

Timescale

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In pursuance of s.91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by s.51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

Approved details

2. This permission is in respect of the submitted application plans and drawings numbered:

P1138-SNUG-XX-XX-A-DR-1101-ProposedDrawingsBlockPlan

P1138-SNUG-XX-XX-A-DR-1102-ProposedDrawingsSitePlan

P1138-SNUG-XX-XX-A-DR-1103-ProposedDrawingsWoodlandArrivalPlan

P1138-SNUG-XX-XX-A-DR-1109-ProposedDrawingsPhasingDrawingPhases1&2

P1138-SNUG-XX-XX-A-DR-1111-ProposedDrawingsPhase1&2RoofVoidPlan

P1138-SNUG-XX-XX-A-DR-1112-ProposedDrawingsPhase1&2RoofPlan

P1138-SNUG-XX-XX-A-DR-1130-

ProposedDrawingsPhase1&2AuditoriumWingElevations

P1138-SNUG-XX-XX-A-DR-1150-ProposedDrawingsPhasingDrawingPhases1

Ecological Impact Assessment report (4Woods Ecology, September 2023)

22-225-200 Landscape Masterplan

as received by the local planning authority on 16 October 2023, and by the revised and additional application plans and drawings numbered:

Yew Tree Lane Visibility Assessment - 502.0178-0003-P03

Yew Tree Lane Site Access Swept Path Analysis - 502.0178-0004-P02

Staff Car Park Private Vehicle Tracking - 502.0178-0005-P01

White House Lane Fire & Rescue Swept Path Analysis - 502.0178-0006-P01

White House Lane Site Access Swept Path Analysis - 502.0178-0002-P03

as received by the local planning authority on 30 November 2023, and by the revised and additional application plans and drawings numbered:

White House Lane Visibility Splays - 502.0178-0001-P04

as received by the local planning authority on 05 December 2023, and by the revised and additional application plans and drawings numbered:

White House Lane Minibus Swept Path Analysis plan 502.0178-0007-P02

as received by the local planning authority on 12 January 2024, and by the revised and additional application plans and drawings numbered:

Landscape Proposal – Planting Strategy Feb 2024 (UBU Design)

as received by the local planning authority on 07 February 2024, and by the revised and additional application plans and drawings numbered:

P1138-SNUG-XX-XX-A-DR-1110-ProposedDrawingsPhase1&2GroundFloorPlan - Rev A

P1138-SNUG-XX-XX-A-DR-1131-

ProposedDrawingsPhase1&2ResearchWingElevations - Rev A

P1138-SNUG-XX-XX-A-DR-1132-
ProposedDrawingsPhase1&2OfficeWingElevations - Rev A
P1138-SNUG-XX-XX-A-DR-1133-
ProposedDrawingsPhase1&2MaintenanceWingElevations - Rev A
P1138-SNUG-XX-XX-A-DR-1151-ProposedDrawingsPhase1GroundFloorPlan - Rev
A
P1138-SNUG-XX-XX-A-DR-1152-ProposedDrawingsPhase1Elevations - Rev A
P1138-SNUG-00-XX-A-DR-1104-ProposedPhaseBlockPlan
as received by the local planning authority on 29 February 2024.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless other minor variations are agreed in writing after the date of this permission and before implementation with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

External materials

3. Prior to commencement any phase of the development hereby permitted (excluding demolition), samples and details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building/s for that phase shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the so-approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the building is satisfactory.

Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3

Parking and turning space to be provided

4. No part of any building(s) for any phase of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied or used until the vehicle parking and turning space for that phase has been provided in accordance with the approved plans. The vehicle parking and turning space shall be retained and maintained in accordance with the approved details and the parking space shall remain available for the parking of vehicles at all times and the turning space shall not be used for any other purpose other than vehicle turning.

Reason: to ensure comprehensive planning and delivery of the development and discharge of conditions. To comply with terms by which the WBC Community Infrastructure Levy is administered. Relevant Policies: Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3, CP4, CP6, and CP14.

Event parking management strategy

5. No study day events (or similar) shall take place until an 'Event Parking Management Strategy' has been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA.

Reason: to ensure the comprehensive management of parking for events at the site. To comply with terms by which the WBC Community Infrastructure Levy is administered. Relevant Policies: Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3, CP4, CP6, and CP14.

Vehicle turning space to be provided

6. Each phase of the development hereby approved shall not be brought into first use until the vehicle turning space for that phase has been provided in full accordance with the approved plans. The vehicle turning space shall thereafter be retained in accordance with the approved details and shall be used for no other purpose.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory form of development and to avoid adverse impact on the public highway in the interests of highway safety. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

Cycle parking – details required

7. Prior to the commencement of each phase of the development hereby permitted, details of secure and covered bicycle storage/parking facilities for the users of [and visitors to] that phase of the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The cycle storage/ parking shall be implemented in accordance with such details as may be approved before occupation of the development hereby permitted, and shall be permanently retained in the approved form for the parking of bicycles and used for no other purpose.

Reason: In order to ensure that secure weather-proof bicycle parking facilities are provided so as to encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 9 (Sustainable Transport) and Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 & CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07.

Visibility splay provision

8. Prior to first use of each phase of the development hereby permitted, the proposed vehicular access shall have been formed and provided with visibility splays shown on the approved drawing numbers referred to in condition 2 above for that phase. The land within the visibility splays shall be cleared of any obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height and maintained clear of any obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height at all times.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

Surfacing of Accesses

9. No building within each phase of the development hereby approved shall be occupied until the vehicular access has been surfaced with a permeable and bonded material across the entire width of the access for a distance of 10 metres measured from the carriageway edge for that phase.
10. Reason: To avoid spillage of loose material onto the highway, in the interests of road safety. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP6.

Accesses before occupation

11. No building for any phase of the development hereby approved shall be occupied until the access has been constructed in accordance with the approved plans for that phase.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

Stopping up access

12. The existing vehicular western onto access to the site shall be stopped up and abandoned, and the footway and/or verge crossings shall be re-instated within one month of the completion of the new access(es) in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

Gate set-back

13. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no gates or barriers shall be erected unless set back a distance of at least 10 metres from the highway boundary and so as to open away from the highway.

Reason: To ensure that vehicles do not obstruct the highway whilst waiting for gates or barriers to be opened or closed, in the interests of road safety. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

Construction method statement

14. No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, within any approved phase until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority for that phase. The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Statement shall provide for:

- i) the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors,
- ii) loading and unloading of plant and materials (including times in line with permitted hours of work – refer to Condition 31 below),
- iii) storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development,
- iv) the erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate,
- v) wheel washing facilities,
- vi) measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction,
- vii) a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works.
- viii) asbestos survey results and if present a safe removal and disposal plan to be submitted.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety & convenience and neighbour amenities. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

Ground and building levels

15. Prior to the commencement of each phase of the development hereby permitted, a measured survey of the site and a plan prepared to scale of not less than 1:500 showing details of existing and proposed finished ground levels (in relation to a fixed datum point) and finished roof levels for that phase shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, and the approved scheme shall be fully implemented prior to the occupation of the building(s).

Reason: In order to ensure a satisfactory form of development relative to surrounding buildings and landscape. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB21.

Boundary treatments

16. Prior to commencement of any phases of the development hereby permitted, details of all boundary treatment(s) for all phases, including measures for small mammal permeability, shall first be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development or phased as agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall be maintained in the approved form for so long as the development remains on the site.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and highway safety.

Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 and CP6

Protection of existing trees

17. a) No development or other operation shall commence on any phase of the development hereby approved until a scheme which provides for the retention and protection of trees, shrubs and hedges growing on or adjacent to that phase, in accordance with BS5837: 2012, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority (the Approved Scheme); the tree protection measures approved shall be implemented in complete accordance with the Approved Scheme for that phase for the duration of the development (including, unless otherwise provided by the Approved Scheme) demolition, all site preparation work, tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery.
- b) No development (including any tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery) shall commence until the local planning authority has been provided (by way of a written notice) with a period of no less than 7 working days to inspect the implementation of the measures identified in the Approved Scheme for each phase on-site.
- c) No excavations for services, storage of materials or machinery, parking of vehicles, deposit or excavation of soil or rubble, lighting of fires or disposal of liquids shall take place within an area designated as being fenced off or otherwise protected in the Approved Scheme for each phase.
- d) The fencing or other works which are part of the Approved Scheme for each phase shall not be moved or removed, temporarily or otherwise, until all works including external works have been completed and all equipment, machinery and surplus materials removed from the site, unless the prior approval of the local planning authority has first been sought and obtained.

Reason: To secure the protection throughout the time that the development is being carried out of trees shrubs or hedges growing within or adjacent to the site which are of amenity value to the area, and to allow for verification by the local planning authority that the necessary measures are in place before development and other works commence Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

Detained Woodland Management Plan

18. Within the first two years following occupation of the first phase of the development hereby approved, a woodland survey shall be undertaken and a detailed woodland management plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing with Wokingham Borough Council. The management plan should be prepared by a qualified and experienced forestry or arboricultural consultant and should include the following elements:
- a) A statement of the overall design vision for the woodland and for individual trees retained as part of the development – including amenity classification, nature conservation value and accessibility.
- b) Type and frequency of management operations to achieve and sustain canopy, understorey, and ground cover, and to provide reinstatement and planting to improve diversity.
- c) Frequency of safety inspections, which should be at least two yearly in areas of high risk, less often in lower risk areas,
- d) Confirmation that the tree pruning work is carried out by suitably qualified and insured tree contractors in accordance with British Standard 3998 – 2010 ‘Tree work - Recommendations’.

- e) Special measures relating to Protected Species or habitats, e.g., intensive operations to avoid March - June nesting season or flowering period.
- f) Inspection for pests, vermin and diseases and proposed remedial measures.
- g) Recommendations relating to how trees within the immediate vicinity of the car park and footpaths are to be protected, such that these are retained without the loss of their canopy or value as habitat.
- h) Confirmation of cyclical management plan assessments and revisions to evaluate the plan's success and identification of any proposed actions.
- i) Measures required to meet the objective of habitat condition enhancement from poor to moderate as measured using Defra metric 4.0 and the ongoing monitoring and actions to maintain moderate condition for 30 years post development completion.

Reason: To ensure the long-term appropriate management of the woodland is delivered. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

Landscaping

19. The landscaping for the key areas of the site as detailed in the Landscape Proposals – Planting Strategy Feb 2024 (UBU Design) document, as referred to in Condition 2 above, shall be implemented on a phased basis in accordance with the planting details included within the document. The applicant shall provide a timetable for the proposed works as indicated within the Planting Strategy within 12 months following the date of this planning permission

Reason: To ensure implementation of long-term landscaping proposals for the site. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

Landscape masterplan

20. All phases of the development and landscaping hereby approved shall be fully implemented in accordance with the proposals as set out in the approved Landscape Masterplan, as referred to in Condition 2 above. These works shall be implemented between 5 and 20 years following the date of this planning permission.

Reason: To ensure implementation of long-term landscaping proposals for the site. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

Species Specific Enhancements

21. Prior to commencement of development of any phase of the development hereby approved, a detailed strategy for ecological permeability and biodiversity enhancements to the site, as per those outlined in section 4.5 and Map 4 of the Ecological Impact Assessment report (4Woods Ecology, September 2023), shall be provided to the local authority for its approval. This strategy shall be prepared by a suitably qualified ecologist and appropriate to the local ecological context. Once approved the strategy shall be implemented in full unless otherwise agreed by the local authority in writing.

Reason: to ensure that the proposal is in accordance with Section 41 NERC Act re. UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Species (Species of Principal Importance), and complies with Planning Policies for Wildlife including CP7 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (2010) and TB23 of Managing Development Delivery Local Plan, and the National Planning Policy Framework which requires consideration of the potential biodiversity gains that can be secured within developments.

Protected species

22. Construction works are to be carried out in full accordance with the mitigation measures given in Section 4.3.8 of the submitted Ecological Impact Assessment report (4Woods Ecology, September 2023) unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Council.

Reason: To ensure that Badgers, a protected species, are not adversely affected by the proposals. Relevant policy: CP7 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (2010) and TB23 of Managing Development Delivery Local Plan.

External Lighting

23. Prior to first use of each phase of the development hereby permitted, a “lighting design strategy for biodiversity” for that phase shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall:

a) identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and badgers and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places or along important routes used to access key areas of their territory, for example, for foraging; and

b) show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places. All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the strategy for all phases, and these shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with the strategy. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that protected species, a material consideration, are not adversely affected by the development. Relevant policy: CP7 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (2010) and TB23 of Managing Development Delivery Local Plan.

Bats

24. No works, including demolition, of the two buildings identified in the Ecological Impact Assessment report (4Woods Ecology, September 2023) as containing bat roosts shall commence until a licence for development works affecting bats has been obtained from the Statutory Nature Conservation Organisation (Natural England) and a copy (or an email from Natural England that the site has been registered under the bat mitigation class licence) has been submitted to the local planning authority. Thereafter mitigation measures approved in the licence shall be maintained in accordance with the approved details. Should conditions at the site for bats change and / or the applicant conclude that a licence for development works affecting bats is not required the applicant is to submit a report to the council detailing the reasons for this assessment and this report is to be approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to commencement of works.

Reason: To ensure that bats, a material consideration, are not adversely affected by the development. Relevant policy: CP7 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (2010) and TB23 of Managing Development Delivery Local Plan.

Deane Cottage - Demolition

25. Notwithstanding the approved Phase Block Plan (P1138-SNUG-00-XX-A-DR-1104-) as referred to in condition 2 above, the development hereby approved shall not be brought into first use until the existing Deane Cottage, as shown on the approved Site

Location Plan (drawing no. P1138-SNUG-XX-XX-DR-A-0001-/-), has been demolished in its entirety.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity of the surrounding area. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB21.

Deane Cottage – Demolition waste/debris to be removed from site

26. Notwithstanding the approved Phase Block Plan (P1138-SNUG-00-XX-A-DR-1104-) as referred to in condition 2 above, the development hereby approved shall not be brought into first use until all resulting waste material and debris from demolished Deane Cottage, as shown on the approved Site Location Plan (drawing no. P1138-SNUG-XX-XX-DR-A-0001), has been permanently removed from the site.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity of the surrounding area. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB21.

Excellent BREEAM rating

27. a) Prior to commencement of each phase of the development hereby permitted suitable Design Stage evidence for each building comprised in that phase of development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Design Stage Certificate reflecting the approved evidence shall be prepared by a suitably qualified assessor and shall demonstrate that that the building(s) will achieve a minimum BREEAM rating of 'Excellent'.

b) Within three months of the occupation of the development, a Post-Construction Certificate in respect of that development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority for an approval in writing. The Post-Development Certificate shall be prepared by a suitably qualified assessor and shall demonstrate that the building in question achieved compliance with BREEAM rating of 'Excellent' as a minimum. Reason: To ensure developments contribute to sustainable development. Relevant Policies: Paragraph 152 of the NPPF, Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Policy CP1, Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policies CC04 and CC05, and the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (2010).

Sustainable drainage

28. No development of shall take place until full details of the drainage system for all phases of the development hereby approved have been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The details shall include:

1. Calculations indicating the Greenfield runoff rate from the site.
2. BRE 365 test results demonstrating whether infiltration is achievable or not.
3. Use of SuDS following the SuDS hierarchy, preferably infiltration.
4. Full calculations demonstrating the performance of soakaways or capacity of attenuation features to cater for the 1 in 100-year flood event with a 40% allowance for climate change and runoff controlled at Greenfield rates, or preferably better.
5. Calculations demonstrating that there will be no flooding of pipes for events up to and including the 1 in 100-year flood event with a 40% allowance for climate change.
6. Groundwater data confirming seasonal high groundwater levels in the area.

7. A drainage strategy plan indicating the location and sizing of SuDS features, with the base of any SuDS features located at least 1m above the seasonal high water table level.

The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development and shall be maintained in the approved form for as long as the development remains on the site.

Reason: to prevent increased flood risk from surface water run-off. Relevant policy: NPPF (2019) Section 14 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10.

Land contamination – preliminary risk assessment

29. Prior to commencement of the development (excluding demolition) hereby permitted, a preliminary Risk Assessment for land relating to all phases of the development hereby approved shall be conducted in line with the Land Contamination Risk Management procedure as defined by the Environment Agency to determine if any gas protection measures are required, and if so, identify these in a clearly defined proposed scheme of works. The preliminary report shall be submitted to an approved in writing by the local authority and any risk or remediation measures agreed prior to commencement of development. Any necessary mitigation measures are to be maintained in perpetuity.

Reason - to ensure that any contamination of the site is identified at the outset to allow remediation to protect existing/proposed occupants of property on the site and/or adjacent land. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 15 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment) and Core Strategy policies CP1 & CP3.

Unexpected land contamination

30. If land contamination is found at any time during site clearance, groundwork, and construction the discovery shall be reported as soon as possible to the local planning authority. A full contamination risk assessment shall be carried out and if found to be necessary, a 'remediation method statement' shall be submitted to the local planning authority for written approval.

Reason - To ensure that any contamination of the site is identified at the outset to allow remediation to protect existing/proposed occupants of property on the site and/or adjacent land. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 15 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment) and Core Strategy policies CP1 & CP3.

Hours of work

31. No work relating to the development hereby approved, including works of demolition or preparation prior to building operations, shall take place other than between the hours of 08:00 and 18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 to 13:00 Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Bank or National Holidays.

Reason - to protect the occupiers of neighbouring properties from noise and disturbance outside the permitted hours during the construction period. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC06.

Construction phase emergency plan

32. No development shall commence on site (including any demolition or site preparation works) until a Construction Phase Emergency Plan for the maximum number of

construction staff and visitors to the site, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Construction Phase Emergency Plan shall include (where applicable):

- a) Triggers for activation of the plan;
 - b) Means and location of sheltering for a period of no less than 72 hours
 - c) Means of support for staff and visitors whilst in sheltering conditions;
 - d) Means of evacuation and recovery;
 - e) Method and frequency of review;
 - f) Contractor names and emergency contact information for the construction period.
- Upon implementation of the development hereby approved, the approved Construction Phase Emergency Plan shall be implemented and maintained in accordance with the approved details throughout the entire construction period.

Reason: As insufficient information is contained within the application submission and in order to provide assurance that an effective Construction Phase Emergency Plan will be put in place to protect construction staff should there be an incident at AWE Burghfield in accordance with MDD Local Plan policy TB04 (Development in vicinity of Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE), Burghfield) and Core Strategy policy CP3 (General Principles for Development).

End user emergency plan

33. End user emergency plan - No works shall commence on site until an End User Emergency Plan(s) for the development hereby approved (insert development name) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The End User Emergency Plan(s) shall plan to accommodate the maximum average number of customers, visitors and staff and include a range of emergency scenarios. The End User Emergency Plan(s) shall include (where applicable):

- a) Triggers for activation of the plan;
- b) Means and location of sheltering for a period of no less than 72 hours;
- c) Means of support for residents, customers, visitors and staff whilst in sheltering conditions (Delete as applicable);
- d) Means of evacuation and recovery;
- e) Method of and frequency of review. Upon first occupation or whenever the use hereby approved first commences, the approved Emergency Plan(s) shall be implemented and maintained in accordance with the approved details for the lifetime of the development.

Within 6 months of first occupation of the development hereby approved, the final contact details and names for those responsible for the monitoring, review and activation of the plan (e.g. business unit operator and management/owners), shall be submitted to the Wokingham Borough Council Emergency Planning Officer.

Reason: As insufficient information is contained within the application submission and in order to provide assurance that an effective End User Emergency Plan will be put in place to protect occupants should there be an incident at AWE Burghfield in accordance with MDD Local Plan policy TB04 (Development in vicinity of Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE), Burghfield) and Core Strategy policy CP3 (General Principles for Development).

Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)

34. Prior to commencement of each phase of the development (excluding demolition) hereby permitted, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) in respect of that phase shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Construction of the development shall not be carried out

otherwise than in accordance with the approved CEMP. The CEMP shall include the following matters:

- i. a method for ensuring that minerals that can be viably recovered during the development operations are recovered and put to beneficial use; and,
- ii. a method to record the quantity of recovered mineral (re-use on-site or off-site) and to report this data to the LPA upon completion of the development.

Reason: to highlight the importance of capturing and recording the amount of minerals that is removed from the ground and put to beneficial use in accordance with the Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan policies M1, M2, M3, M4; Core Strategy Policies CP1, CP6; NPPF section 17

Informatives:

Reason for approval

1. The development accords with the policies contained within the adopted / development plan and there are no material considerations that warrant a different decision being taken.

Within curtilage

2. Whilst it would appear from the application that the proposed development is to be entirely within the curtilage of the application site, the granting of planning permission does not authorise you to gain access or carry out any works on, over or under your neighbour's land or property without first obtaining their consent, and does not obviate the need for compliance with the requirements of the Party Wall etc. Act 1996.

Pre-commencement conditions

3. The applicant is reminded that this approval is granted subject to conditions which must be complied with prior to the development starting on site. Commencement of the development without complying with the pre-commencement requirements may be outside the terms of this permission and liable to enforcement action. The information required should be formally submitted to the Council for consideration with the relevant fee. Once the details have been approved in writing the development should be carried out only in accordance with those details. If this is not clear please contact the case officer to discuss.

Demolition notice

4. The applicant is reminded that a Demolition Notice may be required to be served on the Council in accordance with current Building Regulations and it is recommended that the Building Control Section be contacted for further advice.

Changes to the approved plans

5. The applicant is reminded that should there be any change from the approved drawings during the build of the development this may require a fresh planning application if the changes differ materially from the approved details. Non-material changes may be formalised by way of an application under s.96A Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

P&P – Approved and discussion/amendments required

6. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received. This

planning application has been the subject of positive and proactive discussions with the applicant in terms of:

A full pre-application process was undertaken by the applicant, and Amended plans being submitted by the applicant to provide additional information relating to highway swept path analysis, visibility splays, emergency planning and woodland management.

The decision to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF is considered to be a positive outcome of these discussions.

AWE DEPZ

7. The application site falls within the Burghfield Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) and Conditions 33 and 34 above have been imposed to secure emergency plans to protect the wellbeing of construction workers, staff and the public in the event of an incident at AWE. The applicant should be aware that the Wokingham Borough Council's Emergency Planning Officer, in co-ordination with the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR), AWE Emergency Planning Group led by West Berkshire are responsible for monitoring the implementation of emergency plans and undertake audits on approved developments.

Access construction

8. The Head of Highways at the Council Offices, Shute End, Wokingham [0118 9746000] should be contacted for the approval of the access construction details before any work is carried out within the highway (including verges and footways). This planning permission does NOT authorise the construction of such an access or works.

Mud on the road

9. Adequate precautions shall be taken during the construction period to prevent the deposit of mud and similar debris on adjacent highways. For further information contact the Highway Authority on tel.: 0118 9746000.

Works affecting the public highway

10. Any works/ events carried out by or on behalf of the developer affecting either a public highway or a prospectively maintainable highway (as defined under s.87 New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA)), shall be co-ordinated and licensed as required under NRSWA and the Traffic Management Act 2004 in order to minimise disruption to both pedestrian and vehicular users of the highway. Any such works or events, and particularly those involving the connection of any utility to the site must be co-ordinated by the developer in liaison with the Borough's Street Works team (0118 974 6302). This must take place AT LEAST three months in advance of the intended works to ensure effective co-ordination with other works so as to minimise disruption.

RBFRS Informative

11. The applicant's attention is drawn to Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service's comments that access should comply with Section B5 of ADB Volume 1 2019 with additional local requirements below under the Berkshire Act 1986:
Fire service vehicles currently operated by Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service exceed the nominal requirements stated in the current edition of Approved Document B. The applicant should be made aware of the following amendments:

The minimum carrying capacity for a pumping appliance is 16 tonnes.
The minimum carrying capacity for a high reach appliance is 26 tonnes.
Structures such as bridges should have the full vehicle carrying capacity.

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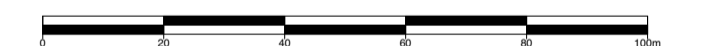
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Notes

Rev	Date	Description	DB/CB



project
 Bartlett Arboretum Research Building
 Whitehouse Farm
 Whitehouse Lane
 RG7 1HR

status
PLANNING

drawing title
 Existing Drawings - Site Location Plan

drawn	checked	date	scale
RE	RB	10 2023	1:1250 @A1

Drawing Code

Project	Originator	Vol	Lev	Type	Role	Number	Rev
P1138	SNUG	XX	XX	DR	A	0001	/

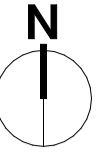
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**REFER TO LANDSCAPE
MASTER PLAN FOR FURTHER
INFORMATION**



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Notes

Drawing Legend

- Phase 1
 - Maintenance Access
 - Woodland arrival
 - Woodland boardwalk
 - Phase 1 building comprising:
 - Open collonade
 - Office wing
 - Glazed link
 - Research wing
 - Building immediate landscape
 - Attenuation basin

- Phase 2
 - Maintenance access extension
 - Phase 2 building comprising:
 - Arrival space
 - Auditorium
 - Event car park
 - Lake

Note - planting of arboretum to be commenced with phase 1. Anticipated to continue during phase 2

26/02/2024

Rev	Date	Description	DB/CB

project

Bartlett Arboretum Research Building
Whitehouse Farm
Whitehouse Lane
RG7 1HR

status

PLANNING

drawing title

Proposed Drawings - Phase Block Plan

drawn	checked	date	scale
MF	RB	02 2024	1:1000, 1:500

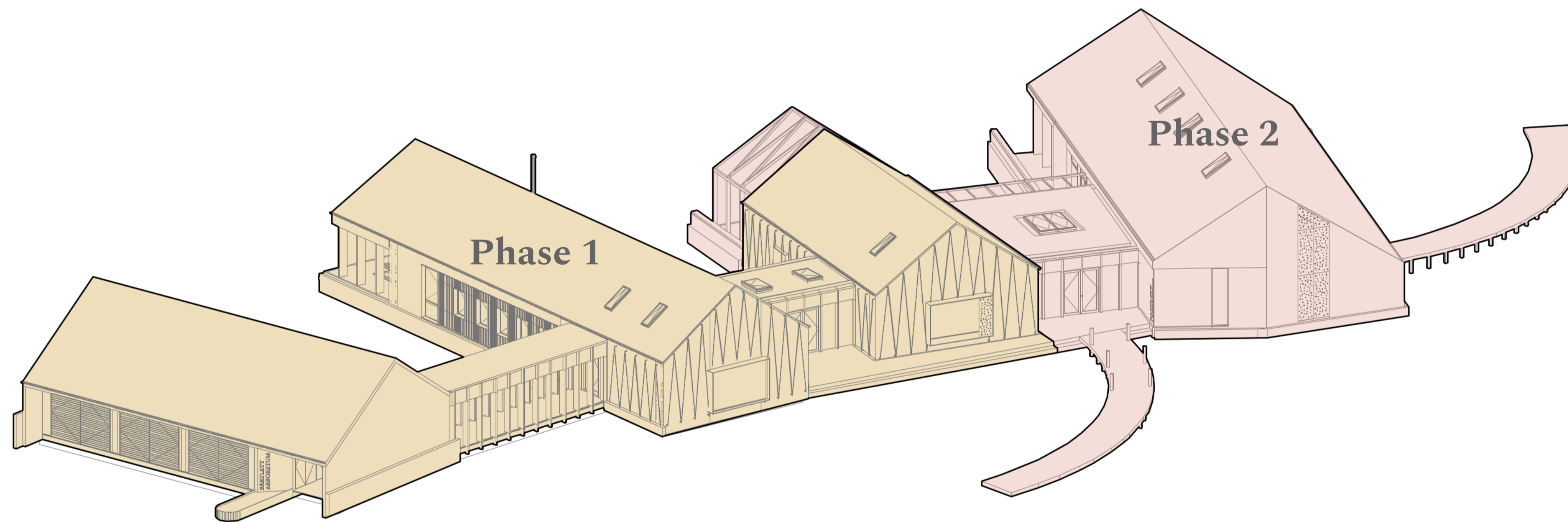
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P1138 - SNUG - 00 - XX - DR - A - 1104 - /							

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Notes

Building Phasing

The building is anticipated to be phased. Phase 1 will comprise the core facilities of the Research, Office and Maintenance wings. Phase 2 will comprise the Auditorium and Arrival Space. The diagrams on this page illustrates the proposed phases 1 & 2.

/ 09/10/2023 Planning Issue /

Rev	Date	Description	DB/CB
-----	------	-------------	-------

project
 Bartlett Arboretum Research Building
 Whitehouse Farm
 Whitehouse Lane
 RG7 1HR

status
 PLANNING

drawing title
 Proposed Drawings - Phasing Drawing -
 Phases 1 & 2

drawn	checked	date	scale
RE	RB	10 2023	@A1

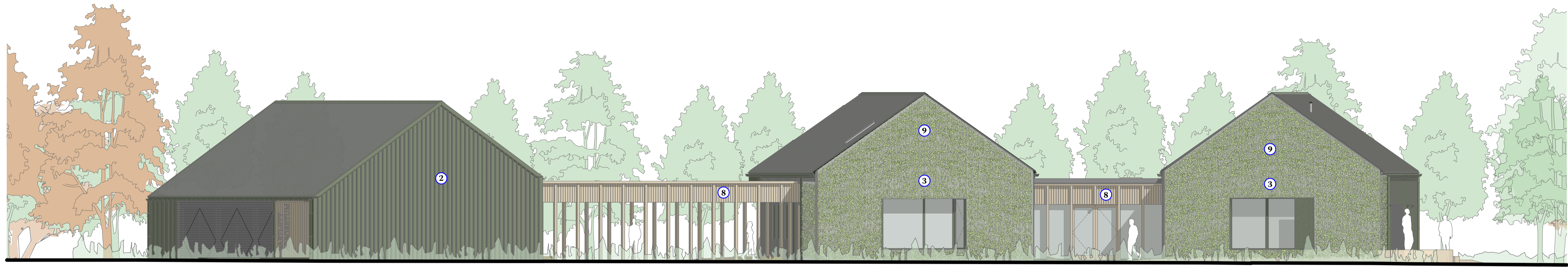
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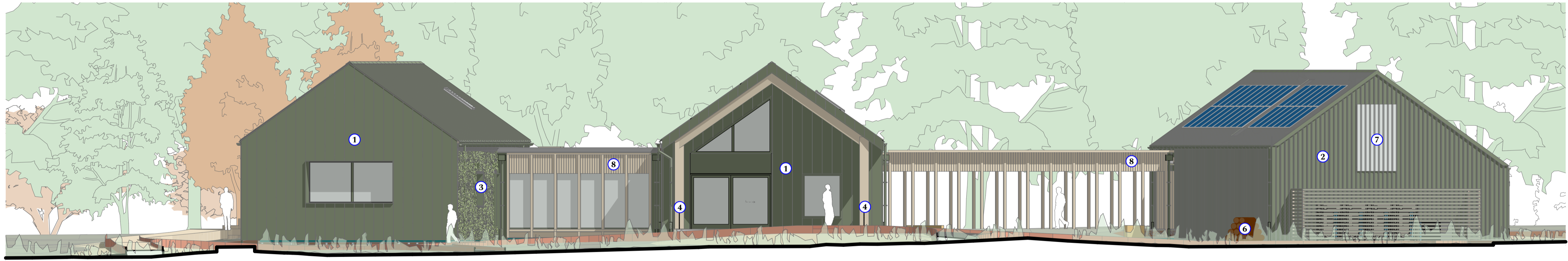
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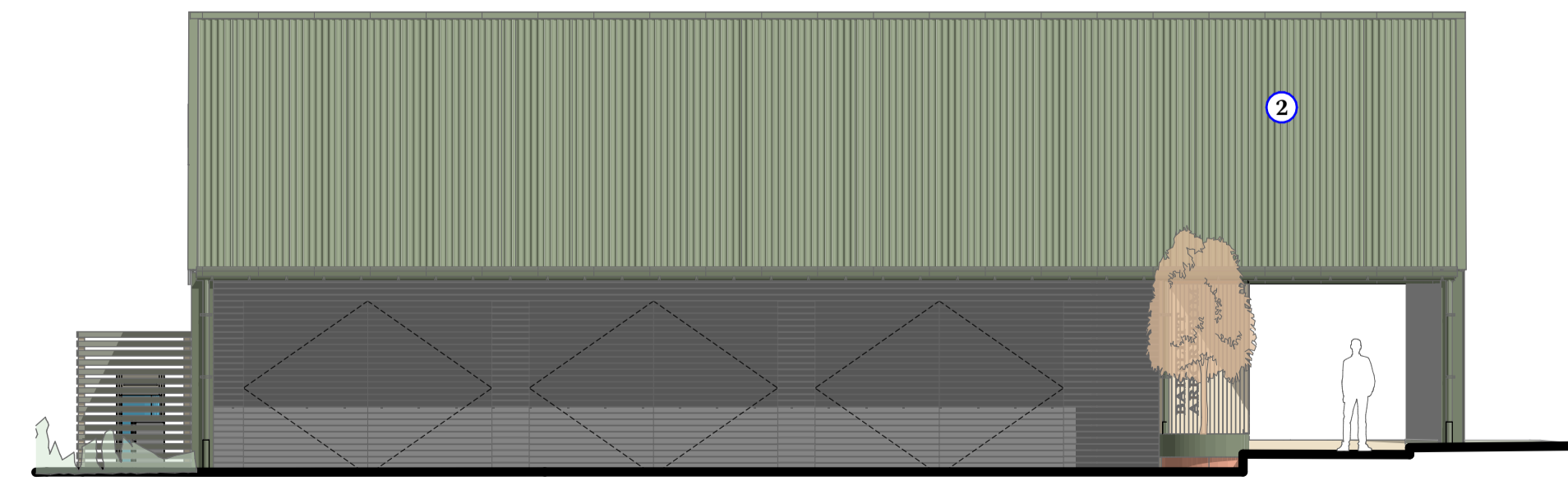
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Scale 1:100



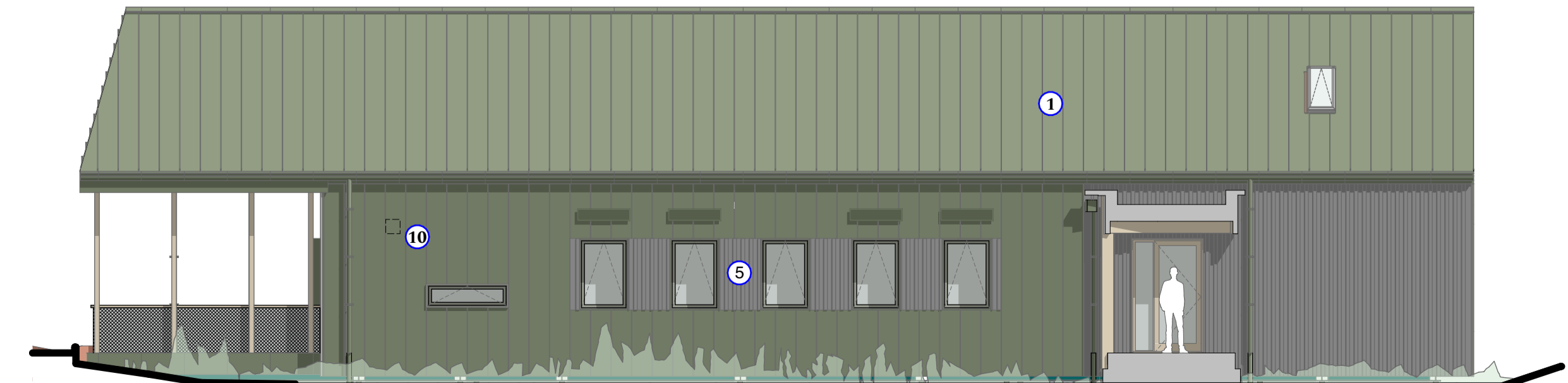
2 **East Elevation**
Scale 1:100



3 **South Elevation**
Scale 1:100



4 **Maintenance North Elevation**
Scale 1:100



5 **Office North Side Elevation**
Scale 1:100

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Notes

Drawing Key

- 1 Green metal cladding
- 2 Corrugated metal Cladding
- 3 Timber cladding with planting
- 4 Exposed timber frame
- 5 Recessed timber cladding
- 6 Stacked logs store
- 7 Translucent panel
- 8 Hardwood timber
- 9 Bat box
- 10 Bird box

Indicative trees illustrated

A	27/02/2024	Amendment and update to Phase 1 elevations	MF / RB
I	12/10/2023	Planning Issue	MS / RB

Rev	Date	Description	DB/CB

project
Bartlett Arboretum Research Building
 Whitehouse Farm
 Whitehouse Lane
 RG7 1HR

status
PLANNING

drawing title
Proposed Drawings - Phase 1 - Elevations

drawn	checked	date	scale
RE	RB	02 2024	1:100 @A1

Drawing Code

Project	Originator	Vol	Lev	Type	Role	Number	Rev
P1138	SNUG	XX	XX	DR	A	1152	A

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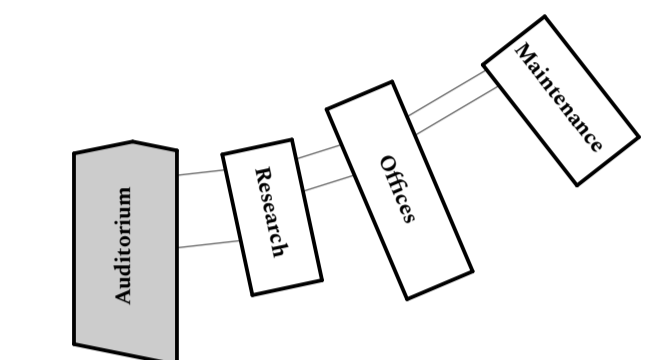
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Notes



Drawing Key

- 1 Green metal cladding
- 2 Corten steel metal cladding
- 3 Corrugated metal cladding
- 4 Green metal cladding with planting on SS cables
- 5 Perforated metal panel
- 6 Laser-cut metal panel
- 7 Exposed timber frame
- 8 Green metal pergola
- 9 Recessed green metal panels
- 10 Stacked logs store
- 11 Green ventilation louvers
- 12 Perforated corrugated metal cladding
- 13 Treated timber
- 14 Bat box
- 15 Bird box

Rev	Date	Description	DB/CB

project
 Bartlett Arboretum Research Building
 Whitehouse Farm
 Whitehouse Lane
 RG7 1HR

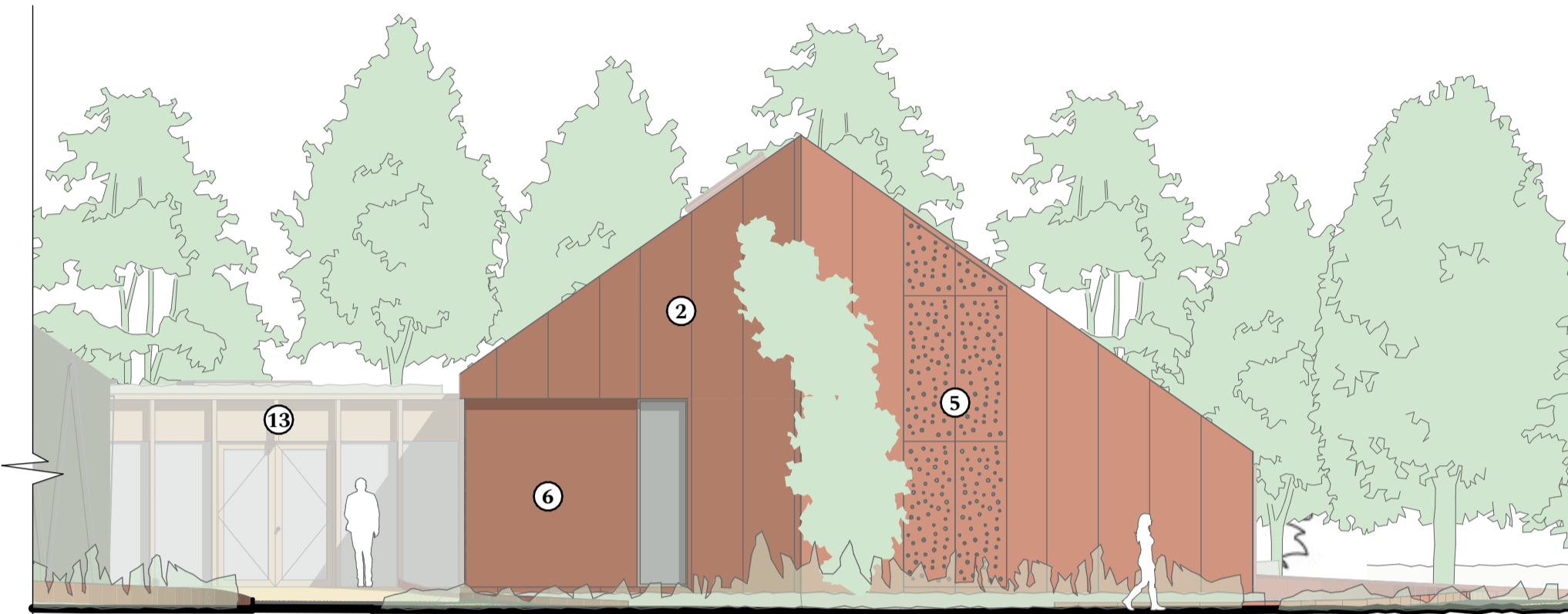
status
 PLANNING

drawing title
 Proposed Drawings - Phase 1 & 2 -
 Auditorium Wing Elevations

drawn	checked	date	scale
RE	RB	10 2023	1:100 @A1

Drawing Code						
Project	Originator	Vol	Lev	Type	Role	Number / Rev
P1138 - SNUG - XX - XX - DR - A - 1130 - /						

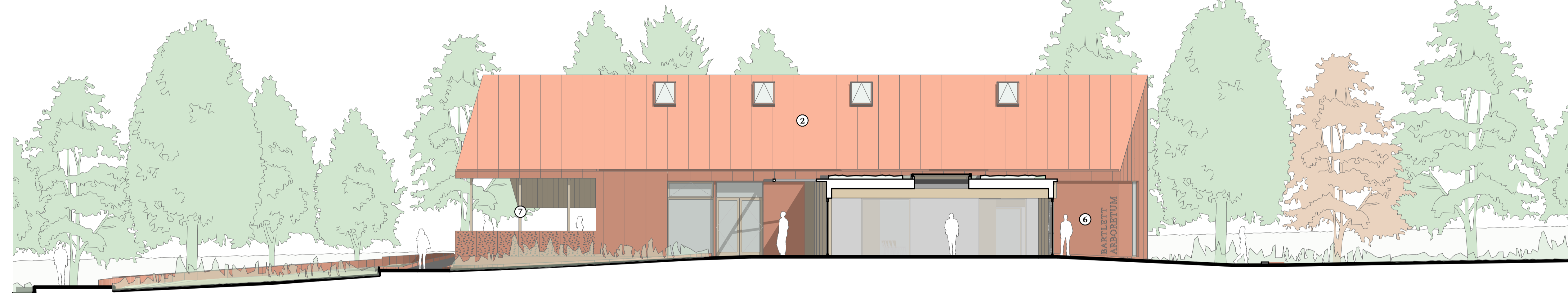
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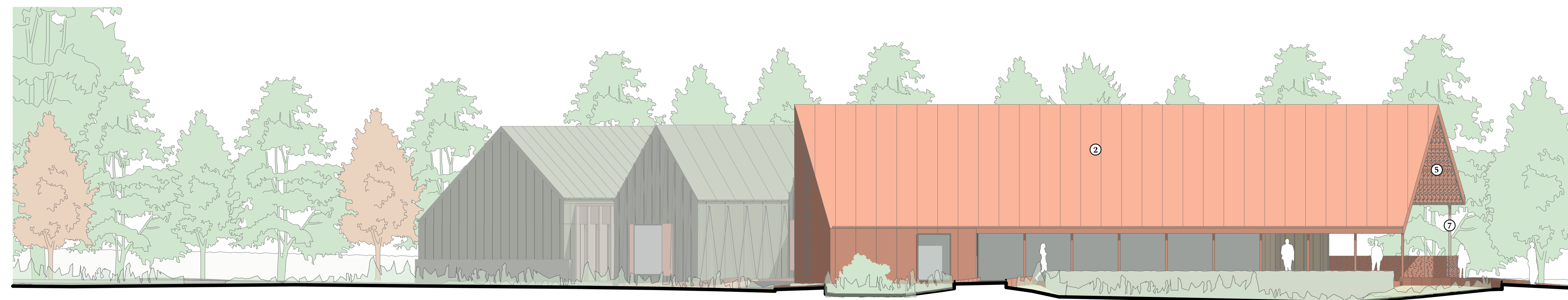
1 Auditorium West Elevation
 Scale 1:100



2 Auditorium East Elevation
 Scale 1:100



3 Auditorium North Elevation
 Scale 1:100



4 Auditorium South Elevation
 Scale 1:100

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Notes



1 **Front Elevation - West**
Scale 1:200



2 **Rear Elevation - East**
Scale 1:200



3 **Side Elevation - South**
Scale 1:200



4 **Side Elevation - North**
Scale 1:200

Rev	Date	Description	DB/CB

project
Bartlett Arboretum Research Building
Whitehouse Farm
Whitehouse Lane
RG7 1HR

status
PLANNING

drawing title
Proposed Context Elevations

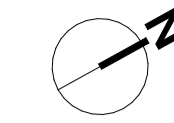
drawn	checked	date	scale
RE	RB	10 2023	1:200, 1:100 @A

Drawing Code						
Project	Originator	Vol	Lev	Type	Role	Number
P1138	SNUG	XX	XX	DR	A	1140 - /

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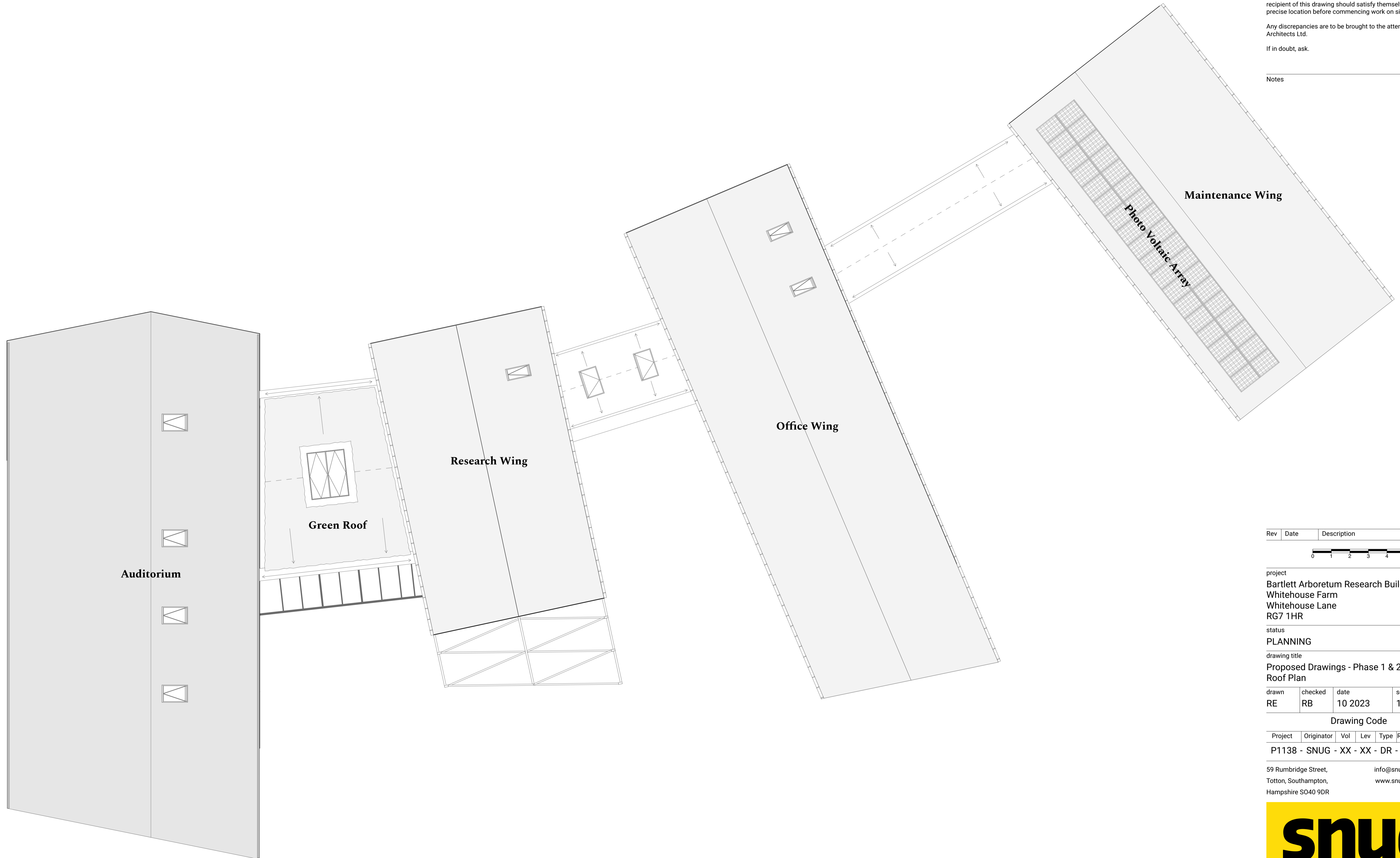
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Notes



285

Rev	Date	Description	DB/CB

project
 Bartlett Arboretum Research Building
 Whitehouse Farm
 Whitehouse Lane
 RG7 1HR

status
 PLANNING

drawing title
 Proposed Drawings - Phase 1 & 2 -
 Roof Plan

drawn	checked	date	scale
RE	RB	10 2023	1:100 @A1

Drawing Code

Project	Originator	Vol	Lev	Type	Role	Number	Rev
P1138 - SNUG	- XX - XX - DR	- A	- 1112	- /			

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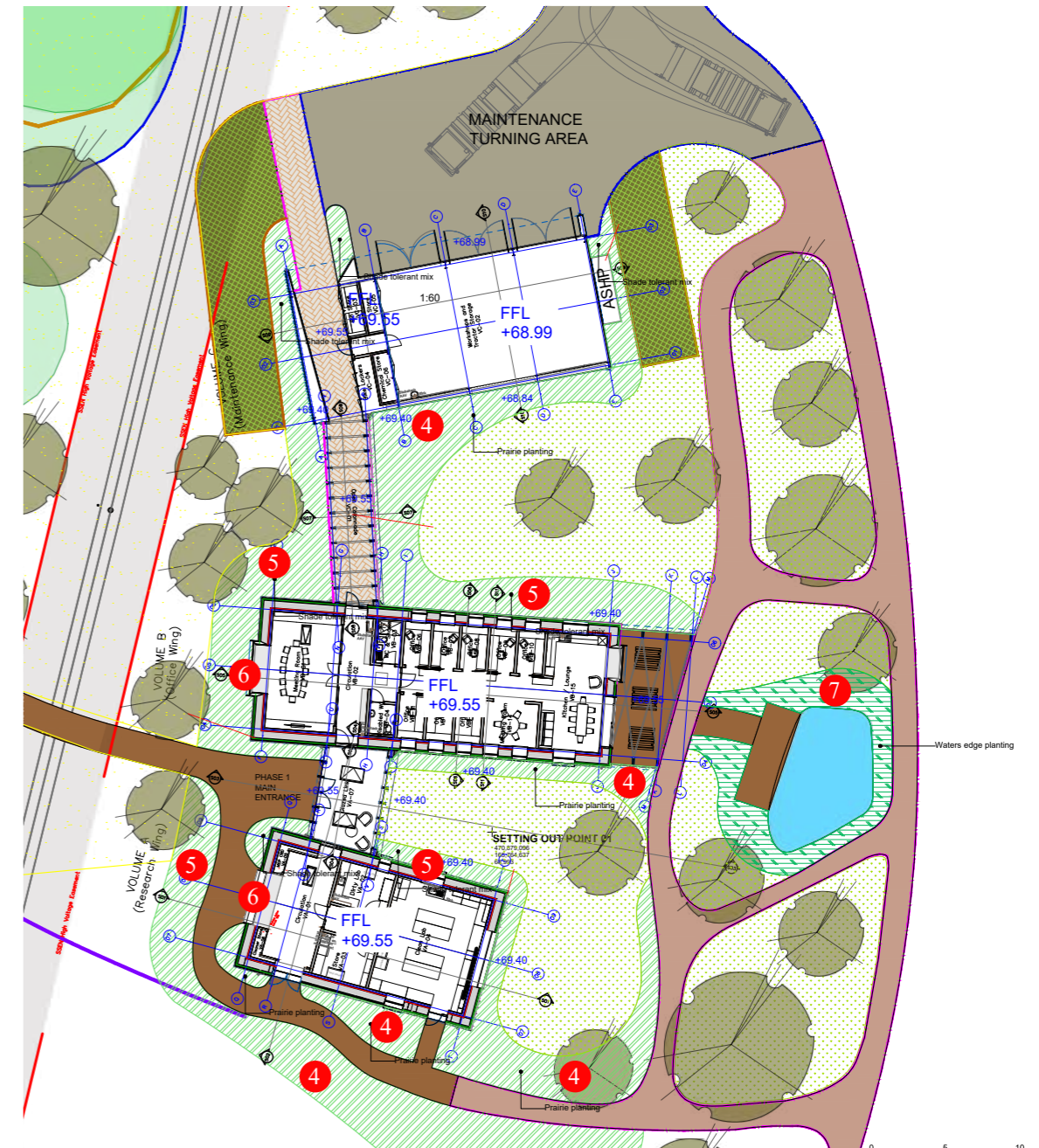
**BARTLETT ARBORETUM, WHITE HOUSE FARM,
READING**

LANDSCAPE PROPOSAL

PLANTING STRATEGY

FEB 2024

Landscape Plan



1. Enhancement to existing woodland - NW corner of the site

Increase the layers of planting - currently only tree canopy. Introduce further diversity of species - Ilex, Taxus, Spindle and Hazel, plant as whips in area where woodland is less dense, to create a mid layer. Further enhance with understory layer, adding a woodland mix and bulbs.



2. Northern Boundary Planting - Coniferous Trees



- Wollemia nobilis
- Tsuga heterophylla
- Prumnopitys andina
- Taxodium distichum
- Metasequoia glyptostroboides
- Picea orientalis
- Sequoiadendron giganteum
- Ginkgo biloba
- Sciadopitys verticillata
- Pinus sylvestris
- Pinus coulteri
- Cryptomeria japonica
- Abies grandis

NB Additional coniferous species could also be included based on availability of stock when planting

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3. Other Boundary Planting - SE and Western edge



- Quercus frainetto
 - Fagus orientalis
 - Liriodendron tulipifera
 - Pterocarya fraxinolia
 - Styphnolobium japonicum
 - Toona sinensis
 - Aesculus indica
 - Aesculus glabra
 - Eucommia ulmoides
 - Acer opalus
 - Acer x zoeschense
 - Quercus bimundorum
 - Celtis occidentalis
 - Nothofagus menziesii
 - Acer griseum
 - Zelkova carpinifolia
 - Magnolia grandiflora
 - Maclura pomifera
 - Aesulus californica
 - Quercus ellipsoidalis
 - Quercus vellutina
 - Quercus castaneifolia
 - Quercus cerris
 - Tilia tomentosa
 - Magnolia acuminata
 - Tilia cordata
 - Tilia chenmoui
 - Quercus coccinea
 - Magnolia acuminata 'Seiju'
 - Magnolia acuminata 'Blue Opal'
- NB Additional species could also be included based on availability of stock when planting

4. Prairie planting - Planting adjacent to the new building

Grasses



Calamagrostis acutiflora 'Karl Foerster'
Deschampsia cespitosa
Hakonechloa macra 'Aureola'
Miscanthus sinensis 'Gracillimus'
Miscanthus sinensis 'Silberfeder'
Molinia caerulea
Pennisetum alopecuroides
Stipa tenuissima
Stipa gigantea

Herbaceous



Allium
Anthriscus sylvestris 'Ravenswing'
Angelica gigas
Aster sp
Cenolophium denudatum
Chaerophyllum hirsutum
Echinacea purpurea
Echinops ritro 'Veitch's Blue'
Iris sibirica
Helenium 'Moerheim Beauty'
Helianthus
Hemerocallis
Knautia macedonica
Monarda 'Marshall's Delight'
Perovskia atriplicifolia 'Blue Spire'
Phlomis fruticosa
Rudbeckia fulgida 'Goldsturm'
Salvia x sylvestris
Stachys officinalis 'Hummelo'
Solidago rugosa 'Fireworks'
Verbascum epixanthinum

5. Shade tolerant mix - Planting adjacent to the new building

Shrubs



- Amelanchier canadensis
- Cornus alba 'Kesselringii'
- Cornus sanguinea 'Mid Winter Fire'
- Cornus sericea 'Flaviramea'
- Osmanthus burkwoodii
- Skimmia confusa 'Kew Green'
- Skimmia japonica
- Skimmia japonica 'Fructu-albo'
- Skimmia japonica 'Rubella'
- Viburnum davidii

Herbaceous



- Alchemilla mollis
- Astilbe 'Fanal'
- Astilbe 'Venus'
- Athyrium filix-femina
- Digitalis purpurea
- Dryopteris filix-mas
- Helleborus argutifolius
- Helleborus niger
- Helleborus orientalis
- Hemerocallis 'Corky'
- Hemerocallis 'Stafford'
- Hemerocallis 'Stella de Oro'
- Heuchera micrantha 'Palace Purple'
- Liriope muscari
- Polystichum setiferum

6. Climbers - located against the western facade of new buildings



7. Pond - located in area close to new buildings



Plant Schedule

Stock	Quantity	Item	Size	Height (cm)	Notes	Densitym2
1. ENHANCEMENT TO EXISTING WOODLAND - 13843m2 - 1 plant per 5m2 - total 2769plants						
	692	Corylus avellana			Whip	
	692	Euonymus europaeus			Whip	
	692	Ilex aquifolium			Whip	
	692	Taxus baccata			Whip	
	2768					
Wildflower meadow mix - 10% of area (1384m2)						
	Counted	Pictorial Meadows Woodland Edge or equivalent at 2g/m2				Counted
Bulbs planted in swathes over 10% of area (1384m2) 15 bulbs per m2						
	4152	Anemone nemorosa				15m2
	4152	Crocus tommasinianus				15m2
	4152	Cyclamen hederifolium				15m2
	4152	Galanthus nivalis				15m2
	4152	Hyacinthoides non-scripta				15m2
	20760					
2. NORTHERN BOUNDARY TREES - conifers planted at 7.5 -15m centres over 1714m2 - 152 trees						
	12	Wollemia nobilis				Counted
	11	Tsuga heterophylla				Counted
	11	Prumnopitys andina				Counted
	12	Taxodium distichum				Counted
	12	Metasequoia glyptostroboides				Counted
	11	Picea orientalis				Counted
	12	Sequoiadendron giganteum				Counted
	12	Ginkgo biloba				Counted
	11	Sciadopitys verticillata				Counted
	12	Pinus sylvestris				Counted
	12	Pinus coulteri				Counted
	12	Cryptomeria japonica				Counted
	12	Abies grandis				Counted
	152					
N.B. Additional species can also be included, ideally larger specimens will be planted to give a mature feel but sizes will vary based on availability						
3. OTHER BOUNDARY TREES -SE and western planted at 7.5 - 15m centres over 8040m2 - 715 trees						
	24	Quercus frainetto				Counted
	24	Fagus orientalis				Counted
	24	Liriodendron tulipifera				Counted
	24	Pterocarya fraxinolia				Counted
	24	Styphnolobium japonicum				Counted
	24	Toona sinensis				Counted
	24	Aesculus indica				Counted
	24	Aesculus glabra				Counted
	24	Eucommia ulmoides				Counted
	24	Acer opalus				Counted
	24	Acer x zoeschense				Counted
	24	Quercus bimundorum				Counted
	24	Celtis occidentalis				Counted
	24	Nothofagus menziesii				Counted
	24	Acer griseum				Counted
	24	Zelkova carpinifolia				Counted
	24	Magnolia grandiflora				Counted
	24	Maclura pomifera				Counted
	24	Aesulus californica				Counted
	24	Quercus ellipsoidalis				Counted
	24	Quercus vellutina				Counted
	24	Quercus castaneifolia				Counted
	24	Quercus cerris				Counted
	24	Tilia tomentosa				Counted
	24	Magnolia acuminata				Counted
	23	Tilia cordata				Counted
	23	Tilia chenmoui				Counted
	23	Quercus coccinea				Counted
	23	Magnolia acuminata 'Seiju'				Counted
	23	Magnolia acuminata 'Blue Opal'				Counted
	715					
N.B. Additional species can also be included, ideally larger specimens will be planted to give a mature feel but sizes will vary based on availability						

4. PRAIRIE PLANTING - 378m2 - half herbaceous (945 plants) and half grasses at 5m2 (945 plants)						
Herbaceous						
	45	Allium	2L			C 5m2
	45	Anthriscus syvestris 'Ravenswing'	2L			C 5m2
	45	Angelica gigas	2L			C 5m2
	45	Aster sp	2L			C 5m2
	45	Cenolophium denudatum	2L			C 5m2
	45	Chaerophyllum hirsutum	2L			C 5m2
	45	Echinacea purpurea	2L			C 5m2
	45	Echinops ritro 'Veitch's Blue'	2L			C 5m2
	45	Iris sibirica	2L			C 5m2
	45	Helenium 'Moerheim Beauty'	2L			C 5m2
	45	Helianthus	2L			C 5m2
	45	Hemerocallis	2L			C 5m2
	45	Knautia macedonica	2L			C 5m2
	45	Monarda 'Marshalls Delight'	2L			C 5m2
	45	Perovskia atriplicifolia 'Blue Spire'	2L			C 5m2
	45	Phlomis fruticosa	2L			C 5m2
	45	Rudbeckia fulgida 'Goldsturm'	2L			C 5m2
	45	Salvia x sylvestris	2L			C 5m2
	45	Stachys officinalis 'Hummelo'	2L			C 5m2
	45	Solidago rugosa 'Fireworks'	2L			C 5m2
	45	Verbascum epixanthinum	2L			C 5m2
	945					
Grasses						
	105	Calamagrostis acutiflora 'Karl Foerster'	2L			C 5m2
	105	Deschampsia cespitosa	2L			C 5m2
	105	Hakonechloa macra 'Aureola'	2L			C 5m2
	105	Miscanthus sinensis 'Gracillimus'	2L			C 5m2
	105	Miscanthus sinensis 'Silberfeder'	2L			C 5m2
	105	Molinia caerulea	2L			C 5m2
	105	Pennisetum alopecuroides	2L			C 5m2
	105	Stipa tenuissima	2L			C 5m2
	105	Stipa gigantea	2L			C 5m2
	945					
5. SHADE TOLERANT MIX - 187m2 - half shrubs at 3m2 (281 plants) and half herbaceous at 5m2 (468 plants)						
Shrubs						
	29	Amelanchier canadensis	3L			C 3m2
	28	Cornus alba 'Kesselringii'	3L	20-30	Bushy, min. 4 breaks	C 3m2
	28	Cornus sanguinea 'Mid Winter Fire'	3L			C 3m2
	28	Cornus sericea 'Flaviramea'	3L	40-60	Branched, min. 2 break	C 3m2
	28	Osmanthus burkwoodii	3L	30-40		C 3m2
	28	Skimmia confusa 'Kew Green'	3L	20-30	Bushy, min. 3 breaks	C 3m2
	28	Skimmia japonica	3L	20-30	Bushy, min. 3 breaks	C 3m2
	28	Skimmia japonica 'Fructu-albo'	3L	20-30	Bushy, min. 3 breaks	C 3m2
	28	Skimmia japonica 'Rubella'	3L	20-30	Bushy, min. 3 breaks	C 3m2
	28	Viburnum davidii	3L	20-30	Bushy, min. 2 breaks	C 3m2
	281					
Herbaceous						
	31	Alchemilla mollis	2L			C 5m2
	31	Astilbe 'Fanal'	2L			C 5m2
	31	Astilbe 'Venus'	2L			C 5m2
	31	Athyrium filix-femina	2L			C 5m2
	31	Digitalis purpurea	2L			C 5m2
	31	Dryopteris filix-mas	2L			C 5m2
	31	Helleborus argutifolius	2L			C 5m2
	31	Helleborus niger	2L			C 5m2
	31	Helleborus orientalis	2L			C 5m2
	31	Hemerocallis 'Corky'	2L			C 5m2
	31	Hemerocallis 'Stafford'	2L			C 5m2
	31	Hemerocallis 'Stella de Oro'	2L			C 5m2
	34	Heuchera micrantha 'Palace Purple'	2L			C 5m2
	31	Liriope muscari	2L			C 5m2
	31	Polystichum setiferum	2L			C 5m2
	468					
6. CLIMBERS - located against the western façade of new buildings						
	8	Clematis montana				
	8	Lonicera periclymenum 'Serotina'				
	8	Trachelospermum jasminoides				
	24					
7. POND - 66m2						
	Counted	Pictorial Meadows Waters Edge Mix or equivalent				Counted

Agenda Item 78.

Application Number	Expiry Date	Parish	Ward
190914	28/03/2024	Wokingham Without	Wokingham Without
191068	28/03/2024	Wokingham Without	Wokingham Without
192325	29/03/2024	Wokingham, Wokingham Without	Wescott, Wokingham Without

190914	
Applicant	Kingacre Estates Ltd
Site Address	Land at phase 2a of the South Wokingham Strategy Development Location (SDL)
Proposal	Outline application with all matters reserved except for principal means of access to the highways, for up to 215 dwellings, public open space, play areas, associated infrastructure and landscaping. To be read in conjunction with applications 190900 & 191068.
Type	Outline
Officer	Emy Circuit
Reason for determination by committee	Major (EIA) application within the South Wokingham SDL

191068	
Applicant	Keir Ventures Ltd and Miller Homes Ltd
Site Address	Land at phase 2b of the South Wokingham Strategy Development Location (SDL)
Proposal	Hybrid planning application (part outline/part detailed) comprising an outline application with all matters reserved except principal means of access to the highways, for a mixed use development of up to 1,434 dwellings, a two-form entry primary school, local centre (A1, A2, A3, A4, A5 and D1 including community building D1/D2), public open space, play areas and associated infrastructure and landscaping; and a full application for the proposed Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), associated landscaping and temporary car park. – To be read in conjunction with applications 190900 & 190914.
Type	Hybrid
Officer	Emy Circuit
Reason for determination by committee	Major (EIA) application within the South Wokingham SDL

192325	
Applicant	Charles Church Developments Ltd
Site Address	Land South East of Finchampstead Road, South Wokingham Strategic Development Location Wokingham (SDL)
Proposal	Hybrid Planning application (part outline/part full) comprising outline application with all matters reserved for up to 171 no.

	dwellings, public open space and associated infrastructure and full application for Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG).
Type	Hybrid
Officer	Emy Circuit
Reason for determination by committee	Major (EIA) application within the South Wokingham SDL

FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Planning Committee on 13 March 2024
REPORT PREPARED BY	Assistant Director – Place and Growth

RECOMMENDATION 190914	<p>1. That the committee:</p> <p>A. NOTE the revised mechanism for securing delivery of the school, community facility and allotments; and</p> <p>B. AUTHORISE the Assistant Director – Place and Growth to agree updates to conditions and informatives between the resolution of the Planning Committee on 18 May 2021 and issue of the decision under delegated powers.</p> <p>2. Should the S106 legal agreement not be completed within 3 months of the date of this resolution planning permission be refused due to failure to secure the necessary infrastructure impact mitigation, unless otherwise agreed by the chairman of the planning committee and confirmed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.</p>
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RECOMMENDATION 191068	<p>1. That the committee:</p> <p>A. NOTE the revised mechanism for securing delivery of the school, community facility and allotments; and</p> <p>B. NOTE the revisions to the draft conditions agreed by the Assistant Director, Place and Growth in accordance with 1.B. of the resolution of the Planning Committee on 18 May 2021.</p> <p>2. Should the S106 legal agreement not be completed within 3 months of the date of this resolution planning permission be refused due to failure to secure the necessary infrastructure impact mitigation, unless otherwise agreed by the chairman of the planning committee and confirmed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.</p>
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RECOMMENDATION	1. That the committee:
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192325	<p>A. NOTE the revised mechanism for securing delivery of the school, community facility and allotments; and</p> <p>B. NOTE the revisions to the draft conditions agreed by the Assistant Director, Place and Growth in accordance with 1.B. of the resolution of the Planning Committee on 9 March 2022</p> <p>2. Should the S106 legal agreement not be completed within 3 months of the date of this resolution planning permission be refused due to failure to secure the necessary infrastructure impact mitigation, unless otherwise agreed by the chairman of the planning committee and confirmed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.</p>
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SUMMARY

This update is to advise members of changes to the originally agreed mechanism for delivery of the school, community facility and allotments, from Council provided infrastructure to direct developer delivery. The reason for this revision is due to increasing cost of construction for the South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR) and other critical infrastructure since the schemes were originally submitted and presented to committee.

The three applications that are the subject of this report form part of the allocated, comprehensively planned development of the South Wokingham Strategic Development Location (SDL). There are committee resolutions in place to approve all three applications subject to completion of S106 agreements to secure the necessary supporting infrastructure. The purpose of this report is to inform the planning committee of:

- i) changes to the mechanism for securing some elements of the supporting infrastructure, namely a primary school, community facility and allotments; and
- ii) revisions to the draft conditions arising from the negotiations about how infrastructure delivery will be fairly apportioned between the various parties, since the earlier committee resolutions.

The adopted Wokingham Borough Core Strategy establishes the need to deliver over 13,000 new homes in borough in the period up to 2026, the majority in four Strategic Development Locations (SDLs) (Core Strategy policy CP17 *Housing Delivery*). Of these 2,500 are to be in an urban extension to the south of Wokingham. Core Strategy Policy CP21 *South Wokingham Strategic Development Location*, amplified by Appendix 7 and two Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) – the *South Wokingham South Wokingham Strategic Development Location SPD* and the *Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions SPD* – set out the Council’s expectations in terms of the comprehensive delivery of these dwellings together with the infrastructure required to support them.

The required infrastructure includes - among other things - primary schools, community facilities, provision of public open space including allotments and the South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR); a continuous new route running through the SDL connecting the A329 London Road in the north to the A321 Finchampstead Road in the south. The new

road, which has been approved and is not subject to these revisions, will provide access to the new development and form a corridor for sustainable travel, as well as providing some traffic relief in the historic town centre of Wokingham. A comprehensive approach to both masterplanning and the delivery of infrastructure is fundamental to the acceptability of proposals within the SDL.

The South Wokingham SDL is divided by the Reading-Waterloo railway line and the first phase of development within it – 636 dwellings and associated infrastructure on land north of the railway, between the A329 London Road and Reading-Waterloo railway line at Montague Park (formerly Buckhurst Farm) - is complete. Montague Park represents roughly a quarter of the development within the SDL and delivered its proportionate share of the necessary infrastructure including the first section of the SWDR from the A329 London Road to the railway line, William Heelas Way.

The second section of the SWDR – commonly referred to as the “Eastern Gateway” was approved in February 2018 and opened in early 2022. It extends William Heelas Way to Waterloo Road, via a new bridge over the railway. An application for the third, central section of the SWDR – from Waterloo Road to Finchampstead Road was approved on 24 May 2021.

Four further applications, submitted during 2019 complete the comprehensively planned proposals for the SDL south of the railway. These were a suite of three applications (referred to collectively as phase 2), reported to the planning committee on 18 May 2021 and a fourth application (referred to as “phase 3” in this report, although that does not necessarily reflect the phasing of development delivery) reported to the Planning Committee on 9 March 2021. Together the four applications would deliver up to 1,820 new homes, together with supporting infrastructure. The committee resolved to grant planning permission for the four applications, with three being subject to completion of a S106 legal agreements to secure the necessary infrastructure.

Consistent with the expectations of the Development Plan, these applications were supported by a coordinated masterplan and an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). The IDP is a document prepared jointly by the five applicants (including the council in its capacity as the developer for the SWDR). It sets out the comprehensive package of infrastructure required to support development in the SDL - based on the requirements of the Core Strategy, *Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions Supplementary Planning Document* (the Infrastructure SDP) and now historic CIL Regulation 123 list - and how that infrastructure is to be secured and delivered, with each party contributing their proportionate share. It informs the obligations in the emerging S106 agreements.

The drafting of the S106 agreements has inevitably been an unusually long and complex process because of the need for comprehensive planning and delivery of the infrastructure required to support the development, with all parties contributing their fair share and the number of parties involved in those negotiations (five applications, five developers including the council and multiple landowners). In order to establish each party's proportionate share, it has been necessary to agree robust costs for the infrastructure that is being delivered. This is particularly critical for those costs associated with delivery of the SWDR, in order to reduce the financial risk to the council. The Council and consortium have been working up these costs over the intervening period.

Following adoption of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging schedule by the council in April 2015, the Regulation 123 list set out which items of infrastructure were to

be delivered by the council from CIL and what was to be delivered by the developers (secured by condition or S106). The CIL rate for the SDL was lower than elsewhere in the borough reflecting the amount of on-site infrastructure to be delivered within the SDLs.

The 2015 Regulation 123 list anticipated that construction of the SWDR would be by the council, funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). However, due to escalating construction costs in recent years, forward funding on the road has become increasingly difficult.

To assist with delivery of the SWDR, an increase in the SDL developers' infrastructure package has been negotiated. In line with the now historic Regulation 123 list, the resolutions secured land for a second primary school, a community facility and allotments within the SDL, with delivery anticipated to be by the council from CIL. It has now been agreed that the developers will deliver these items, in addition to the obligations already agreed. These works – which would otherwise have been funded from CIL reducing the finance available for the SWDR - have a combined value of approximately £20 million. The appraisal sets out in more detail what is now to be secured.

Notwithstanding these additional developer contributions, there would still have been a funding shortfall in the early years of construction, that would not have been made up until CIL income was received from the later stages of the development (likely to be over a decade). The cost of borrowing would have added significantly to the overall cost of the project, so the council explored other options and, in February 2024, succeeded in securing a grant from Homes England, to forward fund the SWDR.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY		
190900	St Anne's SANG: a full, cross-boundary application with Bracknell, north of the railway line/adjoining the Buckhurst Meadows SANG	Approved on 24 May 2021 following the resolution of the Planning Committee on 18 May 2021. Relevant reports are available here .
190914	Phase 2a: an outline application (with details of access) for up to 215 dwellings with associated infrastructure on the land adjacent to Bigwood/to the east of the SDL.	Planning Committee resolution to conditionally approve subject to S106 on 18 May 2021. Relevant reports are available here .
191068	Phase 2b: a hybrid application comprising outline consent (with details of access) for up to 1,434 dwellings with associated infrastructure and full planning permission for a SANG.	Planning Committee resolution to conditionally approve subject to S106 on 18 May 2021. Relevant reports are available here .

192325	Phase 3: a hybrid application comprising outline (with all matters reserved) for up to 171 dwellings with associated infrastructure and full planning permission for a SANG on land at Chapel Green/to the west of the SDL.	Planning Committee resolution to conditionally approve subject to S106 on 9 March 2022. Relevant reports are available here .
192928	Central section of the SDR south of the railway between Waterloo Road and Finchampstead Road	Approved 24 May 2021 following the resolution of the Planning Committee on 18 May 2021. Relevant reports are available here .
203535	Works at the junction of the A321 Finchampstead Road and Molly Millars Lane (the Western Gateway).	Approved 24 May 2021 following the resolution of the Planning Committee on 18 May 2021. Relevant reports are available here .

PLANNING POLICY

On 31 March 2023 the council could demonstrate a deliverable supply of 2,545 dwellings over a five year period housing against Local Housing Need of 795 per annum, which equates to 3.2 years housing land supply. Supply Statement at 31 March 2023, published 26 January 2024). Accordingly the presumption in favour of sustainable development as outlined in NPPF paragraph 11 applies and the tilted balance is engaged unless any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. This adds additional weight in favour of these comprehensively planned, infrastructure rich proposals. There have been no material changes to the planning policy context that would alter the assessment of the proposals since the committee resolutions in 2021 and 2022.

PLANNING ISSUES

1. The primary school

- 1.1. The social infrastructure identified by Core Strategy policy CP21 *South Wokingham Strategic Development Location* and Appendix 7 (paragraphs A7.42 and A7.49) includes two new, two-form-entry primary schools at accessible locations within the SDL. The first school has been provided within the first phase of the SDL at Montague Park (the Floreat Montague Park Primary School) and a suitably located, 1.8 hectare site for a second, two-form entry primary school is to be secured within phase 2b (191068). The Heads of terms set out in 17.1 i) of the report on phase 2b specified *"a 1.8 hectare site for a primary school, level with utilities to the site boundary, to be transferred to the council by the 250th occupation"*. Paragraphs 26 and 32 explained that the council was expected to deliver the school from CIL.
- 1.2. In order to help bridge the SWDR funding gap, the SDL Developers have agreed to deliver the primary school in addition to their original obligation to provide the land for it. The S106 will now secure delivery of a two-form entry primary school to an agreed specification, together with a review mechanism to ensure that the size of the school remains appropriate at the time of delivery. (It is not in the council's interest to have to take on the liability of a

larger facility than needed and it would be unreasonable to require the SDL developers to fund a larger facility than is required to mitigate the SDL development.)

- 1.3. The trigger originally proposed was for the transfer of a serviced site and allowed time for construction of the school by the council following transfer of the land. As the developers will now be delivering the school, the trigger can be pushed back to relate to the opening date of the school. From assessment of Wokingham's projected education needs, the earliest a school is likely to be needed is 300th occupation (or at a later date, on election by the council, depending on need at the time). The S106 should also include a mechanism for review of the need for a two-form entry primary school.

2. Community facilities

- 2.1. Core Strategy policies CP2 *Inclusive Communities* and CP3 *General Principles for Development* seek to secure a network of community facilities to support sustainable and inclusive communities and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB08 *Open Space, sport and recreational facilities standards for residential development* establishes standards for indoor sports provision. A multi-use community hall is among the on-site infrastructure required to support development in the South Wokingham SDL (Appendix 7, paragraph A7.53 and the Infrastructure SPD). This would be in addition to a smaller hall already secured at Montague Park and the improved facilities delivered through redevelopment of the Carnival Pool site, which were - in part - to meet the needs of residents of the SDLs.
- 2.2. Based on the advice in the council's Shaping Our New Communities (SONC) (January 2015) a 702m² community facility (over two-floors with ancillary outside space) would be required to meet the needs of the South Wokingham SDL (paragraph 34 of the report on phase 2b) and the Heads of Terms in paragraph 17.1 ii) included "a 500m² serviced site within the neighbourhood centre for community facility...to be transferred to the council by the 250th occupation". Paragraph 35 of the report on phase 2b explained that the land would be secured through the S106 agreement, with delivery by the council from a combination of CIL and a S106 contributions.
- 2.3. To help bridge the SWDR funding gap, the SDL Developers have agreed to deliver the community in addition to their original obligation to provide the land for it. The S106 will now need to secure delivery of a community facility to an agreed specification.
- 2.4. The trigger for delivery of the community facility site was intended to tie in with delivery of the school and can be similarly revised to the 300th occupation or later (on election by the council).

3. Allotments

- 3.1. Core Strategy policy CP3 g) *General Principles for Development* amplified by MDDL policy TB08 *Open Space, sport and recreational facilities standards for residential development* establish Public Open Space requirements for new development.
- 3.2. For the South Wokingham SDL, south of the railway, the minimum requirement is 2.27 hectares of allotments: the proposed overall provision of 2.72 comprises five sites (three allotments plus a community orchard within phase 2b and one allotment site within phase 3). (There is also a second community orchard proposed as part

of the landscape of the Holme Park SANG which is located to the south of the development parcels).

- 3.3. The Heads of Terms (17.1 iii) of the report on phase 2b and 17.1 i) of the report on phase 3) secured land for allotments and the appraisals (section 8.7 of both reports) explained that delivery of allotments would be by the council, funded by the CIL, in line with the now historic Regulation 123 list. It has now been agreed that the SDL developers will deliver the community orchards and allotment sites to an agreed specification.
- 3.4. As with the school, it is no longer necessary to allow time for the council to deliver the allotments, so the triggers can be revised to reflect when each allotment site needs to be available. Triggers are linked to the number of occupations in nearby residential parcels.

4. Conditions

- 4.1. Draft conditions were included in each of the reports to Planning Committee and the resolutions for phase 2b and 3 allowed the flexibility for the Assistant Director - Delivery and Infrastructure to agree additions and updates between the date of the resolution and issue of the decision notice and it is recommended that the same provision is made for phase 2a.
- 4.2. Since the applications were reported to committee, following review and refinement, a number of changes to conditions have been agreed. These were mostly minor modifications to the wording to improve their clarity. However, there were also a few more significant additions arising from Environment Agency consultation responses received post-committee and amendments arising from the evolution of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and S106 drafting (explained in the following paragraphs).
- 4.3. For all three applications, the draft conditions reported to committee included one requiring the number of occupations that could take place before opening of the full SWDR to be established (based on the phasing of development and traffic modelling). However, once the land for its construction has been transferred, the timing of delivery of the SWDR is entirely in the council's control so it was agreed that this condition was not reasonable and could be deleted (applications 190914, 194068 & 192325). It is the Council's intention to deliver the road under one contract, as such the number of occupations possible before the road will be open will not be enough to cause significant issues to the local highway network.
- 4.4. At the time the applications were reported to committee, the Infrastructure Delivery Plan included the overall cost for each item of infrastructure and each party's proportionate share of that cost but it had not been agreed which party would take responsibility for delivery of each element of the infrastructure. Hence, it was necessary to list the full package of off-site pedestrian, cycle and highway junction works in the conditions for each application. Through ongoing negotiations, the developers have agreed which applicant will take responsibility for delivery of each item of infrastructure, so it is possible to identify which works are to be delivered in conjunction with each planning application. The Finchampstead Road/Oakey Drive/SWDR junction is integral to the SWDR and to be funded from CIL; financial contributions are to be secured towards Peacock Lane/Waterloo Road/Old Wokingham Road, Molly Millars Lane/Finchampstead Road, Easthampstead

Road/Heathlands Road/new Heathlands link road and Heathland Road/Nine Mile Ride; all others off-site junction works are to be delivered by the SDL developers. For the Local Planning Authority, the key consideration is that the infrastructure necessary to support the SDL development is delivered rather than how responsibility is shared between the developers and this approach has the benefit of significantly reducing the complexity of conditions and the S106 drafting. The material revisions to conditions for phases 2a, 2b and 3 (application 190914, 194068 & 192325) are set out in the appendices to this report.

- 4.5. Together the three applications will deliver more SANG than is required to mitigate the impact of the SDL development. Phase 2a will be reliant on the St Anne's SANG (a separate application, 190900 located to the north of the railway adjoining Buckhurst Meadows), phase 3 on a SANG at Chapel Green (within the 192325 application site boundary to the western end of the SDL) and phase 2b on a combination of SANG at Holme Park (within the 191068 application site boundary to the south of the SDL) and within the St Anne's and Chapel Green SANGS (and potentially elsewhere in the vicinity). It is essential that SANG is available on first occupation but, at this stage, the phasing of delivery of SANG and housing is yet to be decided. As originally drafted the condition assumed that the Holme Park SANG would be delivered before first occupation with later phases relying on SANG elsewhere. In the event, the early phases of development in 2b may rely on SANG elsewhere, allowing later delivery of the Holme Parks SANG. The condition and S106 have been revised to reflect this approach and ensure that SANG is provided prior to occupation.

5. Infrastructure impact mitigation

- 5.1. The reports to committee on phases 2a, 2b and 3 each set out the planning policy context for requiring infrastructure impact mitigation and Heads of Terms for items to be secured through S106 legal agreements. Subsequently the SDL developers have agreed to deliver the primary school, community facility and allotments in addition to the obligations previously agreed and the Heads of Terms have been updated accordingly.

S106 Heads of Terms

- i) In addition to the obligations set out in section 17.1 of the report on phase 2b (application 191068) the S106 agreement will now need to secure delivery of the primary school (with a review mechanism), community facility and allotments, to agreed specifications.
- ii) In addition to the obligations set out in section 17.1 of the report on phase 3 (application 192325) the S106 agreement will now need to secure delivery of allotments to an agreed specification.

Appendix 1: 190914, phase 2a, material revisions to conditions

Occupations before completion of the South Wokingham Distributor Road

Since the SWDR is to be delivered by the council and the developers have no control over the timing of its delivery it was agreed that this condition can be deleted.

Strategic highway works (previously off-site junction works)

Off-site junction works are being delivered by other parties and only the new connection between Waterloo Road and phase 2b remains to be secured.

A new connection through parcel R14 to the application site boundary with R10 as identified on Drawing No P18-0963_06Y *Framework Plan* providing an alternative to Waterloo Road in advance of it being closed to through traffic shall be delivered in accordance with the phasing established by condition 3 and details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Off-site pedestrian and cycle provision (as revised)

The off-site pedestrian and cycle works are all to be delivered by other parties so this condition can be deleted.

Appendix 2: 191068, phase 2b material revisions to conditions

Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG)

Prior to the commencement of the development, a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) Delivery Strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (LPA). The SANG Delivery Strategy shall be based on the application proposals and set out the approach to and timing of delivery of SANG in relation to the housing it is intended to mitigate, which may be phased. The SANG Strategy shall accord with the Natural England SANG Design and Delivery Guidance (or any guidance that supersedes it) including delivery of at least 27.53 hectares of SANG to fulfil the quantitative requirements of the development, of which 21.41 hectares shall be within the application site boundary and the remaining 6.12 hectares elsewhere within or immediately adjacent to the SDL boundary, plus a further 3.30 hectares within the application site boundary which have been included in the assessment of the qualitative requirements of the SANG but do not contribute to the quantitative requirements. All SANG within the application site boundary shall be delivered in accordance with the details approved pursuant to condition 15 and the timings established by the SANG Strategy. No phase of the SANG shall be occupied until written confirmation has been received from the Local Planning Authority (LPA) that the SANG has been delivered to an acceptable standard and the SANG is available for public use and no dwelling shall be occupied except in accordance with the SANG Strategy.

Occupations prior to completion of the SWDR

Since the SWDR is to be delivered by the council and the developers have no control over the timing of its delivery it was agreed that this condition can be deleted.

Off-site junction works

Off-site mitigation and junction capacity works shall be provided at the junctions of:

- a) Barkham Road/Barkham Street;
- b) Bearwood Road/Barkham Road;
- c) Barkham Road /Molly Millars Lane;
- d) Peacock Lane/Vigar Way; together with
- e) a new connection through parcel R10 to the application site boundary with as identified on Drawing No P18-0963_06Y *Framework Plan* providing an alternative to Waterloo Road in advance of it being closed to through traffic

in accordance with the phasing established by condition 3 and details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Off-site pedestrian and cycle provision

Off-site pedestrian and cycle and associated enhancement works comprising improvements on:

- a) Easthampstead Road between the SWDR and the Star Lane level crossing;
- b) Easthampstead Road between the SWDR and the junction of Heathlands Road;
- c) Easthampstead Road north of the junction with Waterloo Road to and including Peach Street (unless superseded by a wider environmental improvement scheme), and the side road junctions of Easthampstead Road with Westcott Road, Denton

Road, Goodchild Road, Moles Close, Murdoch Road, Southlands Road, Waterloo Road and Starhead Drive;

- d) north of Wokingham Footpath 17 and the railway (to include street lighting), Gipsy Lane, Langborough Road, Luckley Path (Wokingham Footpath 21), Murdoch Road/Howard Road junction;
- e) Waterloo Road, Rances Lane and London Road, including junctions with Seaford Road and Waterloo Crescent;
- f) Goodchild Road, Westcott Road and Seaford Road, including junctions with School Road, Orchard Close and London Road;
- g) Waterloo Road and Clay Lane;
- h) Waterloo Road and Peacock Lane to Jennets Park, including bus stop infrastructure;
- i) Waterloo Road once alternative access has been provided through parcels R10 & R14 as identified on Drawing No P18-0963_191 *Framework Plan*;

shall be implemented in accordance with the phasing established by condition 3 and details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Appendix 3 192325, phase 3, material revisions to conditions

Occupations before completion of the South Wokingham Distributor Road

Since the SWDR is to be delivered by the council and the developers have no control over the timing of its delivery it was agreed that this condition can be deleted.

Off-site junction works

Off-site junction works are being delivered by other parties or through S106 contributions and the condition can be deleted.

Off-site pedestrian and cycle provision

The majority of off-site pedestrian and cycle works are to be delivered by others or through S106 contributions so the condition now only needs to refer to the works below.

Off-site pedestrian and cycle and associated enhancement works comprising improvements on Luckley Road, Tangle Drive and Finchampstead Road shall be implemented in accordance with the phasing established by condition 3 and details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

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