

# Agenda Item 54.

<b>Development Management Ref No</b>	<b>No weeks on day of committee</b>	<b>Parish</b>	<b>Ward</b>	<b>Listed by:</b>
O/2014/2179 & 140764	Planning Performance Agreement	Finchampstead	Finchampstead South	Major Development

**Applicant** Marino Family  
**Location** Hogwood Farm, Sheerlands Road  
**Proposal** Hybrid Planning Application, including:

Part 1 - Application for OUTLINE PERMISSION (reserving matters of (a) access; (b) appearance; (c) landscaping; (d) layout; and (e) scale) FOR: Demolition of all existing buildings on site; up to 1,500 new dwellings (Use Class C3); up to 12,000 sqm of employment floorspace (Use Class B2); a Neighbourhood Centre with up to 1,900sqm of non-residential floorspace (Use Classes A1/A2/A3/A4/A5 and D1); a new primary school; new sports pitches and associated pavilion building; highways infrastructure including an extension to the Nine Mile Ride and a new link from the Nine Mile Ride Extension to the Hogwood Lane Industrial Estate; associated landscaping, public realm and open/green space (including children's play areas); and sustainable urban drainage systems.

PART 2 – Application for FULL PERMISSION FOR: 29.70 ha of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG).

This is an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) application for the purposes of the EIA Regulations 2011.

**Type** Major  
**PS Category** 1  
**Officer** David Smith

**FOR CONSIDERATION BY** Planning Committee on 14/10/2015  
**REPORT PREPARED BY** Head of Development Management

## REPORT UP-DATE

The application was previously scheduled to go to Committee on 30/09/2015. However, due to an administrative error WBC did not write to people who made comments about the application to notify them of the Committee. In the event, the Committee of 30/09/2015 was cancelled and the application is now being reported here for a decision.

The report below is the report that was published in advance of the previous Committee. WBC Officers hereby up-date the report and recommendation as follows:

- Consultation Responses: Neighbouring Authorities: Hampshire County Council (HCC): HCC actually withdrew their objection to the SDL applications by letter dated 10<sup>th</sup> March 2015; subject to the S106 contributions towards the A327

environmental improvements. In removing their objection HCC was cognisant of the “full build out of both Arborfield sites” – i.e. the cumulative impact of the SDL wide development. HCC are the Highway Authority for Hampshire and are responsible for all roads therein.

- A further condition is recommended so as to control the nature of any future community use within the Neighbourhood centre in the interests of residential amenity and the viability of retail, leisure and community facilities delivery within the District centre – see new condition 12 in updated appendix A.
- For information and in elaboration of paragraphs 14 and 49-54, new appendix F includes the SDL wide Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan was for all intents and purposes agreed by WBC when it granted planning permission for the AGLC site and AGLC’s apportionment of the infrastructure costs was secured under the S106 against their planning permission. MFT’s apportionment of the infrastructure delivery would be secured by on-site provision, S106 contributions and CIL.
- For information, new appendix G includes the AGLC masterplan – i.e. the masterplan approved for the northern part of the SDL.

---

## SUMMARY

The application site comprises Hogwood Farm and forms the southern part of the Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location (SDL). The application site is some 109.93 ha in size and comprises predominantly large open fields, parcels of mature woodland, Hogwood Farm Industrial Estate and two houses.

The proposal is a hybrid application, including application part in outline and part in full, for a residential led development of the site inclusive of associated physical and community infrastructure to support the delivery. Outline planning permission (reserving matters of (a) access; (b) appearance; (c) landscaping; (d) layout; and (e) scale) is sought for all of the development other than the SANG, for which planning permission is sought in full on 29.7ha of the site. A full description is included above. The application follows a planning application for the northern half of the SDL that was approved in April 2015 – the AGLC site.

The site is allocated in the Development Plan as a Strategic Development Location, within which significant growth is anticipated in response to Wokingham’s housing and development needs. The development would deliver up to 1,500 residential units, inclusive of one and two bed flats and one to five bed houses. The wide mix of dwelling sizes and types that can be achieved on the site accords with the aims of Government policy regarding social cohesion and inclusion aims, as do the arrangements for the provision of market and affordable housing units. The development would therefore contribute significantly towards addressing Wokingham’s identified housing needs and demand. The 1,500 add to the 2,000 homes consented under the AGLC application and together, the two applications comprise the total allocation of development for the SDL.

Across the SDL the new community will be provided with primary and secondary schools, community facilities, good quality open space (including SANGs) and a package of transport measures. The SDL wide highways mitigation includes the funding of the Arborfield Cross Relief Road, delivery of the Nine Mile Ride Extension to the A327, widening of Barkham Bridge and improvements to Commonfield Lane and to

California Cross Roads. Traffic management measures will also be introduced in Farley Hill and environmental improvements on the A327 in Eversley. The SDL development will also fund a network of offsite greenways (pedestrian and cycling routes), public transport enhancements, and contribute to the Council's 'My Journey' Travel Plan to encourage the use of these modes. Moreover, an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) identifying the necessary on and off-site infrastructure for the wider SDL has been produced, with both the AGLC site and the Hogwood Farm application delivering their fair apportionment through either direct provision on site, S106 contributions or CIL.

The development would also deliver 12,000 sqm of employment floorspace and uplift in employment at the site by an estimated 250 jobs (Full Time Equivalent). This is less than was envisaged when the Core Strategy, MDD DPD and SDL SPD were adopted. However, this level of provision must be weighed against the housing delivery required of the site, the substantial public benefits of the development and the evidence of the Employment Land Monitoring Report.

Whilst matters of detailed layout and landscaping are reserved, the application is supported by an open spaces parameter plan which demonstrates that sufficient open space can be provided to meet the Council's standards in the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan and the Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy.

The masterplan and DAS addendum demonstrates that the quantum of development can be brought forward for the site without having an unacceptable impact on the landscape or character of the area or the significance of the heritage assets. Also, the proposal would not have a harmful impact upon the amenities of existing residents, and would integrate well with the AGLC development (to the north) to help shape the SDL into a single, coherent place.

The Arborfield Garrison SDL lies within 5km of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) and mitigation is being provided in the form of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), and a financial contribution towards Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM). In addition Officers are satisfied that run-off rates will be restricted to Greenfield (Set 1) and that there will be enough space on site to provide sufficient storage capacity to attenuate surface water run-off up to the 1 in 100 plus climate change storm. As the rates will be set to Greenfield, volumes will be managed so not to increase flood risk off the site.

In summary, this is a sustainable development that would deliver substantial public benefit and contribute significantly towards Wokingham's planned growth. The development would be in general compliance with the Development Plan for the Borough and there are no material considerations of sufficient weight that would dictate that the application should nevertheless be refused. Officers are therefore recommending approval of the scheme in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development conferred upon Local Planning Authorities by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

In making this recommendation, Officers have had full regard to current development plan policy, together with other relevant material considerations. Officers have also taken into account the Environmental Statement submitted under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011; together with the Environmental Statement submitted in conjunction with planning application O/2014/2280 (AGLC Site). Officers are satisfied that sufficient information has been

provided to enable assessment of the likely significant impacts of the development upon the environment and to enable a ‘principle decision’ on the planning application to be made. It is considered that the development proposal, subject to the conditions and parameters set out within this recommendation, will unlikely lead to any significant environmental impacts not already identified and assessed in the Environmental Statement.

## PLANNING STATUS

- Strategic Development Location (SDL)
- Modest Development Location
- Within 5km of the Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Adjacent to Hogwood Shaw Local Wildlife Site
- Allocation for Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace
- Area of High Archaeological Potential

## RECOMMENDATION

- A. That the committee authorise the Head of Development Management to GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to variation of the description of development to limit the development to no more than 500 sqm of non-residential floorspace within the Neighbourhood Centre and subject to conditions (set out at Appendix A of this report) and completion of the legal agreement.
- B. In the event that the applicant fails to complete the legal agreement by 30/11/2015, and it is in the opinion of the Head of Development Management not prudent to continue negotiations, that the committee authorise the Head of Development Management to REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION on the basis that 1) the applicant has failed to sign the S106 legal agreement and thus failed to ensure delivery of the obligations deemed necessary to make the application acceptable in planning terms; and 2) any other reason of refusal considered appropriate by the Head of Development Management to properly reflect the resolution of the Planning Applications Committee.

## RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

### Application Site

Hogwood Farm has not been the subject of any recent planning applications for major development, although relatively minor applications have been submitted for new buildings, alterations and change of use within the Hogwood Farm Industrial Estate.

### AGLC Site

O/2014/2280 - OUTLINE PERMISSION FOR: Phased redevelopment of Arborfield Garrison and adjoining land for: Up to 2 000 new dwellings (including up to 80 units of extra care housing); a District centre comprising a food store up to 4 000 sqm gross with

up to a further 3 500 sqm (gross) floor space within Classes A1 A2 A3 A4 A5 B1 D1 and D2 (with residential above - Class C3) and transport interchange, village square, car parking, servicing and drop off area; a Neighbourhood centre to provide up to 300 sqm (gross) floor space within Classes A1 A2 A3 A4 A5 B1 D1 and D2 with parking/servicing area; Secondary school for up to 1 500 pupils (Class D1) including sports pitches flood-lit all-weather pitch and indoor swimming pool and parking areas; Up to three-form primary school (Class D1) with sports pitch and parking areas; and associated phased provision of car parking, public open space (including sports pitches), informal/incidental open space, children's play areas (including multi-use games area (MUGA)), skate park, community gardens/allotments, landscaping/buffer areas, new roads, footpaths, cycleways, bridleways and sustainable urban drainage systems. FULL PERMISSION FOR: Creation of two new areas of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGS); re-use of existing MoD gymnasium for sports/community uses/centre (Classes D1/D2; new roundabout junction to A327 Reading Road; junction improvements to Langley Common Road Baird Road and Biggs Lane; junction improvements and new access at Biggs Lane/Princess Marina Drive; and re-use and improvements to existing site accesses from Biggs Lane. APPROVED 02/04/2015.

F/2015/0001: Full application for erection of 1,500 place Secondary School with associated sports facilities parking provision and access roads within SDL site – APPROVED 26/03/2015.

150162 – Phase 1 - Reserved Matters application for the erection of 113 dwellings with access from Biggs Lane and Princess Marina Drive, with associated internal access road, parking, landscaping and open space, footpaths and sustainable Urban Drainage (Suds) – PENDING

#### **SUMMARY INFORMATION**

Site area:	109.93ha
Site area – Residential Development Parcels	43.35ha
Site area – Neighbourhood centre	0.45ha
Site area - Primary school	2.5ha
Site area – Employment	1.87ha
Site area – Green infrastructure	58.24ha

#### **Residential**

Proposed units	Up to 1,500
Average density	35 dwellings/hectare
Number of affordable units proposed	To be finalised at the Reserved Matters stage

#### **Buildings to be retained**

None  
Note – Hogwood Farmhouse is excluded from the application site for the purposes of this planning application.

#### **On site public open space proposed**

Outdoor Sports	6.98ha
Amenity Green Space	4.49ha
Parks and gardens	4.72ha

Children's Play space	0.9ha
Civic Space in Neighbourhood Centre	0.04ha
Allotments	1.87ha
SANG	29.7ha
Other Open Space	9.54ha
Total	58.24ha

## CONSULTATION RESPONSES

### External Consultees

Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust	<p>Objects to the application because insufficient information has been submitted with respect to the impact of the development upon bats, greater crested newts, breeding birds, the Longmoor Bog SSSI, Shepperlands Reserve and Local Wildlife Site, and the SANG provision.</p> <p>Recommends conditions relating to reptiles, badgers, ancient woodland mitigation, construction and ecological management and enhancement.</p> <p>[Officer Note: The development, subject to the recommended conditions and S106 obligations, is considered acceptable by both WBC's Ecological Officer and Natural England. Moreover, it is considered that the raft of conditions and S106 obligations will suitably and appropriately mitigate the potential impacts of the development upon protected species and wildlife habitats of importance at the site.]</p>
Binfield Badger Group	<p>A check should be performed by a qualified ecologist that no badgers are currently resident within the exclusion distance guidelines, and/or would have their foraging areas impacted, before the proposed work, or any preparation, is permitted to go ahead.</p> <p>[Officer Note: The development is considered acceptable by WBC's Ecological Officer. The ES is accompanied by badger surveys which indicates that there will be no direct impact to active badger setts as a result of the proposed development but that some relic setts have been identified which will be lost. The main impacts on this species are therefore considered to relate to disturbance as a result of the construction works. A condition of consent is recommended to protect badgers during the construction period.]</p>
Environment Agency	No objection, subject to the recommended conditions. They are satisfied that run-off rates will be restricted to Greenfield and that there will be enough space on site to provide sufficient storage capacity to attenuate surface water run-off up to the 1 in 100 plus climate change storm.

Highways England	No objection
Historic England	No objection. They do not consider the proposal would adversely harm the setting and thus an appreciation of the significance of any nearby Grade I or II* buildings or Scheduled Ancient Monuments. They do advise however that the development has the potential to adversely affect the setting of the Grade II listed Hogwood Farmhouse along with other nearby Grade II buildings and that the advice of WBC's Conservation Officer should be sought on the matter.
Natural England	No objection, subject to securing the delivery of the SANG as proposed.  With regards to the Longmoor Bog SSSI, Natural England is satisfied that the proposed development being carried out in strict accordance with the details of the application, as submitted, will not damage or destroy the interest features for which the site has been notified.
Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue	No objection
Scottish and Southern Energy	No objection
Sport England	Sport England recommends that the proposed areas of playing fields (OS1 and OS2) should be moved closer together and that a pavilion, as referenced in the description of open space, should also be shown on the indicative plans. [Officer Note: Under CIL, the outdoor sports facilities (and adjacent allotments) will be the responsibility of the Council to deliver. The exact positions of OS1, OS2 and CA1 are not being fixed under this outline application. Moreover, the playing pitches (including exact location of pitches and pavilion) will need to be worked up in more detail prior to the Council submitting a Reserved Matters application for the provisions. This Reserved Matters application will have to take into account all existing constraints in this part of the site (including hedgerows), but will also need to have full regard to Sport England's comments – who will be consulted at that time. The Council, as applicant and ongoing management body, would want to ensure that the new facilities are fit for purpose.]
Thames Valley Police	No objection. Advise that in order to maintain the current level of policing developer contributions towards the provision of infrastructure will be required.  [Officer Note: Emergency Services facilities and equipment is covered by WBC CIL]
Thames Water	No objection. The scale of development is likely to require

	<p>significant upgrades to the existing infrastructure. Thames Water is working with the developer to scope these upgrades.</p> <p>[Officer Note: A condition of consent is recommended in relation to foul and surface water drainage]</p>
TVP Crime Prevention Adviser	<p>No objection subject to condition to require reserved matters to achieve Secure by Design accreditation.</p> <p>[Officer Note: Conditions included]</p>
<b>WBC Consultees</b>	
WBC Conservation Officer	<p>Advises that the removal of the existing Hogwood Farm Industrial Estate and the development of parcel RE11 will affect the setting of the Grade II listed Hogwood Farmhouse. Also, the vegetation retention and proposed structure planting, as indicated on the parameter plans, will be important to protect the setting of the C 17th Westwood Farm and C 16th Westwood Cottage listed buildings (both Grade 2) immediately to the west of the site.</p> <p>[Officer Note: These matters will be dealt with in detail at the Reserved Matters stage. It is considered that the removal of the industrial estate and the introduction of the green spine could at the very least preserve, if not enhance, the setting to (and general appreciation of) the Farmhouse.]</p>
WBC Archaeology	<p>Are satisfied that the archaeological interest of the site may be appropriately protected by way of conditions. Whilst this approach has an element of risk to the detailed planning process should preservation in situ of important archaeological assets be required, the applicant has acknowledged this risk in their submissions.</p> <p>[Officer Note: Conditions are recommended requiring the undertaking of archaeological investigation works in advance of 'fixing' any of the detailed layouts of the development.]</p>
WBC Ecology	<p>Satisfied that the applicant has undertaken sufficient survey effort to adequately establish the nature of ecological interest of the site and its surrounds. Has no outstanding ecological objection in principle and considers that the recommended conditions will ensure that the development will not be detrimental to the overall ecological interest of the site.</p>
WBC Education	<p>The site area (2.5Ha) and location of parcel PRS1 are satisfactory. The site will require access routes for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists, which will be dealt with in a detailed planning application.</p>

WBC Environmental Health Officer	No objection subject to conditions.
WBC Flood Risk	Has recommended conditions to deal with matters of surface water drainage and flooding.
WBC Health and Well Being Board	No in principle objection. Comments relate to detailed elements of the application.
WBC Highways	No objection subject to conditions and S106 provisions.
WBC Housing	No in principle objection.
WBC Landscape/Trees	No objection in principle. Any development within the site will need to take account of the existing landscape constraints; whereas detailed information on levels, existing trees and vegetation and landscape proposals, will need to accompany a Reserved Matters / Conditions application according to each phase of the development.
WBC Planning Policy	No objection.
WBC Public Open Space / Sports	No objection.
WBC Public Rights of Way	A condition is recommended to secure details of how the site will ensure that the Shepperlands Farm bridleway can be linked up (via the AGLC site) to the Wokingham Lane and California Country Park bridleways.  [Officer Note: Condition included]
WBC SANG	No objection, subject to conditions and S106 provisions
<b>Neighbouring Authorities</b>	
Bracknell Forest Council	No objection received
Reading Borough Council	Response to original submission raised objections on the grounds that there was insufficient information to assess the transport implications, and that the proposal did not contribute to transport improvements in Reading Borough. WBC provided a response to RBC explaining that South of M4 SDL's financial contribution to RBC had taken into account the transport impact on Reading of all major developments in Wokingham Borough, and so the impact had already been mitigated. No further response was received.
Hampshire County Council	Object to original submission on grounds of impact of additional traffic upon roads in Hampshire. No comments received in response to re-consultation.  [Officer Note: Hampshire County Council provided a similar

	objection to the original AGLC application, but subsequently withdrew that subject to a contribution towards environmental and safety improvements along the A327 between the County boundary and the A30. The Hogwood Farm apportionment of the cost of those works is secured under the S106 here.]
Hart District Council	<p>Object to original submission on grounds of impact of additional traffic upon heritage assets in Eversley.</p> <p>No comments received in response to re-consultation.</p> <p>[See Officer Note to Hampshire County Council]</p>
Eversley Parish Council	<p>Objected to the original submission on the following grounds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highly significant levels of additional traffic in the village;</li> <li>• Severe, adverse social and environmental impacts of that additional traffic;</li> <li>• Lack of adequate mitigation for those severe, adverse impacts.</li> </ul> <p>No comments received in response to re-consultation.</p> <p>[See Officer Note to Hampshire County Council]</p>
West Berkshire Council	No objection received

## REPRESENTATIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND PARISH COUNCILS

### Finchampstead Parish Council

Main causes of concern:

- Overhead power lines (132kva) should be buried. Current proposal for a buffer area to retain existing overhead lines is out of keeping with the Garden Village principles.
- Infrastructure should be planned in for the provision of a high speed fibre optic broadband network.
- Green Infrastructure and open spaces
- Footpaths – the documents confuses the use of the words “footpaths” and “footways”.
- Flooding and Surface water Drainage
- Sustainability Strategy
- Utilities

[Officer Note: There is no policy requirement for the applicant to remove the overhead powerlines; although this planning permission would not preclude a developer from doing that in the future. A condition is recommended to ensure the connection of broadband or similar technologies. Whilst matters of detailed layout and landscaping are reserved, the application is supported by an open spaces parameter plan which demonstrates that sufficient open space can be provided to meet the Council's standards in the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan and the Open Spaces,

Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy. Footpaths and footways will be clarified through the Reserved Matters applications. WBC Flooding and the Environment Agency accept that matters of flooding and surface water drainage at the site may be suitably controlled and managed through the recommended conditions. A condition of consent is recommended to ensure sufficient utility provision on site.]

#### Barkham Parish Council (BPC)

- The Transport Assessments are based on unrealistic assumptions. As a consequence, future traffic levels are significantly underestimated. This in turn means that there is no credible transport plan for Barkham and the neighbouring parishes.
- BPC would like assurance that felling of mature trees will be limited as far as possible. It would be helpful if the developer would commit to planting one new tree for every tree lost.
- BPC would also like to ensure that the edges of the development are softened by adequate landscape zones and that building height on the periphery are limited to a maximum of two storeys.
- BPC also would like to ensure that there are seamless linkages of greenways between the two development sites. In particular it should be possible for students to cycle and walk safely to the new secondary school just to the north of Hogwood Lane.
- The public transport strategy indicates that a regular bus service will operate an indirect service through the development. The practicality of this proposal needs to be validated.

[Officer Note: The Transport Assessment considers the impact of the development on its own, and cumulatively with the AGLC site, the other SDLs and major development outside the borough. WBC's Transport Planners consider the document is technically sound; as do AECOM who were commissioned by the Council to independently verify the document. In addition, Members are reminded that in March 2015 Committee considered the AGLC application for the northern part of the Arborfield Garrison SDL; wherein planning permission was granted subject to an Infrastructure Delivery Plan inclusive of highways mitigation (both on and off site) considerate of the cumulative SDL impact and apportionment of delivery responsibility across the two SDL sites. The development feeds into this previously accepted SDL wide Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

As per the Development Framework Plan, vegetation loss would be minimised, existing boundary vegetation is in the main retained with additional structure planting and building heights around the boundaries are restricted to two storeys. The green spine of the development and the NMRE ensures good connection with the AGLC site, whilst the public transport strategy for the scheme will be brought forward in conjunction with the bus operates at an early phase of the development.]

#### Arborfield and Newland Parish Council

- The submitted Transport Assessment contains many errors in assumptions and calculations. Consequently, the impact of development traffic on the external highway network has been seriously underestimated.
- There is still no submitted design code identifying how the densities can be properly achieved in an acceptable unifying design across the site, especially where areas of two different densities converge.

- The delivery of the primary school will be in phase 1 which is supported by the Parish Council.
- The Parish Council support the inclusion of the Nine Mile Ride Extension (NMRE) in the full application submission and would encourage the funding for this to be sought sooner rather than later. The Parish Council is also of the view that a 30mph speed limit should be applied on the NMRE.
- The threshold trigger for transport mitigation requirements would need to be based on the development progress of both sites in tandem to ensure that mitigation is delivered on time.
- The Parish Council supports the provision of public transport to, from, and through the site.
- The permeability of the site to cyclists and pedestrians is positive and the use of a dedicated cycleway along the NMRE, network of off-road footpaths to connect into the existing highways, and footpaths around the site is supported.
- It is not considered that the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF; the Parish Council are concerned that the level of assessment is inadequate for the proposed development.
- Thames Water Sewage works will need to be confirmed.
- The Parish Council request that further information on the quality of the proposed SANG and that a management plan is provided. In addition, currently there is no Southern Exit from the SANG.
- It is unclear what the impact of the proposed development on local ecology will be.
- The Parish Council would like the layout to be reviewed to maximise the retention of trees and hedgerows wherever possible.
- Based on the submitted plans it appears that the Neighbourhood centre is 90% larger than outlined in the Wokingham Borough Council's Core Strategy. It will need to be ensured that the centre is of an appropriate size in relation to the District centre to be located in the Garrison site.
- Any commuted sums afforded to housing outside the SDL site should be robustly justified in accordance with Core Strategy policy CP5 and the Affordable Housing SPD.

[Officer Note: See comments above in respect to the Transport Assessment. Design Codes will be secured via the conditions. It is anticipated that the Primary School and NMRE will come forward early in the development and it is envisaged that the NMRE will be set to 30MPH. The Transport Mitigation package is linked to the phased delivery of development across the SDL sites. Both WBC Flooding and the Environment Agency are satisfied that details of flood risk and surface water drainage may be dealt with sufficiently by the recommended conditions. Further detail on the SANG will be provided under the recommended conditions and S106 agreement, to ensure it meets the Natural England criteria for SANG provision. The recommended conditions will ensure that the development does not result in an unacceptable impact upon ecology of importance at the site. Officers share the concerns regarding the size of the Neighbourhood centre and have restricted its size and nature by way of the recommended conditions. Under the S106 the affordable housing delivery at the site will be worked up on a phase by phase basis.]

Swallowfield Parish Council

Please applications have been submitted in tandem. Application should be viewed as a single place.

#### Traffic

- Traffic will be attracted to Mereoak and J11 and Basingstoke. Risk of rat-running across small lanes.
- Unconvinced traffic mitigation measures will work
- More detail of traffic calming measures in Farley Hill required
- Scheme should not have urbanising effect upon road, affect school or cause congestion
- Treatment required to discourage traffic using road to Swallowfield from Relief Road (formerly from Arborfield Cross Rbt)
- Concern about congestion at Tally Ho in Eversley, Bramshill Road junction and A30 junction (in Hampshire)
- Difficult for students to access secondary school from the west

[Officer Note: See comments above on traffic impact]

#### MFT

- Concern MFT site would drain into River Blackwater
- Would like to see more comprehensive infiltration SUDS strategy
- Outline plans do not show how flood attenuation will be achieved
- Detailed flood designs need to be expertly reviewed
- WBC should secure funding for ongoing maintenance of flood alleviation assets

[Office Note: Both WBC Flooding and the Environment Agency are satisfied that details of flood risk and surface water drainage may be dealt with sufficiently by the recommended conditions.]

#### Biodiversity

- Impact of construction upon biodiversity. Temporary mitigation should be provided
- Future SANG management should be adequately funded
- Cumulative impact of Arborfield SDL and South of M4 SDL upon biodiversity
- Highway impacts upon Swallowfield parish have not been fully considered, with a consequent underestimation of the environmental impacts

[Officer Note: Both WBC's Ecology Officer and Natural England are satisfied that the recommended conditions will suitably protect the ecology and biodiversity interest of the site and beyond, whilst the SANG provision will ensure compliance with Natural England's 19 criteria for delivery.]

#### Governance

- Future governance unclear

#### Councillor Gary Cowen (Arborfield)

- The principle of development was made against the councils wishes at the South East Plan public inquiry and this has forced this development on Arborfield Garrison and the surrounding area.
- It is crucial that the SDL applications are looked at as a single planning

- application to ensure the overall infrastructure to deliver the whole site is in place.
- The random figure of 3500 houses raises concerns about the ability to be able to deliver these numbers on site while being restricted by the various constraints now coming to light and for this reason it is crucial that the housing numbers are not a fixed 3500 but one based on the constraints that the site throws up such as flooding, highways, public transport, infrastructure, environment and ecology.
  - Impacts upon local residents impacted by the increase in noise, construction traffic along with the loss of countryside, the existing use of public areas especially the overall enjoyment of the living in a semi rural location.
  - A very clear agreement to phased adoption must be a condition on development otherwise residents human rights will be breached.
  - Biodiversity planning must take note of the site now and ensure that after the construction period the flora and fauna is not damaged to the point where its recovery to pre development levels is impossible. It is essential that the council ensures such buffers are put into place along with the protection of all trees where possible and ancient hedges shown for removal in the current submitted plans rather than just rely on the developers submissions.
  - There is considerable wild life on Arborfield Garrison and various species of birds who live in existing deciduous and evergreen trees and replanting especially in open spaces must ensure some specimen of both deciduous and evergreen trees are part of the planting process to ensure they have a future habitat. Replacement trees should also be substantial indigenous species and not whips.
  - Protection for badgers, water voles and other land based species along with bats must also not be ignored.
  - The flood related interactions between the two proposals need to be considered and the significant erosion of green fields must be considered in detail. In addition the Blackwater and Loddon are responsive rivers so the opportunity to provide additional flood storage should be actively encouraged.
  - An overlay of flood zone maps on the proposed new housing areas would be of considerable help in evaluating flood risk.
  - Reliance on flood protection is based on a series of channels, ditches, culverts and discharge points particularly into the Blackwater. It must be clearly demonstrated that the final discharge in any flood condition will not increase in any way even under moderate or extreme weather events along with a need to ensure that flooding is not increased within and beyond the Arborfield site.
  - Traffic impact seems to be based on the bigger picture but fails locally with the exception of the Arborfield bypass to deal with local potential problems. There is an inability to properly address the problems at California Crossroads, Barkham Bridge to Bearwood Road, Winnersh Crossroads and Triangle.
  - There are no solutions and dubious calculations in relation to traffic growth, trip generation rates, and assumptions about internalisation of journeys. This seriously underestimates the external traffic generation of the SDL, and the impacts that it will have on the surrounding road network.
  - Add to this more illogical assumptions on the use of public transport, walking and cycling.
  - Loss of employment opportunities at Arborfield Garrison are not addressed in the planning applications.
  - Arborfield Cross Roundabout sits in a conservation area and any proposed changes would be unacceptable and should be resisted if the character of the conservation area is threatened.
  - Affordable housing allocation must take note of the existing small houses (about

1000) already on the garrison when the calculation for variety sizes and mixes are calculated otherwise the potential to end up with 50% of small houses (in 2020) would unbalance the whole development.

- I welcome the provision of a new secondary school and two primary schools.
- More detail of the overall community facilities are needed including sports facilities especially what precisely will they deliver for example medical/faith facilities.
- Can you ensure that the medical facilities to be provided will be sufficient to meet the needs of residents Arborfield Garrison development will deliver?

[Officer Note: See notes above in respect to Traffic Impacts, soundness of the Transport Assessment, proposed highways mitigations and ecology impacts.

The application proposes up to 1,500 dwellings – a number that will only be achievable subject to first satisfying the various condition and S106 requirements imposed by the planning permission. The site is allocated in the adopted development plan for housing delivery of this magnitude. The impacts of the development upon neighbouring properties will be limited as far as is reasonable through the requirements of the conditions and S106 obligations recommended. All public spaces of the development will be adopted in accordance with a phased management plan. The employment provision of the development is less than that identified in the development plan for the SDL, but this under provision needs to be considered against the housing delivery required of the site, the substantial public benefits of the development and the evidence of the Employment Land Monitoring Report (see paragraphs 35-40 below for more detail). The affordable housing provision of the development would be delivered on a phase by phase basis, at which time through the S106 the LPA will ensure the delivery of mixed and balanced communities. The sports facilities become the responsibility of WBC to deliver under CIL, whilst medical facilities will be delivered in either the District Centre of the AGLC site or potentially within the Neighbourhood centre proposed here – full details of the Neighbourhood centre will need to be subject to a Reserved Matters application.

## PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

The application was advertised twice, firstly when the original application was received and secondly when amended documents and plans were received. In both instances letters of notification were sent to property addresses in the vicinity of the site and the application was advertised by both site notice and press advert.

The following response was received:

	Objection	Comment	Support
Original Consultation	187	45	3
Re-consultation	4	0	0

A summary of the consultation responses is included at appendix B of this report.

## PLANNING POLICY

## National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2012  
Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework 2012

## South East Plan 2009

Saved policy NRM6 - Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area

## Wokingham Borough Core Strategy policies:

- CP1 - Sustainable Development
- CP2 - Inclusive Communities
- CP3 - General Development Principles
- 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 (including countryside)
- CP17 - Housing delivery
- CP18 – Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location

Appendix 7 – Additional Guidance for the Development of Strategic Development Locations

## Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (adopted February 2014)

- 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 (from all sources)
- CC10 - Sustainable Drainage
- TB05 - Housing Mix
- TB07 – Internal Space Standards
- TB08 - Open Space, sport and recreational facilities standards for residential development
- TB21 - Landscape Character
- TB22 - Heritage Assets
- TB23 - Biodiversity and Development
- TB25 - Archaeology
- SAL05: Delivery of Avoidance Measures for the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Areas

## **Supplementary Planning Documents**

Wokingham Borough Design Supplementary Planning Document (2012)

Planning Advice Note, Infrastructure Impact Mitigation, Contributions for New Development (Revised April 2010)

Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (28 May 2010)

Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location Supplementary Planning Document (October 2011)

Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (October 2011)

Wokingham Borough Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (July 2013)

## **PLANNING ISSUES**

### **SUMMARY OF MAIN ISSUES**

1. Outline Planning Permission is sought for a residential led mixed use development including employment uses, a new primary school, a new neighbourhood centre, sports pitches and associated facilities and a Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG). Other than in relation to the SANG, for which full planning permission is sought, all matters of detailed design are reserved. The application site is designated in Wokingham's Development Plan as one half of the Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location (SDL); wherein significant growth is promoted and expected. The main issues for consideration in the determination of this planning application are therefore:

- The principle of the residential led development and the contribution of the development towards addressing Wokingham's housing and development needs, having particular regard to the development plan designations;
- The level, nature and delivery of infrastructure required to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- The mix, tenure split/distribution and quality of the residential accommodation to be provided and whether sufficient on-site amenity space can be provided for future residents;
- Whether the neighbourhood centre, in terms of its size, location and uses, is appropriate for its intended function and its position within the hierarchy of commercial/retail centres in the area;
- Whether the development provides sufficient land for employment uses, having regard to the demolition of the existing Hogwood Farm Industrial Estate;
- Whether the development land identified for the primary school is sufficiently large and unencumbered to facilitate the delivery of a 2 form entry primary school;
- Whether the SANG provision, including provisions for ongoing management and maintenance, would sufficiently mitigate the otherwise unacceptable impacts upon the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area;
- Whether the development land identified for the sports pitches and other community facilities is sufficiently large and unencumbered to enable the delivery of the required recreational facilities;

- The impact of the indicative housing locations, heights and densities upon the character and appearance of the existing landscape;
- Whether a drainage strategy could be worked up as part of the detailed planning for the Reserved Matters applications to suitably manage surface water and minimise flood risk;
- The impact of the development upon heritage assets on and within the vicinity of the site;
- The potential impact of the development upon important wildlife habitats and protected species on and within the vicinity of the site;
- The impact of the development upon neighbouring residential amenity;
- Whether the development would achieve suitable commitment to sustainable design and construction and the use of renewable energy technologies; and
- The impacts of the development upon the function and safety of the highway network in the vicinity of the site and the need to facilitate and promote more sustainable patterns of transport.

## **THE SITE**

2. The application site comprises Hogwood Farm and forms the southern part of the Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location (SDL). The planning application site for Hogwood Farm comprises two parcels of land separated by the access road to West Court, a Listed Building occupied by the Ministry of Defence in the southern part of the SDL. Whilst the application site includes the existing Hogwood Farm Industrial Estate, it specifically excludes the former Hogwood Farmhouse (a Grade II Listed Building) which is located within the Industrial Estate.
3. The application site is some 109.93 ha in size. It lies within a roughly triangular area of land whose boundaries are formed by Reading Road (A327) to the west, Park Lane to the east, south-east and north-east and Sheerlands Road to the north-west. There is a byway along the northern boundary providing pedestrian and cycle access between Sheerlands Road and the Hogwood Industrial Estate.
4. The land comprises: a) predominantly large open fields in agricultural use separated by fencing and hedgerows; b) parcels of mature woodland including the Hogwood Shaw, a Wildlife Heritage Site; c) Hogwood Farm Industrial Estate accessed from Sheerlands Road; d) two houses (Hogwood House and The Lodge) together with ancillary buildings (including garaging, stables, etc.), one to the north, the other to the south, of a private road leading to Hogwood Farm Industrial Estate; and e) various agricultural buildings. The external boundaries of the site are well vegetated by woodland and hedgerows.
5. The site is located immediately to the south of the Arborfield Garrison. The Ministry of Defence has confirmed its intention to withdraw from Arborfield Garrison over a period of time and a planning permission has already been secured for the redevelopment of the area (the northern part of the SDL).

## **DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL**

6. The proposal is a hybrid application, including application part in outline and part in full, for a residential led development of the site inclusive of associated

physical and community infrastructure to support the delivery.

7. Outline planning permission (reserving matters of (a) access; (b) appearance; (c) landscaping; (d) layout; and (e) scale) is sought for all of the development other than the SANG, for which planning permission is sought in full on 29.7ha of the site. The elements to be considered under the outline element of the application are:
  - Demolition of all existing buildings on site – including the two dwelling houses and the Hogwood Farm Industrial Estate;
  - Up to 1,500 new dwellings (Use Class C3);
  - Circa 12,000 sqm of employment floorspace (Use Classes B1, B2 and/or B8);
  - A Neighbourhood Centre (Use Classes A1/A2/A3/A4/A5 and D1);
  - A new primary school;
  - New sports pitches and associated pavilion building;
  - Highways infrastructure including an extension to the Nine Mile Ride and a new link from the Nine Mile Ride Extension to the Hogwood Industrial Estate; and
  - Associated landscaping, public realm and open/green space (including children's play areas); and
  - Sustainable urban drainage systems.
8. The application is supported by parameter plans identifying indicative land uses, key movement routes, maximum building heights and maximum densities (see appendix D). Assumptions on these matters have been made for the purposes of demonstrating the impacts of the development upon the environment and local infrastructure. It is intended that the parameter plans can be secured against any planning permission that the LPA may resolve to grant and thereafter, together with any imposed conditions, act to dictate the detailed form of the development as it is brought forward through the Reserved Matters planning applications.
9. Full planning permission is sought for the Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG). The SANG is located to the south of the site.

## **PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY**

10. The application site forms part of a larger area designated under the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy as the Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location (SDL).
11. Wokingham Borough Core Strategy policy CP17 establishes a requirement to provide at least 13,487 new dwellings with associated development and infrastructure in the period 2006-2026. As a strategic response to this housing demand, Wokingham has identified that the majority of this new residential development will be delivered in four SDLs, of which Arborfield Garrison is one. By concentrating its housing delivery in the four identified SDLs, Wokingham has been able to more strategically plan for and deliver the social, environmental and highways infrastructure necessary to support this significant population growth; whilst at the same time protecting other more sensitive areas of the borough from inappropriate and unsustainable development. The ability of the SDLs to deliver a significant number of homes phased over the plan period is therefore significant if Wokingham Borough Council is to maintain a five year supply of

housing and resist speculative development of other unallocated sites elsewhere in the borough.

12. Core Strategy Policy CP18 identifies that the Arborfield Garrison SDL will deliver a sustainable, well designed mixed use development of around 3,500 dwellings and associated infrastructure. The AGLC site, which forms the northern half of the SDL, has already secured an outline planning permission for up to 2,000 dwellings. The development the subject of this application seeks to deliver the remainder of the SDL's Development Plan housing allocation.
13. Core Strategy policy CP18 is amplified by Appendix 7 of the Core Strategy, the Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions SPD, which address the associated infrastructure impacts across the whole borough. These documents establish a requirement for a sustainable, well designed, mixed use development and make clear that a co-ordinated approach to the development of the SDL will be required to deliver the necessary infrastructure, facilities and services to meet the needs of the expanded community.
14. The timing of the application submissions for both parts of the SDL has enabled site-wide issues to be thoroughly considered in both developers' plans, and for the SDL to be planned as a single place. The planning application has been provided with an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) that identifies how this development contributes towards the overall infrastructure requirements of the SDL, and showing the masterplan has evolved in cognisance of the proposals for the northern part of the SDL.

#### Housing Provision

15. The application seeks consent for up to 1,500 new homes, in line with the SDL allocation. The submitted parameter plans identify development parcels and prescribe development densities across the site; although no indication of dwelling mix has been provided with the application. WBC have therefore commissioned work from AECOM who advise that, based on the dwelling plot area assumptions on the parameter plans, it would be feasible for the applicant to deliver the following dwelling mix: 5% 1 bed; 25% 2 bed; 40% 3 bed; 25% 4 bed; and 5% 5 bed.
16. Notwithstanding, whilst the submitted parameter plans identify existing site vegetation, they do not include the buffers around those parcels of vegetation that would be expected if they are to be retained; retention as is indicated upon the submitted Development Framework Plan. In the circumstances WBC have commissioned AECOM to produce a further constraints plan for the site, identifying all known development constraints (including buffers). AECOM have subsequently superimposed and reduced the application identified development parcels to reflect the constraints and provided commentary on the implications for housing numbers. AECOM suggest that when incorporating all of the constraints the applicant could only deliver between 1,380 and 1,455 homes without exceeding the residential densities identified on the parameter plans, with the following dwelling mix: 15% 1 bed; 24% 2 bed; 26% 3 bed; 21% 4 bed and 13% 5 bed – 1,455 only being achieved if the overhead powerlines are grounded.

17. Officers are therefore recommending approval of the parameter plans as are submitted, although subject to their amendment to accommodate any mitigation strategies that are identified through the other planning conditions of the consent. Where there will be a presumption in favour of retaining the priority landscape and ecological habitats and for mitigating against any losses, this approach will unlikely lead to any significant environmental impacts. That is not to say that subsequent Reserved Matters applications may not seek to remove vegetation at the site which is identified as of lesser importance in ecological and landscape terms, but such decisions will need to be justified at the Reserved Matters stage in the context of site wide mitigation strategies (as will be secured by the conditions) and balanced against the other development priorities at the site.
18. Moreover, the site is allocated in the Development Plan as a Strategic Development Location, within which significant growth is anticipated in response to Wokingham's housing and development needs. The development would deliver up to 1,500 residential units, inclusive of one and two bed flats and one to five bed houses. The wide mix of dwelling sizes and types that can be achieved on the site accords with the aims of Government policy regarding social cohesion and inclusion aims, as do the arrangements for the provision of market and affordable housing units. The development would therefore contribute significantly towards addressing Wokingham's identified housing needs and demand. This is without doubt a substantial public benefit that weighs heavily in favour of the approving the development. Even at 1,380 units, the development will still make a significant contribution to delivery of housing and maintaining Wokingham's 5 year housing supply. This would therefore still assist the Council in the short to medium term in resisting more speculative ad hoc or windfall developments that do not accord with the borough's comprehensive approach to the delivery of housing, infrastructure and services.
19. In order to allow residents to live longer in their own homes, at least 10% of the market and affordable homes will be secured as Lifetime homes in accordance with MDD Policy TB05.

#### Affordable Housing

20. Core Strategy Policy CP5 requires a mix of tenures, including up to 50% affordable housing. The Infrastructure and Contributions SPD states that development within the SDLs should seek 35% affordable housing which echoes Appendix 7 of the Core Strategy.
21. At present, the applicant proposes 35% Affordable Housing on site – to be secured by the S106 agreement. However, affordable housing is exempt from CIL and in the absence of certainty about the dwelling numbers and sizes WBC cannot have any certainty about the potential CIL receipts that will be secured against the development. In the absence of certainty about the CIL receipts, WBC can not 1) be sure of the delivery of infrastructure identified as necessary to make the development acceptable or 2) strategically plan the infrastructure delivery.
22. In the circumstances WBC are drafting the S106 agreement to enable the affordable housing offer of the development to be finalised on a phase by phase basis. It is proposed that each phase of the development will deliver either:

- 35% of the Dwellings on Site as Affordable Housing; or
- A lesser proportion of the Dwellings on Site as Affordable Housing and an Affordable Housing Contribution (equivalent to providing 35% on site); or
- A transfer of land to the Council to a value equivalent to the cost to the Owner of providing 35% of the Dwellings on Site as Affordable Housing for the Council to thereafter provide the Affordable Housing on the Site.

23. It is also intended that the S106 will allow for the potential provision of up to 20 plots for Self-Build Dwellings within phase 1 of the development or an alternative phase as may be agreed between the Owners and the Council.

24. By this approach, the LPA will be able to ensure the delivery of mixed and balanced communities in accordance with policy CP5, having full regard to the circumstances of delivery on a phase by phase basis.

#### Nine Mile Ride Extension (NMRE)

25. The development is principally structured around the proposed NMRE between Park Lane located at the east of the site and Byway 18 to the north, near the proposed new secondary school of the AGLC site. From here the NMRE extension would continue up through the AGLC site and link up to A327 – details of which are emerging under the AGLC proposals.

26. Unlike the AGLC application where their element of the Nine Mile Ride Extension is being constructed by the developer under their S106 obligations, under Wokingham's adopted Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) the delivery of the Hogwood Farm section of the NMRE now falls to the Council. CIL receipts will be collected against the residential elements of the development to fund the provision, although Wokingham will have to explore options of forward funding if it is to be delivered early in the development as is currently programmed. The applicant will be obliged under the S106 to transfer the land to WBC upon request and to accommodate WBC's construction of the road.

27. At present, all matters of detailed design of the NMRE are reserved. The layout shown on the submitted drawings is only indicative, as is the alignment of the NMRE. Whilst it is not anticipated that the alignment will necessarily shift too far (if at all) the exact alignment of the NMRE will need to be subject to detailed site and ground investigation; matters which will be undertaken prior to fixing the route which will need to be presented in a Reserved Matters planning application. Given the importance of the NMRE to the function and masterplan of the SDL, it is essential that this element is fixed before any of the surrounding development parcels. This sequencing of elements is secured by the recommended conditions and S106 obligations.

#### Neighbourhood Centre and Primary School

28. One of the key components of the SDL wide masterplan is the provision of one District and two Neighbourhood centres designed to act as community hubs within the residential neighbourhoods, providing local retail, community,

recreation and education facilities for the residents of the SDL to enable them to access local facilities without the need to travel. It is anticipated that the Centres will include well designed public spaces capable of catering for a variety of functions, as well as enhancing the quality of the public realm experience – such matters as will be worked up in detail pursuant to the design codes (condition) and the subsequent Reserved Matters planning applications. The provision of a secondary school to serve the south of the borough and two primary schools to predominantly serve the development have been identified as necessary infrastructure for the SDL.

29. The District centre and one of the Neighbourhood centres will be delivered on the AGLC part of the SDL. The District centre includes a new secondary school, whilst AGLC's Neighbourhood centre also includes provision for a primary school. This application provides for the additional required Neighbourhood centre (development parcel NC1) and the Primary School (development parcel PRS1) to be located centrally within the site; on either side of the 'village green' and directly north of the SANG.
30. Development Parcel PRS1 is 2.5 hectares in area. The parcel is large enough and, on the basis of evidence currently before WBC, sufficiently unencumbered to enable delivery of a two-form entry primary school (with potential to expand to three-form entry) and associated playing fields and parking areas. The development itself would only generate the need for a two form primary school but the primary school site would offer the Council the opportunity to deliver an enlarged facility that meets the needs of the wider community should this be required in the future. Under CIL, the responsibility to deliver the primary school will fall to Wokingham Borough Council following transfer of the land – matters which will be secured under the S106 agreement. The phasing plans submitted with the application suggest that the primary school delivery will fall within phase 1 of the development and that the delivery of parcels surrounding both the primary school and the Neighbourhood centre will come later. Whilst detailed ground investigation surveys will be required as part of the detailed planning the phasing of the development and the S106 will ensure that the parcel of land ultimately transferred to WBC for the primary school can actually deliver the primary school. This element of the development would therefore enable delivery of an essential piece of infrastructure.
31. In terms of the Neighbourhood centre, the application seeks consent for up to 1,900 sqm to include shops (up to 500sqm), other non-A1 retail uses (e.g. financial and professional services, restaurants and cafes, public house and/or hot food takeways, a church, and a children's nursery. Submissions indicate that 800sqm of the floorspace will be given over to a church (use class D1). Residential dwellings will also be provided within the Neighbourhood centre.
32. Officers do not support the level and nature of non-residential floorspace being promoted in the Neighbourhood centre (parcel NC1). In this regard, whilst adopted development plan policy and the SDL SPD identify the need to deliver a Neighbourhood centre as part of the development, they do not specify the size of the facilities to be provided. Policy TB16 of the MDD DPD does however identify that proposals for retail and leisure uses, including extensions, of 500 sqm (gross) or above outside the defined Wokingham major town centre or the small town/district centres or local centres will be required to satisfy the retail impact

test. The introduction of up to 1,900 sqm of retail, leisure and community uses (as is proposed) has significant potential to impact upon the vitality and/or viability of other centres within the hierarchy of main, district and local centres within Wokingham Borough and beyond; impacts which have not been evidenced through either the submitted Environmental Statement or a Retail Impact Assessment. In the absence of such evidence, officers cannot soundly recommend approval for any Neighbourhood centre provisions above 500sqm; especially where the land would be better utilised in delivering the significant housing numbers required on the site – see comments above.

33. It must be noted that the Neighbourhood centre for the AGLC application only included up to 300sqm of floorspace. The District centre itself is expected to deliver a foodstore up to 4,000 sqm (gross) with up to a further 3,500 sqm (gross) floor space within Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, D1 and D2. There is a clear hierarchical relationship between the centres. AGLC are also committed to provide a new community building of up to 1,285 sqm to serve the new population generated by the entire SDL and the retained MoD/Annington homes. Mindful that the principal purpose of the community building is to provide a local facility to meet the needs generated by the development, the precise location, detailed design and specific uses of the community building have not been fixed at this stage and will be informed by the requirements of the emerging new SDL community as and when that becomes established. S106 contributions are also being secured against the SDL developments to fund the appointment of a Community Manager to support this process of enabling the emerging community to define and refine their community infrastructure requirements over time. Allowing consent for such significant retail, leisure and community provision in the Neighbourhood centre on the Hogwood site as is proposed would potentially impact significantly upon the viability of retail, leisure and community delivery within the District centre in direct conflict with the strategic masterplan and infrastructure delivery plan for the SDL as a whole.
34. The applicant states that the provision of the church has come about as a result of the consultation process that occurred prior to the submission of the planning application and they have refused to remove it from the application proposals. The nature of the Neighbourhood centre provision therefore remains an issue of dispute between officers and the applicant. However, in order for officers to support the application and secure delivery of the substantial public benefits that the development would otherwise offer, a series of conditions are proposed limiting the nature and amount of non-residential floorspace within the Neighbourhood centre. Following the issue of a planning permission the applicant would have the ability to appeal against the conditions if they so wish.

#### Employment

35. Core Strategy Policy CP15 and MDD Policies TB11 and SAL07 identify that the Hogwood Farm site will accommodate around 30,800sqm additional employment floorspace, through the expansion of Hogwood Industrial Estate.
36. The site currently accommodates Hogwood Farm Industrial Estate, which would be demolished as part of the proposed development. This Industrial Estate comprises 7 industrial/commercial buildings of some 4,257 sqm in total. Whilst located directly to the south of Hogwood Industrial Estate, it is in fact separate

with separate access from Sheerlands Road and no direct connection. Moreover, Hogwood Farm Industrial Estate is not designated as a Core Employment Area on Wokingham's Planning Policies Proposals Map (as Hogwood Industrial Estate is) and is not safeguarded under current policy for retention. 12,000 sqm of new employment floorspace is proposed in replacement.

37. Core Strategy Policy CP18 (criterion 3) provides for new employment facilities within the SDL. The supporting text (paragraph 4.84) indicates that there is scope to increase floor space within the existing boundaries of the Core Employment Area at Hogwood Farm Industrial Estate by around 30,800 sqm; however where this is impractical to provide on-site other land within the SDL may need to be identified to accommodate this uplift in employment. Land is therefore allocated by policy SAL07 of the MDD within the Hogwood Farm application site for an extension to the Hogwood Industrial Estate.
38. The development here proposes up to 12,000 sqm of employment floorspace; scheduled for the first phase of development. The development therefore would result in an overall net increase of up to 7,743 sqm of employment floorspace at the site. Through the application of design codes and consideration of the Reserved Matters application, the LPA could ensure that the employment area is designed to a high quality that will make provision for a range of sizes and types of premises in order to meet incubator/start up, move on, expansion, investment accommodation and other employment needs. Applying the HCA's Employment Density Guide (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 2010) suggests that the uplift in employment floorspace could potentially deliver a 220 (full time equivalent - FTE) increase in jobs at the site (342 FTE in total across the 12,000sqm). Further employment opportunities will also be afforded in the new Neighbourhood centre - potentially in the region of 26 full time equivalent positions depending upon the nature and amount of the final uses.
39. However, the area proposed for the Industrial Estate extension is not as large as the amount of land allocated on the Development Plan Policies Map or identified within the adopted SDL SPD (see appendix C). Neither are there any proposals currently before Wokingham Borough Council for an intensification of the existing Hogwood Industrial Estate. The proposed scheme rather proposes to place some residential development upon a section of the land allocated to extend the industrial estate (development parcels RE14 and RE16).
40. In terms of the amount of floorspace required across the Borough, Paragraph 4.70 of the Core Strategy (supporting Policy CP15) states that the level of floorspace for industry and warehousing in the Borough as a whole needs to rise by 51,000 sqm to meet forecast employment growth to 2026 (the period of the Core Strategy). It is stated that this represents an increase in stock of approximately 10% and that this can be met through the intensification of use brought about through the redevelopment of existing employment areas and new allocations in the Managing Development Delivery DPD – as was done on site in this circumstance. Notwithstanding, the Employment Land Monitoring Report for April 2013 – March 2014 demonstrates that there has been a net gain of 3,649 sqm of B use floor space in the Borough since 1st April 2006. The report also showed that at the time of compilation the borough had 88,099 sqm of extant permissions for B use floorspace which could be completed in the next six years based on historic completion rates. Therefore, whilst the development would

deliver less employment floorspace at the site than was envisaged when the Core Strategy, MDD DPD and SDL SPD were adopted; this must be weighed against the housing delivery required of the site, the substantial public benefits of the development and the evidence of the Employment Land Monitoring Report.

### **Open Spaces and Green Infrastructure**

41. Whilst matters of detailed layout and landscaping are reserved, the application is supported by an open spaces parameter plan which demonstrates that sufficient open space can be provided to meet the Council's standards in the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan and the Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy.

#### **Open Space**

42. The site comprises 53% open space, and provides Natural Greenspace and Amenity Greenspace far in excess of current WBC standards. The S106 agreement will include triggers to ensure that all parcels would have a green connection to the SANG at the time of occupation. The indicative masterplan shows that the open space would be provided as follows:

Typology	WBC Standards	Proposals
Parks and Gardens	1.1ha/1,000 population	3.6ha
Amenity Public Open Space	0.98ha/1,000 population	3.53ha
Children's Play	0.25ha/1,000 population	0.9ha
Natural Greenspace	2.84ha/1,000 population	10.22ha
Playing Pitches	1.65ha/1,000 population	5.98ha
Allotments	0.52ha/1,000 population	1.87ha

#### **Sports Pitches**

43. The sports strategy identifies the transfer of land to WBC to provide playing pitches, who will also have the ability to ensure dual use of the primary school facilities. This will add to the provisions secured against the AGLC planning application; wherein the re-use of the garrison sports facilities and the dual use of pitches in the primary and secondary schools are proposed. This approach is considered acceptable by the Council's POS Officer, and will be secured through the Section 106 agreement. The Council will also have responsibility to provide a sports pavilion to facilitate use of the facilities.

44. At the time of writing Sport England has raised concern about the indicative arrangement shown on the application drawings. However, the detailed layout will need to be subject to a Reserved Matters application; an application that will be worked up in detail by the Local Planning Authority having full regard to Sport England's advice and guidance. If possible Sport England's advice will be followed; otherwise WBC will need to demonstrate exceptional circumstances at the time of the Reserved Matters application.

## Play areas

45. The masterplan provides a total of 0.9ha of children's play space, to be delivered as follows:

- 1 x Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP);
- 2 x Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP);
- 2 x Local Landscaped Area for Play (LLAP); and
- Local Areas for Play (LAP).

46. This would be in accordance with the Council's standards, and the S106 agreement secures the provision of suitable equipment for these spaces at appropriate stages of the development – together with arrangements for transfer to the LPA following completion and contributions towards initial maintenance costs. The Council's POS Officer is satisfied with the approach shown.

## Allotments

47. In order to meet the requirement for allotments, the applicant has identified an area of 1.87 ha. This land would be transferred to Wokingham, where after Wokingham would deliver the allotments under CIL arrangements. WBC will be in full control of the provision and can ensure the quality of provision in line with WBC's own specifications. Full details will need to be subject to a Reserved Matters application.

## Future Management and Adoption of Open Spaces

48. Under CIL, the outdoor sports provision and the allotments become the responsibility of WBC to deliver following land transfer which will be secured under the S106. The applicant will assume responsibility for delivery of all other items. The Section 106 agreement secures a contribution towards the maintenance of the green infrastructure and makes provision for it to be passed over to the Local Authority for adoption or to another body nominated by the Council. This flexibility would allow the management of the green infrastructure to be taken over by a Community Interest Company (or alternative community body or Parish Council) should it be established in the future. The Council's S106 requirements are sufficiently robust to ensure there will not be problems created by areas of open space being left unadopted or unmanaged in the future.

## S106 AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

49. Wokingham's CIL charging schedule came into force on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2015. CIL is levied in £s per square metre on net additional increase in floor space for qualifying development in accordance with the provisions of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended). In respect to the Arborfield SDL, £365 per sqm will be levied upon residential development; albeit that affordable housing is exempt payment. The S106 will insert control over the phasing of the Reserved Matters applications to ensure that CIL is secured against the phased delivery of the development.

50. Given the adoption of CIL, the following pieces of infrastructure within the

application site would become the responsibility of the Council to deliver – the transfer of land to enable delivery would be secured via a S106 agreement:

- The Nine Mile Ride Extension;
- The Primary School;
- The Sports Pitches and associated Pavilion; and
- The Allotments.

51. In addition, the following pieces of off-site infrastructure also become the responsibility of Wokingham to deliver for which CIL money from this development could be directed – these infrastructure items having been identified within the Arborfield Garrison Infrastructure Delivery Plan as necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms:

- The Arborfield Cross Relief Road;
- Barkham Bridge Improvements;
- Greenways AR1-AR5;
- Public Transport Network Improvements;
- Secondary School Delivery (on the AGLC site);
- Special Education Needs;
- Community Centre Provision (on the AGLC site);
- Country Parks;
- Countryside Access/PROW;
- Indoor Sports Facilities;
- Libraries; and
- Cemeteries.

52. The development would also deliver the following s.106 obligations:

- Land for delivery of on-site CIL Infrastructure;
- Affordable Housing;
- Environmental Improvements to the A327 in Eversley;
- Off-site highways improvement works Contribution – to Farley Hill and Whitehorse Lane;
- Travel Plans;
- A Public Transport Services Improvements Contribution;
- California Cross Roads Improvements;
- Safeguarding a corridor of land to the west of the NMRE to allow a more direct route through the development bypassing the District Centre, should it be considered necessary;
- Contribution to the provision of a Community Manager;
- SANG delivery, transfer to WBC and contribution towards initial maintenance;
- SAMM contribution;
- Greenspace, Amenity Open Space and Playspace delivery, transfer to WBC and contribution towards initial maintenance; and
- S106 Monitoring fee.

53. The above package is considered reasonable to mitigate the otherwise unacceptable impacts of the development upon local infrastructure. It has been negotiated having regard to the expectations set out in policy(Policy CP18 and

Appendix 7 of the Core Strategy, the Infrastructure and Contributions SPD, and the Arborfield Garrison SDL Infrastructure Delivery Plan), to the details of the scheme and to the substantial planning/public benefits that the scheme would deliver. Each of the obligations above has also been negotiated having regard to the statutory tests set out in the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010; namely they are considered: (i) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; (ii) directly related to the development; and (iii) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

54. The overall infrastructure package to be delivered on and off of the site, either through site specific provisions, S106 obligations or through CIL have been derived from a fair apportionment of a SDL wide Infrastructure Delivery Plan; devised in advance of the granting of the AGLC planning application.

## **LAYOUT AND DESIGN**

### **Policies and Vision**

55. The Council's vision for the Arborfield Garrison SDL is set out in Core Strategy Policy CP18, and in particular the concept rationale in Appendix 7. Further detail is provided by the Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location SPD. This sets out that the development should be a 'large village' with an appropriate mix of uses; that is absorbed into the landscape; has sustainable transport promoted alongside road links; is integrated with existing residential development and heritage assets, and would enhance employment facilities.
56. The NPPF sets out overarching principles for design in section 7. Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 are consistent with this approach and these require high quality design that respects the context of the site and the surroundings. Managing Development Delivery policies CC03 and TB21 require that development proposals have due regard to the landscape context of the area and incorporate adequate landscaping to soften the development, and Policy TB24 seeks to ensure that development would not have a harmful impact upon the heritage assets.
57. The Design and Access Statement provides information about the design choices that informed the proposed masterplan and its parameters. It also provides a high level design code and further information about the likely form of the reserved matters applications.
58. The applicant's vision for their development (in their Design and Access Statement) is built upon the principles in these policies and the objective of delivering a '21<sup>st</sup> Century Garden Village', as explicitly supported by para 52 of the NPPF. The Garden City concept is founded upon the idea of bringing together the best of town and country living, with ten key principles derived from this relating to issues such as the delivery of generous, interlinked green space, homes with gardens, and an integrated and accessible transport systems – see appendix E.

### **Layout**

59. The indicative layout of the development is structured around the proposed

NMRE, the north/south green spine, the centrally located neighbourhood centre and primary school and the SANG and sports/allotments/open spaces provision to the south. In this way it broadly follows the Preferred Spatial Framework Plan of the Arborfield Garrison SDL SPD (appendix C).

60. The exception lies to the east of the site where the residential boundary proposes to project out beyond the existing hedgerow and into the adjacent open space. The main reason for this is to balance the loss of SPD identified residential land which is, as part of the proposals, being re-assigned to the north-south linear green spine of the development. Whilst the development therefore does 'bulge' out beyond the identified development limit boundary for the SDL, it is done so to accommodate the north/south green spine which links into the green infrastructure proposed on the AGLC part of the SDL. Moreover, the encroachment is made in conjunction with a deliverable SDL-wide comprehensive masterplan and infrastructure delivery plan which ensures that the applicant funds and delivers an appropriate share of the SDL infrastructure and does not prejudice the comprehensive delivery and implementation of the wider SDL. In those circumstances the alternative layout is acceptable in accordance with MDD policy CC02.

#### Landscape

61. Appendix 7 of the Core Strategy (A7.4c) sets a strategic objective for the site 'to absorb development into the landscape setting through the careful planning of the built form'. Design Principle 1a of the Arborfield Garrison SDL SPD requires that the design should draw on the existing landscape context and its unique and distinctive elements to deliver a strong character.
62. The development has been focused to the northern part of the site, although with existing structure planting predominantly retained and the introduction of new structure planting. The north/south green spine would be worked up in more detail as part of the Reserved Matters application but has the potential to provide a focal point to the development and a strong link with the northern part of the SDL (the AGLC site). These green links allow easy movement as well as corridors for biodiversity, and in so doing helps to deliver the Garden City vision.
63. Whilst there would be the loss of some of the existing landscape features, losses have been kept to a minimum. In order to compensate for the losses, structural landscaping which includes native tree and hedgerow planting is proposed within the development areas and SANGs.
64. An overarching landscape strategy would be secured to tie together the individual phases around the importance to retain and safeguard the existing vegetation where possible through tree / hedge protection methods, particularly during construction. Where this is not possible, the developer would compensate for the loss of vegetation with suitable replacement planting. Conditions are recommended in this regard.

#### Density, scale and appearance

65. Appendix 7 of the Core Strategy identifies that the average density should be between 30-35 dwellings per hectare, but that variation should occur through the

concentration of above average densities around the district and local centres, and less than average densities towards the site edges. The SPD informs that a density of up to 50dph could be acceptable in central areas.

66. The overall density of the whole site is 35dph. There is variation across the site with the highest density (up to 50dph) along the NMRE and within the Neighbourhood Centre. The density of development has been reduced towards the edges of development so as to reduce landscape and visual impact. A similar approach has been applied to inform the height of the buildings on the site; with parcels central to the site identified for development up to three storeys and other parcels identified for buildings up to two storeys. Taken together, the approach in respect to height and density would provide a transition between the built form and the countryside which is considered to be sensitive to the character of the area and landscape setting. This approach is considered acceptable and would not result in significant harm to the wider area or development itself.
67. Concerns have been raised by various parties that development parcel RE16 has been identified for 'medium density development' at between 27-37dph. In this location the other side of Park Lane is designated countryside. The SPD identifies that in these village edge locations density should be approximately 25-30dph. The SPD goes on to state that settlement edges should be carefully considered to reflect the rural context and that development should not back onto open space or surrounding countryside, to ensure a positive address of these areas. In response it must be remembered that the detailed layout of parcel RE16 is reserved until detailed design stage. The drawings also show the retention of the existing boundary vegetation and new structure planting in this location. In the circumstances it is considered that this area of the development can accommodate the slightly higher densities (at heights of no more than 2 storeys) than those prescribed in the SPD without undue visual or landscape harm.

### Character Areas

68. The Design and Access Statement provides an evaluation of the site and applies principles to inform layout and appearance. In response four character areas have been identified and the D&AS has provided a preliminary indication of how the areas of development might evolve. The areas identified are:

- Village Core;
- Village Residential;
- Village Edge; and
- Employment Area.

### Village Core

69. The Village Core comprises the central development parcels of the site, including the Neighbourhood Centre, the primary school, the areas fronting directly onto the north/south green spine and the properties fronting onto the Nine Mile Ride Extension. These areas will seek to establish the character of the garden village as a whole, creating the sense of a high quality residential environment framed by tree-lined streets and generous green, open spaces. It is envisaged that wide

grass verges adjacent to the highway, planting of large-scale trees, large front gardens and on plot parking with limited on street parking provision will reflect the character of surrounding rural lanes and roads.

70. The Nine Mile Ride Extension will be designed to reflect the character of the existing Nine Mile Ride. Landmark buildings would then define the entrance to the site, the village green and other key locations along the length of the Nine Mile Ride Extension. Large houses with long front gardens would reflect the character of properties on the existing Nine Mile Ride and the strength of this road as a movement route would reinforce the connection to the Garrison site.

71. The generous green space in the centre of the site will act as a village green and main pedestrian route between the Garrison site and the SANGs in the south. It is envisaged that this will be a multi-functional open space, a mix of formal and informal meeting places and a place around which the village and the Neighbourhood centre can focus. It is envisaged that through well planned and varied landscape treatments, together with sensitive design of SUDS creating water features throughout the area, this area will contribute significantly towards the garden village aspirations of the development.

#### Village Residential

72. Around the village core, the ‘village residential’ areas will deliver a range of residential environments to suit a variety of tastes and incomes, with a mix of house types, styles and sizes. There will be more semi-detached and terraced housing than on the Nine Mile Ride Extension. Much of the character will be established by retained existing vegetation and additional shrub planting. A wide range of street typologies will be used in these areas.

#### Village Edge

73. This character area extends around the fringes of the garden village. The Village Edge is identified along the western boundary of the site and along the southern boundaries of the development parcels where they sit adjacent to the proposed SANG and sports pitch/open space provisions. In these areas the density of development will be lowest, marking the transition from the village core and residential areas to open countryside. This character area responds particularly to the woodland setting created by existing shelter belts and groups of trees. Much of the tree planting already exists, although this would be augmented where appropriate and, in many areas, it is envisaged that mature specimen trees will exceed the height of the proposed dwellings.

#### Masterplan conclusion

74. The masterplan and DAS addendum demonstrates that the quantum of development can be brought forward for the site in broad compliance with the requirements of the Core Strategy and the Arborfield Garrison SPD. The proposal would not have a harmful impact upon the amenities of existing residents, and would integrate well with the AGLC development (to the north) to help shape the SDL into a single, coherent place. The conditions proposed, with requirements for detailed design codes, and design briefs in the most sensitive areas, can help establish diversity for the new settlement areas and deliver a

high quality 'place'.

## **NEIGHBOURING RESIDENTIAL AMENITY**

75. The NPPF and Core Strategy policy CP3 require that new development should be of a high quality of design that does not cause detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users. These principles are reinforced and outlined in greater detail within the Council's Managing Development Delivery document and the Borough Design Guide. In particular, the Borough Design Guide sets minimum distances between dwellings, and minimum garden lengths.

### Use

76. The development, subject to considerate management practices, would not be introducing of a use or uses inappropriate to this locality. The proposed uses would be consistent with other uses in the vicinity, and with the uses and activities that are actively promoted and encouraged at this location within the adopted Development Plan.

### Outlook, Daylight, Sunlight and Privacy

77. The application is an outline scheme therefore the exact location of buildings is not to be considered. That notwithstanding, the development is sufficiently distant from all neighbouring properties such that it need not introduce unacceptable relationships of overlooking and loss of outlook, daylight or sunlight. Separation distances to existing dwellings would all achieve separations in excess of the standards set by the Borough Design Guide. Where development parcel RE16 would come closest to existing residential properties located on the opposite side of Park Lane, development heights have been kept to two storeys, existing boundary vegetation is to be retained and new 'advanced woodland planting' is proposed. These matters will be considered in more detail at the Reserved Matters planning stage.

### Impacts During Construction

78. Noise, disturbance and inconvenience during the construction period can be appropriately minimised as far as is reasonable through good practice and through the conditions requiring the submission (for the Council's approval) of a Construction Environmental Management Plan and restricting the hours of construction activity.

### Amenity Conclusions

79. For the reasons set out above, in terms of its impact upon neighbouring residential amenity the development need not fail against the relevant policies of the Development Plan; namely Core Strategy Policy CP3 and Policy CC06 of the MDD DPD.

## **HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT**

### Highways Policy and Background

80. 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 new residential development should mitigate any adverse effects on the existing highway network. The NPPF advises, however, that development 'should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe'.
81. The application is accompanied by a Transport Assessment (TA), and an assessment in the Environment Statement. The impact is considered for the development site on its own, and cumulatively with the AGLC site, the other SDLs and major development outside the borough. In addition, Members are reminded that in March 2015 Committee considered the AGLC application for the northern part of the Arborfield Garrison SDL; wherein planning permission was granted subject to an Infrastructure Delivery Plan inclusive of highways mitigation (both on and off site) considerate of the cumulative SDL impact and apportionment of delivery responsibility across the two SDL sites. Given the holistic approach to the delivery of infrastructure across the SDL, the Hogwood Farm development is required to make up the whole.

#### Highways within/accessing the site

82. The development is principally structured around the proposed Nine Mile Ride Extension between Park Lane located at the east of the site and Byway 18 to the north, near the proposed new secondary school of the AGLC site. Following Wokingham's adoption of its Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging, the delivery of the southern section of Nine Mile Ride Extension through the site becomes the responsibility of Wokingham Borough Council. As set out above, the applicant will be obliged under the S106 to transfer the land to WBC upon request and to accommodate WBC in its construction of the road. In addition the detailed design of the road, including the final route, will be fixed before any of the surrounding development parcels can be brought forward.
83. In addition, the application drawings show the Hogwood Spur Road, which would run between the Nine Mile Ride Extension and Hogwood Lane providing access to parcels of development either side of the road and to Hogwood Industrial Estate.

#### Access Junctions

84. The proposed site access junctions are mainly off the Southern section of the Nine Mile Ride Extension and the Hogwood Spur Road. These will be designed to provide suitable accesses to the development in terms of location and highway design. The only specific site accesses onto an existing highway are off Sheerlands Road. There is a permanent access to the south and the preliminary layout has confirmed that they would have sufficient capacity to accommodate the traffic and operate safely. The junction design is supported by Stage 1 Road Safety Audit. The interim access proposed connects just south of byway 18 and may be constructed if required.

#### Design of the primary and secondary roads

85. The design of the roads are consistent with the WBC Street Hierarchy and Palette of Materials Guidance (although the width of some of the secondary roads will need to be wider than specified, where appropriate, to accommodate buses). All the primary streets, and most of the secondary streets (depending on local characteristics such as traffic flows, the speed limit and proximity to schools) will have footways on both sides of the road and a shared cycle route on one site. At reserved matters the tertiary routes will be specified, and these will also need to comply with the Council's design guidance.

#### Walking and cycling connectivity within the site

86. An extensive network of pedestrian and cycle routes is being delivered within the site to ensure journeys are easy and safe by these modes from all the residential areas to the school, Neighbourhood Centre and recreation areas. These will also enable safe routes to schools to be established when the schools (primary and secondary) are delivered.

87. The more strategic segregated routes within the site connect with the AGLC site to the north and external greenway routes as referred below. There is a key route through the linear park linking the AGLC site to the District Centre and onwards to the West Court SANG.

#### Nine Mile Ride Extension (NMRE)

88. The NMRE South through the site will connect the Nine Mile Ride at Park Lane to Byway 18 where the northern section of the NMRE links to the A327 access roundabout and past the District Centre and the Secondary School. It will be subject to a 30mph speed limit and have the characteristics as identified above for a Primary Street. The avenue of trees will help delineate the road and create a sense of character. The road is being delivered by the Council and is programmed to be delivered early in the development.

89. In order to provide options for the future, and to ensure that traffic would not be delayed in the District Centre when the SDL is complete, a corridor of land has been identified to the west of the NMRE to allow a more direct route through the development bypassing the District Centre, should it be considered necessary in the future. Care is being taken to ensure that this corridor aligns between the AGLC and Hogwood Farm. This matter is secured by way of the S106 agreement.

90. Development in parcels RE2 and RE3 that adjoin this corridor will have to be mindful of the potential for this route to become a primary street, and surrounding development will need to be designed accordingly.

#### Car & Cycle parking

91. The level of parking provision indicated is consistent with the WBC's Parking Standards and will be secured by condition and firmed up through later Reserved Matters applications.

#### Off-site highway effects and mitigation

92. The potential impacts of the additional development traffic have been comprehensively assessed and mitigation developed to deal with the traffic generated by the whole SDL. A similar analysis and findings has been presented as was presented with the AGLC planning application. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan agreed by WBC at the time of the AGLC application identified the following off-site works as necessary to mitigate the otherwise unacceptable impacts of the development upon the function and/or safety of the surrounding highway network. These works remain necessary to facilitate the delivery of the SDL wide development and would be secured/delivered by the S106 obligations imposed upon AGLC, by S106 obligations imposed here upon the applicant and through CIL, as follows:
93. Arborfield Cross Relief Road (ACRR) - Northwards of the SDL on the A327, there are additional traffic flows generated travelling towards the M4 and Arborfield Cross, which is already subject to peak hour delays. The SDL, through S106 contributions from AGLC and CIL from MFT, will fully fund the construction of the ACRR. The timing of completion of the ACRR is expected in 2019 or 2020 which should coincide with no more than 900-1000 dwellings being completed at the Arborfield SDL. However, to secure delivery of the ACRR as soon as possible, WBC is seeking to forward fund the scheme with assistance from Central Government.
94. Barkham Road and Commonfield Lane - This is already a congested route and mitigation opportunities are limited. However, it is proposed that Barkham Bridge will be widened to two way operation. This will be delivered by WBC and funded by a combination of S106 contributions from AGLC and CIL receipts from MFT. The highways model has tested the wider impact of this, and identified little additional flow and significant reductions in delays to traffic. There would also be a benefit to highway safety. Further mitigation at the Bull junction and Bearwood Road junction were considered, but discounted as unnecessary to mitigate the impacts of the development, especially where the opening of the ACRR will transfer some northbound traffic from Bearwood Road and help to mitigate the effects.
95. Park Lane - The NMRE will provide an attractive route for traffic from the A327 accessing the existing Hogwood Industrial Estate or travelling to Finchampstead, and thus reduce pressure on Park Lane North and South. At the eastern end of the NMRE, where Nine Mile Ride joins the application site, the junction will be designed to deter traffic from using both Park Lane north and South, thus protecting the narrow rural lane. This narrow rural section of Park Lane south is expected to become less trafficked mainly due to the NMRE being a better route to the A327 for all modes.
96. Nine Mile Ride and California Crossroads - The main capacity constraint along Nine Mile Ride is California Cross Roads where currently there are peak hour delays, and increased delays would be expected. Mitigation alternatives have been and are being examined. A Working Group has been set up with representatives from the local community, and this has had several meetings. At the meeting, options have been discussed and it was agreed that the preferred approach is to deliver a shared space approach. Over the coming months a scheme will evolve based on these principles to be funded by the developers.

Further east, Nine Mile Ride enters the neighbouring authority of Bracknell Forest Borough Council (BFBC); who have raised no objection to the development.

97. White Horse Lane - This is a narrow lane located about 500m along Nine Mile Ride east of Park Lane that provides a connection to the south and could attract through traffic towards the Hampshire border and Yateley. The Council has carried out a detailed traffic management study and identified the need for mitigation. A detailed scheme has not yet been drawn up but works are likely to include some minor works at the entrances to the Lane and along it, where bridleways and / or footways cross. Some of this traffic will also use the Memorial Junction which would benefit from a road safety improvement. The funding of these mitigation measures would be appropriately apportioned between the two SDL sites through the respective S106 agreements.
98. B3030 Winnersh Corridor - The Transport Assessment Addendum examined these impacts on this corridor and concluded that the increase in flows can be satisfactorily accommodated on the highway network.
99. Church Road and Farley Hill (towards Swallowfield) - Traffic flows are forecast to increase along Church Road through Farley Hill further west to Swallowfield. Existing traffic flows in peak hours are fairly modest at 300-400 vehicles per hour. This means that development traffic flows can soon become significant and during the AM peak while the percentage impact is over 20% the actual volume of flow is 60 vehicles. A traffic calming scheme is proposed for Church Road through Farley Hill, which the developers will be required to deliver early in the development.
100. A327 (South - Effect upon Eversley and Hampshire & Park Lane south) - The traffic effects of the Arborfield SDL on the A327 southwards into Hampshire have been the subject of considerable discussion with Hampshire County Council (HCC). The main highway junctions identified for review were within Eversley and are the Tally Ho junction and the bridge. Both of these were tested and identified as being able to accommodate the additional development traffic. However, it is recognised that there could be some environmental effects and, as such, the developers (both AGLC and MFT) have committed to fund a scheme of improvements that could include improved pedestrian crossing facilities, widening of footways, measures to slow vehicles and vehicle activated signs. The funding of these mitigation measures would be appropriately apportioned between the two SDL sites through the respective S106 agreements.

#### Public Transport Strategy

101. The Infrastructure and Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document sets out the importance of a public transport strategy to meet sustainable objectives. It identifies bus transport routes to Wokingham, Bracknell, Reading and Winnersh. These need to be phased 'and to provide direct services and ensure an effective alternative to car borne journeys'.
102. A bus route has been identified through the site, and a Public Transport Strategy has been developed with consideration to the needs of the entire SDL, and linking to the proposals for the South of M4 SDL. The following enhanced services are proposed:

- Phase 1 (as existing): 20 min to Reading and 60 min to Wokingham;
- Phase 2 (starting early in the development). Retaining the 20 min to Reading. A 30 minute service to Wokingham by adding an additional service via Finchampstead Road. A new direct 60 minute service to Bracknell that runs along Nine Mile Ride;
- Phase 3 adds a further bus to Reading each hour (so a 15min frequency). Then, extends one of the routes to Wokingham or Bracknell depending on which has the most demand, which would mean a 30minute service to either Wokingham or Bracknell.

103. The public transport strategy will be financially supported by the SDL developers under their apportionment of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The Council will seek to ensure that the funding is diverted at an early stage (while the service is not yet viable) so sustainable habits can be embedded from the outset.

#### Greenways and external pedestrian/cycling links

104. Five greenways are planned to be delivered around the SDL. These provide external connections to key destinations for pedestrians, cycles and also equestrians on some of the routes. The routes internal to the SDL will link into these. The Greenways are as follows:

- Route AR1: Arborfield to Shinfield
- Route AR2: Arborfield to Barkham & Wokingham (via Commonfield Lane and Edneys Hill)
- Route AR3: Arborfield to Finchampstead (through California Country Park)
- Route AR4: Circular Bridleway Biggs La / California County Park/ Nine Mile Ride & Park Lane.
- Route AR5: Improvements to Nine Mile Ride (NMR) from Park Lane to Heath Ride.

105. These will be delivered by Wokingham. They are part funded by an AGLC S106 contribution, with the remaining costs to be met by CIL.

#### Travel Planning and My Journey

106. The access strategy focuses on delivery of infrastructure that enables non car modes to be used where possible. This will be augmented through travel plans; which will encourage and promote more sustainable patterns of transport. The residential development will contribute towards the Council's My Journey programme through the S106, while other land uses will be required to provide detailed Travel Plans prior to occupation once the final occupants are known.

#### Construction Traffic

107. A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be submitted and agreed with the Council prior to construction in each sub-phase. It is anticipated that the construction traffic will only access the site from the A327 and will not use Park Lane or Barkham Road beyond the site. These detailed matters will be worked up in detail once developers for each parcel of land have

been identified. A planning condition specifies the requirement of the CEMP.

#### Access and movement – conclusion

108. Overall, the Highways Officer is satisfied that the package of transport measures proposed by the application will help to alleviate the additional vehicle movements that the development generates. An extensive set of highway mitigation is offered which includes funding towards the ACRR, widening of Barkham Bridge and improvements to California Cross Roads. Traffic management measures will also be introduced in Farley Hill and White Horse Lane and environmental improvements on the A327 in Eversley.

109. The access strategy provides for sustainable transport modes, i.e. walking, cycling, equestrians and public transport. There is an extensive set of external greenways and internally a network of pedestrian and cycle routes linking up the different land uses. The public transport strategy will provide 15 minute services to Reading, and is expected to provide a direct 30 minute services to both Wokingham and Bracknell. The internal bus route is within easy walking distance and there will be high quality bus stop facilities. Travel planning, notably with 'My Journey', will help to encourage the use of these modes.

110. The extensive package of measures and recommended conditions as specified should ensure that adverse highways impacts will be minimised in terms of safety and access for all users.

#### **THAMES BASIN HEATHS SPECIAL PROTECTION AREA (SPA)**

111. The Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) was designated under European Directive due to its importance for heathland bird species. Core Strategy policy CP8 establishes that new residential development within a 5km zone of influence is likely to contribute to a significant impact upon the integrity of the SPA. The Arborfield Garrison SDL lies wholly within this zone and, in accordance with Core Strategy Policies CP8, and CP18 and saved South East Plan Policy NRM6, mitigation is being provided in the form of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), and a financial contribution towards Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM).

112. Full planning permission is sought for 29.7ha of SANG within the site. The SANG would be delivered in one phase in advance of occupation of any of the residential development. The SANG is located adjacent to the Southern SANG provision in respect to the AGLC planning permission and would be delivered to link into that provision. The 'end state' scenario (with both developments) would result in a comprehensively-planned West Court SANG of 54ha serving both SDL developments, which would be of a sufficient size to provide a high quality, natural experience. The SANG would be linked to the adjacent development parcels and AGLC site via a network of SDL-wide green links.

113. The design of the SANG would be sympathetic to the landscape and ecological considerations of the site, subject to the details being conditioned. As with AGLC, via the S106 the applicant would be required to submit to the Council for approval a SANG Management Plan prior to commencement of the

construction of the SANG and to construct the SANG in accordance with the approved SANG Management Plan and the Planning Permission. The SANG would be delivered and available in advance of any residential occupation of the development. In addition conditions are recommended to ensure that there is sufficient parking made available prior to the commencement of use of the SANG and prior to residential occupation of any of the development – in the longer term the applicant is currently proposing parking adjacent to the neighbourhood centre to the north of the SANG but these details will need to be worked up in more detail, potentially with temporary provisions in place prior to the neighbourhood centre being built out.

114. Given the SANG proposals and the SAMM contribution, Natural England and WBC's SANG officer support the development. The application is supported by a Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report which demonstrates that the development both alone, and in combination with other plans and projects, is not likely to have a significant effect upon the Thames Basin Heaths SPA.

## **LANDSCAPE, TREES AND VISUAL CHARACTER**

115. The form of the development will have been guided by information in Core Strategy Policy CP18 and Appendix 7, as well as the SPD for the whole of the Arborfield Garrison SDL. One of the key issues is the site's response to the existing landscape context including character and how development can be absorbed into the landscape, taking account of the site's natural features.

### Trees

116. A Tree Constraints and Arboricultural Assessment has been included with the application. This document provides information on all the trees and hedgerows surveyed on the site overlaid onto Parameter Plan B: Green Space and Infrastructure. By confining the development parcels to the existing field pattern of the site, the report identifies that the majority of trees on the site need not be removed to facilitate the development. The report does however identify that the development would likely result in the loss of two category A trees, 16 category B trees/tree groups, 9 category C trees, and 11 category U trees. These mainly consist of the trees to be removed where the Primary Highway Route passes through the site.

117. The loss of the trees is necessary to facilitate the development. However MDD DPD Policy CC03 requires that any impacts should be mitigated, and the Council's Landscape Officer is content that this can be provided through a high quality landscape scheme, that will be required under the Reserved Matters planning applications.

### Visual Character and Landscape Impact

118. The application is also supported by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, which has helped to inform the parameters of the development. The assessment include site context photos from an extensive range of viewpoints both within and out with of the site. The range of viewpoints identify that the boundaries around the northern part of the site are heavily vegetated and afford limited view into the site. Moreover, any visual impacts of the development

from viewpoints outside of the development will be mitigated to a large degree by the retention of existing vegetation and the advanced woodland planting proposed – as indicated on the Development Framework Parameter Plan - and through the use of design codes.

119. That notwithstanding, for the northern part of the site the development upon hitherto undeveloped arable farmland will undoubtedly have a moderate to major significant impact upon the existing landscape character for this area. At the '15 years post construction' stage, landscape character would have changed significantly to one of a series of residential areas defined by woodland edges, access roads with tree planting. This is an inevitable consequence of the development.

120. However, through the adoption of the existing development plan, Wokingham Borough Council has made a choice to pursue the Arborfield Garrison SDL as a delivery mechanism for the growth anticipated within the borough. At present Arborfield Garrison neither contains nor is well connected to a range of services and community facilities. In the case of the Arborfield Garrison SDL, a significant part of the area is brownfield land, particularly on the AGLC site, which would be redeveloped in a manner which would improve its accessibility to services. However, a substantial area of undeveloped 'greenfield' is needed to generate sufficient critical mass for a viable settlement with an acceptable number of facilities; particularly in the southern part of the SDL – indeed, the Hogwood Farm site is predominantly open fields with the exception of two existing dwellings and the Hogwood Farm Industrial Estate. Moreover, the long term sustainability of the area depends on the strategic provision of new transport, commercial, social and employment infrastructure across the whole of the SDL area to prevent unnecessary travel and promote a reasonable degree of self-containment. Any harm as a result of the development on this greenfield site is outweighed by the substantial public benefit of the development.

121. At present the site includes a 132kV overhead powerline, which runs north east to west across the site. It is a prominent feature within the landscape that detracts from the rural feel of the area. It is not however proposed to remove or 'ground' the power line; rather the development parcels have identified this as a constraint of the site. This powerline has a 16.6m easement, a buffer area within which new houses cannot be constructed.

122. The LPA cannot insist upon the removal of the powerline because there is no such adopted policy requirement. However, this would not prevent a future developer from making a commercial decision to ground the infrastructure as and when the Reserved Matters planning applications for the relevant phases are progressed.

## **ECOLOGY**

123. Core Strategy Policy CP7 requires appropriate protection of species and habitats of conservation value. Arborfield Garrison SPD Design Principle 1b seeks to protect and enhance ecological habitat and biodiversity across the SDL.

124. The applicant has undertaken surveys of the site to establish the nature of biodiversity interest of the site and its vicinity. The proposals identify that the site

does support some important habitats such as ancient woodland and species-rich hedgerows; and a number of important/protected species such as bats, badgers and breeding birds. Mitigation is proposed in the form of habitat creation including new ponds woodland and grasslands (mainly within the SANGs), an appropriate bat mitigation strategy (including a sensitive lighting scheme), a detailed reptile mitigation strategy that will enable the retention of the reptiles within the site boundary, and a Biodiversity Action Plan that will deliver a range of general biodiversity mitigation and enhancement measures.

125. Wokingham's Ecology Officer has reviewed the submissions and is satisfied that the applicant has undertaken sufficient survey effort to adequately establish the nature of ecological interest of the site and its surrounds. Moreover, he is satisfied that the recommended conditions allow the LPA sufficient control to ensure that the development, when brought forward through the Reserved Matters planning applications, need not prove unacceptably harmful to the overall ecological interest of the site.

## **DRAINAGE, FLOOD RISK AND THE WATER ENVIRONMENT**

126. The NPPF and Core Strategy policy CP1 seek to ensure that new development should avoid increasing and where possible reduce flood risk. MDD Policy CC09 seeks to locate vulnerable development away from areas at risk of flooding, and Policy CC10 seeks to reduce run-off rates and volumes to as near as greenfield as practicably possible.

127. After reviewing the submitted FRA and additional information submitted to support the application, the Environment Agency is satisfied that run-off rates will be restricted to Greenfield (Set 1) and that there will be enough space on site to provide sufficient storage capacity to attenuate surface water run-off up to the 1 in 100 plus climate change storm. It is proposed to use SUDS as per the Strategic Development Framework Plan. As the rates will be set to Greenfield, volumes will be managed so not to increase flood risk off the site. In the circumstances the Environment Agency have recommended a series of conditions that will ensure that the development will suitably meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

128. WSP have reviewed the submission on behalf of WBC's Flood Risk Advisor and requested further information on the drainage strategy, but in the absence of such information have suggested their own condition. Given that there is so much flexibility in the layout Wokingham Officers have confidence that a strategy could be made to work. Certainly the design standards that they are aiming to achieve would provide a huge benefit for events over the annual maximum and accords with MDD Policy CC10. Further details of the SUDS will be sought for each sub-phase in accordance with the recommended conditions and as part of the Reserved Matters applications.

## **HERITAGE ASSETS**

129. Policy TB24 of the MDD requires development to 'at least conserve and, where possible enhance the important character and special architectural or historical interest of the building, Conservation Area, monument or park and garden including its setting and views'. Furthermore, Section 66(1) of the

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a statutory duty in considering proposals affecting Listed Buildings, to ‘have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting’.

### Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

130. Whilst specifically excluded from the red line application site, Hogwood Farmhouse is a Grade II Listed Building located in the central northern part of the Site. The Farmhouse is flanked to the north by a substantial hedgerow with a further strip of linear vegetation extending to the southwest. Land to the immediate south and east of the Farmhouse is utilised as part of Hogwood Farm Industrial Estate and consists of an access road which runs directly in front (south) of the Farmhouse and a number of medium – large commercial buildings. There is also an area of hard surfacing used for circulation located to the south, opposite the front of the Farmhouse and various other infrastructure associated with the industrial estate such as containers, mobile plant, car parking areas and signage. The character of the Farmhouse setting is significantly affected by the adjoining commercial activities and infrastructure, which detract from the setting of the property and dominate the local landscape.
131. The Proposed Development would result in the removal of the industrial estate buildings and related infrastructure, which would be replaced with residential properties and related access roads. The substantial hedgerow to the north is shown for retention, whilst to the west of the Farmhouse the land would be developed as part of the Village Green area, a green spine extending from north to south through the Proposed Development. It is considered that the new setting to the Farmhouse could at the very least preserve, if not enhance, the setting to (and appreciation of) the Listed Building. Such matters will be a significant consideration in the determination of the Reserved Matters Application pertaining to parcel RE10 and the green spine.
132. The development also proposes enhancing the vegetative buffer between the site and the C 17<sup>th</sup> Westwood Farm and C 16<sup>th</sup> Westwood Cottage listed buildings (both Grade 2) immediately to the west of the site. Such matters will be dealt with at the relevant Reserved Matters phase, at which time the LPA will have suitable control to ensure that the setting of these two listed buildings are not compromised.
133. It has also been identified that unmitigated there would be some environmental effects along the A327 into Eversley and, as such, the developers (both AGLC and MFT) have committed to fund a scheme of improvements that could include improved pedestrian crossing facilities, widening of footways, measures to slow vehicles and vehicle activated signs. The funding of these mitigation measures would be appropriately apportioned between the two SDL sites through the respective S106 agreements. Subject to the funding of these environment improvement works, it is considered that the development would not have any adverse impact upon the important character and special architectural or historical interest of any listed buildings or Conservation Areas within Hart Borough Council.
134. There are no other listed buildings, conservation areas, monuments or parks and gardens on or within the vicinity of the site that will be adversely

impacted by the development.

#### Archaeology

135. The Devil's Highway, an old Roman Road, dissects the SANG; whilst to the north of site there is an area of high archaeological potential identified around Hogwood Shaw Nature Reserve. The application submissions acknowledge that there is high potential for significant archaeological remains of various periods within the site, and for the proposed development to have a direct impact upon both known, and as yet undiscovered, archaeological remains. Other than the SANG however, the application seeks only outline planning consent with all matters of detailed layout reserved. In this context no investigative archaeological fieldwork has been undertaken at this time. Rather it is intended that such work will be undertaken in due course to inform the detailed layouts of the Reserved Matters applications. This approach will allow the LPA to make decisions on what mitigation may be appropriate in advance of fixing any of the development parcels, and the potential effects of this in terms of detailed planning and layouts should preservation in situ of important archaeological assets be required.

136. Whilst the application does seek full consent for the SANG, a condition of consent is recommended to ensure that investigative archaeological work is undertaken prior to the commencement of construction of that area. If archaeological assets that merit preservation in situ in line with local and national planning policy are discovered during the necessary phased archaeological works, then there will be a requirement to alter the detailed plans for the SANG works. In the circumstances the conditions, together with the S106 provisions, allow for this potential alteration.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

#### Noise and Vibration

137. The Environmental Statement includes a noise assessment which considers the impact of noise and vibration during the construction phase (upon existing residents and future occupants), and any impacts resulting from the completed development.

138. In terms of the impact from construction, it concludes that there would be no adverse impact subject to securing appropriate mitigation measures; for example, by limiting hours of construction, and implementing appropriate measures in a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). A CEMP would need to be submitted for each sub-phase, so would address the noise sensitive receptors on site at that time.

139. In assessing the noise arising from the completed development (principally from vehicular movements), the assessment took into account the cumulative impact with the Hogwood site, and identified no significant impacts. Within the site, conditions are proposed to control any impacts arising from the on-site uses (such as noise from the businesses in the village centre).

#### Air Quality

140. An air quality assessment has been carried out as part of the Environmental Statement. The operational phase assessment has demonstrated that the proposals will not result in a significant deterioration of local air quality to level of concern or cause a new Air Quality Management Area to be declared in Wokingham Borough. The assessment has also demonstrated that new receptors are not being put into an area of existing poor air quality.

#### Land Quality

141. The site is occupied by a current industrial estate and agricultural land including former farm buildings and machinery. Part of the north-east corner of the site has also been historically occupied by a former Brick Works. These land uses have potential to cause contamination at the site.

142. A preliminary risk assessment (Phase 1 desk study) has been submitted with the application as part of the Environment Statement. The preliminary risk assessment and ES have identified potential pollutant linkages both on and off site that could present a risk to end users. They conclude that these require further assessment through Phase 2 intrusive investigations. Conditions are therefore recommended to ensure that the potential risks from contamination on site are adequately investigated, remediated and validated where necessary.

#### **SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION**

143. Policy CC04 of the MDD Local Plan (Sustainable Design and Construction) relates to housing standards as well as requirements for water resource management. MDD policy CC05 (Renewable Energy) requires that residential schemes of more than 10 dwellings should provide for a minimum 10% reduction in carbon emissions through on-site renewable energy or low carbon sources.

144. The Energy Strategy submitted with the application has investigated the predicted site energy demand and the decentralised, renewable and low-carbon technologies to reduce the site energy use to comply with the Wokingham Borough Council requirement for securing at least 10% of their energy from these technologies. It concludes that the requirements could be met through use of air to water heat pumps, photovoltaics or a combination of the two. The recommended condition will ensure that specific details of the compliance with this policy will be set out through the reserved matters applications.

145. The applicant has submitted a Sustainability Statement demonstrating how the proposal meets the requirements of the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (May 2010).

146. The Government has indicated that the Code for Sustainable Homes is likely to be abolished, and replaced by an enhanced form of Building Regulations that would more tightly control issues like energy and water use. However, in the absence of this legislation, there is no certainty that this will happen, or when, so it is proposed that the policy requirement should still be sought through condition with flexibility to adapt to changing future circumstances.

#### **OTHER MATTERS**

147. A number of third party letters of objection have been submitted. These letters raise various concerns, as outlined above. However, none of these matters have lead recommending officers to reach a different conclusion on the main issues outlined above.

## **CONCLUSION**

This is a sustainable development that would deliver substantial public benefit and contribute significantly to Wokingham's planned growth. The development would be in compliance with the Development Plan for the Borough and there are no material considerations of sufficient weight that would dictate that the application should nevertheless be refused. Officers are therefore recommending approval of the scheme in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development conferred upon Local Planning Authorities by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The site is allocated for development, and the proposal would not compromise the delivery of housing or infrastructure elsewhere within the SDL. The application demonstrates that the development proposals takes account of the opportunities and constraints of the site, and could accommodate up to 1,500 dwellings and the other necessary on-site infrastructure.

The proposals will not result in significant harm to the amenity of existing or future residents, environment or the transport network and will create a mixed and balanced new community with the required level and range of infrastructure and services. Although, detailed issues such as design, scale, materials and landscaping will be considered and assessed in detail under reserved matters, the application demonstrates that the development would include the key elements of a Garden Village.

Officers do not accept a 1,900 sqm provision of non-residential floorspace within the Neighbourhood centre; but rather than recommending refusal have recommended conditions to control the size and nature of the provision so that it does not challenge the vitality and/or viability of other centres within the hierarchy of main, district and local centres within Wokingham Borough.

In making this recommendation, Officers have had full regard to current development plan policy, together with other relevant material considerations. Officers have also taken into account the Environmental Statement submitted under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011; together with the Environmental Statement submitted in conjunction with planning application O/2014/2280 (AGLC Site). Officers are satisfied that sufficient information has been provided to enable assessment of the likely significant impacts of the development upon the environment to enable a 'principle decision' on the planning application to be made. It is considered that the development proposal, subject to the conditions and parameters set out within this recommendation, will unlikely lead to any significant environmental impacts.

Whilst applications for the subsequent Reserved Matters Applications are not precluded from having a degree of flexibility in how a scheme may be developed, each option will need to have been properly assessed and be within the remit of the outline permission.

In considering this application, due regard has been given to all of the comments and representations received and where possible these have been addressed through negotiation with the applicant.

This proposal is recommended to the Committee for approval subject to conditions and agreement of the S106 package with respect to the provision of infrastructure and services.

## **CONTACT DETAILS**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	<b>Email</b>
Development Management	0118 974 6428 / 6429	development.control@wokingham.gov.uk

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

**Appendix A – Recommended Conditions**

**Appendix B – Summary of Public Consultation Responses**

**Appendix C – Preferred Spatial Framework Plan; Adopted SDL SPD**

**Appendix D – Proposed Parameter Plans**

**Appendix E – Garden City Principles**

**Appendix F – SDL Wide Infrastructure Delivery Plan**

**Appendix G – AGLC Masterplan (the northern part of the SDL)**

**This page is intentionally left blank**