

Agenda Item 76.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Relevant planning history at the site

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

Relevant planning history nearby the site

31 Barkham Ride:

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

Victoria Gardens, 31 Barkham Ride:

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

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

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

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

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

REPRESENTATIONS

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

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

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

COMMENTS RECEIVED ON ORIGINAL SCHEME (68 DWELLINGS):

Town/ Parish Council:

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

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

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

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

Highway matters

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

Impact on the countryside and surrounding area

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

Impact on infrastructure/ amenity

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

Impact on Trees and Ecology

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

- Woodland reduced to enable development

Impact on Neighbours

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

Drainage

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

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

Other Matters

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

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

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

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

- Cannot see plans and balance of cheap affordable housing

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

- The area has already done their bit to provide housing

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

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

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

COMMENTS RECEIVED ON REVISED SCHEME (56 DWELLINGS):

Town/ Parish:

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

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

Local Members: – None

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

Highways

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

Trees/ Ecology

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

Relationship with 31 Barkham Ride

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

Impact on surrounding area

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

Impact on amenities

- Strain on local services
- Not suitable infrastructure

Impact on neighbouring amenity

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

Drainage/ Water

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

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

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

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

PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework
National Design Guide
National Planning Practice Guidance

Core Strategy (CS)

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

MDD Local Plan (MDD)

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

Other

Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document
CIL Guidance + 123 List
Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document
Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document
Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan (2023)

PLANNING ISSUES

1.0 Description of Development

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

2.0 Site and its surroundings

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



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

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

3.0 Principle of Development

a) Principle of development under the development plan

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



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

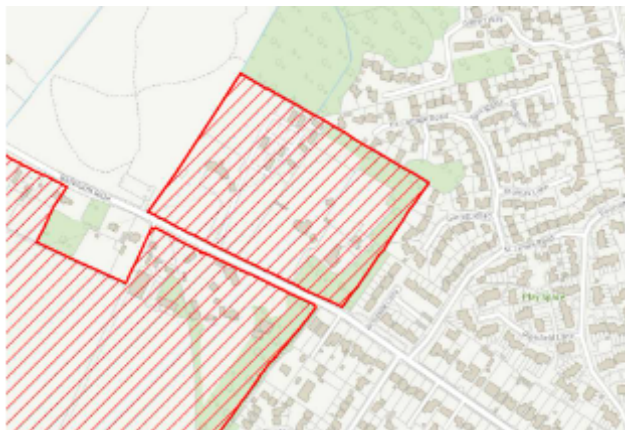
- 3.2 Core Strategy Policy CP9 (Scale and location of development proposals) directs development to locations within development limits and states that *“The scale of development proposals in Wokingham borough must reflect the existing or proposed levels of facilities and services at or in the location,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

b) Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan (FNDP)

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

c) Principle of development under the emerging/consultative policy

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

iii. Existing pattern of openings and boundary treatments on the site frontage

iv. Providing appropriate hard and soft landscaping, particularly at site boundaries

v. Compatibility with the general building height within the surrounding area

vi. The materials and elevational detail are of high quality, and where appropriate distinctive and/ or complementary

b) The application site provides a site of adequate size and dimensions to accommodate the development proposed in terms of the setting and spacing around buildings, amenity space, landscaping and space for access roads and parking

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

d) The proposal does not lead to unacceptable tandem development

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

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

f) Conclusion of principle of development

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

4.0 Impact on Landscape/ Countryside

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

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

Submitted Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)

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

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

Review of Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

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

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

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

Indicative site Layout

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

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



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

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

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

Detailed Design

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

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

Boundary treatment

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

5.0 Public open space

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

6.0 Housing Mix

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

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

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

7.0 Housing Affordability

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

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

8.0 Residential Amenity

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

Internal amenity standards

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

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

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

External amenity space

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

Existing neighbours

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

Overlooking/ Privacy

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

Light

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

Overbearing

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

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

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

9.0 Disabled access

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

10. Highways

Vehicle and cycle parking

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

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

Traffic generation/ impact

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

Visibility

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

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

Access and internal site roads

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

Site Sustainability

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

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

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

Walking

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Buses

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

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

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

Cycling

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

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

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

Summary on sustainability

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

Other Highway matters:

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

11.0 Impact on Trees

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



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

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

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

12.0 Ecology

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

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

Habitats

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

Bats

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

Newts

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

Biodiversity Net Gain

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

Other Ecological Matters

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

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

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

13.0 Flooding and Drainage

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

Sequential and Exception Test

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

Flood Risk

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

Flood Risk to and from the development

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

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

Drainage

Surface Water Drainage

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

Foul Water Drainage

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

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

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

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

14.0 Heritage – Archaeology

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

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

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

15.0 Environmental Health

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

Contaminated Land

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

Noise

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

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

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

Air Quality

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

16.0 Waste Provision

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

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

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

17.0 Housing Sustainability

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

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

18.0 Employment and Skills Plan

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

19.0 Infrastructure

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

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

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

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

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

20.0 Relationship with other developments on Barkham Ride

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

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

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

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

Number of dwellings and impacts on the landscape

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

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

Highways

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

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

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

31 Barkham Ride

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

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

Barkham Solar Farm

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

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

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

Wider coordination

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

Procedure

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

21.0 Planning Balance

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

Economic:

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

Social:

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

Environmental:

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

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

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

22.0 Conclusion:

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

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010)

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

APPENDIX 1 - Conditions / informatives

APPROVAL subject to obligations and the following conditions and informatives:

Conditions

1. Time Limit and submission of reserved matters

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

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

2. Time Limit for Commencement of Development

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

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

3. Reserved Matters

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

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

4. Approved Plans

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

Location Plan Revision A
Parameter Plan Revision A

Received 19th and 22nd January 2024

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

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

Received 9th January 2024

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

5. Materials

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

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

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

6. Dwelling numbers and development Mix

The development hereby permitted shall not exceed 56 dwellings.

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

5 x 1 bedroom flats (as Affordable Housing)

6 x two bedroom flats (as Affordable Housing)

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

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

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

1 x 5 bedroom house

Reason: This reflects the application submission and the Local Planning Authority would wish to properly consider any mix that does not reflect this submitted mix to ensure housing needs are adequately met, in accordance with CP5 of the Core Strategy.

7. Site Levels

Prior to the commencement of development, details of levels, including finished floor levels for all buildings, proposed levels of public open space areas and any attenuation pond, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall only proceed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the development takes appropriate account of any level changes across the site.

8. Details of car and motorcycle parking

The reserved matters application(s) for the development shall include details of car, motorcycle parking and electric vehicle charging spaces in accordance with the Council's policies and which are to be approved in writing by the Council. No dwelling shall be occupied until the vehicular accesses, driveways, parking and turning areas to serve it including any unallocated space have been provided in accordance with the approved details and the provision shall be retained thereafter. The vehicle parking shall not be used for any other purposes other than parking and the turning spaces shall not be used for any other purposes than turning.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience in accordance with Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP6, CC07 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (Feb 2014), the Parking Standards Study within the Borough Design Guide 2010, and the North Wokingham Development Location Supplementary Planning Document (October 2011).

9. Garages to be retained

Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-

enacting that Order with or without modification), the garage accommodation on the site identified on the approved plans shall be kept available for the parking of vehicles ancillary to the residential use of the site at all times. It shall not be used for any business nor as habitable space.

Reason: To ensure that adequate parking space is available on the site, so as to reduce the likelihood of roadside parking, in the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07.

10. Cycle parking

The reserved matters application(s) for the development shall include details of secure and covered bicycle storage/parking facilities serving that dwelling for the occupants of, and visitors to the development. The cycle storage/parking shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details before occupation of the development hereby permitted and shall be permanently retained in the approved form for the parking of bicycles and used for no other purpose.

Reason: In order to ensure the development contributes towards achieving a sustainable transport system and to provide parking for cycles in accordance with Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP6, the Parking Standards Study within the Borough Design Guide 2010 and CC07 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan.

11. Access

Prior to commencement of the development, there shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, details of the proposed vehicular access on to Barkham Ride to include visibility splays of 2.4m by 120m. The access shall be formed as so approved, and the visibility splays shall be cleared of any obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height prior to the occupation of the development. The access shall be retained in accordance with the approved details and used for no other purpose and the land within the visibility splays shall be maintained clear of any visual obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height at all times.

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

12. Stopping Up Access

Within one month of the completion of the new access in accordance with the details to be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, the existing vehicular access to the site shall be stopped up and abandoned, and the footway and/or verge crossings shall be re-instated.

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

13. Highway Construction Details

Prior to the commencement of development, full details of the construction of roads, cycleways and footways, including levels, widths, construction materials, depths of construction, surface water drainage and visibility splays shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Each dwelling shall not be occupied until the vehicle access to serve that dwelling has been constructed in accordance with the approved details to road base level and the final wearing course will be provided within 3 months of occupation, unless otherwise agreed in

writing by the local planning authority.

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

14. Visibility Splays for private driveways

No dwelling hereby approved shall be occupied until visibility splays of 2.0 metres by 2.0 metres, have been provided at the intersection of the driveway and the adjacent footway. (Dimensions to be measured along the edge of the drive and the back of the footway from their point of intersection). The visibility splays shall thereafter be kept free of all obstructions to visibility above a height of 0.6 metres.

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

15. Construction Method Statement

No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Statement shall provide for:

- i) the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors,
- ii) loading and unloading of plant and materials,
- iii) wheel washing facilities,
- iv) storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development,
- v) the erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate,
- vi) measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction,
- vii) a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works.

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

16. External Lighting

Prior to occupation of any dwelling, details of external lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The details shall include:

- A layout plan with beam orientation
- A schedule of equipment
- Measures to avoid glare
- An isolux contour map showing light spillage to 1 lux
- Height and type of light sources
- Intensity of illumination

Lighting strategies should include details of lighting for all highways, cycleways, footpaths, public areas and on residential buildings/ in garden areas. The approved lighting plan shall thereafter be implemented as agreed.

No further external lighting shall be installed without the written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on nature conservation and in the interests of highway safety in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP3, CP6 and CP7 and MDD policy TB23.

17. Parking Management Strategy

Prior to the first occupation of any dwelling, a Parking Management Strategy for the management of the parking arrangements shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The submitted Parking Management Strategy shall include details of the management of all parking spaces.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory development in the interests of amenity and highway safety in accordance with Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Policies CP1, CP6, CP13 and CP21 and MDDL policies CC07 and TB20.

18. Walking and Cycling Strategy

Prior to the commencement of development, details of measures within the development to improve footway and cycleway routes that connect the development with bus stops, Rooks Nest Country Park, Gorse Ride Schools, and local shops shall be submitted for approval by the local planning authority. The measures shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of the first dwelling.

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

19. Hours of work

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

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

20. Waste storage

The reserved matters application(s) shall include details of bin storage, which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The bin storage area and facilities shall be permanently so-retained and used for no purpose other than the temporary storage of refuse, recyclable and compost materials.

Reason: In the interests of visual and neighbouring amenities and functional development. Relevant policy: Core Strategy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC04.

21. Protection of Trees

- a) Prior to the determination of any reserved matters applications dealing with 'Layout', a full Tree Survey, Tree Protection Plan, Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Arboricultural Method Statement which provides for the retention and protection of trees, shrubs and hedges growing on or adjacent the site in accordance with BS5837: 2012 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority (the Approved Scheme). The Arboricultural Impact Assessment shall ensure

development proposals including SuDS requirements have been fully considered in relation to the tree constraints.

The tree protection measures approved shall be implemented in complete accordance with the Approved Scheme for the duration of the development (including, unless otherwise provided by the Approved Scheme) demolition, all site preparation work, tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery.

No development (including any tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery) shall commence until the local planning authority has been provided (by way of a written notice) with a period of no less than 7 working days to inspect the implementation of the measures identified in the Approved Scheme on-site.

No excavations for services, storage of materials or machinery, parking of vehicles, deposit or excavation of soil or rubble, lighting of fires or disposal of liquids shall take place within an area designated as being fenced off or otherwise protected in the Approved Scheme.

The fencing or other works which are part of the Approved Scheme shall not be moved or removed, temporarily or otherwise, until all works including external works have been completed and all equipment, machinery and surplus materials removed from the site, unless the prior approval of the local planning authority has first been sought and obtained.

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

22. Retention of trees and shrubs

No trees, shrubs or hedges within the site which are shown as being retained on the approved plans shall be felled, uprooted wilfully damaged or destroyed, cut back in any way or removed without previous written consent of the local planning authority; any trees, shrubs or hedges removed without consent or dying or being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within 5 years from the completion of the development hereby permitted shall be replaced with trees, shrubs or hedge plants of similar size and species unless the local planning authority gives written consent to any variation.

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

23. Hard and soft landscaping

The reserved matters application for 'Landscaping' shall include full details or both hard and soft landscape proposals. Landscape details shall include:

- Planting plans
- Written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment).
- Schedules of plants and trees, to include large canopy, native and wildlife friendly species, and species likely to prove adaptable to climate change, noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers / densities,
- Details of tree pits
- Details of sustainable drainage and irrigation systems such as rain gardens, and temporary pools and swales
- Implementation timetables
- Specifications for fencing demonstrating how hedgehogs and other wildlife will be able to continue to travel across the site (e.g. fences slightly raised above ground level)
- Above and below ground service routes and existing functional services above and below ground including foul and surface water drainage, soakaways and SUDs details, power, communications cables and water and gas supply pipelines, including access points (ensuring they do not conflict with new or existing planting)
- Permeable hard surfaces

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and to a reasonable standard in accordance with the relevant recommendations of appropriate British Standards or other recognised Codes of Good Practice. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with the timetable agreed with the Local Planning Authority. Any trees or plants that, within a period of five years after planting, are removed, die or become, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, seriously damaged or defective, shall be replaced as soon as is reasonably practicable with others of species, size and number as originally approved.

Reason: To ensure the provision of amenity, and biodiversity enhancements, afforded by appropriate landscape design and to comply with local Core Strategy CP3 and CC03 of the MDD.

24. Boundary Treatment

The reserved matters application for 'Landscaping' shall include a plan indicating the positions, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected/planted, shall be submitted. Where appropriate the boundary treatment shall include the provision of mammal gaps. The boundary treatment shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plan before the development is occupied.

Reason: In order to protect the privacy of adjoining and future occupiers and in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and local wildlife in accordance with Policy CP3 and CP7 of the Core Strategy.

25. Landscape Management Plan

Prior to the commencement of the development a landscape management plan, including long term design objectives, management responsibilities, timescales and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas, including woodland area, attenuation pond and play areas, other than privately owned, domestic gardens,

shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The landscape management plan shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details and for the period specified.

Reason: In order to ensure that provision is made to allow satisfactory maintenance of the landscaping hereby approved in accordance with Policy CC03 of the MDD.

26. Ground work clearance

No development shall take place (including demolition, ground works, vegetation clearance) until a construction environmental management plan (CEMP: Biodiversity) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEMP (Biodiversity) shall include the following:

- a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities
- b) Identification of “biodiversity protection zones”
- c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements)
- d) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features
- e) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works
- f) Responsible persons and lines of communication
- g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person
- h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.

The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To minimise impacts on biodiversity in accordance with CP7 of the Core Strategy and TB23 of the MDD.

27. Biodiversity Net Gain

No development shall commence until a Biodiversity Net Gain Plan that details how habitats on the site will be created, established, managed or a period of 30 years from the day development is completed, and monitored (including details of the frequency of monitoring, in perpetuity), or off-site off-setting, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the council.

The Biodiversity Net Gain Plan shall demonstrate that there will be a minimum of a 10% uplift in biodiversity units using the most up to date DEFRA Metric. The Biodiversity Net Gain Plan shall thereafter be implemented. The results of the monitoring shall be submitted to the council and the local environmental records centre within 4 weeks of the end of each monitoring period.

Should the Biodiversity Net Gain Plan conclude that the development will not result in a 10% uplift in biodiversity units on site then the applicant is to submit details of how such an offset will be achieved off site.

Reason: To ensure that the development results in a Biodiversity Net Gain of at least 10% above baseline levels to support biodiversity in accordance with CP7 of the Core Strategy and TB23 of the MDD.

28. Biodiversity Enhancements

Prior to commencement of the development, details of biodiversity enhancements, to include integrated bird and bat box, tile or brick (or universal nest bricks) built into the new buildings (a minimum of one per dwelling) and native and wildlife friendly landscaping (including gaps at the bases of fences to allow hedgehogs to traverse through the gardens), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the council. The biodiversity enhancements shall thereafter be installed as approved.

Reason: To incorporate biodiversity in and around developments in accordance with CP7 of the Core Strategy and TB23 of the MDD.

29. Thames Water

No dwelling shall be occupied until confirmation has been provided that either:

- a) all water network upgrades required to accommodate the additional demand to serve the development have been completed; or
- b) a development and infrastructure phasing plan has been agreed with Thames Water to allow development to be occupied.

Where a development and infrastructure phasing plan is agreed no occupation shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed development and infrastructure phasing plan.

Reason: The development may lead to no / low water pressure and network reinforcement works are anticipated to be necessary to ensure that sufficient capacity is made available to accommodate additional demand anticipated from the new development to ensure that it is sustainable development in accordance with CP1 of the Core Strategy.

30. Archaeology

Prior to the determination of any reserved matters applications dealing with 'Layout', the applicant or their agents or successors in title shall have implemented a programme of archaeological work, beginning with a scheme of trial trench evaluation, in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the planning authority. The results of this evaluation will be used to inform any necessary mitigation strategy. The development shall only take place in accordance with the detailed scheme approved pursuant to this condition.

Reason: The site lies within an area of archaeological potential. The condition will ensure that any archaeological remains within the site are adequately investigated and recorded in order to advance our understanding of the significance of any buried remains to be lost and in the interest of protecting the archaeological heritage of the Borough in accordance with TB25 of the MDD.

31. Historical Recording Required

No development shall take place until the applicant, agent or successor in title has submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, a scheme for recording the World War II air raid shelter, in accordance with the methodology set

out in Historic England's 'Understanding Historic Building: A Guide to Good Practice' (2016). Details are to include a procedure for taking photographic record during the demolition phases. A copy of the final building recording document, once approved by the Local Planning Authority, is to be submitted to Berkshire Records Office's Heritage Environment Records department and the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to maintain a record of the features to be removed which form part of the historic development of the site in accordance with TB25 of the Managing Development Delivery Plan and section 16 of the NPPF (2023)

32. Land Contamination

Prior to commencement of development, an investigation and risk assessment should be completed in accordance with a scheme to assess the nature and extent of any contamination on the site, including radon gas, (whether it originates on the site or not). The investigation and risk assessment should be undertaken by competent persons and a written report of the findings produced. The written report would be subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. The report of the findings should include:

(i) a survey of the extent, scale, and nature of any contamination.

(ii) an assessment of the potential risks to:

- human health,
- property (existing or proposed) including buildings, crops, livestock, pets, woodland and service lines and pipes,
- adjoining land,
- groundwaters and surface waters,
- ecological systems,
- archaeological sites and ancient monuments.

(iii) an appraisal of remedial options, and proposal of the preferred option(s).

This must be conducted in accordance with DEFRA and the Environment Agency's 'Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination, CLR 11'.

Submission of Remediation Scheme (where required).

A detailed remediation scheme to bring the site to a condition suitable for the intended use by removing unacceptable risks to human health, buildings and other property and the natural and historical environment should be prepared and would be subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. The scheme should include all works to be undertaken, proposed remediation objectives and remediation criteria, timetable of works and site management procedures. The scheme should ensure that the site will not qualify as contaminated land under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in relation to the intended use of the land after remediation.

Reason: to ensure the development is suitable for its end use and the wider environment and does not create undue risks to occupiers of the site or surrounding areas in accordance with Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy.

33. Unexpected Land Contamination

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

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

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

34. Noise Assessment

Prior to commencement of development, a full noise impact assessment shall be conducted, the noise assessment shall be carried out by a suitably qualified acoustic consultant/engineer and shall consider the provisions of BS4142 and BS8233. The assessment shall identify all sources of noise including plant or machinery. This should be submitted to the local authority for approval. This can inform the design to achieve best practice. The report is to identify a clear scheme of recommended works, or such other steps as may be necessary to minimize the effects of noise associated with the proposed development, both on nearby noise sensitive receptors and on future occupants of the development.

Reason: to protect the amenity of the area and to ensure that premises are protected from noise nuisance and disturbance, in accordance with Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Policy CP1, the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy CC06 and Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan Policy GA1.

35. Noise Insulation for Dwellings

The dwellings hereby approved shall be designed and/or insulated to provide attenuation against externally generated noise, the design should ensure that all noise implications are mitigated so that internal ambient noise levels for dwellings meet the BS8233 sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings design range 'good' for living accommodation.

Reason: to protect the amenity of the area and to ensure that premises are protected from noise nuisance and disturbance, in accordance with Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Policy CP1, the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy CC06.

36. Plant/Machinery to be attenuated

Any plant, machinery and equipment installed or operated in connection with the conducting of this permission shall be so enclosed and/or attenuated that noise therefrom does not exceed at any time a level of 5dB[A] below the existing background noise level [or 10dB[A] if there is a particular tonal quality] when measured at a point one metre external to the nearest residential or noise sensitive property. Any recommended noise mitigation measures should be retained and maintained thereafter for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure that no nuisance or disturbance is caused to the occupiers of properties. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC06.

37. Air Quality Assessment

No development shall commence on site until a detailed Air Quality Assessment to determine whether mitigation is required to protect the residents from the effects of poor air quality is submitted to and approved in writing by Local Planning Authority. Where this Air Quality Assessment identifies that future residents will be exposed to poor air quality, an air quality mitigation scheme shall accompany this assessment demonstrating sufficient mitigation to protect the occupants. The scheme shall be

implemented as approved prior to occupation of any part of the development and retained as approved at all times thereafter.

Reason: In order to protect the health of future occupants of the proposed development in accordance with Policy CC1 of the Core Strategy and Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan Policy GA1.

38. Parameters Plan

The Reserved Matters proposal for 'Layout' shall be in accordance with the principles outlined on the parameters plan which highlights areas for development and those to be retained for public open space.

Reason: To ensure that the reserved matter of 'Layout' will be in accordance with the principles established under the outline approval and to ensure open space is provided on site in accordance with policy TB08 of the MDD.

39. Drainage details

Prior to the determination of any reserved matters applications dealing with 'Layout', full details of the drainage system for the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The details shall include:

1. Full calculations demonstrating the capacity of attenuation features to cater for 1 in 100-year flood event with a 40% allowance for climate change and runoff controlled at 4.52l/s/ha.
2. Calculations demonstrating that there will be no flooding of pipes for events up to and including the 1 in 100-year flood event, with a 40% allowance for climate change, or how any flooding will be managed.
3. Separate drainage systems for any proposed adopted highways and residential dwellings.
4. Details of the proposed land raising
5. A drainage strategy plan indicating the location and sizing of SuDS features, with the base of any SuDS features located at least 1m above the seasonal high water table level. This should have due regard to a SuDS management train. Furthermore the plan shall include:
 - i. a timetable for its implementation, and
 - ii. a management and annual maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include the arrangements for adoption by any public body or statutory undertaker, or any other arrangements to secure the operation of the sustainable drainage scheme throughout its lifetime.

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

Reason: To prevent increased flood risk from surface water run-off in line with Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10.

40. Space Standards

The Reserved Matters application for 'Scale' and 'Layout' shall ensure that all dwellings shall accord with the Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standard (2015) or those TB07 of the Wokingham Borough Council Managing Development Delivery (MDD) Local Plan 2014.

Reason: To ensure future occupiers of the development will have a suitable standard of living accommodation in accordance with CP3 of the Core Strategy and TB07 of the MDD.

41. Residential gardens

The reserved matters application(s) shall demonstrate that private residential gardens will have a garden depth of at least 11m and will be of an overall suitable size in relation to the size of dwellings.

Reason: To ensure future occupiers will have a suitable level of outdoor amenity space in accordance with Core Strategy policy CP3 and Borough Design Guide policy R16 of the Wokingham Borough Design Guide.

42. Future Homes Standard

The dwellings hereby permitted shall meet the interim Future Homes Standard in accordance with the requirements of the Building Regulations. No dwelling shall be occupied until compliance has been confirmed by an accredited assessor certifying that a 31% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions has been achieved per the Standard.

Reason: To ensure developments contribute to sustainable development in accordance with the requirements of Part L of the Building Regulations and Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC04.

43. Decentralised Energy

Prior to the commencement of development, a scheme for achieving a 10% reduction in the predicted carbon emissions arising from operation of the development through the use of decentralised renewable and/or low carbon sources (as defined in the glossary of Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change (December 2007) or any subsequent version) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The minimum 10% reduction so required shall be achieved on top of the levels of reduction in carbon emissions required through the Building Regulations in force at the time of the submission of planning application. The approved scheme shall be implemented before the development is first occupied and shall remain operational for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure developments contribute to sustainable development in accordance with the WBC Climate Emergency Action Plan, Core Strategy Policy CP1, Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC05 and the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document.

44. Water consumption rates

Prior to the commencement of development, details of how all dwellings shall meet internal potable water consumption targets of 110 litres or less per person per day. Thereafter, all dwellings shall be built in accordance with the measures to achieve this water consumption target and the measures maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure developments contribute to sustainable development. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 14 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), WBC Climate Emergency Action Plan, Core Strategy policy CP1, Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC05 & the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document.

45. Carbon Neutral Homes

Prior to the approval of any reserved matters application, a statement/ report shall be provided to demonstrate whether the development is practicable and viable to provide carbon neutral homes; carbon neutral homes meaning a scenario in which greenhouse gas emissions arising from human activity are eliminated by minimising energy demands and meeting remaining energy demand with energy from renewable sources. This should take into account the sustainability measures required of the development in conditions 42, 43 and 44 of this permission. These measures shall be implemented prior to the occupation of the development. If it cannot be satisfactorily demonstrated that carbon neutral cannot be achieved as part of the development, measures to bring the development closer to this target shall be submitted to and agreed with the Local Planning Authority before the development commences. These shall be implemented and maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure developments contribute to sustainable development in accordance with the WBC Climate Emergency Action Plan, Core Strategy Policy CP1, Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC05, Policy ES1 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan, Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document and the Wokingham Council Climate Emergency Action Plan Fourth Progress Report (2023)

46. Disabled Access

Within the reserved matters application for 'Layout', 'Scale' and 'Apperance', it shall be demonstrated that 10-20% of the dwellings as a minimum accessible and adaptable in line with M4(2) of the Building Regulations.

Reason: To provide a variety of dwellings, catering to different needs, to support positive neighbourhood planning in accordance with Policy CP2 of the Core Strategy and TB05 of the MDD.

47. Open Space

The application for the Reserved Matter of 'Layout' should incorporate a plan showing a breakdown of the following minimum quantum and open space types on or off site (as indicated) in accordance with TB08 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (2014):

1. Parks and public gardens (1,493 sqm, on site)
2. Natural/semi natural green space (3,820 sqm, on site)
3. Amenity greenspace (1,320 sqm, on site)
4. Provision for children young people (Local Equipped Areas of Play (LEAP) and Local Areas of Play (LAP)) (336 sqm, on site)
5. Sports facilities (2220 sqm, off site)
6. Allotments (699 sqm, on or off site)

For the open space types that are to be provided off site, a plan detailing off-site provision shall be provided.

The open space shall be permanently maintained and kept as publicly accessible open space for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure that a suitable level of on-site public open space will be provided as part of the development in accordance with TB08 of the MDD.

48. Updated Bat Survey

If works do not commence before September 2024, an updated bat survey is to be undertaken and a report detailing the findings shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the development. If bats are found, an appropriate bat licence shall be obtained and submitted to the Local Planning Authority as evidence.

Reason: To ensure that biodiversity, protected and priority species are not adversely affected by the proposals in accordance with CP3 and CP7 of the Core Strategy (2010) and TB23 of the MDD (2014).

49. Communication Strategy for construction phase

No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, a Communications Plan. The Plan shall specify methods for communicating with local residents during the construction phase and shall provide contact details for those responsible for the construction of the development. The Plan shall be carried out as approved until the final completion of the development.

Reason: In order to minimise disturbance to neighbours during construction works in accordance with CP3 of the Core Strategy (2010)

Informatives:

1. This permission should be read in conjunction with the legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act, the obligations in which relate to this development.
2. The applicant is reminded that this approval is granted subject to conditions which must be complied with prior to the development starting on site. Commencement of the development without complying with the pre-commencement requirements may be outside the terms of this permission and liable to enforcement action. The information required should be formally submitted to the Council for consideration with the relevant fee. Once the details have been approved in writing the development should be carried out only in accordance with those details.
3. The applicant is reminded that should there be any change from the approved drawings during the build of the development this may require a fresh planning application if the changes differ materially from the approved details. Non-material changes may be formalised by way of an application under s.96A Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
4. Adequate precautions shall be taken during the construction period to prevent the deposit of mud and similar debris on adjacent highways. For further information contact the Highway Authority on tel.: 0118 9746000.
5. Whilst it would appear from the application that the proposed development is to be entirely within the curtilage of the application site, the granting of planning permission does not authorise you to gain access or carry out any works on, over or under your neighbour's land or property without first obtaining their consent, and does not obviate the need for compliance with the requirements of the Party Wall etc. Act 1996.

6. The development hereby permitted is liable to pay the Community Infrastructure Levy. The Liability Notice issued by Wokingham Borough Council will state the current chargeable amount. A revised Liability Notice will be issued if this amount changes. Anyone can formally assume liability to pay, but if no one does so then liability will rest with the landowner. There are certain legal requirements that must be complied with. For instance, whoever will pay the levy must submit an Assumption of Liability form and a Commencement Notice to Wokingham Borough Council prior to commencement of development, failure to do this will result in penalty surcharges being added. For more information see the Council's website - Community Infrastructure Levy advice page. Please submit all CIL forms and enquiries to developer.contributions@wokingham.gov.uk.

7. The applicant is reminded that, under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it is an offence to (amongst other things): deliberately capture, disturb, injure, or kill great crested newts; damage or destroy a breeding or resting place; intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a resting or sheltering place. Planning permission for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation. Should great crested newts be found at any stage of the development works, then all works should cease, and a professional and/or suitably qualified and experienced ecologist (or Natural England) should be contacted for advice on any special precautions before continuing, including the need for a licence.

8. Fire service access should comply with B5 of ADB Volume 2 2019 with additional local requirements below under the Berkshire Act 1986: Fire service vehicles currently operated by Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service exceed the requirements stated in the current edition of Approved Document B. The applicant should be made aware of the following amendments:- The minimum carrying capacity for a pumping appliance is 16 tonnes. The minimum carrying capacity for a high reach appliance is 26 tonnes. Structures such as bridges should have the full vehicle carrying capacity. Any structural fire precautions and all means of escape provision will have to satisfy Building Regulation requirement. These matters are administered by the local authority Building Control or approved inspectors, who you are advised to contact in this regard.

9. There are water mains crossing or close to your development. Thames Water do not permit the building over or construction within 3m of water mains. If you're planning significant works near Thames Water mains (within 3m) they will need to check that your development doesn't reduce capacity, limit repair or maintenance activities during and after construction, or inhibit the services we provide in any other way. The applicant is advised to read our guide working near or diverting our pipes.
<https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.thameswater.co.uk%2Fdevelopers%2Flarger-scale-developments%2Fplanning-your-development%2Fworking-near-ourpipes&data=05%7C01%7Cplanning.enquiries%40wokingham.gov.uk%7C92f84d1fef8949390d3d08db e5bbe8f0%7C996ee15c0b3e4a6f8e65120a9a51821a%7C0%7C0%7C638356367458250210%7CUnkn own%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljoic4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6Ikl1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3>

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ucA53ilMf0%3D&reserved=0 Yours faithful

10. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

APPENDIX 2 - Parish Council Comments

Finchampstead Parish Council's latest comments (scheme for 56 dwellings)

PLANNING REF : 223528
PROPERTY ADDRESS : FBC Centre
: Gorse Ride, Finchampstead, Wokingham
: RG40 4ES
SUBMITTED BY : Finchampstead Parish Council
DATE SUBMITTED : 16/11/2023

COMMENTS:

The Council feel that the planning applications for 31 Barkham Ride (230791) and 33 Barkham Ride (223528) should be dealt with together as they were a single entity in the "call for sites" and have been treated as one site in the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan (FNDP)

This will be yet another access to Barkham Ride in an area where there are already several,
an access to 33 Barkham Ride,
an access to 31 Barkham Ride,
an access to Victoria Gardens,
an access to Rook's Nest Country Park car park.

The number of dwellings is an overdevelopment at this location leading to additional traffic problems on Barkham Ride. This is a narrow country lane which has major problems coping with existing traffic.

Barkham Parish Council's latest comments (scheme for 56 dwellings)

PLANNING REF : 223528
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Arborfield Green Community Centre
: Arborfield, Reading
: RG2 9ND
SUBMITTED BY : Barkham Parish Council
DATE SUBMITTED : 20/11/2023

COMMENTS:

Barkham Parish Council object to this application, and our previous comments still stand. Our comments as previously submitted are:

As stated in our response to the Local Plan Update in January 2022, the main problem with this proposal is traffic.

Any attempt to mitigate the increased traffic on Barkham Ride, a narrow country lane with a 6ft 6in width restriction, by widening the road will further impact the rural setting of the area contrary to the ABNP.

Further, such a move would not solve any problems but simply move them to Commonfield Lane, Barkham Street and the section of Barkham Ride that passes through Finchampstead.

Barkham Parish Council request this application be refused.

Finchampstead Parish Council's comments on original scheme for 68 dwellings:

PLANNING REF : 223528
PROPERTY ADDRESS : FBC Centre
: Gorse Ride, Finchampstead, Wokingham
: RG40 4ES
SUBMITTED BY : Finchampstead Parish Council
DATE SUBMITTED : 15/12/2022

COMMENTS:

The sites 31-33 Barkham Ride are included in the emerging Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan (FNDP). However, the Council have some concerns that the proposals in this outline planning application are not in accordance with the FNDP, and the planning statement suggests that it is, which is misleading.

The main issues with this application are as follows:

1. Housing density - The original development site was proposed as '31-33 Barkham Ride' for c 70 houses, but this application suggests 68 houses on No. 33 only. The application includes a number of three storey buildings which (outside of the SDLs or Gorse Ride) are not supported by the emerging FNDP, Policy D1, and further increase the density.
2. Traffic & safety - The proposed development will bring a significant increase in traffic onto Barkham Ride, and an additional access point to and from Barkham Ride in an area where there are several other access points including the recently created entrance to Victoria Gardens. Speeding is an issue on Barkham Ride which has a 40mph limit, and the road is dangerously narrow and already struggles with the volume of traffic and buses passing.
3. Infrastructure - Impact on local amenities and already over stretched services.

Barkham Parish Council's comments on original scheme for 68 dwellings:

PLANNING REF : 223528
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Arborfield Green Community Centre
: Arborfield, Reading
: RG2 9ND
SUBMITTED BY : Barkham Parish Council
DATE SUBMITTED : 15/12/2022

COMMENTS:

Barkham Parish Council object to this application.

As stated in our response to the Local Plan Update in January 2022, the main problem with this proposal is traffic.

Any attempt to mitigate the increased traffic on Barkham Ride, a narrow country lane with a 6ft 6in width restriction, by widening the road will further impact the rural setting of the area contrary to the ABNP. Further, such a move would not solve any problems but simply move them to Commonfield Lane, Barkham Street and the section of Barkham Ride that passes through Finchampstead.

Barkham Parish Council request this application be refused.