

From: [REDACTED]
To: [PlanningPolicy](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Representation to the Draft Submission West Berkshire Local Plan on behalf of JPP Land Ltd
Date: 02 March 2023 13:52:36
Attachments: [W Berks Local Plan reps March 2023 Woolhampton.pdf](#)
[Woolhampton LP Reprs form 2 March 2023.pdf](#)
[Dec.pdf](#)
[Planning Statement for Land at Woolhampton December 2020.pdf](#)
[Public reports pack 11052022 1830 Eastern Area Planning Committee.pdf](#)

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Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find attached a duly completed representation form together with a statement detailing the objections to draft policy RSA13 of the Local Plan. The statement includes reference the details of application 20/03028/OUTMAJ which proposed the erection of 16 dwellings on the site allocated in Draft Policy RSA13. A copy of the Planning Statement for this application alongside the Council's decision on this are also attached as these amplify the reasons for the changes sought to the policy and the Council's acceptance of these matters together with confirming its deliverability as a housing allocation.

As the attached representation form confirms, I wish to be notified of the relevant remaining steps for the preparation of the Local Plan and also to appear at the examination.

I would be grateful if you could confirm receipt of this representation.

Yours faithfully,

Graham Ritchie BSc(Hons) MA MRTPI

Woolf Bond Planning
The Mitfords
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Woolf Bond Planning
Chartered Town Planning Consultants

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	<p>West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2022-2039</p> <p>Proposed Submission Representation Form</p> <p>Ref:</p> <p><i>(For official use only)</i></p>
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Please complete online or return this form to:	Online: http://consult.westberks.gov.uk/kse
	By email: planningpolicy@westberks.gov.uk
	By post: Planning Policy, Development and Regulation, Council Offices, Market Street, Newbury, RG14 5LD
Return by:	4:30pm on Friday 3 March 2023

This form has two parts:

- Part A - Your details: need only be completed once
- Part B - Your representation(s): please fill in a separate sheet for each representation you wish to make

PART A: Your Details		
<i>Please note the following:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We cannot register your representation without your details. • Representations cannot be kept confidential and will be available for public scrutiny, however, your contact details will not be published. • All information will be sent for examination by an independent inspector • All personal data will be handled in line with the Council's Privacy Policy on the Development Plan. You can view the Council's privacy notices at http://info.westberks.gov.uk/privacynotices 		
	Your details	Agent's details (if applicable)
Title:		Mr
First Name:*		Douglas
Last Name:*		Bond
Job title <i>(where relevant):</i>		
Organisation <i>(where relevant):</i>	JPP Land Ltd	Woolf Bond Planning
Address* <i>Please include postcode:</i>	c/o agent	The Mitfords Basingstoke Road Three Mile Cross Reading RG7 1AT
Email address:*		[REDACTED]
Telephone number:		0118 988 4923

*Mandatory field

Part B – Your Representation

Please use a separate sheet for each representation

The accompanying guidance note available at: <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/lpr-proposed-submission-consultation> will assist you in making representations.

*Your representation should cover succinctly all the information, evidence and supporting information necessary to support/justify the representation and the suggested change(s) as there will **not normally** be a subsequent opportunity to make further representations, **further submissions will ONLY be at the request of the Inspector, based on the matters and issues they identify for examination.***

Your name or organisation (and client if you are an agent):	JPP Land Ltd
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Please indicate which part of the Local Plan Review this representation relates to:

Section/paragraph:	
Policy:	RSA13
Appendix:	
Policies Map:	
Other:	

1. Legally Compliant

Please see the guidance notes for an explanation of what 'legally compliant' means.

Do you consider the Local Plan Review is legally compliant?

Yes

No

Please give reasons for your answer:

See enclosed statement

2. Soundness

Please see the guidance notes for an explanation of what 'soundness' means.

Do you consider the Local Plan Review is sound?

The soundness of the LPR should be assessed against the following criteria from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Please tick all that apply:

NPPF criteria	Yes	No
Positively Prepared: The plan provides a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed need and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development	✓	
Justified: the plan is an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence		✓
Effective: the plan is deliverable over the plan period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground	✓	
Consistent with national policy: the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies of the NPPF	✓	

Please give reasons for your answer:

The reasons why policy RSA13 is not sound by virtue of it not being justified is detailed in the accompanying statement

3. Complies with the Duty to Co-operate

Please see the guidance note for an explanation of what 'Duty to Cooperate' means.

Do you consider the Local Plan Review complies with the Duty to Co-operate?

Yes

No

Please give reasons for your answer:

4. Proposed Changes

Please set out what change(s) you consider necessary to make the Local Plan Review legally compliant or sound, having regard to the tests you have identified above (Please note that non-compliance with the duty to co-operate is incapable of modification at examination).

You will need to say why this change will make the LPR legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text. Please be as precise as possible.

Whilst these are detailed in the accompanying statement, in summary it is that criteria i to k are omitted from policy RSA13.

5. Independent Examination

If your representation is seeking a change, do you consider it necessary to participate at the examination hearing session(s)?

Yes

No

If you wish to participate at the oral part of the examination, please outline why you consider this to be necessary:

To clarify the adjustments to policy RSA13 of the Local Plan as detailed in the Statement

Please note the Inspector will determine the most appropriate procedure to adopt to hear those who have indicated that they wish to participate at the oral part of the examination.

6. Notification of Progress of the Local Plan Review

Do you wish to be notified of any of the following?

Please tick all that apply:

Tick

The submission of the Local Plan Review for Independent Examination	✓
The publication of the report of the Inspector appointed to carry out the examination	✓
The adoption of the Local Plan Review	✓

Please ensure that we have either an up to date email address or postal address at which we can contact you. You can amend your contact details by logging onto your account on the Local Plan Consultation Portal or by contacting the Planning Policy team.

Signature	<i>Douglas Bond</i>	Date	2 nd March 2023
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Your completed representations must be received by the Council by 4:30pm on Friday 3 March 2023.



Woolf Bond Planning

Chartered Town Planning Consultants

Our ref: DCB/GR/7981

Email: [REDACTED]

2nd March 2023

Development & Planning
West Berkshire Council
Market Street
Newbury
RG14 5LD

Dear Sirs,

West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2022-2039: Proposed Submission Plan Regulation 19 Consultation (January 2023)

Representations Submitted on Behalf of JPP Land Ltd

Introduction

We refer to the above consultation event and respond on behalf of our client, JPP Land Ltd. Our client's interests relate to land located north of Bath Road, Woolhampton. The site has a significant planning history, including its previous identification as a preferred allocation within the Draft Housing Site Allocations Local Plan (preferred option 15 – site ref WOOL001). This draft allocation indicated that the 0.83ha site could accommodate approximately 20 dwellings.

It is acknowledged that within the Draft Submission Local Plan, our client's land is included as a proposed allocation for approximately 16 dwellings (site ref RSA13) in policies SP14 and RSA13. We concur with the Council that the site is suitable for allocation, as assessed in Appendix 7 of the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment alongside the Council's Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) (December 2023).

The suitability of the site for residential development is further demonstrated by the technical evidence that was submitted to the Council as the planning application for 16 dwellings on the site (ref 20/03028/OUTMAJ). Whilst the application was refused by the Council on 21st September 2022, this was not on the basis on any technical reasons, rather this was due to the lack of a legal agreement alongside its current location outside of (but adjoining the settlement boundary). These are both factors which can readily be addressed, especially as through the Draft Submission Local Plan, the site is proposed for inclusion in the settlement boundary of Woolhampton.

Therefore, we reconfirm that the 0.83ha site is suitable for housing development comprising between 16 and 20 dwellings in a sustainable location as an extension to

the settlement of Woolhampton. We consequently endorse its inclusion as an allocation in policy RSA13, subject to the response outlined in this statement.

The site is an available, suitable and deliverable site, with no constraints to bringing the land forward for development at an early stage during the emerging plan period. This is supported by the Technical evidence which accompanied the recent planning application (LPA ref 20/03028/OUTMAJ). This therefore further supports the inclusion of the site as an allocation within the draft plan, subject to the response below.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Tests of Soundness

The NPPF (July 2021) sets out the principal components to be included in local plans. Paragraph 35 requires that in order to be “sound” a Development Plan Document (‘DPD’) should be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

In order to be justified the DPD must be founded upon a proportionate evidence base and represent an appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives.

Effective means the document must be deliverable over the plan period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the Statement of Common Ground.

The positive preparation test requires plans to as a minimum, seeks to meet the area’s objectively assessed needs and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical.

For the reasons set out in these submissions there are a number of potential matters that need to be addressed in future iterations of the emerging Plan. These are outlined following the relevant questions and supporting information within the consultation document.

The Vision Statement

In our response to the December 2018 version of the Draft Local Plan, we highlighted our concern regarding the inconsistency of the Council’s proposed vision with the approach of the NPPF, particularly paragraph 78). This related to the failure of the proposed vision to effectively support growth in villages. The revision to the vision (particularly the second paragraph) which includes references to both towns and villages is therefore consistent with national advice, as is the allocation our client’s land north of Bath Road, Woolhampton. The proposed vision for the Local Plan is therefore endorsed.

Further matters – Comments on draft Policy RSA13 regarding the allocation of land north of Bath Road, Woolhampton

The draft policy indicates that the site is proposed to be allocated for a residential development comprising approximately 16 dwellings. On behalf of our clients, an outline application for the erection of 16 dwellings was submitted to the authority on 21st December 2020 and validated on 5th January 2021 (LPA ref 20/03028/OUTMAJ). This application was refused by the Council on 21st September 2022 for the following two reasons:

- 1. The proposed development is not on land identified as suitable for residential development. The application site is located outside of a defined settlement boundary, below the district settlement hierarchy, where there is a presumption against residential development. The site is not land that has been allocated for residential development. The proposed development is not for rural exception housing, to accommodate rural workers, or limited infill within a closely knit cluster of 10 or more dwellings. As such the proposed development is contrary to Policy C1 of the Housing Site Allocations DPD 2006-2026, the Council's strategy for locating new homes in Policies ADPP1, ADPP6 and CS1 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026, and the National Planning Policy Framework.**
- 2. The application fails to provide a planning obligation to secure:**
 - (a) on-site provision of 40% affordable housing, without which the proposal fails to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy CS6 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026, and the Planning Obligations SPD; and**
 - (b) the provision, transfer (with commuted sum for maintenance) and governance of on-site public open space, without which the proposal fails to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy CS18 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026, Policies RL.1, RL.2 and RL.3 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 (Saved Policies 2007), and the Planning Obligations SPD.**

The first reason is clearly addressed by the Draft Submission Local Plan which confirms its inclusion within the defined settlement boundary for Woolhampton alongside its identification as an allocation for approximately 16 dwellings through policy RSA13. The second reason for refusal can also be readily resolved through

the preparation and agreement of a legal agreement, especially as when application 20/03028/OUTMAJ had been reported to committee, it was recommended for approval as all technical matters had been resolved. Whilst Councillors resolved to refuse the application as the site was not within a settlement, as explained this is resolved through the Draft Submission Local Plan.

Application 20/03028/OUTMAJ followed an earlier outline application (19/01942/OUTMAJ) for 16 dwellings on the site which was also refused by the authority on 23rd January 2020. The earlier application was determined by the authority before it agreed the Regulation 18 version of the Plan¹ which included the site as a draft allocation (then policy RSA20, now policy RSA13). The most recent application was submitted during the Council's consultation on the earlier Draft Local Plan which ended in February 2021.

The Council's determination of application 20/03028/OUTMAJ confirms The Council's determination of the earlier application together with the technical information submitted with the current scheme highlight those matters which are most likely to be relevant for inclusion in a policy for the development of the site.

In contrast, the assessment of the site for the Local Plan (through the most recent Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) (January 2023) does not fully take account of the information submitted for the application, which as confirmed in the determination the proposal (LPA ref 20/03028/OUTMAJ) confirmed that there were no technical matters limiting development of the site.

The technical information submitted with the current application confirms that development of the site could proceed with mitigation to address any potential impacts upon the adjoining Local Wildlife Site. The inclusion of a 15m buffer along the site's western boundary ensures development of the site also safeguards the ancient woodland which is the designated Local Wildlife Site. This is shown on the illustrative layout submitted with the application.

¹ Draft Local Plan Review December 2020, consulted upon from 11 December 2020 until 5 February 2021



A review of the Council’s appraisal of the land north of Bath Road, Woolhampton (MID4) within the January 2023 version of the HELAA is summarised below.

Stages 1a and 1b of the HELAA summarise the identification of the site and whether it is subject to an automatic exclusion. It is agreed that it is appropriate for site MID4 to be considered further within the HELAA.

Stage 2a includes consideration of “Development Potential”. This notes that the site adjoins ancient woodland for which a buffer would be required and that it lies adjacent to an existing settlement boundary. The illustrative layout for 16 dwellings includes a buffer to the Ancient Woodland which lies to the west of the site. The Planning Committee Report on the most recent application (paragraph 6.79) confirmed:

An adequate buffer will be retained and protected to the adjacent woodland.

Therefore the matters within the “Development Potential” analysis can readily be resolved. This is illustrated by the Council’s acceptance of the technical information for the earlier application alongside the proposed revision to the settlement boundary for Woolhampton associated with its allocation.

Stage 2b. This involves an assessment of suitability. Its overall conclusions are:

An ancient woodland (Great Mounts Copse) is immediately adjacent to site, suitability of site depends on appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures. Further ecological studies required.

Further landscape assessment required.

High risk of adverse nature conservation impacts.

Although these are noted, the Council accepted through the most recent planning application that these were all matters which could readily be addressed and not undermine its suitability.

Under availability within step 2c, this was accepted.

The achievability of the site (Step 2d) was also accepted.

The overall conclusion within the HELAA for the site (Step 2e - Deliverability) was that it was “potentially developable”. The conclusions were:

The site is available (in single ownership and there is an option agreement with a developer) and achievable as there are no known market, legal, cost, ownership fragmentation or delivery issues.

An ancient woodland (Great Mounts Copse) is immediately adjacent to site, suitability of site depends on appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures. A buffer will be required between the ancient woodland and development.

There are a number of factors which would need to be investigated further to confirm that the site is developable - further landscape assessment required, and high risk of adverse nature conservation impacts and further ecological studies required.

Whether the site is considered developable is also dependent on further assessment through the plan-making process, in relation to whether circumstances exist to support the change to the settlement boundary.

The technical matters detailed above were all satisfactorily resolved and confirmed through the Council’s determination of the most recent application (20/03028/OUTMAJ). As noted, there were only two reasons for refusing the application, the first being its location outside of a settlement boundary. Through the

Draft Local Plan, this is amended and therefore the Council's analysis of the site through the HELAA together with the applications confirm the suitability of the site.

The annexe to this statement provides further details of the response to the HELAA appraisal of the site, having regard to the information submitted with application 20/0028/OUTMAJ, which was accepted by the authority.

The Sustainability Appraisal (SA)/ Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the site (within appendix 8b (page 50)) concludes:

The site is likely to have an overall neutral impact on sustainability. Positive sustainability impacts are identified in relation to social sustainability as the site would help to meet local housing needs as well as being close to local services and facilities accessible by walking and cycling, with opportunities for public transport close by. Potential negative sustainability impacts have been identified in relation to environmental sustainability as the site is close to a number of ecological designations. A number of unknown sustainability impacts have also been identified. Many of these may be able to be mitigated but further would be needed to determine what would be required.

Whilst negative impacts are identified on environmental sustainability, these relate to matters which were highlighted as issues within the HELAA (Ancient Woodland, ecology). As noted, these were all resolved and accepted by the Council in determining the earlier application.

The other evidence prepared by the Council is summarised in the conclusions of the HELAA and SA/SEA and this therefore confirms its suitability. The draft policy concerning development of the site (RSA13) therefore broadly reflects the conclusions of these documents. The draft policy is proposed to read:

The site, as shown on the indicative map, will be required to be developed in accordance with the following parameters:

- a. The provision of approximately 16 dwellings in a scheme that provides a mix of dwelling types appropriate to the local area;**
- b. Access to the site will be provided from A4 Bath Road;**
- c. Main internal walking and cycle routes for the site will be provided and will be linked to existing routes including the Public Rights of Way network; and**
- d. The development design and layout will be further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA);**
- e. The scheme will be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any**

- designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected;
- f. An integrated water supply and drainage strategy will be provided in advance of development to ensure the provision of adequate and appropriate infrastructure for water supply and waste water, both on and off site. Development will be occupied in line with this strategy;
 - g. Measures will be included to improve accessibility by, and encourage use of, non-car transport modes. These measures will be set out in a Travel Information Pack;
 - h. Provide an appropriate buffer of at least 15 metres between the development and ancient woodland. The precise buffer will be determined through detailed assessment and design when proposals are submitted for development;
 - i. A desk-based assessment to better understand archaeological potential and survival will be required. Subject to the results of the assessment, a field evaluation may be required;
 - j. An odour assessment will be required due to the nearby location of the Woolhampton Waste Water Treatment Works;
 - k. Part of the site is underlain by aggregate mineral deposits and a Minerals Resource Assessment will be required; and
 - l. A Construction and Operations Management Plan (COMP) will accompany any planning application on the site. The COMP will safeguard the oil pipeline from operational works, including the provision of an appropriate buffer.

The only matter referenced in the policy which does not directly stem from the sites evaluation in the HELAA and SA/SEA is clause j. It is noted that this is derived from the conclusions of the Water Cycle Phase 2 – Outline Study (September 2021), primarily section 7. This states with respect to “odour assessments”:

7.1 Introduction

Where new developments encroach upon an existing Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTW), odour from that site may become a cause for nuisance and complaints from residents. Managing odour at WwTWs can add considerable capital and operational costs, particularly when retro fitted to existing WwTWs. National Planning Policy Guidance recommends that plan-makers consider whether new development is appropriate near to sites used (or proposed) for water and wastewater infrastructure, due to the risk of odour nuisance. Phase 1 highlighted six sites that may be risk of nuisance odour, no new sites were identified in Phase 2. For completeness the sites identified in Phase 1 are listed below.

7.2 Results

Table 7.1 identifies the six sites within West Berkshire which fall within 800m of WwTW. The 800m buffer does not take into account the size of the works, the treatment processes present or the condition of the WwTW which can all affect the magnitude of the odour. Where there is already urban area closer to the treatment works than the proposed site, the nature of odour on the new site is likely to be known and reported so these sites represent are lower risk. There are no proposed sites which are closer to the WwTW than existing urban areas. Sites that are given an amber assessment will not necessarily experience nuisance odour but should undergo an odour assessment as part of the planning process.

The appraisal then lists the 6 sites where odour assessments should be considered. One of these is MID4 as confirmed in the table below (copy of Table 7.1 from the Phase 2 Study).

WCS Site Ref.	Site Address WwTW	Distance (m)	WwTW	Location in Relation to Site	Closer than existing urban area?
BAS1	Land off Reading Road, Lower Basildon	Lower Basildon WwTW	540	NW	No
BAS2	Land adjacent Reading Road, Lower Basildon	Lower Basildon WwTW	692	NW	No
KIN3	Land east of Kiln Farm, Kintbury, RG17 9XD	Kintbury WwTW	767	SW	No
THA9	Land at Lower Way Farm, Thatcham, RG19 3TL	Newbury WwTW	449	N	No
MID4	Land north of the A4 Bath Road, junction of New Hill Rd, Woolhampton	Woolhampton WwTW	594	NW	No
EI2	Land south of Fidler's Lane, East Ilsley	East Ilsley WwTW	480	W	No

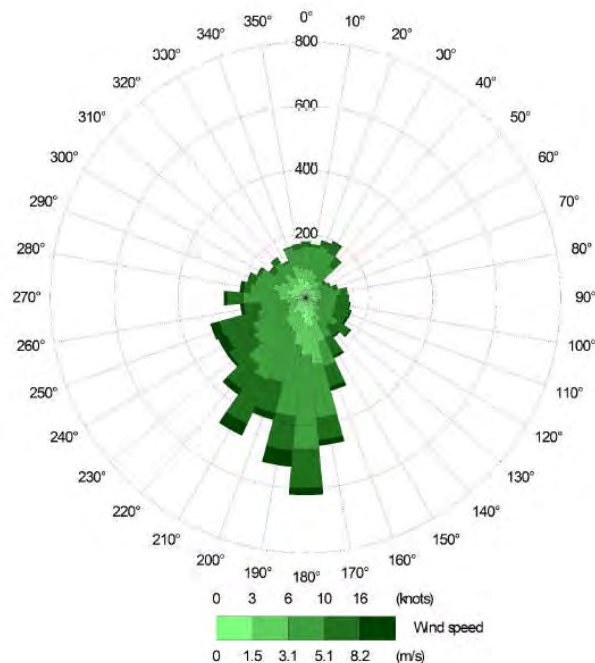
The overall conclusions of the Phase 2 Study in paragraph 7.3 regarding Odour was:

Six sites across West Berkshire are close enough to a WwTW for there to be a risk of nuisance odour. If these sites were to be

allocated in the Local Plan Review, an odour assessment is recommended as part of the planning process, funded by developers. The remaining sites have been given a rating of **green.** (my emphasis)

Although the table indicated that 6 sites were identified for consideration of odour assessments, the detailed sites schedule which accompanied the Phase 2 document only lists our clients site at Woolhampton as necessitating an odour assessment. This is notwithstanding the inclusion of the site on land at Lower Way Farm, Thatcham (THA9) as a housing allocation through policy RSA9 of the Local Plan. The table above confirms that this site should also be subject to the obligation to provide an odour assessment.

Since it is not the closest of the six sites to the treatment works² and more importantly, is unlikely to be affected since the prevailing wind direction is from the south-west, ensuring any odour releases are blown away from the site north of Bath Road. The prevailing wind direction is illustrated by the wind rose for RAF Benson which confirms the prevalence of wind from the south-west³.



RAF Benson meteorological station wind rose (2019).

² The site in Thatcham included as an allocation is closer

³ RAF Benson lies approximately 25km NNE of Woolhampton

Alongside a lack of consideration of wind direction, there is also no explanation with respect to the reasons why 800m is the relevant distance from an existing treatment works for determining potential odour issues.

Taking account of these factors, it is not considered that this element of the policy is justified, as the evidence base is flawed. Either all the allocations associated with the sites listed in Table 7.1 of the Phase 2 Study should be subject to the requirement to provide an odour assessment or non should be.

To reflect the approach of the Plan for the Lower Way, Thatcham site allocated in policy RSA5 and listed in Table 7.1, clause j of policy RSA13 should therefore be omitted.

The annex to this statement explains the reasons why heritage and minerals assessments are not required within the policy.

The inclusion of our client's land north of the Bath Road in Woolhampton as envisaged by draft Policy RSA13, whilst assisting in the enhancement or maintenance of the vitality of rural communities as required by the NPPF (paragraph 78), will also contribute towards the minimum of 10% of housing allocations to meet the district's overall housing need on a site of less than 1ha, as required by paragraph 69.

Representation

The approach of policy RSA13 is therefore unsound as it is not justified. This especially relates to criteria i to k of the policy.

Revision to policy RSA13 sought.

To resolve the objection to policy RSA13, we advocate that criteria i to k of the policy are omitted.

Conclusion

Whilst we concur with the Council's inclusion of our client's land north of Bath Road, Woolhampton as an allocation for around 16 dwellings in policies SP14 and RSA13, for the reasons outlined in the statement, the Local Plan as draft is currently unsound. We therefore object to the Local Plan.

The objection to the plan can readily be resolved through the omission of criteria i to k of policy RSA13 for the reasons outlined.

Summary

We trust the above comments are of assistance in preparing the next iteration of the Local Plan and await confirmation of receipt of our representations in due course.

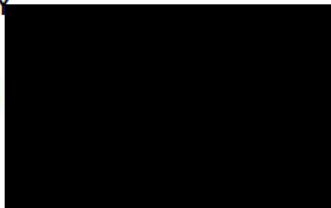
We welcome the opportunity to open up dialogue with the Council in order to further proposals and the formulation of the detailed policy requirements associated with the allocation of our client's land as currently envisaged in policies SP14 and RSA13.

We also confirm that we wish to be notified of each of the relevant future steps in the preparation of the Local Plan through to its adoption in due course.

We also confirm that we wish to appear at the forthcoming Local Plan examination to clarify our objection to policy RSA13.

Please do not hesitate to contact the writer should you wish to discuss any matter(s) arising.

Y



Douglas Bond BA (Hons) MRTPI

Enc.

Annex detailing response to HELAA assessment

1. Development potential.

The first section of the HELAA deals with development potential. The Assessment highlights site specific issues which could affect capacity as relating to the ancient woodland and the need for a buffer. The illustrative scheme within application 20/03028/OUTMAJ includes such a buffer, consistent with Natural England guidelines, with a depth of 15 m. In withdrawing reason for refusal 3 in connection with the previous application, the Council now confirms that the site can be developed without harm to the ancient woodland.

The Assessment assumes a density of 30 dwellings per hectare and an estimated development potential of 20 dwellings. This contrasts to the more sensitive and agreed lower density of 19.4 dwellings per hectare and the 16 dwellings proposed.

2. Suitability

Under relevant planning history, the HELAA references the two earlier applications, as noted in the statement.

It also records the site being assessed as “potentially developable” in the 2013 strategic housing land availability assessment as recorded above. The Council’s assessment notes that:

“During the site selection work for the Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document, the site was recommended as an option for allocation in the Housing Site Allocations (HSA) DPD because it was well connected to existing settlement, close to local services and facilities.

At preferred options the Parish Council commented that development of the site would extend the village westwards. Concern was also raised over additional traffic movement on to New Road Hill. The Parish Council stated a preference for WOOL006 to be allocated for development.”

Application 20/03028/OUTMAJ did not include an access onto New Road Hill. Whilst the proposal would “extend the village westwards”, the alternative site was extending the settlement eastwards. There is no distinguishing difference between the principle of such an extension. In any event, the proposal is contained by a mature woodland block which screens and encloses the site from the more open and wider landscape further to the west. In this sense the suggested extension of the village is not out into the wider open countryside but up to a very well established and contained landscape feature. The relationship of the scheme to this landscape feature is also respected.

In respect of location (settlement hierarchy, relationship to settlement boundary) the HELAA Assessment notes that the site is adjacent to the settlement of Woolhampton, an identified Service Village that has a more limited range of services and “some limited development potential”. The reference to the settlement having a limited range of services fails to acknowledge the significant, higher order, railway station within Woolhampton. The Assessment records that the site adjoins the settlement boundary on the northern and eastern sides. The A4 Bath Road together with a community facility, car park, allotments and some frontage dwellings lie to the south and south east.

The HELAA Assessment confirms that development on the site would not result in harm to the AONB.

In respect of highways and access, the Assessment confirms the position in respect of the planning applications that there are no objections to the proposed means of access off the Bath Road, no significant impact is expected in respect of local highway capacity, and Highways England has advised that individually, the site would be unlikely to materially impact on the operation of the strategic road network.

In respect of flooding, the Assessment confirms that the site lies within flood zone 1 with a low probability of flooding.

No issues are raised in relation to surface water, ground water flood risk and the Council’s drainage officer confirms that the site is suitable for development.

The Assessment confirms that the site is not defined as public open space and that there is no requirement for additional public open space provision over and above development plan policy requirements.

The Assessment confirms that the site has not been identified as Local Green Space which reinforces the point that the site is not significant in townscape terms.

In respect of agricultural land, the site is classified as non-agricultural land. This is hardly surprising given the well contained nature of the site, and its divorced nature from the more open and usable countryside further to the west, all of which point to the site being of limited use other than paddock land on the settlement edge.

The Assessment under the heading air quality, pollution and contamination refers to the location of the site adjacent to the A4, with possible Nitrogen Dioxide and Particulate Matter from construction and operational impacts, and possible contamination and high risk of noise and vibration problems to future residents from the A4. It is relevant to note that no such objections were raised in relation to the planning application in respect of these matters. Furthermore, the site allocated and under construction at the eastern end of the village shares a similar frontage relationship onto the Bath Road. These are not therefore considered determinative issues.

In respect of potential adverse nature conservation impacts, the Thames Valley Environmental Research Centre highlights the site lying within 500m of priority habitats, ancient woodland, European protected species, priority species, statutory sites, SSSI Impact Risk Zone and local wildlife sites.

The Berkshire, Bucks and Oxon wildlife Trust highlight a number of potential impacts to these interests in the absence of any avoidance or mitigation measures. The planning application includes appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures such that the only outstanding nature conservation impacts relate to bats and dormice surveys. The surveys submitted to the Council as part of the planning application 20/03028/OUTMAJ confirm that these do not present a constraint to the development of the site in the manner proposed. The Council's withdrawal of reason for refusal 3 to an earlier application confirms this too.

The 15m buffer zone also confirms appropriate avoidance and mitigation to the nearby ancient woodland.

In respect of whether development would be appropriate in the context of existing settlement form, pattern and character of the landscape, a generic passage from the West Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment (2019) is set out in the HELAA. This could apply to any edge of settlement field thereby precluding any form of development at the edge of a sustainable settlement within the identified settlement hierarchy.

The site-specific comment does recognise the fact that there is existing residential development to the east and north of the site. It records: "Western boundary of the site nearby open countryside is well screened by mature trees. Further landscape assessment required". This does not rule out the development having regard to this consideration. "Further landscape assessment required" comes in the form of the application Landscape and Visual Impact Addendum report that accompanies this Statement.

The Assessment confirms no harm to or loss of significance to any designated heritage assets.

In terms of designated heritage assets, a desk-based archaeological assessment together with some possible fieldwork techniques may be necessary. However, the determination of the earlier application has not identified any such interest. The Planning Statement (paragraph 4.41) also notes that whilst heritage has been identified as a potential matter to be reviewed, this was not identified in the Council's earlier determination of applications 19/01942/OUTMAJ and 20/03028/OUTMAJ.

In terms of minerals and waste, it is noted that the site lies within an existing and proposed mineral safeguarding area. As the Planning Statement which accompanied application 20/03028/OUTMAJ confirms (paragraph 4.41):

The site could not reasonably be quarried in a standalone respect due to its limited area and the need to ensure appropriate buffers to the residential properties, oil pipeline and ancient woodland within or adjoining the site. However, should any minerals be observed on site during construction, these can be sent to a local processor rather than sent to landfill⁴. Again, this could be dealt with by condition. Consequently, mineral extraction is therefore not a constraint for the site.

This flexibility should be acknowledged within any policy although as explained above, this is not considered to be a relevant factor for the determination of the earlier application.

The suitability conclusions refer to the need for appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures in respect of the ancient woodland, the potential high risk of adverse nature conservation impacts. These have now been addressed as confirmed in the recent ecological survey report and Council's withdrawal of reason for refusal 3 to the earlier application. The only outstanding matter therefore relates to a further landscape assessment. This as noted was provided with application 20/03028/OUTMAJ and considered acceptable to the Council. Therefore as demonstrated by the application, the scheme and consequently the site is acceptable in landscape character terms.

The Assessment confirms that all other sites at the edge of Woolhampton are unsuitable, leaving the application site as the only suitable site at this Sustainable Service Village, which the HELAA confirms is suitable and capable of accommodating additional development. To not support additional meaningful development at Woolhampton, bearing in mind the level of existing transport infrastructure (in particular the railway station), would not be sustainable.

3 and 4. Availability and Achievability

The HELAA confirms that the site is immediately available and achievable with no new issues constraining the development of the site. This representation and the current planning application reaffirm this matter.

5. Deliverability

Within this section of the HELAA the Assessment confirms that the site is available, achievable, potentially developable in part owing to a buffer required joining the ancient woodland on the western site boundary, with suitability unknown due to the

⁴ It is understood that quarries within West Berkshire can accept such limited quantities of minerals for processing.

outstanding nature conservation surveys and landscape assessment, both of which are now addressed through this application.

Concluding remarks on 2023 HELAA

Overall, the Council's most recent Assessment highlights the suitability of the site even for a higher level of development than that proposed through the application 20/03028/OUTMAJ. The lower number of dwellings proposed allowed for the appropriate identified mitigation and avoidance measures to be incorporated, in particular in relation to the ancient woodland buffer. The outstanding nature conservation constraints are now resolved through the recent season sensitive bat and dormice surveys, whilst the submitted Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Addendum to the current application addresses landscape impact. That said, the acknowledgement of the well contained nature of the site confirms the landscape and visual impact is limited. Moreover, the planning officer's report on the earlier application confirms that "the presence of housing would be conspicuous in public views, albeit localised and filtered (to varying degrees) but would inevitably be an intrinsic change to the character of the area (the site) in this location".

There can be no doubt that with virtually every greenfield site the presence of housing would be conspicuous in public views, but in this case, it is acknowledged that these would be "localised and filtered". Furthermore, the change from a greenfield site to a housing development, albeit set within a settled and mature landscape, would bring about a change, however, the degree of change in this case is limited, as well as that change being well related to existing built form seen in the same context of the site. This too reduces further the extent of change and impact to a level that is judged by the applicants to be acceptable.

It is clear that the Council's determination of applications 19/01942/OUTMAJ and 20/03028/OUTMAJ has reviewed the various factors which would need to be addressed to enable residential development of the allocation to proceed.

Although the HELAA and SA/SEA have listed other issues, it is evident that planning application 20/03028/OUTMAJ (including the material submitted with it) have addressed these. Council's provisional identification of heritage, minerals and odour as potential factors for development of the site should consequently not be incorporated into the specific expectations of the authority within the policy of the draft Submission Local Plan.

Supporting Planning Statement

**RE-SUBMISSION OF OUTLINE
PLANNING APPLICATION FOR:**

**THE ERECTION OF 16 DWELLINGS,
INCLUDING 6 AFFORDABLE UNITS,
WITH ACCESS FROM BATH ROAD**

**LAND AT JUNCTION WITH BATH ROAD,
NEW ROAD HILL, WOOLHAMPTON,
BERKSHIRE**

Prepared by:

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Woolf Bond Planning LLP**

For

JPP LAND LTD

WBP REF: DB/7981

DECEMBER 2020



Woolf Bond Planning
Chartered Town Planning Consultants

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This Statement has been prepared in support of the re-submission of an outline planning application for the erection of 16 dwellings (10 market and 6 affordable), with access from Bath Road on land to the west of New Road Hill and to the north of Bath Road, Woolhampton. The earlier application (LPA ref 19/01942/OUTMAJ) was refused by the authority on 23rd January 2020. The application follows an exchange of correspondence between the Council and the applicant in respect of an appeal against the earlier refusal indicating that following the decision to allocate the site in the regulation 18 draft local plan review (2037), the appeal be held in abeyance whilst an application is submitted and determined by the Council thereby allowing the appeal to be withdrawn. The Planning Inspectorate refused to accept placing the appeal in abeyance. Accordingly, the appeal was withdrawn, and this application is being submitted with a view to it being approved by the Council following the consultation exercise on the regulation 18 draft local plan. Separate representations will be submitted in support of the local plan confirming the suitability, availability and deliverability of the site for 16 dwellings consistent with draft local plan policies SP4 and RSA 20 which allocate the site for up to 20 dwellings.
- 1.2. This Statement sets out the background to the proposal, including information relating to the location of the site, the nature of development sought, the planning history for the site, and information on the relevant planning policy context, including the allocation of the site in the regulation 18 draft local plan review (2037).
- 1.3. It also sets out the planning policy context, application of current and emerging development plan policy and the case in response to the Council's reasons for refusing the earlier application. These consequently justify the conclusion that planning permission should be granted.
- 1.4. This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Addendum and its appendices.
- 1.5. A separate Ecological Technical Briefing Note statement was prepared and sent to the Council. The Council has reviewed this and confirmed in an email dated 22nd October 2020 that Reason for Refusal No.3 *"has been satisfactorily addressed, and therefore*

evidence does not need to be produced from either party on ecology matters". Therefore, the third reason for refusal has been addressed. The Ecological Technical Briefing Note and the Council's email have been subsumed into an updated Ecological Appraisal, which is submitted with this Statement.

- 1.6. The conclusions set out a brief summary of the planning case and why the application should be approved. The remainder of this Planning Statement sets out in detail the case in support of this re-submitted application.

2. THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1. The application site is located on the western edge of the settlement of Woolhampton. It occupies a broadly rectangular field of 0.81ha (excluding highway land) and appears to have been used as a paddock in the past. The gradient of the site falls away to the south by around 13m. With reference to the Indicative Site Layout Plan below, the site is bounded by New Road Hill, and the properties that front on to it, to the east, and Bath Road (A4) to the south. The southern Bath Road frontage contains various recently built residential properties, a village hall, children's play area, and an allotment site. To the west of the site is a block of ancient woodland known as Great Mounts Copse, although that abutting the site boundary is replanted ancient woodland known as Morris Copse. To the north of the site, there are three residential properties set in relatively large plots, that all front on to New Road Hill. It is evident that the site is very well contained and well related to the built-up area of Woolhampton with varying degrees of built form / settlement uses on 3 of the 4 sides that surround the application site.



Extract from Indicative Site Layout Plan

2.2. The village of Woolhampton is defined as a “Service Village” in the West Berkshire Core Strategy, 2012. Within the village, there are a number of local services and facilities available, including:

1. Midgham Railway Station on the Reading to Newbury line;
2. A village shop and a corner shop.
3. A petrol filling station;
4. Bus services operated by Reading buses;
5. A doctor’s surgery;
6. A primary school located in Upper Woolhampton;
7. A village hall;
8. Visiting mobile library service;
9. Children’s play area;
10. Two public houses;

2.3. Woolhampton is an “infrastructure rich settlement,” with infrastructure capacity to support additional residential development. The application site is well related to the services and facilities available locally in Woolhampton, emphasising its sustainable location. The Council’s determination of the earlier application does not dispute the sustainable location of the site. Its recent local plan history confirms this too as explained later.

2.4. Owing to the well contained character of the site and its strong physical and visual relationship to Woolhampton itself, the site has correspondingly limited landscape and visual amenity value. This contrasts with the more open countryside beyond the site that has fewer urban influences and has greater landscape and visual amenity value.

3. THE APPLICATION PROPOSAL

3.1. The proposed development is in outline form, to include means of access from Bath Road, for the provision of 16 two-storey residential units, including six affordable units, on land between New Road Hill and Bath Road, to the west of the Woolhampton. The indicative layout proposes a mix of detached and semi-detached dwellings, incorporating 1-, 2-, 3- and 4-bedroom homes. Detailed design matters will be considered at reserved matters stage, however, the indicative site layout has been designed to respect the gradient of the land and incorporate the fall of the site into the design, to minimise impact on any neighbouring land uses, continue to preserve the natural containment of the site from external local and long-distance views, and respect the need for a buffer to the woodland to the west and the oil pipeline to the north. It respects the considerations highlighted in the draft local plan policy for the site too.



Extract from Indicative Site Layout Plan 100/110C

4. SITE PLANNING HISTORY

4.1. In July 2014, the Council consulted on the Preferred Options version of the Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document. This acknowledged that Woolhampton is a Service Village within the settlement hierarchy defined by the Core Strategy, and therefore suitable for a limited amount of development. Five sites in Woolhampton were promoted through the SHLAA process that informed the Preferred Options document, but only two of these were put forward in the Preferred Options document itself:

“4.14 There are two alternative preferred sites for Woolhampton, both to the north of the A4, one at the western and one at the eastern end of the village. At this stage these are both put forward for consultation and a choice will be made as to which one is taken forward into the submission plan based on the outcome of consultation.”

4.2. The Preferred Option for the site was as follows:

Preferred Option 15 [View Comments \(12\)](#) [Add Comments](#)

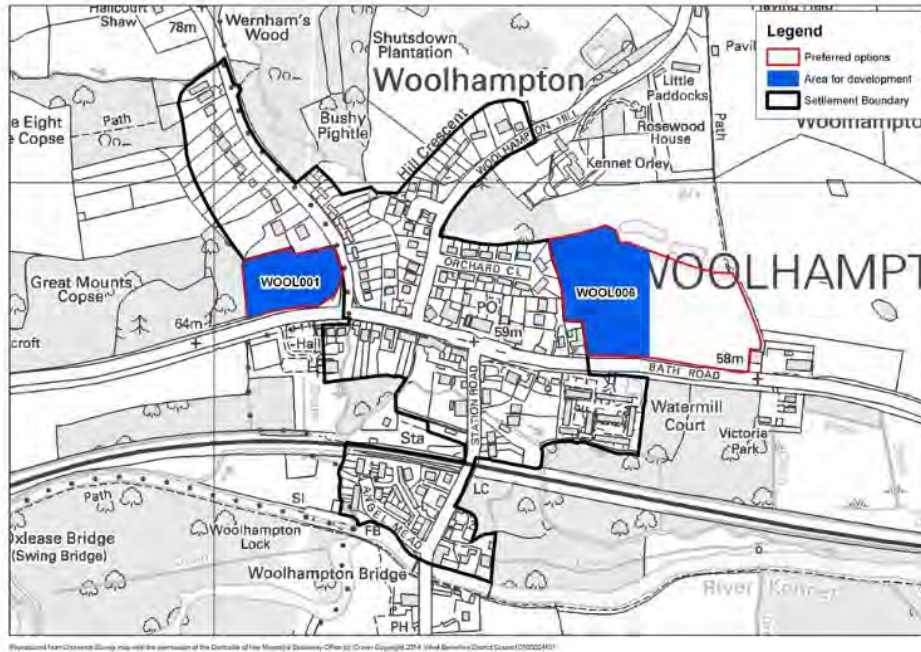
Land north of Bath Road (SHLAA reference WOOL001).

Land north of Bath Road is an approximately 0.83 hectare site which is well located to facilities and services in Woolhampton. It is proposed that it could accommodate 20 dwellings, with an appropriate type and mix of dwellings, including affordable housing. Development would need to take into account the oil pipeline which crosses the northern boundary of the site and the electricity pylons which run along the site boundary.

The site is adjacent to ancient woodland and trees with Tree Preservation Orders as well as a Local Wildlife Site. It is also adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area so there are opportunities to enhance biodiversity in the area. Ecological surveys would be required to inform any development proposal.

Access is proposed off New Road Hill.

4.3. The map from the Site Allocations Preferred Options document is reproduced below, showing the land the subject of this application as WOOL001.



Map extract from Housing Site Allocations Preferred Options document, 2014

4.4. The Council's Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment that accompanied the Preferred Options Housing Site Allocations Plan stated that:

“Overall the site is likely to have a neutral effect on sustainability, and the SA/SEA does not highlight any significant sustainability effects...The site is well related to the existing development in Woolhampton, close to local services and facilities. There are no significant issues with the site. Potential negative impacts in relation to biodiversity and noise and air pollution, but this can be overcome and neutralised with mitigation measures.”

4.5. Twelve respondents gave feedback to the Council's consultation. The main issues raised related to the following points. Additional commentary in bold below has been provided in this Statement explaining how the current scheme addresses and resolves the issues raised:

- Site Wool-006 (the alternative site proposed in the Site Allocations Preferred Options document) provides the least impact on the village, given that if the existing hedge were retained, the site would be screened from the housing opposite (Watermill Court) and from the A4; **The application site also benefits from a strong existing natural screening along its boundaries, which will be protected and enhanced.**

- Site Wool-001 would extend the village westwards and that any S106/Community Infrastructure levies arising would be spent in Midgham and not Woolhampton;

Not a material planning consideration, but issues of infrastructure investment will be addressed through a CIL payment.

- Additional traffic movement arising from the site, onto New Road Hill, would have an adverse impact on what is a relatively small road;

Access is now from Bath Road, which has been accepted by the Council when determining the application, thereby preserving New Road Hill, a feature of the scheme welcomed by a number of local residents at the public consultation stage.

- Woolhampton Parish Council therefore resolved that for these three reasons, this site should be opposed/rejected for development;

Two of these issues plainly no longer apply (expenditure of CIL monies and the location of the access.

- Concerns about increased surface water run-off arising from the introduction of built form on the site;

The submitted SUDS Statement confirms that surface water runoff will not arise from the scheme, which has been confirmed through the Council's determination of the application.

- Do not object to sympathetic development within the village settlement boundary, but a development of this size on the area of land proposed cannot be sustained by the current village infrastructure without significant investment to the drainage, village car parking facilities, transport links and local amenities;

The proposed scheme is for 16 dwellings, not 20, and is more in keeping with the scale of Woolhampton and its existing infrastructure provision. The Council have not identified any infrastructure issues when determining the application.

- Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust commented that it would expect to see consideration of how mitigation measures, such as provision and management of public open space, or management of the designated sites, are to be implemented and evidence of how these mitigation measures will effectively ensure that the development will proactively contribute to protecting and enhancing the local Ancient Woodland and Local Wildlife Sites as well as the wider natural environment;

An updated Ecological Assessment supports this application, and together with a sensitive scheme layout set back from the ancient woodland boundary, and appropriate “green” buffers, confirms that the proposals will respect ecologically sensitive areas. The updated dormouse and bat survey work now confirm no unacceptable impacts. The Council have, as a result, now withdrawn reason for refusal 3.

- Natural England commented that there should be an assessment of the potential for impacts upon the Woolhampton Reed Beds SSSI together with clarification or evidence of the conclusion of there being no hydrological link to the River Kennett SSSI ~280m to the south;

Submitted Ecological Assessment confirms no such impacts and Natural England raised no comments.

- Landscape impacts will need to be taken into account due to the North Wessex Downs AONB being just a kilometre away to the north east - LVIA's should be carried out;

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment confirms no impact on North West Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Council's subsequent HELAA confirms no impact either.

- There is an oil pipeline that runs along the northern part of this potential development site and that no buildings can be constructed at least 6 metres either side of pipeline;

The illustrative layout respects this 6m pipeline easement. The Council determination of the application confirms no outstanding issue.

- The A4 through Woolhampton is already a heavily congested area due to volume of traffic. New Road Hill is heavily used and not wide enough to have a pavement, making it dangerous for those residents who live alongside the road to walk on it;

There will be no access to the site from New Road Hill. The Transport Statement confirms that the configuration of the proposed access to the site from the A4 Bath Road is safe, a point accepted by the Council when determine the application.

- Limited access to this site - potential hazard on this stretch of A4 as there is a bend in the road at this point, so access from the A4 not acceptable;

The Transport Statement confirms that the configuration of the proposed access to the site from the A4 Bath Road is safe, and the access proposals have been subject to a road safety audit

which confirms the same, a point also accepted by the Council when determine the application.

- Concerns regarding the capacity of the sewerage pumping station;
No capacity issues identified. The Council determination of the application confirms no outstanding issue.

- The proposal for 20 dwellings on this site would be a considerable over-development of the site, with a high level of impact on the amenity of the properties which back onto this site;

The proposal is for the delivery of 16 dwellings. The new homes are set back and well screened from neighbouring properties in order to preserve their amenities, a point not disputed by the Council when determining the application.

- The site is well related to services and facilities in the village, opposite the village hall and playground, and close to Midgham Railway station, and would be well integrated with the village;

Noted, confirming the suitability of the site for the proposed development from a sustainable location point of view, a matter also accepted by the Council when determining the application.

- Allocation of the site would not create any possibility of development on adjoining sites, providing an opportunity for a limited expansion of the village of an appropriate scale which can be easily assimilated into the community;

Noted, confirming the suitability of the site for the proposed development.

- At a local level the site is well screened by the adjacent woodland and by a substantial tree and hedge screen along both boundaries where trees are protected by TPOs;

Noted, confirming the suitability of the site for the proposed development from a landscape point of view. Furthermore, no objections were raised by the tree officer when consulted on the application.

- In the wider landscape context, the site is well screened and would not be visible from long distances from outside the settlement or from the Bath Road and therefore would have limited impact on the landscape setting of the settlement;

Noted, confirming the suitability of the site for the proposed development from a landscape and visual amenity point of view. This finding, in particular that development of the site “would have limited impact on the landscape setting of the settlement” is

particularly relevant given the Council's contradictory reason for refusal;

- If only one site option is allocated in Woolhampton it is considered that site WOOL001 is preferable to WOOL006. It is better integrated into the community, close to village facilities, is small scale and well defined with minimal visual impact on the landscape setting of Woolhampton.

Noted, confirming the suitability of the site for the proposed development. Furthermore, the recent 2020 HELAA identifies the application site as now the only potentially developable site at Woolhampton.

4.6. Following feedback from consultation, the Draft Submission Housing Site Allocations Plan allocated land to the north of the A4, SHLAA reference WOOL006, on the eastern side of Woolhampton. The application site was not allocated in the Plan.

4.7. Prior to this, there is no relevant planning history for the site.

2020 HELAA

4.8. The Council published a Housing Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) in February 2020. The application site was one of five sites assessed in Midgham Parish, three of which lie on the edge of Woolhampton. The conclusion of the Assessment is that the application site is the only site with development potential at Woolhampton. The suitability of the site is acknowledged in the December 2020 update on the HELAA, which re-affirms that it is the sole site at Woolhampton with development potential.

4.9. As to the site itself, the Assessment assumes a density of 30 dwellings per hectare which contrasts with the more sensitive and agreed lower density of 19.4 dwellings per hectare proposed for the application scheme. Accordingly, the HELAA Assessment should be seen in this light. The HELAA looks at:

1. Development potential;
2. Suitability;
3. Availability;
4. Achievability; and
5. Deliverability

4.10. Each is addressed in turn below.

1. Development potential.

- 4.11. The first section of the HELAA deals with development potential. The Assessment highlights site specific issues which could affect capacity as relating to the ancient woodland and the need for a buffer. The illustrative application scheme includes such a buffer, consistent with Natural England guidelines, with a depth of 15 m. In withdrawing reason for refusal 3 in connection with the previous application, the Council now confirms that the application site can be developed without harm to the ancient woodland.
- 4.12. The Assessment assumes a density of 30 dwellings per hectare and an estimated development potential of 20 dwellings. This contrasts to the more sensitive and agreed lower density of 19.4 dwellings per hectare and the 16 dwellings proposed.

2. Suitability

- 4.13. Under relevant planning history, the HELAA Assessment confirms no relevant planning applications but records the site being assessed as “potentially developable” in the 2013 strategic housing land availability assessment as recorded above. The Council’s assessment notes that:

“During the site selection work for the Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document, the site was recommended as an option for allocation in the Housing Site Allocations (HSA) DPD because it was well connected to existing settlement, close to local services and facilities. At preferred options the Parish Council commented that development of the site would extend the village westwards. Concern was also raised over additional traffic movement on to New Road Hill. The Parish Council stated a preference for WOOL006 to be allocated for development.”

- 4.14. The application scheme no longer proposes an access onto New Road Hill. Whilst the proposal would “extend the village westwards”, the alternative site was extending the settlement eastwards. There is no distinguishing difference between the principle of such an extension. In any event, the proposal is contained by a mature woodland block which screens and encloses the site from the more open and wider landscape further to the west. In this sense the suggested extension of the village is not out into

the wider open countryside but up to a very well established and contained landscape feature. The relationship of the scheme to this landscape feature is also respected.

- 4.15. In respect of location (settlement hierarchy, relationship to settlement boundary) the HELAA Assessment notes that the site is adjacent to the settlement of Woolhampton, an identified Service Village that has a more limited range of services and “some limited development potential”. The reference to the settlement having a limited range of services fails to acknowledge the significant, higher order, railway station within Woolhampton. The Assessment records that the site adjoins the settlement boundary on the northern and eastern sides. The A4 Bath Road together with a community facility, car park, allotments and some frontage dwellings lie to the south and south east.
- 4.16. The HELAA Assessment confirms that development on the site would not result in harm to the AONB.
- 4.17. In respect of highways and access, the Assessment confirms the position in respect of the planning application that there are no objections to the proposed means of access off the Bath Road, no significant impact is expected in respect of local highway capacity, and Highways England has advised that individually, the site would be unlikely to materially impact on the operation of the strategic road network.
- 4.18. In respect of flooding, the Assessment confirms that the site lies within flood zone 1 with a low probability of flooding.
- 4.19. No issues are raised in relation to surface water, ground water flood risk and the Council’s drainage officer confirms that the site is suitable for development.
- 4.20. The Assessment confirms that the site is not defined as public open space and that there is no requirement for additional public open space provision over and above development plan policy requirements.
- 4.21. The Assessment confirms that the site has not been identified as Local Green Space which reinforces the point that the site is not significant in townscape terms.

- 4.22. In respect of agricultural land, the site is classified as non-agricultural land. This is hardly surprising given the well contained nature of the site, and its divorced nature from the more open and usable countryside further to the west, all of which point to the site being of limited use other than paddock land on the settlement edge.
- 4.23. The Assessment under the heading air quality, pollution and contamination refers to the location of the site adjacent to the A4, with possible Nitrogen Dioxide and Particulate Matter from construction and operational impacts, and possible contamination and high risk of noise and vibration problems to future residents from the A4. It is relevant to note that no such objections were raised in relation to the planning application in respect of these matters. Furthermore, the site allocated and under construction at the eastern end of the village shares a similar frontage relationship onto the Bath Road. These are not therefore considered determinative issues.
- 4.24. In respect of potential adverse nature conservation impacts, the Thames Valley Environmental Research Centre highlights the site lying within 500m of priority habitats, ancient woodland, European protected species, priority species, statutory sites, SSSI Impact Risk Zone and local wildlife sites.
- 4.25. The Berkshire, Bucks and Oxon wildlife Trust highlight a number of potential impacts to these interests in the absence of any avoidance or mitigation measures. The planning application includes appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures such that the only outstanding nature conservation impacts relate to bats and dormice surveys. The recent surveys confirm that these do not present a constraint to the development of the site in the manner proposed. The Council's withdrawal of reason for refusal 3 confirms this too.
- 4.26. The 15m buffer zone also confirms appropriate avoidance and mitigation to the nearby ancient woodland.
- 4.27. In respect of whether development would be appropriate in the context of existing settlement form, pattern and character of the landscape, a generic passage from the West Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment (2019) is set out in the HELAA. This could apply to any edge of settlement field thereby precluding any form of development at the edge of a sustainable settlement within the identified settlement hierarchy.

- 4.28. The site-specific comment does recognise the fact that there is existing residential development to the east and north of the site. It records: "Western boundary of the site nearby open countryside is well screened by mature trees. Further landscape assessment required". This does not rule out the development having regard to this consideration. "Further landscape assessment required" comes in the form of the application Landscape and Visual Impact Addendum report that accompanies this Statement.
- 4.29. The Assessment confirms no harm to or loss of significance to any designated heritage assets.
- 4.30. In terms of designated heritage assets, a desk-based archaeological assessment together with some possible fieldwork techniques may be necessary. The determination of the earlier application has not identified any such interest.
- 4.31. In terms of minerals and waste, it is noted that the site lies within an existing and proposed mineral safeguarding area. However, this issue has not been raised as a determinative constraint when considering the planning application.
- 4.32. The suitability conclusions refer to the need for appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures in respect of the ancient woodland, the potential high risk of adverse nature conservation impacts. These have now been addressed as confirmed in the recent ecological survey report and Council's withdrawal of reason for refusal 3. The only outstanding matter therefore relates to a further landscape assessment. This as noted is now provided through this application which confirms the acceptable effect of the scheme in landscape character terms.
- 4.33. The Assessment confirms that all other sites at the edge of Woolhampton are unsuitable, leaving the application site as the only suitable site at this sustainable Service Village, which the HELAA confirms is suitable and capable of accommodating additional development. To not support additional meaningful development at Woolhampton, bearing in mind the level of existing transport infrastructure (in particular the railway station), would not be sustainable.

3 and 4. Availability and Achievability

- 4.34. The HELAA confirms that the site is immediately available and achievable with no new issues constraining the development of the site.

5. Deliverability

- 4.35. Within this section of the HELAA the Assessment confirms that the site is available, achievable, potentially developable in part owing to a buffer required joining the ancient woodland on the western site boundary, with suitability unknown due to the outstanding nature conservation surveys and landscape assessment, both of which are now addressed through this application.

Concluding remarks on 2020 HELAA

- 4.36. Overall, the Council's most recent Assessment highlights the suitability of the site even for a higher level of development than that proposed through the application scheme. The lower number of dwellings now proposed allows for the appropriate identified mitigation and avoidance measures to be incorporated, in particular in relation to the ancient woodland buffer. The outstanding nature conservation constraints are now resolved through the recent season sensitive bat and dormice surveys, whilst the submitted Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Addendum addresses landscape impact. That said, the acknowledgement of the well contained nature of the site confirms the landscape and visual impact is limited. Moreover, the planning officer's report on the earlier application confirms that "the presence of housing would be conspicuous in public views, albeit localised and filtered (to varying degrees) but would inevitably be an intrinsic change to the character of the area (the site) in this location".
- 4.37. There can be no doubt that with virtually every greenfield site the presence of housing would be conspicuous in public views, but in this case, it is acknowledged that these would be "localised and filtered". Furthermore, the change from a greenfield site to a housing development, albeit set within a settled and mature landscape, would bring about a change, however, the degree of change in this case is limited, as well as that change being well related to existing built form seen in the same context of the site.

This too reduces further the extent of change and impact to a level that is judged by the applicants to be acceptable.

Draft Local Plan December 2020

- 4.38. Recognising that the application site was the sole site at Woolhampton which was considered deliverable in the 2020 HELAA, the Council's Local Plan Review 2020-37: Emerging Draft (December 2020) has proposed the site for allocation in draft Policy RSA20. This is set out below.

Policy RSA 20

Land north of A4 Bath Road, Woolhampton (Site Ref MID4)

The site, as identified on the indicative map, is proposed to be allocated for a residential development comprising approximately 20 dwellings.

Detailed policy criteria will be developed to highlight specific mitigation measures and infrastructure requirements that will include amongst others, the need for a buffer between the developable area and the ancient woodland and Local Wildlife Site which adjoin the site to the west.

land north of A4 Bath Road, Woolhampton



4.39. The inclusion of the application site as an allocation for residential development within the emerging Local Plan therefore reflects the Council's acknowledgement that the site is in principle suitable having regard to the continued status of Woolhampton as a Service Village, the spatial strategy of supporting appropriate levels of development at such settlements within the settlement hierarchy, the acknowledgement that the application site remains the only suitable site at Woolhampton for future residential

development, is appropriate in landscape and ecological terms and ultimately represents an acceptable and logical but sensitive addition to Woolhampton. The determination of the earlier application confirmed that there were no technical objections to the proposal, for example in highway or access terms. This has reinforced the suitability of the site for development. This recent history has culminated in the allocation of this site in the draft local plan review.

4.40. Alongside the draft Local Plan Review, a site selection background paper has been prepared. Within appendix 4e of this paper, there is an assessment of the sole suitable site in Woolhampton – the application site. The appraisal of the site reviews those factors relevant to the consideration of the application and acknowledges with respect of landscape, flooding, highways/transport, education, environmental health and utility services, these do not constrain the site.

4.41. Although the site appraisal indicates that ecology, heritage and minerals could constrain the site, these are resolved for the following reasons.

a) Ecology – as indicated earlier in the statement, through the submission of further details, the Council's concerns with respect of the ecological impact of the earlier application have been addressed. This is therefore not a constraint to the development of the site.

b) Heritage – This was not raised as a determinative issue for the earlier application.

c) Minerals – This was not raised as a determinative issue for the earlier application. Furthermore, the site could not reasonably be quarried in a standalone respect due to its limited area and the need to ensure appropriate buffers to the residential properties, oil pipeline and ancient woodland within or adjoining the site. However, should any minerals be observed on site during construction, these can be sent to a local processor rather than sent to landfill¹. Again, this could be dealt with by condition. Consequently, mineral extraction is therefore not a constraint for the site.

4.42. Consequently, the draft allocation of the site in the Emerging Local Plan confirms the Council's acceptance of the suitability of the site for residential development.

¹ It is understood that quarries within West Berkshire can accept such limited quantities of minerals for processing.

5. DETERMINATION OF THE PREVIOUS APPLICATION BY THE COUNCIL

5.1 The earlier planning application (LPA ref 19/01942/OUTMAJ) initially proposed the erection of 14 dwellings including four affordable units, with access from Bath Road. During the course of the planning application there was a difference of opinion between the applicant and the Council regarding the interpretation and application of the Council's affordable housing policy. In light of these discussions the appellant decided to amend the application to ensure that it corresponded with the Council's interpretation of Core Strategy Policy CS6. As a result, the application was amended to incorporate 16 dwellings with 6 affordable homes, comprising 40% provision of affordable housing. The application was advertised on this basis and ultimately determined on this basis.

5.2 During the course of the application the Council confirmed that there were:

- 1) No highway objections to the proposed means of access;
- 2) The proposed housing mix and density was acceptable;
- 3) There were no infrastructure constraints on the basis of a Community Infrastructure Levy receipt;
- 4) The affordable housing was consistent with the Council's affordable housing policy;
- 5) The proposal, given its limited scale, resulted in no implications associated with the AWE Aldermaston facility and Policy CS8;
- 6) The illustrative site layout plan would not have a detrimental impact on neighbouring residential properties have regard to issues such as overlooking, overbearing and overshadowing or from a loss of sunlight;
- 7) A satisfactory on-site residential environment would be created for the prospective residents;
- 8) No objections from the tree officer; and
- 9) No objections were raised in relation to flooding and drainage.

5.3 Despite a meeting with the planning officers regarding the suitability of the site, the officers concluded that the proposal, lying beyond a defined settlement boundary, would be inconsistent with the then current development plan Policies ADPP1, ADPP6, CS1 and C1 on a point of principle. However as noted in section 4, the draft Local Plan

Review (December 2020) includes the application site as a draft allocation in policy RSA20 for up to 20 dwellings.

- 5.4 Unable to support the principle of development, the officers also concluded that the proposal would have a harmful impact on the landscape and character of the area.
- 5.5 It was consequently refused as at that time it was not identified as a suitable allocation and therefore seen to be contrary to Development Plan policy. As indicated above, this concern regarding inconsistency with the Development Plan is resolved through the authority's recognition of its suitability and its allocation in the Draft Local Plan.
- 5.6 The second reason for refusal alleged harm to landscape and character of the area. Again, as indicated in the Council's assessment of the site through the 2020 SHLAA and its inclusion as an allocation in the Draft Plan, the site is clearly appropriate for the development of up to 20 dwellings, as envisaged in draft Policy RSA20. Additional landscape work, including verified visual montages, has been prepared that confirm the suitability of the site in landscape terms.
- 5.7 The third reason for refusal suggested there was incomplete ecological and biodiversity surveys. Therefore, it had not been demonstrated that the proposed development could not have a negative impact upon the adjacent Great Mounts Copse (designated ancient semi-natural woodland). Since the refusal of the previous application, additional ecological surveys have been carried out, and submitted to the Council, that confirm that there are no protected species on the site and that the proposed development will have an acceptable impact on the adjacent Great Morris Copse designated semi-natural ancient woodland such that RFR 3 has been resolved.
- 5.8 The fourth (and final) reason for refusal related to the failure to provide a Planning Obligation for onsite affordable housing and the provision, transfer (with commuted sum for maintenance) and governance of onsite public open space.
- 5.9 The applicant remains committed to an agreement for on-site affordable housing and the provision, transfer (with commuted sum for maintenance) and governance of onsite public open space.
- 5.10 Therefore, all the matters of concern to the authority which resulted in the refusal of the earlier application have been resolved.

6. DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTEXT

6.1. Relevant to the Application, the Development Plan for the District includes the following documents:

- Saved policies of the West Berkshire District Local Plan, 2002
- West Berkshire Core Strategy (“CS”) (adopted July 2012)
- Housing Site Allocations Local Plan, 2017

6.2. Additionally, there are various Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which are relevant to the consideration of the application but relate more to matters associated with a detailed planning application such as parking standards, design and layout of buildings. The illustrative site layout highlights how these more detailed policies can be complied with. SPD concerning infrastructure contributions are relevant and have been complied with.

6.3. The relevant development plan policies are those listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Relevant Development Plan policies

Core Strategy, 2012	
Policy ADDP1	Spatial Strategy and District Settlement Hierarchy
Policy ADDP6	The East Kennet Valley
Policy CS1	Delivering New Homes and Retaining the Housing Stock
Policy CS4	Housing Type and Mix
Policy CS5	Infrastructure Requirements and Delivery
Policy CS6	Provision of Affordable Housing
Policy CS13	Transport
Policy CS14	Design Principles
Policy CS15	Sustainable Construction and Energy Efficiency
Policy CS17	Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Policy CS18	Green Infrastructure
Policy CS19	Historic Environment and Landscape Character
Housing Site Allocations Local Plan, 2017	

Policy C1	Location of new housing in the countryside
Policy P1	Residential Parking for New Development
West Berkshire District Local Plan, 2002 (saved policies)	
Policy Trans. 1	Meeting the Transport Needs of New Development
Policy RL.1	Public Open Space Provision in Residential Development Schemes
Policy RL.2	Provision of Public Open Space (methods)
Policy RL.3	The Selection of Public Open Space and Recreation Sites

6.4. Section 4 of this statement summarised the allocation of the application site in the Draft Local Plan (Policy RSA20). The pertinent policies in the Draft Local Plan are detailed below.

Table 2: Pertinent Emerging Development Plan policies

Draft Local Plan, 2020	
Policy SP1	Spatial Strategy
Policy SP3	Settlement Hierarchy
Policy SP5	Responding to Climate Change
Policy SP7	Design Principles
Policy SP8	Landscape Character
Policy SP9	Historic Environment
Policy SP10	Green Infrastructure
Policy SP11	Biodiversity and geodiversity
Policy SP12	Approach to Housing Delivery
Policy SP14	Sites allocated for residential development in Eastern Area
Policy SP18	Housing type and mix
Policy SP19	Affordable Housing
Policy SP22	Transport
Policy SP23	Infrastructure requirements and delivery
Policy RSA20	Land north of A4 Bath Road, Woolhampton (Site ref MID4)
Policy DC3	Building Sustainable homes and Businesses
Policy DC6	Water resources
Policy DC14	Trees, woodland and hedgerows

Policy DC29	Residential space standards
Policy DC30	Residential amenity
Policy DC35	Transport infrastructure
Policy DC36	Parking and Travel Plans
Policy DC37	Public open space
Policy DC38	Promotion of FTTP (fibre to the premises)

6.5. Although the policies of the emerging Local Plan have limited weight in the determination of the application, due to both the earlier stage in its preparation and the unknown level of responses to their contents², the application is nevertheless consistent with its approach in seeking the early delivery of a site allocated in an emerging development plan. In this regard the application scheme is development plan led.

² As per paragraph 48 of the NPPF

7. HOUSING CONTEXT IN WEST BERKSHIRE

- 7.1. This Section provides an overview of the housing context in West Berkshire and the background for determining this application. This includes a review of past performance and the expectations of delivery in both the short and medium term.
- 7.2. The application site within West Berkshire lies partly within Central Berkshire in the areas that border Reading and Bracknell, one of the key areas within the Thames Valley west of London. The area fulfils an important economic role and with it should provide a healthy supply of housing to support the local and regional economy.
- 7.3. The location of the application site within West Berkshire lies just beyond the outer edge of London's Metropolitan Green Belt (which is located to the east of Reading at Twyford) with Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty extending across extensive areas to the west (that covering 74% of the District).
- 7.4. As acknowledged in paragraph 59 of the NPPF, the Government's objective is still to seek significant boosts to the supply of homes. This applies especially in respect of relatively unconstrained locations (within a District where 74% is covered by AONB) and where they are sustainably located. The provision of open market housing not only increases supply but also has the effect of improving affordability in the District. Given the District has a high affordability ratio this is a significant factor. Therefore, although the Council can demonstrate the minimum five years' supply, this does not negate the benefits that further boosting the supply of housing provides as identified in the NPPF³. That objective and weight to be applied to it still applies despite Councils having five-year housing land supply surplus, as in the case of the Crondall judgement: 9 years supply (paragraph 108).
- 7.5. A further important component of housing is the provision of affordable housing, which also remains a significant objective of both the Council and Government. This statement (Section 9) confirms there is an acute need for more affordable homes and a significant shortfall in their supply such that every opportunity to deliver new

³ Appeals with respect of land north of Church Road, Bacton, Stowmarket (PINS ref APP/W/3520/W/18/3209219) allowed on 30th July 2019 (paragraphs 7, 21 & 52); land at Deerlands Road, Wingerworth (PINS ref APP/R1038/W/3192255 allowed on 19th November 2018 (paragraph 77); and the judgement in Crondall Parish Council v SOSHCLG [2019] EWHC1211(Admin) (paragraph 108)

affordable homes should be taken, even more so in sustainable locations such as the application site, on the only site left at Woolhampton found acceptable in the Council's Housing Economic Land Availability Assessment (2020) (see earlier Section 4).

8. AFFORDABLE HOUSING CONTEXT IN WEST BERKSHIRE

- 8.1. The provision of affordable housing is a key part of the planning system. A community's need for affordable housing was first enshrined as a material consideration in PPG3 in 1992 and has continued to play an important role in subsequent national planning policy, including the National Planning Policy Framework (2012, 2018 and 2019 versions).

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

- 8.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material planning consideration. It is important in setting out the role of affordable housing in the planning and decision-making process.
- 8.3. The NPPF sets a strong emphasis on the delivery of sustainable development, including affordable homes, at paragraphs 20 and 61.
- 8.4. As already noted, Paragraph 59 clearly sets out the Government's aim to "boost significantly the supply of homes". To both achieve higher housing supply and address the needs of the whole community, paragraphs 60 and 61 indicate:

60. To determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance – unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals. In addition to the local housing need figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for.

61. Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers²⁵, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes²⁶).
(My underlining)

- 8.5. The need for affordable housing and the importance of its provision is emphasised in many Government publications, including:

- Planning and the broken housing market, Committee of Public Accounts, House of Commons (June 2019)
- Reaffirmation of the Government support for affordable housing in press release of 6^h July 2020⁴
- Planning White Paper – August 2020

Affordable Housing Delivery and Supply

- 8.6. The Berkshire and South Bucks SHMA (February 2016), prepared jointly by the Council and the other Authorities in Berkshire, quantifies the District's affordable housing needs. This indicated an annual net need (2013-36) for 189 affordable dwellings (Table 81) and can be compared with the overall assessed need for 665 homes annually (Table 139). Seeking 189 affordable homes annually therefore represented 28% of the total housing need for the Authority over the period 2013 to 2036. This contrasts with a requirement of between 20% and 40% in Core Strategy Policy CS6: as the application site is green field and proposes 15 dwellings or more, 40% affordable is required. This equates to the 6 dwellings proposed in this application for 16 dwellings.
- 8.7. An Updated Assessment of Affordable Housing Need has been released alongside the Draft Local Plan in December 2020⁵. This indicates that from 2018 until 2036, the district has an annual need for 319 affordable dwellings (Table 9.1).
- 8.8. Table 4 (from the Government's Live Tables on affordable housing supply - Live Table 1011C⁶) indicates the Council has delivered 728 affordable homes from April 2013 to March 2020 (the period examined in the SHMA). This is equivalent to 104 affordable dwellings annually since 2013.

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/jenrick-acts-to-safeguard-affordable-homes-during-pandemic>

⁵ Updated Housing Needs Evidence prepared by Icen Projects (May 2020)

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-affordable-housing-supply>.

Table 4 – Comparison of affordable housing delivery in West Berkshire against the Berkshire SHMA (2013-36)

Year	Net housing completions		SHMA Affordable homes need	Shortfall from annual affordable need in SHMA	Cumulative Shortfall
	All	Affordable			
2013/14	457	142	189	-47	47
2014/15	496	76	189	-113	160
2015/16	625	162	189	-27	187
2016/17	485	19	189	-170	357
2017/18	526	129	189	-60	417
2018/19	527	84	189	-105	522
2019/20	398	116	189	-73	595
Total	3,514	728	1,323	- 595	595

Net delivery of affordable homes April 2013 to March 2019

- 8.9. As Table 4 indicates, the delivery of 728 affordable dwellings since April 2013 should be viewed in the context that this represents an under provision of 595 dwellings as assessed by the SHMA to achieve the annual requirement of 189 affordable units.
- 8.10. In contrast, in comparison to the annual requirement since 2018 for 319 affordable dwellings in the Updated Housing Needs Assessment (May 2020), 200 affordable dwellings have been provided in the last 2 years. This is however, significantly less than the 638 affordable dwellings that it assessed as the District's need⁷.
- 8.11. It is evident that there is an ongoing shortfall in affordable housing delivery in West Berkshire.
- 8.12. Paragraph 61 of the NPPF indicates that the context of assessing affordable housing need must be within the overall framework of a local housing need assessment, as explained in paragraph 60. The local housing need assessment is undertaken following the advice in the NPPF (paragraph 73) and the associated Planning Practice Guidance which entails application of the standard methodology for assessing housing need.
- 8.13. For an assessment of land supply at April 2019 (relying upon the base date for the Council's assessment of supply), the output of the standard methodology for West

⁷ 319 x 2

Berkshire results in annual housing need for 520 dwellings (2019 assessment date applying the 2014 based household projections). Once the 5% buffer is added to reflect the findings of the Housing Delivery Test, the annual need increases to 546dpa.

Affordable Housing Shortfall

- 8.14. The Council's Updated Housing Needs Assessment (May 2020) indicates that there is an annual need for 319 affordable dwellings in the district. This represents 61% of the District's minimum Local Housing Needs for 520dpa.
- 8.15. As envisaged in paragraph 59, it is essential that sufficient housing is delivered to ensure that the **"needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed"**. This therefore includes providing for the full annual need of 189 affordable units as appraised through the SHMA or the more recently assessment minimum annual need of 319 dwellings in the Updated Housing Needs Assessment. This is because paragraph 61 of the NPPF is clear that affordable housing comprises one of those groups with a specific housing requirement.
- 8.16. Table 4 indicates that between April 2013 and March 2020, under-delivery against the assessed affordable housing need in the SHMA has so far reached 595 dwellings. In percentage terms, this represents a 45% shortfall against assessed needs during this period, a serious gap in provision which affects West Berkshire and how it functions in an economic, social and environmentally compatible way. In contrast, against the May 2020 Local Housing Needs Assessment which considered the requirements for affordable housing since 2018, a provision of only 200 affordable dwellings results in a shortfall of 68.7% compared to the assessed need of 638 dwellings.
- 8.17. Furthermore, when reviewed in comparison to the existing policy requirement (Core Strategy policy CS6) (20 - 40% (typically 30%) and the 28% expectation of the SHMA, the Council has seriously under-delivered on affordable homes.
- 8.18. The need to address the very significant under-delivery of affordable housing, which would arise through the early approval of the planning application, is an important benefit associated with the proposals that attracts significant and substantial weight.

Future Affordable Housing Supply

8.19. The future delivery of affordable housing in West Berkshire is highly uncertain. In addition to the shortfall, there is also the question of whether future needs will be met. The risks of not meeting these needs are heightened by the fact that any future housing supply delivered through permitted development conversions is exempt from affordable housing, and on brownfield sites, the affordable housing potential is tempered by vacant building credit. This has the potential to make the situation even more severe, not just for West Berkshire's vulnerable position on affordable housing land supply, but for the significant number – 1,755⁸ - of households currently on the Council's Housing Register, of which 613 were within a reasonable preference category emphasising greater level of need. The Council's Draft Housing Strategy (2020-36) indicates that in August 2019, there were 2,300 households in need of social housing in the District.

8.20. The Draft Housing Strategy (page 12) also emphasises the challenges to the economy in the failure to provide sufficient housing, especially affordable ones. This states:

Employment opportunities are critical to delivering a balanced housing market, and across West Berkshire the number of jobs is higher than the south east average and similarly there is a greater proportion of adults who are economically active.

However, there is a risk that where employment opportunities do not match the skills of local residents the inward employment migration that results can place pressures on the local housing market, potentially removing housing opportunities for local people and increasing the reliance on social housing.

Housing affordability is inextricably linked to economic activity and West Berkshire Council's Economic Development Strategy 2019-2036 sets out how the Council intends to work with its partners to address economic challenges. This strategy should therefore be read in conjunction with the Economic Development Strategy.

Across the South East affordability is a critical issue in all segments of the housing market, with people struggling to secure affordable and sustainable housing, whether seeking home ownership or seeking to rent. In many areas the cost of home ownership relative to earnings is high, and in West Berkshire the

⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/local-authority-housing-statistics-data-returns-for-2018-to-2019>.

£346,500 average cost of a home¹⁷ is almost ten times that of average earnings¹⁸.

For those seeking to rent their home, average private rents have increased by just over 20% to meet demand¹⁹, which in West Berkshire is often driven by professionals seeking accommodation near their place of work, and this presents affordability challenges for local residents. People private renting pay the highest housing costs compared with home-owners with mortgages and social housing tenants²⁰.

For residents who are on low incomes and/or are in receipt of welfare benefits the continued low level of Local Housing Allowance (LHA) reduces the availability of affordable accommodation. This is due to the resulting low value of housing benefit or (the housing costs element of) universal credit relative to market rent levels.

It is expected therefore that the affordability challenges facing many private renters will remain moving forward, unless there is a significant injection in the capacity within the private rental market. (my emphasis)

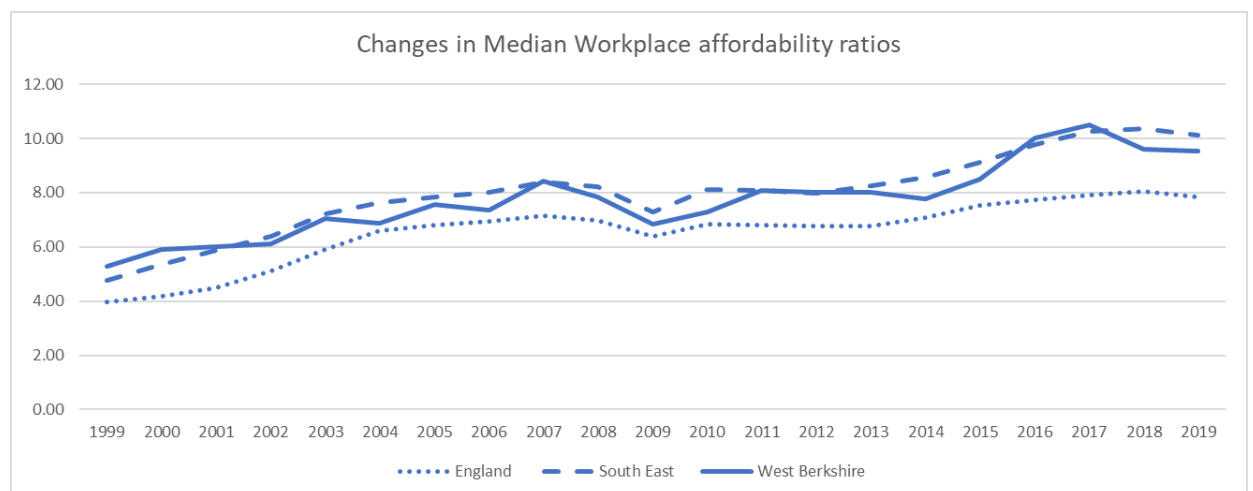
- 8.21. The draft Housing Strategy is therefore clear on the challenges and risks to the economic and social well-being of the District if insufficient market and affordable homes are delivered.
- 8.22. Furthermore, paragraph 59 of the NPPF requires that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed. Paragraph 61 confirms that one of the specific groups relates to those requiring affordable housing. Whilst figure 3.3 of the Council's Authority Monitoring Report 2017 provides an indicative affordable housing delivery trajectory (copied below), it does not provide sufficient clarity that the shortfall of 389 dwellings affordable dwellings⁹ alongside the continuing annual need for 189 affordable dwellings will be addressed. Therefore, it is essential to seek further opportunities to boost the supply of affordable homes – as would arise on the application site.
- 8.23. This is emphasised in the figure below indicating that it is expected that only from 2019/20 to 2021/22 is the delivery of affordable homes expected to exceed the 189 dwellings annual need, let alone address the shortfall at 31st March 2017 of 389 dwellings. The indicative trajectory also shows that the under delivery is expected

⁹ At 31st March 2017, now increased to 595 dwellings at 31st March 2020

worsen in both 2017/18 and 2018/19 thereby increasing the need to supplement affordable housing supply.



8.24. The failure to meet the identified needs of affordable housing is a dire situation indicating that the Authority is not fulfilling the objectives in paragraph 59 of the NPPF. The continued under delivery of affordable housing, and arguably market housing given the matters presented in Section 8 of this evidence, has contributed to the worsening of the affordability ratios in the District as indicated in the chart below¹⁰.



Affordability ratios in West Berkshire

8.25. The chart also shows that affordability ratios in West Berkshire nearly doubled between 1999 and 2019 from 5.27 to 9.54, and whilst they were below those of the South East

¹⁰ The slight reduction in affordability ratios in West Berkshire from 2017 to 2019 is a result of median incomes increasing faster (14.6%) than median house prices (4.2%).

region from 2001 to 2016, they are fluctuating both above and below them. This near doubling in the affordability ratio has occurred because of a failure to deliver sufficient homes to meet market and affordable need in the District.

- 8.26. A step change in the delivery of affordable housing is therefore required if the Council is to get anywhere near the accepted identified need in the SHMA and begin to address the dysfunctions of the local housing market. Such a step change would be consistent with the thrust of paragraph 59 of the NPPF, to boost significantly the supply of homes.

Weight to be Afforded to the Proposed Affordable Housing

- 8.27. Planning applications should be considered individually on their merits. The social need for affordable housing is an important material planning consideration and making social progress in tackling such needs is an important element of sustainable development running through the NPPF.
- 8.28. Furthermore, the West Berkshire Council Strategy 2019-23 indicates that a key priority for the Authority (page 18) is:

“This priority also includes a commitment to address housing needs. This will combine a number of actions which will facilitate the building of the right size, type and number of homes needed by our residents and will support an increase of the affordability of housing in the District.”

- 8.29. Consequently, there can be no doubt that there is an acute need for affordable housing in West Berkshire. The evidence set out above emphasises that the provision of affordable housing should be afforded very significant weight in the overall planning balance. This proposal will deliver 6 affordable homes for local people, for which there is a demonstrable need, in the face of significant historic and ongoing under delivery.
- 8.30. The applicants have consulted with the one of the Council’s preferred affordable housing providers who have confirmed that the site is appropriately located to meet identified affordable housing needs whilst the proposed layout and mix of dwellings is also seen as appropriate in meeting these needs. This reinforces the merits and therefore weight to be attached to the proposed affordable housing element of the application scheme.

8.31. Some of the key points that arise from the above analysis:

- Affordable housing is an important material consideration;
- Affordable housing can be considered in its own right;
- The importance of unmet need for affordable housing being met; and
- Even where there is a 5-year housing land supply, material benefits arising from affordable housing can still justify the grant of planning permission despite harm/development plan policy conflict;
- If a proposed development is acceptable in all other respects, and is delivering important affordable housing, it should be allowed to come forward now, rather than waiting for adoption of the Local Plan and the inevitable permission for the development

8.32. The above emphasises that the provision of affordable housing should be afforded **very significant weight** in the overall planning balance. This proposal will deliver 6 affordable homes for local people, for which there is a demonstrable need, in the face of significant historic and ongoing under delivery.

8.33. The sustainable location of the site, in particular with good accessibility to a variety of different modes of public transport, reinforces the suitability of the site for affordable housing. All of these matters should feed into the final planning balance.

9. APPLICATION OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICY

- 9.1. The application is in outline form, to include means of access to be provided from Bath Road. However, an indicative site layout accompanies the application, and demonstrates how the site can accommodate 16 residential units, with a mix of unit sizes through from 1-bedroom to 4-bedroom. Having discussed the principle of the acceptability of the scheme in the strategic planning policy context in sections 5 and 6 of this Statement, in order to conclude on the planning balance, the main planning issues that are relevant to the determination of the application are discussed in this section of the Planning Statement.

Continuation of the existing spatial strategy.

- 9.2. Analysis of the relevant development plan policies confirm that the application proposal is consistent with policies ADPP1, ADPP6, CS1 and CS19.
- 9.3. The CS also contains 'DM' policies: provision of affordable housing (CS6), transport (CS 13), design principles (CS 14), CS17 (biodiversity) and CS19 (historic environment and landscape character). Of these, there are no issues or conflict with CS6 (subject to completion of a S106), CS13, CS14 as confirmed in the planning officer report and reasons for refusal. CS17 is now agreed to be satisfied¹¹. Within CS19, there is no allegation of harm to the historic environment and the Applicant's case (Planning and landscape statements) confirms that there is no unacceptable impact on landscape character.
- 9.4. The emerging Draft Local Plan (December 2020) continues the current spatial strategy of focusing development at a number of settlements within the hierarchy including service villages. The settlement of Woolhampton remains designated in the third tier of the District's hierarchy - as a service village (Draft Policy SP3) and is acknowledged to be an appropriate location for additional housing, including allocations (as envisaged in the Draft Plan for the application site).

¹¹ Reason for refusal 3 is withdrawn

- 9.5. The up-to-date evidence base, including the 2020 HELAA and the Site Selection Background Paper for the Emerging Draft Local Plan confirms that the application site is the sole deliverable site¹² at Woolhampton which has resulted in its allocation through draft Policies SP14 and RSA20 of the Emerging Local Plan (December 2020).
- 9.6. As to the site itself, and as confirmed by the 2020 HELAA, the site is found to be acceptable in all respects other than two issues that required further work:
1. Ecology; and
 2. Landscape impact.
- 9.7. In respect of ecology, additional surveys have been carried out and submitted to the Council. These confirmed and the Council have accepted, that the proposed site can be developed without any impact on protected species or on the adjacent Morris Copse and Great Mounts Copse, designated ancient semi-natural woodland.
- 9.8. As to landscape impact, the planning application is supported by a comprehensive Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Addendum together with verified views which confirm the acceptable impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area and landscape. The proposed allocation of the site recognises that ecological and landscape Issues no longer preclude development on the site.
- 9.9. The local planning authority acknowledge that development should be supported following analysis through the plan making process. The Council's Regulation 18 version of the Draft Local Plan 2037 (December 2020) identifies the application site for residential development (policies SP14 and RSA20).
- 9.10. As noted, the evidence base only identifies one site as being suitable at Woolhampton. Given the spatial strategy continues to rely Service Villages, there is a strong degree of certainty, owing to the lack of alternatives, that the application site is the correct and most suitable site at Woolhampton. This principle is reinforced by assessing the suitability of the site in respect of the following issues:
- a. Character and appearance of the area;
 - b. Impact on residential amenity;
 - c. Highways/transport;
 - d. Ecology;

¹² By virtue of its suitability, availability and achievability

- e. Drainage/flood risk;
- f. Open market and affordable housing; and Infrastructure.

9.11. These matters are address under separate headings below:

Suitability of the Application Site for Development

9.12. The application site is not presently allocated for development and is defined as open countryside in the Local Plan and Site Allocations Local Plan. However as indicated above, the site is allocated for 20 dwellings through policies SP14 and RSA20 of the Draft Local Plan 2037 (December 2020).

9.13. However as is made clear within the NPPF, one of the Government's overriding objectives is to significantly boost the supply of homes. The Core Strategy and Standard Methodology housing requirements are expressed as minimums and do not represent caps to otherwise acceptable developments. The acceptability of the site for residential development is confirmed through the Council's identification of the site as an allocation in the Draft Local Plan 2037 (December 2020).

Character of the Existing Site

9.14. Firstly, and with reference to the extract from the Site Context Plan below, the site, whilst currently classed as open countryside in policy terms, has at best a semi-rural/urban fringe character, compromised by residential development bounding its northern, eastern and southern sides.



Extract from Site Context Plan

- 9.15. The site itself comprises an exceptionally well enclosed area of land of limited visual quality, presently in no beneficial public or commercial use. Further the site is not located in an area recognised for its landscape or environmental quality or any defined strategic or local gap. Such constraints are common to several potential development sites within the Borough, as best illustrated on the Core Strategy Key Diagram that shows areas of AONB and other constraints.
- 9.16. It is therefore apparent that the application site represents relatively unconstrained land.
- 9.17. The site is already characterised by existing development on its western, eastern, northern and southern side off Bath Road and New Road Hill. The proposed dwellings will not therefore materially extend any further west than existing development that lies to the north or south. This is evident from the proposed site context plan (see above). Moreover, the western boundary (as evident from the Site Context Plan above) is defined by a strong block of mature woodland that effectively contains the site in its wider context. The site therefore represents a small-scale site which to varying degrees is contained on 3 of its 4 sides by residential development. The site is not related either visually or physically to the more open countryside beyond to the west. It represents a logical small-scale development that will not adversely affect the character, appearance or function of the land and not damage the landscape quality of the surrounding area. The proposal by reason of the well contained character of the site will not conflict with the objectives of countryside policies (AADP1 and C1). The suitability of the site is acknowledged by the Council through its allocation in the Draft Local Plan (December 2020).
- 9.18. These points are confirmed in a visual assessment of the scheme, which is set out in the Landscape and Visual Assessment accompanying this application.
- 9.19. The proposed location of the dwellings behind mature trees along the Bath Road frontage, together with the ability of the scheme to retain the mature trees on the edges of the site, ensure that the proposed dwellings will not be prominent in any public street scene views from the west. A series of views are reviewed below.



Photograph1a



Photograph 1b

Photographs 1a and 1b. Bath Road street scene from the east. The application site is on the right largely out of view due to the intervening Bath Road frontage landscaping. The proposal will sit comfortably in this landscape and will not impact on the street scene and area as seen from within Woolhampton.



Photograph 2. Bath Road street scene from the west entering Woolhampton. Mature woodland on the left dominate the setting and view. These features will remain masking any view of the proposed development which is set back from the Bath Road. The character and appearance of Woolhampton as seen from the west will be preserved.

9.20. At the localised level, views into the site will be limited by mature boundary planting, as shown in the Street Views above. The ancient woodland to the west of the site represents a strong edge to the settlement of Woolhampton that will continue to provide a strong and attractive landscape backdrop to the site. The site is bounded to the north by existing residential development, to the east by New Road Hill, which is heavily treed with residential properties beyond this on its eastern side, and to the south by the A4 Bath Road and existing residential development and the village hall. It is extremely well contained, with existing screening to be retained except to enable vehicular access to Bath Road, so any impact will only be experienced at the very localised level, with only passing glimpses into the site. The existing character of a wooded sylvan backdrop to the site will be protected so that the existing street scene will be retained, and even views when travelling along the A4 Bath Road will remain largely intact, despite the addition of an access point, because the proposed dwellings are set back from the site boundaries.

9.21. With reference to views up and down New Road Hill, the views from the north and south (see photographs 3 and 4) will remain unaffected, with the enclosed landscape edge of the road continuing to be characterised by mature soft landscaping that precludes any views of the proposed dwellings. The rural street scene will be preserved.



Photograph 3. New Road Hill street scene from the north. The application site is on the right out of view due to the intervening mature vegetation. The proposal will not impact on the street scene and area.



Photograph 4. New Road Hill street scene from the south. The application site is on the left largely out of view due to the intervening mature vegetation. The proposal will not impact on the street scene and area.

9.22. New Road Hill street scene will remain characterised by the existing frontage properties on the eastern side and retained mature vegetation along the road on its western side. The proposed dwellings will not therefore be prominent or clearly visible

from New Road Hill, further confirming the acceptable impact of the proposed scheme on the character and appearance of the area as seen within Woolhampton.

- 9.23. Therefore, in terms of impact, the proposed development is limited in scale and nature, thus the degree of change is limited. Given its juxtaposition to other residential development on three sides of the site, the well contained nature of the site, and the limited visual impact of the scheme, this means that the impact of the scheme is only very localised. In the light of this, given that a small area of land of limited landscape value would be lost to sensitively planned development, the harm to be factored into the planning balance is not overriding, and would not in itself warrant the refusal of planning permission.
- 9.24. Notwithstanding this limited level of harm, there are a number of mitigation measures proposed as part of the scheme, including the protection of existing trees on the site boundaries, native tree and hedgerow planting as required to supplement these existing boundaries, management and maintenance of existing hedgerows and trees, and the sensitive positioning of buildings to respect the natural features on the site boundaries. In addition, to the west of the site, a 15m wide green buffer will be located between the site and the ancient woodland, and to the north of the site, a 6m landscaped edge respecting the easement for the oil pipeline and offering another green buffer to the site boundary. All these measures reduce further the already limited level impact of the proposed scheme.
- 9.25. With regard to the potential impact of the scheme on the character and appearance of the built-up area, the scheme layout has been designed to respect the grain, scale and density of existing dwellings in Woolhampton, such that it would represent a natural addition to the settlement in a manner that is designed sensitively to reflect surrounding land uses and the wider setting of the site.
- 9.26. The Design and Access Statement confirms the design merits of the proposed dwellings and their appropriateness having regard to the character and appearance of the built form in the immediate surrounding area.
- 9.27. Views from further away, from the east, west and north, confirm that the site has a secure a secure means of visual enclosure that ensure that there are no views of the application site and the proposed dwellings on it from these directions.

- 9.28. The location of the site at the western edge of the village, contained on three sides by built form, ensures that it is well related to the existing built form, forms a logical and sensitive rounding off and does not form part of the larger more generally open landscape which lies further to the west and north.
- 9.29. The Design and Access Statement, the LVIA Addendum, and the verified views, confirm that the application scheme is a form, scale and layout of development that is consistent with the identified character, grain and density of the surrounding built up area. The proposal will not therefore be out of character with the surrounding built up area.
- 9.30. Finally, these findings are also supported by the Council's identification of the application site as an allocation for up to 20 dwellings in policies SP14 and RSA20 of the Draft Local Plan 2037 (December 2020).
- 9.31. The area within which the application site is located was not identified for its high landscape value or visual sensitivity. The key features relate to the tree belts which are being retained. It is relevant to note that despite the open "countryside" character of the site, the fact that this feature will be lost is an inevitable consequence of meeting the need for new housing that cannot be met within existing built up areas. Nevertheless, in respect of the application site, that loss will be minimal and of limited consequence to the site and wider area. For instance, as the visual assessment confirms, the visible tree cover will in fact help assimilate the development into the landscape without harm.
- 9.32. The proposal will not materially extend development any further west, east or north than existing developments, representing a logical well contained residential development. The western boundary can form a satisfactory settlement edge. It will represent a natural defined woodland offering a great degree of appropriate enclosure to built form. In this sense, the application scheme will result in a satisfactory settlement edge.
- 9.33. The site therefore represents a logical rounding off development. As noted, the proposal will not result in the loss of any gap. The proposal will be contained by the natural tree belts and woodland that wrap around the site to form a logical self-contained development parcel well related to Woolhampton without impacting visually or physically on the more open landscape compartments beyond.

- 9.34. The above analysis confirms that the site is not subject to any Local Plan constraints aside from its current countryside designation, although as noted through the Draft Local Plan, it is proposed as a housing allocation for up to 20 dwellings.
- 9.35. In terms of gauging the level of harm arising from the loss of this undeveloped land currently defined as countryside, it is relevant to note that the site does not lie in an area of landscape/countryside which is designated as having any great value; neither the application site nor the adjoining landscape is covered by any statutory or non-statutory designations for landscape character or quality. The landscape quality of the site and its surroundings is not identified in the development plan nor does the site sit within a landscape that can be characterised as a 'valued' landscape for the purposes of paragraph 170a of the NPPF. Rather, the application site, as noted, is a small, enclosed area of semi-improved neutral grassland with a high degree of natural containment, therefore any effect of the development in terms of impact on the landscape will only be very localised.
- 9.36. Moreover, there are no listed or strategic viewpoints related to the appeal site, and it is not readily visible from public receptors in its wider landscape context. Overall, the site is assessed as being of medium to low landscape quality, and therefore its sensitivity to residential built development is assessed as medium to low. Consistent with the NPPF, the application recognises and has regard to the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside (NPPF paragraph 170). A blanket protection of the countryside is no longer consistent with the NPPF. The application site, owing to its strong physical and visual relationship with the existing built up area of Woolhampton, has limited intrinsic character and beauty such that reduced weight can be applied to its protection, especially as through the draft Local Plan 2037 (December 2020) the application site is allocated for up to 20 dwellings.
- 9.37. These are material considerations in the determination of the application and the application of planning policy.
- 9.38. For the above reasons the application scheme is not considered to have significant or overriding impacts upon the character or appearance of the area. This is achieved by its self-contained nature, relationship to the existing development, the limited views from the surrounding area and its semi-rural/ urban fringe rather than open countryside character. Further it is noted that the site is free of any Local Plan or environmental

constraints aside its location outside the current settlement boundary, although as noted, the site is allocated for residential development in the Draft Local Plan 2037.

- 9.39. The extent that the site will be screened is illustrated in the Verified Visual Montages (VVMs) included in the LVIA (Addendum). The ones showing the changes from the Bath Road (just west of the site) (figures 5.5-5.7) along with those associated with the junction of Bath Road and New Road Hill (figures 5.8-10) are shown below.

VVM of site from Bath Road (west of site)



Copy of LVIA Addendum Figure 5.5 – baseline



Copy of LVIA Addendum Figure 5.6 – year 1



Copy of LVIA Addendum Figure 5.7 – year 15

VVM of site from junction of Bath Road and New Road Hill



Copy of LVIA Addendum Figure 5.8 – baseline



Copy of LVIA Addendum Figure 5.9 – year 1



Copy of LVIA Addendum Figure 5.10 – year 15

9.40. It is therefore considered that the application scheme comprises very limited harm to the wider character of the countryside. Any perceived harm is clearly reduced, whilst the contribution towards the existing open market and affordable housing land supply position outweighs any such harm, especially once regard has been had to its allocation in the Draft Local Plan.

Impact on residential amenity

9.41. Regarding the impact of the proposed scheme on residential amenity, the eastern edge of the site is screened from development on the opposite side of New Road Hill by a mature and extensive tree belt, as shown in Image 3 above, that will remain in place as part of the proposal. There will not therefore be any impact on the residential amenity and outlook from existing properties along New Road Hill arising from the implementation of the scheme.

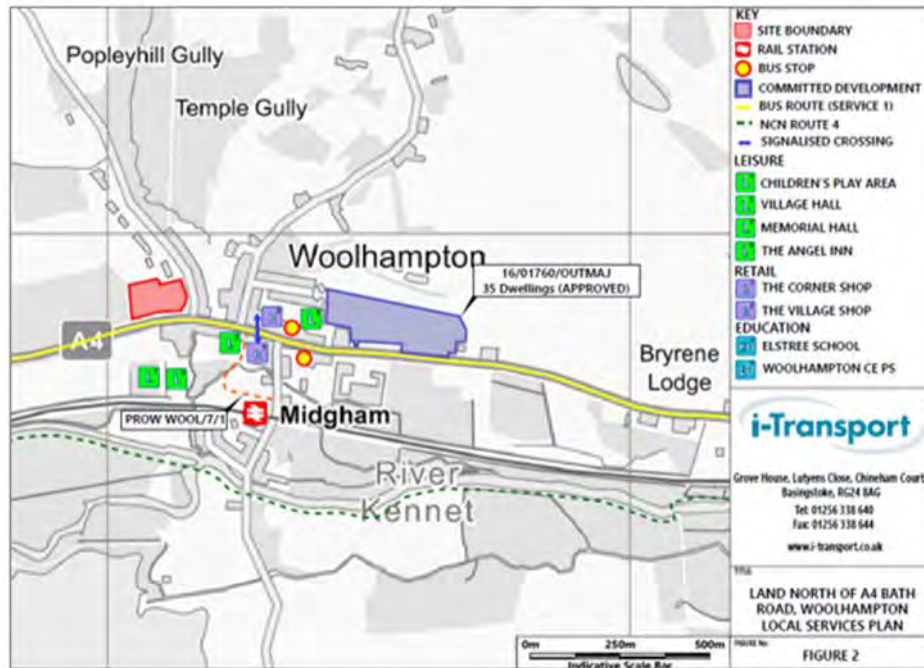
9.42. On the northern edge of the site, the existing residential properties fronting New Road Hill will have oblique views of the development site. However, the fall of the land from north to south means that the houses will be set 2.7 metres below the existing levels at the northern edge of the site. Supplemented by additional planting, and the positioning of the 6m wide green buffer over the oil pipeline easement, there will be no material impact on residential amenity of, nor the outlook from, existing properties.

9.43. With regard to the existing residential properties located opposite the site on the southern side of Bath Road, the existing tree planting on this boundary of the site will be protected and supplemented as appropriate, and again, there will be no material impact on residential amenity. In essence, the undeveloped wooded backdrop of the site will remain.

Highways/Transport

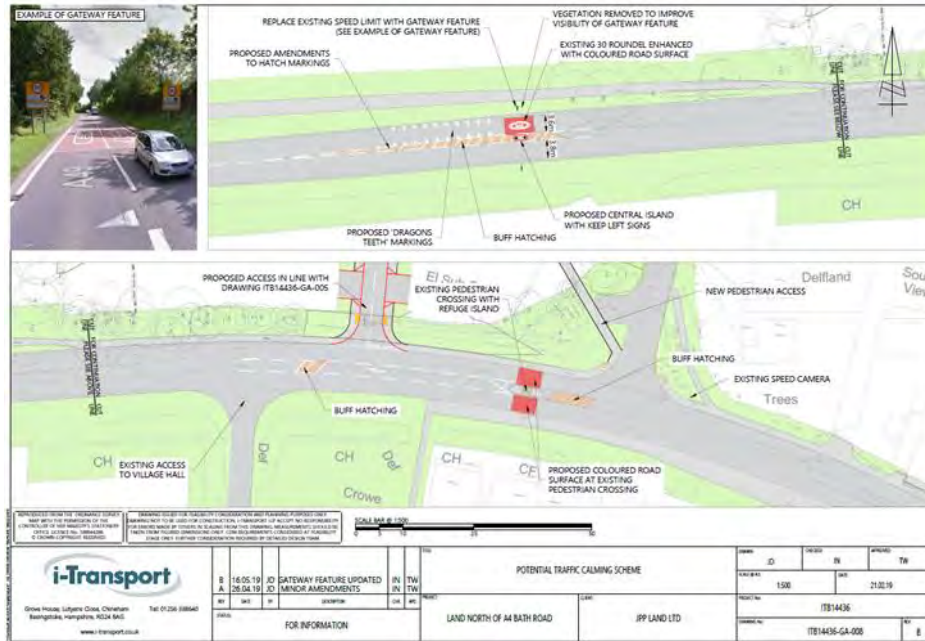
9.44. The planning application is accompanied by a Transport Statement. This demonstrates that the site is in an accessible location, well located to good quality walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure. An extract from the Transport Statement showing the Local Facilities and Services Plan is reproduced below.

Image 3.1: PROW Location



Source: Extract of Local Facilities and Services Plan

9.45. The Transport Statement provides details of appropriate vehicular access arrangements to the site, taken from Bath Road. Suitable visibility splays in accordance with design standards can be achieved. However, to supplement this, a traffic calming scheme has been designed to encourage drivers to reduce vehicle speeds through the village. This proposed traffic calming scheme is set out as part of a Road Safety Audit that will be submitted in support of the application. It can be viewed in full in that document but is reproduced below for information.



Proposed traffic calming scheme

- 9.46. The proposal meets the Council’s vehicle parking standards, and in fact exceeds these by offering two additional visitor car parking spaces above the standard requirement. Cycle parking will also be provided in accordance with the Council’s standards.
- 9.47. A dedicated footpath link will be provided from the site to the existing pedestrian crossing on the junction with Bath Road and New Road Hill. This will facilitate pedestrian access to the footpath network that links to Midgham Railway Station, on the Reading to Newbury line. This offers a regular service between Reading and Newbury, with travel times approximately 20 minutes to Reading and 13 minutes to Newbury. In addition, there are regular bus services between Reading and Newbury, operated by Reading Buses.
- 9.48. The Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environment Assessment report prepared as part of the Site Allocations Local Plan noted that the site is well-related to the settlement of Woolhampton. The site assessment for WOOL001 noted that, even at a scale of development of 20 units (rather than the 16 sought through this application), development would generate approximately 120 daily vehicle movements, including around 12 during the 08:00 to 09:00 AM peak. This was not expected to have a significant impact on the highway network.

9.49. It concluded that, in summary:

“There are no significant sustainability effects on the site...The proximity of the site to local services and facilities will bring sustainability benefits – the site will encourage active healthy lifestyles and opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport.”

9.50. This conclusion is repeated on page 320 of The Sustainability of Sites (Appendix 5) which accompanies the Draft Local Plan 2037 with respect of the application site (now referenced MID4).

9.51. In this context, it is evident that the Council has acknowledged that Woolhampton is well provided with a strategic transport infrastructure network which has the capacity to accommodate additional residential development. Within the parameters of sustainable development, paragraph 102 of the NPPF notes that opportunities from existing transport infrastructure should be realised. Clearly, the settlement of Woolhampton offers significant potential for residents to make use of sustainable transport modes other than the private car, and significant weight should therefore be afforded to the sustainable location and benefits that would arise from the proposal.

9.52. This is one of the many benefits that arises from this scheme: An exceptionally located site from a transport sustainably point of view.

Ecology

9.53. The planning application is accompanied by an Ecological Appraisal. This confirms that the site comprises a single grass paddock with hedgerows (containing a number of standard trees) on the east and south boundaries. Off-site hedgerows are present on the northern boundary associated with residential gardens. The edge of Great Mounts Copse Local Wildlife Site (LWS), a privately owned woodland, is adjacent to the western boundary, and this is also mapped as Ancient Replanted Woodland. The majority of the field comprises species poor semi-improved grassland, although a small area with comparatively greater species diversity is present in the south-east corner. This area of grassland, the hedgerows and the off-site woodland are considered to form important ecological features. The site itself is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory ecological designations.

- 9.54. The site generally offers limited opportunities for protected species, and surveys show that the site is used by commuting and foraging bats, common mammals and nesting birds. Appropriate mitigation measures, centred on the careful timing of works, general site safeguards and a sensitive lighting scheme will therefore be implemented to safeguard these species. An indicative Lighting Strategy and Light Spill Diagram accompanies this planning application, demonstrating how this can be achieved.
- 9.55. In terms of the proposal, a 15m buffer between the proposal and the Great Mounts Copse LWS is incorporated into the proposals and mitigation will be implemented during construction. With these measures in place, the LWS would not be adversely affected. Moreover, none of the designations within the wider surrounding area are likely to be adversely affected by the proposals
- 9.56. Small sections of the hedgerow at the southern boundary will be removed to facilitate access to the site, and the majority of the grassland will likely be removed. This will be compensated by new, native hedgerow and scrub planting and the creation of new flower-rich grassland. The off-site woodland will be retained, buffered and protected during construction, and measures are incorporated into the scheme to prevent public access.
- 9.57. The proposal presents the opportunity to secure a number of ecological enhancements such as bird and bat boxes. In addition, the DEFRA metric has been completed which shows the outline layout is capable of delivering a net gain in relation to habitats, with a net gain of 25.44% for habitats and 3.9% for hedgerows. The exercise should be repeated at the detailed design stage to ensure this remains the case.

Drainage/flood risk

- 9.58. The site assessment for site WOOL001, prepared as part of the background work for the Sustainability Appraisal/SEA for the Site Allocations Local Plan, notes that the site is not in Flood Zone 2, is not at risk from groundwater flooding, is not in a critical drainage area, and does not suffer from on-site surface water flood risk. The application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy, which sets out the proposed measures to ensure that these matters are addressed for the lifetime of the development.

Open Market and Affordable Housing

9.59. The 16 units proposed not only represents a sensitive development in terms of density and scale of housing but also one that matches the identified needs for new homes in West Berkshire having regard to the SHMA and desired mix of different types of new homes. The mix of dwellings envisaged also reflects the expectations of the emerging Draft Local Plan 2037 (Table 3).¹³

9.60. In this regard the proposal provides a policy compliant mix of open market and affordable homes of:

Mix of dwellings envisaged (including proportion)

Dwellings size	Market	Affordable	Overall
1 bed	0 (0%)	3 (50%)	3 (18.75%)
2 beds	2 (20%)	3 (50%)	5 (31.25%)
3 beds	5 (50%)	0 (0%)	5 (31.25%)
4 beds +	3 (30%)	0 (0%)	3 (18.75%)
Total	10	6	16

9.61. The scheme incorporates six affordable housing units, and the applicant is offering a commitment through a legal agreement that these be made available to eligible residents with a local connection to Woolhampton and Midgham Parishes in the first instance.

9.62. In addition, the market properties will be eligible for the Government's "right to buy" scheme. As set out in Section 8 of this Statement, significant weight should be afforded to the provision of affordable housing given the identified need in West Berkshire, and the uncertainty regarding future supply to meet in full those needs.

9.63. The variety of house sizes ensures that the proposals meet identified needs thereby enhancing the quality of the proposal in terms of housing objectives and therefore the weight that should be attached to boosting the supply of new homes in West Berkshire.

Infrastructure

¹³ This includes an emphasis on 3 bed market homes and 2 bed affordable units.

9.64. Regarding improvements to infrastructure, West Berkshire Council collects payments through the Community Infrastructure Levy. Based on the indicative layout, the CIL payment to West Berkshire Council would be around £112,500. The site does not fall within an area where a Neighbourhood Plan has been adopted and does not therefore generate an automatic 25% payment of the CIL receipts to the Parish Council (Midgham PC). However, Midgham Parish Council will still benefit from receipt of 15% of the CIL payment, which based on the indicative layout, would be about £16,900.

Conclusions on main issues

9.65. In conclusion, this section of the Statement has demonstrated that there are no significant planning matters that would cause material harm in the overall planning balance. Moreover, the scheme would deliver appropriate and positive mitigation measures that would lessen even further any harm arising from the scheme. In this context, there are no material planning considerations that would cause adverse impacts to arise from the development that would outweigh any current development plan policy conflicts.

9.66. Furthermore, it is also recognised that the application site is allocated in the Draft Local Plan 2037 (December 2020) for up to 20 dwellings, and consequently the authority has acknowledged the suitability of the site for residential development. In other circumstances¹⁴ the Council has approved planning applications for residential developments on sites allocated in Draft Local Plans prior to their adoptions.

9.67. The neighbouring Wokingham Borough has resolved to approve planning permission for residential development on sites likewise allocated in a Regulation 18 version of their Local Plan. This includes sites at the former Reading FC Training Ground in Arborfield¹⁵ and at Ashridge Farm, Wokingham¹⁶. With respect to the former Reading FC Training Ground, the Report to Wokingham's Planning Committee acknowledges in its summary:

¹⁴ The Inspector's Reports into the examination of both the Council's Core Strategy (July 2012) and Housing Site Allocations Local Plans (March 2017) (paragraph 8 in both instances) highlighted the Council's approval of applications on draft allocations in advance of their respective adoptions and the consequential revision to settlement boundaries which then occurred

¹⁵ Application 163547 considered at the 9th December 2020 Planning Committee

¹⁶ Application 201515 considered at the 16th December 2020 Planning Committee

It is noted that the site is proposed for allocation within the Draft Local Plan, however, in accordance with advice contained within the NPPF, refusing the application on grounds of prematurity would not be justified in this instance as the proposed development is not so substantial in itself nor would it contribute to a cumulative effect that would undermine the plan-making process

- 9.68. The same principles apply with respect of this application site where approval of the scheme could not be justified on prematurity grounds when it is allocated for up to 20 dwellings, compared to the overall emerging requirement of the draft Local Plan 2037 (December 2020) of between 8,840 and 9,775 dwellings in policy SP12. The allocation for 20 dwellings in the Draft Local Plan equates to less than 0.2% of the total minimum housing needs and therefore cannot be regarded as so substantial as to undermine plan making in the authority. Refusal would therefore not be justified pursuant to paragraph 49 of the NPPF.
- 9.69. The reports to Wokingham's Planning Committee for these two sites indicate that the authority could demonstrate a five year supply. Nevertheless, the authority has resolved to approve applications on sites allocated in their Draft Local Plan. This is a further illustration of the acceptability of this approach and demonstrates that West Berkshire can legitimately adhere to this in approving this application, given its acknowledged suitability.

10. THE MERITS AND BENEFITS OF THE APPLICATION SCHEME

10.1. The merits and benefits of the application scheme include:

- 1) Contribution towards housing needs and the government's policy to significantly boost the supply of new homes (consistent with Policy CS1 and NPPF paragraph 59);
- 2) Making provision for on-site affordable housing against a context of significant unmet needs (consistent with Policy CS6 and NPPF paragraphs 59 and 61);
- 3) A housing scheme that delivers the right type of housing by reason of size of new homes, consistent with identified needs in the Council's most recent strategic housing market assessment (consistent with Policy CS4);
- 4) A housing scheme that is located at an identified settlement within the District's settlement hierarchy in close proximity to a high-level mode of public transport (Midgham Railway Station) on a site identified as potentially developable within the Council's SHLAA (consistent with Policies ADPP1 and ADPP6);
- 5) A housing scheme on a site allocated for residential development within the Draft Local Plan 2037 (December 2020) (Policies SP14 and RSA20);
- 6) A housing development by reason of density that is compatible with the neighbouring pattern and intensity of development ensuring that the proposal is respectful of the character of the surrounding built up environment (consistent with Policy CS14);
- 7) The site lies in a very sustainable location in close proximity to a railway station with direct pedestrian access to it. The site is also appropriately located in respect of other services, facilities and other forms of public transport and non-car modes of movement (consistent with Policies CS13 and CS14);

- 8) A housing development that is respectful of its immediate landscape context, including neighbouring ancient woodland. The development retains the well enclosed nature and characteristic of the site thereby ensuring that the proposal only has localised/filtered visual impacts (consistent with Policy CS19 and NPPF Paragraph 170);
- 9) The characteristics of the site and illustrative scheme ensure that the transition between countryside and built-up area is successfully secured and the setting of Woolhampton in the wider landscape is preserved. The ability to accommodate new residential development in these terms is testament to the suitability of the site for new development (consistent with Policy CS19 and NPPF Paragraph 170);
- 10) A proposal that secures an appropriate relationship with neighbouring ancient woodland (consistent with Policy CS17);
- 11) A proposal that respects a number of trees and hedging within and on the edge of the site that contribute to the character of the area (consistent with Policy CS18);
- 12) The proposed means of access off the A4 Bath Road with a right-hand turning lane and ghost island together with a development on the A4 Bath Road creating an 'active frontage' will assist in reducing vehicle speeds into the village (consistent with Policies CS13 and CS14);
- 13) A site and scheme that can be accommodated in regard to infrastructure requirements and needs (consistent with Policy CS5);
- 14) A proposal that delivers on site green infrastructure) (consistent with Policy CS18);
- 15) A proposal that secures a net gain for biodiversity whilst also ensuring that there are no harmful ecological or habitat impacts (consistent with Policy CS17);

- 16) A scheme that is deliverable in respect of flooding and drainage considerations (consistent with Policy CS16).

11. PLANNING BALANCE: THE THREE ROLES OF SUSTAINABILITY

11.1. The merits and potential impacts of the application scheme are assessed in relation to the three sustainability tests set out at paragraph 8 of the NPPF. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF states (amongst other things) that the assessment of the sustainability roles should not be undertaken in isolation, because they are mutually dependent. In accordance with the guidance at paragraph 8 of the NPPF, a combined analysis in relation to the sustainability role is set out below.

Economic Considerations

11.2. The principal **economic considerations** are summarised below:

- 1) Increased house building in an area where there is a significant demand for new housing that in turn drives economic growth further and faster than any industry. In this regard the proposals will be contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is being made available in the right place and at the right time to support growth¹⁷;
- 2) The provision of 16 new homes in the District where there is an established need for such new homes.;
- 3) The application scheme is immediately available and can deliver much needed housing during the early part of the five-year housing land supply period;

¹⁷ The 2011 Census indicated that West Berkshire had fewer 16-64 year olds compared to England as a whole (64.4% to 64.8%). However, the proportion of the 16 to 74 population who were economically active was higher at 76.2% compared to 69.9%. The proportion with a level 4 or above qualification is also higher in West Berkshire at 32.1% compared to 27.4% in England as is the proportion of people in employment who are managers, directors & senior officials (13.1% compared to 10.9%), in professional occupations (20.2% compared to 17.5%) or in associate professional and technical occupations (14.2% compared to 12.8%). This highly skilled workforce is demonstrated by median gross annual residence based incomes at £36,472 compared to £30,661 for England in 2019 (19% higher). The Land Registry indicates that average house prices in West Berkshire (July 2020) were 32% at £336,388 compared to £254,688 in England. The Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan (pages 27 & 31) emphasises the importance of ensuring that the economic potential of the area is not stifled by labour supply issues, including a lack of housing, including an appropriate mix – this would need to reflect the demographic and educational profile of residents indicated above.

- 4) The application scheme will deliver much needed on site affordable homes, that will meet identified local needs that are otherwise not being met;
- 5) 40% of the units will be affordable, as required by development plan policy;
- 6) The issues of local housing need, affordability and lack of affordable housing supply as highlighted in section 8 of this evidence reinforces the important economic and social roles of the application scheme;
- 7) Meeting general housing needs is a benefit, consistent with the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of housing;
- 8) For the economy to function, sufficient housing is required in the right locations and at the right time. This site, within Woolhampton, lies in a sustainable location;
- 9) Create or support between 38.4 and 49.6 direct, indirect and induced jobs from the homes built on the site¹⁸;
- 10) Generating £0.6m GVA per annum during the construction phase of the scheme;
- 11) Helping to deliver a significant boost to the local economy through 'first occupation' expenditure of £87,392¹⁹. This is expenditure on new furniture and other household goods that residents spend as one offs when moving into a new home;
- 12) Generating a further significant economic boost of £35,563 from residents moving into the District's existing housing stock which were vacated so that the owners could move into the new homes proposed on land at the junction with Bath Road and New Road Hill, Woolhampton. This is a result of the

¹⁸ See page 13 of the Homes Builders Federation "Economic Footprint of UK Housebuilding" (July 2018) - https://www.hbf.co.uk/documents/7876/The_Economic_Footprint_of_UK_House_Building_July_2018_LR.pdf

¹⁹ Research carried out by OnePoll on behalf of Barratt Homes (August 2014; <https://www.barratthomes.co.uk/the-buying-process/home-buying-advice/>).

spending on renovations, household goods, removals, surveys, estate and legal fees that are associated with the purchase of existing rather than new homes within the District's housing stock²⁰.

13) In terms of household expenditure, data from the ONS Family Expenditure Survey 2018-19²¹ shows that the 'average UK household spend' is £571.80 per week (Table A33) (or £29,815 per year), whereas in South East England it is 19.3% higher than the UK average (Table A33). This means average weekly spend per household is £682.20 (or £35,572 per annum). For this scheme, the total gross expenditure is estimated to be £569,152 per year to the economy. A proportion of this household expenditure is anticipated to be spent in local shops and services and will help sustain the existing services in Woolhampton and other settlements²² including the centres in West Berkshire at Pangbourne, Tilehurst and Newbury²³. The expenditure will include that a proportion of that spent on areas including food & non-alcoholic drinks (£66.20 per week); alcoholic drinks (£12.50 per week); recreation and culture (£99.60 per week), household goods and services (£51.30) and miscellaneous goods and service i.e. hairdressing & beauty treatments (£52.80 per week).²⁴ Given the current economic challenges facing the UK these are significant economic benefits.

14) The application scheme will generate a New Homes Bonus economic benefits for the Council, totalling approximately up to £162,000;

²⁰ Research by HBF and Knight Frank on "Economic Benefits of housing market activity" which shows a contribution per house sale/purchase transaction of £9,560 - https://content.knightfrank.com/research/2121/documents/en/knight-frankhbf-economic-benefits-of-housing-market-activity-2020-7616.pdf?pk_campaign=newsletter_4034. The 2011 Census indicates that 37.2% of owner occupied or shared ownership households in West Berkshire that had moved within previous year, had lived within the authority.

²¹

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/personalandhouseholdfinances/expenditure/bulletins/familyspendingintheuk/april2018tomarch2019/relateddata>.

²² The application site at Woolhampton lies on the boundary of survey zones 3 and 16 of the Western Berkshire Retail and Commercial Leisure Assessment 2016 as illustrated in figure A

²³ The shops/centres within West Berkshire which would be supported by further population growth in Woolhampton (from the Retail and Commercial Leisure Assessment) includes where existing residents do their main food shopping, Tesco superstore (Bath Road) and Extra (Pinchington Lane) in Newbury; Waitrose, Newbury; Lidl Newbury; Sainsburys, Calcot & Newbury and Aldi, Bath Rd, Reading & London Rd, Newbury. For non-food shopping it includes within West Berkshire: Sainsbury's Calcot; Homebase and B&Q, Newbury; Newbury Retail Park; Tesco Extra, Newbury and the centres of Pangbourne, Tilehurst and Newbury and for entertainment the Vue Cinema, Newbury.

²⁴ Figures based upon SE Regional data in Table A33

15) The application could generate a CIL payment of around £112,500, with 15% for Midgham Parish

11.3. By providing land of the right type, in the right place, and at the right time to support economic growth, the development of 16 no. dwellings on the application site satisfies the objectives at paragraph 8 of the NPPF and assists in the aims of the NPPF in helping to build a strong and competitive economy (NPPF, paras 80-84).

11.4. In accordance with the provisions at paragraph 80 of the NPPF, and consistent with Secretary of State and Inspectors' application decisions²⁵, the economic considerations associated with the residential development, attract **moderate to significant weight** in the planning balance.

Social Considerations

11.5. The principal considerations that arise from the proposal in respect of the **social role** relate to helping to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, including by providing high-quality housing required to meet identified needs in open market and affordable sectors. The benefits are:

- 1) Providing additional market and affordable housing in a District which falls short against identified affordable housing need, a substantial social benefit;
- 2) The increase in supply of new open market housing, which will improve affordability ratios, thereby improving the ability of the population to own their own home and enhance how society and the economy function;
- 3) The proposal would provide a range of housing types and size, and a mix that directly responds to the type and size of accommodation needed for the local area;

²⁵ Appeal Decision for land north of Church Road, Bacton, Stowmarket (PINS ref APP/W/3520/W/18/3209219) allowed on 30th July 2019 (paragraph 50)

4) The scheme would enable the delivery of high-quality residential accommodation;

5) The scheme provides homes that are accessible to local services;

6) The provision of new publicly accessible open space that will enhance the opportunities for recreational activity as well as social and community interactions with positive healthy outcomes.

11.6. In determining the weight to be attached to the contribution of the market and affordable housing, Ministerial speeches and Government commissioned reports stretching back several years set out in stark relief the scale of the housing crisis. The consequences of this crisis are that *"...ordinary families, young people starting out in life and many others struggling to secure that most basic of human needs – a place to call their own – and being denied the opportunities that come with it"*²⁶.

11.7. Owing to the acute need for affordable housing (Section 8 of this evidence), substantial weight should be attached to the provision of new affordable homes. The emerging Local Plan represents the most up-to-date position on housing need and gives a strong indication of the likely direction of travel, especially with respect of its inclusion in Policies SP14 and RSA20 of the application site as an allocation for up to 20 dwellings. Considering the above, substantial weight should be attached to the contribution of this scheme to the provision of market housing, and particularly to affordable housing, given the pressing need.

11.8. In addition, the provision of new publicly accessible open space will enhance the opportunities for recreational activity as well as social and community interactions with positive healthy outcomes. This too can attract significant weight²⁷.

11.9. The policy objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes contained in NPPF paragraph 59 does not cease to apply in the event of a supply of housing in excess of five years.²⁸

²⁶ Rt. Honorable James Brokenshire Secretary of State, MHCLG Local Government Association Annual Conference 2018 Speech.

²⁷ Appeal decision for land north of Church Road, Bacton, Stowmarket (PINS ref APP/W/3520/W/18/3209219) allowed on 30th July 2019 (paragraph 48)

²⁸ Crondall Parish Council v SOSHCLG [2019]CO/3900/2018 EWHC1211(Admin) (paragraph 108)

11.10. Overall, the social considerations of the scheme attract **substantial weight** in the overall planning balance. This is irrespective of a five-year housing land supply²⁹.

Environmental Considerations

11.11. In terms of the **environmental considerations**, the Application site currently lies outside but well related to a sustainable and recognised settlement. This status is envisaged to change as a result of its allocation for residential development in the Draft Local Plan 2037 (December 2020).

11.12. The application scheme recognises and responds to the intrinsic character (urban edge) and beauty (limited) of the countryside complying with development plan policy CS19. The application of Policy C1 needs to be viewed in light of the scheme not materially harming the character and appearance of the wider more open countryside. In this context the application does not conflict with the objectives of Policy C1. The application scheme is not precluded by Policies CS1, or the distribution Policies ADPP1 and 6 or the landscape Policy CS19. The site is not located on land designated at a national or local level for its landscape, ecological value, or recreational value. The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Addendum and supporting illustrative material confirm the scheme will not result in any significant residual landscape or visual effects as it is visually well contained with only limited localised impacts.

11.13. These sustainable considerations are summarised in the Table below.

Sustainable Considerations Table

Economic Considerations	Weighting
Increased House Building to meet needs and drive economic activity and growth	Significant
Direct and indirect jobs from homes being built on site	Significant
£0.6m GVA per annum from construction phase	Significant

²⁹ APP/E2530/W/17/3181823 Application decision dated 9th March 2018 paragraph 51 (Document DB22)

Deerlands Road Application Decision paragraph 53 (Document DB13), and Secretary of State Watery Lane Decision letter paragraph 53 (Document DB18).

Economic Considerations	Weighting
One off first occupation expenditure (£87,392)	Significant
Additional expenditure from people moving into homes vacated in the District so they can occupy the new homes (£35,563)	Significant
Increased household expenditure £569,152 pa	Significant
New Homes Bonus	Moderate
CIL contributions of at least £112,500	Moderate
Social Considerations	
Meeting an established housing need	Significant
Delivering much needed on site affordable homes	Substantial
Delivering new housing to improve affordability ratios in an area of high house prices	Significant
Improving the ability of the population to own their own home and enhance how society and the economy function	Significant
Significantly boosting the supply of new homes consistent with government policy	Significant
Providing a range of housing types, sizes and mix in response to identified local needs	Significant
Delivering high-quality residential accommodation	Moderate
Delivering new homes in a sustainable location	Substantial
Environmental Considerations	
Locating new homes in an acknowledged sustainable location and settlement	Substantial
Creating an attractive residential environment for new residents	Moderate

Economic Considerations	Weighting
A visually well contained development respecting and responding to the character, function and appearance of the landscape	Significant
A proposed development that respects the amenities of neighbouring residential properties	Moderate

11.14. Overall, the proposal represents sustainable development.

12. CONCLUSIONS

- 12.1. The application site lies adjacent but well related to Woolhampton, an identified service village which includes a number of sustainable components, including a railway station. The Council's Housing Land Availability Assessments have confirmed that this is now the only remaining suitable site left at the village. It has consequently been included as an allocation through Policies SP14 and RSA20 within the Draft Local Plan 2037 (December 2020).
- 12.2. The outstanding issues highlighted by the Council's assessments relate to ecology and landscape. The ecology matter has now been addressed. With regard to landscape, there was a suggestion that this be considered in greater detail. The application landscape material together with the commentary in this Planning Statement confirm that the proposal is acceptable in landscape terms. This is not particularly surprising given the strong degree of visual and physical containment of urban form and uses that lie on three of the site's four sides. The strong degree of containment by ancient woodland on its fourth from the more open countryside that lies beyond further reinforces the strong association of the site to Woolhampton and its suitability for a small-scale sensitively designed and laid out residential development. The visual landscape material including the VVMs reinforce these conclusions.
- 12.3. By reason of the development plan policies not providing a cap or a limit on the amount of residential development in the district, or policies that have been worded with an appropriate degree of flexibility that in turn do not preclude greenfield development at (on the edge of) an identified service village (including Woolhampton), the application proposal is consistent with almost all of the relevant development plan policies.
- 12.4. Although the site is currently outside a settlement, as indicated above this is due to be changed as a result of its inclusion as an allocated site for 20 dwellings in the Draft Local Plan. The inclusion of the site as an allocation reflects the Council's acknowledgement of its suitability.
- 12.5. Reflecting the approach followed by the authority approving schemes on other sites allocated in draft Local Plans prior to their adoption, the same approach can be followed with respect of this site, recognising the consistency of the proposal with

current Policy, taking account the refinements in the emerging document. Due to the limited scale of the allocation in the Draft Local Plan, the approval of this application would not be regarded as pre-emptive of the approach of that document, especially as it is an allocated site. Given the acknowledged suitability of the site, it is therefore appropriate to approve this application.

12.6. Consequently, and as arises in this case, the proposal is consistent with the development plan when looked at as a whole and therefore can be approved consistent with section 38(6). There are other material considerations which also reinforce or outweigh any conflict with any current development plan policy. These material considerations include:

1. Significantly boosting the supply of new homes;
2. Making important contributions towards much-needed affordable housing;
3. Locating development within an acknowledged sustainable location (the Council does not object on sustainable location grounds);
4. A development that supports, consistent with NPPF paragraph 78, villages where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities;
5. The suggested continuation of the settlement hierarchy and the desirability of allowing further development at Service Villages;
6. The Council's evidence base identifying and confirming the application site as the only suitable residential site at Woolhampton; and
7. The allocation of the site in the Council's draft local plan. The allocation confirms that development here is acceptable in landscape impact terms, and on the Council's own assessment, would only have localised and filtered visual Impacts. This reinforces the suitability of the site and its ability to accommodate the proposed development without unacceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area and on land that is less environmentally sensitive than most of the district.

12.7. It is for all these reasons the application scheme has significant merits, development plan policy support, and in this context, should respectfully be allowed.

Woolf Bond Planning
Mr Douglas Bond
The Mitfords
Basingstoke Road
Three Mile Cross
Reading
RG7 1AT

Applicant:
JPP Land Limited

PART I - DETAILS OF APPLICATION

Date of Application

21st December 2020

Application No.

20/03028/OUTMAJ

THE PROPOSAL AND LOCATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT:

Outline application for the erection of 16 dwellings, including 6 affordable units, with access from Bath Road. Matters to be considered: Access

Land at Junction With Bath Road, New Road Hill, Midgham, Reading

PART II - DECISION

In pursuance of its powers under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, West Berkshire District Council REFUSES OUTLINE planning permission for the development referred to in Part I in accordance with the submitted application form and plans, for the following reason(s):-

1. The proposed development is not on land identified as suitable for residential development. The application site is located outside of a defined settlement boundary, below the district settlement hierarchy, where there is a presumption against residential development. The site is not land that has been allocated for residential development. The proposed development is not for rural exception housing, to accommodate rural workers, or limited infill within a closely knit cluster of 10 or more dwellings. As such the proposed development is contrary to Policy C1 of the Housing Site Allocations DPD 2006-2026, the Council's strategy for locating new homes in Policies ADPP1, ADPP6 and CS1 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026, and the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. The application fails to provide a planning obligation to secure:
 - (a) on-site provision of 40% affordable housing, without which the proposal fails to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy CS6 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026, and the Planning Obligations SPD; and
 - (b) the provision, transfer (with commuted sum for maintenance) and governance of on-site public open space, without which the proposal fails to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy CS18 of the West Berkshire Core

Strategy 2006-2026, Policies RL.1, RL.2 and RL.3 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 (Saved Policies 2007), and the Planning Obligations SPD.

If you require further information on this decision please contact the Council via the Customer Call Centre on 01635 519111.

INFORMATIVE:

1 In attempting to determine the application in a way that can foster the delivery of sustainable development, the local planning authority has approached this decision in a positive way having regard to Development Plan policies and available guidance to try to secure high quality appropriate development. In this application there has been a need to balance conflicting considerations, and the local planning authority has also attempted to work proactively with the applicant to find a solution to the problems with the development; however, an acceptable solution to improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area could not be found.

2 This application has been considered by West Berkshire Council, and REFUSED. Should the application be granted on appeal there will be a liability to pay Community Infrastructure Levy to West Berkshire Council on commencement of the development. This charge would be levied in accordance with the West Berkshire Council CIL Charging Schedule and Section 211 of the Planning Act 2008.

Decision Date :- 21st September 2022

Bob Dray
Interim Development Control Manager

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

Notification to be sent to an applicant when a local planning authority refuse planning permission or grant it subject to conditions

Appeals to the Secretary of State

- If you are aggrieved by the decision of your local planning authority to refuse permission for the proposed development or to grant it subject to conditions, then you can appeal to the Secretary of State under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- If you want to appeal against the local planning authority's decision then you must do so within 6 months of the date of this notice.
- Appeals must be made using a form which you can get from the Planning Inspectorate at Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6PN or online using the Planning Portal at www.planningportal.co.uk.
- The Secretary of State can allow a longer period for giving notice of an appeal, but he will not normally be prepared to use this power unless there are special circumstances which excuse the delay in giving notice of appeal.
- The Secretary of State need not consider an appeal if it seems to him that the local planning authority could not have granted planning permission for the proposed development or could not have granted it without the conditions they imposed, having regard to the statutory requirements, to the provisions of any development order and to any directions given under a development order.
- In practice, the Secretary of State does not refuse to consider appeals solely because the local planning authority based their decision on a direction given by him.

Purchase Notices

- If either the local planning authority or the Secretary of State refuses permission to develop land or grants it subject to conditions, the owner may claim that he can neither put the land to a reasonably beneficial use in its existing state nor render the land capable of a reasonably beneficial use by the carrying out of any development which has been or would be permitted.
- In these circumstances, the owner may serve a purchase notice on the Council in whose area the land is situated. This notice will require the Council to purchase his interest in the land in accordance with the provisions of Part VI of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Agenda Item 4.(1)

Item No.	Application No. and Parish	Statutory Target Date	Proposal, Location, Applicant
(1)	20/03028/OUTMAJ Midgham	06/04/2021 ¹	Outline application for the erection of 16 dwellings, including 6 affordable units, with access from Bath Road. Matters to be considered: Access Land at Junction With Bath Road New Road Hill Midgham Reading JPP Land Limited

¹ Extension of time agreed with applicant until 12/05/2022

The application can be viewed on the Council's website at the following link:
<http://planning.westberks.gov.uk/rpp/index.asp?caseref=20/03028/OUTMAJ>

Recommendation Summary: Delegate to the Service Director of Development and Regulation to grant outline planning permission subject to the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement, or to refuse planning permission if the Section 106 legal agreement is not completed.

Ward Member: Councillor Graham Pask

Reason for Committee Determination: More than 10 of objection have been received and the officers' recommendation is to approve the application.

Committee Site Visit: 4th May 2022

Contact Officer Details

Name: Mr. Matthew Shepherd
Job Title: Senior Planning Officer
Tel No: 01635 519111
Email: Matthew.Shepherd@Westberks.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This application seeks outline planning permission for the erection of 16 dwellings, including 6 affordable units, with access from Bath Road. Details of access are to be considered at this outline stage, but the layout, scale, appearance and landscaping are reserved matters for later consideration if outline permission is granted.
- 1.2 The site is located at junction of Bath Road with New Road Hill, on the western edge of Woolhampton, within the parish of Midgham. The site is not with a planning policy defined settlement boundary. The site is 0.81 hectares in size according to the application form, it is an undeveloped green field site, currently used as a paddock with strongly defined boundary's adjacent to Woodlands. The site is bounded to the west by a Biodiveristy Opportunity Area and a Local Wildlife Site, and has a Tree Protection order on a T1 Oak to the east of the site. The site is bounded by Ancient Woodland to the East to which sits adjacent to the boundary of the site. In summary:
- Open countryside (outside of any defined settlement boundary)
 - Adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area, Local Wildlife Site and has TPO on the site.
 - Site is bounded by Ancient Woodland to the East

2. Planning History

- 2.1 The table below outlines the relevant planning history of the application site.

Application	Proposal	Decision / Date
19/01942/OUTMAJ	Outline application for the erection of 16 dwellings, including 6 affordable units, with access from Bath Road.	Refused 23.01.2020. Appeal withdrawn

- 2.2 As detailed above, planning permission was refused for substantively the same development in January 2020, and this decision was appealed to the Planning Inspectorate. However, in advance of the scheduled inquiry the Regulation 18 consultation draft of the Local Plan Review was published with the appeal/application site as a proposed allocation. Consequently, the appeal was withdrawn to pursue this application in light of the changing circumstances.

3. Procedural Matters

- 3.1 **EIA:** Given the nature and scale of this development it is considered to fall under section 10 of Column 1 of Schedule 2, but it is not considered to exceed any of the thresholds listed in column 2 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. As such, EIA screening is not required.
- 3.2 **Publicity:** Site notices were displayed on 13/01/2021 on lampposts fronting the site adjacent to the A4; the deadline for representations expired on 03/02/2021. A public notice was displayed in the Newbury Weekly News on 21/01/2021.

- 3.3 **CIL:** Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a levy charged on most new development to pay for new infrastructure required as a result of the new development. CIL will be charged on residential (C3 and C4) and retail (A1 - A5) development at a rate per square metre (based on Gross Internal Area) on new development of more than 100 square metres of net floorspace (including extensions) or when a new dwelling is created (even if it is less than 100 square metres). Based on the CIL PAIR form, it appears that the proposed development will be CIL liable. However, CIL liability will be formally confirmed by the CIL Charging Authority under separate cover following the grant of any reserved matters approval. More information is available at www.westberks.gov.uk/cil

4. Consultation

Statutory and non-statutory consultation

- 4.1 The table below summarises the consultation responses received during the consideration of the application. The full responses may be viewed with the application documents on the Council's website, using the link at the start of this report.

Midgham Parish Council:	<p>Objection to the application for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a development in the countryside. • It is outside the settlement boundary. • It is a ribbon development. • The matter has already been assessed by the planning authorities very recently and planning permission was denied. • The parish council are also objecting to the potential inclusion of this site into the local plan.
Woolhampton Parish Council:	<p>Object to the application due to the access to the site being considered unsafe and too close to other junctions nearby.</p> <p>The sewage infrastructure is not sufficient to meet the demands of the new development.</p> <p>Overdevelopment- The oil pipeline area cannot be built on/near too.</p>
WBC Highways:	No objections subject to conditions
WBC Trees:	No objections subject to conditions
WBC Housing Officer:	No objections subject to securing affordable housing via legal agreement
WBC Minerals and Waste Officer:	No response 29/04/2022
WBC Planning Policy Officer:	<p>Response summarised as follows:</p> <p>This proposed development does not meet the exceptions listed in Policy C1, and therefore the policy presumption against new</p>

	<p>residential development applies. The proposed development is considered to be contrary to the current development plan.</p> <p>The HELAA concluded that the site is available within the next 1-5 years; that development is achievable (i.e. no known legal, ownership, market, or cost issues that could constrain the development); and the suitability was unknown. It was assessed that the site is potentially developable in part due to the need for a buffer between development and the ancient woodland which adjoins the site. The other sites in Woolhampton promoted for consideration in the HELAA (refs MID2 and MID3) were assessed as 'not developable within the next 15 years'.</p> <p>The LPR is in an early stage of development, and an emerging draft was subject to public consultation (Regulation 18 stage) between December 2020 and February 2021. Policy RSA20 allocates the application site for residential development.</p> <p>The preparation of the LPR has been delayed, given the changes outlined in the July 2021 NPPF and the need to undertake 30-year visioning work.</p> <p>Through the Regulation 18 consultation, six representations were received in respect of the site, and these can be viewed on the Council's Local Plan Consultation Portal: https://consult.westberks.gov.uk/kse/event/35924/peoplesubmissions/section/ID-5735616-6?consultation=ID-5735616-SITE-20.</p> <p>Of the six representations, two were in support (this included the site promoter), there was one objection (Midgham Parish Council), and three which recommended typographical changes or criteria for inclusion in the policy.</p> <p>Officers consider that the matters raised in the representations are not of a significance that they would warrant the removal of the site as an allocation.</p> <p>Woolhampton is designated as a 'service village' and no changes are anticipated to take place to that classification through the LPR, meaning that the settlement will continue to be regarded as suitable for this scale of development through the LPR.</p> <p>The application site has been promoted again as part of the LPR. Of the three sites adjacent to the village this is the only site that has not been discounted through the HELAA, and it is the only proposed allocation in the village.</p>
WBC Ecology Officer:	No Objections subject to conditions
Thames Water Utilities:	<p><u>Waste Comments</u></p> <p>The application indicates that SURFACE WATER will NOT be discharged to the public network and as such Thames Water has no objection, however approval should be sought from the Lead Local Flood Authority. Should the applicant subsequently seek a connection to discharge surface water into the public network in the future then we would consider this to be a material change to the</p>

	<p>proposal, which would require an amendment to the application at which point we would need to review our position.</p> <p>With the information provided, Thames Water has been unable to determine the waste water infrastructure needs of this application. Thames Water has contacted the developer in an attempt to obtain this information and agree a position for FOUL WATER drainage, but have been unable to do so in the time available and as such, Thames Water request that a condition be added to any planning permission.</p> <p>Thames Water recognises this catchment is subject to high infiltration flows during certain groundwater conditions. The scale of the proposed development doesn't materially affect the sewer network and as such we have no objection. In the longer term Thames Water, along with other partners, are working on a strategy to reduce groundwater entering the sewer network.</p> <p>Thames Water recognises this catchment is subject to high infiltration flows during certain groundwater conditions. The developer should liaise with the LLFA to agree an appropriate sustainable surface water strategy following the sequential approach before considering connection to the public sewer network. The scale of the proposed development doesn't materially affect the sewer network and as such we have no objection. In the longer term Thames Water, along with other partners, are working on a strategy to reduce groundwater entering the sewer network.</p> <p><u>Water Comments</u> Following initial investigations, Thames Water has identified an inability of the existing water network infrastructure to accommodate the needs of this development proposal. Thames Water have contacted the developer in an attempt to agree a position on water networks but have been unable to do so in the time available and as such Thames Water request that a condition be added to any planning permission.</p>
WBC Emergency Planning Officer:	No objections
Officer of Nuclear Regulation (ONR):	No comment
AWE:	No response 28/04/2022
WBC Archaeology Officer:	No objections
Thames Valley Police:	No objections

WBC Environmental Health:	The application site is located next to the A4 road which will result in elevated noise levels. A noise survey and acoustic mitigation proposals will be required to demonstrate that the recommended internal and external noise levels can be achieved. An hours of work and dust conditions are required in order to reduce the impact to nearby residential properties during the construction phase.
Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue:	No response 28/04/2022
Berkshire, Buckinghamshire And Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust:	No objections in principle will submit condition suggested wording
Environment Agency:	No objections
Natural England:	No comment
WBC Transport Policy:	No response 28/04/2022
WBC Lead Local Flood Authority:	No objections subject to conditions
WBC Waste Management:	Comments made and condition suggested.
CLH Fisher German Pipeline:	No objections

Public representations

4.2 Representations have been received from 39 contributors, all of which object to the proposal. The full responses may be viewed with the application documents on the Council's website, using the link at the start of this report. In summary, the following issues/points have been raised:

- There is no need for any more houses to be built in the village as there has already been 4 houses building in the village in the last year.
- The junction they are proposing will be very dangerous as there are numerous junctions coming onto the A4.
- Affordable housing that is being proposed locals could not afford these prices in their own village.
- The planning application was refused once why has it been put in again.

- Peoples views will be no longer looking at open fields just windows or rooftops .
- The village of Woolhampton is already in danger of losing its charm and character with the developments in place - the houses being built beside Midgham station and the large new estate on the A4.
- The amount of cars and extra traffic would not only be a major disruption but also very dangerous on an already extremely dangerous road.
- On street parking in the area is an issue.
- This paddock forms part of the defined rural landscape on approach to the village from the west creating clear definition between the village and open countryside to develop this area would detract from the small village feel.
- The site is a Greenfield site and borders ancient woodland and to develop this site can only have a negative impact on the local wildlife and their habitat regardless of any mitigating efforts of the development.
- Adding in so many houses and people would have a negative effect on local facilities and amenities.
- Noise and light pollution will significantly rise in this area due to the development. This would also negatively affect the adjoining paddock.
- It is a greenfield site.
- The development will impede natural drainage in the event of heavy rain.
- The sewerage works in station road are at full capacity with no initiation of enhancement from Thames Water.
- The junction is dangerous, turning right from the A4 is extremely precarious at the moment. It is clearly a dangerous road due to the need for speed cameras.
- The site has been rejected once.
- Deer and other wildlife has been known to graze on the land.
- This is basically the same application as the one already refused and should not be considered further.
- The developer states they did a mail drop about the application but nothing has been received by the objector.
- Planning applications have an adverse effect on people mental health and general feeling of wellbeing in the village.
- The land selected is greenbelt land, and as such should not be being considered for domestic development.
- It was always discussed that it was reed gardens or new road hill, never both developments coming forwards.
- The MOD oil pipeline runs through the development site, any new development runs the risk of causing a major incident to the pipeline.
- Water is already seen running down the roads from New Road Hill and Woolhampton by building more homes this could increase the risk of flooding.
- The field is important area for protect birds and foraging ground animals.
- The development falls within the Kennet School catchment area and this school is already oversubscribed. The development would put yet more pressure and compound this issue further.
- The area of land in question is on a very steep gradient which floods regularly with surface water running down New Road Hill. More concrete and housing will reduce natural infiltration and cause more danger to passing traffics on Bath Rd.
- The local primary school is at maximum capacity and would need significant investment and new buildings in order to offer places to a greater number of children.
- More houses will mean more congestion and more issues and busy times on the roads around Woolhampton.
- The south side of the A4 flooded in previous years and this along with other development could exacerbate this issue.
- There will be noise and disruption during construction.
- There will be a loss of the village feel to Woolhampton.

- Wildlife and protected species are often seen in the proposed development site.
- Views from existing house's adjacent to the site will be negatively impacted.
- There is no need for more housing in Woolhampton.
- The A4 is a very busy road and sometimes has limited viability due to the lack of lighting at the junction which could be dangerous.
- There is concern that more development towards Thatcham could exacerbate the issues raised in regards to this application.
- To allow this application would turn the village into a town losing its character.
- It is not considered this application is sufficiently different from the previous application to warrant any other decision than refusal.
- Concern is raised over the steepness of the site and the stability of the ground.
- The timing of this new application being proposed during lockdown suggests lack of transparency.

5. Planning Policy

5.1 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The following policies of the statutory development plan are relevant to the consideration of this application.

- Policies ADPP1, ADPP6, CS1, CS4, CS5, CS6, CS8, CS13, CS14, CS15, CS16, CS17, CS18 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 (WBCS).
- Policies C1, C3 and P1 of the Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document 2006-2026 (HSA DPD).
- Policies TRANS 1, OVS.5, OVS6, RL.1, RL.2 and RL.3 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 (Saved Policies 2007).
- Policies 1 and 2 of the Replacement Minerals Local Plan for Berkshire 2001 (RMLP).

5.2 The following material considerations are relevant to the consideration of this application:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan 2019-24
- WBC Quality Design SPD (2006)
- Planning Obligations SPD (2015)
- Sustainable Drainage SPD (2018)
- West Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment (2019)

6. Appraisal

6.1 The main issues for consideration in this application are:

- Principle of development
- Housing mix and infrastructure
- Affordable housing
- AWE
- Landscape and visual impact
- Residential amenity
- Highways matters
- Flooding and sustainable drainage

- Sustainable construction and energy efficiency
- Ecology and trees

Principle of development

6.2 The application site is located to the west of Woolhampton. It lies adjacent to, but outside of, the Woolhampton settlement boundary, and in policy terms is located in open countryside. The site is proposed as a residential allocation in the draft emerging West Berkshire Local Plan Review to 2037. The existing development plan and emerging policies are considered below with respect to the principle of development.

Development Plan

- 6.3 The most important development plan policies for determining whether the principle of development is acceptable are Policies ADPP1, ADPP6 and CS1 of the Core Strategy, and Policy C1 of the Housing Site Allocations DPD. The Core Strategy includes a Spatial Strategy (ADPP1 and ADPP6) that provides a broad indication of the overall scale of development in the district, applying the principles of sustainable development, and based on defined spatial areas and a settlement hierarchy. Policies CS1 and C1 relate specifically to housing.
- 6.4 According to Policy ADPP1, most development will be within or adjacent to the settlements in the hierarchy, and related to their transport accessibility and level of services. The urban areas will be the focus for most development. The scale and density of development will be related to the site's accessibility, character and surroundings.
- 6.5 Woolhampton is classified as a "service village" in the District Settlement Hierarchy of Policy ADPP1, which is a third tier settlement designated for having a more limited range of services and some limited development potential.
- 6.6 Only appropriate limited development in the countryside (outside of the defined settlement boundaries) will be allowed, focused on addressing identified needs and maintaining a strong rural economy.
- 6.7 The application site is located within the East Kennet Valley, the name given to the rural south-east of the district that lies east of Thatcham and outside of the AONB. Distinct features of this area are the Kennet and Avon Canal and River Kennet which both run from west to east across the breadth of this area, parallel to the Newbury – Reading train line and the A4. The East Kennet Valley is also characterised by a number of villages along the route of the canal/river and others dispersed across farmland and some woodland. The Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) has two bases in this area, at Aldermaston and Burghfield, which has implications for the future level of development in this area.
- 6.8 Policy ADPP6 is the spatial strategy for the East Kennet Valley. The policy identifies that the area will accommodate approximately 800 new homes over the plan period. The two identified rural service centres of Burghfield Common and Mortimer will be the focus of development, together with the more modest development of the identified service village of Woolhampton. According to the policy, the character of all the settlements in this area will be conserved and enhanced by ensuring that any development responds positively to the local context. Development in the open countryside will be strictly controlled.
- 6.9 According to Policy CS1, new homes will be located in accordance with the Spatial Strategy and Area Delivery Plan Policies. New homes will be primarily located on

suitable land within settlement boundaries, and other land allocated for development within the Local Plan.

- 6.10 In this context, Policy C1 of the HSA DPD gives a presumption against new residential development outside of the settlement boundaries. Exceptions to this are limited to some forms of development listed in the policy.
- 6.11 The HSA DPD was prepared within the framework of the adopted Core Strategy and allocated smaller scale housing sites to boost the supply of housing in a plan-led manner, while taking the opportunity to update selected housing policies.
- 6.12 This particular site (ref: WOOL001) was not allocated within the HSA DPD. The site was submitted and assessed as part of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment process as potentially developable. The site was then considered through the HSA DPD process, and was one of two sites presented as alternatives at the Preferred Options stage. Following consultation and further sustainability appraisal the site to the north of the A4 to the east of the village was selected for allocation rather than this site. Site works have commenced on the allocated site which will deliver 35 homes, including 14 affordable homes. This is now believed to have been built out (April 2022).
- 6.13 This proposed development does not meet the exceptions listed in Policy C1, and therefore the policy presumption against new residential development applies. The proposed development is considered to be contrary to the current development plan.

West Berkshire Local Plan Review to 2037 (LPR)

- 6.14 The current Local Plan (which comprises of the Core Strategy, Housing Site Allocations DPD, and the saved policies of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006) sets out the district's planning policies up to 2026. A review of the Local Plan is now underway to cover the period up to 2037.
- 6.15 Various evidence documents have been produced to underpin the policies within the LPR, and one such document is the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA). The application was promoted to the Council and has been assessed as part of the HELAA, last updated in December 2020 (<https://info.westberks.gov.uk/helaa>). Comments were sought from internal and external consultees, and represented an assessment based on the information provided at that time.
- 6.16 The HELAA concluded that the site is available within the next 1-5 years; that development is achievable (i.e. no known legal, ownership, market, or cost issues that could constrain the development); and the suitability was unknown. It was assessed that the site is potentially developable in part due to the need for a buffer between development and the ancient woodland which adjoins the site. The other sites in Woolhampton promoted for consideration in the HELAA (refs MID2 and MID3) were assessed as 'not developable within the next 15 years'.
- 6.17 The LPR is in an early stage of development, and an emerging draft was subject to public consultation (Regulation 18 stage) between December 2020 and February 2021. Policy RSA20 allocates the application site for residential development.
- 6.18 Paragraph 48 of the NPPF allows Local Planning Authorities to give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:
- a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);

- b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
 - c) the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).
- 6.19 The preparation of the LPR has been delayed, given the changes outlined in the July 2021 NPPF and the need to undertake 30-year visioning work.
- 6.20 Through the Regulation 18 consultation, six representations were received in respect of the site, and these can be viewed on the Council's Local Plan Consultation Portal: <https://consult.westberks.gov.uk/kse/event/35924/peoplesubmissions/section/ID-5735616-6?consultation=ID-5735616-SITE-20>.
- 6.21 Of the six representations, two were in support (this included the site promoter), there was one objection (Midgham Parish Council), and three which recommended typographical changes or criteria for inclusion in the policy.
- 6.22 Officers consider that the matters raised in the representations are not of a significance that they would warrant the removal of the site as an allocation. Officers advise Members on the basis of evidence. Officers recommended this site be included as a proposed allocation in the emerging draft LPR and Members agreed that the plan could be consulted on. Members will need to agree that the proposed submission version of the plan (Regulation 19) can be consulted upon.
- 6.23 Having regard to paragraph 48 of the NPPF, the consultation draft of the LPR is considered to be consistent with the NPPF. The relatively early stage of preparation is such that normally limited weight can be given to the emerging policies. However, careful consideration has been given to the specific circumstances of this site.
- 6.24 As part of the LPR it is proposed to merge the Eastern Area and East Kennet Valley spatial areas into a new single spatial area. The LPR also proposes to retain a District Settlement Hierarchy that will direct appropriate levels of growth to the settlements across the district.
- 6.25 Woolhampton is designated as a 'service village' and no changes are anticipated to take place to that classification through the LPR, meaning that the settlement will continue to be regarded as suitable for this scale of development through the LPR. It is also recognised that a large area within the proposed Eastern Spatial Area has been constrained by the emergency planning zones surrounding the two AWE sites.
- 6.26 The application site has been promoted again as part of the LPR. Of the three sites adjacent to the village this is the only site that has not been discounted through the HELAA, and it is the only proposed allocation in the village.
- 6.27 Planning Policy has confirmed that the matters raised in the Regulation 18 are not of a significance to warrant not pursuing the allocation, and therefore it is considered that there are not any unresolved technical objections. The matters raised in the HELAA (such as the relationship to ancient woodland) have been considered as part of this application and found to be acceptable.
- 6.28 Taking all these points into consideration, it is considered that the application site is highly likely to progress as an allocation in the LPR, and therefore greater weight can be applied to the emerging policies in accordance with paragraph 48 of the NPPF.

- 6.29 Consideration has been given to whether the granting of planning permission now would be premature to the adoption of the Local Plan Review. The NPPF provides Government policy on this issue of prematurity in paragraph 50. It states:

“Refusal of planning permission on grounds of prematurity will seldom be justified where a draft plan has yet to be submitted for examination; or – in the case of a neighbourhood plan – before the end of the local planning authority publicity period on the draft plan. Where planning permission is refused on grounds of prematurity, the local planning authority will need to indicate clearly how granting permission for the development concerned would prejudice the outcome of the plan-making process.”

- 6.30 As the LPR has not been submitted for examination, national policy is clear that planning permission cannot be refused on grounds of prematurity in this case.
- 6.31 Overall it is considered, in the particular circumstances of this case, that the principle of development is acceptable.

Housing mix and infrastructure

- 6.32 In terms of efficient use of land, policy CS4 allows for lower density developments below 30 dwellings per hectare in certain areas of the district where areas are sensitive to intensification. The housing density has been calculated as approximately 19.7 dwellings per hectare. The location of the site, sensitivity to change and character of the area are such that a lower density is justifiable. Additionally the constraints of the sites in the form of buffers and pipeline easement must be factored in. This consideration relates solely to land use density, not the precise impact of the development.
- 6.33 Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy relates to infrastructure provision and services for new development. The scale of the development is such that community infrastructure levy receipts would go towards mitigating impacts on the majority of local infrastructure including schools and health services.

Affordable housing

- 6.34 Core Strategy policy CS6 provides that for site of more than 0.5 hectares or development of 15 dwellings or more on greenfield land shall provide 40% affordable housing. The tenure split sought by the Council is 70% social rented and 30% intermediate housing to meet identified local need. As the developers are proposing 16 dwellings, and as this is a greenfield site of over 0.5 hectares 40% of all dwellings are required for affordable housing provision, which equates to 6 units (rounded up). The development proposal would provide 6 units equating to 40% of the site as affordable housing.
- 6.35 However, the development will need to comply with the Government’s introduction of First Homes. This therefore needs to be factored into the housing mix.
- 6.36 With regard to the unit mix factoring in First Homes, in the light of sales values, it would not be feasible in this location for a 3-bed home to meet the First Homes criterion regarding a maximum 30% discount on market value. Therefore the following unit mix was proposed and agreed with the Council’s Housing Officer.

First Homes

- 2 x no.2 bed

Social Rent

- 2 x no.1 beds
- 1 x no.2 beds
- 1 x no.3 beds

6.37 The applicant has provided a policy compliant level of affordable units. Both affordable housing and the provision and transfer of public open space would need to be secured by a planning obligation. The development is considered in accordance with policy in this regard subject to agreement of planning obligations.

AWE

6.38 The application site is located outside the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone of both AWE sites. No objections have been received from the Office of Nuclear Regulation or Emergency Planning, and no comments have been submitted by AWE. The proposal is considered to comply with Policy CS8.

Landscape and visual impacts

6.39 There are a number of policies that include matters which relate to the impact of development on the character of the area. Policy ADPP1 requires the scale and density of development to be well related to the site's character and surroundings, and Policy ADPP6 that the character of the settlements conserved and enhanced.

6.40 Policy C1 of the Housing Site Allocations DPD states that, planning permission will not be granted where a proposal harms or undermines the existing relationship of the settlement within the open countryside, where it does not contribute to the character and distinctiveness of a rural area, including the natural beauty of the AONB, or where development would have an adverse cumulative impact on the environment.

6.41 Policy CS14 states that new development must demonstrate high quality and sustainable design that respects and enhances the character and appearance of the area. It further states that development shall contribute positively to local distinctiveness and sense of place.

6.42 Policy CS19 seeks to conserve and enhance the functional components of the landscape character and environment. Particular regard will be given to the sensitivity of the area to change, and ensuring that new development is appropriate in terms of location, scale and design in the context of the existing settlement form, pattern and character. Policy CS19 states that proposals for development should be informed by and respond to the distinctive character areas and key characteristics identified in relevant landscape character assessments. The West Berkshire LCA was published in August 2019.

6.43 The application included an indicative layout and landscaping plan, as well as a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). This documents comments that the site is well contained in views from the adjoining landscape and townscape by the adjoining well-treed and wooded landscape, as well as the existing built form. Where the new homes are visible, they will be seen within the context of the existing residential development along New Road Hill and Bath Road, and will not appear out of character. The LVIA concludes that "overall, the proposed development, in line with the Indicative Site Layout Plan, Illustrative Landscape Strategy Plan and the principles set out in Section 5.2, will complement the character of the surrounding area, and will not have any significant effects on the surrounding landscape or townscape character."

- 6.44 The West Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment defines the site in *WH4: Cold Ash Woodland and Heathland Mosaic*, the site is right in the southern border of this area. One of the identified ongoing detractors in the area is the increase in sub urbanisation of the area. It notes modern housing along main routes and on adjacent cul-de-sacs, together with street lighting and pavements, has introduced suburban characteristics to some places, particularly where there is less tree cover to mask changes. It goes on to comment that the loss of small pasture fields adjacent to settlements have been vulnerable to development however these sites adjacent to settlement boundaries contribute to the rural character as they act as transitions between settlements and countryside that contributes positively to the landscape character. The proposed development leads to the loss of the paddock land, which makes a contribution to the rural setting of the village. The loss of this paddock detracts from the landscape character identified in the assessment degrading the character of the area through the loss of transitioning space between settlement and countryside.
- 6.45 The applicant has sought to justify this by identifying the degree of screening the site benefits from and the woodland to which marks, in their opinion, the edge of the settlement boundary. The applicant notes that the open field plays little part in the setting of Woolhampton.
- 6.46 The proposed development would have an adverse impact in terms of the loss of the open paddock, which makes a contribution to the rural setting of the village. The presence of housing would be conspicuous in public views immediately adjacent to the site. Whilst it is considered that there is landscape and visual harm (having regard to the LCA), it is considered to be localised to the immediate vicinity of the site whereby the development would be viewed in the context of existing built form, and views of the development would be filtered to varying degrees.
- 6.47 Overall, it is concluded that there would be some localised harm, but that when balanced against the principle of development it is considered that the site is acceptable in this respect.

Residential amenity

- 6.48 According to Policy CS14, new development must demonstrate high quality and sustainable design that makes a positive contribution to the quality of life in West Berkshire. Paragraph 127 of the NPPF states planning decisions should ensure that developments create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.
- 6.49 Consequently, all development should be designed in a way to avoid any unacceptable harm to neighbouring living conditions. Applications will typically be assessed in terms of any significant loss of light, overlooking of neighbouring buildings or land, and whether the proposal would result in any undue sense of enclosure, overbearing impact, or harmful loss of outlook to neighbouring properties. Developments should also provide a good quality environment for future occupants of the development, including the above considerations, noise, and private outdoor amenity space.
- 6.50 The application is made in outline therefore the detailed design is subject to change; however an indicate site layout has been provided to show one way in which the site could be developed.
- 6.51 It is considered that the indicative site layout submitted would give due consideration to the neighbours of the application site. The dwelling to the north of the site known as Mariner Lodge would benefit from the pipeline easement area of open space to which is an adequate buffer between the sites proposed dwellings and neighbouring dwellings. The distances between plots 14 and 15 and those dwellings to the east of the site are

considered adequate. It is considered that the illustrative layout submitted would not have a detrimental impact on neighbouring amenity from issues such as overlooking, overbearing, and overshadowing or from a loss of sunlight.

- 6.52 The garden spaces provided to each individual dwelling are considered acceptable. Some of the plots fall below the thresholds required by the SPD but others exceed, so there would be sufficient flexibility at reserved matters stage. Given the site plan is also indicative this is something that may be subject to change. The development is considered capable of complying with the above policies in terms of neighbouring amenity.

Highway matters

- 6.53 The Highway Authority has reviewed the plans, letters from the public, and the Transport Statement (TS) prepared by i-Transport. This proposal is similar to and follows on from planning application 19/01942/OUTMAJ.

Site layout

- 6.54 Whilst it appreciated that the indicative site layout is only illustrative at this stage, the layout appears to be generally acceptable. The layout will need to comply with parking standards set in the Housing Site Allocations DPD Policy P1 2017 and Cycle and Motorcycle Advice and Standards for New Development 2014. This can be considered further any reserved matters stage.
- 6.55 It must be noted that within West Berkshire, all roads serving more than five houses must be built to an adoptable standard. Highway officers will strongly encourage the roads and other infrastructure be adopted under Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980 and will take measures accordingly.

Access

- 6.56 As shown on drawing ITB14436-GA-005 Rev E, the vehicular access onto the A4 is proposed to a width of 5.0 metres with 2.0 metre wide footways on both sides. As stated within the TS, to determine the required sight lines, speed surveys were undertaken between the February 5th and the 11th 2019. 85th percentile recorded speeds were found of 66 kph (41.0 mph) eastbound and 57.5 kph (35.7 mph) westbound. Sight lines, are therefore being provided of 2.4 x 120.0 and 61.0 respectively. This complies with standards set within the Government's Manual for Streets (MfS) and the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DRMB).
- 6.57 For the proposed access, Highway officers are content with the proposed turn right lane and ghost island within the A4, as it generally complies with the DRMB TD42/95.
- 6.58 The provision of additional accesses onto major roads such as the A4 is not normally supported by highway officers, and in some respects it may have been preferable to have had an access serving the site onto New Road Hill. However, in this instance having the development accessing and fronting onto the A4 would assist in providing an 'active frontage' in line with the Government's Manual for Streets. The indicative layout does show dwellings fronting onto the A4.
- 6.59 An independent Stage One Road Safety Audit (RSA) was undertaken for both the proposed site access junction. The RSA did not raise any particular highway safety issues with the proposed design.

Traffic generation

- 6.60 Traffic generation for the development has been projected using the Trip Rate Information Computer System (TRICS) which is an Ireland and UK database of traffic surveys from many different uses including residential. This is a very standard methodology to project traffic levels. The following has been obtained from TRICS

Trip rate...	AM peak 08.00 to 09.00			PM peak 17.00 to 18.00		
	Arrive	Depart	Total	Arrive	Depart	Total
Per dwelling	0.128	0.448	0.576	0.383	0.180	0.563
For proposal	2	7	9	6	3	9

Projected traffic generation

- 6.61 It needs to be highlighted that the above trip rates do not include all of the traffic that will leave the site during the morning and that return during the PM peak etc. It is only during the particular peak hours. The Highway Officer considers this to be sufficiently robust. With the above figures, Officers have no objection on traffic grounds.
- 6.62 Personal Injury Accident (PIAs) data for the Woolhampton area has been viewed for five years up to the end of 2021. In total, there were four PIAs recorded in the study period, two of which were recorded as slight in nature and two which resulted in serious injury. Every PIA is regrettable, however the number of PIA's are not unusual and do not identify any specific road safety problems in the local area that would be increased by what is a relatively small development
- 6.63 Overall, the Highway Authority raises no objection to this proposal. Should the proposal be approved conditions will be needed.

Flooding and sustainable drainage

- 6.64 The site is located within Flood Zone 1, which indicates a low risk of fluvial (river) flooding. It is also not within any critical drainage area identified by the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the district. As major development, a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has nevertheless been provided in accordance with Policy CS16. There are no objections to the development on grounds of flood risk.
- 6.65 Notwithstanding the absence of any flood risk objections, Policy CS16 states that on all development sites, surface water will be managed in a sustainable manner through the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Methods (SuDS) in accordance with best practice and the proposed national standards and to provide attenuation to greenfield run-off rates and volumes, for all new development and re-development and provide other benefits where possible such as water quality, biodiversity and amenity. The Council has adopted a Sustainable Drainage SPD which supports this policy, and provides examples of measures that can be incorporated into even minor developments.
- 6.66 The Lead Local Flood Authority has reviewed the submitted FRA and Drainage Strategy and are content with the principles proposed. Subject to a condition the LLFA raised no objection to the application. A condition is necessary to secure the prior approval of a detailed sustainable drainage scheme and its subsequent implementation, in order to comply with Policy CS16.

Sustainable construction and energy efficiency

- 6.67 Policy CS15 requires residential development to comply with the Code for Sustainable Homes; however this scheme no longer exists and so this part of Policy CS15 can no longer be applied.
- 6.68 Policy CS15 further stipulates that major development shall achieve minimum reductions in total CO₂ emissions from renewable energy or low/zero carbon energy generation on site, unless it can be demonstrated that such provision is not technically or economically viable. The percentage reductions in CO₂ emissions should be based on the estimated CO₂ emissions of the development after the installation of energy efficiency measures related to Code for Sustainable Homes has been applied (however, the baseline will be Building Regulations following the cancellation of CSH). From 2019 the policy seeks zero carbon.
- 6.69 The applicant has submitted an Energy Statement which summaries that there will be a total reduction in emissions from energy efficiency, low-carbon and renewable technologies are calculated as; 12,813 kg CO₂ per year, which equates to a reduction of 57.90% (% of TER). Whilst not achieving full zero carbon, this is considered to be a meaningful reduction in carbon emissions.

Ecology and trees

- 6.70 Policy CS17 of the Core Strategy requires biodiversity assets to be conserved and enhanced. It states that harm to habitats or species of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity will only be permitted if there are no reasonable alternatives and there are clear demonstrable social or economic benefits of regional or national importance that outweigh the need to safeguard the site or species and that adequate compensation and mitigation measures are provided. All development shall maximise opportunities for net gains in biodiversity.
- 6.71 The site is within 500m of approximately two ancient and semi natural woodland and an ancient replanted woodland, and 500m of both the Woolhampton Reed Beds and River Kennet Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). There is evidence of European Protected Species (including 6 different bat species) and Priority Species. It is also within a Biodiversity Opportunity Area.
- 6.72 The site comprises a single grass paddock with hedgerows (containing a number of standard trees) on the east and south boundaries. Off-site hedgerows are present on the northern boundary associated with residential gardens. The edge of Great Mounts Copse Local Wildlife Site (LWS) is adjacent to the western boundary.
- 6.73 The majority of the field comprises species poor semi-improved grassland, although a small area with comparatively greater species diversity is present in the southeast corner. This area of grassland, the hedgerows and the off-site woodland are considered to form important ecological features. Small sections of the hedgerow at the southern boundary will be removed to facilitate access and the majority of the grassland will likely be removed. This will be compensated by new, native hedgerow and scrub planting and the creation of new flower-rich grassland. The off-site woodland will be retained, buffered and protected during construction, and measures are incorporated into the scheme to prevent public access.
- 6.74 In regards to Dormice the Council's Ecologist is satisfied that an appropriate level of effort survey effort has been undertaken with regard to establishing the presence/likely absence of dormice in and around the site, as stated in 4.2 of the submitted ecology Technical Briefing Note. The Construction Ecological Management Plan for the site will still need to make sure that methodology safeguards are in place for the clearance of

any vegetation onsite and that any ecological planting aids the housing and feeding of notable/protected species of mammals and birds.

- 6.75 In regards to bats, the Council's Ecologist is satisfied that an appropriate level of effort survey effort has been undertaken with regard to establishing the level of commuting and foraging onsite by bats. The only concern is with regard to the lighting plan shown on the ecology Technical Briefing Note, the levels of lighting protruding into the vegetation is not acceptable currently to but this can be resolved by an appropriately worded condition that includes an updated bat survey (as the surveys only last 3 years).
- 6.76 The Council's Ecologist is satisfied that an appropriate level of mitigation has been put forward with regard to protecting the adjacent Morris Copse and Great Mounts Copse.
- 6.77 Biodiversity Net Gain Best Practice (endorsed by CIEEM AND Natural England) is generally considered to be that a minimum of 10% Net Gain for Biodiversity which this development meets with a percentage increase, with the Biodiversity Impact Assessment finds that the outline layout is capable of delivering a quantifiable net gain for biodiversity in relation to habitats, which at 25.44% for habitats and 3.9% in relation to linear habitats is significantly in excess of the 10% contained in the environment act 2021 but will not be enacted until 2023.
- 6.78 A point raised in the submitted ecology Technical Briefing Note (5.4) with regard to water quality; Biodiversity Net Gain does not take water quality into account but it should account for things such as culverts being put in place and so far the Ecologist is not confident that this has been fully demonstrated (as the calculations themselves have not been submitted) and considered by the applicant. The Ecologist is confident that the new development's proposals will not significantly adversely affect water volumes leaving the site but the same cannot be said for water quality due to the changes in land use with increases in hydro carbons derived from motor vehicles likely to negatively affect dissolved oxygen in the water body and elements such as heavy metals also found within motor vehicle fuel would also negatively affect aquatic life. To mitigate for the impacts on water quality and the partial culverting of the water body the Ecologist proposes that the size (surface area and overall volume) of the SuDS be increased and to be a 2 staged with a grate system and then a fen/reed bed being placed inline just before the stream goes into the proposed culvert. This can be secured through the drainage planning condition.
- 6.79 The Tree Officer has raised no objections subject to conditions. An adequate buffer will be retained and protected to the adjacent woodland.
- 6.80 The development is therefore considered to comply with Policies CS17 and CS18.

7. Planning Balance and Conclusion

- 7.1 The proposed development engages the presumption against new residential development in Policy C1 of the HSA DPD, and is therefore not in accordance with the current development plan. However, the site is proposed as a housing site allocation in draft Local Plan Review. Careful consideration has been given to the specific merits of this case in accordance with paragraph 48 of the NPPF, which allows local planning authorities to give weight to policies in emerging plans. Whilst the LPR is in a relatively early stage of preparation, the specific circumstances relating to Woolhampton and the proposed Eastern Spatial Area are such that it is considered that the application site is highly likely to progress as an allocation in the LPR, and therefore greater weight be can applied to the emerging policies in accordance with paragraph 48 of the NPPF.

- 7.2 The proposed development would result in some localised landscape and visual harm to the immediate vicinity; however, it is considered that this harm is outweighed by the benefit of housing in this location in accordance with the emerging policies. All other technical considerations are considered to be acceptable.
- 7.3 Balancing all of the considerations in this application it is concluded that benefits of the proposal outweigh the adverse effects, and therefore the application is recommended for approval subject to the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement.

8. Full Recommendation

- 8.1 PROVIDED THAT a Section 106 Agreement has been completed by 11th August 2022 (or such longer period that may be authorised by the Service Director of Development and Regulation, in consultation with the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Eastern Area Planning Committee), to delegate to the Service Director of Development and Regulation to GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the conditions listed below.
- 8.2 OR, if a Section 106 Agreement is not completed, to REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION for the reasons listed below.

Conditions

1. **Approval of reserved matters**

Details of the appearance, landscaping, layout and scale (hereinafter called “the reserved matters”) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority before any development takes place. 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).

2. **Time limit for reserved matters**

Application(s) for approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the local planning authority not later than three years from the date of this permission.

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. **Commencement of development (outline)**

The development hereby permitted shall take place not later than two years from the date of 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).

4. **Approved plans**

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and documents listed below:

Location Plan 112 E
Context plan 100.111D
Design and Access Statement JIA-100 Rev B

For information the following plan was considered

Indicative Site Layout Plan 100.110E

Indicative Sections 100.113.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning.

5. **Schedule of materials (prior approval)**

The construction of the dwellings shall not take place until a schedule of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Samples of materials shall be made available upon request. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the external materials respect the character and appearance of the area. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies CS14 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026), and Supplementary Planning Document Quality Design (June 2006).

6. **Construction method statement**

No development shall take place until a Construction Method Statement (CMS) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the demolition and construction works shall incorporate and be undertaken in accordance with the approved CMS. The CMS shall include measures for:

- (a) A site set-up plan during the works;
- (b) Parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
- (c) Loading and unloading of plant and materials;
- (d) Storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
- (e) Erection and maintenance of security hoarding including any decorative displays and/or facilities for public viewing;
- (f) Temporary access arrangements to the site, and any temporary hard-standing;
- (g) Wheel washing facilities;
- (h) Measures to control dust, dirt, noise, vibrations, odours, surface water run-off, and pests/vermin during construction;
- (i) A scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works;
- (j) Hours of construction and demolition work;
- (k) Hours of deliveries and preferred haulage routes;

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of adjoining land uses and occupiers, and in the interests of highway safety. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies CS13 and CS14 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026, and Policies OVS.5, OVS.6 and TRANS.1 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 (Saved Policies 2007). A pre-commencement condition is required because the CMS must be adhered to during all demolition and construction operations.

7. **Protection from external noise (prior approval)**

The construction of the dwellings shall not take place until details of external noise mitigation measures for the dwellings have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall be informed by an appropriately detailed investigation to address the noise impacts on the proposed dwellings, gardens and external amenity area of the approved development from traffic noise from the A4. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and no dwelling shall be first occupied until such measures have been completed.

Reason: To protect future occupants from the adverse effects of excessive noise levels that may be generated by the adjacent A4 and any other noise sources in the area. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy CS14 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026), Policy OVS.6 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 (Saved Policies 2007), and Quality Design SPD.

8. **Hours of work (construction/demolition)**

No demolition or construction works shall take place outside the following hours, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority:

7:30am to 6:00pm Mondays to Fridays;

8:30am to 1:00pm Saturdays;

No work shall be carried out at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of adjoining land uses and occupiers. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policy CS14 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

9. **Refuse Storage (prior approval)**

No dwelling shall be occupied until a storage area for refuse and recycling receptacles (and collection areas if necessary) has been provided for that dwelling in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that there is adequate refuse and recycling storage facilities within the site, to ensure safe and adequate collection in the interests of highway safety and local amenity. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies CS13 and CS14 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026), and the West Berkshire Quality Design SPD (Part 1, Section 2.13).

10. **Tree Protection (scheme submitted)**

Protective fencing shall be implemented and retained intact for the duration of the development in accordance with the tree and landscape protection scheme identified on approved drawing numbered plan JPP22230-03 Rev A of 18/12/20. Within the fenced areas, there shall be no excavations, storage of materials or machinery, parking of vehicles or fires.

Reason: To ensure the enhancement of the development by the retention of existing trees and natural features during the construction phase in accordance with the objectives of the NPPF and Policies CS14, CS18 and CS19 of West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

11. **Tree Protection – Construction Precautions**

No development or other operations shall commence on site until details of the proposed access, hard surfacing, drainage and services providing for the protection of the root zones of trees to be retained has been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason; To ensure the protection of trees identified for retention at the site in accordance with the objectives of the NPPF and Policies CS14, CS18 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026. A pre-commencement condition is necessary because insufficient detailed information accompanies the application; tree protection installation measures and works may be required to be undertaken

throughout the construction phase and so it is necessary to approve these details before any development takes place.

12. **Arboricultural supervision condition**

No development shall take place (including site clearance and any other preparatory works) until the applicant has secured the implementation of an arboricultural watching brief in accordance with a written scheme of site monitoring, which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the enhancement of the development by the retention of existing trees and natural features during the construction phase in accordance with the objectives of the NPPF and Policies CS14, CS18 and CS19 of West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026. A pre-commencement condition is necessary because insufficient detailed information accompanies the application; tree protection installation measures and site supervision works may be required to be undertaken throughout the construction phase and so it is necessary to approve these details before any development takes place.

13. **Arboricultural Programme of Works**

No development or other operations shall commence on site until a detailed schedule of tree works including timing and phasing of operations has been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the enhancement of the development by the retention of existing trees and natural features during the construction phase in accordance with the objectives of the NPPF and Policies CS14, CS18 and CS19 of West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026. A pre-commencement condition is necessary because insufficient detailed information accompanies the application; tree protection measures and works may be required to be undertaken throughout the construction phase and so it is necessary to approve these details before any development takes place.

14. **Electric vehicle charging points (prior approval)**

No dwelling shall be first occupied until electric vehicle charging points have been provided for that dwelling/unit in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the charging points shall be maintained, and kept available and operational for electric vehicles at all times.

Reason: To secure the provision of charging points to encourage the use of electric vehicles. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy CS13 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026, and Policy P1 of the Housing Site Allocations DPD 2006-2026.

15. **Highways Construction Details**

No development shall take place until details of the highway construction details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall ensure that the roads, footways and other highway infrastructure within the site are designed to an adoptable standard. The submitted details shall include all items ensuring compliance with the Council's Standard Highway Details including gradients. Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. Access should also be available for Council highway engineers to inspect works when appropriate.

Reason: In the interest of road safety, future maintenance, residential amenity and to ensure waste collection over adoptable infrastructure. This condition is imposed in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy CS13 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026) and Policy TRANS1 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 (Saved Policies 2007). A pre commencement condition is needed as the details may need influence the construction of the site.

16. **Gradient of private drive**

The gradient of private drives shall not exceed 1 in 12.

Reason: To ensure that adequate access to parking spaces and garages is provided. This condition is imposed in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy CS13 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026).

17. **Visibility splays (provision)**

No dwelling shall be first occupied until the visibility splays at the proposed access onto the A4 have been provided in accordance with drawing number ITB14436-GA-005 received on December 21st 2020. Thereafter the visibility splays shall be kept free of all obstructions to visibility above a height of 0.6 metres above carriageway level at all times.

Reason: To ensure there is adequate visibility at the access, in the interests of highway safety. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policy CS13 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

18. **Parking (prior approval before occupation)**

No dwelling shall be first occupied until vehicle parking and turning spaces for that dwelling (including any surfacing arrangements and marking out) have been completed in accordance with details which have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the parking and turning spaces shall be kept available for parking and manoeuvring (of private cars and/or private light goods vehicles) at all times.

Reason: To ensure the development is provided with adequate parking facilities, in order to reduce the likelihood of roadside parking that would adversely affect road safety and the flow of traffic. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy CS13 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026, and Policy P1 of the Housing Site Allocations DPD 2006-2026.

19. **Access construction before remainder of development**

The first development to take place shall be the construction of the access onto the A4. Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, no other development shall take place until the access has been constructed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that safe access to the highway is constructed before any further development in the interests of highway safety. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy CS13 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026).

20. **Highway works**

No development shall take place until engineering details the vehicular and footway access onto the A4 Bath Road, with a turn right lane and ghost island, has been provided in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This condition applies irrespective of the details in this application

Reason: To encourage sustainable travel, in the interest of road safety and to ensure adequate and unobstructed provision for pedestrians and/or cyclists. This condition is imposed in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy CS13 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026). A pre commencement condition is needed as the details may need influence the construction of the site.

21. Cycle parking/storage (prior approval before occupation)

No dwelling shall be first occupied until cycle parking/storage facilities for that dwelling have been provided in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the facilities shall be maintained and kept available for that purpose at all times.

Reason: To ensure the provision of cycle parking/storage facilities in order to encourage the use of cycles and reduce reliance on private motor vehicles. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy CS13 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026, Policy P1 of the Housing Site Allocations DPD 2006-2026, Quality Design SPD, and the Council's Cycle and Motorcycle Advice and Standards for New Development (November 2014).

22. Sustainable drainage

No development shall take place until details of sustainable drainage measures to manage surface water within the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

These details shall:

- a) Incorporate the implementation of Sustainable Drainage methods (SuDS) in accordance with the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for SuDS (March 2015), the SuDS Manual C753 (2015) and West Berkshire Council local standards, particularly the WBC SuDS Supplementary Planning Document December 2018;
- b) Include and be informed by a ground investigation survey which establishes the soil characteristics, infiltration rate and groundwater levels. Any soakage testing should be undertaken in accordance with BRE365 methodology;
- c) Include attenuation measures to retain rainfall run-off within the site and allow discharge from the site to an existing watercourse at no greater than 1 in 1 year Greenfield run-off rates;
- d) Include construction drawings, cross-sections and specifications of all proposed SuDS measures within the site;
- e) Include run-off calculations, discharge rates, infiltration and storage capacity calculations for the proposed SuDS measures based on a 1 in 100 year storm +40% for climate change and an additional 10% increase of paved areas over the lifetime of the development (Urban Creep);
- f) Include pre-treatment methods to prevent any pollution or silt entering SuDS features or causing any contamination to the soil or groundwater;
- g) Ensure any permeable paved areas are designed and constructed in accordance with manufacturers guidelines.
- h) Include details of how the SuDS measures will be maintained and managed after completion. These details shall be provided as part of a handover pack for subsequent purchasers and owners of the property/premises;
- i) Apply for an Ordinary Watercourse Consent in case of surface water discharge into and other works on or adjacent to a watercourse (i.e stream, ditch etc);
- j) Show that attenuation storage measures have a 300mm freeboard above maximum design water level. Surface conveyance features must have a 150mm freeboard above maximum design water level;

- k) Provide details of how surface water will be managed and contained within the site during any construction works to prevent silt migration and pollution of watercourses, highway drainage and land either on or adjacent to the site;
- l) Provide a verification report carried out by a qualified drainage engineer demonstrating that the drainage system has been constructed as per the approved scheme (or detail any minor variations thereof), to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority on completion of construction. This shall include: plans and details of any key drainage elements (surface water drainage network, attenuation devices/areas, flow restriction devices and outfalls) and details of any management company managing the SuDS measures thereafter.

Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that surface water will be managed in a sustainable manner; to prevent the increased risk of flooding; to improve and protect water quality, habitat and amenity and ensure future maintenance of the surface water drainage system can be, and is carried out in an appropriate and efficient manner. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy CS16 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026), Part 4 of Supplementary Planning Document Quality Design (June 2006) and SuDS Supplementary Planning Document (Dec 2018). A pre-condition is necessary because insufficient detailed information accompanies the application; sustainable drainage measures may require work to be undertaken throughout the construction phase and so it is necessary to approve these details before any development takes place.

23. Lighting design strategy for light sensitive biodiversity

No dwelling shall be first occupied until a lighting design strategy for biodiversity for the development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall:

- a) identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places or along important routes used to access key areas of their territory, for example, for foraging; and
- b) show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.
- c) Include an appropriately updated bat survey so the above design strategy reacts to the current biodiversity constraints of the site.

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

Reason: Bats are sensitive to light pollution. The introduction of artificial light might mean such species are disturbed and/or discouraged from using their breeding and resting places, established flyways or foraging areas. Such disturbance can constitute an offence under relevant wildlife legislation. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policy CS17 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

24. Construction Environmental Management Plan

No development shall take place (including demolition, ground works, vegetation clearance) until a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP 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: This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policy CS17 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 to conserve the biodiversity of the site. A pre-commencement condition is required because the CEMP will need to be adhered to throughout construction.

25. Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP)

No development shall take place until a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) (also referred to as a Habitat or Biodiversity Management Plan) has been submitted to and be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The content of the LEMP shall include the following:

- (a) Description and evaluation of features to be managed.
- (b) Ecological trends and constraints on site that might influence management.
- (c) Aims and objectives of management.
- (d) Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives.
- (e) Prescriptions for management actions.
- (f) Preparation of a work schedule (including an annual work plan capable of being rolled forward over a five-year period).
- (g) Details of the body or organization responsible for implementation of the plan.
- (h) Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures.

The LEMP shall also include details of the legal and funding mechanism(s) by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured by the developer with the management body(ies) responsible for its delivery.

The plan shall also set out (where the results from monitoring show that conservation aims and objectives of the LEMP are not being met) how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the originally approved scheme.

The approved plan will be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policy CS17 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 to conserve the biodiversity of the site. A pre-commencement condition is required because the CEMP will need to be adhered to throughout construction.

26. Biodiversity measures (prior approval)

No development shall take place until details of biodiversity enhancement measures have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, no dwelling shall be occupied until the measures related to that dwelling have been installed/constructed in accordance with the approved detail.

Reason: To ensure biodiversity enhancements are incorporated into the development. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policy CS17 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

A pre commencement condition is needed as the details will need to be agreed as part of the reserved matters and possibly implement throughout the construction of the development

27. Site levels

No development on any dwelling shall take place until details of the finished floor levels of that dwelling in relation to existing and proposed ground levels of adjoining dwellings have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved levels.

Reason: Insufficient information on levels has been provided as part of the application. This information is required to ensure satisfactory relationships between properties in order to safeguard residential amenity, and to ensure the levels/heights respect the character and appearance of the area. This information is needed at this stage because of the site-wide implications of levels of the layout of the development in accordance with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies CS14 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

28. Spoil

No development shall take place until details of how all spoil arising from the development will be used and/or disposed have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall:

- a) Show where any spoil to remain on the site will be deposited;
- b) Show the resultant ground levels for spoil deposited on the site (compared to existing ground levels);
- c) Include measures to remove all spoil from the site (that is not to be deposited);
- d) Include timescales for the depositing/removal of spoil.

All spoil arising from the development shall be used and/or disposed of in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure appropriate disposal of spoil from the development and to ensure that ground levels are not raised in order to protect the character and amenity of the area. A pre-condition is required because insufficient information accompanies the application, and the agreed details will affect early construction activities. This condition is applied in accordance with the NPPF, Policies ADPP5,

CS14 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026), and the Quality Design SPD (June 2006).

29. Habitat Management Plan

No development shall take place until a Habitat Management Plan for the site for a minimum period of 10 years has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall ensure that appropriate mitigation measures and management regimes are in place for the site and associated green infrastructure. No dwelling shall be first occupied until the approved plan has been implemented, and thereafter adhered to for the lifetime of the plan.

Reason: To ensure that appropriate mitigation measures and management regimes are in place for the site and associated green infrastructure post-development, in accordance with the recommendations of the submitted ecological report. A pre-condition is required because insufficient information accompanies the application. This condition is applied in accordance with the NPPF and Policy CS17 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

30. Restrictions during bird breeding season

No demolition, or site/vegetation clearance shall take place during the bird breeding season (March to August inclusive) unless carried out under the supervision of an experienced ecologist, who will check the habitat to be affected for the presence/absence of any birds' nests. If any active nests are found then works with the potential to impact on the nest must temporarily stop, and an appropriate buffer zone shall be established, until the young birds have fledged and the nest is no longer in use.

Reason: To prevent harm to nesting birds from demolition and vegetation clearance. This condition is applied in accordance with the statutory provisions relating to nesting birds, the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policy CS17 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

31. Biodiversity enhancements

No dwelling shall be first occupied until details of biodiversity enhancement plan have been provided in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The enhancements plan shall follow the principles set out within the supporting ecological appraisal of this application. Thereafter, the biodiversity enhancement measures shall be maintained in their approved condition for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To achieve net gains in biodiversity, and to mitigate the impact on bat species. A pre-condition is required because insufficient details accompany the application. This condition is applied in accordance with the NPPF and Policy CS17 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026).

32. Broadband

The construction of the dwellings shall not take place until a Superfast Broadband Strategy Statement shall have been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such a statement shall set out how superfast broadband is to be provided to each phase of the development, including a schedule for connection. Thereafter no phase of the development shall be occupied until superfast broadband infrastructure has been provided in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the site is provided with high speed communications infrastructure in the interests of the amenity of the occupants of the site in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF, Policies CS5 and CS14 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026).

33. Waste water infrastructure

No development shall take place until either:

- (a) Confirmation has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority that the Fowl Water Drainage capacity exists off site to serve the development, or
- (b) A development and infrastructure phasing plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (in consultation with Thames Water).

Where a development and infrastructure phasing plan is agreed, no occupation shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed development and infrastructure phasing plan, or when all wastewater network upgrades required to accommodate the additional flows from the development have been completed.

Reason: Network reinforcement works may be required to accommodate the proposed development. Any reinforcement works identified will be necessary in order to avoid sewage flooding and/or potential pollution incidents. The developer can request information to support the discharge of this condition by visiting the Thames Water website at thameswater.co.uk/preplanning.

34. Water supply infrastructure

No development shall be take place until either:

- (a) Confirmation has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority that the water network infrastructure capacity exists off site to serve the development, or
- (b) A development and infrastructure phasing plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (in consultation with Thames Water).

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

Informatives

1. S106 Legal Agreement

This decision notice should be read in conjunction with the associated s106 legal agreement. You are advised to familiarise yourself with the planning obligations contained within the agreement before initiating any development. You may wish to seek legal advice.

2. Compliance with conditions

Your attention is drawn to the conditions of this permission and to the Council's powers of enforcement, including the power to serve a Breach of Condition Notice under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). All Conditions must be complied with. If you wish to seek to amend a condition you should apply to do so under s.73 of the Act, explaining why you consider it is no longer necessary, or possible, to comply with a particular condition.

3. **Pre-conditions**

This decision notice contains pre-conditions that impose requirements which must be met prior to commencement of the development. Failure to observe these requirements could result in the Council taking enforcement action, or may invalidate the planning permission and render the whole of the development unlawful.

4. **Compliance with approved drawings**

Planning permission is hereby granted for the development as shown on the approved drawings. Any variation to the approved scheme may require further permission, and unauthorised variations may lay you open to planning enforcement action. You are advised to seek advice from the Local Planning Authority, before work commences, if you are thinking of introducing any variations to the approved development. Advice should urgently be sought if a problem occurs during approved works, but it is clearly preferable to seek advice at as early a stage as possible.

5. **Proactive actions of the LPA**

The Local Planning Authority (LPA) has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner based on seeking solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with a planning application. In particular, the LPA:

- a) Provided the applicant with a case officer as a single point of contact.
- b) Alerted the applicant to issues that were raised during the consideration of the application.
- c) Accepted amended plans to address issues arising during the consideration of the application.
- d) Agreed an extension of time before determining the application to enable negotiations with the applicant.
- e) Entered into protracted considerations/negotiations in order to find a solution to problems with the proposed development, rather than refusing planning permission without negotiation.

6. **Building Regulations**

Separate approval for the works hereby granted permission/consent may be required by the Building Act 1984 and the Building Regulations 2000 (as amended), and the grant of planning permission does not imply that such approval will be given. You are advised to consult with Building Control Solutions (the Local Authority Building Control service for West Berkshire provided in partnership by Wokingham Borough Council) before works commence. Call: 0118 974 6239, email: building.control@wokingham.gov.uk, or visit: www.wokingham.gov.uk/building-control

7. **Foul drainage**

The National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance states that when drawing up wastewater treatment proposals for any development, the first presumption is to provide a system of foul drainage discharging into a public sewer to be treated at a public sewage treatment works (those provided and operated by the water and sewerage companies). This should be done in consultation with the sewerage company of the area.

8. **Access construction**

The Highways Manager, West Berkshire District Council, Transport & Countryside, Council Offices, Market Street, Newbury, RG14 5LD, telephone number 01635 - 519887, should be contacted to agree the access construction details and to grant a licence before any work is carried out within the highway. A formal application

should be made, allowing at least four (4) weeks' notice, to obtain details of underground services on the applicant's behalf.

9. **Damage to footways, cycleways and verges**

The attention of the applicant is drawn to the Berkshire Act, 1986, Part II, Clause 9, which enables the Highway Authority to recover the costs of repairing damage to the footway, cycleway or grass verge, arising during building operations.

10. **Damage to the carriageway**

The attention of the applicant is drawn to the Highways Act, 1980, which enables the Highway Authority to recover expenses due to extraordinary traffic.

11. **Excavation in close proximity to the highway**

In order to protect the stability of the highway it is advised that no excavation be carried out within 15 metres of a public highway without the written approval of the Highway Authority.

12. **Incidental works affecting the highway**

Any incidental works affecting the adjoining highway shall be approved by, and a licence obtained from, the Principal Engineer (Streetworks), West Berkshire District Council, Transport & Countryside, Council Offices, Market Street, Newbury, RG14 5LD, telephone number 01635 - 519169, before any development is commenced.

13. **Developer Coordination Requirements**

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

Any such works or events commissioned by the developer and particularly those involving the connection of any utility to the site, shall be coordinated by them in liaison with West Berkshire Council's Street Works Section, (telephone 01635 519169/519234). This must take place at least one month in advance of the works and particularly to ensure that statutory undertaker connections/supplies to the site are coordinated to take place wherever possible at the same time.

Reason: In order to minimise disruption to road users, be they pedestrians or vehicular traffic, under the requirements of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 and the Traffic Management Act 2004. In order to satisfy the licensing requirements of the Highways Act 1980.

14. **Official Postal Address**

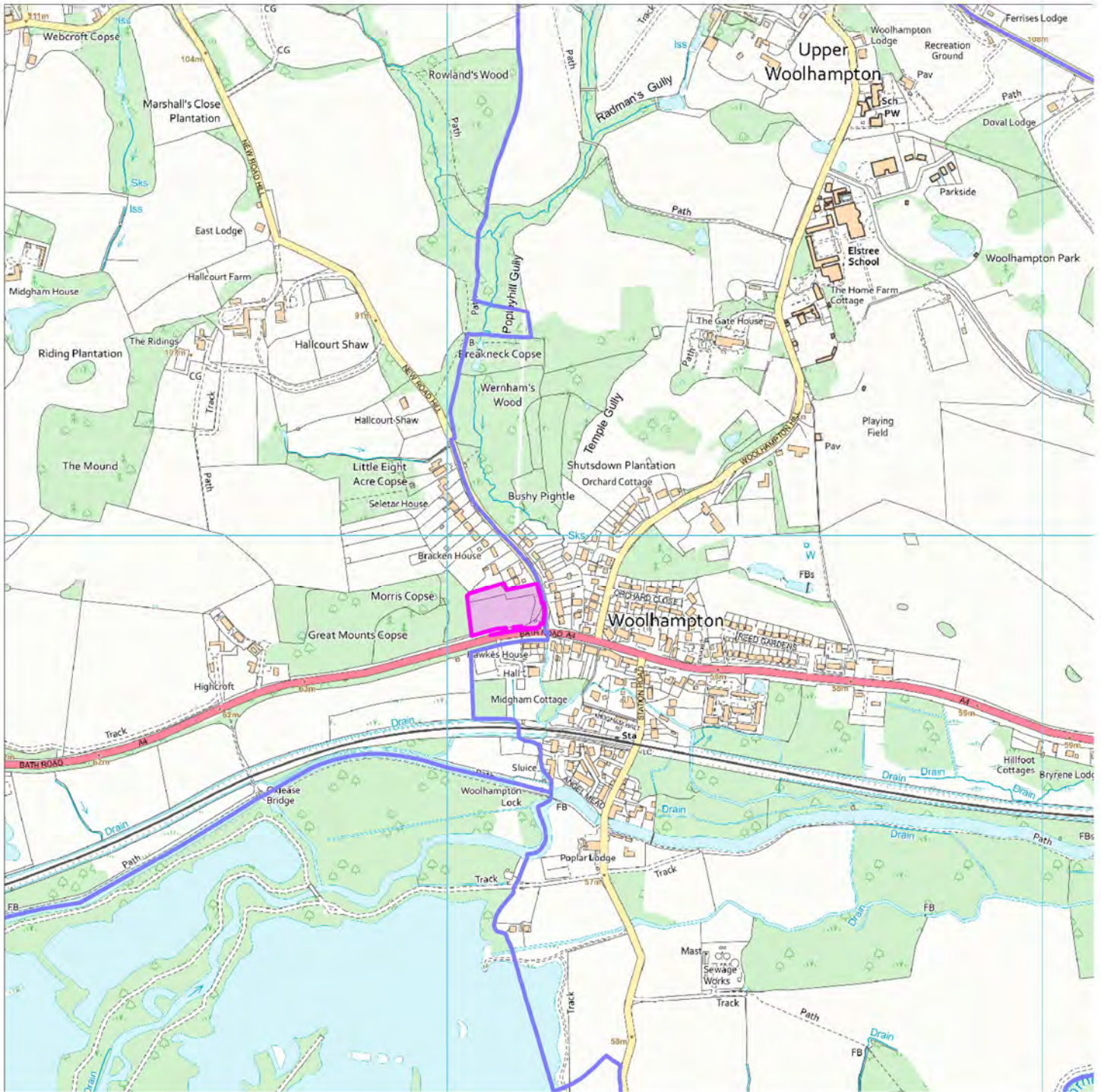
Please complete and online street naming and numbering application form at <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/snn> to obtain an official postal address(s) once development has started on site. Applying for an official address promptly at the beginning of development will be beneficial for obtaining services. Street naming and numbering is a statutory function of the local authority.

15. **Advanced Payment Code**

The Local Highway Authority will serve notice under Section 220 of the Highways Act 1980. This is to ensure that all roads serving more than five houses are built to an adoptable standard, and that the developer be encouraged to enter into a Section 38 of the Highway Act 1980 to have the roads adopted as public highway

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Land at Junction With Bath Road, New Road Hill, Midgham



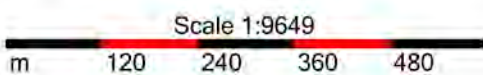
Map Centre Coordinates :

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Organisation	West Berkshire Council
Department	
Comments	Not Set
Date	28 April 2022
SLA Number	0100024151



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