



**Land North of London Road  
and East of A329(M)**  
**Planning Statement**

On behalf of **Willson Developments Ltd**

Project Ref: 34972 | Date: July 2023

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Appendix 1 - Consultation Leaflet

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 Stantec has been instructed by Willson Developments Ltd to prepare and submit an outline application for residential development on land north of London Road and east of A329(M). This outline application has the following description of development:

**“Outline planning for the erection of residential dwellings, Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), public open space, landscaping and associated infrastructure (means of access into the site to be considered, all other matters reserved)”**

1.1.2 The proposed development is located to the west of the existing residential development of Amen Corner North (ACN) and lies within a sustainable location within proximity (approximately 3.5-4km) of the centres of both Wokingham and Bracknell. The site is identified as a draft allocation (Ref: 5HU051) within the Council’s emerging Local Plan. Furthermore, Wokingham Borough Council currently do not have a five-year housing supply and therefore this development will aid in boosting local housing supply, in a sustainable location within the borough. In addition, as avoidance mitigation for the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA), the proposals will provide a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) which will form an extension to the existing Piglittle Field SANG forming part of a network of publicly accessible SANG in the local area.

1.1.3 This Planning Statement has therefore been prepared to support this application which provides an assessment of the proposals in consideration of relevant national and local planning policy. The following documents have also been submitted in support of this application and should be read in conjunction with this Statement.

- Design and Access Statement, prepared by Urban Place Lab;
- Transport Statement, prepared by ALP;
- Landscape & Visual Appraisal, prepared by HDA;
- Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy, prepared by ALP;
- Ecological Appraisal (and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment), prepared by EPR;
- Arboricultural Survey, prepared by FLAC;
- Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment , prepared by Stantec;
- Noise Assessment, prepared by RPS;
- Air Quality Assessment, prepared by RPS;
- Contaminated Land Risk Assessment, prepared by RPS;
- Mineral Resource Assessment, prepared by RPS;
- Utilities Assessment, prepared by ALP; and
- Sustainability / Energy Statement, prepared by Envision.

### 1.2 Structure of Planning Statement

1.2.1 **Section 2.0 (The application site and surroundings)** identifies the site context and immediate surroundings.

1.2.2 **Section 3.0 (The Proposed Development)** provides details of the proposed development.

1.2.3 **Section 4.0 (Planning Policy Framework)** identifies the relevant national, regional and local planning policies considered to be of relevance to the determination of the application.

1.2.4 **Section 5.0 (Planning Issues)** assesses the proposals against national, regional and local planning policies and demonstrates that the Development accords with the development plan and has regard to other material planning considerations. The numerous benefits of the proposals are identified which support the grant of planning permission.

1.2.5 **Section 6.0 (Conclusion)** draws together all of the issues and considerations outlined in the preceding chapters and sets out a rationale as to why planning permission should be granted for the Development.

1.2.6 **Appendix 1 - Consultation Leaflet**

## 2 THE APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1.1 The application site lies adjacent to the A329 (M) motorway, accessible via the Coppid Beech Roundabout, with access towards Bracknell, Reading and Junction 10 of the M4 motorway. The site is located in St Nicholas Hurst parish, within Wokingham Borough and comprises of approximately 3.06 Ha of species poor grassland. The site is located on the edge of Wokingham borough, with Bracknell borough located immediately adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site. The site is located 3.5km from Wokingham Town Centre, and 4km mile from Bracknell Town Centre, making it an ideal location for a sustainable development. The land is undeveloped, comprising of one field of unmanaged species poor grassland bounded by hedgerows with trees.
- 2.1.2 To the north of the site lies the Piglittle Field SANG which was delivered as part of the ACN development. Beyond the Piglittle Field SANG to the north-west is the Keephatch Meadows SANG.
- 2.1.3 The eastern boundary of the site is bordered by a recreational area which forms part of the existing ACN residential development, beyond of which are residential dwellings. Access will be provided through the existing Chiltern View access road which is located on the eastern edge of the development which in turn provides access to London Road. Kings Academy Oakwood Primary school and allotments is located southeast of the site. In terms of the wider context, the site is situated on the edge of the built-up residential area of Bracknell.
- 2.1.4 The southern boundary of the site comprises of mature trees and shrubland which shields the site from the London Road. Beyond that, south of London Road, the land comprises of a telecoms mast, Merrydale Day Nursery and Pre-school and residential properties which can be accessed through existing footways and crossings southeast of the site.
- 2.1.5 The western boundary of the site is formed by mature trees and shrubland which separates the site from the A329 (M). Beyond the A329 (M) are residential premises which forms the edge of the settlement of Wokingham. A Public Right of Way (PROW), Footpath 25/1, runs linear to the north and western boundaries of the site, which connects to footpaths around Coppid Beech Roundabout, and runs through the ACN development and beyond.
- 2.1.6 In terms of accessibility, the site is well connected to public transport with a bus stop located immediately south of Kings Academy Oakwood serving Bracknell, Reading and Wokingham. The site is within proximity of two train station, Wokingham and Bracknell are both approximately 3.5-4km from the site which serves routes to Reading, London Waterloo and Gatwick.
- 2.1.7 The site is not located in a Flood Zone and is at low risk of flooding. Furthermore, there are no listed or designated heritage features on or within immediate proximity of the site.

### Planning History

- 2.1.8 The site is being promoted through the local plan process and is a draft allocation (Ref: 5HU051) within the Local Plan Update (within the Revised Growth Strategy Consultation 2021 – 2022), allocated for 45 dwellings. There are no other relevant planning applications for this site.

### 3 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1.1 As indicated in the Introduction chapter, Stantec has been instructed by Willson Developments Ltd to produce a detailed application for:

**“Outline planning for the erection of residential dwellings, Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), public open space, landscaping and associated infrastructure (means of access into the site to be considered, all other matters reserved)”**

3.1.2 The proposals are for up to 45 dwellings (aligned with the draft allocation housing figure for this site within the emerging Local Plan Update) to provide a mix of dwellings types and sizes with the indicative housing mix (as taken from the Design and Access Statement) as follows:

- 2 bed - 25%
- 3 bed - 55%
- 4 bed - 20%

3.1.3 The proposals will also look to provide 40% of the dwellings as affordable units in line with local planning policy.

3.1.4 The dwellings will predominantly be 2 storey in height, with some at 2.5 storey.

3.1.5 The vehicular access to the will be from the existing Chiltern View road to the east which in turn allows access to London Road. A pedestrian link from the proposed development will be provided to the west which will link to the existing Public Right of Way which runs along the western and north boundaries of the site and connects to the footpath network around the Coppid Beech Roundabout.

3.1.6 The residential developable area will be located towards the eastern part of the site therefore allowing the remaining part of the site (the western section) to form as SANG which will include pathways (with linkages to the Piglitte Field SANG), landscape and attenuation. As shown on the illustrative layout, an area of proposed SANG is shown which lies outside of the redline – this will come forward as part of separate planning application to support a residential development on a draft allocated site within Bracknell Forest which is also in the Applicants control.

3.1.7 A proposed acoustic bund will also be located along the western boundary of the site to assist in providing sufficient noise attenuation for the proposed houses.

3.1.8 Areas of public open space will be provided as part of the proposals including a proposed Local Area of Play (LAP).



## 4 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 4.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that where the development plan contains relevant policies, applications for development which are in accordance with the plans should be allowed unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.1.2 This planning application has regards to the Joint Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2023; the Regional Strategy Policy NRM6 (Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area) of the South East Plan Regional Strategy (2009); the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (January 2010); and, the Managing Development Delivery Development Plan Document (MDD DPD) (February 2014).
- 4.1.3 This chapter of the Planning Statement identifies the relevant national, regional and local planning policies considered to be of relevance to the determination of the application. The Applicant has sought to ensure that the development proposals accord with all the relevant planning policy guidance relating to the Application Site.
- 4.1.4 This planning application also has regard to Supplementary Planning Guidance, Supplementary Planning Documents prepared by Wokingham Borough Council.

### 4.2 National Planning Policies

#### National Planning Policy

##### - The National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 4.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was originally published on 27th March 2012, however, has since been subsequently updated in 2018, 2019 and 2021. The NPPF establishes that while planning decisions should be taken in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, they should also be made in the context of a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 4.2.2 Chapter 2 (Achieving sustainable development) states that in order to achieve a sustainable development the three overarching objectives need to be pursued mutually in supportive ways:
- Economic Objectives
  - Social Objective
  - Environmental Objective
- ‘all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects;’**
- 4.2.3 Paragraph 11 of chapter 2 outlines that plans should apply a presumption of favourable development.
- 4.2.4 For decision making this means:
- c. **approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.”**
  - d. **where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:**

- i. The application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed.**
  - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”**
- 4.2.5 Footnote 8 states that, for applications involving the provision of housing, policies most relevant to determining an application are considered out-of-date in situations where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites.
- 4.2.6 Chapter 4 (Decision making) paragraph 49 notes that arguments that an application is premature would not justify a refusal of planning permission where there is a presumption of favourable development. The circumstances in which premature applications could be refused are:
  - “a. The development proposed is so substantial, or its cumulative effect would be so significant, that to grant permission would undermine the plan-making process by predetermining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development that are central to an emerging plan; and**
  - b. the emerging plan is at an advanced stage but is not yet formally part of the development plan for the area.”**
- 4.2.7 Chapter 5 (Delivering a sufficient supply of homes) paragraphs 74-77 outlines the importance of having a sufficient amount and variety of land where is needed that will aid in housing requirements. Paragraph 74 of the NPPF states:
  - “Local Planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years’ worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted policies, or against their local housing need where strategic policies are more than five years old.”**
- 4.2.8 Chapter 8 of the framework is focused on promoting healthy, safer, and inclusive communities. Paragraphs 98 outlines the importance of accessible and high-quality open space and recreational areas highlighting the importance this has for the health and well-being of communities.
- 4.2.9 Chapter 9 of the Framework is focussed on promoting sustainable transport including ensuring that appropriate opportunities exist to promote sustainable transport modes and ensuring that any significant impacts from the development on the transport network, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.
- 4.2.10 Chapter 11 (effective use of land) states that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in terms of meeting the needs for homes, whilst safeguarding and improving the environment ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- 4.2.11 Chapter 12 of the Framework is focused on achieving well-designed places which is a key aspect of sustainable development, creating better places in which to live and work. Paragraph 126 states that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

- 4.2.12 Chapter 14 is focussed on meeting the challenges of climate change, flooding and costal change. This chapter states (paragraph 151) that new development should help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat. Paragraph 165 states that major developments should incorporate sustainable drainage systems unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate.
- 4.2.13 Chapter 15 of the Framework is focussed on conserving and enhancing the natural environment and states at paragraph 170 that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment, including providing net gains for biodiversity. Planning decisions should also recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. Paragraph 175 states that significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development must be adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for otherwise planning permission should be refused.
- 4.2.14 Chapter 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) is focussed upon the protection and enhancement of heritage assets. Paragraph 189 states that local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

#### **National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)**

- 4.2.15 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) was published live on the internet on 6th March 2014 and, alongside the Framework, provides guidance notes on various matters including Air Quality; Design; Noise; Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities, Public Rights of Way (PROW) and Green Space; and Climate Change.

#### **National Design Guide**

- 4.2.16 The National Design Guide sets out the fundamental principles for good design and demonstrates what good design means in practice covering ten characteristics including identity, built form, movement, nature, public spaces, context, Uses, Homes and Buildings, Resources, and lifespan.

### **4.3 Local Planning Policy**

#### **Wokingham Boroughs Core Strategy (January 2010)**

- 4.3.1 Wokingham Borough's Core Strategy was adopted in January 2010 which sets out where development will occur within the borough to 2026, taking account of the health, wellbeing and quality of life of the borough's residents.
- 4.3.2 Policy CP1 (Sustainable Development) states that planning permission will be granted for sustainable developments. This includes development proposals that: maintain and enhance the high-quality environment; limit any adverse effects on water quality; ensure the provision of adequate drainage; provide attractive, functional, accessible, safe, secure and adaptable schemes; and reduce the need to travel particularly by car.
- 4.3.3 Policy CP2 (Inclusive Communities) states that planning permission will be granted to developments that contribute to the provision of sustainability and promotion of inclusive communities.
- 4.3.4 Policy CP3 (General Principles for Development) notes that planning permission will be granted for proposals that have no detrimental impact upon important ecological, heritage, landscape or geological features or water courses and maintain or enhance the ability of the site to support fauna and flora including protected species. Development proposals will be required to

demonstrate how they have responded to the criteria of this policy through the submission of Design and Access Statements, clear and informative plans, elevations and street scenes and where required Masterplans, Development Briefs, Concept Statements and Design Code.

- 4.3.5 Policy CP4 (Infrastructure Requirements) states that planning permission will not be granted unless appropriate arrangements for the improvement or provision of infrastructure, services, community and other facilities required for the development taking account of the cumulative impact of schemes are agreed. This shall be secured by planning obligations or condition if appropriate.
- 4.3.6 Policy CP5 (Housing mix, density and affordability) notes that planning permission will be granted for residential developments providing a mix of densities, dwelling types, tenures and sizes. Development proposals of over 5 dwelling or above 0.16 Ha will be required to provide 40% of the net additional units proposed as affordable housing.
- 4.3.7 From a transport perspective, policy CP6 (Managing Travel Demand) emphasises that planning permission will be granted for schemes that provide for sustainable forms of transport to allow choice.
- 4.3.8 Policy CP7 (Biodiversity) states that sites designated as important for nature conservation at an international or national level will be conserved and enhanced and inappropriate development will be resisted.
- 4.3.9 Policy CP8 (Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area) states that the fact development may have significant impacts on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) and adequate measures to avoid and mitigate any potential adverse effects should be delivered. This approach is consistent with policy NRM6 of the South East Plan.
- 4.3.10 CP9 (Scale and location of development proposals) notes that development should be appropriate in terms of the existing or proposed levels of facilities or services and accessibility at that location.
- 4.3.11 Policy CP11 (Proposals outside Development Limits (including countryside) outlines development limits outside of settlement boundaries. Policy CP11 states:

**“In order to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment, proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted except where:**

- 1) **It contributes to diverse and sustainable rural enterprises within the borough, or in the case of other countryside based enterprises and activities, it contributes and/or promotes recreation in, and enjoyment of, the countryside; and**
- 2) **It does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings; and**
- 3) **It is contained within suitably located buildings which are appropriate for conversion, or in the case of replacement buildings would bring about environmental improvement; or**
- 4) **In the case of residential extensions, does not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building;**
- 5) **In the case of replacement dwellings the proposal must:**
  - i) **Bring about environmental improvements; or**
  - ii) **Not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building.**

**6) Essential community facilities cannot be accommodated within development limits or through the re-use/replacement of an existing building; 7) Affordable housing on rural exception sites in line with CP9.”**

4.3.12 Policy CP17 (Housing Delivery) outlines the housing targets for the borough based on the overall requirements of the SEP. Policy CP17 states that provision will be made for 13,230 swellings between the period 2006-2026.

**Wokingham Borough's Managing Development Delivery DPD**

4.3.13 Wokingham Borough's Managing Development Deliver DPD (MDD DPD) was adopted in February 2014 and adds extra detail to the policies within the Core Strategy. Together, these two documents set out how the Borough will develop up until 2026 making it an excellent place to live, work and play.

4.3.14 The document begins by setting out ten cross cutting polices. The first of these policies is policy CC01 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development) which states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.3.15 Policy CC02 (Development limits) sets out the development limits for each development. Policy states that permission for proposals at the edge of a settlement will only be granted where they can demonstrate developments are within the limits and respects the transition between the built up area and countryside.

4.3.16 Policy CC03 (Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping) notes that development proposals should; provide new or protect and enhance the Borough's Green Infrastructure networks; promote accessibility, linkages and permeability between existing green corridors including public right of way such as footpaths, cycleways and bridleways; protect and retain existing trees, hedges and other landscape features; and incorporate high quality, ideally, native planting and landscaping.

4.3.17 Policy CC04 (Sustainable Design and Construction) notes that planning permission will only be granted for proposals that seek to deliver high quality sustainable design and construction. All new homes will be expected to achieve the requirements of the full Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 and meet internal potable water consumption targets of 105 litres or less per person per day.

4.3.18 Following the emphasis of sustainable design, policy CC05 (Renewable Energy and Decentralised Energy Networks) notes that planning permission will be granted for proposals that consist of over 10 dwellings that deliver a minimum reduction of 10% carbon emissions through renewable energy and low carbon technologies.

4.3.19 In relation to noise, Policy CC06 (Noise) states that proposals must demonstrate noise impacts have been addressed to protect noise receptors (both existing and proposed).

4.3.20 In relation to 'Parking', policy CC07 (Parking) states that planning permission will only be granted where the proposal demonstrates the proposed parking provision set out within the MDD DPD and that the scheme considers provisions such as charging facilities for the use of electric vehicles.

4.3.21 Policy CC09 (Development and Flood Risk (from all sources)) focuses on flood risk and notes, in line with footnote 20 of paragraph 103 of the NPPF, that a Flood Risk Assessment is required for proposals of 1 hectare or greater in Flood Zone 1.

- 4.3.22 In relation to drainage, policy CC10 (Sustainable Drainage) states that all developments must reproduce greenfield runoff characteristics and return run-off rates and volumes back to the original greenfield levels. The policy also emphasises that proposals must incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), where practicable, which meet the long term needs of the development and which achieve wider social and environmental benefits. In addition the developer must provide clear details of how the proposed SuDS will be adopted and maintained.
- 4.3.23 Policy TB05 (Housing Mix) notes that residential developments must provide an appropriate housing mix taking into consideration underlying character of the area and both the current and projected needs of households. Developments should provide an appropriate mix of affordable housing which reflects the council Housing Strategy and Affordable Housing SPD.
- 4.3.24 Policy TB07 (Internal Space Standards) notes that all new residential units should ensure the internal layout and size are suitable to serve the amenity requirements of future occupiers.
- 4.3.25 TB08 (Open Space, sport and recreational facilities standards for residential development) states that in the event open space is lost proposals should demonstrate how they will meet the standards as set by the council.
- 4.3.26 In terms of protecting the characteristics of the landscape, policy TB21 (Landscape Character) states that proposals must demonstrate how they have addressed the requirements of the Council's Landscape Character Assessment and must retain or enhance the condition, character and features that contribute to the landscape.
- 4.3.27 Policy TB23 (Biodiversity and Development) states that planning permission for development proposals will only be granted where they demonstrate how they provide biodiversity opportunities. This can be done through design, layout, and landscaping to incorporate new biodiversity features or enhance existing.
- 4.3.28 Policy TB25 (Archaeology) states that if the area is of high archaeological potential, applicants will need to provide a detailed assessment of the impact on archaeological remains. The Policy then states that appropriate measures shall be undertaken to protect remains by preservation in situ if a development.

#### **Natural Resource Management Plan (2004)**

- 4.3.29 Policy NRM6 (Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area) states that any residential development which is likely to have effects on the integrity of the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection should demonstrate that adequate measure has been put in place to avoid or mitigate any potential adverse impacts. Policy NRM6 sets out and arrangements for when mitigations are carried out in the form of SANG provision.

#### **Joint Central and Eastern Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (JMWP) 2023**

- 4.3.30 The joint Minerals Waste Plan guides the level of minerals and waste development needed within central and eastern Berkshire and identifies where developments should go. Policy M2 (Safeguarding sand and gravel resources) outlines the criteria in which a development in the Minerals Safeguarding Area may be permitted.

#### **Supplementary Planning Guidance & Supplementary Planning Documents**

##### **Highway Design SPG (November 2006)**

- 4.3.31 The Highway Design SPG provides a guide to design standards with the aim to create an which is acceptable for all uses within the Borough and which encompasses all modes of transport.



#### **Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (May 2010)**

- 4.3.32 The Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and Companion Document provides an up to date and comprehensive approach to considering sustainable design and construction in new development.

#### **Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions (October 2011)**

- 4.3.33 This document has been produced to update information on infrastructure delivery within the Strategic Development Locations.

#### **Borough Design Guide SPD (Adopted May 2012)**

- 4.3.34 The Borough Design Guide SPD was adopted to encourage developers to bring forward well designed developments which complement and built upon the character of that immediate area.

#### **Emerging Policy**

- 4.3.35 Wokingham Borough Council have begun progressing their Local Plan Update. In 2020, the Council consulted on a Draft version of the Plan, followed by a Revised Growth Strategy consultation in 2021-2022. The Local Plan Update is not expected to be adopted until December 2025 (Local Development Scheme, July 2023).

- 4.3.36 The Local Plan which would plan up to 2036, and guide where and how growth will take place in the borough. The new Local Plan will plan for new housing, new employment, schools, roads, parks, shops and community facilities necessary to create places people want to live, work and do business.

- 4.3.37 Within the Revised Growth Strategy consultation document, the site subject to this planning application is included as a proposed allocation (Ref: 5HU051) for 45 dwellings. The document sets out draft development guidelines for this site as below:

- “- **Opportunities to maximise pedestrian connectivity to planned services and facilities as part of the adjacent Amen Corner North development (in Bracknell Forest)**
- **Opportunities to improve pedestrian and cycle links, including pedestrian crossings**
- **Investigate opportunities to improve pedestrian access to London Road**
- **Vehicular access preferred from Chiltern View situated at the adjacent Amen Corner North development. Access arrangements should be investigated further, working in partnership with Bracknell Forest Council**
- **Opportunities to provide pedestrian connectivity to areas of green space at the adjacent Amen Corner SANG and Keephatch Meadows SANG**
- **Investigate potential noise impacts from the A329(M) and provide suitable mitigation measures (if required), such as a suitable buffer”**

- 4.3.38 Below is a list of relevant draft policies from the draft version of the Plan. Due to the stage at which the Plan is at, these draft policies are considered to have some weight, if limited, with regard to these proposals.

- Policy SS1: Spatial Strategy
- Policy SS2: Settlement Hierarchy and scale and location of development proposals

- Policy SS8: Climate Change
- Policy SS9: Adaptation to Climate Change
- Policy SS10: Supporting Infrastructure
- Policy C1: Active and Sustainable Transport and Accessibility
- Policy C2: Mitigation of Transport Impacts and Highways Safety and Design
- Policy C3: Cycling and Walking
- Policy C4: Vehicle and Cycle Parking
- Policy C5: Technology and Innovation in Transport
- Policy C7: Utilities
- Policy C8: Green and Blue Infrastructure and Public Rights of Way
- Policy ER5: Employment and Skills Plan
- Policy H1: Housing Provision
- Policy H3: Housing mix, density and standards
- Policy H5: Affordable Housing
- Policy DH1: Place Making and Quality Design
- Policy DH2: Safeguarding Amenity
- Policy DH5: The Historic Environment
- Policy DH6: Archaeology
- Policy DH7: Energy
- Policy DH9: Environmental Standards for residential development
- Policy HC1: Promoting Healthy Communities
- Policy HC3: Open Space, Sports, Recreation and Play Facilities
- Policy HC5: Environmental Health
- Policy HC6: Air Pollution and Air Quality
- Policy HC8: Noise Pollution
- Policy NE1: Biodiversity and Nature Conservation
- Policy NE2: Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area
- Policy NE3: Trees, Woodland and hedgerows
- Policy NE4: Development and existing trees, woodland and hedgerows
- Policy NE5: Landscape and Design
- Policy NE7: Landscape Character, Value and Green Routes
- Policy NE8: Development and Flood risk (from all sources)
- Policy NE9: Sustainable Drainage
- Policy MW2: Minerals Resource and Infrastructure

### **Neighbourhood Plan**

- 4.3.39 St Nicholas Hurst was designated as a Neighbourhood Area on 10 April 2018 however a Neighbourhood Plan has not been progressed for public consultation to date.

### **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

- 4.3.40 The proposed development would need to make a financial contribution towards local social and community Infrastructure via the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).



## 5 PLANNING ISSUES

### Principle of Development & the Need for Housing

5.1.1 Paragraph 11, d) ii of the NPPF states that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development where:

**“.....there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:**

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or**
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”**

5.1.2 Footnote 8 confirms that, for applications involving the provision of housing, policies most relevant to determining an application are considered out-of-date in situations where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites (with the appropriate buffer, as set out in paragraph 74); or where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was substantially below (less than 75% of) the housing requirement over the previous three years.

5.1.3 Wokingham Borough Council issued their most recent Housing Land Supply Statement in January 2023. Based upon a based date of March 2022, this Statement confirms that the Council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year supply of housing with only 3.95 years of supply. Therefore in consideration of footnote 8, of paragraph 11 of the NPPF, the policies which are most important for determining this application are out-of-date, and therefore permission should be granted unless; the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole (i.e. parts d) 'i' and 'ii' of paragraph 11).

5.1.4 In addition to the Council not having a five year land supply of housing, the housing requirement set out within the Core Strategy (Policy CP17) is out-of-date, based upon the revoked South East Plan housing requirement, and therefore the policies and settlement boundaries detailed in the Core Strategy and the MDD DPD to achieve the delivery of this quantum of housing, is also out-of-date including policies CP9 and CP11 of the Core Strategy and CC02 of the MDD DPD. This fact was cited by an Inspector within a recently allowed appeal for a residential development on land west of Kingfisher Grove, Three Mile Cross (Ref: APP/X0360/W/22/3304042). This appeal decision referred to a five-year land between 4.66 and 4.83 years highlighting that the Council's housing supply position has since got weaker.

5.1.5 On the basis that paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged, with the Council unable to demonstrate a five year land supply, it should be emphasised that this proposed site is located within a sustainable location in the borough which lies close to the edge of the settlements of Wokingham and Bracknell. Policy CP9 states that the scale of development proposals in Wokingham Borough must reflect the existing or proposed levels of facilities and services at or in the location, together with their accessibility. Policy CP9 defines Wokingham as a 'Major Development Location' which, as indicated a paragraph 4.52 of the Core Strategy, are "those with the greatest range of facilities and services which also allow residents the greatest choice in modes to access them". The proposed site, located close to a Major Development Location, is therefore considered an appropriate location for residential development as it has good access to range of facilities and services, especially as Wokingham Town Centre has gone through a recent re-generation. Such access can be achieved by public transport, with existing

bus stops along London Road which provide regular services to the centres of Wokingham, Bracknell and Reading. In addition, the site is approximately 3.5-4km from both Bracknell train station and Wokingham train station, which provide services to London Waterloo, Reading and Gatwick. Furthermore, the site benefits for being located by the A329M motorway, accessible via the Coppid Beech Roundabout, which also allows vehicular access towards Bracknell, Reading and Junction 10 of the M4 motorway.

- 5.1.6 Just like Wokingham, the settlement of Bracknell is also identified as containing the majority of infrastructure, services, employment and transport facilities within Bracknell Forest Borough, as set out within the adopted Bracknell Forest Core Strategy. The site benefits as being a logical extension to the adjacent ACN residential development, with the main access to the site taken from the existing 'Chiltern View' road. It should be emphasised that the ACN site was a residential allocation within Bracknell Forest's Site Allocations Local Plan, which at the outline planning application stage only received two objections from members of the public for a development of up to 380 dwellings and a primary school.
- 5.1.7 It should also be emphasised that this site has been identified as a draft residential allocation (Site Reference 5HU051) within the Wokingham Borough Council's emerging Local Plan Update (within the Revised Growth Strategy Consultation 2021 – 2022). By identifying the site as a draft allocation demonstrates that the Council consider it to be a suitable location for residential development. It should also be highlighted, that in response to the Revised Growth Strategy Consultation 2021-2022, this draft residential allocation received support from the Parish Council (St Nicholas Hurst). The assessment of these proposals against the draft criteria for this draft allocation is considered under the 'Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development' sub-section below, but in alignment with the draft Local Plan, the proposals look to provide up to 45 dwellings.
- 5.1.8 Although the Council have identified this site as a draft residential allocation within the emerging Local Plan Update, in consideration of paragraph 49 of the NPPF, this application is not considered 'premature' as the development is not so substantial, or its cumulative effect would be so significant, that to grant permission would undermine the plan making process by predetermining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development that are central to an emerging plan. It is noted that the Council approved (via Planning Committee) an outline application for up to 200 dwellings on land at Bridge Farm, Twyford (Ref: 212720) which is also an emerging allocation within the Local Plan Update. No concerns were raised regarding prematurity for that application, which is for a significantly larger residential development than these proposals. Further still, the Local Plan Update is not at an advanced stage. In fact, as it currently stands, the emerging Local Plan Update is not expected to be adopted until December 2025 (Local Development Scheme, July 2023), therefore this sustainable site will help to boost the Council's housing supply position in the short term especially as it will take a number of years before any proposed larger allocated sites identified within the Local Plan Update can be delivered.
- 5.1.9 Based on the above, in consideration of the adopted documents forming Wokingham's Development Plan, even though the site lies outside of Development Limits, it is a sustainable location which lies close to the Major Development Location of Wokingham and also the settlement of Bracknell, forming a logical extension to the existing ACN residential development. Furthermore, by the very fact that this site is identified as an emerging residential allocation within the Local Plan Update, shows that the Council consider that this is a suitable location for residential development. It should also be emphasised, that policy CP11 of the Core Strategy (which states what is considered appropriate development in the countryside), states that "*In order to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment, proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted....*" (our emphasis). The policy then lists a series of development proposals which are considered acceptable within the countryside: the proposed development is not included in this list. However, the policy does not set out an absolute prohibition for all development and the word not 'normally' therefore indicates that development outside of Development Limits may still be considered acceptable even if such development does not meet the criteria of policy CP11 if there are other material

considerations which outweigh the general restraint on development outside of settlement boundaries. As explained in this Statement, it is considered that benefits of these proposals, in particular the delivery of housing in a sustainable part of the Borough, outweigh any harm in policy terms relating to the location of the site outside of defined Development Limits.

- 5.1.10 These proposals will therefore boost the supply of housing, especially within the short term, and will also boost the supply of affordable housing as 40% of the proposed dwellings will be affordable units aligned to adopted and emerging local planning policies, located within a sustainable location within Wokingham Borough.
- 5.1.11 Consideration of paragraph 11, d)i and d)ii of the NPPF with regard to the presumption of sustainable development is considered further at the end of this chapter. The following sub-sections consider the technical topics relevant to these proposals.

### **Design Principles**

- 5.1.12 A Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Urban Place Lab which supports this planning application and should be read in conjunction with this sub-section of this statement.
- 5.1.13 Underpinning the proposals are three main design drivers which combine to provide a context-specific design response, in accordance with best practice, national (including the National Design Code) and local planning policy.
- 5.1.14 The first of these drivers is a 'landscape focussed design' whereby the proposals integrate an extension to the existing SANG network providing access to an extensive natural landscape on the doorstep. Surface water attenuation ponds will be integrated into the open space network alongside supporting and enhancing ecological habitats and on-site biodiversity. Public open space, located to the north and south of the development, will provide areas of play and recreation.
- 5.1.15 The secondary driver is creating an accessible, legible layout. Clear and legible access will be provided into the site from the existing ACN development, via Chiltern View. A clear hierarchy of streets, including a central spine, linking streets and lane/green edge, will create a permeable layout, where shared surfaces will be maximised to create a strong neighbourhood feel. Pedestrian and cycle access points will be provided linking the existing routes and the surrounding accessible landscape.
- 5.1.16 The third driver is neighbourhood placemaking and character, which will form a direct relationship with the wider development context, as a logical extension to the Amen Corner North development yet creating clear character frontages along key spaces and streets, especially linkages to the surrounding proposed greenspaces.
- 5.1.17 Buildings will predominately be 2 storeys in height with some 2.5 storey landmark buildings with a contrast in consistency building lines with a variety in rooflines such as projecting gables, dormer windows, and/or change of orientation. There will be a variety of building types such as short terraces, semi-detached and some detached buildings, with a mixtures of sizes ranging from 2 bedroom to 4 bedroom houses.
- 5.1.18 Landscape and public realms have been designed to retain tree belts and mature trees surrounding the site, addition of diverse, attractive planting to ensuring every house is within a vegetated setting, street trees to intersect roads, and drainage features located at the lowest part of the land.
- 5.1.19 It is therefore considered this proposal adheres to the principles set out in national policy including the National Design Code, and the policies set out in Wokingham Borough's Core Strategy including CP5 and CP3 and Management Development Delivery (MDD DPD) policies TB05, CC04, and TB21.

## Transport

- 5.1.20 A Transport Statement has been prepared by ALP which supports this planning application and should be read in conjunction with this sub section of the statement.
- 5.1.21 Vehicular access to the proposed development will be taken from via an extension of the existing road of Chiltern View at the eastern edge of the site. The existing road will be extended into the development and will form the spine road from which internal roads will be formed.
- 5.1.22 The main site access road will be a minimum of 5m with a 2m verge on its north side, and a 2m footway on its southern side as its points of connection with Chiltern View.
- 5.1.23 Furthermore, a pedestrian and cycle path is to be provided from the sites western boundary which will connect to the existing shared footway / cycleway adjacent to the A329 (M) at Coppid Beech roundabout, facilitating access to the wider pedestrian and cycle network.
- 5.1.24 The site is in a location where it is accessible to a range of existing jobs, schools, shops, community facilities, community facilities and amenities, all of which within a reasonable walking and cycling distance which will reduce the need for travel by car.
- 5.1.25 The site also benefits from sustainable modes of transport, such as bus stops to which offer connections to Bracknell, Wokingham, and Reading. The closest bus stops are within a 400 to 500m walk on the B3408 London Road and are accessible via the existing walking and cycling network with existing signalised crossings which provide for safe movements over the B3408.
- 5.1.26 A significant portion of journeys can therefore be undertaken by non-car modes in accordance with the transport policy aspirations articulated at all levels of government.
- 5.1.27 The proposed development is expected to generate no more than 29 vehicle movements during peak hours, this is equivalent to less than 1 vehicle movement every 2 minutes. This modest number of vehicle movements would not have any discernible impact upon highway capacity or safety along roads and junctions within the vicinity of the site.
- 5.1.28 It is therefore considered this proposal is in line with Wokingham Borough's Core Strategy policy's CP1, CP4, CP6, and CP10. Furthermore, the proposals are considered to align with draft policies SS10, C1, C3 and C5 of the Draft Local Plan Update (2020).

## Landscape and Visual Appraisal

- 5.1.29 A Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal (LVA) has been prepared by Hankinson Duckett Associates (HDA) which supports this application and should be read in conjunction with this sub-section of the statement.
- 5.1.30 Within the site, the grassland has been assessed as having a Medium/Low sensitivity to the proposed development, whereas boundary features, including off-site trees, have been assessed as having a High/Medium sensitivity. It is concluded that the overall sensitivity of the site is medium. The landscape surrounding the site has been judged as having a high/medium sensitivity to the proposed development due to the SANG and surrounding agriculture uses. Upon maturity, proposed tree planting will help assimilate the housing scheme into the landscape.
- 5.1.31 It has been considered the significance of effect on users of the Footpath 25/1 and existing Piglittle Field SANG has been assessed as moderate Adverse during the time of construction. However with the maturing of planting within the existing and proposed SANG's the significance of effect on these receptors would reduce to Minor Adverse 10 years post completion.

- 5.1.32 From the assessment it was found that the most noticeable landscape effects would arise during construction at the site, when the grass field would be removed and replaced with proposed dwellings set within public open space and green infrastructure, which would be characteristic of the adjacent urban areas. The changes arising from construction of the development will be mitigated through the creation of 1.3ha of new public open space (including SANG), enhanced with new tree planting.
- 5.1.33 As the site itself will have a limited visual effect as the site slopes towards the north, and views of the site from the wider landscape are contained by rolling landform and woodland close to the site. Therefore, the potential landscape and visual effects associated with the proposed development would be primarily localised, though permanent, and given public viewpoints into the site, there is little potential the proposal would have an impact upon people.
- 5.1.34 It should also be emphasised that as the proposed developable area is located towards the eastern part of the site (as a logical extension to the Amen Corner North development), with the remaining undevelopable part of the site forming SANG, open space or land required for a noise bund which will consolidate the undeveloped gap (already defined by the A329M) between the settlements of Wokingham and Bracknell. The proposals will therefore not prejudice settlement separation. Although it should be emphasised that neither Wokingham's Draft Local Plan nor Bracknell's emerging Local Plan (following the Inspectors hearing remarks) propose a strategic gap in this location between Wokingham and Bracknell.
- 5.1.35 It is therefore considered that the proposals are compliant with policies CP1, CP3, CP7, and CP11 as set out within Wokingham Borough's Core Strategy, and policies CC02, CC03, TB08, TB21, and TB23 in Wokingham Borough's MDD DPD. In addition to this the proposals align with policies set out in Wokingham's emerging local plan such as SS1, HC3, NE3, NE4, NE5, and NE7.

#### **Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy**

- 5.1.36 A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy has been prepared by ALP which supports this planning application and should be read in conjunction with this sub-section of the planning statement.
- 5.1.37 The site lies within Flood Zone 1 therefore a less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of a risk of river flooding. The EA's Risk of Flooding from Surface Water mapping indicates areas that could be susceptible to surface water flooding during extreme rainfall events.
- 5.1.38 The proposed surface water drainage strategy will manage the flood risk posed by uncontrolled surface water runoff from the site. Any increase in surface water run-off can be managed using SuDS source control techniques as well as attenuation features to provide storage in extreme storm events.
- 5.1.39 All surface water drainage systems will be designed to restrict drainage discharge rates to QBAR runoff rates and store the balance of water for all events up to and including the 1 in 100 year event including allowance for a 40% increase in rainfall intensities as a result of climate change and urban creep.
- 5.1.40 The proposed development complies with national and local planning policy with respect to flood risk and drainage. The risk of flooding is adequately managed, and the offsite flood risk is not increased.
- 5.1.41 It is therefore considered that the proposals are compliant with policy CP1 as set out within Wokingham Borough Council's Core Strategy. In addition, the proposals are considered to align with draft policies NE8 and NE9 of the Draft Local Plan Update (2020).

#### **- Foul Water Drainage**



- 5.1.42 Due to the topography of the site and location of the existing sewer point of connection, it is necessary the wastewater from the site will need to be pumped to the receiving public sewer.
- 5.1.43 Thames Water are in the process of assessing the capacity of the receiving sewer and will advise on its suitability or requirement for downstream upgrades.
- 5.1.44 The proposed foul sewers will be designed in collaboration with Thames Water and in accordance with the sewage Sector Guidance (SSG) and will be offered to Thames Water for adoption under S104 agreement of the Water Industry Act.

### **Ecology**

- 5.1.45 An Ecological Appraisal has been prepared by EPR which supports this planning application and should be read in conjunction with this sub-section of the planning statement.
- 5.1.46 A suite of field surveys was undertaken in 2023 surveying the habitats and vegetation, Bats, Birds and Reptiles.
- 5.1.47 The Ecology surveys confirmed that the site itself was limited in ecological value with no ecology designations within or adjacent to the site. The site lies within the 5km buffer of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA), and thus there is a requirement for proposed development to mitigate recreational pressure on the SPA through the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG). The proposed SANG will form an extension to the existing Piglittle Field SANG, which in turn has connections to Keephatch Meadows SANG therefore creating a network of publicly available SANGs.
- 5.1.48 No part of the site is designated for nature conservation, however several statutory and non-statutory are within the vicinity of the site. Statutory designated site Broadmoor to Bagshot Woods and Heaths SSSI is located 3.5km distant from the site, and therefore occupies a zone in which recreational pressure arising from residential development is considered likely to result in a significant effect thereupon. In addition to this, there are several non-designated sites located within a 2km radius of the site with the most proximate of these are two areas of ancient semi-natural woodland, Blackmans Copse LWS and Pockets Copse LWS. The proposed SANG will avoid the impact avoidance mechanism for recreational effects on European sites and designated sites.
- 5.1.49 Subject to implementation of the proposed measures within the Ecology Appraisal the proposed development will not result in significant residual impacts on the ecological features of the Site.
- 5.1.50 The DEFRA Biodiversity Metric 4.0 has been utilised to demonstrate that the proposals can achieve a net gain. To achieve metric trading rules, land beyond the redline within the Applicant's control can be used as an offsetting solution, which will also ensure that a 10% net gain will be achieved. This is in line with Wokingham Borough's Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP7, and MDD DPD policies CC03, TB21 and TB23, and emerging policy within the Draft Local Plan.

### **Built Heritage**

- 5.1.51 A Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment has been prepared by Stantec in support of this application.
- 5.1.52 There are no designated archaeological heritage assets identified within the site. A number of Grade II listed buildings forming Popes Manor are identified to lie c.700m to the north-east, and the Grade II\* registered park and garden of Newbold College, c.670m to the north-east. The Assessment concludes that there will be no direct physical impacts on any built heritage assets through the proposed, with all built heritage assets and their setting will remain unaltered, with the significance of these remaining intact, and as such there will be no harm to the significance of these built heritage assets resulting from the development on the site development.

5.1.53 With regard to below ground heritage assets, the primary archaeological potential within the site is for buried remains to be present dating from the prehistoric to post-medieval period. Any archaeological work could be conducted under the terms of a staged archaeological planning condition set out under the granting of planning consent.

5.1.54 On the basis of the above, it is considered that these proposals are in accordance with national policy and policy CP3 of Wokingham Borough's Core Strategy and policy TB25 of Wokingham's MDD DPD. In addition these proposals are aligned to draft policies DH5 and DH6 of the Draft Local Plan (2020).

#### **Utilities**

5.1.55 A Utilities report has been prepared by ALP in which they reviewed the utility service records surrounding the site. It was found that all major services such as potable water, telecommunication, gas, and electricity could all be located and accessed within the vicinity of the site.

#### **Arboriculture**

5.1.56 An arboriculture assessment report has been prepared by FLAC in support of this application and has been carried out in compliance with BS5837:2012.

5.1.57 All trees (244 in total) located at the site or near to the site boundary have been retained with only 1 category U tree removed due to its fragile state.

5.1.58 It was found that there are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) within the site or adjacent. There is a veteran tree located on the northeastern boundary of the site, however the proposals have been designed to ensure a sufficient buffer is provided to this tree from any proposed development in this part of the site.

5.1.59 This therefore is considered compliant with policies set out in Wokingham Borough's Core Strategy CP1 and CP2, and in Wokingham Borough's MDD DPD policy CC03. In terms of Wokingham's emerging Local Plan, these proposals also align with emerging policies NE3 and NE4.

#### **Noise**

5.1.60 A Noise Impact Assessment have been prepared by RPS to support this planning application in line with national and local planning policy and with reference to appropriate standards and guidance.

5.1.61 It has been found that using standard facade and glazing systems, the internal ambient noise guideline values in BS 8233:2014 and the ProPG can be met. It has also been found that external noise levels in gardens will meet the guidance criteria of BS 8233 / ProPG.

5.1.62 A noise bund has been proposed for the southwest boundary of the development, this will reduce the noise levels in the SANG and provide further protection for the proposed dwellings from road traffic noise from the A329(M). Gardens and amenity areas have been located on the opposite side of buildings meaning the spaces will benefit from screening attenuation from the proposed buildings and bunds.

5.1.63 Further to this, the layout of the proposed buildings has been optimised to reduce the noise levels across the site.

5.1.64 The assessment concluded, that with appropriate design and mitigation measures, significant adverse noise impacts because of the development will be avoided and adverse impacts can be mitigated and minimised. Therefore, while noise within proposed dwellings is expected to be

above the Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level (LOAEL) set out in PPG-N, it is expected to be acceptable in planning terms.

- 5.1.65 This is therefore compliant with Wokingham Boroughs adopted Core Strategy policy CP1, and emerging policy HC8 of the Draft Local Plan Update (2020).

#### **Air Quality**

- 5.1.66 An Air Quality Assessment has been prepared by RPS to support this application.
- 5.1.67 Impacts during construction, such as dust generation and plant vehicle emissions, are predicted to be of short duration and only relevant during the construction phase. The results of the risk assessment of construction dust impacts undertaken using the IAQM dust guidance, indicates that before the implementation of mitigation and controls, the risk of dust impacts will be low.
- 5.1.68 The number of vehicles generated by the proposed development will be below the threshold criteria for an assessment, and thus the air quality effects in the surrounding areas are not considered significant.
- 5.1.69 In terms of the suitability of the air quality for occupants it was found that pollutant concentrations at the facades of proposed residential receptors are to be well within the health-based air quality objectives. On this basis, the development is deemed acceptable for future occupants.
- 5.1.70 Furthermore, the impacts during construction, such as dust generation and plant vehicle emissions, are predicted to be short term and only relevant during the construction phase. Using the IAQM dust guidance it was found that before implementation of mitigation and controls, the risks of dust impacts will be low.
- 5.1.71 The development on the land north of London Road and east of A329 (M) does not, in air quality terms, conflict with national or local policies and so there are no constraints to the development in the context of air quality.
- 5.1.72 It is therefore considered this proposal is in line with Wokingham Borough's adopted Core Strategy policy CP1 and emerging policy HC6 of the Draft Local Plan (2020).

#### **Ground works**

- 5.1.73 A desktop study, preliminary risk assessment and site reconnaissance assessment, prepared by RPS, has been undertaken for the site. The assessment concludes that there are no potentially significant contamination sources at the site. Due to the site's proximity to the Sandlea Farm landfill, the assessment does recommend further gas monitoring works which can be covered by planning condition.

#### **Mineral resource Assessment**

- 5.1.74 A Mineral Resource Assessment (MRA) was undertaken by RPS and accompanies this submission. The MRA was undertaken using available geological and site setting information to evaluate the mineral resources present on the Assessment Site. The site-specific geology relating to the safeguarded sand and gravel has been determined from available BGS boreholes records and exploratory hole records available from the ground investigation undertaken by RPS in 2014 on the neighbouring site, Amen Corner North.
- 5.1.75 The assessment concludes that the safeguarded mineral resource present on the site is sand and gravel of River Terrace Deposits. The geological data reviewed has demonstrated that the sand and gravel deposits of potential commercial interest are only present in the east of the site and are clayey in nature with potential 0.30 m thick clay bands. The deposits are therefore not considered to be of commercial interest. The potential extractable mineral volume equates to



less than 10,000 m<sup>3</sup> and supports the consideration that the mineral resource is unlikely to be economically viable given extraction costs and the need to backfill the site with appropriate material to provide an appropriate development platform. This volume is substantially reduced further by the application of reasonable buffers given the proximity of sensitive receptors, most notably; a primary school, strategic infrastructure and residential properties. The application of these buffers restricts potentially viable resource to below 1,000 m<sup>3</sup>. This volume of mineral resource would not be of commercial interest to third party extractors, hence mineral extraction is not therefore considered economically viable on the site. However, the incidental extraction of safeguarded sand and gravel resources will occur during the construction phase and that small volume of mineral resource can be re-used on the site.

- 5.1.76 It is therefore considered that the ground works and mineral resources assessment comply with policies set out in Joint Central and Eastern Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (JMWP) 2023 such as policy M2.

### **Sustainability and Energy**

- 5.1.77 Envision has prepared a Sustainability and Energy Report to accompany this application.
- 5.1.78 The report demonstrates how the proposals would be able to meet the sustainability policy requirements of Wokingham Borough council, and how the wider sustainability benefits would be realised by the proposals. The key features incorporated within the proposal are as follows:
- A SANG to promote biodiversity, natural landscaping, promote natural drainage and aid local microclimates.
  - Air Source Heat Pumps have been incorporated into the design to promote reduction in carbon. Based on energy efficiency measures and low/zero carbon technologies assumed to be included within the detailed design, a 56.48% reduction in total energy demand would be achieved, and a total CO<sub>2</sub> reduction of 69.1% which is above the 10% reduction in energy demand via renewable sources indicated within local policy.
  - Measures which support modes of sustainable travel including cycle parking and new pathways which link the site to existing foot and cycleways.
- 5.1.79 The proposed development will make a strong contribution and will comply with relevant sustainability policies within Wokingham Borough's Core Strategy including policy CP1 and policies CC04 and CC05 of Wokingham Borough's MDD DPD.

### **Community Engagement**

- 5.1.80 The applicant has undertaken a public consultation which comprised of a leaflet drop which was sent to 382 households within 3km of the site. The leaflet outlined the development proposal and invited residents to provide their comment. A copy of the consultation leaflet is included at **Appendix 1**.
- 5.1.81 The consultation period ran for 14 days from 30<sup>th</sup> June to 14<sup>th</sup> July. In total 17 responses were received to this consultation. In summary the comments received on the application were as follows including a response to the comments raised:
- *Concern over access and congestion - Chiltern View already is busy with only one road providing access to Kings Academy Primary School, and thus leading to congestion at peak hours. Concerns also raised about safety for school children, including construction traffic.*

A Transport Statement Report has been prepared to support the planning application to assess the accessibility and sustainability credentials of the development site as well as appraising the likely traffic impact that will arise.

Consideration is given to the suitability of Chiltern View as the means of access into the development as well as the network of roads within the adjacent Amen Corner Development which in turn enable access onto the wider highway network at London Road and beyond. The Report also sets out how both Wokingham Borough Council's and Bracknell Forest Council's updated parking standards now take account of garages only being occasionally used for parking. Accordingly, a higher quantum of allocated and visitor parking will be provided at the proposed development which will help prevent inappropriate parking occurring on-street.

In respect of traffic impact, the Transport Statement demonstrates that the development of up to 45 dwellings can be expected to generate less than 30 vehicle movements during the peak hours, equating to less than one vehicle movement every 2 minutes. This modest number of vehicle movements would not have any discernible impact upon highway capacity or safety along Chiltern View or the other roads and junctions in the vicinity of the site.

The Transport Statement Report establishes how a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be produced and agreed with Wokingham Borough Council prior to the commencement of any construction activities. This will ensure there is an appropriate strategy in place so that construction activities can be undertaken in an organised and safe manner which minimises impact along the surrounding road network. This is particularly the case given the proximity of the Kings Academy Oakwood Primary School where it is envisaged that the Construction Environmental Management Plan will include stipulations to prevent HGV construction traffic routing along Chiltern View during times that coincide with school drop off / collection periods.

- *Concerns that the development will impact on the peace and tranquillity of the existing allotments especially during the construction period, in addition increase in pollution*

Although there will be a period of construction which, as indicated above, the Council can control through a CEMP, the proposed development will not have any direct impact on the existing allotments, with the proposed dwellings located beyond an existing hedge line.

- *Concerns over levels increase in noise and air pollution as a result of the development*

The proposed development is supported by both an air quality and noise assessment both of which conclude that the proposals are acceptable from both an air quality and noise perspective.

- *The proposals will result in the loss of undeveloped land which has ecological value and will result in the loss in an area which is publicly accessible for walkers*

An ecological assessment supports this planning application. The proposals will include a SANG which will form an extension to the existing Piglittle Field SANG therefore expanding the extent of publicly accessible SANG in the local area, in addition to providing biodiversity enhancements. Pathways will be provided to allow the SANG to be available for existing and proposed residents, which will also connect to the existing PRoW.

- *Concerns of flooding*

The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Report which has considered the nature of the site and surroundings and sets out the proposed drainage strategy which looks to incorporate SUDs to manage surface water drainage.

- *Views being destroyed and devaluing properties.*

Due to the existing recreational space to the east of the proposed site, the proposed residential dwellings will not be resulting in any overlooking on the existing dwellings at Amend Corner North. As indicated within the Statement, this development would form a sustainable extension to the Amen Corner North development which has been identified as a draft residential allocation within the Council's emerging Local Plan Update.

- *Concerns regarding capacity of school and GP surgery.*

Wokingham Borough Council have a CIL Charging Schedule which captures residential developments such as these proposals. CIL contributions will be used towards infrastructure funding including local schools and health facilities.

## 5.2 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

- 5.2.1 As indicated at the start of this chapter, the Council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year supply of housing with only 3.95 years of supply, therefore in consideration of footnote 8, of paragraph 11 of the NPPF, the policies which are most important for determining this application are out-of-date, and therefore permission should be granted unless; the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.
- 5.2.2 In consideration of d) 'i' of paragraph 11, and footnote 7, it should be emphasised that the site does not lie within a protected habitat, and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; nor are there any irreplaceable habitats nor designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest); or areas at risk of flooding or coastal change at the site. On this basis the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance do not provide a clear reason for refusing these development proposals.
- 5.2.3 With regard to d) 'ii' of paragraph 11, the benefits of these proposals are summarised below in consideration of the three overarching objectives of sustainable development (economic, social and an environmental) as set out within the NPPF.

### **Economic**

- 5.2.4 The proposals will provide opportunities for construction jobs in building out the site. Furthermore, the proposed residents of the development will support patronage for existing services and facilities including within the nearby town centres of Bracknell and Wokingham.

### **Social**

- 5.2.5 As indicated above, the Council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year land supply of housing therefore this proposed development will boost the supply of housing in the borough, located within a sustainable location. If the proposals were granted planning permission, the site could be delivered within five years therefore will be able to support housing needs in the short term, especially as large allocated residential sites that will come forward within the Local Plan Update (once adopted) could take several years before they start delivering.
- 5.2.6 The proposals will also achieve 40% of housing as affordable units aligned to adopted and emerging local plan policies, therefore these proposals will boost the supply of affordable housing.
- 5.2.7 From a transport perspective, this a sustainable location with good public transport connections and cycle and pedestrian connectivity, boosted by the proposed footpath link which will link into the existing foot and cycle network. The site also benefits from being within proximity to the A329 (M) which provides access to the settlements of Bracknell and Reading, plus the M4 motorway.
- 5.2.8 The proposals also include areas of public open space which could be used by both existing and proposed residents. The proposals also include a Local Area of Play. The proposals also

benefit from proximity to a network of pathways provided at part of existing SANG's (Piglittle Field and Keephatch Meadows), to which this network will be expanded further with the proposed SANG provided as part of these proposals.

### Environmental

- 5.2.9 To ensure sufficient avoidance mitigation on the Thames Basin Heaths SPA, the proposals will include a SANG. However the benefit of a SANG at this location is that it will form an extension to the existing Piglittle SANG, provided as part of the ACN development which in turn is connected to the Keephatch Meadows SANG therefore providing a network of natural greenspaces providing opportunities for biodiversity enhancements within the local area.
- 5.2.10 These proposals will also achieve a biodiversity net gain above what is required by adopted policy.
- 5.2.11 The proposals will also incorporate sustainable urban drainage systems, forming part of the proposed SANG, to manage the flow of surface water drainage across the site. The proposals are considered to be acceptable from a landscape and visual perspective, with the proposed SANG assisting in consolidating an undeveloped gap to bolster, which is already provided by the A329 (M) the separate between the urban areas of Wokingham and Bracknell. Furthermore, the proposals provide the opportunity for a noise bund to be provided to assist in mitigating against any noise impact from the A329 (M).
- 5.2.12 Further to the above benefits, it should be again emphasised that the site lies within a sustainable location located on the edge of the settlements of Wokingham and Bracknell, and benefits from good public transport connections with bus stops within proximity of the site alongside London Road, providing connections to the surrounding larger conurbations. Furthermore, the site forms a logical extension to the existing ACN residential development, with vehicular access taken from the existing Chiltern View road. The very fact that Wokingham Borough has included this site as a proposed residential allocation within its emerging Local Plan Update, reaffirms that this is an appropriate and sustainable location for residential development. With regard to the draft allocation within the Local Plan Update, the proposals align with the draft criteria for the site as set out within Revised Growth Strategy Consultation 2021 - 2022 as follows:

*Opportunities to maximise pedestrian connectivity to planned services and facilities as part of the adjacent Amen Corner North development (in Bracknell Forest)*

- The proposed development will provide pedestrian connectivity to tie into the existing footpath along the Chiltern View road allowing access to the ACN development.

*Opportunities to improve pedestrian and cycle links, including pedestrian crossings.*

A new foot and cycleway is proposed to be constructed on the western boundary of the site connecting to the existing shared footway / cycleway adjacent to A329 (M) corridor at Coppid Beech Roundabout, therefore providing connections from the site to the surrounding foot and cycle network. As indicated above, a pedestrian link will also be provided to tie into the existing footpath along the Chiltern View road.

*Investigate opportunities to improve pedestrian access to London Road*

- The proposed foot and cycleway connection to be provided to the west of the site path will provide connections to the existing foot and cycle network including pedestrian access along London Road. Access to London Road will also be achieved through the Amen Corner North development.

*Vehicular access preferred from Chiltern View situated at the adjacent Amen Corner North development. Access arrangements should be investigated further, working in partnership with Bracknell Forest Council*

- The vehicle access to the proposals will be via the existing Chiltern View road to the east of the site. The existing Chiltern View road lies within Bracknell Forest Borough and runs up to the borough boundary. The proposed main access road lies solely within Wokingham Borough and runs up to the borough boundary to tie-in within the existing Chiltern View road.

*Opportunities to provide pedestrian connectivity to areas of green space at the adjacent Amen Corner SANG and Keephatch Meadows SANG*

- The proposed SANG will form an extension to the existing Piglittle Field SANG, including providing walkable pathway connections to Piglittle Field SANG which in turn provides connections to the Keephatch Meadows SANG. The proposed SANG will therefore form part of a network of publicly accessible SANGs within the local area.

*Investigate potential noise impacts from the A329(M) and provide suitable mitigation measures (if required), such as a suitable buffer*

- A Noise Impact Assessment have been prepared by RPS to support this planning application and from the assessment it was found the best solution was to incorporate a noise bund on the southwest boundary of the development. This will reduce the noise levels in the SANG and provide further protection for the proposed dwellings from road traffic noise from the A329(M). In addition to this, the orientation, design and layout of the proposed buildings has been optimised to reduce the noise levels across this site.

5.2.13 On the basis of the above, and in light of d) 'ii' of paragraph 11, it is considered that adverse impacts of approving a residential development at this site would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF, and in consideration of policies forming Wokingham Borough's Development Plan, and is consistent with the emerging draft Local Plan.

## 6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared to support an application for the erection of residential dwellings, Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), public open space, landscaping, and associated infrastructure on land north of London Road and east of A329(M).
- 6.1.2 There are a range of benefits which would be delivered by the proposed development, securing social, economic, and environmental benefit gains as described above, and in the supporting documentation.
- 6.1.3 This application has been submitted on the basis of a presumption in favour of sustainable development as Wokingham Borough Council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year land supply of housing, and therefore as indicated by footnote 8 to paragraph 11 of the NPPF, policies most relevant to determining an application are considered out-of-date in situations where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. Furthermore, the housing requirement set out within the Core Strategy is based upon the revoked South East Plan housing requirement, and therefore the policies and settlement boundaries detailed in the Core Strategy and the MDD DPD to achieve the delivery of this quantum of housing should be considered out-of-date including policies CP9 and CP11 of the Core Strategy and CC02 of the MDD DPD.
- 6.1.4 This site is included as a draft residential allocation within Wokingham Borough Council's emerging Local Plan Update (within the Revised Growth Strategy Consultation 2021 – 2022 (Site Reference 5HU051)). Although the plan is still at an early stage, the very fact that the site has been identified for residential development indicates that Wokingham Borough Council consider this to be an appropriate location for a sustainable development which will form a logical extension to the existing Amen Corner North residential development. In consideration of paragraph 49 of the NPPF, due to the scale of the proposals, it is not considered that there is a prematurity case.
- 6.1.5 The site lies within a sustainable location located close to the Major Development Location of Wokingham which provides a variety of services and facilities. The site also benefits of being within proximity of the town of Bracknell which also offers a variety of services and facilities. These urban centres can be easily accessed from the site via public transport routes, with bus stops (located along London Road) within 400 to 500m walk of the. There is also good access to the surrounding pedestrian and cycle networks, which provides routes to the surrounding urban areas. With the proposed pedestrian and cycle route to be provided along the western edge of the site will provide connections to this network. The A329 (M) also allows access to the settlements of Bracknell and Reading, as well as the M4 motorway.
- 6.1.6 The proposals will provide an opportunity to deliver high quality private and affordable homes whilst providing an inclusive, well-designed development in a sustainable location. The proposals will also provide SANG, as required as avoidance mitigation to the Thames Basin Heaths SPA, which due to its location will be of a benefit as it will form an extension to the existing Piglittle Field SANG therefore expanding the network (along with the Keeppatch Meadows SANG) of publicly accessible SANG which will provide biodiversity enhancements. The proposals will also achieve a biodiversity net gain (a 10% gain can be achieved when using offsetting land beyond the redline within the Applicant's control). In addition, the proposals will provide areas of public open space and new areas of landscaping, as well as incorporating appropriate noise mitigation (including an acoustic bund) from the surrounding roads. Furthermore, the undevelopable part of the site forming SANG, open space or land required for a noise bund, will consolidate the undeveloped gap (already defined by the A329M) between the settlements of Wokingham and Bracknell therefore the proposals will not prejudice settlement separation.

- 6.1.7 In conclusion these proposals will provide a variety of benefits located within a sustainable location of the borough which will help in meeting the Council's housing supply, including affordable housing, and could be delivered within 5 years thus supporting housing needs in the short term. We therefore hope that this Statement and the supporting application documents, encourages the Local Planning Authority to make a positive decision regarding these proposals.



## Appendix 1

Appendix 1 - Consultation Leaflet



# Land North of London Road

Willson Developments Ltd would like to inform you of proposals for a residential development on Land North of London Road, which will be subject to a planning application during this summer. Prior to the submission of the application, Willson Developments Ltd would like to seek your thoughts on these proposals - please see the back of this leaflet for further information on how you can provide comments.

Willson Developments Ltd are a land promoter who are familiar with the area having previously secured outline planning permission for the adjacent Amen Corner North development. Willson Developments Ltd hope that these proposals will provide much needed homes within a sustainable location at a site which has been identified as a draft residential allocation within Wokingham Borough Council's emerging Local Plan.

## Site Context

The site benefits from excellent access to the highway network, open space, schools and other amenities, and lies within a short and easily accessible distance from both Wokingham and Bracknell town centres, which have both undergone recent regeneration and provide for the full range of facilities required for sustainable living. The site will be accessed from the existing Chiltern View (which in turn allows access to London Road), located directly adjacent to the existing allotments and the King Academy Oakwood primary school.



## The Proposals

The proposed planning application will be in outline form where permission will be sought for the principle of a residential development at this site however the adjacent 'illustrative' layout demonstrates what could be achieved at the site.

Nestled in Wokingham Borough on the boundary of Bracknell, the site will deliver up to 45 homes providing a range in size from two to four bedroom properties, with a proportion being affordable homes in line with Wokingham Borough's adopted policy. These proposals will therefore assist in meeting housing needs in the local area, as well as creating a friendly and sustainable place to live.

As an alternative green space to divert visitors from the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA), the proposals will include publicly accessible Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG). This SANG will form as an extension to the existing Piglittle Field SANG, which will be accessible via the existing footpath network, which along with the nearby Keephatch Meadows SANG, will form a substantial biodiversity and public amenity resource within the area.

The proposals will also look to incorporate areas of green space providing opportunities for children's play. Sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) will be used to manage surface water drainage which will be incorporated within the landscaped areas.

The planning application will be supported by a Transport Assessment but the site benefits from an existing access from Chiltern View, in addition to being within proximity to bus stops along London Road offering connections to Wokingham, Bracknell and Reading.



Proposed SANG will form extension to Pig Little Field SANG affording access to much larger areas of publicly accessible SANG and open space

### Piglittle Field SANG

A planted, acoustic bund would mitigate against noise impacts from the adjoining transport network and provide a visual buffer to and from development, affording a more natural setting to the SANG

Public right of way

Connections will provide direct routes to surrounding areas and green space as well as local facilities; promoting walking and cycling, rather than car use





Site access can be directly and legibly obtained via the existing road (Chiltern View) which adjoins the recreation area, primary school and allotments

The existing recreation area would mean no overlooking of existing homes

A shared space around the neighbourhood loop could facilitate slower traffic speeds, play and community activity

The proposed houses would draw on local precedents for example front gardens with brick walls, and hedges feature within adjoining areas



Willson Developments Ltd hope that these proposals will achieve the following objectives:

### Health & Wellbeing

An integrated community with well designed high quality homes and accessible open space that considers the needs of all ages and activities.

### Community Spirit

Provide spaces for people to interact and socialise on their doorstep.

### Ecology & Biodiversity

Support and enhance the integrated SANGs connecting residents to the natural world and helping sustain species key to our ecosystem.

### Quality & Character

Respect the local character, landscape and topography, reinforcing a sense of place, which in turn would instil a sense of pride and stewardship within the community.

### Sustainability

Incorporate measures to help minimise impact upon the environment including zero-carbon homes.

If you have any comments regarding the proposals set out within this leaflet we would like to hear from you.

Please send your comments to the following e-mail address

[landnorthoflondonroad@stantec.com](mailto:landnorthoflondonroad@stantec.com) by Friday 14th July.

