

# **PLANNING STATEMENT**

**LAND TO THE REAR OF THE HOLLIES  
BURGHFIELD COMMON**

Prepared by Pro Vision on behalf of T A Fisher & Sons Ltd

January 2022

**LAND TO THE REAR OF THE HOLLIES**

PLANNING STATEMENT

PROJECT NO. 50929

**PREPARED BY:**

JAMES BLAKE MRTPI

SENIOR PLANNER

**CHECKED BY:**

KATHERINE MILES MRTPI

DIRECTOR

**DATE:**

JANUARY 2022

**PRO VISION**

THE LODGE

HIGHCROFT ROAD

WINCHESTER

HAMPSHIRE

SO22 5GU

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared by Pro Vision in support of a Full Planning Application on behalf of T A Fisher & Sons Ltd for a development of 32 residential dwellings (Use Class C3) on land to the rear of The Hollies, Burghfield Common. The relevant authority is West Berkshire Council ('the Council).
- 1.2 Section 2 of this statement sets out a description of the site and surrounding context. Section 3 provides a summary of the relevant planning history. Section 4 provides a description of the proposal. Section 5 sets out the relevant planning policy context and material considerations. Section 6 provides an assessment of the key planning issues and weighs the planning balance. Conclusions are provided in Section 7.
- 1.3 This statement should be read alongside the Design and Access Statement, plans and other supporting information submitted with the planning application. Please refer to the covering letter for a full list of information submitted.

## 2.0 The Application Site and its Surroundings

- 2.1 The site forms part of the Policy HSA16 housing allocation for 60 dwellings in the West Berkshire Council Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document (2017) (HSADPD). Part of the allocated site has already received planning permission for 28 residential dwellings and is currently being build out by Crest Nicholson Operations Ltd (planning references 16/01685/OUTMAJ and 19/00772/RESMAJ).
- 2.2 T A Fisher & Sons Ltd have acquired the rest of the allocated site and intend to fulfil the delivery of the remaining 32 dwellings.
- 2.3 The site is 2.014 hectares and includes Regis Manor Road, which is the primary access road from the adjacent consented scheme to the east and which provides access onto Reading Road. The developable site area is 1.83 hectares.
- 2.4 The site lies on the north east edge of the village of Burghfield Common and comprises semi-improved grassland, paddocks and scattered groups of trees. A small outbuilding is located close to the eastern border of the site. The level of the site slopes south east to north west, significantly in places.
- 2.5 Ancient woodland can be found immediately adjoining the north – north-west border of the site. Along the southern and western site boundaries are residential properties with private rear gardens and paddocks. Immediately east of the site is the consented residential scheme referred to above.
- 2.6 There are no Public Rights of Way (PRoW) within the site, although bridleway BURG/9/1 can be found close by. There are Tree Preservation Orders relating to a group of Oak trees and two Ash trees within the site.
- 2.7 The Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning confirms the site is within Flood Zone 1, meaning it has a low probability of flooding (less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding).
- 2.8 There are no designated heritage assets within or close to the site and it is not within a Conservation Area.

- 2.9 There are no ecological designations within or near to the site and the site lies outside of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA 7km boundary. The site is within the Burghfield Woodland and Heathland Mosaic.
- 2.10 As the site is within 3km of AWE Burghfield it is within the middle land use planning consultation zone.
- 2.11 Burghfield Common is located to the south west of Reading and has been identified by West Berkshire Council as a rural service centre, capable of accommodating further residential growth and providing a range of services with reasonable public transport provision. A bus stop on Reading Road in both directions is a short walk from the site, providing regular and frequent bus services.
- 2.12 Burghfield Common's wide range of local services and facilities includes local convenience stores and shops, a post office, garage, primary and junior schools, a leisure centre, a village hall, a church, health centre and pharmacy and cafes.

### 3.0 Relevant Planning History

3.1 The application site itself does not have any relevant planning history, however the adjoining part of the allocated site has a number of applications registered to it.

#### **16/01685/OUTMAJ**

3.2 On 30<sup>th</sup> October 2018, West Berkshire Council granted Outline Planning Permission under application reference 16/01685/OUTMAJ for:

*“Outline planning application for 28 dwellings. Matters to be considered: Access. Matters reserved: Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale.”*

#### **19/00772/RESMAJ**

3.3 On 8<sup>th</sup> August 2019, an application for Reserved Matters was granted by the Council under application reference 19/00772/RESMAJ for:

*“Approval of reserved matters application following outline application 16/01685/OUTMAJ for 28 dwellings. Matters to be considered: Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale.”*

3.4 This permission has been implemented and constructed in full. It now forms the dwellings served by Regis Manor Road to the north east of the application site.

#### **Other Submissions**

3.5 On 27 January 2022, consent was granted to remove two Ash trees from the application site (21/02960/TPW) – Tree 92 (T3) and Tree 93.

## 4.0 The Proposed Development

- 4.1 This application for Full Planning Permission proposes the development of 32 dwellings as part of an allocated site and includes access, associated parking, landscaping and public open space (POS).

### Housing Type and Mix

- 4.2 The proposed development will comprise of a mixture of dwelling types and sizes in order to meet local housing needs. It has been designed to be in keeping with the character and scale of the site, the adjoining development and existing residential dwellings. It comprises a mix of dwelling types, including apartments, short rows of terraced housing, semi-detached and detached housing.
- 4.3 The dwellings will contain a mix of 1-, 2-, 3- and 4-bedroom units and there will be a planning policy compliant proportion of affordable homes appropriately integrated with the general market housing throughout the development.

### Access, Vehicle Parking and Connectivity

- 4.4 In terms of access into the site, a new 4.8-metre-wide vehicular access is proposed to link with the road in the adjoining development (Regis Manor Road). This access road will provide the primary access for all dwellings within the site and includes a turning head. A narrowing of the road along the straight section between plots 12 and 14 ensures that vehicular speed is restricted through the development.
- 4.5 A total of 77 car parking spaces are provided throughout the site, which is slightly higher than the standards, however this ensures the side of the road is clear of parked vehicles and also provides dedicated visitor parking spaces.
- 4.6 Pedestrian footways at two metres in width will be provided along the majority of both sides of the proposed road and will link with the consented scheme to provide suitable pedestrian infrastructure.
- 4.7 The proposed development also includes a footpath to the open space.

### Green Infrastructure, Landscaping and Biodiversity



- 4.8 The site is considered capable of supporting a variety of species and will provide significant areas for wildlife onsite. The proposal includes a large area of open green space in the northern corner of the site in addition to a 15-metre buffer to the ancient woodland along the entire northern site boundary.
- 4.9 The proposed development will be set within an attractive landscape setting. Native trees and hedges will be planted throughout the site to enhance the existing vegetation to be retained.
- 4.10 The proposal seeks to conserve the important trees within the site, whilst creating new areas of open space and landscaping. The buffer and additional landscape planting will protect and encourage biodiversity.

#### Sustainable Drainage

- 4.11 An attenuation pond is proposed adjacent to the open space, in addition to storage crates to be installed under the POS area. a private pumping station is also to be provided to facilitate the foul drainage from the site, as explained within the submitted Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Statement.

## 5.0 Planning Policy and Other Material Considerations

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 advises Local Planning Authorities to determine planning applications in accordance with the policies of the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.2 The relevant parts of West Berkshire's Development Plan in this instance are:

- The West Berkshire Core Strategy (July 2012) and
- The Housing Site Allocations DPD (May 2017)

5.3 The Core Strategy provides the long-term vision for West Berkshire to 2026 and translates this into spatial terms, setting out proposals for how much development is required and where it should be located.

5.4 The Housing Site Allocations (HAS) is a daughter document to the Core Strategy and implements the framework set by it by allocating housing sites across West Berkshire.

### West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026

5.5 Policy ADPP1 sets out the Council's target of providing 10,500 net additional dwellings over the plan period, with most development taking place within or adjacent to existing settlements. Burghfield Common is identified as a rural service centre with a range of services and reasonable public transport provision.

5.6 Policy ADPP6 identifies that some housing growth is planned for the East Kennet Valley area to help meet the needs of the village communities and to assist with the viability of village shops and services. This amounts to approximately 800 homes over the plan period, an average of 40 new homes a year. Burghfield Common as a rural service centre will be the focus for development in the area, along with Mortimer.

5.7 Policy CS1 relates to the delivery of new homes. It reiterates that new homes will be located in accordance with the settlement hierarchy outlined in the Spatial Strategy Area Delivery Plan policies and confirms that new homes will primarily be developed, inter alia, on '*land allocated for residential development in subsequent Development Plan Documents*'.

5.8 Policy CS4 requires residential development to contribute to the delivery of an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes to meet the housing needs of all sectors of the community,

with regard to the character of the surrounding area, accessibility of the location and the availability of local services, facilities and infrastructure.

- 5.9 Policy CS6 sets out the Council's approach toward affordable housing and the proportion sought from residential development. On sites of 15 dwellings or more, 40% provision will be sought on greenfield land. All affordable units will be integrated within the development.
- 5.10 Policy CS8 sets out that residential development with over 20 dwellings within the middle land use consultation zone (1.5km and 3km) of AWE Burghfield are subject consultation with the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR).
- 5.11 Policy CS14 seeks that new development demonstrates a high quality and sustainable design which respects and enhances the character and appearance of the area and which makes a positive contribution to the quality of life in West Berkshire. It seeks, amongst other concerns, that development proposals:
- Make good provision for access by all modes of transport; and
  - Make efficient use of land whilst respecting the density, character, landscape and biodiversity of the surrounding area.
- 5.12 Policy CS15 deals with sustainable construction and energy efficiency. It sets out requirements for new development to meet defined minimum standards of construction, by reference to the Code for Sustainable Homes. However, the Government withdrew the Code on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2015 and replaced it with new national technical standards comprising new additional optional building regulations regarding water and access, as well as a new national space standard. These additional options are comparable with the requirements for the former Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4.
- 5.13 Policy CS16 identifies that proposed development on sites of 1 hectare or more within Flood Zone 1 are required to be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA). Developments are required to demonstrate appropriate measures can be incorporated to manage any flood risk and that safe access and exit can be provided in the event of flooding. Surface water must be managed in a sustainable manner through the implementation of sustainable drainage methods.
- 5.14 Policy CS17 seeks to ensure that biodiversity and geodiversity assets across West Berkshire are conserved and where possible, enhanced.

5.15 Policy CS18 identifies that new developments will make provision for high quality and multifunctional open spaces of an appropriate size.

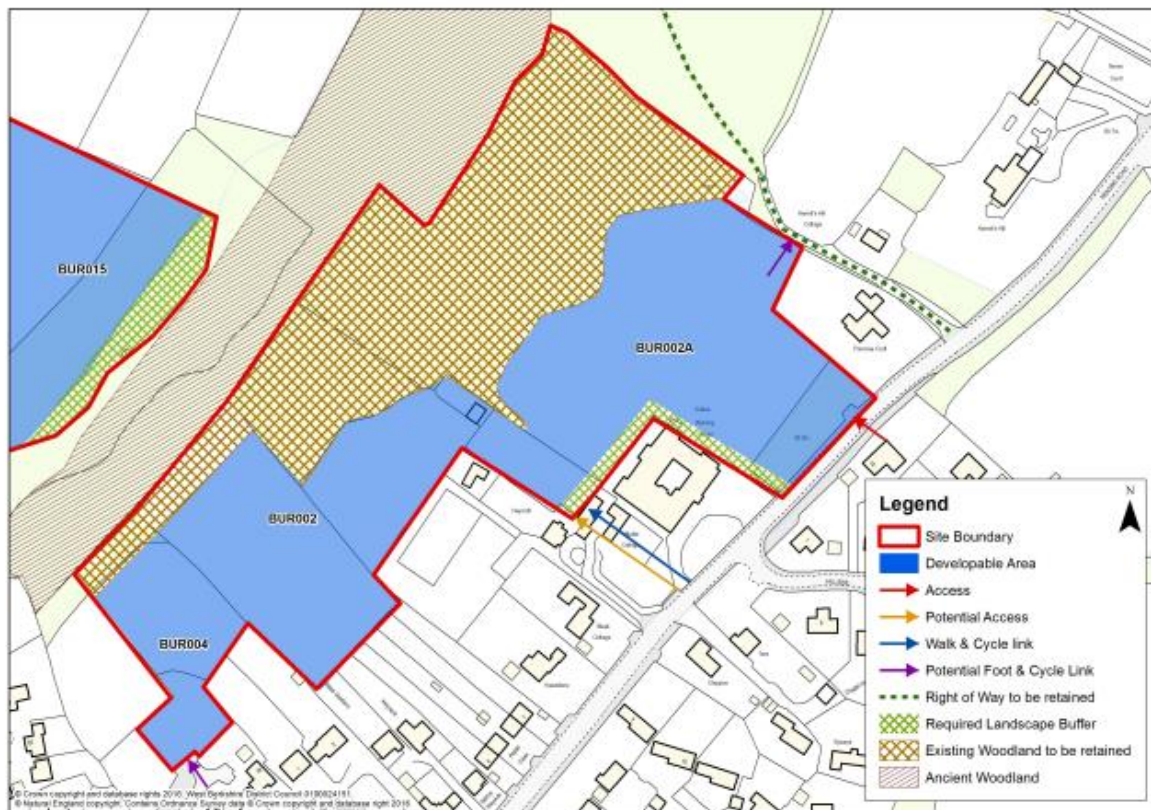
5.16 Policy CS19 states that the diversity and local distinctiveness of the landscape character of the district must be conserved and enhanced and that a holistic approach will be taken in considering new development where natural, cultural and functional components of its character will be considered as a whole.

Housing Site Allocations DPD (2017)

5.17 Policy HSA16 allows for the provision of approximately 60 dwellings with a mix of dwelling types and sizes on this allocated site. The scheme is to be accompanied by an extended phase 1 habitat survey with further detailed surveys as necessary and informed by a Flood Risk Assessment and Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. The development should comprise a design and layout that will:

- Limit the developable area to the west of the site to exclude areas of existing woodland.
- Reflect the semi-rural edge of Burghfield Common through appropriate landscaping.
- Provide a 15-metre buffer to areas of ancient woodland and an appropriate buffer to the rest of the TPO woodland.

**Land to the rear of The Hollies Nursing Home and Land opposite 44 Lamden Way, Burghfield Common  
- Policy HSA16**



5.18 Supporting paragraph 2.35 identifies that the settlement boundary for Burghfield Common has been redrawn to include the developable area.

5.19 Policy C1 confirms that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development within the settlement boundary of Burghfield Common.

5.20 Policy P1 provides details of the parking standards for new residential development and discusses the guidelines for parking provision within the District. The site is within Zone 3, where dwellings are required to provide parking in accordance with the table below:

	Flats (+1 additional space per 5 flats for visitors)			Houses			
	1	2	3	1	2	3	4
Zone 1	0.75	1	2	1	1	2	2
Zone 2	1.25	1.5	2	1.25	2	2.5	2.5
Zone 3	1.5	1.75	2	1.5	2	2.5	3
EUA Zone	1.5		2	1	2	2	3

Criteria ix. identifies that cycle and motorcycle parking should be provided in accordance with the 'Cycling and Motorcycling Advice Standards for New Development'.

### Material Considerations

5.21 Section 70(2) of the Town and County Planning Act 1990 requires that planning decisions should have regard to material considerations. Material considerations in this instance relate to the following:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) (July 2021)
- The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- Quality Design Supplementary Planning Document (June 2006)
- Burghfield Parish Design Statement (August 2011)

### The National Planning Policy Framework (the 'Framework')

5.22 Paragraph 8 sets out three overarching objectives to achieving sustainable development in planning. These are economic, social and environmental objectives.

5.23 Paragraph 11 clearly sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development which requires Local Planning Authorities to approval proposals for development which accord with an up to date Development Plan without delay.

5.24 Paragraph 38 identifies that local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way and should work proactively with applications to secure developments that improve economic, social and environmental conditions.

5.25 Paragraph 47 sets out that planning law required applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.26 Paragraph 60 identifies that in order to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forwards where it is needed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.

5.27 Paragraph 73 notes that the supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as extensions to existing

villages, provided they are well located and designed and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities.

- 5.28 Paragraph 78 discusses how in rural areas planning decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs.
- 5.29 Paragraph 79 sets out that housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities in order to promote sustainable development in rural areas.
- 5.30 Paragraph 111 identifies that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 5.31 Paragraph 112 sets out that applications for development should give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements within schemes and with neighbouring areas and facilitate access to high quality public transport as well as create places that are safe, secure and attractive.
- 5.32 Paragraph 119 requires planning decisions to promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- 5.33 Paragraph 126 states that *“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”*.
- 5.34 Paragraph 130 requires planning decisions to:
- Ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area over the lifetime of the development;
  - Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
  - Are sympathetic to local character and history;
  - Establish a strong sense of place
  - Accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development; and
  - Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible.

5.35 Paragraph 174 identifies that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and provide net gains for biodiversity.

*Quality Design SPD: Part 2 Residential Development*

5.36 The SPD provides guidance on the achievement of design quality within residential development.

5.37 Part 2 of the SPD relates to residential development proposals and sets out that new development in edge of settlement locations is required to respect the inter-relationship between open countryside and development form.

5.38 To create a traditional development edge and sensitive interface with the adjoining countryside, the following guidelines are provided:

- Building materials should be in tune with the locally distinctive pallet;
- Roof forms and building heights should be varied;
- Substantial planting on the edges and within development adjacent to the countryside should be used to soften views and subdivide the urban form into groups of building;
- The use of native species of local provenance is encouraged; and
- Development boundaries should be broken up by planting and open space.

*Burghfield Parish Design Statement*

5.39 The Burghfield Parish Design Statement was adopted by the Council as guidance in August 2011 and covers the parish of Burghfield, including Burghfield Common, Burghfield Village and Burghfield Bridge.

5.40 The statement identifies that Burghfield Common has witnessed recent, quality housing development and includes shops and three recreation grounds as well as two public houses, a junior, primary and secondary schools as well as a village hall.

5.41 Paragraph 3.1 identifies that development within Burghfield Common as continued throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the last four to five decades seeing a substantial increase in



housing, mostly in the form of planned residential estates, with most recent developments attempting to draw upon more traditional styles and building materials.

5.42 Section 5 provides a number of planning and development guidelines, with an overall objective that new development should conserve and enhance the character of the parish, incorporating sympathetic design and reflecting the surrounding environment.

5.43 The following highlights the key sections within the Design Statement which new development should consider and incorporate into proposals within Burghfield Common:

a) Environmental

- Open spaces within the Parish are important and any new development should respect, conserve, and where possible enhance these spaces.
- The setting of Burghfield in the wider landscape should be conserved and enhanced by any future development.
- New development should pay special attention to maintaining and enhancing wildlife corridors across the Parish and should maximise opportunities for biodiversity enhancements.

b) Street Scene

- Existing trees, shrubs and hedgerows should be conserved within and around any future development sites. Landscaping should be enhanced with further planting to lessen any potential visual impact of the development.
- Footpaths and walkways should be maintained and enhanced throughout the Parish and new development should provide additional paths/pedestrian links where appropriate.
- The visual impact of car parking within new development should be minimised.
- Traffic-calming measures in sympathy with the Parish's rural nature would be welcomed.

c) Building Design

- The use of wall material, type and colour in new development should be consistent with commonly used existing materials along with the use of brick patterns and bonds, raised designs or mouldings to complement the immediate surroundings.

- The roof pitch and design of properties should relate well to the proportions, roof massing and form of existing buildings.
- The design of windows and doors should be in character with the building and in harmony with the architectural style of surrounding development.
- New development should respect the height of existing and adjacent buildings, traditionally not exceeding 2 storeys.
- New development should take account of the inclusion and provision of safe and secure locations for refuse and recycling bins.
- Clearly defined property boundaries are encouraged and should be rural in character and content.
- Existing mature landscape features should be incorporated into the design of new development.
- Front garden space should be provided within new development in keeping with surrounding properties and the prevailing character of the area.

*Emerging Local Plan Review 2037*

- 5.44 The most recent version of the Local Development Scheme (LDS), dated April 2020, sets a timetable for the adoption of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review to 2037 as being December 2022.
- 5.45 A Regulation 18 consultation version of the emerging draft of the Local Plan Review was produced by West Berkshire Council in December 2020. The draft Plan identifies the development requirements to meet local needs and the strategy for distributing development within the District, along with outlining the policies for conserving and enhancing the natural and built environment.
- 5.46 A consultation period on the emerging draft Local Plan Review was held between 11 December 2020 and 5 February 2021. Responses are currently being considered to inform the next draft version of the Local Plan Review (Regulation 19 pre-submission version).
- 5.47 However, a press release issued on 18 August 2021 identified that the changes to the National Planning Policy Framework on 20 July 2021 had significant implications for the West Berkshire

District Local Plan Review. As a result, additional work is needed to support the new requirements and subsequently, the Council had no alternative but to delay the production of the Local Plan Review.

- 5.48 No further information is available at present setting out a new timetable for the adoption of the Local Plan Review. Consequently, at this stage in its preparation, no material weight can be afforded to the draft policies contained within the Local Plan Review.

## 6.0 Planning Assessment

### *Principle of Development*

- 6.1 As noted in Section 2, the site benefits from being part of allocated site HSA16 for approximately 60 dwellings. In addition, the site is within the settlement of Burghfield Common, a rural service centre identified for housing growth within the Core Strategy under policy ADPP1 and ADPP6. Further, policy CS1 outlines that new homes will be developed on land allocated for residential development in subsequent development plan documents.
- 6.2 The proposal will deliver the balance of 32 dwellings on this allocated site, noting that 28 dwellings have already been granted permission and are being constructed. This will assist West Berkshire Council in delivering its target of 10,500 net additional dwellings over the plan period.
- 6.3 Given this background, the principle of residential development in this location is considered acceptable.

### *Housing Mix and Tenure, including Affordable Housing Statement*

- 6.4 Details of the proposed tenure mix of market and affordable units for the site are identified in the table below.

Accommodation Type	Number of Units	Housing Type
1 Bedroom Apartment	2	Affordable
2 Bedroom Apartment	3	Affordable
2 Bedroom House	6	Affordable
2 Bedroom House	1	Open Market
3 Bedroom House	2	Affordable
3 Bedroom House	12	Open Market
4 Bedroom House	6	Open Market
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	

- 6.5 It is proposed that 40% of the new dwellings will be offered as affordable to ensure compliance with policy CS6. This equates to 13 affordable units, split to provide 70% affordable rent and 30% intermediate housing. Therefore, 9 dwellings are for rent and 4 dwellings are for shared ownership.
- 6.6 The affordable units are well-integrated into the overall development and distributed throughout. Externally, they are designed to be no different to the market housing and their sizing complies with national space standards. They comprise a mix of 1 and 2-bedroom apartments and 2 and 3-bedroom terraced and semi-detached dwellings.
- 6.7 In relation to the open market housing, the mix of units comprises 2-, 3- and 4-bedroom dwellings which will be delivered as semi-detached and detached units. This mix is considered appropriate, given the character of the surrounding area and is therefore acceptable for the site.
- 6.8 The proposal therefore incorporates an appropriate mix of housing types and tenures, having regard to the character of the area and accessibility of the site, in compliance with policy CS4 and policy HSA16.

*Impact on Existing Landscaping and Proposed Landscaping*

- 6.9 A Landscape, Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LTVIA) has been prepared by RPS to accompany this submission, as required by policy HSA16.
- 6.10 The location of the site and scale of development in the context of the existing settlement form, pattern and character has already been considered acceptable through the site's allocation in the HSADPD. The proposal therefore accords with policy CS19 in principle.
- 6.11 The LTVIA finds that the landscape in this area exhibits few special qualities and so the introduction of housing will not result in significant adverse effects. The proposed development will result in moderate to negligible adverse effects on landscape character.
- 6.12 In respect of visual effects, the LTVIA notes the greatest changes in views would be experienced by private views of neighbouring residents in properties at The Oaks. Views from other properties would experience a lesser effect.

- 6.13 In summary, visual effects from other viewpoints at the edge of Burghfield Common and the local rural landscape would not be significant and would range from moderate to negligible adverse, whilst overall the development would seek to ensure the site functions well and would add to the overall character and quality of the area, with moderate to negligible adverse effects on the landscape character.
- 6.14 Mitigation measures will be incorporated into the scheme to provide new hedgerow, scrub and tree boundaries which will reinforce the vegetation network. Over time, the visual effects of the development will be reduced to a less than significant level. It is therefore considered the proposed scheme will not result in significant harm to visual amenity within the area.
- 6.15 The site is largely bounded by existing vegetation, ancient woodland and private properties with the exception of a post and rail fence to the west, beyond which a paddock is located. There are a number of TPOs relating to trees within the site which are clustered together in a row. As a result, public views of the site are limited to glimpses at most from Reading Road.
- 6.16 The ancient woodland to the rear of the site provides an attractive backdrop for the development and in accordance with policy HSA16, a suitable 15 metre buffer is proposed to protect this natural asset. In addition, appropriate buffers are proposed between the development and any trees subject to TPOs within the site, along with landscape planting between the site and neighbouring properties to minimise the impact of the development. Where possible, existing vegetation is to be retained or replaced elsewhere within the site, if it is unable to be retained.
- 6.17 A landscape strategy and planting schedule are provided (drawing ref. JSL4137/100 and JSL4137/550), identifying the location of soft and hard landscaping and the planting of new native species of trees and hedging throughout the development and open green space, which will enhance the appearance of the landscape along with the development itself.
- 6.18 The landscape strategy has taken inspiration from the semi-rural setting and ancient woodland backdrop. Alongside retained trees, small native trees are proposed to be planted at the point of entry into the site from the consented development to the east, acting as a 'gateway' to the development. Native species trees will also be planted around the edge of the new open green space.
- 6.19 The ancient woodland buffer, POS and attenuation pond are set aside to provide both a space for wildlife and informal recreation, rather than formalised pitches for active play, which is why

only a single public footpath leading to POS is required. The woodland buffer will be planted with woodland edge species and shade tolerant wildflower mix.

- 6.20 The POS will feature amenity grass, whilst wildflower turf is proposed around the attenuation pond to provide both visual interest and support local wildlife. The attenuation pond will feature vegetated embankments, where species rich grasses and wildflower planting will be used to soften the appearance of the pond and provide interesting throughout the year.
- 6.21 The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the requirements of policy CS18 and policy CS19 of the Core Strategy, and Policy HSA16 of the DPD as the development will result in the provision of a high quality and multifunctional POS in proportion to the size of the scheme. The measures will help to conserve and enhance the diversity and local distinctiveness of the landscape character in this area.

#### *Design, Layout and Appearance of the Development*

- 6.22 The LTVIA notes the development of the site will result in permanent changes to the Burghfield Woodland and Heathland landscape character area, but that it has the capacity to absorb the scale of the residential development proposed.
- 6.23 The scheme has therefore been informed by the LTVIA to ensure it can deliver a high-quality, landscaped development appropriate for the location of the site.
- 6.24 The scheme will blend in well with the existing semi-rural character of the area whilst ‘marrying up’ to the adjacent consented scheme, currently under construction. The development will use similar materials, colours, textures and design features, but will have its own subtle unique character, in keeping with the surrounding area.
- 6.25 The design takes account of the requirements of policy CS14 and policy CS19 in that it respects and enhances the character of its setting through good design and the way it will function. It is further informed by the Quality Design SPD and the development guidelines contained within the Burghfield Parish Design Statement.
- 6.26 The layout of the development is proposed to provide a logical street structure which is easy to navigate and allows for natural surveillance of the street scene. Dwellings are well spaced and face outward and fronting the road.

- 6.27 The density of the proposed development is 17.4 dwellings per hectare (dph), which is in keeping with the character of this part of Burghfield Common. The layout makes efficient use of the site by providing a good balance between built development and the provision of a large area of POS and attenuation pond. In addition, to ensure greenfield runoff rates are provided, storage crates will be installed under the POS to manage surface water drainage effectively. The POS and attenuation pond are proposed in the northern corner of the site.
- 6.28 A significant buffer of 15 metres to the ancient woodland is provided beyond the POS and to the rear of plots 24 – 29, providing opportunities for landscaping and biodiversity to be protected and enhanced. A pumping station is proposed to be located between plot 24 and the open space. This includes a dedicated maintenance parking bay.
- 6.29 The units are proposed to be a mix of apartments and houses, predominantly set at two storeys in height, apart from plots 1-5 and 30-31 which are 2.5 storeys. The topography of the site has been utilised in this sense to add variety to the designs. The height is consistent with the surrounding height of development in the area.
- 6.30 Except for plots 6-11, which feature rows of allocated parking to the front, the dwellinghouses are provided with front gardens and driveways with off-street parking either to the front or side of the units.
- 6.31 A mixture of garages and/or carports are also provided for all other dwellinghouses (excluding plots 24 and 25.). These are set back to the side of dwellings. Plots 15 and 16 feature detached carports/ garages. Where garages are not provided, secure and lockable cycle storage sheds are proposed in the rear gardens. All dwellinghouses are provided generous private garden spaces, in line with Council space standards.
- 6.32 The apartments (plots 1-5) are allocated a row of parking spaces parking spaces in front of the block, along with a secure cycle store and refuse store. To the rear is a large communal garden space.
- 6.33 Variations in the use of different colour bricks, roof tiles and detailing for the proposed units adds interest to the development and helps to distinguish the house types within the development. The design, materials and features are informed by those found throughout Burghfield Common and in particular, Reading Road, to ensure the appearance is sympathetic to its surroundings and blends in well with the semi-rural character of the area.



### *Impact on Neighbouring Amenity*

- 6.34 The development site is located to the north of several existing residential properties along Reading Road. As such, it is important for the development to avoid adversely impacting on the amenities of the occupiers of these properties, or the new future occupiers of the consented scheme which is under construction to the east.
- 6.35 To aid with this, landscape planting and the retention of existing trees and hedgerows is proposed, where possible, along the boundaries of the site. These will serve as both visual screens and as natural noise buffers between current and future occupiers in close proximity of the site.
- 6.36 The separation distances between the site, existing dwellings and the landscape planting proposed means the amenities of existing occupiers of the dwellings to the south and future occupiers of the new development to the east would not be materially or unacceptably affected by the development. Further, it is considered there will be no loss of light, outlook or privacy arising from the development, in accordance with the Quality Design SPD.

### *Transport, Access and Parking*

- 6.37 The access to the application site from Reading Road via Regis Manor Road has already been established through the adjoining consented scheme. Therefore, this application only discusses the access road through the development itself and the parking provisions for the units.
- 6.38 Cole Easdon has prepared a Transport Statement to accompany the submission, which identifies that the proposed development site benefits from being located in an accessible location, with a number of facilities available within a reasonable walking or cycling distance, whilst bus services link the site to Reading Town Centre.
- 6.39 This enables occupants to avoid being reliant on private car ownership to access local shops, services, facilities or areas of employment.

- 6.40 The access road sweeps through the development, providing interest and ensures that vehicle speeds are kept low by narrowing the main straight between plots 12 and 14 and the curving nature of the road.
- 6.41 Regis Manor Road connects with Reading Road via a T-junction to the east of the site. The junction benefits from good visibility and will not be materially impacted by the proposed development. The additional trips generated by this development will not exceed the capacity of the Reading Road/Regis Manor Road junction, which has been designed with the full allocation of dwellings in mind.
- 6.42 Off-street vehicle parking is proposed through the use of private driveways and allocated parking bays, with garages and carports provided to some dwellings. Parking arrangements either cater for tandem parking or side-by-side parking. The terraced houses and apartments are provided with allocated off-road parking spaces arranged in a row.
- 6.43 All 77 car parking spaces within the development are provided in accordance with the requirements as set out in the policy P1 and provide easy access onto the main access road. Each space will have the ability to incorporate an Electric Vehicle Charging Point (EVCP), if required.
- 6.44 A number of shared spaces are also provided throughout the site, accommodated within bays along the access road. In addition, a turning head is provided to allow for ease of manoeuvrability for larger vehicles, such as refuse collection vehicles.
- 6.45 The development provides suitable space for cycle parking within the curtilage of each of the dwellings, either within a garage or with a dedicated lockable cycle shed. In the case of the apartments, a dedicated cycle store is provided at the front of the block.
- 6.46 A Swept Path Analysis (drawing reference 7740/202(B) has been undertaken to ensure there is adequate space for a large refuse vehicle to navigate the site and manoeuvre within the proposed turning head by plots 23-25.
- 6.47 Overall, the Transport Statement identifies that the site occupies a sustainable location where residents have access to key services in Burghfield Common and the surrounding area and that car and cycle parking is provided in accordance with adopted standards.
- 6.48 The Transport Statement concludes there will be no severe residual cumulative impacts as a result of the development, nor will there be an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

### *Flood Risk and Drainage*

- 6.49 The site is within flood zone 1, however in accordance with policy HSA16, the development is required to be informed by a flood risk assessment. A flood risk assessment and drainage strategy has been prepared by Cole Easdon which identifies that there have been no records of flooding at the site, or its immediate vicinity and so no fluvial flood risk mitigation measures are required. Similarly, no groundwater flood risk mitigation measures are necessary either.
- 6.50 In terms of drainage, the site currently drains towards the drainage ditches located within the site and around its boundaries. Development of the site will invariably add impermeable surfacing to the site, which will increase surface water runoff. However, surface water runoff generated from the developed site will be reduced to comparable greenfield runoff rates by utilising sustainable drainage measures, as is discussed in the Drainage Strategy.
- 6.51 In summary, the report finds that the development proposed can be accommodated on the site without increasing flood risk within the locality.
- 6.52 As such, the proposal conforms with policy CS16 as it has been demonstrated that surface water and foul drainage can be suitable and sustainably managed through the provision of appropriate measures.

### *Ecology and Arboriculture*

- 6.53 Pro Vision have prepared an ecological assessment of the site to accompany this submission. The assessment found the site has the potential to support a range of species.
- 6.54 Prior to the development commencing, the assessment recommends that an updated badger survey is carried out to ensure no setts have been opened close to any proposed works. In addition, some of the retained mature trees within the site may contain features suitable for bats. If the felling of additional trees not shown on the proposed plans is required, the assessment notes that further tree inspections may be required.
- 6.55 A number of ecological enhancements and measures are recommended within the assessment. These include enhancing the grassland, native species planting and the inclusion of a pond. In addition, the installation of bat brick or bat tiles, swift bricks and bird boxes is proposed. The assessment also recommends that partially buried log piles be provide for invertebrates and log pile and hibernacula created within the reptile mitigation areas.

- 6.56 These details have been taken into consideration and incorporated into the landscaping strategy for the site to ensure the development can deliver appropriate ecological enhancements in accordance with policy CS17. A net gain in biodiversity is envisaged for the site, in line with local and national policy.
- 6.57 Keen Consultants have undertaken an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) and Tree Survey. This has been prepared to inform the design and layout of the proposed development. The tree survey identifies the size and quality of the trees both within the site and immediately offsite.
- 6.58 This information has been used to prepare the Tree Constraints Plan (drawing ref. 1730-KC-XX-YTREE-TCP01 Rev 0) identifies the location of each tree, its size and the area around each tree that needs to be considered during the design process. A Tree Protection Plan (drawing ref. 1730-KC-XX-YTREE-TPP01 Rev A) has also been prepared to ensure adequate provisions for the protection of trees are in place.
- 6.59 During the design process, the design team consulted with the arboriculturist to consider options emerging from the design and what Root Protection Areas (RPAs) for new trees were needed. With respect to drainage, this will unavoidably be taken through the RPAs of some trees, but will be undertaken via thrust boring and not by digging a trench, to minimise any impacts. The arboriculturist has reviewed these plans and is comfortable this will limit the impact on trees and will not require them to be removed as a result.
- 6.60 In addition, the sloping topography of the site has influenced the location of the proposed access road and its route through the site. Alternative options/routes were considered to reduce the need for tree removal, however, these were not technically possible whilst ensuring an acceptable gradient for highway safety. The route proposed is therefore considered to strike an acceptable balance between highway safety and tree retention, whilst providing access to the allocated site.
- 6.61 On finalisation of the design, an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) has been produced to accompany the planning application. The impact assessment demonstrates the proposals meet national and local planning policy and guidance. It demonstrates the benefits of the retained trees and incorporates new tree planting.

- 6.62 In summary, the AIA identifies the proposed development will result in the loss of some trees, the majority of which are of low quality and value. The ancient woodland will be adequately respected by a generous 15-metre buffer between the dwellings and their garden spaces.
- 6.63 Specialist measures will be employed to minimise harm to trees, including where service and utility installations are proposed near RPAs. Please refer to the AIA for full details.
- 6.64 Extensive new and replacement tree planting is proposed which will provide a diverse portfolio of tree coverage, contributing to the sustainability of the site.

#### *Land Contamination*

- 6.65 The site is not considered to be contaminated and there are no known contamination issues linked with the site.
- 6.66 Ground and Water have prepared a Landscape Contamination Assessment to advise the Applicant on the risk factors pertaining to the site. Special reference has been made to former and present day potential contaminative uses and their impact on sensitive receptors, these being human health, controlled waters, buildings, building materials and services.
- 6.67 The Phase 1 Desk Study identifies potential on-site sources of contaminants from a backfilled pond, carried out prior to 1961 and a former tennis court which was removed by 1972.
- 6.68 As a result of these features, contaminants associated with made ground and putrescible materials could be present on site, but the risk posed by these features is considered low. Some off-site sources of contaminants have also been noted, however the risks posed by these features are also considered low.
- 6.69 It is recommended that an intrusive ground investigation is undertaken at the site to evaluate the risk that contaminants of concerns within the soils and groundwater may affect end-users. This could be addressed through the imposition of a suitably worded condition.

#### *Emergency Planning*

- 6.70 The site is located within the middle land use consultation zone (1.5km and 3km) of AWE Burghfield and seeks to deliver more than 20 dwellings, as such under Policy CS8, consultation with the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) is required.

- 6.71 It is noteworthy to mention again that the site is an allocated site, so consultation with the emergency planning team will likely have taken place already to ensure the future housing provision on this site could be accommodated within the emergency planning arrangements.
- 6.72 Nevertheless, it is significant that the ONR, when commenting on the adjacent application for outline planning permission, considered the scale and location of the proposed development is such that they would not advise against the application.
- 6.73 Therefore, the proposed development on this site should also be found acceptable and capable of being accommodated in the emergency planning arrangements.

#### *S106 Agreement*

- 6.74 The following Heads of Terms for a Section 106 Agreement are set out below<sup>1</sup>:
- Provision of affordable housing
  - Provision of public open space
  - Provision of environmental enhancements

#### *Summary*

- 6.75 The proposed development is part of an allocated site within the HSADPD and will contribute to the provision of local housing by providing a suitable mix of dwellings for open market and affordable housing. The site is located in a sustainable and accessible location and will deliver economic, social and environmental benefits to the area.
- 6.76 The development sets out a comprehensive strategy to ensure the site can enhance and preserve the natural and built environment, and add to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
- 6.77 The proposal presents no issues in relation to landscape impact, flood risk, transport, ecology, trees, heritage or land contamination.

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<sup>1</sup> Subject to such not otherwise being covered by the Community Infrastructure Levy.

6.78 Therefore, having considered all relevant development plan policy considerations and other material considerations referred to in this statement, it is considered that the development proposal is acceptable.

## 7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 This Statement has been prepared to accompany a full planning application submitted to West Berkshire Council for the erection of the remaining 32 dwellings allocated to the site under policy HSA16 of the HSADPD. The development includes the provision of affordable housing, together with access, associated parking, landscaping, POS and infrastructure.
- 7.2 This Statement has demonstrated the principle of development in this location is acceptable and that the proposals would deliver an appropriate mix of dwellings, both in terms of tenure and size. This will contribute to meeting the Council's wider housing needs, as well as contributing to local housing needs.
- 7.3 The layout, scale and appearance of the proposed development is in keeping with the requirements of policy HSA16. The design has been informed by a landscape assessment and has carefully evolved to complement and respect the character, form and appearance of the surrounding area. It has also been designed to fit in well with the previously consented scheme for 28 units, currently being built out on the neighbouring site.
- 7.4 The materials proposed are reflective of the local vernacular and the proposal overall has been designed to integrate well with the local area, ensuring the scheme is in-keeping and sympathetic to its surroundings, whilst delivering a high-quality form of development with its own unique character to further complement the area.
- 7.5 There will be no adverse consequences as a result of the development on existing occupiers nearby, nor will there be any consequences for future occupiers of the development site.
- 7.6 The access arrangements from the neighbouring site are suitable to serve the development and it has been confirmed the development will not result in adverse impacts on road safety or the wider local highway network. The levels of off-street parking provision and cycle parking are consistent with the adopted parking standards.
- 7.7 The proposals seek to retain existing trees, where possible, throughout the development. Where retention is not possible, trees are to be replaced within the site as part of the comprehensive soft landscaping scheme, which seeks to improve the look of the development and enhance and protect local biodiversity.
- 7.8 The proposal includes a 15-metre landscape buffer between the housing units and the ancient woodland to protect this local natural asset and create a wildlife corridor. Subject to the



mitigation measures set out in the ecology report, there are no ecological constraints to the development.

- 7.9 There are no flooding or drainage constraints which would affect the proposed development. An attenuation pond is proposed in the northern section of the site. This forms part of the POS and will further assist with onsite drainage.
- 7.10 There are no archaeological or heritage constraints within the site which could affect the proposal.
- 7.11 The appropriate infrastructure can be secured and delivered by way of a Section 106 Legal Agreement.
- 7.12 Accordingly, the proposed development is considered to comply with all relevant local and national policies and other material considerations, having been informed by the required technical studies as set out in policy HSA16. It should therefore receive approval without delay.

