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## Local Plan Review 2023-2041 version for adoption June 2025

# 1 Introduction and Background

## What is the Local Plan Review and what is it for?

**1.1** The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development<sup>(1)</sup> which is defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs<sup>(2)</sup>. Put another way, the planning system tries to ensure that the right development happens in the right place at the right time, benefiting communities and the economy.

**1.2** The planning system should be plan-led. Concise and up-to-date development plans should provide a positive vision for the future of an area; a framework for meeting housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a way for local people to shape their surroundings. Planning applications must be decided in accordance with the development plan, unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise.

**1.3** The West Berkshire Local Plan Review (LPR) is an important part of the development plan. It identifies the development that is required to meet local needs until 2041. It sets out the strategy for distributing development within the District and the policies for protecting, conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment. It helps local people in West Berkshire achieve sustainable development.

**1.4** It is important that the LPR is read as a whole. All LPR policies should be viewed together and not in isolation in the preparation and consideration of planning applications. Development proposals will be judged against all relevant policies. All development plan policies will be taken into account in determining planning applications, along with other material considerations in a proportionate manner. Please note that the policies in the LPR do not list or cross-refer to all other policies that may be relevant.

## What is the wider context?

### Nationally:

**1.5** Local plans must be consistent with the principles and policies contained within the NPPF<sup>(3)</sup>. The NPPF covers most forms of development and sets out the government's economic, environmental and social priorities for planning in England. Local plans must also be produced in line with relevant primary and secondary legislation.

### Regionally:

**1.6** Local planning authorities are expected to work collaboratively with other bodies to ensure that strategic priorities are properly co-ordinated across administrative boundaries. Joint working is expected between neighbouring authorities to enable local planning authorities to meet development requirements which cannot wholly be met within their own areas.

### Locally:

#### **Minerals and Waste**

**1.7** West Berkshire Council is also responsible for producing minerals and waste local plans. The [West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2022-2037](#) was adopted on 1 December 2022.

#### **Neighbourhood Planning**

**1.8** Parish and town councils within West Berkshire can produce neighbourhood plans (NDP) which, when adopted, also form part of the development plan, together with the LPR and the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with, and reflect the strategic policies in, the LPR. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the LPR, but can promote more development. In West Berkshire we have four made neighbourhood plans – the [Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan](#) (2017), the [Compton Neighbourhood Development Plan](#) (2022), the [Hermitage Neighbourhood Development Plan](#) (2024) and the [Cold Ash Neighbourhood Development Plan](#) (2024).

1 Paragraph 7, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021)

2 Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future (1987)

3 References to specific paragraph numbers throughout the LPR relate to the NPPF published in July 2021

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## Other Council Strategies

**1.9** The Council has adopted a number of [strategies](#) which the LPR has taken account of. These include, but are not limited to: the Council Strategy (2021); the Environment Strategy (2021); the Economic Development Strategy (2021) and; the Housing Strategy (2021).

## Duty to Cooperate

**1.10** Section 110 of the Localism Act places a legal duty on local planning authorities and other prescribed bodies to cooperate with each other when preparing development plan documents in order to address strategic planning issues relevant to their areas. The LPR has been produced through close partnership working with our neighbouring local authorities to ensure that cross-boundary planning issues have been taken into account. We have also co-operated with all authorities within a 60 minute “drive time” of Newbury with regards to employment issues. A [Duty to Cooperate Statement](#) accompanied the submitted LPR which set out in detail how the Council co-operated on strategic cross-boundary issues in order to create and deliver a positively prepared plan.

## What evidence supports the LPR?

**1.11** One of the key features of the plan-led system is that development plans should be based on up-to-date evidence. The LPR is underpinned by a wide-ranging [evidence base](#), which was prepared, reviewed and updated as necessary as part of the LPR preparation. The aim was to understand how West Berkshire functions as a place, what makes it unique, and what was required to conserve and enhance that uniqueness.

**1.12** The evidence can be broken down into two parts:

- The views and experiences of our local communities and those with a stake in the future of the District; and
- Technical research in the form of published studies.

**1.13** The LPR is supported by a vast amount of national and local information and numerous professional studies. These are referred to at various points in the LPR and are published on the Council's website.

## Sustainability Appraisal

**1.14** All local plans must be accompanied by a [sustainability appraisal](#) (SA) of the plan. The SA offers a systematic and robust way for checking and improving on plans and their policies as they are being developed. It helps planning authorities to fulfil the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in preparing their plans, and thus contributes to sound plan making. The SA of the LPR was fully integrated into the plan-making process, so that it informed and influenced the LPR as it evolved.

## Preparation of the LPR

**1.15** The preparation of the LPR was an iterative process subject to a number of stages of public consultation.

**1.16** The review of the Local Plan started in 2018 and included public consultation on the scope and content of the LPR and the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report in February and March of that year. A second round of consultation was undertaken in November/December 2018, and a focused consultation with town and parish councils and neighbourhood planning groups took place in February 2020. In December 2020 the Council published the Emerging Draft LPR for public consultation.

**1.17** In addition, and where relevant, documents prepared as part of the evidence base to inform the LPR were subject to a specific consultation with technical experts, statutory bodies and other stakeholders as appropriate throughout the process.

**1.18** In January 2023 the Council published the Proposed Submission version of the LPR for a six-week period of public consultation.

**1.19** In preparing the LPR we took into account all of the views expressed during the various stages of public consultation. Further details of the responses received can be found within our Consultation Statement.

**1.20** On 31 March 2023 the LPR was submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination by a Planning Inspector and hearing sessions were held between 8 May and 3 October 2024. The examination process provided a further opportunity for interested parties and stakeholders to shape the content of the Plan.

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**1.21** Following the hearing sessions, a further round of public consultation was held for eight weeks between 6 December 2024 and 31 January 2025 on the Proposed Main Modifications to the LPR, along with proposed changes to the Policies Map, an Updated Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and an Addendum to the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). All comments received during this consultation period were taken into consideration by the Inspector in the preparation of his Final Report, which was published on 25 April 2025.

### Structure of the LPR

**1.22** The LPR includes a vision, strategic objectives and a set of policies which together provide a policy framework for assessing planning applications and guiding development across West Berkshire. It is set out as follows:

- **Introduction and context**
- A **spatial portrait** which describes and sets out a snapshot of West Berkshire in facts and figures
- Our **Vision** of what West Berkshire will look like in 2041
- Our **Strategic Objectives** which represent the key delivery outcomes that the LPR should achieve and against which its success will be measured
- Our **Development Strategy** which sets out our overall approach for managing growth and change across the District up to 2041 and which outlines our place based approach focusing on the following spatial areas:
  - Newbury and Thatcham
  - Eastern Area
  - North Wessex Downs National Landscape
- **Strategic policies (SP)** which set out the overarching principles for development and which are considered fundamental to achieving the vision and strategic objectives, focusing on:
  - Our place based approach
  - Our environment and surroundings
  - Delivering housing
  - Fostering economic growth and supporting local communities
- **Non-strategic site allocation policies (RSA and ESA)** which, led by the capacity of the landscape, allocate large, medium and small residential and mixed-use sites (RSA) and also employment sites (ESA) for development within each of the spatial areas
- **Development management policies (DM)** which are considered in the context of the strategic policies, providing more detail on specific issues
- **Appendices** which set further technical information and guidance to assist in implementing the policies, including **Implementation and Monitoring**
- **Policies Map** which geographically illustrates the LPR policies.

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## 2 Context

**2.1** West Berkshire is a unitary authority of 704 square kilometres, located in the south east of England. About 90% of the District is rural in character. The North Wessex Downs National Landscape is a nationally important and legally protected landscape, designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) for the quality of its scenic beauty. Approximately 74% of West Berkshire is within the National Landscape. The valleys of the internationally and nationally important chalk rivers of the Lambourn and Kennet also form two distinctive landscapes threading through the District.

**2.2** The largest settlements include Newbury and Thatcham and the urban areas of Tilehurst, Purley on Thames and Calcot in the east of the District, close to Reading. Newbury is the largest town in West Berkshire and serves as the District's administrative centre.

**2.3** The population estimate of the District is 161,400 (Census 2021). Approximately 44% of residents live in the Newbury and Thatcham urban areas, 17% in the suburban areas to the west of Reading borough with the remainder in the rural areas. This rural population is dispersed across a large number of villages and smaller settlements each of which has its own identity, as well as its own specific needs and concerns.

**2.4** This rural dimension is very important in shaping the character of West Berkshire, its communities, economy and environment. The importance of agriculture, the horseracing industry and other rural businesses, the prominence of landscape and countryside along with the small scale and dispersed nature of rural communities, are all important issues and challenges to be considered through the review of the Local Plan. The rural environment of West Berkshire adds significantly to the quality of life enjoyed by urban residents of the District and is a considerable asset for the area.

**2.5** West Berkshire is part of the Thames Valley which is recognised as the most dynamic and competitive sub-regional economy in the UK. Employment provision in West Berkshire is diverse and, notwithstanding the current economic uncertainty which both COVID-19 and Brexit bring, rates of employment in the District are high.

**2.6** West Berkshire is well connected in transport terms. At the centre of the District is an important road interchange. This is where the east-west M4 motorway intersects with the north-south A34. There are road connections to larger centres such as Reading, Oxford, Swindon, Basingstoke and London. Mainline railway services to London and the south west of England run through the south of the District and the line has been electrified between London and Newbury. These locational factors, combined with high quality urban and rural areas, contribute towards making the area a popular place to live and work.

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### 3 Shaping West Berkshire: Vision and Objectives

#### Our Vision

**3.1** West Berkshire will provide the space and environment for sustainable development, including supporting infrastructure, that retain and attract creative and sustainable business growth with training and employment opportunities. A variety of different sectors together with a combination of larger businesses and small and medium-sized enterprises will ensure a resilient and sustainable economy. The local economy will help to create benefits for the environment, culture and social well-being.

**3.2** Making available carbon neutral housing of different types, sizes, tenures and affordability will be a priority in order to provide West Berkshire residents with homes and environs at sustainable locations in towns and villages that meet their needs, whatever their income, stage of life and ability.

**3.3** Development and infrastructure will be sustainable, contributing to our aim to deliver carbon neutral by 2030 and thereafter<sup>(4)</sup>, and of a high quality design that is in keeping with the character and local distinctiveness of the area. Development will be better connected to local services, facilities and open space within the District, and where relevant, in adjoining local authority areas, by favouring more sustainable means of travel including reducing the need to travel, all of which will foster community cohesion, health and wellbeing. Development will no longer contribute to the pollution of our air and water supply, including our rivers and aquifers. Development will be energy efficient in order to reducing our carbon footprint, minimise the risk of flooding, take advantage of new technologies as they emerge and by integrating green space and green infrastructure be adaptable for higher temperatures which may become the norm.

**3.4** West Berkshire's landscape in the North Wessex Downs will remain of outstanding value and its biodiversity more abundant in settlements and the surrounding countryside. Heritage assets will be conserved and enhanced and there will be greater opportunity for enjoyment and appreciation of the special qualities of the built, historic and natural environment.

#### Our Strategic Objectives

**3.5** Our strategic objectives are all-encompassing, interrelated and apply in both urban and rural areas. They represent the key delivery outcomes that the LPR should achieve and it is against these objectives that the success of the LPR will be measured.

##### 1. Climate Change

To mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change and minimise demand for energy and other resources.

##### 2. Housing

To provide a range of sites to ensure that the District's housing needs and aspirations are met by providing a range of market, affordable and specialist housing types, tenures and sizes in appropriate and sustainable locations.

##### 3. Sustainable and Quality Development

To ensure provision of sustainable developments of high quality design, construction and efficiency (including land use) which contribute to an attractive, safe and accessible environment for all.

##### 4. Economy

To facilitate and support a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base across the District, including the provision of employment land which provides for a range of local job opportunities.

##### 5. Town Centres

To enhance the vitality and viability of town and district and local centres in West Berkshire as places for shopping, leisure and community activities.

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**6. Culture**

Together with partners, to develop and promote the cultural distinctiveness of the area, recognising it is fundamental to the improved future wellbeing and sustainability of West Berkshire's economy and communities.

**7. Heritage**

To conserve and enhance the local distinctive character, identity, significance and special interest of the built, historic and natural environment in West Berkshire's towns, villages and countryside.

**8. North Wessex Downs National Landscape**

Together with partners, to continue to conserve and enhance the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, with appropriate landscape-led development delivering wider environmental, economic and social benefits.

**9. Green Infrastructure and Healthy Living**

To ensure that West Berkshire contains a strong network of multi-functional green infrastructure which provides health and environmental benefits and enhances the overall quality of life of sustainable communities.

**10. Transport**

To make provision for transport networks that support sustainable growth in West Berkshire and to promote low emission transport choices.

**11. Infrastructure**

To ensure that infrastructure needs (physical and social) arising from the growth in West Berkshire are provided to support and keep pace with development in accordance with the detail set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).

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## 4 Development Strategy: Our place based approach

### Background

4.1 The spatial strategy sets out our overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development across the District. It seeks to deliver the spatial vision and objectives for the District and has been informed by:

- National planning policy
- Other plans and strategies
- Key pieces of the evidence base
- Responses to previous consultation on the LPR

#### National planning policy

4.2 The [NPPF](#) says that local plans should provide a positive vision for the future; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities. A local plan should contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and plan positively for development and infrastructure in co-operation with neighbouring authorities. The NPPF promotes the effective use of land including re-using previously developed land, encourages higher densities in urban areas of high housing demand and refers to the need to release small and medium sized sites for development.

#### Other plans and strategies

4.3 Key [Council strategies](#) are reflected in the [West Berkshire Vision 2036](#), prepared by the West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board, which contains five strategic aspirations:

- A West Berkshire where everybody has what they need to fulfil their potential
- A West Berkshire with a housing mix with something for everyone
- A West Berkshire that welcomes business, enterprise and industry into a productive, growing and dynamic local economy
- A West Berkshire where the health and wellbeing of residents of all ages and backgrounds is good
- A West Berkshire with both beautiful and diverse natural landscapes and a strong cultural offering

4.4 A climate emergency was declared by the Council in July 2019 followed by publication of and an [Environment Strategy 2020-2030](#), a strategic plan for the District which aims to deliver carbon neutrality by 2030.

#### Key pieces of evidence

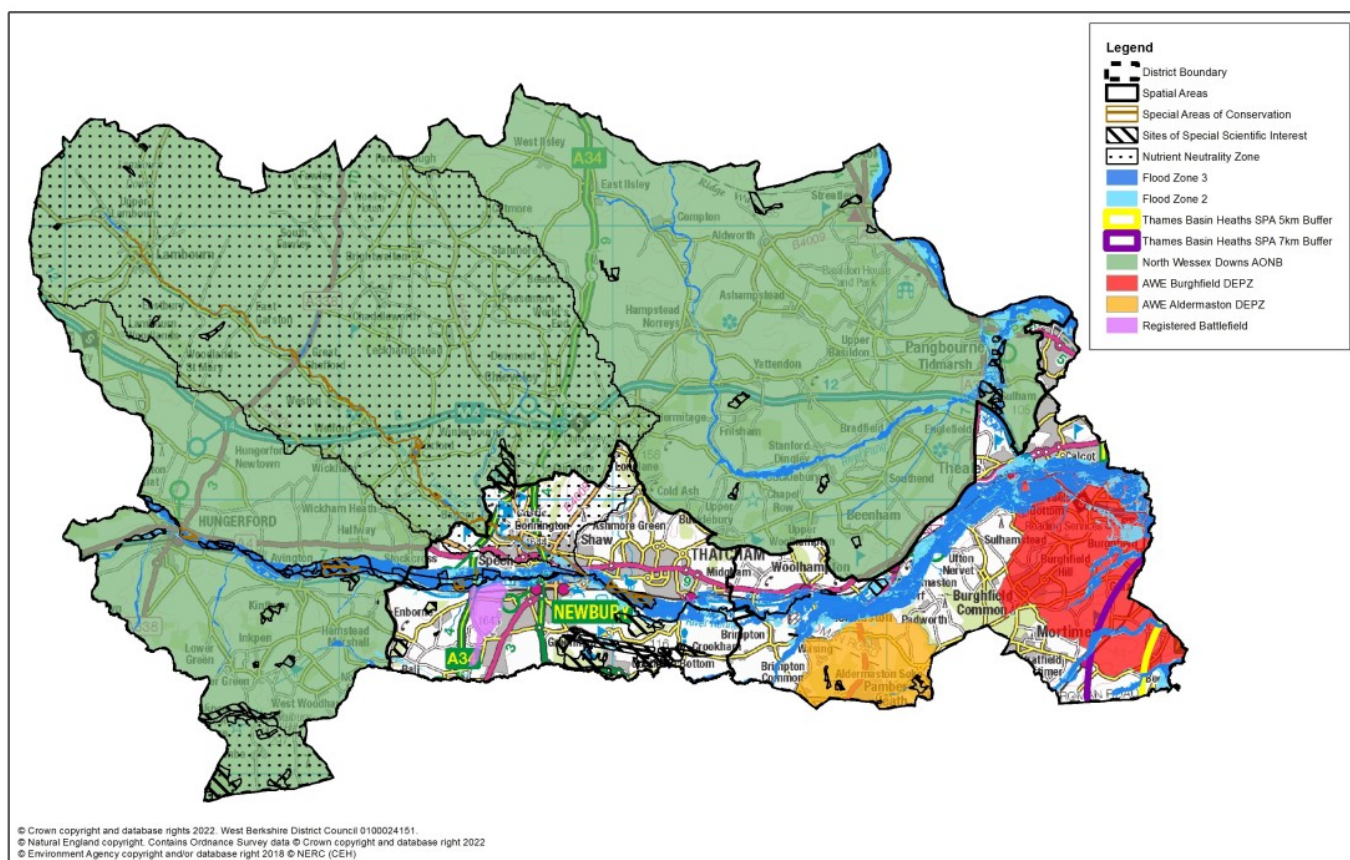
4.5 The scale of growth that is required during the plan period is informed by:

- The local housing need (LHN) conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance. The LHN for West Berkshire is 515 dwellings per annum, using a 2023 base date.
- The [Employment Land Review](#) which sets out the scale of provision that is needed for future business and industrial floorspace in West Berkshire.
- The [Retail and Commercial Leisure Assessment](#) which sets out the need for comparison and convenience retail floorspace in the District
- The [Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment](#) (HELAA) which identifies potential land for development and assesses its suitability, availability and achievability.

#### Constraints

4.6 West Berkshire contains a number of physical and environmental constraints which influence the location of development. At a strategic level these include the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, which covers 74% of the District, substantial areas liable to flood, the presence of Atomic Weapons Establishments (AWE) at Aldermaston and Burghfield, a Registered Battlefield to the west of Newbury, various international and national nature conservation designations and the River Lambourn Nutrient Neutrality Zone (NNZ) as identified in Figure 1 below. In addition, there are other designations including Conservation Areas and Registered Parks and Gardens which due to scale are not included in Figure 1, but which are included on the Policies Map.

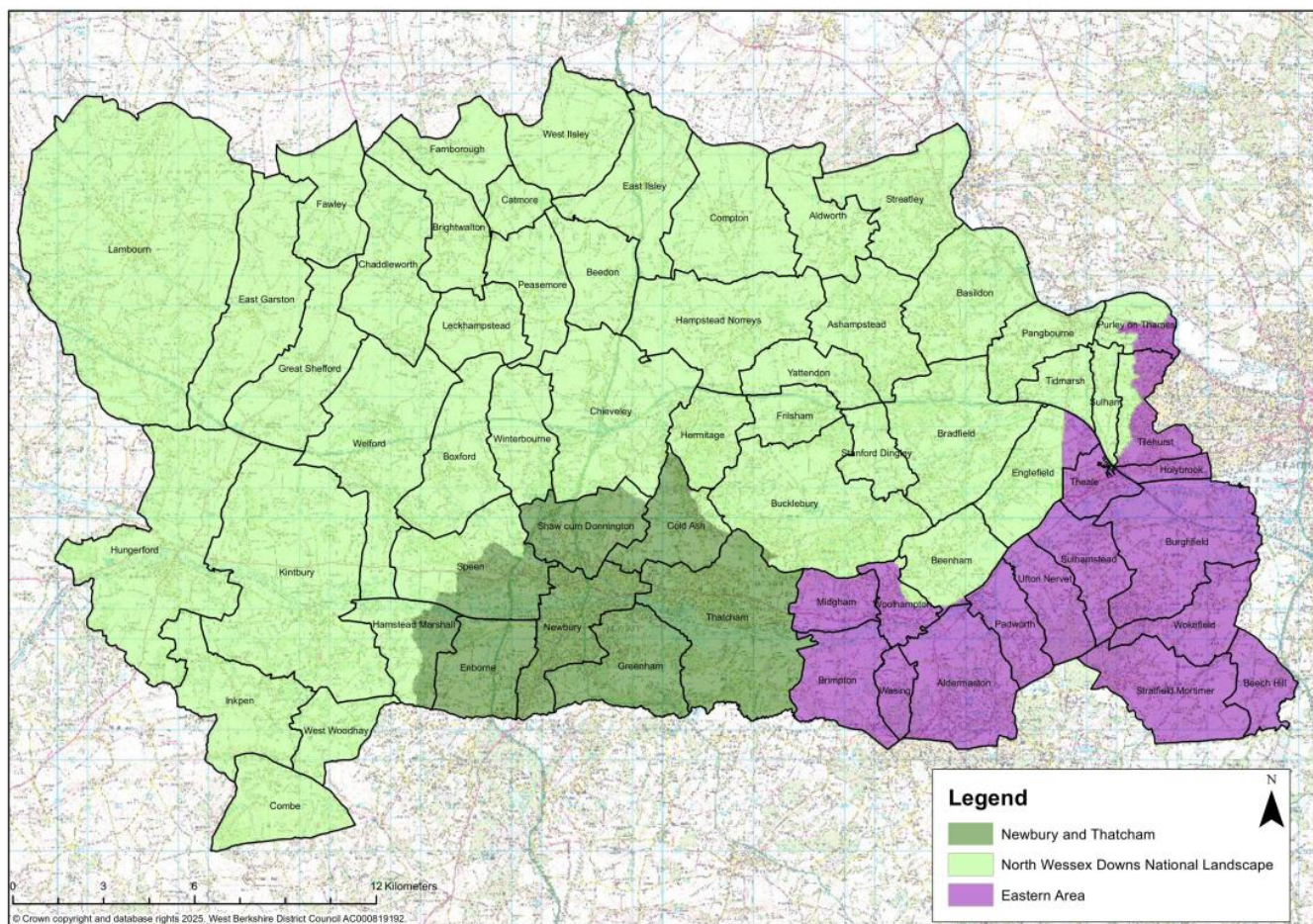


**Figure 1 West Berkshire Constraints**

## The Spatial Areas

**4.7** West Berkshire is a diverse area and previous consultation<sup>(5)</sup> reaffirmed that the approach of dividing the District into geographical areas remains an appropriate mechanism to deliver the spatial strategy. The four spatial areas of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2012) have been reduced to three in the LPR, by combining the Eastern Area and the East Kennet Valley (as shown in figure 2). Though there are significant differences in character within the Eastern Area and East Kennet Valley (as set out in the Core Strategy), this is true of all the spatial areas. Whilst the functional relationships within this area of the District are also complex, no area can be seen in isolation; there is interaction within and between all the spatial areas. The rural service centre of Theale sits on the edge of the Eastern Area (as set out in the Core Strategy) but it could easily be argued that it has more in common with the East Kennet Valley. In strategic planning terms the Eastern Area (as set out in the Core Strategy) is small and difficult to plan for in isolation. Combining with the East Kennet Valley area in the LPR gives more flexibility in spatial planning terms for future development.

## Figure 2 The Spatial Areas



## Newbury and Thatcham Area

**4.8** The spatial area comprises the parishes of Newbury, Thatcham, Greenham and Enborne, together with those parts of Speen, Shaw cum Donnington and Cold Ash which lie outside the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. It includes the main urban areas of Newbury and Thatcham, together with their significant rural hinterland which includes a number of smaller villages, such as the service village of Cold Ash which sits within open countryside on the edge of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape to the north and west. The character of these rural areas visibly contrasts with the more urban areas of Newbury and Thatcham.

**4.9** Whilst Newbury and Thatcham are separate and distinct towns with their own character, they are geographically close and functionally related. Both towns have significant employment provision and Newbury provides many of the major services, including retail and leisure facilities. There is significant movement between the two towns and transport linkages, by rail and road are vital.

**4.10** The area is well located in terms of access to rail and to the strategic road network. There are train stations at Newbury, Newbury Racecourse and Thatcham enabling rail access to Reading and London and to the West Country.

**4.11** The Newbury and Thatcham urban area is the main focus for development in the current Local Plan and will remain the focus in the LPR. Though there are constraints of flood zone and designated heritage assets, including the registered battlefield of the First Battle of Newbury (1643) immediately to the west of Newbury, there are also opportunities for brownfield development, particularly in Newbury, and for allocation of additional greenfield sites. Further growth for Newbury and Thatcham has been set in the context of a long-term Vision developed for both towns, ensuring growth is sustainable in the longer term.



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### The Eastern Area

**4.12** The new Eastern Area is a diverse area that includes the land to the west of Reading which abuts the North Wessex Downs National Landscape and the parishes in the more rural south east of the District, to the east of Thatcham, which lie outside the National Landscape. The urban areas of Tilehurst, Purley on Thames and Calcot have a close functional relationship with Reading and will continue to benefit from the facilities and services it provides.

The spatial area includes the rural service centres of Theale to the south of the M4, and Burghfield Common and Mortimer, which have a more rural setting. The Kennet & Avon Canal and River Kennet which run from west to east through the whole of the District, cross the southern part of this area, with a number of villages along the canal/river route such as Woolhampton and Aldermaston Wharf.

**4.13** There is significant employment provision within this area. The Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) has two major sites in this area, at Aldermaston and Burghfield, is of national significance, and is an important provider of local jobs. There is a business park at Arlington near Theale and a number of other employment areas comprising small industrial estates. The main transport links include the mainline railways linking the West Country with Reading and London, and Reading with Basingstoke and the south coast. There are stations at Theale, Midgham, Aldermaston and Stratfield Mortimer.

**4.14** The Eastern Area has significant constraints. The North Wessex Downs National Landscape abuts the western edge of the built up area of Tilehurst and Calcot and there are extensive areas of floodplain to the south of Holybrook. The two AWE establishments have significant implications for the future level of development in this area. The Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) required under legislation for Aldermaston and Burghfield is reviewed every three years and is a major factor in the assessment of sites in this location. There are also limited opportunities for redevelopment of brownfield land within existing settlement boundaries.

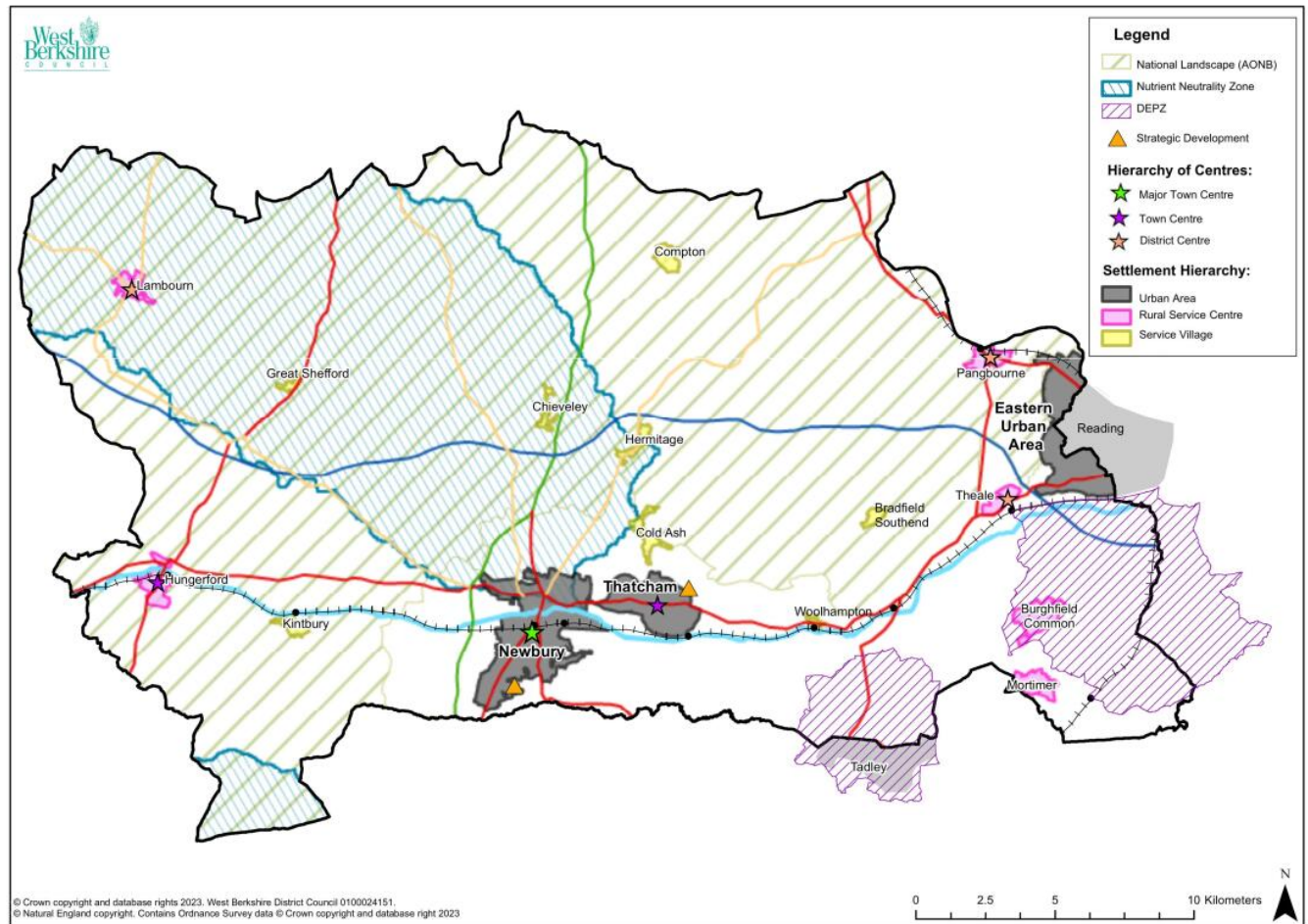
### The North Wessex Downs National Landscape

**4.15** The North Wessex Downs National Landscape covers 74% of West Berkshire and is an area where the landscape is managed to conserve and enhance its natural beauty in accordance with its national designation. It includes the rural service centres of Hungerford, Lambourn and Pangbourne, together with the service villages of Bradfield Southend, Chieveley, Compton, Great Shefford, Hermitage and Kintbury.

**4.16** The area makes a significant contribution to the uniqueness of West Berkshire with its primarily agricultural landscape with villages and a small town which have a strong sense of identity. Hungerford is the largest town, a historic market town with a role as a tourist destination, based on its retail offer, cultural events and as a base to explore the surrounding countryside. Lambourn is a key service centre for the surrounding rural area and serves as the heart of one of the most important areas for horseracing in the country. Pangbourne is a thriving village community with a good range of retail and leisure facilities and good access by rail to Reading, Oxford and beyond.

**4.17** The Core Strategy planned for the delivery of up to 2,000 homes over the period 2006 – 2026 in this area. The Inspector examining the Core Strategy required this to be expressed as a maximum amount in view of the national landscape designation. There are existing allocations in the National Landscape at the rural service centres and service villages that are still to be delivered and which will largely meet housing need in this rural area. Hungerford, Lambourn, Compton and Hermitage have designated neighbourhood areas for the preparation of neighbourhood plans and the rural service centre of Pangbourne, has limited development opportunities. Additional development for the period beyond 2026 will therefore be limited and will come in part through allocations within NDPs. The strategy for the National Landscape is set out in policy SP2.

Figure 3 Key Diagram



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## The Spatial Strategy

### Policy SP1

#### Spatial Strategy

The overarching spatial strategy for West Berkshire will deliver the spatial vision and strategic objectives for the District over the plan period and inform the preparation of neighbourhood plans (NDPs). The strategy:

- a. Directs development to areas of lower environmental value;
- b. Optimises the use of previously developed land; and
- c. Optimises the density of development to make the best use of land whilst conserving and enhancing the distinctive character and identity of the built, historic and natural environment.

The development approach will be based on three spatial areas:

- Newbury and Thatcham
- Eastern Area
- North Wessex Downs National Landscape

The focus of development in each spatial area will be required to follow the District-wide settlement hierarchy set out in policy SP3 which takes account of the function and sustainability of settlements and promotes sustainable communities.

Development and redevelopment within the settlement boundaries of those settlements identified in Appendix 2 and outlined on the Policies Map will be supported. Outside of settlement boundaries, land will be treated as open countryside where development will be more restricted, as set out in policies DM1 and DM35.

In each spatial area, opportunities should be taken to make the best use of previously developed land with higher densities of development in locations such as town centres, where the extent and capacity of supporting infrastructure, services and facilities is the greatest.

In making optimum use of land and achieving high quality design density on individual sites will vary according to their location and context, size of developable area and site specific issues such as shape and access:

- Within Newbury, Thatcham, Tilehurst, Purley on Thames, and Calcot, developments are expected to secure a net density of at least 35 dwellings per hectare with densities of at least 70 dwellings per hectare in town centres and for flatted developments along main transport routes and close to transport nodes.
- Within other defined settlements developments are expected to secure a net density of at least 30 dwellings per hectare with higher densities achievable in the centres of Hungerford, Pangbourne and Theale.
- Developments on the edge of defined settlements are generally expected to secure a net density of 30 dwellings per hectare outside of the National Landscape, and 20 dwellings per hectare within the National Landscape.
- Lower density developments will be appropriate in certain areas of the District that are particularly sensitive to the impact of intensification and redevelopment. This may be because of the prevailing character of the area, the sensitive nature of the surrounding countryside or built form, and/or the relative remoteness from public transport.

The strategy will deliver a range of site sizes for residential development. There are already significant existing commitments throughout the District. Additional development will come forward on both large strategic sites and smaller non-strategic sites allocated in the LPR and in some neighbourhood plans, together with infill development, including that on windfall sites within settlement boundaries. Allocations will be related to the role and function of settlements and the development opportunities identified through the HELAA.

Town centres will be expected to continue to play a vital role for communities and will need to adapt to meet the changing needs of communities. Main town centre uses will be located in accordance with policy SP18. Within town centres, schemes will be of an appropriate scale and character to respond to the role and function of the centre and to support sustainable communities.



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Employment development to meet the existing and future economic demands of businesses will be directed to sites allocated for employment land, to sites within settlement boundaries, to Designated Employment Areas (DEA) and to existing suitably located employment sites, to help promote sustainable patterns of development, prioritise the use of previously developed land and support the retention of these areas for employment uses. In accordance with policy SP17 and policy SP18, proposals for office development will be directed to town and district centres and DEAs.

Proposals to strengthen and diversify the rural economy will be encouraged, particularly where they are located in or adjacent to Rural Service Centres and Service Villages identified in the settlement hierarchy. Existing small and medium sized enterprises within the countryside will be supported in order to provide local job opportunities and maintain the vitality of smaller rural settlements and their communities.

Demand for travel will be managed, and accessibility to sustainable transport opportunities increased through improving choice in transport modes. Existing community infrastructure will be protected and, where appropriate, enhanced. Infrastructure requirements will be set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).

The District's historic environment and environmental assets will continue to be protected and enhanced and used positively in development to establish a distinctive sense of place that nurtures human health and wellbeing.

### **Newbury and Thatcham**

Newbury will retain its traditional market town heritage and continue to fulfil its key role as the administrative centre and major town centre for the District. Opportunities will continue to be taken to regenerate and enhance the townscape of the town centre and its periphery.

Newbury will be a focus for housing development. An urban extension on greenfield land to the south of Newbury, at Sandeford Park will provide a new residential neighbourhood with supporting facilities and green infrastructure in accordance with policy SP13. Smaller scale developments will include redevelopment of previously developed land.

Thatcham will be a focus for regeneration, for new housing and for improved provision of services and facilities. A new urban extension to the north east of the town will provide a new residential neighbourhood with supporting facilities and green infrastructure in accordance with policy SP14. Opportunities will be taken to maintain and enhance the identity of Thatcham separate to that of Newbury and its surrounding rural settlements in accordance with policy DM2.

Newbury and Thatcham will remain the focus for business development, with Newbury the main focus for office development. DEAs in this spatial area will play a vital role in meeting the existing and future economic needs of the District.

The villages in the surrounding area will retain their existing role and separate identity, with settlement boundaries and policies SP8, DM1 and DM2 ensuring that physical separation is maintained.

### **Eastern Area**

The Eastern Urban Area will continue to be a focus for housing development through existing commitments, allocated sites and regeneration and change in the existing built up area.

The individual identities of the separate settlements within this area will be maintained and the high quality landscape and environmental assets in this part of West Berkshire will be conserved and enhanced.

Theale will be a focus for additional housing through existing commitments and allocated sites.

The area will continue to be important for business development with the retention of DEAs.

### **North Wessex Downs National Landscape**

The North Wessex Downs National Landscape will have appropriate and sustainable growth that conserves and enhances its special landscape qualities as set out in policy SP2.

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**Supporting text**

**4.18** The principles which underlie the spatial distribution stem from the overriding objective of enabling sustainable development, development that will meet the social and economic needs of the District while conserving and enhancing the environmental assets of the District and meet the objective to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change and minimise demand for energy and other resources.

**4.19** The LPR aims to build on the principles of the Core Strategy with regard to the spatial distribution of development. The focus will be on existing settlements, using the settlement hierarchy, set out in policy SP3. This steers development to the most sustainable areas, with an appropriate balance between urban and rural development, in order to meet local needs and maintain vibrant and balanced communities with their own sense of identity, while conserving and enhancing the environmental assets of the District. The existing urban areas are regarded as the most suitable locations for future development by virtue of their existing access to services and facilities, thereby providing the opportunity to reduce out-commuting and the need to travel. Development in Newbury and the smaller towns of the District is seen as contributing not only to their regeneration, through provision of additional services and facilities, but also to the rural areas they serve.

**4.20** The strategy seeks to make effective use of brownfield land. Opportunities for infill development and for re-use of brownfield land are greatest in those settlements at the upper levels of the hierarchy, particularly in Newbury. Further greenfield allocations are, however, needed, and the plan allocates a range of sites of varying sizes. The allocation of sites takes account of the evidence from the HELAA, SA and the settlement hierarchy, with higher levels of development at the higher levels of the hierarchy.

**4.21** The approach in the different spatial areas reflects the different characteristics of the different parts of West Berkshire. Policies SP12, SP13, SP14 and RSA1-29 set out the proposed allocations for residential and mixed use development in the separate spatial areas and the housing requirements for neighbourhood plans.

**4.22** The NPPF indicates that the efficient use of land is a priority<sup>(6)</sup> and that planning policies should support development that makes efficient use of land. West Berkshire is a diverse area and densities achieved will reflect this diversity. Higher densities will be sought in town centre locations, having regard to the sustainability of the location and the character and amenity of the surroundings. The policy makes clear that site specific constraints and local character may justify variations from the densities set out in the policy.

**4.23** The [West Berkshire Density Pattern Book](#) <sup>(7)</sup> provides more information on the densities that are typical in the different part of the District and will be used by the Council as a starting point to guide development.

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6 NPPF Paragraphs 119 and 120

7 West Berkshire Density Pattern Book: David Lock Associates, September 2019



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## North Wessex Downs National Landscape

### Policy SP2

#### North Wessex Downs National Landscape

The North Wessex Downs National Landscape will have appropriate and sustainable growth that conserves and enhances its special landscape qualities. Development will be required to respond positively to the local context, conserving and enhancing local distinctiveness, sense of place and setting of the National Landscape. The strong sense of remoteness, tranquillity and dark night skies, particularly on the open downland, should be preserved. The conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape will be the primary consideration in the assessment of all development proposals.

Development in the setting of the National Landscape will be required to have regard to the interrelationship with the National Landscape and its landscape character and special qualities. Proposals will be required to be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise any adverse impacts on the National Landscape.

Development in the North Wessex Downs will be required to support its local communities and rural economy in a manner commensurate with the statutory status of the National Landscape as a nationally valued landscape. Planning permission will be refused for major development in the National Landscape except in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated to be in the public interest.

In determining what constitutes major development, the Council will consider whether the development, by reason of its scale, character or nature, has the potential to have a significant adverse impact on the landscape and scenic beauty of the National Landscape. This will include the consideration of the individual characteristics of a proposal and its context and the impact of cumulative development.

If an application is deemed to be major development then further consideration will take account of:

- a. The need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;
- b. The cost of, and scope for, developing elsewhere outside the National Landscape, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and
- c. Any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

If it is considered that exceptional circumstances exist and development would be in the public interest, all opportunities to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the National Landscape will be sought.

### Supporting text

**4.24** The North Wessex Downs is a nationally important landscape, designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and protected by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act) to conserve and enhance its natural beauty. On 22 November 2023 AONBs across England and Wales became known as National Landscapes, but the formal designation, and the legal protections, remain the same. The primary purpose of AONB designation, 'to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area', is set out in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (as amended). The North Wessex Downs National Landscape covers 74% of West Berkshire and its natural beauty is a function of the relationship between people and place over time. It encompasses everything that makes the area distinctive: the area's geology and landform; its climate, soils and rivers; its wildlife and ecology; its rich history of human settlement and land use over millennia; its archaeology and buildings and cultural associations; and the people who have occupied the area in the past and those who currently live and work there. It is inevitable and appropriate that this unique landscape will continue to change and develop but it is important that this is done in a way that conserves and enhances its special qualities. Under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (as amended), the Council has a duty to seek to further the primary purpose of designation and so this policy makes clear that the North Wessex Downs will have appropriate sustainable growth throughout the plan period to support its local communities and rural economy in a manner commensurate with its statutory status.

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**4.25** The setting of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape and the protected landscape of the National Landscape itself add value to each other as the landscape and landforms link visually and functionally. The policy recognises this important interrelationship and seeks to ensure that development in its setting does not cause significant harm to the National Landscape by being poorly located or designed. This is especially the case where long views from or to the National Landscape are identified as important, or where the landscape character of land within and adjoining the National Landscape is complementary.

**4.26** The [North Wessex Downs AONB Landscape Character Assessment \(2002\)](#) draws out the special qualities of the landscape and identifies the main issues that will need to be addressed to conserve its special character and outstanding qualities. It is complemented by the [West Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment \(2019\)](#) which identifies in more detail the sensitivities and qualities of the features that are particularly valued for their contribution to landscape character (i.e. if any one attribute ceased to exist, it would change the character to the detriment of the landscape).

**4.27** The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) requires local authorities to produce management plans for AONBs within their areas. The review, production and publication of the [Management Plan for the North Wessex Downs](#), (currently covering the period 2019-2024) together with the coordination of its delivery, has been delegated by the Council to the North Wessex Downs National Landscape Partnership (Council of Partners<sup>(8)</sup>). It supports and complements the LPR, setting out a spatial policy framework that reflects national and local issues to ensure the National Landscape's natural heritage, landscape and built character are conserved, the local economy is supported and use of the National Landscape for recreation is encouraged. It sets out the approach that the Council of Partners will take on particular issues and will be used, where relevant, as a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications in West Berkshire.

**4.28** The policy also sets out what constitutes major development and, if an application is deemed to constitute major development, how that application will be considered. Firstly, an assessment will be made to determine whether development constitutes major development. The NPPF is clear that this is a matter for the decision maker. For the purposes of this policy, all of the following principles will be applied when determining whether an application constitutes major development:

- i. The starting point will be the definition of major development in the *Town and County Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015*, or to proposals that raise issues of national significance;
- ii. For applications below the *Town and County Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015* threshold, the Council will consider development proposals on a case by case basis;
- iii. For all applications a judgement will then be made in light of all of the circumstances of the application and the context of the application site;
- iv. The final determination as to whether the development is major development will consider whether it has the potential to have a significant adverse impact alone or in combination with other development. It will not include an in-depth consideration of whether the development will in fact have such an impact;
- v. The application of other criteria may be relevant to the considerations, but will not determine the matter or raise a presumption either way.

**4.29** If the proposal is considered to be major development, then the following factors, as set out in the policy, will be taken into account:

- vi. The need for development in the location proposed. Where residential development is proposed, taking account of any local need identified by the Council or Neighbourhood Plan and bearing in mind that housing in the National Landscape should focus on the needs of its local communities;
- vii. Detrimental effects on businesses and employment in the local economy, in particular any that is specific to the site or location as opposed to general benefits to a sector such as on the construction industry;
- viii. The cost of, and scope for, meeting the need in some other way, on the assumption that it is a local need which should ideally not be met outside the National Landscape;
- ix. Detrimental effects on the environment, including biodiversity and cultural heritage, and the extent to which the effects can be moderated;

<sup>8</sup> This Partnership was formed in July 2001 to oversee the future of the AONB. It includes not only the nine constituent local authorities of the North Wessex Downs but also representatives of the local communities, the farming and rural business community, those representing nature conservation, heritage and landscape, and recreation interests, including members of government and voluntary agencies. The Partnership is underpinned by a small National Landscape delivery team.

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- x. Detrimental effects on the landscape and the extent to which the effects can be moderated;
- xi. Detrimental effects on recreational opportunities and the extent to which the effects can be moderated; and
- xii. Whether there is a reasonable expectation that exceptional circumstances exist and that it could be demonstrated that development would be in the public interest.

**4.30** As part of the development of the LPR the Council has demonstrated the exceptional circumstances which justify allocating the sites identified in the LPR within the National Landscape. Therefore, proposals that meet the requirements of the relevant site allocation policy, along with other relevant policies, will be deemed to be in accordance with the development plan and consistent with national policy.

**4.31** The exceptional circumstances necessary to justify the allocation of any sites for major development within NDPs will be expected to be demonstrated through individual neighbourhood plans. Proposals that meet the requirements of the relevant site allocation policy in the neighbourhood plan, along with other relevant policies in the development plan, will be deemed to be in accordance with the development plan and consistent with national policy.

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## Settlement Hierarchy

### Policy SP3

#### Settlement Hierarchy

Development in West Berkshire will be required to comply with the spatial strategy set out in policy SP1. The focus of development will follow the District-wide settlement hierarchy which takes account of the function and sustainability of settlements across the District and promotes sustainable communities. The scale of development proposals will be expected to be relative to the existing or proposed level of facilities and services in the settlement, together with their accessibility.

**Urban Areas:** Newbury, Thatcham, Eastern Urban Area (Tilehurst, Calcot, Purley on Thames)

The urban areas will be the prime focus for housing and economic development, offering development potential through:

- a. Regeneration and change in the existing built up area including the redevelopment of suitable previously developed sites for both housing and employment purposes;
- b. Strategic and non-strategic sites allocated for housing and economic development through other policies in the LPR and/or neighbourhood plans;
- c. The retention of the individual identity of adjacent settlements; and
- d. The necessary supporting infrastructure.

**Rural Service Centres:** Burghfield Common, Hungerford, Lambourn, Mortimer, Pangbourne, Theale

These larger rural settlements offer development potential appropriate to the character and function of the settlement through:

- e. Infill or changes of use within the settlement boundary;
- f. Non-strategic sites allocated for housing and economic development through other policies in the LPR and/or neighbourhood plans; and
- g. Rural exceptions affordable housing schemes

**Service Villages:** Bradfield Southend, Chieveley, Cold Ash, Compton, Great Shefford, Hermitage, Kintbury, Woolhampton

These smaller rural settlements may offer some limited and small-scale development potential, appropriate to the character and function of the village, in order to meet local needs through:

- h. Infill or changes of use within the settlement boundary;
- i. Non-strategic sites allocated for housing and economic development through other policies in the LPR and/or neighbourhood plans; and
- j. Rural exceptions affordable housing schemes.

Development in smaller settlements with settlement boundaries, and which are not included in the settlement hierarchy, will be delivered in accordance with policy SP1. Development outside of these settlements, in other rural hamlets and in isolated groups of development will be restricted to that which is appropriate in a rural area as set out in policy DM1.

Neighbourhood plans can allocate non-strategic sites for development. These must be located either within and/or adjoining the settlement boundaries of Urban Areas, Rural Service Centres and Service Villages. Strategic site allocations cannot be made within neighbourhood plans.

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## Supporting Text

**4.32** The policy has been informed by a re-assessment of the existing settlement hierarchy used for the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006 – 2026) Development Plan Document. The revised and updated [settlement hierarchy](#) ensures that new development planned throughout the Plan period continues to be directed to the more sustainable settlements, is appropriate for the settlement in question and is adequately supported by infrastructure and services.

**4.33** The hierarchy categorises the District's settlements according to their different roles, and groups them accordingly. At the top of the hierarchy are the larger towns and areas that fulfil the most functions and which are the most sustainable. The smaller settlements with fewer functions are towards the bottom of the hierarchy.

**Table 1 District Settlement Hierarchy**

Type	Role and function	Settlements
Urban Areas	The main urban areas with a wide range of services and opportunities for employment, community and education. Serving a large catchment area with good levels of accessibility and frequent public transport provided to a large number of destinations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newbury</li> <li>• Thatcham</li> <li>• Eastern Urban Area (Tilehurst, Calcot, Purley on Thames)</li> </ul>
Rural Service Centres	Settlements with a good range of key services and opportunities for employment, community and education. They serve a wide catchment area and contain reasonable accessibility and regular public transport provided to a number of destinations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burghfield Common</li> <li>• Hungerford</li> <li>• Lambourn</li> <li>• Mortimer</li> <li>• Pangbourne</li> <li>• Theale</li> </ul>
Service Villages	Smaller settlements with a more limited, yet valued, range of key services and opportunities for community and education with some localised employment. They serve a small local catchment, contain a lower level of accessibility and provide often limited public transport in terms of destination choice and ease of commuting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bradfield Southend</li> <li>• Chieveley</li> <li>• Cold Ash</li> <li>• Compton</li> <li>• Great Shefford</li> <li>• Hermitage</li> <li>• Kintbury</li> <li>• Woolhampton</li> </ul>

**4.34** Development over the plan period will build upon the existing settlement pattern and direct most development to those urban areas which have the infrastructure and facilities to support sustainable growth. The main focus for growth will therefore be Newbury, Thatcham and the east of the District. Focusing further growth in these areas has the potential to make the best use of previously developed land and house residents close to jobs, shops, leisure and cultural facilities and public transport.

**4.35** Outside of these areas, the six rural service centres across the District provide a focal point for the surrounding villages and rural areas in terms of the provision of services and facilities. Although they do not have as wide a range of services as the urban areas, they are still sustainable locations.

**4.36** There are a number of other villages across the District which have been identified as service villages. Most are in the National Landscape. These offer a more limited range of services but act as focal points for their surrounding rural areas.

**4.37** The characteristics of the individual rural service centres and service villages vary, reflective of the diverse nature of West Berkshire. They are not intended to have the same amount of growth as each other; instead, the level of growth will depend on the role and function that they perform for the surrounding spatial area, and will be related to their location, size, range of facilities and services as well as the availability of suitable development opportunities. Their sustainability will be considered alongside other factors, particularly environmental constraints such as the National Landscape or the DEPZ around the AWE sites of Aldermaston and Burghfield. Due to these environmental constraints the development potential within these areas could be more limited and specific regard should be given to policies SP2 North Wessex Downs National Landscape and SP4 Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) Aldermaston and Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) Burghfield.

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**4.38** Any non-strategic residential allocations within neighbourhood plans that are situated within defined settlement boundaries will not count towards meeting the housing requirement figure in policy SP12. This is because there is a presumption in favour of development within defined settlement boundaries and to do so would be inconsistent with the assumptions made in the LPR about the District's overall housing land supply.

**4.39** Settlements outside of the settlement hierarchy will deliver additional development but this will be limited to infill or change of use within the settlement where a settlement boundary has been defined, and to rural exception schemes for affordable housing to meet local needs. Some limited development is important for the long-term sustainability of rural communities. Outside these settlements, in the countryside, a more restrictive approach to development will be taken as set out in other policies in the LPR .



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## AWE Aldermaston and Burghfield

## Policy SP4

**Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) Aldermaston and Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) Burghfield**

Within the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) land use planning consultation zones surrounding AWE Aldermaston and AWE Burghfield development will be managed in the interests of public safety, and to ensure that any proposed developments do not adversely affect the defence related operation or capability of the AWE sites.

Development proposals within the land use planning consultation zones that pose an unacceptable risk to the operation of AWE off-Site Emergency Plan (OSEP) and/or adversely affect the defence related operation or capability of the AWE sites will be refused planning permission.

In determining applications, the ONR and AWE/MOD will be consulted on development proposals in the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) <sup>(9)</sup>, Outer Consultation Zone (OCZ) <sup>(10)</sup> and 12km consultation zone which meets the ONR consultation criteria as detailed on the [ONR website](#) <sup>(11)</sup>. The ONR and AWE/MOD will be consulted on any proposal that is likely to lead to any increase in the residential or non-residential population (including visitors and workers) of the DEPZ. Development within the DEPZ is likely to be refused planning permission where the ONR, as regulator of the nuclear licenced sites, advise against the proposed development.

## Supporting Text

**4.40** There are two nuclear licensed sites located in West Berkshire, the Atomic Weapons Establishment in Aldermaston (AWE A) and in Burghfield (AWE B). These are operated by AWE plc on behalf of the Ministry of Defence and regulated by the Office of Nuclear Regulation (ONR) (as well as other regulators).

**4.41** Both AWE sites are critical to sustaining the UK government's nuclear deterrent and support national defence and security.

**4.42** There are hazards associated with the authorised use of these sites including conventional chemicals, explosives and radiation sources. As a result of the quantities and types of material involved, the sites are also regulated under the following key legislation:

- a. The Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations 2019 (REPPIR)<sup>(12)</sup>. Both sites fall within the scope of REPPIR legislation. The regulator for these sites is the ONR;
- b. Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations 2015 (COMAH)<sup>(13)</sup>. Under these regulations AWE A is a Lower Tier COMAH site. The joint regulators for this site are the ONR and the Environment Agency (EA). AWE B does not fall under the COMAH regulations at the present time (2022);
- c. Explosive Regulations 2014<sup>(14)</sup>. Both AWE A and AWE B sites have explosives on site and AWE plc holds an explosives licence for both sites. The regulator is the ONR.
- d. Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 (EPR). Both sites generate and dispose of radioactive wastes. The regulator is the EA.

**4.43** The NPPF outlines that local planning authorities should consult the appropriate bodies when considering applications for the siting of, or changes to, major hazard sites, installations or pipelines, or for development around them.

9 Current and future Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) as defined by REPPIR and as detailed on the Council's website. The extent of the DEPZs (at January 2023) shown in Appendix 3 and the Policies Map could change before the Local Plan is updated or superseded. Policy SP4 will be applied to the latest version of the DEPZ.

10 Outer Consultation Zone (OCZ) and 12km zones as defined by ONR along with relevant distances and centre points. The OCZ and 12km zones are depicted in Appendix 3 and on the Policies Map.

11 <https://www.onr.org.uk/our-work/what-we-regulate/other-regulations/legislations/land-use-planning/>

12 Radiation - Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations 2019 (REPPIR)

13 [COMAH Guidance](#)

14 [Explosives Regulations 2014 -L150](#)



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**4.44** Furthermore, the NPPF requires planning policy to promote public safety and take into account wider security and defence requirements. It requires that operational defence sites are not affected adversely by the impact of other development proposed in the area, and that existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established.

**4.45** The NPPF defines major hazard sites, installations and pipelines as 'Sites and infrastructure, including licensed explosive sites and nuclear installations, around which Health and Safety Executive (HSE) (and Office for Nuclear Regulation) consultation distances to mitigate the consequences to public safety of major accidents may apply.'

**4.46** Under the REPIR 19 legislation a Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) must be determined by the local authority where the relevant nuclear site is situated. For the AWE sites this is West Berkshire District Council. This process was undertaken in 2019/20 and reviewed in 2022/23. Under legislation formal reviews of the DEPZ are required to be undertaken at least every three years or as a result of a material change in work with ionising radiation. As such, the extent of the DEPZs shown in Appendix 3 and on the Policies Map could change before the Local Plan is updated or superseded. Policy SP4 will be applied to the latest version of the DEPZ.

**4.47** The DEPZ for the AWE sites is the geographic area that in respect of which the AWE Off-Site Emergency Plan (OSEP) covers. The AWE OSEP must set out protective actions which would be implemented without delay to mitigate the likely consequences of a radiation emergency, and the Council, along with the other agencies involved in the AWE OSEP, must be able to respond effectively. The regulators therefore require assurances that the AWE OSEP, owned by the Council, is adequate and can be implemented effectively in order to protect the public.

**4.48** The OCZ and 12km land use planning consultation zones for the AWE sites are determined by the ONR and extends from a geographical centre point on each AWE sites. During the plan period there may be changes to the REPIR legislation and/or in the inputs to the ONR's process which may result in consequential changes to the land use planning consultation zones or consultation criteria, which in turn could result in changes to ONR's advice on particular proposals. These will be kept under review and policy SP4 will be applied to the latest version of the ONR Guidance/Zones.

**4.49** In respect of both AWE sites, the ONR and AWE/MOD will be consulted on any planning applications within the DEPZ, the OCZ and the 12km zone which meet the consultation criteria as set out on the ONR website<sup>(15)</sup>. Developments within these zones may pose an unacceptable risk to the viability and operability of the AWE OSEP and/or adversely affect the defence related operation or capability of the nuclear licensed sites, and advice will be provided to the Local Planning Authority accordingly.

**4.50** The ONR's decision making process is detailed on its website.<sup>(16)</sup> The ONR will normally advise against a particular development should they not receive adequate assurance that the development can be accommodated within the AWE OSEP. As a result, the ONR will consider feedback provided by West Berkshire District Council Emergency Planning Service, as the AWE OSEP owner under REPIR. Should it be considered that there would be an unacceptable risk to the AWE OSEP the policy makes clear that planning permission will be refused.

**4.51** Policy SP4 applies to all development proposals in the land use planning consultation zones, irrespective of whether they comply with other policies including SP1, SP3 and SP17. Applicants considering development proposals within the land use planning consultation zones are strongly encouraged to enter into discussions with the Council at an early stage to establish if there are likely to be any implications on the OSEP as a result of the proposals.

**4.52** The land use planning consultation zones for the AWE sites cross over into the following neighbouring councils: Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, Reading Borough Council and Wokingham Borough Council. The Council will monitor committed and future development proposals in partnership with neighbouring councils, those agencies with duties under REPIR, and the ONR to understand the impact on the OSEP and the operation of the AWE.

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.onr.org.uk/our-work/what-we-regulate/other-regulationslegislations/land-use-planning/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.onr.org.uk/land-use-planning.htm>

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## 5 Our environment and surroundings

### Responding to climate change

#### Policy SP5

##### Responding to Climate Change

The principles of climate change mitigation and adaptation will be required to be embedded into new development, improving the resilience of land, buildings and existing and future communities to the opportunities and impacts arising from climate change. All development should contribute to West Berkshire becoming and staying carbon neutral by 2030. Depending on the nature and scale of proposals, development will be expected to satisfy the following criteria:

- a. To withstand predictable effects from climate change for its expected lifetime;
- b. To take advantage of the latest low and zero carbon technologies and innovations, including digital;
- c. To achieve net zero operational carbon development by applying the energy hierarchy, achieving the highest viable levels of energy efficiency, generating and supplying renewable, low and zero carbon energy, and as a last resort carbon offsetting in accordance with policy DM4;
- d. To achieve the highest viable levels of energy efficiency;
- e. To generate and supply renewable, low and zero carbon energy for its own use and/or local distribution networks in accordance with policy DM4;
- f. To provide for sustainable forms of vehicular and personal transport to and from the site and reduce car use in accordance with policies SP19, DM44 and DM45;
- g. To enable recycling and waste reduction both during construction and occupation;
- h. To manage and conserve adequate water resources and avoid harming water quality and improve it where possible in accordance with policies DM7 and DM6;
- i. To demonstrate that flood risk from all sources can be avoided or managed in accordance with policy SP6;
- j. To use sustainable urban drainage systems in accordance with policy SP6;
- k. To provide for green/blue infrastructure and open spaces within the layout for shading and cooling, to detain surface water run-off and absorb carbon dioxide emissions in accordance with policy SP10;
- l. To improve wildlife habitat and species conservation and connectivity to allow for movement in response to climate change in accordance with policy SP11; and
- m. To maintain the integrity of the historic environment and to respect the character and improve the environmental performance of heritage assets without compromising their significance in accordance with policy SP9. This necessitates taking a whole building approach informed by heritage expertise.

Proposals should be accompanied by a Sustainability Statement which demonstrates how these principles have been embedded into the development. The level of information provided should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed.

#### Supporting text

**5.1** Our climate is changing faster than it would otherwise due to our increased burning of fossil fuels for electricity, heating and powering transport as well as our consumption of products such as meat and milk from livestock that produce methane. The gases emitted such as carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide have added to our atmosphere and the greenhouse 'blanket' accelerating global temperatures and affecting the climate in ways that could change how we live and our long term behaviours. The effects of climate change include shifts in our seasons, hotter drier summers, warmer wetter winters, rising sea levels and more extreme weather events such as droughts, flash floods, and strong winds.

**5.2** National policy is leading the response to climate change but there are measures that can be taken through the Local Plan to incorporate climate impacts into local decision making that radically reduce our contributions to greenhouse gas emissions and adapt development to enable communities and infrastructure to be more resilient to the consequences of climate change. Both reducing the impacts of, and being less vulnerable to, climate change is an essential part of delivering the environmental element of sustainable development.

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**5.3** Through the Climate Change Act 2008, the UK has committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and to increase energy generation from renewable sources:

- a 100% (amended by Order in 2019) reduction in net greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 (from 1990 levels);
- sourcing 30-45% of its energy from renewable sources by 2030.

**5.4** In the [Environment Strategy 2020-2030 for West Berkshire](#), the District sets a target for carbon neutrality by 2030 being achieved by reducing carbon emissions to 350kt/annum and neutralising that amount by carbon sequestration, local energy and carbon offsetting projects.

**5.5** The NPPF requires that local planning authorities adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

**5.6** Climate change mitigation means taking action to reduce the causes of climate change, primarily through reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Designing and constructing developments that are extremely energy efficient and/or make the best use of renewable energy technologies are both ways of helping to mitigate further climate change.

**5.7** Climate change adaptation means ways that a development can be adapted to deal with the weather related consequences of climate change. Using water more efficiently, reducing overheating and controlling high levels of rainwater run-off are all examples of adapting a development to respond to changes in our climate.

**5.8** The principles of climate change adaptation and mitigation are embedded within this policy and supported by other policies in this Plan.

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## Flood risk

### Policy SP6

#### Flood Risk

Flood zones are defined in Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) and the Council's Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) <sup>(17)</sup>. Within Flood Zones 2 and 3 (and also on sites of 1 hectare or more in size, and in other circumstances as set out in the NPPF), the sequential approach will be strictly applied across the District. Development within areas of flood risk from any source of flooding, including areas with a history of fluvial, groundwater or surface water flooding, or from areas suffering sewer flooding from overwhelmed sewers will only be supported if it is demonstrated that it is located and designed to ensure that flood risk from all sources of flooding is acceptable in planning terms, and there are no suitable and available sites at a lower flood risk.

A sequential test is needed for all development in all areas of flooding unless:

- a. The site is allocated for development and subject to the test at the plan-making stage (provided the proposed development is consistent with the use for which the site was allocated and provided there have been no significant changes to the known level of flood risk to the site, either now or in the future which would have affected the outcome of the test);
- b. The site is an area at low risk from all sources of flooding, unless the SFRA, or other information, indicates there may be a risk of flooding in the future; and
- c. The application is for a development type that is exempt from the test, as specified in the NPPF.

However applications for the above exceptions should still demonstrate all the requirements for site specific flood risk assessments.

The sequential approach should be followed for all development so that the most vulnerable development is located at the lowest risk flood areas within a site, taking account of all sources of flood risk. Development proposals should also include an assessment of the impact of climate change using appropriate climate change allowances over the lifetime of the development so that future flood risk is taken into account.

Only water compatible uses and essential infrastructure development will be supported in the area defined as functional floodplain (Flood Zone 3b). The exception test will still apply.

If the sequential test shows that it is not possible for an alternative site to be used and therefore development has to be located in a flood risk area, it should be demonstrated that:

- d. The development will be safe for its lifetime and not increase flood risk elsewhere;
- e. It will reduce the risk where possible and take into account climate change;
- f. Safe access and egress from the development will be provided during the 100-year plus climate change event, from any source of flooding;
- g. A sequential approach to development layout will be undertaken with the highest vulnerability development located in areas at lowest risk within the site; and
- h. Flood mitigation measures will be as set out in the Level 1 SFRA, or any future SFRA.

Evidence provided within the Level 1 SFRA should be used to apply the sequential test as well as provide evidence to show that other reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development have been adequately considered.

In addition to the sequential test, the exception test must be applied in certain situations according to national policy. This includes highly vulnerable development in Flood Zone 2, essential infrastructure in Flood Zone 3a or 3b, and more vulnerable development in flood zone 3a. The exception test should demonstrate how flood risk would be managed on site so that the development is safe taking into account the vulnerability of its users, and that it will not increase flood risk elsewhere. The exception test will also need to show that the sustainability benefits of the development to the community outweigh the flood risk.

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Development will only be permitted in areas at risk of flooding if either of itself or cumulatively it can be demonstrated:

- i. Through the sequential and exception test (where required), that the benefits of the development to the community outweigh the risk of flooding;
- j. It would not have a detrimental impact or impede on the flow of fluvial flood water, surface water or obstruct the run-off of water due to high levels of groundwater;
- k. It would not increase the number of people, property or infrastructure at risk of flooding;
- l. It would not reduce the capacity of the floodplain to store water and includes or contributes to compensation, flood mitigation and/or protection measures, where necessary, to manage flood risk associated with or caused by the development;
- m. It would not cause new or exacerbate existing flooding problems, either on the proposal site or elsewhere and would increase the flood storage capacity of the floodplain where possible;
- n. Provision is made for the long term maintenance and management of any flood protection and or mitigation measures for the lifetime of the development;
- o. Safe access and exit from the site can be provided for routine and emergency access under both frequent and extreme flood conditions; and
- p. Natural flood management measures can be implemented where possible.

Mitigation measures should be considered as a last resort to address flood risk issues where the sequential and exception tests have demonstrated that development is necessary for wider sustainability benefits.

Proposed development will require a site specific flood risk assessment (FRA) if it meets any of the following criteria:

- q. All developments greater than 1ha in size located in Flood Zone 1.
- r. All developments located within Flood Zone 2 or 3, or 1 in 100-year flood extent plus climate change. This includes standing advice for minor developments such as non-residential extensions, alterations which do not increase the size of the building or householder developments. It also includes changes of use of an existing development.
- s. All developments where proposed development or a change of use in development type could be subject to other sources of flooding. This applies to those less than 1ha in Flood Zone 1.
- t. All developments located in an area which has been highlighted as having critical drainage problems by the lead local flood authority or the Environment Agency.

Development proposals will be required to incorporate appropriate comprehensive flood risk management measures as agreed with the Environment Agency or the Council as Lead Local Flood Authority. FRAs should be proportionate to the proposal and follow the latest government guidance on development and flood risk, complying with the approach recommended in national planning policy and guidance as well as the West Berkshire SFRA in appraising, managing and reducing the consequences of flooding both to and from a development site. Information on FRAs is also set out within the Level 1 SFRA.

A Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA) forms an addendum to the Level 1 SFRA, and it identifies those river catchments where the level of flood risk and development pressures mean they could be affected by cumulative impacts. Where the latest CIA identifies high sensitivity to cumulative impacts, all development proposals must be accompanied by a Surface Water Drainage Strategy.

All new development close to rivers and culverts should take advantage of the opportunity presented to improve and enhance the river environment, water quality, and contribute to biodiversity targets. To enable this, an undeveloped 10 metre buffer zone alongside main rivers and, where practicable and appropriate, ordinary watercourses should be provided. This buffer zone should be on both sides of the watercourse and be measured from the top of the river bank at the point at which the bank meets the level of the surrounding land.

In 2018 the Environment Agency identified Newbury and Thatcham as a nationally significant Flood Risk Area. In line with the recommendations of the CIA, a Surface Water Drainage Strategy will be required for all developments in Newbury and Thatcham regardless of their size.

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On all development sites, in order to restrict or reduce runoff, surface water will be managed in a sustainable manner through the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Methods (SuDS) in accordance with the SuDS Supplementary Planning Document, best practice, and the Non-statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage<sup>(18)</sup>.

Restriction to greenfield run-off rates and volumes, for all new development on undeveloped sites should be provided, unless it can be demonstrated that this is not achievable, for all rainfall events up to and including the 1 in 100 year, including an allowance for climate change. For pre-developed sites a restriction to greenfield run-off rates and volumes, should be provided, unless it can be demonstrated that this is not achievable. For pre-developed sites, a maximum discharge rate equivalent to 50% of the existing 1 in 100 year runoff rate would be accepted. SuDS should also provide other benefits where possible such as water quality, biodiversity and amenity.

## Supporting Text

**5.9** The risk of flooding within West Berkshire is widespread, arising not only from rivers, but also from surface water and groundwater, and sewer flooding. This policy aims to achieve a planning solution to flood risk management wherever possible, steering vulnerable development away from areas affected by flooding.

**5.10** Under the NPPF, development is classed as 'essential infrastructure', 'less vulnerable', 'more vulnerable', 'highly vulnerable' or 'water compatible'. Table 2 of the Planning Practice Guidance<sup>(19)</sup> provides further detail of the type of development considered appropriate for each Flood Zone, where development is not permitted, and where development is allowed only when an exception test is passed.

**5.11** The Council has undertaken a [SFRA](#) of the District which has been agreed with the Environment Agency. This study supports this policy and has been used to evaluate allocation sites. It has considered all sources of flooding including fluvial, surface water, groundwater, sewers and reservoirs, both now and in the future, taking climate change into account.

**5.12** Information on flood risk is being updated continuously and flood risk identified in the SFRA may change. The most up-to-date flood risk information should always be used to inform planning applications, including future SFRAs and the Flood Zones identified by the Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning.<sup>(20)</sup>

**5.13** Definitions for the following terms used in this policy can be found in the NPPF, Planning Practice Guidance, and the the West Berkshire SFRA.

### Sequential test, exception test, and sequential approach

**5.14** The aim of the sequential test is to direct new development to areas at the lowest risk of flooding from all sources, both now and in the future, to ensure that areas with little or no risk of flooding are developed in preference to areas at higher risk. Development should not be permitted if there are reasonably available sites in areas with a lower risk of flooding. The sequential test is required in accordance with national policy.

**5.15** In line with Planning Practice Guidance, the area of search for the sequential test should be defined by local circumstances relating to the catchment area for the type of development proposed. For some developments this may be clear, for example, the catchment area for a school. In other cases it may be identified from other policies contained within the LPR, for example policies SP1, SP3 and DM1. Alternatively it may be identified through evidence produced for the LPR, for example the 2016 Berkshire Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA) Study identified the Western Berkshire FEMA which comprises of West Berkshire District.

**5.16** If it is not possible for development to be located in areas at lower risk of flooding, the exception test may need to be applied. The need for the exception test will depend on the vulnerability of the proposed development and the Flood Zone as set out in Planning Practice Guidance 'flood risk vulnerability classification' and 'flood risk vulnerability and flood zone compatibility table'.

18 DEFRA Non-statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sustainable-drainage-systems-non-statutory-technical-standards>  
 19 Table 2 Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification, Planning Practice Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change#Table-2-Flood-Risk-Vulnerability-Classification>  
 20 Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning: <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/>



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**5.17** The sequential approach should be taken when determining the layout of a development site, meaning the most vulnerable development should be sited in the areas of lowest flood risk within the site.

**5.18** The Council's SFRA provides the necessary information for the sequential and exception tests to be applied. Early discussions with the Environment Agency and the Council are encouraged, at the pre-application stage, for sites within flood risk areas, to address flooding issues.

## Flood Risk Assessment

**5.19** A site-specific FRA is required for any development located within areas identified as being at risk of flooding identified within the SFRA as well as locations prescribed by national policy.

**5.20** A FRA should refer to guidance in the Planning Practice Guidance <sup>(21)</sup> and assess in detail the level of flood risk to the site, including but not limited to:

- a. The area liable to flooding from all sources of flood risk, including fluvial, surface water, groundwater, artificial sources and drainage;
- b. The probability of flooding occurring now and over time;
- c. The extent and standard of existing flood defences and their effectiveness over time;
- d. The likely depth of flooding;
- e. The rates of flow likely to be involved;
- f. The routes of safe access and egress from the site during flood events;
- g. The nature and currently expected lifetime of the development proposed;
- h. The potential impacts of climate change.

**5.21** Proposals for the design of the site should:

- a. Be performed in accordance with the requirements of the sequential test and, when necessary, the exception test;
- b. Not increase flood risk, either upstream or downstream, of the site, taking into account the impacts of climate change;
- c. Ensure that where development is necessary in areas of flood risk (after application of the sequential and exception tests and the sequential approach), it is made safe from flooding for the lifetime of the development, taking into account the impact of climate change;
- d. Use opportunities provided by new development to reduce flood risk and provide betterment within the site and elsewhere;
- e. Identify safe access and egress routes for the site.

**5.22** In circumstances where FRAs are prepared for windfall sites, then they should include evidence that demonstrates that the proposals are in accordance with the policies set out in the development plan.

**5.23** It is recommended that all sites within Flood Zone 1 should carry out an assessment of localised flood risks, including surface water flooding. The cumulative impact of minor development, including development permitted without the need for a planning application, could also affect local flood storage capacity or flood flows. The Environment Agency's Standing Advice should be referred to prior to designing a development.

**5.24** The Council will consult the Environment Agency where it has indicated that it wishes to be involved in the planning process. The Environment Agency's Flood Risk Assessment Standing Advice <sup>(22)</sup> provides information to local planning authorities on which applications it wishes to be consulted on in relation to flood risk. The Environment Agency's guidance 'Approach to Groundwater Protection' <sup>(23)</sup> should be referred to for developments which may impact groundwater.

21 Planning Practice Guidance Flood Risk Assessment Checklist:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change#Site-Specific-Flood-Risk-Assessment-checklist-section>

22 DEFRA and the Environment Agency Review Individual Flood Risk Assessments: Standing Advice for Local Planning Authorities:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-assessment-local-planning-authorities>

23 <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5ab38864e5274a3dc898e29b/Environment-Agency-approach-to-groundwater-protection.pdf>



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**Cumulative Impacts**

**5.25** Under the NPPF, strategic policies and their supporting SFRAs are required to consider cumulative impacts in, or affecting, local areas susceptible to flooding, rather than just to or from individual development sites. Cumulative impacts are defined as the effects of past, present, and future activities on the environment.

**5.26** A Cumulative Impacts Assessment was prepared as an addendum to the Level 1 SFRA, and this identifies several river catchments where the level of flood risk and development pressures mean they could be affected by cumulative impacts. It sets out measures to manage the risk, and these have been incorporated within the policy.

**Newbury and Thatcham Flood Risk Area**

**5.27** Within the 2018 Environment Agency Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment for England, the Newbury and Thatcham area has been designated as a nationally significant Flood Risk Area for surface water flood risk.

**5.28** Development proposals within the Newbury and Thatcham Flood Risk Area, as shown within the Thames River Basin District Flood Risk Management Plan 2021 to 2027 <sup>(24)</sup>, will require a Surface Water Drainage Strategy.

**Water Framework Directive**

**5.29** The policy seeks to ensure that the requirements of the Water Framework Directive are taken account of in site design and layout. Development should look at opportunities for river restoration and enhancement, and projects which reconnect rivers with their floodplains. These ideas and plans should be incorporated into plans for new development from an early stage. Options include natural flood management, backwater creation, de-culverting and naturalising the channel through in-channel habitat enhancements and removal of structures. There may be opportunities in river enhancement and restoration to include historic water management features such as water meadows. Care should be taken when creating ponds and earthwork-moving to ensure fragile archaeological features are not destroyed heedlessly.

**5.30** The culverting of an ordinary watercourse or alteration to an existing culvert requires prior consent from the Land Drainage Authority under the Ordinary Watercourse Consent process. West Berkshire Council, like the Environment Agency, is generally opposed to culverting ordinary watercourses due to the adverse ecological, flood risk, human safety and aesthetic impacts.

**Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)**

**5.31** It is the responsibility of a developer to make proper provision for surface water drainage to ground, water courses or surface water sewer. It must not be allowed to drain to the foul sewer, as this is the major contributor to sewer flooding. The policy seeks to ensure that development provides appropriate measures for the management of rainfall (surface water) as an essential element of reducing future flood risk to both the site and its surroundings. SuDS (eg. green roofs, ponds and permeable surfaces), should be incorporated unless inappropriate. The integration of a SuDS scheme is dependent upon the topography, geology and soil conditions (including contamination) of the site and its surrounding area. Requirements and design principles for managing surface water runoff and drainage in the district are outlined in detail within the West Berkshire SuDS Supplementary Planning Document and the SuDS Manual published by CIRIA (C753) <sup>(25)</sup>.

24 Thames River Basin District Flood Risk Management Plan 2021 to 2027 (page 214):

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6380a45d8fa8f56ea9d462d8/Thames-FRMP-2021-2027.pdf>

25 The SUDS Manual, CIRIA: [https://www.westberks.gov.uk/media/62436/CD4-6-Appendix-E/pdf/CD4.6\\_-\\_Appendix\\_E.pdf?m=1745513264453](https://www.westberks.gov.uk/media/62436/CD4-6-Appendix-E/pdf/CD4.6_-_Appendix_E.pdf?m=1745513264453)

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## Design quality

## Policy SP7

## Design Quality

New development will be required to strengthen a sense of place through high quality locally distinctive design and place shaping. This will enable healthy place making, creating places that are better for people, taking opportunities available for conserving and enhancing the character, appearance and quality of an area and the way it functions.

Development proposals will be expected to show how they have responded positively to both national and local design guidance. At a national level this includes the characteristics of a well-designed place as set out in the National Design Guide (2021), or as superseded, and at a local level, this includes neighbourhood plans, design guides or codes and relevant community planning documents that identify the local character and distinctiveness of an area which is valued by local communities.

## Supporting Text

**5.32** A sense of place is about ensuring that development responds in a holistic way. The Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission <sup>(26)</sup> notes that new development should be designed to fit into the life and texture of the place where it occurs and should also aim to be an improvement of that place. It promotes beautiful buildings in beautiful places, where they are also beautifully placed.

**5.33** In that context, the purpose of this policy is to ensure that all new development across West Berkshire is of the highest possible design quality, in line with both national and local design guidance.

**5.34** For new development to comply with the National Design Guide: <sup>(27)</sup> <sup>(1)</sup> and be of the highest possible design quality, proposals for new development should demonstrate a positive response to the following characteristics of a well-designed place:

- a. Context – Proposals for new development should enhance the surroundings by beginning with an understanding of an area's existing character and context and its design should evolve from West Berkshire's high quality and diverse landscape character and rich built and cultural heritage.
- b. Identity – New development should be attractive and distinctive, complementing and enhancing existing areas, using architectural distinctiveness (through both the quality and choice of construction materials and techniques) and high quality design, to reinforce local identity and to create a sense of place; one that is successful and enjoyed. Architectural design should be appropriate and sympathetic to the setting, in terms of height, massing, scale, proportions, roof form, materials, night and day visibility, elevation, vernacular detailing (where relevant), hard and soft landscaping, curtilage and boundary treatment.
- c. Built form – All forms of development should be designed appropriately in terms of nature, location and scale. When assessing an application consideration will be given to the impact of the scheme taking into account existing approved and proposed development in the same locality and considering the cumulative impact of development over time.
- d. Movement - Proposals will be designed to enhance the way an area functions in practical terms through a mix of land uses, by ensuring the development is well connected, accessible, safe and easy for people to find their way through and around.
- e. Nature – Development will be designed to strengthen green infrastructure in accordance with policy SP10 and should include arrangements for its long term maintenance and management. Design proposals will create habitats and select species that are locally characteristic, taking opportunities to design wildlife habitats into the fabric of buildings and enhance wildlife connectivity in accordance with policy SP11.
- f. Public spaces - A sense of place can be created through a full understanding of how new development contributes to the character of an area and adapting design techniques to create places that feel safe, and secure; places that feel inclusive and people enjoy using; places that promote physical activity, enhance social connections and strengthened mental health; and places that people can identify with and can take pride in or responsibility for their upkeep. Development will be comprehensive at a human scale using gateways, focal points and

26 Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission: <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/building-better-building-beautiful-commission>

27 National Design Guide: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide>

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landmarks as appropriate. Landscape treatment, street furniture and infrastructure will be of the highest quality and have a clear purpose. Opportunities for the integration of high quality public art will be considered. Opportunities for the planting of trees and other soft landscaping will be maximised.

- g. Uses – New development will help to create more sustainable and socially inclusive places by contributing towards the provision of a mix of uses that support everyday activities including living, working and playing; and by delivering an integrated mix of tenures and housing types.
- h. Homes and buildings – New development should be designed to be functional, healthy and sustainable, and all residential development should comply with the nationally described space standards, as set out in the Technical Housing Standards (2015) or as superseded. New development should provide a high quality of amenity and privacy for occupants of the development and neighbouring properties and land, having regard to overlooking, access to natural sunlight, outlook and amenity space, in line with policy DM30. Development will be designed to provide appropriate open space provision in terms of amount, layout and location in accordance with policy DM40.
- i. Resources – New development should respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials, solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5. New development should be designed to include the provision of high quality, secure, accessible and where possible integrated storage for general and recycling waste, heating fuel, and transport related equipment.
- j. Lifespan – New development should be made to last and able to adapt to changing future needs and technologies over time.

**5.35** New waterside development adjacent to the Kennet & Avon Canal should seek to positively address the water, integrate the towing path and open up access to the water, link the waterside space to the water, make use of the water itself, incorporate access improvements, engage with the benefits of being by the water, and reflect the scale of the local waterway to the wider neighbourhood. In accordance with policy SP6, where practicable and appropriate, any development should include an undeveloped buffer zone of 10m on both sides of the Canal.

**5.36** Use of the National Design Guide and other national design guidance, including <sup>(28)</sup>principles will be supplemented through the use of more detailed local design guidance. These currently include the Council's Supplementary Planning Document '[Quality Design – West Berkshire](#)', [Conservation Area Appraisals](#), and [Shopfronts and Signs Supplementary Planning Guidance](#), and [neighbourhood plans](#).

**5.37** The Council also actively encourages the production of non-statutory community planning documents such as [town and village design statements](#) and [parish plans](#). Where they have been adopted or endorsed by the Council will use the relevant elements within them to inform and support the policies contained within the Local Plan. Local design guidance can emphasise the unique characteristics which give a particular place its local distinctiveness and also highlight the importance of the richness in detail. Choosing the right materials which are appropriate and sympathetic to the local vernacular, for instance, will greatly help new development to fit harmoniously with its surroundings and ensure that it reflects and respects existing local character.

**5.38** For development which affects the North Wessex Downs National Landscape these documents also include 'Guidance on the Selection and Use of Colour in Development' (2021) <sup>(29)</sup>[https://www.northwessexdowns.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/WD\\_guidance\\_screen.pdf](https://www.northwessexdowns.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/WD_guidance_screen.pdf) and 'A Guide to Good External Lighting' (2021) <sup>(30)</sup> published by the North Wessex Downs National Landscape.

**5.39** Development proposals should be accompanied by all necessary supporting information. The Council publishes a [local list of documents](#) that are required as part of planning applications and developers are encouraged to ensure their proposals comply with this list.

28 Secured by Design Secured by Design: <https://www.securedbydesign.com/guidance/design-guides>

29 'Guidance on the Selection and Use of Colour in Development':

30 'A Guide to Good External Lighting': [https://www.northwessexdowns.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Lighting\\_Guide\\_07-05\\_MEDRES.pdf](https://www.northwessexdowns.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Lighting_Guide_07-05_MEDRES.pdf)

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## Landscape character

### Policy SP8

#### Landscape Character

Landscape led development which conserves and enhances the diversity and local distinctiveness of the landscape character of the District will be supported.

The natural, cultural, and perceptual components of the character of the landscape will be considered as a whole. Particular regard will be given to:

- a. Its valued features and qualities;
- b. The sensitivity and capacity of the area to change; and
- c. Ensuring that new development is appropriate in terms of location, scale and design in the context of the existing settlement form, pattern and character.

Development should be demonstrably informed by and respond positively to the evaluation of the distinctive landscape character areas set out in the [West Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment](#) (2019) and other relevant landscape character assessments. These assessments provide an understanding of the valued characteristics, features and qualities of identified local landscape character areas across West Berkshire.

Proposals for development should be accompanied by an appropriate landscape assessment carried out in accordance with the current guidance from the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment. The level of information provided should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed but should be sufficient to allow an informed assessment of the potential landscape and visual effects of the proposed development. The assessment should demonstrably inform the detailed design of the development, including its layout, form, scale and appearance in accordance with policy SP7.

## Supporting Text

**5.40** One of the key issues facing West Berkshire is the conservation and enhancement of the distinctive local character of both the natural, and built and historic environment. It helps local people in West Berkshire achieve sustainable development. The high quality diverse landscape character with its rich cultural and natural heritage contributes to the enjoyment and overall quality of life of everyone in the District. Having an understanding of this distinctive character and using this as a positive tool in accommodating necessary change will ensure that the inherent qualities and valued features of West Berkshire's landscape will continue to be appreciated.

**5.41** Conserving and enhancing the distinctive landscape character of the District is given considerable weight in line with national policy which sets out that valued landscapes should be protected in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan.

**5.42** 74% of the District lies within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, extending from Wiltshire in the west and Oxfordshire in the north, over the Berkshire Downs. At West Berkshire's eastern boundary, the River Thames, the North Wessex Downs National Landscape adjoins the Chilterns National Landscape above Purley-on-Thames and then curves back around the north of Newbury before returning south to cover part of the Hampshire Downs. The National Landscape is characterised by the quality of its chalk landscape which ranges from remote open downland, dramatic skyline escarpments, contrasting wooded downland, and the small scale intimate settled river valleys of the Lambourn and Pang. As a nationally valued and designated landscape, the North Wessex Downs National Landscape will be conserved and enhanced in accordance with its national status and this is set out in policy SP2.

**5.43** A landscape does not have to have a designation to be valued locally. Outside the National Landscape, the River Kennet and the inter-connected Kennet & Avon Canal, from Newbury to Reading, lies within a distinctive broad corridor of an open lowland landscape characterised by a variety of wetland habitats including wet meadow, reed bed, and flooded gravel workings. Further to the south and east there are small areas of remnant heath with the Ministry of Defence owning large tracts of land at Aldermaston and Burghfield.

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**5.44** Value can apply to areas of landscape as a whole or to individual elements, features and aesthetic or perceptual dimensions which contribute to the character of the landscape. There are no locally designated landscapes in West Berkshire. All landscapes across the District have some degree of value and all development should therefore respond positively to the identified character and valued qualities inherent in that local landscape. The West Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment 2019 evaluates and provides an understanding of what is important and why, for each identified local landscape character area across the District. It provides a framework for informed decisions to be made as to whether different landscapes should evolve by:

- Conserving the existing and historic character;
- Enhancing existing character by introducing new features into the landscape;
- Strengthening or restoring a previous character; or
- Creating a new character when a sense of place and local distinctiveness have been eroded or lost.

**5.45** Other relevant landscape character assessments include the North Wessex Downs AONB Landscape Character Assessment (2002), which was produced in order to manage and guide change across a designated area extending beyond West Berkshire. In addition, [Historic Landscape Characterisation](#) (2007) and [Historic Environment Character Zoning](#) (2007) <sup>(31)</sup>, which provide a sound understanding of the historic environment context of West Berkshire, can also be used by the Council to inform and support planning decisions.

**5.46** The character of the landscape in West Berkshire is defined by the historic processes that have shaped and formed the landscapes that exist today. Having an understanding of these processes and the way the historic environment of the District has influenced settlement patterns and the sense of place of particular areas is essential when accommodating future development. Settlements are a key component of the landscape, and in West Berkshire most settlements can trace their origins back over many hundreds of years. The separate and distinctive identity of these individual settlements helps to define communities and is an important feature of the local character of West Berkshire. A variety of rural settlement forms can be seen, from the nucleated patterns common on the chalk downs to the more dispersed patterns found in the southern part of the District. Much of the pressure for development is around the edges of settlements, which can physically lead to coalescence or introduce an increase in activity which has an urbanising effect. Despite this, a key feature of even the larger settlements is the way in which few have coalesced in recent times and so the blurring of the physical distinction between places has largely been avoided. The retention of these actual and perceived visual breaks remains important for the continued maintenance of the existing settlement form, pattern and character.

**5.47** The policy makes clear that proposals for development should be accompanied by an appropriate landscape assessment carried out in accordance with the current guidance from the Landscape Institute and IEMA. Depending on the scale and nature of the proposals this will either be a formal Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) typically as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) or less formally as a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA). Regardless of the scale of the assessment, it should address both the potential landscape effects and also the potential visual effects that may result from the development. Detailed development proposals will then be expected to respond positively to this assessment to ensure they conserve and enhance landscape character by strengthening a sense of place in accordance with policy SP7.



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## Historic environment

## Policy SP9

## Historic Environment

Positive action will be taken to ensure that opportunities for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment are maximised. For example, this will include, but not be limited to:

- producing conservation area appraisals and management plans;
- maintaining a local list of non-designated heritage assets; and
- maintaining a list of local heritage assets which are at risk, but which do not meet the criteria for inclusion on the national Heritage at Risk Register.

The historic character, sense of place, environmental quality and local distinctiveness of West Berkshire will also be sustained and enhanced through new development, including promoting heritage-led regeneration where appropriate and delivering public benefits from the District's archaeological resources. Development proposals will be required to conserve and, where appropriate, enhance those aspects of the historic environment which are recognised as being of archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic interest, or of landscape or townscape significance. These heritage assets include:

- a. Listed Buildings;
- b. Scheduled Monuments and archaeological sites of national importance;
- c. Registered Parks and Gardens;
- d. Registered Battlefields;
- e. Conservation Areas;
- f. Buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas and landscapes that have been added to the [West Berkshire Local List of Heritage Assets](#); and
- g. Other places, spaces, structures and features which may not be formally designated but are recognised as significant elements of West Berkshire's heritage and are positively identified on the [West Berkshire Historic Environment Record](#), or through the development management or other planning processes.

Development that has an impact upon a heritage asset, whether designated or non-designated, will be expected to maximise opportunities to preserve, enhance, or better reveal the asset's significance including the contribution to that significance made by its setting, and make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness through high standards of design in accordance with policy SP7.

Weight will be given to the conservation of the District's heritage assets in a manner according to their importance. Any harm to the significance of a designated or non-designated heritage asset must be justified. All proposals affecting a heritage asset, including its setting, should be accompanied by a 'Statement of Heritage Significance', in accordance with the current guidance from Historic England. For known assets of archaeological interest, or on land where there is archaeological potential, an archaeological desk-based assessment will be required as a minimum. The level of information provided should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed but should be sufficient to allow an informed assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the heritage asset.

Development which would lead to substantial harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset, including the contribution to that significance made by its setting will not be permitted, unless –

- h. This harm is demonstrated necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that cannot otherwise be achieved and which outweigh that harm; or
- i. The nature of the asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- j. No viable use of the asset can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- k. Conservation by grant funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- l. The harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

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Development which would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, including the contribution to that significance made by its setting will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Where development would affect the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, a balanced judgement will be made which has regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Where material change to a heritage asset has been agreed, recording and interpretation should be undertaken to document and understand the asset's archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic significance. The scope of the recording should be proportionate to the asset's significance and the impact of the development on the asset. The information and understanding gained should be made available for public benefit, as a minimum through the deposition of evidence with the West Berkshire Historic Environment Record. Archaeological archives resulting from investigations in West Berkshire should be deposited in West Berkshire Museum or an appropriate digital depository, with provision made for ongoing conservation, storage, access and interpretation.

Proposals for development will be informed by and respond to:

- m. The nature and potential of heritage assets identified through the West Berkshire Historic Environment Record and the extent of their significance;
- n. Relevant historic landscape character assessments;
- o. Other features identified in various settlement character studies including the Newbury Historic Character Study and Conservation Area Appraisals; and
- p. The West Berkshire Historic Environment Action Plan (HEAP).

## Supporting Text

**5.48** People have left their mark on our landscape for over ten thousand years, modifying natural features, utilising local materials, cultivating the soil and creating monuments, buildings and settlements. This multi-layered interaction of humans and their environment tells our story and gives us a perspective on our own times. West Berkshire's historic environment is therefore a positive and irreplaceable resource, valuable not only in social, educational and economic terms, but as a frame and reference point for the creation of distinctive places for existing and future generations to enjoy. It shapes the District's sense of identity and is intrinsically linked to the quality of life of its residents, the success of its existing businesses and the wider cultural profile that West Berkshire projects to potential investors and visitors. The Local Plan therefore sets out to implement a positive strategy for the conservation, enhancement and enjoyment of the historic environment across the District as a fundamental approach to sustainable development.

**5.49** The policy gives weight to conserving the significance of heritage assets and their settings in a manner according to their importance. Heritage assets include any valued component of the historic environment, be it a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape, identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage assets include designated heritage assets and assets identified as 'non-designated' heritage assets.

**5.50** There are a wide variety of heritage assets across West Berkshire, ranging in age from the early prehistoric to the modern day and in scale from landscape parks to milestones.

**5.51** Designated heritage assets in 2020 include:

- 53 Conservation Areas
- Approximately 1900 Listed Buildings
- Approximately 90 Scheduled Monuments
- 12 Registered Parks and Gardens
- 1 Registered Battlefield, the First Battle of Newbury 1643

**5.52** Non-designated heritage assets include:

- Those that have been entered onto the [West Berkshire Local List of Heritage Assets](#)
- Assets not yet on the West Berkshire Local List of Heritage Assets but which have been identified as having heritage interest
  - In the West Berkshire Historic Environment Record;

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- During the development management process;
  - Through other planning processes to assess local character, such as conservation area and village character appraisals;
  - Through neighbourhood plans; and
  - Through site assessments undertaken as part of the Local Plan
- 1 Battlefield included in the Appendix of the Battlefields Register, the Second Battle of Newbury 1644
  - Nationally important but non-scheduled archaeological remains, which should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets
  - Registered commons
  - Historic Public Rights of Way

**5.53** Historic England produces an annual register of designated heritage assets known to be at risk as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development. In West Berkshire the Heritage at Risk register (HAR) has included Grade I or II\* Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, the Registered Battlefield, and Places of Worship. The Battlefield of the First Battle of Newbury 1643 was removed from the Heritage at Risk Register in 2017. The Council in collaboration with the West Berkshire Heritage Forum will also maintain a list of other local heritage assets which are at risk but which do not meet the criteria for inclusion on the HAR. These may be Grade II listed buildings or non-designated heritage assets. Emphasis will continue to be given to finding solutions for those assets that are at risk through discussions with owners, management plans, stewardship schemes and partnership working.

**5.54** Under the NPPF, local authorities should maintain or have access to a Historic Environment Record (HER). The [West Berkshire HER](#) is the principal register of the physical remains of past human activity in the area, including designated and non-designated assets and those on the Heritage at Risk register. It is the primary index to the archaeological investigations that have taken place in the District as well as to a wide range of sources of information from books to unpublished reports, and historic maps to aerial photographs, and the locations of these sources in libraries and record offices. The HER is a dynamic information service and public record, which serves both as an evidence base for the planning process and as the recipient of new knowledge gained through developer-funded fieldwork and community projects.

**5.55** The HER will be used to:

- Assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make; and
- Predict the likelihood that currently unidentified heritage assets, particularly sites of historic and archaeological interest, will be discovered in the future. Many heritage assets remain undiscovered.

**5.56** Where development will lead to the loss (wholly or in part) of heritage assets, developers will be required to record and advance our understanding of the significance of the asset or relevant part of it. However the ability to investigate and record a heritage asset is not a factor in deciding whether consent for its destruction should be given. Knowledge which advances our understanding of the past is the core purpose of archaeological work. This public benefit will be best achieved if the recording is undertaken by a professionally accredited organisation or individual with appropriate expertise, complying with best practice and taking account of research frameworks. The resultant report should be deposited with the West Berkshire HER, but for investigations with particular important or unusual findings, publication through books and journals may be appropriate.

**5.57** Any archaeological recording project will also involve the compilation, deposition and conservation of an archaeological archive as the record of the original findings and the raw material for future research. The West Berkshire Museum is the collecting body for physical documentary and material archaeological archives derived from any site researched or investigated within the unitary authority of West Berkshire. Digital archives should be deposited with an accredited digital repository. Provision should be made for the curation and safe-guarding of archaeological archives to ensure continued public engagement for the purposes of exhibition, learning and enjoyment.

**5.58** Development proposals likely to affect the significance of a designated or non-designated heritage asset, including the contribution to that significance made by its setting, are required to demonstrate a thorough understanding of context, the significance of the asset and any potential impacts on that significance through the preparation of a proportionate heritage statement. This should be in the form of a 'Statement of Heritage Significance', in accordance with Historic England Advice Note 12 'Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets'. Statements of Heritage Significance must be proficient, objective and impartial in order to be of greatest value to the decision making process and should provide sufficient information to demonstrate how the proposals would contribute



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to the asset's conservation. For known heritage assets of archaeological interest, an archaeological desk based assessment should be provided and, where there is archaeological potential, pre-determination field evaluation may be necessary. As a minimum the West Berkshire Historic Environment Record should be consulted.

**5.59** Heritage assets rarely prevent development schemes where their significance has been properly assessed and understood from the outset. Indeed, the most successful schemes often arise from this understanding and an appreciation of the social, cultural, economic, and environmental value that can be gained from their retention, sympathetic re-use and successful integration. Preserving embodied energy through the re-use and adaption of existing historic buildings for example, can be more sustainable than constructing new buildings. Proposals for energy saving measures should be designed with the knowledge and understanding of the building's significance. Getting the balance right and avoiding unintended consequences, is best done with a holistic 'whole building' approach in accordance with the current guidance from Historic England. This helps to highlight and resolve uncertainties and reconcile conflicting aims, ensuring that energy efficient measures are suitable, robust, well integrated, properly coordinated and sustainable.

**5.60** A clear understanding of the significance of a heritage asset and its setting is necessary to develop proposals which avoid or minimise harm. Advice from the Council's officers should be sought in the process of creating proposals; early assessments, a conservation plan or targeted specialist investigation can help to identify constraints and opportunities arising from the asset at an initial stage. This is particularly relevant where heritage assets have received little previous attention, or where there is archaeological potential. Such studies can reveal alternative development or design options, such as more compatible uses or a more appropriate scale of development. These schemes are more likely to minimise harm and deliver public benefits in a sustainable and appropriate way.

**5.61** Having an understanding of the way the historic environment of the District has influenced settlement patterns, and the sense of place of particular areas across West Berkshire, is essential when accommodating future development. Relevant landscape character assessments, including [Historic Landscape Characterisation](#) (2007) and [Historic Environment Character Zoning](#) (2007) will be used by the Council to inform and support planning decisions. At a more detailed level, these will be supplemented by the use of relevant settlement character studies, including the [Newbury Historic Character Study](#) (2006), and adopted [Conservation Area Appraisals](#).

**5.62** The historic environment belongs to the whole community and everyone should be able to participate in sustaining this shared resource. One mechanism for achieving this is through the West Berkshire Heritage Forum, a partnership established in 2009 to recognise, promote and protect the District's heritage. The West Berkshire Historic Environment Action Plan (HEAP), published by the West Berkshire Heritage Forum, describes the character and evolution of the area as a whole and identifies its significant historic components. These include Mesolithic sites in the Kennet Valley; transport routes such as the Ridgeway and other old drove roads, the Kennet & Avon Canal and the Great Western Railway; pottery and brick manufacture and the cloth industry; Civil War battles; and the sites associated with the Cold War, nuclear technologies and peace protests. The HEAP identifies key issues and opportunities and provides an overview of the actions required to ensure long term conservation. Its aims encompass the promotion of greater awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the historic environment and advocacy of a multi-agency approach to sustainable management.

**5.63** Since 2012 the Council has also been working with the West Berkshire Heritage Forum and local communities to compile a '[West Berkshire Local List of Heritage Assets](#)'. The list is regularly updated as new assets are identified. Successful conservation and enhancement of the historic environment of the District can only be achieved through partnership and co-operation. To this end the Council will continue to work closely with the West Berkshire Heritage Forum and local communities to ensure that decisions continue to reflect the value the public places on it.

**5.64** The Council has a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the District's 53 Conservation Areas. As part of this duty and as part of its strategy to maximise opportunities for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment the Council is undertaking a phased programme of Conservation Area Appraisals (CAAs), in partnership with the West Berkshire Heritage Forum. As well as helping to define what is special about a particular Conservation Area, the project will provide local communities with an understanding of how and why Conservation Area status is appraised, designated, and applied in future development and conservation management decisions. This will help communities better engage with the management of change in their area, allowing them to more effectively champion the significance and values of local heritage. The project has involved the setting up of a Conservation Area Working Group, which has developed a 'Toolkit', which contains a variety of guidance, list of resources, and an appraisal report template, to assist parish councils and volunteers in undertaking a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

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**Green Infrastructure****Policy SP10****Green Infrastructure**

The Council will strengthen both local and strategic green infrastructure (GI) assets across the District. This will be achieved by protecting and enhancing existing GI assets and linkages and adding to the local network for the benefit of both the natural environment and the health and wellbeing of the community. This policy will be considered in conjunction with other policies in the LPR affecting the status and provision of GI in the District.

Depending on their location, nature and scale, development proposals should:

- a. Protect and/or enhance existing GI and the functions this performs,
- b. Create additional GI which is integrated into the overall development design from the outset; and
- c. Take opportunities to achieve multi-functionality by bringing GI functions together.

Proposals for GI will be supported where they:

- d. Help to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change and boost resilience through sustainable drainage measures which minimise urban heating, flood risk and maximising GI habitats to sequester carbon and provide environmental cooling and insulation functions;
- e. Generate high quality GI which creates an attractive and distinctive setting to new development, enhancing any existing asset that may be present. This should be planned and designed from the outset as a network of multifunctional green and blue spaces and other natural features which identify and respond to the site's local context. Proposals for GI will be expected to be designed in accordance with the most up to date recognised GI standards;
- f. Can provide pleasant and safe 'green routes' to commute or travel on foot, cycle and horseback which help to link parts of urban areas and to the surrounding countryside along blue (water) and green corridors;
- g. Enhance the natural environment and natural processes to improve biodiversity and increase natural capital whilst seeking opportunities to use green infrastructure to extend wildlife corridors and provide habitat connectivity, particularly in urban areas and where it contributes to nature recovery networks;
- h. Use the GI network to help improve health and wellbeing and promote local social interaction and community networks;
- i. Increase its attractiveness as a recreation opportunity and support accessibility to public open spaces which are adaptable and capable of accommodating multiple uses of varying ability;
- j. Restore and open up historic routeways such as hollow ways and drovers roads, avenues and access to historic parks;
- k. Does not involve the culverting of watercourses, except where essential to allow highways and / or other infrastructure to cross;
- l. Protect, enhance and support the creation of integrated constructed wetlands, 'wet woodland' habitats, ponds, lakes, reed beds, raingardens, and floodplain meadows;
- m. Make appropriate provision to protect, enhance, improve and maintain accessible networks of blue corridors, including the restoration of chalk streams and their catchments, de-culverting, back water creation, de-silting, naturalising the channel through in-channel habitat enhancements and removal of structures where appropriate;
- n. Maintain and enhance natural drainage features; and
- o. Provide undeveloped buffer zones along the banks of water courses in accordance with policy SP6.

Development proposals will be required to take account of existing access networks within and around the site. Opportunities should be sought to protect and enhance the Public Rights of Way network within and adjacent to development proposals in line with the NPPF, having particular regard to ensuring the needs of all users have been provided throughout the year. The addition of new connections and status upgrades to the existing rights of way network will be supported.

Proposals involving the loss of green or blue spaces and other natural features will not be supported unless there is no longer a need for the existing infrastructure or an alternative is provided to meet the local needs that is both accessible and of equal or greater quality and benefit to the community.



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Proposals for major development will be required to consider the long-term management and maintenance of GI infrastructure and should clearly demonstrate how these considerations have informed site proposals. Details of maintenance requirements and arrangements will be required to be set out, including who is responsible for these requirements. Appropriate funding arrangements for delivery of the long-term maintenance requirements should be clearly demonstrated to the Council before construction starts, including measures to secure biodiversity net gain through all phases and stages of the development.

The amount, type and design of GI will be informed by the appropriate national and local standards, guidance and best practice current at the time of the application.

## Supporting text

**5.65** The NPPF defines green infrastructure as ‘a network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity’. It is integral to successful place-making through the range of multi-faceted benefits well-designed and integrated green infrastructure can bring to an area. In West Berkshire the Green Infrastructure network will be The network is planned, designed and managed to:

- promote healthier living and positive well-being;
- lessen the impacts of climate change;
- improve air quality and water quality;
- support economic growth and investment via greener settings;
- boost tourism and support tourism related jobs;
- encourage walking, cycling, horse riding and other recreational and sensory experiences;
- store carbon; and
- improve biodiversity and ecological resilience.

**5.66** Examples of GI assets include:

- Natural and semi-natural rural and urban green and blue spaces – including woodland and scrub, hedgerows, individual trees and groups of trees grassland (e.g. downland and meadow), heath, wetlands, open and running water, brownfield sites and bare rock habitats (e.g. quarries);
- Parks and gardens – urban and country parks, formal gardens, and institutional grounds (e.g. schools and hospitals);
- Amenity green space – informal recreation spaces, play areas, outdoor sports facilities, housing greenspaces, community gardens, roof gardens, village greens, commons, living roofs and walls, trees and hedgerows, civic spaces, and highway trees and verges;
- Allotments, orchards, and farmland;
- Cemeteries and churchyards;
- Green/blue corridors - rivers and canals (including their banks and towpaths), road verges and rail embankments, cycling routes and public rights of way;
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites and Nature Reserves;
- Local Green Spaces;
- Accessible archaeological and historic sites;
- Functional green space such as sustainable drainage schemes (SuDS) and flood storage areas;
- Green and brown roofs and green walls on buildings; and
- Lakes and reservoirs.

**5.67** The government’s 25 Year Environment Plan (2018) highlights that ‘The provision of more and better quality green infrastructure, including urban trees, will make towns and cities attractive places to live and work, and bring about key long term improvements in people’s health’. The document makes a commitment to the production of a GI Framework,<sup>(32)</sup> currently being produced by Natural England, which will help to target the creation and/or improvement of GI across the District. The Framework complements Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and Nature Recovery Strategies which both form part of the Environment Act (2021). To ensure high quality multi-functional GI is delivered in West Berkshire as set out in the policy, development proposals will be expected to be designed having regard to the Natural

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England Framework, and any future relevant national, regional or local guidance which could be brought forward. Proposals will be supported which use the most up to date recognised GI principles and standards. For example, The Building with Nature Standards developed by the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) or the emerging Natural England Green Infrastructure Standards. In addition, if a development falls under BREEAM, consideration of Land Use and Ecology Credits should be undertaken at the design stage to ensure the requirements of policy DM4 Building Sustainable Homes and Businesses is met.

**5.68** The policy makes clear the Council's commitment for strengthening both local and strategic GI across the District for the benefit of both the natural environment and the health and wellbeing of the community. New GI provision will add to the integrity of the wider GI network of the District and those of neighbouring authorities. Key opportunities include:

- Adopting Sustainable Drainage systems to alleviate flooding and, while supporting broader biodiversity aims and providing local amenity;
- Creating green and blue spaces and planting within development to provide shade, cooling and wind interception and an insulation role in winter;
- Forming buffers zones and wildlife corridors for key habitats and species;
- Providing good quality, accessible green and blue spaces and infrastructure within development to improve health and wellbeing, creating an attractive place to live and work;
- Maximising the number of functions and benefits delivered by each GI asset;
- Interconnecting GI assets to form a strong GI network of green and blue spaces and corridors which deliver the range of GI functions and improve off road connectivity;

**5.69** The [West Berkshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment \(Level 1\) \(2019\)](#) recommends that all new development close to rivers and culverts should consider the opportunity presented to improve and enhance the river environment and contribute to national, county and local biodiversity targets. This can be achieved through proposals exploring opportunities for river restoration and enhancement, and projects which reconnect rivers with their floodplains. Options include, backwater creation, de-silting, de-culverting and naturalising the channel through in-channel habitat enhancements and removal of structures. Special consideration needs to be given the Rivers Pang and Lambourn which are groundwater-fed chalk streams, and are fragile hydrological systems, supporting diverse, rare habitats. The Chalk Stream Strategy (2021) sets out the key foundations and principles of chalk stream restoration. It highlights that chalk stream restoration should include the following considerations: the natural gradient of the river, an intact river bed, a dynamic interconnection between the river and the floodplain, and the ecological processes and habitat requirements of the ecosystem engineers (fish, insects, mammals and plants) to shape the habitat.

**5.70** The Council will work in partnership with the local community, statutory advisors, developers, landowners and other organisations to identify and prioritise areas which will provide the best opportunities to protect, maintain and enhance the District's network of high quality 'multi-functional' green and blue spaces and other natural features.

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**Biodiversity and geodiversity****Policy SP11****Biodiversity and geodiversity**

Development proposals will be required to demonstrate how they conserve and enhance biodiversity and/or geodiversity including their long-term future management and, where required, deliver Biodiversity Net Gains.

Development will be permitted where it:

- a. Protects biodiversity and/or geodiversity value and implements appropriate conservation management. The degree of protection will be proportionate to the status of the site or species in terms of its international, national and/or local importance;
- b. Avoids fragmentation and maximises opportunities for restoration, enhancements and connection of linear features which enables strong connectivity of biodiversity as part of an integrated habitat network (including links to habitats outside the district);
- c. Incorporates beneficial biodiversity and/or geodiversity conservation features and enhances existing features, including those that will help wildlife to adapt to climate change where appropriate;
- d. Provides or retains at least 10m buffer zones between development proposals and designated sites, habitats for protected or priority species or main rivers, which are informed by detailed site-based assessment;
- e. Provides coherent ecological connectivity and permeability that is integrated and linked to the wider green infrastructure and any nature recovery network identified as relevant to the location;
- f. Seeks to eradicate or control any invasive non-native species present on site; and
- g. Is compatible with any Biodiversity Action Plan, Local Nature Recovery Strategy and /or other strategic conservation management plans for species or habitats that have been formally adopted by the Council.

In addition to the above, where specific identified sites are to be affected the following will be taken into account:

**Internationally Designated Sites**

Development likely to result in a significant effect on an internationally designated site will be subject to assessment under the Habitats Regulations and will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that there are no alternatives following/through appropriate derogation tests for the proposal and that any adverse effects on the integrity of the site can be fully avoided, mitigated and/or compensated and proposals are in the public interest.

**Nationally Designated Sites**

Development which is likely to have any adverse impact on the notified features of a nationally designated site will not normally be permitted. In exceptional circumstances, a proposal may be found acceptable where it can be demonstrated that:

- j. A suitable alternative site with a lesser impact than that proposed is not available;
- k. The on-site benefits of the proposal clearly outweigh the impacts on the notified features of the site and where applicable, the overall site or habitat network;
- l. All appropriate mitigation measures have been proposed and secured through the development management process; and
- m. Does not prevent future attainment of nationally protected sites from meeting Favourable Condition, or to provide enhancements to enable the nationally designated sites to meet Favourable Condition as per their Conservation Objectives.

**Irreplaceable Habitats**

Proposals which are likely to result in the loss or deterioration of an irreplaceable habitat (such as ancient woodland, ancient or veteran trees, ancient hedgerows, traditional unimproved meadows/ancient grasslands and lowland fens) will only be permitted for wholly exceptional reasons where:

- o. The need and benefits of the development in that location clearly and unambiguously outweigh the loss;

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- p. It has been adequately demonstrated that the irreplaceable habitat cannot be retained with the proposed scheme; and
- q. Appropriate compensation measures are provided on site wherever possible and off site where this not is feasible. The scale and quality of the compensation measures required will be commensurate to the loss or deterioration of the irreplaceable habitat and will be considered on a site by site basis, including long term management and maintenance.

#### Sites of Local Importance

Development proposals affecting sites of local importance should always seek to contribute to their favourable management in the long term.

Where a proposal is likely to result in harm to sites of local importance (including habitats or species of principal importance for biodiversity, and sites that meet the criteria for designation as a Local Wildlife Site or designation as a Local Geological Site), developers will be required to accord with the following sequential approach:

- r. Firstly, seek an alternative site in the District with a lesser impact than that proposed;
- s. Secondly, if the first is not possible, demonstrate mitigation measures can be taken on site; and
- t. Thirdly, and as a last resort, seek appropriate compensation measures, on site wherever possible and off site where this is not feasible including long term management and maintenance.

### Supporting text

**5.71** West Berkshire supports a rich and diverse range of biodiversity and geodiversity assets which reflect both the underlying geology and soils and traditional management practices that have been carried out over many years. The aim of this policy is to provide a framework for conserving and enhancing this richness and diversity both for its own sake, but also the positive contribution that it makes to the overall quality of life and sense of place for residents and visitors to West Berkshire in both urban and rural areas. Policy SP11 sets out how new development in West Berkshire will be expected to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment at a landscape scale as well as sites of biodiversity importance at different levels. Where appropriate, new development should promote conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and should secure opportunities for a net gain for biodiversity.

**5.72** The 2019 'State of Nature Report' indicates that biodiversity across the UK is continuing to decline and as such change is required in relation to how we manage land. The Report highlights that urbanisation can fragment landscapes by creating barriers between habitats, thus isolating some populations but also recognises the wide variety of green spaces which exist within urban environments including domestic gardens, parks, allotments, cemeteries, ponds, and road verges which can all add to biodiversity value. Habitat connectivity is a key challenge for biodiversity and linked to the challenge of the climate crisis it is important that habitats do not become isolated with metapopulations and local populations of faunal and flora species finding themselves less able to respond to natural fluctuations where they can face heightened risk of decline and extinction.

**5.73** Linear features, or stepping stones, which form part of the connected habitat includes networks of hedgerows and ditches; habitats along all water courses; roadside verges; and (cumulatively) private gardens (including links to habitats outside the District) are essential for the migration, dispersal, and genetic exchange of wild species. Examples of linear features within West Berkshire include waterways such as the River Kennet, River Lambourn and the Kennet and Avon Canal and they play an important role in providing strong connecting links across the biodiversity network. By protecting these natural habitats and networks across the District, the Council may be able to avoid or repair fragmentation and isolation of natural habitats and ultimately conserve and enhance our priority natural areas and the connections between them. This element of the policy closely links with policy SP10.

**5.74** A buffer zone is a landscape feature which can be used to protect a sensitive area from the impacts of development (or other harmful neighbouring land use). Buffers which are linked to corridors will be supported as a means of increasing connectivity across the District to help nature thrive. Buffers should be appropriately designed and informed by an understanding of what needs to be protected and/or mitigated. Regard should also be given to policy DM6 in regards to providing appropriate buffers along watercourses.

**5.75** The policy takes a hierarchical approach according to the designation and significance of the natural assets and will apply the principle of net gain through delivery in line with paragraph 179 a) of the NPPF and wider government policy including the 25 year Environment Plan (2018).

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**Sites of International and National Importance**

**5.76** The most important sites for biodiversity and individual wildlife species receive statutory protection under international and national legislation and form part of the national site network. Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) are internationally important and are afforded the highest level of protection. Candidate SACs and proposed SPAs will be afforded the same level of protection as those already designated.

**5.77** SACs are internationally important conservation sites which are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Under these regulations, it is a requirement to seek and protect the most valuable and threatened habitats and species. In accordance with the policy, any developments which are likely to have significant effects on SACs will be required to prepare an appropriate assessment to identify the implications for the site in respect of the site's conservation objectives. There are three SACs in the district (which are all sensitive to surface and groundwater quality and quantity):

- Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain
- River Lambourn
- Kennet Valley Alderwoods.

**5.78** The Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain SAC is ecologically important as it contains a cluster of sites which supports one of the most extensive known populations of Desmoulin's whorl snail in the UK and is one of two sites representing the species in the south-western part of its range in the important chalk stream habitat. Integrity of the population is being maintained by taking measures, including habitat creation, to safeguard populations.

**5.79** The River Lambourn SAC is an example of a chalk river characterised by an abundance of water-crowfoots. These species help to modify water flow, promote fine sediment deposition and provide shelter and food for fish and invertebrate animals. The River provides a habitat which is only found in southern and eastern England. For part of its length it is a winterbourne, drying through the summer months. It is one of the least-modified rivers of this type, with a characteristic flora dominated by pond water-crowfoot upstream and water-crowfoot further downstream. It is adversely affected by nutrient enrichment, mainly from sewage inputs and agriculture, but is also vulnerable to artificial reduction in river flows. In March 2022 Natural England advised that the SAC was in unfavourable condition due to unnaturally high levels of phosphorus. It also advised that future development within the hydrological catchment of the River Lambourn SAC must achieve 'nutrient neutrality' to ensure that it does not impact on the condition of the protected site. The Council's approach to nutrient neutrality is set out in policy DM6 and a more detailed Supplementary Planning Document will also be produced.

**5.80** The Kennet Valley Alderwoods SAC is an alluvial forest with Alder and Ash and which contains the largest fragments of alder-ash woodland on the Kennet floodplain. The wettest areas are dominated by alder over tall herbs, sedges and reeds, but dryer patches include a base-rich woodland flora with much dog's mercury and also herb-Paris. The occurrence of the latter is unusual, as it is more typically associated with ancient woodland, whereas evidence suggests that these stands have largely developed over the past century.

**5.81** The Council also has a duty to ensure that future development does not adversely affect the integrity of SACs outside of its geographical area. This includes the Solent Maritime SAC, which receives water from the River Test. The catchment for the River Test extends into a very small part of the district around Combe. It is also adversely affected by nutrient pollution and in March 2022 Natural England advised that the SAC was in unfavourable condition due to excessive levels of nitrogen. It also advised that future development within the hydrological catchment of the River Test must achieve 'nutrient neutrality' to ensure that it does not impact on the condition of the protected site.

**5.82** There are no SPAs within West Berkshire, although there is a very small part of the District (256 hectares) around Beech Hill within 5km of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA. The 5km boundary has been determined by Natural England as a buffer area to regulate development near the SPA. However, it is possible that certain types of development up to 7km from the boundary of the SPA could have an impact on the SPA. Proposals for new residential development of one or more net additional dwellings up to 5km from the boundary of the SPA, and residential development of over 50 dwellings located between 5 and 7km of the boundary of the SPA, will therefore require screening to assess whether they will have a likely significant effect on the SPA. Where a significant effect exists or cannot be excluded, an Appropriate Assessment under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) would need to be undertaken. Proposals will only be permitted if they do not adversely affect the integrity of the SPA. The Thames Basin Heaths SPA Delivery Framework will be used to guide assessment and any avoidance or mitigation measures that may be needed. The provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to attract new residents away from the SPA is a key part of these avoidance measures, together with strategic access management on the SPA and monitoring. Since the level of development expected to come forward in this area of



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the District is extremely low, the Council will explore opportunities for cross boundary working in this regard. Alternatively, SANG may be provided by developers for individual developments where it complies with Natural England's guidelines and there is an appropriate contribution to strategic access management and monitoring. In all cases SANGs will need to be agreed with Natural England.

**5.83** Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are nationally designated sites which have important wildlife or geological value. There are currently 51 SSSIs within West Berkshire covering 1470 hectares. Six fall within the SACs. The pre-dominant (60%) designated habitats are chalk streams and grassland, and ancient woodland.

### Irreplaceable habitats

**5.84** The NPPF states that 'development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists. Within West Berkshire there are a number of irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland, ancient or veteran trees, ancient hedgerows, traditional unimproved meadows/ancient grasslands and lowland fens. However, this list is not definitive and applicants should assess whether there are any other irreplaceable habitats present on a site by site basis. Compensation measures for irreplaceable habitats will not be considered acceptable where the replacement habitat provided results in a neutral impact. Instead, the compensation to be provided will be based on the nature or extent of damage or loss to the irreplaceable habitat and will contribute towards the enhancement of biodiversity. Compensation could be in the form of habitat creation, enhancement or restoration and potentially be large in nature to reflect the irreplaceability of the habitat loss or damage. This will be assessed on a site by site basis in consultation with the relevant conservation body. If a proposal impacts upon Ancient Woodland, ancient or veteran trees or ancient hedgerows, development will also need to be in accordance with policy DM15 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows.

### Sites of Local Importance

**5.85** The District contains a range of habitats and geological features of local significance designated as Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites. Local Wildlife Sites are non-statutory sites of significant value for the conservation of wildlife. These sites represent local character and distinctiveness, and have an important role to play in meeting local and national targets for biodiversity conservation. There are 508<sup>(33)</sup> sites (c.7600 ha) designated for their county level importance and covering 11% of West Berkshire, many of which are ancient semi-natural woodland.

**5.86** Site selection criteria for Local Geological Sites have been drawn up by the Berkshire Geoconservation Group, and there are currently five sites in West Berkshire covering 150 hectares.

### Protected and Priority Species

**5.87** Some species, such as bats, great crested newts and badgers, have special protection under international and national legislation (such as the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.) and must be considered as part of the planning application process. Similarly, priority species are identified under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act as of principal importance for the purposes of conserving biodiversity in England. The Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre also holds information for rare, scarce and notable (but not limited to) species in West Berkshire.

**5.88** Where there is a reasonable likelihood that a protected or priority species may be present and affected by a proposal, comprehensive surveys will need to be undertaken to provide the evidence needed to allow a determination to be made and licenses to be sought where necessary. Appropriate compensation measures should be provided where development would disadvantage the conservation of a priority species. For example, the Sky Lark, Lapwing and other ground nesting birds require suitable habitats so that the species are not displaced as part of development which would limit the success of the species. There are many opportunities for biodiversity and geological enhancement in all parts of the District and not just on identified sites.

**5.89** Ponds are critical to great crested newts for breeding. Whilst on land, great crested newts are also dependent upon other habitats such as woodland, hedgerows, rough grassland and scrub. They are generally found within 500m of ponds, although may travel further than this. West Berkshire Council has been granted a District Licence as part of the Nature Space supported District Licence Scheme for Great Crested Newts. This enables the Council through its planning function to authorise activities affecting Great Crested Newts. Developers will be required to pay compensation for their impacts of the proposed development which will enable long term management agreements to be put in place with land owners and managers to fund and maintain newt habitats which is more effective for newts on sites and on a landscape scale.

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**Biodiversity Net Gain**

**5.90** The Council will deliver Biodiversity Net Gain in line with the latest national guidance and the Environment Act 2021. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) can be defined as “Development that leaves the environment in a measurably better state than beforehand” (DEFRA, 2018). In England, BNG is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environmental Act 2021) <sup>(34)</sup>. BNG is part of the mitigation hierarchy and applicants for planning permission will be required to demonstrate that they have made all reasonable efforts to avoid losses of significant habitats and to mitigate any significant effects on biodiversity before demonstrating how the legally required BNG will be delivered. BNG will be achieved through a combination of retaining important features of the site and by making on site and off-site biodiversity enhancements to ensure an overall measurable minimum 10% net biodiversity gain is achieved, which contributes to restoring and enhancing the wider ecological networks and biodiversity of the District. To achieve net gain, a development must have a higher biodiversity unit score after development than before development (except where exemptions apply). The most up to date Natural England Biodiversity Metric should be used to allow the assessment of biodiversity losses of a planning proposal, and where necessary the size of contribution required to offset the biodiversity loss from that development and deliver the additional 10% minimum net gain. Applicants will need to submit a Biodiversity Gain Plan (including the completed Metric calculator) to demonstrate how the required net gain is to be delivered and to enable the local planning authority to discharge the statutory condition. Development cannot commence until the Biodiversity Net Gain plan has been approved and the condition discharged.

**5.91** The Environment Act 2021 requires that any on-site or off-site biodiversity net gain must be secured for a minimum of 30 years. Applicants will therefore need to demonstrate how the proposed BNG will be delivered and managed over that period of time. The Council will require periodic monitoring to assess whether the required BNG is being delivered and will seek appropriate remedial measures where monitoring demonstrates that it is not satisfactorily delivering and maintaining the required target condition. To secure the delivery of significant on-site and off-site BNG over the 30 years period, a legal agreement between the applicants/landowners and the local planning authority will be required. Where applicants propose to use off-site credits to deliver the required net gain in whole or in part, they will need to demonstrate that these credits are from a site registered to provide such credits.

**5.92** To demonstrate that development proposals have met the requirements of Policy SP11, they will need to be accompanied by an appropriate ecological impact assessment (EclA) where this is relevant to the type of development proposed and its relationship with biodiversity and geodiversity interests. These assessments should be undertaken by a suitably qualified and/or experienced ecologist, be consistent with nationally accepted standards and guidance from the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, and will need to include a Biodiversity Gain Plan (including the completed Metric calculator) to measure the net gain achieved on site or loss that would need to be compensated. The assessment should be proportionate to the scale and impact of the development and so for householder and most minor applications this will initially involve a Preliminary Protected Species Survey or Preliminary Ecological Appraisal in order to assess if further work is required.

**Compensatory measures and long term management**

**5.93** Compensatory measures refer to all measures designed to help offset the adverse effects that cannot be further reduced by mitigation measures. Compensation for residual harm is considered the last step and will be considered where it can be evidenced that on-site improvements are not possible, may result in piecemeal mitigation on small sites, or where better opportunities exist to secure net gain elsewhere. Compensatory measures (also known as biodiversity offsetting) will normally involve off-site measures to balance losses within the development site or to offset residual effects on affected wildlife sites. Compensatory measures should provide a biodiversity net gain in accordance with policy SP11. In addition newly created habitats should be in place in time to provide fully the ecological functions that they are intended to compensate for.

**5.94** Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOA) have been identified by the Berkshire Local Nature Partnership. There are 17 which have currently been identified, either whole or in part, across the District. BOAs do not represent a statutory designation or a constraint upon development, rather, they are the areas where biodiversity improvements are likely to have the most beneficial results at a strategic scale. The Council will pursue net gains for biodiversity in and around BOAs and projects which seek to enhance biodiversity within West Berkshire, particularly based on Biodiversity Opportunity Areas, will be supported.

**5.95** Local Nature Recovery Strategies are a new system of spatial strategies for nature they will: map the most valuable existing habitat for nature; map specific proposals for creating or improving habitat for nature and wider environment goals; and agree priorities for nature's recovery. Once the Local Nature Recovery Strategy is produced

34 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/schedule/14/enacted>

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for the District it will guide the delivery of biodiversity net gain and other nature recovery measures through illustrating where the most valuable existing habitats are located and will focus on habitat creation and/or improvement where it will achieve the best outcomes. Prior to the Local Nature Recovery Strategies being produced the Council will work with applicants and relevant stakeholders to identify strategic locations for the delivery of off-setting as part of the Local Nature Recovery Network. The Biodiversity Opportunity Areas are likely to be incorporated into the Local Nature Recovery Network.

**5.96** Where compensation is required, regard will be had for the risks associated with the difficulty of success and the time-lag between any loss of biodiversity, and the achievement of the requisite habitat quality or other feature in determining the level of compensation required. To ensure the successful delivery and conservation in perpetuity, management arrangements will also need to be considered. Policy SP11 requires the long term management and maintenance of a site, and this should be achieved through a Habitat Management Plan. Details of maintenance requirements and arrangements must be set out, including who is responsible for these requirements. Funding arrangements for delivery of the long-term maintenance requirements should be demonstrated to the Council before construction starts, including measures to secure biodiversity through all phases and stages of the development.

**5.97** The Environment Act 2021 sets out that in relation to biodiversity net gain any on-site or off-site biodiversity increase must be secured for 30 years. To allow for a consistent approach the Council will define long term management and maintenance to be a minimum of 30 years. To assist in undertaking appropriate compensatory measures, the Council will require the developer to use prevailing guidance by respective designating bodies.

## 6 Delivering Housing

### Approach to housing delivery

#### Policy SP12

##### Approach to Housing Delivery

Provision will be made for at least 9,270 net additional homes in West Berkshire for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2041; an average housing requirement of 515 dwellings per annum.

New homes will be located in accordance with policy SP1: Spatial Strategy, policy SP3: Settlement hierarchy and policy DM1: Development in the Countryside.

There should be no net losses from the existing stock of homes in West Berkshire. Existing homes should be retained in residential use (or replaced at least in equal numbers, normally on the proposed site), unless there is a reasoned justification in the form of a benefit to the wider community for a change of use. Developments should utilise opportunities to make better use of the existing housing stock.

To meet the housing requirement, the following sources will ensure a continuous supply of land for housing across the plan period:

- sites allocated within the Local Plan and made neighbourhood plans;
- existing planning commitments on unallocated sites;
- existing planning commitments for communal accommodation (Use Class C2); and
- a windfall allowance.

##### Sites to be allocated in Neighbourhood Plans

The Council will supply a housing requirement figure to those qualifying bodies either preparing or updating a neighbourhood plan that intends to include residential allocations.

For those plans currently in preparation, it will be necessary to identify sites to meet the following levels of development:

- Hungerford: approximately 55 dwellings
- Lambourn: approximately 25 dwellings.

Sites allocated within this LPR cannot be counted towards the housing requirement supplied to qualifying bodies.

### Supporting Text

#### Housing need and the housing requirement

**6.1** The NPPF states that “to determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing needs assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance – unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach.... Any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for”.

**6.2** Details of the standard method for calculating the local housing need figure (LHN) are set out in the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment section of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). Using the 2014-based household projections, and an uplift based on the ratio of house prices to workplace-based earnings published by the Office for National Statistics on 22 March 2023, the LHN for the District is 515 dwellings per annum using a baseline of 2023.

**6.3** The LHN is not necessarily the same as the housing requirement, and the PPG outlines circumstances where it may be appropriate to plan for a higher number. These include, but are not limited to, situations where increases in housing need are likely to exceed past trends. This can include unmet needs from adjoining authorities, strategic infrastructure requirements that are likely to drive an increase in the local housing needs, and growth strategies for the area that are likely to be deliverable, for example where funding is in place to promote and facilitate extra growth.

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**6.4** Although the NPPF no longer refers to 'Housing Market Areas' (HMAs), the PPG provides a definition of a housing market area which refers to the importance of key functional linkages between places where people live and work. The [Berkshire \(including South Bucks\) Strategic Housing Market Assessment](#) (SHMA, February 2016) found that West Berkshire has a strong functional relationship with Wokingham Borough, Reading Borough and Bracknell Forest. As a result, there has been much collaborative working between these authorities on housing matters and associated infrastructure.

**6.5** The Reading Borough Local Plan (adopted 2019) identified a shortfall of 230 dwellings that was anticipated to arise in the latter part of plan period. The local authorities which make up the Western Berkshire HMA agreed a Statement of Common Ground for the purposes of local plan-making. This recognises Reading's unmet need set out in the adopted Reading Borough Local Plan and the principle that the need should be met within the West of Berkshire area. This agreement relates only to Reading's need as calculated by the SHMA, not by any alternative calculations of need.

**6.6** Reading Borough Council now expects to deliver enough homes over the remainder of its adopted Local Plan period (to 2036) to more than meet its own adopted housing requirement including its previously identified unmet need. Reading Borough Council therefore does not expect the West Berkshire LPR to make specific provision for the unmet need as outlined in the adopted Reading Borough Local Plan.

**6.7** No shortfall has been identified from other adjacent authorities or any of the other authorities within the Western Berkshire HMA.

### Meeting the housing requirement

**6.8** Several sources will ensure a continuous supply of land for housing across the plan period. These include:

- sites allocated within the Local Plan and made neighbourhood plans;
- existing planning commitments on unallocated sites;
- existing planning commitments for communal accommodation (use class C2); and
- a windfall allowance.

### Sites allocated within the Local Plan and neighbourhood plans

**6.9** *Retained Local Plan and Stratfield Mortimer NDP allocations:*

**6.10** The plan period of the LPR (2023 - 2041) overlaps with the previous plan period (2006 – 2026) and account therefore needs to be taken of sites that were allocated in the adopted Core Strategy, the adopted HSA DPD and the made Stratfield Mortimer NDP. The relevant policy criteria for the retained Local Plan allocations included in Chapter 8 still apply to these sites to cover events such as revised schemes being submitted or a planning permission lapsing.

**6.11** This element of the supply consists of allocations with and without planning permission at 31 March 2023. Where a site has an extant permission, the number of dwellings permitted has been used for the purposes of calculating the housing supply. For those sites without permission at 31 March 2023, the number allocated within the policy has been used.

**6.12** *Allocations in the Local Plan which are not being retained:*

**6.13** Several sites that were allocated within the Core Strategy and HSA DPD have not been retained in the LPR and this is because development is at an advanced stage of construction. At 31 March 2023, there were 451 units outstanding on these sites.

**6.14** *New sites allocated in the LPR:*

**6.15** The Council's overall approach to identify land for allocation is set out in policy SP1 and in policy SP3. Assessment of the availability, suitability and viability of individual sites has taken place through the [Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment](#) (HELAA) and further technical and sustainability assessments have been undertaken. Sites proposed for allocation are detailed in policies SP13 and SP14, as well as policies RSA1 to RSA29, and these include additional housing supply on newly allocated sites of some 2,400 homes. This includes the strategic allocation at North East Thatcham for up to approximately 2,500 homes, with approximately 1,760 homes expected to be delivered within the plan period.



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**6.16 Sites to be allocated in Neighbourhood Plans:**

**6.17** The NPPF requires that within the housing requirement for the whole District, strategic policies should also set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations.

**6.18** Should any qualifying body decide to prepare a neighbourhood plan that includes residential allocations or update a made neighbourhood plan to include residential allocations, then the Council will supply a housing requirement figure.

**6.19** In meeting this requirement, the policy clarifies that sites allocated within this LPR cannot be counted towards meeting the figure supplied to a qualifying body. In addition, policy SP3 also makes clear that any NDP allocations within defined settlement boundaries will not count towards meeting the housing requirement figure in policy SP12 either. This is because there is a presumption in favour of development within defined settlement boundaries and to do so would be inconsistent with the assumptions made in the LPR about the District's overall housing land supply.

**6.20** A number of neighbourhood plans are in preparation within the District. Whilst it is not compulsory for neighbourhood plans to include allocations it is proposed that approximately a further 80 dwellings will be allocated through the neighbourhood plans for Hungerford and Lambourn. The delivery of these neighbourhood plans will be monitored by the Council to ensure the housing requirement is met. The Council reserves the right to identify opportunities to address any shortfall if the Hungerford and Lambourn neighbourhood plans are not made within two years of the adoption of the LPR.

**Existing planning commitments on unallocated sites:**

**6.21** Existing permissions for housing on unallocated sites will also contribute to supply. Over 1,729 units on windfall sites, those not specifically identified in the development plan, already had permission or prior approval for permitted development at 31 March 2023. 31 March 2023 is the date when the annual monitoring of development progress takes place.

**Existing planning commitments for communal accommodation (Use Class C2):**

**6.22** The housing supply and delivery section of the PPG requires local planning authorities "to count housing provided for older people, including residential institutions in Use Class C2, as part of their housing land supply. This contribution is based on the amount of accommodation released in the housing market." The Housing Delivery Test Measurement Rulebook gives the ratio for communal accommodation based on the national average number of adults in all households as 1.8 based on the 2011 Census. For example, a 90 bed care home would equate to 50 net dwellings ( $90 \div 1.8 = 50$ ).

**6.23** At 31 March 2023 there were existing permissions for residential institutions in Use Class C2 which equate to 91 units.

**Windfall allowance**

**6.24** The NPPF states that local planning authorities should support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes (para. 68). Policies within the LPR identify the most sustainable settlements and direct development to the built up areas within settlement boundaries. The Council also publishes and maintains a [register of brownfield sites](#) that are available and potentially suitable for residential development across the District.

**6.25** The Council has assessed the contribution likely to be made from windfall sites based on past trends. It is clear that windfall sites have consistently played an important role in the housing supply of the District: approximately 72% of completions in the period 2006 - 2023 were on unallocated, windfall sites. The windfall allowance, of 140 dwellings per annum is, in comparison, relatively modest and will add flexibility to the supply over the plan period. It has been based on the average annual delivery on small sites of less than 10 units over the period 2006 – 2023. The calculated allowance set out in Table 2 takes account of existing small permissions that are already included in the supply by deducting these from the allowance of 140 dpa over the period 2023 to 2041. Any future windfall sites of 10 units or more are not included in the calculations of future supply, which introduces flexibility to the figures.

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**Housing supply 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2041**

Table 2 shows the supply position over the plan period.

**Table 2 Housing Supply 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2041**

Supply category	No. of net dwellings
<b>Sites allocated within the Local Plan and made neighbourhood plans</b>	
<b><i>Retained Local Plan and Stratfield Mortimer NDP allocations</i></b>	
• Core Strategy: Sandleford Park Strategic Site	1,500
• Housing Site Allocations DPD Sites	
• Sites with extant permissions	887
• Sites without extant permissions	110
• Stratfield Mortimer NDP site	58
<b><i>Local Plan allocations not being retained (due to site being at an advanced stage of construction)</i></b>	
• Core Strategy: Newbury Racecourse	398
• Housing Site Allocations DPD Sites	53
<b><i>New sites allocated in the LPR</i></b>	2,421
<b><i>Sites to be allocated in Neighbourhood Development Plans</i></b>	
• Hungerford	55
• Lambourn	25
<b><i>Subtotal of sites allocated within the Local Plan and neighbourhood plans</i></b>	5,507
<b>Existing planning commitments on unallocated sites</b>	1,729
<b>Existing planning commitments for C2 Use Class communal accommodation</b>	91
<b>Windfall allowance to 2041</b>	2,166
<b>TOTAL housing supply</b>	<b>9,493</b>

**Housing Trajectory**

**6.26** The NPPF requires local planning authorities to illustrate the expected rate of housing delivery over the plan period through a housing trajectory. In preparing the trajectory the Council engages with landowners and developers and gives consideration to likely lead in times, start dates and build rates on different types of site. The housing

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trajectory showing the projected timeline for the delivery of housing developments across the plan period in relation to the annual average requirement is included in Appendix 7. The trajectory will be updated annually and reported in the [Authority Monitoring Report](#) (AMR).

### Five Year Housing Land Supply

**6.27** National policy now requires local plans to demonstrate that the housing trajectory includes a sufficient supply of deliverable sites for the five year period post-adoption to meet the housing requirement plus the appropriate buffer to ensure a flexible and robust supply.

**6.28** The assessment of the five year supply for the post adoption period beginning 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2031 is set out in the housing trajectory in Appendix 7, and demonstrates a supply of 5.9 years. The calculation is outlined in the table below.

**Table 3 5 year housing land supply 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2031**

Requirement including a 5% buffer (A)	2,704 (515 x 5 x 1.05)
Total deliverable housing land supply (B)	3,195
<b>Total deliverable housing supply in years (B/A x 5)</b>	<b>5.9 years</b>

**6.29** The ability to demonstrate a five year land supply of land for housing is important in the decision making process. If the supply falls below the required amount, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies and the plan-led approach advocated in the NPPF is compromised. The allocation of additional sites in this LPR aims to ensure that a five year supply can continue to be demonstrated and is maintained throughout the plan period.

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## Sandleford strategic site allocation

## Policy SP13

**Sandleford Strategic Site Allocation**

Land as shown on the Policies Map, is allocated for a residential development comprising approximately 1,500 dwellings.

A Mineral Resource Assessment (MRA) will be required to be provided for each development phase of the site.

Detailed flood risk assessments accompanied by hydraulic modelling will be required for each development phase of the site.

The site will be delivered to achieve a sustainable, comprehensive development and ensure the timely and co-ordinated provision of infrastructure.

The Council will be supportive of proposals which have regard, and positively respond, to the [Sandleford Park SPD](#) (2015) which provides a framework for the future development of the site.

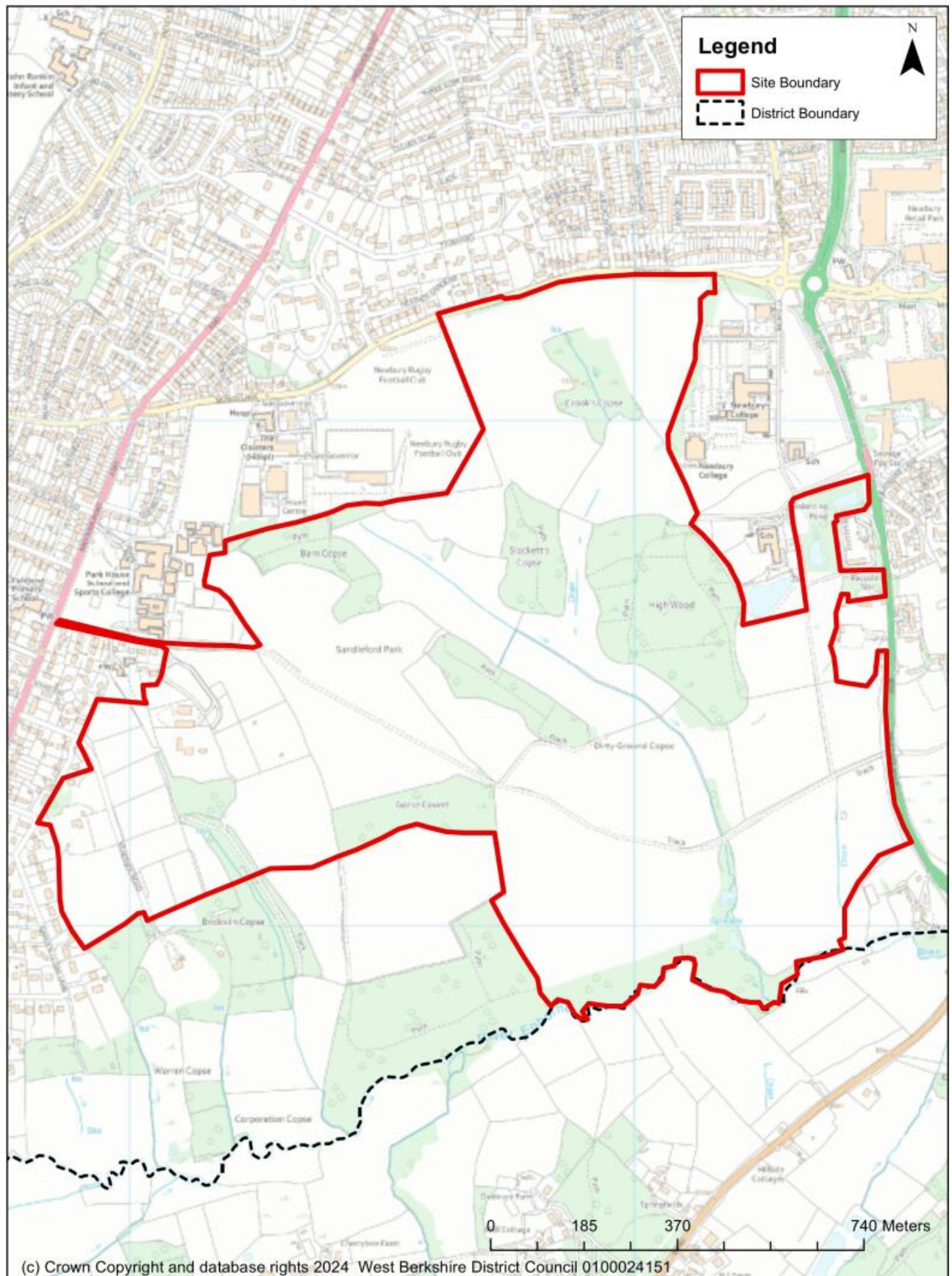
Development of the site will be expected to deliver:

- At least 40% affordable housing, in accordance with policy SP16;
- An appropriate mix of housing types, tenures and sizes having regard to policy SP15 and the Sandleford Park SPD, and therefore an emphasis on family homes;
- Development to be limited to the north and west of the site in order to respect the landscape sensitivity of the wider site and to protect the registered historic landscape and setting of the former Sandleford Priory;
- On-site energy generation from renewable, low carbon and/or zero carbon energy sources to assist in the delivery of a carbon neutral development, in accordance with policies SP5 and DM4 and having regard to the Sandleford Park SPD;
- Four primary all vehicle accesses:
  - Two off Monks Lane;
  - One through to Andover Road via Warren Road; and
  - One onto the A339, via Highwood Copse Way.
- Sustainable transport through routes connecting the A339, Monks Lane and Andover Road for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport;
- Further infrastructure improvements will be delivered in accordance with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
- Provision of a new primary school on site and the extension of Park House School;
- Provision of a local centre to include retail facilities, community facilities and employment space
- A network of green infrastructure to be provided which will:
  - Conserve the areas of ancient woodland and provide appropriate buffers between the development and the ancient woodland;
  - Mitigate the increased recreational pressure on nearby sensitive wildlife sites, secure strategic biodiversity enhancements;
  - Provide a country park or equivalent area of public open space in the southern part of the site which will be retained outside of the settlement boundary for Newbury; and
  - Respect the landscape significance of the site on the A339 approach road into Newbury.



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## Sandleford Park





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### Supporting text

**6.30** The vision for Newbury contained in the Core Strategy DPD (2012) was that the town would retain its traditional market town heritage whilst undergoing infrastructure improvements and development and renewal of commercial uses and housing, to create a vibrant 21<sup>st</sup> century centre. It would be the main focus for housing growth over the period with new housing development well integrated into the town, supporting the vitality of the town centre and accompanied by enhanced services, facilities and infrastructure.

**6.31** In reviewing the vision for Newbury as part of the LPR, the Council prepared the West Berkshire Strategic Vision 2050, which offers a clear spatial steer as to where growth in Newbury and Thatcham might go over the longer-term period up to 2050. Newbury will remain a focus for development whilst retaining its traditional market town heritage and continue to fulfil its key role as the administrative centre and major town centre for the District. Opportunities will continue to be taken to regenerate and enhance the townscape of the town centre and its periphery.

**6.32** The Council's spatial strategy is outlined in policy SP1 and affirms a continued approach to focusing development in settlements in line with a District-wide settlement hierarchy (contained in policy SP3). Newbury, as part of the Newbury and Thatcham urban area, is a sustainable location for development as confirmed in the Strategic Vision 2050.

**6.33** The Sandleford Park site to the south of Newbury comprises approximately 134 hectares of land. It is bordered to the north by existing development along Monks Lane and could accommodate approximately 1,500 dwellings with associated community facilities and services.

**6.34** The site was allocated as a strategic development in the Core Strategy DPD (2012). Since then, a SPD for the Sandleford Park site was adopted (2013) and set out the detailed guidelines for the distribution of uses and design of the site. To address some concerns that there was potential that the site may not come forward in a comprehensive manner, the SPD was amended in 2015 to reflect the need for a single planning application for the site to ensure that the site is comprehensively delivered, with timely and well planned provision of infrastructure. As part of this a housing and infrastructure phasing plan is expected to accompany planning proposals for the site.

**6.35** Whilst applications for developing the site have been considered by the Council, it does not yet benefit from full planning permission, although a large part of the site has outline consent. The site was submitted to the Council as part of the call for sites for the LPR and was assessed within the HELAA (2020). In reviewing the evidence, it remains the firm belief of the Council that Sandleford Park is the most appropriate location for strategic housing delivery in Newbury.

**6.36** Hence, Sandleford remains allocated for development. The area is accessible to facilities and services in Newbury town centre and is also close to other retail and educational facilities. Whilst the site has not delivered housing to date, the Council is confident that the site will deliver housing within the plan period of the LPR and is actively working to ensure this.

**6.37** British Geological Survey data indicates that the site is underlain in part by construction aggregate mineral deposits. Therefore, a Mineral Resource Assessment will be carried out to determine the possibility of prior extraction of the mineral in accordance with saved policies 1, 2 and 2A of the Replacement Minerals Local Plan for Berkshire.

**6.38** The Housing Site Allocations DPD (HSA DPD) was adopted in 2017 and contains a generic policy, Policy GS1, which includes a criterion applying to all allocated sites whereby they will be master planned and delivered as a whole and that a single planning application will be submitted for each to ensure a comprehensive approach to development is achieved. That policy has been reviewed, and deleted, as part of the LPR. This policy (SP13) now ensures that a comprehensive approach to development at Sandleford is achieved. This policy takes precedence over the SPD requirement for a single planning application, but makes clear that the site must be delivered to achieve comprehensive development and ensure the timely and co-ordinated provision of infrastructure in line with the site's Infrastructure Delivery Plan as required in the Sandleford Park Supplementary Planning Document.

**6.39** In addition, the importance of the SPD is highlighted such that the Council will be supportive of proposals which have regard, and positively respond, to it as it provides a framework for the future development of the site. This includes having regard to the Development Principles listed in Section F.

**6.40** Following the adoption of the HSA DPD in 2017, the settlement boundary at Sandleford was amended such that land between Garden Close Lane and Kendrick Road is now included within the settlement boundary of Newbury. As there is now a presumption in favour of sustainable development at this location, the boundary of the site is updated to include this land.

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**6.41** Criteria for the delivery of the site are included in the policy above. As work on the LPR progresses, these will be further developed and refined to include any additional, specific, mitigation measures and infrastructure requirements identified by stakeholders engaging with the process.

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## North East Thatcham strategic site allocation

**Policy SP14****North East Thatcham Strategic Site Allocation**

Land as shown on the Policies Map is allocated for the delivery of a comprehensive, sustainable, low carbon, urban extension comprising of distinct neighbourhoods defined by their landscape and connected and contributing to Thatcham, and woven through with natural habitats and links. Proposals must demonstrate how the provision of all infrastructure, services, open space and facilities will meet the needs of the development and be delivered in a timely and co-ordinated way across the whole site alongside the phased delivery of residential development.

**Homes**

The site is allocated for the phased delivery of up to approximately 2,500 dwellings, with the final number of dwellings to be determined by the adopted Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) required by this policy. These dwellings will comprise an appropriate mix of housing types, tenures and sizes having regard to policy SP15. In addition at least:

- 40% of dwellings will be affordable housing in accordance with policy SP16; and
- 3% of dwellings will be delivered via serviced custom/self-build plots.

**Community**

The site will provide a range of community facilities including:

- Local centres providing local retail facilities and small-scale business-use, including for community use;
- Primary Healthcare provision and associated infrastructure, which is operationally and financially viable, the details of which should be agreed with the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (BOB-ICB) or other such appropriate body, taking into account the feasibility study carried out by BOB-ICB. Further detailed feasibility work should be carried out at the applicant's expense in collaboration with BOB-ICB;
- Early years and primary school provision on site with land to be provided and build costs to be met by the applicant;
- Secondary school and SEND provision, including the provision of land and a financial contribution. The nature and cost of the required provision will be informed by a feasibility study, undertaken at the applicants expense and prepared in collaboration with the Council and local stakeholders;
- Community indoor facility to be used for sport and community uses with a variety of room sizes;

**Green Infrastructure**

The site will provide a comprehensive network of green infrastructure and public open space across the whole site in accordance with policy SP10 which will respond positively to the sensitivities of the landscape, protect and enhance landscape and biodiversity features of value within and around the site and make provision for biodiversity net gain. This provision will include:

- Conservation of the areas of ancient woodland by providing appropriate buffers between the development and the ancient woodland;
- Enhancements for biodiversity;
- A band of green infrastructure/new community park across the higher land on the northern part of the allocation (as shown on the indicative map) to be retained outside the settlement boundary. This is to create a buffer between the built development of the allocation and the adjoining countryside and the village of Upper Bucklebury to the north. The precise nature of the band of GI is to be informed by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and the masterplanning process, having regard to the location of the site within the setting of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape;
- Green infrastructure and public open space within the developed parts of the site in addition to the community park, taking into account the requirements set out in policy DM40;

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- Greenways which connect through the site and facilitate connectivity to the wider landscape and the existing Public Rights of Way network;
- A Public Rights of Way Strategy to demonstrate how existing Public Rights of Way will be protected and enhanced and how new ones will be established, including bridleway links and safe crossing points;
- Provision of allotments
- Outdoor formal and informal sports pitches and areas; and
- A Green Infrastructure Strategy to show how the network of multifunctional green infrastructure will be delivered across the site to include a strategy for the protection of existing and provision of new trees, hedgerows and other appropriate native planting.

### Transport

Measures will be included to improve accessibility by, and encourage use of, sustainable transport modes.

Development proposals for the site will be supported by a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan to provide detail on how this will be achieved, including:

- Active travel improvements on routes between the site, Thatcham town centre and the railway station;
- Multiple access points and a vehicular through route;
- Sustainable transport through routes;
- Mitigation of the development's impacts on the highways network with improvements to existing junctions where they are needed and delivery of new access points for all forms of movement and transport to the site at locations to be agreed with the planning authority;
- How adverse impacts on air quality will be minimised; and
- Promotion and encouragement of sustainable modes of travel, in accordance with policy DM45.

### Sustainability

Development proposals for the site will be supported by an Energy Statement or a detailed energy section with the Sustainability Statement which will set out measures in accordance with policies SP5 and DM4.

A Construction and Operations Management Plan (COMP) to accompany any planning application on the site. The COMP shall safeguard any below ground infrastructure on the site from operational works, including the provision of an appropriate buffer.

### Flooding and Water Environment

- Development proposals for the site will be supported by a Flood Risk Assessment, in accordance with policy SP6, which will take into account the Thatcham Surface Water Management Plan and set out:
  - Adequate flood mitigation measures to ensure there is no detrimental impact on flood risk in Thatcham;
  - Surface water drainage management approaches that could deliver net gain for Thatcham town, including use of on-site sustainable drainage systems (SuDS); and
  - Flood alleviation measures already present on the site and how they will be retained, protected and enhanced.

Development proposals also need to consider water resources and waste water in accordance with policy DM7.

### Biodiversity

Development proposals for the site will be supported by a Biodiversity Strategy in accordance with policy SP11 which will set out:

- How biodiversity net gain will be achieved including through habitat restoration and linkages;
- How priority habitats and ecological features will be protected and enhanced;
- The creation of new ecological features; and
- A site-wide Biodiversity Management Plan.



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**Landscape**

The site lies in the setting of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape and will be developed in accordance with policy SP2 and the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment (2021) for the site.

Development proposals for the site will be supported by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) in accordance with the Landscape Institute Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd ed. 2013. This will inform the Masterplan SPD which will determine the final capacity, design and layout of the site and requirements for green infrastructure and the provision of public open space.

**Heritage**

Development proposals for the site will be supported by a Historic Environment Strategy in accordance with policy SP9 to demonstrate how the site's historical development, archaeological remains and historic buildings and parkland will inform the scheme and help to create a sense of place.

**Lighting**

Development proposals for the site will be supported by a Lighting Strategy which will include consideration of dark skies, particularly in relation to the nearby North Wessex Downs National Landscape, and measures to mitigate the impact on biodiversity.

**Mineral Resources**

Development proposals for the site will be supported by a Mineral Resource Assessment (MRA) which identifies any potential viable mineral resources on the site and considers firstly prior extraction, and then incidental extraction as part of the development.

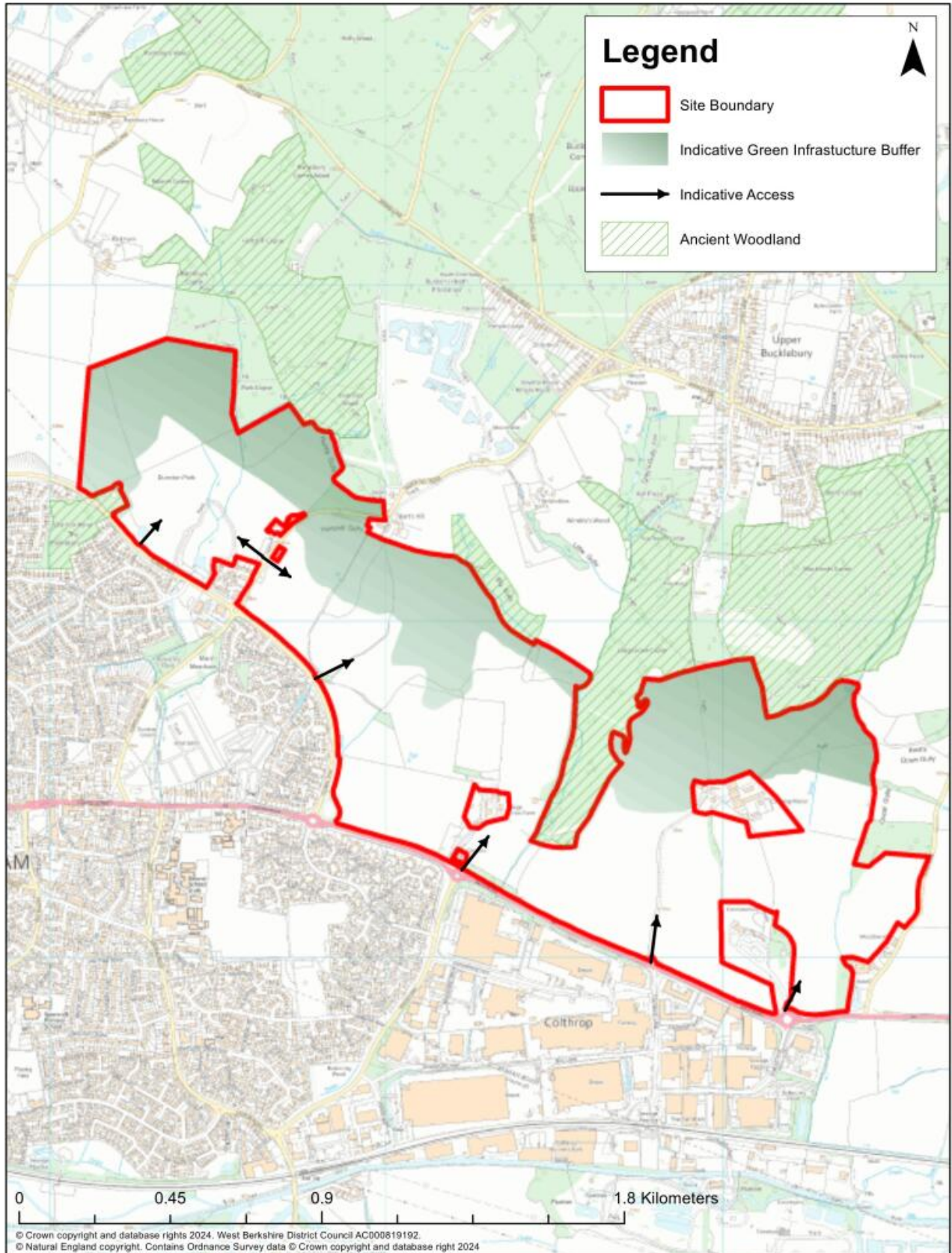
**Masterplanning and Design Code**

The site will be masterplanned and a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) prepared by the Council. The SPD will be funded by the applicant and prepared in collaboration with the applicant, relevant town and parish councils, the community and other stakeholders. The SPD will be adopted by the Council prior to the submission of a planning application. The Masterplan SPD will provide the framework to guide the development and should be based on the evidence base underpinning the Local Plan and outcome of further technical work prepared in line with requirements of this policy. The Masterplan SPD will determine the location and extent of built development, land uses, green infrastructure including the extent of the green buffer, key access arrangements, community and other infrastructure. Proposals must have regard to, and demonstrate how, they have been guided positively by the adopted Masterplan SPD.

A design code, prepared by the developer and agreed with the local planning authority, should be secured by a planning condition as part of any outline planning permission.'



## North East Thatcham



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### Supporting Text

**6.42** Thatcham has experienced rapid population growth during the post-war period, expanding more than 5 times since 1951. This growth has been accompanied by infrastructure growth in transport, and a considerable expansion in the built-up area to match the population growth. However, in recent decades, the provision of social infrastructure has not kept pace with housing growth.

**6.43** The vision for Thatcham contained in the Core Strategy DPD (2012) was that Thatcham town centre would be a focus for regeneration, enabling the town to fulfil its role within the District's Hierarchy of Centres by improving the retail offer and enhancing the streetscape. The provision of leisure and community facilities for all ages would be improved and encouraged within the town centre. The town would become more self-contained providing a range of job opportunities and encouraging residents to shop and socialise locally. Additionally, the Core Strategy concentrated housing expansion in Newbury.

**6.44** The [Thatcham Strategic Growth Study](#) (TSGS) was carried out in 2019 - 2020 to understand how to plan for growth in Thatcham over the plan period. [The West Berkshire Strategic Vision 2050](#) was drafted in 2022 to guide sustainable growth over the long term in the context of paragraph 22 of the updated NPPF published in 2021. These documents include relevant information that form part of the justification for the LPR's spatial strategy and the strategic allocations in Newbury and Thatcham.

**6.45** This evidence draws on other recent evidence produced to support the LPR such as the Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) (2019) and the Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) (2020). The TSGS shows that Thatcham compares poorly to other similar centres in terms of overall service provision, including public services and commercial services. The town's self-image is of a large village, rather than as a thriving market town.

**6.46** In addition, it demonstrates that recent planning decisions support the approach that only growth of a strategic scale can support the service provision and regeneration that Thatcham requires.

**6.47** The TSGS considers the sites promoted to the Council as part of the LPR and recommends that if strategic development were to occur in Thatcham, the most appropriate location to examine in more detail is the site promoted at North East Thatcham.

**6.48** The western edge of the site is adjacent to the existing Thatcham settlement boundary along Floral Way and Bath Road (A4). The eastern end of the site is adjacent to Colthrop Industrial Estate, which is contiguous with Thatcham.

**6.49** Stage 3 of the TSGS examines the North East Thatcham site in detail and, using community objectives which emerged during a community stakeholder workshop, provides context for how development could come forward at the site.

**6.50** The Council's spatial strategy is outlined in policy SP1 and affirms a continued approach to focusing development in settlements in line with a District-wide settlement hierarchy (contained in policy SP3). Thatcham, as part of the Newbury and Thatcham urban area, is a sustainable location for development as confirmed in the Strategic Vision 2050. The TSGS shows the most sustainable way for development to come forward in the town and this policy draws on that evidence.

**6.51** Hence, Thatcham is now a focus for regeneration, for new housing and for improved provision of services and facilities. A new urban extension to the north east of the town is allocated for development and will provide a new residential neighbourhood with supporting facilities and green infrastructure and enable long-term planning for Thatcham's future. Delivery of up to approximately 2,500 dwellings is anticipated, with the final capacity informed through the LVIA and masterplanning process.

**6.52** The indicative site map shows locations for access points and for the band of green infrastructure buffer to the northern part of the site. The final location and extent of built development, access, landscaping and green infrastructure will be determined following the completion of further work such as LVIA and the Masterplan SPD required by policy SP14.

**6.53** It is anticipated that approximately half of the site will be set aside as green infrastructure, to serve the new population at North East Thatcham and be retained in perpetuity, taking into account the site's location within the setting of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. An area, across the north of the site, will provide a buffer between the new development and the existing community of Upper Bucklebury to the north and comprise an extensive

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area of multi-functional green space, which will protect ancient woodland and areas of ecological value while providing opportunities for informal recreation. In addition, green infrastructure will be provided within the areas of built development. Built development and the green infrastructure buffer should respond to the findings of the LVIA and ensure an appropriate form of development taking into account the constraints of the site, including below ground infrastructure. Areas of isolated development should be avoided.

**6.54** The area of green infrastructure shown on the indicative map takes into account the landscape work undertaken to support the TSGS, and uses the 105m contour to the west and central portion of the site, with the 100m contour to the east. The gas pipeline across the north of the site is required to have designated standoff areas and given its location to the north of the site development to the north of the pipeline is not considered appropriate. The final extent of the green infrastructure buffer will be informed by the LVIA, and other relevant background work carried out to support the Masterplan SPD.

**6.55** The settlement boundary for Thatcham is an exception to the settlement boundary review criteria set out in Appendix 2, and will be revised through a future Plan to reflect the extent of the built up area once that has been defined through the masterplanning and planning application processes required by policy SP14. Consideration of whether it is appropriate to designate a gap between Thatcham and Upper Bucklebury, in line with policy DM2, will be considered once the settlement boundary has been redrawn.

**6.56** The site will deliver a number of community benefits, both for the new residents of the site and for existing residents of Thatcham. The community infrastructure required to support the development is set out in the policy, the specific details, including the location, size, phasing and funding arrangements will be determined through the planning application stage. There may be opportunities for community infrastructure to be provided off site, or for improvements to existing services or facilities to be made as a result of the development.

**6.57** New education provision, including early years, primary and secondary provision will be required to support the needs of the development. Early years and primary provision will be provided on site. The requirements for secondary and SEND provision will be determined following the completion of a feasibility study which will consider the best solution for secondary education requirements in Thatcham. It is expected that land will be required on the site, and financial contributions to support delivery of the preferred solution.

**6.58** Primary healthcare facilities should be provided, with associated car parking and landscaping. The facilities should be operationally and financially viable and take into account the feasibility study commissioned by the NHS Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (BOB-ICB). The facility should provide room sizes that comply with the Department of Health Building Note 11-01 (or any successor documents). The provision and any contractual arrangement of the facility will need to be agreed as part of any planning application coming forward on the site. Where the onsite provision of a facility in accordance with this policy is not viable, the Council will expect other offsite mitigation measures, to ensure the primary healthcare provision can support the new population growth. The applicant should engage with the BOB-ICB at an early stage to discuss the details of any offsite provision. A further feasibility study, to identify other mitigation measures, would need to be carried out at the applicant's expense and any identified offsite mitigation measures will be funded by the applicant through developer contributions.

**6.59** Flood risk and surface water drainage is a key consideration for Thatcham, following extensive surface water flooding in the summer of 2007 as a result of high intensity rainfall overwhelming storm drains and culverted streams. The flood event was considered to be in the order of a 1 in 200 year event. Following the flooding various studies and strategies were developed to identify opportunities for reducing flood risk in the town. The Thatcham Surface Water Management Plan (2010) sets out a number of proposed measures to reduce flood risk in Thatcham, focusing on retaining runoff upstream of Thatcham to reduce peak flows through the existing urban area and drainage system. A number of flood attenuation ponds have been constructed on the North East Thatcham site, and these are to be retained and enhanced in addition to Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) provided on the site. An Integrated Water Supply and Drainage Strategy involving localised and strategic flood management measures will be required, in line with the requirements of the West Berkshire Sustainable Drainage Systems SPD (2018).

**6.60** Below ground infrastructure is present on the site. The design and layout of the site will need to take their presence into account and appropriate stand offs will be required to ensure there is no impact on operational requirements.

**6.61** British Geological Survey data identifies that the site is underlain in part by construction aggregate mineral deposits. Therefore, a Minerals Resource Assessment will be carried out to determine the possibility of prior extraction of the mineral in accordance with the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2020-2037.



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**6.62** The Council will lead the development of a Masterplan SPD, which will be produced in collaboration with the applicant, relevant town and parish councils, the community and other stakeholders and funded by the developer as part of a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA). It will be based on existing, and updated, evidence and information already produced to support the allocation of the site, including the Thatcham Strategic Growth Study. The Masterplan SPD will determine the location and extent of built development, land uses and green infrastructure including the extent of the green buffer, key access arrangements, community and other infrastructure. The Masterplan SPD will be adopted by the Council prior to submission of a planning application. It is the Council's intention that the Masterplan SPD will be adopted within 12 months of adoption of the LPR.

**6.63** A Design Code will be developed alongside the planning application, secured by condition, and agreed with the Council prior to submission of the first reserved matters application.

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## Housing type and mix

### Policy SP15

#### Housing Type and Mix

Residential development will contribute to the delivery of an appropriate mix of dwelling tenures, types and sizes to meet the existing and future housing needs of all sectors of the community, including those with specialist requirements.

Residential developments should provide a mix of unit sizes. All developments, including conversions, of 10 or more dwellings (gross) will provide a mix of dwelling sizes reflecting the requirements of Table 3 in the supporting text to this policy, or any more recent evidence published by the Council.

In determining any variation from this mix, the Council will have regard to:

- a. The most up to date evidence on local housing needs;
- b. The appropriate mix for the site's size and location;
- c. For conversions or redevelopment, any physical factors limiting a particular mix; and
- d. Site specific viability.

All dwellings should be delivered as accessible and adaptable dwellings in accordance with Building Regulations M4(2). Around 10% of the new market housing should meet the wheelchair accessible standard M4(3) wheelchair user dwellings. The Council will also support proposals for affordable wheelchair adaptable and accessible homes where evidenced by need. Affordable wheelchair adaptable and accessible homes will be negotiated on a site by site basis. The Council will take account of site-specific factors, evidence of site suitability and/or whether it would render development unviable in determining whether these requirements should apply.

In order to support local communities to meet their housing needs the Council will normally support the development of housing schemes that are initiated by local communities. These may include schemes involving affordable housing, co-housing, community self-build, or housing for people with specific needs such as older people or those with disabilities.

## Supporting Text

**6.64** In addition to ensuring that an appropriate amount of housing is provided in suitable locations, it is also important to ensure that there is a wide choice and mix of housing to meet existing and future local needs, and to help secure mixed and balanced communities. Housing provision must support the needs of the whole community, including the provision of both market and affordable housing, and reflect the needs of specific groups such as, but not limited to, families with children, single person households, the elderly, those households with specific needs, those wishing to build or commission their own home, Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and those seeking houseboat moorings. Developers will therefore need to consider housing mix in their proposals, including any local evidence of housing needs or evidence in parish or neighbourhood plans which may be important considerations even for small sites, particularly in rural areas.

**6.65** The Berkshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment <sup>(35)</sup> (SHMA) and the subsequent Local Housing Needs Evidence Updates <sup>(36)</sup> established the mix of new homes required and the need for specialist housing. The evidence supports maximising affordable housing on new development sites and requirements for affordable housing are set out in policy SP16. Policy DM19 and policy DM18 provide policy for specialist housing and self and custom build respectively. Policy DM30: Residential space standards sets out the requirement for residential development to meet nationally described space standards in order to ensure that new homes provide sufficient space for basic daily activities and needs.

**6.66** The latest evidence from the 2022 Iceni Local Housing Need Assessment recommends the following mix for future dwelling sizes by tenure required for market and affordable housing:

35 [Berkshire \(including South Bucks\) Strategic Housing Market Assessment](#): GL Hearn February 2016

36 Iceni Projects May 2020 and July 2022



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**Table 4 Mix of housing by size and tenure**

	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4+ bedrooms
Market	5-10%	40-45%	35-40%	10-15%
Affordable home ownership	20-25%	45-50%	20-25%	5-10%
Affordable housing (rented)	30-35%	35-40%	20-25%	5-10%

To ensure mixed and balanced communities, a mix of dwelling sizes, in line with the table above, will be sought from developments delivering new homes. While developments will be expected to reflect this mix, rigid application of these requirements may not be appropriate in all cases. When considering the appropriate mix, the Council will have regard to:

- the scale of development;
- individual site circumstances including location, character of surrounding area, and any physical building constraints, particularly in relation to conversions; and market conditions.
- viability, subject to the applicant submitting a viability assessment at the application stage and its independent assessment by the Council; and
- information within made neighbourhood plans and any associated local housing needs surveys.

**6.67** Given the expected increase in the number of older people during the plan period and the specific needs of those with long-term health conditions and disabilities, there is a requirement for homes which are adaptable and accessible (see policy DM19). The dwelling mix set out above does not apply to developments for sheltered housing, extra care housing and registered care provision. In such developments, the appropriate mix of dwelling sizes will be assessed against the specific needs of intended occupiers.

**6.68** Improved space standards are gradually being introduced through building regulations to ensure that housing has adequate space to meet wider needs and can be adapted easily to meet changing future needs. These optional standards, specifically M4(2) (accessible and adaptable buildings) and M4(3) (wheelchair user dwellings)

**6.69** In a September 2020 Government consultation proposals were set out to increase the required access standards for all housing through building regulations. This consultation set out a range of options for how standards can be improved. As a result of the consultation the Government has proposed to make all M4(2) standards mandatory for all housing development. This is to be implemented as a minimum standard through changes to the building regulations in due course. The M4(3) (Category 3: Wheelchair user dwellings) would continue as now where there is a local planning policy in place in which a need has been identified and evidenced

**6.70** The projected change in the number of people with disabilities as highlighted in the Housing Needs Assessment Update (2022) provides clear evidence justifying delivering 'accessible and adaptable' homes as defined in Part M4(2) of Building Regulations, subject to viability and site suitability.

**6.71** The Whole Plan Viability Assessment of the cost of meeting this standard does not consider that it would have any significant impact on viability and would potentially provide a greater number of homes that will allow households to remain in the same property for longer. The inclusion of the requirement for all housing development to meet the Part M4(2) Category 2 is considered to be justified.

**6.72** In relation to the M4(3) (Category 3: Wheelchair user dwellings) the Housing Needs Assessment Update (2022) identifies a need for around 1,200 dwellings to be for wheelchair users (meeting technical standard M4(3)) and recommends that around 10% of market homes should meet this with a proportion in the affordable sector. Provision to meet the higher wheelchair user standard M4(3) will be encouraged where this is practicable given site considerations and financial viability.

**6.73** The Council supports the development of housing schemes that are initiated by local communities. The Council will expect that the proposal has been initiated by a legitimate local community group which is able to demonstrate that it has a democratic structure, is not for profit, is controlled by the local community and has appropriate policies and procedures in place. Community groups may wish to consider partnering with organisations such as housing

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associations, landowners and agents in bringing forward sites for development. Local communities includes any groups with members that have a connection to West Berkshire, for example residents or people who work within the District.

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**Affordable housing****Policy SP16****Affordable Housing**

Affordable homes will be sought from residential development. The Council's priority and starting expectation will be for affordable housing to be provided on-site.

The following levels of affordable housing provision will be required:

- a. On development sites of 10 dwellings or more (or 0.5 hectares or more), 30% provision on previously developed land and 40% on greenfield land; or
- b. In areas designated as rural under Section 157(1) of the Housing Act 1985 <sup>(37)</sup> on development sites of between five and nine dwellings, 20% provision.

The levels set out above represent the default position and a lower provision of affordable housing should not be sought, other than in exceptional circumstances and where fully justified by the applicant through clear evidence set out in a publicly available viability assessment.

If a lower provision of affordable housing is sought in exceptional circumstances, a review mechanism may be required to ensure that if viability improves during the lifetime of the development project, additional affordable housing, up to the levels specified in this policy, is provided.

In exceptional circumstances where site specific issues inhibit the provision of on-site affordable housing, or where provision can be better met on an alternative site in the district, off-site contributions may be accepted as an alternative, where it would result in mixed and balanced communities.

In determining residential applications the Council will assess the site size, suitability and type of units to be delivered. The Council will seek a tenure split of 70% social rented and 30% affordable home ownership. The priority is for social rent, but the Council will consider the potential for affordable rent as an alternative, only when necessitated by site specifics, viability of delivery and identified local need.

First Homes must be delivered, sold and let in accordance with the Council's First Homes policy.

For schemes that consist of 100% build to rent units, the affordable housing provision will be in the form of affordable private rent, discounted by a minimum of 20% from local market rents.

In relation to specialist housing for older and disabled people it is recognised that the provision of affordable housing may be particularly difficult to achieve. Proposals will therefore be considered having regard to whether it falls within Class C2 or Class C3 depending on the level of care and scale of communal facilities provided. In such circumstances the policy will be implemented on a case-by-case basis, and the individual viability assessment will be used to demonstrate an appropriate affordable housing contribution.

Affordable homes will be built to net zero carbon standards to help meet objectives on sustainability and climate change. The affordable units will be appropriately integrated within the development.

The Council will expect First Homes and other forms of affordable home ownership dwellings to remain affordable in perpetuity so as to meet the needs of both current and future occupiers. It is expected that all other affordable homes provided will remain at an affordable price for future generations of eligible households for as long as it is needed. Where this is not possible, the subsidy will be recycled within the District for the provision of future affordable housing.

**Supporting Text**

**6.74** West Berkshire is an area of high property prices and many local people have difficulty gaining access to suitable housing on the open market. Provision of affordable housing is seen as a priority as housing has wide implications on health, education and employment opportunities.

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**6.75** The NPPF and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) states that affordable housing should only be sought from major development of 10 or more dwellings or on housing sites of 0.5ha or more across the district, other than in designated rural areas. In designated rural areas local planning authorities may instead choose to set their own lower threshold in plans and seek affordable housing contributions from developments above that threshold. Designated rural areas applies to rural areas described under [section 157\(1\) of the Housing Act 1985](#), which includes National Parks and National Landscapes. Approximately 74% of West Berkshire is within a National Landscape. Most of the remaining parishes are designated rural areas. It is considered justified and reasonable for the Council to secure 20% affordable housing on sites of between five and nine dwellings in the parishes designated as rural and this is reflected in policy SP16. In the following parishes that are not designated as rural areas the level of affordable housing required will only apply to sites of 10 dwellings or more as set out in the policy;

- Burghfield
- Greenham
- Holybrook
- Newbury
- Speen
- Thatcham
- Theale
- Tilehurst

**6.76** The Whole Plan Viability Assessment 2022 examines the impact of various levels of affordable housing on the viability of housing development across the district and demonstrates that the requirements identified within policy SP16 are viable.

**6.77** The affordable housing need was assessed in the Berkshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment<sup>(38)</sup> and reviewed in the Updated Housing Needs Evidence<sup>(39)</sup> in May 2020 and July 2022. The definition of 'affordable housing' is set out in the NPPF, and covers affordable housing for rent, first homes, discounted market sales housing and other affordable routes to home ownership for those whose needs are not met by the market.

**6.78** The latest evidence shows a high need for affordable housing across the District with a net affordable and social rented housing need equivalent to 330 dpa (2021 base date). This is a significant need for the district and a clear justification for the Council to seek affordable dwellings through new development schemes. Whilst the level of need will be kept under review the policy therefore seeks to maximise opportunities for increased affordable housing delivery with social rented dwellings being the priority affordable housing tenure.

**6.79** The issue of affordable housing need is complex and should not be directly linked to the overall District housing need of 515 calculated under the Standard Method.

**6.80** Methods for securing affordable housing as an element of market housing proposals are well established. A study of economic viability<sup>(40)</sup> has been carried out on behalf of the Council which sets out the evidence for affordable housing thresholds and this was updated through the Whole Plan Viability Assessment 2022. The Council recognises that in some circumstances there may be exceptional costs of development which need to be acknowledged, and that the policy may represent the starting point for negotiation.

**6.81** The Council acknowledges that there may be exceptional cases where affordable housing cannot be secured as part of a policy compliant scheme. This must be fully justified by the applicant through clear evidence set out in a publicly available Open Book viability assessment. Where an exemption from publication of the viability assessment is sought by the applicant, the Council must be satisfied that the information to be excluded is commercially sensitive. In all cases, as a minimum, an executive summary must be made publicly available.

**6.82** In exceptional circumstances where a lower provision of affordable housing is sought, the Council will require a review mechanism to enable the Council to reassess viability over the lifetime of the development to ensure policy compliance. If the viability is found to have improved, additional affordable housing must be provided, up to the levels specified in this policy. The potential risks of development are already accounted for in developers' returns. The realisation of risks will therefore not trigger a review mechanism. In other words, the Council will only consider a review of the level of affordable housing to be provided where viability has improved (for example, where values have increased), and not where viability has worsened (for example where costs have increased).

38 [Berkshire \(including South Bucks\) Strategic Housing Market Assessment](#): GL Hearn February 2016

39 Updated Housing Needs Evidence: Icen Projects Ltd July 2022

40 Affordable Housing Viability Study: Dixon Searle Partnership October 2019

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**6.83** The Council will carefully scrutinise proposals which appear to fall artificially below the required thresholds which may indicate a possible attempt to avoid making the appropriate contribution towards the delivery of affordable housing. Such proposals are likely to be refused planning permission where they fail to make efficient use of land.

**6.84** The viability evidence supports a higher contribution to affordable housing on greenfield sites. The requirement for affordable housing will be applied to the gross number of dwellings on the proposed site, although it is recognised that there are circumstances where national policy allows an exception. Where vacant buildings are being reused or redeveloped the existing gross floorspace will be deducted from the overall affordable housing contribution calculation.

**6.85** As a starting point, the Council seeks a tenure split of the affordable housing on each development site of 70% social rented and 30% affordable home ownership. The Housing Need Assessment concludes that the core requirement is for social rented housing. There is, however, still a significant proportion of existing and newly arising households that require access to some form of affordable home ownership, including shared ownership, discounted market sale and First Homes.

**6.86** The NPPF requires that policies should expect at least 10% of the total number of homes on major developments to be available for affordable home ownership with exemptions for schemes which provide solely Build to Rent homes, specialist accommodation for those with specific needs, sites for those who wish to build or commission their own homes or which are exclusively for affordable housing.

**6.87** The requirements of the Written Ministerial Statement (May 2021) are now included in the PPG on First Homes and specifies that First Homes should be secured first. These should as a minimum account for at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered by developers through planning obligations. First Homes must be delivered on-site. Commuted sums or off-site provision will not be accepted in lieu of on-site provision. As the financial, national and local policy context is subject to change, the Council may, subject to site specific circumstances, consider an alternative negotiated mix of tenure. The objective will be to ensure that where affordable housing is being delivered it is affordable to those in need at the time the planning application is determined.

**6.88** On smaller schemes where the expected tenure split is impractical the tenure would be based on local need. Given the nature of the policy there will be instances where the proportion of affordable housing sought will result in the provision of a part unit. In these cases the part unit will be rounded up or down to provide the nearest whole unit.

**6.89** A First Home is a home sold at a discounted price of no more than 70% of the market value of the property. The market value must be determined by an independent registered valuer and based on the assumption that the home is sold as an open market dwelling without restrictions. The first time a First Home is sold, it must not cost more than £250,000, after the discount has been applied. Future re-sales of the home must also be at a discounted price of no more than 70% of the market value of the property. First Homes can only be purchased or rented by buyers or tenants who meet the eligibility criteria sets out in the Council's First Homes policy.

**6.90** For schemes that consist of 100% build to rent units, the affordable housing provision will be in the form of affordable private rent, discounted by a minimum of 20% from local market rents.

**6.91** Affordable housing should be provided as built units on the application site as part of well-designed mixed tenure schemes, helping to create mixed inclusive communities.

**6.92** The District Council will be supportive of community-led affordable housing schemes such as community land trusts and cooperatives and would encourage neighbourhood plans to consider such initiatives. Any scheme should, however, accord with other policies of the LPR in terms of siting, scale design and external appearance. No significant harm should be caused to the character or setting of the settlement and the surrounding countryside.



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## 7 Fostering economic growth and supporting local communities

### Strategic approach to employment land

#### Policy SP17

##### Strategic approach to employment land

Through the LPR the Council will seek to facilitate the growth and forecasted change of business development over the plan period through site allocations and by promoting the supply of office and industrial space across the District to meet the identified needs. For the plan period 2023 to 2041 there is a requirement across the District for a minimum of 57,531sqm (NIA) of office space and minimum of 98,196sqm (GIA) (24.5ha) of industrial space.

Appropriate proposals for business development (offices, industrial, and storage and distribution) will be supported where they are located:

- a. On sites allocated for business development in accordance with the individual site specific policy (ESA1 - ESA6) in this Plan or any subsequent neighbourhood plans; or
- b. On a suitable site within a settlement boundary; or
- c. Within a Designated Employment Area (DEA) in accordance with policy DM31, and as listed in Appendix 4 and as defined on the Policies Map; or
- d. On previously developed land within existing suitably located employment sites; or
- e. Within the countryside provided the proposal is in accordance with other relevant policies within the Plan, in particular policy DM35.

Proposals for new office development that are not within a town or district centre as set out in policy SP18 or within a DEA will be required to satisfy the sequential test.

Development proposals that would result in the loss of business development outside of a DEA, will be required to justify the loss of floorspace and/or land. As a minimum, this will require marketing evidence and demonstrating that the proposal will:

- f. Not substantially prejudice the overall supply of employment land over the plan period; and
- g. Not conflict with or undermine the function of existing neighbouring uses; and
- h. If offices within a town or district centre, maintain the vitality of that centre;
- i. If in the countryside, the proposal would also need to demonstrate that it does not have a significant negative impact on the vitality and viability of the local economy of the surrounding rural area in accordance with policy DM35.

The redevelopment and regeneration of existing employment sites for business uses will be supported.

A range of types and sizes of employment sites and premises will be encouraged throughout the District to meet the needs of the local economy. Proposals for business development should be of a high quality design and in keeping with the surrounding environment.

Where feasible and appropriate, the Council will encourage an Employment and Skills Plan as part of major business development proposals.

#### Supporting text

**7.1** The purpose of this policy is to set the framework to facilitate and promote the growth and forecasted change of business development across the District over the plan period to 2041. For the purposes of this Plan business uses/development are office (Egi and Egii), industrial, storage and distribution (Egiii, B2 and B8), and the term employment land/site refers to the land on which these uses are located. It is recognised that the term economic development is broader and encompasses other employment generating uses including main town centre uses, as well as community and public uses.

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**7.2** The Council Strategy 2019 – 2023 sets out six priorities of which one is to support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire, stemming from the Council's Strategy theme 'Open for Business'. This theme is followed through within the Council's [Economic Development Strategy](#) which seeks to boost inclusivity, productivity and sustainability in a way that benefits all of our residents and businesses.

**7.3** To inform the Local Plan Review (LPR) the Council undertook an [Employment Land Review](#) (ELR 2020) which was completed prior to the Covid 19 pandemic, prior to the UK exiting the EU, and before significant changes were made to the planning system,<sup>(41)</sup> all of which have implications for the local economy. The Council therefore updated the [ELR in 2022](#) using the most recent economic forecasts which take account of the major macro-economic changes which have taken place and provides up to date evidence.

**7.4** The ELR 2022 concludes that whilst the office sector in West Berkshire has been steadily shrinking over the past decade, the economic forecast predicts positive job growth over the plan period and recommends a need for a net increase in office space of a minimum 57,531 sqm (NIA) to 2041.

**7.5** Monitoring data shows a net decline in office floorspace for most of the past decade, with changes from office to residential under permitted development rights contributing to a large proportion of these losses which have been largely driven by the difference between residential and office values, as well as lower grade office space. In order to assist in protecting these employment sites, the Council will explore additional measures to provide protection for example through planning conditions/planning obligations restricting permitted development rights on new office development.

**7.6** The Council's evidence confirms that the market signals are generally not sufficient to trigger new build office development on a speculative basis. It is evident from the ELR and the SA/SEA that the Plan is unable to make provision to meet the District's office requirements over the plan period to 2041. The Council has positively sought opportunities to meet the office requirement for the District by undertaking numerous Call for Sites, sought to deliver office space on the North East Thatcham strategic site, and pursued opportunities through Duty to Cooperate.

**7.7** With a lack of supply of suitable sites for office development and little to no viability in the market at present, the Council seeks to promote the supply and refurbishment/upgrading of existing offices and seeks to safeguard existing supply where possible, so that if the market demand for offices strengthens delivery can be achieved. Policy SP17 removes the requirement for office developments within DEAs to satisfy the sequential test and promotes the redevelopment and regeneration of existing employment sites for business development particularly in DEAs. The town and district centres policy also promotes the provision of office space on the regeneration or redevelopment of sites within and on the edge of existing centres. Given the identified shortfall in supply the Council will commit to seek to address this matter again at the first five year review of the Local Plan.

**7.8** The provision of industrial space has been consistently strong over recent years, and both trend-based projections and economic forecasts indicate growth in industrial space. The ELR 2022 therefore recommends a minimum industrial requirement of 98,196sqm or 24.5ha of land to 2041 to meet identified needs.

**7.9** Chapter 8 sets out a number of site allocations for industrial land, each of which has a site specific policy (policy ESA 1-6) setting out development parameters. Whilst these allocations go some way towards meeting the identified need there remains a shortfall. As with the office requirement the Council has positively sought opportunities to meet the industrial requirement however, the District is heavily constrained and this has resulted in a lack of suitable available sites. Given the identified shortfall in supply the Council will commit to seek to address this matter again at the first five year review of the Local Plan.

**7.10** Any sites allocated through the neighbourhood planning process will be in addition to those sites allocated within this Plan and/or existing planning commitments within the neighbourhood planning area.

**7.11** The regeneration of the Bond Riverside area (formerly known as London Road Industrial Estate (LRIE)) has the potential to deliver additional supply in the later part of the plan period. The redevelopment and regeneration of the Bond Riverside area is a long held vision of the Council and the area has scope, subject to overcoming other policy constraints, for regeneration and the intensification of employment uses to maximise the potential of the site as an employment location, which at present is not optimum and does not provide an attractive environment for modern day use. At this stage the Bond Riverside area is not considered as part of the supply due to uncertainty with regard to the timing of delivery, but the LPR recognises its potential. The majority of the Bond Riverside area falls within the

41 The introduction of Use Class E and GDPO Class ZA and MA

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London Road Industrial Estates DEA, an area designated for business uses. It is important to note that the DEA includes the majority of the Council owned Bond Riverside area and the adjoining Riverpark Industrial Estate, but excludes the football ground.

### Location of business development

**7.12** The policy seeks to support and build upon West Berkshire's strong and resilient economy through continued business development in sustainable locations. To retain existing businesses and attract new ones into the District the supply of sites and premises of the right quality, size and type in the right locations is essential.

**7.13** The Council's evidence highlights two distinct areas of demand for offices within West Berkshire, focusing on Theale in the east which is connected to the Reading market, and Newbury and Thatcham in the centre of the District. The demand for office space in Newbury town centre is predominantly for smaller units with larger requirements focusing on the out of town stock, however large amounts of office accommodation has been lost to residential in recent years through permitted development rights. Outside of Theale and Newbury the office market has a local focus. Since the Covid 19 pandemic began the economy has experienced a weakened office market, with fallen demand and strong signs that companies are releasing/rationalising space and not taking on new space. However, despite this slowdown in the office market there remains a forecasted demand for office space over the plan period.

**7.14** The industrial market across West Berkshire is performing well, with low vacancy and a tight supply for smaller units (up to 5,000sqm) which sees the most take up activity. Whilst there is demand for larger B8 distribution and logistics this tends to be at the motorway junctions. Occupiers across all building sizes range from local to national businesses and covering a wide variety of business activity with no specific sector driving demand. The Covid19 pandemic has strengthened the industrial market further, with continued strong demand.

**7.15** As a result the ELR recommends safeguarding existing employment sites. West Berkshire has a number of designated employment areas (DEA) which are specific locations across the District designated for business uses/development providing a range of sites and locations to promote sustainable economic growth. These areas known as Protected Employment Areas (PEAs) are renamed Designated Employment Areas (DEAs) through this LPR. All DEAs are listed in Appendix 4 and defined on the Policies Map. The District's DEAs contribute significantly to the supply of employment land and provide opportunities for regeneration and intensification and therefore policy DM31 seeks to safeguard these areas to protect and strengthen their function and integrity.

**7.16** The Council will support appropriate proposals for offices, industrial, and storage and distribution on sites allocated for employment land, within settlement boundaries where there is a presumption in favour of development, within DEAs and on previously developed land within existing suitably located employment sites where they accord with the relevant policies within this Plan.

**7.17** Greenham Business Park has a Local Development Order in place across the site. This sets out development parameters by which certain schemes can proceed without planning permission. Proposals which are outside of the scope of the Local Development Order and require planning permission shall be determined in accordance with the relevant LPR policies.

**7.18** The District has a vast rural area that is host to a large number of small and medium sized enterprises which are vital to providing local job opportunities and a diverse economy. The LPR therefore seeks to support appropriate new or expanding businesses in the countryside, supporting sustainable economic growth within the rural areas without detriment to the environment. In the countryside, proposals that contribute to sustaining a prosperous rural economy will be encouraged where they accord with policy DM35.

**7.19** Office development will be required to satisfy the sequential test where the proposal is not within a town or district centre as set out in policy SP18 or within a DEA. There will be a particular focus on directing offices to Newbury, where evidence indicates a market demand for high quality new office provision, provided the scale and intensity is in keeping with the surrounding area.

**7.20** In order to maintain a supply of employment land across the District to support the local economy, proposals seeking the loss of business development, outside of a DEA, will be required to justify the loss of floorspace/land. This includes, as a minimum, providing evidence that the site has been marketed at a realistic price for a minimum period of six months with no reasonable offer of sale or rent. In addition, the Council require applicants to demonstrate that the proposal will not substantially prejudice the overall supply of employment land over the plan period and will not conflict with or undermine the function of existing neighbouring uses. If the proposal is for the loss of offices within a town or district centre as set out in policy SP18 then it must be demonstrated that the scheme will contribute to the

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vitality and viability of that centre. If the proposal is in the countryside, the applicant must also demonstrate that the proposal does not have a significant negative impact on the vitality and viability of the local economy of the surrounding rural area in accordance with policy DM35.

### **Scale, type and intensification of business development**

**7.21** The redevelopment and regeneration of existing employment sites for business development will be supported to boost supply and enable the provision of modern employment stock, attracting investment and replacing lower grade stock that is reaching the end of its functional life. To ensure the health of the local economy is maintained it is important to provide variety of size and type of employment premises of an appropriate scale and intensity allowing businesses to invest, adapt and expand. The Council will therefore encourage proposals which seek to upgrade or redevelop existing sites and premises making efficient use of land, especially within DEAs, which will enhance the flexibility and availability of employment space. Local Development Orders (LDO) will also be supported where appropriate.

**7.22** Business development within the District is dominated by small and medium sized units. Demand for such accommodation is likely to be met through smaller individual sites and within multi-occupancy employment areas. The Council will encourage the provision for small and medium sized businesses, including flexible workspace which enables businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire.

**7.23** An important factor in building economic resilience is having a skilled local workforce. Where feasible and appropriate, the Council will encourage an Employment and Skills Plan as part of major business development proposals. Such plans are likely to be conditioned/within a legal agreement, and undertaken in conjunction with the Council's Economic Development Team.

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## Town and district centres

### Policy SP18

#### Town and District Centres

The Council will seek to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of West Berkshire's town and district centres. The scale, character and role of each centre defines its position within the District's hierarchy of centres:

- i. Major town centre: Newbury
- ii. Town centres: Thatcham and Hungerford
- iii. District centres: Lambourn, Pangbourne and Theale.

The extent of the town centre commercial area boundary for each of the above designated town and district centres within the hierarchy is defined on the Policies Map.

Development proposals for main town centre uses will be directed to the town and district centres defined in this policy in line with the sequential test set out in the NPPF. New office developments within Designated Employment areas (DEA) will be exempt from the sequential test in accordance with policy SP17.

Development proposals within a town or district centre will be supported where they:

- a. Are of an appropriate scale and character that reflect and respond to the role and function of that centre;
- b. Create a high quality, well designed environment and public realm that promotes the individuality of the centre and responds to its historic built heritage;
- c. Contribute to the vitality or viability of that centre;
- d. Do not have an adverse impact on the safety and capacity of the local highway network; and
- e. Do not have an adverse impact on local amenity.

Retail uses will be encouraged within the primary shopping area as defined on the Policies Map. Changes of use within the primary shopping area from Class E to other uses will be permitted where they do not result in a disproportionate concentration of non-Class E units that would be harmful to the vitality of that centre.

The Council will support redevelopment/regeneration proposals within town and district centres that provide a net additional contribution to office space to assist in meeting identified needs.

To contribute to the diversity and vitality of the District's centres, the Council will seek to retain and enhance existing town centre markets, where appropriate.

### Supporting Text

**7.24** The key aim of this policy is to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of West Berkshire's town and district centres to ensure they are places where people want to live, work, shop and spend leisure time.

**7.25** The policy also promotes a network of dynamic and successful town centres across the District in accordance with the NPPF. The position of each centre within the hierarchy reflects the scale and character of that town centre, as well as its role and function within the community they serve mainly based upon their retail and leisure offer. The extent of the town centre commercial area boundary for each of the designated town and district centres within the hierarchy is defined on the Policies Map.

**7.26** The NPPF requires the Plans to take a positive approach to the growth, management and adaptation of town centres, allowing them to grow and diversify in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure sectors. Over recent years the retail industry has faced a number of challenges and is continuing to experience a period of unprecedented change as the country emerges from the COVID19 pandemic and establishes its position after exiting the EU. This is evident in our town centres as consumer shopping behaviours have dramatically shifted with the growth of online shopping and 'click and collect', and retailers are having to adapt and respond to these



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macro-economic 'shocks' as well as the changes in shopping trends. The nature of retail and our high-streets continues to adapt, and the commercial leisure sector is becoming an increasingly important contributor to the vitality and viability of town centres.

**7.27** The Western Berkshire Retail and Commercial Leisure Assessment 2016 identifies an additional need of 25,600sqm of comparison goods floorspace to 2036 within West Berkshire. However, since this evidence was published the retail industry is experiencing an unprecedented period of change as outlined above. Given the challenges being faced and the need for the sector to take time to adjust and adapt it has not been possible to update the retail evidence in a meaningful way to feed into this Local Plan Review. The Council is therefore committed to a review of the District's retail needs in the first five year review of the Local Plan.

**7.28** In responding to the changes within the retail sector, the Use Classes Order was amended in 2020 and now allows much greater flexibility with the introduction of a new use class, Class E (Commercial, Business and Service). Changes of use between the different uses within Class E, which includes typical high street uses, can take place without the need for planning permission. This is to help our high streets and town centres adapt quickly to changing demand and trends.

**7.29** The NPPF supports a town centre first approach when locating development for main town centre uses to assist in maintaining the vitality and viability of town centres. This policy promotes a sequential approach and directs main town centre uses (including retail, leisure, cultural and office development) to town and district centres in the first instance, followed by edge of centre, and then out of centre sites.

**7.30** The strategic residential allocations, at Sandleford and North East Thatcham, will create new convenience retail floorspace to serve the local communities and this provision will need to complement rather than compete with the existing centres.

**7.31** The policy encourages retail uses to be the focus of the primary shopping area, as defined on the Policies Map, however other appropriate Class E uses such as cafes will also be acceptable. Changes of use within the primary shopping area from Class E to other uses will only be permitted where they do not result in a disproportionate concentration of non-Class E units that would be harmful to the vitality of that centre.

**7.32** The Council recognise the importance of providing a diverse range of uses within existing centres, and will seek to retain and enhance existing town centre markets, where appropriate. The importance of residential development within a town centre is also recognised as adding vitality to centres, providing activity outside of normal business hours. However, residential that would result in the loss of ground floor retail space and would impact upon the vitality and viability of the centre will not be permitted.

**7.33** As the nature of our town centres continue to change we see regeneration for mixed use schemes as centres evolve and ensure they have a viable function moving forward. A vital component of town centre development is accessibility as well as an attractive environment and public realm. In addition, the Council is keen to ensure such mixed use regeneration/redevelopment proposals include provision for office space to assist in meeting the identified need over the plan period. As such, this policy supports town centre regeneration/redevelopment schemes where they provide a net additional contribution to office space.

**7.34** The Council's Economic Development team has been working with consultants to prepare place-making strategies for existing centres within the District. These strategies seek to provide a long-term strategy and masterplan for the centres to reposition their commercial, leisure, residential, cultural and public realm offer and to ensure the centres continue to meet the needs of residents, businesses, workers and visitors now and in the years to come. West Berkshire's town and district centres have a lot to celebrate and these strategies draw upon their individual challenges and opportunities to help enhance their environment and offer through a series of actions set out within a Delivery Strategy. The Newbury Town Centre Masterplan was prepared in 2020, and the Council has also completed similar strategies for Thatcham and Hungerford.

**7.35** The cultural heritage offer in West Berkshire is vibrant, diverse and strong and it makes a unique contribution to the richness of West Berkshire as a place to live, work and learn. The West Berkshire Cultural Heritage Strategy 2020-2030 sets out a vision to have a sustainable, resilient and thriving cultural heritage sector by 2030 which continues to contribute to the local economy, increases its contribution to the health and wellbeing of residents and that our historic environment is protected and better understood for the enjoyment of all.

**7.36** The Council will continue working in partnership with businesses, independent organisations, venues, the Business Improvement District (BID), community and voluntary organisation and other stakeholders to promote West Berkshire's town and district centres as the preferred shopping and leisure destinations for local residents.

## Transport

### Policy SP19

#### Transport

Development that generates a transport impact will be required to:

- Minimise the impact of all forms of travel on the environment, in accordance with West Berkshire's declared Climate Emergency and Environment Strategy;
- Improve and promote opportunities for active travel;
- Improve travel choice and facilitate sustainable travel particularly within, between and to main urban areas and rural service centres;
- Demonstrate good access to key services and facilities;
- Mitigate any adverse impact on local transport networks and the strategic road network; and
- Have regard to the West Berkshire Freight Route Network and availability of lorry parking where development will need the support of these facilities.

Non-residential developments will be required to prepare Transport Assessments or Transport Statements as appropriate in support of the proposed development. The judgement regarding the need for such documents lies with the Council and will be guided by indicative thresholds for various uses.

For residential development, a full Transport Assessment will be required where 60 or more dwellings are proposed. Where 30 or more dwellings are proposed, a Transport Statement will be required. Where appropriate, any development below 60 dwellings may be requested to produce a full Transport Assessment. Development proposals should follow the advice set out in the Council's 'Highway Design Guidance for Residential Developments.'

Travel Plans and the implementation of associated measures will be required for all developments which generate a significant amount of transport movement and in accordance with policy DM45 relating to travel planning measures.

## Supporting Text

**7.37** The provision of a sustainable transport network to serve the communities of West Berkshire is essential for improving accessibility, enhancing economic vitality, protecting the environment, and promoting quality of life. The policy therefore seeks to encourage sustainable travel in order to achieve these goals, and to minimise the impact on local transport networks and the strategic road network.

**7.38** Central to this policy is the recognition of the part that transport needs to play in adapting to help achieve the local Climate Emergency target of carbon neutrality by 2030. The development of new ideas and technologies in relation to reducing the environmental harm caused by our travel activities is moving at pace. It is essential that new development in the District adopts the latest standards and practices in reducing carbon in order that transport and travel is leading the way in West Berkshire in tackling climate change and minimising harm to our environment.

**7.39** Improving and promoting opportunities for active travel should be considered for all development and be carried out in a way that recognises safety as a key consideration. Particular focus should be given to the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians, and other vulnerable road users. These active travel modes benefit people's health and are promoted through the [Local Transport Plan](#) and supporting [Active Travel Strategy](#), and the [Environment Strategy](#).

**7.40** Improving travel choice is a key way of working towards a modal shift away from single occupancy car use in favour of more sustainable travel (walking, cycling, bus and rail travel, car sharing, car clubs). Improving sustainable travel choice within and between the main urban areas and rural service centres of West Berkshire and key destinations in neighbouring authorities will help to facilitate regular journeys for example to work and education. All development will be required to show how it improves travel choice and reduces the use of single occupancy cars.

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**7.41** The Council's desire to plan for people to live in places where there are local facilities and services, whether these are fixed or mobile will support the ambition to reduce the need to travel which is one of the best ways of reducing the impact on the environment or stress on local transport networks. The changing nature of technology and how this facilitates working from home and access to services through the world wide web also contributes to this.

**7.42** The nature of West Berkshire poses a significant challenge for accessibility to key services and facilities. Residential development should seek to demonstrate good accessibility by:

- locating where there is already good access to key services and facilities;
- contributing towards improving connections between communities and key services and facilities.
- having or developing good technology infrastructure

**7.43** The Council is responsible for the local highway, cycle and walking, and public right of way networks as well as supporting public transport networks. National Highways is responsible for the strategic road network (SRN) which, in West Berkshire, comprises the M4 and the A34. All development proposals will be required to demonstrate that they do not adversely affect these networks or that they can mitigate the adverse impact. Where a Transport Assessment for a significant development illustrates that there will be an impact on the capacity of the SRN or local networks, the developer will need to undertake detailed traffic modelling in accordance with national guidance. Developers will need to work with the Council and National Highways to establish a suitable mitigation package.

**7.44** The Council has established a preferred Freight Route Network (FRN) for West Berkshire which identifies a hierarchy of routes that should be used for freight movements to, through and within the District. Development which results in freight movements, including construction traffic should take into consideration the FRN. Developments that have associated travel activity that is likely to require the use of local lorry parking facilities should have regard to the capacity of these facilities in support of their proposed development. Development that encourages modal shift of goods and people to more sustainable forms of transport will be supported.

**7.45** Transport Assessments / Statements and Travel Plans are vital to support planning proposals so that the impact of the proposed development can be assessed and mitigated. All developments which are judged to generate significant transport movement will be required to provide a suitable level of assessment.

**7.46** Details around requirements for parking provision (relating to cycle, motorcycle and car parking) are dealt within policy DM44, and details travel planning measures in policy DM45.

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## Infrastructure requirements and delivery

### Policy SP20

#### Infrastructure Requirements and Delivery

Development will be required to ensure the timely and coordinated delivery of necessary infrastructure, having regard to the latest version of the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan, through proportionate financial contributions and/or on-site provision. Where necessary, the phasing of development will be linked to infrastructure provision.

The Council will collaborate with other strategic policy making authorities to ensure that administrative boundaries do not restrict the delivery of the most appropriate infrastructure response.

To ensure that communities and business are able to function and grow in a sustainable and effective manner, within the context of the Council's declared local climate emergency, the Council will work with infrastructure providers and stakeholders, agencies and organisations and funding providers, to identify requirements for and enable the delivery of infrastructure and services for new development and infrastructure development in its own right.

The Council will seek to protect, co-ordinate and, where appropriate, improve services and facilities that provide a key function in the operation of existing communities and protecting environmental quality. The loss of existing infrastructure will only be supported if a suitable alternative can be provided or it can be demonstrated that the infrastructure is no longer required to meet the needs of the community.

### Supporting Text

**7.47** To ensure that new development within West Berkshire is sustainable, it needs to be supported by adequate and appropriate infrastructure in a timely manner. Infrastructure includes, but is not limited to, physical, social and green (including blue) infrastructure. Certainty regarding the infrastructure requirements of new development is needed, and therefore infrastructure will be completed in advance of new development where appropriate. This is to make certain that the needs of the occupiers of new development can be met without placing undue burdens on existing infrastructure facilities and services.

**7.48** Existing infrastructure facilities and services in West Berkshire will play an important role in helping to meet demand where spare capacity has been identified or where co-location of facilities can be achieved for multiple uses. As such, the Council will be seeking to protect and make best use of its existing infrastructure assets.

**7.49** In preparing the LPR, the Council is working in partnership with infrastructure providers, both internal Council departments and external organisations, to identify the infrastructure required to support and facilitate the new development proposed in the plan. Details of this are contained in the Council's emerging Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).

**7.50** The [Infrastructure Delivery Plan](#) (IDP) sets out a range of infrastructure projects to be delivered over the lifetime of the plan and includes details of the timing and type of infrastructure, costs associated with delivery and funding arrangements or gaps and who will lead on delivery. Infrastructure schemes identified in the early phase of the Local Plan will have greater certainty of being delivered and although longer term schemes may be more fluid at this stage, the IDP is a living document which will be updated on a regular basis to ensure it remains up to date with the timing of projects and their costs and funding.

**7.51** The Council will always seek to ensure that development makes a fair contribution to infrastructure, with developers taking the lead in this provision. Therefore, and where appropriate, the Council will encourage developers to provide the necessary infrastructure and facilities themselves as part of new development, rather than by making financial contributions, provided that these include funded proposals for long term management and maintenance.

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**7.52** Where necessary, the Council will continue to seek funding for all infrastructure projects through a range of sources including from central government, Local Enterprise Partnerships, and developer contributions. The council will secure developer contributions through the use of Section 106 (S106) Agreements, licensing agreements and through the [Community Infrastructure Levy](#) (CIL) Charging Schedule or any successor. The policy is therefore also supported by the [Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document](#).

**7.53** National planning policy requires that the viability of new development is considered in the context of infrastructure requirements. In considering planning obligations, the relevant tests will need to be applied as set out in Regulation 122 of the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended).



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## 8 Non strategic site allocations: our place based approach

**8.1** This section contains policies for the non-strategic site allocations (residential, mixed use and employment). A significant number of the residential sites are already allocated, carried over from the HSADPD. Not all the HSADPD sites have been included; those where development has been completed or is close to completion have been excluded as there is no need for an allocation in the LPR.

**8.2** For each policy, the site allocation is identified on the indicative site map. The area shown on the map is the gross site area. The approximate number of dwellings for each site have been calculated using the West Berkshire Density Pattern Book Study (2019), unless the site promoter has suggested a development potential that is lower. The approximate numbers are indicative, and actual numbers will be determined during the planning application process through detailed design work in accordance with the parameters set out below and other relevant policies, having regard to the particular characteristics of the site and its surroundings.

### **Sites allocated for residential development: Newbury and Thatcham**

**8.3** The main focus for growth in West Berkshire is the Newbury and Thatcham area, where two strategic urban extensions are proposed; the first, the existing Core Strategy allocation at Sandleford Park, south of Newbury, which is carried forward with a redefined policy boundary where approximately 1,500 homes could be developed; and the second, another greenfield site, to the northeast of Thatcham for up to approximately 2,500 homes. These two sites are allocated under policies SP13 and SP14, with the remainder of the growth in the Newbury and Thatcham area comes through smaller site allocations set out below.

**8.4** There is significant potential on previously developed land within settlement boundaries, particularly in Newbury town centre and periphery. Sites within settlement boundaries are not being allocated. This is because settlement boundaries are a long-established planning tool. They identify the main built up area of a settlement within which development is considered acceptable in principle, subject to other policy considerations.

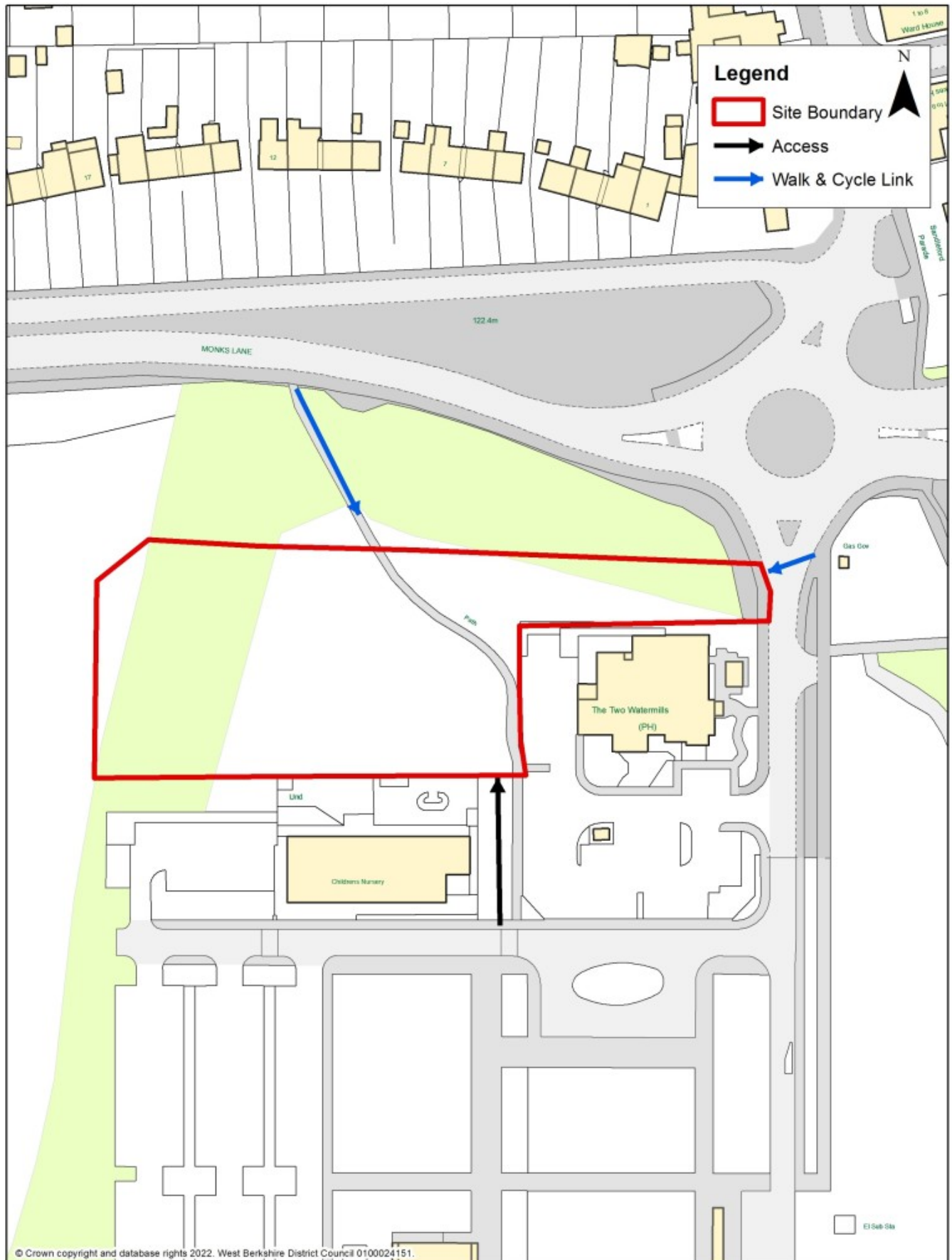
Policy	Allocation	Approximate numbers
RSA1	Land north of Newbury College, Monks Lane, Newbury (Site Ref: HSA 1)	15 dwellings
RSA2	Land at Bath Road Speen (Site Ref: HSA 2)	100 dwellings
RSA3	Land at Coley Farm, Stoney Lane, Newbury (Site Ref: HSA 3)	75 dwellings
RSA4	Land off Greenham Road, South East Newbury (Site Ref: HSA 4)	160 dwellings
RSA5	Land at Lower Way, Thatcham (Site Ref: THA025)	85 dwellings
RSA6	Land at Henwick Park, Bowling Green Road, Thatcham (Site Ref: CA12)	225 dwellings
RSA7	Land east of Regency Park Hotel, Bowling Green Road, Thatcham (Site Ref: CA17)	45 dwellings
RSA29	Long Copse Farm, Enborne (Site Ref: TS2)	24 plots

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**Sites allocated for residential development: Newbury and Thatcham Area****Policy RSA1****Land north of Newbury College, Monks Lane, Newbury (Site ref HSA 1)**

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

- a. The provision of approximately 15 dwellings;
- b. Accessed via the west of the public house onto Monks Lane via the existing roundabout;
- c. Informed by an air quality survey that will advise on any necessary mitigation measures;
- d. Informed by the archaeological assessment already undertaken of the site;
- e. The scheme will be supported by a Flood Risk Assessment that will advise on any appropriate mitigation measures;
- f. A development design and layout in line with policy SP7 that includes the following measures:
  - i. Sensitively designed to enhance the gateway into Newbury from the south;
  - ii. Takes into account the development proposals for Sandleford Park;
  - iii. Traffic calming and road safety measures to avoid conflict with users of Newbury College;
  - iv. Linkages into existing footpaths and cycleways;
  - v. Responds positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5; and
- g. The site lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and so consideration of policy 9 of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will be required.

**Land North of Newbury College, Newbury**

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**Policy RSA2****Land at Bath Road, Speen, Newbury (Site Ref: HSA 2)**

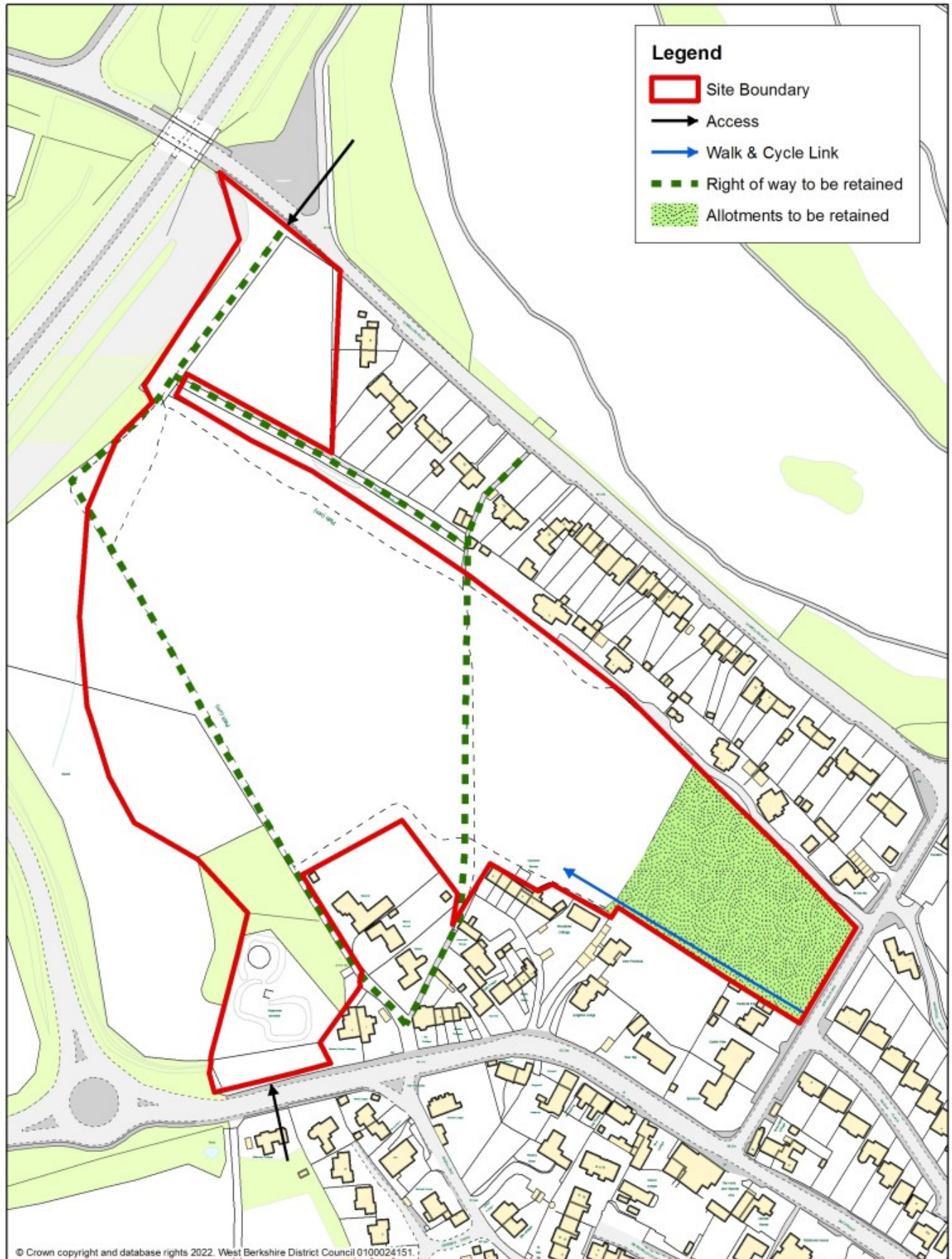
This site, as shown on the indicative map, will be required to be developed in accordance with the following parameters:

- a. The comprehensive delivery of approximately 100 dwellings;
- b. Vehicular access options to be fully explored are Bath Road and Lambourn Road. The final choice/s will be fully informed by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) for the site. This will consider the development, design and layout, including full consideration of the heritage setting of the site;
- c. Informed by a noise and air quality survey which will advise on appropriate mitigation measures given the proximity of the site to the A34;
- d. Informed by the archaeological assessment already undertaken of the site;
- e. Informed by an appropriate Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and protected and/or priority habitats and/or species are not adversely affected;
- f. The site lies within the hydrological catchment of the River Lambourn SSSI/SAC and the development must demonstrate nutrient neutrality. A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required to accompany any future planning application. This will be supported by an appropriate Nutrient Neutrality Assessment and Mitigation Assessment. Mitigation required will need to be operational and in place prior to any nutrient pollution being discharged;
- g. The site will be developed in accordance with the Landscape Capacity Assessment (2015) which will ensure development conserves and enhances the landscape edge to Speen and that the existing character of Speen and west Newbury is maintained. The scheme will comprise a development design and layout in line with policy SP7 that includes the following measures:
  - i. Limitation of built form to below the higher ground to avoid introducing prominent development on the skyline;
  - ii. Retention of the allotments in situ, with consideration of additional provision;
  - iii. A tree planted landscape buffer to the A34, slip road and A4 to maintain the rural and historic character of the western approach into Newbury;
  - iv. Tree belts to be provided to the rear gardens of the adjacent houses linking into the tree line along the former railway line;
- h. Responds positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5;
- i. Development will protect and enhance the special architectural and historic interest of the Speen Conservation Area. Particular attention will be paid to the design of the scheme when approaching the Conservation Area along Bath Road, responding sensitively to the character, density and scale of existing development;
- j. The rural character of the existing Public Rights of Way across the site will be protected;
- k. The site lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and so consideration of policy 9 of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will be required;
- l. A Construction and Operations Management Plan (COMP) should accompany any planning application on the site. The COMP will safeguard the oil pipeline from operational works, including the provision of an appropriate buffer; and
- m. The scheme will be supported by a Flood Risk Assessment that will include the consideration of surface water flooding and will advise on any appropriate mitigation measures.



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## Land at Bath Road, Speen





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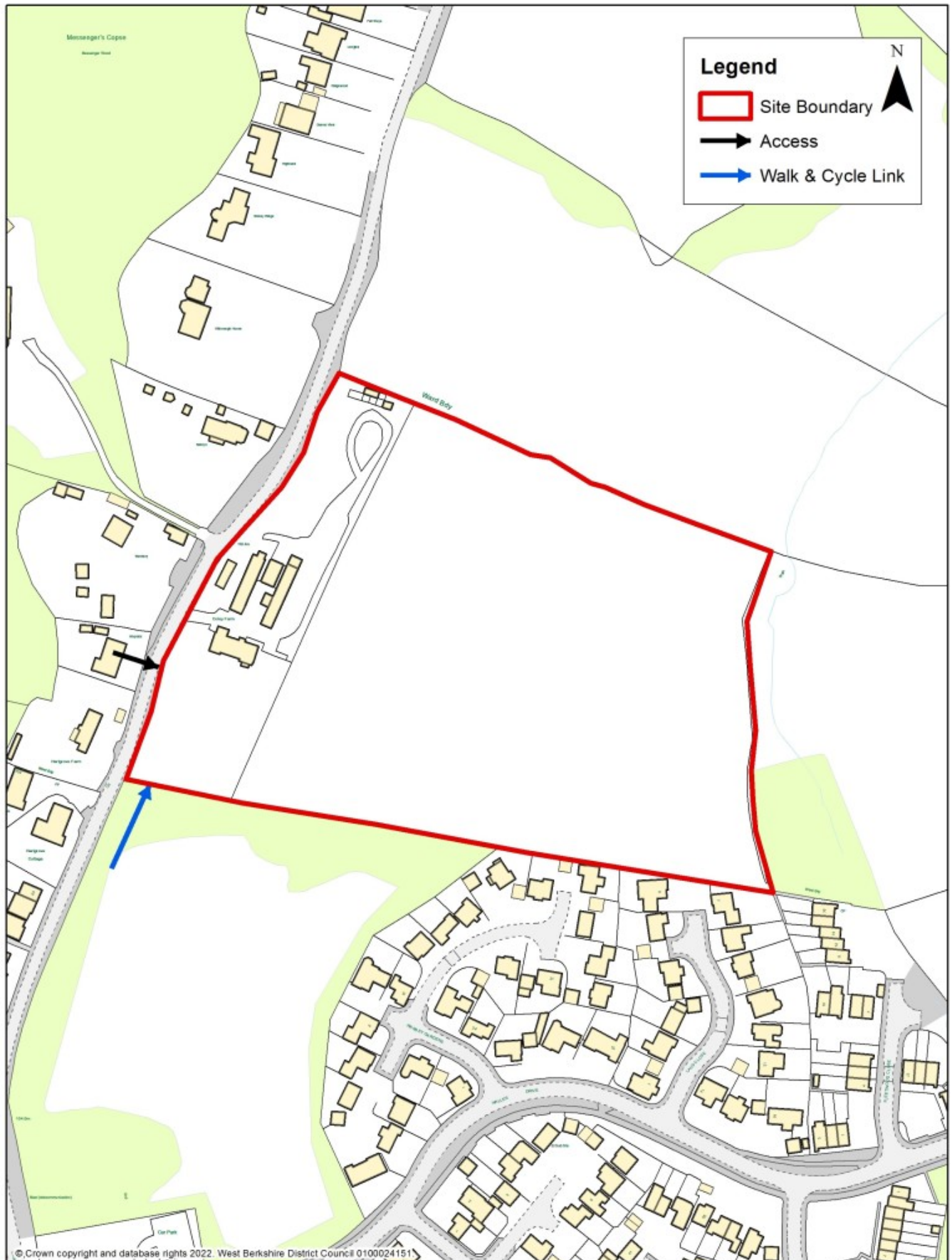
**Policy RSA 3****Land at Coley Farm, Stoney Lane, Newbury (Site Ref: HSA 3)**

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

- a. The provision of approximately 75 dwellings;
- b. Be accessed from Stoney Lane, which will require widening, with footpaths provided to connect the site to existing footways. The potential for secondary accesses will need to be fully explored through the planning application process;
- c. Informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and protected and/or priority habitats and/or species are not adversely affected;
- d. Takes into account the findings of a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) which will take into account the flood risk downstream of the site and include mitigation measures including sustainable drainage measures to manage surface water on-site;
- e. Comprises a development design and layout in line with policy SP7 that includes the following measures:
  - i. Sensitively designed to respect the character of this part of Newbury;
  - ii. Responds effectively to the topography of the site in terms of design and layout;
  - iii. Dwellings fronting onto the open space to provide an attractive living environment;
  - iv. Respects the setting of the balancing pond and other water features to the south of the site;
  - v. Provides cycle and footpath connections into existing routes and beyond into the open countryside;
- f. Responds positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5;
- g. The following landscape mitigation and enhancement is required to soften the edge and help integrate the site into the landscape:
  - Retention of vegetation along Stoney Lane, except at the access point;
  - Development will be set back from Stoney Lane and additional woodland buffer planting introduced in order to retain the enclosed rural character of Stoney Lane; and
  - Development will be set back from the northern boundary and a woodland belt provided;
- h. The site lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and so consideration of policy 9 of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will be required; and
- i. A Construction and Operations Management Plan (COMP) should accompany any planning application on the site. The COMP will safeguard the oil pipeline from operational works, including the provision of an appropriate buffer.

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## Land at Coley Farm, Stoney Lane, Newbury



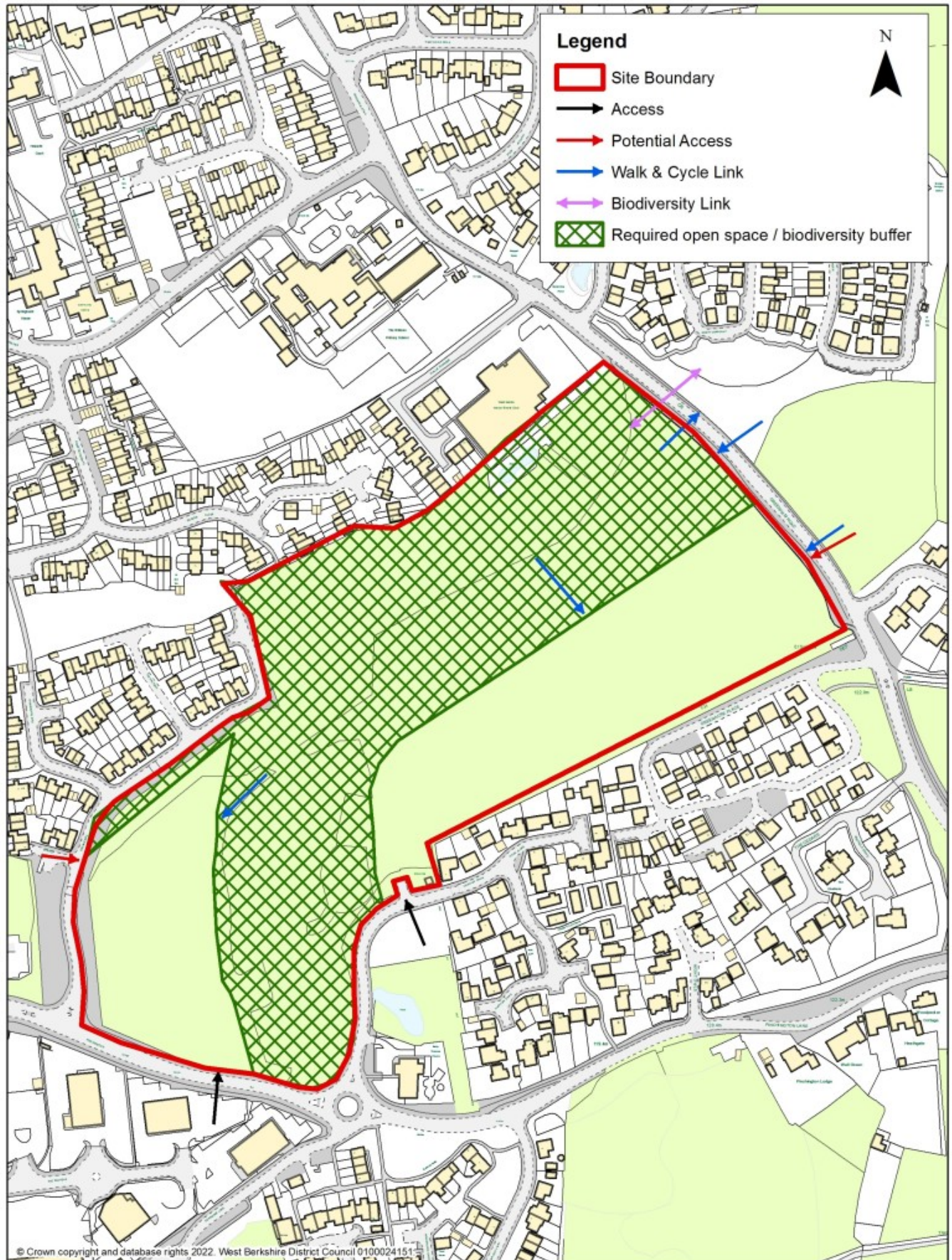
## Local Plan Review 2023-2041 version for adoption June 2025

**Policy RSA4****Land off Greenham Road, South East Newbury (Site Refs: HSA 4)**

Together these sites, as shown on the indicative map, will be required to be master planned comprehensively to provide a phased and permeable development. The sites will be delivered in accordance with the following parameters:

- a. Provision of approximately 160 dwellings, with a mix that includes a proportion of smaller, higher density homes;
- b. Includes accesses from Pinchington Lane, Greenham Road and Haysoms Drive;
- c. Informed by an appropriate Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and protected and/or priority habitats and/or species are not adversely affected;
- d. A full contamination investigation will be required. Development will need to take into account the findings of the contamination assessments that have been carried out for the site, putting in place appropriate mitigation measures;
- e. Informed by a Transport Assessment that takes into account committed development including the Sandleford Park proposal;
- f. Comprises a development design and layout in line with policy SP7 that includes the following measures:
  - i. Integrates effectively with the existing residential built form; and
  - ii. A key part of the development allocation will be the establishment of the central part of the site as public open space. This area of land, which will be retained outside of the settlement boundary for Newbury, will remain open in perpetuity in order to ensure protected species are not adversely affected. There will be opportunities for reptile and Great Crested Newt receptor sites. Further consideration will be required at the planning application stage in order to determine the detailed layout and management of this area;
- g. The scheme will support and make a positive contribution to the West Berkshire Living Landscape project;
- h. Responds positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5; and
- i. The scheme will be supported by a Flood Risk Assessment that will include the consideration of surface water flooding and will advise on any appropriate mitigation measures.



**Land off Greenham Road, Newbury**

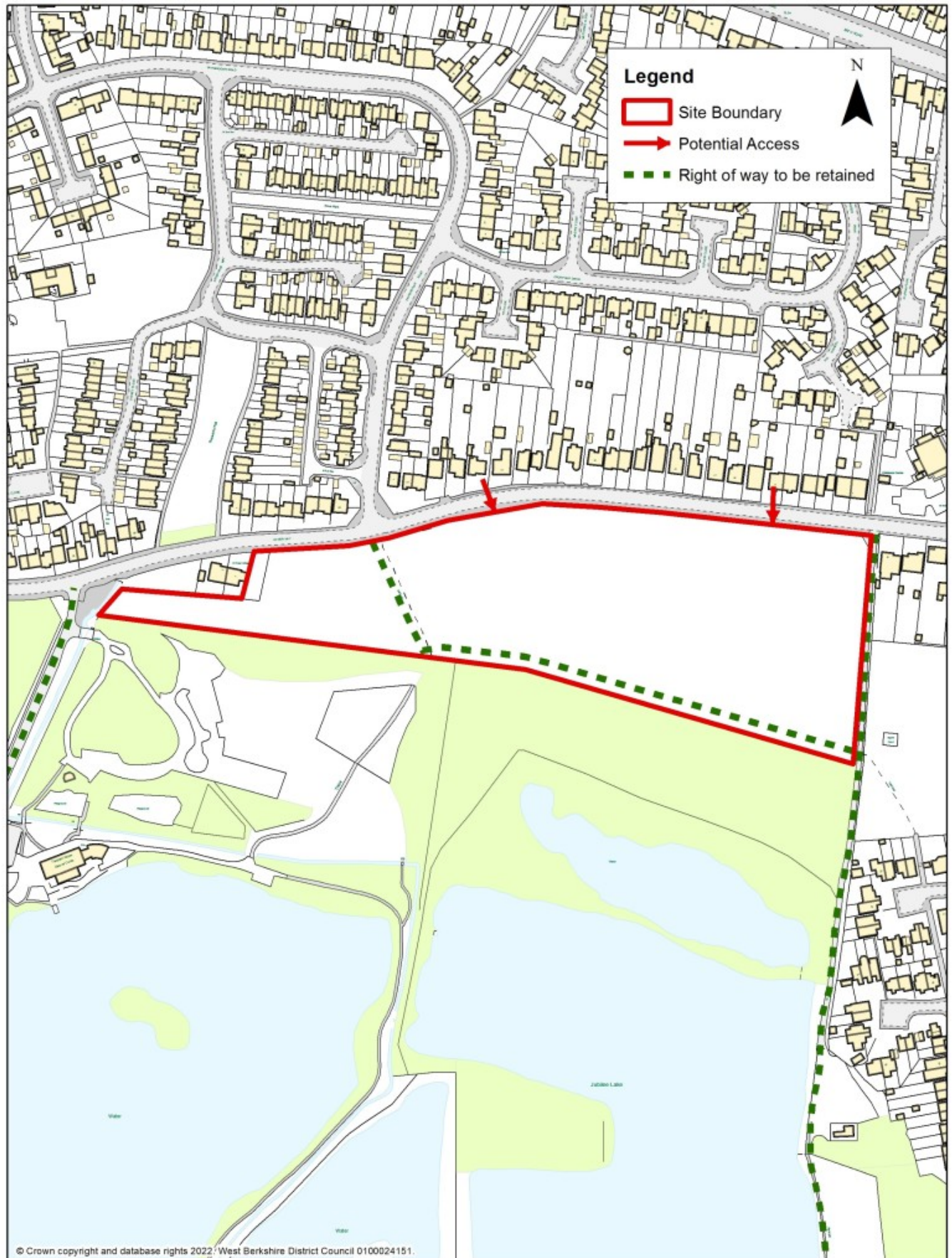
## Local Plan Review 2023-2041 version for adoption June 2025

**Policy RSA5****Land at Lower Way, Thatcham (Site Ref: THA025)**

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

- a. Provision for approximately 85 dwellings, with a mix of dwelling sizes and types;
- b. The site should be accessed via Lower Way. To ensure permeability through the site, the scheme should be designed with the potential for two accesses to be provided. Pedestrian and cycle linkages will be expected through the site and linking to the surrounding area;
- c. The scheme will be informed by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) which considers the site in its wider context, particularly in relation to the lakes to the south of the site and the existing housing to the north. The LVIA will inform the design, layout and capacity of the development, including the location of public open space on the site;
- d. It is expected that development will front onto Lower Way to enable effective integration with the existing built form and be set back from the existing public rights of way within or adjacent to the site, which should be retained as distinct routes separate from the roads within the development;
- e. Development will be informed by an appropriate Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected. This includes any adverse impact on the Thatcham Reed Beds SSSI, River Kennet SSSI and Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain SAC. Opportunities to improve biodiversity and green connectivity alongside the nearby Long Lake Marsh Local Wildlife Site should be considered;
- f. The scheme will support and make a positive contribution to the West Berkshire Living Landscape project;
- g. Development will be informed by the archaeological assessment already undertaken of the site;
- h. Development will be informed by a phase 1 contamination assessment and subsequent investigations as necessary;
- i. The scheme will be informed by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) which takes into account the adjacent area of surface water flood risk and the ordinary watercourse on the site. The FRA should consider all potential sources of flood risk and advise on the necessary mitigation measures to be incorporated within the development;
- j. Development on the site will not adversely affect the adjacent SSSI and SAC to the south of the site. A Habitat Regulations Assessment will be required to accompany any future planning application;
- k. Development on the site will connect to the mains sewerage system and an integrated water supply and drainage strategy will be required for this site;
- l. The scheme will comprise a development design and layout in line with policy SP7 and development on the site will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5; and
- m. The site lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and so consideration of policy 9 of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will also be required.



**Land at Lower Way, Thatcham**

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**Policy RSA6****Land at Henwick Park, Bowling Green Road, Thatcham (Site Ref: CA12)**

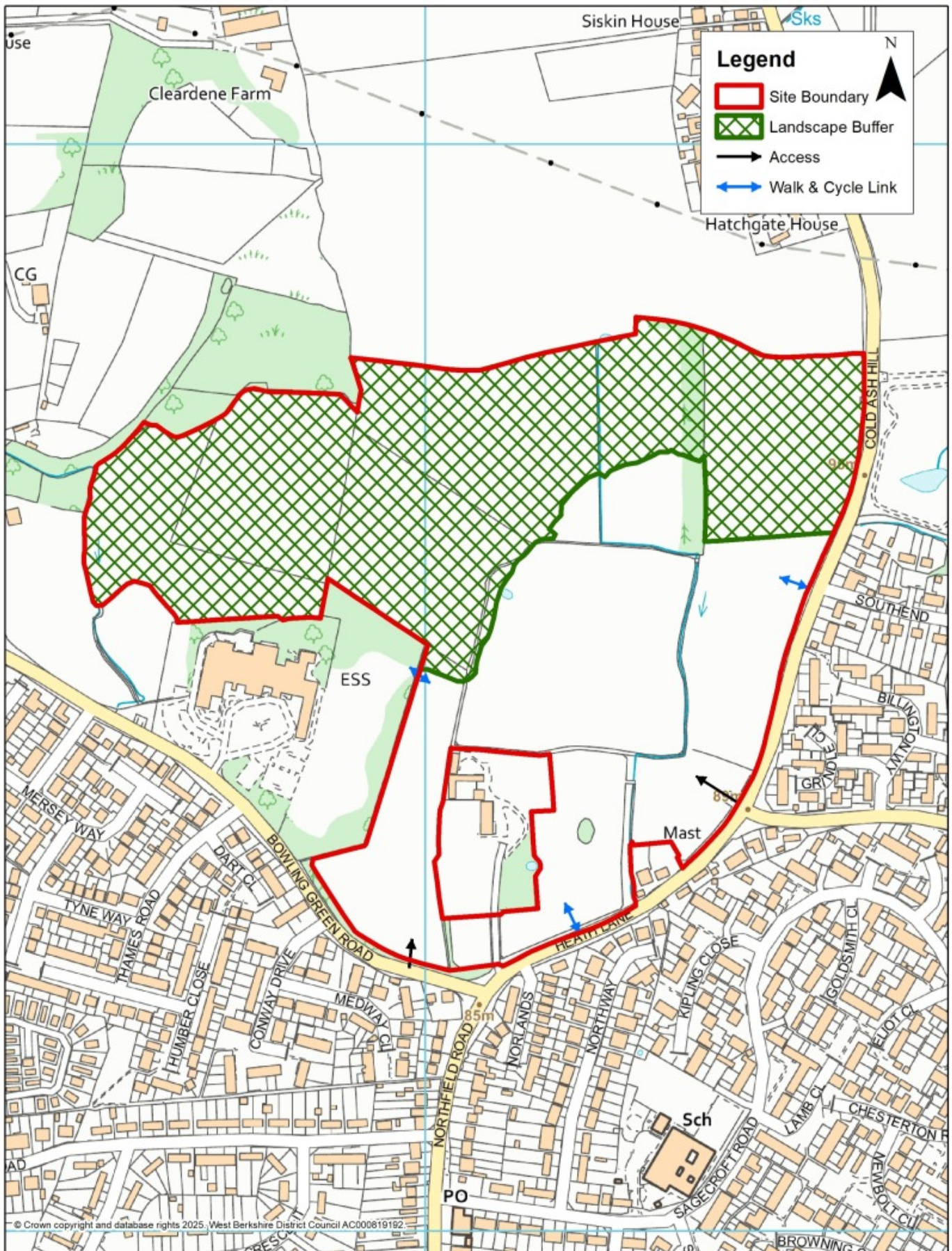
The site as shown on the on the indicative map, will be required to be developed in accordance with the following parameters:

- a. The provision of approximately 225 dwellings;
- b. Access to the site will be provided via Cold Ash Hill / Heath Lane and Bowling Green Road, with further pedestrian accesses onto Cold Ash Hill, Heath Lane, Bowling Green Road, and site allocation RSA7 (Land east of the Regency Park Hotel);
- c. Internal walking and cycling routes for the site will be provided and will be linked to existing routes;
- d. Measures will be provided to mitigate the impact of development on the local road network which may include the widening of Heath Lane and Bowling Green Road fronting the site. A Transport Assessment will be required;
- e. Measures will be included to improve accessibility by, and encourage the use of, non-car transport modes. These measures will be set out in a Travel Plan;
- f. The scheme will comprise a development design and layout in line with policy SP7 and policy DM2 that will be further informed by a full detailed Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), and will include the following measures:
  - i. Adequate flood mitigation measures to ensure there is no detrimental flood risk; and
  - ii. How flood alleviation measures already present on the site will be retained, protected and enhanced;
- g. A Heritage Impact Assessment will be required to inform the development design and layout and to protect the setting of the nearby Grade II listed Henwick Old Cottage;
- h. Development will be informed by an archaeological desk based assessment as a minimum and field evaluation if required to assess the historic environment potential of the site;
- i. Small areas of the site are at risk from surface water flooding. Development proposals for the site will be supported by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA), in accordance with policy SP6. The FRA will need to take into account of the Thatcham Surface Water Management Plan and set out:
  - i. Adequate flood mitigation measures to ensure there is no detrimental flood risk; and
  - ii. How flood alleviation measures already present on the site will be retained, protected and enhanced;
- j. Development will be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected;
- k. The development design will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5; and
- l. The site lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and so consideration of policy 9 of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will be required.



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## Land at Henwick Park, Bowling Green Road, Thatcham



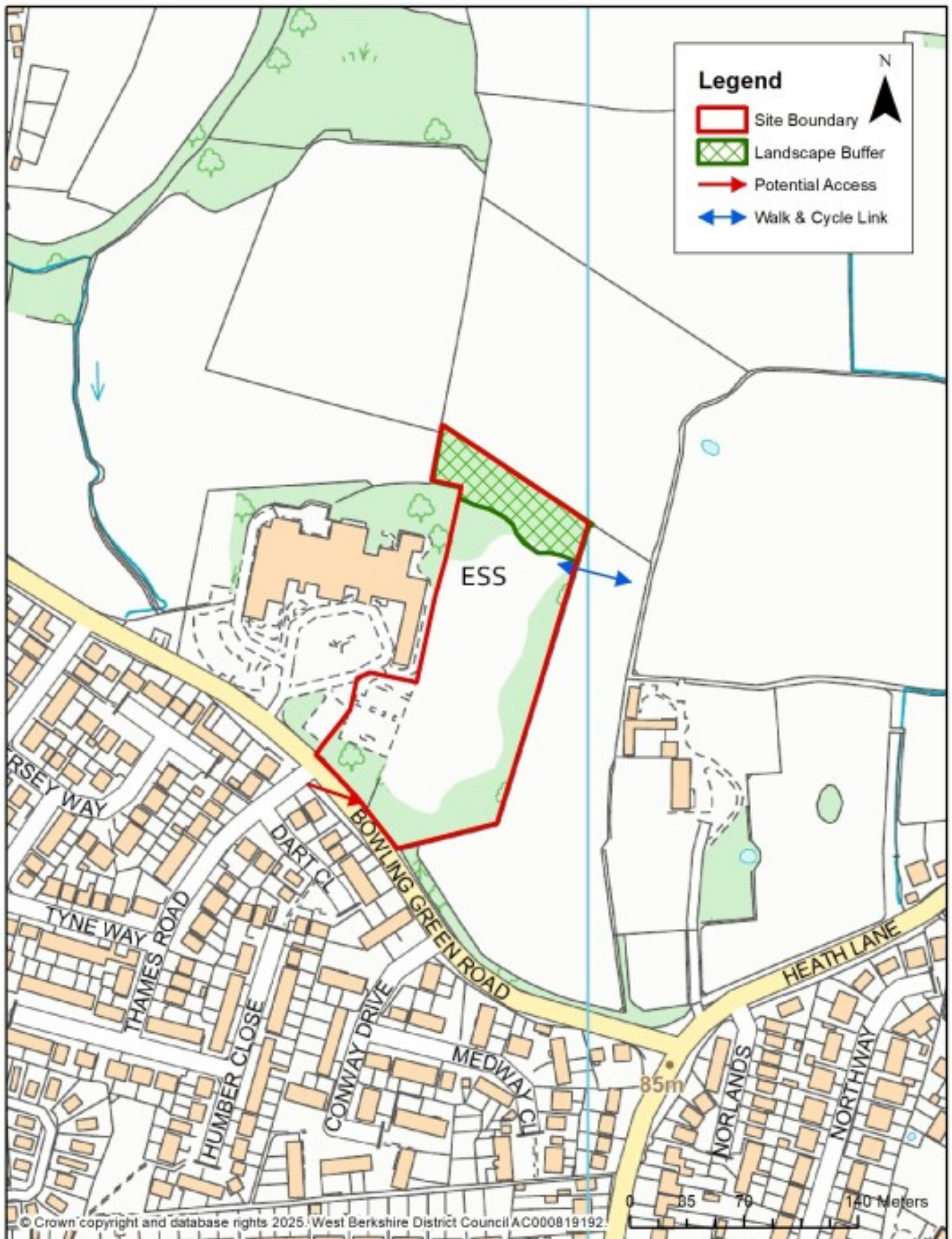
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**Policy RSA7****Land East of Regency Park Hotel, Bowling Green Road, Thatcham (Site ref CA17)**

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

- a. The provision of approximately 45 dwellings;
- b. Access to the site will be provided via Bowling Green Road with the exact access arrangements to be determined at the planning application stage. A walking and cycling link to site allocation RSA6 (Land at Henwick Park) must also be provided;
- c. Internal walking and cycling routes for the site will be provided, and will be linked to existing routes;
- d. Measures will be provided to mitigate the impact of development on the local road network. A Transport Assessment will be required;
- e. Measures will be included to improve accessibility by, and encourage the use of, non-car transport modes. These measures will be set out in a Travel Plan;
- f. The site will be developed in accordance with the Landscape Capacity Assessment (2015). The scheme will comprise a development design and layout in line with policy SP7, that will be further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), and will include the following measures:
  - i. No development above the 95 metre AOD contour;
  - ii. The balance of land in the north of the site to be retained as a landscape buffer which will be retained outside the settlement boundary for Thatcham;
  - iii. Reinforcement of the existing tree line along the Bowling Green Road, eastern, and northern boundaries; and
  - iv. Green Infrastructure to break up the built form;
- g. A Heritage Impact Assessment will be required to inform the development design and layout due to the presence of non-designated heritage assets;
- h. Development will be informed by an archaeological desk based assessment as a minimum and field evaluation if required to assess the historic environment potential of the site;
- i. Development proposals for the site will be supported by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA), in accordance with policy SP6. The FRA will need to take account of all potential sources of flood risk, including surface water flooding, and will advise on any appropriate mitigation measures. It will also need to take account of the Thatcham Surface Water Management Plan;
- j. Development will be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA); Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected;
- k. The development design will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5; and
- l. Part of the site lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and so consideration of policy 9 of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will be required.



**Land East of Regency Park Hotel**

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**Sites allocated for residential development: Eastern Area**

**8.5** In the Eastern Area the significant constraints to development mean provision for new development is more limited. Constraints include the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) of Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) Aldermaston and AWE Burghfield. The DEPZ was defined following changes to legislation in 2019 (Radiation (Emergency Planning Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations 2019) which resulted in the redetermination of the emergency planning arrangements around AWE Aldermaston and AWE Burghfield in 2020. Given the constraints in this spatial area the LPR does not propose any strategic allocations, but non-strategic allocations are proposed on the edge of existing settlements as set out below.

**8.6** Land adjacent to New Stocks Farm (policy RSA28), which is located within the DEPZ of AWE Aldermaston, is already in use for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation (transit site). The allocation of the site for eight permanent pitches was not considered to have an impact upon the emergency plan.

**8.7** Land adjoining Pondhouse Farm, Burghfield (policy RSA15), which is located within the DEPZ of AWE Burghfield, was granted outline planning permission in December 2019. When the DEPZ was reconsidered in 2020, the 100 units proposed were included in the detailed calculations undertaken by Emergency Planning.

**8.8** If in the future the DEPZ is reviewed and the emergency planning arrangements be amended, then future reviews of the Local Plan will consider whether allocations in this area would be suitable.

Policy	Allocation	Approximate numbers
RSA8	Land at Pincents Lane, Tilehurst (Site Ref: TIL13)	138 dwellings
RSA9	Stoneham's Farm, Long Lane, Tilehurst (Site Ref: HSA 9)	65 bedspace care home
RSA10	72 Purley Rise, Purley on Thames (Site Ref: HSA 11)	35 dwellings
RSA11	Land adjacent to Bath Road & Dorking Way, Calcot (Site Ref: HSA 13)	35 dwellings
RSA12	Land between A340 & The Green, Theale (Site Ref: HSA 14)	100 dwellings
RSA13	Whitehart Meadow, Theale (Site Ref: THE1)	40 dwellings
RSA14	Former Sewage Treatment Works, Theale (Site Ref: THE7)	60 dwellings
RSA15	Land adjoining Pondhouse Farm, Clayhill Road, Burghfield Common (Site Ref: HSA 15)	100 dwellings
RSA16	Land north of A4 Bath Road, Woolhampton (Site Ref MID4)	16 dwellings
RSA28	New Stocks Farm, Paices Hill, Aldermaston	8 pitches

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**Policy RSA8****Land at Pincents Lane, Tilehurst (Site Ref: TIL13)**

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

- a. The provision of approximately 138 dwellings, providing a mix of dwellings sizes and types including custom and self-build units;
- b. Access to the site will be obtained from Pincents Lane from the south, with an additional emergency vehicle access to be provided;
- c. Measures will be provided to mitigate any impact of the development on the local road network. A Transport Assessment will be required to inform development proposals;
- d. Walking and cycle routes into and through the site will be provided and will be linked to existing routes, including existing Public Rights of Way which will be protected and enhanced. The dedication/acceptance of a public footpath running north/south through the community parkland and the creation of pedestrian links to the recreation ground should also be considered;
- e. Measures will be included to improve accessibility by, and encourage use of, non-car transport modes. These measures will be set out in a Travel Plan;
- f. The site lies within the setting of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape and will be developed in accordance with policy SP2 and the Landscape Capacity Assessment <sup>(42)</sup> for the site. The scheme will comprise a development design and layout in line with policy SP7, that will be further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and will include the following measures:
  - i. development will be expected to be contained below 75m AOD contour. Any minor incursions above 75m shall not exceed 80m AOD and would need to demonstrate that the development would not be visually prominent from sensitive viewpoints;
  - ii. development will be contained to the area west of the existing conifer line between the existing retail units and the recreation ground;
  - iii. retain open views from the A4 and the recreation ground to the wooded skyline;
  - iv. reinforce the wooded skyline and woodland links between the National Landscape and Withy and Oliver's Copses;
  - v. include a substantial 15m wooded landscape buffer along the east side of Pincents Lane;
  - vi. reinforce the tree belt along the southern edge of the site towards the adjoining commercial area; and
  - vii. avoid creating isolated built form through the creation of landscaped links into adjoining built form;
- g. A key part of this development allocation will be the establishment of community parkland to be provided as green infrastructure and public open space in perpetuity on the eastern part of the site. This area of land will remain outside the settlement boundary;
- h. The development will be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected;
- i. The development will be informed by a Tree Survey due to the presence of TPOs on the site;

42 Landscape Capacity Assessment of Potential Housing Sites within and adjacent to the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty: Eastern Urban Area Additional Sites (August 2015)

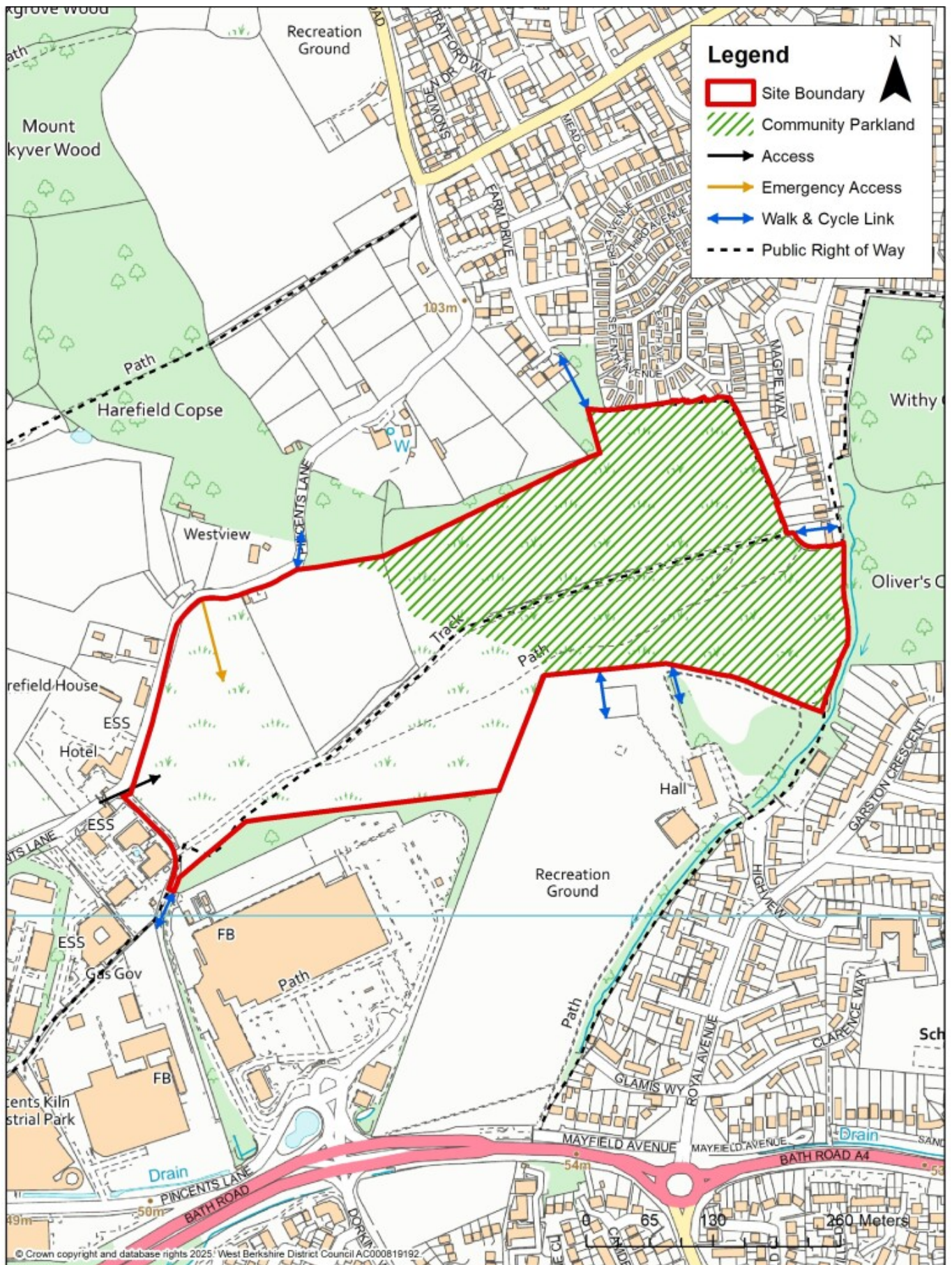
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- j. The development will be informed by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) , in accordance with policy SP6. The FRA will need to take into account all potential sources of flood risk, including surface water flooding, and will advise on any appropriate mitigation measures;
- k. Given the proximity of the site to the M4 and adjacent commercial area the development will be informed by a noise and air quality survey which will advise on appropriate mitigation measures, where necessary;
- l. A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) will be required to inform the development design and layout, and to protect the setting of the Grade II listed Pincents Manor;
- m. Development will be informed by an archaeological desk-based assessment as a minimum and field evaluation if required to assess the historic environment potential of the site;
- n. Development will be informed by a desk-based assessment (as a minimum) detailing the likelihood and extent of land contamination, followed by, where necessary, an intrusive investigation and undertaking of appropriate remediation measures. Further monitoring may be required depending on the nature of contamination and remediation;
- o. Much of the site lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area, and so the scheme will be informed by the Minerals Resource Assessment already undertaken for the site; and
- p. The development design will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5.



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## Land at Pincents Lane



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**Policy RSA9****Stoneham's Farm, Long Lane, Tilehurst (Site Ref: HSA 9)**

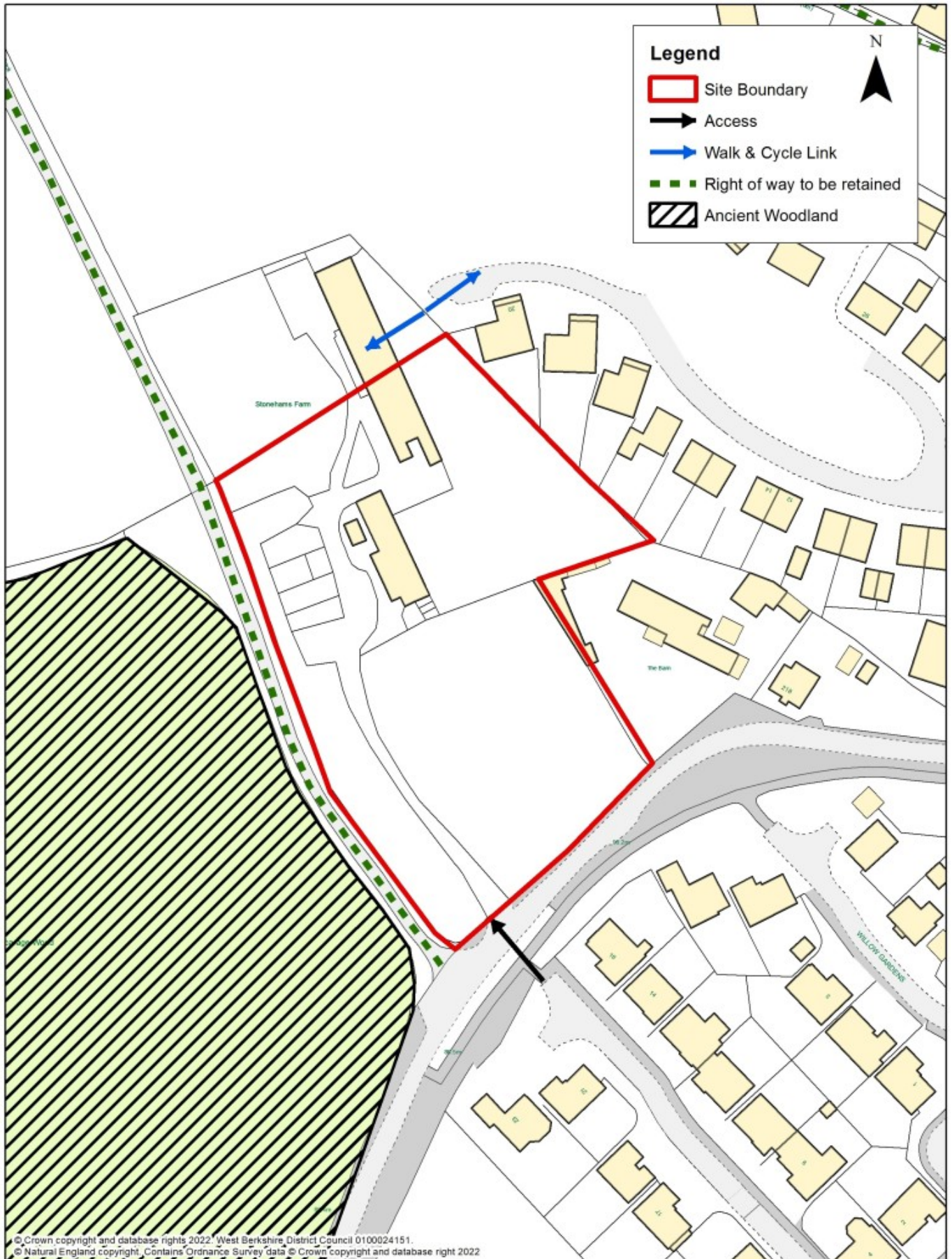
This site, as shown on the indicative map, will be required to be developed in accordance with the following parameters:

- a. The provision of a care home (C2 Use Class);
- b. The site will be accessed from Long Lane;
- c. The scheme will be informed by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) given that the centre of the site is within a surface water flood risk area. The FRA will advise on appropriate mitigation measures;
- d. The scheme will be supported by an appropriate Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected;
- e. The site will be developed in accordance with the Landscape Capacity Assessment (2014) and will include:
  - i. The retention of boundary hedgerows and trees along Long Lane and the Berkshire Circular Route; and
  - ii. New tree belt and hedgerow along the northern exposed boundary;
- f. The scheme will comprise a development design and layout in line with policy SP7 that will be further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA);
- g. The development design will provide appropriate buffers of at least 15 metres between the development and the ancient woodland. The precise buffer will be determined through detailed assessment and design when proposals are submitted for development.
- h. The development design will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5; and
- i. The site lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and so consideration of policy 9 of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will also be required.



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## Stonehams Farm, Tilehurst



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**Policy RSA10****72 Purley Rise, Purley on Thames (Site Ref HSA 11)**

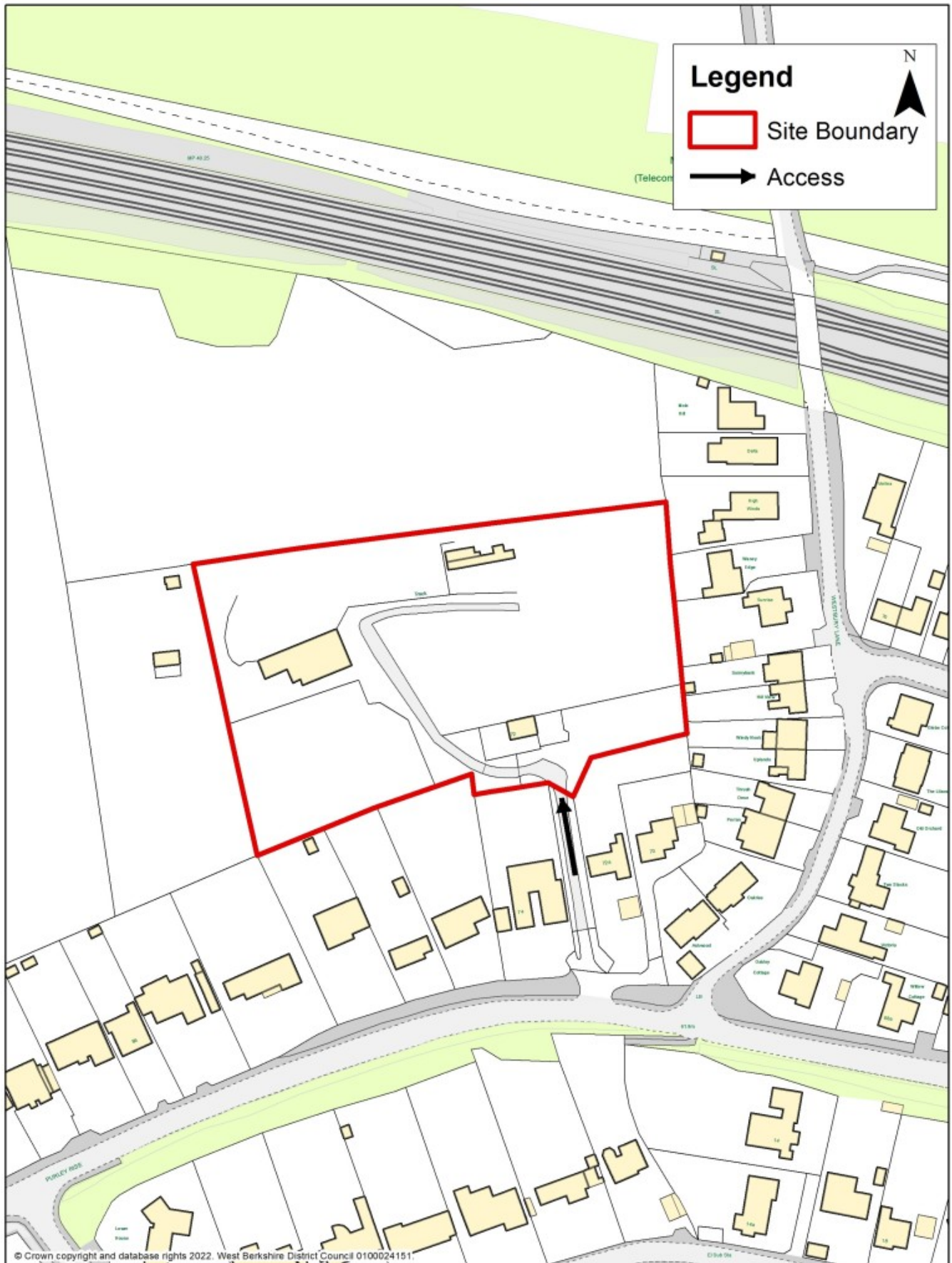
This site, as shown on the indicative map, will be required to be developed in accordance with the following parameters:

- a. The provision of approximately 35 dwellings including an element of self- or custom-build homes;
- b. The site will be accessed from the A329 with the provision of an access of adoptable width;
- c. The scheme will be informed by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) as the site is within a groundwater emergence zone and is adjacent to an area of surface water flood risk. The FRA will advise on necessary mitigation measures;
- d. The scheme will be supported by an appropriate Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected;
- e. The site will be developed in accordance with the Landscape Capacity Assessment (2015) and will include:
  - i. The densities and the mass and scale of development to reflect the adjacent settlement character;
  - ii. The height of the development and landscape treatment to be designed to avoid increasing the visual prominence of development on the edge of Purley;
  - iii. The tree cover on the site and around the boundaries to be retained.;
- f. The scheme will comprise a development design and layout in line with policy SP7 that will be further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA); and
- g. The development design will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5.



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## 72 Purley Rise, Purley on Thames



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**Policy RSA11****Land adjacent to Bath Road and Dorking Way, Calcot (Site Ref HSA 13)**

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

- a. The provision of approximately 35 dwellings, with a mix that includes flatted development and smaller houses;
- b. The site will be accessed from Dorking Way, with additional pedestrian access provided which links into existing pedestrian and cycle links and the new residential development at Bath Road, Calcot;
- c. The scheme will be supported by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) (a small part of the western edge of the site is within a surface water flood risk area) which will inform necessary mitigation measures;
- d. Informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and /or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected;
- e. Informed by a noise and air quality survey which will advise on appropriate mitigation measures given the proximity of the site to the M4, the A4 Bath Road and the railway;
- f. Comprises a development design and layout in line with policy SP7 that will:
  - i. Be designed to integrate with the adjoining residential built form;
  - ii. Be based upon good acoustic design, to ensure a good standard of amenity for the occupants; and
  - iii. Include street trees along all boundaries of the site, with additional planting along the boundary with the A4 Bath Road;
- g. The development design will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5;
- h. The site lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and so consideration of policy 9 of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will be required; and
- i. A Construction and Operations Management Plan (COMP) should accompany any planning application on the site. The COMP will safeguard the oil pipeline from operational works, including the provision of an appropriate buffer.





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**Policy RSA12****Land between A340 and The Green, Theale (Site Ref: HSA 14)**

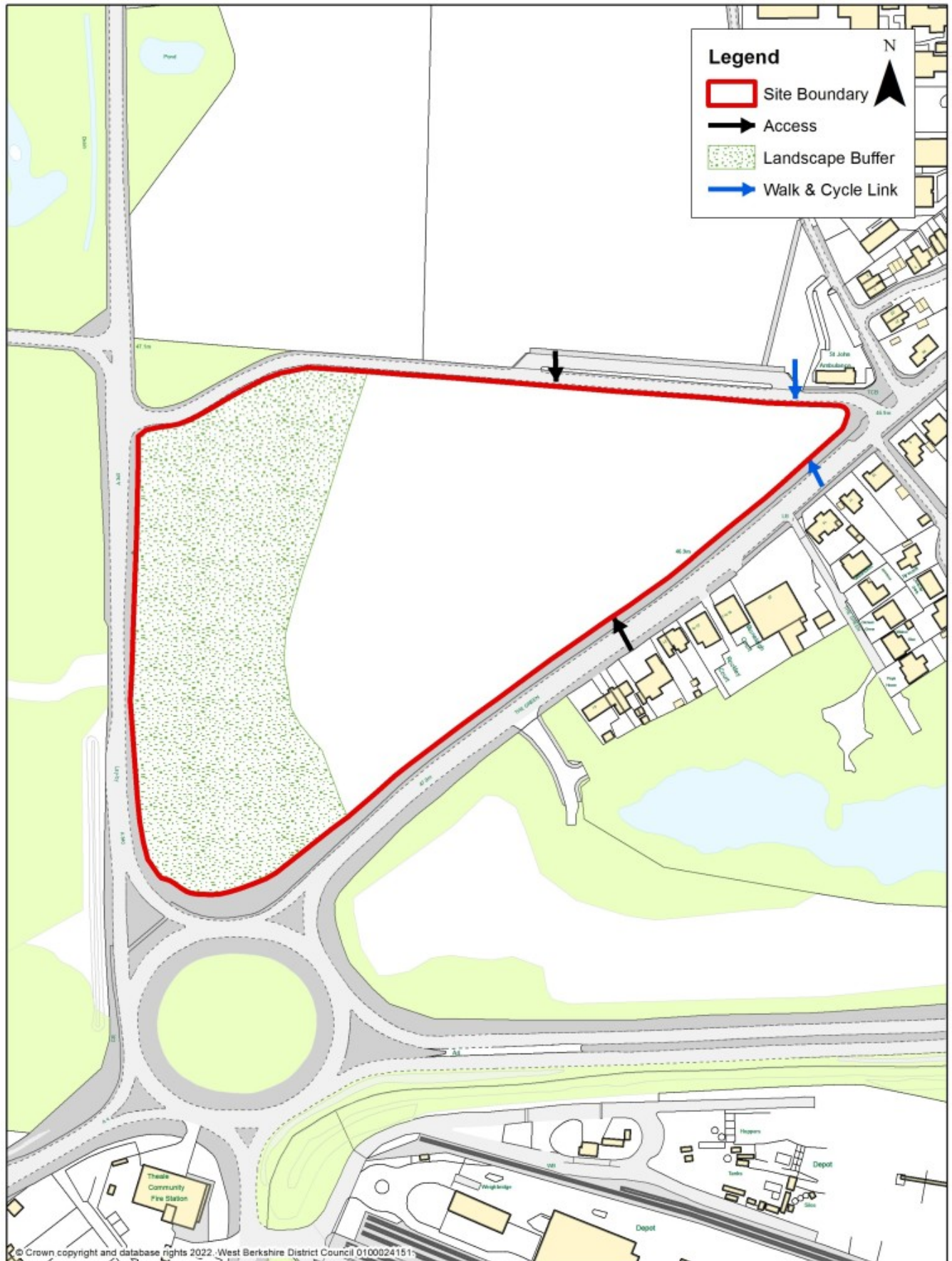
The site, as shown on the indicative map, will be required to be developed in accordance with the following parameters:

- a. Provision of approximately 100 dwellings with an emphasis on family housing;
- b. The site will be accessed from The Green, with options for other accesses in relation to any committed Lakeside scheme being explored;
- c. The scheme will be supported by a noise and air quality survey which will advise on appropriate mitigation measures;
- d. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) will be required that includes the consideration of the groundwater emergence zone and the two small areas of surface water flood risk on the site. The FRA will advise on any necessary mitigation;
- e. The site will be developed in accordance with the Landscape Capacity Assessment (2015) and will include:
  - i. Limiting the western extent of the developable area to tie in with the outer extent of the school grounds and the approved Lakeside development;
  - ii. The retention of an open landscape buffer between the edge of the village, Englefield Park and the boundary of the National Landscape in order to enhance the gateway to the village and assist in screening;
  - iii. The provision of woodland copses and open grassland within the landscape buffer which will be retained outside the settlement boundary for Theale; and
  - iv. The retention and enhancement of existing tree planting along the road network around the site, in order to help soften and screen the development in views from the north;
- f. The scheme will comprise a development design and layout in line with policy SP7 that will be further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and will take account of the committed development at South Lakeside or any subsequent scheme that comes forward for the Lakeside sites;
- g. The scheme will be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and /or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected;
- h. The development design will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5;
- i. The site lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and so consideration of policy 9 of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will be required;
- j. A Construction and Operations Management Plan (COMP) should accompany any planning application on the site. The COMP will safeguard the oil pipeline from operational works, including the provision of an appropriate buffer;
- k. The scheme will be informed by the archaeological assessment already undertaken of the site; and
- l. The scheme will conserve the listed milestone in the north east corner of the site and enhance its setting.



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## Land between A340 and The Green, Theale



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**Policy RSA13****Whitehart Meadow, Theale (Site Ref THE1)**

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

- a. The provision of approximately 40 dwellings, in a low density scheme (30dph) that provides a mix of dwelling sizes and types;
- b. The site will be developed in accordance with the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment (2021). The scheme will comprise a development design and layout in line with policy SP7, that will be further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), and will include the following measures:
  - i. Development will not extend beyond the north-east of the High Voltage Power Lines, nor beyond the stream to the south. The area beyond is to be undeveloped, apart from the access road, to retain the open character between Theale and Calcot. The siting of development will be in accordance with National Grid's publications 'A Sense of Place' and 'Development near overhead power lines';
  - ii. Development will be limited to two storeys in height;
  - iii. Development will create a positive interface with the adjacent public open space, to the west, allowing integration between the development and open space;
  - iv. Tree planting throughout the development to break up the built form, and on the north eastern edge of the site will be provided and will retain the wooded view as visible from the National Landscape. Planting should maintain and contribute to the screening and integration of the adjacent M4 motorway;
  - v. Sulham Brook will be incorporated as a feature of GI.
- c. Access to the site will be provided from the High Street;
- d. Measures will be provided to mitigate the impact of development on the local road network. A Transport Assessment will be required;
- e. Main internal walking and cycle routes for the site will be provided and will be linked to existing routes including the Public Rights of Way network;
- f. Measures will be included to improve accessibility by, and encourage use of, non-car transport modes. These measures will be set out in a Travel Information Pack;
- g. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) will be required given the size of the site, proximity to Flood Zone 2, surface water pooling, and high ground water;
- h. No development will be permitted within Flood Zone 2, including highly vulnerable development;
- i. A Surface Water Drainage Strategy will be required. The design of SuDS schemes must take into account the high groundwater table. 'Natural' vegetated SuDS (such as green roofs, swales and ponds) will be preferred over 'hard engineered' and below ground SuDS;
- j. The FRA and surface water drainage strategy should demonstrate wider betterment by demonstrating measures which can be put in place to contribute to a reduction in flood risk downstream;
- k. Sulham Brook is a Main River. A buffer of at least 10 metres will be provided and maintained between the riverbank and any built structures, on either side of the riverbank. It will need to be demonstrated that development would not result in adverse impacts on the springs arising from the chalk that feeds the brook;
- l. An Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) will be required. Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected. Such a survey will cover the potential impacts from the direct loss of habitats in the footprint of the development and indirect impacts such as changes in the groundwater;
- m. The scheme will be informed by an archaeological desk based assessment as a minimum and field evaluation if required to assess the historic environment potential of the site;
- n. The scheme will be informed by a noise and air quality survey which will advise on appropriate mitigation measures given the proximity of the site to the M4 and to the A4;
- o. The scheme will be informed by an desk based assessment (as a minimum) detailing the likelihood and extent of land contamination, followed by, where necessary, an intrusive investigation and undertaking of appropriate remediation measures. Further monitoring may be required depending on the nature of contamination and remediation;

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- p. The development design will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5; and
- q. The site lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and so consideration of policy 9 of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will be required.



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## Whitehart Meadow





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**Policy RSA14****Former Theale Sewage Treatment Works, Theale (Site Ref THE7)**

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

- a. The provision of approximately 60 dwellings, in a low density scheme that provides a mix of dwelling sizes and types;
- b. The site will be developed in accordance with the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment (2021). The scheme will comprise a development design and layout in accordance with policy SP7, that will be further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), and will include the following measures:
  - i. Development will not extend beyond the north-east of the High Voltage Power Lines. The area beyond is to be undeveloped, to retain the open character between Theale and Calcot, within the National Landscape. The siting of development will be in accordance with National Grid's publications 'A Sense of Place' and 'Development near overhead power lines';
  - ii. Development will be limited to two storeys in height;
  - iii. Development will create a positive interface with the adjacent public open space, to the south, off Woodfield Way, allowing integration between the development and open space. Development will be orientated to face the public open space, to enable integration;
  - iv. Tree planting throughout the development to break up the built form, and on the north eastern edge of the site to screen views from the National Landscape; and
  - v. Retain a landscape buffer of a minimum of 15 metres to Blossom Lane and the footpath (THEA/5/1);
- c. The site will be accessed from Blossom Lane;
- d. Measures will be provided to mitigate the impact of development on the local road network. A Transport Assessment will be required;
- e. Main internal walking and cycle routes for the site will be provided and will be linked to existing routes including the Public Rights of Way network;
- f. Measures will be included to improve accessibility by, and encourage use of, non-car transport modes. These measures will be set out in a Travel Plan;
- g. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) will be required, given the size of the site, the proximity to Flood Zone 2, pockets of surface water pooling within the centre of the site, and the high groundwater level;
- h. No development will be permitted within Flood Zone 2, including highly vulnerable development;
- i. A Surface Water Drainage Strategy will be required. The design of SuDS schemes must take into account the high groundwater table. 'Natural' vegetated SuDS (such as green roofs, swales and ponds) will be preferred over 'hard engineered' and below ground SuDS;
- j. The FRA and surface water drainage strategy should demonstrate wider betterment by demonstrating measures which can be put in place to contribute to a reduction in flood risk downstream;
- k. Sulham Brook is a Main River. A buffer of at least 10 metres will be provided and maintained between the riverbank and any built structures, on either side of the riverbank. It will need to be demonstrated that development would not result in adverse impacts on the springs arising from the chalk that feeds the brook;
- l. An Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) will be required. Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected. Such a survey will cover the potential impacts from the direct loss of habitats in the footprint of the development and indirect impacts such as changes in the groundwater;
- m. The scheme will be informed by an archaeological desk based assessment as a minimum and field evaluation if required to assess the historic environment potential of the site;
- n. The scheme will be informed by a noise and air quality survey which will advise on appropriate mitigation measures given the proximity of the site to the M4;
- o. The scheme will be informed by an desk based assessment (as a minimum) detailing the likelihood and extent of land contamination, followed by, where necessary, an intrusive investigation and undertaking of appropriate remediation measures. Further monitoring may be required depending on the nature of contamination and remediation;

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- p. The majority of the site is within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and so consideration of policy 9 of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will be required; and
- q. The development design will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5.

**Former Theale Sewage Treatment Works**

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**Policy RSA15****Land adjoining Pondhouse Farm, Clayhill Road, Burghfield Common (Site Ref: HSA15)**

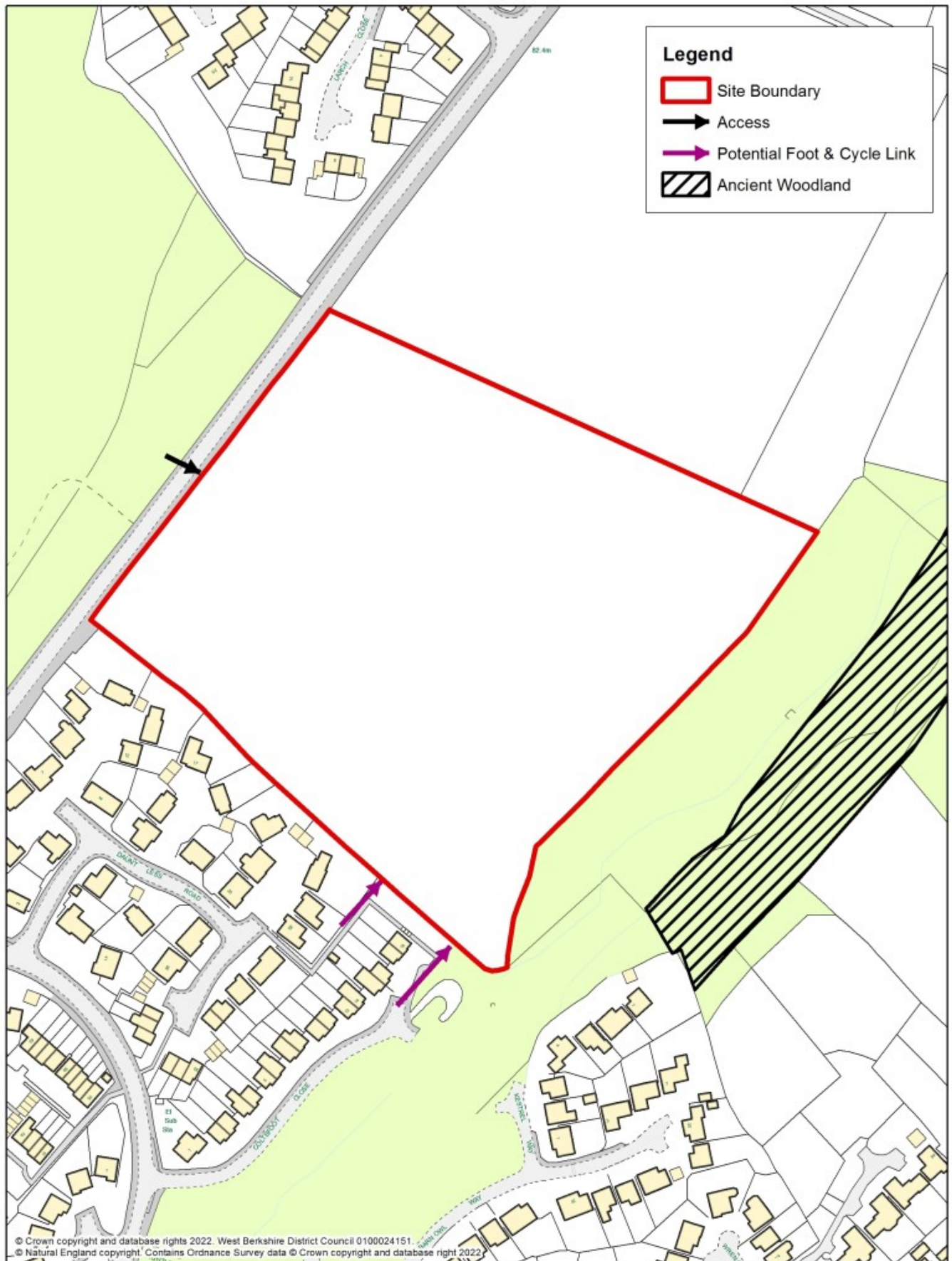
This site, as shown on the indicative map, will be required to be developed in accordance with the following parameters:

- a. The provision of approximately 100 dwellings with a mix of dwelling types and sizes;
- b. The site will be accessed from Clayhill Road;
- c. The scheme will be supported by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) and a protected species survey. Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected;
- d. The scheme will be informed by an archaeological desk based assessment as a minimum and field evaluation if required to assess the historic environment potential of the site;
- e. An integrated water supply and drainage strategy will be provided in advance of development to ensure the provision of adequate and appropriate infrastructure for water supply and waste water, both on and off site. Development will be occupied in line with this strategy;
- f. The scheme will comprise a development design and layout in line with policy SP7 that will front the road to allow proper integration with the existing built form;
- g. Be informed by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) which will include measures to:
  - i. Protect and if necessary strengthen the existing landscaping to the adjacent development;
  - ii. Protect and enhance the landscape edge to the south east of the site and seek opportunities to reconnect Clayhill Copse and Pondhouse Copse through landscaping;
  - iii. Create views out of the development to the north and south east; and
  - iv. Create a new gateway to Burghfield Common to its north;
- h. Protect the watercourse with a 10m buffer zone adjacent to the watercourse along the south eastern boundary of the site;
- i. Provide footpaths and cycleways to serve the site, enabling connections to the existing network of footpaths and local routes in the surrounding housing areas to increase permeability and to ensure that residents of the site can access school provision in Burghfield Common via accessible, safe and sustainable transport options;
- j. Retain existing woodland on the site and provide an appropriate buffer of at least 15 metres between the development and the areas of ancient woodland. The precise buffer will be determined through detailed assessment and design when proposals are submitted for development; and
- k. Respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5.



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## Land adjoining Pondhouse Farm, Clayhill Road, Burghfield Common



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**Policy RSA16****Land north of A4 Bath Road, Woolhampton (Site Ref MID4)**

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

- a. The provision of approximately 16 dwellings in a scheme that provides a mix of dwelling types appropriate to the local area;
- b. Access to the site will be provided from A4 Bath Road;
- c. Main internal walking and cycle routes for the site will be provided and will be linked to existing routes including the Public Rights of Way network; and
- d. The development design and layout will be further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA);
- e. The scheme will be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected;
- f. Measures will be included to improve accessibility by, and encourage use of, non-car transport modes. These measures will be set out in a Travel Information Pack;
- g. Provide an appropriate buffer of at least 15 metres between the development and ancient woodland. The precise buffer will be determined through detailed assessment and design when proposals are submitted for development;
- h. Development should be informed by an archaeological desk based assessment as a minimum and field evaluation if required to assess the historic potential of the site;
- i. A Construction and Operations Management Plan (COMP) will accompany any planning application on the site. The COMP will safeguard the oil pipeline from operational works, including the provision of an appropriate buffer; and
- j. The development design will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5.

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## Land north of A4 Bath Road, Woolhampton





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## Sites allocated for residential development: North Wessex Downs National Landscape

### Sites allocated for residential development: North Wessex Downs National Landscape

**8.9** The special characteristics of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape mean that development will be modest, helping to meet local needs, support the rural economy and sustain local facilities in accordance with policy SP12.

Policy	Allocation	Approximate numbers
RSA17	Land adjoining Lynch Lane, Lambourn (Site Ref: HSA 19)	60 dwellings
RSA18	Land at Newbury Road, Lambourn (Site Ref: HSA 20)	5 dwellings
RSA19	Land North of Pangbourne Hill, Pangbourne (Site Ref: PAN8)	25 dwellings
RSA20	Land North of Southend Road, Bradfield Southend (Site Ref: BRAD5)	20 dwellings
RSA21	Land at Chieveley Glebe, Chieveley (Site Ref: CHI23)	15 dwellings
RSA22	Pirbright Institute Site, High Street, Compton (Site Ref: HSA 22)	140 dwellings
RSA23	Land west of Spring Meadows, Great Shefford (Site Ref: GS1)	15 dwellings
RSA24	Land off Charlotte Close, Hermitage (Site Ref: HSA 24)	15 dwellings
RSA25	Land to the south east of the Old Farmhouse, Hermitage (Site Ref HSA 25)	10 dwellings
RSA26	Land adjacent Station Road, Hermitage	42 dwellings
RSA27	Land adjoining The Haven, Kintbury (Site Ref: KIN6)	20 dwellings



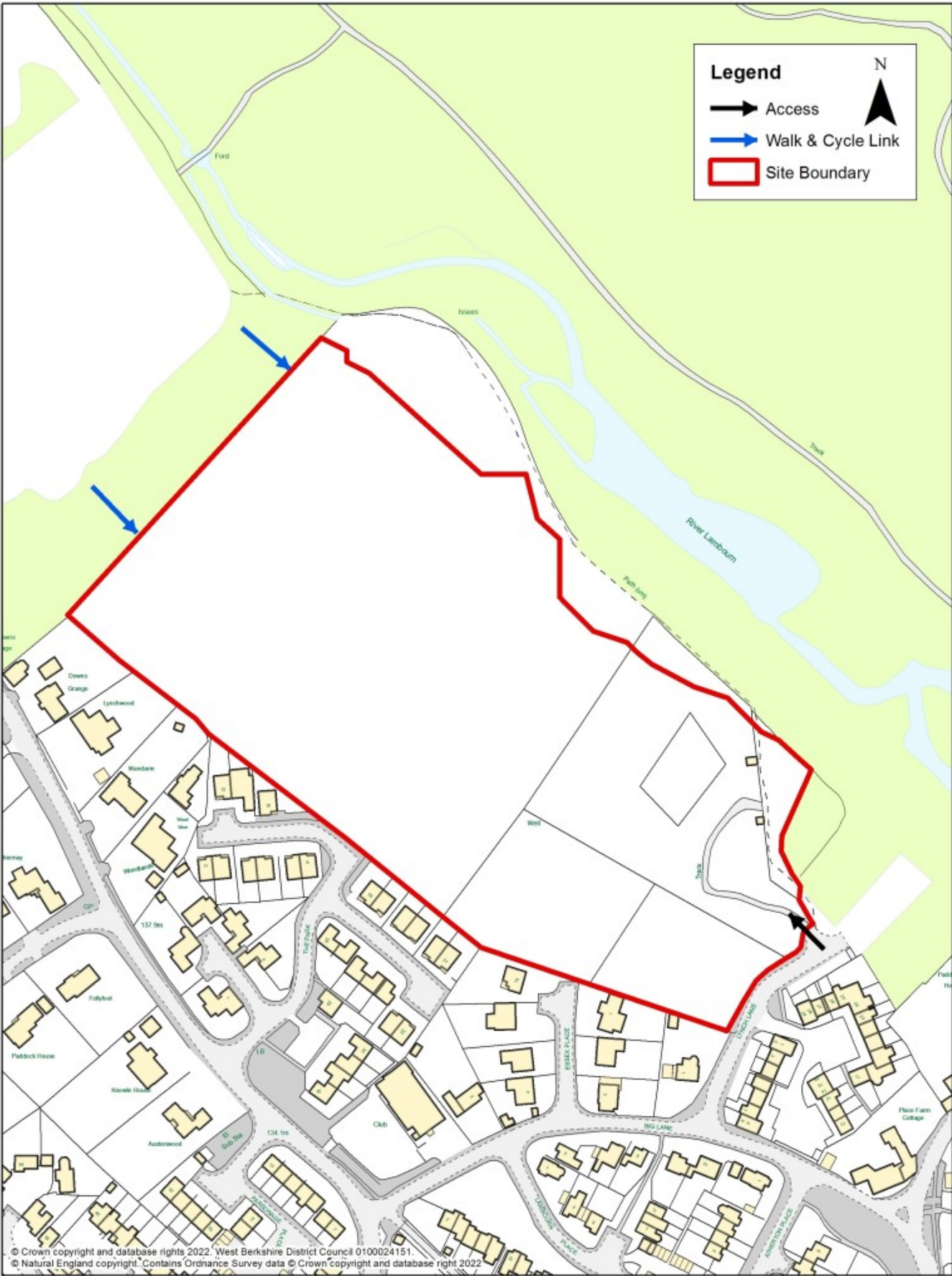
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**Policy RSA17****Land adjoining Lynch Lane, Lambourn (Site Ref: HSA 19)**

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

- a. The provision of approximately 60 dwellings, to be delivered at a low density in keeping with the surrounding area. The development should ensure a mix and type of dwellings appropriate for the local area, taking into account the needs of the horseracing industry which has a specific need for affordable single person accommodation;
- b. To ensure effective integration with existing residential areas the development will be accessed via Lynch Lane. To enhance permeability through the site pedestrian and cycle links will be provided to enable connection with existing housing and the land to the north west of the site;
- c. Public Rights of Way and bridleway improvements will include improvement of the pedestrian/bridle link between Lynch Lane and the village centre, and improved connectivity between Lower and Upper Lambourn;
- d. The scheme will be informed by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) which will take account of all potential sources of flood risk, including groundwater emergence. As part of the FRA consideration will also be given to the provision of SuDS on the site, along with necessary mitigation measures;
- e. The site lies within the hydrological catchment of the River Lambourn SSSI/SAC and the development must demonstrate nutrient neutrality. A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required to accompany any future planning application. This will be supported by an appropriate Nutrient Neutrality Assessment and Mitigation Assessment. Mitigation required will need to be operational and in place prior to any nutrient pollution being discharged;
- f. Infiltration from groundwater into the network has been identified as a strategic issue within Lambourn; therefore development on the site will connect to the mains sewerage system;
- g. Development will be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected. The final developable area of the site could therefore reduce;
- h. To ensure the provision of an appropriate buffer for the River Lambourn SSSI/SAC, no development on the site will take place within 15m of the outer edge of Flood Zone 2;
- i. The scheme will comprise a development design, layout and capacity that is in line with policy SP7 and in accordance with the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2011), and will be further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA);
- j. The design of the development will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5; and
- k. Development should be informed by an archaeological desk based assessment as a minimum and field evaluation if required to assess the historic environment potential of the site. A pre-determination evaluation will be required.

Land adjoining Lynch Lane, Lambourn



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**Policy RSA18****Land at Newbury Road, Lambourn (Site Ref: HSA 20)**

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

- a. The provision of approximately 5 individually designed dwellings to be delivered at a low density in keeping with the surrounding area. The scheme will reflect the existing settlement pattern and take the form of a linear development fronting Newbury Road;
- b. The scheme will be developed in accordance with the Landscape Capacity Assessment (2015) with development contained on the lower ground and the provision of a native hedge with hedgerow trees to contain the housing;
- c. The development design and layout will be in accordance with policy SP7 and be further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA);
- d. The design of the development will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5;
- e. Individual accesses will be provided from Newbury Road in keeping with the adjacent pattern. Given the topography of the site the design of individual access points/driveways will need to be carefully considered;
- f. The scheme will be informed by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) which will take account of all potential sources of flood risk, including groundwater emergence. As part of the FRA consideration will also be given to the provision of SuDS on the site, along with appropriate mitigation measures to protect the River Lambourn Site of Special Scientific (SSSI)/Special Area of Conservation (SAC) e.g. possibly petrol/oil receptors;
- g. The site lies within the hydrological catchment of the River Lambourn SSSI/SAC and the development must demonstrate nutrient neutrality. A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required to accompany any future planning application. This will be supported by an appropriate Nutrient Neutrality Assessment and Mitigation Assessment. Mitigation required will need to be operational and in place prior to any nutrient pollution being discharged;
- h. Infiltration from groundwater into the network has been identified as a strategic issue within Lambourn; therefore development on the site will connect to the mains sewerage system;
- i. Development will be informed by the archaeological assessment already undertaken of the site; and
- j. Development will be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected.



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### Land at Newbury Road, Lambourn





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**Policy RSA19****Land north of Pangbourne Hill, Pangbourne (Site ref PAN8)**

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

- a. The provision of approximately 25 dwellings, in a low density scheme;
- b. Access to the site will be provided via Sheffield Close, off Pangbourne Hill;
- c. Measures will be provided to mitigate the impact of development on the local road network. A Transport Assessment will be required. The following elements shall be undertaken to inform the Transport Assessment:
  - i. Updated speed surveys fronting the access onto Pangbourne Hill, with any required adjustments to sight lines provided;
  - ii. Junction 10 PICADY traffic model submitted for the access onto Pangbourne Hill and for the Pangbourne Hill/A340 junction.
- d. Internal walking and cycle routes for the site will be provided and will be linked to existing routes;
- e. Measures will be included to improve accessibility by, and encourage use of, non-car transport modes. These measures will be set out in a Travel Information Pack;
- f. The scheme will be informed by a full detailed Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) which takes account of the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment (2020) (LSCA). The proposals will include the following measures:
  - i. To ensure it is not visually prominent, development will be limited to the lower slopes on the eastern side of the site only, adjacent to Riverview Road; and
  - ii. No development shall be located on the elevated upper slopes in order to conserve and enhance the National Landscapes of both the North Wessex Downs and the Chilterns. This part of the site will be retained as a landscape buffer which will remain outside the settlement boundary;
- g. An arboricultural survey will be required to inform the delivery of the site, to take into account the protected trees adjacent to the site on the eastern side;
- h. Development proposals for the site will be supported by a Flood Risk Assessment, in accordance with policy SP6. The FRA will need to take into account all potential sources of flood risk, including surface water flooding, and will advise on any appropriate mitigation measures;
- i. Development will be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected;
- j. Development will be informed by an archaeological desk based assessment as a minimum and field evaluation if required to assess the historic environment potential of the site;
- k. The development design will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5.

Land north of Pangbourne Hill, Pangbourne



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**Policy RSA20****Land North of Southend Road, Bradfield Southend (Site Ref: BRAD5)**

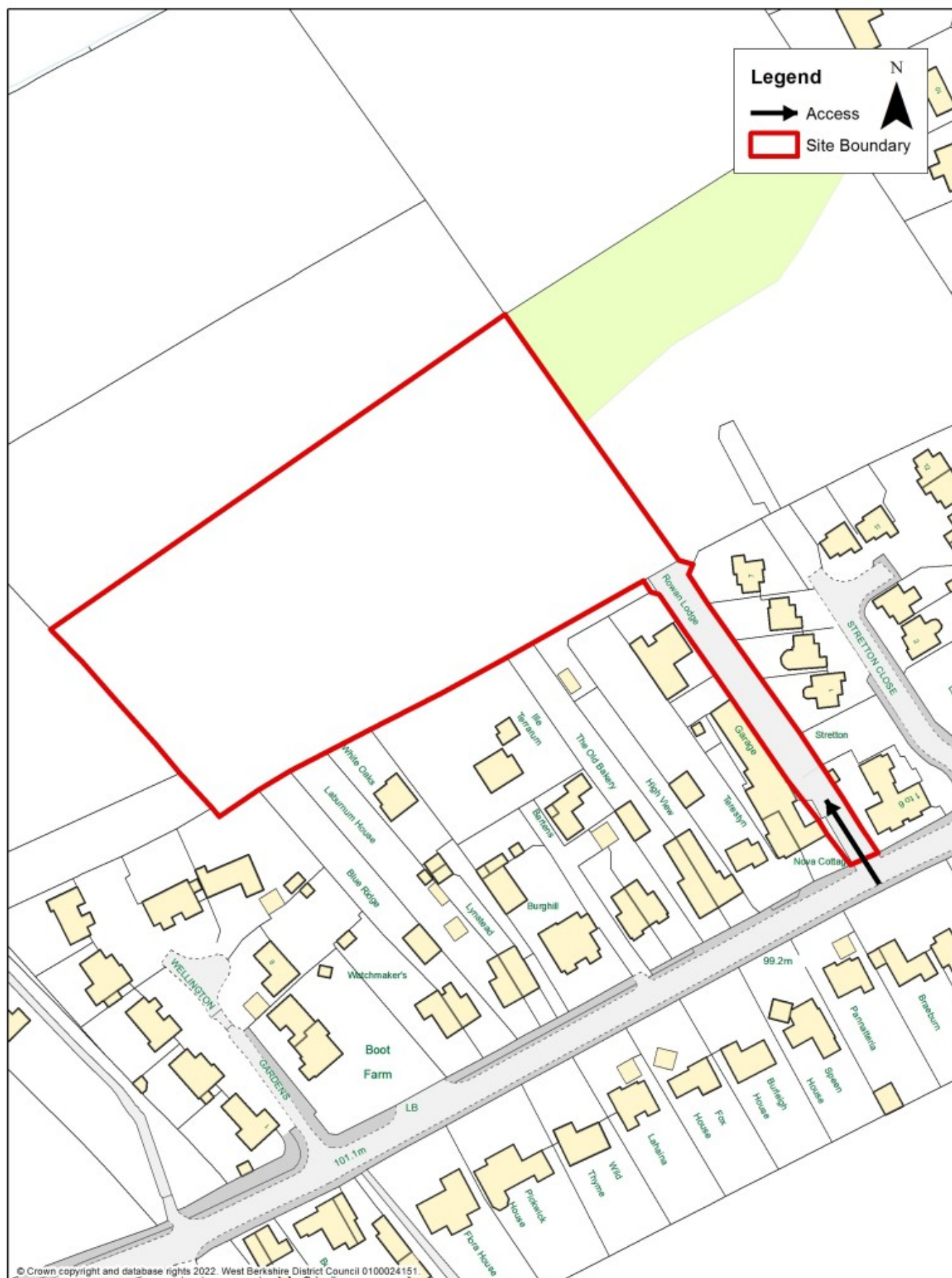
The site, as shown on the indicative map, will be required to be developed in accordance with the following parameters:

The provision of approximately 20 dwellings, in a low density scheme that provides a mix of dwelling sizes and types appropriate for the local area;

- a. Access to the site will be provided from Southend Road, subject to an assessment of the impact on existing trees;
- b. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) will be required to inform the delivery of the site as the site lies adjacent to an area of surface water flood risk (watercourse to the north of the site). This FRA will also inform mitigation measures including the provision of SuDS;
- c. An Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) will be required. Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected;
- d. An arboricultural survey will be required to inform the delivery of the site, to take into account the protected trees present on the eastern boundary;
- e. Appropriate landscaping will be provided along the northern boundary, responding positively to the existing tree belt to the north of the site, on the eastern boundary and with new planting on land at Stretton Close;
- f. The development design and layout will be in line with policy SP7 and be further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA);
- g. Measures will be included to improve accessibility by, and encourage use of, non-car transport modes. This will be set out in a Travel Information Pack;
- h. Main internal walking and cycle routes for the site will be provided and will be linked to existing routes;
- i. The design of the development will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5; and
- j. The southern quarter of the site lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and so consideration of policy 9 of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will also be required.



## Land north of Southend Road, Bradfield Southend





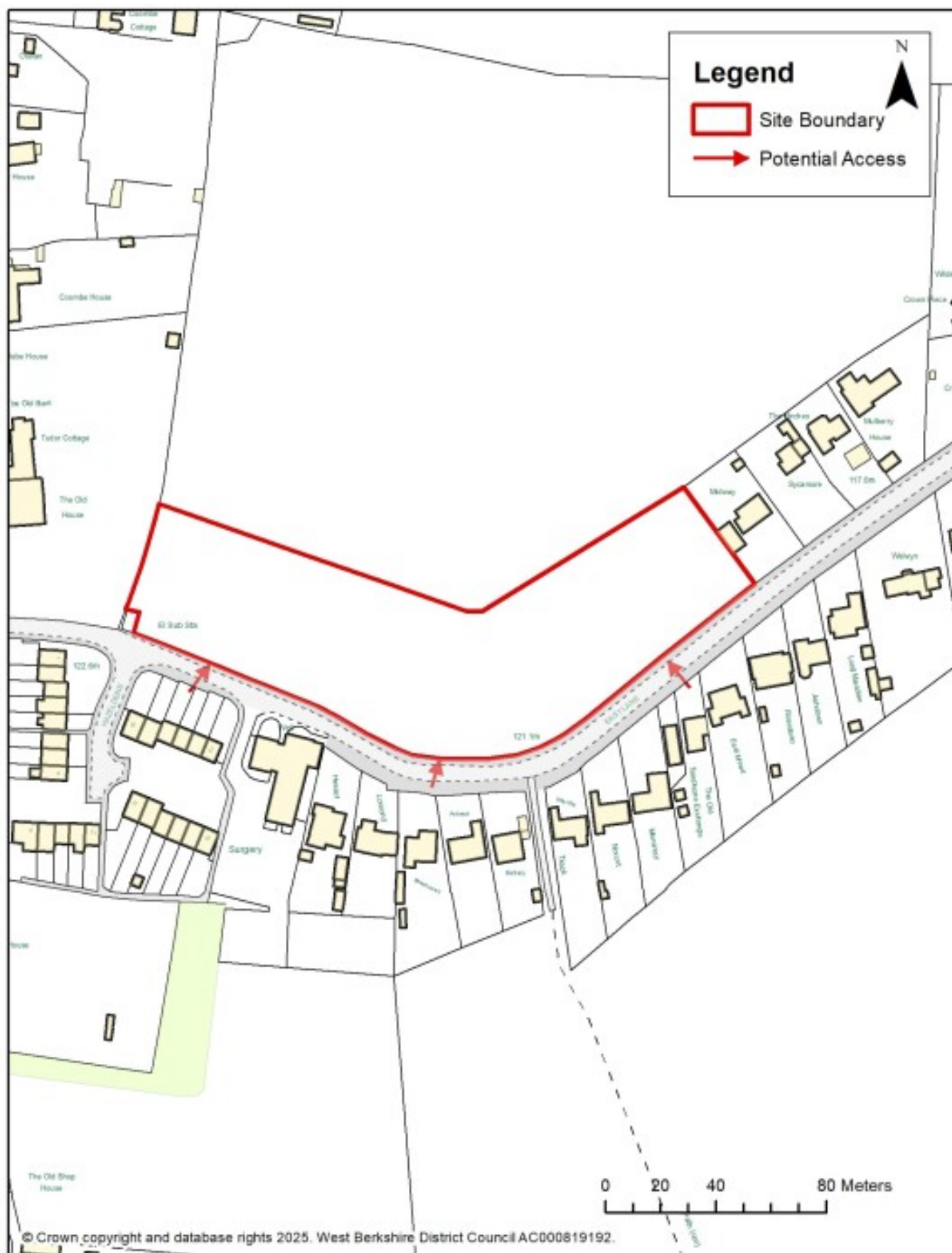
## Local Plan Review 2023-2041 version for adoption June 2025

**Policy RSA21****Land at Chieveley Glebe, Chieveley (Site Ref: CHI23)**

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

- a. The provision of up to 15 dwellings to be delivered at a low density in keeping with the surrounding area. The scheme will reflect the existing settlement pattern and take the form of a linear development fronting East Lane;
- b. Access will be provided from East Lane. The existing frontage hedgerow should be retained and enhanced as much as possible as part of the design and so proposals should allow for a maximum of three access points from East Lane. To achieve sight lines of 2.4 x 43 metres, these will need to serve more than one dwelling;
- c. Opportunities should be taken to enable linkages to connect to existing footways along East Lane;
- d. Measures will be included to improve accessibility by, and encourage use of, non-car transport modes. These measures will be set out in a Travel Information Pack;
- e. The development design and layout will be further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA);
- f. The scheme will be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected;
- g. The development design and layout will be further informed by a Heritage Impact Assessment. The development will protect and enhance the special architectural and historic interest of the Chieveley Conservation Area, with particular attention paid to the western end of the site adjoining the boundary of the Grade II listed the Old House;
- h. Development will be informed by an archaeological desk-based assessment as a minimum and field evaluation if required to assess the historic environment potential of the site;
- i. Development of the site provides an opportunity to be able to establish a burial ground at the western end of the site adjoining the boundary of the Grade II listed the Old House. Further consideration will be required at the planning application stage in order to determine the detailed layout of this area;
- j. Development proposals should explore the opportunity to provide a footpath link to Chieveley recreation ground from the western part of the site adjoining the boundary of the Grade II listed the Old House;
- k. The site lies within the hydrological catchment of the River Lambourn SSSI/SAC and the development must demonstrate nutrient neutrality. A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required to accompany any future planning application. This will be supported by an appropriate Nutrient Neutrality Assessment and Mitigation Assessment. Mitigation required will need to be operational and in place prior to any nutrient pollution being discharged;
- l. The development design will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5; and
- m. The scheme will be supported by a Flood Risk Assessment that will include the consideration of surface water flooding and will advise on any appropriate mitigation measures.

### Land at Chieveley Glebe, Chieveley



## Policy RSA22

### Pirbright Institute Site, High Street, Compton (Site Ref: HSA 22)

A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been adopted for the site and this sets out a detailed framework to guide its future development. The SPD can be found at <http://www.westberks.gov.uk/spd>.

The site, as shown on the indicative map, is to be comprehensively redeveloped delivering a residential led mixed-use scheme with a mix of employment floorspace, green infrastructure and community uses in accordance with the adopted SPD. Redevelopment of the site should incorporate an appropriate mix of uses which responds to the character and function of the village, as well as the wider landscape.

In addition, the development will be delivered in accordance with the following parameters:

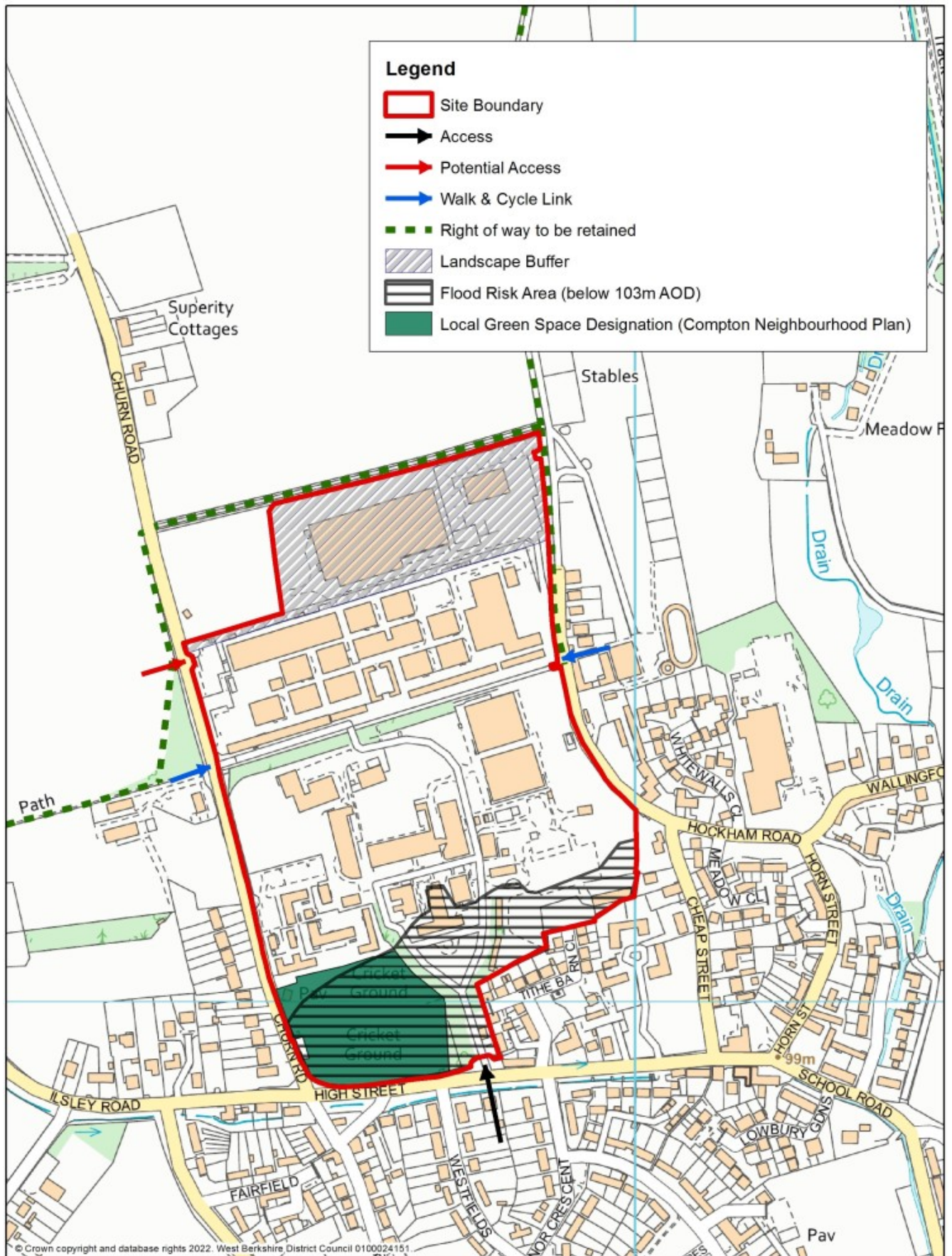
- a. The development will be residential-led with the provision of approximately 140 dwellings, delivering an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes and types which conserve and enhance the character of Compton. An element of employment floorspace will be replaced within the site;
- b. A local lettings policy should be explored for the site to allow a percentage of the affordable housing provision to be reserved for people with local needs;
- c. Should the hostel site (off Churn Road) come forward for development in a timely manner with the allocated site, it must form an integrated element of the developable area;
- d. The overall density of the site will reflect the character of Compton. The northern part of the developable area (known as Area B) will be built to a lower density than the southern part (known as Area C) so as to reflect the built form pattern on the northern edge of the village and to prevent an adverse impact on the National Landscape;
- e. The existing access from the High Street will form the main access to the development with potential for a minor access from Churn Road. The rural character of Churn Road and Hockham Road will be retained and highway improvements should therefore be limited;
- f. Improvements will be necessary to the footways that front the site onto the High Street and additional pedestrian and cycle routes could be provided onto Hockham Road;
- g. Footpath and bridleway links will be created throughout the site to improve connectivity with the wider existing network and to provide linkages between the village centre and the site. The opportunity to reinstate the former east/west public footpath through the site should be reinstated and the adjacent line of trees and remnants of the hedgerow should be retained. If feasible, access for residents to Compton Primary School and/or The Ilsleys Primary School should be provided;
- h. A phase 1 contamination report and a preliminary risk assessment will be required and may lead to subsequent reports being required. In order to ensure a safe development, the site must be remediated to the appropriate level for the proposed land uses. Any remediation will need to take into account any plans or preferences for infiltration SuDS infrastructure in the proposed development;
- i. The scheme will be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected;
- j. Informed by an archaeological desk based assessment as a minimum and field evaluation if required to assess the historic environment potential of the site;
- k. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) will be required that should cover infiltration testing and details of SuDS to be implemented, together with groundwater modelling. A sequential approach to development on the site will be followed:
  - i. No development will be permitted within Flood Zones 2 and 3, including essential infrastructure and water compatible development;
  - ii. In accordance with the Flood Risk Study (2012) (4) only less vulnerable land uses, water compatible or critical infrastructure development (in accordance with the NPPF) would be appropriate below the 103m AOD line, and more vulnerable land uses above this line, unless detailed modelling indicates otherwise;
  - iii. Detailed modelling of the River Pang which runs to the south of the site will be required to inform development proposals, including the latest Climate Change Allowances;
- l. Land to the north of the site (known as Area A) will be restored and enhanced to make a significant positive contribution to the landscape character and local distinctiveness of the open downland landscape of the

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National Landscape. This area will be retained outside of the settlement boundary for Compton. The landform will be carefully modified to remove incongruous features, as informed by the Landscape Framework (2012); and

- m. The site will comprise a development design and layout that is in accordance with the adopted SPD for the site and policy SP7 and is informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). This will include the protection of the area to the north (known as Area A) as outlined above and the retention of the cricket ground (as a community use) as green infrastructure. The scheme will also conserve and enhance the special architectural and historic interest of the Compton Conservation Area and protect its setting. The design of the development will also respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5.



**Pirbright Institute Site, High Street, Compton**

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**Policy RSA23****Land west of Spring Meadows, Great Shefford (Site Ref: GS1)**

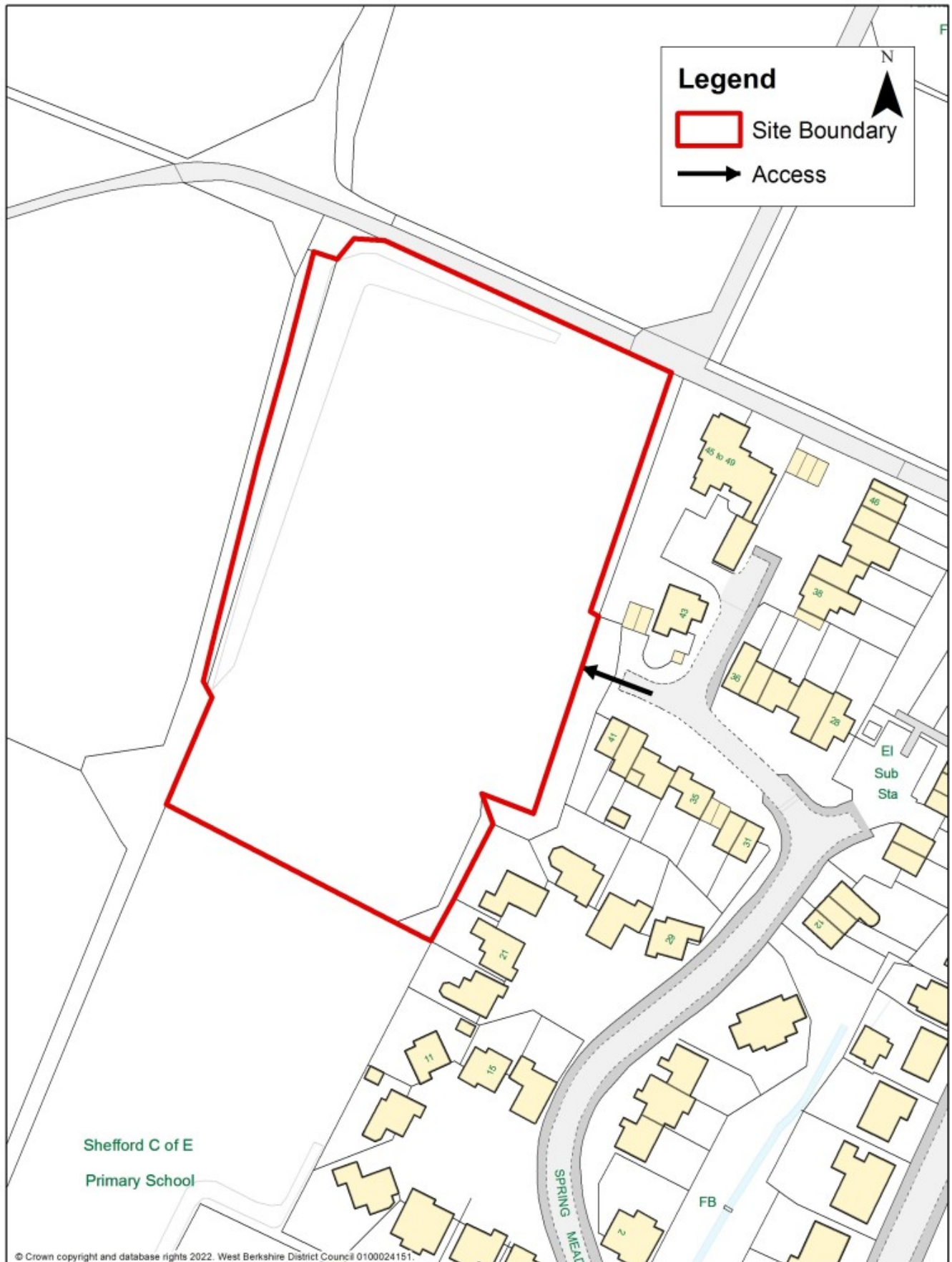
The site, as shown on the indicative map, will be required to be developed in accordance with the following parameters:

- a. The provision of approximately 15 dwellings in a scheme that provides a mix of dwelling types appropriate to the local area;
- b. Access to the site will be provided from Spring Meadows. A footway will need to be provided from the development to the existing footway in Spring Meadows;
- c. Main internal walking and cycle routes for the site will be provided and will be linked to existing routes including the Public Rights of Way network;
- d. The scheme will be developed in accordance with the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2011):
  - i. Retention of the existing boundary vegetation;
  - ii. Buildings to be kept off the northern-most corner of the site; and
  - iii. New planting to integrate buildings into the landscape and soften the edge;
- e. The development design and layout will be further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA);
- f. The scheme will be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected;
- g. The scheme will be informed by a Flood Risk Assessment for the site. This is due to the presence of a surface water flow path across the northeast corner of the site, in addition to a small area of groundwater emergence in the north east corner of the site. Development will need to be avoided in this area;
- h. The site lies within the hydrological catchment of the River Lambourn SSSI/SAC and the development must demonstrate nutrient neutrality. A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required to accompany any future planning application. This will be supported by an appropriate Nutrient Neutrality Assessment and Mitigation Assessment. Mitigation required will need to be operational and in place prior to any nutrient pollution being discharged;
- i. Infiltration from groundwater into the network has been identified as a strategic issue within this catchment; therefore development on the site will connect to the mains sewerage system;
- j. Measures will be included to improve accessibility by, and encourage use of, non-car transport modes. These measures will be set out in a Travel Information Pack;
- k. Development will be informed by an archaeological desk based assessment as a minimum and field evaluation if required to assess the historic environment potential of the site;
- l. Part of the site is underlain by aggregate mineral deposits and a Minerals Resource Assessment will be required; and
- m. The development design will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5.



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## Land west of Spring Meadows, Great Shefford



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**Policy RSA24****Land off Charlotte Close, Hermitage (Site Ref: HSA 24)**

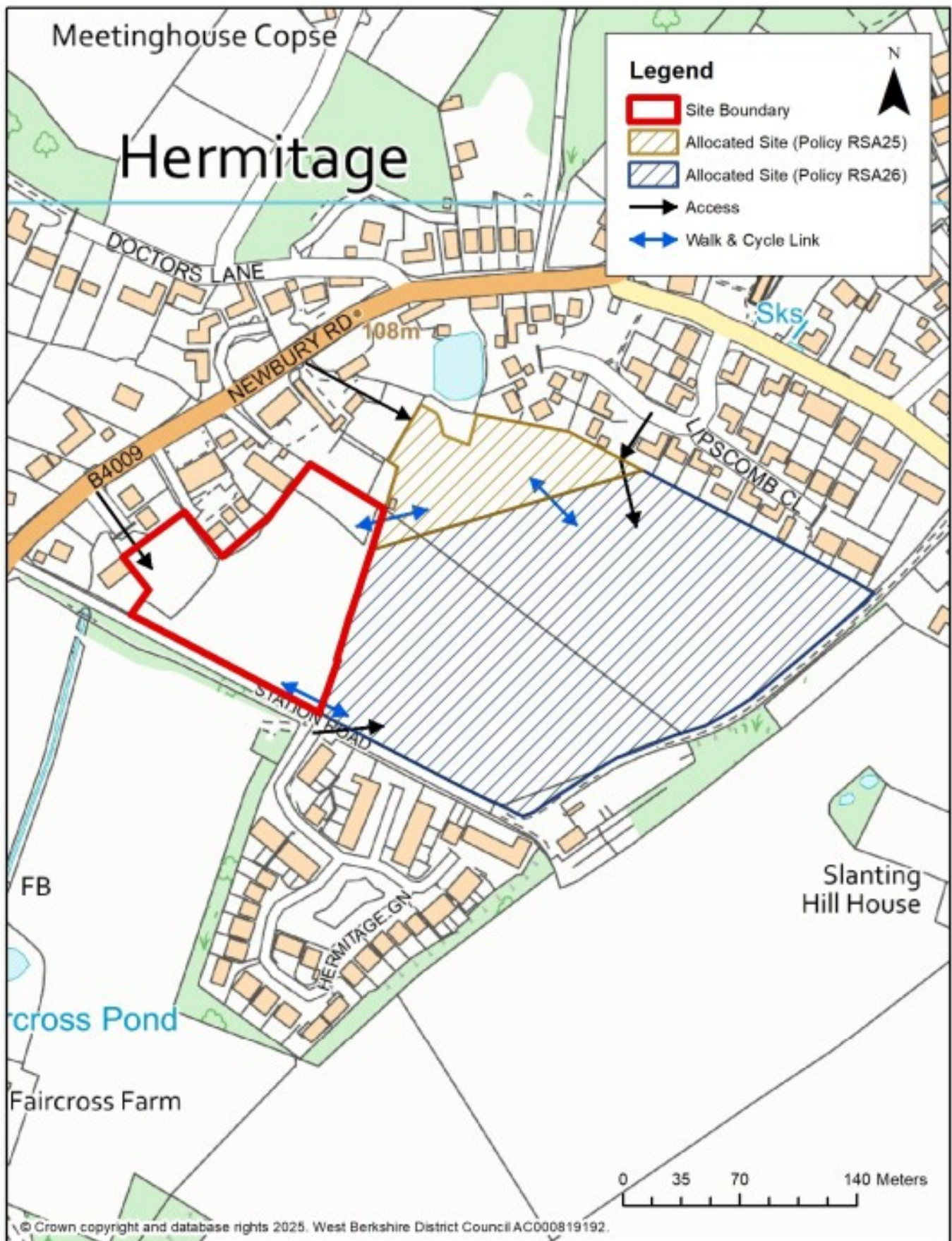
The site, as shown on the indicative map, will be required to be developed in accordance with the following parameters:

- a. The provision of approximately 15 dwellings to be developed at a mass and density that reflects the adjacent settlement character;
- b. The site will be accessed via Charlotte Close with the provision of pedestrian and cycle linkages through the site to the allocations RSA25 (Land to the south east of the Old Farmhouse) and the public open space in RSA26 (land adjacent Station Road). Opportunities should be taken to enable making these linkages part of a Hermitage to Newbury off-road path and to providing footpath links to the local Primary School to enable sustainable travel;
- c. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) will be required as the site falls within an area at risk from surface water flooding with a small part of the site within a Critical Drainage Area. The FRA should consider all potential sources of flood risk and advise on the necessary SuDS techniques/mitigation measures to be incorporated within the scheme. An ordinary watercourse is in culvert beneath the site. The development scheme should include opportunities to open up the culvert and contribute to biodiversity net gain. The development scheme should incorporate a 10m wide undeveloped buffer zone to the watercourse;
- d. The site lies within the hydrological catchment of the River Lambourn SSSI/SAC and the development must demonstrate nutrient neutrality. A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required to accompany any future planning application. This will be supported by an appropriate Nutrient Neutrality Assessment and Mitigation Assessment. Mitigation required will need to be operational and in place prior to any nutrient pollution being discharged;
- e. An Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) will be required. This should include a Great Crested Newt Survey to cover all ponds within the vicinity of the site. The final developable area will be dependent upon the extent of any appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures required to be implemented to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species will not be adversely affected;
- f. The site will be developed in accordance with the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2011) and will include:
  - i. The protection and enhancement of the tree line along Station Road and other on-site trees;
  - ii. The protection and enhancement of the hedgerow along the eastern boundary;
  - iii. The maintenance of the views through and over the built form to the woodland beyond; and
  - iv. Green infrastructure that integrates the site within the existing landscape character.
- g. The development design and layout will be in line with policy SP7 and further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA);
- h. The design of the development will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5;
- i. The development will be informed by the archaeological assessment already undertaken of the site; and
- j. The site lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and so consideration of policy 9 of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will also be required.



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## Land off Charlotte Close, Hermitage



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**Policy RSA25****Land to the south east of the Old Farmhouse, Hermitage (Site Ref HSA 25)**

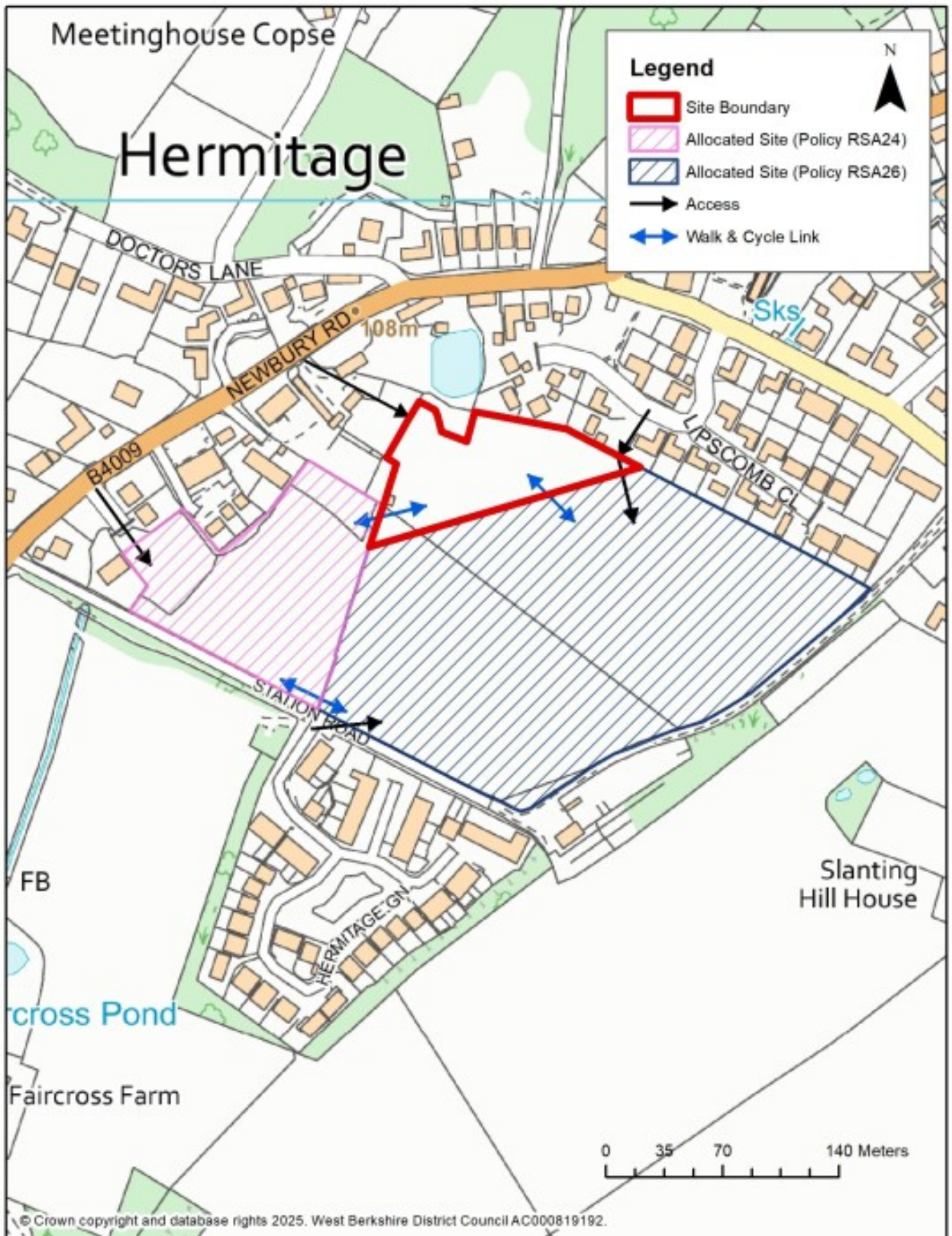
The site, as shown on the indicative map, will be required to be developed in accordance with the following parameters:

- a. The provision of approximately 10 dwellings to be developed at a mass and density that reflects the adjacent settlement character;
- b. The site will be developed in accordance with the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2011) and will include:
  - i. the protection and enhancement of the existing tree belt;
  - ii. the provision of landscaping along the south eastern boundary of the developable area; and
  - iii. green infrastructure that integrates the site within the existing landscape character;
- c. The development design and layout will be in line with policy SP7 and further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA);
- d. The design of the development will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5;
- e. The site will be accessed via Newbury Road and/or Lipscomb Close with the provision of pedestrian and cycle linkages from Lipscomb Close through the site to the allocations at RSA24 (Land off Charlotte Close) and the public open space in RSA26 (Land adjacent Station Road). Opportunities should be taken to enable making these linkages part of a Hermitage to Newbury off-road path and to providing footpath links to the local primary school to enable sustainable travel;
- f. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) will be required as a small part of the site falls within an area at risk from surface water flooding with a large part of the site within a Critical Drainage Area. The FRA should consider all potential sources of flood risk and advise on the necessary SuDS techniques/mitigation measures to be incorporated within the scheme. An ordinary watercourse is in culvert beneath the site. The development scheme should include opportunities to open up the culvert and contribute to biodiversity net gain. The development scheme should incorporate a 10m wide undeveloped buffer zone to the watercourse;
- g. The site lies within the hydrological catchment of the River Lambourn SSSI/SAC and the development must demonstrate nutrient neutrality. A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required to accompany any future planning application. This will be supported by an appropriate Nutrient Neutrality Assessment and Mitigation Assessment. Mitigation required will need to be operational and in place prior to any nutrient pollution being discharged;
- h. An Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) will be required. This should include a Great Crested Newt Survey to cover all ponds within the vicinity of the site. The final developable area will be dependent upon the extent of any appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures required to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species will not be adversely affected;
- i. Development will be informed by an archaeological desk based assessment as a minimum and field evaluation if required to assess the historic environment potential of the site;
- j. The site lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and so consideration of policy 9 of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will also be required; and
- k. The design of the development should protect the setting of the nearby Listed Building (Barnaby Thatch).



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## Land to the south east of the Old Farmhouse, Hermitage



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**Policy RSA26****Land adjacent Station Road, Hermitage (HER4)**

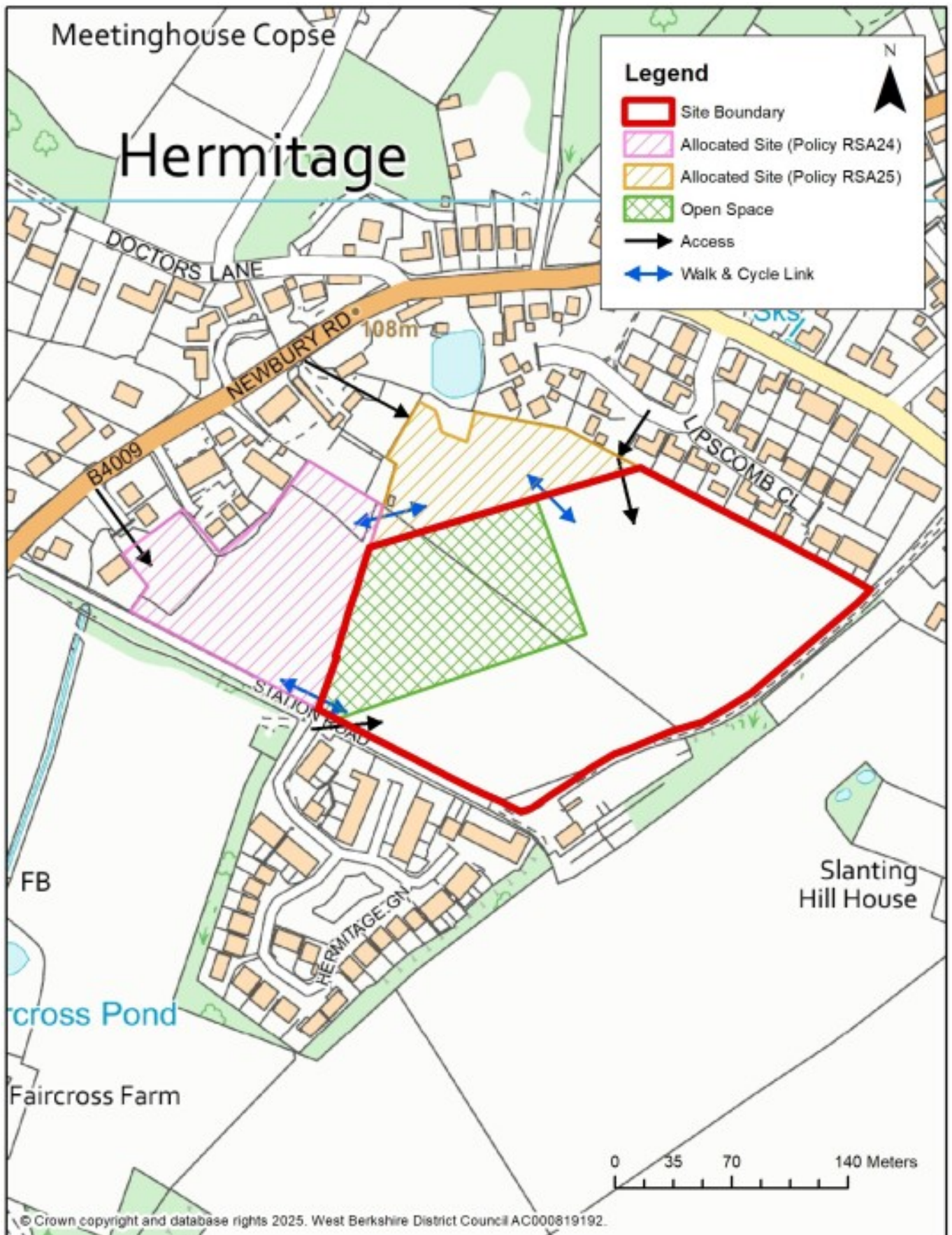
The site as shown on the indicative map will be required to be developed in accordance with the following parameters:

- a. The provision of approximately 42 dwellings in a low density scheme that provides a mix of dwellings sizes and types appropriate for the local area;
- b. Access to the site will be provided by Station Road, with options for other accesses from Lipscomb Close and / or B4009 Newbury Road being explored. If required, any access from Lipscomb Close should be a through route. Walking and cycle links will be provided to the allocations RSA24 (Land off Charlotte Close) and RSA25 (Land to the south east of the Old Farmhouse). Opportunities should be taken to enable making these linkages part of a Hermitage to Newbury off-road path and to providing footpath links to the local primary school to enable sustainable travel;
- c. Include a Transport Assessment;
- d. The site will be developed in accordance with the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment (2022) and will:
  - i. Retain the existing boundary planting;
  - ii. Retain the land in the north western part of the site as a public open space which could have a character of a village green;
  - iii. Be set back from the existing regenerated treed railway line, with additional planting along this boundary to further reduce the visual effect of development on the landscape to the south;
  - iv. Be 15 metres width set back from Station Road to retain the rural character and the setting of the mature roadside trees; and
  - v. Be set adjacent the rear gardens off Lipscomb Close to avoid an open edge to rear gardens;
- e. The development design and layout will be in line with policy SP7 and be further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment(LVIA);
- f. The design of the development will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5;
- g. The scheme will be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and or species are not adversely affected;
- h. The site lies within the hydrological catchment of the River Lambourn SSSI/SAC and the development must demonstrate nutrient neutrality. A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required to accompany any future planning application. This will be supported by an appropriate Nutrient Neutrality Assessment and Mitigation Assessment. Mitigation required will need to be operational and in place prior to any nutrient pollution being discharged;
- i. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) will be required to inform the delivery of the site as two low risk surface water flow paths travel through the site. This FRA will also inform mitigation measures including the provision of SuDS;
- j. A Heritage Impact Assessment will be required due to the presence of non-designated heritage assets and the nearby Scheduled Monument (Grimsbury Castle);
- k. Development will be informed by an archaeological desk based assessment as a minimum and field evaluation if required to assess the historic environment potential of the site; and
- l. Part of the site is underlain by aggregate mineral deposits and a Minerals Resource Assessment will be required.



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## Land adjacent to Station Road, Hermitage



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**Policy RSA27****Land adjoining The Haven, Kintbury (Site Ref: KIN6)**

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

- a. The provision of approximately 20 dwellings to be developed in a low density scheme in keeping with the surrounding area;
- b. The scheme will be developed in accordance with the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2011):
  - i. Replacement of the conifer hedge to the western boundary with more appropriate planting;
  - ii. Views from the surrounding countryside, Public Right of Way, and the neighbouring recreational field would need to be carefully considered; and
  - iii. New planting to integrate the buildings into the landscape;
- c. The development design and layout will be in accordance with policy SP7 and further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA);
- d. An Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) will be required which should include a Great Crested Newt survey. The final developable area will be dependent upon the extent of any appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures required to be implemented to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species will not be adversely affected;
- e. The design of the development will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5;
- f. Access to the site will be provided from The Haven via the existing garages. Any parking lost will need to be relocated;
- g. A Transport Statement will be required as part of any planning application;
- h. Main internal walking and cycle routes for the site will be provided and will be linked to existing routes including the Public Rights of Way network;
- i. Part of the site lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and so consideration of policy 9 of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will be required; and
- j. A noise survey will be required as part of any planning application due to the proximity of the site to a sports ground; and
- k. The scheme will be supported by a Flood Risk Assessment that will include the consideration of surface water flooding and will advise on any appropriate mitigation measures.



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## Land adjoining The Haven, Kintbury



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## Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation

### Policy RSA28

**New Stocks Farm, Paices Hill, Aldermaston (Site Ref: TS1)**

**Type of site:** Gypsy and Traveller site

**Number of pitches:** 8 permanent pitches

**Timescale:** Within 5 years

Proposals for this site should:

- a. Replace 8 existing transit pitches on the south east part of the New Stocks Farm site with 8 permanent pitches;
- b. Be accessed from the existing access;
- c. Demonstrate appropriate safeguards to prevent the pollution of ground and surface water;
- d. Provide a Sustainable Urban Drainage assessment;
- e. Have due regard to the provisions of policy DM20 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople; and
- f. The site shall only be occupied by those persons who meet the definition of Gypsies and Travellers, as outlined in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites.



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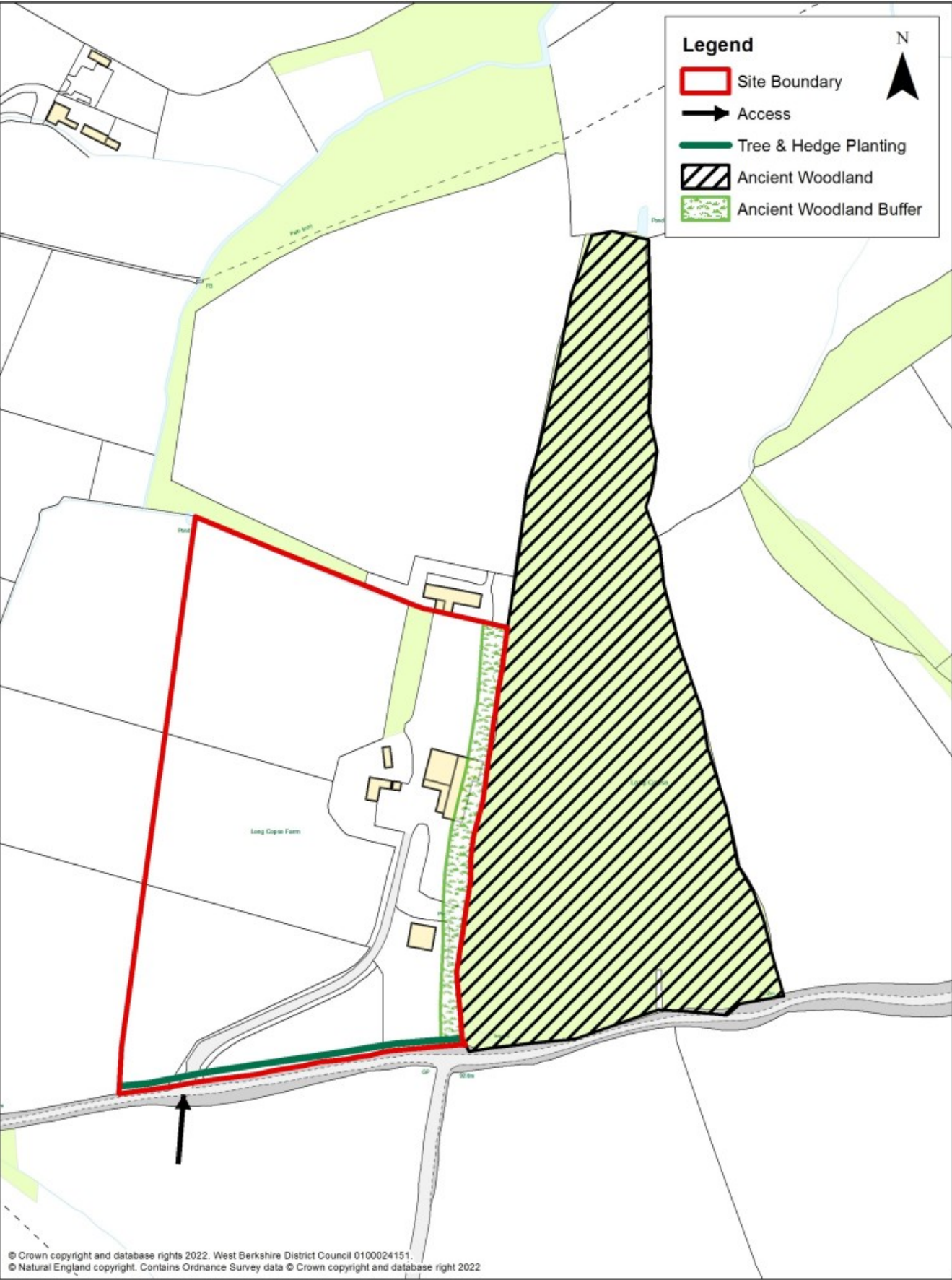
**Policy RSA29****Long Copse Farm, Enborne (Site Ref: TS2)****Type of site:** Travelling Showpersons yard**Number of plots:** 24 plots**Timescale:** 24 plots to be delivered within 5 years

Proposals for this site should:

- a. Provide a design, layout and siting plan together with a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA);
- b. Provide a landscaping scheme to conserve and enhance the existing trees, hedgerows and woodland which should demonstrate how it would assist in breaking up and screening the built area and the area along the road access to the site;
- c. Include a Transport Assessment identifying the highway improvements to Wheatlands Lane to be agreed with the Highways Authority, including achieving appropriate sight lines at the existing access point to Wheatlands Lane and road widening or passing places east of the site;
- d. Include an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will be required to be implemented to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species will not be adversely affected;
- e. Provide an appropriate buffer of at least 15m between the development and the Ancient Woodland at Long Copse Wood., The precise buffer will be determined through detailed assessment and design when proposals are submitted for development. A 10m woodland buffer along the northern and western boundaries of the site to link to Long Copse Wood and tree planting along the southern boundary of the site should also be provided. These must be in place before the occupation of the site;
- f. Locate the plots and associated development infrastructure together closely relating to the existing buildings at Long Copse Farm and to minimise impact on existing residential properties;
- g. Provide a layout showing the residential, maintenance and storage activities proposed on the site;
- h. Demonstrate appropriate safeguards to prevent the pollution of ground and surface water;
- i. Provide a Sustainable Urban Drainage assessment;
- j. Have due regard to the provisions of policy DM20 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople;
- k. A minimum 5 metre buffer zone will be provided and maintained between the watercourse running through the site and any proposed plots; and
- l. The site lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and so consideration of policy 9 of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will be required.

The site shall only be occupied by those persons who meet the definition of Travelling Showpeople, as outlined in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites.

Long Copse Farm, Enborne



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## Sites allocated for employment land

**8.10** The following sites are allocated to facilitate the growth and forecasted change in industrial land over the plan period to 2041:

Policy Ref:	Site Name:	Approximate floorspace (sqm)	Use
ESA1	Land east of Colthrop Industrial Estate, Thatcham	20,400	B2/B8
ESA2	Land west of Ramsbury Road, Membury Industrial Estate	10,390	B2/B8
ESA3	Land to the south of Trinity Grain, Membury Industrial Estate, Lambourn Woodlands	<u>5,200</u>	Egiii/B2
ESA4	Beenham Landfill, Pips Way, Beenham	14,000	B2/B8
ESA5	Northway Porsche, Grange Lane, Beenham	6,400	Egiii/B2
ESA6	Land adjacent to Padworth IWMF, Padworth Lane	12,400	B2/B8

**8.11** The Council will seek to ensure that sufficient sites are provided in the right locations to foster sustainable economic growth. The allocated sites are focused around or near to areas of existing employment activity, and mainly adjacent to defined Designated Employment Areas. Those sites allocated on land adjacent to a DEA, will, through this LPR, now form part of that DEA.

### Thatcham

**8.12** Thatcham's main industrial area is Colthrop Estate, comprising a mix of larger distribution units and smaller workshops, and is described in the ELR as 'the District's premier logistics and distribution park'. There are some vacancies in the office stock, and a very high occupancy in the industrial and warehousing stock. The allocated site to the east of the Colthrop Estate (ESA1) is a logical extension and would aid in meeting the identified need in the Urban Area of Thatcham.

### Membury Industrial Estate

**8.13** Membury Industrial Estate has seen a number of redevelopments and expansions in recent years and through the LPR the boundary of the DEA has been extended to reflect these changes and to support the creation of local job opportunities in the more western rural areas of the District. The allocated sites at Membury (ESA2 and ESA3) will also aid in addressing a local and rural demand.

### Beenham

**8.14** Beenham Grange Industrial Area is largely occupied by industrial operators, with a mix of locally based companies and larger companies servicing the area. At the time of the ELR there were no available industrial units, reflecting the nature of the industrial market in this location. The sites allocated in this area (ESA4, ESA5 and ESA6) would aid in meeting the identified need towards the east of the District. The site at Northway Porsche would encourage light industrial units, compatible with surrounding uses. The site at Padworth sidings, whilst it is not directly adjacent to a DEA, it would make use of brownfield land and is adjacent to the Padworth Household Waste Recycling Centre.

**8.15** For each site policy (ESA1-ESA6), the site allocation is identified on the indicative site map. The area shown on the map is the gross site area. The policies provide approximate floor space for development, based on standard plot ratios as set out within the HELAA, unless the site promoter has suggested a development potential that is lower

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than that calculated. The actual floorspace achieved may vary slightly depending on the detailed design work carried out in preparation for a planning application and will be influenced by the topography and other specific site characteristics.

## Policy ESA1

### Land east of Colthrop Industrial Estate, Thatcham (Site Ref: MID5)

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

- a. The provision of approximately 20,400 square metres of employment floorspace for B2 and/or B8 uses across the site <sup>(43)</sup>;
- b. Access to the site will be provided from the A4;
- c. Measures will be provided to mitigate the impact of development on the local road network. A Transport Assessment will be required;
- d. The development design and layout will be in accordance with policy SP7, and be further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). The design and layout should also take into account the site's position as a gateway into Thatcham, tree planting within the site, building design including colour scheme and suitable roof treatments, and the presence of overhead power lines;
- e. Buildings should be set back from the A4/Bath Road and the eastern site boundary to allow for a tree planted landscape buffer, extending the existing wooded edge of Colthrop Industrial Estate and to help mitigate any visual impact on the wider landscape to the east;
- f. Development will be informed by a Tree Survey due to the presence of TPOs on the western side of the site;
- g. Development will be informed by a Flood Risk Assessment, which will include appropriate flood mitigation measures, including SuDS;
- h. Development will be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected. Such mitigation will include external lighting design;
- i. The site lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and so consideration of policy 9 of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will be required. Consideration of extraction prior to any development would be encouraged;
- j. Development will be informed by an archaeological desk based assessment as a minimum and field evaluation if required to assess the historic environment potential of the site;
- k. Development will be informed by a desk based assessment (as a minimum) detailing the likelihood and extent of land contamination, followed by, where necessary, an intrusive investigation and undertaking of appropriate remediation measures. Further monitoring may be required depending on the nature of contamination and remediation; and
- l. The development design will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5.

43 As at June 2024 the site had extant planning permission 21/02130/OUTMAJ for 19,536sqm of B2/B8 space with ancillary office space, and a second extant permission 23/02965/FULMAJ for a Logistics Hub comprising approximately 7,800sqm of office space and associated uses for Thames Valley Police.



## Land east of Colthrop Industrial Estate, Thatcham



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**Policy ESA2****Land west of Ramsbury Road, Membury Industrial Estate, Lambourn Woodlands (Site Ref: LAM6)**

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

- a. The provision of approximately 10,390 square metres of employment floorspace for B2 and/or B8 uses;
- b. Access to the site will be provided from Ramsbury Road;
- c. Measures will be provided to mitigate the impact of development on the local road network. A Transport Assessment will be required;
- d. Measures will be included to improve accessibility by, and encourage use of, non-car transport modes. These measures will be set out in a Travel Plan;
- e. The scheme will be developed in accordance with the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment (2021) for Land west of Ramsbury Road - LAM6 and will include the following measures:
  - i. Development should be limited to the area shown on the indicative map;
  - ii. A landscape buffer should be created and retained, as shown on the indicative map. The buffer should be planted as native woodland between the proposed developable area and Ramsbury Road. Woodland areas should include native trees and shrubs, and to include some fast growing tree species as part of early planting;
  - iii. The height of buildings should be limited so they do not protrude above the treeline of the tree belt to the west as would be visible from Ramsbury Road;
  - iv. Appropriate design to consider façade treatment on the eastern flank walls of buildings to reduce their visual prominence; and
  - v. Access into the developable area should be low key, have a rural character and avoid large signage which would detract from the existing rural character of the area;
- f. The development design and layout will be in accordance with policy SP7, and be further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA);
- g. Development will be informed by a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA);
- h. Development will be informed by a Flood Risk Assessment, which will include appropriate flood mitigation measures, including SuDS;
- i. Development will be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected;
- j. The site lies partly within a Waste Preferred Area and a Mineral Safeguarding Area and so consideration of policy 9 of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will be required. Consideration of extraction of minerals resources prior to any development would be encouraged;
- k. The development design will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5; and
- l. Development will be informed by an archaeological desk-based assessment as a minimum and field evaluation if required to assess the historic environment of the site.

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Land west of Ramsbury Road, Membury Industrial Estate, Lambourn Woodlands



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**Policy ESA3****Land to the south of Trinity Grain, Membury Industrial Estate, Lambourn Woodlands (Site Ref: LAM10)**

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

- a. The provision of approximately 5,200 square metres of employment floorspace for B2 and/or E(g)(iii) across the site;
- b. Access to the site will be provided from Ramsbury Road;
- c. Measures will be provided to mitigate the impact of development on the local road network. A Transport Assessment will be required;
- d. Measures will be included to improve accessibility by, and encourage use of, non-car transport modes. These measures will be set out in a Travel Plan;
- e. The scheme will be developed in accordance with the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment (2022) for Site 2: South of Trinity Grain, and will include the following measures:
  - i. Retain the tree belt/hedgerow along the eastern site boundary and the woodland copse within the southern part of the site; and
  - ii. Buildings should be at a height where they are not visible above the adjacent silo towers and the tree canopy (within the southern part of the site) from the wider landscape to the south and from the Ramsbury Road;
- f. The development design and layout will be in accordance with policy SP7 and be further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA);
- g. Development will be informed by a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA);
- h. Development will be informed by a Flood Risk Assessment, which will include appropriate flood mitigation measures, including SuDS;
- i. Development will be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected;
- j. The development design will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5; and
- k. Development will be informed by an archaeological desk-based assessment as a minimum and field evaluation if required to assess the historic environment of the site.



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**Land to the south of Trinity Grain, Membury Industrial Estate, Lambourn Woodlands**

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**Policy ESA4****Beenham Landfill, Pips Way, Beenham (Site Ref: part of BEEN3 and part of BEEN5)**

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

- a. The provision of approximately 14,000 square metres of employment floorspace for B2 and/or B8 uses across the site;
- b. Access to the site will be provided from Pips Way, accessed off the A4/A340 roundabout;
- c. Measures will be provided to mitigate the impact of development on the local road network. A Transport Assessment will be required, and will consider the impact on the A340/A4 roundabout;
- d. The scheme will be developed in accordance with the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessments (2022) for Beenham Industrial Area - BEEN3 and BEEN5 and will include the following measures:
  - i. Retain and enhance the existing newly planted wooded bund along the SW edge of the site and create a landscape buffer along the NW and SE site boundary;
  - ii. Propose a new landscape buffer to the wider National Landscape and strengthen the existing woodland belts which enclose the site by additional tree planting, especially along the NE site boundary;
  - iii. Restrict and consider the scale of development to avoid an adverse visual effect on adjacent areas of the National Landscape, Aldermaston Wharf and the A4. This will include the proposed height of buildings, colour, architectural style and roof profile, the impact of external lighting and noise, and any other structures/features which could negatively impact on adjacent areas. The North Wessex Downs AONB: Guidance on the selection and use of colour in development should be used as guidance;
  - iv. Avoid the use of close boarded fencing in areas visible from Public Rights of Way and in particular along the site boundary. The existing wire mesh fencing could be retained as a suitable fencing; and
  - v. External lighting if required, should be minimal and avoid edge off site locations which could result in light pollution intruding into adjacent areas of the open countryside;
- e. The development design and layout will be in accordance with policy SP7, and be further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA);
- f. Development will be informed by a Flood Risk Assessment, which will include appropriate flood mitigation measures, including SuDS;
- g. Development will be informed by an appropriate Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected;
- h. Development will be informed by a desk based assessment (as a minimum) detailing the likelihood and extent of land contamination, followed by, where necessary, an intrusive investigation and undertaking of appropriate remediation measures. Further monitoring may be required depending on the nature of contamination and remediation;
- i. The site lies within a Waste Safeguarding Area and so consideration of policy 10 of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will be required; and
- j. The development design will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5.

**Beenham Landfill, Pips Way, Beenham**



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**Policy ESA5****Northway Porsche, Grange Lane, Beenham (Site ref: BEEN10)**

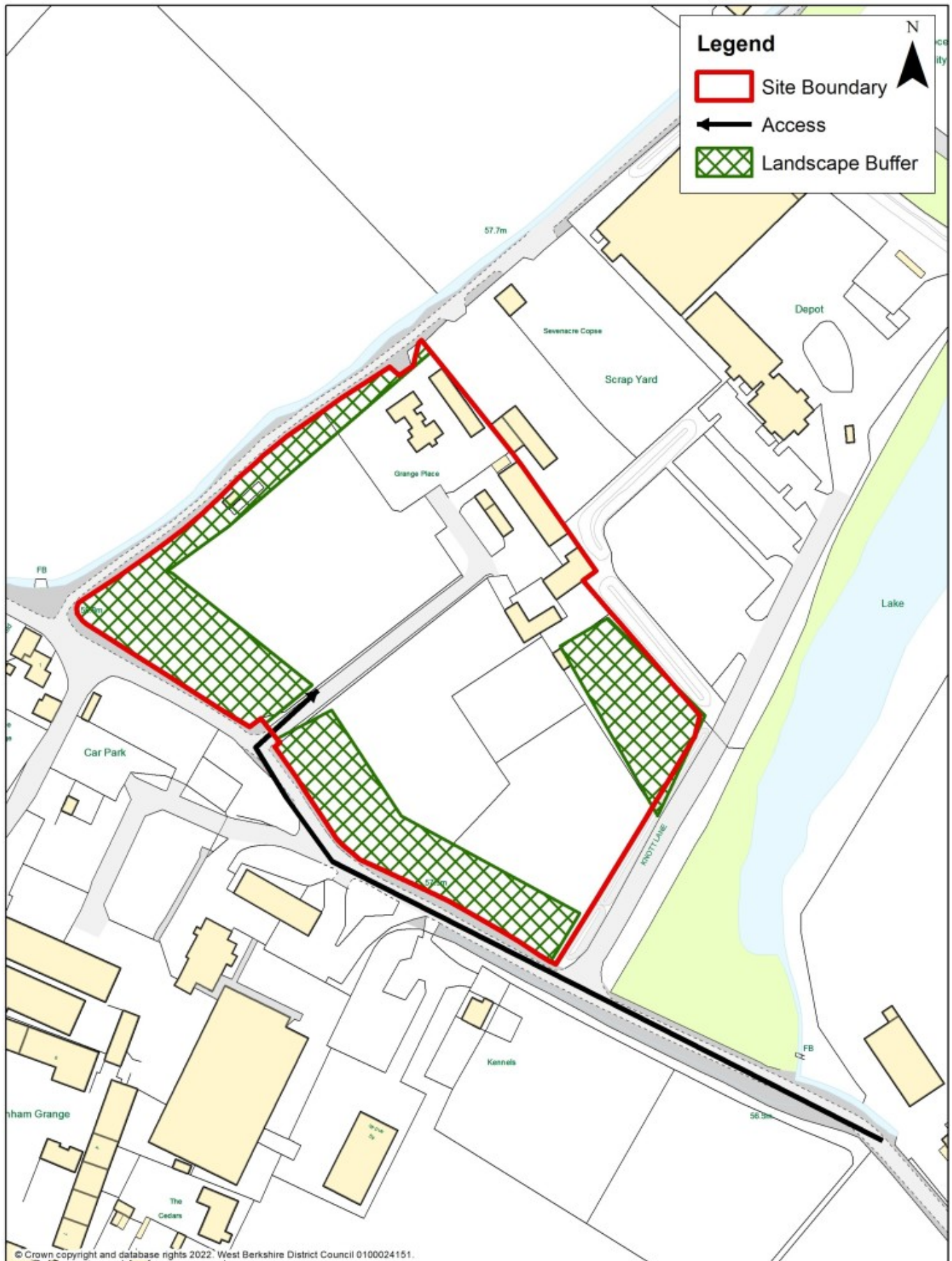
The site, as shown on the indicative map, will be developed in accordance with the following parameters:

- a. The provision of approximately 6,400 square metres of employment floorspace for B2 and/or E(g)(iii) uses across the site;
- b. Access to the site will be provided off the A4 using the existing access to Beenham Industrial Estate;
- c. Measures will be provided to mitigate the impact of development on the local road network. A Transport Assessment will be required, and will consider the impact on the A340/A4 roundabout;
- d. The scheme will be developed in accordance with the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment (2022) for Beenham Industrial Area - BEEN10 land north east of Beenham Grange and will include the following measures:
  - i. Retain a landscape buffer between the site and the two adjacent PRow, which should be planted as native woodland;
  - ii. Retain and provide an open setting for existing mature trees of value;
  - iii. Avoid the use of close boarded fencing in areas visible from Public Rights of Way and in particular along the site boundary. The existing wire mesh fencing could be retained as a suitable fencing;
  - iv. Buildings should be rural in scale and character, and of a height which does not intrude above the existing height of buildings on the site. Particular attention should be given to building facades which face onto the surrounding landscape, to avoid any indirect adverse landscape effect on the National Landscape. The North Wessex Downs AONB: Guidance on the selection and use of colour in development should be used as guidance;
  - v. External lighting if required, should be minimal and avoid edge of site locations which could result in light pollution intruding into adjacent areas of the open countryside; and
  - vi. Noise levels should not increase above the existing noise levels within adjacent areas;
- e. The development design and layout will be in accordance with policy SP7, and be further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA);
- f. Development will be informed by a Flood Risk Assessment, which will include appropriate flood mitigation measures, including SuDS;
- g. Development will be informed by a Tree Survey due to the presence of TPOs on the site;
- h. Development will be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected;
- i. Development will be informed by an archaeological desk based assessment as a minimum and field evaluation if required to assess the historic environment potential of the site;
- j. Development will be informed by a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA);
- k. The site lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and so consideration of policy 9 of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will be required. Consideration of extraction prior to any development would be encouraged;
- l. The development design will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5; and
- m. Development will be informed by a desk based assessment (as a minimum) detailing the likelihood and extent of land contamination, followed by, where necessary, an intrusive investigation and undertaking of appropriate remediation measures. Further monitoring may be required depending on the nature of contamination and remediation.



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## Northway Porsche, Grange Lane, Beenham



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**Policy ESA6****Land adjacent to Padworth IWMF, Padworth Lane, Padworth (Site Ref: PAD4)**

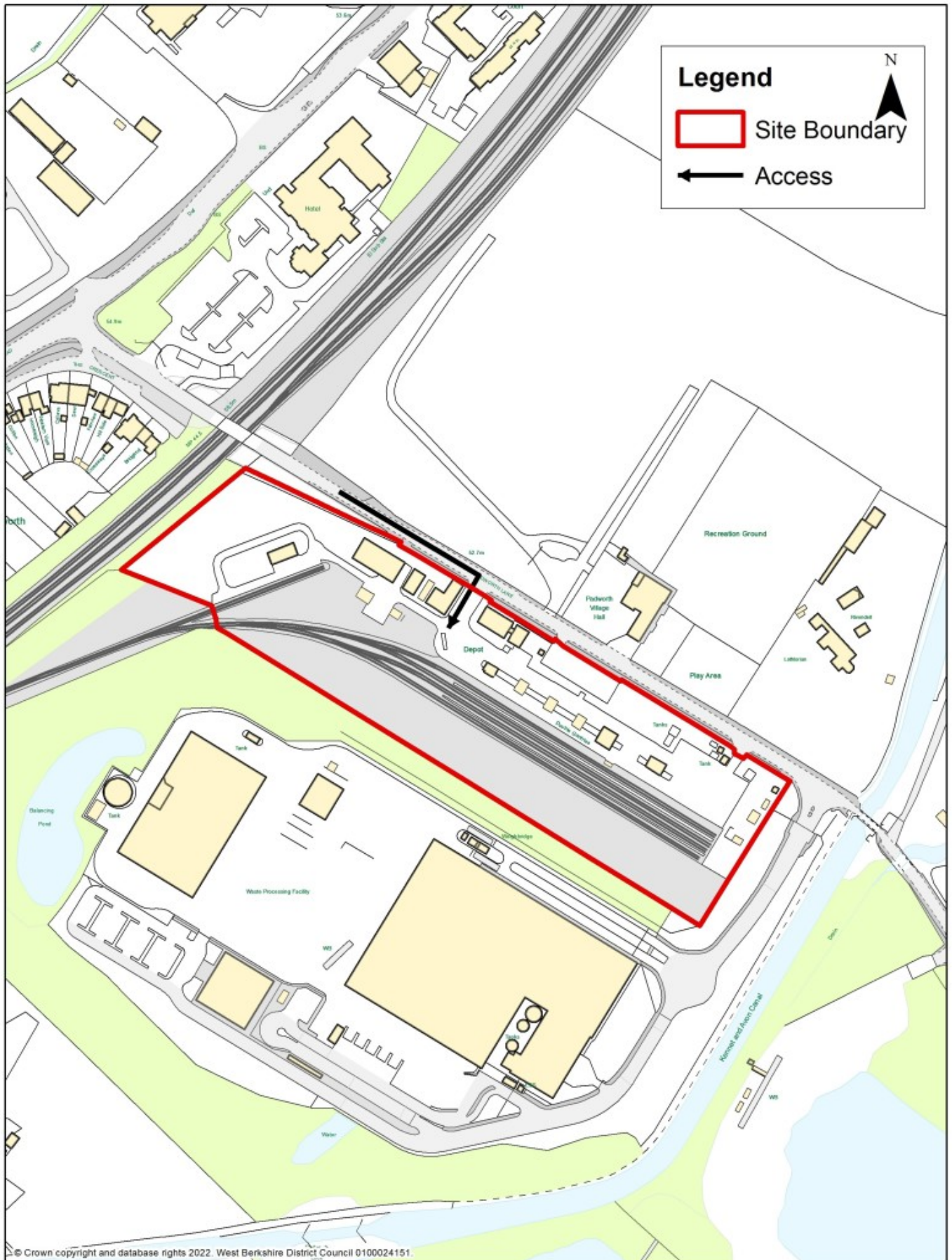
The site, as shown on the indicative map, will be developed in accordance with the following parameters:

- a. The provision of approximately 12,400 square metres of employment floorspace for B2 and/or B8 uses across the site;
- b. Access to the site will be provided from Padworth Lane;
- c. Measures will be provided to mitigate the impact of development on the local road network. A Transport Assessment will be required, and will consider the impact on Padworth Lane, the bridge and traffic lights on Padworth Lane, the junction with the A4, and the A340/A4 roundabout;
- d. The development design and layout will be in accordance with policy SP7, and be further informed by a full detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), and take into account the character and appearance of surrounding development;
- e. Development will be informed by a Flood Risk Assessment, which will include appropriate flood mitigation measures, including SuDS;
- f. Development will be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and/or species are not adversely affected;
- g. Development will be informed by an archaeological desk based assessment as a minimum and field evaluation if required to assess the historic environment potential of the site;
- h. Development will be informed by a desk based assessment (as a minimum) detailing the likelihood and extent of land contamination, followed by, where necessary, an intrusive investigation and undertaking of appropriate remediation measures. Further monitoring may be required depending on the nature of contamination and remediation;
- i. A Construction and Operations Management Plan (COMP) shall accompany any planning application on the site. The COMP shall safeguard the oil pipeline from operational works, including the provision of an appropriate buffer;
- j. The site lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and so consideration of policy 9 of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will be required; and
- k. The development design will respond positively to the challenge of climate change and be designed for climate resilience, including maximising the efficient use of sustainable technologies, resources, materials and solar gain, in accordance with policy SP5.



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## Land adjacent to Padworth IWMF, Padworth Lane, Padworth



## 9 Development Management Policies: Our place based approach

### Policy DM1

#### Residential Development in the Countryside

Exceptionally, new residential development outside of adopted settlement boundaries will be permitted. These exceptions are solely limited to development which is appropriately designed and located and which satisfies one or more of the following criteria:

- a. Sites allocated as part of the development plan;
- b. Sites for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople (policies RSA28, RSA29 and DM20);
- c. Rural exception housing and/or First Homes exception sites (policies DM16 and DM17);
- d. The conversion of redundant or disused buildings (policy DM24);
- e. Housing to accommodate rural workers (policy DM23);
- f. The extension to or replacement of existing residential dwellings (policies DM25 and DM28);
- g. The subdivision of existing residential dwellings (policy DM27);
- h. Student or staff accommodation necessary to meet the reasonable needs and operational requirements of existing educational and institutional sites in the countryside (policy DM38); or
- i. Limited residential infill in settlements in the countryside with no defined settlement boundary where:
  - i. It is within a closely knit cluster of 10 or more existing dwellings adjacent to, or fronting an existing highway; and
  - ii. The scale of development consists of infilling a small undeveloped plot commensurate with the scale and character of existing dwellings within an otherwise built up frontage; and
  - iii. It does not extend the existing frontage at either end; and
  - iv. The proposed plot size and spacing between dwellings is similar to adjacent properties and respects the rural character and street scene of the locality.

### Supporting text

**9.1** New development is easiest to assimilate when located within existing settlements. The overall spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy for West Berkshire is set out in policies SP1 and SP3. The policies seek to accommodate development in the most sustainable way, focusing development in settlements with existing facilities and services. Policy SP1 sets out that the principle of development is acceptable inside settlement boundaries and makes clear that only appropriate limited development in the countryside will be allowed.

**9.2** In this context, this policy makes clear that land outside of settlement boundaries will be treated as open countryside where there is a presumption against new residential development. National planning guidance currently advises that blanket policies restricting development should be avoided unless there is robust evidence on why this is necessary. In West Berkshire, the conservation and enhancement of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape and its setting is clearly a key consideration. At the same time, planning guidance also makes clear that planning policies and decisions should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. The appreciation that all countryside will have some such qualities means that it needs to be protected or safeguarded. Responding to that acknowledgement whilst maintaining the vitality of rural communities is also a key consideration in West Berkshire. This policy therefore sets out the exceptional circumstances whereby residential development outside settlement boundaries may be acceptable.

**9.3** The countryside of West Berkshire is characterised by small settlements and dispersed farmsteads. Due to the constant pressure for development, these settlements and farmsteads are at risk from piecemeal development. Cumulative impact is an important consideration in these areas, as incremental changes when viewed collectively can significantly change the character of a landscape.

**9.4** The conversion of rural buildings to residential use for instance can have a considerable impact on the character of the surrounding area. Similarly, the intensification of modest rural properties through extensions and the addition of large ancillary buildings and/or redevelopment can result in a disproportionate number of larger country houses, resulting in a loss of smaller and mid-sized properties and increased suburbanisation undermining a balance in the



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historic settlement pattern and rural character. Whilst there may be no increase in the actual number of dwellings, a scene that was once comprised of isolated agricultural workers cottages and barns set within open fields is urbanised and the rural character altered.

**9.5** An assessment therefore, has to be made of the sensitivity of the landscape to a particular type of change and the subsequent capacity of that area to absorb the change. For some areas, the character may be so fragile that new development is not acceptable even on a small scale. All development proposals are expected to respond positively to their context by conserving and enhancing landscape character in accordance with policy SP8 and by strengthening a sense of place in accordance with policy SP7 and also SP5.

**9.6** In particularly exceptional cases there may be a very special circumstance where an isolated new home of truly outstanding design standards, reflecting the highest standards of architecture, is proposed. Such proposals will be extremely rare and will be considered on their individual merits.

**9.7** For all development proposals in the countryside, robust evidence will need to be provided to support the application to demonstrate that an exceptional approach is fully justified. The Council publishes a [list of local documents](#) that are required as part of planning applications and developers are encouraged to ensure their proposals comply with this list. Proposals will be expected to clearly illustrate the appropriateness of the development within the rural context.

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**Policy DM2****Separation of Settlements around Newbury and Thatcham**

In order to prevent the coalescence of Newbury and Thatcham and to maintain the separate identity of the distinct settlements around both towns, the following gaps between settlements have been identified and are outlined on the Policies Map:

- a. Land between Newbury and Donnington
- b. Land between Newbury and Enborne Row/Wash Water
- c. Land between Newbury and Thatcham
- d. Land between Thatcham and Cold Ash
- e. Land between Thatcham and Ashmore Green

Development which would detract from the open or rural character of these gaps will not be permitted. In these areas development will only be permitted where it:

- i. Would not diminish the clear physical and visual separation between distinct settlements; and
- ii. Would not compromise the integrity of the gap either individually or cumulatively with other existing or proposed development.

**Supporting Text**

**9.8** The overarching spatial strategy for the LPR set out in policy SP1 focuses development on Newbury and Thatcham. This pressure for development has the potential to lead to the loss of the separate and distinct identity of both settlements and the settlements surrounding them through coalescence. This could either be by physically or perceptually reducing the gaps between them or by introducing an increase of activity which has an urbanising effect. The visual break and sense of openness between these settlements is very important in maintaining the separate identity of individual communities and the Council considers it important that the integrity of this openness is maintained.

**9.9** An [Appropriate Countryside Designation Study](#) (2022) was therefore undertaken of the countryside around Newbury and Thatcham to help determine whether a specific planning designation was needed to safeguard the unique characters and separate identities of the individual settlements. This concluded that should the Council specifically define the particular gaps it wanted to protect, that it would be justified in creating a new green gap policy.

**9.10** Gaps are a long established planning tool used to prevent the coalescence of settlements in order to maintain their separate identity. A clear gap between distinct settlements helps maintain a sense of place for residents of, and visitors to, the settlements on either side of the gap. They prevent development in areas where there is the greatest risk of coalescence and so ensure that by retaining a sense of openness, local distinctiveness is maintained.

**9.11** The identified gaps set out in the policy have not been specifically defined to protect the landscape character of the countryside around Newbury and Thatcham, the Council's approach to which is set out in policy SP8. It is important to recognise that the gaps are not a local landscape designation. Landscape character assessment can be used however to inform and understand how the settlement pattern has developed, the nature of the individual character and setting of each distinct settlement, the pattern of the separation between them and how the landscape functions to maintain that separation.

**9.12** The land included within each identified gap performs an important role in defining the settlement character of the area and separating settlements at risk of coalescence. In defining the extent of a gap, no more land than is necessary to prevent the coalescence of settlements has been included.

**9.13** Currently, the parcel of land between Thatcham and Upper Bucklebury does not meet the criteria for designation as an essential gap. However, the Council acknowledges that this situation may change depending on how the North East Thatcham strategic site is delivered. The relationship between the proposed development and the country park to the north of the site will be critical in this regard. In accordance with the recommendations made in the Appropriate Countryside Designation Study (2022), further assessment as to an appropriate essential gap in this area will need to be carried out when the extent of the built development on the site has been established.

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## 10 Development Management Policies: Our environment and surroundings

### Policy DM3

#### Health and Wellbeing

Development proposals will be required to promote, support and enhance positive mental and physical health and wellbeing and thus contribute to reducing health inequalities. Where any potential adverse impacts are identified, they will need to be addressed and mitigated in an appropriate manner.

Proposals for development should support healthy lifestyles, including through the use of active design principles. Where appropriate, the provision of new or improved health facilities will be required as part of new development, proportionate to the additional demand that they would generate.

Proposals for major development, or other development likely to have a potentially significant impact on the health and wellbeing of the local population or particular groups within it in relation to either the nature of the use proposed and/or its location in relation to other uses, should be accompanied by a fit for purpose Health Impact Assessment (HIA) in accordance with the current guidance<sup>(44)</sup> from Public Health England. The level of information required should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed. The purpose of the HIA is to assess any health impacts, positive or negative, that may arise from the proposed development and it should show how any potential health risks can be avoided or minimised, with particular emphasis on disadvantaged sections of communities that may be affected. Development proposals should demonstrate how the conclusions of the HIA have been taken into account in the design of the scheme.

Development that would have an unacceptable impact on the health or wellbeing of existing or new communities will not be permitted.

### Supporting Text

**10.1** It is essential that the decisions we make consider the health of our residents and contribute to reducing health inequality. The [West Berkshire Vision 2036](#) highlights that mental health problems represent the largest single cause of disability in the district, affecting people of all ages. It also notes the significant health inequalities across West Berkshire, with a life expectancy gap of up to ten years in different areas. The district's mix of rural and urban settlements means that access to services can be varied.

**10.2** The Council's [Leisure Strategy 2021-2031](#) notes that West Berkshire's existing leisure offering is very good, with a number of parks and open spaces, commons, woodland, public rights of way and leisure centres available for physical activity. There is also a range of water based opportunity through rivers such as the Thames, Enborne, Lambourn, Pang and Kennet, the Kennet & Avon Canal and lakes which are also enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. It quotes the percentage of physically active adults at 63.3%, just below the national average of 66.3%.

**10.3** A wide range of indoor and outdoor sports are played across the District. These opportunities and their associated health benefits, are reflected in West Berkshire's life expectancy, with those for both men and women being above regional and national averages. The District's cultural heritage is also integral to people's health and wellbeing. It increases academic attainment, provides a sense of place and identity and has a significant, positive impact on the local economy.

**10.4** Tackling health and wellbeing requires a multi-agency approach. The Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2030, developed by the Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham Health and Wellbeing Boards together with the Berkshire West Integrated Care Partnership is underpinned by a place based approach with its number one priority to reduce health inequalities.

44 Health Impact Assessment in spatial planning - a guide for local authority public health and planning teams (October 2020) Public Health England

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**10.5** The Council recognises that the Local Plan has a crucial role to play in ensuring that opportunities exist for people to be able to make healthier lifestyle choices and address health inequalities. Health and environment are inextricably linked and the creation of attractive, safe and accessible places to live improves the quality of life and wellbeing of both individuals and communities as a whole.

**10.6** Policy SP7 sets out that development should be designed to encourage healthier lifestyles through the promotion of physical activity, the enhancement of social connections and the strengthening of mental health.

**10.7** This DM policy ensures that specific consideration is given to the potential overall impact of development on health, with individual proposals encouraged to maximise their overall contribution towards a healthier environment and healthier communities. Health Impact Assessments (HIA) will be an important tool for assessing any effect on health and in addressing health inequalities by protecting those who are vulnerable to the negative effects of development. The policy makes clear they will be required for all major development proposals or other development likely to have a potentially significant health impact in relation to either its use and/or location.

**10.8** When an HIA is required, it will:

- Consider the likelihood, significance and duration of both the potential positive and negative impacts of the development proposals on the health and wellbeing of different sectors of the community, taking into account that some people will be more vulnerable to negative impacts than others;
- Identify and take action to maximise positive impacts and minimise and mitigate any adverse impacts on health and wellbeing, having regard to the most affected sectors of the community; and
- Identify what will be monitored, how and by whom.

**10.9** It should also take into account the cumulative impact of development, i.e. where several developments are in progress within a particular area, as well as the potential over-concentration of uses in an area.

**10.10** The HIA may be a free-standing document or incorporated into a sustainability statement, an environmental impact assessment or other form of assessment or impact statement. If the HIA is not freestanding then a statement needs to be provided explaining how the requirements for an HIA are being met.

**10.11** The HIA should include reference to how the proposals for development have been discussed with health service providers regarding impacts on primary health care services. Developers are encouraged to engage with the NHS Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire Integrated Care Board (BOB-ICB) or other such appropriate body at the earliest opportunity in order to determine the health care requirements associated with new development.



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**Policy DM4****Building Sustainable Homes and Businesses**

New development of one or more new dwellings (C3 or C4 use class) and/or 100sqm or more of new non-residential floorspace, including hotels (C1 use class), residential institutions (C2 use class) or Secure Residential Institutions (C2A use class) should achieve net zero operational carbon emissions (regulated and unregulated energy) by implementing the energy hierarchy.

Proposals should demonstrate application of the energy hierarchy through submission of an Energy Statement or a detailed energy section within the Sustainability Statement in accordance with policy SP5 and which identifies how the following minimum standards of construction are achieved to the greatest extent feasible and viable.

**1. Residential Development - minimum construction standard**

A. New development of one or more new dwellings (C3 or C4 use class) will meet the following minimum standards of construction:

- Achieve the carbon Target Emission Rate set by the Future Homes Standard once this is confirmed by central government; in the meantime, achieve 63% reduction in carbon emissions is achieved by on-site measures, as compared to the baseline emission rate set by Building Regulations Part L 2021 (SAP 10.2). These regulated carbon emission targets are to be achieved before the addition of on-site renewable electricity generation (which should subsequently be considered in section 3 of this policy); and
- Equal to or less than the following targets, using the Building Regulations Part L SAP Fabric Energy Efficiency (FEE) metric:
  - End terrace: 32.9 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year FEE
  - Mid terrace: 25.1 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year FEE
  - Room in roof (semi detached): 32.5 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year FEE
  - Detached: 43.6 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year FEE
  - Bungalow: 51.0 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year FEE
  - Low-rise apartment: 21.0 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year FEE
  - Mid to high-rise apartment: 13.5 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year FEE
  - Where the proposed home type does not precisely reflect any of the above, the applicable target from the list above will be that of the most similar home type to that proposed, with a note to justify why this is thought to be the most similar. In apartment buildings, it will be acceptable to meet this target via a weighted average of all residential floor space in the building (recognising that there may be variation between floors in the building).
- For outline applications and where the home type is not known, it will be required to commit to delivering the relevant target(s) through reserved matters. This will be secured by a condition.

B. Residential refurbishment developments of 10+ units will meet BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment 2014 (or future equivalent) Excellent as a minimum.

**2. New Non-Residential Development, including hotels, residential institutions, secure residential institutions - minimum construction standard**

New development of 100sqm or more of new non-residential floorspace, including hotels (C1 use class), residential institutions (C2 use class) or secure residential institutions (C2A use class) will meet the following minimum standards of construction:

- Appropriate to the building type, calculate a typical building baseline using a nationally recognised standard and demonstrate a percentage reduction in energy (regulated and unregulated) carbon emissions. These operational carbon emission targets are to be achieved before the addition of on-site renewable electricity generation (which should subsequently be considered in section 3 of this policy); and
- BREEAM Excellent (BREEAM New Construction V6 or future equivalent).

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## 3. Renewable Energy

A. Subsequent to the achievement of the minimum construction standards under parts 1 and 2, new development of one or more new dwellings (C3 or C4 use class) and/or 100sqm or more of new non-residential floorspace, including hotels (C1 use class), residential institutions (C2 use class) or Secure Residential Institutions (C2A use class) should include onsite renewable, zero and low carbon energy technologies to achieve net zero carbon operational energy (regulated and unregulated) on site.

B. The Council will support proposals for renewable energy provided that the technology is:

- i. Suitable for the location;
- ii. Not on the most versatile agricultural land (grades 1, 2 and 3a);
- iii. Is accompanied by a landscape / visual impact assessment; and
- iv. Would not cause harm to residential amenity by virtue of noise, vibration, overshadowing, flicker or other harmful emissions.

## 4. Carbon Offsetting

Where a development proposal of one or more new dwellings (C3 or C4 use class) and/or 100sqm or more of new non-residential floorspace, including hotels (C1 use class), residential institutions (C2 use class) and or secure residential institutions (C2A use class) cannot demonstrate that it is net zero carbon in relation to operational energy (regulated and unregulated), it will be required to address any residual carbon emissions by a cash in lieu contribution.

## Supporting Text

**10.12** Carbon reduction has been a key issue for West Berkshire since the Core Strategy, introducing policies aimed at delivering carbon neutral development by 2016, was approved following examination in 2012. However, despite the 26.4% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the District since 2005, the authority still has emissions well above the Berkshire, South East and England levels.

**Table 5 Full Set and Sub Set\* Per Capita Carbon Dioxide emissions (tonnes) at local authority level in 2017, listed by difference**

Area	Full Set data	Sub Set data	Difference
West Berkshire	8.2	5.8	2.4
Windsor & Maidenhead	5.7	4.5	1.2
Wokingham	4.7	3.6	1.1
Slough	5.0	4.1	0.9
Reading	3.4	3.3	0.1
Bracknell	3.7	3.7	0
South East	4.8	4.2	0.6
England	5.1	4.3	0.8

*\*The Full Set data contains all measured emission sources for each LA area whilst the Sub Set removes those that the LA has no influence over.*

**10.13** The Council unanimously declared a Climate Emergency in July 2019 with the stated aim to be carbon neutral by 2030 as the consequences of global temperature rising above 1.5°C are so severe that preventing this from happening must be of the utmost urgency.

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**10.14** Sustainable construction and renewable energy generation can help in achieving emissions reduction. Cost implications of installing CO2 emissions reduction measures from the start of a development are less than if they were retro-fitted. In addition, the benefits derived by the end user in relation to reduced heating and fuel bills will be enhanced.

**10.15** The District is one of the highest electricity users in the south east, and is in the upper quartile of local authorities for CO2 emissions within the country. Fuel poverty levels in West Berkshire are also high, compared to other authorities. This is clear evidence and justification that West Berkshire needs to do more to meet national targets in relation to CO2 emissions reduction.

**10.16** The NPPF requires action on climate change and the protection and enhancement of the natural environment. Paragraph 152 requires the Council to support the transition to a low carbon future and shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience to the effects of climate change. At the same time development of poor design, which fails to capitalise on opportunities for improving character, quality and take account of design standards should be refused. Furthermore, the quality of development approved should not diminish between permission and completion as a result of changes being made to the permitted scheme.

**10.17** The re-issue of the Planning Policy Guidance on Climate Change in 2019 allows local planning authorities to *“set energy performance standards for new housing or the adaption of buildings to provide dwellings that are higher than the building regulations, but only up to the equivalent of Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes”*.

**10.18** Viability work undertaken for the LPR, tested the viability based on “carbon neutral” development and concluded it is not a barrier to development in West Berkshire.

### Operational Energy - Net Zero Carbon

**10.19** Following the energy hierarchy, developments are required to achieve net zero carbon emissions in relation to operational energy (regulated and unregulated).

**10.20** Methodologies which could be used to calculate operational energy reductions (regulated and unregulated) to support the achievement of net zero carbon emissions include CIBSE TM54 or PHPP. Developers are advised to use this exercise as a way to earn further BREEAM credits towards the required overall “Excellent” rating, if done in accordance with BREEAM guidance under Ene 01, 04 and 08.

**10.21** Developers should be aware that the new Part L 2021 includes a requirement for prediction of actual operational energy consumption in non-residential over 1000m<sup>2</sup>, for the purpose of informing the new owner, and mentions CIBSE TM54 as a suitable method to do this and specifies that basic SBEM outputs are NOT suitable for this purpose.

**10.22** For non-residential developments, the use of the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) ensures that issues relating to health, energy, water, sustainable transport, materials, waste, ecology and pollution are addressed from the start of the project and the certification process provides greater assurances that the agreed level of quality and sustainability is delivered at completion. It is also a means of demonstrating compliance against a broad suite of policies; such as natural environment and operational energy, in addition to those related to climate mitigation and resilience. However, other technical standards are acceptable, provided they result in an equivalent outcome.

**10.23** For residential refurbishment developments of 10+ units that require planning permission, BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment to a rating of Excellent is required as a minimum. This includes change of use to residential development and refurbishment of existing residential properties.

**10.24** Applications for commercial development and residential refurbishment developments of 10+ units should include a BREEAM pre-assessment, undertaken by a licensed BREEAM assessor and where deemed appropriate supported by a BREEAM accredited professional at the start of the design process to demonstrate how the target rating will be met and ensure early action credits are not missed.

**10.25** Commercial development includes (but is not limited to) uses for retail, office, industrial, data centres, healthcare, and education, prisons and leisure facilities. Multi-residential schemes, including care homes/student halls of residence, hotels and other multi-occupancy domestic buildings are also included as commercial development. Early engagement with a licensed BREEAM assessor should be sought at RIBA Stage 0 to determine if BREEAM is applicable to a development.

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### Renewable Energy Generation

**10.26** Renewable energy technology can make a major contribution to reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Communities can benefit from reduced fuel bills and improved security of energy supply. Building a green economy that can generate growth and improvements in people's lives is consistent with sustainable development and the Council's 'Environment Strategy' and helps build in a resilient economic future for renewable energy technology as it is constantly evolving. Examples of renewable energy technology include:

- (i) Combined heat and power (CHP) with a modest plant being able to serve a large number of dwellings and commercial uses in a small geographical area;
- (ii) Large scale ground mounted solar PV systems; and
- (iii) Micro-renewable technology, in particular solar water heating, ground and air source heat pumps, photovoltaic cells and biomass boilers.

**10.27** However it is important not to restrict future options for how renewable energy might be delivered within West Berkshire.

**10.28** Where appropriate and following the energy hierarchy, renewable energy proposals will be integrated in to the proposed scheme as part of the design process and shown on plans submitted for planning permission.

### Carbon Offsetting

**10.29** Where a development cannot achieve net zero carbon for operational energy, with the use of the energy hierarchy, contributions to an offsetting scheme shall be secured through Section 106 Agreements and will be required to be paid prior to the occupation of the development. In order to provide further guidance the Council intends to prepare an update to its existing Planning Obligations SPD which it anticipates adopting in 2025.

**10.30** The amount of carbon to be offset will be calculated in the Energy Statement or detailed section of the Sustainability Statement required under policy SP5 and reflect emissions over a period of 30 years from completion. Calculations may take into account grid carbon reductions over that 30 year offset period such as through electricity grid decarbonisation.

**10.31** The carbon offset price is the central figure from the nationally recognised non-traded valuation of carbon, which is updated annually as part of the Treasury Green Book data by BEIS and includes future years' per-tonne prices that should be used for each of the future 30 years of operation (to match the years used for the electricity grid carbon factors as above).

**10.32** At the Council's discretion, a verified local off-site offsetting scheme. The delivery of any such scheme must be within West Berkshire, guaranteed and meet relevant national and industry standards. If it is a nature-based carbon sequestration scheme, then it must be backed by the government's Woodland Carbon Code initiative (or future replacement/equivalent national scheme).

**10.33** Funds raised through this policy will be ring-fenced and transparently administered by the Council to deliver a range of projects that achieve measurable carbon savings as locally as possible, at the same average cost per tonne. The fund's performance will be reported in the Authority Monitoring report on: amount of funds spent; types of projects funded; amount of CO<sub>2</sub> saved.

### Assured Performance

**10.34** New development of one or more new dwellings (C3 or C4 use class) and/or 100sqm or more of new non-residential floorspace, including hotels (C1 use class), residential institutions (C2 use class) or Secure Residential Institutions (C2A use class) will be required to:

- Implement a recognised quality regime that ensures the as built performance and addresses the energy performance gap in order to ensuring the building performs as close as possible to energy predictions.
- Submit to the Council as built energy calculations prior to occupation and demonstrating that the finished building meets the minimum construction standards and achieves net zero operational carbon emissions (regulated and unregulated energy).
- Where assessment undertaken at completion shows that there is a performance gap between the design and the performance of the completed building, this must be remedied as far as practicable and following which



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carbon offsetting contributions will be required to reflect any associated additional carbon emissions not accounted for at the point of determination of the planning application and an adjusted payment made if necessary.

### Existing Housing Stock

**10.35** Measures to increase the adoption of retro-fitting energy efficiency measures for the existing housing stock may be explored in subsequent Local Plan documents.

### Design

**10.36** This policy should be read in the context of policy SP7. The principles of good design extend to all development, including sustainable homes and businesses.

### Changes to national targets

**10.37** This policy may be revised and updated periodically, for example to reflect changing national guidance or changing circumstances.

### Thresholds

**10.38** The Council will carefully scrutinise proposals which appear to fall artificially below any thresholds as this may indicate a possible attempt to avoid implementing the relevant measures described above.

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**Policy DM5****Environmental Nuisance and Pollution Control**

Development will be supported where it does not lead to adverse effects on pollution of the environment. In ensuring a site is suitable for development proposals should satisfy the following criteria:

- a. There would be no harm to the amenity of occupants of neighbouring land and buildings, and future occupants of the development, through an unacceptable increase in pollution, including from light, noise, dust, vibration and/or odour. Where necessary suitable mitigation measures will be put in place;
- b. It would be compatible with surrounding uses; and not give rise to unreasonable restrictions placed on existing businesses and community facilities;
- c. There would be no adverse impact on the environment by pollution of air, soil, or water, through the storage and disposal of waste and hazardous materials or through emissions;
- d. Where there is a likelihood that contamination is present or is known to be present, as a minimum a desk based assessment detailing the likelihood and extent of land contamination be undertaken, followed by, where necessary, an intrusive investigation; and the identification and undertaking of appropriate remediation measures in accordance with minimum national standards. Further monitoring may be required depending on the nature of the contamination and remediation;
- e. It would not cause noise or vibrations of a level which would disturb areas that are valued for their tranquillity in terms of recreation or amenity. Development proposals that generate significant levels of noise must be accompanied by an assessment to mitigate such effects, having regard to the nature of surrounding uses;
- f. All reasonable steps are taken through design, siting and technological solutions to ensure the abatement of obtrusive light to avoid sky glow, glare and light spillage, intrusion and any adverse impact to wildlife and neighbouring residents. A Lighting Appraisal in accordance with the current guidance from the Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) (or similar body), national guidance and British Standards will be required for proposed developments which include outdoor lighting;
- g. Appropriate containment solutions for oils, fuels and chemicals are provided; and
- h. There would be no harm to existing areas with biodiversity and/or geological value, in accordance with policy SP11.

Development which includes potential nuisance or pollution activities should be located on the least sensitive part of the site.

Appropriate site investigations/assessments will guide development and the results and recommendations will be presented with planning applications (for example, noise assessments) depending on the type of development, location, and likely source of pollution.

**Supporting Text**

**10.39** The NPPF seeks to conserve and enhance the natural, built and historic environment and in doing so protects new and existing development from contributing to and/or being put at risk from unacceptable levels of pollution.

**10.40** This policy is intended to aid in promoting good quality of life for all land users, by managing the effects of development and requiring developers to undertake appropriate assessments to understand the sources of pollution on and around the site, and their impacts on the site and surrounding uses. Such assessments can aid in guiding development to the least sensitive part of the site, and/or identifying suitable mitigation measures to alleviate the effects of pollution.

**10.41** There are existing regimes in place, though pollution control authorities (Environmental Health), and the planning system is not intended to replicate or control pollution in the same way as such regimes.

**10.42** Development must be compatible with neighbouring uses, particularly those in town/village centre locations and those venues which operate in the evening or night. Suitable mitigation must therefore be provided, in the form of good design (e.g. for proposed residential, the consideration of placement of bedrooms), and noise and odour reduction measures, depending on the proposed uses and surrounding existing uses (e.g. sound insulation in proposed residential units; odour minimisation for proposed food outlets near to residential properties). It is important that new development would not place unreasonable restrictions on existing businesses and community facilities.

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**10.43** The Noise Policy Statement for England (2010)<sup>(45)</sup> seeks to avoid, mitigate and minimise the adverse impacts on health and quality of life arising from noise from new development and, where possible, encourages schemes which can contribute to improvements to amenity by using development to mitigate against existing impacts. It states that consideration should be given to whether or not a significant adverse effect is occurring or likely to occur; whether or not an adverse effect is occurring or likely to occur; and whether or not a good standard of amenity can be achieved. The Noise Exposure Hierarchy<sup>(46)</sup> set out in national planning practice guidance on noise can be used as a guide to determine whether noise is likely to be a concern.

**10.44** Rural and tranquil areas are more sensitive to disturbance from noise where the ambient noise levels are lower compared to urban areas. National policy specifies that planning policies should identify and protect areas of tranquillity which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are valued for their recreational and amenity value for this reason.

**10.45** The West Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment (2019) identifies that away from the towns and main roads, the majority of the District enjoys relatively high levels of tranquillity, whether through elevation and distance from large settlements, as is the case in the high downland areas, or as a result of containment from urbanising influences by strong woodland cover. Areas of tranquillity are shown in figure 3.6 of the Study and the document should be used to identify those areas with high levels of tranquillity.

**10.46** Light pollution (also known as obtrusive light) is caused by excessive artificial light being directed into the night sky. Outdoor lighting can cause intrusive and unnecessary light pollution in urban, suburban and rural areas, although it is in the open countryside that light pollution is most noticeable. The Landscape Character Assessment (2019) highlights that outside the main settlements and away from the M4 corridor the majority of the District enjoys dark or very dark night skies, with little light pollution. This is illustrated in figure 3.7 Dark Skies contained within the Assessment. Excessive artificial light at night is visually intrusive impacting on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes, nature conservation and can cause physiological problems, in addition to it being a significant waste of energy. It is therefore vital to ensure appropriate controls on external lighting to avoid or mitigate against these adverse effects. In considering development involving potentially adverse lighting impacts to wildlife the Council will expect surveys to identify movement corridors and ensure that these corridors are protected and enhanced.

**10.47** Applicants should be guided by and adhere to the guidance on lighting provided in the most up to date Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) guidance notes, alongside other relevant local and national documents including the North Wessex Downs AONB 'A Guide to Good External Lighting' (2021). The ILP note 'Reduction of Obtrusive Light' (2021)<sup>(47)</sup> identifies forms of obtrusive light which may cause nuisance to others, or adversely affect fauna and flora as well as waste money and energy. These are defined as:

- Sky Glow, which is the brightening of the night sky;
- Glare, the uncomfortable brightness of a light source when viewed against a darker background;
- Light spill, the spilling of light beyond the boundary of the area being lit, inclusive of light intrusion where this causes a nuisance to others.

The ILP Guidance identifies environmental zones and corresponding lighting environments. Table 6 sets out the ILP environmental zones for exterior lighting control and should be used to determine whether development proposals involving artificial lighting have a detrimental impact. The Lighting Appraisal should be assessed in accordance with the zone in which they are located (E1, E2, E3 or E4) on whether they have the potential to cause harm to the health or quality of life, or to affect biodiversity. Where an area to be lit lies within visual distance of the boundary between two zones then the obtrusive light values applicable to the most rigorous zone shall apply.

45 [Noise Policy Statement for England \(2010\)](#)

46 [Noise Exposure Hierarchy](#)

47 [Institute of Lighting Professional - Guidance Note 01/21 - Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light \(2021\)](#)

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**Table 6 ILP environmental zones for exterior lighting control**

Zone	Lighting Environment	ILP examples of types of environmental zones
<b>E1 - Natural</b>	Dark (SQM 20 to 20.5)	Relatively uninhabited rural areas, National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, IDA buffer zones etc.
<b>E2 Rural</b>	Low district brightness (SQM ~15 to 20)	Sparsely inhabited rural areas, village or relatively dark outer suburban locations
<b>E3 Suburban</b>	Medium district brightness	Well inhabited rural and urban settlements, small town centres of suburban locations
<b>E4 Urban</b>	High district brightness	Town / City centres with high levels of night-time activity

**10.48** For development proposals which require a Lighting Appraisal this should set out how any proposed lighting will be energy efficient and dark sky compliant (where applicable), the light source and intensity being used, the luminaire design, height, and angle, light spill and times of operation.

**10.49** The reduction of light pollution should not compromise crime prevention and public safety and alternative technological solutions should be explored to ensure these elements are not compromised whilst also mitigating against obtrusive light.

**10.50** Odour can be associated with commercial, industrial, agricultural or sewage related activities. Odour can affect air quality and the quality of life of residents, both existing and of proposed residential development. Appropriate investigations are therefore required to support development proposals, and mitigation proposed, where required. This includes, as an example, development within 800 metres of a Sewage Treatment Works.

**10.51** The use or storage of substances such as oils, fuels and chemicals pose a risk to watercourses and groundwater resources through surface water run-off, from leakage and inadequate storage measures. Where a development proposal poses a risk of contamination, remedial action will be necessary. To this end, appropriate conditions may be imposed requiring certain remedial measures prior to construction and appropriate design of wastewater and surface water run-off management schemes. As a minimum, development proposals should ensure that in the future land will not be designated as contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Where development proposals pose a risk to the deterioration in water quality, the Council will seek the appropriate measures to ensure development does not compromise the objectives of the River Basin Management Plan and where possible, contributes to improvements to water quality status.

**10.52** This policy should be read alongside policies SP2, SP3, SP7, SP10, SP11, DM3, DM6 and DM8.



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**Policy DM6****Water quality**

The water quality of West Berkshire District's waterbodies will be protected and enhanced. Any development (including infrastructure) that would have a direct or indirect impact on any water body will take account of the impact of their development on water quality. All development should demonstrate it satisfies the following criteria:

- a. That it causes no deterioration in the quality of waterbodies, surface and groundwater, nor that it will prevent future attainment of 'favourable condition' for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) rivers, waterbodies or wetlands (as required by Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), or 'good status' for other waterbodies under the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017 and Groundwater (Water Framework Directive) (England) Direction 2016 or subsequent amendment;
- b. That it contributes positively to the water environment and its ecology and delivers enhancements where waterbodies are not achieving 'favourable condition' for SSSI's or, good ecological or chemical status for non-SSSI waterbodies;
- c. If located within the hydrological catchments of the River Lambourn SSSI/SAC or River Test, development proposals will be required to demonstrate nutrient neutrality;
- d. Where proposals are not connecting to the sewer network and are within 500 metres of a SSSI an assessment of the risk to water quality will be required;
- e. That it contributes to the protection and enhancement of classified waterbodies identified by the Thames River Basin Management Plan objectives, covering the Thames and Chilterns South Catchment and Kennet Catchment;
- f. Proposals for built development will be required to be at least ten metres away from the top of the bank of the nearest watercourse or main river providing or retaining a natural or semi-natural habitat buffer; and
- g. How the proposal will support improving the status and overall health of the River Kennet and River Lambourn.

Where development is likely to have an adverse impact on water quality, a detailed water quality assessment will be required. The need for and the type of assessment will depend on the type or location of new development. Appropriate measures may be required to be undertaken by the developer to ensure that a proposed development does not contaminate surface or groundwater resources.

**Supporting Text****Water Framework Directive**

**10.53** The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017(WFD) recognises that development near water bodies can affect their quality for human consumption and health and for their ecological value. It establishes a legal framework along with national implementation for the protection, improvement and sustainable use of the water environment. This includes lakes, streams, rivers, groundwater and dependent ecosystems.

**10.54** The primary policy document for the delivering the WFD is the Environment Agency's River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) for the Thames District that includes the Kennet and tributaries catchment and Thames and Chilterns South catchment in West Berkshire. Proposals will be expected to include sufficient information to demonstrate how they have taken into account the Thames River Basin Management Plan. Development can have a major impact on the water environment, and so needs to be controlled accordingly, delivering enhancements wherever possible. Development that would be likely to lead to deterioration in the overall status of a water body, or would prevent future attainment of good status, can only be permitted in exceptional circumstances as set out in regulations. This is a requirement of the WFD to prevent a deterioration in class of individual containments. The 'Weser Ruling' by the European Court of Justice in 2015 specified that individual projects should not be permitted where they may cause a deterioration of the status of a water body. If a water body is already at the lowest status 'bad', any impairment of a quality element was considered to be a deterioration. It is noted in the [Water Cycle Study](#) (Phase 2) (2021) that current emerging practice is that a 3% limit of deterioration is applied.

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**Protected sites**

**10.55** Under Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2017 (as amended) the Council has a legal duty to consider whether plans submitted to it for approval are likely to have significant effects on Habitats Sites. The Council may only agree to a plan or project after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the Habitats Site.

**10.56** The River Kennet is one of England's premier chalk streams. Much of its length is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) on account of its chalk stream habitats and associated wildlife. One of its main tributaries, the River Lambourn, is also a SSSI and is designated as an internationally important Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2017 (as amended).

**10.57** Advice from Natural England, in March 2022, identified the River Lambourn SAC as being in unfavourable condition due to unnaturally high levels of phosphorus. Likewise, the Solent Maritime SAC is also in unfavourable condition due to excessive levels of nitrogen. The Solent receives water from the River Test the catchment for which extends into the district of West Berkshire.

**10.58** On 24 May 2024, the Secretary of State published a Notice of Designation of Sensitive Catchment Areas. Under this Notice, the River Lambourn SAC has been designated as a phosphorus sensitive catchment area, whilst the catchment of the Solent Maritime SAC as a nitrogen sensitive catchment area under the Water Industry Act 1991.

**10.59** For development which may affect the integrity of Habitats Sites, Natural England has advised that certain types of new development should only be approved if it can be demonstrated that they are nutrient neutral<sup>(48)</sup>. The policy therefore makes clear that relevant proposals within the hydrological catchment of the River Lambourn SSSI/SAC and the River Test must demonstrate nutrient neutrality. These catchments are identified as Nutrient Neutrality Zones on the Policies Map. Relevant proposals are those which would:

- result in a net increase in population served by a wastewater system; or
- have the potential to release additional nitrogen or phosphorus into the surface or groundwater system.

**10.60** A case-by-case approach may need to be taken for some of these proposals and advice should be sought from the Council's ecologists at the earliest opportunity. Further detail will be set out in a forthcoming SPD.

**10.61** Where development may affect the integrity of a Habitats Site, a Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required to accompany a planning application. This will be expected to be supported by an appropriate Nutrient Neutrality Assessment and Mitigation Assessment. It will be critical that any mitigation required is operational and in place prior to any nutrient pollution being discharged.

**10.62** To stop pollution at source, the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 created a new duty on water companies to upgrade wastewater treatment works by 1 April 2030, in catchments of Habitats Sites identified by the Secretary of State as being in an unfavourable condition due to nutrient pollution.

**10.63** Within the Sensitive Catchment Areas designated catchments, water companies must guarantee that waste water treatment works serving a population equivalent to more than 2,000 meet specified nutrient removal standards by 1 April 2030. Local Planning Authorities, when considering applications, will need to consider that the nutrient pollution standard will be met by the upgrade date for the purposes of Habitats Regulations Assessments.

**10.64** Most foul water is removed from a development site by a mains sewer. However, where this is not the case, foul water is usually treated on site and then discharged either to ground to filter away from the site, or into a nearby watercourse. If the treated water is discharged to ground, it has the potential to impact on water quality sensitive features, particularly by increasing the already high nitrate concentrations. The Environment Agency's publication 'General binding rules: small sewage discharge to a surface water' (2021) stipulates that the general binding rules can only be met if the discharge is less than 2 cubic metres per day and via a shallow drainage field located, designed and constructed in line with the recommendations in British Standard BS6297:2007. If it is identified that a planning application could affect groundwater, the potential impact on water quality will need to be investigated and include a mitigation strategy which demonstrates how the applicant will reduce the negative effects of their proposal and show how they will implement risk reduction measures.

48 Using site specific nutrient calculators (phosphorus for the River Lambourn and nitrogen for the River Test catchment) to calculate the net nutrient (phosphorus or nitrogen) budget for the proposed development and demonstrating how any net increase will be mitigated to achieve nutrient neutrality.

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**10.65** The ecological status of the River Kennet and its tributaries is predominantly classified as moderate. Pollution from waste water and physical modifications to waterbodies are the main issues preventing good status under the Water Framework Directive. Abstraction is also a significant contributory factor. The ecological status of the Thames and Chilterns South is predominantly classified as moderate. Pollution from waste water, physical modifications to waterbodies and pollution from rural areas are the main issues preventing good status under the Water Framework Directive. Proposals which contribute to the protection and enhancement of the River Kennet and River Lambourn's overall health and improved status under the Water Framework Directive will be supported. Well-designed development will assist the conservation and enhancement of the biodiversity, landscape and recreational value of the watercourses whilst building climate resilience. Applicants must also have specific regard to policy SP10 Green Infrastructure.

### **Preservation of watercourses:**

**10.66** The [Strategic Flood Risk Assessment](#) (2021) has identified that to enable the preservation of a watercourse corridor there should be no built development within 10 metres from the top of a Main River and recommends this buffer is applied to all watercourses. The built environment refers to any man made structure and also includes formal landscaping, sports fields, footpaths, lighting and fencing and the buffer should be maintained for native biodiversity. This width of buffer allows for the enhancement of wildlife habitats, flood flow conveyance and future watercourse maintenance and/or improvement. It also ensures that the watercourse is buffered from land-based activities, reducing the levels of diffuse pollution reaching the watercourse.

### **Protecting and improving the quality of water environments:**

**10.67** Development should deliver opportunities to protect and improve the quality of the water environment, including such measures as:

- incorporating into all development proposals, green infrastructure and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) (having regard to the [West Berkshire Sustainable Drainage Systems Supplementary Planning Document](#) 2018) in order to manage and treat surface water run off close to source and to minimise the risk from contaminants and sediment. Developments should allow sufficient shallow drainage areas if infiltration is to be used. The use of deep soakaways for infiltration (e.g. boreholes) are not a recognised SuDS solution and may be refused a permit. This is to protect groundwater quality;
- reducing the risk of discharges of surface waters to the sewerage network and of pollution, including groundwater infiltration, from treatment works, particularly within Drinking Water Safeguard Zones, Groundwater Source Protection Zones and Groundwater Vulnerability Zones and in proximity to, and downstream of, Special Areas of Conservation or Site of Special Scientific Interest;
- prioritising natural flood management over hard flood defences;
- protecting watercourses and wetland habitats along river corridors and where appropriate restore 'natural' systems, including de-culverting, restoring or re-profiling rivers and naturalising river banks;
- adopting water efficiency measures to reduce pressure from low water levels and flows;
- works to restore contaminated land where applicable;
- working with and taking opportunities identified by Catchment Partnerships and flood risk management authorities to inform development proposals.

### **Wastewater**

**10.68** Increased levels of development during the local plan period is likely to increase the discharge of treated wastewater from wastewater treatment works in West Berkshire. There is a potential for this to cause a deterioration in water quality in the receiving watercourses. Early engagement with Thames Water by developers should ensure that any development is aligned with existing capacity to serve the development or that the required upgrades to the wastewater infrastructure and sewage treatment are constructed prior to occupation of new developments. Land may need to be safeguarded to ensure that land required for water infrastructure in the future is not developed, preventing necessary upgrade.

**10.69** This policy will be considered in conjunction with other policies in the LPR to ensure a comprehensive consideration of the water environment.

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**Policy DM7****Water Resources and Waste Water**

Development will be required to minimise water use by incorporating appropriate water efficiency and water recycling measures. A collaborative approach is encouraged between the Council, statutory agencies, water companies and site promoters/developers to promote innovation in water efficiency and re-use within and outside of dwellings and commercial buildings, including demand reduction to improve longer term water resilience. Liaison with other local authorities is expected where relevant.

Development will be required to be designed to be water efficient and reduce water consumption. Refurbishments and other non-domestic development will be expected to meet BREEAM water-efficiency credits. All new residential developments (including replacement dwellings) will meet the Building Regulation optional higher water efficiency standard of 110 litres per person per day, using the 'Fittings Approach' as set out in table 2.2 of the Building Regulations part G2. Planning conditions will be applied to new residential development to ensure that the water efficiency standards are met.

New or replacement non-residential development of 1000sqm gross floor area or more will meet BREEAM 'excellent' standards for water consumption (with at least a 40% improvement in water consumption against the baseline performance of the building), unless demonstrated not to be practicable.

Both of the above apply unless it can be demonstrated that it would not be feasible on technical or viability grounds. Where subsequent national standards exceed those set out above, the new national standards will be applied.

Development proposals should satisfactorily demonstrate the following criteria:

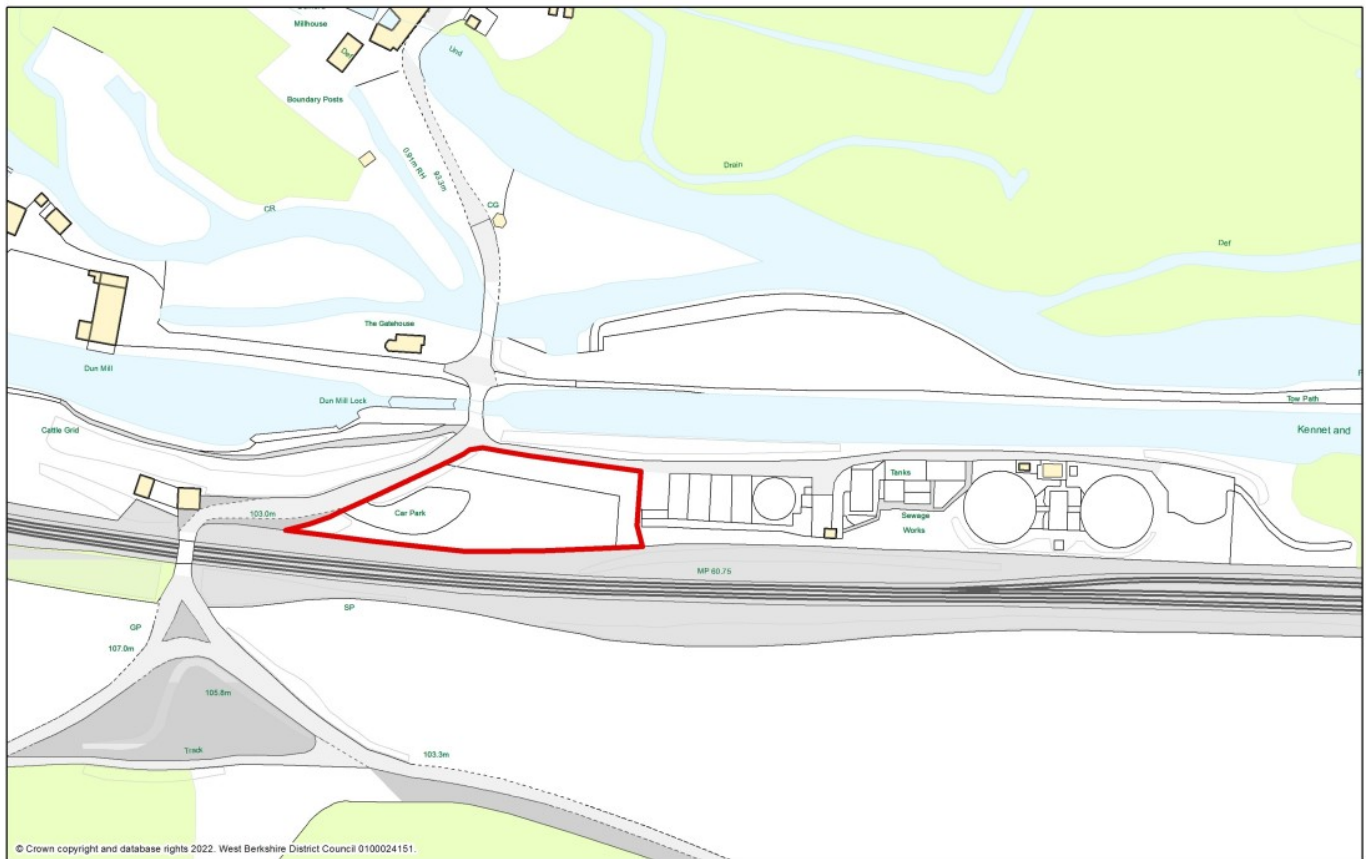
- a. Efficient use of water is made through recycling measures such as rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling;
- b. Foul water flows produced by the development will be drained separately from surface water run off to a suitable point of connection to a public foul sewer or, for non mains drainage proposals, where there would be no detrimental impact on the environment;
- c. Suitable land and access is safeguarded for the maintenance and treatment of water resources and wastewater, flood defences and drainage infrastructure; and
- d. It will not adversely impact the water quality, ecological value or drainage function of water bodies in the District, including any adverse impacts on Source Protection Zones (SPZ).

Development which would overload available facilities and create or exacerbate problems of flooding or pollution will not be permitted. Where upgrades to water supply and waste water are required and where there is a capacity constraint the Local Planning Authority will, where appropriate, apply phasing conditions to any approval to ensure that any necessary infrastructure upgrades are delivered ahead of the occupation of the relevant phase of development. The identified need for the development or expansion of other water supply or wastewater facilities, required for existing or proposed development, is an important material consideration in the consideration of planning applications for such proposals.

The West Berkshire Phase 2 Water Cycle Study (2021) identifies that land adjacent to the Hungerford Waste Water Treatment Works (as shown on the plan below), will need to be safeguarded to enable upgrades to the Waste Water Treatment Works to serve future growth.



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**Area for safeguarding at Hungerford Waste Water Sewage Treatment Works****Supporting Text**

**10.70** A comprehensive and integrated approach to the conservation and management of our precious water resources is needed to ensure well designed development is delivered in accessible locations in an environmentally sensitive way. West Berkshire lies within one of the driest part of the country. A growing population and number of households within the District and its primary Water Resource Zone in the Kennet Valley, alongside growth within the neighbouring Thames water resource zones will place demand pressures on the sustainable supply of water. The Thames Water Resources Management Plan (2019) sets out their understanding of population growth, drought, environmental obligations and climate change, and how it will provide a secure and sustainable supply of water to its customers over the next 80 years. The Plan includes a number of measures that are intended to reduce the amount of water needing to be put into the supply, and for the remaining sources of supply, taking measures to improve habitats and avoid environmental degradation. Thames Water predict that there will be a substantial shortfall between the amount of water available and the amount we need in the next 25 years and in the longer term if action isn't taken.

**10.71** Furthermore the amount of available water will be affected by climate change through changing weather patterns and more extreme weather events such as storms, floods and drought. In taking water from rivers and aquifers, their value to the natural environment and people's enjoyment must not be compromised but improved and sustained.

**10.72** Most of the water is abstracted from groundwater aquifers supported by some river extraction, notably the Rivers Kennet and Lambourn. Most is to satisfy public water supply but a significant proportion is supplied for private supply including agricultural land management, and electricity and industry. Thames Water supplies all of West Berkshire and is classified as being in a 'seriously water stressed' area in the Environment Agency Water Stressed Areas Classification 2021. All developments should implement the highest standards of water efficiency and infrastructure in order to place no additional pressure on water scarcity and quality in the river basin catchments of the Kennet and its tributaries and of the Thames and Chilterns South. Efficiency measures will also contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions including those associated with water treatment and taking pressure off wastewater treatment works.

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**10.73** Contamination of land or groundwater can result from land formerly used for development or inappropriate uses and/or water management techniques. Land formerly used for industrial or waste management purposes could contain contaminants which can escape from the site and result in water pollution or pollution of nearby land. National policy reaffirms that where a site is affected by contamination, responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner, through appropriate remediation. Groundwater Source Protection Zones (GSPZs) are protected areas of groundwater used for drinking water. There are a number of SPZs within the District. Depending on the type and location of development in proximity of the SPZs only certain types of SuDS may be appropriate and will need to be agreed with the Environment Agency.

**10.74** One way in which this can be achieved is by reducing the water demand from new houses through to achieving “water neutrality” in a catchment by offsetting a new development’s water demand by improving efficiency in existing buildings. The definition of ‘water neutrality’ adopted by the government and Environment Agency is ‘For every development, total water use in the wider area after the development must be equal to or less than total water use in the wider area before development’. In essence, water neutrality is about accommodating growth in a catchment without increasing overall water demand. Water neutrality can be achieved in a number of ways:

- Reducing leakage from the water supply networks;
- Making new developments more water-efficient;
- Offsetting new demand by retrofitting homes with water-efficient devices;
- Encouraging existing commercial premises to use less water;
- Implementing metering and tariffs to encourage the wise use of water;
- Education and awareness-raising amongst individuals.

**10.75** As set out in government guidance the Council has the option to set additional technical requirements in the Local Plan on exceeding the minimum standard required by the Building Regulations relating to water efficiency. There is a clear local need for the tighter requirement of 110 litres per person per day due to West Berkshire falling within an area classed as being under serious water stress by the Environment Agency Water stressed areas – 2021 classification (2021) and is supported by the Water Cycle Study Phase 2 (2021).

**10.76** Early engagement with Thames Water should ensure that any development is aligned with existing capacity to serve the development or that the required upgrades to the water supply network, wastewater infrastructure, sewage treatment upgrades are constructed prior to occupation of new developments. Land may need to be safeguarded to ensure that land required for water infrastructure in the future is not developed, preventing necessary upgrade. This is supported by the [West Berkshire Water Cycle Study \(Phase 2\)](#) (2021) which highlights that development in areas where there is limited wastewater network capacity will increase pressure on the network, increasing the risk of a detrimental impact on existing customers, and increasing the likelihood of sewer flooding. To overcome this early engagement with Thames Water is required, and further modelling of the network may be required at the planning application stage. The Study highlights that three waste water treatment works within West Berkshire are predicted to, or already exceeding their flow permit during the plan period: Chieveley, Hungerford and Newbury. In order to allow for water and wastewater infrastructure delivery national planning guidance stipulates that phasing new development should be considered to ensure that the ‘infrastructure will be in place when and where needed and provided through the timely provision of new, or the enhancement of existing necessary strategic and local infrastructure to ensure that infrastructure is in place and available prior to the occupation of all developments’. As the Water Cycle Study (Phase 2) (2021) is showing the need for upgrades it may be necessary for development to be phased in West Berkshire to allow for the delivery of this infrastructure.

**10.77** This policy will be considered in conjunction with other policies in the LPR to ensure a comprehensive consideration of the water environment.

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**Policy DM8****Air Quality**

Development will be required to maintain, and where possible, improve air quality and reduce exposure to areas of poor air quality. Development will be supported where it does not lead to adverse effects on health or the environment either from the development itself or cumulatively.

Taking account of the end-use and nature of the area and application, the proposal should demonstrate that the development satisfies the following criteria:

- a. It has no adverse effect on air quality in an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA);
- b. It will not lead to the declaration of a new AQMA;
- c. It will not interfere with the implementation of current Air Quality Action Plans (AQAP);
- d. It is not in proximity to a source of air pollution which could present a significant risk to human health;
- e. It does not expose occupiers who are particularly sensitive to air pollution, such as those in schools, health care establishments or housing for older people;
- f. It is not in proximity to a source of air pollution which could present a likely significant effect/ risk on/to the qualifying features of a site designated for its wildlife habitat and species importance;
- g. It will minimise the impact on air quality, both during the construction process and lifetime of the completed development; and
- h. It provides opportunities to improve air quality, reduce airborne emissions, and where necessary mitigates impacts, including measures such as the provision and enhancement of green infrastructure, active travel, and other traffic and travel management.

An Air Quality Assessment (AQA) carried out in accordance with the relevant national standards and guidance will be required by the Council where development proposals meet one of the following criteria:

- i. The development has the potential to impact on air quality within an AQMA, either on its own or having regard to cumulative planned developments;
- ii. The development has the potential to impact on air quality where there are concerns that an air quality objective might be exceeded, either on its own or having regard to cumulative planned developments;
- iii. The development involves more than 100 parking spaces outside an AQMA, or 50 parking spaces within or close to an AQMA;
- iv. The development has the potential to increase heavy goods vehicle movements on a busy (greater than 10,000 Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) movements) or congested road near to sensitive receptors;
- v. Development involving larger scale energy/heating plant with the potential to impact on sensitive receptors e.g. solid fuel plant and short term operating reserve sites; or
- vi. Development introducing a new sensitive receptor within an AQMA or in close proximity to an AQMA.

A Habitats Regulations Assessment, will be required by the Council to establish whether a development could present a likely significant effect/ risk on/to the qualifying features of a site designated for its international importance for biodiversity.

**Supporting Text**

**10.78** Air quality is the largest environmental health risk in the UK. It shortens lives and contributes to chronic illness. Health can be affected both by short-term, high-pollution episodes and by long-term exposure to lower levels of pollution (*Source: Clean Air Strategy 2019*). Air pollution has direct and indirect impacts on the natural environment, contributing to climate change and affecting habitats and species, through plant take up and nitrogen and acid deposits on the ground and water sources.

**10.79** West Berkshire Council is a member of the Public Protection Partnership with Bracknell Forest and Wokingham where data and information about air quality in these parts of Berkshire is pooled and shared. The Policy Guidance: Planning for Air Quality (including Good Design and Air Quality Assessments) being prepared by the Partnership will set the requirements for the consideration of air quality in proposals for new development. National guidance has been produced by Environmental Protection UK and the Institute of Air Quality Management.

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**10.80** Planning has an important influence on air quality and also, therefore, the health of humans and ecosystems. It can be used to locate development to reduce emissions overall and reduce the exposure of people to air pollution. Where necessary, appropriate mitigation measures will be required and these will vary on a case by case basis but can include simple measures designed into the scheme from the outset. The Council will utilise the Policy Guidance: Planning for Air Quality (including Good Design and Air Quality Assessments) prepared by the Public Protection Partnership to aid the assessment of applications, development proposals which incorporate good design principles to minimise emissions and impacts on air quality will be supported. Other mitigation measures may include incorporating active travel, traffic management or well-designed green infrastructure which can offer significant physical health benefits and equality via improved air quality, if planned and designed correctly, through reducing the public's exposure to pollutants. The aims of improving air quality and the natural environment in addition to reducing exposure to air pollution have been woven into the LPR to achieve sustainable development and applicants should have regard to the following policies SP5, SP7, SP10, SP11, SP19, DM3, DM4 and DM5. Proposed development allocations have been located where possible, to minimise the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport and the individual strategic and residential site allocation policies have regard to air quality.

**10.81** The NPPF states that the planning system should contribute to and wherever possible enhance the natural and local environment. Specifically, planning policies and decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for air pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) and Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts on air quality from individual sites in local areas.



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**Policy DM9****Conservation Areas**

Proposals for development in a Conservation Area, or for development that affects its setting or important views into, out of, across or through the area, will be required to assess and clearly demonstrate how the special character, appearance and significance of the Conservation Area will be preserved or enhanced. Proposals will be determined in accordance with policy SP9 and will be sensitively designed to satisfy the following criteria:

- a. To respect the overall settlement pattern and its setting as part of the wider landscape;
- b. To reflect the form and layout of the area including views and vistas into and out of it and the shape and character of spaces contributing to the character of the historic environment, including historic street patterns and their setting;
- c. To ensure the scale, height, form, massing, and alignment respects the historic and architectural character, including roofscapes of the area, the relationship between buildings and the spaces between them;
- d. To ensure the nature and quality of materials are appropriate to the locality and complement those of the surrounding area;
- e. To respect locally distinctive design details that contribute to the area's character such as traditional frontage patterns, vertical or horizontal emphasis, pattern of fenestration, window and door detailing, shopfronts, advertisements, historical or traditional street furniture, traditional surfaces, and boundary treatments;
- f. To ensure buildings and streets of townscape character, trees, open spaces, walls, fences or any other features are retained where they contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area;
- g. To ensure it does not generate levels of traffic, parking or other environmental problems which would harm the character, appearance or significance of the area; and
- h. That the use is appropriate to and compatible with the character, appearance and historic function of the area.

Proposals for or involving demolition of existing buildings, walls or other structures which make a positive contribution to the special character or appearance or historic interest of the Conservation Area will not be permitted unless there is clear and convincing evidence that:

- i. The condition of the building (provided that this is not a result of deliberate neglect) and the cost of repairing and maintaining it in relation to its significance and to the value derived from its continued use, is such that repair is not practical; or
- ii. The replacement would make an equal or greater contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area; or
- iii. The development would generate planning benefits that outweigh the harm arising from its loss in accordance with national policy.

Where development is acceptable, a record of the current site, building or structure and its context will be required, prior to or during development or demolition, in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation.

Plans for redevelopment or re-use of an area where demolition is proposed must be agreed and a contract for redevelopment signed before the demolition is carried out.

**Supporting Text**

**10.82** The purpose of this policy is to set out more detailed criteria for development proposals affecting Conservation Areas.

**10.83** A Conservation Area is 'an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' (Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act, 1990). Preservation in this context means not harming the interest in the Conservation Area, as opposed to keeping it utterly unchanged.

**10.84** The special character and appearance of a Conservation Area can be derived from many different aspects including its physical features, spaces, landscape, views, the uses of an area, and the relationship between these elements. Other aspects of character may be more intangible perceptions of a place, such as historical or cultural associations with a place or building. Others may be relatively ephemeral or transitory, such as the smells and sounds associated with specific activities, which may occur only at certain times of the day or year.

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**10.85** The NPPF clarifies that not all elements of a Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance. In these cases the level of harm should be weighed against the wider benefits of the proposal including the potential to enhance or reveal further the heritage significance of the area.

**10.86** Demolition is only desirable where the building or structure involved does not make a positive contribution to the area and demolition of certain buildings/structures and/or demolition of the whole or substantial part of any gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure in a Conservation Area still requires planning consent. Information regarding the condition of the building should be based on a sound structural survey carried out by a chartered civil or structural engineer.

**10.87** High standards of maintenance and repair are encouraged in Conservation Areas. In cases where disrepair is severe, the Council may consider serving a Section 215 or Urgent Works Notice requiring work to be carried out.

**10.88** The Council would be supportive of proposals that would improve upon the condition of heritage assets that are identified as being at risk of being lost as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development, as long as it can be demonstrated that there would be no resultant harm to their setting or their significance.

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**Policy DM10****Listed Buildings**

Proposals for development affecting a Listed Building and/or its setting will be determined in accordance with policy SP9 and will be required to clearly demonstrate:

- a. Why the proposed development and related works are desirable or necessary; and
- b. How the significance of the Listed Building and/or its setting will be preserved.

Development will not be permitted if applicants fail to provide adequate or accurate detailed information to show the effect on the significance and architectural and historic interest of the Listed Building and/or the contributions made by its setting and any curtilage listed features.

Unless justified otherwise, development will not be permitted if it would:

- i. Adversely affect the character, scale, proportion, design, detailing, or materials used in the Listed Building; or
- ii. Result in the loss of/irreversible change to original features or other features of importance or interest; or
- iii. Harm the setting of the Listed Building.

In particular, development should avoid directly, indirectly or cumulatively any of the following:

- iv. Removal of original walls, stairs, or entrances, or subdivision of large interior spaces;
- v. Removal, alteration or replacement of structural elements including walls, roof structures, beams and floors;
- vi. Removal, alteration or replacement of original or historic features such as windows, doors, fireplaces and plasterwork;
- vii. Repairs or alterations involving materials, techniques and detailing inappropriate to the Listed Building;
- viii. The unnecessary replacement of traditional features other than with like for like, authentic or original materials and using appropriate techniques;
- ix. Extensions to the principal elevation/s of the Listed Building;
- x. The installation of satellite antennae, solar panels or other renewable energy features that are sited in a prominent location, either on the Listed Building, or within its curtilage; or
- xi. The removal of historic boundary treatments.

Where change to a Listed Building is acceptable, provision for appropriate recording will be required in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation approved in writing by the Council prior to any works commencing.

**Supporting Text**

**10.89** The purpose of this policy is to set out more detailed criteria for development proposals affecting Listed Buildings.

**10.90** Buildings and structures are listed in recognition of their special architectural or historic interest and any works which affect their character require Listed Building Consent. The NPPF makes clear that substantial harm to or loss of grade II Listed Buildings should be exceptional and for grade II\* and grade I Listed Buildings it should be wholly exceptional.

**10.91** Within West Berkshire there are approximately 1900 Listed Buildings, varying in age, character and size. Not all are actually buildings: structures such as milestones, war memorials, gate piers and walls are included. The oldest buildings are parish churches and the castle at Donnington, whereas the most recently constructed are associated with the Cold War at Greenham Common airbase. Architectural styles vary from the vernacular (particularly using timber framing, thatch and local bricks) to the polite examples of gentry houses. West Berkshire is rich in agricultural buildings; almshouses and canal locks and bridges are also well represented in the List. The majority of properties which are listed are private dwellings.

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**10.92** One of the principal aims of listing is to prevent alterations that are detrimental to the special character of the designated asset, including the interior of buildings. Listed Buildings are a finite, non-renewable resource, which in many cases are highly fragile and vulnerable to damage and destruction, as once historic fabric is removed or altered it is lost forever. It is therefore important that they are protected through the planning system. The setting of a listed building is also important and proposals that detract from the setting will be resisted. The Council will not grant consent for the demolition of a listed building other than in the most exceptional circumstances and applicants will need to demonstrate that every effort has been made to keep the building.

**10.93** It is a statutory requirement for local planning authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving any listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Preservation in this context means not harming the interest in the building, as opposed to keeping it utterly unchanged.

**10.94** The Council will seek solutions for assets at risk of loss or harm through decay, neglect or other threats. This will be pursued through proactive discussion with owners and a readiness to engage with development proposals with the potential to secure repair and continued maintenance. Where appropriate the Council may resort to the use of its statutory powers, Urgent Works or Repair Notices, to arrest decay of the asset.

**10.95** Applications for development or other work affecting a Listed Building will be expected to show why the works are desirable or necessary. The development might be related to the Listed Building and curtilage itself or could be separate but still affect its setting. The applicant should therefore provide a thorough but proportionate assessment of the architectural or historic significance of the Listed Building, its features and setting in accordance with policy SP9. This will include taking a whole building approach to retrofitting energy efficiency measures in accordance with the current guidance published by Historic England. The Statement of Heritage Significance will both inform the design proposals and reach a planning decision. Information should include appropriate floor plans, elevations, sections and details (at an appropriate scale); specifications, providing information on proposed materials and detailing, and (where external work is involved) plans and elevations showing the context of the Listed Building. It should also include research into the evolution of the building as originally built and subsequently altered, with the presumption that where unfortunate/inappropriate changes have occurred, the opportunity will be taken to rectify them, in order to strengthen the building's significance.

**10.96** In terms of appropriate uses for historic buildings, the best use is very often that for which they were designed. However, without appropriate uses to fund their long-term maintenance and repair, they can be at considerable risk. Whilst adaptation to a new use can pose a threat, new commercial, residential or other uses that enhance their historic character and significance are encouraged.

**10.97** Conversion of non-residential Listed Buildings to residential use can often pose many challenges. For example, where there are large open internal spaces (e.g. in barns and chapels) they would need to be sub-divided to achieve residential use, and this can often destroy the character of the building. However, virtually any conversion of a Listed Building from its original use involves some loss of character. Where conversion is accepted, the types and levels of use of the building itself or its setting will be strictly controlled to minimise any loss of character. Domestication of outside areas with gardens, washing poles and new outbuildings for instance is often wholly inappropriate because it would fail to conserve and enhance the heritage asset and such domestication cannot always be controlled through planning conditions. Where proposals would fail to conserve and enhance the heritage asset an alternative scheme should be sought.

**10.98** Some alterations to Listed Buildings are not classed as 'development' and may not require planning permission. However, most works to Listed Buildings, for example internal alterations and minor external works will require Listed Building Consent. Where planning permission is required for works to a Listed Building there is always a requirement to obtain Listed Building Consent as well. In these cases, both should be applied for concurrently. The impact of 'development' on features separately considered under Listed Building Consent can be a reason for refusal of planning permission.



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**Policy DM11****Non-designated Heritage Assets**

Proposals for development affecting buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as being non-designated heritage assets will be determined in accordance with policy SP9. Proposals should satisfy the following criteria:

- a. Demonstrate a clear understanding of the significance of the asset and/or its setting, alongside an assessment of the potential impact of the proposal on that significance;
- b. Be undertaken in a sympathetic manner using high quality design; and
- c. Have particular regard to the following characteristics, depending on the type of asset affected:
  - i. Its historic character and appearance;
  - ii. Its scale, proportion, design, historic fabric, detailing and materials;
  - iii. Ensuring there is no unacceptable level of loss, damage or covering of original features;
  - iv. The layout, boundary features and setting of the asset, including key views into, through or out of it;
  - v. Ensuring development is appropriate and sympathetic to its setting in terms of height, massing, density, materials and night and day visibility;
  - vi. The conservation of both human-made and natural features of architectural, archaeological, artistic and historic interest within it and the requirement to record such features on the Historic Environment Record;
  - vii. Its biodiversity interest;
  - viii. Any disturbance which could harm its archaeological potential;
  - ix. The integrity of the landscape;
  - x. The cumulative impact of successive small scale changes; and
  - xi. The enhancement of existing public access and interpretative opportunities.

**Supporting Text**

**10.99** The purpose of this policy is to set out more detailed criteria for development proposals affecting non-designated heritage assets.

**10.100** Non-designated heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets or which have not yet been assessed for national designation. Designated assets only make up a small percentage of the nation's heritage; the vast majority of archaeological sites for example are not on the National Heritage List for England. However, non-designated heritage assets make an important regional and local contribution to the character and appearance of the towns, villages and specific areas within the District, and play a key role in reinforcing a sense of local identity and distinctiveness in the historic environment. The value of such assets can be due to their integral archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic interest, their significance as part of a wider group, or their role in the social or economic development of the settlement or area in which they are located.

**10.101** The importance of particular sites, landscapes, buildings, structures and monuments to the communities of West Berkshire may be demonstrated by their inclusion on the [West Berkshire Local List of Heritage Assets](#) or their identification in neighbourhood plans and other area appraisals. However the absence of any particular heritage asset from the Local List does not necessarily mean that it has no heritage value, it may simply be that it is yet to be identified. Whilst the Local List is the most proactive way of identifying non-designated heritage assets, national planning guidance is clear that, when considering development proposals, the Council should establish if any potential heritage asset meets the definition of a non-designated heritage asset at an early stage in the process.

**10.102** A wide variety of assets have been identified in the [West Berkshire Local List of Heritage Assets](#) with examples including:

- Pangbourne Police Station
- Several C18th/C19th cast iron water pumps located along the A4 Bath Road

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- Church and Childs Almshouses in Newtown Road, Newbury
- Wooden turnstile at entrance to The Cliffs from Church Street, Kintbury

**10.103** The West Berkshire Historic Environment Record (HER) also includes hundreds of entries of heritage interest which are characteristic of the area, many of which might also be candidates for the Local List of Heritage Assets including:

- Historic farmhouses, barns, cartsheds, granaries and stables
- Farm labourers' cottages and gate lodges relating to rural estates
- 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century village schools and parish halls
- Buildings linked to important local industries such as brewing, brickmaking and smithing
- Non-conformist chapels, places of worship associated with other denominations and more modern churches as well as vicarages, manses and lych gates
- 20<sup>th</sup> century military remains such as First and Second World War pillboxes, gun emplacements, Cold War structures, evidence of peace camps and commemorative monuments
- Structures relating to transport routes such as bridges, guide posts and boundary markers
- built elements of the Kennet & Avon Canal not already on the National Heritage List for England
- Structures and earthworks found along historic routeways
- The battlefield of the Second Battle of Newbury 1644
- Landscaped parks and gardens around past or present country houses such as those at Chilton, Culverlands, Denford, Elcot, Hungerford, Midgham, Padworth, Sulhamstead House, Welford, West Woodhay, Wokefield, Woolhampton and Woolley.
- Municipal parks and areas of open space such as Victoria Park in Newbury.
- Features on registered and non-registered common land, both those relating to its use by commoners and relict monuments that have survived due to the lack of development.

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**Policy DM12****Registered Parks and Gardens**

Proposals for development that could affect designed landscapes identified on the 'Register of Historic Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England' (Registered Parks and Gardens) will be required to be sensitively designed and clearly demonstrate that great weight has been given to the conservation and significance of the asset and its setting in accordance with policy SP9. Particular regard will be given to the following criteria:

- a. Its historic character and appearance;
- b. The integrity of the landscape;
- c. Prevention of the sub-division of the landscape;
- d. The cumulative impact of successive small scale changes;
- e. The conservation of both human-made and natural features of architectural, archaeological, artistic and historic interest within it and the requirement to record such features and deposit the evidence with the Historic Environment Record;
- f. Its biodiversity interest; and
- g. The setting, including key views into, through, or out of the park or garden, particularly those which are an integral part of the design.

Depending upon the size of the historic park or garden, its current condition, the level of change proposed, and the complexity of the site, the Council may require an appropriate Conservation Management Plan (CMP). The CMP should provide a comprehensive review of the history and development of the site, its current condition and use and the constraints and opportunities that will influence its management, together with a clear plan to for its holistic management over the longer term.

**Supporting Text**

**10.104** The purpose of this policy is to set out more detailed criteria for development proposals affecting historic designed landscapes that are nationally designated as Registered Parks and Gardens. It recognises the value of these designed landscapes and aims to protect them from development that would be harmful to their character or setting.

**10.105** Historic parks and gardens are a fragile and finite resource, and can easily be damaged beyond repair or lost forever. As designed landscapes they differ from other heritage assets because:

- they often cover large areas of land, sometimes in different ownerships;
- their structure is based on a range of both natural and human-made features of historic significance such as lodges and gates, walls, hedges, walks and drives, parkland, ha-has, pleasure grounds, formal and informal planting, woodland and agricultural land, kitchen gardens, water features and garden buildings and ornaments. Some of these features may also be protected in their own right as listed buildings, scheduled monuments or through Tree Preservation Orders;
- they can have high biodiversity value; and
- each park or garden is a reflection of its location and due to natural growth or deliberate alteration, is a dynamic entity that changes over time.

**10.106** Applications within or adjoining historic parks and gardens will therefore be expected to protect the special features, historic interest and setting of the designed landscape.

**10.107** Historic England compiles a Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England (National Heritage Act 1983) which forms part of the National Heritage List for England. The main purpose of the register is to identify historic parks and gardens that are of importance, in the national context, to England's cultural heritage, and to encourage their appreciation, maintenance and enhancement. In 2020 there are currently twelve Registered Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest that fall completely within West Berkshire, three at Grade II\* and nine at Grade II. There are also two in Wiltshire and Oxfordshire that have elements which cross the county boundaries. Several such as Aldermaston Court and Hamstead Marshall evolved from medieval deer parks; many were created as designed landscapes around country houses, particularly in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Basildon Park and Purley Hall are examples of these. The avenues and compartments of the formal garden around Inkpen House survive; at Shaw House there is a raised garden walk and planting that may date back to the 1600s. West Berkshire's position

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on the coaching route between London and Bath played a part in the creation of some estates. Benham Park and Sandford Priory were landscaped by Capability Brown and one garden at Folly Farm was created in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century by garden designer Gertrude Jekyll.

**10.108** Inclusion on the register does not provide statutory protection, nor does it imply any additional powers to control development. However, the historic interest of a park or garden is a material planning consideration when determining planning applications within or adjoining registered parks and gardens. The NPPF makes clear that substantial harm to or loss of grade II Registered Parks and Gardens should be exceptional and for grade II\* and grade I Registered Parks and Gardens it should be wholly exceptional.

**10.109** There are also historic parks and gardens of more local interest, which, whilst not on the register, are of sufficient quality to warrant their protection when considering development proposals. As non-designated heritage assets these will therefore be considered under policy DM11.

**10.110** The policy emphasises that a holistic approach will be taken to understanding the potential impact of development proposals on the setting of Registered Parks and Gardens. Historic designed landscapes have their own qualities and cultural attributes which set them apart from other open or amenity spaces and consideration of their setting is important. Whilst they themselves often provide the setting for a large number of historic buildings, the actual setting of the designed landscapes can often include land, topographic features or structures that extend some distance from the park or garden. Views in and out of designed landscapes were important features particularly in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century for instance. In many instances there is an overlap with Conservation Areas. Parks often contain archaeological earthworks and cropmarks, either relating to earlier use of the designed landscape, such as mottes and park pales, or as unrelated features that have survived within the uncultivated land. The parks that include historic churches like Wasing and Englefield are also likely to have once contained villages that were shifted during emparkment to outside the boundaries. Donnington Grove encompasses the listed 14<sup>th</sup> century Donnington Castle and its surrounding scheduled Civil War star fort as well as part of the non-designated site of the Second Battle of Newbury 1644.

**10.111** The policy makes clear that for some proposals the Council may require a Conservation Management Plan (CMP). CMPs are valuable tools for developing informed long term management strategies for historic designed landscapes which help prevent inappropriate ad hoc changes that may be detrimental to the historic character of the park or garden.

**10.112** The Council will consult [Historic England](#) on applications for development likely to affect a Grade I or II\* Registered Park and Garden. [The Gardens Trust \(formerly known as The Garden History Society\)](#) is the statutory consultee for all applications for planning permission likely to affect any park or garden on the Register; The Berkshire Gardens Trust as the local county organisation will also be consulted.



## Policy DM13

### Registered Battlefields

Proposals for development that could affect the Registered Battlefield(s) in Newbury will be required to be sensitively designed and clearly demonstrate that great weight has been given to the conservation and significance of the asset and its setting in accordance with policy SP9. Particular regard will be given to the following criteria:

- a. Its historic open character and appearance;
- b. The topographical integrity of the landscape;
- c. Any disturbance which could harm its archaeological potential;
- d. The prevention of the sub-division of the landscape;
- e. The cumulative impact of successive small scale changes;
- f. The conservation of both human-made and natural features of archaeological and historic interest within it and the requirement to record such features and deposit the evidence with the Historic Environment Record;
- g. Minimising the impacts from development in its rural setting and along the urban edge of Newbury by ensuring the design is appropriate and sympathetic to its setting in terms of height, massing, density, materials and night and day visibility;
- h. The provision of new landscape planting where appropriate to maintain and enhance the level of screening/filtering of built development especially on the urban edge of Newbury from views within and surrounding the Registered Battlefield; and
- i. The enhancement of existing public access and interpretative opportunities.

Proposals for development in previously undisturbed areas within the Registered Battlefield and its setting should be subject to appropriate archaeological assessment.

## Supporting Text

**10.113** The purpose of this policy is to set out more detailed criteria for development proposals affecting Registered Battlefields.

**10.114** Since 1995 Historic England has compiled a Register of Historic Battlefields, designated because of their special historic interest; they are designated heritage assets of the highest significance. Inclusion on the Register does not provide statutory protection, however, the historic and archaeological interest of a battlefield is a material planning consideration when determining planning applications within or adjoining Registered Battlefields. Furthermore the NPPF makes it clear that substantial harm to or loss to Registered Battlefields should be wholly exceptional.

**10.115** To be included on the Register, sites must be securely established and still recognisable today. In 2020 there is one Registered Battlefield in West Berkshire, the First Battle of Newbury in 1643. It is a unique heritage asset in West Berkshire. It has been affected by past development and it is reasonable to expect that these development pressures will continue due to its close proximity to the built edge of Newbury and the significant amount of potential development land in its setting.

**10.116** The First Battle of Newbury is important because it represented probably the best chance Charles I ever had of winning the Civil War. The battle was fought south of the River Kennet over terrain which rises gradually to a narrow plateau a mile long before falling away again towards the River Enborne. The battlefield area boundary defines the outer reasonable limit of the battle and has been drawn so that it is easily appreciated on the ground. Despite the removal of boundaries of many small fields on land to the north of the battlefield area, there is still topographic integrity to Newbury 1643, which allows the landscape context to be understood. The site also forms valuable open space to the west of Newbury.

**10.117** Newbury was also the site of a second Civil War conflict in 1644, to the north of the town, the Second Battle of Newbury. This was also a significant engagement where Parliamentary failure to triumph led to the creation of the New Model Army. Much more of this battlefield has been urbanised and is not a designated heritage asset. It is however listed in the Appendix of the Register of Historic Battlefields and it still contains areas of open space that allow for a degree of understanding of the battle's terrain. As a non-designated heritage asset the site of the Second Battle of Newbury 1644 will therefore be considered under policy DM11.

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**10.118** Newbury is unique in being the location of two Civil War battles, and for both sites there is the potential for interpretation and presentation. Furthermore, the archaeological potential of both battlefields has not been fully explored. The application of methodical survey techniques executed to professional standards offers the potential for major advances in the understanding of battle sites. It is likely however that past episodes of unsystematic and poorly recorded metal-detecting may have removed some evidence over the areas of conflict at Newbury. The creation of local Finds Liaison Officers under the Portable Antiquities Scheme has done much to improve the reporting of archaeological discoveries, and opportunities should be taken to advance understanding of the battles in a sustainable way. Despite the armies' losses, there are very few known contemporary graves.

**10.119** The Council will consult Historic England on applications for development likely to affect a Registered Battlefield. Consideration will also be given to consulting the Battlefields Trust.

## Policy DM14

### Assets of Archaeological Importance

Proposals for development affecting heritage assets of archaeological interest and their settings will be determined in accordance with policy SP9 and will be expected to clearly demonstrate:

- a. Why the proposed development and related works are desirable or necessary; and
- b. How the significance of the assets will be preserved

Development may not be permitted if applicants fail to provide adequate or accurate detailed information to show the impact on the nature, extent and significance of the assets. For known assets of archaeological interest, or on land where there is archaeological potential, an appropriate archaeological desk-based assessment will be required which should allow informed decisions to be made about options for mitigating or offsetting that impact.

Where appropriate, pre-determination field evaluation may be necessary as a further stage. This is a limited programme of fieldwork to determine the presence or absence of archaeological features, artefacts or ecofacts and their research potential, and to define their character, extent, quality and preservation to enable assessment of significance.

Archaeological evaluation may include:

- i. Non-destructive methods such as geophysical survey, earthwork survey, building survey;
- ii. Intrusive methods of varying destructive potential such as augering, test pits, trial trenches and fieldwalking; and
- iii. In the case of buildings, physical intervention such as the removal of modern materials to reveal older fabric.

Proposals will be permitted where the proposal accords with other relevant policies and includes:

- Provision to preserve the archaeological remains in situ, by sensitive layout and design. This is the preferred outcome for archaeological assets of the highest significance (Scheduled Monuments and those non-designated assets of equivalent significance); and/or
- Provision for the investigation and recording of any archaeological remains that cannot or are not required to be preserved, including at least the deposition of evidence with the West Berkshire Historic Environment Record and any archaeological archive with the appropriate depository, in accordance with a detailed Written Scheme of Investigation approved before the start of development.

## Supporting Text

**10.120** The purpose of this policy is to set out more detailed criteria for development proposals affecting Assets of Archaeological Interest.

**10.121** There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset, whether it is a building, monument, site, place, area of landscape, if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

**10.122** The survival into the present day of any given archaeological material depends on many factors. Below ground conditions are not always conducive to site formation, and natural processes or later human activity can erode or destroy archaeological evidence whether buried or upstanding. Heritage assets of archaeological interest can therefore be fragile and fragmentary. They form a finite resource which is irreplaceable.

**10.123** The potential knowledge which may be unlocked by investigation of archaeological assets may be harmed even by minor disturbance, because the context in which evidence is found is crucial to furthering understanding. It is therefore generally desirable for archaeological assets to be preserved in situ.

**10.124** Archaeological sites, monuments and buildings vary in type, scale and character as well as state of preservation, and they may be of national, regional or local significance and designated or non-designated. Only a very small percentage of archaeological sites are designated in any way, and many await discovery.

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**10.125** The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 provides specific protection for archaeological monuments of national interest, including the maintaining of a Schedule of Monuments. The NPPF makes it clear that Scheduled Monuments are heritage assets of the highest significance and that substantial harm to or loss of them should be wholly exceptional. However, scheduling is discretionary, and non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest may be demonstrably of equivalent significance to Scheduled Monuments, either because they have yet to be formally assessed, or because discretion has been exercised not to designate them. A third category of nationally important archaeological assets is those types of site which are not eligible for scheduling because their physical nature falls outside the scope of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. These non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest of equivalent significance to Scheduled Monuments should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.

**10.126** Prior written permission for works to a Scheduled Monument is required and undertaking works without consent is a criminal offence. Scheduled Monument Consent is administered by Historic England. An application for planning permission may also be necessary for work affecting a Scheduled Monument which constitutes 'development', and there is a requirement to consult Historic England for development likely to affect the site of a Scheduled Monument.

**10.127** Where the partial or total loss of an archaeological asset is to be permitted due to public benefit, developers will be required to commission recording to offset this loss, generally through a programme of archaeological work or building recording, specified through an approved Written Scheme of Investigation. Archaeological excavation is controlled intrusive fieldwork which examines, records and interprets archaeological features, structures and deposits; artefacts are retrieved and environmental samples are collected where appropriate. As the archaeological site is removed through the process, it is essential that important evidence is not thoughtlessly destroyed. Those carrying out the work should seek to answer questions within a current research framework and to advance understanding. The records made and objects gathered from the archaeological archive should be studied in order to compile a report, and this evidence should be made publicly accessible. The explicit purpose of development-led archaeological work therefore is to make useful contributions to knowledge, for public benefit.



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**Policy DM15****Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows**

Development which conserves and enhances trees, woodland and hedgerows will be supported.

Development proposals should be accompanied by an appropriate Arboricultural Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment and/or an Arboricultural Method Statement. Proposals will be expected to clearly demonstrate that wherever possible existing trees, woodland and hedgerows have been incorporated into the design and layout of a scheme from the outset. Where this cannot be achieved the onus is on the applicant to justify the loss of trees and/or other features as part of the proposals.

Development affecting trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) must be justified and the impact of the proposal will be assessed on the amenity of the area. Where these and other protected trees are subject to felling, a replacement of an appropriate number, species and size in an appropriate location will be required.

Ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees and ancient hedgerows are irreplaceable habitats. Development resulting in their loss or deterioration will be considered in accordance with policy SP11. The scale and quality of the compensation measures required will be commensurate to the loss or deterioration of the irreplaceable habitat.

Development proposals which could potentially result in the loss of ancient wood pasture; or trees, woodlands and hedgerows located within historic parks and gardens will be considered in accordance with policy DM12, for those within Registered Parks and Gardens, or policy DM11 for those forming part of non-designated heritage assets.

Where loss or damage of non-protected trees, woodland or hedgerows is unavoidable, appropriate replacement or compensation planting including appropriate measures to secure their long term maintenance will be required.

Development proposals will provide appropriate protection for retained trees, woodland and hedgerows in advance of any work on site to prevent damage to root systems and to take account of future sustainable growth.

Where appropriate, suitable opportunities should be identified and incorporated for the restoration and planting of new trees, woodland and hedgerows. New planting should:

- a. Be suitable for the site conditions;
- b. Use appropriate tree pit sizes and soil volumes;
- c. Use native species wherever appropriate;
- d. Be informed by and contribute to local character; and
- e. Enhance or create new habitat linkages.

To ensure the sustainable growth of restored or newly planted trees, development will be required to include appropriate measures to secure their long term maintenance.

**Supporting text**

**10.128** The purpose of this policy is to ensure the management, including conservation and enhancement, of existing trees, woodland and hedgerows, and to ensure that opportunities for restoration and new planting are realised where appropriate. Development proposals will be considered in accordance with the latest guidance in British Standard BS5837 'Trees in relation to demolition, design and development'.

**10.129** This policy does not prevent the appropriate management of trees, woodlands and hedgerow or removal of trees and hedges that are not in character with their locality particularly if they are a non-native species of flora. For new planting the use of UK and Ireland sourced and grown tree stock is encouraged.

**10.130** West Berkshire's trees, woodland and hedgerows are valued visual and ecological assets in our towns, villages and countryside, adding local character and distinctiveness to the landscape, streets, parks, gardens, public rights of way and other open spaces. They have an inherent biodiversity value and can help integrate new development into the landscape, its character, and environment. They are important components of the historic environment as

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planted or managed flora, and often historically important as indications of past land use and ownerships. They assist in mitigating for the effects of climate change, increase the tree canopy cover in the district and make both public and private areas within a development more attractive, enjoyable and healthy places to be.

**10.131** The protection of existing trees, woodland and hedgerows and the addition of new planting contributes greatly to conserving and enhancing the local character of an area. Boundary treatments are particularly important and the character of an area can easily be lost if front gardens or boundary hedgerows are removed. There is evidence in both rural and urban areas of the district of long established boundary hedgerows being ripped out and replaced by close boarded fencing or walls. A proportion of these result in retrospective applications to retain fences or walls in excess of 1 metre next to highways. Where planning applications are required to propose new boundary treatments or retrospective applications are required to regularise works already undertaken and it is clear that an established hedgerow will or has been removed, the Council will require sufficient space to be left to allow for the retention of an existing hedge or planting of a new one to replace the one that has been removed.

**10.132** The retention of existing trees and hedgerows within new gardens adds a sense of establishment and maturity to any new development. New planting can also add value, with the use of dwarfing rootstocks a way of accommodating trees in smaller gardens.

**10.133** In the public realm, street trees and appropriate planting can help soften the streetscape and ensure it is not dominated by hard surfaces and parked cars. Structural landscaping is encouraged in publicly managed areas. The specification and choice of design, materials and planting should take account of the pressures placed upon the public realm through the movement of both people and vehicles.

**10.134** Individual trees, groups and lines of trees and woodlands important to the character of Conservation Areas, to their setting and to the approaches to Conservation Areas should be retained and appropriately managed.

**10.135** Protected trees includes trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order (whether that be an individual tree, a group of individual trees or a woodland) or those located within a Conservation Area. They also include those hedgerows meeting the criteria of "important hedgerow" in the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 (as amended).

**10.136** Ancient woodland and ancient and veteran trees are identified as irreplaceable in the NPPF. Ancient woodland is the most extensive habitat remaining in West Berkshire. It also has a high archaeological value as a type of land use as it often contains much older features such as prehistoric field systems and barrows and also evidence of management such as sawpits and charcoal burning. Ancient semi-natural woodland currently covers 2894 hectares. There are a further 1164 hectares of plantation on ancient woodland sites which could potentially be restored. Ancient woodlands and veteran trees once lost cannot be recreated, their unique character, high archaeological value and valuable biodiversity resource will be safeguarded and not allowed to be lost or lose condition.

**10.137** Development should buffer any ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees and ancient hedgerows it affects by providing sufficient space to afford surrounding protection and allow for future growth and expansion where possible. Development near ancient woodland will be treated in accordance with the most up to date joint Natural England and Forestry Commission Standing Advice. This currently advises that development proposals should have a buffer zone of at least 15 metres from the boundary of the woodland to avoid root damage. For ancient and veteran trees the buffer zone should be at least 15 times larger than the diameter of the tree. The buffer zone should be 5 metres from the edge of the tree's canopy if that area is larger than 15 times the tree's diameter. Precise buffers would need to be determined through detailed assessment and design when proposals are submitted for development. The Council will adopt a precautionary approach as to what would be considered appropriate in order to ensure that any buffer fulfils the specific requirements of its location and the type of development proposed.

**10.138** It is important that a buffer zone consists of semi-natural habitats such as woodland and/or a mix of scrub, grassland, heathland and wetland. Development proposals, including gardens would not be appropriate. Sustainable drainage schemes would only be considered acceptable if they did not affect root protection areas and any changes to the water table did not negatively affect ancient woodland or ancient and veteran trees. The Woodland Trust <sup>(49)</sup> highlights the importance of protecting and enhancing natural habitats around ancient woodland in order to help reverse the historic fragmentation of this irreplaceable habitat and to improve ecological connectivity with the surrounding landscape.

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**10.139** Ancient woodland is greatly at risk from ammonia pollution and so all ammonia-emitting developments, such as intensive livestock units, which fall within 5 kilometres of an ancient woodland site will require an additional assessment to include a detailed Ancient Woodland Nitrogen Impact Assessment of the ancient woodland(s) of concern. This will need to demonstrate that there will be no deterioration as a result of the contributions from the development.

**10.140** Within the district there are historic ancient wood pastures and historic parkland, both of which are also irreplaceable habitats. These form important elements of West Berkshire's heritage and it is essential their significance is taken into account in development proposals.

**10.141** The Council needs to better understand what proportion of the district has tree canopy cover and the extent of the functions this cover provides. A canopy cover assessment will be undertaken for West Berkshire. This will provide the basis for setting targets for canopy cover within the district, supporting both this policy and policy SP10, in the consideration of future development proposals.

# 11 Development Management Policies: Delivering Housing

## Policy DM16

### First Homes Exception Sites

First Homes exception sites, suitable for first-time buyers which offer affordable housing, will be supported adjacent to existing settlements with a settlement boundary in the spatial areas of Newbury/Thatcham and the Eastern Area subject to satisfying the following criteria:

- a. The site is proportionate in size to the scale of the adjacent existing settlement;
- b. Development is not located within and does not compromise the natural beauty or specific qualities of the National Landscape or other assets of particular importance;<sup>(50)</sup>
- c. Any development of market homes included on the site is small in proportion to the total number of dwellings and is essential to enable grant funding of the First Homes on the site;
- d. Dwellings delivered will be subject to restrictions that limit occupation to those in affordable housing need, with those in a designated rural area <sup>(51)</sup> subject to additional restrictions that afford priority to households with a local connection; and
- e. The mix of dwellings provided reflects the local housing needs of first-time buyers and/or renters, subject to consideration of site character, context and development viability.

It is expected that First Homes exception schemes will deliver 100% affordable housing. In some cases, a proportion of market housing may be acceptable where this enables the closing of a funding gap for the delivery of affordable housing within the scheme. The market homes should be integrated with the affordable homes to form a single scheme. Where market housing is being used to financially support a First Homes exception scheme, the following evidence is needed:

- i. A financial appraisal demonstrating the viability of the scheme and the financial relationship between open market and affordable housing;
- ii. The measures being taken to ensure the use of affordable housing is to meet local needs in perpetuity; and
- iii. The relationship of open market housing to meeting local need, in terms of location, design, visual character, and type of accommodation.

## Supporting Text

**11.1** The [Written Ministerial Statement on First Homes](#) includes a provision to support the development of First Homes exception sites suitable for first time buyers unless the need for such homes is already being addressed within the Council's area. Evidence identifies a high level of need for affordable housing, and development viability constrains the level of delivery that can be achieved through development sites. The Council does not, therefore, consider that there is justification for constraining support for entry-level exception sites on the basis that the need for such homes will already be met in the District.

**11.2** The Written Ministerial Statement is clear that First Homes exception sites should not be located within or compromise the protections accorded to areas or assets of particular importance as set out in the NPPF, including Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Policy DM17 sets out the policy for exception sites in rural areas.

**11.3** The Written Ministerial Statement allows local authorities to set local connection criteria. Local authorities are also allowed to permit a small proportion of market homes on these sites where this is essential to enable grant funding of the First Homes on the site.

50 As defined by the NPPF footnote 6

51 The North Wessex Downs National Landscape and areas designated as 'rural' under Section 157 of the Housing Act 1985



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**Policy DM17****Rural Exception Housing**

Small scale rural exception housing schemes will be supported adjacent to rural settlements to meet a local housing need. Such schemes will be expected to be in response to a need identified through a local needs survey for a parish or group of parishes. The affordable housing within the scheme will be required to remain affordable in perpetuity.

It is expected that rural exception housing schemes will deliver 100% affordable housing. In some cases, a proportion of market housing may be acceptable where this enables the closing of a funding gap for the delivery of the affordable housing within the scheme. The market homes should be integrated with the affordable homes to form a single scheme. Where market housing is being used to financially support a rural exception housing scheme, the following detailed evidence is required:

- a. A financial appraisal demonstrating the viability of the scheme and the financial relationship between open market and affordable housing;
- b. The measures being taken to ensure the use of the affordable housing is to meet local needs in perpetuity; and
- c. The relationship of open market housing to meeting local need, in terms of location, design, visual character, and type of accommodation.

**Supporting Text**

**11.4** The rural exception housing policy relates to the provision of small scale sites to meet an identified local housing need associated with rural communities. There has to be a very strong case for allowing such development anywhere in the rural area, both inside and outside the National Landscape. The provision for other types of affordable housing is focused in the main urban areas alongside general housing development. Rural exception housing will not, therefore, be permitted in the countryside adjacent to urban areas.

**11.5** Rural exception housing is allowed for within the terms of the NPPF as an exception to policy. The schemes are intended to be small in scale and meet an identified need established in a parish housing needs study for affordable housing for a settlement or parish (or group of villages) to which the proposal relates. Local need is restricted to meeting the needs of households that have a connection with the area in accordance with the Council's [Housing Allocations Policy](#) and are unable to access housing without publicly funded financial assistance.

**11.6** The Council encourages parish councils to have an up-to-date Housing Needs Survey. Rural exception housing is subject to all the normal planning considerations. In addition, schemes should be well related to the existing settlement and care should be taken to ensure they do not result in isolated development in the countryside because of the impact on the landscape character of the area and access for occupants to public transport, education and other essential facilities including for example, access to foul drainage infrastructure.

**Supporting Evidence - Local Housing Needs Survey**

**11.7** Housing being brought forward on the basis of overriding local need must be accompanied by a statement setting out the evidence both of the need and to justify a particular location. The evidence must be sufficient to demonstrate that a genuine need exists, how the proposed development intends to meet that need and that all suitable alternative sites in the same locality have been considered that might have less impact and/or be more sustainable. The development must be designed and developed as a comprehensive scheme.

**11.8** National planning guidance states that a rural exception site may include an element of open market housing to help with funding the scheme. However, this must be clearly justified. If a rural exception scheme requires an element of market housing, there is a presumption that the development will have the least amount of open market housing required to help finance the scheme. The number of market houses will depend on the individual circumstances and be assessed on a site by site basis. If open market housing dominates the housing mix, then the scheme no longer qualifies as rural exception housing and will be contrary to policy. The proportion of market houses should be small in relation to the overall number of housing units proposed on the rural exception site. The Council will require open book accounting as part of any approval.

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**11.9** Community-led organisations may be suitable as a means of delivering affordable housing on rural exception sites.

**Supporting Evidence – Viability**

**11.10** The Council will require a detailed submission setting out why any open market housing element is necessary, how the scale of market housing proposed supports the funding of the rural exception housing and why alternative funding mechanisms have not been used, including Parish receipts from Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments. The overriding consideration is the exceptional need for local affordable housing and it must be shown that the scheme provides housing for local households in perpetuity.

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**Policy DM18****Self and Custom-build Housing**

The Council is supportive in principle of schemes which will provide a diverse mix of housing and cater for new and emerging housing models and innovative products, including self-build and custom-build products.

Applications for self and custom-build developments will need to demonstrate high-quality design and be sensitive to the characteristics of the local area.

Where appropriate, the Council will work with developers, registered providers, landowners and relevant individuals or groups to address identified local requirements for self and custom-build homes as identified in the West Berkshire self and custom-build register.

**Supporting text**

**11.11** The NPPF states that the type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies with due regard for people wishing to commission or build their own homes. Self and custom housebuilding is a key element of the government's agenda to increase supply of new housing and legislation has been introduced to support this initiative including:

- The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act (March 2015)
- The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding (Register) Regulations 2016 (Commenced 1st April 2016)
- Housing and Planning Act 2016
- [West Berkshire's self-build register](#)

**11.12** Local planning authorities should therefore plan for the need of different groups including self and custom build homes. West Berkshire Council maintains a register of individuals and associations of individuals who have expressed an interest in self- and custom-build homes.

**11.13** To support self-build and custom-build housing, the Council will work with partners to establish how serviced plots may be effectively provided to meet the demand. There is no requirement for plots to be made available at below market value but they should be reasonably priced reflecting prevailing market values for such plots. Reference should also be had to advice from the National Custom and Self Build Association and developing best practice.

**Supporting Evidence**

**11.14** The Council maintains a register of individuals who have expressed an interest in self- and custom-build homes. Due to privacy reasons it would not be appropriate to publish this list in support of the Local Plan as it contains personal information. The register is updated regularly. There are no restrictions upon the number of local authority self-and custom build registers that an individual or association may apply to be included on. Nor are there any restrictions around whether an individual or organisation has a local connection to West Berkshire.

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**Policy DM19****Specialised Housing**

The provision of new specialist forms of housing designed to meet the needs of those with identified support or care needs will be supported where:

- a. Housing meets a proven locally identified need in the District for the specific housing product being proposed; and
- b. The location is appropriate, in terms of design, layout, and accessibility of facilities, services and public transport, subject to other policies in the Plan being satisfied.

Planning permission for extensions or alterations to existing specialised housing will also be supported where:

- c. The activities and/or operations associated with the development do not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of neighbours, through increased noise and disturbance or obtrusive light; and
- d. Due regard is given to the design of the development, taking into account the needs of the end users, particularly with regard to on site accessible outdoor spaces and provision of a satisfactory outlook for all residents.

Proposals for new specialised housing or extensions to existing accommodation, should demonstrate appropriate and evidence-based provision for:

- i. On-site car and cycle parking; and
- ii. The storage of mobility scooters and/or wheelchairs

Specialist accommodation development will be sought as an integral part of the mix from the strategic housing allocations at Sandleford Park and North East Thatcham.

Affordable housing contribution will be required in accordance with the requirements of policy SP16: Affordable Housing, depending upon whether the accommodation falls within Use Class C2 (residential institutions) or C3 (dwelling house) of the Use Classes Order.

**Supporting text**

**11.15** The NPPF indicates that local planning authorities should plan for the needs of different groups in the community including older people and disabled people. There is no single model of housing that is right for everybody. Although many people will live in conventional housing all their lives, specialist accommodation will be required for some to enable access to some form of support or care. This policy sets out how the Council will consider the provision of new specialised housing and extensions to existing accommodation for those with support or care needs.

**11.16** Housing for the elderly and people with disabilities can be provided through adapted market housing, assisted living housing or extra care housing. Extra care housing allows independent living but offers a higher level of support than sheltered housing, with care workers available on site up to 24 hours a day but may not offer as much care as a care home or nursing home where residents have their own rooms but not their own front door. Care homes offer accommodation with personal care and nursing homes also provide around-the-clock care on site from qualified nurses. These types of housing provision all have specialised products which sit within them, with products often spanning more than one category; for example, they may also provide dementia care and/or care for those with learning or physical disabilities.

**11.17** Housing for older people covers a wide range of needs, from sheltered housing (where residents live mainly independent lives whilst sharing some communal facilities) through to extra care housing and care homes, where a level of personal health care is typically provided. Proposals for specialist housing will be considered on their own merits having regard to whether the proposal falls within Class C2 or Class C3 of the Use Classes Order. This will depend upon factors such as the level of personal care offered; the type of accommodation and level of communal space and facilities. Pre-application advice should be sought if clarification is needed as to whether a development is likely to constitute a specialist care housing provision.



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**11.18** The need for specialist housing for older people in the District is estimated to be around 1,710 units over the 2021-39 period (95 per annum) (West Berkshire Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA), 2012, Table 5.8). The LHNA recognises that extra care schemes have higher delivery costs as a result of the higher accessibility standards and the level of facilities and services/support required so may not be appropriate in every location.

**11.19** This Plan contributes through a proposed new extra care scheme allocation at Stoneham's Farm, Long Lane, Tilehurst. New schemes often emerge on previously unidentified redevelopment sites and can also be appropriately located as part of larger general purpose residential schemes such as Sandleford Park and North East Thatcham. The Council will support the delivery of specialist care housing as part of the mix on the strategic housing allocations in the Local Plan and from other large housing sites where feasible. On the other large sites, however, need will be negotiated on a site by site basis as opportunities arise. Provision will also be encouraged on suitably located windfall sites. The provision of dwellings suitable for older people in the villages is also important, as many villages can have even higher numbers of older people. Neighbourhood plans are well placed to identify local need and include provision in neighbourhood plan policies.

**11.20** The location of the proposed specialist housing must be appropriate having regard to access to facilities, services and public transport.

**11.21** Outdoor spaces must be accessible for all users of the development. Residents should be able to enjoy a reasonable outlook from their individual rooms.

**11.22** Assisted living and extra care housing can have specific impacts from noise from centralised kitchen facilities, mechanical and electrical systems and higher levels of outdoor lighting. Where development is proposed for new extra care dwellings, extensions or re-development of existing facilities, planning applications must be accompanied by robust and appropriate evidence of how the proposals may affect neighbouring occupiers. This will enable the Council to assess whether there is a likely to be a likely negative effect as a result of the development in line with any amenity and pollution policies.

**11.23** The requirement of policy SP15 for all new homes to be built to the accessible and adaptable dwellings (Part M4(2)) of the Building Regulations standard would also address issues such as getting in and out of dwellings and getting around within them. This will provide the opportunity for older people to live in their own homes for longer, by providing the necessary flexibility needed to adapt their homes and/or for extra care to be provided in their own home.

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**Policy DM20****Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople**

The Council will meet the identified permanent and transit need for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople by allocating land for pitches and/or plots.

Existing authorised sites for Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople will be safeguarded for use by Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, unless acceptable replacement accommodation/pitches/plots can be provided. This is to ensure that there remains a good supply of pitches and plots in the District.

Permanent Gypsy and Traveller sites and sites for Travelling Showpeople will be developed:

- a. On sites allocated in policies RSA28 and RSA29;
- b. As expansions to existing authorised Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites, unless in conflict with criterion d;
- c. On sites located in, or well related to, existing settlements; or
- d. When in rural settings, ensuring the scale of the site(s) do not dominate the nearest settled community, whether singly or cumulatively with any other Gypsy and Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople sites. Isolated locations in the countryside should be avoided.

Where possible sites will be on previously developed land. The Council will seek compatibility of use with that of the surrounding land use and promote the integrated co-existence between the site and the settled community, including adequate levels of privacy and residential amenity both within the site and with neighbouring occupiers.

Proposals for development should satisfy the following criteria:

- i. Site planning will be landscape-led and development will be in accordance with policies SP7 and SP8;
- ii. Ensure each pitch can accommodate space for a mobile home and touring caravan, parking, and if to be provided, a day room/amenity building. Provision will be made for play and residential amenity space. A layout plan shall be submitted with a planning application to demonstrate how the site and each pitch is laid out;
- iii. Provide safe access with appropriate turning space(s);
- iv. The development would not generate traffic of a type or amount that would result in substantial harm to local roads, and/or would require improvements that would adversely affect the character and nature of such roads. A Transport Assessment or Transport Statement should accompany a planning application, which would also detail appropriate mitigation;
- v. The site has easy access to local services including public transport, shops, schools and health services;
- vi. Measures to improve accessibility by, and encourage use of, non-car transport modes including internal walking routes linked to any existing Public Rights of Way network are provided. These measures should be set out in a Travel Plan for the site;
- vii. Development avoids areas of high flood risk and if required provide a Flood Risk Assessment, in accordance with policy SP6;
- viii. It is demonstrated that surface water will be managed in a sustainable manner through the implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Methods (SuDS), in accordance with policy SP6;
- ix. Adequate and appropriate infrastructure is provided for the supply of electricity and water, facilities for drainage and waste disposal;
- x. Development will be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA). Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will need to be implemented to ensure any designated sites and/or protected habitats and or species are not adversely affected; and
- xi. Development will not harm the value of any heritage assets and their setting and proposals will be in accordance with policy SP9.

Proposals for Travelling Showperson sites will be required to satisfy the above criteria and additionally demonstrate that the site is appropriately designed to accommodate the storage and maintenance of show equipment and associated vehicles.

This policy supplements the detailed provisions for each of the sites set out in policies RSA28 and RSA29.

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## Supporting Text

**11.24** West Berkshire Council, as the local planning authority, is required to identify sites to meet the needs of Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople. Proposed sites within settlement boundaries are considered acceptable in principle, as with conventional housing, subject to material considerations. Some of the policy criteria will assist in providing a suitably located and designed site. In consideration of location, caravans are not permitted in Flood Zone 3 as per Table 2 of the Planning Practice Guidance.

**11.25** There is a corporate commitment to supporting sustainable communities, and a good supply of affordable housing including social rented housing to address housing needs. This applies to the Travelling communities as well as settled communities.

**11.26** The Council is required by national policy to set pitch and plot targets which address the likely permanent and transit accommodation needs in the area, working collaboratively with neighbouring authorities. A [Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment](#) was undertaken to inform the LPR.

### Gypsy and Traveller sites

**11.27** Table 7 sets out the need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches up to 31 March 2038, correlating to the study period for the GTAA.

**Table 7 Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation**

Additional permanent pitches required 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2038	30
Additional permanent pitches planned for 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2023	
• New Stocks Farm, Paices Hill, Aldermaston	8
• Four Houses Corner, Padworth	1
• Ermin Street, Lambourn Woodlands	1
Total pitches planned for 2021-2023	10
Permanent pitches required 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2038	20

**11.28** The GTAA 2021, in updating the 2019 study, identifies that there is a residual overall need for 30 permanent pitches between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2038, considering existing supply on established sites, and accounting for household formation and net in-migration. Taking into account the 10 pitches already planned this leaves a residual need of 20 pitches which are required between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2038.

**11.29** Table 7 sets out the total need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation. Of the 30 pitches needed to 2038, 13 are required in the short term up to 31 March 2026. 10 pitches have been planned for in the period 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2023. The site at New Stocks Farm, Paices Hill, Aldermaston has been allocated in RSA28 to replace 8 transit pitches with 8 permanent pitches. This takes forward the allocation in the Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document and the recommendations of the GTAA to create permanent pitches. Planning permission (reference 22/00120/FUL) was granted in September 2022 for this use and is yet to be implemented. Since the GTAA was updated, Four Houses Corner, a Council operated site in Padworth, had planning permission approved for 17 permanent pitches (reference 23/01552/REG3 approved in April 2024). This represents an increase of 1 pitch above the 16 pitches counted in the GTAA. The permission is yet to be implemented. Also since the GTAA was updated 1 pitch has been provided on land at Ermin Street, Lambourn Woodlands (reference 21/02045/FUL approved in August 2022).

**11.30** Table 7 outlines that 20 permanent pitches are required between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2038. Site allocations will be made in the context of a further update to the GTAA which would follow the repopulation of Four Houses Corner, Padworth. In contributing to meeting the need planning applications will be assessed in accordance with the criteria set out in this policy.

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**11.31** There is no requirement to identify a site for transit pitches. However, the GTAA 2021 recommends that tolerated stopping places or negotiated stopping places should be provided. The Council will explore this further through the Local Plan process and/or through developing a Council policy to govern this.

**11.32** The GTAA does not identify a need for houseboat dwellers and thus the LPR does not provide for any permanent houseboats.

**Travelling Showperson sites**

**11.33** There is currently one Showperson's Yard in the District which is located at Long Copse Farm, Enborne. 24 plots are allocated for use by Travelling Showpeople, as defined in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, under policy RSA29. The eastern part of the site has an authorised use for Circus headquarters and agricultural holding as a dual use. The allocation would enable a residential and operational base for staff and families associated with the Circus.



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**Policy DM21****Retention of Mobile Home Parks**

Proposals that would result in the loss of a mobile home park site either in part or full (as shown on the Policies Map), will not be permitted unless it will provide 100% affordable housing which will meet locally identified needs.

**Supporting Text**

**11.34** The NPPF recognises that a range of size, type and tenure of housing is needed for different groups of people in the community.

**11.35** There are a number of mobile home park sites across the District which perform an important role in terms of providing low cost home ownership accommodation. As a result, there is a need to safeguard the loss of these sites from redevelopment to alternative uses which would not meet a locally identified housing need.

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**Policy DM22****Residential Use of Space above Non-residential Units**

The Council will support proposals related to the conversion of existing space or provision of additional space above non-residential units that provide a net increase in housing and:

- a. Are consistent with the prevailing height and form of neighbouring properties and the overall street scene;
- b. Are well designed and meet the appropriate space standards; and
- c. Maintain safe access and egress for occupier.

Where the proposal relates to the addition of residential space or the conversion of existing non-residential space to residential space under permitted development rights, the development should:

- i. Be well designed and meet the appropriate space standards; and
- ii. Meet the conditions and limitations of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended), including the need to apply for Prior Approval.

**Supporting Text**

**11.36** The Council is committed to providing a full range of housing types, to meet the diverse need of the district. Town and district centres in particular offer an opportunity for new housing, taking advantage of access to employment, shops and services and, in many cases, increased public transport provision. This could take many forms. The most common is likely to be the conversion of first floors and above of units which are currently in non-residential use. However this could also take the form of vertical extensions to non-residential units.

**11.37** Under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) there are permitted development rights for proposals to change the use from commercial, business and service uses (use class E) and some sui generis uses to residential use; and/or to add up to two flats (use class C3) to a current non-residential mixed use, subject to limitations and conditions including the need to apply for Prior Approval.

**11.38** The Council's starting point will be for all new homes, including subdivisions and upper floor conversions of retail units, to meet the appropriate space standards, unless it can be shown that the standards are not practicable in the face of other material considerations and policy requirements. For example, an exception may be made where works needed to achieve the standards would adversely affect the significance of a heritage asset or would require unachievable changes to the building being converted.

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**Policy DM23****Housing Related to Rural Workers**

New dwellings in the countryside related to, and located at or near, a rural business will be supported where the following criteria are satisfied:

- a. It is proven as essential to the continuing use of land and buildings for agriculture, forestry or a similar land based rural business;
- b. Detailed evidence is submitted showing the relationship between the proposed housing and the existing or proposed rural business and demonstrating why the housing is required for a full time worker in that location;
- c. It is demonstrated that there are no suitable alternative dwellings available or that could be made available in that location to meet the need. This includes those being used as tourist or temporary accommodation or existing buildings suitable for residential conversion;
- d. It is shown why the housing need cannot be met by existing or proposed provision within existing settlement boundaries;
- e. The financial viability of the business is demonstrated to justify temporary or permanent accommodation;
- f. The size, location and nature of the proposed dwelling is commensurate with the needs of the business; and well related to existing farm buildings or associated dwellings;
- g. The development has no adverse impact on the rural character and heritage assets of the area and its setting within the wider landscape, and in accordance with policies SP2 and SP7; and
- h. No dwelling serving or associated with the rural business has been either sold or converted from a residential use or otherwise separated from the holding within the last 10 years. The act of severance may override the evidence of need.

Where a new dwelling is essential to support a new rural business, temporary accommodation will be sought for the first 3 years. Any permission will be subject to a condition restricting the use of the property to persons employed within the rural business.

Agricultural Occupancy conditions will be retained unless demonstrated through robust evidence that there is no current or possible renewed need for the foreseeable future, that appropriate marketing has been undertaken and that it cannot meet an existing local housing need.

**Supporting Text**

**11.39** The rural economy plays an important role in the District, in providing employment and in managing the rural landscape. The Council encourages viable agricultural, forestry and other land based rural businesses that support the delivery of a wide range of public benefits and sees them as essential to the maintenance of a thriving rural economy.

**11.40** Many people work in rural areas in offices, workshops, garages and garden centres but it is unlikely that they will have an essential need to live permanently at or near their place of work. Being employed in a rural location is not sufficient to qualify as a rural worker with an essential housing need, neither is the need to accommodate seasonal workers.

**11.41** The Council's preference is for rural workers' accommodation to be located in nearby towns or villages or in existing properties near to their place of work, which would avoid the need for new dwellings in the countryside. The Council accepts however, that there may be cases where the nature and demands of the worker's role require them to live at or very close to the work place. Such instances will be judged on the needs of the workplace and not the personal preferences of the specific individuals.

**11.42** Where new businesses are being set up, there is a need for the financial viability of the business to be demonstrated before a permanent dwelling is considered. A period of three years allows time for a business to establish and justify the development of a permanent dwelling to meet an essential need. A temporary dwelling to meet an essential need can be sought in this initial period which will usually be restricted via a condition.

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**11.43** The District is known for its links with the equestrian and horseracing industry, with Newbury Racecourse located on the edge of Newbury. The racehorse breeding and training industry is a particularly important part of the local rural economy, with the Lambourn area a nationally important location. This type of development is covered in policy DM37. The Council wishes to retain and support the expansion of this industry and so through this policy and also in accordance with policy DM37 will support the provision of new residential accommodation in the countryside where it is shown to be essential. Where new stabling or breeding facilities are proposed, together with residential accommodation, financial viability will need to be demonstrated together with supporting evidence to show the new facility has sufficient need to require a worker to be permanently living on the site in the long term. It should be noted that a restricted occupancy condition may be applied.

**11.44** The Council is mindful of the impact that proposed rural workers dwellings can have on the landscape and the potential impacts on biodiversity, particularly where the provision of housing involves the conversion of an existing building. The requirements within policies SP8 and SP11 will therefore apply.

**11.45** Suitable alternative buildings that should be considered before creating a new dwelling unit, are existing vacant residential buildings or buildings suitable for conversion to residential use. Applicants should detail in their planning submission whether it is possible for the retired rural worker/their dependents/their widow or widower to be housed in alternative existing accommodation, thus allowing the existing residence to be used for the incoming rural worker.

**11.46** The creation of new curtilages associated with new dwellings and their boundary treatment can also impact on the rural character of the area. Details will be required of the way the boundaries are to be established.

**11.47** Where an agricultural occupancy condition has been applied this will not be relaxed unless it is clear that there is no longer a continuing need for the accommodation in the local area by the persons employed or last employed in the agricultural sector. Proposals for the removal of existing conditions will need to be supported by robust evidence. To establish the current market interest in a particular property it should be widely marketed, through advertisements in the local press, internet and other publications including at least one agricultural publication, on terms reflecting its occupancy condition. This should normally be for at least 12 months or an appropriate period as agreed with the Council. After this time, if no interest in occupation has been indicated then the accommodation should be made available as an affordable dwelling. Only if it can be robustly demonstrated that such use would be unviable, unsuitable or unnecessary at the location, will release on to the open market be deemed acceptable.



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**Policy DM24****Conversion of Existing Redundant or Disused Buildings in the Countryside to Residential Use**

The conversion of existing redundant or disused buildings in the countryside to residential use will be supported provided that the following criteria are satisfied:

- a. The proposal involves a building that is structurally sound and capable of conversion without substantial rebuilding, extension or alteration;
- b. The applicant can prove the building is genuinely redundant or disused;
- c. Any internal and external changes do not harm the significance of a heritage asset in accordance with policies SP9 and DM11;
- d. The proposal respects and retains the character, fabric and distinctive features of the building and uses matching materials where those materials are an essential part of the character of the building and locality;
- e. The site and location is suitable for residential use and gives a satisfactory level of amenity for occupants;
- f. It has no adverse impact on rural character;
- g. The existing vehicular access is suitable in landscape terms for the use proposed;
- h. The creation of the residential curtilage would not be visually intrusive, have a harmful effect on the rural character of the site, or its setting in the wider landscape; and
- i. The impact on any protected species is assessed and appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures are implemented to ensure any protected species are not adversely affected.

There will be a presumption against permission being granted for replacement building(s) pursuant to a change to a residential use established under this policy.

**Supporting Text**

**11.48** This policy applies to all existing buildings in the countryside that are structurally sound, including for example, traditional farmsteads or buildings, stables, community and educational facilities. In this context, whilst many buildings will be suitable for conversion, it cannot be presumed that simply by being redundant or disused, that any building can be converted to residential use. Not all buildings will be suitable for conversion and or re-use, due to their unsuitable location, poor access arrangements, condition or appearance. Some buildings may also have had conditions applied to restrict their use as part of a planning application and other buildings may have conditions of prior approval which require the removal of the building on cessation of agricultural use. The policy is not intended to encourage the retention of buildings that currently have adverse visual/landscape impact such as large agricultural sheds.

**11.49** There is a difference between a building of sound construction that has until recently been used and a derelict or semi-derelict structure that is not of sound construction, such as a temporary farm building or domestic outbuilding. The policy only allows for the conversion and adaption of existing sound permanent structures not the redevelopment of derelict buildings, which would be classed as new residential development in the countryside and assessed against policy DM1.

**11.50** The successful conversion of existing buildings in the countryside depends on having a clear understanding of their significance, their setting in the wider landscape and their sensitivity to and capacity for change.

**11.51** Historic farm buildings for instance are found scattered throughout West Berkshire. They provide a strong sense of time-depth and contribute positively to the distinctive character of the District and so it is essential that both their integrity and settings are conserved and enhanced. They also represent a historical investment in materials and energy that can be sustained through conversion and careful re-use.

**11.52** In determining whether a building is genuinely redundant or disused, it is important that the original use of the building for that purpose no longer exists. The nature of the use, when it ceased and the reason why it ceased will be carefully considered by the Council. An empty or part empty, building is not an unequivocal sign of redundancy, a bigger picture has to be considered. It will be necessary for applications to clearly demonstrate for how long and to what extent the building has been used, why the building is no longer needed, how long it has been unused and that significant efforts to re-use it have both tried and failed. The Council will take account of all the circumstances and judge, whether taken together, they indicate the building is no longer needed or useful.

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**11.53** If the building is performing an essential function and the conversion will lead to a request that a replacement building be provided elsewhere, now or within the foreseeable future, then the conversion will not be covered by this policy. Planning permission will be refused for any subsequent planning application for a replacement building to be provided elsewhere, unless it can be clearly shown that it performs a different function to that of the use lost under this policy.

**11.54** Domestic outbuildings in gardens, built for specific uses ancillary or incidental to existing residences, are rarely likely to become permanently redundant and their conversion will seldom lead to an enhancement of the setting of the main dwelling.

**11.55** In order to determine whether a building is of permanent and substantial construction and suitable for and capable of conversion the Council will expect proposals to be accompanied by the following information:

- i. a structural survey demonstrating the structural integrity of the building and confirming that the structure is capable of conversion without substantial rebuilding or creation of new structural elements;
- ii. the extent of alterations that will be made to the fabric of the building, including the number and size of new openings that will need to be created and how services and insulation will be incorporated.

**11.56** Though redundant or disused, where a building makes an important contribution to the local character and appearance of an area, great care will need to be exercised in the design of the conversion. The perceived contribution the building makes to the rural character of the area will need to be retained. Where, for example, a barn stands in an open field within the rural landscape, the conversion to residential use can raise the issue of curtilage. The existing field boundaries should not necessarily be taken as the curtilage for a proposed residential use. There is a need to define a curtilage appropriate to the building as the change of use from agricultural use to domestic garden has a profound visual impact on the immediate surroundings and potentially on the wider landscape, depending on the location of the site. The building should be capable of being converted and accommodated into the existing landscape, without significant adverse effects on the rural character of the area, including light pollution and the character of rural highways. It is expected that any building works will be relatively minor and will involve the use of matching materials.

**11.57** There are Permitted Development (PD) Rights allowing the conversion of some buildings to residential use from other uses including shops and agricultural use. The latest position should be checked prior to seeking planning permission. Where Permitted Development Rights are being used, generally the Prior Notification procedure has to be followed. This essentially means applicants notifying the Council of their intention to change the use of the building and affording the Council the opportunity to request further detail of the scheme. It is advisable to seek professional advice or to contact the Council to discuss relevant requirements prior to commencing any development on site.

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**Policy DM25****Replacement of Existing Dwellings in the Countryside**

The replacement of an existing dwelling of permanent construction in the countryside with another dwelling will be supported providing that the following criteria are satisfied:

- a. The existing dwelling is not subject to a condition limiting the period of use as a dwelling;
- b. The replacement dwelling is located on the footprint of the existing building unless alternative siting has a positive benefit on the impact on the countryside or other environmental benefits can be demonstrated;
- c. The replacement dwelling is proportionate in size and scale to the existing dwelling, uses appropriate materials and sustainable technologies in accordance with policy SP7, and does not have an adverse impact on:
  - d. The character and local distinctiveness of the rural area;
  - e. Individual heritage assets and their settings;
  - f. Its setting within the wider landscape;
  - g. There is no extension of the existing curtilage, unless it is necessary to provide additional parking or amenity space to be consistent with dwellings in the immediate vicinity;
  - h. Where the existing dwelling forms part of an agricultural or other land based rural business and is an essential part of that business, the replacement dwelling must continue to perform the same function. An occupancy condition may be applied; and
  - i. The impact on any protected species is assessed and appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures are implemented to ensure any protected species are not adversely affected.

**Supporting Text**

**11.58** Only proposals involving the replacement of existing permanent dwellings will be supported under policy DM26. The policy should not be used to establish a permanent residential use on a site where a property is derelict.

**11.59** There is evidence within the National Landscape of small rural properties being purchased, then demolished and replaced with substantial new houses that are alien to the local context and the special qualities and natural beauty of the landscape of the National Landscape. Such development neither enhances nor conserves the character of the National Landscape and will be refused.

**11.60** If a replacement dwelling is disproportionate to the existing dwelling it will not be accepted. The key components of proportionality are the scale, massing (volume), height, width, length, footprint (floorspace) of a development, and position within the plot (layout) and general context of the locality. Similarly to the consideration of extensions to existing dwellings in the countryside; there are no rules that can be applied as to the acceptable size of a replacement dwelling. Any size increase has to be considered on the basis of the impact of a particular property in a particular location.

**11.61** The replacement of dwellings will be assessed on the basis of the impact of the new development relative to the existing property on the character and local distinctiveness of the rural area. This will include consideration of any new access arrangements. For a dwelling in the National Landscape and its setting, the prime consideration will be its impact on the special qualities and natural beauty of the landscape in accordance with policy SP2.

**11.62** A replacement dwelling creates an opportunity to take positive action on climate change. Replacement dwellings which maximise the opportunities to enhance resilience to climate change in accordance with policies SP5 and SP7 are encouraged.

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**Policy DM26****Extension of Residential Curtilages in the Countryside**

Extensions to existing residential curtilages in the countryside will only be supported where it can be shown that there is no adverse impact on the character and local distinctiveness of the rural area, the setting of the property within the wider landscape or encroachment on the rural area, public rights of way and on the amenity of local residents. Proposals will be supported where:

- a. It is required to provide parking in the interests of highway safety in accordance with policy DM44; and/or
- b. To realign a garden boundary or extend a garden to achieve a similar level of provision to other dwellings in the immediate area.

Applications should be accompanied by details which satisfactorily demonstrate the following:

- i. The boundary treatment of the extended curtilage is appropriate for the site and its rural surroundings;
- ii. All new hard surfacing, ground moulding or landscaping are in character with the surrounding area; and
- iii. The forming of any new entrances or gateways, complete with visibility splays, do not result in the significant loss of landscape features or harm the character of the rural highway. The integrity of banks, hedges, walls and roadside trees should be maintained.

**Supporting Text**

**11.63** This policy will apply to any land that is proposed to be incorporated into ancillary residential use in the countryside. It is important to note that a curtilage is not a land use but is rather a description of land which is attached to a building. When determining what constitutes a residential curtilage the Council will consider the physical layout; ownership, both past and present; and its use or function, again both past and present.

**11.64** There are many reasons why an individual might wish to extend the curtilage of their property in the countryside. It could be to provide a larger garden, or provide off-street parking or garaging. Such changes even though minor in nature are not without potentially harmful effects. The inclusion of existing non-residential land used for agriculture, woodland or other rural uses can have a considerable visual impact on the local character of a rural area and the wider landscape, due to the urbanising effect of the change in use. Land previously used for agriculture or equestrian purposes has a different character to that of residential gardens, parking areas and garage spaces. The NPPF also recognises the importance of economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land.

The way the boundaries are treated has an important impact. The protection of existing hedgerows contributes greatly to conserving and enhancing the local character of an area. This character can easily be lost if boundary hedgerows are removed. The erection of two metre high timber fences may be appropriate in some urban settings but, in a rural environment where many boundaries are marked out by simple post and rail fences or native hedgerows, they can stand out in the landscape and would not be considered acceptable when submitted as part of a planning application. Development proposals for the removal of existing hedgerows will be considered in accordance with policy DM16.



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**Policy DM27****Sub-division of Existing Dwellings in the Countryside**

The sub-division of an existing dwelling of permanent construction in the countryside into two or more residential units will be supported providing that the following criteria are satisfied:

- a. It is not subject to a condition restricting its use to ancillary accommodation;
- b. It is appropriate to the site, locality and surrounding area in terms of land use, design, size and scale;
- c. It would not require significant extensions, including alterations and outbuildings, which would have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the original building or surrounding area;
- d. Any internal or external changes do not harm the significance of a heritage asset or its setting in accordance with policy SP9;
- e. The internal accommodation is adequate in terms of size and layout relative to the intensity of occupation envisaged and complies with residential space standards;
- f. It does not have an adverse impact on any neighbouring residential or other uses, including in terms of privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight and it should not have an overbearing effect in accordance with policy DM30;
- g. Following sub-division, sufficient space is available for vehicular access, car parking, amenity space and facilities for refuse storage on-site in a way that does not detract from the character and appearance of the site and the area;
- h. It does not involve the inappropriate sub-division of existing curtilages to a size below that prevailing in the area, taking account of the need to retain and enhance mature landscapes; and
- i. It does not have an adverse impact on the character and local distinctiveness of the rural area and its setting within the wider landscape.

Particular regard will also be had to the accessibility of the new development based around the site's location and its relationship to the settlement hierarchy set out in policy SP3, including its accessibility to shops, services and facilities.

**Supporting Text**

**11.65** The sub-division of existing residential properties can improve sustainability by helping re-balance the housing stock, particularly in the countryside where there can be a shortage of smaller dwellings. Overall, whilst there is general policy of restraint in the countryside, it is recognised that sub-divisions can enable rural communities to be adaptable and more resilient to changing economic and demographic needs. In rural areas there are fewer properties available and this can make it difficult for residents to find suitable property in their local area to accommodate their changing needs. For example if they wish to downsize, and/or accommodate the needs of other family members, sub-division is an option that avoids them having to leave the local community and its social support network.

**11.66** For the purposes of applying the policy it cannot be presumed that all dwellings will be suitable for sub-division. It is important that all dwellings created through the sub-division of an existing dwelling should provide adequate accommodation, and not compromise living standards especially where smaller units are provided. Successful sub-divisions depend on having a clear understanding of the capacity of the dwelling for change and the standard of accommodation that can be created. In this context, residential annexes permitted under policy DM28 are not regarded as suitable for sub-division as independent planning units.

**11.67** It is also important that changes are capable of being accommodated into the existing landscape, without undermining or having an adverse impact on the rural character of the area, either individually or cumulatively. This will include consideration of any new access arrangements. New separate gardens with the potential for the introduction of domestic paraphernalia can also have a considerable visual impact on the local character of a rural area. In considering proposals in or within the setting of the National Landscape particular regard will be had to the impact on its special qualities and natural beauty.

**11.68** When considering accessible locations, significant intensification of residential uses through the creation of a large number of dwelling units, either individually or cumulatively, will be avoided within areas which lack sufficient supporting infrastructure, facilities or services or where opportunities to access them by public transport, cycling and walking are limited.

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**Policy DM28****Residential Extensions**

The principle of the extension of existing permanent dwellings will be supported. In the National Landscape and its setting particular regard will be given to the impact of proposals on the special qualities and natural beauty of the landscape in accordance with policy SP2.

An extension, including alterations or erection of an outbuilding will be permitted where the proposal complies with the following criteria:

- a. The scale of the enlargement or outbuilding is clearly subservient to the original dwelling;
- b. It is of a high quality design, in accordance with policy SP7, which conserves and enhances the character and local distinctiveness of the surrounding area in accordance with policy SP8;
- c. It does not harm the setting of the existing dwelling and the space occupied within the plot boundary;
- d. It does not harm the historic and/or architectural interest of the existing dwelling;
- e. The use of materials is appropriate within the local architectural context;
- f. It is not overbearing or of a form which would be detrimental to the amenity of nearby residents by virtue of loss of outlook, daylight, sunlight and / or privacy in accordance with policy DM30;
- g. The windows are appropriate in terms of number, architectural style and type, position, size and proportion, extent of opening and need for obscure glazing;
- h. Following construction of the extension, sufficient space is available for on-site vehicular parking in accordance with policy DM44 in a way that does not detract from the character and appearance of the area;
- i. It enables for the retention and provision of high quality useable private amenity space in accordance with policy DM30;
- j. It would not result in adverse impacts on trees (including their roots and canopy spread) on and off site, in accordance with policy DM15. Trees should be retained where possible; and
- k. The proposal conserves and enhances biodiversity, in accordance with policy SP11.

Proposals for residential annexes will also need to be in accordance with policy DM29.

**Supporting text**

**11.69** The policy relates to the extension of existing permanent dwellings, including alteration and the erection of outbuildings. It applies to residential extensions both inside and outside of settlement boundaries. House extensions are one of the most common forms of development in the District, whether they are permitted development or require planning permission. The purpose of the policy is to avoid the over-extension of existing dwellings and the adverse impact that this has on the character and appearance of both the site and its wider surroundings, whether it is part of an existing settlement or in the countryside. All proposals will be therefore be considered in accordance with the context of the design principles set out in policy SP7.

**11.70** Overall, there is a general policy of restraint in the countryside but it is recognised that there are many existing dwellings in the rural area and that over time, proposals will come forward for extensions to these, including the erection of outbuildings within their curtilage. The Council may permit these changes where it does not undermine the general policy of restraint or have an adverse impact on the rural character of the countryside.

**11.71** In the rural area, the enlargement of a small rural dwelling to become a substantial house can have a significant impact, whether that is through the cumulative impact of several small extensions or one large one. An assessment will be needed of the impact of the development, individually and/or cumulatively, on the local architectural and visual context, and the capacity of the wider landscape to accommodate such development, especially within the National Landscape and its setting. The enlarged dwelling should be capable of being accommodated into the existing landscape, without undermining or having an adverse impact on the rural character of the area. This will include consideration of the impact of any new proposed access arrangements.

In all development proposals, the relationship with the existing dwelling is key. The design of any development should be sympathetic to the character of the existing dwelling, the area adjacent to the site and its wider setting. Proposed changes, either individually or cumulatively should not overwhelm or dominate the character and appearance of

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the original dwelling or be excessive in size. They should appear as a subservient addition in both proportion and style. Consideration will be given to the scale, height, width, length, massing (volume) and footprint (floorspace) of an extension, materials, position within the plot and general context of the locality.

**11.72** It is acknowledged that the original character of a house can be lost if the property is extended in an unsympathetic way through the addition of numerous extensions. In some circumstances, it may be more appropriate to provide one new extension as a replacement for several existing extensions, especially where these are in poor condition or do not reflect the original character of the building.

**11.73** Regard will be given to previous extensions, including annexes and existing outbuildings on the site, either allowed through Permitted Development Rights or through planning approvals. All applications will need to consider the impact of the cumulative extensions on the original dwelling as it was built or as it was on 1 July 1948. In applying the policy the Council will have regard as to what it sees as any attempt to circumvent the planning process by fragmenting a potentially large extension into a series of smaller extensions submitted over a relatively short period of time.

**11.74** There are no 'rules' that can be applied to an acceptable size of an extension as each application has to be considered on the basis of the impacts on the particular property in that location.

**11.75** Side extensions should not unbalance the appearance of the main dwelling and of surrounding dwellings (e.g. when in a pair of semi-detached properties, or at the end of a terrace). It is therefore recommended that a side extension in particular should be set back from the front of the dwelling and set down from the roof. Front extensions should not dominate the frontage of the dwelling. Factors such as the prominence in the street scene, relationship with neighbouring properties, depth of front gardens and landscaping will be considered when assessing such schemes. Whilst rear extensions may not have such an impact on the surrounding area, they should still follow any established pattern of development and ensure they are subservient, particularly in rural locations.

**11.76** Extensions should be constructed in materials that harmonise with the character of the dwelling being extended. Materials should be chosen to complement the character and appearance of the existing built form and surrounding area. Materials that will appear alien in their surroundings or at odds with surrounding built form will not be accepted.

**11.77** Architectural detailing is important. In most cases an extension will be more sympathetic to the original building if similar detailing is used. Replication of the head and cill details to windows and doors can be an effective way of integrating the old with the new. Similarly roof details on the verge, eaves and ridge of the roof can be detailed in the same way as the original building and achieve a sense of continuity. The bonding of the brickwork and matching of the mortar type and joints are also important, so that the new brickwork blends with the old. There may be circumstances, however, where it may be appropriate for modern additions to differentiate between the 'old' and the 'new', particularly for listed buildings. In such cases, particular care will need to be taken to ensure the extension would not dominate the original building and that it would make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness through high standards of design.

**11.78** When assessing proposals for development the Council will take account of the potential impact on the living conditions of any neighbouring occupiers and on any other adjacent uses in accordance with policy DM30 Residential Amenity. Care will be exercised to ensure that a proposed extension will not give rise to increased over-looking, loss of daylight and sunlight, be of an overbearing nature or have a serious adverse impact on habitable rooms of adjacent or adjoining properties. For example, a two-storey extension sited to the rear of a terraced or semi-detached property requires careful design to ensure that the amenities of the neighbours are not seriously affected.

**11.79** Extensions that overshadow a neighbour's property resulting in an unacceptable loss of light will not be accepted. The Building Research Establishment (BRE) Guide "Site Layout Planning for Daylight & Sunlight. A Guide to Good Practice (2022) (or any further update) is a useful guide in the assessment of this. The orientation of the host dwelling and neighbouring dwellings (in terms of how the sun tracks throughout the day) and positioning of windows in neighbouring dwellings are important factors in assessing the scale of impact on neighbouring properties. Leaving space between properties may assist in avoiding loss of light, and reducing loss of outlook.

**11.80** Development which results in an oppressive outlook (e.g. a large blank wall) and an overbearing impact to neighbouring dwellings will not be accepted. An overbearing development can be one where it results in an undue sense of enclosure.

**11.81** Window design and position needs to be considered carefully in order to maintain and protect existing privacy levels with neighbours. Detailed plans should be submitted with development proposals in order for a full and accurate assessment to be made. Where possible windows should replace like for like and be of a similar design, style and

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shape to those existing or positioned at high level or with obscure glazing in order to prevent significant additional overlooking. When designing an extension it is important to consider the size, style and proportion of the windows, and seek to complement the existing style of the dwelling. Dormer windows in particular can have a dominating impact and should be well proportioned within the roofscape. Roof lights are preferable as they result in less intrusion in the roofscape, and may also result in less overlooking to neighbouring properties.

**11.82** Household extensions should ensure that adequate parking remains commensurate with the number of bedrooms, in line with policy DM44. Should the parking area be affected by an extension manoeuvring space should be maintained, or provided, where the access is on to a main road.

**11.83** Consideration also needs to be given to the location of existing trees and hedges affected by the proposed development. They can be important visual elements, help to soften the impact of development, add value to the character of the area, and have an inherent biodiversity value. They are also useful natural tools in carbon capture. The policy therefore makes clear that trees should be retained where possible.

**11.84** Householders are encouraged and expected to consider measures to conserve and enhance biodiversity in both the design of their proposals and implementation of biodiversity measures. This could be through the retention and planting of trees, bat boxes, bird boxes, space for hedgehogs to move under fences, bee friendly planting, etc. in accordance with policy SP11.

**11.85** The policy makes clear that outbuildings should be designed and sited so as not to dominate the main dwelling and not have an adverse impact on the street scene. Where possible they should be sited to the rear or side of the main dwelling where the visual impact is likely to be lower. Keeping the height of the eaves and roof pitch low, and keeping the overall size limited are methods of ensuring this. Outbuildings can sometimes contain ancillary accommodation either in a room above parking space(s), accessed via steps, or within the ground floor. Dormer windows may be proposed. Such buildings may not be considered subservient, though this depends on the size and style of the outbuilding in relation to the host dwelling, the outbuilding's location within the site, any building it replaces, and the character of the locality. Proposals for residential annexes will also need to comply with policy DM29.

**11.86** Single or double detached garages of appropriate dimensions and design may be permitted if they are not intrusive upon the local area, remain subordinate to and do not detract from the character and appearance of the main dwelling.

**11.87** For the purposes of applying this policy, the use of outbuildings to support home working and home-based businesses will generally be supported where this does not involve a change of use of the main dwelling or have an adverse impact on the residential amenities of adjoining residents or the distinctive local character of the area.

**11.88** It is expected that extensions, including outbuildings, will remain ancillary and/or incidental to the residential use of the host dwelling. Where necessary, planning conditions, or planning obligations, will be used to control the permitted use.

**11.89** There are extensive Permitted Development Rights enabling the enlargement or alteration of a house and erection of outbuildings without requiring a formal planning application. These rights come with standard conditions and both the rights and conditions may be changed through government legislation. It is essential to establish what rights currently exist in the particular location. Rights may be removed or restricted by the Council in some exceptional circumstances and the presence of such a restriction must be checked prior to commencing any development thought to be permitted. Proposals which are permitted development subject to prior approval (e.g. larger extensions) will be assessed using criterion d of this policy, as well as policy DM30, in the event where neighbouring residents raise objections.



## Policy DM29

### Residential Annexes

Proposals for residential annexes will be supported where the following criteria are satisfied:

- i. It is in accordance with policy DM28;
- ii. It has either a clear physical and/or functional link to the main dwelling;
- iii. If it is detached, it has a close spatial relationship with the main dwelling with satisfactory shared access, vehicular parking, utilities and garden space; and
- iv. It is designed so that it can continue to be used as an ancillary and subordinate part to the main dwelling without creating an independent and/or separate planning unit at any time.

Where proposals are considered acceptable, a condition will be applied to restrict occupation of the annexe to a person dependent upon an occupant of the main dwelling. Permitted development rights may also be removed and/or a legal agreement may be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

### Supporting Text

**11.90** The creation of an annexe to an existing dwelling, whether the main dwelling is located inside, or outside settlement boundaries can often create a useful facility for the support and care of family members. Although some types of residential annexe benefit from permitted development rights and so do not require planning permission, planning law in this area is complicated. Applicants are therefore advised to contact the Council at an early stage so that advice can be given on the need for planning permission.

**11.91** Where permission is required, a residential annexe should be designed to ensure the dwelling curtilage as a whole provides genuinely flexible subordinate ancillary accommodation that can be adapted and re-adapted to meet the changing needs of family circumstances over time. This should include the option of absorbing the annexe back into the main dwelling accommodation if necessary, by the same or future occupiers. To meet these requirements it is essential that the annexe and main dwelling are directly connected physically and/or functionally. The annexe must therefore be in the same ownership as the main dwelling and share utility services, access, vehicular parking and private amenity space.

**11.92** An annexe should usually be incorporated within or physically attached to the main dwelling and be of a comparatively modest size. It should be linked internally to the main dwelling, but may have a separate entrance.

**11.93** Where an extension to provide an annexe physically attached to the main dwelling is not practical and a detached annexe is proposed, consideration will also be given to the size of the detached annexe, together with its spatial relationship and sub-ordination to the main dwelling. Unduly large or detached annexes can prove an economic and practical liability when vacated or when the property changes ownership and this can lead to pressure for the annexe to be severed and let separately from the main dwelling. This can create substandard accommodation with inadequate standards of access, amenity and space, which is unacceptable in planning terms.

**11.94** Where the Council approves annexe accommodation, a condition will normally be attached to a planning permission to restrict its use to ancillary accommodation. Where an annexe would comprise self-contained living accommodation which would otherwise conflict with the development plan, the Council will require the applicant to enter into a Section 106 Agreement under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, to prevent the severance of the annexe from the main dwelling, and/or limiting the occupation to a person dependent upon an occupant of the main dwelling such as dependent relative(s) or full-time carer(s). This will prevent the sub-letting of either property and ensure that such accommodation is required to meet a genuine family need.

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**Policy DM30****Residential Amenity**

All development will be required to provide and/or maintain a high standard of amenity for existing and future users of land and buildings.

When considering the impact on the living conditions of existing and proposed residential dwellings, development proposals will be supported where there is no unacceptable harm in terms of the following criteria:

- a. Any significant loss of daylight and/or sunlight to land and buildings;
- b. Any significant overlooking of land and buildings that results in a harmful loss of privacy;
- c. Development resulting in an undue sense of enclosure, overbearing impact, or a harmful loss of outlook; and
- d. Noise, dust, fumes and odours.

In addition, all new residential development will be expected to include the provision of the following:

- i. Functional amenity space of a quality and size to meet the needs of the occupants;
- ii. Internal accommodation of an adequate size and layout relative to the intensity of occupation envisaged;
- iii. Natural light in all habitable rooms of the proposed development;
- iv. A garden size which is at least a minimum of 10.5 metres in depth, where possible; and
- v. A minimum distance of 21 metres between directly facing windows, serving habitable rooms.

**Supporting text**

**11.95** The NPPF highlights that high-quality design and a good standard of amenity should be sought in all new development. For clarity, this policy applies to all residential development (including house extensions), and shall be applied to determine the impacts of all new development upon residential amenity.

**11.96** New development must demonstrate high quality and sustainable design that respects and enhances the character and appearance of the area and makes a positive contribution to the quality of life in West Berkshire. Good design relates not only to the appearance of a development, but the way in which it functions and impacts the immediate and wider locality.

**11.97** Neighbouring amenity and privacy are important aspects of development. Proposals should seek to maintain, and where practicable, improve the existing relationship with neighbouring occupiers. This policy sets out the requirements development should achieve in order to provide a good quality of life both for occupants and maintains good neighbouring amenity.

**11.98** National policy also recognises that local planning authorities should address barriers to improving health and wellbeing through a high standard of housing design. All new and extended homes should benefit from private outdoor amenity space solely for the use of the occupants of a sufficient size and quality to support physical and mental health and wellbeing. Development It should be designed to ensure there is no undue loss of privacy or overlooking of adjoining and neighbouring properties.

**11.99** As a guide, outdoor amenity space for a one and two bedroom house should be at least 70 square metres. For houses of three bedrooms and above at least 100 square metres of outdoor amenity space should be provided. This is applicable for new dwellings, houses as extended/altered, and for host dwellings, when considering schemes for subdivision.

**11.100** For flats, there may be a variety of approaches to providing outdoor amenity space for flats which will vary according to the location and character of the proposed development. As a guide, for 1 or 2 bedroom flats at least 25 square metres of communal open space should be provided per unit. For three or more bedroom flats at least 40 square metres of communal open space should be provided per unit. Additionally, balconies could compensate for limited garden space if they provide high quality space, and the space offered would be taken into consideration when looking at the overall amenity space proposed for a flatted development.

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**11.101** In terms of the functionality of all garden spaces, external amenity space should be of a sufficient size to accommodate domestic features such as a storage shed (including a cycle store where no garage provision is possible), space to facilitate the drying of clothes (rotary or washing line), table and chairs suitable for the size of the dwelling, an area for children to play in and circulation space. External private amenity or communal space does not include car parking or turning areas.

**11.102** National space standards will be applicable to ensure adequate internal accommodation is provided. This is applicable for new residential units. Natural light should be maintained and provided in all habitable rooms for the benefit of all occupants, and applies to all types of development proposal. This ensures that residents maintain a good quality of life. The amount of existing light into habitable rooms and the proposal's impact on this will be taken into account, in the event where the development proposal affects an existing property/building. The Council wishes to ensure that windows are provided for habitable rooms, particularly for conversions.

**11.103** The Council expects that occupiers will be able to enjoy a reasonable degree of amenity and privacy in their gardens by maintaining reasonable relationship with neighbouring properties. A guideline depth of at least 10.5m is considered appropriate to preserve the amenity and privacy of residents. This should be measured from the rear wall of the house to the opposite boundary.

**11.104** Development should not cause material harm to neighbours privacy and outlook. Windows that directly overlook a nearby neighbouring dwelling should be avoided and a minimum 21m distance achieved between direct facing windows. There may be a higher expectation of privacy in areas with large, mature gardens, or in areas in rural fringe locations. Such areas may seek to achieve greater levels of distance. There may also be circumstances on individual sites which may enable dwellings to be closer without a detrimental effect on privacy. Examples include town centre locations; dwellings across a highway; where the existing distance is less than 21 metres and the proposed development does not lessen the distance between properties. The site specific circumstances affecting each proposal will therefore need to be taken into account when applying the policy. The impacts on residential dwellings from all types of development will be considered.

**11.105** Window design and position shall need to be considered carefully in order to maintain and protect existing privacy levels with neighbours. Detailed plans should be submitted with any scheme in order for a full and accurate assessment to be made. Where possible windows should replace like for like and be of a similar design, style and shape to those existing or positioned at high level or with obscure glazing in order to prevent significant additional overlooking where possible.

**11.106** All new development which includes Juliet and standard balconies should aim to reduce and remove any potential impact caused to by over-looking and a loss of privacy between neighbours. Design would need to consider the position of the works on development, the depth and any privacy screening that would aid maintaining existing privacy levels between neighbours where possible. The installation of further new windows, Juliet balconies and balconies may be controlled and secured via planning condition in the interests of neighbouring amenity.

**11.107** In consideration of daylight, sunlight and overshadowing the orientation of the building/extension and positioning of windows in host and neighbouring buildings should be taken into account. Schemes should take into account the 'BRE Site Layout planning for daylight and sunlight, a guide to good practice' (2011) (or any further update). The development proposal should be designed as to avoid a significant loss of light to habitable rooms of neighbouring properties which could detrimentally impact on those occupier's quality of life. Should the development proposal lead to an unacceptable loss of light the proposal would not be supported.

**11.108** Noise, dust, fumes and odour are important environmental issues that must be taken into account when planning development and determining impact upon all types of neighbouring property. This includes the occupants of the proposed development. Careful design may aid in alleviating any conflicting uses, and the use of planning conditions will aid in protecting neighbour amenity. This will include (but not limited to) hours of operation, outlining construction hours, methods of suppressing dust from development sites, and protection from noise receptors (e.g. main roads, railways, commercial operations, etc.). A noise assessment may be required, to accompany a planning application, which would then aid in guiding the assessment of schemes and use of planning conditions.

**11.109** This policy should be read in conjunction with the Quality Design Supplementary Planning Document (or any further updates).

## 12 Development Management Policies: Fostering economic growth and supporting local communities

### Policy DM31

#### Designated Employment Areas

Designated Employment Areas (DEA), as defined on the Policies Map and listed in Appendix 4, are specific locations designated for business uses (office, industry, storage and distribution). These areas are safeguarded for such uses and for the role they play in meeting the future economic needs of the District.

The redevelopment and regeneration of land within DEAs to provide additional business development that meets the needs of the District will be supported.

Proposals for appropriate alternative employment generating uses which support and compliment the primary function of DEAs will be considered favourably, subject to the application of the sequential test if required.

New office proposals located within a DEA will not be required to satisfy the sequential test.

Development which either individually or cumulatively would undermine the integrity or function of the DEA will not be permitted.

### Supporting Text

**12.1** Designated Employment Areas (DEA) are specific locations across the District designated for business uses/development providing a range of sites and locations to promote sustainable economic growth. These areas host a diverse range of businesses from large multi-national companies to small and medium sized enterprises (SME), all of which contribute to a strong and resilient local economy. Such areas contribute significantly to the supply of employment land across the District and provide further opportunities for regeneration and intensification of use. The aim of this policy is therefore to protect and strengthen the function and integrity of these areas.

**12.2** For the purposes of this Plan business uses/development are offices (Egi and Egii), industrial, storage and warehousing and distribution (Egiii/B2/B8), and the term employment land refers to the land on which these uses are located.

**12.3** The Local Plan designates a number of areas for business development, previously known as Protected Employment Areas (PEA), and through this Local Plan Review (LPR) these have been renamed DEA. The Council has reviewed the designated areas, taking the [Employment Land Review](#) (ELR) as the starting point in considering how each area performs including any key issues or opportunities, and any changes in circumstances, in particular where there has been a loss of office space to residential through permitted development rights, or new development adjacent to existing areas. This work also takes in account allocations set out within this Plan and the designation of new DEA.

**12.4** The Council's evidence ([ELR 2020 and 2022](#)) highlights high occupancy rates for industrial uses and high to moderate occupancy for office space and given the balance between supply and demand, the ELR recommends safeguarding all DEAs for business uses/development. It is important to safeguard the District's DEAs for the role they play in providing a supply of employment land to meet the existing and future needs of businesses. Maintaining a supply of employment land is essential to ensure the economic competitiveness of the District and to deliver sustainable economic growth.

**12.5** However, the Council does recognise the need to allow for some diversity of uses within DEA to create the right conditions for businesses to invest, expand and adapt and so the policy does allow for appropriate alternative employment generating uses to locate within DEAs where, subject to the sequential test if required, they are complementary to the existing business use in that location, support the primary function of the DEA, and individually and/or cumulatively would not undermine the integrity and function of the DEA.

**12.6** For the purposes of this policy appropriate alternative employment generating uses are those not classed as business uses within this Plan, but are uses that serve the businesses and employees in these locations and which support the function and operation of DEAs without compromising their integrity. Where such proposals would result



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in the loss of employment land and/or floorspace the applicant will be required to provide justification for the loss, including marketing evidence (minimum six months) to demonstrate that the site is no longer attractive for business uses. Each DEA has its own identity and the differing nature of the existing uses contributes to the individuality and function, and therefore it should be recognised that what is appropriate in one location may not be appropriate in another.

**12.7** The redevelopment and regeneration of DEAs to provide additional business development that meets the needs of the District will be supported to allow businesses to expand, attract inward investment and respond to modern business requirements.

**12.8** Changes in planning legislation in 2013 and in 2020 have reduced the Council's ability to protect the integrity of the District's DEAs as offices can be converted to residential under permitted development rights subject to a prior approval process. In addition, the changes to the Use Classes Order means offices now fall within a new use class, Class E, and changes of use between the different uses within Class E do not constitute development and therefore do not require planning permission. The Council will monitor the DEAs and may consider the use of conditions and/or planning obligations to restrict permitted development rights on new development to ensure the integrity and function of a DEA is not undermined and to maintain the supply of employment land for business uses.

**12.9** The NPPF requires main town centre uses, which includes offices, to satisfy the sequential test. The sequential test ensures such uses are directed to town centres in the first instance, followed by edge of centre then out of centre sites where there are no sequentially preferable suitable or available sites. Given the DEAs are designated for business uses including offices, and in the interest of promoting a supply of office space to meet the District's future requirements, proposals for offices within DEAs will be exempt from the sequential test.

**12.10** This policy applies to all DEA across the District, existing and new. A full list can be found at Appendix 4 and all DEAs are defined on the Policies Map.

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**Policy DM32****Development within AWE**

Development within the Aldermaston and Burghfield Atomic Weapons Establishments (AWE) will be supported where it directly sustains the functioning of each of the AWE sites as Government research and defence establishments.

**Supporting Text**

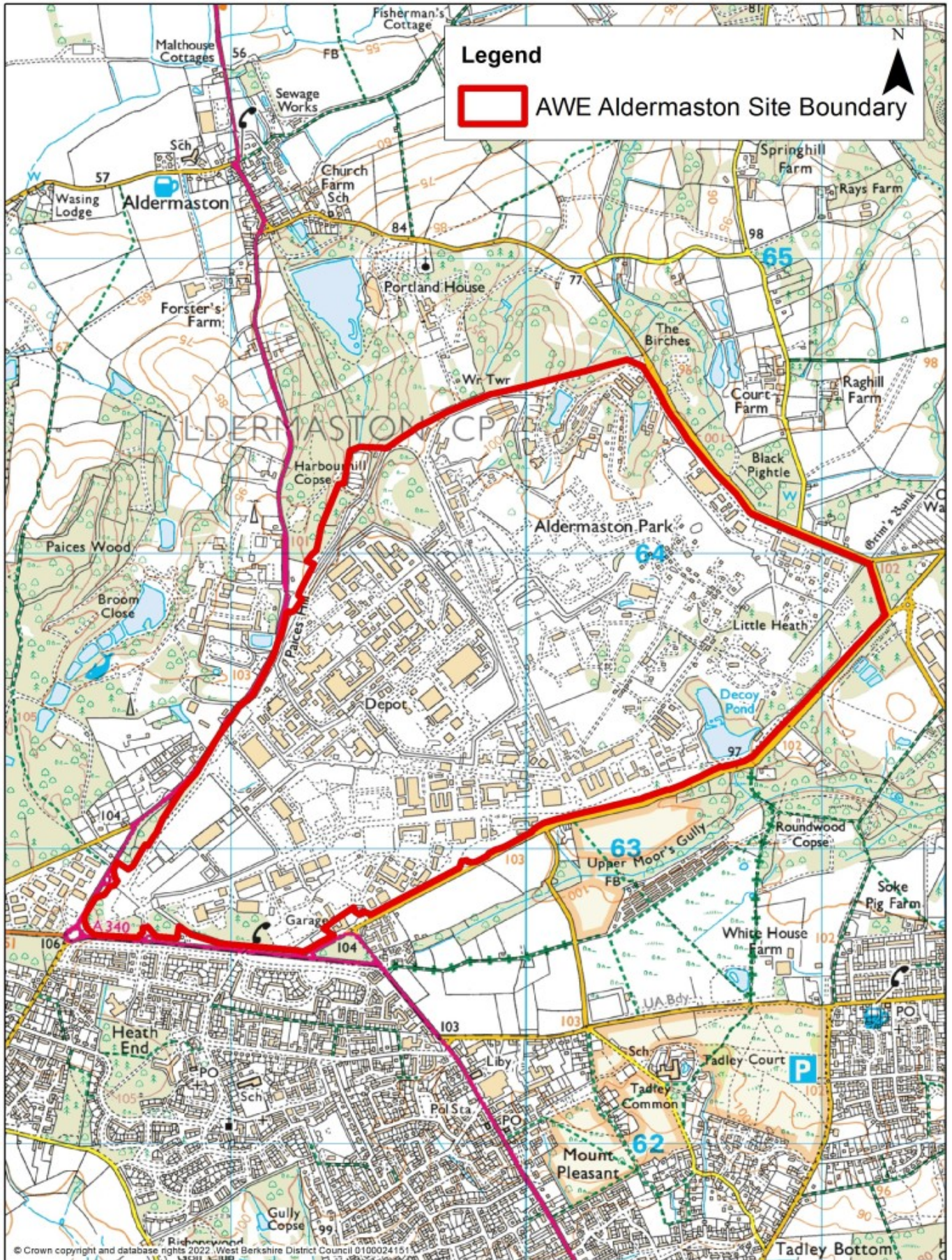
**12.11** The NPPF outlines that planning policies and decisions should recognise and support development required for operational defence and security purposes.

**12.12** The Employment Land Review (ELR) and the [West Berkshire Economic Development Strategy](#) (2020) comment that the AWE sites at Aldermaston and Burghfield are large employers, drawing in employees from local areas and indirectly supporting businesses in nearby business and industrial parks. The uses at the sites relates to defence services, owned by the Secretary of State for Defence, delivering the warhead contribution to the national and international UK nuclear deterrent. The specialist nature of the activity within the sites means that development on the sites are not covered by policies SP17 and DM35, and are not Designated Employment Areas.

**12.13** Development covered under this policy would relate to new building, extensions, redevelopment, conversion and the change of use of buildings, and where planning permission is required the refurbishment of buildings. Uses would cover offices, uses in connection with science, research and development, manufacturing, storage, energy and infrastructure. Planning permissions should also positively consider the temporary use of land needed in connection with site optimisation and phased delivery of development.



## AWE Aldermaston





[illegible]



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**Policy DM33****RAF Welford and Denison Barracks**

Development within the site boundary of RAF Welford and/or Denison Barracks will be supported where it directly sustains the functioning of these defence establishments.

Development in the areas around RAF Welford and/or Denison Barracks will not be supported where it would adversely affect the defence related operation or capability of these sites and/or the safety and wellbeing of those within the relevant statutory safeguarding zones.

**Supporting Text**

**12.14** RAF Welford and Denison Barracks provide important outputs that support national defence activities. The NPPF outlines that planning policies and decisions should recognise and support development required for operational defence and security purposes.

**12.15** National policy also seeks to ensure that operational sites are not affected adversely by the impact of other development proposed in the area and that existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established.

**12.16** RAF Welford is safeguarded due to its capacity as a military explosive storage area and as such it has statutory safeguarding zones to ensure that development and land uses will be compatible with MOD capability. The inner and outer safeguarding zones <sup>(52)</sup> are defined on the Policies Map and within the safeguarded area of RAF Welford the MOD is a statutory consultee under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (safeguarded aerodromes, technical sites and military explosives storage areas) Direction 2022 (DfT/ODPM Circular 01/2003).

**12.17** The MOD will object to development proposals which support people living, working, or congregating within the inner safeguarding zone of RAF Welford. In principle, the MOD does not object to land in the outer safeguarding zone being developed for residential, commercial and/or industrial land use purposes. However, within this zone, where applicable, requirements relating to the siting, design and construction of buildings, or changes to land use may apply.

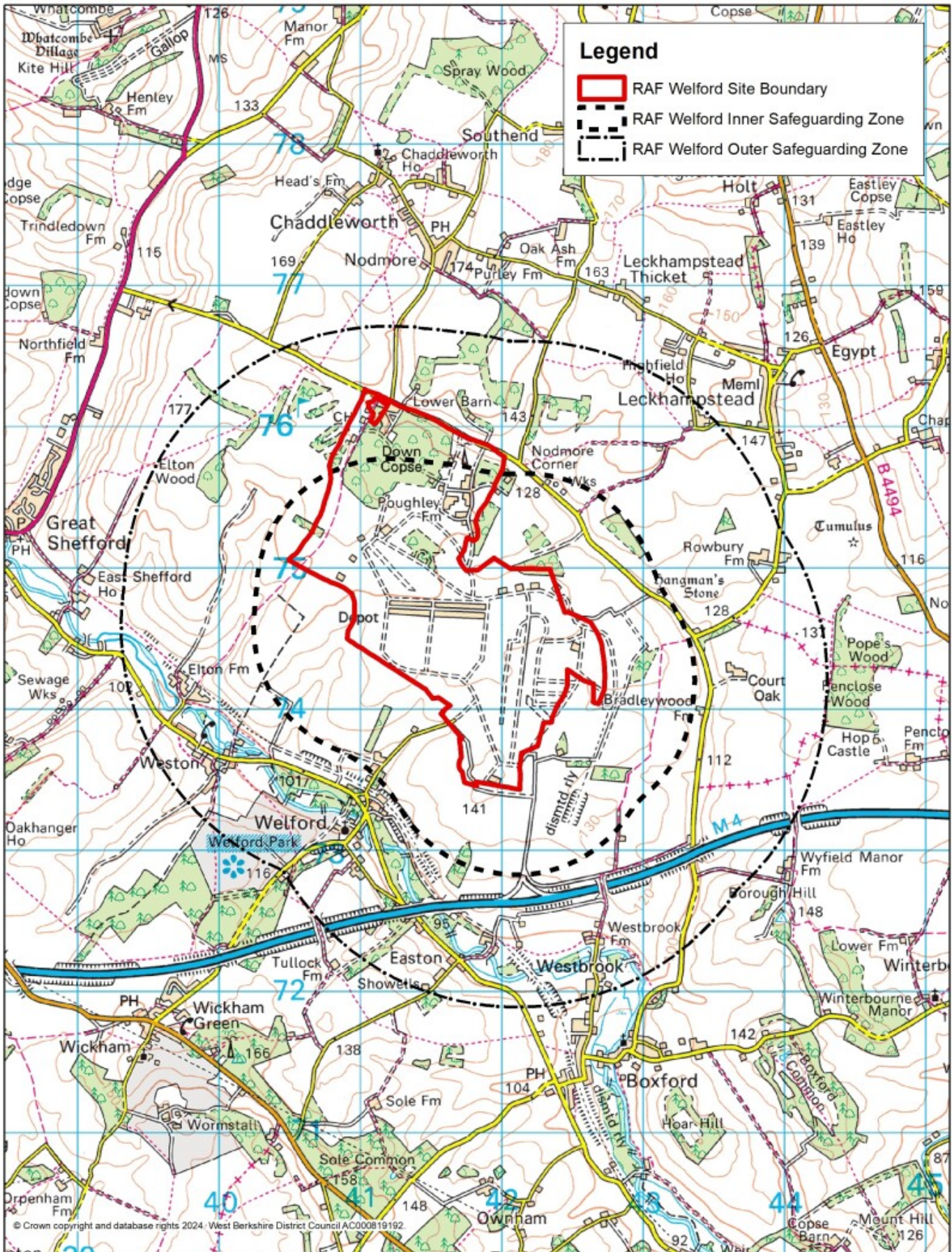
**12.18** Whilst Denison Barracks in Hermitage does not have safeguarding zones around the site, consideration should be given to the impact of development proposals on the operation and capability of the site as a defence establishment and the local planning authority will consult with Denison Barracks and/or MOD as appropriate.

52 The extent of the safeguarding zones shown on the Policies Map could change before the Plan is updated or superseded. Policy DM33 will be applied to the latest version of the RAF Welford safeguarding zones as determined by the MOD



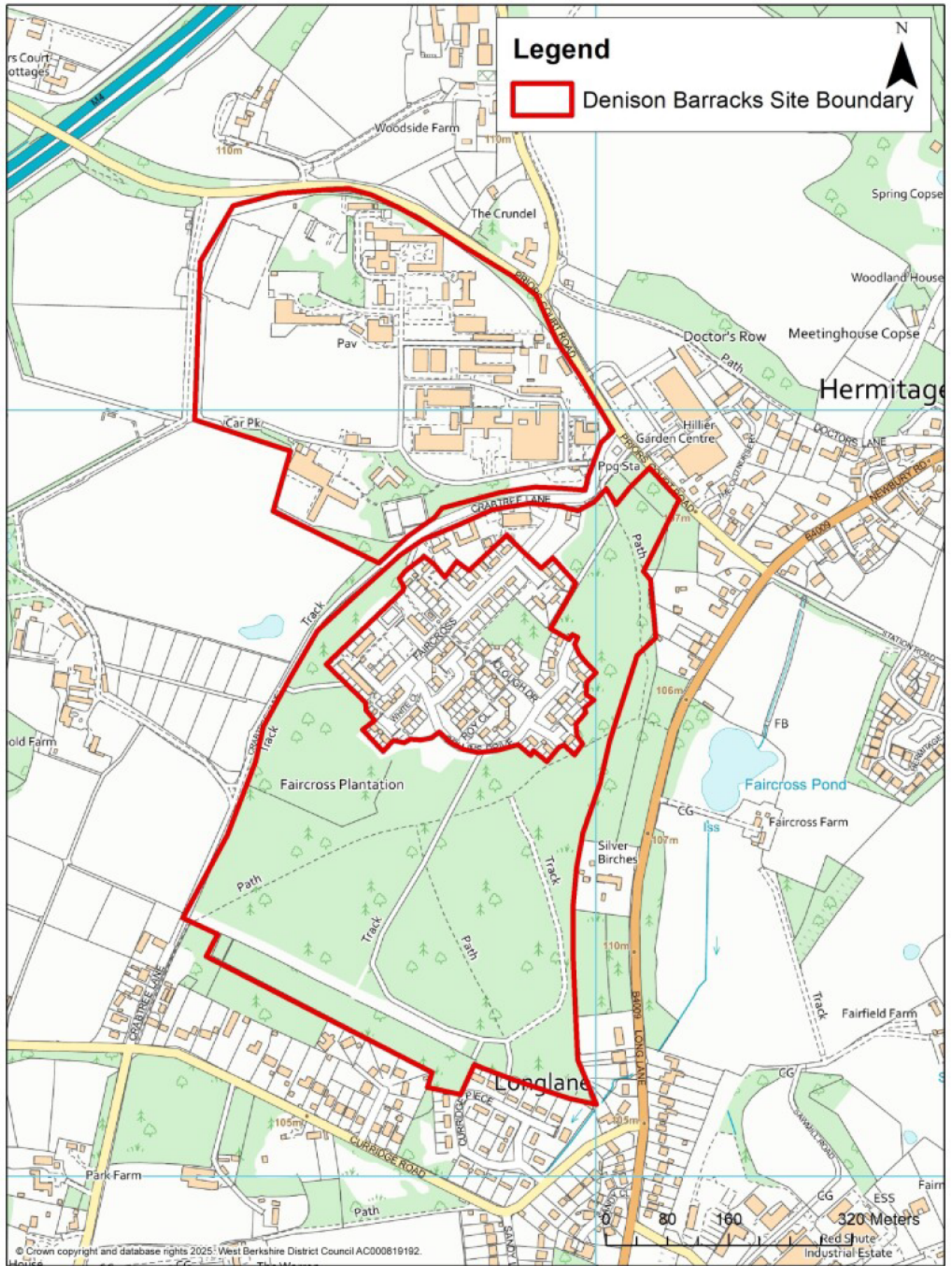
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## RAF Welford





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**Denison Barracks**

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**Policy DM34****Retail Parks**

The Council will seek to safeguard the following areas, defined on the Policies Map as Retail Parks, for retail and leisure uses:

- Pincents Lane Retail Park, Calcot;
- London Road Retail Area (along A4 between Newbury and Thatcham);
- Newbury Retail Park, Newbury.

Proposals within these areas should either individually, or cumulatively with other such proposals, have no significant detrimental impact on the vitality and viability of Newbury town centre or other nearby centres.

**Supporting Text**

**12.19** Through this policy the Council will seek to safeguard and retain retail and leisure provision within the Retail Parks as defined on the Policies Map. The areas designated through this policy are established retail parks, often with a mix of appropriate class E, retail warehousing and leisure uses. These areas include the following locations:

- Pincents Lane Retail Park, Calcot;
- London Road Retail Area (along the A4 between Newbury and Thatcham);
- Newbury Retail Park, Newbury.

**12.20** The Western Berkshire Retail and Commercial Leisure Study 2016 highlights that retail warehousing within the District performs well and in Newbury in particular attracts strong market shares from the western part of the District. The term retail warehousing within the Study refers to retail parks, standalone retail warehouse units and non-food floorspace within foodstores. Given these areas perform well and offer a different type and size of unit than that offered within the town and district centres it is important that such locations are safeguarded for retail and leisure uses to ensure the health and diversity of the local economy. Notwithstanding, the Council's main priority is to ensure vibrant and viable town and district centres (policy SP18), therefore any proposals within these areas would be subject to the sequential test where appropriate and should not have a significant detrimental impact either individually, or cumulatively with other such proposals, on the vitality and viability of Newbury town centre or other nearby centres.



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**Policy DM35****Sustaining a Prosperous Rural Economy**

Development proposals that contribute to sustaining a prosperous rural economy will be encouraged.

To support the rural economy, proposals for economic development in the countryside will only be permitted where they satisfy the following criteria:

- a. The proposals demonstrate that the business can make a positive contribution to the rural economy;
- b. The use/development is suitable for a rural location;
- c. The proposals are compatible with uses in the surrounding area;
- d. Where new buildings are proposed the landowner has not disposed of, or converted, any buildings to a residential use in the previous 3 years which could have met the needs of the development proposed;
- e. Any proposals are of a high quality design, are appropriate in terms of siting scale, form, massing, character and appearance having regard to the surrounding rural area and its setting in the wider rural landscape;
- f. New or replacement buildings are located within or adjoining an existing group of buildings and further expansion into the open countryside is avoided;
- g. It would not generate traffic of a type or amount inappropriate for the rural roads, byways or restricted byways affected by the proposal or require improvements to these roads, byways, or restricted byways which could be detrimental to their character and use by motorised and non-motorised traffic;
- h. It would not have a detrimental effect on the fabric, character and setting of historic buildings or other heritage assets; and
- i. Appropriate proposals which make more efficient use of previously developed land will be encouraged.

Insofar as a planning application is required, proposals resulting in the loss of existing business sites and premises in the countryside, will only be permitted where the applicant can demonstrate that no alternative economic use can be found, and that the proposal does not have a significant negative impact upon the vitality and viability of the local economy of the surrounding rural area.

**Supporting Text**

**12.21** Rural West Berkshire plays an important role within the District's economy and therefore it is essential that the businesses within it and the communities that rely on them are supported through planning policies and decisions. Many rural areas host a large number of small and medium sized enterprises which are vital to providing local job opportunities and a diverse economy and so this policy seeks to foster sustainable economic growth in the countryside without detriment to the environment. Proposals for farm diversification will be considered in accordance with policy DM36 and proposals for equestrian and the horseracing industry in accordance with policy DM37.

**12.22** The NPPF includes a specific section on the rural economy and expects local planning policies and decisions to support the sustainable growth, and expansion businesses in rural areas, through the conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings. The focus of rural policy nationally and locally is on expanding the diversity of the rural economy while recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and this is recognised in the Council's [Economic Development Strategy](#).

**12.23** Appropriate proposals that contribute to strengthening the rural economy will be supported provided that all of the criteria in the policy are met. These are designed to safeguard against functionally, visually or environmentally inappropriate development in the countryside.

**12.24** The [West Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment](#) (2019) outlines that rural areas are more at risk from piecemeal development, and thus it is especially important to consider the impact that developing or redeveloping a site will have on conserving and enhancing local distinctiveness and sense of place. A successful development in the countryside depends on having a clear understanding of the site's significance, its setting in the wider landscape and sensitivity to and capacity for change.

**12.25** New economic development, or proposals to expand existing premises in the countryside will be supported provided they are suited to a rural location, meet the requirements of this policy, and where relevant, other national and local policies on employment locations and protected environments e.g. SP2, SP17, etc. In demonstrating that the business can make a positive contribution to the rural economy supporting evidence will be provided with a planning

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application. Such evidence could include a business plan, whole estate plan or similar. For new businesses in particular, this can aid in illustrating the viability of the proposal. An assessment will be made as to whether planning conditions will be required to limit changes of use which would otherwise be permitted under the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) in order to achieve the objectives of the policy, and to avoid pressure for non-economic uses in locations which may not be suitable (e.g. residential).

**12.26** The overarching spatial strategy for West Berkshire focuses development on previously developed land (PDL). Whilst developers are expected to make the best use of PDL within settlement boundaries, this policy provides some flexibility, to allow for some development on PDL in the countryside to enable the sustainable growth of rural businesses, as long as it meets the wider objectives of the Local Plan. However, all proposals will firstly be considered in a landscape led context because previously developed sites will not always be appropriate in terms of landscape character. Wider development needs and pressures will not be accepted as a reason to develop on any site outside of settlement boundaries.

**12.27** Where re-use of buildings is proposed, re-use for business is the Council's strong preference, in order to safeguard the local economy. Notwithstanding this position, it is acknowledged that for some buildings future economic use is not viable. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate that this is the case, and that any alternative proposal does not have a significant negative impact upon the vitality and viability of the local economy of the surrounding rural area.

**12.28** Permitted development rights exist for the conversion of certain buildings to residential use. Notwithstanding these rights, in cases where a planning application is required, the provisions regarding the loss of a business site or premise in this policy will apply.

**12.29** In applying the policy the Council considers it essential that both the integrity and setting of historic farm buildings are conserved and enhanced. Their appropriate conservation and re-use will ensure that the historical investment that has been made in their materials and energy will be sustained.

**12.30** The NPPF notes that, in rural areas, sites which meet local community and business needs may have to be found in locations that are not well served by public transport. It will therefore be important that the scale and density of development proposals are related to the site's accessibility, character and surroundings. In less accessible locations, positive weight will be given to proposals that demonstrably offset their accessibility by clearly delivering other environmental benefits.

**12.31** Assessment of the highway implications will be made on the basis of the proposal and what would be considered necessary in terms of improvements by the Highway Authority. The reference to 'rural roads' is a generic term and the Council would be concerned as to the effects of the proposed development on rural tracks, footpaths and bridleways. Relevant considerations would include past and existing levels of traffic generated from the site; the level, type and frequency of traffic likely to be generated by the proposed development; and traffic levels accepted under any existing planning permission attached to the land.

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**Policy DM36****Farm Diversification**

Proposals relating to the diversification of existing farms in the countryside, will be supported where the proposal complies with the following criteria:

- a. The use/development is suitable for a rural location;
- b. It does not cause severance or disruption to the existing business and it is demonstrated that the development can make a long-term contribution to sustaining the farm business as a whole;
- c. Diversification activities remain subsidiary to the agricultural operation, in terms of physical scale and environmental impact;
- d. It re-uses or replaces existing buildings wherever possible. Where this is not feasible, new development should be related physically and functionally to existing buildings;
- e. When new buildings are proposed, the business has not disposed of a building or converted one to a residential use in the previous 3 years which could have met the need of the development proposed;
- f. It is of a high quality design, appropriate in scale, bulk, form, impact and siting to the character and local distinctiveness of the surrounding rural area and its setting in the wider rural landscape;
- g. The use of materials is appropriate within the local architectural context;
- h. Any internal and external changes do not harm the significance of a heritage asset in accordance with policies SP9 and DM11;
- i. It would not cause unacceptable levels of disturbance, nuisance or environmental harm to nearby properties or other adjacent land uses by noise, smell, dust, pollution, lighting or operations at unreasonable hours; and
- j. It does not generate traffic of a type or amount inappropriate for the rural roads affected by the proposal or require improvements to these roads which could be detrimental to their rural character.

**Supporting text**

**12.32** The countryside of West Berkshire includes significant areas of privately owned and farmed landscapes with rural estates and farms, both large and small, playing a vital role in both the development of a sustainable rural economy and the conservation and enhancement of the diversity and local distinctiveness of the landscape character across the district as a whole. Within this context, the purpose of this policy is to continue to support the long term viability of agricultural businesses.

**12.33** The objective of diversification is to allow the primary agricultural unit to be retained whilst being supported by other forms of income such as:

- Farm shops selling local produce;
- Educational facilities directly related to the farm/countryside location;
- Leisure facilities promoting the quiet enjoyment and understanding of the countryside, including increased access to the countryside;
- Tourist accommodation;
- Small-scale generation of electricity or heat from local renewable sources of energy, primarily for use on site or in the local area;
- Appropriately scaled processing facilities for the outputs of the unit or of other agriculture businesses in the local area;

**12.34** For larger businesses, 'whole farm or estate plans' can be particularly helpful in identifying potential opportunities in a holistic way. In order to encourage partnership working and to aid decision making, when considering proposals for development within rural estates and large farms, positive regard will be had to proposals which are part of a 'whole farm or estate plan' that has been endorsed by the Council.

**12.35** The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, are encouraged where suitable opportunities exist. What is considered suitable will depend very much on the individual characteristics of a proposal and its context and the impact of cumulative development. Consideration will therefore include the site itself, and the amount and type of existing development; the type and nature of development proposed; where the development is located; whether the proposal responds positively to its rural context; and the intensity of

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the proposed use compared to the existing use (e.g. looking at the visitor movements associated with the proposed use). A more restrictive approach is taken to new residential development and this is set out in policy DM1. Policy DM36 is therefore not relevant to schemes which seek the redevelopment of previously developed land in the countryside for residential uses.

**12.36** Re-use and adaptation of existing farm buildings should normally take priority over redevelopment unless it can be demonstrated that redevelopment would be a better option given the extent of environmental improvement that would occur.

**12.37** In applying the policy the Council considers it essential that both the integrity and setting of historic farm buildings are conserved and enhanced. Successful proposals depend on having a clear understanding of their existing significance, their setting in the wider landscape and their sensitivity to and capacity for change. Their appropriate conservation and re-use will also ensure that the historical investment that has been made in their materials and energy will be sustained.

**12.38** Proposals for visitor/tourist accommodation should be economically viable in the longer term and applicants will be expected to clearly demonstrate this as part of a planning application submission. Planning conditions may be applied or the Council may require applicants to enter into a legal agreement to ensure that such accommodation remains ancillary to the main use of the site and to ensure that such buildings are not sold off separately to be followed by applications for further housing or residential accommodation.

**12.39** Assessment of the highway implications will be made on the basis of the proposal and what would be considered necessary in terms of improvements by the Highway Authority. The reference to 'rural roads' is a generic term and the Council would be concerned as to the effects of the proposed development on rural tracks, footpaths and bridleways. Relevant considerations would include past and existing levels of traffic generated from the site; the level, type and frequency of traffic likely to be generated by the proposed development; and traffic levels accepted under any existing planning permission attached to the land.



## Policy DM37

### Equestrian and Horseracing industry

#### Equestrian Development

Proposals for all equestrian development that help to strengthen the rural economy and increase opportunities for people to enjoy the countryside in a sustainable way, will be supported.

Proposals for the development of equestrian facilities, whether domestic or commercial, will be permitted where it satisfies the following criteria:

- a. Is appropriate in terms of siting, scale, massing, character and appearance and level of activity;
- b. Re-uses existing buildings wherever feasible and viable;
- c. Where new buildings are proposed there are no existing buildings within the site or in proximity that might reasonably be used instead of the proposal, and no buildings have been disposed of, or converted to a residential use in the previous 3 years which could have met the needs of the development proposed;
- d. Locates new buildings, stables, yard areas and facilities adjacent to existing buildings provided they respect the amenities and activities of surrounding properties and uses;
- e. Responds positively to the character of the landscape, its historic context and its setting in the wider landscape;
- f. Is well located to existing utilities and transport infrastructure, including vehicular and field access, tracks and bridleways;
- g. Provides new or supplementary landscape features including planting and hard landscape features and boundary treatments, consistent with local character;
- h. Does not have an adverse detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties and the wider local area by reason of noise, lighting, smell, dust, nutrient pollution, overlooking, or other general disturbance;
- i. Demonstrates appropriate safeguards to prevent the pollution of ground and surface water; and
- j. It would not generate traffic of a type or amount inappropriate for the rural roads, byways or restricted byways affected by the proposal or require improvements to these roads, byways, or restricted byways which could be detrimental to their rural character and/or use by motorised and non-motorised traffic.

In all cases, proposals will be expected to demonstrate the adequate provision of land to allow for the proper care of horses, including stabling, grazing and exercise, having regard to the Equine Industry Welfare Guidelines, the British Horse Society standards or the British Horseracing Authority as appropriate.

Particular consideration will be given to the cumulative effects of proposals on the local area and the wider landscape and environment.

#### North Wessex Downs National Landscape Horseracing Industry

Whilst conserving environmental quality and countryside character, the horseracing industry in the National Landscape will be protected, and its sensitive growth will be allowed for. Within this context:

- i. Suitable existing establishments or facilities are expected to be retained. Re-development or conversion of those establishments away from uses essential to the horseracing industry will be subject to the tests of both suitability and necessity outlined in the supporting text to this policy;
- ii. Permanent fragmentation will be resisted;
- iii. Proposals for associated new residential accommodation in the countryside will be permitted in accordance with policy DM23 where genuine need is suitably demonstrated through a business case and accommodation cannot be reasonably secured within existing settlements;
- iv. Development proposals, particularly within or around Lambourn and Upper Lambourn, which would negatively impact on the long term vitality and/or viability of the horseracing industry as a whole, will be resisted. There must be clear and convincing evidence that the development would generate planning benefits that would outweigh any significant harm to the horseracing industry as a whole; and
- v. Proposals for related development such as those providers of goods and services to the industry will be supported and considered in accordance with policy DM35.

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**Newbury Racecourse**

Newbury Racecourse's viability as a major tourist attraction and economic driver will be maintained and future development proposals will have a positive impact upon the ability of the Racecourse to continue operations as normal and potentially expand in the future. Proposals within and adjacent to Newbury Racecourse will be design and community led to secure high quality sustainable development that is sensitive to the environmental quality and historic character of the area.

**Supporting text**

**12.40** Equestrian activities and related development, and the horseracing industry are characteristic features of West Berkshire, and are of particular importance to the rural economy.

**12.41** The policy recognises the important links between the various aspects of the equestrian industry and the shared facilities and infrastructure that support it, such as veterinary practices, institutions providing social and medical support, specialist retailers and equipment suppliers, farriers and horse transporters, horse feed merchants, livery yards and riding schools which cater to both commercial and more recreational markets. Whilst this policy sets out the Council's approach specifically to equestrian development, it also makes clear that proposals for related development such as those providers of goods and services to the horseracing industry will be considered in accordance with policy DM35.

**12.42** Within an overall context of development restraint in the countryside the policy encourages proposals that help to strengthen the rural economy and increase opportunities for people to enjoy the countryside in a sustainable way.

**12.43** Land used for equestrian activities such as grazing land, stables, field shelters and other equine buildings, gallops and access routes, can all impact on both the visual and physical nature of the environment. It is particularly important that development proposals are in keeping with the character and appearance of the local area and prevent the spread of the built form in the countryside and National Landscape and this will be expected to be addressed through good quality design.

**12.44** Wherever viable, existing buildings should be re-used to avoid additional buildings in the countryside. The location of new buildings like stables, field shelters, and tack storage can easily change the character of an area and should be kept to a minimum. The layout of buildings should seek to contain and enclose yard areas for storage, parking and other activities. The management of manure and waste should take account of the amenities of the neighbouring uses as well as environmental protection requirements.

**12.45** Equestrian development such as new barns and manèges should be sensitively lit. Development that would impact on dark night skies such as barns with extensive glazing and roof lights, floodlit manèges and other intrusive lighting may not be permitted. Sites that are well located to the bridleway network can provide good recreational opportunities.

**12.46** Private stables and loose boxes can have a detrimental visual impact on the character of the countryside particularly where there is an accumulation of other items such as jumps and equipment such as horse boxes. This visual impact may be further compounded if a field has been divided up into a number of horse paddocks, each with an accumulation of equipment. The cumulative impact of proposals will therefore also be taken into account.

**12.47** Proposals for the conversion to residential use of existing disused or redundant buildings in the countryside formerly used for equestrian activities will be considered in accordance with policy DCM25 except where special justification is made in relation to the horseracing industry as set out below.

**12.48** New field shelters and stables erected for leisure purposes will not normally be considered suitable for conversion to residential purposes or commercial purposes. If they are no longer required for the accommodation of horses it is expected that the buildings will be removed. Where necessary, planning conditions or planning obligations will be used to control the permission.

**12.49** The policy makes clear that proposals for equestrian development will need to provide appropriate safeguards to prevent the pollution of ground and surface water. Any applications which lie within the Nutrient Neutrality Zone of the River Lambourn or the River Test, as shown on the Policies Map, will need to provide sufficient information, including appropriate nutrient budget calculations, to show how any net increase in phosphorous/nitrogen will be mitigated to achieve nutrient neutrality.

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**North Wessex Downs National Landscape Horseracing Industry**

**12.50** The North Wessex Downs National Landscape is home to around 10%<sup>(53)</sup> of Britain's racehorse trainers and the Lambourn area is a nationally important centre of activity for the horseracing industry second only to Newmarket. The horseracing industry is one of the strongest rural industries in the district, employing over 700 people and contributing £22 million each year to the economy. Substantial investments in recent years, including the upgrading of the public gallops by the Jockey Club Estates and other training yards, has also enhanced Lambourn's status within the industry. The industry has long been a fundamental part of the character of Lambourn and the surrounding villages with the Lambourn Valley sometimes referred to as 'The Valley of the Racehorse'. The traditional gallops landscape and views of racehorses training are valued features of the character of the area.

**12.51** The policy aims to allow for the protection and sensitive development and growth of the horseracing industry whilst conserving environmental quality and countryside character. This includes the built and natural form, and social and economic aspects such as the influence of the horseracing industry as part of the local economy which gives Lambourn its unique character. Outside of settlements, preference will be given to proposals that seek to locate within valleys and avoid development on hilltops or ridgelines. Equine buildings on sites which are open, exposed, elevated or sloped are likely to have particular landscape impacts that may make it difficult to achieve sensitive design solutions.

**12.52** The policy aims to prevent pressure for redevelopment of existing facilities to other uses, and fragmentation of existing sites. These pressures could lead to the decline of the industry locally, threaten the character and form of settlements, and increase pressure for replacement facilities in environmentally sensitive areas. Protecting training yards from development for alternative uses is particularly important in difficult times for the Industry.

**12.53** The variety in yard sizes is an important feature for the industry in this area and this can help support the start-up of new trainers. Throughout a trainer's career they will require different sized yards at different times for a variety of reasons, and a range of yard sizes allows them to move within the same area, retaining access to local gallops, staff and owners. A small yard could range in size from 10 to 40 horses and could work with as few as six boxes. Given the Rules of Racing<sup>(54)</sup>, it is difficult to sub-divide yards. As such, spare box capacity does not demonstrate an ability to go without certain individual yards which are important for new trainers and for those who are down-sizing their operations.

**12.54** Access to gallops is important for yards and opportunities for improving access routes should be fully explored before a yard is considered for re-use or redevelopment. In considering access to gallops, a trainer would consider safety of the horses and the time taken to get to the gallops which will depend on the number of horses in training, how many riders are used, and how many outings to the gallops are needed. Some trainers will depend upon the gallops provided and maintained by the Jockey Club Estates.

**12.55** In terms of interpreting the policy, existing establishments or facilities includes land and buildings relating to the horseracing industry, including residential development. The policy makes clear that re-development or conversion of those establishments away from uses essential to the horseracing industry will be subject to the tests of suitability and necessity given the importance of the industry to West Berkshire and the Lambourn Valley in particular. It is considered important to adopt such an approach in order to protect and sensitively grow this specialist industry whilst responding to its unique characteristics.

**12.56 Suitability test:** In considering the suitability of existing establishments, the key factors to consider will be:

- a. The existing range of facilities on the site and their adequacy for the purpose of training and/or breeding horses, or their capability for adaptation to meet such needs; and
- b. The availability of and access to (including the potential for improved access) suitable gallops and training areas.

**12.57** It is not the intention of the policy to retain training and breeding establishments that are no longer appropriate. The Council accepts that it cannot control the closure of businesses where there is little or no support and which are not economically viable. However, it can ensure that horseracing industry facilities are not displaced by redevelopment or changes to other land uses without first considering the consequences and potential loss to the industry. It can also ensure that applications for re-use or redevelopment should conserve the character and amenities of the settlement, the landscape and rural quality of the surrounding countryside and not materially harm the availability of local employment opportunities.

53 A study of the key effects of the horseracing industry on the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty [www.northwessexdowns.org.uk](http://www.northwessexdowns.org.uk)

54 Rules of racing by British Horseracing Authority are available to view at <http://rules.britishhorseracing.com>

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**12.58 Necessity test:** Proposals for redevelopment or change of use will need to demonstrate the absence of harm to the horseracing industry through the loss of the existing facility. In order to show that there is no longer a demand for the yard or facility in that particular location development proposals will be required to provide:

- i. A robust assessment which clearly demonstrates the absence of demand for the existing use and the absence of demand for an alternative horseracing industry related use (which should be the first priority);
- ii. An assessment of the existing contribution that the facility makes to the horseracing industry, or in the case of a vacant site, the last known contribution;
- iii. In the case of a derelict/vacant site, an assessment of the reasons for dereliction including a history of the previous uses and the attempts made to reuse it for horseracing industry related uses; and
- iv. A robust marketing plan, to the satisfaction of the Council, as evidence to show that all reasonable attempts have been made to sell or let the site at a realistic price. Its scope should be agreed with the Council in advance but it would be expected to cover a sufficient period, show that the site has been marketed at an appropriate value and has been advertised in publications that are accessible to the horseracing industry.

**12.59** Proposals for fragmentation of existing establishments and facilities should not adversely affect the operational use of the site or the industry as a whole. It is important to retain a supply of yards which are of various sizes to allow for market churn, ensuring the facilitation of start-up businesses as well as established businesses. The loss of a facility should therefore not detrimentally alter the critical balance and/or range of yard sizes available in the area.

**12.60** It is acknowledged that there is a need in some circumstances to provide accommodation close to hand in order to provide 24 hour supervision as part of licensing requirements, or for the effective running of an establishment. It is the Council's preference for workers to be accommodated within existing nearby villages, so as to contribute to the overall sustainability of settlements and limit development in the countryside. Whilst racing charities and training yard owners provide some low cost and/or hostel accommodation in the area, it is recognised there is still a specific need for affordable single person accommodation in Lambourn. The policy makes clear that proposals for associated new residential accommodation in the countryside will be permitted in accordance with policy DM23. In accordance with that policy, the occupation of any residential accommodation will be restricted by a planning condition or legal agreement to rural workers involved in the day-to-day operations of the horseracing industry.

### **Newbury Racecourse**

For Newbury Racecourse, the policy aims to ensure that the Racecourse maintains its status as a premier sporting and major events venue. The policy seeks to allow for sensitive development of the Racecourse and surrounding areas which do not have a negative impact upon the ability of the Racecourse to continue operations as normal or restrain appropriate and sustainable expansion opportunities in the future. The consideration of neighbour amenity will be an important issue when considering development proposals in support of events not related to the horseracing industry.



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**Policy DM38****Development on Existing Educational and Institutional Sites in the Countryside**

Development at existing educational and institutional sites in the countryside will be supported provided it complies with the following criteria:

- a. It is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council that such development is necessary to meet the reasonable needs and operational requirements of existing educational and institutional establishments;
- b. There are no existing buildings that are available and suitable, including locationally, that could reasonably be used to accommodate the proposal;
- c. It is proportionate to the size and nature of the existing establishment;
- d. Any proposals are appropriate in terms of siting, scale, form, massing, character and appearance, having regard to the local environment and setting within the wider landscape. Development should positively reinforce local distinctiveness;
- e. Any new buildings are located adjoining existing buildings or within or adjoining an existing group of buildings unless otherwise justified for operational reasons;
- f. It does not harm the significance of a heritage asset or its setting or assets of archaeological interest in the area; and
- g. It would not generate traffic of a type or amount inappropriate for the rural roads, byways or restricted byways, affected by the proposal or require improvements to these roads, byways or restricted byways which could be detrimental to their rural character.

**Supporting text**

**12.61** Rural West Berkshire contains a number of existing educational and institutional establishments, including boarding schools. These establishments are found in a number of locations, some wholly within the countryside and some partly outside a defined settlement. Bradfield College is an example of an establishment partly within a defined settlement boundary, with some educational buildings and staff accommodation outside of the defined settlement boundary. Pangbourne College and Brockhurst and Marlston House School are examples of establishments outside of a defined settlement boundary.

**12.62** The NPPF outlines that local planning authorities should take a 'proactive, positive and collaborative approach' to ensure a sufficient choice of school places to meet the needs of existing and new communities. This statement is in the context of all educational settings, within and outside of settlement boundaries.

**12.63** The policy therefore makes provision for development required for educational, and institutional, establishments subject to complying with the criteria. This strikes a balance between the restriction on development in the countryside and the operational requirements of such establishments, whilst considering the impact on landscape and local infrastructure. It is necessary for an educational or institutional establishment to justify its need for additional facilities or accommodation as part of a planning application. It is expected that as part of this justification applicants provide details of searches for making use of existing accommodation on site or in the locality. An 'estate plan' or 'development framework' can be particularly helpful in identifying potential opportunities in a holistic way. In order to encourage partnership working and to aid decision making, when considering proposals for development within educational or institutional establishments, positive regard will be had to proposals which are part of a 'estate plan' or 'development framework' that has been endorsed by the Council.

**12.64** In the case of new staff or student accommodation this policy applies. Planning conditions may be applied, or the applicant will be required to enter into a legal agreement, to ensure that such accommodation remains ancillary to the main use of the site and to ensure that such accommodation is not sold off separately to be followed by applications for further housing or residential accommodation.

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**Policy DM39****Local Community Facilities**

Development proposals for new and/or the expanded provision of local community facilities will be supported where the proposal complies with the following criteria:

- a. A local need can be demonstrated;
- b. It is accessible and inclusive to the local community it is intended to serve;
- c. It is of a high quality design and proportionate in scale to the local area;
- d. It has been subject to prior meaningful local community engagement; and
- e. Appropriate consideration has been given to the use of shared spaces, the re-use and/or redevelopment of existing buildings within the local community.

Proposals which would result in the loss of an existing local community facility will only be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated that:

- i. It is no longer viable to retain the facility in its current use; or
- ii. The facility is no longer needed and any need arising from its loss can be accommodated within easily accessible existing facilities, or
- iii. To outweigh the loss of the existing facility, the proposal will deliver equivalent or, where possible, greater community benefit which is easily accessible to the community it is intended to serve.

The Council will support local communities who seek to provide and/or retain local community facilities through the Community Rights agenda.

**Supporting text**

**12.65** The provision and retention of local community facilities is essential to the creation of sustainable communities, particularly in our rural areas. These facilities play an important role in providing for day-to-day living, as well as positively contributing towards wellbeing and social cohesion.

**12.66** The NPPF is clear that local planning policies should plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments. Planning policies should also guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs.

**12.67** For the purposes of this policy, local community facilities include:

- Shops selling essential goods;
- Halls or meeting places for the principal use of the local community;
- Places of worship;
- Cultural buildings;
- Areas or places for community outdoor sport or recreation;
- Public houses;
- Post offices;
- Public health care facilities, including GP surgeries, dental practices and pharmacies.

**Provision of local community facilities**

**12.68** This policy seeks to support suitable proposals for the provision of local community facilities in order to enable communities to meet their day-to-day needs. The provision of such facilities will allow local communities to thrive, and reduce the need to travel by car for everyday essentials.

**12.69** It is important that proposals are sensitive to its particular location and proportionate in scale to the local area. Development proposals that deliver inclusive local community facilities through the shared use of space in accessible locations will be encouraged. The re-use and/or redevelopment of existing buildings within the local community will be supported where suitable opportunities exist, especially where sites are physically well-related to existing settlements.

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**12.70** Local community engagement is essential to gauge the need for current and proposed local community facilities. Such engagement and consultation should be proportionate to the scale of the proposal.

### **Retention of local community facilities**

**12.71** The Council, through this policy, will seek to protect and retain local community facilities unless it can be demonstrated that, in order to outweigh the loss, the proposals will deliver equivalent or, where possible, greater community benefit which is easily accessible to the community it is intended to serve, or the facility is no longer viable, or it is no longer needed and any need arising from its loss can be accommodated within easily accessible existing facilities.

**12.72** Where a development proposal could lead to the loss of a local community facility or reduce its functionality and/or viability, applicants must provide justification/evidence for its loss. As part of any assessment it will be essential to gain the views of the local community it is intended to serve, through meaningful community engagement and consultation.

**12.73** Where an applicant wishes to demonstrate that the facility is no longer viable the following information should be provided:

- a. A marketing report that outlines a robust marketing strategy and its results. As a minimum, the market report should outline details of a robust marketing strategy for the site, one which genuinely tests the markets at a realistic price over a period of at least six months. The report must also show, as a minimum:
  - o official confirmation by the marketing agent that the premises were appropriately and extensively marketed with no reasonable offer of sale or rent;
  - o an enquiry log, details of how the enquiry was followed up and a review of why it was unsuccessful; and
  - o evidence of property particulars and extensive advertising, via photos of physical signage and adverts, along with screenshots from online advertisements and accompanying analysis of activity.
- b. A commercial viability study that sets out as a minimum, financial viability details and what measures have been taken in an attempt to return the facility to a viable business. This could include details of commercial initiatives introduced, development proposals for the business etc.

**12.74** Where an applicant wishes to demonstrate that a facility is no longer needed/required and any need arising from its loss can be accommodated within easily accessible existing facilities, an assessment of local need will be required to support such a proposal. This assessment will need to demonstrate, as a minimum, that there are available, accessible and inclusive alternative existing community facilities, of an equivalent or better quality to those lost, which would meet the community need without causing an unreasonable shortfall in local provision.

**12.75** Public houses in particular serve important social, community and economic functions in maintaining the vitality and viability of communities. Public houses also have important links to leisure and tourism, and contribute to the distinctiveness and vibrancy of towns and villages. The loss of a public house from a community can be especially severe if it is the only remaining facility in the area and is a focal point for that community. While the planning system cannot prevent a business from closing, it can positively manage any applications for change of use, including conversions to private dwellings. The Council will encourage the combination of services or activities, such as post offices, shops or related brewing functions with the existing public house use.

**12.76** Any partial loss or subdivision of a local community facility will only be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated that this will contribute to and/or not prejudice the economic viability or future operation of the facility as a whole. In order to avoid the unnecessary loss of such facilities, this policy applies to any building or the land upon which it sits.

**12.77** The NPPF is clear that proposals for small scale rural development will not be subject to the sequential approach. Where the decision maker has concerns over the scale and/or impact of a proposal in a rural area a sequential assessment and/or impact assessment may be sought.

**12.78** When considering planning permission for new buildings or changes of use to local community facilities, an assessment will be made as to whether planning conditions will be required to limit changes of use which would otherwise be permitted under the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) in order to achieve the objectives of the policy.

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**Community Rights agenda**

**12.79** The Community Rights agenda was introduced as part of the Localism Act in 2011 and includes initiatives such as the Community Right to Bid and the Community Right to Build.

**12.80** The Community Right to Build gives local communities the right to bring forward small-scale community-led developments. This right forms part of the neighbourhood planning provisions. The [Community Right to Bid](#) gives local communities the ability to nominate local land or buildings to be included in a list of Assets of Community Value (ACV). This list is held by the Council, and once an asset is listed certain restrictions are then placed upon the owner should they decide to sell the land/building. The Council will support local communities who seek to provide and/or retain local community facilities through the Community Rights agenda.



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**Policy DM40****Public Open Space**

Proposals for residential development of 10 dwellings or more will be required to provide high quality public open space.

Wherever possible, on-site provision will be made to a standard of 3 – 4.3ha per thousand population. Where more appropriate to the circumstances of the site or the open space requirements, off-site provision or a financial contribution in lieu of provision will be considered.

Particular regard will be given to;

- a. The location, size, condition and nature of the land;
- b. The attractiveness, interest, multifunctionality, inclusivity and safety of the design, layout and facilities;
- c. The suitability of the site for an appropriate range of recreational activities both formal and informal, including whether there is undue fragmentation into small areas which would limit their recreational value and potential;
- d. The potential impact it has on protected sites or species and the contribution it makes to achieving biodiversity net gain;
- e. The avoidance of undue disturbance or harm to the amenity of adjoining residents and landowners through the design and layout of the space and distribution of activities within it;
- f. Its easy and safe accessibility from adjoining development areas by foot and cycle, and where necessary, public transport; and
- g. Whether the provision meets anticipated demands for participation now and in the future having regard to any national or Council strategies on leisure and sports provision.

**Supporting text**

**12.81** Public open space is land available to satisfy the recreation and leisure needs of the community. It can fulfil a number of functions including amenity land, Accessible Natural Greenspace (ANG), play areas, informal recreation and leisure or formal sporting activity. It will also fulfil an important function in supporting the overall green infrastructure in the district.

**12.82** The NPPF requires local planning authorities to plan positively for the creation of open space as part of new developments, because it promotes physical activity, positive mental wellbeing and healthy childhood development.

**12.83** New development places additional demands on the supply and resilience of existing open space. It is important that new residential development meets the standards set out in this policy to provide sufficient public open space for new residents.

**12.84** Proposals for new housing will be acceptable only where they include appropriate public open space and recreational provision, both in terms of space and associated facilities / equipment. Where the proposal is for the redevelopment of a previously developed site which includes existing residential dwellings, the net increase in residents will be calculated so that only the additional pressure on open spaces as a result of the development is taken into consideration.

**12.85** The need for public open space provision will be generated by residential schemes of all types including sheltered housing schemes for older persons. Open space that is provided with the intention of being used exclusively by residents will not be an acceptable alternative to public open space provision. The only exception will be for accommodation for the frail elderly and care homes (Use Class C2).

**12.86** This policy may be satisfied through on-site provision, off-site provision, financial contributions or a combination of the three, taking into account local circumstances. In general terms, provision on site is preferred, but it is acknowledged that this is not suitable on all sites or for all types of open space. Ideally public open space provision should be grouped into larger 'park areas' where both formal and informal recreation activities can be properly integrated and managed. Particularly smaller sites are unlikely to be able to provide useable good quality space to the required standard. In applying the public open space standard the Council will not normally accept areas of less than 0.2 hectares (0.5 acres) in size, unless adjoining an existing area where the total together would exceed the minimum viable size.

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**12.87** Where off-site provision is made, the space must be made permanently available through formal agreement on other land in the applicant's control which is readily accessible from the development site and appropriate for public open space/recreational use.

**12.88** Financial contributions to the Council in lieu of open space provision will be accepted only where it will be possible to provide new public open space or other appropriate recreation facilities easily accessible to the development site within a reasonable period of time.

**12.89** In assessing the suitability of proposed open space provision, the Council expects not only the quantity standard to be met, but will consider the acceptability of the proposed provision. It will do so by reference to the criteria set out in the policy, and in consultation with relevant Council officers and by reference to relevant Council evidence and strategies.

**12.90** Public open space must provide sufficient diversity and quality to fulfil a variety of recreational roles, both formal and informal, with a balance between them that is appropriate to local needs and circumstances. Generally speaking a scatter of small areas has less recreational potential than one or two larger areas.

**12.91** Open space should form a clearly defined focal point for the development, be fully integrated into the design of the scheme and readily accessible to all potential users including for management and maintenance purposes. Any development briefs or masterplans for sites are expected to make the open space one of the central pillars of the design ethos of the scheme.

**12.92** Public open space should be genuinely available in perpetuity to the public at large. The Council will normally seek the transfer of public open space areas into local authority ownership/control in a condition appropriate for such use, and together with a reasonable sum for their ongoing maintenance.

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**Policy DM41****Digital Infrastructure**

The roll out and continued improvement of digital infrastructure serving all parts of the district will be supported. This includes full-fibre gigabit-capable broadband, 4G and 5G technologies.

Applicants will be required to actively demonstrate that they have considered gigabit-capable broadband and mobile connectivity within their proposals for new residential, employment, and retail developments.

Adverse impacts on the successful functioning of existing digital infrastructure shall be avoided. Where this is not possible, appropriate mitigation shall be provided.

**Supporting text**

Digital infrastructure comprises of physical telecommunications components such as fixed broadband and mobile connectivity. High quality digital infrastructure is key to ensuring economic growth and social inclusion, and this is recognised in the NPPF.

**12.93** The NPPF expects planning policies and decisions to support the expansion of digital infrastructure. Policies should set out how high quality digital infrastructure, providing access to services from a range of providers, is expected to be delivered and upgraded over time; and should prioritise full fibre connections to existing and new developments, as these connections will, in almost all cases, provide the optimum solution.

**12.94** In March 2020, the government stated its intention to amend Building Regulations to require all new build developments to have the physical infrastructure to support gigabit connections. At the time of writing building regulations remain unchanged. However the LPR policy has had regard to this.

**12.95** The six Berkshire authorities <sup>(55)</sup>, including West Berkshire District Council, are implementing a Digital Strategy and have set-out a “Connected Berkshire Vision and Strategy” to ensure that over 95% of households and business have access to full fibre coverage (providing Gigabit capable connectivity) and to eliminate all 4G poor coverage areas by 2025. A suite of guidance is being produced by the six authorities to support the Digital Strategy which will act as good practice for developers to help them determine the best solution for their proposals.

**12.96** With this in mind, the Council will expect all new residential and employment generating premises commercial premises to be served by high speed reliable gigabit-capable broadband, wherever possible in the form of fibre to the premises (FTTP), or any new or alternative technologies that may come forward during the lifetime of the Local Plan. Where it is not currently viable to deliver FTTP broadband, the fastest viable alternative connection should be provided, together with adequate ducting to allow FTTP connections to be made easily at a later date, without the additional costs of retrofitting.

**12.97** Applications for major residential and employment development will be expected to be supported by a connectivity strategy which demonstrates how the development delivers future-proofed infrastructure and supports sustainable communications services, having regard to the latest appropriate Building Digital UK <sup>(56)</sup> strategy and other relevant industry guidance. Developers should engage with broadband providers at the earliest opportunity to enable the highest possible internet connection speeds to be provided in new developments.

**12.98** The Council will work with the telecommunications industry to maximise access to super-fast broadband, wireless hotspots and improved mobile signals for all residents and businesses, assisting them in delivering their investment plans and securing funding to address any infrastructure deficiencies or barriers, including through the Superfast Berkshire project <sup>(57)</sup>.

55 <http://www.thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/digital-infrastructure-group>

56 <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/building-digital-uk>

57 <http://www.superfastberkshire.org.uk/>

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**Policy DM42****Transport Infrastructure**

Proposals for new development will be expected to demonstrate the type and level of travel activity likely to be generated. In order to assist in tackling the climate emergency, this travel activity will be expected to be minimised by the design of developments that support low levels of travel with a focus on local journeys that can be made sustainably. Developments will be required to be supported through a range of infrastructure associated with different transport modes. New development will only be supported where the relevant transport infrastructure is delivered in a timely manner. Development will, where necessary, be required to make a proportionate contribution to the provision of or improvement to transport infrastructure including, where relevant, the following:

- a. Connections and improvements to local pedestrian, cycle and equestrian networks, including access to public transport routes;
- b. Walking, cycling and equestrian infrastructure identified in relevant Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans;
- c. Secure cycle and motorcycle parking;
- d. Improvements to passenger facilities across a range of transport interchanges;
- e. Provision of real time passenger information at bus stops along key bus routes;
- f. New or improved passenger transport services;
- g. Improvements to the safety and operational capacity of the local road network;
- h. Works to allow the re-use of former railway line alignments as walking, cycling, and equestrian routes; and
- i. Provision of electric vehicle charging points and associated infrastructure.

**Supporting Text**

**12.99** The NPPF states that transport issues should be considered at the earliest stage of development proposals, so that the potential impact on transport networks can be addressed, that opportunities from existing and proposed infrastructure are realised, and that opportunities to improve walking, cycling and public transport are identified and pursued. At all stages, proposals should consider the need of reducing the need to travel, especially during the working day. Where possible, services and facilities should be located within an acceptable walking distance and cycling distance of new places of employment or residences.

**12.100** The development and delivery of transport infrastructure will need to contribute to the aims of policy SP19 and relevant Council strategies and plans, such as the [West Berkshire Environment Strategy](#), July 2020 and the [Local Transport Plan](#). There is a need for development to assist in the provision of deliverable measures that will contribute towards modal shift to sustainable modes of travel for residents and employees of both new development, and if possible, for existing communities.

**12.101** The Council actively seeks to further develop walking, cycling, and equestrian networks in the District to encourage more travel by sustainable modes. As part of this, Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) identify specific walking and cycling improvements on key corridors. These are largely centred on the urban areas with one covering Newbury and Thatcham urban area and the other including the Eastern Urban Area. For the latter plan the Council has partnered with Reading and Wokingham Borough Councils in the development of a LCWIP for the wider Reading urban area. The LCWIPs will be used to inform the Council's own future investment strategies and CIL funding bids as well as to guide the delivery of the most appropriate walking, cycling, and equestrian infrastructure to support new development.

**12.102** The Council as both local planning and local highway authority will need to ensure that development proposals will not result in an unacceptable impact for any user of both the local and strategic road networks.

**12.103** Whilst it is anticipated that the majority of development will be focused in existing urban areas and within settlement boundaries, it is important that improvements are also sought to encourage sustainable leisure and recreational opportunities in the rural areas of the District. Specifically this could include opportunities to replace that part of the former Didcot, Newbury & Southampton railway line to provide between Hermitage and Newbury, a route



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for both leisure and potentially commuter use, incorporating existing minor roads and bridle ways as a walking, cycling, and equestrian route. Opportunities at other locations, including use of the Kennet and Avon Canal towpath, will be sought where applicable).

**12.104** The provision of electric vehicle charging points and associated infrastructure supports the need for readiness for the banning the sale of new petrol, diesel or hybrid cars in the UK, which will occur during the lifetime of the plan, by 2030. While the provision of such infrastructure will be mandated in developments, developers will be encouraged to go further to help achieve a comprehensive public charging network in public car parks, supermarkets and retail parks, railway stations, and where is safe to do so, at petrol filling stations. The provision of such infrastructure is essential to contribute towards the achievement of a zero carbon West Berkshire by 2030.

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**Policy DM43****Theale Rail - Road Transfer Site**

The site at Wigmore Lane in Theale, as defined on the Policies Map, shall be safeguarded as a rail-road transfer facility.

Redevelopment of the site, in part or in whole, for uses that would compromise the operation of this facility will not be permitted.

**Supporting text**

**12.105** The rail-road transfer site at Wigmore Lane, Theale, is an important infrastructure facility within the District allowing for the transfer of goods from rail to road, and this policy seeks to safeguard the site, as defined on the Policies Map, as a rail-road transfer facility, allowing the continued movement of freight from rail to road for other industries requiring such a facility, including for example the transfer of consumer goods.

**12.106** The facility is primarily an aggregates terminal and the West Berkshire [Minerals and Waste Local Plan](#) (2022-2037). safeguards the site to ensure the supply of minerals and the continued export of minerals from the District by road. Proposals for any non-mineral development on the site would need to comply with policy 9 of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2022-2037. Should the exceptions be deemed to apply, policy DM43 will ensure the site continues to remain in use as a rail-road transfer facility, allowing the continued movement of freight from rail to road for other industries requiring such a facility, including for example the transfer of consumer goods.

**12.107** The movement of freight by rail is vital to the local economy and plays a significant role in reducing congestion and carbon emissions. Many industries rely on rail freight for the movement of goods, and with the drive to reduce carbon emissions globally it is expected that demand for rail freight will continue to grow. Theale is the only location which offers rail - road transfer facilities in the area and which may have the potential to support rail freight growth. The site should be protected to ensure the infrastructure exists to allow for the transfer of rail freight to the highway network.

**12.108** The extent of the rail-road transfer site is defined on the Policies Map.

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**Policy DM44****Parking**

Parking provision in association with development will be required to ensure that all modes have the facilities they require and that the balance of provision of these facilities between different modes reflects the need for travel activity to minimise carbon emissions and environmental harm.

Cycle and motorcycle parking should have regard to the Council's 'Cycling and Motorcycling Advice and Standards for New Development'. This sets out design standards and expected levels of provision for different types of development.

Electric vehicle charging points will be required to be installed for all development in line with requirements of the English Building Regulations as a minimum. These charging points may vary from communal points where there are shared parking areas in non-residential developments or for developments of flats, to individual points associated with houses. Details of how these charging points should be delivered and where there are opportunities to go beyond the minimum standards are set out in the Council's guidance 'Electric Vehicle Charging Points for new development'. This must be taken into account when planning new development.

**Non-residential parking**

In addition to cycle and motorcycle parking and adequate provision of spaces for electric vehicles to plug-in, priority should be given to provision for other ultra-low emission vehicles, car sharing spaces and car club vehicles.

The level of vehicular parking required will be judged on a case by case basis and will take account of:

- a. The accessibility of the development;
- b. The type, mix and use of development;
- c. The availability of and opportunities for public transport;
- d. Local car ownership levels; and
- e. Other locally specific issues.

**Residential Parking for New Development**

The layout and design of parking spaces should take account of the parking design guidance included within the Council's 'Highway Design Guidance for Residential Development' in order that good quality homes and neighbourhoods are created.

The following levels of parking (as a minimum) should be provided for residential development within the curtilage of the dwellings and / or within formal parking areas. Zones 1, and 2, and the eastern urban settlements zone are detailed on the accompanying maps (as set out in Appendix 5) and Zone 3 covers all other parts of the District.

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	Flats (+1 additional space per 5 flats for visitors)			Houses			
Bedrooms	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
Eastern urban settlements zone	1.5		2	1	2	2	3

Where flats and houses are built with bedrooms in excess of the thresholds given in the table above, these will be assessed on an individual basis.

Houses of multiple occupation represent special cases and will be dealt with on an individual basis.

Garages will not be counted as a parking space for the purposes of meeting the required levels of parking set out in this policy. Well-designed car ports will be accepted as a parking space.

Residential development resulting in an intensification of dwellings within an existing Residential Parking Zone will need to accommodate its parking needs within its site. The residents of the new development will not be eligible for a residents' parking permit under the Residents' Parking Scheme.

### Travel Plans

The levels of parking for different modes as set out in this policy are required irrespective of whether the implementation of travel plan measures are associated with any given development.

Travel Plan measures will be required to be implemented in relation to most non-residential developments where a Transport Assessment is required as set out in policy SP19.

For residential developments of 60 or more dwellings travel plan measures will be required to be implemented. Where appropriate, any development below 60 dwellings may be requested to implement travel plan measures. The judgement regarding the need for travel plan measures lies with the Council and will take into account any relevant specific local circumstances.

Residential developments of 10 or more dwellings will be required to provide new residents with a travel information pack containing relevant details to inform residents of their travel choices and encourage sustainable travel.

## Supporting Text

**12.109** The provision of the appropriate levels of parking for different modes and purposes will remain a balancing act. Sufficient parking should be provided so that there is not an undue impact on the safety and operation of the surrounding local transport networks, however, the provision of plentiful parking spaces can encourage undesirable higher levels of car ownership and usage which does not accord with the Council's declared climate emergency.

**12.110** The way in which different parking areas are designed are important factors in creating good quality environments in the areas where people work and especially where people live. The residential parking standards included in this policy, along with the West Berkshire Highway Design Guidance for Residential Development, seeks to ensure the delivery of good quality neighbourhoods for West Berkshire.

**12.111** To reflect the different levels of accessibility across the District, the policy refers to four parking zones. A broad description of these zones is included in the table below and they are shown on the maps included in Appendix 5. As part of the ongoing assessment work linked to this policy, the details of this appendix are under review.

**12.112** The levels of parking for residential areas and the relevance of the zones have been developed following survey work from across the District covering different types of existing residential neighbourhoods.



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**Table 8 Parking zones for residential areas**

Zone	Description	Areas
<b>Zone 1</b>	Town Centre plus 5 minute walking zone	Newbury and Thatcham
<b>Zone 2</b>	Settlements including 500m buffer outside the adopted settlement boundary.	Not including areas within relevant zone 1, Newbury, Thatcham, Hungerford, Pangbourne and Theale within adopted settlement boundary, plus 500m buffer outside
<b>Zone 3</b>	Remainder of the District	All areas of the District not within Zone 1, Zone 2 or the Eastern urban settlements zone
<b>Eastern urban settlements zone</b>	Within the adopted settlement boundary of the Eastern Urban Area plus 500m buffer outside	Calcot, Tilehurst and Purley-on-Thames

**12.113** The increased use of low emission vehicles will help contribute to the need to decarbonise the transport sector as part of tackling the global Climate Change issue. The UK government currently has a target to ban the sale of new petrol and diesel cars from 2030. Therefore, the parking policy actively seeks the provision of electric vehicle charging points in both residential and non-residential developments. The provision of electric vehicle charging points in new developments was incorporated into the English Building Regulations in December 2021. The Council has also produced its own guidance for developers to help outline what the Council will expect to be provided.

**12.114** Although around 80% of electric vehicle charging is expected to take place at home, there is a need to ensure that development assists in creating a more comprehensive public charging network, particularly in proximity to major route corridors and at leisure and retail areas. The Council will look for opportunities for development to contribute to the improvement of wider public charging networks where appropriate.

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**Policy DM45****Travel Planning**

Travel planning measures will be required to be implemented in relation to most non-residential developments where a Transport Assessment is required as set out in policy SP19.

For residential developments of 60 or more dwellings travel plan measures will be required to be implemented. Where appropriate, any development below 60 dwellings may be requested to implement travel planning measures. The judgement regarding the need for travel planning measures lies with the Council and will take into account any relevant specific local circumstances.

Residential developments of 10 or more dwellings will be required to provide new residents with a travel information pack containing relevant details to inform residents of their travel choices and encourage sustainable travel.

Where developments are required to develop travel plan measures, it is expected that necessary targets will be set to restrict single occupancy vehicle journeys and to increase sustainable travel, and undertake monitoring and reporting in line with the requirements of the Council.

**Supporting text**

**12.115** The way in which we are travelling and how we live our lives is changing and is likely to continue to change throughout the plan period as we respond to the Climate Change Emergency. The decarbonisation of transport will play a key part as we prioritise the encouragement of active and sustainable travel, and make provision for the growth in ownership of electric vehicles and the influence of emerging technologies.

**12.116** Therefore, managing the travel needs of new development will be a key consideration in helping to minimise single occupancy vehicle journeys and lessening the negative impacts of traffic generation on local highway networks and communities. Travel planning measures are an effective means of encouraging safe, healthy and sustainable methods of travel. They also offer people with more choice in how they travel, particularly for those without access to a car.

**12.117** Travel Plan planning measures fulfil an important role in encouraging the uptake of sustainable and active travel and supporting the use of the various infrastructure and facilities built into developments – both residential and non-residential. Such measures could include but are not limited to: cycle training and promotion, personalised travel planning, discounted or taster tickets for bus or rail travel, car clubs and car sharing.

**12.118** All Travel Plans will be expected to contain targets to reduce single occupancy vehicle journeys and develop measures to increase use of sustainable travel choices. Effective monitoring will be critical to ensuring that Travel Plans and the individual measures contained within are robustly delivered and that there is a regular review to process to ensure that progress towards meeting headline targets is being achieved. Results of monitoring and reviews of progress will need to be submitted to the Council, with an outline of remedial measures that could be implemented if monitoring suggests that targets are not on-track to be achieved.

**12.119** Commonly Travel Plans should be monitored for a period of five years, which should allow for travel patterns to become established. However, for large multi-occupancy developments which may be built over an extended period, the monitoring period may cover a period encompassing the construction and final occupation of the development and include a period of up to five years beyond final occupation. In these incidences, the monitoring period will be agreed between the Council and the developer.

**12.120** The Council recognises that the preparation and sustained implementation of travel planning measures can pose an onerous demand for developers to fulfil their Travel Plan obligations in accordance with that agreed as part of the development management process. Therefore the Council is currently developing an alternative approach where travel plans are required, whereby developers would have an option to allow the Council to have responsibility for developing and delivering travel planning measures (although developers will still be expected to provide the necessary hard infrastructure associated with development). This would be secured by means of a set financial contribution (for instance on a cost per unit basis), in lieu of producing and delivering a Travel Plan. Details of the new approach for travel planning, and the options for developers, will be outlined in a specific Travel Planning SPD.

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## Appendix 1 Monitoring and Delivery

**1.1** The purpose of monitoring is to assess whether the policies of the LPR are achieving the objectives and intended policy outcomes, whether they are having any unintended consequences and whether they are still relevant or require a review.

**1.2** The Monitoring Framework below sets out how the policies in the LPR will be monitored. Monitoring indicators are drawn directly from the strategic objectives of the LPR and targets indicate how these objectives could be met. Related policies in the LPR are identified, and for each objective the achievement of targets will be assessed. The effectiveness of policies should be assessed, wherever possible, against measurable targets. Where it is not possible to set meaningful local targets, national targets may be appropriate. Some policies aim to deliver a qualitative rather than a quantitative outcome. In such instances it is appropriate to monitor whether the policy is delivering the intended trend or direction of travel. For some policies measurable targets may be set through subsequent Supplementary Planning Documents.

**1.3** Data collected and subsequent analysis will also inform the review process in accordance with paragraph 33 of the NPPF which states 'Reviews should be completed no later than five years from the adoption date of a plan and should take into account changing circumstances affecting the area, or any relevant changes in national policy'.

**1.4** The Council produces an [Authority Monitoring Report](#) containing an assessment of the policies in the LPR. This monitoring will indicate whether any changes need to be considered if a policy is not working or if the targets are not being met. The Authority Monitoring Report will be produced on an annual basis and will be published on the Council's website<sup>(58)</sup>.

**Table 9 Monitoring Indicator 1 - Climate Change**

1. Climate Change			
To mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change and minimise demand for energy and other resources.			
Related Policies: SP1, SP5, SP6, SP7, SP10, SP11, SP19, RSA1-27, ESA1-6, DM4			
Key Policy Outcome	Delivery Indicators	Target	Where presented
All new residential developments of one or more dwellings and new non-residential development of 100sqm or more to achieve net zero carbon in relation to operational energy (regulated and unregulated)	Number and percentage of residential development (one or more dwellings) applications approved which are supported by an Energy Statement and to achieve at least 63% reduction in carbon emissions	100% of eligible applications	Authority Monitoring Report / Environment Strategy Annual Progress Report
	Number and percentage of non-residential development applications (100sqm or more) approved to achieve BREEAM Excellent	100% of eligible applications	Authority Monitoring Report / Environment Strategy Annual Progress Report
	Number and percentage of residential refurbishment applications of 10+ dwellings approved to achieve BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment Excellent	100% of eligible applications	Authority Monitoring Report / Environment Strategy Annual Progress Report

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**1. Climate Change**

To mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change and minimise demand for energy and other resources.

**Related Policies:** SP1, SP5, SP6, SP7, SP10, SP11, SP19, RSA1-27, ESA1-6, DM4

Key Policy Outcome	Delivery Indicators	Target	Where presented
All new residential developments of one or more dwellings and new non-residential development of 100sqm or more to address any residual carbon emissions by contribution towards carbon offsetting scheme where development proposal cannot demonstrate that it is net zero carbon in relation to operational energy (regulated and unregulated)	Amount of funds spent, types of projects funded, and amount of CO <sup>2</sup> reduced from contribution towards carbon offsetting scheme secured through Section 106 Agreement or equivalent	No target, maximise contribution	Authority Monitoring Report / Environment Strategy Annual Progress Report
To support proposals for renewable, zero and low carbon energy technologies to achieve net zero carbon in relation to operational energy (regulated and unregulated)	Number and percentage of residential development (one or more dwellings) applications approved which include renewable, zero and low carbon energy technologies	No target, assess trends	Authority Monitoring Report / Environment Strategy Annual Progress Report
	Number and percentage of non-residential development (100sqm or more) applications approved which include renewable, zero and low carbon energy technologies	No target, assess trends	Authority Monitoring Report / Environment Strategy Annual Progress Report

**Table 10 Monitoring Indicator 2 - Housing**

**2. Housing**

To provide a range of sites to ensure that the District's housing needs and aspirations are met by providing a range of market, affordable and specialist housing types, tenures and sizes in appropriate and sustainable locations.

**Related Policies:** SP1, SP2, SP3, SP4, SP12, SP13, SP14, SP15, SP16, RSA1-29, DM1, DM2, DM16, DM17, DM18, DM19, DM20, DM21, DM22, DM23, DM24, DM25, DM26, DM27, DM28, DM29, DM30

Key Policy Outcome	Delivery Indicators	Target	Where presented
To meet the housing requirement to 2041	Number of net dwellings completed	Housing Delivery of an average of 515 net dwellings per annum for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2041	Authority Monitoring Report
To maintain Five Year Housing Land Supply	Housing trajectory which includes a sufficient supply of deliverable sites for the first five years	To maintain at least a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites	Five Year Housing Land Supply Report



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**2. Housing**

To provide a range of sites to ensure that the District's housing needs and aspirations are met by providing a range of market, affordable and specialist housing types, tenures and sizes in appropriate and sustainable locations.

**Related Policies:** SP1, SP2, SP3, SP4, SP12, SP13, SP14, SP15, SP16, RSA1-29, DM1, DM2, DM16, DM17, DM18, DM19, DM20, DM21, DM22, DM23, DM24, DM25, DM26, DM27, DM28, DM29, DM30

Key Policy Outcome	Delivery Indicators	Target	Where presented
Development on allocated housing sites	Net dwellings completed and development progress on allocated housing sites	Phased development to maintain housing land supply	Authority Monitoring Report / Five Year Housing Land Supply Report
	Windfall Permissions and net dwellings completed including prior approvals	No target, assess trends	Authority Monitoring Report / Five Year Housing Land Supply Report
To optimise the use of previously developed land	Number and percentage of net dwellings completed on previously developed land	No target, assess trends	Authority Monitoring Report
To direct development within existing settlements and to follow the settlement hierarchy	Number and percentage of net dwellings completed and permitted within settlement boundaries	Housing focused in existing settlements within settlement boundaries and in accordance with settlement hierarchy	Authority Monitoring Report
	Number of net dwellings completed and permitted in settlements within settlement hierarchy		Authority Monitoring Report
To provide affordable housing to meet local needs	Number of net affordable housing completed by tenure	30-40% on site of 10+ dwellings; 20% on site of 5-9 dwellings in designated rural areas	Authority Monitoring Report
	Number of applications approved to include off-site contribution to affordable housing	100% of eligible applications	Authority Monitoring Report
To deliver a mix of housing types and sizes to reflect local needs, including those with specialist requirements	Number of net dwellings completed by dwelling size	To deliver a mix of housing types and sizes to reflect local needs	Authority Monitoring Report
	Number of net dwellings completed that are self-and custom-build		Authority Monitoring Report
	Number of net dwellings or bedspace completed for older people and disabled people (C2 and C3 use class)		Authority Monitoring Report

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**2. Housing**

To provide a range of sites to ensure that the District's housing needs and aspirations are met by providing a range of market, affordable and specialist housing types, tenures and sizes in appropriate and sustainable locations.

**Related Policies:** SP1, SP2, SP3, SP4, SP12, SP13, SP14, SP15, SP16, RSA1-29, DM1, DM2, DM16, DM17, DM18, DM19, DM20, DM21, DM22, DM23, DM24, DM25, DM26, DM27, DM28, DM29, DM30

Key Policy Outcome	Delivery Indicators	Target	Where presented
Development of sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	Number of net additional pitches or plots for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	To meet identified need	Authority Monitoring Report
Development within the Land Use Planning Consultation Zones in accordance with Office for Nuclear Regulation advice	Number of net dwellings completed and permitted in the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) of AWE Aldermaston and AWE Burghfield	To take account of Office for Nuclear Regulation advice in the interests of public safety and to ensure proposed developments do not adversely affect the defence related operation or capability of the AWE sites	Authority Monitoring Report

**Table 11 Monitoring Indicator 3 - Sustainable and Quality Development, Green Infrastructure and Healthy Living**

**3. Sustainable and Quality Development, Green Infrastructure and Healthy Living**

To ensure provision of sustainable developments of high quality design, construction and efficiency (including land use) which contribute to an attractive, safe and accessible environment for all.

To ensure that West Berkshire contains a strong network of multi-functional green infrastructure which provides health and environmental benefits and enhances the overall quality of life of sustainable communities.

**Related Policies:** SP1, SP2, SP3, SP4, SP5, SP6, SP7, SP8, SP10, SP11, SP13, SP14, RSA1-29, ESA1-6, DM3, DM5, DM6, DM7, DM8, DM15, DM40

Key Policy Outcome	Delivery Indicators	Target	Where presented
To ensure development within areas of flood risk will only be accepted if there are no suitable and available sites at a lower flood risk	Number of net dwellings completed and permitted within Flood Zones 2 and 3	No increase in properties at risk from flooding	Authority Monitoring Report
To safeguard local green space, as identified in the neighbourhood plans	Any gains and losses of designated local green spaces	No loss of designated local green spaces	Authority Monitoring Report
To identify local green infrastructure requirements on allocated housing sites	Delivery of local green infrastructure in accordance with the housing site allocation policies	To meet local green infrastructure requirements in accordance with the housing site allocation policies	Authority Monitoring Report

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**3. Sustainable and Quality Development, Green Infrastructure and Healthy Living**

To ensure provision of sustainable developments of high quality design, construction and efficiency (including land use) which contribute to an attractive, safe and accessible environment for all.

To ensure that West Berkshire contains a strong network of multi-functional green infrastructure which provides health and environmental benefits and enhances the overall quality of life of sustainable communities.

**Related Policies:** SP1, SP2, SP3, SP4, SP5, SP6, SP7, SP8, SP10, SP11, SP13, SP14, RSA1-29, ESA1-6, DM3, DM5, DM6, DM7, DM8, DM15, DM40

Key Policy Outcome	Delivery Indicators	Target	Where presented
All residential development of 10 dwellings or more to provide public open space	Number and percentage of residential development applications approved of 10 dwellings or more which provide public open space through on-site provision, off-site provision or financial contributions	100% of eligible applications	Authority Monitoring Report
Development does not lead to adverse effect on air quality	Number of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAS) declared	No new AQMAS declared	West Berkshire Air Quality Annual Status Report / Authority Monitoring Report
	Annual Mean Nitrogen Dioxide Concentrations for declared AQMAS	Not to exceed the Nitrogen dioxide (NO <sub>2</sub> ) Annual Mean Objective of 40 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	West Berkshire Air Quality Annual Status Report / Authority Monitoring Report

**Table 12 Monitoring Indicator 4 - Economy and Town Centres**

**4. Economy and Town Centres**

To facilitate and support a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base across the District, including the provision of employment land which provides for a range of local job opportunities.

To enhance the vitality and viability of town and district centres in West Berkshire as places for shopping, leisure and community activities.

**Related Policies:** SP1, SP2, SP3, SP4, SP17, SP18, ESA1-6, DM2, DM31, DM32, DM33, DM34, DM35, DM36, DM37, DM38, DM39

Key Policy Outcome	Delivery Indicators	Target	Where presented
To meet the identified need for employment land to 2041	Net office (Class E g (i)(ii)) floorspace completed and permitted	Provision for 57,531 sqm of office (Class E g (i)(ii)) floorspace for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2041	Authority Monitoring Report

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**4. Economy and Town Centres**

To facilitate and support a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base across the District, including the provision of employment land which provides for a range of local job opportunities.

To enhance the vitality and viability of town and district centres in West Berkshire as places for shopping, leisure and community activities.

**Related Policies:** SP1, SP2, SP3, SP4, SP17, SP18, ESA1-6, DM2, DM31, DM32, DM33, DM34, DM35, DM36, DM37, DM38, DM39

Key Policy Outcome	Delivery Indicators	Target	Where presented
	Net industrial, storage and distribution (Classes E g(iii), B2 and B8) floorspace completed and permitted	Provision for 98,196 sqm of industrial, storage and distribution (Classes E g(iii), B2 and B8) floorspace for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2041	Authority Monitoring Report
Development on allocated employment sites	Net employment floorspace completed and development progress on allocated employment sites	To meet the identified need for employment land to 2041	Authority Monitoring Report
Optimise the use of previously developed land	Amount and percentage of net employment floorspace completed on previously developed land	No target, assess trends	Authority Monitoring Report
Encourage the redevelopment and regeneration of land within Designated Employment Areas and to safeguard all Designated Employment Areas for business uses or development	Net employment floorspace completed and permitted within Designated Employment Areas	No net loss of employment floorspace within Designated Employment Areas	Authority Monitoring Report
	Net loss of employment floorspace to residential use through prior approvals within Designated Employment Areas	No target, assess trends	Authority Monitoring Report
Development within the Land Use Planning Consultation Zones in accordance with Office for Nuclear Regulation advice	Net employment floorspace completed and permitted in the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) of AWE Aldermaston and AWE Burghfield	To take account of Office for Nuclear Regulation advice in the interests of public safety and to ensure proposed developments do not adversely affect the defence related operation or capability of the AWE sites	Authority Monitoring Report
To direct retail, leisure and hospitality related development to town and district centres	Net floorspace for main town centre uses completed and permitted within town and district centres	No target, assess trends	Authority Monitoring Report
	Retail vacancy rates within town and district centres	No target, assess trends	Authority Monitoring Report



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**Table 13 Monitoring Indicator 5 - Culture and Heritage**

<b>5. Culture and Heritage</b>  Together with partners, to develop and promote the cultural distinctiveness of the area, recognising it is fundamental to the improved future wellbeing and sustainability of West Berkshire's economy and communities.  To conserve and enhance the local distinctive character, identity, significance and special interest of the built, historic and natural environment in West Berkshire's towns, villages and countryside.  Related Policies: SP1, SP2, SP3, SP5, SP7, SP8, SP9, DM9, DM10, DM11, DM12, DM13, DM14			
Key Policy Outcome	Delivery Indicators	Target	Where presented
To conserve and enhance the built and historic environment including cultural and heritage assets	Number of Conservation Areas and percentage with up to date Conservation Area Appraisal	All Conservation Areas to have Conservation Area Appraisal	Authority Monitoring Report
	Number of Listed Buildings	No net reduction of Listed Buildings	Authority Monitoring Report
	Number of Scheduled Monuments	No net reduction of Scheduled Monuments	Authority Monitoring Report
	Number of Registered Parks and Gardens	No net reduction of Registered Parks and Gardens	Authority Monitoring Report
	Number of Registered Battlefields	No net reduction of Registered Battlefields	Authority Monitoring Report
	Number and details of sites identified on the Heritage at Risk Register	Decrease in numbers	Authority Monitoring Report
	Number of non-designated heritage assets identified on the local list and in neighbourhood plans	No net reduction of non-designated heritage assets	Authority Monitoring Report

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**Table 14 Monitoring Indicator 6 - North Wessex Downs National Landscape**

<b>6. North Wessex Downs National Landscape</b>  <b>Together with partners, to continue to conserve and enhance the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, with appropriate landscape-led development delivering wider environmental, economic and social benefits.</b>  <b>Related Policies: SP1, SP2, SP3, SP6, SP7, SP8, SP10, SP11, SP12, SP17, RSA17-27, ESA2 - 5, DM1, DM2, DM5, DM6, DM7, DM8, DM15, DM35, DM36, DM37, DM38, DM40</b>			
Key Policy Outcome	Delivery Indicators	Target	Where presented
To conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape	Number of major planning applications approved in the North Wessex Downs National Landscape	To ensure major applications are only granted in accordance with the policy	Authority Monitoring Report
To conserve and enhance sites of biodiversity importance at different levels, promote conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species	Changes in areas of biodiversity importance	To assess trends	Authority Monitoring Report / Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) Annual Monitoring Report
	Changes in the area of UK priority habitats	To assess trends	Authority Monitoring Report / Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) Annual Monitoring Report
	Number of Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites in positive conservation management	To assess trends	Authority Monitoring Report / Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) Annual Monitoring Report
	Condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)	Natural England's objective is to achieve 'favourable condition' status for all SSSIs	Authority Monitoring Report
	Distribution and status of selected species	To assess trends	Authority Monitoring Report / Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) Annual Monitoring Report

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**Table 15 Monitoring Indicator 7 - Transport and Infrastructure**

<b>7. Transport and Infrastructure</b>  To make provision for transport networks that support sustainable growth in West Berkshire and to promote low emission transport choices.  To ensure that infrastructure needs (physical and social) arising from the growth in West Berkshire are provided to support and keep pace with development in accordance with the detail set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.  Related Policies: SP1, SP3, SP5, SP6, SP7, SP10, SP13, SP14, SP15, SP16, SP17, SP19, SP20, RSA1-27, ESA1-6, DM41, DM42, DM43, DM44, DM45			
Key Policy Outcome	Delivery Indicators	Target	Where presented
To deliver the strategic and local infrastructure projects included in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan during the plan period	The progress and delivery of strategic and local infrastructure projects in accordance with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan	To meet the requirements set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan	Authority Monitoring Report / Infrastructure Funding Statement

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## Appendix 2 Settlement Boundary Review

### Review of settlement boundaries

As part of our Local Plan Review (LPR), we undertook a review of the settlement boundaries across the District. Settlement boundaries are a long established planning tool. They identify the main built up area of a settlement within which development is considered acceptable in principle, subject to other policy considerations. While allowing for development, settlement boundaries protect the character of a settlement and prevent unrestricted growth into the countryside. They create a level of certainty about whether or not the principle of development is likely to be acceptable.

The settlement boundary review criteria set out the general principles followed when defining a boundary and give guidance as to what would usually be included and what would usually be excluded.

### Settlement Boundary Review Criteria

The Council took a landscape led approach to the drawing of settlement boundaries.

When reviewing the boundary for any given settlement the Council consulted the following sources, where relevant:

- Landscape Character Assessment for West Berkshire (2019)
- North Wessex Downs AONB Landscape Character Assessment (2002)
- Landscape Sensitivity Studies (2009) for Newbury, Thatcham, Hungerford and West Reading
- Landscape Sensitivity Assessments (2011) for the rural service centres and service villages in the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- Landscape Capacity Assessments (2014 and 2015) for potential housing sites in the AONB
- Historic Landscape Characterisation and Historic Environment Character Zoning (2007)
- Historic Environment Record
- Settlement character studies such as village, town and parish design statements
- Conservation Area Appraisals
- Adopted parish plans and neighbourhood plans

In conjunction with any relevant recommendations from the above studies the Council also applied the following principles in the revision of settlement boundaries:

### Principles of inclusion of land uses

Settlement boundaries identify the main built up area of a settlement within which development is considered acceptable in principle, subject to other policy considerations. While allowing for development, settlement boundaries protect the character of a settlement and prevent unrestricted growth into the countryside. They create a level of certainty about whether or not the principle of development is likely to be acceptable.

Where practicable and barring the exceptions set out below, boundaries will usually follow clearly defined features such as walls, hedgerows, railway lines and roads. Where possible, preference will be given to using features that are likely to have a degree of permanence as some features can change over time. Where development is on one side of the road only, the settlement boundary will be drawn along the edge closest to the settlement. Some boundaries may also follow along the rear of built development in order to prevent inappropriate development, for instance where dwellings have large back gardens.

### Boundaries will include:

- The main settlement area. i.e. the area of close knit physical character
- Residential sites allocated through the Local Plan and neighbourhood plan processes
- Curtilages which are contained, are visually part of the built up area and are separated from the open or wider countryside
- Recreational or amenity open space which is physically surrounded by the settlement (or adjoined on three sides by the settlement)
- Existing community facilities (such as churches, schools and village halls) which are physically and visually related to the settlement



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- Single plots or other similar small scale development opportunities which would provide infill and rounding off opportunities that are physically, functionally and visually related to the existing built up area, taking account of any environmental development constraints.

### **Boundaries will exclude:**

- Highly visible areas such as exposed ridges, land forms or open slopes on the edge of settlements
- Open undeveloped parcels of land on the edges of settlements which are not either functionally or physically or visually related to the existing built up area
- Recreational or amenity open space which extends into the countryside or primarily relates to the countryside in form and nature. This includes designated Local Green Space.
- Tree belts, woodland areas, watercourses and other features which help to soften, screen existing development and form a boundary to the settlement
- Areas of isolated development which are physically or visually detached from the settlement and areas of sporadic, dispersed or ribbon development
- Large gardens or other areas, such as orchards, paddocks, allotments, cemeteries and churchyards, which visually relate to the open countryside rather than the settlement
- The extended curtilages of dwellings where future development has the capacity to harm the structure, form and character of the settlement
- Loose knit arrangements of buildings on the edge of a settlement
- Farmsteads, agricultural buildings, or converted agricultural buildings on the edge of a settlement which relate more to the rural context
- Horse related development, minerals extraction, landfill, water features, public utilities (sewage treatment plants, substations) on the edge of a settlement
- Important gaps between developed areas in fragmented settlements. Settlement boundaries do not need to be continuous. It may be appropriate, given the nature and form of a settlement, to define two or more separate elements of it.
- Roads, tracks and public rights of way running along the edge of a settlement.

### **Specific issues to be considered on a site by site basis:**

- The wider setting and important views both into and out of the settlement will, where appropriate, be taken into account
- School playing fields
- Garden centres and plant nurseries
- Employment and leisure uses located on the edge of settlements will be considered according to their scale, functionality, visual and physical relationship to the settlement.
- Existing commitments for built development where development is underway and built out or substantially built out will be considered according to their scale and physical relationship with the settlement.

The following settlements now have defined boundaries which are shown on the Policies Map:

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**Table 16 Settlements with defined settlement boundaries**

Settlements with defined settlement boundaries			
Aldermaston	Burghfield Common	Hampstead Norreys	Tadley/Pamber Heath
Aldermaston Wharf	Chaddleworth	Hermitage	Thatcham
Ashmore Green	Chieveley	Hungerford	Theale
Beedon	Cold Ash	Kintbury	Tidmarsh
Beenham	Compton	Lambourn	Eastern Urban Area (Tilehurst, Calcot, Purley)
Boxford	Curridge	Leckhampstead	Upper Basildon
Bradfield	Donnington	Lower Basildon	Upper Bucklebury
Bradfield Southend	East Garston	Mortimer	West Ilsley
Brightwalton	East Ilsley	Newbury	Woolhampton
Brightwalton Green	Eastbury	Pangbourne	Wickham
Brimpton	Eddington	Peasemore	Yattendon
Burghfield	Enborne Row	Stockcross	
Burghfield Bridge	Great Shefford	Streatley	

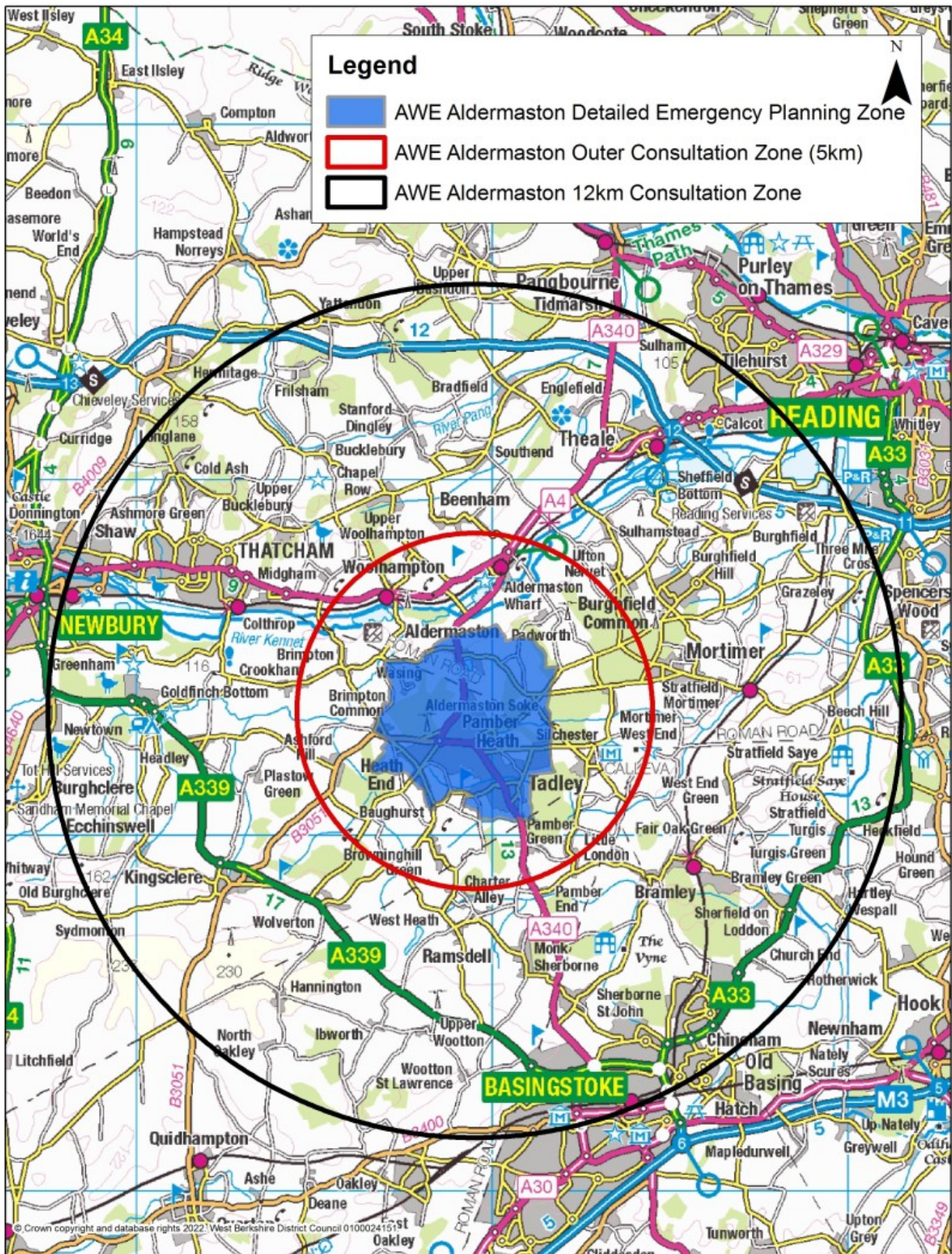
## Appendix 3 AWE Land Use Planning Consultation Zones

**3.1** The maps set out below provide the mapping information, as at January 2023, in relation to the DEPZs, OCZs (5km) and the 12km planning consultation zones for each AWE site as per the ONR consultation criteria.

**3.2** The extent of the DEPZs shown in Appendix 3 and the Policies Map could change before the Plan is updated or superseded and policy SP4 will be applied to the latest version of the DEPZ.

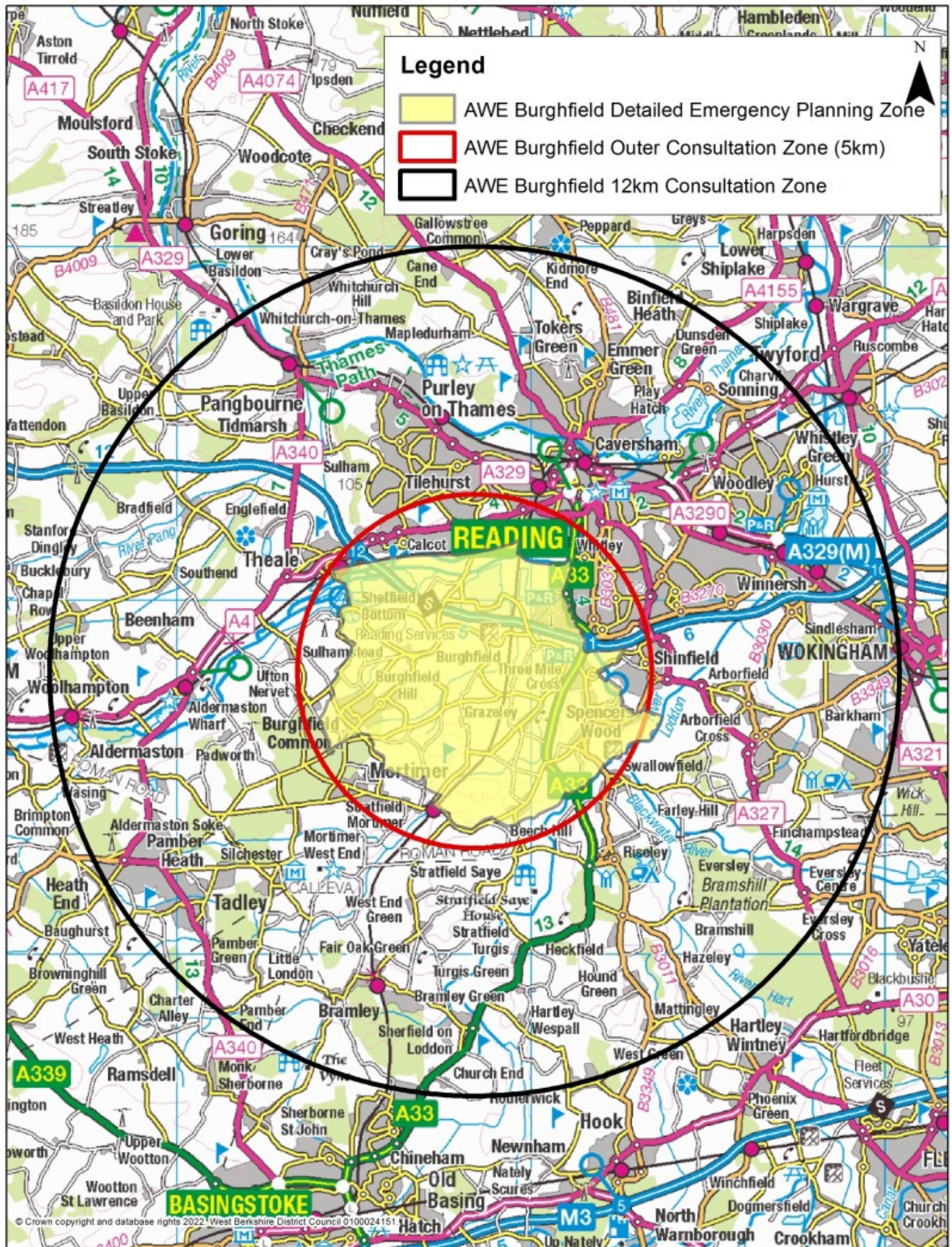


### AWE Aldermaston





## AWE Burghfield





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## Appendix 4 Designated Employment Areas

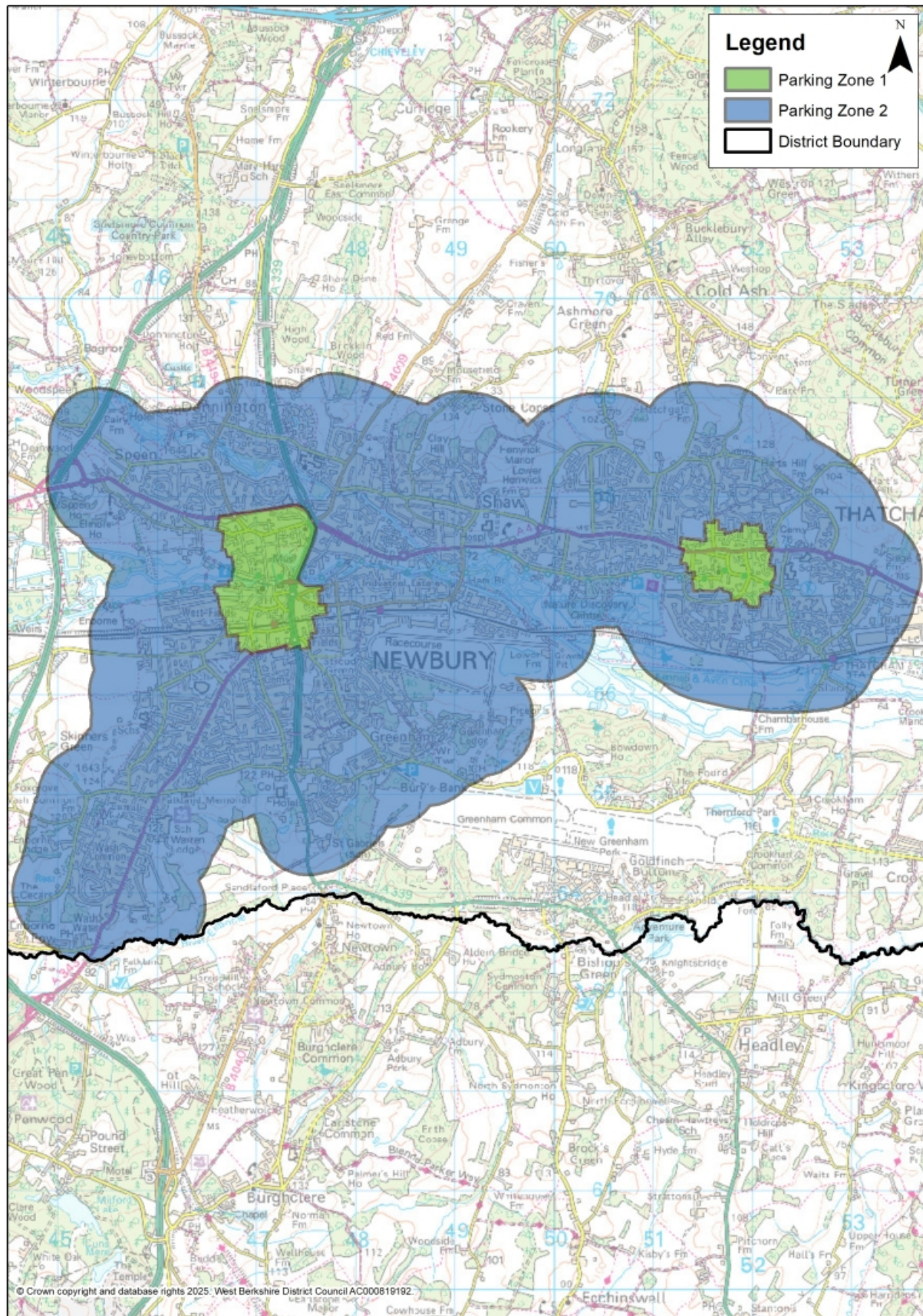
List of Designated Employment Areas across the District as defined on the Policies Map.

**Table 17**

Aldermaston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calleva Park</li> <li>• Paices Hill/Youngs Industrial Estate</li> </ul>
Beedon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Langley Business Court</li> </ul>
Beenham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beenham Industrial Area</li> </ul>
Hermitage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Red Shute Hill</li> </ul>
Hungerford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Station Yard</li> <li>• Smitham Bridge (Hungerford Trading Estate)</li> <li>• Charnham Park</li> </ul>
Lambourn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Membury Industrial Estate, including Hurst Farm</li> <li>• Lambourn Business Park</li> </ul>
Newbury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hambridge Road/Lane Industrial Estate</li> <li>• London Road Industrial Estates</li> <li>• Newbury Business Park</li> <li>• Turnpike Industrial Estate</li> <li>• Castle Industrial Estate</li> <li>• Vodafone Campus</li> </ul>
Pangbourne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Horseshoe Park</li> </ul>
Thatcham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green Lane</li> <li>• Colthrop Industrial Estate</li> <li>• Greenham Business Park</li> </ul>
Theale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arlington Business Park</li> <li>• Estates off Brunel Road and Station Road</li> <li>• Theale Lakes at Sheffield Bottom</li> </ul>

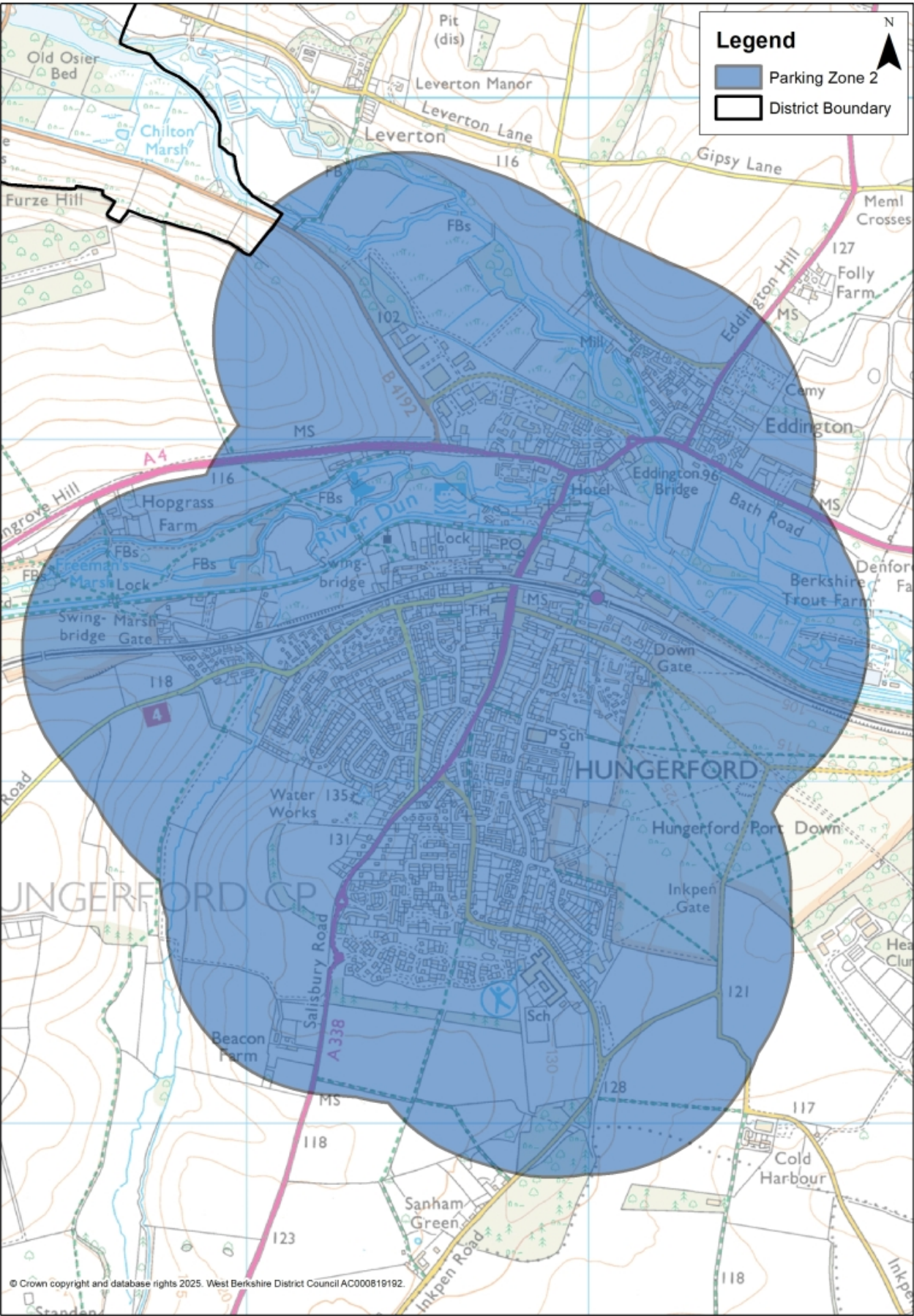
## Appendix 5 Residential Parking Zones

### Residential Parking Zones - Newbury and Thatcham



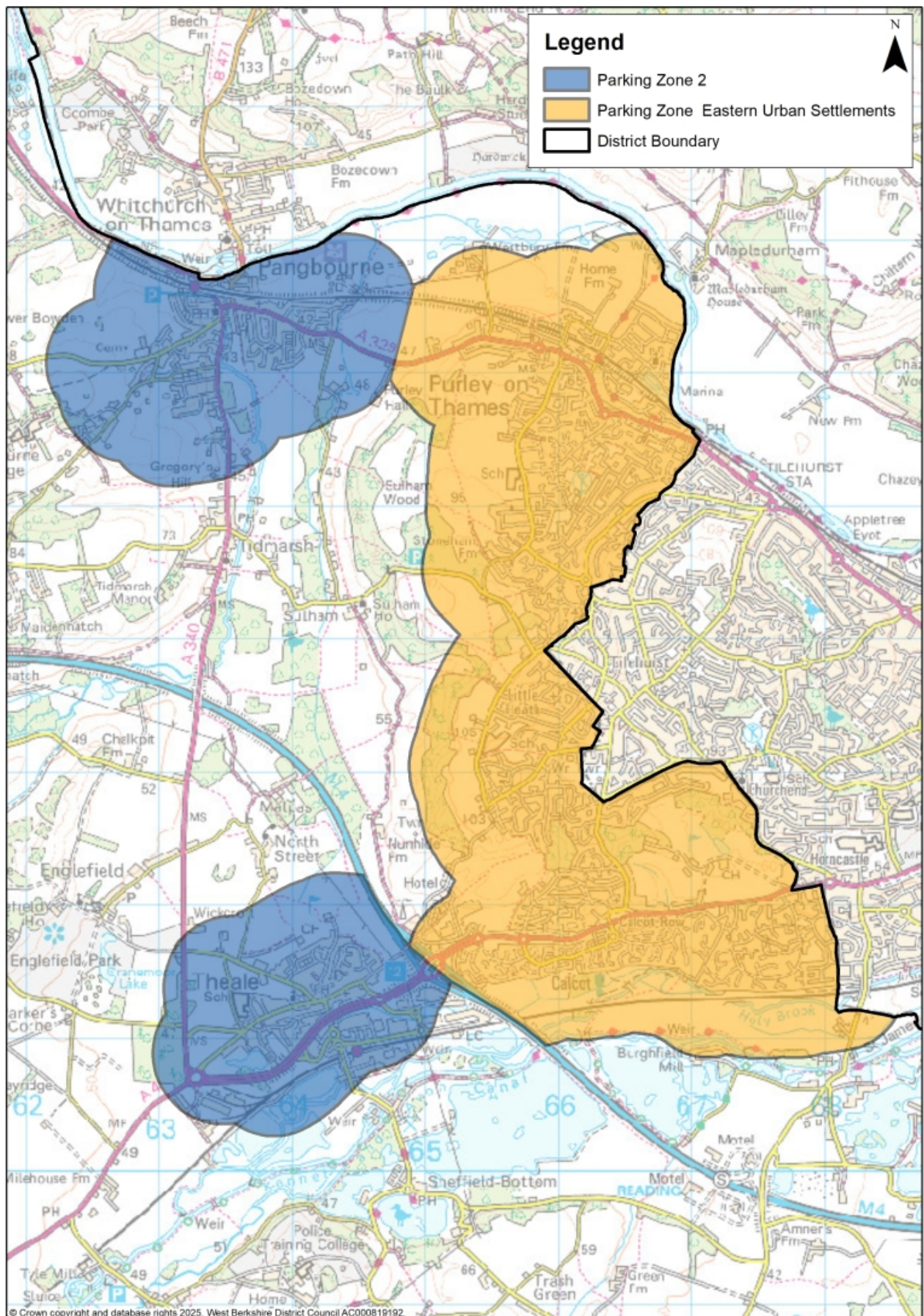


Residential Parking Zone - Hungerford





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**Residential Parking Zone - Pangbourne, Theale and Eastern Urban Settlements**

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## Appendix 6 Schedule of policies to be superseded/ deleted

Details of how LPR policies replace the saved policies of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006, the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 and the Housing Site Allocations DPD 2006-2026

Local Plan Review Policy	Superseded West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 Policy	Superseded West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 Policy	Superseded Housing Site Allocations DPD 2006-2026 Policy
SP1 Spatial Strategy	-	ADPP1 Spatial strategy; ADPP2 Newbury; ADPP3 Thatcham; ADPP4 Eastern Area; ADPP5 AONB; ADPP6 East Kennet Valley; CS1 Delivering new homes and retaining the housing stock	C1 Location of new housing in the countryside
SP2 North Wessex Downs National Landscape	-	ADPP5 AONB	-
SP3 Settlement Hierarchy	-	ADPP1 Spatial strategy	-
SP4 Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) Aldermaston and Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) Burghfield	-	CS8 Nuclear installations - AWE Aldermaston and Burghfield	-
SP5 Responding to Climate Change	-	-	-
SP6 Flood Risk	-	CS16 Flooding	-
SP7 Design Quality	-	CS14 Design principles	GS1 General site policy; C3 Design of housing in the countryside
SP8 Landscape Character	-	CS19 Historic environment and landscape character	-
SP9 Historic Environment	-	CS19 Historic environment and landscape character	-
SP10 Green Infrastructure	RL5 Kennet & Avon Canal; RL5A The River Thames	CS18 Green infrastructure	-
SP11 Biodiversity and Geodiversity	-	CS17 Biodiversity and geodiversity	-
SP12 Approach to Housing Delivery	-	CS1 Delivering new homes and retaining the housing stock	CS2 Newbury Racecourse strategic site allocation  HSA6 Poplar Farm, Cold Ash  HSA7 St Gabriel's Farm, The Ridge, Cold Ash

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Local Plan Review Policy	Superseded West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 Policy	Superseded West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 Policy	Superseded Housing Site Allocations DPD 2006-2026 Policy
			<p>HSA8 Land to the east of Sulham Hill, Tilehurst</p> <p>HSA10 Stonehams Farm, Tilehurst</p> <p>HSA12 Bath Road, Calcot</p> <p>HSA16 The Hollies, Burghfield Common</p> <p>HSA17 Land to the north of the A4, Woolhampton</p> <p>HSA18 Salisbury Road, Hungerford</p> <p>HSA21 Land north of Pangbourne Hill, Pangbourne</p> <p>HSA22 Stretton Close, Bradfield Southend</p> <p>HSA26 Land east of Laylands Green, Kintbury</p>
SP13 Sandleford Strategic Site Allocation	-	CS3 Sandleford strategic site allocation	-
SP14 North East Thatcham Strategic Site Allocation	-	-	-
SP15 Housing Type and Mix	RL5 Kennet & Avon Canal	CS4 Housing type and mix	-
SP16 Affordable Housing	-	CS6 Provision of affordable housing	-
SP17 Strategic Approach to Employment Land	ECON6 Future of the former Greenham Common Airbase	CS9 Location and type of business development	-
SP18 Town and District Centres	ECON5 Town centre commercial areas; SHOP1 Non-retail uses in primary shopping frontages	CS11 Hierarchy of centres	
SP19 Transport	TRANS1a Road Schemes; TRANS1 Meeting the transport needs of new development; TRANS3 A34/M4 Junction 13 Chieveley	CS13 Transport	-



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Local Plan Review Policy	Superseded West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 Policy	Superseded West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 Policy	Superseded Housing Site Allocations DPD 2006-2026 Policy
SP20 Infrastructure Requirements and Delivery	-	CS5 Infrastructure requirements and delivery	-
RSA1 Land north of Newbury College, Monks Lane, Newbury	-	-	HSA1 North of Newbury College Newbury; GS1 General site policy
RSA2 Land at Bath Road, Speen, Newbury	-	-	HSA2 Bath Road Speen; GS1 General site policy
RSA3 Land at Coley Farm, Stoney Lane, Newbury	-	-	HSA3 Coley Farm Stoney Lane Newbury; GS1 General site policy
RSA4 Land off Greenham Road, South East Newbury	-	-	HSA4 Greenham Road Newbury; GS1 General site policy
RSA5 Land at Lower Way, Thatcham	-	-	HSA5 Lower Way Thatcham; GS1 General site policy
RSA6 Land at Henwick Park, Bowling Green Road, Thatcham	-	-	-
RSA7 Land east of Regency Park Hotel, Bowling Green Road, Thatcham	-	-	-
RSA8 Land at Pincents Lane, Tilehurst	-	-	-
RSA9 Stonehams Farm, Long Lane, Tilehurst	-	-	HSA9 Stonehams Farm Tilehurst; GS1 General site policy
RSA10 72 Purley Rise, Purley on Thames	-	-	HSA11 Purley Rise Purley on Thames; GS1 General site policy
RSA11 Land adjacent to Bath Road and Dorking Way, Calcot	-	-	HSA13 Dorking Way Calcot; GS1 General site policy
RSA12 Land between A340 and The Green, Theale	-	-	HSA14 The Green, Theale; GS1 General site policy
RSA13 Whitehart Meadow, Theale	-	-	-



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Local Plan Review Policy	Superseded West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 Policy	Superseded West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 Policy	Superseded Housing Site Allocations DPD 2006-2026 Policy
RSA14 Former Theale Sewage Treatment Works, Theale	-	-	-
RSA15 Land adjoining Pondhouse Farm, Clayhill Road, Burghfield Common	-	-	HSA15 Pondhouse Farm Burghfield Common; GS1 General site policy
RSA16 Land north of A4 Bath Road, Woolhampton	-	-	-
RSA17 Land adjoining Lynch Lane, Lambourn	-	-	HSA22 Lynch Lane Lambourn; GS1 General site policy
RSA18 Land at Newbury Road, Lambourn	-	-	HSA20 Newbury Road Lambourn; GS1 General site policy
RSA19 Land north of Pangbourne Hill, Pangbourne	-	-	-
RSA20 Land north of Southend Road, Bradfield Southend	-	-	-
RSA21 Land at Chieveley Glebe, Chieveley	-	-	-
RSA22 Pirbright Institute Site, High Street, Compton	-	-	HSA23 Pirbright Institute Compton; GS1 General site policy
RSA23 Land west of Spring Meadows, Great Shefford	-	-	-
RSA24 Land off Charlotte Close, Hermitage	-	-	HSA24 Charlotte Close Hermitage; GS1 General site policy
RSA25 Land to the south east of the Old Farmhouse, Hermitage	-	-	HSA25 Old Farmhouse Hermitage; GS1 General site policy
RSA26 Land adjacent Station Road, Hermitage	-	-	-
RSA27 Land adjoining The Haven, Kintbury	-	-	-
RSA28 New Stocks Farm, Paices Hill, Aldermaston	-	-	TS1 New Stocks Farm Paices Hill

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Local Plan Review Policy	Superseded West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 Policy	Superseded West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 Policy	Superseded Housing Site Allocations DPD 2006-2026 Policy
RSA29 Long Copse Farm, Enborne	-	-	TS2 Long Copse Farm Enborne
ESA1 Land east of Colthrop Industrial Estate, Thatcham	-	-	-
ESA2 Land west of Ramsbury Road, Membury Industrial Estate, Lambourn Woodlands	-	-	-
ESA3 Land to the south of Trinity Grain, Membury Industrial Estate, Lambourn Woodlands	-	-	-
ESA4 Beenham Landfill, Pips Way, Beenham	-	-	-
ESA5 Northway Porsche, Grange Lane, Beenham	-	-	-
ESA6 Land adjacent to Padworth IWMF, Padworth Lane, Padworth	-	-	-
DM1 Residential Development in the Countryside	-	-	C1 Location of new housing in the countryside
DM2 Separation of Settlements around Newbury and Thatcham	-	-	-
DM3 Health and Wellbeing	-	-	-
DM4 Building Sustainable Homes and Businesses	-	CS15 Sustainable construction and energy efficiency	-
DM5 Environmental Nuisance and Pollution Control	OVS5 Environmental nuisance and pollution control; OVS6 Noise pollution; OVS7/8 Hazardous substances	-	-
DM6 Water Quality	-	-	-
DM7 Water Resources and Waste Water	-	-	-
DM8 Air Quality	-	-	-
DM9 Conservation Areas	-	-	-

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Local Plan Review Policy	Superseded West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 Policy	Superseded West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 Policy	Superseded Housing Site Allocations DPD 2006-2026 Policy
DM10 Listed Buildings	-	-	-
DM11 Non-designated Heritage Assets	-	-	-
DM12 Registered Parks and Gardens	-	-	-
DM13 Registered Battlefields	-	-	-
DM14 Assets of Archaeological Importance	-	-	-
DM15 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows	-	-	-
DM16 First Homes Exception Sites	-	-	-
DM17 Rural Exception Housing	-	-	C2 Rural housing exceptions
DM18 Self and Custom Build Housing	-	CS4 Housing type and mix	-
DM19 Specialised Housing	-	CS4 Housing type and mix	-
DM20 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople		CS7 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	TS3 Detailed planning considerations for traveller sites
DM21 Retention of Mobile Home Parks	HSG14 Retention of mobile home parks	-	-
DM22 Residential Use of Space above Non-residential Units	HSG13 Residential use of space above shops and offices	-	-
DM23 Housing Related to Rural Workers	ENV27 Development on existing institutional and educational sites in the countryside	-	C5 Housing related to rural workers
DM24 Conversion of Existing Redundant or Disused Buildings in the Countryside to Residential Use	-	-	C4 Conversion of existing redundant buildings in the countryside to residential use
DM25 Replacement of Existing Dwellings in the Countryside	-	-	C7 Replacement of existing dwellings

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Local Plan Review Policy	Superseded West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 Policy	Superseded West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 Policy	Superseded Housing Site Allocations DPD 2006-2026 Policy
DM26 Extension of Residential Curtilages in the Countryside	-	-	C8 Extension of residential curtilages
DM27 Sub-division of Existing Dwellings in the Countryside	-	-	-
DM28 Residential Extensions	House Extensions Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)	-	C6 Extension of existing dwellings in the countryside
DM29 Residential Annexes	-	-	-
DM30 Residential Amenity	-	-	-
DM31 Designated Employment Areas	ECON6 Future of the former Greenham Common Airbase	CS9 Location and type of business development	-
DM32 Development within AWE	-	-	-
DM33 RAF Welford and Denison Barracks	-	-	-
DM34 Retail Parks	SHOP3 Retail areas and retail warehousing	-	-
DM35 Sustaining a Prosperous Rural Economy	ENV19 The re-use and adaption of rural buildings (in relation to economic uses)	CS10 Rural economy	-
DM36 Farm Diversification	ENV16 Farm diversification		
DM37 Equestrian and Horseracing Industry	ENV29 Development involving accommodation for horses	CS12 Equestrian / racehorse industry	-
DM38 Development on Existing Educational & Institutional Sites in the Countryside	ENV27 Development on existing institutional and educational sites in the countryside	-	-
DM39 Local Community Facilities	SHOP5 The encouragement of local and village shops; Public Houses Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)	-	-
DM40 Public Open Space	RL1 Public open space provision in residential schemes; RL2 Provision of public open space	-	-



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Local Plan Review Policy	Superseded West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 Policy	Superseded West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 Policy	Superseded Housing Site Allocations DPD 2006-2026 Policy
	(methods); RL3 Selection of public open space and recreation sites		
DM41 Digital Infrastructure	-	-	-
DM42 Transport Infrastructure	TRANS1a Road Schemes; TRANS1 Meeting the transport needs of new development; TRANS3 A34/M4 Junction 13 Chieveley	-	-
DM43 Theale Rail - Road Transfer Site	ECON7 Safeguarding rail-based industry at Theale	-	-
DM44 Parking	TRANS1 Meeting the transport needs of new development	-	P1 Residential parking in new development
DM45 Travel Planning	TRANS1 Meeting the transport needs of new development	-	-

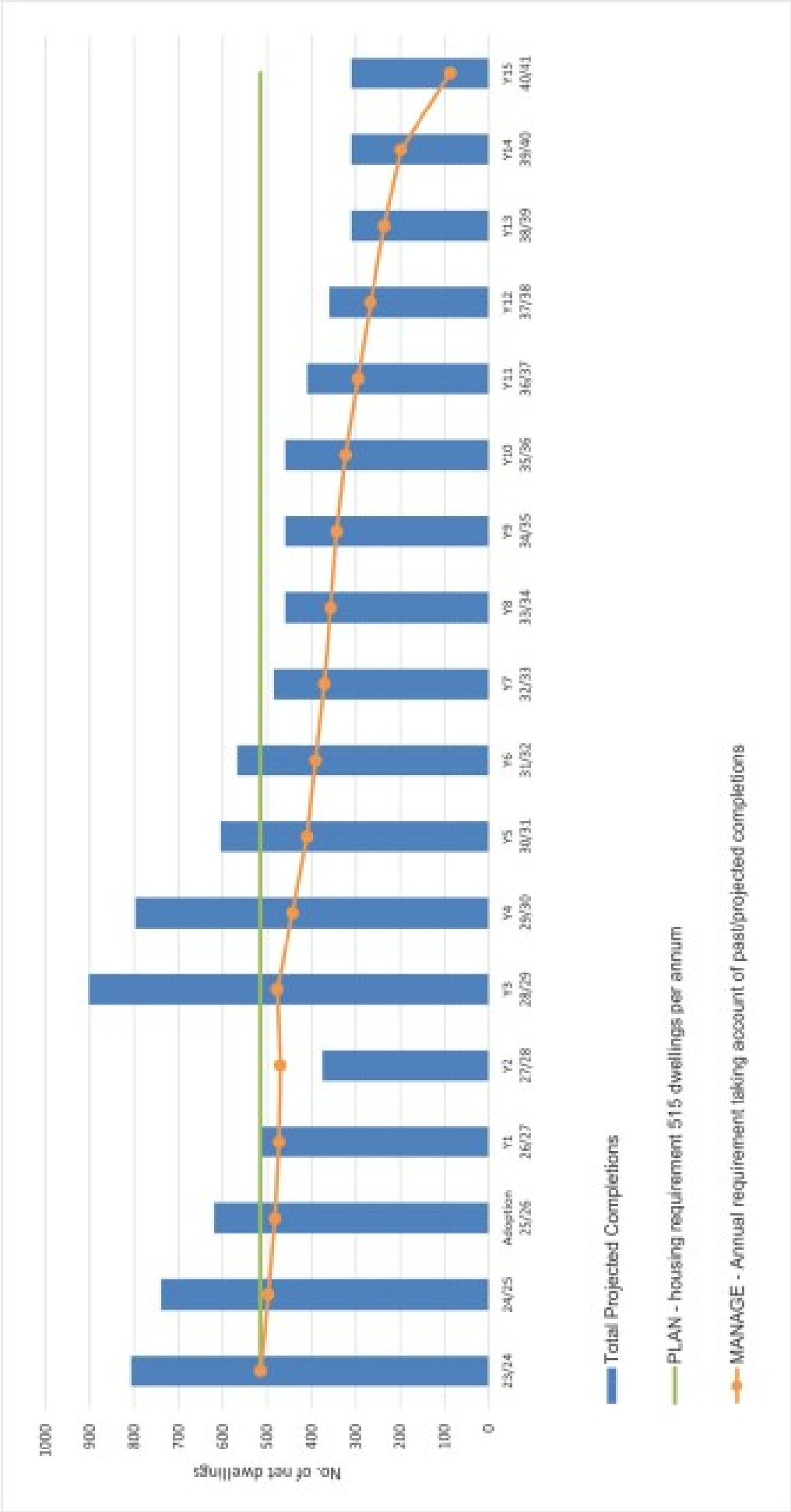
	Planning status at 31 March 2023	Submission 22/23	23/24	24/25	Adoption 25/26	Y1 26/27	Y2 27/28	Y3 28/29	Y4 29/30	Y5 30/31	Y6 31/32	Y7 32/33	Y8 33/34	Y9 34/35	Y10 35/36	Y11 36/37	Y12 37/38	Y13 38/39	Y14 39/40	Y15 40/41	TOTAL
Local Plan allocations not being retained (due to site being at an advanced stage of construction)																					
Core Strategy allocated site - Newbury Racecourse	Under construction	67	51	15	39	55	46	54	40	50	48	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	398
HSADPD 4B - Land west of New Road, North of Pyle Hill, Greenham	Completed	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HSADPD 7 - St Gabriel's Farm, The Ridge, Cold Ash	Under construction	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
HSADPD 10 - Stonehams Farm, Tilehurst	Under construction	35	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15
HSADPD 12 - Land adjacent to Junction 12 of M4, Bath Road Calcot	Under construction	68	29	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	29
HSADPD 17 - Land to the north of A4, Woolhampton	Completed	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HSADPD 18 - Salisbury Road, Hungerford	Completed	66	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HSADPD 22 - Land off Stretton Close, Bradfield Southend	Under construction	7	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Subtotal: Local Plan allocations not being retained		270	104	15	39	55	46	54	40	50	48	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	451
Existing planning commitments on unallocated sites																					
Beansheaf Farm, Bourne Close, Holybrook	Under construction	22	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Sterling Industrial Estate, Newbury	Under construction	0	119	48	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	167
Land to rear of 1-15 The Broadway (Bayer site), Newbury	Full permission	0	0	0	36	36	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	72
Market Street redevelopment, Newbury	Under construction	2	198	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	198
1 West Street, Newbury	Permission lapsed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Land off Faraday and Kelvin Road, Newbury	Full permission	0	0	0	0	0	0	80	80	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	160
Westminster House, Bath Road, Padworth	Full permission	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
Comfort Inn And Land To The South West , Bath Road, Padworth	Full permission	0	0	0	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	26
Land adjacent to Hilltop, Donnington: West	Under construction	73	40	35	35	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	135
Land adjacent to Hilltop, Donnington: East	Under construction	70	40	35	21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	96
Crookham House , Crookham Common, Thatcham	Completed	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lakeside, Theale	Full permission	0	0	30	60	60	60	60	29	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	299
19 and 19A High Street, Theale	Full permission	0	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15
Permitted non-allocated sites of 10+ dwellings at 31 March 2023		169	413	163	178	121	60	140	109	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1184
Emerald House, Newbury Business Park	Completed	109	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bayer House, Strawberry Hill	Under																				

	Planning status at 31 March 2023	(for reference)	23/24	24/25	Adoption 25/26	Five Year Period Post Adoption																TOTAL
						Y1 26/27	Y2 27/28	Y3 28/29	Y4 29/30	Y5 30/31	Y6 31/32	Y7 32/33	Y8 33/34	Y9 34/35	Y10 35/36	Y11 36/37	Y12 37/38	Y13 38/39	Y14 39/40	Y15 40/41		
Retained allocations in the Local Plan and Stratfield Mortimer NDP allocations																						
SP16 Sandleford Park Newbury - East	Outline permission	0	0	0	0	50	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	50	0	0	0	0	1000	
SP16 Sandleford Park Newbury - West	No permission	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	0	0	0	500	
RSA1 - Land north of Newbury College, Monks Lane, Newbury	Permission lapsed	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	
RSA2 - Land at Bath Road, Speen, Newbury	Outline permission on 107 units Full permission on 11 units	0	0	10	30	30	30	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	118	
RSA3 - Land at Coley Farm, Stoney Lane, Newbury	Full permission	0	0	25	25	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	75	
RSA4 - Land off Greenham Road and New Road, South East Newbury	Under construction	0	0	50	50	57	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	157	
RSA5 - Land at Lower Way, Thatcham	Full permission	0	0	30	50	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	91	
RSA7 - 72 Purley Rise, Purley on Thames	Under construction	0	15	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	29	
RSA8 - Land adjacent to Bath Road and Dorking Way, Calcot	No permission	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	10	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	35	
RSA9 - Land between A340 and The Green, Theale	Full permission	0	0	37	52	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	104	
RSA12 - Land adjoining Pondhouse Farm, Clayhill Road, Burghfield	Full permission	0	0	49	51	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	
RSA14 - Land adjoining Lynch Lane, Lambourn	No permission	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	20	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	60	
RSA15 - Land at Newbury Road, Lambourn	Full permission	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	
RSA18 - Pirbright Institute Site, High Street, Compton	Outline permission	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	50	50	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	160	
RSA20 - Land off Charlotte Close, Hermitage	Full permission	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	
RSA21 - Land to the south east of the Old Farmhouse, Hermitage	Outline permission	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	
RSA24 - 'Land Adjacent To New Stocks Farm, Paices Hill, Aldermaston	Full permission	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	
SMNDP - Land to the south of St John's School, The Street, Stratfield Mortimer	Under construction	24	26	14	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	58	
Subtotal: Retained allocations in the Local Plan and Stratfield Mortimer NDP allocations		24	41	237	276	196	130	290	240	235	160	150	150	150	150	100	50	0	0	0	2555	

		(for reference)	Five Year Period Post Adoption																		
	Planning status at 31 March 2023	Submission 22/23	23/24	24/25	Adoption 25/26	Y1 26/27	Y2 27/28	Y3 28/29	Y4 29/30	Y5 30/31	Y6 31/32	Y7 32/33	Y8 33/34	Y9 34/35	Y10 35/36	Y11 36/37	Y12 37/38	Y13 38/39	Y14 39/40	Y15 40/41	TOTAL
Proposed New Allocations																					
SP17 North East Thatcham	No permission	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	60	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	1760
RSA10 - Whitehart Meadow, Theale	No permission	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	40
RSA11 - Former sewage treatment works, Theale	No permission	0	0	0	0	0	0	30	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	60
RSA13 - Land north of A4 Bath Road, Woolhampton	No permission	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16
RSA16 - Land north of South End Road, Bradfield Southend	No permission	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20
RSA17 - Land at Chieveley Glebe	No permission	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15
RSA19 - Land west of Spring Meadows, Great Shefford	No permission	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15
RSA22 - Land adjacent Station Road, Hermitage	No permission	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	15	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	42
RSA23 - Land adjacent The Haven, Kintbury	No permission	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20
Henwick Park, Bowling Green Road, Thatcham	No permission	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	50	50	50	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	225
Regency Park Hotel, Bowling Green Lane, Thatcham	No permission	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	45
Land at Pincents Lane, Tilehurst	No permission	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	50	38	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	138
Land north of Pangbourne Hill, Pangbourne	No permission	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25
Site to be allocated in Hungerford Neighbourhood Development Plan	No permission	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	20	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	55
Site to be allocated in Lambourn Neighbourhood Development Plan	No permission	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	10	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25
Subtotal: Proposed New Allocations		0	0	0	0	0	0	278	268	180	220	195	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	2501
Windfall allowance		0	0	0	66	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	2166
Existing planning commitments for C2 Use Class communal accommodation		2	24	36	28	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	91
Total Past Completions		640																			
Total Projected Completions			807	739	619	515	376	902	797	605	568	485	460	460	460	410	360	310	310	310	9493
Cumulative Completions (A)			807	1546	2165	2680	3056	3958	4755	5360	5928	6413	6873	7333	7793	8203	8563	8873	9183	9493	
PLAN - housing requirement 515 dwellings per annum			515	515	515	515	515	515	515	515	515	515	515	515	515	515	515	515	515	515	515
Cumulative requirement (using 515 dpa) (B)			515	1030	1545	2060	2575	3090	3605	4120	4635	5150	5665	6180	6695	7210	7725	8240	8755	9270	
515dpa + 5%			538	538	538	538	538	538	538	538	538	538	538	538	538	538	538	538	538	538	538
Cumulative 515dpa + 5%			538	1076	1614	2152	2690	3228	3766	4304	4842	5380	5918	6456	6994	7532	8070	8608	9146	9684	
MONITOR - No. of dwellings above or below housing requirement (A-B)			292	516	620	620	481	868	1150	1240	1293	1263	1208	1153	1098	993	838	633	428	223	
MANAGE - Annual requirement taking account of past/projected completions			515	498	483	474	471	478	443	410	391	371	357	342	323	295	267	236	199	87	



Housing Trajectory 2022/23 - 2040/41



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## Appendix 8 Glossary

Table 18

Term	Acronym	Explanation
Affordable housing		<p>Affordable housing is defined in the NPPF as:</p> <p><i>Housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>Affordable housing for rent:</b> meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the government's rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).</li> <li>b. <b>Starter homes:</b> is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household's eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used.</li> <li>c. <b>Discounted market sales housing:</b> is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.</li> <li>d. <b>Other affordable routes to home ownership:</b> is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.</li> </ul>
Air quality management areas	AQMA	Areas designated by local authorities because they are not likely to achieve national air quality objectives by the relevant deadlines.
Ancient or veteran tree		A tree which, because of its age, size and condition, is of exceptional biodiversity, cultural or heritage value. All ancient trees are veteran trees. Not all veteran trees are old enough to be ancient, but are old relative to other trees of the same species. Very few trees of any species reach the ancient life-stage.
Ancient woodland		An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS).

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Term	Acronym	Explanation
Annual Monitoring Report	AMR	Annual statement monitoring progress on the Local Plan and on the implementation of policies. Also known as Authority Monitoring Report.
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	AONB	A nationally important landscape protected by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act) to conserve and enhance its natural beauty. On 22 November 2023 AONBs across England and Wales became known as National Landscapes, but the formal designation, and the legal protections, remain the same. In West Berkshire, the North Wessex Downs National Landscape is designated as an AONB.
Best and most versatile agricultural land		Land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification.
Brownfield land		See 'Previously Developed Land'.
Carbon neutral/ Carbon neutrality		The act of reducing a person's/events/ organisations/products carbon footprint to zero through energy efficiency measures and external emission reductions projects
Community Infrastructure Levy	CIL	A levy charged on most new development within the local authority area. The money is used to pay for new infrastructure supporting the development of an area by funding the provision, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure. CIL will be used to fund: roads and other transport facilities, schools and other educational facilities, flood defences, medical facilities, open spaces and sports and recreational areas
Density		A measurement of how intensively land is occupied by built development
Derogation (in relation to a Habitats Site)		Tests to consider if proposals that would have an adverse effect on a European site qualify for an exemption.
Designated rural areas		Designated rural areas include Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and areas designated as 'rural' under Section 157 of the Housing Act 1985. The parishes which are designated within West Berkshire are listed in <a href="#">The Housing (Right to Acquire or Enfranchise) (Designated Rural Areas in the South East) Order 1997</a>
Detailed Emergency Planning Zone	DEPZ	A defined zone around the nuclear site where it is necessary to pre-define protective actions which would be implemented without delay to mitigate the likely consequences of a radiation emergency. It is the zone that the AWE Off-Site Emergency Plan must cover in detail and the Council, along with the other agencies involved in the AWE Off-Site Emergency Plan, must be able to support.
Development Plan		Is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and includes adopted local plans, neighbourhood plans that have been made together with any regional strategy policies that remain in force. Neighbourhood plans that have been approved at referendum are also part of the development plan, unless the local planning authority decides that the neighbourhood plan should not be made.
Ecological Impact Assessment	EclA	A process of identifying, quantifying and evaluating the potential effects of development-related or other proposed actions on habitats, species and ecosystems. It can be used for the appraisal of projects of any scale.
Edge of centre		Defined in the NPPF as: 'For retail purposes, a location that is well connected to, and up to 300 metres from, the primary shopping area. For all other main town centre uses, a location within 300 metres of a town centre boundary. For office development, this includes locations outside the town centre but within 500 metres of a public transport interchange. In determining whether a site falls within the definition of edge of centre, account should be taken of local circumstances.'

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Term	Acronym	Explanation
Energy Hierarchy		Generally accepted best practice across the building design sector. This seeks to 1) reduce energy demand (be lean), 2) supply energy efficiently (be clean), and 3) supply renewable energy (be green).
Environmental Impact Assessment	EIA	A procedure to be followed for certain types of project to ensure that decisions are made in full knowledge of any likely significant effects on the environment.
Flood risk areas (as defined by the Environment Agency)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Flood Zone 2:</b> comprises land assessed as having between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 annual probability of river flooding (1% – 0.1%) or between a 1 in 200 and 1 in 1000 annual probability of sea flooding (0.5% – 0.1%) in any year.</li> <li>• <b>Flood Zone 3a:</b> comprises land assessed as having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding (&gt;1%) or a 1 in 200 or greater annual probability of sea flooding (&gt;0.5%) in any year.</li> <li>• <b>Functional flood plan (3b):</b> defined as land where water has to flow or be stored in times of flood.</li> <li>• Any other land is classed as Flood Zone 1; land at no appreciable risk of flooding from rivers or tidal flooding.</li> </ul>
Greenfield land		Land which does not fall within the definition of previously developed land.
Green infrastructure	GI	A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.
Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople		<p>Annex 1 of the Government's 'Planning Policy for Traveller sites' (PPTS, December 2023) defines, Gypsies and Travellers for the purposes of planning policy as:</p> <p><i>"Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such."</i></p> <p>In determining whether persons are "Gypsies and Travellers", for the purposes of planning policy, Annex 1 (of the PPTS) identifies that consideration should be given to the following issues amongst other relevant matters:</p> <p>a) whether they previously led a nomadic habit of life</p> <p>b) the reasons for ceasing their nomadic habit of life</p> <p>c) whether there is an intention of living a nomadic habit of life in the future, and if so, how soon and in what circumstances.</p> <p>Travelling Showpeople are defined in the PPTS for the purposes of planning policy as:</p> <p><i>"Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family's or dependants' more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above."</i></p>



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Term	Acronym	Explanation
Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment	GTAA	Government guidance requires local planning authorities to assess need and use a robust evidence base to inform the preparation of local plans. The GTAA establishes the future need for Gypsy and Traveller site provision, along with the provision of plots for Travelling Showpeople within West Berkshire.
Habitats Regulations Assessment	HRA	<p>An assessment of the potential effects of a land-use plan against the conservation objectives of any international Habitats Site protected by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as amended (known as the Habitats Regulations). These sites include Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).</p> <p>The first stage in the HRA process is a screening for potential impacts on European sites. If there is a probability or a risk that there will be significant effects on site integrity, alone, or in-combination with other relevant plans or projects, (having regard to the site's conservation objectives) then the plan or project must be subject to an Appropriate Assessment of its implications on the site.</p>
Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment	HELAA	A technical study which aims to identify as many potential sites as possible for residential and economic development uses in West Berkshire. Most of the sites are submissions from landowners and developers for possible future development potential. Importantly, the HELAA does not allocate sites. It is for the plan-making process to determine which sites are appropriate for residential and economic development, with any potential sites being subject to consultation and independent examination.
Infrastructure Delivery Plan	IDP	A document which identifies future infrastructure and service needs for the District
Irreplaceable habitat		Habitats which would be technically very difficult (or take a very significant time) to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed, taking into account their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity. In West Berkshire they include ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, ancient hedgerows, traditional unimproved meadows/ancient grassland and lowland fen.
Landscape Capacity Assessment	LCA	The ability of a landscape to accommodate different amounts of change or development of a specific type.
Landscape Character Assessment		An assessment to develop a consistent and comprehensive understanding of the character of the landscape.
Landscape Sensitivity Assessment	LSA	The degree to which the character and qualities of the landscape are affected by specific types of development and land-use change. Sensitivity depends upon the type, nature and magnitude of the proposed change as well as the characteristics of the landscape.
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	LVIA	An assessment of both the landscape and the visual effects of a proposed development undertaken in accordance with the Landscape Institute <i>Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment</i> 3 <sup>rd</sup> ed. 2013.
Local Enterprise Partnership	LEP	A body, designated by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, established for the purpose of creating or improving the conditions for economic growth in an area. West Berkshire is covered by the Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
Local Housing Need	LHN	The number of homes identified as being needed through the application of the standard method set out in national planning guidance (or, in the context of preparing strategic policies only, this may be calculated using a justified alternative approach as provided for in paragraph 61 of the Framework).

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Term	Acronym	Explanation
Local Nature Partnership	LNP	A body, designated by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, established for the purpose of protecting and improving the natural environment in an area and the benefits derived from it. West Berkshire is covered by the Berkshire LNP.
Local Plan		A plan for the future development of a local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. A local plan can consist of either strategic or non-strategic policies, or a combination of the two.
Local Plan Review	LPR	This document. It sets out the strategy for distributing development within the District up to 2041 and the policies for protecting, conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.
Main town centre uses		Defined in the NPPF as: <i>'Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).</i>
Major development		<p>Defined by the government in the NPPF as follows:</p> <p><i>Major development<sup>70</sup>: For housing, development where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more. For non-residential development it means additional floorspace of 1,000m<sup>2</sup> or more, or a site of 1 hectare or more, or as otherwise provided in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.</i></p> <p><sup>70</sup> Other than for the specific purposes of paragraphs 176 and 177 in this Framework.</p>
Material consideration		Factors which will be taken into account when reaching a decision on a planning application or appeal. Under Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, decisions on planning applications 'must be made in accordance with the [development] plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise'. Material considerations include issues regarding traffic, wildlife, economic impacts and the historical interest of the area (this list is not exhaustive). Issues such as the loss of a view or the impact on property values are not material to planning decisions.
Mineral Safeguarding Area	MSA	An area designated by the minerals planning authority which covers known deposits of minerals which are desired to be kept safeguarded from unnecessary sterilisation by non-mineral development.
Minor development		Development that does not fall within the definition of major development.
National Landscape	NL	See Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
National Planning Policy Framework	NPPF	The NPPF sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.
Natural Flood Management	NFM	Managing flood risk by protecting, restoring and emulating the natural 'regulating' function of catchments, rivers and floodplains.

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Term	Acronym	Explanation
Nature Recovery Network		An expanding, increasingly connected, network of wildlife rich habitats supporting species recovery, alongside wider benefits such as carbon capture, water quality improvements, natural flood risk management and recreation. It includes the existing network of protected sites and other wildlife rich habitats as well as landscape or catchment scale recovery areas where there is coordinated action for species and habitats.
Neighbourhood Plan	NDP	A plan prepared by a parish council or neighbourhood forum for a designated neighbourhood area. In law it is described as a neighbourhood development plan in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
Nutrient neutrality		<p>An approach by Natural England which highlights the need to carefully consider the nutrient impacts of any new plans and projects on internationally protected Habitats Sites. Developments need to demonstrate that they do no harm, and are 'nutrient neutral' before they can go ahead. Competent authorities and developers have to assess a site's current nutrient status and the likely impact of any new development and then identify the level of mitigation required to cancel out any additional nutrient pollution expected from a particular project.</p> <p>Pollution most typically arises from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Agricultural activity - fertilisers, animal waste, slurry</li> <li>- Use / occupation of buildings (homes especially) – untreated or partially treated sewage and wastewater entering rivers over and above the limits that water companies' permits allow.</li> <li>- Surface water 'run-off' - from development</li> </ul> <p>Development achieves nutrient neutrality when the nutrient load created through additional wastewater (including surface water) from the development is mitigated. By designing development alongside suitable mitigation measures, additional nutrient loads can often be avoided or mitigated. It essentially allows developments to be permitted without impacting on the condition of protected sites.</p>
Nutrient neutrality zone	NNZ	The geographical area in which the Council needs to consider the possibility of adverse effects to Habitats Sites, as a result of additional nutrient loads (including from residential developments), as part of a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA). In West Berkshire these are the catchments of the River Lambourn and the River Test.
Older people		People over or approaching retirement age, including the active, newly retired through to the very frail elderly; and whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing through to the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.
Original building		A building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was built originally.
Out of centre		Defined in the NPPF as: ' <i>A location which is not in or on the edge of a centre but not necessarily outside the urban area.</i> '
Out of town		Defined in the NPPF as: ' <i>A location out of centre that is outside the existing urban area.</i> '
Parish Plan		Non statutory community led document which sets out a 5 year vision for a community and the actions it needs to take to achieve that vision.

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Term	Acronym	Explanation
People with disabilities		People have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, and that impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. These persons include, but are not limited to, people with ambulatory difficulties, blindness, learning difficulties, autism and mental health needs.
Perception (of landscape)		Our own personal appreciation of landscape and how we relate to or make use of it as individuals and communities through sight, sound, smell and feel
Permitted Development	PD	Certain types of minor changes to houses or businesses can be made without needing to apply for planning permission. These changes can be made under 'permitted development rights'. They derive from a general planning permission granted not by the local authority but by Parliament. The permitted development rights which apply to many common projects for houses do not apply to flats, maisonettes or other buildings.
Planning condition		A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission (in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) or a condition included in a Local Development Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.
Planning obligation		A legal agreement entered into under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal.
Planning Policy for Traveller Sites		Government planning policy for traveller sites which should be read in conjunction with the National Planning Policy Framework.
Planning Practice Guidance	PPG	On-line guidance produced by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities that supplements the NPPF and supersedes previous planning practice guidance.
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal or Preliminary Protected Species Survey	PEA	A rapid assessment of the ecological features present, or potentially present, within a site or the surrounding area. It normally comprises a desk study and a walkover survey. A PEA report does not replace an EclA (see above), but for very straightforward projects, where no further ecological surveys are needed, an EclA Report can be produced following completion of the PEA.
Policies Map		Map showing policy areas on an Ordnance Survey map base
Previously Developed Land	PDL	Also known as brownfield land. Defined by the NPPF as: <i>Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape.</i>
Priority habitats and species		Species and Habitats of Principal Importance included in the England Biodiversity List published by the Secretary of State under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.
Public Rights of Way	PROW	Public footpaths, bridleways and byways as defined in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The phrase 'rights of way' include the above and permissive routes where there is no legal right of way but access is permitted by the landowner.



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Term	Acronym	Explanation
Renewable and low carbon energy		Includes energy for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, from the sun and also from biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels).
Rural exception sites		Defined in the NPPF as <i>"Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding"</i> .
Section 106 Agreements		Legal agreements entered into under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) between a planning authority and a developer, or undertakings offered unilaterally by a developer to ensure that specific works are carried out, payments made or other actions undertaken which would otherwise be outside the scope of the planning permission. Also referred to as Planning Obligations. Section 106 Agreements differ to CIL in that whilst they secure monies to be paid to fund infrastructure to support new developments, the agreements are negotiable and not all new development is subject to such agreements.
Self-build and custom-build housing		Housing built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with or for them, to be occupied by that individual. Such housing can be either market or affordable housing. A legal definition, for the purpose of applying the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended), is contained in section 1(A1) and (A2) of that Act.
Setting of a heritage asset		The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.
Settlement Boundary		Settlement boundaries identify the main built up area of a settlement within which development is considered acceptable in principle, subject to other policy considerations. While allowing for development, settlement boundaries protect the character of a settlement and prevent unrestricted growth into the countryside. They create a level of certainty about whether or not the principle of development is likely to be acceptable.
Site of Special Scientific Interest	SSSI	Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
Source Protection Zone	SPZ	SPZs are defined by the Environment Agency for groundwater sources such as wells, boreholes and springs that are used for public drinking water supply. The zones show the risk of contamination from activities that might cause groundwater pollution in the area. The size and shape of a zone depends upon subsurface conditions, how the groundwater is removed, and other environmental factors.
Special Areas of Conservation	SAC	Areas defined by regulation 3 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which have been given special protection as important conservation sites.
Special Protection Areas	SPA	Areas classified under regulation 15 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds.

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Term	Acronym	Explanation
Stepping stones		Pockets of habitat that, while not necessarily connected, facilitate the movement of species across otherwise inhospitable landscapes.
Strategic Environmental Assessment	SEA	A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.
Sustainable Development		<p>The NPPF states '<i>At a very high level, sustainable development is that which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways; a) economic, b) social and c) environmental.</i>' It goes on to note that these objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in the Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.</p> <p>The NPPF contains a "presumption in favour of sustainable development" requiring plan making to positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of the area with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change and approve development proposals that accord with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.</p>
Supplementary Planning Document	SPD	A document which adds further detail to the policies in the development plan. It can be used to provide further guidance for development on a specific site, or on a particular issue, such as design. It is capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but it is not part of the development plan.
Sustainability Appraisal	SA	An appraisal of the economic, social and environmental impacts of policies and proposals. It incorporates Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) – see above. The SA Scoping Report identifies the information needed for the appraisal, and describes the methodology for undertaking sustainability appraisal.
Sustainable Drainage System	SuDS	A sequence of management practices and control structures designed to drain surface water in a sustainable manner.
Town centre		Defined in the NPPF as: 'Area defined on the local authority's policies map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. Unless they are identified as centres in the development plan, existing out-of-centre developments, comprising or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres.'
Transit site		Refers to Gypsy and Traveller site which is intended for short stays and contains a range of facilities. There is normally a limit on the length of time residents can stay.
Transport Assessment	TA	A comprehensive and systematic process that sets out transport issues relating to a proposed development. It identifies what measures will be required to improve accessibility and safety for all modes of travel, particularly for alternatives to the car such as walking, cycling and public transport and what measures will need to be taken to deal with the anticipated transport impacts of the development.

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Term	Acronym	Explanation
Transport Statement	TS	A simplified version of a transport assessment where it is agreed the transport issues arising from development proposals are limited and a full transport assessment is not required.
Travel Plan	TP	A long-term management strategy for an organisation or site that seeks to deliver sustainable transport objectives and is regularly reviewed.
Village Design Statement	VDS	A parish, town or village design statement (VDS) is a non-statutory community led document which is intended to influence the operation of the statutory planning system. A VDS describes the distinctive visual qualities and characteristics of a particular area and sets out clear design guidance for any future development in it.
Wildlife corridor		Areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations.
Windfall allowance		An allowance within the anticipated housing supply for windfall sites that will come forward in the future. This allowance needs to be realistic, having regard to the land availability assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends.
Windfall sites		Defined in the NPPF as ' <i>Sites not specifically identified in the development plan</i> '