

4 Housing Site Allocations - East Kennet Valley Spatial Area

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4.1 The East Kennet Valley is the name given to the rural south-east of the District that lies to the east of Thatcham and outside of the North Wessex Downs AONB. The East Kennet Valley is characterised by a number of villages along the route of the River Kennet and the Kennet and Avon Canal and others dispersed across farmland and woodland. There are a number of important environmental assets in the area such as ancient woodlands, local wildlife sites and SSSIs.

4.2 Some growth is planned for this area to help meet the needs of the village communities and to assist with the viability of village shops and services. The overall amount of growth is relatively low for two main reasons:

- The East Kennet Valley has fairly limited services and facilities as well as poor transport connections.
- The Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) has two bases in this area, at Aldermaston and Burghfield. There is a restriction on development as set out in full in Core Strategy policy CS8.

4.3 The Core Strategy sets out a housing number of approximately 800 new homes for the East Kennet Valley between 2006 and 2026. At March 2013, approximately 270 remained to be identified and this number has been reduced further by permissions since then and by the inclusion of a modest windfall allowance. An element of flexibility is necessary however, in case houses cannot be delivered as planned elsewhere, specifically the Eastern area of the District.

4.4 The Core Strategy defines Burghfield Common and Mortimer as Rural Service Centres in this area, with Woolhampton and Aldermaston as Service Villages. There are not proposed to be any allocations in Aldermaston due to its proximity to AWE Aldermaston. Development is proposed in Burghfield Common, Mortimer and Woolhampton in the form of small extensions to these villages.

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Burghfield Common

4.5 Burghfield Common is one of the two Rural Service Centres within the East Kennet Valley and will be a focus for development within this area. There has been considerable developer interest in housing options around Burghfield Common and 11 of the sites promoted through the SHLAA were assessed as 'potentially developable'.

4.6 The number of sites promoted meant that choices needed to be made through the site selection process. This information is set out in full in the SA/SEA Environmental Report and includes full details about the sites which have been discounted through the site selection process.

Preferred Options

Preferred Option 11

Land to the rear of The Hollies Nursing Home and Land opposite 44 Lamden Way (SHLAA site references BUR002, 002A, and 004)

These sites are being considered as a single larger site. Together the sites have a developable area of just under 3 hectares. They have development potential for approximately 85 dwellings at a medium density of 30 dwellings per hectare. The sites are to the east of Burghfield Common and are well related to the village and close to existing local services and facilities. They have the potential to integrate with existing development.

It is proposed that the site will be developed for medium density housing with a full mix of types and sizes. Affordable housing will be provided on the site in accordance with policy CS6 of the adopted Core Strategy and there may be scope for an element of sheltered housing. Access will be provided onto the Reading Road. Existing woodland will be retained.

Ecological surveys would be required to advise the detail of any development proposal.

Preferred Option 12

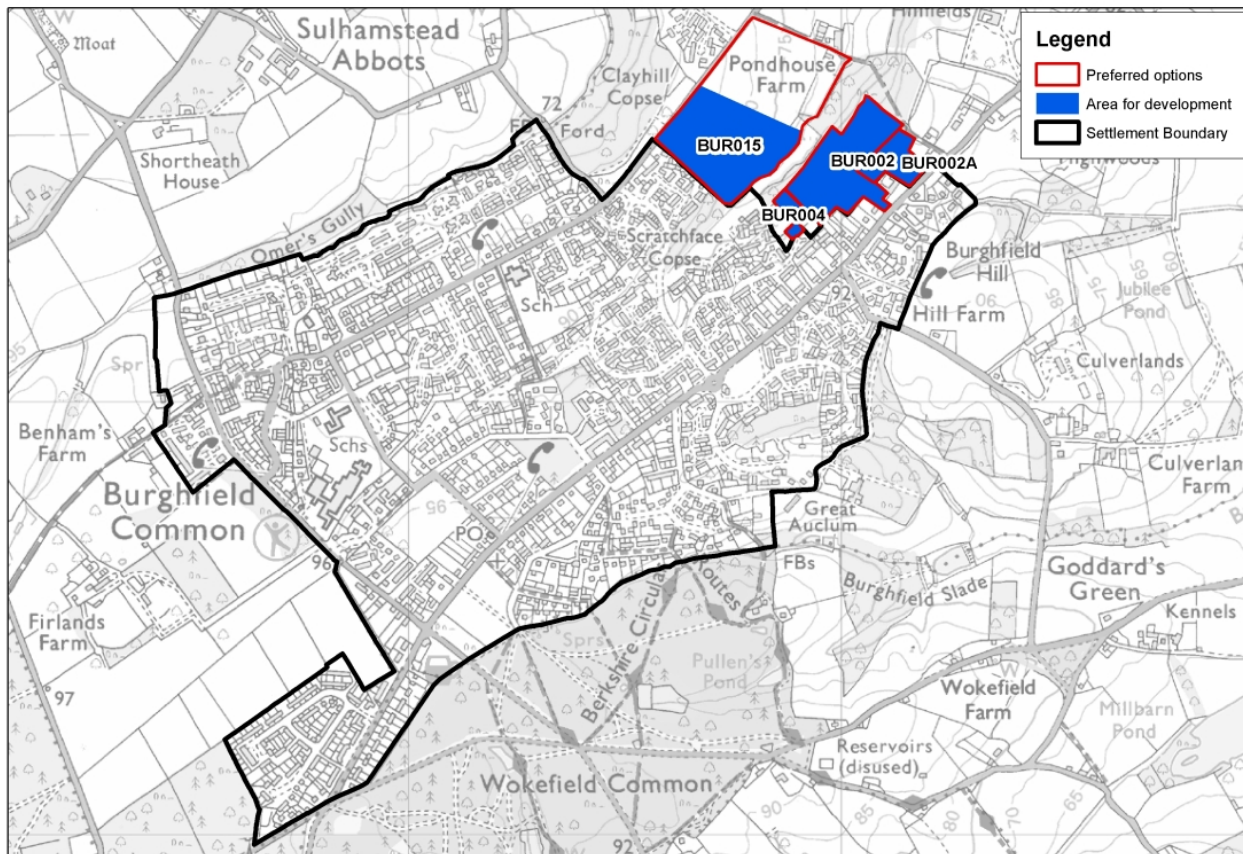
Land adjoining Pondhouse Farm, Clayhill Road (SHLAA site reference BUR015)

Pondhouse Farm covers an area of 10 hectares, however only the western part of the site adjoining the existing settlement is being considered for allocation, for approximately 105 dwellings. The site is to the east of Burghfield Common and is close to local services and facilities. It has the potential to integrate well with existing development. Access will be provided onto Clayhill Road.

It is proposed that the scheme will be developed for medium density housing with a mix of dwelling types and sizes including affordable housing. The site will be sensitively designed to protect the character of this part of Burghfield Common. Ecological surveys will be required to advise the detail of any development proposal. Appropriate landscape and biodiversity enhancements will be incorporated. Omer's gully on the site will need to be protected.

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Preferred Options - Burghfield Common



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Settlement Boundary

4.7 It is proposed that the settlement boundary of Burghfield Common will be extended to include the areas where development is proposed to be included in the submission version of the DPD. Any other changes to the settlement boundary will be carried out in accordance with the settlement boundary criteria once these have been confirmed through the consultation.

Table 4 Site Options considered and rejected (See Appendix 3 for maps of sites)

Site Reference	Site Name	Development Potential	Key Reasons for Rejection
BUR005	Land between Reading Road and Gully Copse	71	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not as well related to the village as other sites. Development would extend beyond the existing building line of the village Potential access issue.
BUR006	Land adjacent to Bolt Hole, Hollybush Lane	58	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not as well related to the village as other sites.

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Site Reference	Site Name	Development Potential	Key Reasons for Rejection
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development would extend the village beyond the existing furthest extent of the building line. • Public Right of Way on western boundary
BUR007	Land at Firlands	125	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Right of Way passes through site. • Ecological issues • Benham's gully would need protecting.
BUR008	Land adjoining Mans Hill	315	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface Water Flooding. • BAP habitat. • Scale of development proposed would impact on setting of village. • Concern over highways safety.
BUR011	Benhams Farm, Hollybush Lane	79	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development would extend beyond the existing building line of the village • Ecological potential • Archaeological potential

Mortimer

4.8 Mortimer is a Rural Service Centre within the East Kennet Valley, meaning that it will be a focus for development in this area. Four sites adjacent to the current settlement boundary of Mortimer were considered through the SHLAA process as potentially developable, with choices to be made through the plan-led process.

4.9 Site selection work has been carried out on the sites in Mortimer in the same way as the other parts of the District. However, Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council is undertaking a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) to cover the parish area. The NDP will form part of the overall planning framework for the area and can allocate sites for development.

4.10 Two options are currently being considered:

- **Option 1** – Stratfield Mortimer is given a housing number of at least 100 dwellings and allocates sites for development through the NDP, in conformity with the policies of the Core Strategy. The settlement boundary of Mortimer would then be re-drawn around the site/sites.
- **Option 2** – West Berkshire Council allocate sites to fulfil the housing requirement.

4.11 If option 2 is taken forward the preferred options for Mortimer are set out below. All sites assessed as potentially developable in Mortimer have been assessed and the information is set out in full in the SA/SEA Environmental Report.

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Preferred Options (should option 2 be taken forward)

Preferred Option 13

Land adjoining West End Road (SHLAA site reference MOR005).

Land adjoining West End Road, to the west of the existing settlement boundary of Mortimer, is a site of approximately 2 hectares with a developable area of just over 1.5 hectares. It has potential to accommodate approximately 47 dwellings in a medium density development.

The site is close to local services and facilities and is surrounded by development on two sides. The scheme would include a mix of dwelling sizes and types, including affordable housing. Landscape and biodiversity enhancements would be incorporated into any scheme. Buffers would be provided around any protected trees.

It is likely that access would be provided onto West End Road.

Preferred Option 14

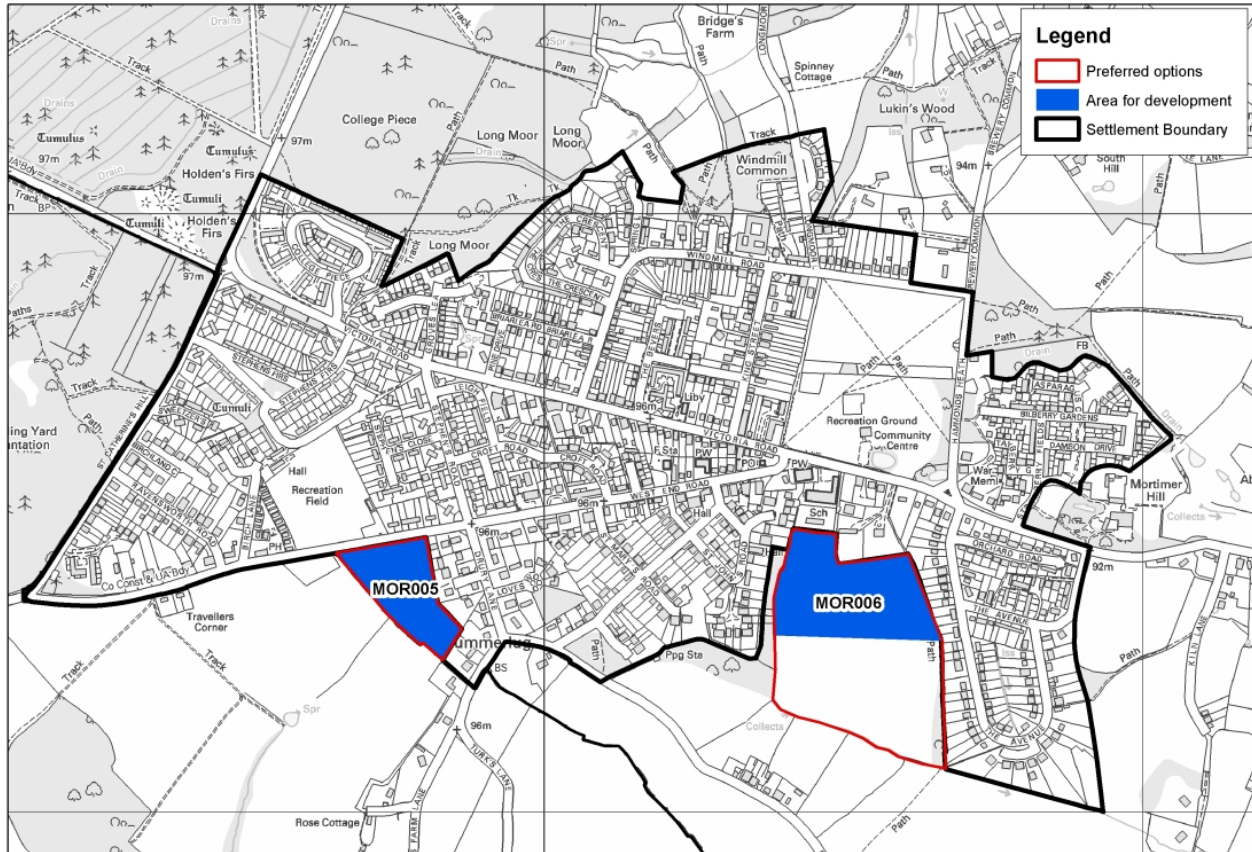
Land to the south of St John's Church of England School, Victoria Road (SHLAA site reference MOR006)

Land to the south of St John's School is a site of approximately 8.4 hectares, however, is considered to have potential for development on about half of the site – for approximately 100 dwellings. Access is an issue which needs resolving (potentially through land acquisition) before this site could come forward for development. It is therefore probable that this site will be phased to come forward later in the plan period to give time to resolve this issue.

The site would be a medium density development providing a mix of dwelling types and sizes, including affordable housing. Open space would be provided on site and appropriate landscape and biodiversity enhancements would be incorporated to ensure that the character of the area is conserved and enhanced.

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Preferred Options - Mortimer



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Settlement Boundary

4.12 It is proposed that the settlement boundary of Mortimer will be extended to include the areas where development is proposed. Any other changes to the settlement boundary will be carried out in accordance with the settlement boundary criteria once these have been confirmed through the consultation.

Table 5 Site Options considered and rejected (See Appendix 3 for maps of sites)

Site Reference	Site Name	Development Potential	Key Reasons for Rejection
MOR008	Land at north east corner of Spring Lane	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close to local services and facilities Spring Lane suffers from water run-off Flood risk on the site
MOR001	Land at Kiln Lane, Mortimer	151	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site further from local services and facilities within village than other sites (except junior school) Impact on landscape character – site surrounded by countryside on three sides Possible access issues

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Woolhampton

4.13 Woolhampton is a Service Village within the East Kennet Valley, meaning that it has been assessed as suitable for a limited amount of development. Five sites promoted through the SHLAA process were considered to be potentially developable and are shown on the map below. These have been assessed and information is set out in full in the SA/SEA Environmental Report.

Preferred option

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

Preferred Option 15

Land north of Bath Road (SHLAA reference WOOL001).

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

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

Access is proposed off New Road Hill.

Preferred Option 16

Land to the north of the A4 (SHLAA reference WOOL006)

Land to the north of the A4 is a 2.2 hectare site which has capacity for approximately 30 dwellings on part of the site at a medium density. The site is located on the edge of Woolhampton between the Village and the garage to the east of the village.

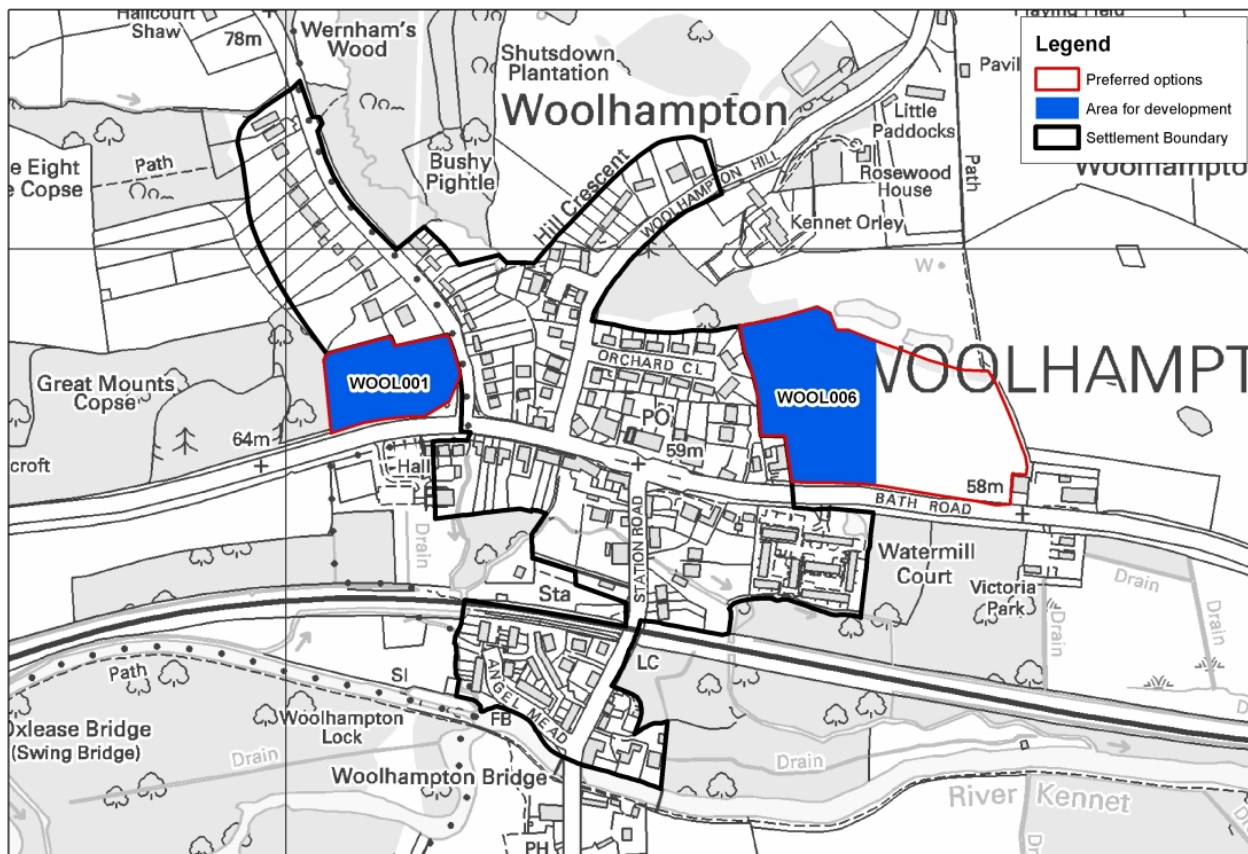
The site could be developed for a range of dwelling types and sizes and would include affordable housing. Development would need to take into account the electricity pylons that run along the site boundary and the oil pipeline that crosses the site.

The site is adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area so there are opportunities to enhance biodiversity in the area. Ecological surveys would be required to inform any development proposal.

Access is proposed off the Bath Road.

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Preferred Options - Woolhampton



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Settlement Boundary

4.15 The settlement boundary of Woolhampton will be redrawn around the developable area of the site that is chosen to be included in the submission version of the DPD. It is also proposed that it will be redrawn around site WOOL002 which has development potential for 4 dwellings only and is therefore too small for allocation.

Table 6 Site Options Considered and Rejected (See Appendix 3 for maps of sites)

Site Reference	Site Name	Development Potential	Key Reasons for Rejection
WOOL003	Land adjoining Woolhampton Allotments, Bath Road	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flooding – SA/SEA highlights this as significant issue
WOOL005	Land adjacent to Victoria Park	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not immediately adjacent settlement boundary • Flood Zone 2 and part Flood Zone 3