

**PROPOSED CIRCUS HQ LONG COPSE FARM, ENBORNE**

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Enborne</b>
<b>NDLCA Landscape Character Type: LCT11 Wooded Lowland Farmland</b>	
<b>North Wessex Downs AONB Character areas closest to Long Copse Farm:</b>	
East of and sharing characteristics of northern part of LCA 8E: Highclere Lowlands and Heath	
<b>Date of site survey</b>	May 2015
<b>Surveyor</b>	BK

<p><b>Key landscape characteristics of LCT11</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Variable scale of enclosure by mixed and deciduous woodlands</li> <li>• Irregularly undulating terrain</li> <li>• Irregular pattern of arable and pasture farmland</li> </ul>
<p><b>Key landscape characteristics of LCA8E</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lowland landscape</li> <li>• Complex micro topography</li> <li>• Frequent watercourses</li> <li>• Mosaic of irregularly shaped fields under arable and pasture</li> <li>• Wooded margins and thick hedges</li> <li>• Extensive woodland cover</li> <li>• Small scale enclosed landscape</li> </ul>
<p><b>Key visual characteristics of LCT11</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visually rich</li> </ul>
<p><b>Key settlement characteristics of LCT11</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small clustered villages and scattered farmsteads</li> <li>• Winding network of small lanes</li> </ul>
<p><b>Key settlement characteristics of LCA8E</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dense lattice of minor roads</li> <li>• Small hamlets and loose linear settlements</li> <li>• Scattered farmsteads</li> </ul>

**An Integrated Landscape Sensitivity Approach to Settlement Expansion within West Berkshire (LSS) 2009: LLCA11A: Enborne Wooded Lowland**

The site lies immediately west of LLCA11A Enborne Wooded Lowland. The landscape west of the LLCA11A is noted as having a strong landscape connection with LLCA11A. The following characteristics of LLCA11A

**LLCA11A:** Enborne Wooded Lowland has an overall *medium sensitivity*.

*Enborne Wooded Lowland* is characterised by a generally open north facing slope in the north of the area, rising to a gently undulating landform in the south. The A34 is a major influence. The area has strong connections with LCA8E Speen Valley to the north, and with the areas of higher ground to

the east (LLCA15B Wash Common Farmland) and west (which includes the site). The key elements of landscape sensitivity are:

- Much historic interest from prehistoric to WW2, also part of registered battlefield; predominantly low to medium historical sensitivity, high in west
- Southern part of area is smaller scale and enclosed by vegetation and topography, but severed by the A34 which cuts awkwardly through the small scale rolling topography
- Little built form apart from long established farmsteads
- Low levels of tranquillity close to the A34 but good levels where the A34 is screened by the local topography.

Wider landscape: LLCA11A: *Enborne Wooded Lowland* has strong connectivity with the surrounding landscape, in particular with LLCA8E (Speen Valley) to the north, and the higher ground to the east (LLCA15B) and west, outside the study area.

Setting to the urban form: LLCA11A: *Enborne Wooded Lowland* abuts the hard urban edge of Newbury to the east. Encroachment of built form west onto the valley side could be very intrusive from the sensitive valley landscape and higher ground to the north and west.

### **Summary of the key characteristics of the settlement and landscape constraints on the extent and location of development**

GTTS2 lies within the landscape setting of the North Wessex Downs AONB LCA 8E but has no intervisibility with the AONB. The key characteristics of LCA8E included in the table above are however those that are shared with the landscape around the site.

The site is isolated from any settlement. Newbury is 1km to the east, separated by open countryside and the A34 on embankment. The rural loose hamlet of Crockham Heath lies west of the site and the loose linear hamlet of Enborne 500m to the north. Both of these settlements are very rural in character with a low level of development of residential and farm buildings broken up by open fields and dense boundary vegetation.

The guidelines for NDLCA LCT11 recommend that small to medium scale development may be permissible in carefully selected locations providing the development form responds to local landscape features and includes screening and integration into the local landscape pattern.

The LSS identifies the sensitivity of the landscape east of the site. Of particular note is the potential adverse visual impact of any built form and erosion of the local good level of tranquillity.

### **Site description**

The GTTS site at Long Copse Farm forms a number of open fields under pasture on a gently undulating landform to the north of Wheatland's Lane and west of Long Copse. The eastern part of the site is formed by the good sized woodland at Long Copse with smaller woodland on the northern boundary. A collection of farm buildings is located on the western edge of Long Copse and the site is used already by Travelling Showpeople with 4 caravans and the storage of equipment for Zippo's Circus. The landscape of the site and its surroundings are typical of the small scale undulating rural landscape found west of Newbury in LCT11 and extending into the AONB LCA8E.

The southern edge along Wheatland's Lane is bounded by a mature hedge that filters views in part into the site from Wheatland's Lane and there are views over this hedge into the site from higher ground to the south. The western boundary is a hedgerow with hedgerow trees but this is gappy allowing views in from the west at Crockham Heath. A line of individual infield trees run north to south east of this hedgeline. West of this boundary are the open fields surrounding Crockham

Heath. The northern boundary is formed by small woodland beyond which lie the open fields south of Enborne. The site is crossed by a public right of way in the north which provides views into the site (see photographs 2,3 and 4).

<p><b>Relationship with adjacent settlement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Isolated from Crookham Heath</li> <li>• Separated from loose rural hamlets of Crookham Heath and Enborne by open fields</li> <li>• Individual residential properties and farm buildings are typical of the area</li> </ul>
<p><b>Relationship with adjacent wider countryside</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part of the small scale undulating landscape that forms the wider hinterland of Newbury and landscape setting of the AONB</li> <li>• Shares landscape characteristics with the AONB</li> <li>• Visual links with surrounding rural landscape</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential impact on key landscape characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential damage to woodland and tree and hedgerow cover</li> <li>• Loss of pastoral landscape</li> <li>• Potential loss of rural character of the site and the wider landscape</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential impact on key visual characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential visual impact from greater level of development on views from the surrounding landscape</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential impact on key settlement characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential to sub-urbanise the rural settlement of Crookham Heath</li> <li>• Potential to create a built form which is out of keeping in the rural location</li> <li>• Potential impact on the landscape character of Wheatland's Lane</li> </ul>

**Assessment of Potential Site identified by the landowner for Travelling Showpeople:  
RPS Drawing no. 0001-03**

The site proposed by the landowner is a large area to the west of Long Copse Farm of a much larger scale than the existing built form in the area; but reflects the local rectangular field pattern which is welcomed. At this stage no details of how the site might be laid out for 24 plots are provided but it is recommended that these should be laid out to reflect the clustered local settlement/built form pattern as far as possible and minimise the impact of the built form.

The existing built form on the site is currently visible from the adjacent roads to the south and west and from the footpath to the north, even in summer, suggesting that the proposed development could potentially be prominent within this rural landscape.

It is therefore important that any proposals for this site not only conserve and enhance all existing tree, hedgerow and woodland cover, including the trees within the site, but also include a landscape structure that will break up and screen the built form. Drawing 0001-03 shows retention of the boundary hedges and trees and a 15m buffer to Long Copse. In addition the existing mature and young trees within the site and along the road access off Wheatland's Lane should be retained. At present the proposed new planting is limited to new hedgerows along the southern boundary of the potential development area identified by the landowner and west to east across the centre of the site. These hedgerows should include tree planting. In addition it is recommended that 10m wide woodland buffers are provided to the northern and western boundaries to screen views from the footpath and Crookham Heath and that these are continued to link into Long Copse north of the farm buildings. Further tree planting should be included within the site; and along the southern boundary with Wheatland's Lane to screen views from the higher ground to the south.

The surrounding land within the red line should be retained in its current use as pasture and any sub-urbanising changes including tracks, fencing, signage, lighting, CCTV or other development infrastructure avoided in order to conserve and enhance the existing character of this rural landscape. It is also important that the proposed development does not lead to unacceptable changes to the rural character of Wheatland's Lane through, for example, road widening, introduction of larger and/or more sub-urban access or junction details, or roadside hedgerow or tree loss.

Any planning application should be supported by a landscape and visual impact assessment in accordance with the Landscape Institute's Guidance for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Edition 3 2012. This should inform the siting and design on the site as well as proposals for screening the development and minimising the harm to the local landscape character.

**Sources:**

- North Wessex Downs AONB Integrated Landscape Character Assessment 2002;
- Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment 2003 (BLCA)
- Newbury District Landscape Character Assessment 1993 (NDLCA)
- Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC)
- Quality Design SPD- Part 3