



	<p>West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2022-2039</p> <p>Proposed Submission Representation Form</p> <p>Ref:</p> <p><i>(For official use only)</i></p>
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Please complete online or return this form to:	Online: http://consult.westberks.gov.uk/kse
	By email: planningpolicy@westberks.gov.uk
	By post: Planning Policy, Development and Regulation, Council Offices, Market Street, Newbury, RG14 5LD
Return by:	4:30pm on Friday 3 March 2023

This form has two parts:

- Part A - Your details: need only be completed once
- Part B - Your representation(s): please fill in a separate sheet for each representation you wish to make

PART A: Your Details

Please note the following:

- *We cannot register your representation without your details.*
- *Representations cannot be kept confidential and will be available for public scrutiny, however, your contact details will not be published.*
- *All information will be sent for examination by an independent inspector*
- *All personal data will be handled in line with the Council's Privacy Policy on the Development Plan. You can view the Council's privacy notices at <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/privacynotices>*

	Your details	Agent's details (if applicable)
Title:		Mr
First Name:*		Rob
Last Name:*		White
Job title <i>(where relevant):</i>		Director
Organisation <i>(where relevant):</i>	Bloor Homes Limited	White Peak Planning Ltd
Address* <i>Please include postcode:</i>		Didsbury Business Centre, 137 Barlow Moor Road, Didsbury, M20 2PW

Email address:*		████████████████████ ████████████████████
Telephone number:		

**Mandatory field*

Part B – Your Representation***Please use a separate sheet for each representation***

The accompanying guidance note available at: <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/lpr-proposed-submission-consultation> will assist you in making representations.

*Your representation should cover succinctly all the information, evidence and supporting information necessary to support/justify the representation and the suggested change(s) as there will **not normally** be a subsequent opportunity to make further representations, **further submissions will ONLY be at the request of the Inspector, based on the matters and issues they identify for examination.***

Your name or organisation (and client if you are an agent):	White Peak Planning Ltd on behalf of Bloor Homes Limited
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Please indicate which part of the Local Plan Review this representation relates to:

Section/paragraph:	-
Policy:	See attached Table 1 (including Annexe 1 and Annexe 2).
Appendix:	-
Policies Map:	-
Other:	-

1. Legally Compliant

Please see the guidance notes for an explanation of what 'legally compliant' means.

Do you consider the Local Plan Review is legally compliant?

Yes

No

Please give reasons for your answer:

N/A. Representations relate to plan soundness.

2. Soundness

Please see the guidance notes for an explanation of what 'soundness' means.

Do you consider the Local Plan Review is sound?

The soundness of the LPR should be assessed against the following criteria from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Please tick all that apply:

NPPF criteria	Yes	No
Positively Prepared: The plan provides a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed need and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development	Yes	
Justified: the plan is an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence		No
Effective: the plan is deliverable over the plan period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground		No
Consistent with national policy: the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies of the NPPF		No

Please give reasons for your answer:

The Strategy set out in the plan correctly focuses development towards Newbury as the most sustainable location. Proposed locations for new housing allocations (as opposed to those carried forward from the Core Strategy) do not, however, reflect the most sustainable, available and deliverable locations for development. Additionally, a number of policies are inconsistent with NPPF requirements and may not result in deliverable development.

Further detail is set out alongside each separate policy representation in Table 1, attached.

3. Complies with the Duty to Co-operate

Please see the guidance note for an explanation of what 'Duty to Cooperate' means.

Do you consider the Local Plan Review complies with the Duty to Co-operate?

Yes

No

Please give reasons for your answer:

N/A Representations relate to plan soundness.

4. Proposed Changes

Please set out what change(s) you consider necessary to make the Local Plan Review legally compliant or sound, having regard to the tests you have identified above (Please note that non-compliance with the duty to co-operate is incapable of modification at examination).

You will need to say why this change will make the LPR legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text. Please be as precise as possible.

Individual policy representations are set out in Table 1, attached.

5. Independent Examination

If your representation is seeking a change, do you consider it necessary to participate at the examination hearing session(s)?

Yes

Yes

No

If you wish to participate at the oral part of the examination, please outline why you consider this to be necessary:

See Table 1.

Please note the Inspector will determine the most appropriate procedure to adopt to hear those who have indicated that they wish to participate at the oral part of the examination.

6. Notification of Progress of the Local Plan Review


Do you wish to be notified of any of the following?

Please tick all that apply:

Tick

The submission of the Local Plan Review for Independent Examination	Yes
The publication of the report of the Inspector appointed to carry out the examination	Yes
The adoption of the Local Plan Review	Yes

Please ensure that we have either an up to date email address or postal address at which we can contact you. You can amend your contact details by logging onto your account on the Local Plan Consultation Portal or by contacting the Planning Policy team.

Signature		Date	27.02.2023
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Your completed representations must be received by the Council by 4:30pm on Friday 3 March 2023.

Table 1: West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2022-2039 Proposed Submission Draft (Reg 19) Representations on Behalf of Bloor Homes: Land South of Gorse Covert, Sandlford Park, Newbury.

Plan Section	Legal	Sound	Duty to Co-operate	Proposed Change	Appear at EIP
Section 3.5 Strategic Objectives Housing SO 3		Y		Support.	No
SP 1 Spatial Strategy		N		<p>Object. The policy is not consistent with national policy, justified or effective.</p> <p>Proposed change: insertion of the following phrase,</p> <p>“Within Newbury ... and Calcot, developments are expected to secure a net density of at least 35 dwellings per hectare... unless it has been demonstrated that site constraints necessitate a lower density of development.”</p> <p>Paragraph 125 of the NPPF advocates the use of minimum density standards, where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs. Paragraphs 127-136 provide guidance on the importance of good design to ensure that development is visually attractive, sympathetic to local character, and optimises the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space). Given that there is not a shortage of land to meet housing needs and much of West Berkshire District is valuable countryside, some flexibility should be introduced into the policy wording to ensure that sustainable development can be provided in sustainable locations which sits well within the landscape and reflects the constraints of each individual development site. There needs to flexibility for density to be varied across a development site, particularly where it will be delivered in</p>	Yes. To explain and provide examples of how the plan cannot be effectively delivered without flexibility over density requirements.

			<p>phases, to reflect site constraints.</p> <p>Blanket application of density requirements could also render the plan ineffective as it could prevent sustainable sites from being developed out due to protracted debate over application of the density policy.</p> <p>It is noted and supported that this caveat has been attached to the requirement for development on the edge of defined settlements to secure a net density of 30 dwellings per hectare.</p>	
SP3 Settlement Hierarchy		N	<p>Object.</p> <p>The focus on key urban areas, encompassing strategic sites and non-strategic sites allocated in this plan review is supported subject to inclusion of Land South of Gorse Covert as an expansion to Policy SP16 Sandleford Park Strategic Allocation and set out in Policy SP13 of this plan review. Please see representations in respect of Policies SP12, SP13 and SP16.</p>	No
SP5 Responding to Climate Change		N	<p>Object. Bloor Homes supports the Council's objective to ensure development responds positively to the challenges of climate change but an amendment is required to Policy SP5 to ensure it is effective and, therefore, sound.</p> <p>Policy SP5 sets out the Council's overarching policy with respect to climate change which directly supports the NPPF and specifically Paragraph 153, which states; <i>'Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures.'</i></p> <p>Furthermore Paragraph 154(b) states; <i>'New development should be planned for in ways that can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design. Any local requirements for the sustainability of buildings should reflect the Government's policy for national technical standards.'</i></p>	Yes. To provide the Inspector with further explanation of the need for appropriate policy wording to ensure a deliverable approach towards the delivery of climate change resilient development in West Berkshire.

			<p>In addition to a range of requirements which consider the climate resilience and adaptability of development, the Policy includes criteria c., d., and e., which relate to energy and carbon emissions.</p> <p>These are set out below:</p> <p>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;</p> <p>d. To achieve the highest viable levels of energy efficiency;</p> <p>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;</p> <p>Proposed amendment 1. Criterion c. should also be amended to reflect the reality that the energy solution for a site must be viable to be deliverable. This will assist in ensuring that the policy is effective as it will facilitate sustainable delivery of the development strategy for housing and other development set out in the plan.</p> <p>c. Where viable and practical, To achieve net zero operational carbon development by applying the energy hierarchy, achieving the highest viable levels of enhancing energy efficiency, generating and supplying renewable, low and zero carbon energy, and as a last resort carbon offsetting in accordance with Policy DM4;</p> <p>Proposed amendment 2. To ensure that SP5 provides an over-arching strategy policy approach to climate change and to provide consistency with the requirements of Policy DM4 (and Bloor Homes' representations to DM4), criteria d. and e. of Policy SP5 should be removed. Criteria d and e are appropriately included in the more detailed climate change development management policy (DM4).</p> <p>d. To achieve the highest viable levels of energy efficiency;</p> <p>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;</p>	
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<p>SP12 Approach to Housing Delivery and Table 2.</p>		N	<p>Object. The policy is not justified or effective.</p> <p>The policy directs development to be located in accordance with Policies SP1 Spatial Strategy, SP3 Settlement hierarchy and DM1 Development in the Countryside. This is justified, effective and consistent with national policy. However, Table 2 in the reasoned justification includes the Sandleford Park site, setting out net units outstanding as 1580 homes. There is scope to increase the Sandleford Park site by up to circa 200 units with the inclusion of Land to the South of Gorse Covert.</p> <p>Consequently, reasonable alternatives have not been properly considered: a site in a location recognised to be the most sustainable in the District has been dismissed from inclusion in the plan. See representations to Policies SP13 and SP16 for further site information details of Land South of Gorse Covert.</p> <p>Windfalls are proposed to make up 20% of the housing requirement. It is considered that the level of dependency on windfalls could result in insufficient development coming forward within the plan period. This could be particularly pronounced in the latter half of the plan period due to reliance on the North East Thatcham Strategic Allocation and windfalls. It would also potentially risk shortfalls in the Council’s five year housing land supply, resulting in permissions being sought on less sustainable sites. The five-year land supply on adoption in 2024/25 is estimated to be marginal at around 5.38 years.</p> <p>It would be preferable to allocate additional sites to provide supply certainty. Land South of Gorse Copse is an available site in a sustainable location for development, being in Newbury and adjacent to an allocated site. There are no site constraints which prevent it from being developed. It should be included in the Plan as a housing site. Further site details can be found in representations to Policies SP13 and SP16.</p>	<p>Yes, to explore whether the draft policy will deliver the housing requirement.</p>
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			<p>Additionally, there is a need for clarity on the Council’s housing requirement figures. The Council has set a minimum annual figure of 513 homes and a target of 538. This is likely to lead to confusion and resultant decision making delays. It would be preferable if the plan was amended to incorporate an additional buffer, with the 538 figure adopted as the minimum.</p> <p>Proposed amendment 1.</p> <p>Approach to Housing Delivery Provision will be made for 9,146 net additional homes in West Berkshire for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March, 538 dwellings per annum. The target 538 dwellings per annum does not constitute a ceiling or cap to development.</p> <p>Proposed amendment 2. Table 2 to be amended to reflect the allocation of circa 200 homes on Land South of Gorse Copse, adjacent to Sandleford Park or the increase in the Sandleford Park site to include the circa 200 homes that can be delivered on Land South of Gorse Copse.</p> <p>Table 2</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="936 1094 1823 1203"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="936 1094 1384 1129"><i>Supply Category</i></th> <th data-bbox="1384 1094 1823 1129"></th> </tr> <tr> <th data-bbox="936 1129 1384 1165"><i>Site</i></th> <th data-bbox="1384 1129 1823 1165"><i>Net Units</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="936 1165 1384 1203">Land South of Gorse Copse</td> <td data-bbox="1384 1165 1823 1203">200</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<i>Supply Category</i>		<i>Site</i>	<i>Net Units</i>	Land South of Gorse Copse	200	
<i>Supply Category</i>										
<i>Site</i>	<i>Net Units</i>									
Land South of Gorse Copse	200									
SP13 Sites allocated for residential and mixed-use development in Newbury and Thatcham		N	<p>Object. The policy is not justified or consistent with national policy.</p> <p>Proposed amendment: to increase the Sandleford Park Strategic Allocation capacity to approximately 1750 dwellings.</p>	No						

			<p>The Sandleford Park allocation has been carried forward from the Core Strategy, Policy CR3 Sandleford Park. It was intended to deliver up to 2,000 homes. Site constraints and the importance of delivering a significant level of green infrastructure have reduced its capacity to around 1,500 units.</p> <p>The draft plan, through policies SP1 Spatial Strategy and SP3 Settlement Hierarchy, continues to place importance on focusing housing development in Newbury, identifying that an urban extension on greenfield land at Sandleford Park will form a new residential neighbourhood. The Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment reinforces this approach. It did, however, consider four options for Sandleford Park (Table 28, page 36). It did not consider an additional option to include Land South of Gorse Covert.</p> <p>Land South of Gorse Covert (plan attached) presents an opportunity to support the plan strategy of focusing new residential development in Newbury and ensure that the optimum number of dwellings is proposed in this sustainable location [Sandleford Park]. Land South of Gorse Covert is available, suitable and deliverable within the plan period. The site has capacity to deliver up to circa 200 housing units. It is adjacent to, and immediately to the south of, the Sandleford Park Strategic Allocation set out in Policy SP16. Consequently, it abounds the land the subject of an outline planning permission for up to 1,000 homes, Land at Sandleford Park (Ref 20/01238/OUTMAJ), the larger of the two Sandleford Park sites. Bloor Homes is the developer for both Land South of Gorse Covert and Land at Sandleford Park.</p> <p>The site is in a sustainable location for development, being in Newbury and adjacent to an allocated site.</p> <p>There are no site constraints which prevent it from being developed.</p>	<p>Yes. To fully explore the potential for the site's inclusion in the Plan to ensure the Plan is sound.</p>
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			<p>Land South of Gorse Covert was assessed in the HELAA Update 2023 with reference GRE2. The capacity was incorrectly estimated as 150 units instead of up to circa 200 units. Contrary to information in the HELAA, it is now being promoted by a developer. The site is identified as being bordered by ancient woodland to the north but this is an area of commercial woodland and is not subject to an ancient woodland designation. There is scope to provide access to the site through this wooded area. Woodland to the south is at some distance from the site boundary. Overall, the site appears to have been excluded from further consideration due concerns over landscape character.</p> <p>The accompanying note Annexe 2. Land South of Sandleford Park, Newbury (HELAA Site Reference GRE2) Preliminary Landscape Review sets out an assessment by the developer’s landscape architects SLR. This concludes that ‘development of the site would not have a detrimental effect on the <i>“settlement form, pattern and character of the landscape.”</i>’ The review was based on consideration of relevant policy documents and a desktop-based study of the existing landscape pattern within the site and its immediate vicinity.</p> <p>The review reaches this conclusion (paragraph 6.2) ‘due to the site’s location within the landscape, and the strong existing boundaries associated with the current and future¹ landscape and visual baseline. The setting of, and views from, Grade 2 listed Sandleford Priory would also be preserved. The proposed settlement form and pattern within the site would be aligned with the proposed development pattern within the allocated Sandleford Park⁸ development north of Gorse Covert. It would respect and strengthen existing boundary elements – reinforce existing hedgerows to the east and west and provide appropriate buffers from the woodland edges to the north and south. This would help to integrate the site and associated development within its landscape context,</p>	
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¹ As part of the agreed proposals for the Country Park¹ to the east - Policy CS3 - West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006 - 2026) Development Plan Document Adopted July 2012

			<p>thereby ensuring that new development is appropriate in terms of location, scale and design in the context of the existing settlement form, pattern and character.’</p> <p>The site is being promoted by the developer for Land at Sandlesford Park, which offers maximum potential to integrate the site into the existing allocation. The site would benefit from the new services and infrastructure coming forward as part of Sandlesford Park, representing a highly sustainable extension to a long standing commitment in the Local Plan.</p> <p>As currently proposed, SP13 does not present an appropriate strategy in that it has not fully taken account of all reasonable alternatives i.e an option to increase the size of the Sandlesford Park Strategic Allocation. It also fails to include a parcel of land which would contribute towards the delivery of sustainable development, contrary to the intentions of the NPPF (2021)</p>	
<p>SP16 Sandlesford Park Strategic Site Allocation</p>		<p>N</p>	<p>Object. The policy is not justified or consistent with national policy.</p> <p>Proposed amendment 1. Land as shown on the Policies Map is allocated for a residential development of approximately 1,500 1,750 dwellings.</p> <p>Proposed amendment 2. Amend Sandlesford Park Site Boundary on page 69 of the Local Plan Review, to include Land South of Gorse Covert as shown outlined in red on the attached plan ‘Land South of Gorse Covert’.</p> <p>The Sandlesford Park allocation has been carried forward from the Core Strategy, Policy CR3 Sandlesford Park. It was intended to deliver up to 2,000 homes. Site constraints and the importance of delivering a significant level of green infrastructure have reduced its capacity to around 1,500 units.</p>	<p>Yes. To fully explore the merit of including additional land within the Strategic Allocation.</p>

			<p>The draft plan, through policies SP1 Spatial Strategy and SP3 Settlement Hierarchy, continues to place importance on focusing housing development in Newbury, identifying that an urban extension on greenfield land at Sandleford Park will form a new residential neighbourhood. The Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment reinforces this approach. It did, however, consider four options for Sandleford Park (Table 28, page 36). It did not consider an additional option to include Land South of Gorse Covert.</p> <p>Land South of Gorse Covert (plan attached) presents an opportunity to support the plan strategy of focusing new residential development in Newbury and ensure that the optimum number of dwellings is proposed in this sustainable location [Sandleford Park]. Land South of Gorse Covert is available, suitable and deliverable within the plan period. The site has capacity to deliver up to circa 200 housing units. It is adjacent to, and immediately to the south of, the Sandleford Park Strategic Allocation set out in Policy SP16. Consequently, it abounds the land the subject of an outline planning permission for up to 1,000 homes, Land at Sandleford Park (Ref 20/01238/OUTMAJ), the larger of the two Sandleford Park sites. Bloor Homes is the developer for both Land South of Gorse Covert and Land at Sandleford Park.</p> <p>The site is in a sustainable location for development, being in Newbury and adjacent to an allocated site.</p> <p>There are no site constraints which prevent it from being developed. Land South of Gorse Covert was assessed in the HELAA Update 2023 with reference GRE2. The capacity was incorrectly estimated as 150 units instead of up to circa 200 units. Contrary to information in the HELAA, it is now being promoted by a developer. The site is identified as being bordered by ancient woodland to the north but this is an area of commercial woodland and is not subject to an ancient woodland designation. There is scope to provide access to the site through this</p>	
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			<p>wooded area. Woodland to the south as at some distance from the site boundary. Overall, the site appears to have been excluded from further consideration due concerns over landscape character. The accompanying note Annexe 2. Land South of Sandleford Park, Newbury (HELAA Site Reference GRE2) Landscape Review sets out an assessment by the developer’s landscape architects SLR. This concludes that ‘development of the site would not have a detrimental effect on the <i>“settlement form, pattern and character of the landscape.”</i>’ The review was based on consideration of relevant policy documents and a desktop-based study of the existing landscape pattern within the site and its immediate vicinity.</p> <p>The review reaches this conclusion (paragraph 6.2) ‘due to the site’s location within the landscape, and the strong existing boundaries associated with the current and future² landscape and visual baseline. The setting of, and views from, Grade 2 listed Sandleford Priory would also be preserved. The proposed settlement form and pattern within the site would be aligned with the proposed development pattern within the allocated Sandleford Park⁸ development north of Gorse Covert. It would respect and strengthen existing boundary elements – reinforce existing hedgerows to the east and west and provide appropriate buffers from the woodland edges to the north and south. This would help to integrate the site and associated development within its landscape context, thereby ensuring that new development is appropriate in terms of location, scale and design in the context of the existing settlement form, pattern and character.’</p> <p>As previously stated, the site is being promoted by the developer for Land at Sandleford Park, which offers maximum potential to integrate the site into the existing allocation. The site would benefit from the new services and infrastructure coming forward as part of Sandleford Park,</p>	
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D² As part of the agreed proposals for the Country Park² to the east - Policy CS3 - West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006 - 2026) Development Plan Document Adopted July 2012

			<p>representing a highly sustainable extension to a long standing commitment in the Local Plan.</p> <p>As currently proposed, SP13 does not present an appropriate strategy in that it has not fully taken account of all reasonable alternatives i.e an option to increase the size of the Sandford Park Strategic Allocation. It also fails to include a parcel of land which would contribute towards the delivery of sustainable development, contrary to the intentions of the NPPF (2021).</p> <p>Proposed amendment 3. Supporting paragraph 6.55 should be deleted.</p> <p>6.55 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.</p> <p>Now the plan is at an advanced stage of consultation, this caveat should be removed. The policy needs to be clear and sound, giving certainty to the developers.</p> <p>Proposed amendment 4. Delete <u>A Minerals Resources Assessment will be provided for the site.</u></p> <p>The requirement for a Minerals Resource Assessment is not necessary. Detailed studies have shown that the winning of minerals would adversely impact on this sensitive site with ancient woodland and associated ground water regime. The requirement should be removed from the policy.</p> <p>Proposed amendment 5. Sustainable Transport through routes connecting the A339, Monks Lane and Andover Road for pedestrians,</p>	
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			<p>cyclists and public transport subject to agreement with bus operators.</p> <p>Additional wording is required to qualify the requirement for sustainable bus routes, as this is partly controlled by the bus operators. The extent to which Warren Road can be widened is understood to be limited, although the Manual for Streets does recognise that whilst streets on bus routes should not generally be less than 6.0 metres wide, this could be reduced on short sections with good inter-visibility between opposing flows. Therefore, the existing widening scheme can serve as a bus route subject to agreement with bus operators.</p> <p>Proposed amendment 6.</p> <p>Bloor Homes do have significant concerns with the requirement for the provision of: <i>“On-site renewable energy to assist in the delivery of a carbon neutral development;”</i></p> <p>In its current form, Bloor Homes believe that this aspect of draft Policy SP16 is unsound for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The current Outline Planning Permission (OPP) does not require the development to be carbon neutral and therefore introducing such a requirement at this stage is unsound because at no point during the preparation or determination (including at the Public inquiry) was the requirement to be carbon neutral considered from a technical and commercial perspective. 2. There are many different definitions of Carbon Neutral (some of which include embodied carbon) which are significant commercial and technical challenges which must be considered at the very outset of the design process. Sandleford is currently proceeding to Reserved Matters applications and therefore undertaking detailed design work. 3. The request for ‘on-site’ renewable energy is also ambiguous and can refer to large scale renewable energy infrastructure, implementing this type of system would impact on land availability and could also lead to a reduction in housing delivery. 4. The Outline Planning Permission for Sandleford Park East is supported by a number of planning conditions which were agreed 	
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			<p>with the Secretary of State (SoS). These should therefore form the basis for the sustainability and energy strategy. No additional requirements should be introduced at this stage.</p> <p>To resolve the issues of soundness for Policy SP16, Bloor Homes consider that the most effective way to achieve this is to delete this requirement from Policy SP16 and replace it with the following text:</p> <p>“Development of the site will be expected to deliver: ... On site renewable energy to assist in the delivery of a carbon neutral development;”</p> <p>‘A sustainability and energy strategy.’</p> <p>Infrastructure: The Policy refers to an Infrastructure Delivery Plan, but this is not appended to the consultation document. We reserve the right to make further representations in relation to this in due course.</p>	
SP16 Supporting paragraph 6.55			<p>Object. The supporting wording is not justified or consistent with national policy guidance.</p> <p>Supporting paragraph 6.55, which specifies that additional policy criteria will be added as the Local Plan Review progresses. Now the plan is at consultation stage, this caveat should be removed. The policy needs to be clear and sound, giving certainty to the developers.</p> <p>Remove paragraph 6.55</p>	
SP18 Housing Type and Mix		Y	<p>Support. Reference to site specific viability (Criterion D) is welcomed. As a national-wide developer and promoter of Sandford Park, Bloor has a comprehensive understanding of the market and viability considerations. Consequently, it is well placed to propose an appropriate mix and type of homes.</p>	No.

<p>SP19 Affordable Housing</p>		<p>N</p>	<p>Object. The policy wording is not justified or consistent with national policy.</p> <p>Bloor Homes fully supports the Council’s objectives for delivering affordable homes given that we are currently experiencing a housing crisis for many thousands of people across the district and the UK who cannot afford to own or live in their own home.</p> <p>In relation to the requirement for affordable homes to be built to net zero carbon standards, the policy should align clearly with Policy DM4.</p> <p>Proposed amendment. <i>Affordable homes will be built in accordance with the requirements of Policy DM4 to net zero carbon standards to help meet objectives on sustainability and climate change’.</i></p> <p><i>‘Affordable homes will be built to help meet objectives on sustainability and climate change’.</i></p>	<p>Yes. To explain the adverse impact of the policy requirements on the delivery of affordable housing.</p>
<p>SP23 Transport</p>		<p>N</p>	<p>Object. The policy wording is not consistent with national policy or effective.</p> <p>Proposed amendment 1. Mitigate any adverse significant impact on local transport networks and the strategic road network</p> <p>The amendment is proposed to be consistent with paragraph 110 (d) of the NPPF (2021). It is recognised that some adverse impacts on the road network are likely as a result of development: the NPPF is clear that it is significant impacts which require mitigation.</p> <p>Proposed amendment 2. The policy refers to a document ‘Highway Design Guidance for Residential Developments’. To allow for updates to local design guidance, it is necessary to amend the wording. The wording should be</p>	<p>Yes, to explain the extent of variation from national policy, which makes the policy unsound.</p>

			<p>amended to</p> <p><i>“Development Proposals should refer to the guidance set out in the Council’s Highway Design Guidance for Residential Developments and other relevant national guidance.”</i></p>	
<p>DM 19 Specialist accommodation i.e. The provision of new specialist forms of housing designed to meet the needs of those with identified support or care needs</p>		N	<p>Object. The wording is not justified or effective.</p> <p>As currently worded this element of the policy is a little vague. The proposed amendment directs the decision maker and developer towards information required to appraise the requirement for the provision of specialist accommodation.</p> <p>Proposed amendment.</p> <p>“Specialist accommodation development will be sought as an integral part of the mix from the strategic housing allocations at Sandford Park and North East Thatcham subject to evidence of need and site specific viability.”</p>	No.
<p>Policy DM4 Building Sustainable Homes & Businesses</p>		N	<p>Object. The policy as currently worded is not effective. A detailed note setting out Bloor Homes’ representations in respect of Policy DM4 is attached to this table as Annexe 1. Policy DM4 Representations.</p> <p>Proposed amendments. We would recommend that the text is amended to include:</p> <p>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 energy only) by implementing</p>	<p>Yes, to provide the Inspector with further explanation of the need for appropriate policy wording to ensure a deliverable approach towards the delivery of climate change resilient development in West Berkshire.</p>

			<p>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.</p> <p>1. Residential Development - minimum construction standard</p> <p>A. New development of one or more new dwellings (C3 or C4 use class) will meet the following minimum standards of construction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Prior to 2025 homes will meet the requirements of the Interim Future Homes Standard and deliver a 31% carbon reduction above Part L 2013.</u> • <u>From 2025 homes will meet the requirements of the 2025 Future Homes Standard, maximising opportunities to reduce energy demand and carbon emissions through design,</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 15kWh/m2/year space heat demand target, evidenced by the Building Regulations Part L SAP Fabric Energy Efficiency metric. <p>B. <u>Where feasible and viable,</u> new residential refurbishment developments of 10+ units will meet BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment Excellent as a minimum.</p>	
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			<p>2. New Non-Residential Development, hotels, residential institutions, secure residential institutions - minimum construction standard From 2025 new development of 100sqm or more of new non-residential floorspace, hotels (C1 use class), residential institutions (C2 use class) or secure residential institutions (C2A use class) will meet the following minimum standards of construction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 2018 or future equivalent). <p>3. Renewable Energy A. From 2025 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, 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:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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. <p>4. Carbon Offsetting</p>	
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			<p>From 2025, 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 operational energy (regulated and unregulated), it will be required to address any residual carbon emissions for a period of 30 years through a cash in lieu contribution using a carbon offset cost of £xxx per tonne. Grid decarbonisation can be considered when calculating the offset cost.</p>	
<p>Supporting Text to Policy DM4 Building Sustainable Homes & Businesses</p>		<p>N</p>	<p>Renewable energy</p> <p>The use of deficiencies with the national grid as justification for greater renewable energy requirements on development sites is not appropriate and should be removed from the policy and supporting text. Furthermore we believe that alternative renewable energy options are prioritised ahead of CHP systems, with the Policy DM4 supporting text updated as shown below:</p> <p>Proposed Amendment 1.</p> <p><i>Examples of renewable energy technology include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(i) Micro-renewable technology, in particular solar water heating, ground and air source heat pumps, photovoltaic cells and biomass boilers.</i> <i>(ii) Large scale ground mounted solar PV systems; and</i> <i>(iii) 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;</i> <p>Carbon offsetting – The evidence base does not include consideration of the unregulated energy as part of the carbon offsetting cost, it is assumed as a result that no allowance has been included in the viability</p>	<p>Yes to explain the amendments required to ensure the policy is effective.</p>

			<p>assessment. Clarity is sought on whether unregulated energy has been properly considered to ensure the soundness of Policy DM4. Draft policy DM4 should also clearly state the carbon offset cost proposed and this should be included in the viability assessment.</p> <p>In addition the Council should clearly set out how the required carbon offset has been achieved, within a reasonable timeframe and suggest paragraph 10.32 is updated as below.</p> <p><i>'10.32 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. Funds will be spent within 5 years of collection and returned to the developer. The fund's performance will be reported in the Authority Monitoring report on: amount of funds spent; types of projects funded; amount of CO2 saved.'</i></p>	
Whole Plan Viability Assessment 2022		N	<p>Bloor Homes considers there to be a number of potentially significant omissions from the viability assessment that justifies Policy DM4 and, therefore, recommends that the Council reviews the assessment to ensure it is sound and meets the requirements of the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).</p>	Yes, to explain the flaws in the assessment.
Policy DM30 Residential Space Standards		N	<p>Object. The policy wording is not effective.</p> <p>Proposed amendment. The policy should be deleted.</p> <p>The policy should be deleted unless the Council have clear evidence that the requirements of the policy to deliver all new market and affordable dwellings, including from permitted development, change of use and conversion, to nationally described space standards, can realistically be delivered. Bloor Homes Ltd is concerned that the proposed approach may reduce the number of homes delivered and may not represent an efficient or sustainable use of land. Consequently, the policy is not</p>	Yes. To explain the implications of the policy as currently worded.

				deliverable or effective and renders the plan unsound.	
Policy DM42 Transport Infrastructure		N		<p>Object. The policy is inconsistent with the NPPF 2021, not justified or effective.</p> <p>Proposed amendment 1. The word ‘proportionate’ before ‘contribution’ in the first paragraph of heading text should be retained. This should be included as it forms one of the tests as set out in paragraph 57 of the NPPF and Regulation 122 (2) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010. The wording should remain as follows:</p> <p><i>“Where required, new development will be expected to make a proportionate contribution to the provision or improvement of a range of transport infrastructure.”</i></p> <p>Proposed amendment 2. To ensure that contributions to transport infrastructure provision meets the NPPF paragraph 57 tests, the following phrase should be added to criterion f.</p> <p><i>“f. New or improved passenger transport services, where appropriate. “</i></p> <p>Proposed amendment 3. Development should not provide improvements to the operational capacity of the local road network unless they are necessary or the impact is severe. Unnecessarily building in capacity would encourage car use and be contradictory to other environmental policies.</p> <p><i>“g. Improvements to the safety and operational capacity of the local highway network, where appropriate.”</i></p>	Yes to explain the extent of variation from national policy, which makes the policy unsound.
Policy DM44 Parking and Travel Plans 295		N		<p>Object. The policy is inconsistent with national policy and not effective.</p> <p>Proposed amendment 1.</p>	Yes to explain the purpose of parking standards and the

			<p>For residential developments, the policy does not allow for site-specific circumstances to be taken into consideration contrary to Para 107 of NPPF. Para 57 states,</p> <p><i>“If setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development policies should take into account: 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) the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles”.</i></p> <p>The zoning system for residential development set out in Policy DM44 is intended to address this to some extent but it does not sufficiently provide for the individual circumstances of a site to be taken into consideration. Additionally, the removal of the ‘exceptional circumstances’ line below the minimum standards table suggests no flexibility which is a concern when dealing with minimum standards.</p> <p>Wording should be inserted into the policy after the minimum standards table to allow for agreement on a case-by-case basis, as follows :</p> <p><i>A reduced residential parking standard may be accepted for sites in sustainable locations deemed suitable by the Council and based on evidence presented by the applicant.</i></p> <p>In general, I would question the use of minimum standards. Setting maximums would help to ensure that developments continue to come forward with levels of parking provision that remain commensurate with the vision to reduce car dependency and to promote alternative sustainable transport options. Nevertheless, NPPF does state that maximum parking standards for residential and non-residential development should only be set where there is a clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network,</p>	<p>extent of variation from national policy, which makes the policy unsound.</p>
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			<p>or for optimising the density of development in city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport.</p> <p>Proposed amendment 2. The policy specifies that garages will not be counted as a parking spaces. There will, however, be circumstances where garages will be used for parking. To ensure the policy is justified and therefore sound, some flexibility should be introduced.</p> <p>The following amendment is proposed:</p> <p>Garages will not be counted as a car parking space for the purposes of meeting the required levels of parking set out in this policy.</p> <p>Garages will only be accepted as contributing towards parking provision for development if they have adequate functional space. Where garages are also used to provide cycle storage, additional space must be provided to accommodate this.</p> <p>Proposed amendment 3. For Zone 2 residential developments, the policy does not specify whether half spaces are the minimum spaces plus 1 unallocated space per X dwellings. This requires clarification in the policy wording.</p>	
Policy DM45 Travel Planning		N	<p>Object. The policy is not justified.</p> <p>Monitoring is not compulsory once targets within travel plans have been met. The statement “<i>regular monitoring and reporting in line with the requirements of the council</i>” is, therefore, a concern without clarification as to what those requirements are.</p> <p>The policy should be amended to read as follows:</p>	Yes, to explain policy wording which would ensure that travel plan monitoring is undertaken in a way which meets the NPPF paragraph 107 tests.

				<p>Where developments are required to develop travel plan measures, it is expected that necessary targets will be ... and undertake regular monitoring and reporting until the travel plan targets have been met in line with the requirements of the Council.</p>	
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Annexe 1. Policy DM4 Response

Policy DM4 is clearly a very significant policy in terms of the Council's ambition to delivery net zero development as well as the commercial and technical implications for the delivery of much needed new housing and non-domestic buildings in the district.

Bloor Homes supports the Council's commitment to delivery of net zero housing however in its current form we do have significant concerns that the Policy is unsound and could lead to a reduction in the delivery of much needed private and affordable dwellings. Bloor Homes are very pleased to be able to share our thoughts with the Council to ensure the draft Local Plan can develop a sound and effective net zero policy.

Given the complexity of this issue it is inevitable that Policy DM4 contains a lot of detail however for the purposes of these representations we consider it helpful to summarise the main requirements of new buildings as part of draft Policy DM4:

- Minimum construction standards - Achieve the carbon Target Emission Rate set by the Future Homes Standard 2025 once this is confirmed by central government; in the interim (up to 2025), achieve a 63% reduction in carbon emissions through 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; and achieve a space heating demand of equal to or less than 15kWh/m²/year.
- Renewable energy - Subsequent to the achievement of the minimum construction standards include onsite renewable, zero and low carbon energy technologies to achieve net zero carbon operational energy (regulated and unregulated) on site.
- Carbon offsetting - Where a development proposal cannot demonstrate that it is net zero carbon in relation operational energy (regulated and unregulated), it will be required to address any residual carbon emissions by: a cash in lieu contribution.

It is noted that draft Policy DM4 is supported by an evidence base document which present the technical and financial information to justify the draft policy. Bloor Homes have carefully reviewed draft Policy DM4 and its supporting evidence base document and have a number of concerns and suggestions which, if addressed, would result in a sound and effective net zero policy. There are set out below:

Minimum Construction Standards – Bloor Homes supports the use of minimum construction standards and energy performance targets to enhance energy efficiency and minimise energy demand in new homes where this is feasible and deliverable.

The Government states in the executive summary of the 2019 FHS consultation³ that the 2025 FHS provides Net Zero Ready homes which are future proofed and do not require retrofitting to operate Net Zero, 'We have said that from 2025, the Future Homes Standard will deliver homes that are zero-carbon ready. We intend to set the performance standard of the Future Homes Standard at a level which means that new homes will not be built with fossil fuel heating, such as a natural gas boiler. These homes will be future-proofed with low carbon heating and high levels of energy efficiency. No further energy efficiency retrofit work will be necessary to enable them to become zero-carbon as the electricity grid continues to decarbonise. Our work on a full technical specification for the Future Homes Standard has been accelerated and we will consult on this in 2023. We also intend to introduce the necessary legislation in 2024, ahead of implementation in 2025'.

With regards to the implementation and delivery of Policy DM4 it is assumed that the intention of the policy is its immediate implementation on adoption of the Local Plan. We believe that draft Policy DM4 is attempting to introduce an interim requirement above Building Regulations up until 2025 followed by implementation of the FHS 2025. This includes requiring homes to achieve a 63% carbon reduction above Part L 2021 (equivalent to the 2025 FHS), as well as a space heating demand target of 15kWh/m².

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/the-future-homes-standard-changes-to-part-l-and-part-f-of-the-building-regulations-for-new-dwellings>

The Government's 2019 FHS consultation response set out the rationale for implementing a staged approach to reducing emissions, largely in response to capacity and skills in the market to deliver the required changes, *'We must ensure that all parts of industry are ready to meet the Future Homes Standard from 2025, which will be challenging to deliver in practice, by supporting industry to take a first step towards the new standard'*. In particular the consultation response identifies potential issues in relation to requirements to scale up and upskill the delivery of heat pumps.

It is noted that Policy DM4 includes a requirement for homes to achieve a space heating demand equal to, or less than 15kWh/m². Draft Policy SP5 and DM4 evidence base sets out the Council's ability to set policies which go beyond the Building Regulations through the Energy Act 2008 (Energy Act).

The space heating demand target within Policy DM4 is drawn from the Committee on Climate Change UK housing: fit for the future report⁴ (2019) which states that new development should meet a space heating demand of between 15-20kWh/m² to contribute to meeting the Government's 2050 net zero target. It is the CCC's role to provide guidance to the Government who then sets out policy which in this instance has been the FHS 2025.

While it is correct the Energy Act currently makes an allowance for policies to go beyond the Building Regulations the 2019 FHS consultation, notes, *'as we move to ever higher levels of energy efficiency standards for new homes with the 2021 Part L uplift and Future Homes Standard, it is less likely that local authorities will need to set local energy efficiency standards in order to achieve our shared net zero goal.'*

The Government is planning on consulting on the 2025 FHS in 2023, as noted above it is the government's intention that the 2025 FHS delivers net zero ready homes through a consistent standard across England, and is the government's mechanism through which to meet the climate challenge set out by the CCC. Introducing an interim requirement above current Building Regulations within the Local Plan and through draft Policy DM4 creates a very significant risk of introducing an undeliverable policy. Bloor Homes consider that such a Policy will have an adverse impact on the deliverability of new homes.

With respect to the cost of draft Policy DM4, the Whole Plan Viability Assessment 2022 tests a cost uplift of 5% for Policy DM4 which is significantly lower than the figure of 11% considered in the 2021 assessment and no evidence is presented to justify the use of this lower figure. The viability assessment also notes that consideration should be given to the longevity of the plan period, as well as avoiding setting higher costs in the short term. Bloor Homes considers this a reasonable statement to make however the Viability assessment then fails to consider the impact of bringing these requirements ahead of the 2025 FHS and the impact it may have on the deliverability of the policy and much needed private and affordable dwellings. Further concerns with respect to viability are raised below.

For the reasons set out above (including upskilling and availability of energy efficiency products and services, FHS consultation requirements, and viability) Bloor Homes believe that Policy DM4 should not introduce a mandatory interim requirement above Part L 2021 in advance of the FHS 2025 and amendments should be made to the policy to align with the Government's net zero strategy.

Further to the requirements for residential development set out above it is noted that a requirement is included for, *'New residential refurbishment developments of 10+ units will meet BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment Excellent as a minimum.'* There are a number of issues associated with placing specific requirements on refurbishment projects which are themselves unique and as above is not necessarily reflected in the viability assessment. We would recommend that this text is amended to include: **Where feasible and viable** *'New residential refurbishment developments of 10+ units will meet BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment Excellent as a minimum'*

Unregulated energy – Policy DM4 requires all operational energy, regulated and unregulated to be reduced, and then provided via low carbon renewable energy, or offset. While Bloor Homes supports the delivery of net zero homes it is considered this should be restricted to regulated energy only. As a housebuilder Bloor Homes

⁴ <https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/UK-housing-Fit-for-the-future-CCC-2019.pdf>

only has the ability to influence the regulated energy demand of homes through design and specification of materials and systems, and renewable energy technologies. The unregulated energy consumption, (often referred to as 'plug in load') of homes is ultimately the function of the residents use of the building, which cannot be influenced by the developer and therefore the requirement on the developer to offset emissions from residents unregulated energy use is not appropriate.

Post 2025 one of the greatest demands for unregulated energy in new homes will be to charge an electric vehicle. Bloor Homes considers it unreasonable to assume that they, as a housebuilder, should effectively meet the cost of mitigating carbon from a resident charging their electric vehicle.

Furthermore the Evidence Base notes the deficiencies in the current SAP modelling methodology around regulated energy, this also extends to unregulated energy. It is our experience that residents use of energy and therefore unregulated energy demand can vary dramatically, this has been brought into sharp focus with the current cost of living crisis. It is therefore likely that a prediction of unregulated energy will be highly inaccurate.

The points above are equally, if not more applicable to non-residential development. Large scale industrial and commercial development may have significant unregulated energy demands which are outside of the developers control to estimate and are likely covered by operators own Environmental Social Governance requirements.

Risk of Delivery and Achieving Net Zero Homes - The Policy DM4 Evidence Base includes details of the assessment of risks for a range of policy approaches. Of the four approaches considered two were initially discounted on the basis of not providing an adequate response to the effects of climate change. The two remaining options, Accelerating future stated national policy (Approach 3), and Acceleration + (Approach 4) were taken forward and ultimately Approach 4 was selected as the basis for Policy DM4. In reviewing the Evidence Base it is noted that the scoring of the risk of delivery for each options results in a risk of 76 for Approach 3 and 75 for Approach 4, out of a potential score of 200. Given how close the potential scores are a robust assessment would take forward both approaches for consideration further, including consideration of the viability implications of both options, this has not been done.

As noted following this assessment, Approach 4 has been taken forward, and as set out in the Evidence Base elements of this option considered have been modified, however, the resulting option has not been re-assessed to ensure its Risk score remains the same and in effect remains the preferred set of measures when compared to Approach 3. It is our view that given the alterations to this policy consideration be given again to the risk scoring of the Policy.

Prior to the adoption of Policy DM4 we believe further evidence needs to be gathered to consider the viability implications of both Approach 3 and 4 to provide a more robust consideration of which policy route is most applicable and ensure the assessment is sound and meets the requirements of the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

Renewable energy – Bloor Homes supports the specification of low carbon and renewable energy technologies, however we would welcome clarity on the following points within draft Policy DM4:

- The evidence base sets out a rationale for generating energy onsite to support capacity issues with the wider national electricity network. Bloor Homes considers that it is not their responsibility to address deficiencies with the national grid network through measures on homes. As part of the development process, Bloor Homes will liaise with District Network Operators to ensure that all necessary legislative requirements for the supply of power to the site are met. We consider any requirements above this are not reasonable.
- The text supporting draft Policy DM4 identifies Combined Heat and Power (CHP) as a potential low carbon source. We would note that typically these operate as gas fired CHP systems currently and no longer represent a technically viable low carbon option given that the carbon content of gas is now significantly higher than that of grid supplied electricity. Alternative low carbon options for fuelling CHP systems at scale are largely untested. We would suggest that alternative renewable energy options are prioritised ahead of CHP systems.

Carbon offsetting – Bloor Homes broadly supports the addition of a mechanism to offset residual carbon emissions provided that the scope and cost of such a policy has been tested. We also support the recognition by the carbon offset policy of the decarbonisation of the electricity network and linking the offset payment to this. Notwithstanding this helpful inclusion we do have concerns that the policy does not clearly state the cost of carbon used by the policy and that this has not clearly been included within the viability assessment. While a potential cost is set out in the evidence base this has not followed through to the Policy. Furthermore, we are also concerned that the viability assessment does not currently include provision for unregulated energy offsetting and only includes an assessment of potential regulated residual emissions and cost. As noted in the evidence base unregulated carbon emissions can be 50% of a buildings energy use and it is therefore unclear whether this has been adequately considered as part of the assessment and clarity is sought to ensure policy soundness.

In addition to clearly setting out the costs the Policy needs to include reference to delivering the required carbon offset within a reasonable timeframe. It is noted in the supporting text an annual report will be prepared to demonstrate how the offsetting fund is spent, this should clearly show and confirm how the required carbon offset has been delivered. Furthermore the Council should set out its expectation on a timeframe for spending the funds collection, the evidence base notes that the National Planning Practice Guidance states, *'[S106] agreements should normally include clauses stating when and how the funds will be used by and allow for their return, after an agreed period of time, where they are not'* and, *'The Centre for Sustainable Energy notes that developers can ask for a refund of carbon offset payments that are unspent within 5 years.'* We would recommend the supporting text includes reference to the provision of a timeframe as above.

Viability – The viability of Policy DM4 is set out in the Whole Plan Viability Assessment 2022 which provides an uplift figure of 5% to meet the requirements of Policy DM4, with no evidence provided as to how this percentage has been calculated. The evidence base notes a report and discussions with Bioregional, however the report is not referenced, and information is not clearly presented within the evidence base. We would note that the 2021 Viability Assessment included a sensitivity analysis of a wider range of costs up to 11%.

As part of the lack of evidence as noted it is not clear whether the cost uplift includes an allowance for providing unregulated energy demand onsite, or whether this is included in the offsetting costs. The evidence base notes unregulated energy can be 50% of a buildings energy demand, this will likely only increase as homeowners switch to using electric vehicles. The evidence base also notes that the Building Regulations software for assessing unregulated energy demand is not accurate and could overestimate unregulated energy use and carbon emissions impacting on viability.

In addition to these points we believe greater consideration needs to be given to the potential impacts of inflation which will have increased the cost allowance significantly, even in the period since the preparation of the evidence base and viability assessment.

For the reasons as set out above, Bloor Homes considers there to be a number of potentially significant omissions from the viability assessment that justifies Policy DM4 and therefore recommends that the Council reviews the assessment to ensure it is sound and meets the requirements of the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

Summary – In summary, Bloor Homes fully supports the Council's objectives to deliver net zero homes, however before the policy can be considered sound, additional work with respect to viability is recommended as well as amendments to draft Policy DM4. For clarity, Bloor Homes has summarised the amendments below and would be pleased to discuss these with the Council at the earliest opportunity:

Minimum construction standards – We believe that the requirements of Policy DM4 need to more closely follow the governments net zero strategy being put forward through the FHS. In this context we believe that bringing in requirements which go beyond the Building Regulations ahead of 2025 is premature, and has implications on the potential deliverability of the policy. In this context amendments are proposed to Policy DM4 to align with the interim FHS in the short term and 2025 FHS once implemented. For refurbishment of

residential development consideration needs to be given to the feasibility and viability of delivering this requirement.

Unregulated energy – We believe the inclusion of unregulated energy and emissions is unreasonable and suggest the definition of operational net zero be amended to reference regulated energy only as shown below.

Renewable energy – We believe the use of deficiencies with the national grid as justification for greater renewable energy requirements on development sites is not appropriate and should be removed from the policy and supporting text. Furthermore we believe that alternative renewable energy options are prioritised ahead of CHP systems, with the Policy DM4 supporting text updated as shown below:

Examples of renewable energy technology include:

- (i) Micro-renewable technology, in particular solar water heating, ground and air source heat pumps, photovoltaic cells and biomass boilers.*
- (ii) Large scale ground mounted solar PV systems; and*
- (iii) 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;*

Carbon offsetting – The evidence base does not include consideration of the unregulated energy as part of the carbon offsetting cost, it is assumed as a result that no allowance has been included in the viability assessment. Clarity is sought on whether unregulated energy has been properly considered to ensure the soundness of Policy DM4. Draft policy DM4 should also clearly state the carbon offset cost proposed and this should be included in the viability assessment.

In addition the Council should clearly set out how the required carbon offset has been achieved, within a reasonable timeframe and suggest paragraph 10.32 is updated as below.

'10.32 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. Funds will be spent within 5 years of collection and returned to the developer. The fund's performance will be reported in the Authority Monitoring report on: amount of funds spent; types of projects funded; amount of CO₂ saved.'

Viability – The Whole Plan Viability Assessment 2022 provides no clear evidence as to the cost uplift used in the assessment of Policy DM4. It is recommended that the Council reviews the assessment to ensure it is sound and meets the requirements of the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

Bloor Homes have presented a revised draft Policy DM4 below which we hope it is helpful to the council. We believe the draft Policy below will deliver net zero homes through a practical, viable and sound policy.

Revised 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 energy only~~) 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:

- **Prior to 2025 homes will meet the requirements of the Interim Future Homes Standard and deliver a 31% carbon reduction above Part L 2013.**
- **From 2025 homes will meet the requirements of the 2025 Future Homes Standard, maximising opportunities to reduce energy demand and carbon emissions through design,**

- ~~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 15kWh/m²/year space heat demand target, evidenced by the Building Regulations Part L SAP Fabric Energy Efficiency metric.~~

B. **Where feasible and viable**, new residential refurbishment developments of 10+ units will meet BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment Excellent as a minimum.

2. New Non-Residential Development, hotels, residential institutions, secure residential institutions - minimum construction standard

From 2025 new development of 100sqm or more of new non-residential floorspace, 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 2018 or future equivalent).

3. Renewable Energy

A. **From 2025** 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, 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

From 2025, 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 operational energy (regulated ~~and unregulated~~), it will be required to address any residual carbon emissions for a period of 30 years through a cash in lieu contribution using a carbon offset cost of £xxx per tonne. Grid decarbonisation can be considered when calculating the offset cost.

Annexe 2. Land South of Sandford Park Newbury (HELAA Site Reference GRE2) Preliminary Landscape Review (February 2023) SLR

Our Ref: 2022.013
Your Ref:

Didsbury Business Centre
137 Barlow Moor Road
Didsbury
Manchester
M20 2PW

Planning Policy Team
Development and Regulation
West Berkshire District Council
Market Street
Newbury
RG14 5LD

T: 0845 410 0117
E: info@whitepeakplanning.co.uk

BY EMAIL ONLY TO: planningpolicy@westberks.gov.uk

27th February 2023

Dear Sir or Madam,

RE: West Berkshire Local Plan 2022-2039 Proposed Submission Draft Consultation

I am pleased to provide you with representations to the West Berkshire Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan 2022-2039 Consultation on behalf of Bloor Homes Ltd.

These representations are made with reference to a site for which my client is the promoter and developer, known as 'Land South of Gorse Covert, Sandford Park'. The site lies immediately adjacent to the Proposed Local Plan Allocation SP16 Sandford Park, also allocated in the adopted Core Strategy under Policy CS3. The site was assessed in the latest HELAA update and a site plan extract has been included in these representations for ease of identification (Location Plan Land South of Gorse Covert).

The site forms a sustainable and logical extension to Sandford Park and has the added benefit of being promoted by my client, who is also the promoter and developer for Land at Sandford Park, the larger of the two Sandford Park sites.

Given the trajectory for the delivery of the allocated Sandford Park site, which has outline planning permission (20/01238/OUTMAJ) and is being progressed to the Reserved Matters stage, this area of expansion land is also realistically deliverable within the local plan period.

Representations

I have set out representations on the attached West Berkshire Representation Form Sections A and B with an accompanying Table 1 setting out the proposed changes and reasoned justification for each policy. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any clarification or additional information in respect of these representations.

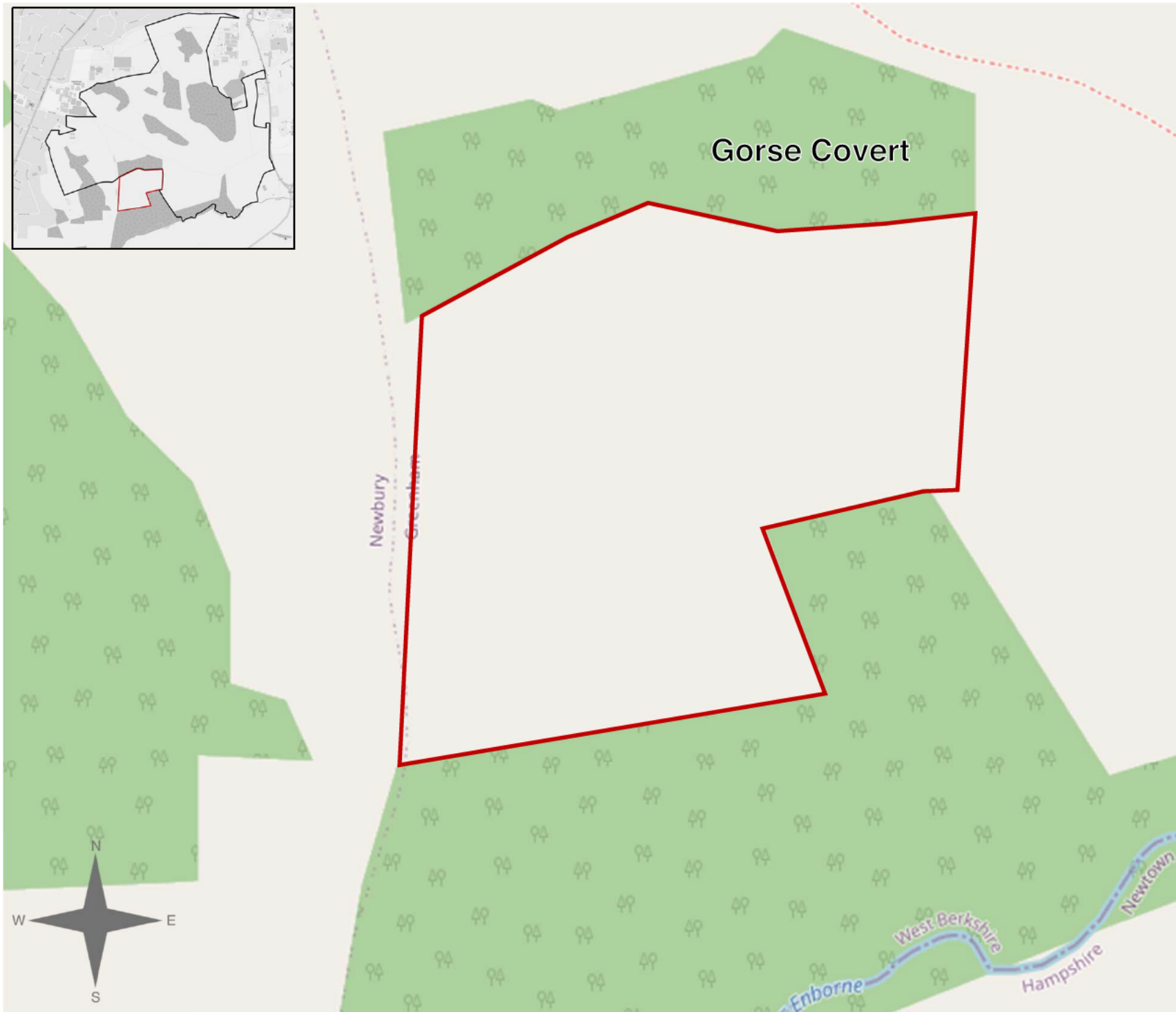
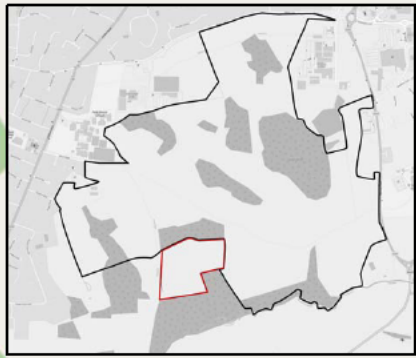
Please note that I have provided these representations within the context provided by current national planning policy and guidance and the need to progress the Local Plan without delay.

Yours faithfully,




Rob White
Director

For and on behalf of White Peak Planning Ltd.



Land South of Gorse Covert Location Plan

LEGEND

 Land South of Gorse Covert

PLAN NOT TO SCALE

BOUNDARY LINES ARE APPROXIMATE

CONTEXT OF LOCATION IN RELATION TO LOCAL PLAN ALLOCATION CS3 SHOWN ON INSET

Client: Bloor Homes
Project: 2022.013
Scale: Not to Scale
Rev: A



WHITE PEAK Planning

LAND SOUTH OF SANDLEFORD PARK, NEWBURY (HELAA SITE REFERENCE GRE2)

HIGH-LEVEL LANDSCAPE REVIEW

1.0 OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 SLR was instructed to provide a high-level landscape review for potential development in the land to the south of Sandleford Park¹, referred to as ‘the Site’ for the purpose of this review, as illustrated in Figure 1 below.

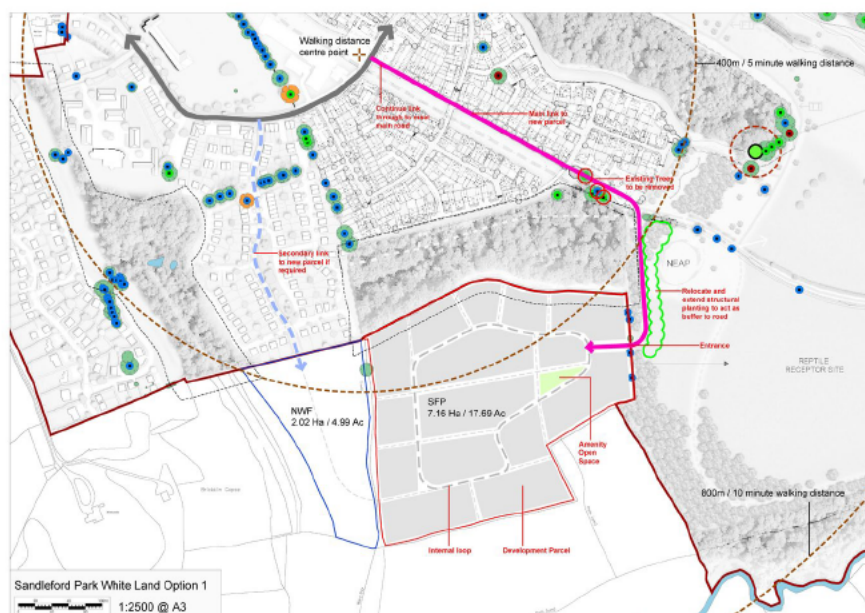


Figure 1: The Site – HELAA reference GRE2

2.0 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 A review of the landscape context was undertaken based on aerial photography and an Ordnance Survey map to analyse the field pattern, vegetation and development context within and around the Site. The study has also been informed by our knowledge of the local area within and around the Site, having provided long-standing professional advice relating to the Sandleford Park¹ development. A review of the relevant landscape policies and published guidance was also undertaken including the Local Plan Review 2022-2039 Proposed Submission- Pre-consultation version as of 13 January 2023, relevant documents from the Local Plan Review Evidence Base and the West Berkshire Council Housing and

¹ Policy CS3 - West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006 - 2026) Development Plan Document Adopted July 2012

Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA), January 2023 Update.

3.0 REVIEW OF RELEVANT GUIDANCE

West Berkshire Council Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA), January 2023 Update

- 3.1 Conclusions reached regarding the Site's (referenced as GRE2) suitability, as stated in Stage 2b Suitability of the spreadsheet (HELAA Appendix 4), maintain that *'Development would be inappropriate in context of settlement form, pattern and character of the landscape.'* The reasoning behind this is as follows:

"West Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment (2019): the site lies within the Greenham Woodland and Heathland Mosaic LCA (WH2). It notes that the Newbury settlement boundary has extended into this area to take account of allocated development, particularly at Sandleford Park, and there is continued pressure for further development south of Newbury. The LCA identifies this as a key detractor.

The landscape strategy for this area is therefore to ensure new development integrates into the landscape. There is an opportunity to enhance the urban-rural interface in this area at Newbury. The distinction between individual settlements should be respected. Development would therefore not be appropriate in the context of the existing settlement form, pattern and character of the landscape."

Landscape Sensitivity Study for Newbury, May 2009

- 3.2 The Landscape Sensitivity Study for Newbury, undertaken in May 2009 is included within the Evidence base for the Local Plan Review. The Site lies within Character Area: LLCCA18D Sandleford Park. The overall sensitivity of the LLCCA was determined to be Medium.
- 3.3 Owing to the age of the document, it has not been reviewed in depth, however it is noted that the Site lies within the same LLCA as the area within the allocated Sandleford Park development site², and therefore, assessed as Medium sensitivity as well.

West Berkshire's Landscape Character Assessment, 2019

- 3.4 The Site lies in LCA WH2: Greenham Woodland and Heathland Mosaic. It is noted that one of the key detractors associated with the LCA is *"1) Development pressure - The Newbury settlement boundary has extended into this area to account for allocated development, particularly at Sandleford Park, and there is continued pressure for further development south of Newbury and at Greenham Business Park.."*
- 3.5 The Landscape Strategy for the LLCA seeks to:

"3) Conserve and strengthen existing boundary elements Seek to prevent further loss or decline in the quality of boundary hedgerows, and encourage restoration/reinstatement of hedgerows where appropriate particularly to provide further integration of

² Policy CS3 - West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006 - 2026) Development Plan Document Adopted July 2012

development and along lanes.

4) Promote appropriate woodland management This is particularly important for ancient and semi-natural woodland areas but also relevant to more recently planted woodland areas. Appropriate coppicing, pollarding, planting, thinning and management of invasive species and disease should all be encouraged. It is important to ensure that woodland boundaries are sensitive to landform, and potential for diversification of some plantations to include more broadleaved element...

6) Ensure integration of new development into the landscape Any new development should be integrated into the landscape. There is an opportunity to enhance the urban-rural interface in this area at Newbury. The distinction between separate settlements and the role of the landscape as a setting to the character of those individual settlements should be respected. Further opportunities for woodland planting and screening should be considered.

7) Conserve the setting and integrity of heritage features in the landscape, which provide a sense of time-depth and evidence of past land use in the area. In particular, seek ways to restore the Grade II Registered Park and Garden at Sandleford Priory, which is on the Heritage at Risk Register..”

The Local Plan Review 2022-2039 Proposed Submission- Pre-consultation version as of 13 January 2023

3.6 Policies of relevance to the Site include:

Policy SP8 ‘Landscape Character’ states that:

“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*
- 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”*

Policy SP9 ‘Historic Environment’ states that:

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

Policy SP10 ‘Green Infrastructure’ states that:

“Depending on their location, nature and scale, all development proposals will:

- protect or enhance existing GI and the functions this performs, and*
- create additional GI which is integrated into the overall development design from the outset.*

- *take opportunities to achieve multi-functionality by bringing GI functions together.*

Proposals for GI will be encouraged where they:

- *help to mitigate the causes of and address the impacts of climate change through measures such as sustainable drainage, minimizing urban heating, flood risk management, and maximise GI to sequester carbon and provide cooling and insulation functions;*
- *create high quality GI which creates an attractive and distinctive setting to new development enhancing any existing asset that may be present;*
- *can provide pleasant and safe ‘green routes’ to commute on foot, cycle and horseback which help to link parts of urban areas and to the surrounding countryside along blue (water) and green corridors;*
- *contribute to biodiversity net gain and seek opportunities to use green infrastructure to extend wildlife corridors, particularly in urban areas and where it contributes to nature recovery networks;*
- *create green spaces within the GI network that can help improve health and wellbeing and promote local social interaction and community networks;*
- *can be used to increase its attractiveness as a recreation opportunity and to increase accessibility to public open spaces that are adaptable and capable of accommodating multiple uses and users of varying ability.”*

4.0 THE SITE AND ITS CONTEXT – CURRENT AND FUTURE BASELINE

4.1 As illustrated in Figure 2 below, the Site benefits from strong landscape boundaries defined by

- Woodland block (protected within Tree Protection Orders³) – Gorse Covert, to the north;
- Woodland block to the south (protected within Tree Protection Orders³) with the south-eastern part of the woodland being an Ancient Woodland;
- Strong field boundary, in the form of a hedgerow with mature trees to the west; and
- Gappy boundary hedge (current baseline) with intermittent trees to the east, which would be reinforced as part of the advanced planting areas within the Country Park for the allocated Sandleford Park⁴ development, and would form part of the future baseline.

³ <https://gis2.westberks.gov.uk/webapps/OnlineMap/>

⁴ Policy CS3 - West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006 - 2026) Development Plan Document Adopted July 2012



Figure 2: Aerial photograph taken from Google Earth showing existing baseline landscape context and future baseline associated with the Country Park proposals in the vicinity of the Site

4.2 In terms of its location, in context of the existing settlement form along the southern edge of Newbury, it is noted that the proposed development would not extend beyond the existing line of development edge within the southern built-up edge of Newbury (Wash Common), as illustrated in Figure 3 below.



Figure 3: Google Earth image showing line of existing development within Newbury (Wash Common)

5.0 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER, SETTLEMENT PATTERN AND FORM

5.1 In response to West Berkshire’s Landscape Character Assessment (2019), as outlined in paragraph 4.1, strong boundaries already exist as result of the existing ‘protected’ woodland blocks and strong hedgerow line, which would be further reinforced (to the east) with the woodland/advanced planting areas associated with the proposed Country Park⁵. This, alongside the proposed reinforced and planted eastern edge would mean that the proposed development would be both visually and physically well contained within the Site.

5.2 The proposed landscape strategy for the Site would align with the identified Landscape Strategy for the LLCA, as outlined in paragraph 3.4, in terms of conserving and strengthening boundary elements - reinforcing hedgerows to the east and west, and promoting appropriate woodland management by providing appropriate buffers from the woodland edges to the north and south, and thereby helping to integrate the development within the landscape.



Viewpoint 8b: Existing view from Sandleford Priory, First floor window from St Gabriel's School looking west towards the site.



Viewpoint 8b: 15 years after planting from Sandleford Priory, First floor window from St Gabriel's School looking west towards the site

The setting of the Grade II Registered Park and Garden at Sandleford Priory would not be affected as the woodland/advanced planting areas, along the eastern edge of the Site, within the proposed Country Park⁵ would form part of the future visual baseline, and screen any views of the Site, as illustrated in the photomontage – Figure 4 (included as part of the LVIA submitted for the outline planning application for the allocated Sandleford Park⁵ development).

Figure 4: Photomontage – View from St Gabriel's School

5.3 In response to the policy direction outlined in Policy SP8⁶- Landscape Character, development would

- Respect the appropriate buffers from the edge of the woodland;
- Align with the development pattern within the Sandleford Park⁵ development north of Gorse covert; and

⁵ Policy CS3 - West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006 - 2026) Development Plan Document Adopted July 2012

⁶ The Local Plan Review 2022-2039 Proposed Submission- Pre-consultation version as of 13 January 2023

- The proposed development edge within the Site would not extend beyond the line of existing southern built-up edge of Newbury (Wash Common) (Figure 3).

The development would be landscape led, with a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) produced to inform the development pattern within the site, with appropriate mitigation measures. Thereby, *“Ensuring that new development is appropriate in terms of location, scale and design in the context of the existing settlement form, pattern and character”*.

- 5.4 In response to the policy direction outlined in Policy SP9⁷ - Historic Environment, the proposed mitigation that would be implemented, as part of the advanced planting areas within the Country Park⁶ would, upon maturity, become part of the future visual baseline and therefore, would not generate any significant effects on the setting of and views from Grade 2 listed Sandleford Priory, as illustrated in Figure 4.
- 5.5 In response to policy direction outlined in SP10⁷ - Green Infrastructure, the proposed development would seek to align the green infrastructure proposals with the key guidance outlined in the policy.
- 5.6 The HELAA, in assessing the suitability of the Site, does not take into account the proposed mitigation, as part of the advanced planting areas within the Country Park⁸, which would reinforce the existing eastern boundary and form a key element of the future landscape and visual baseline.

6.0 SUMMARY

- 6.1 Based on a review of the above outlined documents, the existing landscape pattern within the Site and its immediate vicinity, and taking into account, the future⁸ landscape and visual baseline, it is considered that development within the Site would not have a detrimental effect on the settlement form, pattern and character of the landscape.
- 6.2 The Site’s location within the landscape, the strong site boundaries reinforced with the additional planting⁸ would define future landscape and visual baseline, retaining the local landscape character and preserving the setting in views from Grade 2 listed Sandleford Priory. The design proposals within the Site would be aligned with the proposed development pattern within the allocated Sandleford Park⁸ development north of Gorse Covert. Existing boundary elements would be respected and strengthened with existing hedgerows to the east and west reinforced, and appropriate buffers from the woodland edges to the north and south provided. This would help to integrate the new development within its landscape context. Therefore, contrary to the HELAA findings, the new development within the Site would be appropriate in terms of location, scale and design *“in the context of the existing settlement form, pattern and character of the landscape.”*

⁷ The Local Plan Review 2022-2039 Proposed Submission- Pre-consultation version as of 13 January 2023