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24/00046/FUL

24/01/2024



ET Planning

Planning Statement

Client:

Rio Homes

Athol Villa & Woodside

Westbourne Road, College Town, Sandhurst, GU47 0QX

Erection of nine dwellings following demolition of two existing dwellings and outbuildings, with associated access and landscaping.

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- Appendix 2 - 78 College Road Approved Site Plan
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is produced to support a planning application for the erection of nine dwellings following the demolition of the existing two dwellings and their outbuildings (seven net additional dwellings), with associated access and landscaping.
- 1.2 The application constitutes a re-submission following the refusal of application reference 21/00928/FUL, and its subsequent dismissed appeal, reference APP/R0335/W/22/3304460. This new application therefore seeks to address the matters raised concerning the impact upon the character of the area, which is the remaining concern following the appeal.
- 1.3 This planning statement will cover the background to the application and provide the necessary information to enable its determination by officers at the Council. It will consider the proposal in light of relevant planning policies and other material considerations. The conclusion reached is that key material considerations and the wider objectives of National and Local planning policy support the grant of permission.
- 1.4 In addition to this planning statement, the application is accompanied by the appropriate planning application forms and ownership certificate, duly signed and completed, and the following documents:
 - 0506 PL20 'Location Plan'
 - 0506 PL21 'Site layout for 9 no. dwellings'
 - 0506 PL22 'Block Plan'
 - 0506 PL23 'Plots 1 & 2 Plans and Elevations'
 - 0506 PL24 'Plots 3 & 4 Plans and Elevations'
 - 0506 PL25 'Plots 5 & 6 Plans and Elevations'

- 0506 PL26 'Plots 7 & 8 Plans and Elevations'
- 0506 PL27 'Plot 9 Plans and Elevations'
- 0506 PL28 'Street Scene'
- 0506 PL29 'Street Scene Through Plots 5, 7 and 8'
- 0506 PL30 'Street Scene Showing Plot 9'
- 0506 PL31 'Bin Storage and Collection Plan'
- 0506 'The Breech Densities'
- 893-LA-P-02 'Detailed Planting Plan & Schedule'
- Transport Statement (Motion)
- Flood Risk Assessment (GeoSmart)
- Sustainable Drainage Assessment (GeoSmart)
- Updated Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (John Wenman)
- Arboricultural Survey and Impact Assessment (LandArb)
- Computer Generated Imagery (CGI)

1.5 The relevant application fee will be submitted by the applicant separately.

1.6 As alterations to the public highway are proposed to enable access to the development (via revisions to the adopted footpaths and kerb lines), Certificate B of the application form has been completed in respect of serving notice on the Highway Authority.

2. Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The application site forms an approximate 'T' shaped area of land consisting of the residential dwellings of Athol Villa and Woodside, with their associated outbuildings, gardens and other curtilage, extending to the rear of numbers 56 and 58 College Road, and to the south of residential development at The Breech.
- 2.2 The two existing detached dwellings are a three bedroom house and a two bedroom bungalow. Both properties benefit from various single storey outbuildings including garages within their lengthy soft landscaped rear gardens. Both dwellings also contain hard surfaced driveways with access on to Westbourne Road.
- 2.3 The site is located within a predominately residential area within the cul-de-sac of Westbourne Road, neighbouring the Sandhurst Royal Military Academy to the east.
- 2.4 Further detailed consideration of the site surroundings in the context of the acceptability of the proposal is provided within Section 5 of the Statement below.

3. Planning History

- 3.1 Application reference 10192 for a 'Pair chalet and garages (part of)'. Refused in 1964.
- 3.2 Application reference 20/00645/FUL for the 'Erection of ten dwellings following demolition of two existing dwellings and outbuildings, with associated access and landscaping'. Withdrawn, 18 November 2020.
- 3.3 Application reference 21/00928/FUL for the 'Erection of nine dwellings following demolition of two existing dwellings and outbuildings, with associated access and landscaping'. Refused, 4 March 2022. Appeal dismissed, 26 October 2023 (Appeal reference APP/R0335/W/22/3304460).
- 3.4 Application 21/00928/FUL was refused for several reasons (flooding sequential test, character of area, drainage, highway safety, ecology and Section 106 matters). Whilst the corresponding appeal was dismissed, the only matter for refusal was the impact on the character of the area, with the other matters either overcome or not considered to be matters of harm by the Inspector. A copy of the appeal decision is provided as Appendix 1 for ease of reference.
- 3.5 Accordingly, this new application seeks to address the primary remaining matter which is the impact on the character of the area. This is presented in Section 5 of the statement below.

4. Development Proposals

- 4.1 The National Design Guide (2019) identifies that “well-designed homes and buildings are functional, accessible and sustainable. They provide internal environments and associated external spaces that support the health and well-being of their users and all who experience them. They meet the needs of a diverse range of users, taking into account factors such as the ageing population and cultural differences. They are adequate in size, fit for purpose and are adaptable to the changing needs of their occupants over time” (para 120-121).
- 4.2 Regarding the requirements of NPPG Paragraph: 029 Reference ID: 14-029-20140306 in respect of Design and Access Statements, the proposal is described as follows:
- 4.3 **Use and Amount:** The proposed use of the site would be for residential C3 purposes, involving the creation of seven net additional dwellings, via the erection of nine dwellings following the demolition of the two existing on site. Accompanying these dwellings would be associated landscaping including residential curtilage and garden space, and dedicated parking.
- 4.4 **Layout & Dwelling Mix:** The development would comprise 2no. three bedroom dwellings, 6no. two bedroom dwellings, and 1no. one bedroom apartment at first floor level above parking for six bays. This would follow the demolition of the two existing dwellings on site.
- 4.5 Two sets of two bedroom semi-detached dwellings would be sited fronting Westbourne Road, either side of the proposed access road leading further into the site. A pair of semi-detached dwellings then occupies the central portion of the site, leading to another pair of semi-detached dwellings and a flat above garage (‘FOG’) on opposite sides of the access at the northern end of the site.

- 4.6 The proposed layout has been designed to maximise the efficiency and land use of the unorthodox T-shaped site configuration, whilst minimising impacts on existing neighbouring properties.
- 4.7 **Scale and Appearance:** The dwellings would be two storeys in height, with the FOG also having a two storey layout (albeit at a lower comparative height).
- 4.8 The proposed conservative designs of the dwellings provide a reflection of the existing design and architectural vernacular and character of the area, especially in the street scene of Westbourne Road, Fairmead Close to the south, and College Road to the west. This includes through the use of hipped and gable design configurations, and dual-pitched roofs.
- 4.9 The proposed materials would comprise of high quality red-facing brickwork, grey roof tiles and white window frames. This arrangement again reflects the established character, architectural style, and visual appearance of the area.
- 4.10 **Landscaping:** Each dwelling would contain dedicated rear gardens proportionate in size proportionate in size to their host dwellings, and these would be subject to high quality soft landscaping.
- 4.11 The proposal would require the removal of elements of soft landscaping however these would largely be replaced within the new scheme, which also includes planting to the various proposed verges and other amenity strips, as illustrated by the submitted CGI drawings.
- 4.12 One large tree is present adjoining the northeastern corner of the site, and is proposed for retention as part of the development.

- 4.13 Hard landscaping is also proposed in the form of off-street parking, patio areas and via the main access road, all of which are proposed to be of high standard.
- 4.14 **Access & Parking:** Access to the four proposed semi-detached properties at the front of the site would be directly from Westbourne Road. Alterations to existing kerb line and highway verge would be undertaken to achieve this.
- 4.15 The remainder of the dwellings would be served by a dedicated access road. As more than five dwellings are proposed to be served by this access road, it is proposed to be constructed to adoptable standards, and would include provision for the turning of large vehicles including refuse and emergency vehicles, as supported by the Motion Transport reports.
- 4.16 18no. Dedicated off-street parking spaces are to be allocated to the dwellings (two each), as well as two visitor spaces, forming 20 spaces in total.
- 4.17 **Summary of changes to previous submission:** The new planning application offers an amended layout for the nine dwellings proposed. Changes are proposed to the dwelling mix, namely the proposed FOG (new Plot 9). The central area of the development is no longer proposed for a set of three terraced dwellings, but rather a pair of semi-detached dwellings. Former Plot 8, a previously proposed detached dwelling, is now proposed as a pair of semi-detached dwellings in keeping with The Breech.
- 4.18 In accordance with the above changes, alterations are proposed to proposed landscaping, parking and access arrangements. Namely, the adjustments provide opportunity for increased soft landscaping to the front of new Plots 7 & 8, with an adjusted hardsurfacing area

4.19 No changes are proposed to the dwellings fronting Westbourne Road (Plots 1- 4), as the Inspector was happy with the layout in their decision.

4.20 Further justification for the proposed changes is provided in Section 5 of the statement below.



Figure 1: The proposed development

5. Policy Assessment

- 5.1 **National Guidance:** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a relevant material consideration to the application.
- 5.2 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 38 of the NPPF states that “Local planning authorities should approach decision on proposed development in a positive and creative way” and “at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible”. Paragraph 123 of the NPPF comments that planning should “promote an effective use of land” in “meeting the need for homes and other uses, whilst safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions”.
- 5.3 Paragraph 60 confirms the Government’s objective to boost the supply of housing, and paragraph 8 identifies the three objectives of sustainable development, as economic, environmental and social.
- 5.4 Paragraph 131 identifies that “Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities”, whilst paragraph 139 states that significant weight should be given to “outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings”.
- 5.5 The National Design Guide builds on the above, and clarifies that “well-designed neighbourhoods need to include an integrated mix of tenures and housing types that reflect local housing need and market

demand. They are designed to be inclusive and to meet the changing needs of people of different ages and abilities. New development reinforces existing places by enhancing local transport, facilities and community services, and maximising their potential use" (para 109).

- 5.6 **Principle of Development – Policy Context:** Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.7 Bracknell Forest Council's Development Plan relevant to the proposal includes the following:
- Site Allocations Local Plan (SALP) (2013)
 - Core Strategy Development Plan (CSDPD) (2008)
 - 'Saved' Policies of the Local Plan (BFBLP) (2002)
 - Bracknell Forest Policies Map (2013)
- 5.8 It is also acknowledged that the Borough is developing a new Draft Local Plan ('DLP'). The current status of this involves the Council compiling responses received to the Proposed Main Modifications. Consequently this draft plan can be given weight.
- 5.9 Whilst Sandhurst Town has been formally designated as a Neighbourhood Area, no draft documents of note have been published, and the progress of the Plan appears to be indefinitely suspended.
- 5.10 CSDPD Policy CS1 sets out that development will be permitted which makes efficient use of land and infrastructure, is placed in a location which reduces the need to travel, and supports economic wellbeing. CSDPD Policy CS2 states that development will be permitted within defined settlements. Examples of nearby development approved include numbers 60 and 60A College Road, depicted in Figure 2

below, as well as 78 College Road, where what was a single dwelling is now four dwellings (Appendix 2 and Figure 3).

- 5.11 Whilst more of a character matter than a principle one, it is also noted in the wider context of the proposal that Figures 2 and 3 highlight development with minimal soft landscaping to the front, with vehicles needing to reverse



Figure 2: 60 and 60A College Road



Figure 3: Redevelopment of 78 College Road view from College Road showing front two dwellings)

- 5.12 The site lies within the defined settlement of Sandhurst, as identified on the Bracknell Forest Policies Map. It is within 250m of services and amenities along nearby Yorktown Road, including an off licence, newsagent and post office, and a parade of various retail units and hairdressers. A bus stop is also located in Yorktown Road and College Road, with links to Camberley and Bracknell onwards. College Town Montessori Nursery is also within walking distance, some 500m away on College Road, and College Town primary school is also 500m away located on Branksome Hill Road. Furthermore, the proposal is sited on existing residential land, a notable proportion of which is previously developed.
- 5.13 It is therefore demonstrated that the proposal complies with CSDPD Policies CS1 and CS2.

- 5.14 **Principle of Development – Housing Supply:** The Council have acknowledged that the Borough no longer has Five Year Housing Supply, as per its published Housing Land Supply calculation dated 26 July 2023 (Appendix 3).
- 5.15 This calculation confirms that, as of 1 April 2023, the Council is only able to demonstrate a supply of 4.74 years, which equates to a shortfall of 158 dwellings.
- 5.16 Whilst the positive weight to be attributed to the supply of housing even with an adequate supply of housing is significant due to the economic and social benefits it brings, this weight is even more significantly increased without a housing supply. The economic benefits of the provision of housing include the generation of construction work and jobs and the boost to the local economy from additional spend from new residents. The social benefits of the provision of housing include the need to provide individuals with a place to live and prosper.
- 5.17 Additionally the contribution of seven net additional dwellings to reducing the Council's shortfall of 158 dwellings is not to be undervalued.
- 5.18 Turning to the NPPF, paragraph 11 states that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision making this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay. As per NPPF footnote 8, the Council cannot demonstrate an adequate supply of housing. However, as confirmed in the previous submission, footnote 7 is also triggered with part of the site being in Flood Zone 2. As a consequence the 'tilted balance' is not triggered due to the presence of the Flood Zone.

- 5.19 Nonetheless, as set out above, under the 'orthodox' planning balance great weight is still to be attributed to the supply of new homes in view of the housing shortfall.
- 5.20 **Principle of Development – Flooding Sequential Test:** The southeastern and northeastern corners of the site are located within Flood Zone 2.
- 5.21 Paragraph 167 of the NPPF sets out that all plans should apply a sequential approach to the location of development, taking account of all sources of flood risk. Paragraph 168 of the NPPF goes on to states that the aim of the sequential test is to steer new development to areas with the lowest risk of flooding where possible. The National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) further expands upon the requirements of this Sequential Test.
- 5.22 The case of *Substation Action Save East Suffolk Ltd, R (On the Application Of) v Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero [2024] EWCA Civ 12* has confirmed the correct approach to Sequential Tests, as of January 2024. It sets out that the relevant provisions of the NPPF and NPPG do not require an applicant for development consent to demonstrate that wherever there is a risk of flooding from surface water, that there are no other sites reasonably available where the proposed development could be located in a rea of lower surface water risk. In considering this, the risks of flooding from surface water must also be taken into account. The submitted Flood Risk Assessment demonstrates that the risk of flooding on this site is low.
- 5.23 In any case, a Flooding Sequential Test has been submitted with the application, demonstrating that, as per previous submissions, there are only a limited number of comparable sites within the Borough

suitable for housing, and none are at an overall lower risk of flooding, or necessarily immediately available for housing.

- 5.24 Within the previous application the Council advised that it did not accept there were no alternative sites that could come forward as an alternative. However, the Inspector in Appendix 1 judged that the Sequential Test has been passed. Amongst other reasons, it is reasonable to and logical to consider a basic principle of sustainability in locating development within settlement boundaries, which justifies discounting unallocated sites outside of the settlement boundary.
- 5.25 Furthermore the lack of a five year housing supply has rendered Council opposition position untenable, and the definition of what is developable and deliverable has to take into account developments that can be evidenced as very likely to come forward in a similar time frame, as well as to be reasonably comparable to the application site.
- 5.26 It is therefore considered that the Flooding Sequential Test on this site is passed, as per the previous conclusions.
- 5.27 **Principle of Development – Conclusion:** The above has demonstrated that the location is appropriate for additional and replacement housing development, in line with both local and national planning policies. The development is therefore considered acceptable in principle, subject to matters including impact on the character of the area, residential amenity, and highway safety, etc. which are presented below.
- 5.28 **Dwelling Mix:** The proposal complies with the Council's aims for a mix of house types with the proposal providing a range of bedroom numbers as well as an apartment unit.
- 5.29 The proposed mix is considered appropriate to the location by providing, in addition to the apartment, a number of smaller dwellings

as starter family homes to complement the varied dwelling mix within the surrounding area, as well as a variety of family sized dwellings for growing families of all sizes.

As the Council cannot demonstrate a five years' supply of housing the provision of this site as a windfall site offering a variety of dwelling sizes is of high importance.

5.30 **Character and Appearance of the Area – Density & Massing:**

Para. 126 of the NPPF identifies that *"Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities"*, whilst para. 1314 states that *great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.*

5.31 CSDPD Policy CS7 and 'Saved' BFBLP Policy EN20 set out that development will be permitted which is sympathetic to, and builds upon, the local character of the area.

5.32 Para. 131 of the NPPF identifies that *"Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities"*, whilst para. 139 states that *great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.*

5.33 CSDPD Policy CS7 and 'Saved' BFBLP Policy EN20 set out that development will be permitted which is sympathetic to, and builds upon, the local character of the area.

- 5.34 The site is located within a predominately residential area, bordered by dwellings on all sides except for the highway to the front (south) and part of the northeastern corner of the site bordering the Sandhurst Royal Military Academy. The site is not located within one of the Borough's identified character areas.
- 5.35 Exploring the quantum & density of development firstly, this was a critical issue to the aforementioned appeal determination. The NPPF provides a whole chapter, titled 'Making effective use of land', in terms of the consideration of this subject – highlighting its importance. Specifically, NPPF paragraphs 123 & 128 state that planning decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land.
- 5.36 Paragraph 18 of the appeal decision (Appendix 1) highlights that the previous proposal would be efficient use of land, however, it was considered by the Inspector that, 'the density and layout of the scheme would be efficient in the extreme'. This is somewhat of a misnomer, as if a development is cramped then that itself makes the scheme an inefficient use of land due to excessive development. For clarity, this is not presented as a criticism of the Inspector, but rather as a point of confusion.
- 5.37 Attention is drawn to submitted plan references 0506 PL21 & 0506 PL22, as well as supporting plan 0506 'The Breech Densities'. The application site has a proposed density of 39 dwellings per hectare. However, focus then turns to the densities of the housing in the immediate surroundings, including other recent developments (see paragraph 5.10 above).
- 5.38 Plan 0506 'The Breech Densities' has undertaken this exercise, demonstrating that the northern section of The Breech has a density of 37.5 dwellings per hectare, with the southern marked section

increasing to 43.16 dwellings per hectare. Therefore the surrounding area is demonstrated to have a similar density of housing (and in cases a higher level) to that of the proposal.

- 5.39 It is noted that the Inspector did not visit The Breech to the north of the application site when conducting their site visit, and ultimately this is a separate matter. However, the point ultimately presented here is that inadequate consideration of the surrounding densities has appeared to have resulted, which the above therefore seeks to clarify.
- 5.40 Moving away from the mathematical exercise to the visual one, the application would involve backland development, and this is highly consistent with the surrounding area. The development within The Breech is itself backland development, at a similar overall density and with a larger total number of dwellings. Other backland developments have been identified at 78 College Road (Appendix 3, paragraph 5.10) and at land to the rear of Gunnery Mews, to name two examples. Further to this, cul-de-sac style residential development is the predominant development layout in this area.
- 5.41 The rear (north) of the application site in particular is heavily influenced by the semi-detached dwellings of 30 – 33 The Breech, a cul-de-sac development granted approval in 2016, following the initial development of the Breech in the early 1990s. This has a significant influence on the appropriate density, layout and character with which to develop the application site.



Figure 4: Nos. 30 & 31 The Breech with the rear (northern) boundary of the appeal site on the right side, and further dwellings within The Breech to the left.

- 5.42 Paragraph 18 of the Inspector’s appeal decision also contains an inaccuracy where it is claimed that the then Plots 8 & 9 would ‘appear to step up in height and size’. In terms of height in particular, this is incorrect.
- 5.43 For the purposes of this new application, Street Scene plans have been provided (drawing references 0506 PL29 & 0506 PL30) demonstrating that there is no increase in height, and in fact the heights of these proposed dwellings towards the rear of the site would be lower than those within The Breech.
- 5.44 It is therefore considered, in view of the above, that the proposal is of an appropriate density to the character of the area.

- 5.45 **Character and Appearance of the Area - Landscaping:** In addition to policies CSDPD CS7 and BFBLP EN20, 'Saved' BFBLP Policy EN1 states that trees and other planting important to the character of and appearance of the area shall be retained.
- 5.46 With significant elements of the proposal being sited on existing garden land, the proposal would involve the loss of some soft landscaping, including shrubbery. However, the proposed soft and hard landscaping scheme would provide full mitigation and enhancement to the site, providing significant visual merit to the proposal.
- 5.47 Each dwelling would have dedicated enclosed rear garden space, with landscape frontages. Sections of proposed verges and other areas outside the proposed curtilages would also be supplemented with soft landscaping.
- 5.48 Paragraph 19 of the Appeal Decision raised concerns with regards to the occupation of frontages of dwellings being with parking spaces, bin storage and turning areas. It is firstly noted as per submitted plans 0506 PL21 & 0506 PL22 that such arrangements to dwelling frontages are the common character and layout in this area, highlighted by the extent of parking spaces and hardstanding shown to existing properties, raising the question as to what the harm is for such a layout in this proposal. However, in any case, the proposal has been amended to provide additional soft landscaping to proposed plots 7 & 8 in particular, and the reduction in the number of dwellings in the centre of the site.
- 5.49 Paragraph 19 of the Appeal Decision goes on to state that the appearance of the hardsurfacing and boundary features, including parking, would contribute to the cramped nature of the development. This has again been resolved through the amendments made, by

adjusting the parking, soft landscaping, and general layout of the central and rear sections of the site. Whilst there would be limited frontages to Plots 5 & 6, overall a significant level of soft landscaping would flank the access road up to the terminus at Plot 9, therefore avoiding any sense of a cramped form of development, in combination with the aforementioned density discussion.

5.50 Of further note in terms of parking and access arrangements, the layout fully meets the Council's requirements and guidance in terms of minimum space standards (and in various situations exceed these minimum standards). Additionally, the dwellings would at minimum meet, and in cases exceed, the national space standard requirements.

5.51 **Character and Appearance of the Area – Design & other considerations:** Given the Inspector's favourable commentary in paragraph 17 of Appendix 1, the four dwellings to the front of the site have been retained in the same manner as previously proposed.



Figure 5: CGI view of proposal from southeast along Westbourne Road

- 5.52 The proposed dwellings have been designed to closely reflect the surrounding built form. While there is considerable architectural variety within the wider area, most notably within College Road, the focus has been on the design and form within Westbourne Road and Fairmead Close given that this is the point of access.
- 5.53 Plot 9 is now proposed as a FOG, and this reflects guidance given to the Applicant within the pre-application discussions undertaken in 2021 (as highlighted in Appendix 4). This design solution serves to both reduced overall massing as well as to provide landscaping solutions.
- 5.54 Furthermore, the proposed dwellings would comprise a considerable visual improvement over and above the existing two dwellings of Athol Villa and Woodside. Due to age and use over time these

dwellingings have resulted in a somewhat dilapidated appearance, and have no particular beneficial merit or design connection with neighbouring buildings. Additionally, over time these dwellingings have become structurally weakened and will therefore need to be replaced in any case within the future.

- 5.55 **Impact on Trees:** No trees within or immediately adjoining the site are subject to a Tree Preservation Order.
- 5.56 Three notable trees are present adjacent to the northeastern boundary of the site. Previous Tree Surveys undertaken on the site remain relevant in terms of clarifying the extent of these trees and the absence of impact from the proposal on these trees. It is further noted that the Tree Officer raises no objection in previous submissions.
- 5.57 **Residential Amenity – Impacts on Neighbouring Occupants:** BFBLP 'Saved' Policy EN20 refers to the need for development to not adversely impact the amenity of the surrounding properties and adjoining areas, through ensuring the development would not result in an adverse impact through loss of light, privacy or overbearing impact. Further specific guidance is set out within the Borough's Design SPD (2017).
- 5.58 By way of their linear siting, the placement of proposed four semi-detached dwellingings at the front of the site would not give rise to any adverse impacts to the amenities of the neighbouring properties of Invicta and Ferriday.
- 5.59 All the proposed side-facing first floor windows to the dwellingings would be obscure-glazed, as they would serve bathrooms.
- 5.60 The rear outlook of the dwellingings of Invicta and Ferriday would not be materially affected. There would be no interruption to the direct

line of site northwards, and the proposed dwellings of Plot 8 and 9 would be located at a significant separation distances some 26m away and at an oblique angle. Whilst, for example, the front windows of proposed Plot 7 would have some view of the rear garden of Ferriday, this would be at an oblique angle and would form a relationship commonly found in built up residential areas. Three trees are proposed on this boundary which will also provide beneficial screening and separation between the development Ferriday.

- 5.61 The proposed dwelling of Plot 9 would be sited forwards of a neighbouring dwelling to the southwest. In combination with the submitted layout plans, drawing 0506 PL30 highlights the absence of any adverse impact upon the occupants of this existing dwelling, by way of the separation distances involved and the absence of habitable windows in the immediate vicinity.
- 5.62 In respect of the relationship between 31 & 32 The Breech and proposed Plots 8 & 9, the proposal would comply the loss of light tests set out within the Council's Design SPD, as marked on the submitted plans.
- 5.63 **Residential Amenity – Amenities of Prospective Occupants:**
The proposed dwellings have been designed in a manner to prevent any loss of light or loss of privacy impacts between them. In respect of the relationship between the rear elevations of Plots 5 & 6 and the southern side elevation of Plot 7, a separation of between 7.5m and 11m would be provided (depending on whether measured from the projecting rear element or the main wall), which would avoid any material harm.
- 5.64 Each of the proposed dwellings would be provided with adequate private amenity space in the form of enclosed rear gardens. Whilst the garden space to Plot 9 would be comparatively smaller than the

other dwellings, this reflects its status as an apartment. It is nonetheless considered that this is a good standard of outdoor amenity in view of a single apartment.

- 5.65 In respect of Plots 6, 7 & 8 and the existing tree to the east of these dwellings, adequate separation distance has been provided to prevent an adverse overshadowing impact, and it is noted that this relationship would be superior to that witnessed by many properties to the north within The Breech.
- 5.66 All dwellings would meet or exceed minimum space standards, thereby providing a good standard of amenity whilst also meeting the Council's emerging policies.
- 5.67 **Transport and Parking:** Paragraph 115 of the NPPF sets out that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds where there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or where the cumulative impacts on the wider road network would be severe.
- 5.68 Each proposed dwelling would accord with the minimum parking requirements set out within the Council's Parking Standards SPD (2016) (in the case of Plot 9, it would exceed requirements). Provision for two visitor spaces would also be accommodated, as advised in this SPD. The parking spaces would meet, and in some cases exceed, minimum sizes, with adequate access.
- 5.69 Separate, dedicated 0.9 metre wide pedestrian access would also be available for both the front and rear garden access points to dwellings.
- 5.70 A Transport Statement has been submitted in support of the proposal, concluding that Westbourne Road and the surrounding local transport network can adequately accommodate the proposed additional

vehicular movements. The proposed access road within the site would be built to adoptable standards, with provision for the turning of large vehicles on-site, including refuse and emergency vehicles.

- 5.71 The Transport Statement considers the proposed impacts of the width of the cul-de-sac access road and concludes that these would not give rise to highway safety issues. It is critical to also note that the level of traffic movements generated by the proposal would be very limited, and therefore would give rise to minimal conflict in respect of access and two cars passing at any one time.
- 5.72 Each dwelling would contain external access to its rear garden, which would provide secure cycle parking.
- 5.73 Furthermore, the site is located within a highly sustainable location, not only due to its location within defined settlement, but through its close proximity to the defined town centre location of Yorktown Road, College Town, to the southwest (as identified in the Policies Map). This would be sited within walking distance of the proposal and contains various shops and other amenities, as well as public transport links.
- 5.74 All of the above aligns with the judgements made in the Appeal Decision, which did not consider there to be an adverse impact on highway safety.
- 5.75 **Refuse Provision:** Each dwelling would contain external access to its rear garden, which would provide secure bin storage not visible in the street scene. A bin collection point will be provided adjacent to the access road for Council kerbside collection.
- 5.76 The proposed access road within the site would be built to an adoptable standard, and would allow refuse and emergency vehicles to enter and egress the site in forward gear.

- 5.77 The Transport Statement again provides commentary on the proposed refuse arrangements. It is highlighted that the Council's Waste & Recycling Officer raises no objection to the proposed development.
- 5.78 Drainage and SuDS:** The southeastern and northeastern corners of the site are located within Flood Zone 2. A surface water drainage ditch known as the Yorktown Road Ditch (NB: the name Cove Brook is incorrect and actually refers to a different water course in Farnborough) is present to the east of the site, and adjoins its northeastern corner.
- 5.79 Further to previous conclusions made regarding the acceptability of the proposal in drainage terms (subject to mitigation), the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has therefore been updated and submitted in support of the application. It is agreeable that the contents of this report be secured by planning condition.
- 5.80 The FRA follows correspondence with the Environment Agency (EA) with regard to flood risk following the withdrawal of the previous application. The EA are satisfied with the modelling data and mitigation measures provided.
- 5.81 Furthermore a Flooding Sequential Test has been submitted, demonstrating that there are only a limited number of comparable sites within the Borough suitable for housing, and of these none are at an overall lower risk of flooding, or necessarily immediately available for housing development. This has been discussed in more detail in the 'Principle of Development' section above.
- 5.82 **Ecology:** The submitted Ecological Survey demonstrates that the two existing dwellings are unlikely to be suitable for the roosting of bats.

- 5.83 The submitted information further sets out various additional mitigation recommendations and biodiversity enhancements. It is agreeable that these measures be secured by planning condition.
- 5.84 A Reptile Survey has been conducted which identifies the presence of protected slow worms within the site. The Survey therefore sets out a methodology for the safe translocation of these slow worms to a receptor site, with the details of the receptor site to be finalised during the course of the application. The Reptile Survey further sets out construction mitigation measures in case of any residual matters which may remain.
- 5.85 Previous submissions have identified that the land surrounding the Yorktown Road ditch (not Cove Brook, see paragraph 5.70 above) forms an important wildlife corridor and ecological feature.
- 5.86 As part of dialogue with the EA, biodiversity improvements have been identified and proposed to the section of the site that adjoins this feature. These improvements would be in the form of appropriate and extensive native planting, and the presence of permeable fencing. The land use of this particular parcel will not change – it is currently garden land and will remain as such, and will be notably improved as currently there is limited planting and impermeable close-boarded fencing. While standing guidance suggests a buffer zone should be incorporated which does not include garden space, discussions with the EA have highlighted the circumstances of the existing situation and how a net biodiversity improvement will be achieved, therefore meeting with local and national planning policies.
- 5.87 **Contamination:** There are no known land contamination issues present on the site. However any issues raised during the planning application process can be addressed including by planning condition if necessary.

5.88 **Sustainability and Energy:** Paragraph 8 of the NPPF supports the transition of development to a low carbon future. The national Code for Sustainable Homes has now been abolished, however it is proposed that the development would conform to Part L of the Building Regulations which as of 2010 requires a 25% reduction in carbon emissions over the 2006 standards. This is equivalent to Code level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. By way of contributing to the reduction in carbon, the proposal would also achieve current building construction standards with added sustainability measures through;

- A. The limitation of the amount of inherent material, structure and embodied energy through the employment of good building standards to create an excellent SAP rating;
- B. Use of locally sourced, recycled materials and labour where practicable;
- C. Reduced internal water consumption of 110 litres per person per day through the incorporation of water efficient sanitary fittings, including low flow toilets and water efficient taps for wash basins;
- D. Refuse, recycling and composting facilities to be provided to work with the Council's existing waste and recycling collection service;
- E. Secure cycle provision to encourage sustainable modes of transport;
- F. 'A' rated electrical appliances and energy saving light fittings;
- G. 'A' rated double glazed windows with natural cross ventilation provision;

- H. Water butts fitted to the rainwater down pipes for watering the garden;
- I. Recycling of waste construction materials where practicable;
- J. Permeable driveway/parking spaces to avoid increase in surface water runoff;

5.89 The proposal is therefore considered to comply with sustainability objectives in this respect. It is acknowledged that in accordance with CSDPD Policies CS10 & CS12 conditions to secure water usage and on-site renewable energy production may be required.

5.90 It is further considered that the proposed dwellings would offer significant energy efficiency improvements over those provided by the older and dilapidated existing dwellings.

5.91 **Archaeology:** The site is not known to be sited in a location of archaeological interest. However any issues raised during the planning application process can be addressed including by planning condition if necessary.

5.92 **Special Protection Area:** The site is located between 400 metres and 5 kilometres from the boundary of the Thames Basin Heath SPA. As such it is acknowledged that, following the undertaking of a Habitats Regulations Assessment, the development would be liable to pay a monetary contribution towards Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM).

5.93 As was the case with the previous appeal, the client is agreeable to entering into a Section 106 Agreement to secure the above, upon a recommendation of approval of the application.

- 5.94 **Affordable Housing:** As the proposal is for nine dwellings, including a net increase of seven dwellings, it does not meet the Council's threshold for affordable housing contribution.
- 5.95 **Community Infrastructure Levy:** The proposed development is CIL liable, and lies within the 'Crowthorne/Sandhurst' Charging Zone.
- 5.96 The relevant forms have been completed and submitted with the application.

6. Planning Balance & Conclusion

- 6.1 This statement has demonstrated that the proposed development is acceptable in principle and makes an efficient use of land.
- 6.2 Material planning considerations have been carefully considered and analysed, as evidenced in section 5 of this statement and the supporting plans and documents. This includes a review of feedback received in the previous planning application submission and appeal decision, and accordingly appropriate amendments to these previous submissions.
- 6.3 In terms of planning gains and benefits is considered the proposed development would contribute an appropriate windfall site to the Borough's housing supply, without adverse effect on the character of the area, the amenity of neighbouring residents, highway safety, etc. This would be supported by the provision of general family-oriented dwellings in a highly sustainable location, providing a high level of energy efficiency and biodiversity net gain.
- 6.4 Notwithstanding the information presented, even if some minor harm was still to be considered in terms of the density of the development (notwithstanding the similar and higher densities within The Breech), then this minor harm must be balanced against the significant benefits.
- 6.5 Ultimately it is considered that the proposed scheme complies with relevant Development Plan Policies and is further supported by National Guidance. Concerns expressed in the earlier application have been addressed and overcome. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.

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| CIL
| Enforcement
| Land Promotion
| Planning
| Sequential Tests
| Viability

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